

FEATURE ARTICLE



Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

Williams, M., Palmer, J., Instone, L., Mee, K. and
Vaughan, N. (2012)

Acknowledgements:



Centre for Urban and
Regional Studies
School of Environmental
and Life Sciences
University of Newcastle
Callaghan, NSW, 2308
<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research-centre/urban-and-regional-studies>

SUSTAINING RENTAL LIFE SERIES NOTE

The Briefing Paper series of the '**Rental housing, climate change and adaptive capacity: a case study of Newcastle NSW**' project seeks to provide readers with access to current research on rental sector adaptation to climate change. Briefing Papers produced by the project team are working documents that provide a forum on theoretical, methodological and practical issues related to climate change adaption in rental housing. The project is funded by the National Climate change Adaptation Facility (NCCARF) for 2012. The publication as a 'Briefing Paper' does not preclude subsequent publication in scholarly journals, books or reports. Unless otherwise stated, 'Rental housing, climate change and adaptive capacity' publications are presented as contributions to debate and discussion and represent our developing thinking about the research. We are hoping that they may facilitate feedback from readers, researchers, renters and housing managers.

Briefing Papers are available in electronic format and may be downloaded from the Sustaining Rental Life website:

<http://www.newcastle.edu.au//research-centre/urban-and- regional-studies>

The correct citation for this publication is:

Williams, M., Palmer, J., Instone, L., Mee, K. and Vaughan, N. (2012) 'Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media', Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Newcastle, Sustaining Rental Life Briefing Paper 10.

Also visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SustainingRentalLife>

Enquiries may be directed to:

Dr Lesley Instone & Dr Kathy Mee
Geography and Environmental Studies
University of Newcastle
Callaghan, NSW, Australia

University Telephone: +61 2 49216637 or +61 2 4921 6451

Email: Lesley.Instone@newcastle.edu.au or Kathy.Mee@newcastle.edu.au

Cover page photo by Instone, L. (2011):

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

Contents

1. Summary	2
2. Introduction.....	3
3. The rental market	3
Shortages of affordable housing ..	3
Renters in the market.....	4
4. Carbon tax impacts.....	6
5. Information on tenancy law changes	7
6. Sustainability	8
7. Conclusions	11
8. Reference List	12
9. Contacts for further Information	14

1. Summary

Reporting on climate change is variable and inherently political. Media reporting also plays a significant role in constructing perceptions of the rental sector, including framing public housing policy responses and debates.

For example the relationship between landlords and tenants is often highlighted in what could be seen as a “problem frame”, a way of constructing people and places through an expected delivery of news. Other media articles position tenants as passive victims of government policy, or as actively able to change their behaviour and everyday practices in order to live more sustainably.

Media reporting on sustainability practices can also be seen as another important avenue through which people may be exposed to various adaptation practices.

The media items reviewed in this Briefing Paper focus on four general themes which we broadly term: the rental market; carbon tax impacts; information on tenancy law changes; and sustainability.

In the media items reviewed in this paper there is very little connection made between climate change adaptation and the rental sector. This is an important gap that remains to be filled.

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

2. Introduction

Media reports play an important role in constructing information about climate change (Anderson 2009; Slocum 2004; Carvalho 2010; Carvalho 2007). How climate change and the rental sector are framed through media reporting is of particular interest to our project which is seeking to enhance the adaptive capacity of the rental sector. Media reporting can involve struggles over defining meaning and constructing public responses to policy by framing problems and using specific news narratives in order to shape how stories are interpreted (Mee 2004). As a politically charged issue, reporting on climate change is variable and inherently political (Anderson 2009; Slocum 2004; Carvalho 2010; Carvalho 2007). Communicating about climate change can be particularly difficult because of how distant the problem can seem from everyday life (Slocum 2004: 413). Media reporting also plays a significant role in constructing perceptions of the rental sector, including framing public housing policy responses and debates (Mee 2004).

