

RENT TRACKER

Welcome to the second issue of the Tenants' Union of NSW's Rent Tracker. With Rent Tracker, we bring multiple sources of information together to give tenants, journalists and others a clear and easy way to understand rent movements in New South Wales.

There are more tenants in NSW than ever before, with bonds held in the Rental Bond Board rising much more quickly than the population.

Key Stats: September 2016

Bonds Held	Yearly Increase	
Greater Sydney	551,315	5.27%
Rest of NSW	239,572	2.84%

Median Rents: Houses	Yearly Increase	
Greater Sydney	\$520	4.00%
Rest of NSW	\$330	3.13%

Median Rents: Units	Yearly Increase	
Greater Sydney	\$525	5.00%
Rest of NSW	\$245	2.08%

Value of all bonds Held	\$1.31 billion
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Source: Rent and Sales Reports

For tenants renting houses in the west of Sydney there hasn't been a lot of movement in rents for new dwellings over the last year. Of course that's no guarantee a sitting tenant hasn't had to deal with a rent increase or two.

However, for tenants in units there has been a lot of new stock coming on to the market - and because homes are not like other items, this means median rent prices have gone up, not down. A new building is generally nicer than both the building it replaced, and the other, older properties still on the market. This difference means it rents at the higher end of the scale, pushing the median rent higher.

For example Sydney, Parramatta and Rockdale LGAs together added more than 5200 new apartments in the last year, and new rents went up about 5% in each of those areas.

Greater Sydney generally added more than 27500 new rented homes to the market, with the fastest growing areas Camden lodging 20% more bonds than this time last year, and Lane Cove just over 15%.

The renting population of NSW also grew, though somewhat more slowly. Lithgow-Mudgee and Lake Macquarie both saw increases of around 6% of rental stock and were the largest increases outside of the Greater Sydney area.

Issue 2
2016

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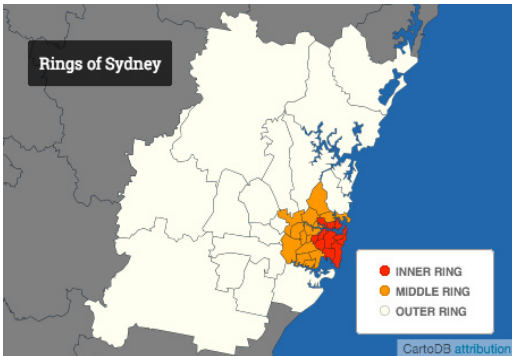
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Sydney's Rents

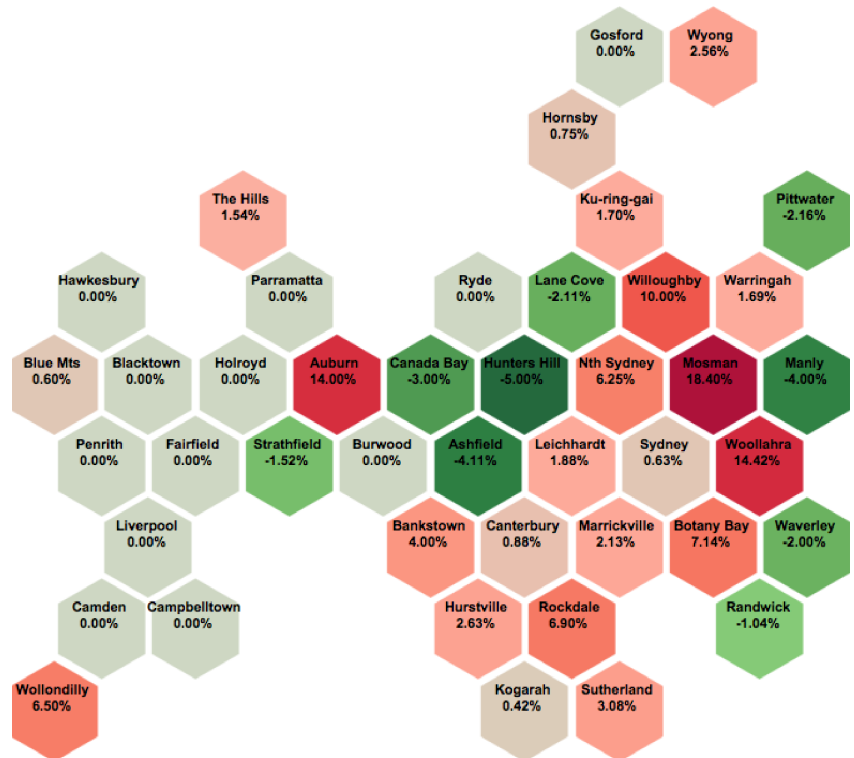
When Sydney's rents are discussed, we often use just one number for the whole city. This makes information quick to impart but it can be easy to miss that different parts of the city experience things differently. A map of Greater Sydney makes it quite hard to see information about the smaller inner areas.



