

15<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Independent Planning Commission  
Suite 15.02, Level 15  
King Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

**Vicki Lockwood – The Goldfields Honey Group**

Please see attached is a copy of my submission for the public hearing on 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> of February. I believe you have not got an overview on the severe impacts that the McPhillamy Project will have on our businesses under the Goldfields Honey umbrella. Please find our business structure on the cover of our submissions which we have put together as one.

We as a family and leading business owners in our community, and our industry have now exhausted our resources, energy and mental health with this project.

I am not a report writer, and nor do I have the time or resources to employ one.

Over the last ten years that this project has affected me, we have had no empathy shown from Regis Resources or the Dept of Planning and Environment. I guess I should have not expected any. I have attached just a little of the exhausting email trail I have endured.

I am now overwhelmed and very sad that the proposed mine will destroy our business and the legacy that I have worked so hard with my late husband and my family in a very unusual but vital industry if it is to proceed.

**I now add some additional concerns:**

**EMPLOYMENT**

I am proud of our contribution to the Australian economy, to training both Australian and those from other countries, many of whom are now Australian citizens. I have **attached below** documents stating that Goldfields Honey is an approved employer sponsor with the Department of Immigration. Job vacancies in our local area are astronomical. The national unemployment rate is just 3.5%, many of these people just unemployable. Our local areas of Blayney, Bathurst and Orange all have a crisis in finding people to employ. Businesses are closing, working reduced hours or poaching staff from competitive business. Where will the people come from to fill the positions that Regis have on offer? The town of Blayney will be in crisis if people leave their jobs to go and work at a mine, that pays so much more.

We have always contributed to the local economy, NSW and Australia by working hard, paying taxes and operating an honest, transparent business. I am happy to share with you my financial turnover. As this is a public document, that is something I would like to remain confidential, so I am unsure how to submit it.

**HOUSING**

My staff are from all walks of life, different socioeconomic backgrounds and cultures. The competition to obtain suitable housing is incredibly competitive. I have to secure housing for my

employees. I know firsthand how difficult it is. House buying, mortgage repayments, rent is all at a crisis in our immediate areas of Blayney, Orange & Bathurst. (I have attached below, recent articles that relate to our area). Any extra competition in the housing market would be catastrophic. This is not a short term problem, and is going to take a long period of time for government and the economy to restore housing. Any new pressure from any sector will create havoc. Our essential workers are not currently able to find housing.

### **EDUCATION/TOURISM**

In our immediate area, as within the whole of Australia, the shortage of positions in childcare is huge. Our schools in Orange, Bathurst & Blayney ... both public and private, have severe teacher shortages.

I am proud of my contribution to education and tourism. Over the years, I have shared our knowledge from PHD students to preschool children, in the form of lectures and visits to our site. We are always happy to share our knowledge with anyone, as our industry affects everyone that eats. As a traveller myself, I am always curious, and I replicate that curiosity with our visitors. Tourist dollars are also important to the Australian economy, and word of mouth is the best form of advertising. Competition for accommodation is at a premium at certain times of the year, we cannot afford for it to be compromised by any itinerate workers at the proposed mine.

### **THE ENVIRONMENT**

My love of the environment is probably the most devastating thing that will happen if this mine is approved. Flora, fauna, waterways, night skies destroyed. I cannot seem to find any references to the nocturnal animals and their demise.

You may think it is just a small parcel of land, but all these small parcels add up. With climate change happening, yes, it is real, every little bit we can save is vital. It saddens me to think of the destruction, and yes not many people know about the little area of Kings Plains, but its destruction will affect countless people.

I cannot believe that the tailing dam is as big as our local Carcoar Dam, and the dam wall is nearly as big as the dam at Wyangala Dam. The pit, the tailings dam, and the wall will be there forever. I am also very unhappy at the lack of care of newly planted tube stock trees along borders of the mine. They not only neglected them during the drought by not watering them, but they also then allowed the tree guards to blow through the forest with no respect or thought to the wildlife. I am also concerned that the tube stock planted is not all sourced from the tree seeds on site, and there may be introduced species into the area. This should be investigated by a tree specialist, but no one is allowed on Regis land. Also, Regis has created double fenced corridors for this tree planting that is detrimental to the wildlife, eg Kangaroos get disoriented and can't escape, often getting caught on the fences.

