



Vote Home 2016 – End the Housing Crisis

Federal election 2016: a guide to producing a factsheet on housing issues in your electorate

A Federal election is to be held on July 2. Issues around housing affordability have become key issues for the first time in many years.

This guide is aimed at helping you prepare a factsheet on housing issues for electorates in New South Wales.

There is a list of the Federal electorates in New South Wales, with key suburbs/towns and a map that identifies local government areas that each covers, at the Australian Electoral Commission's website: go online to www.aec.gov.au/profiles/index.htm and click 'NSW'.

The boundaries of most Federal electorates in New South Wales changed on 25 February 2016. Those that stayed the same are Bennelong, Berowra, Kingsford-Smith, Lindsay, Mackellar, Macquarie and Robertson.

You can also check if yours is a marginal seat (that is, a seat where the MP would change with a small swing of votes against her party). Go to 'Federal Election Pendulum prepared by the ABC's Antony Green, online at blogs.abc.net.au/antonygreen/2016/03/2016-federal-election-pendulum-update.html.

Preparing a factsheet for an electorate where the boundaries have changed

We suggest you look at a small number of key indicators of the housing situation for the people who live in this electorate.

For example, you could look up data for tenure type; the number of unoccupied private dwellings; the median sales price of all dwellings; the proportion of housing stock that is affordable for home purchase; the weekly median rent for a new tenancy; the availability of affordable private rental housing; the degree to which households in private rental housing are at risk of experiencing housing stress; the number of applicants for social housing; the number of social housing dwellings; and the waiting times for social housing.

Since the Australian Bureau of Statistics' data from the 2011 Census for these electorates is not relevant anymore, because the boundaries have changed (except for those small number who remain unchanged – see below), you could use data for the main local government areas (LGAs) that cover the electorate. It's not quite the same as using data specifically for the electorate, but it still gives you a good picture. The figures provided here are for Campbelltown and Camden (in Sydney), just to provide a picture. In these examples, they help to present a profile of the electorate of Macarthur.

1. Tenure type

	Campbelltown	Camden
Owner (including mortgagor)	64.2%	76.7%
Renter – private	17.8%	18.4%
Renter – social housing	11.4%	2.1%

Where to find this data? You can get data for the tenure breakdown in LGAs from www.home.id.com.au/demographic-resources/community-profiles/?submissionGuid=17feca3b-f155-47b2-a33a-654476e80b68. This gives you the number of households at time of 2011 ABS Census.

2. Unoccupied private dwellings

	Campbelltown	Camden
Owner (including mortgagor)	64.2%	76.7%
Renter – private	17.8%	18.4%

Where to find this data? Go to www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/communityprofiles?opendocument&navpos=230, and enter the LGA's name and click 'QuickStats'. This gives you the number of unoccupied private dwellings at time of the 2011 ABS Census.

3. Median sales price of all dwellings

Campbelltown	Camden
\$550,000	\$675,000

Where to find this data? Go to the Department of Family and Community Services' website for its Rent and Sales Report, at www.housing.nsw.gov.au/about-us/reports-plans-and-papers/rent-and-sales-reports/latest-issue. Look for Table 8 in the latest issue (the examples here are from RSR issue 114), and in the 'Additional Sales Tables' (which are in Excel format) look for Sales sorted by statistical area.

4. Proportion of the housing stock that is affordable for home purchase

	Campbelltown	Camden
Very-low income households	0.1%	0.0%
Low-income households	4.5%	1.1%
Moderate-income households	50.7%	15.9%

Where to find this data? Go to the Department of Family and Community Services' website for its Local government housing kit database, at www.housing.nsw.gov.au/centre-for-affordable-housing/nsw-local-government-housing-kit/local-government-housing-kit-database/2011-census-database, and look up Table M3b.

5. Weekly median rent for a new tenancy

	Campbelltown	Camden
2-bedroom dwelling	\$360	\$383
3-bedroom dwelling	\$400	\$450

Where to find this data? Go to the Department of Family and Community Services' website for its Rent and Sales Report, at www.housing.nsw.gov.au/about-us/reports-plans-and-papers/rent-and-sales-reports/latest-issue. Look for Table 2 in the latest issue, and in the 'Additional Rent Tables' look for Rents sorted by statistical area. The examples we have given here are the median weekly rents for new tenancies for all 2-bedroom and all 3-bedroom dwellings.

6. Proportion of the housing stock that is affordable for rental

	Campbelltown	Camden
Very-low income households	5.1%	1.5%
Low-income households	42.1%	8.3%
Moderate-income households	93.4%	81.8%

Where to find this data? Go to the Department of Family and Community Services' website for its Local government housing kit database, at www.housing.nsw.gov.au/centre-for-affordable-housing/nsw-local-government-housing-kit/local-government-housing-kit-database/2011-census-database, and look up Table M3a.

7. Degree to which private rental housing is affordable

Campbelltown (postcodes)	Camden (postcodes)
Acceptable	Moderately unaffordable

Where to find this data? Go to the SGS/National Shelter Rental Affordability Index, at www.sgsep.com.au/publications/rental-affordability-index. Look up the local government areas you are interested in. In this Index, a score of 120 to 150 indicates that the area is 'acceptable', a score of 100 to 120 indicates that the area is

'moderately unaffordable', and a score of 100 or less indicates that households would pay more than 30% of income to access a rental dwelling and, accordingly, could be at risk of experiencing housing stress. This Index gives data by postcode in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, and by local government area for the rest of New South Wales.