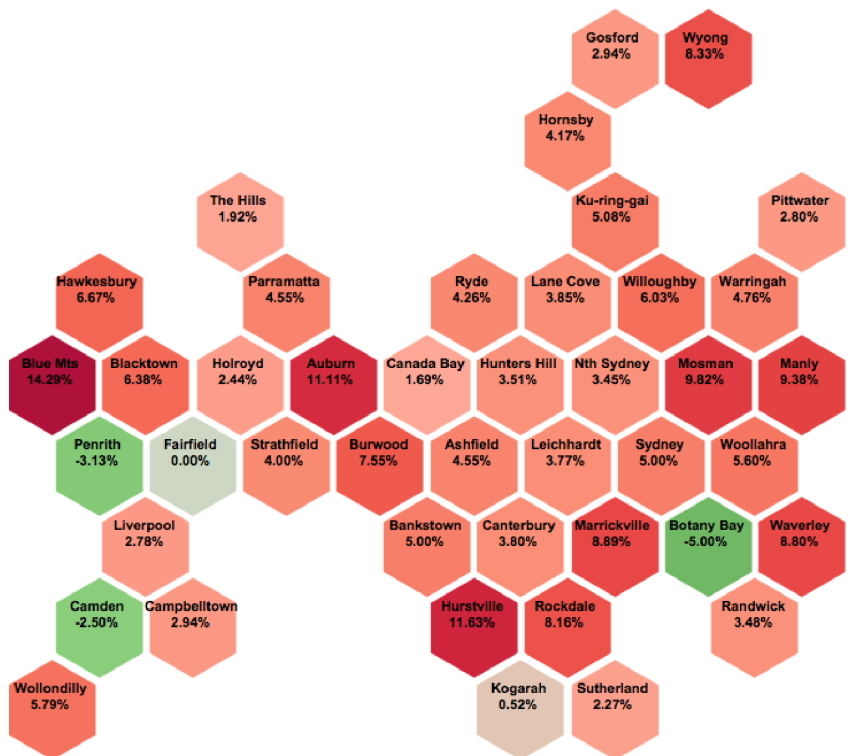
Using the maps to the right it is easier to see how different parts of Sydney change over time. You can access interactive versions of the maps along with extra historical information at tenants.org.au/tu/rent-tracker.

We have demonstrated this with the last years increases (or decreases in rent). These hex maps show that house rents were quite flat, or even fell in many parts of Greater Sydney over the last year to September 2016.

Units on the other hand, continued to rise in most of Sydney, except for a couple of pockets. These pockets have been the sites of quite large increases in rent costs over recent years because of the release of large numbers of newer, more expensive units into the market.



New house rents increase Sep 2015 - Sep 2016, Greater Sydney.

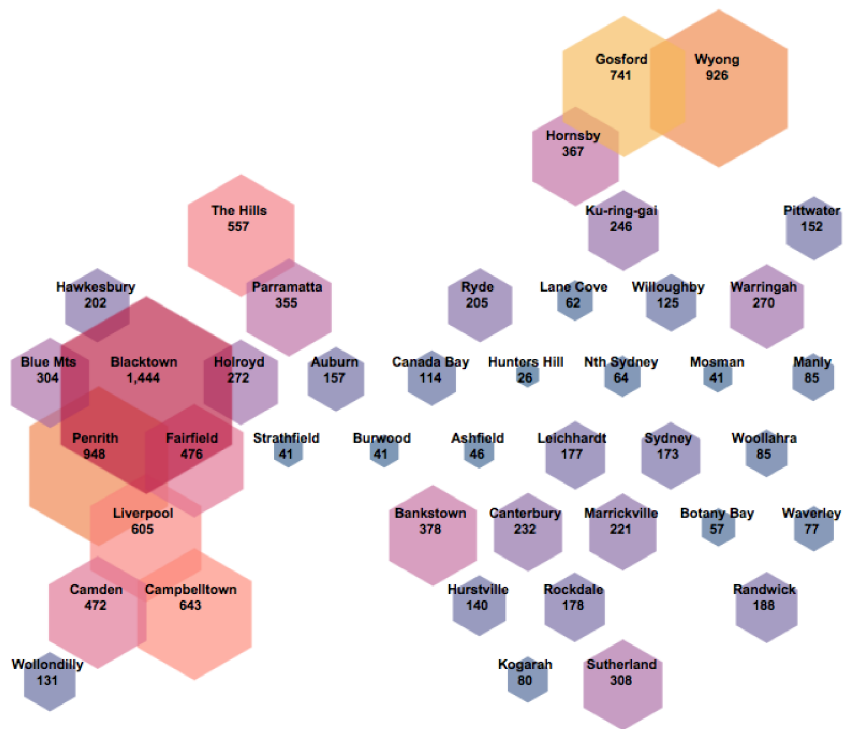


New unit rents increase Sep 2015 - Sep 2016, Greater Sydney.

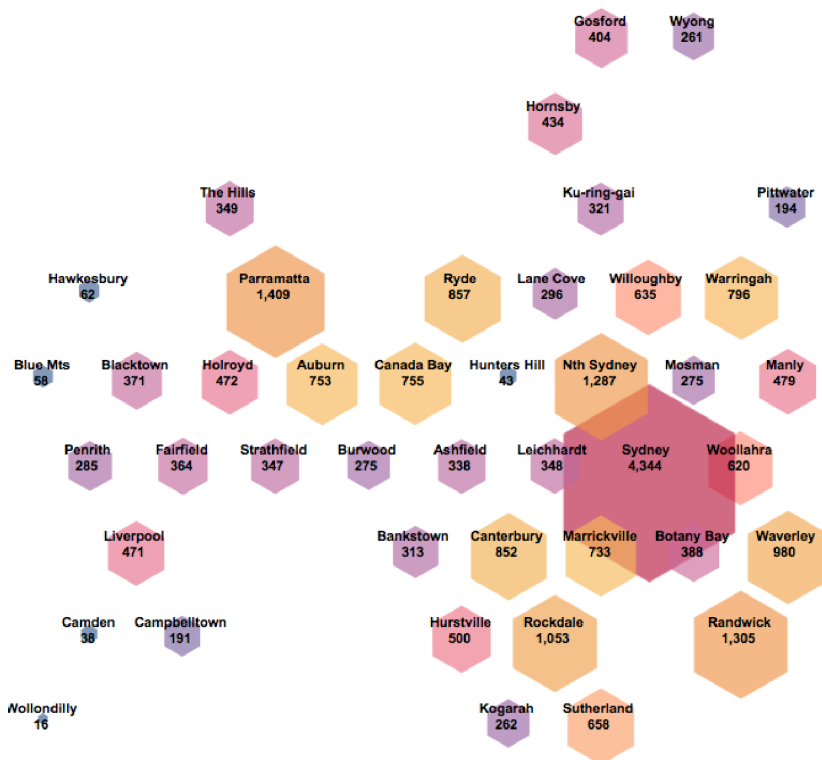
However, when we start looking at where different kinds of properties are located, this gives us a much greater insight regarding the difference between house and rent prices.