I also **attached** an email from Forestry Corporation of NSW which is dated 10<sup>th</sup> February 2017, please note that elevated levels of naturally occurring asbestos in the Vittoria state forest which caused an exclusion zone. Has naturally occurring asbestos been investigated thoroughly on the proposed mine site? I did share this information with Department of Planning & Environment.

### **ENERGY**

Regis has recently purchased land so that the easement can be placed so they can obtain electricity with the building of new power lines to the project. This energy will come from coal or some unsustainable source. Where is Regis's commitment to use energy that is sustainable, eg wind or solar to operate their plant. The energy required to operate their lighting system so they can operate 24/7 must be enormous. Another burden on our energy.

Has an assessment been done on the disturbance created by the electricity easement?

## **COMMUNITY**

There are 84 dwellings within 2km of the proposed mine. Each of these is either someone's home or place of business. Their lives to become disturbed should the mine be approved. Regis has not done it's duty of care and reached out to these landowners. Discussions must be made with each of them in regard to contaminated dust that may end up on their roofs, then in the rainwater tanks. This is their drinking water! Also, base line monitoring must be done in regard to their air quality for the sake of health.

The vibration from blasting needs very close monitoring at each of these residences to make sure no structural damage will occur. For example, I own a **Cobb and Co Inn, built in 1859**, with an underground cellar. Regis has just dismissed this, but I need guarantees that the building will not be disturbed from blasting, as it is constructed from handmade local materials.

These residences must also be given guarantees that they will not be affected by noise. These landholders are located in a rural environment, therefore most, if not all have domestic and non-domestic animals. Will their livestock be affected? Will they lose condition, not only from the stress of noise from blasting, and general running of the mine? Will their pastures be affected by contaminated dust, which will then reflect in the health of animals? Also, has any consideration been given to the disturbance of quality of life, peace and tranquillity, many of the reasons people choose to live on the land?

## **NIGHT LIGHTING**

I have been asking and trying to get answers from Regis for years about night lighting. I refer to an information night held many years ago, and I asked the lighting expert the distance the lights would be seen. I did not understand the lighting report. They could not explain. I have asked this question many times, and I refer to the attached emails that I have had with Regis. Night lighting is of great concern to me. Not only will it destroy our beautiful night sky that is part of the community's life, it will affect the nocturnal animals. My biggest concern is for our bees. No one wants to take this seriously. The bees attraction to the night lights could cause major concerns at the proposed mine site. Regis has not attempted to do any studies on how commercial quantities of bees will affect the operations of the mine at night, and cause major disturbance to workers.

THIS LEADS ME TO MY BIGGEST CONCERN THAT PLAYS HAVOC WITH MY AND MY FAMILIES MENTAL HEALTH EVERY DAY. WHAT IF A MINE WORKER DIES DUE TO A BEE STING, OR MULTIPLE BEE STINGS!! I AM TRYING TO HAVE A DUTY OF CARE ON THIS MATTER. REGIS SEEMS TO HAVE NO DUTY OF CARE. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE? EVEN IF REGIS TAKES FULL RESPONSIBILITY, WE AT GOLDFIELDS WILL ALWAYS FEEL RESPONSIBLE.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

With the continued burning of fossil fuels, do we need another unnecessary industry adding to our problems? This project does not seem to address, or be seen to implement any renewable energy into this project. Our responsibilities must ensure that any project of this size must be contributing and using renewable resources.

The communication we at Goldfields has had with Regis or the Department of Planning & Environment, has not been professional. It is the old "David & Goliath" story. Regis can produce facts and figures and reports and analysis and jargon, but every time I have asked for that to be explained in "layman terms", I am ignored. The staff/management is constantly turning over at the Regis office in Blayney, so this adds to the problem.

My sons and partners, Jon, Mark and Sam will be submitting more detailed submissions relating to the specifics of Goldfields Honey.

Please also find attached various pieces of correspondence that I have had with Regis and the Department of Planning over the years that may be of interest to the commissioners.

I now list the following conditions that should be placed on Regis for the proposed McPhillamy's Mine, if it is approved by the Independent Planning Commission.