This briefing paper provides an overview of the types of media reports currently being written on rental housing in Australia with a specific focus on articles that connect the rental sector to the carbon tax, changes in the tenancy laws and sustainability. Our review is primarily a qualitative examination of newspaper and online articles that were obtained through a search of an online newspaper database Newsbank from January 2011 to July 2012. Articles were identified using specific search words to target current issues facing the rental sector. Searches included such topics as changes to the Residential

Tenancy Act in NSW; the effects of the introduction of the carbon tax on public housing; along with other more general themes on sustainability in the home, going “green” and the rental sector. In total 53 articles were found that reflected these themes. A particular author was identified as writing a regular column on the rental sector and their work was sought out via Google searches. Moreover, we analysed a radio program on ABC Radio National called *This Rental Life* which was aired June-July 2012.

The media articles discussed below focus on four general themes which we broadly term: the rental market; carbon tax impacts; information on tenancy law changes; and sustainability. We discuss each of these areas in turn, identifying the key themes of the articles and the ways in which the authors position the issues discussed. This briefing paper will help to contextualise our understanding of interview data and the assets and/or barriers to adaptation along with current changes to policy affecting the rental sector. It does this by providing an overview of some of the discourses and understandings circulating in the Australian print, radio and online media on climate change, sustainability and rental housing.

3. The rental market

Shortages of affordable housing

Housing markets are framed in particular ways through media reports (Mee 2004). One framing of the rental sector permeating in the media reports studied is that there is a lack of affordable housing available in particular areas, which we overview briefly in this section.

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

The lack of affordable rental housing has been positioned in the media as a crisis, which includes the rental housing market in the Hunter region where our research project is based.

Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Newcastle have each been highlighted in the media as suffering from a shortage in affordable rental housing and as being negatively affected by rising rents (ABC 2012a; Anderson 2012; Dolan 2012b; Raimondo 2012; Dolan 2011a; Wade and Irvine 2012). For example an article written for the *Sydney Morning Herald* explains that:

Canberra's rental affordability crisis has been labelled the worst for any city in the country after a property snapshot found there was 'virtually no affordable housing' available for low-income earners in the ACT. Fewer than 140 listed properties suitable for a variety of low-income earners were recorded for the Canberra and Queanbeyan area in Anglicare Australia's annual Rental Affordability Snapshot, issued today (Anderson 2012).

Renters across Australia are said to be experiencing "housing stress" with "Nationally, just over 60 per cent of the poorest 10 per cent of households... considered to be overstretched" (Cullen 2012). According to Dolan (2012b) and Raimondo (2012), in Victoria housing shortages are most pronounced in the lower-end of the housing market with more people entering the rental market, and less affordable houses being available to rent. In Sydney, Wade and Irvine (2012) argue, it is becoming increasingly difficult for people to buy homes, resulting in more competition for rental housing.

In the Hunter region, the latest census figures revealed that the price of rent is increasing, resulting in a housing crisis (ABC 2012a). Public housing in the Newcastle region is particularly seen as being in short supply with the "Hunter experiencing chronic public housing shortage" (ABC 2012b). In this article and another two, governments are positioned as being responsible for addressing the issue of housing affordability and the actions are clearly seen as out of the hands of tenants (ABC 2012a; Cullen 2012; ABC 2012b). Images of renters and the rental market more broadly are varied.

Renters in the market

Media reporting on renters, and the rental market more broadly, is generally more varied, particularly when it comes to story-telling about life in rental housing. Of specific interest to us is how renters are framed as either active or passive. Some media items position tenants as bound by the regulations of their tenancies and their assured meagre financial capacity (Toohey and Fritze 2009; Gurran et al. 2008); others which position tenants as more active include a regular column on rental life and a radio program which produced an online discussion. These are discussed below.

In advice for Melbourne tenants that appears in a semi-regular column by Kath Dolan in *The Age* newspaper, the contentious relationship between landlords and tenants is regularly highlighted in could be considered a 'problem frame', a way of constructing people and places through an expected delivery of news Mee (2004:121). Dolan has written articles on a variety of topics including the lack of affordable housing

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

in Moreland (Dolan 2011a) and the difficulty tenants have finding sustainable rental properties (Dolan 2012a). In an article on *Green Moves*, Dolan (2012a) interviews the founder, Dani King, who explains that there are not many sustainable rental properties available.

