



**Affordable Housing Strategy
and Action Plan**

2023–2026



Statement of Recognition of Penrith City's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage

Council values the unique status of Aboriginal people as the original owners and custodians of lands and waters, including the land and waters of Penrith City.

Council values the unique status of Torres Strait Islander people as the original owners and custodians of the Torres Strait Islands and surrounding waters.

We work together for a united Australia and City that respects this land of ours, that values the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage and provides justice and equity for all.

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Introduction and Purpose

Penrith City Council affirms that housing is a right and recognises that one of the critical barriers relating to housing in the Penrith Local Government Area (LGA) is affordability.



Council has demonstrated commitment and leadership on this issue, being the first in Western Sydney to establish an Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Scheme, and the first Greater Sydney Council to apply this to urban release areas/ greenfield sites. Prior to this, Council sought the provision of 3% affordable housing for all its release areas under its Penrith Sustainability Blueprint for Urban Release Areas, adopted by Council July 2005, by negotiating through Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPAs).

But we are also acutely aware of the recent increases in housing and daily living costs which continue to place significant pressure on local people. This report has been developed with generous assistance and input from a number of key local groups as well as peak bodies. When the draft report went on public exhibition, it drew comments from a broad range of residents and groups, affirming the critical need of affordable housing for our community and reinforcing strategic directions outlined in this document.

Housing pressures are being felt nationally. The scale of the issue has led to intense interest and rapidly evolving policy activity by both State and Federal Governments. Sustained investment and a multi-level government response is required for significant change to occur.

This Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan, which builds on Council's significant work to date, provides an overarching framework and identifies further direct actions and advocacy positions that Council will take towards improving housing affordability during 2023 – 2026.

Our Goal

Diverse Affordable Homes for Everyone

Deliver and expand a diverse range of affordable housing that meets the spectrum of housing needs for low to moderate income households.



Background


As it is nationally, housing affordability is a critical issue in the Penrith LGA. The 2021 Census identified that over one third (34.8%) of households in the private rental market were paying greater than 30% of their gross household income on rent, and 16.7% of those with a mortgage were paying greater than 30% of their gross household income in mortgage payments.

Furthermore, the rate of housing stress is likely to have increased between the Census capture in July 2021 and the formulation of this Strategy and Action Plan in mid-2023. This is due to several factors including the recent series of interest rate rises.

Penrith has many strengths; we are experiencing unprecedented growth and transformation, bringing with it significant investment in infrastructure. Right now, our community is strong and connected, and residents tell us they are proud to live here – a sentiment which we seek to continue.

Noting the increasing cost of housing and daily living pressures, Council identifies that now is the time to build on commitments in this area and advocate for continued action and focus across State and Federal Government.

Working in partnership, Council seeks to harness the opportunities that come with local growth and investment to realise the adequate provision of quality affordable housing throughout Penrith LGA that will meet the spectrum of housing needs in our community.



93% of residents are likely to recommend Penrith as a place to live

HOWEVER

47% say they disagree, strongly disagree or are neutral about their ability to provide a house of good standard

Community Wellbeing Survey, November 2022

What is Affordable Housing?

Affordable housing is housing that is appropriate for the needs of a range of very low to moderate income households, and priced so that these households are also able to meet other basic living costs, such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education. As a rule of thumb, housing is usually considered affordable if it costs less than 30% of a household's gross income.

Although affordable housing is sometimes available for purchase, it is most commonly available for rent. Affordable rental housing may be owned by private developers or investors, local governments, charitable organisations, or community housing providers. It is usually managed by not-for-profit community housing providers, and sometimes by private organisations.

Affordable housing in NSW has been developed in a range of ways and funded through a mix of sources including Government (Local/State/Commonwealth) grant or land contributions, planning incentives, philanthropic sources, community housing provider equity contributions, and from finance secured against assets owned by community housing providers.

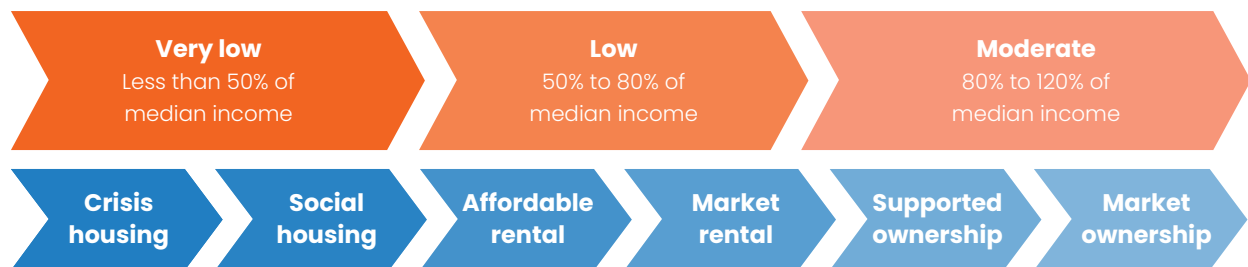
TERM	MEANING FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS STRATEGY
Housing Stress	Households are in housing stress when they are spending more than 30% of gross household income on housing costs for low-to medium- income households.
Social Housing	Social housing is housing delivered and/or subsidised by Government, typically Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC), Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) or the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO). Social housing is usually provided to very low to low-income households.
Affordable Rental Housing	Affordable housing managed by a community housing provider and rented to very low, low or moderate-income level households, at no more than 30% of the household's gross income.
Community Housing Provider (CHP)	Community housing providers are registered under the National Regulatory System of Community Housing. In NSW, a community housing provider must be registered by the Registrar of Community Housing to receive assistance from the Department of Family and Community Services or NSW Land and Housing Corporation.
Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Scheme	Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Schemes are council-led documents which set out how, where, and at what rate development contributions can be collected by councils for affordable housing.
Affordable Housing Contributions	A contribution of money or land for the provision of Affordable Rental Housing that is required by a condition imposed on a development consent and that is authorised under section 7.32 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