Houses are largely concentrated in the west, south west and central coast. Units on the other hand make up the majority of rented dwellings in the inner rings, and in particularly built-up areas like Parramatta. Areas close to CBDs and the jobs located around them are going to be more expensive.

This goes a long way to explaining why the median unit rent lodged during July-September was \$525 per week while the median house rent was only \$520. Of course in the same area, a house will almost always cost more than a unit, not least because they generally have more bedrooms, and living space, including private external. However across such a large and varied city as Sydney, rented units and houses mostly aren't located in the same areas.



Number of new bonds lodged for houses, July - Sep 2016, Greater Sydney.



Number of new bonds lodged for units, July - Sep 2016 Greater Sydney.

Rent Tracker Index

Rent Tracker Index is a creation of the Tenants' Union to help make sense of media reporting of rents. It demonstrates the difference in movements of rents advertised by landlords compared to the actual rents paid by tenants.

Data sources

The *Advertised Rents* index combines the SQM Research *Weekly Asking Rents Index* for Greater Sydney, and Domain-APM's data series for Greater Sydney, using both their houses and their units measures as separate lines of data. We intend to include Core Logic-RP Data's data series in future publications.

Figure 1 shows the figures SQM, Domain-APM and the *Rent and Sales Report* reported new rents in flats and units over the period December 2010 to September 2016. Figure 2 does the same for houses.

The *Actual Rents* index uses the median rent for All Dwellings, All Bedrooms published in the *Rent and Sales Report* Trend for Greater Sydney, and the Sydney 'Rents component' of the Australian Bureau of Statistics *Consumer Price Index*.

The 'Rents component' takes a sample of rents from agents across Sydney, and therefore represents a mix of new and established rents. Figure 3 demonstrates the Rents Component when applied to the median rent in Sydney in 1990.

Creating the Index

The two asking rent measures and the two actual rents measures have been indexed back to December 2010 and adjusted for inflation.

If rents had increased with inflation over the period of the index, they would appear as a flat line at the 100 mark.

