

Christina's story



Christina has been searching for a rental for over 10 months.

Due to health issues she's restricted to ground floor units only. Those that are within her price range are too small, with no room for a fridge or a small dining table, or in complete disrepair and unsafe.

Flats are not always supplied with heating, which is essential in the

Melbourne winter. She had understood that landlords were to provide heating, but this appears not to be the case.

Christina is currently staying with a friend until she can find a place to rent. Her friend's unit is similar to many others she has seen, being in a poor state of repair. There is no smoke alarm, large cracks in the walls, appliances such as the stove are very dilapidated and the pipes are old and rusted, which means the water is barely drinkable.

Tenants are fearful of complaining, as they worry they'll be evicted if the landlord needs to spend money on repairs. Many units have flimsy security gates, which as an older lady makes Christina feel very vulnerable.

Constant rent increases mean more and more of one's pension is eroded and so you keep moving to try and afford to live. This means there is no stability or quality of life. You don't get to be part of a community and establish friendships because you are either moving in or moving on.

House prices have skyrocketed in the past few years, nearly tripling in price. Salaries and pensions have certainly not increased like this. So having been a solid taxpayer and contributed to the economy for all her working life, Christina is now at the mercy of friends putting her up whilst she desperately searches for something affordable and liveable.