What is Affordable Housing Continuum?

The provision of affordable housing can be understood in context of an Affordable Housing Continuum. It shows a progression of income bands and the housing tenures likely to be most suitable for each band.

At the start of the continuum are the very low-income households, who are generally in need of social housing or – at the worst of times – crisis housing. As incomes increase in the low-income band, supported affordable rentals and some private market rentals are the most suitable tenure types. Moderate -income households generally can afford private market rentals, and some may be able to look to home ownership where appropriately priced stock is available, or through supported ownership programs.

Graph 1: The Affordable Housing Continuum



Councils typically focus largely on Affordable Rental Housing as this is the category of housing in which local government has legislative avenues to influence its delivery, especially under the Housing State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP). The provision of social housing is primarily the responsibility of LAHC and Councils takes an advocacy role to ensure high quality, fit for purpose social housing provision in the right locations and quantum.



Why is it important?

The right to housing is about more than shelter. The affordability, quality and security of our homes is crucial to our wellbeing.

Secure affordable housing, dispersed across appropriate locations, facilitates diverse and vibrant communities. When housing is available across the spectrum of housing needs in our community, the whole City benefits:

- All people can choose to live close to their workplaces and businesses can attract and retain diverse workforce.
- People can meet other basic living costs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education.
- Our community can continue to be made up of people from a broad range of incomes, backgrounds and aspirations – strengthening the vitality and dynamism of our City and allowing people to stay close to their neighbourhood bonds and networks throughout their lives.

Strong communities also care for, and support, their most vulnerable residents, including homeless people. Homelessness has a high cost for both the individual and community. Investing in quality programs and accommodation for people experiencing, or at risk of homelessness, is not only humane, but it also reduces demand for costly support services in the long term.

What is Council's role

and current contribution?

Although many of the factors that contribute to housing affordability are outside of Council's control, such as housing and planning policy from other levels of government, tax incentives for investors, and development industry trends, Council is an active leader in this area in a number of ways, including:

- Establishing an Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Scheme to capture affordable housing contributions in green field development at Orchard Hills and Glenmore Park. The Scheme was endorsed by Council in March 2023 and came into effect on 9 June 2023. Council is now working to prepare an Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Implementation Policy.
- Planning and regulating the housing mix available across our City, ensuring that growth is inclusive and happens in the right locations, especially through our Local Environment Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP).
- Advocating strongly for affordable housing provision with partners on major urban renewal projects, such as Phillip Street, St Marys, which has been delivered in partnership with Link Wentworth. The development is situated in close proximity to the St Marys CBD and provides 49 units for the purpose of affordable rental housing.
- Conducting research into local housing needs and understanding affordable housing policy positions across State and Federal Government.
- Working with our community services partners to support responses to homelessness.
- Working to support the objectives and outcomes of local community services focused on provision of housing, essential daily living supports, and building community cohesion and resilience.
- Working with residents and stakeholders to implement community programs and events to increase residents' energy literacy and energy efficiency outcomes, including solar photovoltaic and battery storage options and reducing heating and cooling costs.

Strategic Alignment

Affordable Housing is a theme included in a range of Council’s strategic documents. The actions put forward in this Strategy and Action Plan generally align with this network of strategic documents.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC DOCUMENT	AREA OF ALIGNMENT
Community Strategic Plan (CSP) & Delivery Plan and Operational Plan (DPOP)	<p>Council’s Community Strategic Plan identifies the shared vision, aspirations and values of our community and its desired outcomes to inform long-term planning and the strategies to achieve them. Work to improve housing affordability aligns with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome 2 – We are welcoming, healthy, happy, creative and connected • Outcome 3 – We plan and shape our growing city <p>Council’s one-year Operational Plan includes the following action:</p> <p>Assist with the implementation of the Western Sydney Planning Partnership (WSPP) District Affordable Housing Strategy</p>
Penrith Local Strategic Planning Statement 2040 (LSPS 2040)	<p>Increasing the supply of affordable rental housing is a key objective under Planning Priority 4 - Improve the affordability of housing.</p> <p>Key Action - Develop an Affordable Housing Policy</p>
Local Housing Strategy (LHS)	<p>The Local Housing Strategy recognises that the geographic characteristics and design of Penrith City’s residential areas contribute to the degree of ‘affordability’ or ‘unaffordability’. The following are identified as potential mechanisms to increase housing affordability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the establishment of a broad-based scheme for affordable housing delivery that includes a combination of mechanisms, including affordable housing contributions and incentive mechanisms, enabling flexibility for the housing industry to deliver or make financial contributions towards affordable housing in Penrith. • Investigate broad-based funding options that recognise the delivery of market-priced housing which creates a need for targeted affordable housing provision to ensure all residents have the ability to access housing. • Focus specific measures for the delivery of affordable housing on locations that maximise access to jobs, health and education, and that affordable housing is ‘tenure blind’ and meets the same amenity standards as market housing. • Investigate the inclusion of affordable housing targets, inclusionary zoning, development incentives and affordable housing funding schemes, particularly in locations likely to benefit from new public transport infrastructure. • Balance plans for the renewal of precincts with growth potential with the retention of existing affordable housing stock to maintain a market-driven supply of affordable housing.
Resilient Penrith Action Plan	<p>Under Direction 1 - People-Centred City, the plan sets the Goal: Access to affordable and appropriate housing.</p> <p>Actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for more affordable housing options in Penrith • Advocate for new developments to include features enabling accessibility and aging in place • Better align future housing type to Penrith demographics • Support service providers in proactively building the resilience and capacity of the homeless community

