



Renting - the new road to poverty

Did you know that thousands of South Australians are living in rental stress? The conversation is changing. Homelessness is still a significant issue in South Australia, but more and more, we are beginning to see the **disastrous effects of paying more than 30% of your income in rent.**

The National Rental Affordability Index¹, designed to examine rental housing affordability across the country, shows that Adelaide is one of the most unaffordable cities in Australia to live. People have been horrified by results found in the Index. **The narrative of Adelaide as Australia's most liveable city is being challenged by these new figures.**

Shelter SA has regular contact with people who have low paying jobs, but are being forced into homelessness because there are no rents that they can afford. It could easily happen to Lisa who shared her story with Shelter SA, available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q_4lvKWehAs

Lisa mentions some of the extreme sacrifices she makes to support her children. She says that for her and her children, **toothpaste is a luxury**, stating 'if you have a choice between bread and toothpaste, your bread is going to win'. She also talks about the severe emotional and mental strain people face when they are living in rental stress. Lisa talks about her **lack of self-worth** and **desperation. Most importantly**, Lisa touches on the fact that people living with rental stress are too nervous to ask for help, or do not ask for help because they do not see themselves as homeless.

Alice Clark, Executive Director of **Shelter SA**, the peak body for housing in South Australia, said today "Rental stress is a critical issue. **We need to inform people** that they can ask for help, that there are services out there, and that they are not alone. **We cannot let people in housing stress suffer silently.** We know there are thousands of people with a similar story to Lisa's."

Lisa recorded her story after attending the **Homeless Connect Expo**, a day that connects people experiencing homelessness and housing stress with services to assist them. The Expo is funded by the Adelaide City Council and Housing SA, and presented by Shelter SA.

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¹ Available here www.shelter.org.au Developed by SGS Economics, National Shelter and Community Sector Banking