Dolan also writes information on particular aspects of the Victorian tenancy law such as enabling tenants fee-free ways to pay their rent (Dolan 2011d). In these articles Dolan reports on events, rental legislation, changes in rental vacancies and general rental issues such as the length of leases and rising rents. Renters are constructed as passive in some situations, for example, tenants cannot always successfully encourage landlords to repair the property without incurring increased rent (Dolan 2011c). And in other articles Dolan highlights the importance of the landlord-tenant relationship, reporting that “the key to improving even a poorly performing rental property is a good relationship with your landlord” (Dolan 2012d). In this article tenants are positioned as actively able to change their behaviour and everyday practices in order to live more sustainably.

Another mode that moves beyond this problem framing of rental housing is the story-telling mode adopted by the recent ABC Radio National program ‘This Rental Life’. This series documented the life of a number of different renters, interviewing individuals on topics including renting and gardening; pets and renting; renovating and renting; housing cooperatives as a utopian form of renting; and renting in boarding houses (ABC Radio National 2012a). The series highlighted some of the problems facing tenants and landlords

at the same time as discussing some of the innovative practices of tenants and potential possibilities for improving rental life.

A discussion board on the topics covered in the program was provided after each episode on the website to continue the conversation. In these discussions both active and passive constructions of tenants were mobilised in and out of the problem frame. This website became a temporary moment for people to share more ideas and make comments such as:

... grab some larger plastic pots or even cheap buckets with some holes drilled into the base, fill them up with a premium potting mix, add some seeds and keep them watered, plonk the pots on the back patio or balcony and enjoy you're portable edible garden. This is a great way for renters to still grow their own vegetables at home (Patrick Johnstone 18th August at ABC Radio National 2012b).

The program has produced some interesting discussions, particularly on pet ownership and rental housing which elicited 40 online comments (ABC Radio National 2012c). Conversations about pets living in rental properties provided a vehicle for people to engage with the current issues affecting the rental sector and prompted some dynamic debates. For example ‘Hayley’ argues that:

Landlords hate the idea of pets in rentals but they often enjoy having pets themselves. It's a rich/poor divide (ABC Radio National 2012c).

‘Neil’ claims that:

It is easy for the tenant advocate to say tenants have to pay for damage

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

caused but most tenants refuse to pay (ABC Radio National 2012c).

'John' makes the comment that:

I owned a rental property in Bendigo; I had a tenant who was a vet with two dogs. She apparently also used to from time to time bring other animals home from the practice. When she moved out the house was as she found it – immaculate (ABC Radio National 2012c).

These discussions variously rework, expose, challenge, perpetuate and discuss solutions for current perceived injustices effecting the rental sector and stereotypes about landlords and renters (ABC Radio National 2012c). For example people suggest having a 'pet bond', encouraging responsible pet ownership and adopting rental policy similar to Europe in order to improve the situation of tenants (ABC Radio National 2012c).

Another current issue at the time of writing this review was the introduction of the carbon tax and how it would affect public housing tenants.

4. Carbon tax impacts

Tenants will need to adapt not only to climate change, but to mitigation measures such as the carbon tax. The carbon tax was introduced at the time of conducting this research in July 2012. The carbon tax has an active role to play in the rental sector and may affect the economic assets of tenants and the way they behave in their home due to increased energy costs.

In the months preceding the introduction of the carbon tax in Australia, State governments in New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia

released information indicating they would increase public housing rents in response to the carbon tax. Fifteen of the 58 articles deal specifically with concerns over the effect rising rents will have on public housing tenants, specifically pensioners.

Articles written around this time focused on the moves made by the NSW State government to raise the rents of public housing tenants in response to Federal compensation for cost-of-living increases resulting from the tax (Caldwell and Helbig 2012; The Daily Examiner 2012; Tovey 2012; Wood 2012; Coorey and Wroe 2012; Harrison 2012; Martins 2012; Clement 2012; Drape and Bennett 2012). Media articles which appeared after the NSW Government made its announcement included those with titles such as '[State Premier] O'Farrell accused of carbon tax compo raid' (Coorey and Wroe 2012), and 'O'Farrell accused of "grab" at pensioner carbon rebate' (Tovey 2012). One article published in *The Daily Examiner* (2012) argued:

About 1400 public housing tenants in the region will be slugged with a hike in rent after the NSW Government announced that rents would increase from March 2013 when the state includes carbon tax compensation payments in people's income.