How we developed this strategy

Research into current best practice approaches

Researching approaches in use by other Councils and housing peak bodies.

Demographic research and analysis of housing and population trends

Using ABS Census data and other sources to help understand the current housing situation and key and emerging trends.

Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Undertaking a Community Wellbeing Survey in November 2022 to understand resident perception on a range of wellbeing and quality of life measures, including housing and daily living needs.

Engagement with local community services and housing providers, as well as key peak bodies, in June 2023 to hear about local needs and suggested ways to increase affordable housing and housing affordability more broadly.

Preparation and Public Exhibition of a Draft Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan

Working across Council teams to understand and synthesise the information received, consider the implications and opportunities to act, and prepare the draft strategy and action plan.

Public exhibition took place over a four-week period, attracting a broad range of responses reinforcing support for the strategic directions in the document.



This Plan Responds to the needs of Our Community

Community Wellbeing Survey – Key Findings

In November 2022 Council completed a Community Wellbeing Survey to understand and track over time the extent to which our community is strong and connected, and a place where people can live well and thrive. The survey included questions about housing and basic needs. The information was gathered via a randomised representative telephone survey and 614 residents responded. The survey has a 95% confidence level, which means that if the survey was replicated with 614 different residents, 19 times out of 20 we would expect to see the same results.

Our residents responded very positively about some aspects of housing and living in Penrith:

- 93% of residents are likely to recommend Penrith as a place to LIVE
- 90% say they are secure in their housing situation

Those rating the highest housing security were more likely to be male residents, those aged over 70, residents from the newer residential 'release' areas, and those with household income over \$100,000.

Many respondents to this survey also identified significant challenges related to their housing situation and meeting their families' basic daily living needs:

- 47%, nearly half of all those surveyed, say they disagree, strongly disagree or are neutral they are able to provide a house of good standard

Results showed those who are least able to provide a house of good standard are residents with a disability, or who identify as First Nations, and those households earning between \$50,000- \$100,000.

- 10% say they are not secure in their housing situation

Those who are least secure in their housing situation are female residents, those aged 25 – 34, residents from older established areas, resident who identify as living with disability, from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background, or as First Nations people, or in households earning \$50,000 – \$100,000 per year.

- 4% feel they cannot provide basic needs for their family

Those who are least able to provide basic needs for their family are residents with a disability or from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background.

- 7% have run out of food in last 12 months and could not buy more

Respondents who are more likely to run out of food are residents with a disability, First Nations people, or who are living in older established neighborhoods.

Key Considerations

- Affording housing of a good standard is currently difficult for many residents.
- Housing security is an issue for 1 in 10 residents, making this group particularly vulnerable.
- Residents most likely to experience housing security issues are female, people who live in households with a combined income of up to \$100,000, those who are living with a disability, or as First Nations people, or having a culturally and linguistically diverse background.
- Apart from housing pressures, there are residents within our community who struggle to provide basic daily needs.

Stakeholder Engagement – Key Findings

At the June 2023 Penrith Homelessness Interagency meeting, Council officers attended and presented to 12 local community and housing service providers and peak housing bodies. The purpose of the engagement was to:

- Provide information on what Council is currently doing in the Affordable Housing space.
- Build a shared understanding of the current local pressures and concerns.
- Explore opportunities for further action including advocacy.

In terms of **housing related needs**, we heard that:

- Many people on Government benefits are couch surfing or homeless.
- Many residents have no money left after paying their rent or mortgage to cover food or bills.
- Requests for services and assistance has doubled in the last 12 months. Financial counselling services are at capacity with long wait lists.
- Local emergency relief is at capacity. Food vouchers disappear at the beginning of each week as soon as they are made available.
- Seniors on Government benefits are struggling to rent affordable housing that suits their needs and stages of life. In some instances, where seniors have been able to secure affordable housing, the nature of the housing itself makes it unsuitable due to issues of accessible design and compatibility with other residents.