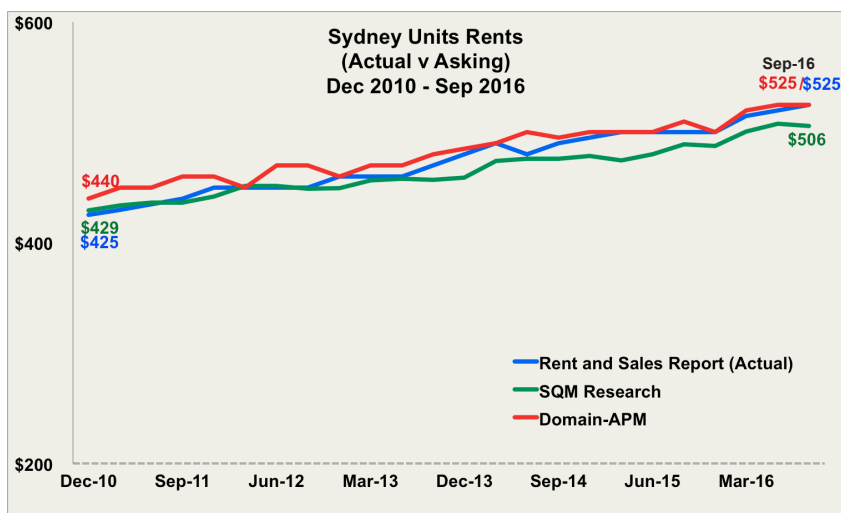


Figure 1

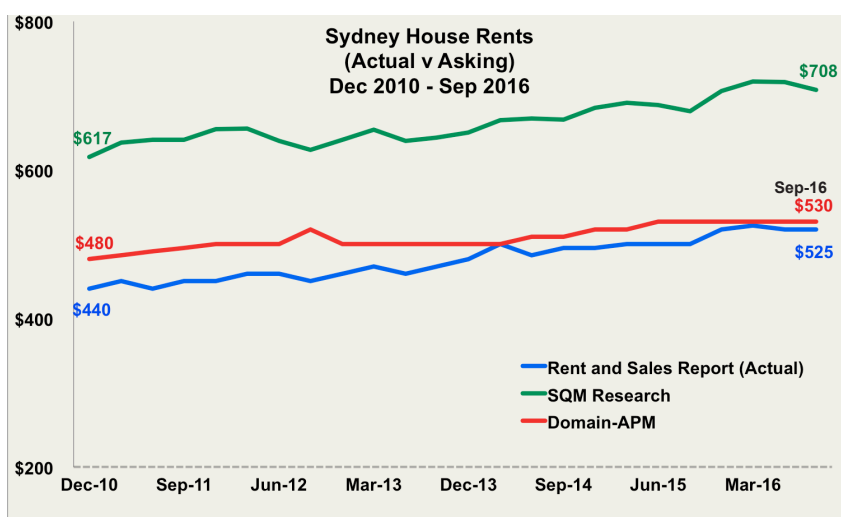


Figure 2

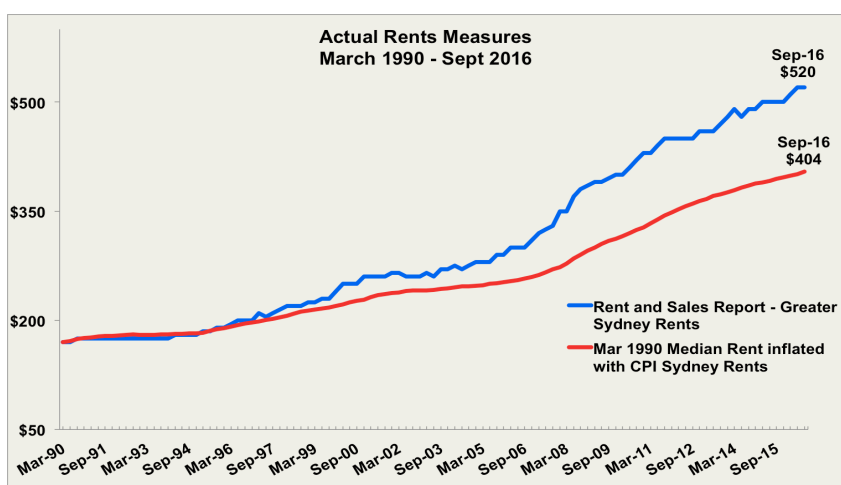
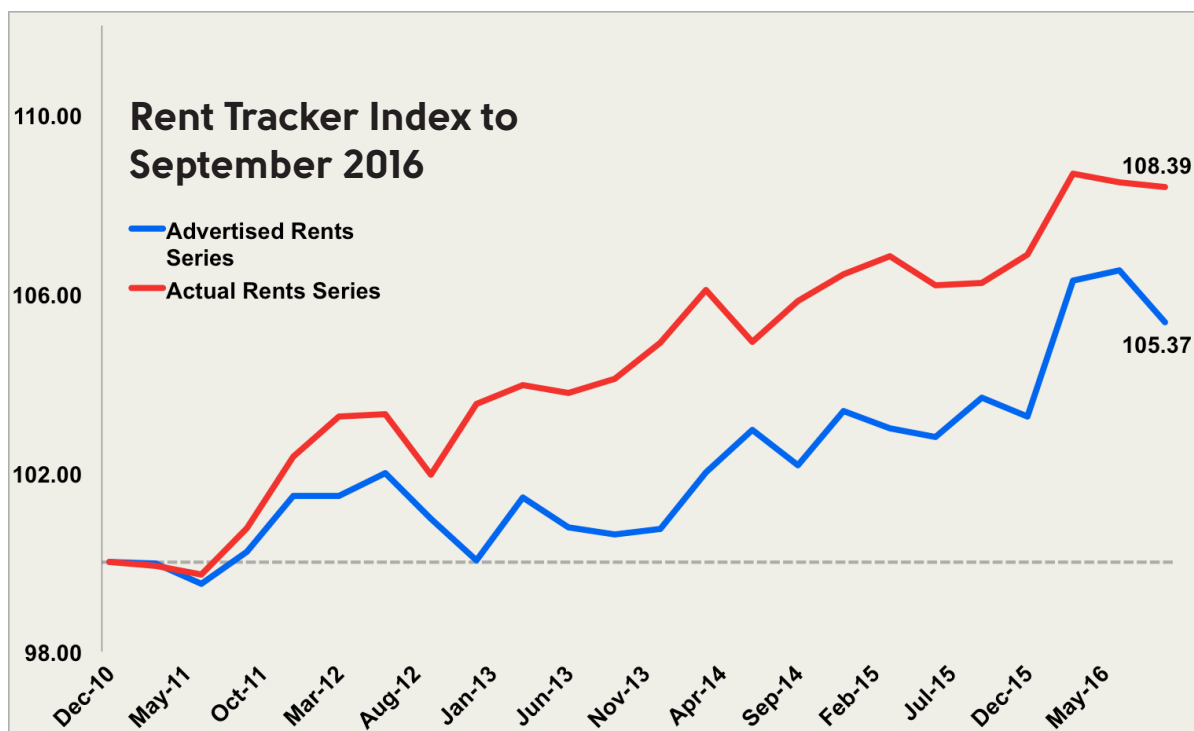


Figure 3



Source: Rent and Sales Reports, Consumer Price Index, Domain Group-APM, SQM Research

Advertised rents are generally higher than actual rents, but the Rent Tracker Index brings both down to the same level at the start point in December 2010, to allow for better comparison of their movements over time.

Figure 4 shows the movements across quarters and appears to show actual rents tending to move in the quarter before asking rents show the same kind of movement. Figure 5 demonstrates the annual change.