The emotive language evoked here was echoed in sentiments by other commentators in Queensland who claimed:

Carbon tax pain looks set to deepen, with the State Government expecting to claw back compensation payments and hike public housing rents for some of Queensland's poorest families (Caldwell and Helbig 2012).

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

In West Australia:

The West Australian government has back-flipped after saying it would take a quarter of carbon tax compensation payments from pensioners who live in public housing (Australian Associated Press 2012).

In each of the articles local government ministers, State housing ministers and the Federal Minister for Housing are quoted as 'experts' justifying decisions or calling each other to account. In one article published in the *Daily Telegraph*, confusion about the effect of the carbon tax on public housing rents was evident:

Alison Peters, director of the NSW Council of Social Services said she was 'bemused' about the decision, particularly after being told in a post-budget briefing on Tuesday that the carbon compensation would not be counted as personal income. 'At that briefing a pensioner's group raised this exact issue, and was told (carbon tax compensation) would not be taken into account,' Ms Peters said. 'To hear today that there's been a change in position is a bit of a surprise. We are hoping to talk to the state government about what they are doing and why they appear to have changed their policy' (Wood 2012).

Each of these articles raises issues of justice and further disadvantage to vulnerable tenants. These articles are framed in terms of an issue – that carbon tax compensation is being taken by the State government from the public housing tenants or pensioners (depending on the article) – and this action is seen as unjust.

Public housing tenants are mentioned in these articles mainly as pensioners who

are victims of the government's 'cash grab'. The power is solely positioned with the governments or decision-makers who have decided to tax Federal compensation. Two out of 15 articles inform people about a petition run by NSW Labor Members of Parliament to challenge the 'pension rent gouge' (AAP 2012). For example, Clement (2012) lets readers know:

If you oppose the government's move to increase public housing rents, sign the petition at the office of your local Labor MP.

Whilst governments are seen as powerful decision-makers, tenants are still constructed in these two articles as able to actively challenge a problematic policy move. However, the majority of the articles written about the carbon tax 'comp raid' (Coorey and Wroe 2012) position tenants as victims.

5. Information on tenancy law changes

The changes that have been made to the tenancy law in NSW by previous governments are seen and reported on in a different way. To canvas media response to recent changes made to the tenancy laws in NSW, we examined both those media articles which responded specifically to the changes, and those which discussed tenancy laws more broadly. In NSW, new laws came into effect on the 31 January 2011.

Articles written around that time highlighted the most important changes for both landlords and tenants such as:

... changes to arrangements for rent payments, early termination by tenants, alterations by tenants, no

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

grounds evictions, rent arrears, shared housing, sub-letting, security and tenancy database (Tarala 2011).

The overviews are brief and include information about how “tenants have at least one fee-free way to pay their rent” and “landlords gain clear right to show premises to prospective tenants or buyers at least twice a week” (Dickson 2011).

Articles were also written that expose the tensions evident in the landlord-tenant relationship and document ideas about who benefits most from the changes made to the Act. For example it was reported that “[u]pdating 20-year old tenancy laws, the changes aim to level the balance of power between tenants and landlords” (Dickson 2011) in favour of the tenants. The *Manly Daily* published two pieces on the changes made to the Act that raised concerns about landlords being disadvantaged by the changes. For example, Nicastrì (2011) interviews a local landlord and property manager and reports that:

... the new Act attempts to balance the rights of landlords and tenants, and reduce disputes by making the law clearer and up to date with modern practices. But some landlords and real estate agents said some parts of the Act had made things less clear.

Here, the new Act is implicitly criticised for disadvantaging landlords. Moreover, fears about renters who damage property and threaten to undermine the investment of landlords are also highlighted in some articles. For example, Pike (2011) wrote a piece on ‘reckless renters’, who “can leave landlords with a financial headache which could include lost rent and a long list of repairs”. He goes on to say that

“changes to the Act, which came into effect on January 31 this year, made some residential investors nervous” (Pike 2011). In this case the relationship between tenant and landlord is constructed as one that is tension-filled and where the tenant is the problem.