In response to the question on what other **direct actions and advocacy actions Council could consider**, we heard the following suggestions:

- Review fees and charges for community housing providers delivering affordable housing.
- Consider greater planning incentives to deliver affordable housing, including height and floor space ratio (FSR) for affordable housing provision.
- Liaise with and undertake joint action with other local councils.

Key Considerations

- Service providers report sharp increases in the number of people seeking help to meet basic daily living needs, the level of assistance requested, and the frequency of those requests.
- Service providers report that the majority of people they see prioritise keeping a roof over their heads, at the cost of other essential daily living needs including the provision of food, heating and cooling, or clothing.

Demographic Housing and Population Data – Key Findings

The following section presents demographic data related to housing stress, rental payment quartiles, social housing dwellings and low-income households.

Housing Stress

RENTAL STRESS

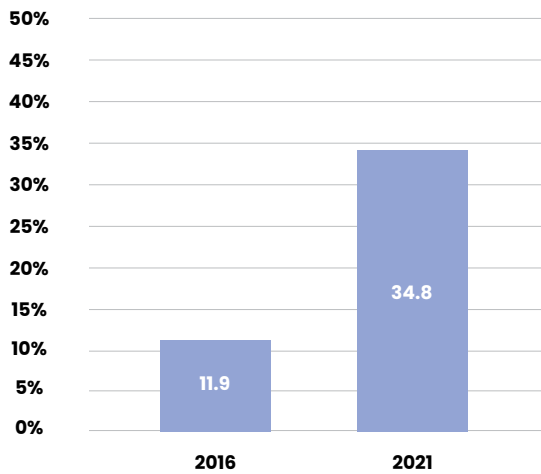
In 2021, 34.8% (8,524) of Penrith City's renting households, close to 4 in 10 households, were paying more than 30% of income on rent compared to 11.9% in Greater Sydney.

The proportion of households in rental stress has substantially increased, growing by 22.9% in the five years from 2016 when 11.9% of households were in rental stress to 34.8% in 2021.

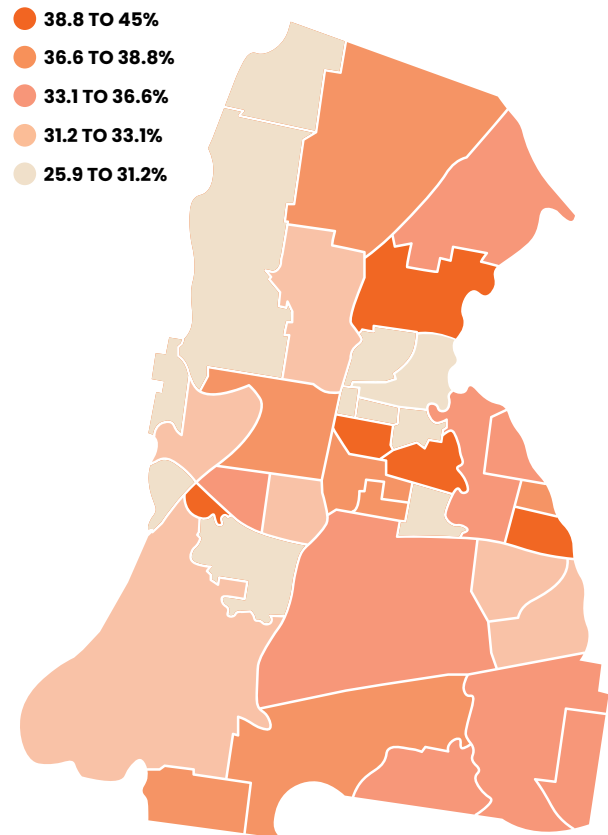
While Penrith City had a marginally lower proportion of households paying more than 30% on rent, it is important to note that this varied across the LGA. Proportions ranged from a low of 25.9% in Castlereagh - Agnes Banks to a high of 45.0% in Regentville. The five areas with the highest percentages were:

- Regentville (45.0%)
- Cambridge Park (41.1%)
- Llandilo (40.2%)
- Colyton (39.9%)
- Werrington (38.8%)

Rental Stress in Penrith LGA



Households in Rental Stress



Source: ABS 2021

Furthermore, the rate of rental stress is likely to have increased between the Census capture date (July 2021) and the formulation of this Strategy (mid 2023). This is due to factors such as the series of recent interest rate rises.

MORTGAGE STRESS

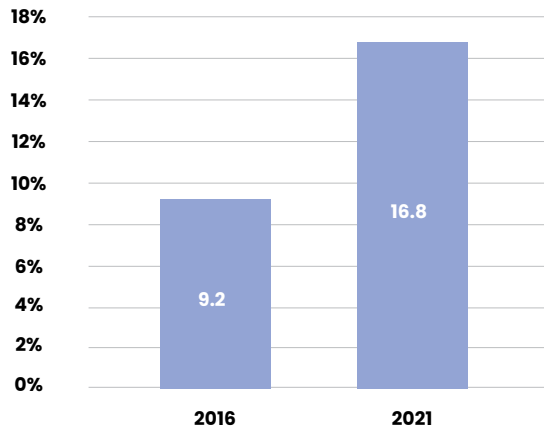
In 2021, 16.8% (4,847) of Penrith City's households with a mortgage were paying more than 30% of income on their mortgage compared to 19.8% in Greater Sydney.