1. Regis is responsible for housing any "fly in workers", and will not compete on the local housing and tourist market.
2. Regis will not encroach on the employment of the surrounding areas of Blayney, Orange or Bathurst.
3. Regis is to ensure that an independent environmental scientist is caring for mine site, the mine footprint, and the surrounding area of 5km of the site. A bi-annual report to be written and given to all surrounding landholders and interested parties.
4. Regis is to implement renewable energy for the life of the mine.
5. Regis is to monitor the residences within 3 kms of the mine site for dust, noise, vibration, and water quality with a quarterly report issued to them directly every three months.
6. Regis also employ a social worker to be in regular contact with all residents within a 3 kilometre radius of the mine for the monitoring of mental and physical health from the defects of the mine and follow up with paid assistance if problems arise.
7. Regis will take all responsibility for injury or fatality that may occur due to beekeeping operation in the surrounding area.
8. All premises within 3 kilometres of the proposed mining lease boundary are application for VLAMP.
9. Regis to empty tailings dam into pit and refill pit and bring lay of the land and environment back to normal.

Regards

**Vicki Lockwood**  
"The Goldfields Group"



## NOTICE OF DECISION SPONSORSHIP APPROVAL NOTICE

### Details of Sponsorship Approval

Name of Sponsor	GOLDFIELD HONEY AUSTRALIA PTY LTD
Sponsor Client ID	[REDACTED]
Application ID	
Sponsorship Transaction reference number	EGOMSA4EQJK
Sponsorship effective until	23 July 2024

Your application for a temporary activities sponsor has been approved.

Visa classes which can be sponsored under the temporary activities sponsors include:

- Temporary Work (International Relations)(Class GD) (Subclass 403) visa
- Training (Class GF) (Subclass 407) visa
- Temporary Activity (Class GG) (Subclass 408) visa.

As an approved sponsor some visa subclasses are governed by specific sponsorship requirements. You can refer to our website for further information about these requirements.

[immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/employing-and-sponsoring-someone/existing-sponsors](http://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/employing-and-sponsoring-someone/existing-sponsors)

### Period of approval

Regulation 2.63 provides for the duration of approval for a temporary activities sponsor as well as for other sponsors.

It can be a period of time, until a particular event, or until the occurrence of a particular event.

Sponsorship approval has been granted to GOLDFIELD HONEY AUSTRALIA PTY LTD from 23 July 2019 to 23 July 2024.

### Sponsorship obligations

As an approved sponsor, it is your responsibility to ensure that the sponsorship obligations outlined in the table below are satisfied for the duration of your sponsorship approval, or in some cases for a different period as specified in the relevant regulation. If you do not comply with these sponsorship obligations, there may be serious consequences. The Department may:

- cause an infringement notice to be issued to you
- bar you from accessing program for a period
- cancel your approval as a sponsor
- pursue civil litigation against you should the sponsorship obligations not be met.

#### 2.78 Obligation to cooperate with inspectors



18 November 2020

GOLDFIELDS HONEY BEE AND POLLINATION SERVICES PTY LTD

**In reply quote:**

Name of applicant	GOLDFIELDS HONEY BEE AND POLLINATION SERVICES PTY LTD [REDACTED]
Application ID	EGOQF4L9FE
Sponsorship transaction reference number	[REDACTED]
File number	BCC2020/2648831
Transmission method	Email sent to [REDACTED]

Dear Sponsor

**Notification of approval as a standard business sponsor**

Your sponsorship application has been approved.

This letter contains important details about the approval and your obligations.

Keep a copy of this letter for future reference.

**Details of Sponsorship Approval**

Sponsor type	Standard Business Sponsorship - Renewal
Sponsorship effective until	18 November 2025
Accreditation status	Not accredited

Ensure that you continue to use your original sponsorship TRN for future applications.

Original Sponsorship TRN                            EGO9RNTAOD

**Accredited sponsorship**

You may want to consider sponsorship accreditation for future renewal applications. To be approved for accredited status, you must meet the standard sponsorship requirements and additional characteristics.

Accredited sponsorship status provides you with faster processing of your associated nomination and visa applications.