More hopeful accounts of the tenant-landlord relationship included an article published in the *Newcastle Herald* by Mathew Kelly (2011), which revealed a more positive take on the changes. He reported that:

... millions of litres of water will be saved in the Hunter each year thanks to new legislation requiring landlords to ensure their rental properties are water efficient (Kelly 2011).

Kelly (2011) interviewed a local tenant and reported on her first positive shower experience with the new water-saving shower head. Such positive framings of the legislation also make connections between tenants and sustainability.

A few articles highlighted some potential difficulties in the implementation of the new legislation. For example Dickson (2011) explained that “there is some concern that the new legislation may deter people from entering the investment property market”, whilst Nicastrì (2011) highlighted problems of interpretation in provisions which allow tenants “to carry out ‘reasonable’ renovations”.

6. Sustainability

Articles on renters and sustainability have been published in conjunction with specific events that connect ideas of sustainability with the rental sector or housing more broadly. These articles are framed in a positive light,

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

showcasing particular events or practices in which landlords and tenants are involved. They highlight the active roles of both landlords and tenants in moving towards making rental properties more sustainable whilst acknowledging potential concerns.

Although the relationship between media reporting and changes to everyday practice is ambiguous, media reporting on sustainability practices can be seen as another avenue through which people may be exposed to various adaptation practices (Anderson 2009: 166). Table 1 below provides a summary of the types of changes to the everyday practices of tenants or landlords that are discussed in four articles on sustainability. These articles make suggestions to landlords and tenants or showcase particular sustainability practices.

Interestingly the types of sustainability, mitigation and adaptation practices of landlords conveyed in media reporting differs slightly from sustainability practice guides targeted at tenants (See Briefing Paper 9 'Tenant Resources'). Landlords are positioned as able to play an active role in encouraging the sustainable practices of tenants by altering the physical fabric of the home through the installation of sustainable technologies (Dolan 2012c). Stories are told of what some 'green' landlords have done to make their rental properties sustainable (Dolan 2011b).

Table 1: Sustainability Practices

Sustainability Practice	Actor
Use grey water	Tenant
Don't place hot items in the fridge, and don't open the fridge door too often	Tenant
Hang heavy, lined curtains	Tenant
Use timer switches on heating and cooling systems.	Tenant
Stop draughts with door snakes or self-adhesive seals around windows and doors	Tenant
Turn appliances off at the power point when not in use	Tenant
Invest in a portable rainwater tank	Tenant
Switch to green power	Tenant
Ensuring fridge seals worked properly	Tenant
Draught-proofing with door snakes or rugs	Tenant
Utilising passive solar design principles	Landlord
Insulation	Landlord
Install heavy curtains and pelmets	Landlord
Draught-proof property	Landlord
Use gas appliances and heating	Landlord
Turning off non-essential lights	Landlord
Raise tenant awareness	Landlord
Installing solar	Landlord
Use energy efficient appliances	Both
Use AAA-rated shower heads	Both
Install motion-sensor lighting	Landlord
Install energy-saving devices, such as times	Landlord

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

Switch the property's electricity to Gold Standard Green Power	Landlord
Provide recycling facilities and services for tenants	Landlord
Install rainwater tanks for watering gardens and lawns	Landlord
Tell your tenants etc about Earth Hour	Landlord

(Sources: Lacey 2012; Melbourne Times Weekly 2012; Dolan 2011b; Dolan 2012c)

A number of these suggestions are made in an article by Dolan (2011b) titled 'Light-bulb moment for landlords'. Dolan (2011b) captures the active role of landlords in improving the sustainability of properties by focusing on the annual *Sustainable House Day*, explaining that:

Sustainable House Day offers inspiration to landlords to make improvements that add value and help retain good tenants.

In this article Dolan (2011b) interviews a 'green' landlord who discusses the benefits of sustainable housing for himself and the tenants:

Having happy, long-term tenants looking after a place means less spent on advertising for new tenants, fewer periods of no rental income and potentially less spent on damages and repairs (Dolan 2011b).