In 2016, 9.2% of Penrith residents were experiencing mortgage stress. This is an increase of 7.6% in the five-year period from 2016 to 2021.

While Penrith City had a lower proportion of households paying more than 30% of income on a mortgage, it is important to note that this varied across the City. Proportions ranged from a low of 10.3% in Leonay to a high of 27.5% in Castlereagh - Agnes Banks. The five areas with the highest percentages were:

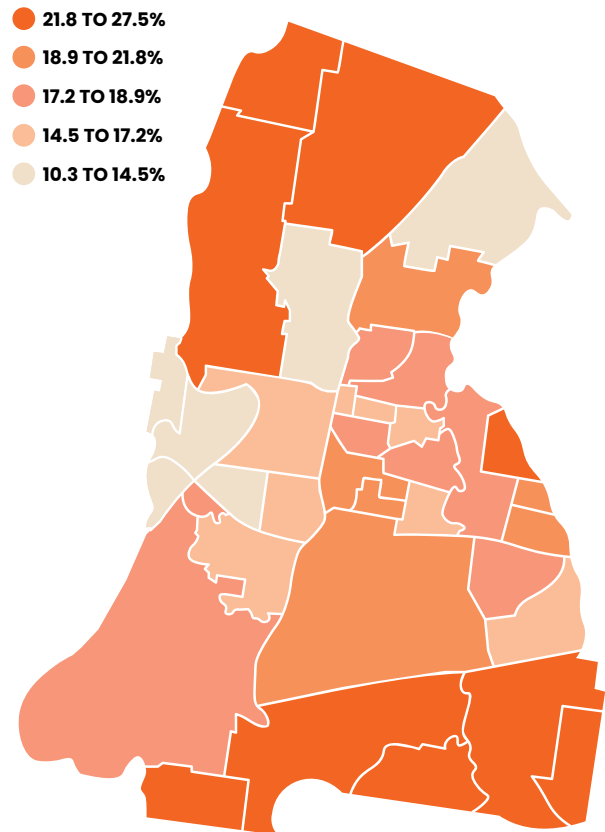
- Castlereagh - Agnes Banks (27.5%)
- Mount Vernon - Kemps Creek - Badgerys Creek (25.4%)
- North St Marys (22.8%)
- Londonderry (21.8%)
- Colyton (20.9%)

Mortgage Stress in Penrith LGA



Households with rent payments greater than or equal to 30% of household income.

Households in Mortgage Stress



Source: ABS 2021

Rental Payment Quartiles

Rental payment quartiles allow us to compare relative rental liabilities across time. Analysis of the distribution of households by rental payment quartiles in Penrith City compared to Greater Sydney shows that there was a smaller proportion of households in the highest payment quartile, and a larger proportion in the lowest payment quartile.

HOUSING RENTAL – QUARTILE GROUP DOLLAR RANGES		
CALCULATED FROM RENTAL PAYMENT DATA FOR NEW SOUTH WALES	WEEKLY HOUSING RENTAL PAYMENTS BY CENSUS YEAR	
Rental payment ranges	2021	2016
Lowest group	\$0 to \$314	\$0 to \$266
Medium lowest	\$315 to \$432	\$267 to \$391
Medium highest	\$433 to \$562	\$392 to \$529
Highest group	\$563 and over	\$530 and over

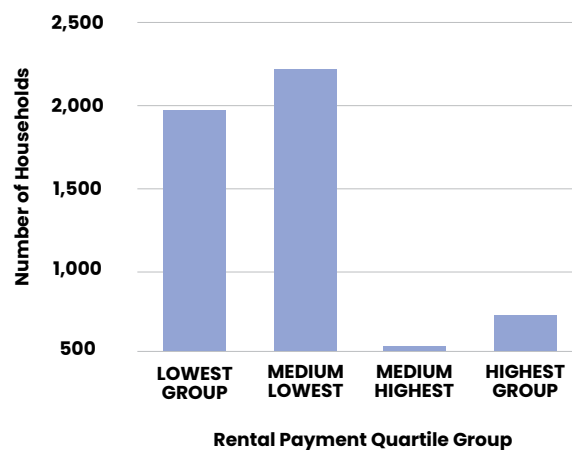
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Census of Population and Housing](#) 2016 and 2021. Compiled and presented by [.id](#) (informed decisions).

HOUSING RENTAL QUARTILES							
PENRITH CITY – HOUSEHOLDS (ENUMERATED)	2021		2016		Greater Sydney		CHANGE
Quartile group	Number	%	%	Number	%	%	2016 to 2021
Lowest group	5,380	22.6	17.1	3,422	18.6	17.8	+1,959
Medium lowest	9,359	39.2	22.4	7,147	38.8	18.7	+2,212
Medium highest	6,782	28.4	28.2	6,235	33.9	29.4	+547
Highest group	2,338	9.8	32.3	1,603	8.7	34.0	+735
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS WITH STATED RENT	23,860	100.0	100.0	18,408	100.0	100.0	+5,453

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Census of Population and Housing](#) 2016 and 2021. Compiled and presented by [.id](#) (informed decisions).