More information on sponsorship accreditation is available on our website  
[immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/employing-and-sponsoring-someone/sponsoring-workers/becoming-a-sponsor/accredited-sponsor](http://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/employing-and-sponsoring-someone/sponsoring-workers/becoming-a-sponsor/accredited-sponsor)

Vicki Lockwood

**From:** James Stewart (Bathurst) - [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 10 February, 2017 4:21 PM  
**To:** 'Gold Fields Honey'  
**Cc:** Charlie Fisher; Jason Molkentin; Alex Slattery  
**Subject:** New Exclusion area in Vittoria State Forrest  
**Attachments:** OP2017-0013\_ABV0117\_Elouera.pdf; Vittoria SF Exclusion area.pdf

Hi Vicki,

Forestry Corporation of NSW identified potential Naturally Occurring Asbestos (NOA) areas on State Forest land in the Central West of NSW in June 2016 using mapping and rock sampling techniques.

Following on from these initial samples, FCNSW carried out air quality monitoring in high potential areas of naturally occurring asbestos.

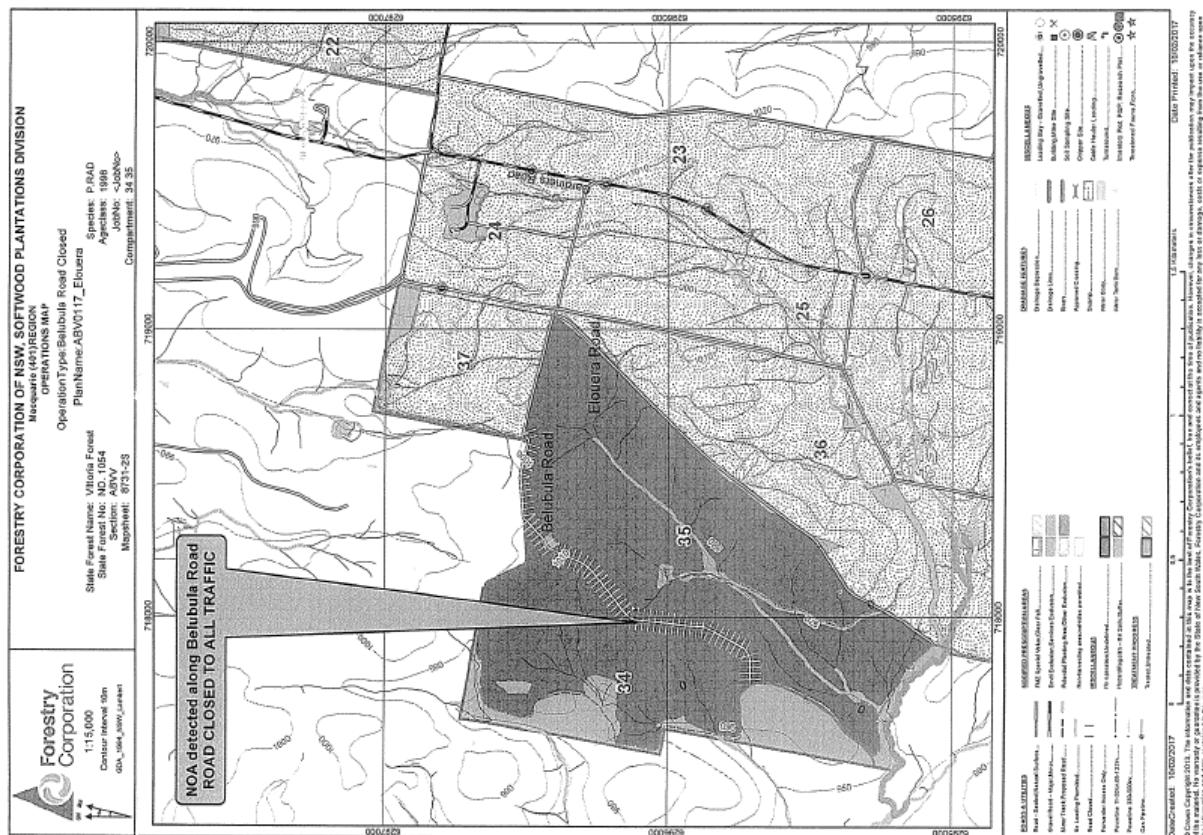
On Tuesday, air quality monitoring was conducted at Elouera in Vittoria SF. Results from these tests showed elevated levels of naturally-occurring asbestos along Belubula Road (refer to attached map). The gravel material on Belubula Road was extracted on site from a borrow pit. **Belubula Road is now closed to all traffic.** There also will be NOA warning signs placed on Belubula Road.