Sustainable Housing Day is seen as an opportunity to showcase the possibility of positive tenant-landlord relationships.

A similar event to Sustainable House Day in this respect is Earth Hour. Earth Hour has been used to promote conversations between landlords and tenants around sustainability practices (Dolan 2012c). The article reports that in

2011 landlords were targeted by the organisers of Earth Hour to engage with their tenants and other landlords in order to encourage them to make more sustainable lifestyle choices:

'We're encouraging landlords to take an active engagement in Earth Hour', Dr Llewellyn says. 'We've got materials on the website – posters and flyers – so they can raise awareness with their tenants. It would be great if landlords want to host an event – sign up, bring your tenants together for a conversation about sustainability' (Dolan 2012c).

Other articles draw attention to the changes renters can make to their homes. An example of this is an article by Lacey (2012) who reflects on his own renting experience and the expertise of Chris Ward from Green Renters, to discuss the greening of rental properties:

Until recently, renters who wished to create a sustainable home didn't have many options. But all that is changing thanks to a swag of state and federal government programs (Lacey 2012).

This article raises awareness of the context of sustainability and the rental sector and provides a set of tips for renters to follow if they want to green their homes. Tips have been sourced from the Alternative Technology Association Renters guide and include suggestions such as: hang heavy, lined curtains; invest in a portable rainwater tank; switch to green power (Lacey 2012). Other articles feature workshops that are held at local councils or with specific green groups such as 'Just Change' and the 'Moreland Energy Foundation' (The Standard 2012; Dolan 2012d). There are articles on people

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

living sustainable lives, who just happen to be tenants, such as the article by O'Dwyer (2011) titled 'Greener at the grassroots—Sustainable Sydney special report—Sustainable Homes' which showcases a couple living in Enmore:

In the front yard, the mulberry tree is heavy with dark berries and there are waist-high clumps of green beans and fennel. Brussels sprouts, rhubarb and kale are ready to pick (O'Dwyer 2011).

These articles share sustainable rental stories in a relatively positive light to inspire readers to make changes.

7. Conclusions

Media reporting contains a diverse array of tools to communicate climate change adaptation and policy responses as has been shown here. The articles reviewed here portray tenants and landlords as active or passive depending upon context. There are a number of key themes emerging from the articles reviewed. Firstly, some articles raise key concerns about issues affecting the rental sector such as the lack of affordable housing and a housing shortage affecting the sector in particular localities. Governments are seen as needing to play a key role in addressing these concerns.

Secondly, evident in the review of media on the carbon tax, the government is seen as having a responsibility to not further disadvantage public housing tenants through climate change mitigation measures. This is shown in the critique of the NSW and QLD state governments and their raising of public housing rents. Here tenants are constructed as passive or relatively absent from critiques aimed at governments, with the focus being on

the government's responsibility to help public housing tenants.

Thirdly, the discourses circulating around the landlord-tenant relationship utilise a number of problem frames focusing on tensions, fears and stereotypes but also on the possibilities for positive relationships which construct both tenants and landlords as responsible and active. These are simultaneously playing out in print media and revealed on online discussion forums.

Finally the media items which focused on sustainability and particular events or groups highlighted the possibilities for action on the part of both tenants and landlords. Instead of drawing out the obvious tensions, these articles focused on the possibility of positive relationships between landlords and tenants. These articles played an awareness-raising role in providing information to tenants and landlords about potential sustainability practices by providing tips or stories of particular sustainability practices.

Overall the media items reviewed for this paper simultaneously perpetuated and challenged existing discourses about the landlord-tenant relationship and the possibility of rental housing to be a site for sustainable practices and climate change adaptation. In general, sustainability and sustainable practices are positioned in a positive light; there were often instances where tenants and landlords were constructed as playing an active role in practicing sustainability. However, from the media reviewed it is clear that very little connection is made between climate change adaptation and the rental sector, revealing an important gap that remains to be filled. Media can

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

play a powerful role in communicating the contentious issues of climate change adaptation and mitigation along with the possibilities for responses by landlords and tenants.