The total number of households renting their dwelling in Penrith City increased by 5,452 between 2016 and 2021. The most significant change during this period was in the medium lowest rental quartile which showed an increase of 2,212 households.

Change in Housing Rental Quartiles, 2016 to 2021



Social Housing

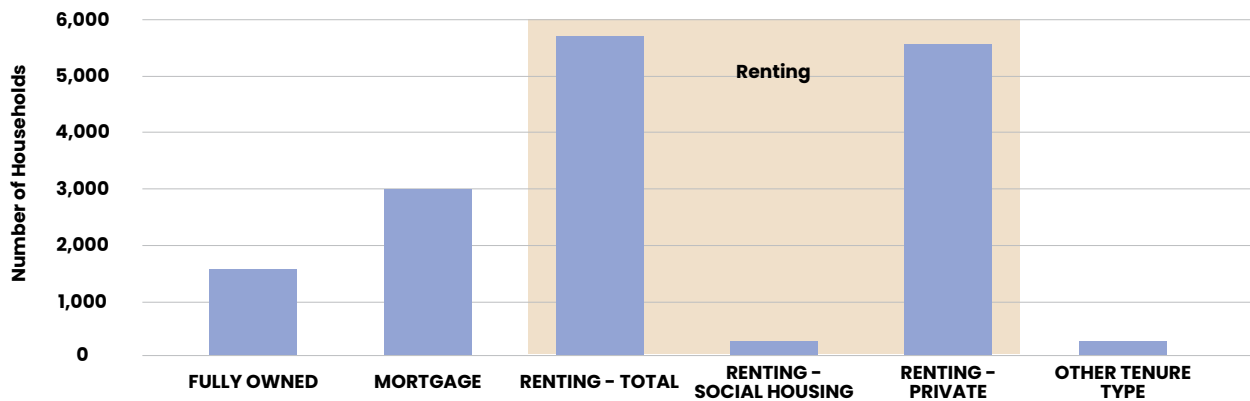
In 2021, 4.1% (3,202) of Penrith City's households were renting their dwelling from a government authority compared to 4.1% in Greater Sydney.

While Penrith City had a similar proportion of households who are renting from a government authority, this varied across the City. Proportions ranged from a low of 0.0% in 9 suburbs (Berkshire Park, Castlereagh - Agnes Banks, Leonay, Llandilo, Londonderry, Luddenham-Wallacia, Mulgoa, Orchard Hills, Regentville) to a high of 14.7% in North St Marys. The five areas with the highest percentages were:

- North St Marys (14.7%)
- Penrith (10.1%)
- Kingswood (8.2%)
- St Marys (7.1%)
- Cranebrook (6.9%)

The number of households renting social housing in Penrith LGA grew only very slightly by + 245 households in the five years from 2016 to 2021.

Change in Housing Tenure, 2016 to 2021



Low Income Households

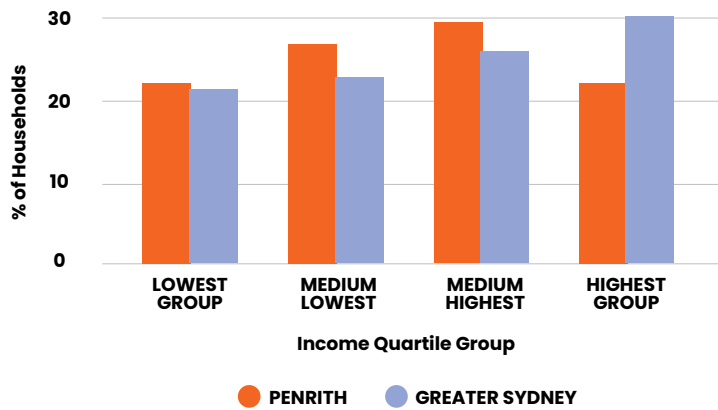
Income quartiles allow us to compare relative income earning capabilities across time. Analysis of the distribution of households by income quartile in Penrith City compared to Greater Sydney shows that there was lesser proportion of households in the highest income quartile and a similar proportion in the lowest income quartile.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUARTILES							
PENRITH CITY - HOUSEHOLDS (ENUMERATED)	2021		2016			CHANGE	
	Number	%	Greater Sydney %	Greater Sydney Number	Greater Sydney %		
Lowest group	14,862	21.4	21.3	11,492	19.8	21.0	+3,370
Medium lowest	18,469	26.6	23.1	14,500	25.0	22.3	+3,969
Medium highest	20,543	29.6	25.7	17,562	30.3	26.1	+2,981
Highest group	15,464	22.3	30.0	14,376	24.8	30.6	+1,088
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS	69,340	100.0	100.0	57,932	100.0	100.0	+11,408

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, [Census of Population and Housing](#) 2016 and 2021. Compiled and presented by [.id](#) (informed decisions).