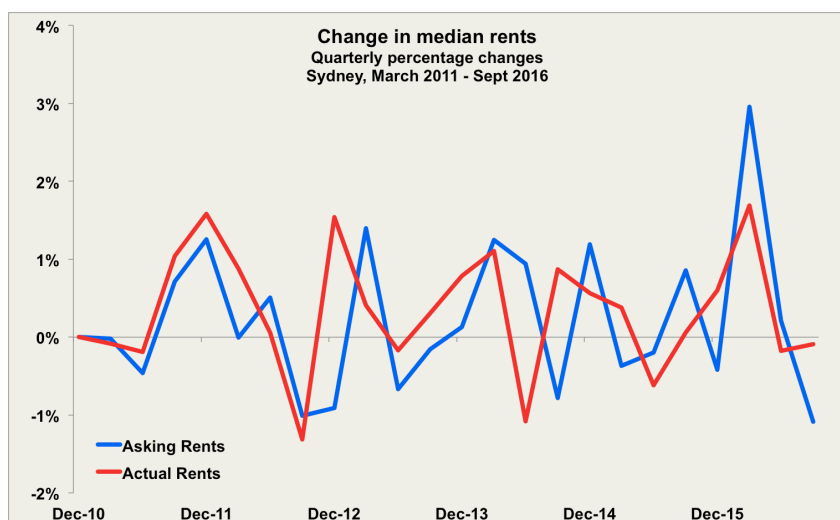


Figure 4

Results

The full Rent Tracker Index shows us that over the last five years, measuring advertised rents has broadly reflected actual rent movements. However, it appears that advertised rents pick up trends a quarter late, and are generally underestimating the actual size of those movements. The *Advertised Rents* series describes rents moving half as fast as Actual Rents

One explanation for this might be that landlords and agents are advertising rents at a more optimistic level than they are ultimately receiving for the property and actual rents are being dragged up in a rubber-band effect.

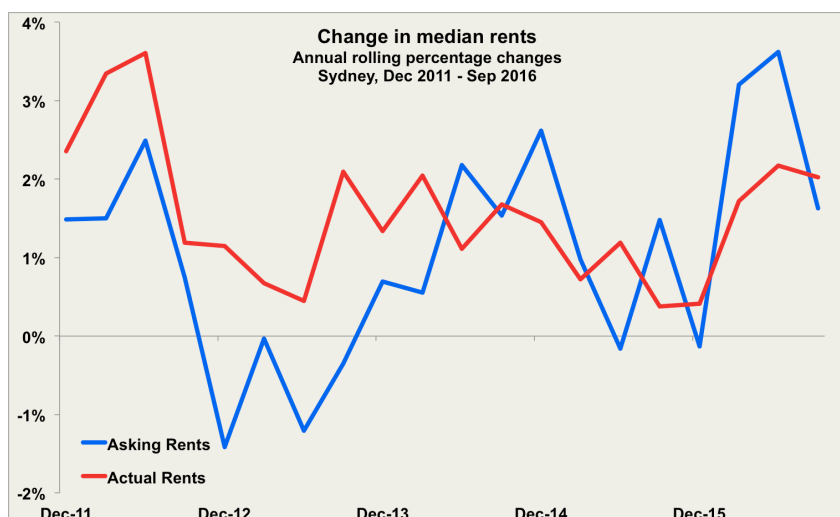


Figure 5

NSW Rents Over Time

The tables and charts over the following pages are here to help contextualise the Rent and Sales Report. The report has been running for 26 years, and is a deep and powerful data set.

Inflation and Rents

Where would rents be if rents had risen in line with the cost of living generally? The answer is that housing would be a lot cheaper. Median units would be more than \$200 per week cheaper than now, and houses similarly reduced, though not by quite as much. The prices would also be more distinct - rather than the \$5 per week difference between units and houses, they would be nearly \$60 apart.

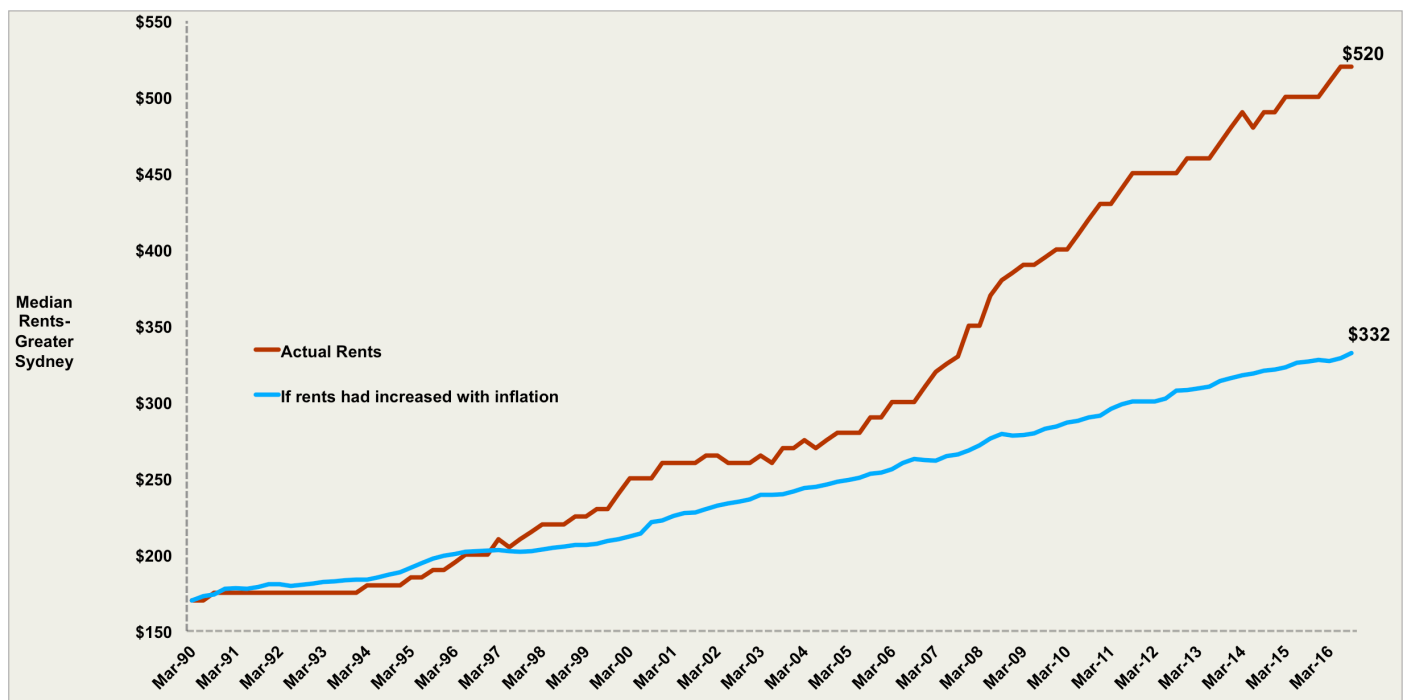
This is largely due to rented properties in the more expensive

