

Media Release

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 28 February 2019

NORTHERN RIVERS HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS FORUM

Candidates in the Northern Rivers will give voters the opportunity to know how they will address the issue of housing and homelessness in the region, in an upcoming pre-election forum.

The forum is being supported by Homelessness NSW and NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS).

Housing stress is high in the Northern Rivers with 13.2% of households in the lowest 40% of incomes paying more than 30% of their gross weekly income on housing costs (16,179 households), compared to 11.7% for NSW.

Housing stress is also very high among renter households in Northern Rivers at 38.8% compared to 28.4% for NSW.

According to the ABS, 1,494 people were homeless in the Northern Rivers on Census night in 2016 representing 51.5 persons per 10,000 population; an increase of 194 persons (or 4.6 per 10,000) since the 2011 Census.

A further 1,370 were found in other marginal housing in 2016, including in caravan parks.

Community members have been submitting questions and concerns that they wish to be answered by the candidates in an open discussion being held next week.

Event details:

Tuesday 5 March 2019

10:00 am – 12:00 pm AEDT

Ballina Lighthouse & Lismore SLSC Lighthouse Parade East Ballina, NSW

To register, visit: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/northern-rivers-housing-and-homelessness-pre-election-forum-tickets-56081102086>

NCOSS CEO, Joanna Quilty, said increasing cost of living and a lack of social and affordable housing stock are contributing to the issue in the Northern Rivers and around NSW.

“This forum will give the community an opportunity to know what policies their candidates will put in place, if elected,” Ms Quilty said.

“We will be hearing firsthand what local candidates plan to do to tackle homelessness and increase housing affordability, and to answer any questions from the community.

“Urgent and effective action is imperative in order to combat this housing crisis.”

NCOSS is the peak body for health and community services in NSW.

For more information on NCOSS, go to www.ncoss.org.au.

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