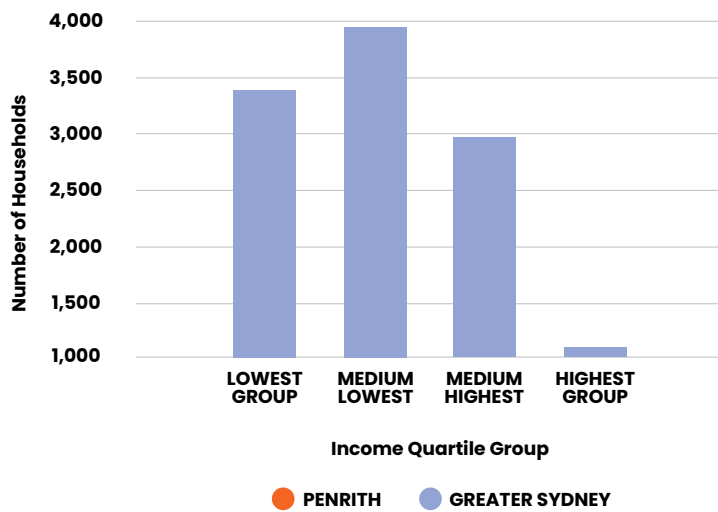
Household Income Quartiles, 2021



The most significant change in Penrith City between 2016 and 2021 was in the medium lowest quartile which showed an increase of 3,969 households.

Those in the lowest household income quartile, earning less than \$886 per week, grew by 3370 households in the period 2016 to 2021 to 14,862 households.

Change in Household Income Quartile, 2016 to 2021



The top 5 suburbs with the greatest proportion of households in the lowest household income quartile include:

- Nth St Marys: 29% (390)
- Penrith (suburb): 27% (2119)
- St Marys: 24% (1149)
- Kingswood: 23% (1133)
- Colyton: 22% (648)

The table below shows a comparison of the top five suburbs with the greatest proportion of low-income households, the provision of social housing within those suburbs, the potential number of low-income households in those suburbs who are renting, and the change in rental prices that have occurred in the last 12 months in these places. Data confirms there are many low-income households who are likely to have experienced a significant increase in housing pressures as a result of recent rising rents.

COMPARISON OF LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS BY SUBURB, SOCIAL HOUSING PROVISION AND PRIVATE RENTAL CHANGES OVER 12 MONTHS

Suburbs with highest % of low-income households	Households Renting Social Housing – by % and number	Potential low-income households in private housing market – number	Median House Rental Costs per Week – by suburb (Realestate.com June 23)	House Rental price trend in past 12 months to May 2023 (Realestate.com JUNE 23)
Total LGA 17.8% 14,864 households (Greater Sydney – 18%)	Total LGA 4.1% 3,202 households	Total LGA 11,662		
Nth St Marys 29% 390	15% 216	174	\$420	UP 5.7% ▲
Penrith (suburb) 27% 2119	10% 853	1,266	\$490	UP 6.5% ▲
St Marys 24% 1149	7% 373	776	\$440	UP 10.0% ▲
Kingswood 23% 1133	8% 447	686	\$450	UP 7.1% ▲
Colyton 22% 648	4% 108	540	\$465	UP 10.7% ▲

Key Considerations

- The population of the Penrith LGA is growing, and the nature of our households is changing. We are currently very family-oriented, but trends show the number of lone person households is significantly increasing.
- Most people live in separate houses, but the number of high-density dwellings (apartments), whilst small, has nearly doubled in the five years from 2016 – 2021.
- Penrith LGA currently has housing with a mix of bedroom sizes. Proportionally Penrith has more 3- and 4-bedroom dwellings than Greater Sydney, but a much lesser proportion of (smaller) housing with 0 – 2 bedrooms compared to Greater Sydney.
- The number of households in the Penrith LGA renting their dwelling has increased, with the most significant growth during this period being in the medium lowest followed by the lowest rental payment quartiles. These households are likely to have less capacity or resources to buffer significant increases in rental costs.
- The number of households in rental stress has grown by 22.9% in the five years between 2016 – 2021. At 2021, there are about 4 in 10 households who are in rental stress. The number of households in rental stress is likely to have increased significantly since the 2021 census, given recent rising rents and cost of living.
- We have 3,202 households who are renting social housing. The number of households renting social housing has grown only very slightly between 2016 and 2021, and has declined as a percentage of total households in this five-year period.
- Penrith has over 14,000 households who are considered low-income households and earn less than \$886 per week. The majority of our low-income households are not residing in social housing and will therefore rely on the private market, where rents are on the increase.

Affordable Housing Action Plan

Our Goal

Diverse Affordable Homes for Everyone

Deliver and expand a diverse range of affordable housing that meets the spectrum of housing needs for low to moderate income households.



Action Plan

What we will do:

Through collaboration and partnerships, we will work on objectives that seek to:

- Increase the supply of affordable rental housing in appropriate locations,
- Identify and advocate for improved housing affordability, and
- Support a strong robust housing, homelessness and community services sector.

Council's ability to act in the affordable housing policy area has limits: a variety of macroeconomic factors, as well as critical economic and housing policies set at both State and Federal Government levels are largely outside of Council's control. Within this context, Council defines its role in two ways:

- **Direct Actions:** Activities that Council will undertake to directly impact housing affordability in the LGA.
- **Advocacy Positions:** Council's stance on issues relating to housing affordability which it will seek to advance in both planned and opportunistic ways.