Then and Now- Sydney Rents		
Greater Sydney	Units	Adjusted for inflation (\$2016)
Mar 1990	\$160	\$314
Sep 2016	\$525	\$525
Increase:	228%	67%
Greater Sydney	Houses	Adjusted for inflation (\$2016)
Mar 1990	\$190	\$373
Sep 2016	\$520	\$520
Increase:	174%	39%

Source: Rent and Sales Reports, Consumer Price Index

Inner Ring being largely units, outweighing the less expensive houses in the outer ring.

As shown in the long graph below, at different periods since March 1990, rents have actually risen more slowly than inflation. This was particularly true for the first half of 1990s and the first few years of the 21st century.



Source: Rent and Sales Reports, Consumer Price Index

Bonds & Rents over time

Looking at the bond data gives context for rent levels. For instance, in the generally more expensive Inner Ring of Sydney the majority of rented dwellings are units, which in large part accounts for the high cost of units compared to houses across the city.

Note: There are approximately a third of all bonds which were not identified as units or houses on their

bond lodgment form. These are included in the All Dwellings count.

For the rents tables we have chosen two bedroom units and three bedroom houses because of the consistent use of those data sets over time, as well as the high proportion of all dwellings they represent.

They are listed by Local Government Areas, with summaries for the Inner, Middle and Outer Rings, and the rest of the Greater Metropolitan Region.

Units	Bonds Held Sep 2016	Increase over the last year	5 years average yearly increase	10 years average yearly increase	20 years average yearly increase
SYD Inner Ring	103540	5.05%	3.46%	1.83%	4.44%
SYD Middle Ring	81019	9.90%	6.22%	3.94%	5.26%
SYD Outer Ring	53772	6.14%	3.55%	2.66%	4.12%
Newcastle	5259	2.55%	1.25%	0.97%	1.77%
Wollongong	7839	3.06%	1.48%	1.59%	2.58%
Rest of NSW	47660	2.08%	0.77%	1.46%	2.59%
Total NSW	299089	5.90%	3.56%	2.40%	4.10%

Houses	Bonds Held Sep 2016	Increase over the last year	5 years average yearly increase	10 years average yearly increase	20 years average yearly increase
SYD Inner Ring	11236	9.54%	2.45%	1.91%	2.65%
SYD Middle Ring	27098	5.53%	3.25%	1.67%	1.75%
SYD Outer Ring	85456	7.47%	4.74%	2.82%	4.16%
Newcastle	6552	2.57%	1.99%	0.58%	2.02%
Wollongong	5576	5.39%	2.23%	1.90%	3.30%
Rest of NSW	97157	3.78%	2.82%	3.12%	4.39%
Total NSW	233075	5.61%	3.48%	2.65%	3.71%

All Dwellings	Bonds Held Sep 2016	Increase over the last year	5 years average yearly increase	10 years average yearly increase	20 years average yearly increase
SYD Inner Ring	181960	4.12%	2.70%	1.81%	2.99%
SYD Middle Ring	162658	6.40%	4.91%	3.52%	3.92%
SYD Outer Ring	206697	5.41%	3.96%	2.88%	4.23%
Newcastle	20789	3.23%	2.16%	2.12%	3.09%
Wollongong	19007	3.94%	2.07%	2.25%	2.62%
Rest of NSW	199776	2.70%	2.25%	3.16%	4.04%
Total NSW	790887	4.52%	3.29%	2.77%	3.73%