FCNSW will now engage Regional EnviroScience to collect more rock samples in the area so we have a better idea of exactly where it is. We will draft a management plan for the site which will probably include capping the Belubula Road.

As a direct result, your Macq957 Permit area will be partially excluded (highlighted in orange), no access or apiary activities allowed within this exclusion area (refer to map).

If you have any questions, my contact details are below.

Thank you for your understanding.



<https://www.centralwesterndaily.com.au/story/8041575/single-mum-treated-like-a-second-class-citizen-as-housing-struggle-rages-on/>

## Michelle Cook talks housing crisis in Central West NSW



By [Riley Krause](#)

**Updated** January 11 2023 - 11:23am, first published 11:00am

Michelle Cook has opened up about the housing crisis she entered when she moved to the Central West. Picture by Carla Freedman.



Michelle Cook believes she and other would-be-renters are being treated like "second class citizens" as the housing crisis in the Central West worsens. The single mum moved from Sydney to Grenfell just before the Covid pandemic hit in March of 2020, after she was left homeless as a result of a legal battle with an ex-partner.  
"I had worked hard; I had a university degree and a professional job. But all of that was taken by someone who wanted to punish me for leaving," she said.

"Times were tough, but I had persistence."

A friend of Ms Cook's was planning on moving back home to Grenfell to care for their ageing father, who himself owned a farm in the town. The friend and Ms Cook worked out a deal where she was able to live on the property and in return, would help with care.

But living in a caravan on someone else's land was not a long-term solution. But every time she attempted to get a place of her own, she was rebuffed.

"Not only not being able to get a rental, but the stringent application process. They're treating people like second class citizens," she said.

"It feels like people who rent aren't as 'citizen' as someone who owns a house. I really felt intimidated by the process."

According to the census data, rental stress in Grenfell has gone from 4.5 per cent to 24.5 per cent in 2021. In Orange, from 12.4 per cent in 2016 to 29.4 per cent in 2021.

Knowing she would be staying in town for the foreseeable future, she turned her attention towards trying to purchase a house of her own. This too, proved difficult.

"We were making suitable offers, only to realise agents preferred Sydney investors, who were paying over market prices. For investors, regional property prices are still a bargain," Ms Cook added.

"But how will that change the structure of these towns. When locals can no longer afford to buy in the town, they grew up in. Or as in our case, can't find a home to live in, when they are needing to take care of elderly parents?"

She then gave up trying. While she knows she has the strength to deal with the situation, it begs the question of whether she should have to.

"Banks require a full-time job as a prerequisite for a mortgage, but full-time roles are hard to come by in the regions. It is a catch 22 situation and a system issue," she added.

"Since I have been here, I have seen employers taking advantage of staff. I have seen issues like wage theft, underemployment and casualisation of the workforce, even when they are crying out for workers, in industries like age care, staff are still not given suitable hours and shifts."

With her friend's father having recently moved into an age care facility, Ms Cook has been able to move into the house itself, but that does not guarantee her future in the town.

"I'm employed for the next two or so years and I would love to stay here," Ms Cook said.

"I am told I have strength; I have resilience. But I don't want to be strong."

"I want to go home and have a nice shower, somewhere to cook, a place to call home."

[https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-06-28/locals-taking-in-strangers-amid-escalating-housing-crisis/100236724?utm\\_source=abc\\_news\\_web&utm\\_medium=content\\_shared&utm\\_campaign=abc\\_news\\_web&utm\\_content=messenger](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-06-28/locals-taking-in-strangers-amid-escalating-housing-crisis/100236724?utm_source=abc_news_web&utm_medium=content_shared&utm_campaign=abc_news_web&utm_content=messenger)

## Central West locals take in strangers as housing crisis escalates

By [Arianna Levy](#) and [Micaela Hambrett](#)

Posted Mon 28 Jun 2021 at 6:31am Monday 28 Jun 2021 at 6:31am

A perfect storm of booming tourism and a tightening real estate market has created a new class of homeless in regional NSW.

**Key points:**

- Locals take in strangers in a bid to get people off the street
- An emerging class of homelessness sees skilled professionals sleeping in their cars as the rental market tightens
- Housing support services have seen an increasing number of tenants who are displaced after being served 90-day eviction notices by landlords

They are the paid professionals, with full-time, consistent work, who are finding themselves sleeping in their cars as short- and long-term accommodation becomes increasingly elusive in the current housing environment.