Actions are delivered either in the short term (1yr), medium term (2 yrs) or long term (3yrs), or as ongoing actions.

What we want to achieve:

All Penrith residents can afford to pay for housing that meets their needs.

OBJECTIVE 1: INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING IN APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS

Actions	Type of Action	Timeframe
1.1 Maintain Council's endorsed Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Scheme for Glenmore Park Stage 3 and Orchard Hills North.	Direct	Ongoing
1.2 Prepare and implement an Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Implementation Policy to support the delivery of Council's endorsed Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Scheme.	Direct	Short Term
1.3 Investigate the feasibility of a Local Government Area wide Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Scheme.	Direct	Short – Medium term
1.4 Investigate the potential for additional local planning incentives for any affordable rental housing delivered in perpetuity.	Direct	Medium term
1.5 Opportunities to develop a pilot affordable rental housing project on Council-owned land will be investigated as part of the development of the Property Strategy.	Direct	Medium term
1.6 Investigate opportunities to support the delivery of social and affordable rental housing on State owned land within the Local Government Area.	Direct	Short – Medium term
1.7 Continue to deliver on Council's housing targets as outlined in its Local Housing Strategy.	Direct	Ongoing
1.8 Continue to plan for a diverse housing mix across our City through our Local Environment Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP).	Direct	Ongoing
1.9 Advocate to State government for the introduction of a publicly available Affordable Rental Housing database to track all affordable rental housing approved under the Housing SEPP or delivered through Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Schemes.	Advocacy	Ongoing



OBJECTIVE 2: IDENTIFY AND ADVOCATE FOR IMPROVED HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Actions	Type of Action	Timeframe
<p>2.1 Investigate additional options to directly impact housing affordability in Penrith LGA, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of a range of lot sizes to support a diverse housing mix appropriate to location and needs. • Supporting the “missing middle” of housing types such as terraces, manor houses, dual occupancies and co-living housing in suitable locations including developing character statements and introducing development controls to signal desired built form outcomes. 	Direct	Short – Medium term
<p>2.2 Investigate additional options to directly impact housing related cost of living in Penrith LGA, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocating to government to extend and apply environmental upgrade agreements targeting more sustainable living to residential dwellings. • Advocating to Land and Housing Corporation for environmental upgrades to social and affordable housing dwellings to improve running costs. 	Direct and Advocacy	Medium term
<p>2.3 Research the availability of State and Federal funding to support affordable housing provision, for example Build to Rent opportunities. Provide relevant information to local stakeholders and consider opportunities for Council to utilise this funding.</p>	Direct	Short term
<p>2.4 Implement actions that enable local residents to work towards home ownership, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalising an Economic Development Strategy and a Visitor Economy Strategy to support local jobs growth with adequate job security. • Working with the community services sector to further understand the needs and gaps with regard to financial literacy, financial counselling and financial advisory services available to residents at no or low cost. • Researching the issues and opportunities presented in ‘rent to buy’ schemes to understand the way this form of housing could be applied locally to enable social/affordable housing tenants to transition to home ownership. 	Direct	Short term Medium – Long term
<p>2.5 During housing related strategic planning and policy development, ensure consideration is given to the cumulative financial costs of development and the potential impact this may have on feasibility of affordable housing provision.</p>	Direct	Ongoing
<p>2.6 Advocate for amendment to Affordable Rental Housing Contribution Scheme guidelines – to allow LGA wide Schemes and not just areas subject to rezoning, as well as a simplified approach to implementation.</p>	Advocacy	Short – Medium term
<p>2.7 Advocate for amendment to the Housing SEPP – to incentivise quality affordable housing outcomes, including changes to support the delivery of affordable housing under the Housing SEPP in perpetuity, not just for 15 years.</p>	Advocacy	Short – Medium term
<p>2.8 Advocate to Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) for greater partnership and actions to support the delivery and renewal of social and affordable housing in the right locations throughout the LGA that meet community needs and minimise clustering.</p>	Advocacy	Ongoing
<p>2.9 Prepare a Social and Affordable Rental Housing Discussion Paper in respect to St Marys to help inform the development of the St Marys Town Centre Master Plan.</p>	Direct	Short term

OBJECTIVE 3: COLLABORATE AND PARTNER FOR A ROBUST HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SECTOR

Actions	Type of Action	Timeframe
3.1 Conduct a yearly housing forum with stakeholders to understand and agree to key local issues and opportunities for action.	Direct	Ongoing
3.2 Investigate opportunities to strengthen partnerships with Community Housing Providers for increased affordable housing provision.	Direct	Short – Medium term
3.3 Continue to support and build capacity of local homelessness, Domestic Violence, housing and community support services through training programs, hosting of local interagencies, identifying joint advocacy positions and provision of grant funding opportunities.	Direct	Ongoing
3.4 Continue to work with the local homelessness sector to respond to and support people sleeping rough through appropriate referral pathways.	Direct	Ongoing
3.5 Review and update Council's homelessness protocols to reflect current and best practice in customer service, advice and referral.	Direct	Short term
3.6 Continue to inform our community, services and stakeholders on housing related matters through provision of local housing and demographic data and research that assists with decision- making.	Direct	Ongoing



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