Source: Rent and Sales Report

Median Rents All Units	Sept 2016 New Bonds	Sept 2016 Median Rent	Increase over the last year	5 years average yearly increase	10 years average yearly increase	20 years average yearly increase
Inner Ring LGAs	10914	600	4.35%	3.53%	7.14%	8.04%
Ashfield	338	460	4.55%	3.29%	7.69%	8.53%
Botany Bay	388	570	-5.00%	6.98%	11.92%	10.83%
Lane Cove	296	540	3.85%	4.55%	8.00%	7.56%
Leichhardt	348	550	3.77%	3.91%	5.71%	10.71%
Marrickville	733	490	8.89%	5.13%	9.60%	11.33%
Mosman	275	615	9.82%	5.36%	7.57%	7.30%
North Sydney	1287	600	3.45%	2.64%	6.44%	6.32%
Randwick	1305	595	3.48%	3.80%	7.50%	7.93%
Sydney	4344	630	5.00%	2.91%	6.58%	8.13%
Waverley	980	680	8.80%	4.73%	8.89%	8.60%
Woollahra	620	660	5.60%	2.96%	6.92%	7.45%
Middle Ring LGAs	8854	510	6.25%	4.29%	8.21%	9.17%
Auburn	753	500	11.11%	5.00%	7.24%	11.13%
Bankstown	313	420	5.00%	4.00%	6.80%	6.05%
Burwood	275	570	7.55%	5.33%	7.81%	10.41%
Canterbury	852	410	3.80%	4.85%	11.03%	8.67%
Canada Bay	755	600	1.69%	1.43%	5.69%	7.50%
Hunters Hill	43	590	3.51%	7.60%	7.88%	7.29%
Hurstville	500	480	11.63%	5.26%	9.20%	8.71%
Kogarah	262	480	0.52%	2.86%	6.84%	7.31%
Ku-Ring-Gai	321	620	5.08%	1.75%	9.38%	7.78%
Manly	479	700	9.38%	5.45%	8.42%	9.00%
Parramatta	1409	460	4.55%	4.21%	8.04%	8.14%
Rockdale	1053	530	8.16%	6.50%	8.93%	9.32%
Ryde	857	490	4.26%	4.81%	8.85%	9.00%
Strathfield	347	520	4.00%	3.64%	6.77%	8.68%
Willoughby	635	615	6.03%	3.65%	6.18%	6.60%
Outer Ring LGAs	5424	420	2.44%	3.33%	6.80%	8.13%
The Hills	349	530	1.92%	3.56%	7.10%	10.14%
Blacktown	371	375	6.38%	2.73%	7.05%	8.89%
Blue Mountains	58	320	14.29%	6.67%	11.33%	8.91%
Camden*	38	390	-2.50%	8.62%	12.61%	10.60%
Campbelltown	191	350	2.94%	6.92%	11.21%	9.00%
Fairfield	364	330	0.00%	2.76%	8.86%	7.69%
Gosford	404	350	2.94%	4.14%	6.67%	7.07%
Hawkesbury	62	320	6.67%	3.70%	7.78%	6.85%
Holroyd	472	420	2.44%	3.33%	7.87%	7.73%
Hornsby	434	500	4.17%	4.10%	6.67%	7.50%
Liverpool	471	370	2.78%	3.87%	9.47%	9.23%
Penrith	285	310	-3.13%	3.40%	8.24%	7.40%
Pittwater	194	550	2.80%	4.44%	7.19%	8.10%
Sutherland	658	450	2.27%	2.78%	6.67%	6.84%
Warringah	796	550	4.76%	4.44%	6.67%	8.41%
Wollondilly*	16	320	5.79%	4.62%	9.39%	8.33%
Wyong	261	325	8.33%	5.00%	8.06%	8.54%
Rest of Greater Metropolitan Region	1974	320	3.23%	2.86%	6.84%	8.33%
Kiama	51	390	0.00%	6.00%	8.57%	10.00%
Lake Macquarie	212	295	0.00%	2.69%	6.39%	7.83%
Maitland	104	270	8.00%	1.60%	5.21%	7.27%
Newcastle	612	325	-1.52%	0.31%	6.25%	8.00%
Port Stephens	114	275	-1.79%	2.00%	6.18%	6.96%
Shellharbour	80	320	6.67%	6.67%	9.39%	8.33%
Wollongong	716	350	6.06%	5.00%	8.92%	9.00%

Source: Rent and Sales Report

*denotes too small sample size, estimated median rent.