Now, some locals are opening their homes to complete strangers just to keep them off the streets.



### A job, but nowhere to go

Suman and Dinesh Poudel say they were facing having to sleep in a motel or their car. (ABC Central West: Arianna Levy)

Suman and Dinesh Poudel hail from Pokhara at the base of the Himalayas in Nepal.

Before making the switch to Orange as part of their visa requirement, the cousins lived and worked in Sydney.

When Suman was offered the head chef role at one of Orange's nursing homes, he transferred

within his current company to move to the region and the future seemed bright.

"In Orange, the demand is higher than the supply of rental properties, so we applied for more than 20 properties and all were rejected," Suman said.

As Suman's start date drew closer and closer, he posted a notice on a local community Facebook group but received no reply.

In desperation — and days away from having to leave Sydney for Orange — he posted again. "We couldn't go back to Sydney, the lease was up and I had to start my new job," he said.

**'Thought I was crazy'**

Orange local and pianist Debbie Nicholls was happily living on her own when she saw the post on Facebook.

Debbie (Dee) Nicholls lived by herself before she saw Suman and Dinesh's Facebook post. (*Supplied: Debbie Nicholls*)

"I just thought, 'Well I've got two rooms here,'" Ms Nicholls said.

"I did say to them, 'As long as you're seriously looking for a rental, I'll take you in short term'. I just couldn't bear the thought of them just not having anywhere to eat and shower and sleep."

Unsurprisingly, Ms Nicholls encountered resistance from concerned family members.

"They were saying these people could be making drugs in your garage, they could be radicals, you could come home and find all your prized possessions gone in your house," she said.



### Invisible homeless

For support service Housing Plus, the Poudels' story is all too common. It is reporting a shift in the type of clients requiring its services, according to a representative.

"The current situation has seen a new type of client who is employed but unable to obtain a rental," the representative said.

Housing Plus in Orange is seeing a new type of client who is employed but unable to obtain a rental. (*ABC Central West: Arianna Levy*)



Ms Nicholls said that, in the past, homeless people tended to be "down and out".

"So, those who were in extreme poverty, those with mental illness, problems with alcohol, that sort of thing," Ms Nicholls said. "But now you've got professionals who are also finding themselves in this predicament."

Beverly Rankin is the development manager for community services not-for-profit Fusion in

Orange, central west NSW. She also helps run the city's Uniting Church's homeless support service.

Her experience echoed Housing Plus' observations. She said the concern was with "invisible homeless".

"We don't see a lot of people who are actually sleeping rough," Ms Rankin said.

"It's the people who are couch-surfing or sleeping in their cars roughing it. [They are] the people who you don't see on the streets."

Uniting Church member Bev Rankin says the lack of accommodation in Orange is due to the zero vacancy rate. (*ABC Central West: Arianna Levy*)

### Legislation loophole

It's no secret that tourism and booming population pressures are being felt across regional towns.

Scott Munro is an Orange City Councillor and real estate agent. He said the tenancy legislation had a rental loophole that put unexpected pressure on the market.

Under the [Residential Tenancies Act 2010](#), rent can only be increased once every 12 months for ongoing and fixed-term agreements of two years or more.

"Most of the time, landlords and agents do the right thing," he said.

But, if landlords wanted to increase the rent quickly, their only option was to serve existing tenants with a 90-day notice to evict.

Usually, the existing tenants could not afford the new rent. "So families or young people who are given that 90-day eviction notice experience a period of homelessness and displacement because they're unable to find affordable accommodation," Cr Munro said.



Housing Plus confirmed that it had seen an increase in clients who were served 90-day "no fault" termination notices.

## Regional towns battling housing crisis

The managing director of a Cowra engineering business says it's difficult to attract good staff when they have nowhere to live, so he's started renting houses around town.

[Read more](#)

### Perfect storm



With demand surpassing supply, a population boom — combined with an upward trend of tenants being displaced from their rentals — had created the perfect storm for homelessness in the central west.

"When you ring hotels, motels and places like that to find accommodation, it's [all] fully booked," Ms Rankin said. "Most of them are at maximum capacity nearly every weekend."

As Housing Plus representative Penny Dordoy indicated, of the "137 primary clients [Housing Plus has]" there were only eight properties available under \$350 per week in Orange.