8. Number of applicants for social housing

Campbelltown (Allocation Zone)	Camden (Allocation Zone)
1,833	151

Where to find this data? You can find this data on the Housing Pathways website of the Department of Family and Community Services, at www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/how-to-apply/expected-waiting-times. The data is not sorted by either federal electorate or local government area, but, rather, by the Department's own allocation zones for their administrative purposes. It's easy to identify the allocation zones in your district. You can find more detail for the FACS allocation zones at www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/332274/2015-EWT-Overview-table.pdf.

9. Number of social housing dwellings

Campbelltown (Allocation Zone)	Camden (Allocation Zone)
6,647	428

Where to find this data? You can find this data on the Housing Pathways website of the Department of Family and Community Services, at www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/how-to-apply/expected-waiting-times. The data is not sorted by either federal electorate or local government area, but, rather, by the Department's own allocation zones. It's easy to identify the allocation zones in your district. Go to www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/332274/2015-EWT-Overview-table.pdf, and look at the table called "Expected Waiting Times for Social Housing".

10. Waiting times for social housing

	Campbelltown (Allocation Zone)	Camden
(Allocation Zone)	\$360	\$383
2-bedroom dwelling	2 - 5 years	5 - 10 years
3-bedroom dwelling	5 - 10 years	10+ years

Where to find this data? You can find this data on the Housing Pathways website of the Department of Family and Community Services, at www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/how-to-apply/expected-waiting-times. But the data are not sorted by either federal electorate or local government area, but, rather, by the Department's own allocation zones for their administrative purposes. It's easy to identify the allocation zones in your district. Go to www.housingpathways.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/332274/2015-EWT-Overview-table.pdf and look at the table called 'Expected Waiting Times for Social Housing'. Here we have given the expected waiting time for general applicants on the Social Housing Register for an applicant with a 2-bedroom entitlement and for an applicant with a 3-bedroom entitlement.

Preparing a factsheet for an electorate where the boundaries have not changed

The boundaries of some Federal electorates in New South Wales did not change on 25 February 2016. Those are Bennelong, Berowra, Kingsford-Smith, Lindsay, Mackellar, Macquarie, and Robertson. This means that ABS data from the 2011 Census is still useful in those cases.

Shelter NSW has produced factsheets on 2 of these electorates, Lindsay and Robertson, because they are 'marginal' seats where the election result will be important for the overall result Australia-wide. You can download these from the Shelter NSW website at www.shelternsw.org.au.

In the cases of the other 5 electorates (Bennelong, Berowra, Kingsford-Smith, Mackellar, and Macquarie), you can produce similar factsheets for those electorates using the guide and data sources indicated in the previous section (from page 1).

However, you have access to 2011 Census data for the first 2 indicators, by federal electorate, so you can directly use that rather than. The following tables give you sample data on these 2 indicators for the electorate of Macquarie. The source for this data is the same place where you would find data for these indicators for any of those 5 seats.

1. Tenure type (Macquarie)

Owner (including mortgagor)	77.0%
Renter – private	19.3%
Renter – social housing	2.2%

Where to find this data? Go to www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/communityprofiles?opendocument&navpos=230, and, in the Location field, enter the electorate's name (in this example, Macquarie, it came up as something like 'Macquarie, NSW CED'). Then open the link called 'Basic Community Profiles'. Go to Table B32 which is a table showing housing tenure for private dwellings in this electorate, at the time of the 2011 ABS Census. (This data is a count of occupied private dwellings, whereas data for the same housing indicator in other Factsheets (based upon local government areas) is a count of households. Accordingly, the numbers vary slightly.)

2. Unoccupied private dwellings (Macquarie)

Number	5,497
Percentage	10.1%

Where to find this data? Go to www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/quickstats?opendocument&navpos=220, and, in the Location field, enter the electorate's name (in this example, Macquarie, it came up as something like 'Macquarie, NSW CED'). Go to the new page you generate, and scroll down to the data provided on 'Dwellings', and you will see a table that has the proportion of unoccupied private dwellings in this electorate, at the time of the 2011 ABS Census.

A note on data sources

In the case of electorates where the boundaries have changed since the last federal election, data are given by local government area (LGA). However, the SGS rental affordability index uses postcode in metropolitan areas, and the social housing data use the NSW Department of Family and Community Services' Allocation Zones for social housing.

If you wish to create your own tables from 2011 ABS Census data, you can use the ABS TableBuilder website, which is online at www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/censushome.nsf/home/tablebuilder.

There are other housing indicators that might be of interest to you in your electorate, e.g. vacancy rates in the private-rental market, social-economic disadvantage, and number of hours per week that a minimum wage employee needs to work to be able to rent a 1-bedroom unit in Sydney.

- For data on vacancy rates, follow the links at: www.sgmresearch.com.au/terms_vacancy.php
- You can compute a score for 'social-economic disadvantage' for selected local government areas using the database of id:the population experts. Go to: demographic-indicators.id.com.au/?submissionGuid=51470bb6-c37e-4da3-b775-911cba393606. This provides a SEIFA Index of Disadvantage at the time of the 2011 Census. It is shown as a score. The higher the rank, then the greater the disadvantage. The score for all of New South Wales is 996. You can rank your selected local government areas.
- For a graphic on the number of hours a week that a minimum wage employee needs to work to be able to rent a 1-bedroom unit in Sydney in April 2016, check out a story at the Sydney Morning Herald website: www.smh.com.au/national/education/80-per-cent-of-international-students-in-restaurants-paid-below-minimum-wage-survey-finds-20160421-gobkzh.html. This graphic covers Sydney (excluding Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury). Rents are by suburbs and the figures represent 'average weekly asking rent for a one-bedroom apartment based on listings from the past 2 years'.