Median Rents All houses	Sept 2016 New Bonds	Sept 2016 Median Rent	Increase over the last year	5 years average yearly increase	10 years average yearly increase	20 years average yearly increase
Inner Ring LGAs	1191	875	1.18%	2.93%	8.11%	8.44%
Ashfield	46	750	-4.11%	2.22%	7.50%	7.50%
Botany Bay	57	760	7.14%	4.19%	7.86%	8.89%
Lane Cove	62	900	-2.11%	3.25%	5.56%	7.92%
Leichhardt	177	835	1.88%	3.45%	7.72%	8.58%
Marrickville	221	800	2.13%	3.23%	8.95%	8.85%
Mosman*	41	1675	18.40%	0.58%	12.16%	9.51%
North Sydney	64	970	6.25%	8.33%	9.47%	9.17%
Randwick	188	998	-1.04%	2.35%	9.00%	8.57%
Sydney	173	797	0.63%	4.62%	9.28%	8.45%
Waverley	77	1300	-2.00%	4.50%	7.31%	8.76%
Woollahra	85	1395	14.42%	3.80%	4.88%	5.63%
Middle Ring LGAs	2403	600	2.50%	3.21%	7.57%	7.30%
Auburn	157	500	14.00%	5.33%	11.11%	9.25%
Bankstown	378	500	4.00%	3.64%	8.57%	7.38%
Burwood	41	650	0.00%	2.61%	7.57%	7.50%
Canterbury	232	580	0.88%	3.00%	7.56%	7.50%
Canada Bay	114	750	-3.00%	2.05%	7.43%	7.13%
Hunters Hill	26	900	-5.00%	4.36%	3.77%	8.57%
Hurstville	140	600	2.63%	4.00%	8.00%	7.19%
Kogarah	80	570	0.42%	3.08%	6.67%	7.00%
Ku-Ring-Gai	246	1000	1.70%	4.59%	8.17%	8.06%
Manly	85	1250	-4.00%	4.55%	7.14%	10.19%
Parramatta	355	500	0.00%	2.22%	7.24%	6.63%
Rockdale	178	600	6.90%	2.55%	7.71%	7.65%
Ryde	205	665	0.00%	2.41%	7.11%	7.04%
Strathfield	41	700	-1.52%	4.07%	7.33%	7.26%
Willoughby	125	1100	10.00%	6.83%	8.49%	8.75%
Outer Ring LGAs	8818	480	2.13%	4.00%	7.78%	7.97%
The Hills	557	650	1.54%	2.96%	6.50%	7.00%
Blacktown	1444	450	0.00%	3.68%	8.00%	7.50%
Blue Mountains	304	420	0.60%	4.14%	8.37%	8.20%
Camden	472	510	0.00%	3.11%	7.93%	9.05%
Campbelltown	643	420	0.00%	3.33%	7.50%	7.00%
Fairfield	476	450	0.00%	2.50%	8.00%	7.16%
Gosford	741	470	0.00%	4.32%	6.98%	7.50%
Hawkesbury	202	463	0.00%	3.68%	7.65%	7.50%
Holroyd	272	480	0.00%	2.86%	8.11%	7.31%
Hornsby	367	660	0.75%	3.28%	7.76%	7.05%
Liverpool	605	500	0.00%	2.22%	7.86%	7.50%
Penrith	948	450	0.00%	3.68%	7.65%	7.50%
Pittwater	152	993	-2.16%	4.13%	6.45%	7.93%
Sutherland	308	660	3.08%	2.33%	6.96%	7.88%
Warringah	270	900	1.69%	3.68%	6.98%	8.24%
Wollondilly	131	450	6.50%	7.14%	9.59%	9.84%
Wyong	926	400	2.56%	4.24%	7.39%	7.50%
Rest of Greater Metropolitan Region	3450	400	0.00%	2.22%	6.00%	7.50%
Kiama	68	500	0.50%	3.81%	7.86%	8.89%
Lake Macquarie	802	400	0.00%	2.86%	6.67%	8.33%
Maitland	369	380	0.00%	0.27%	5.20%	7.67%
Newcastle	720	400	5.00%	2.70%	6.80%	8.55%
Port Stephens	339	400	5.26%	2.86%	6.67%	8.33%
Shellharbour	263	460	9.52%	5.56%	8.40%	8.53%
Wollongong	561	470	4.35%	5.26%	8.11%	8.33%

Source: Rent and Sales Report

Regional Rents

The following tables show two bedroom units and three bedroom houses median rents across 15 Local Government Areas containing the most populous regional centres in New South Wales.

We have restricted our analysis here to 15 regional centres due to the small numbers of bonds lodged in a quarter in

some areas of New South Wales. The Rent and Sales Report does contain all Local Government Areas across the state.

Unlike the Sydney Greater Metropolitan Region, data prior to 1998 is no longer easily accessible. We intend to include older data in future editions.

2 bedroom units	Median Rent Mar 2016	Increase over the last year	5 years average yearly increase	10 years average yearly increase
Albury	190	0.00%	3.38%	3.57%
Coffs Harbour	280	0.00%	4.35%	6.47%
Wagga Wagga	223	1.14%	0.23%	5.34%
Port Macquarie-Hastings	290	1.75%	4.17%	7.06%
Tamworth Regional	240	0.00%	2.86%	5.00%
Orange	240	5.49%	0.21%	4.55%
Wingecaribee	310	-1.59%	4.80%	7.71%
Dubbo	230	9.52%	6.29%	7.69%
Bathurst Regional	260	4.00%	4.76%	5.03%
Shoalhaven	260	-3.70%	4.76%	6.25%
Lismore	240	4.35%	0.87%	5.48%
Greater Taree	240	4.35%	5.26%	6.00%
Ballina	330	3.94%	4.44%	5.00%
Armidale Dumaresq	230	-2.13%	1.90%	5.86%
Goulburn Mulwaree	240	9.09%	8.24%	7.78%

3 bedroom houses	Median Rent Mar 2016	Increase over the last year	5 years average yearly increase	10 years average yearly increase
Albury	280	0.00%	0.93%	2.73%
Coffs Harbour	390	2.63%	2.94%	5.29%
Wagga Wagga	308	2.67%	1.24%	2.83%
Port Macquarie-Hastings	395	0.64%	3.24%	6.12%
Tamworth Regional	310	0.00%	2.14%	4.76%
Orange	310	-3.13%	-1.21%	4.09%
Wingecaribee	460	15.00%	7.06%	10.91%
Dubbo	315	1.61%	4.23%	5.75%
Bathurst Regional	320	0.00%	2.07%	4.55%
Shoalhaven	350	6.06%	5.00%	6.67%
Lismore	340	3.03%	2.30%	4.17%
Greater Taree	320	4.92%	3.70%	5.24%
Ballina	450	7.14%	5.00%	5.00%
Armidale Dumaresq	330	0.00%	2.00%	5.00%
Goulburn Mulwaree	330	6.45%	3.57%	6.92%

Source: Rent and Sales Report

Sources:

Family and Community Services, 1995-2016, *Rent and Sales Report* Nos. 35, 36, 77, 97, 113, 117.

Rent and Sales Reports are available here: <http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au/about-us/reports-plans-and-papers/rent-and-sales-reports>

Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016, *Consumer Price Index: 6401.0, Table 9.*

Australian Property Monitors, 2010, *Rental Report, December 2010*

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