The culmination of tourism and the "tsunami" of people who had moved to the regions since the start of the pandemic has continued to push prices up.

Ms Nicholls' story of taking in strangers is just one of many as an increasing number of skilled workers find themselves without a roof over their head.

### 'Exceptional story'

Ms Rankin's advice in that situation was to consider the accommodation that was available.

"It's not that these organisations don't have the funding or the will to help people, it's just there's nothing available," she said. "If you have a granny flat or garage that's sitting there vacant, consider making that available because there are people who would really appreciate it."

But, in Ms Nicholls' case, following her heart and doing her due diligence paid off in ways no-one saw coming. "We're one big family now," she said.

"After a week, we just hit it off so well that they said 'Well, we're not going anywhere'.

"And I said, 'Well, I don't want you to go anywhere!'

"So my story's exceptional, I guess."

*Posted 28 Jun 2021 28 Jun 2021, updated 29 Jun 2021*

<https://www.dailyliberal.com.au/story/8045613/local-housing-provider-urges-people-to-sign-petition-for-political-parties-to-tackle-housing-crisis/>

## Home in Place is urging people to sign a petition calling for MPs to tackle the current housing crisis

Updated January 12 2023 - 5:01pm, first published 11:00am

[Facebook](#)[Twitter](#)[Whatsapp](#)[Email](#)



Home in Place manager of business and public affairs Martin Kennedy is calling on MPs to put housing first. Picture supplied.

Local community housing provider Home in Place is urging people to sign a petition calling for MPs and political parties to make a real, long term, investment in social and affordable housing to tackle the current housing crisis.

The petition is part of the Confront the Crisis campaign organised by the Community Housing Industry Association NSW ahead of the upcoming state election.

Home in Place manager of business and public affairs Martin Kennedy said the housing crisis was affecting those in NSW.

Mr Kennedy said with rent continuing to rise, more people than ever are struggling to keep a roof over their heads.

He said those most affected by the crisis include pensioners, young people, people with a disability, women and children escaping domestic violence but also workers that keep our communities running such as teachers, nurses, aged care workers and cleaners.

"The rental market is broken, with supply falling well short of housing demand," Mr Kennedy said.

"Vacancy rates have plummeted across the state in many areas, rental housing isn't just unaffordable, it's unavailable."

According to Mr Kennedy 50,000 families and individuals are on the NSW social housing waitlist with waiting times as high as 10 years in some areas.

**READ MORE:**

"Whoever governs NSW after March must have a plan to confront this crisis or more people will be forced to join the list and either live with family, friends, couch surf, or worse, live in tents or their cars," he said.

Inflation figures released by the Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) have confirmed rising cost pressures in housing with urgent policy action needed says Master Builders Australia CEO Denita Wawn.

Inflation accelerated to 7.3 per cent during November, with prices now rising at their fastest pace since 1990.

"We acknowledge that the Reserve Bank of Australia has a difficult balancing approach to take in curbing inflation but at the same time not getting too ahead of the realised impact of their decisions," Ms Wawn said. "However, the most sustainable solution to the inflationary problem lies on the supply side, through bringing down the cost of doing business. This requires issues like labour shortages, materials costs and the regulatory burden to be dealt with in a focused and urgent manner."

Over the year to November, the cost of buying a newly-built home rose by 17.9 per cent according to ABS.

"Housing continues to be the inflationary canary in the coal mine with figures reflecting huge increases in the cost of building materials, as well as continued shortages of key construction trade workers," Ms Wawn said. Rent prices are also accelerating and are up 3.6 per cent over the past year.

"Growing pressures in the rental market are being exacerbated by persistently low building volumes in the higher density part of the housing market," Ms Wawn said.

"Labour shortages can best be addressed over the short and medium term by making it easier for migrants to work in Australia. The bottlenecks in our migration system need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

"The continued ramping up of the regulatory burden on our industry is making it much more costly for building businesses to do their work, contributing to housing inflation."

People can find out more about the crisis and the campaign, and sign the petition, at [www.confrontthecrisis.com](http://www.confrontthecrisis.com).

Home in Place is a NSW based not for profit community housing provider and a member of CHIA NSW. It manages more than 6,600 social, affordable and disability housing properties in NSW including Dubbo.