8. Reference List

- AAP (2012) 'MPs petition against pension rent gouge', *AAP News Australia*, 20th April 2012
- ABC (2012a). 'Action urged on Hunter's chronic housing crisis'. Online News Article
<<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-06-08/action-urged-on-hunter27s-chronic-housing-crisis/4059842>> accessed 8th June
- ABC (2012b). 'Hunter experiencing chronic public housing shortage'. Australian Broadcasting Association
<<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-05-14/hunter-experiencing-chronic-public-housing-shortage/4009056>> accessed 9th July
- ABC Radio National (2012a). 'This Rental Life'. *Life Matters*.
<<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/features/this-rental-life/>> accessed 9th July
- ABC Radio National (2012b). 'This Rental Life (Part 1): the portable oasis: renters are gardeners too!'. *Life Matters*.
<<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/lifematters/this-rental-life/4053658>> accessed 9th July
- ABC Radio National (2012c). 'This Rental Life (Part 2): Can my pet come too?'. *Life Matters*.
<<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/lifematters/this-rental-life/4053658>> accessed 9th July
- Anderson, A. (2009). Media, Politics and Climate Change: Towards a New Research Agenda. *Sociology Compass* 3(2): 166–182.
- Anderson, S. (2012) 'Canberra's rental crisis 'worst' of any city in the country', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, Australia, Fairfax, 1st May 2012
- Australian Associated Press (2012) 'WA backflips on carbon tax compensation', *AAP News Australia*, 21st April 2012
- Caldwell, A. and K. Helbig (2012) 'Battlers' carbon payments under rent hike threat', *The Courier Mail*, Brisbane, Australia, 9th July 2012

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

- Carvalho, A. (2007). Ideological cultures and media discourses on scientific knowledge: re-reading news on climate change. *Public Understanding of Science* 16: 223–243.
- Carvalho, A. (2010). Media(ted) discourses and climate change: a focus on political subjectivity and (dis)engagement. *WIREs Climate Change* 1(March/April): 172-179.
- Clement, J. (2012) 'O'Farrell's grab for cash - carbon tax supplement wiped out by rental increases', *Canterbury-Bankstown Express*, Sydney, Australia, 26th June 2012
- Coorey, P. and D. Wroe (2012) 'O'Farrell accused of carbon tax compo raid', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, Australia, 20th June 2012
- Cullen, S. (2012, 29th June). 'Governments failing on housing affordability'. <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2012-06-29/governments-failing-to-curb-rental-stress-report/4099176>> accessed 9th July
- Dickson, L. (2011) 'Fresh take on the Tenancy Act alters slightly the tenant-landlord balance', *Manly Daily* Sydney, Australia, 22nd January 2011
- Dolan, K. (2011a) 'Help wanted to keep things fair - RENTAL', *The Age*, Melbourne, Australia, 23rd July 2011
- Dolan, K. (2011b) 'Light-bulb moment for landlords', *The Age*, Melbourne, Australia, 10th September 2011
- Dolan, K. (2011c) 'Tenants left in a financial fix', *The Age*, Melbourne, Fairfax, 17th December
- Dolan, K. (2011d) 'Three's a crowd', *The Age*, Melbourne, Australia, 3rd December 2011
- Dolan, K. (2012a) 'From mean streets to green streets', *The Age*, Melbourne, Australia, 21st April 2012
- Dolan, K. (2012b) 'Life on the great dividing range', *The Age*, Melbourne, Fairfax, <<http://theage.domain.com.au/real-estate-news/life-on-the-great-dividing-range-20120210-1s5ub.html>>
- Dolan, K. (2012c) 'Lights out: it's time for bright ideas', *The Age*, Melbourne, Australia, 24th March 2012
- Dolan, K. (2012d) 'Take control of your power bills', *The Age*, Melbourne, Fairfax, 6th August 2011
- Drape, J. and A. Bennett (2012) 'Public housing rents up under carbon tax', *Nine MSN News*, Nine MSN, 14th June 2012
- Gurran, N., E. Hamlin and B. Norman (2008). *Planning for climate change: Leading practice principles and models for sea change communities in coastal Australia*, Prepared for the National Sea Change Task Force, July 2008, University of Sydney.
- Harrison, D. (2012) 'State may take cut of carbon tax pension rise', *The Sydney Morning Herald* Sydney, Australia, 3rd April
- Kelly, M. (2011) 'Landlords splash out for water efficiency', *The Newcastle Herald* Newcastle, Australia, 8th February 2011
- Lacey, S. (2012) 'A new lease of eco life', *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, Fairfax, 16th June 2012 <<http://www.smh.com.au/environment/energy-smart/a-new-lease-of-eco-life-20120614-20b1c.html>>
- Martins, B. (2012) 'Carbon tax offset taken by rent rise', *Fairfield City Champion*, Australia, 3rd July 2012
- Mee, K. (2004). Necessary Welfare Measure of Policy Failure: Media Reports of Public Housing in Sydney in the 1990s. In *Social Construction in Housing Research*. K. Jacobs, J. Kemeny and T. Manzi. Ashgate, Aldershot: 117-141.
- Melbourne Times Weekly (2012) 'Green up, renters told', *Melbourne Times Weekly*, Melbourne, Fairfax, 12th June 2012
- Nicastri, D. (2011) 'Act gives renters the edge -- Landlords claim new tenancy laws put them on an 'uneven' playing field', *Manly Daily* Sydney, Australia, 19th January 2011
- O'Dwyer, E. (2011) 'Greener at the grassroots - sustainable Sydney special report- sustainable homes ', *The Sydney*

