



Demand for homelessness services grows

Demand for the homelessness services of CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes has jumped in the past year, as wider sections of the community struggle to find safe and sustainable accommodation. Employed people now make up 10 per cent of the people seeking CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes housing assistance, higher than previously.

The number of clients aged 50 or more swelled from 70 to 105 in 12 months.

CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes released the data as it prepares to host a webinar bringing together a panel of local experts in the homelessness field to raise awareness of the issue in western NSW on August 3.

National residential property rental vacancy rates remained as low as 1 per cent in June 2022, figures from SQM Research show.

On the local level, in the year ending June 30 the Forbes-Parkes homelessness service of CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes assisted 720 people, a 6 per cent increase.

Eviction and other forms of housing crisis overtook domestic violence as the leading reason for people needing its help in the two towns, CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes Safe Home Portfolio manager Andrew Bament reports.

It rose by a substantial 9 per cent to account for 38 per cent of people seeking services.

At Bourke, total demand for assistance jumped by 13 per cent in the past three months.

Mr Bament says homelessness is a “hidden issue” in western NSW because outside capital cities it often takes the forms of couch-surfing and over-crowding of dwellings, instead of the more visible rough sleeping.

CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes will host the ‘Homelessness – A Regional Perspective’ webinar at 2pm on August 3, during Homelessness Week.

Community members are invited to join the event via Zoom to hear from a panel of local experts about homelessness, trends in housing availability, barriers to safe and sustainable accommodation and ideas towards solutions that may help end homelessness.

Please follow this link to join us:

[CatholicCare Homelessness Webinar](#)

(Meeting ID: 841 9812 7047)

Password: AtHome!

Ends.....

CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes provides social services, caring for the well-being of individuals, families and communities.

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging



- **Mental Health**
- **Parent Child Services**
- **Family Relationship Services**
- **Financial Counselling & Capability**
- **Accommodation & Housing Support**

Supporting individuals, families and communities in western NSW