Sustainability and climate change in the rental sector: Stories from the media

- Morning Herald*, Sydney, Australia, 12th October 2011
- Pike, B. (2011) 'Cover Story - Home truths for investors', *The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, Australia, 9th July 2011
- Raimondo, E. (2012) 'Victorian rental vacancies tighten', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, Fairfax, 14th April 2012 <<http://www.smh.com.au/domain/real-estate-news/victorian-rental-vacancies-tighten-20120706-21knb.html>>
- Slocum, R. (2004). Polar bears and energy-efficient lightbulbs: strategies to bring climate change home. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* **22**: 413-438.
- Tarala, K. (2011) 'New laws address key tenancy issues', *The Newcastle Herald*, Newcastle, Australia, Fairfax, 2nd February 2011
- The Daily Examiner (2012) 'Renters 'betrayed by O'Farrell Govt'', *The Daily Examiner*, Grafton, New South Wales, 2nd June 2012
- The Standard (2012) 'Free tips on how to easily cut household energy costs', *The Standard*, Warrnambool, Australia, 17th May 2012
- Toohy, S. and J. Fritze (2009). *A future focussed housing standard: the case for rental housing standards to help vulnerable households adapt to climate change*, VCOSS, Melbourne.
- Tovey, J. (2012) 'O'Farrell accused of 'grab' at pensioner carbon rebate', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, Australia, 15th June 2012
- Wade, M. and J. Irvine (2012). 'Incomes rising but families caught in housing squeeze'. *The Sydney Morning Herald* <<http://www.smh.com.au/national/income-s-rising-but-families-caught-in-housing-squeeze-20120621-20r1v.html>> accessed 27th June
- Wood, A. (2012) 'Carbon tax payments taken in rent grab', *The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, Australia, 15th June 2012

9. Contacts for further Information

Dr Lesley Instone

E: lesley.instone@newcastle.edu.au
Ph: +61 2 49216637

Dr Kathleen Mee

E: kathy.mee@newcastle.edu.au
Ph: +61 2 49216451

Dr Jane Palmer

E: jane.palmer@newcastle.edu.au
Ph: +61 2 49212075

Ms Miriam Williams

E: miriam.williams@newcastle.edu.au
Ph: +61 2 49218963

Ms Nicola Vaughan

E: nicola.vaughan@newcastle.edu.au
Ph: +61 2 49215196

Centre for Urban and Regional Studies

School of Environmental and Life Sciences,
Faculty of Science and Information Technology,
University of Newcastle,
Callaghan, NSW, 2308
<<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research-centre/urban-and-regional-studies/transforming-cities-city-lives-city-natures-city-politics/climate-change-and-urban-transitions/climate-change-adaptation-in-the-rental-sector/>>