

Brisbane sees the sharpest decline in rental affordability in the nation during 2022

Today's release of the national Rental Affordability Index (RAI) report has highlighted Queensland's rental crisis, with some of the least affordable areas in the country.

Greater Brisbane has hit a low point for rental affordability, and regional Queensland is the least affordable regional market in Australia.

The RAI developed by National Shelter and SGS Economics & Planning measures housing stress by indicating rental costs relative to household incomes.

Brisbane suburbs that have experienced a notable decline in rental affordability in 2022 include those in the eastern suburbs from Yeerongpilly through to Birkdale. Suburbs on the outskirts of Greater Brisbane, including Woodford, Rosewood, Sandstone Point and Caboolture, declined in affordability by between 10-20% over the past year.

Rental affordability in regional Queensland reached a historic low point. People seeking affordability because they are pushed from cities towards the regions are much less likely to find housing they can afford.

The downward trend in affordability also continued on the Gold Coast in 2022, as well as in Cairns and other regional cities and towns.

This data follows on the heels of last week's Community Housing Institute Association report into unmet housing need which showed Queensland regions including Gold Coast, Logan Beaudesert, Sunshine Coast and Ipswich, were among regions with the highest levels of unmet housing need in the country.

Similarly, the latest Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) rental vacancy data shows September was the ninth consecutive quarter with vacancy rates below one per cent.

The RAI report's Household Snapshots help put a human face to these numbers, and Q Shelter's Executive Director, Fiona Caniglia, says that their members are seeing the real-life stories play out across Queensland every day.

'If you are a single pensioner living in Brisbane spending 53% of your weekly income on rent then life is really tough. It isn't possible to pay for other living costs, and people go without. It can mean people become more isolated because they can't afford the cost of participating in opportunities to be socially connected. We are hearing from people who are in a state of chronic anxiety about their future'.

For young people on a job seeker payment and rent assistance, it's even worse. Young people can end up spending 94% of their income on rent.

As the Queensland Housing Summit Report is due for release, it is vital we focus on implementing real solutions throughout Queensland.

'There have already been positive announcements about investment in housing and support. We hope the Summit sets us on a path to systemic reform combined with investment in

supply. We also hope to see enhancements for Specialist Homelessness Services as well as investment in support for vulnerable households to sustain tenancies’.

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Q Shelter Executive Director, Fiona Caniglia, and Q Shelter Manager of Policy and Strategic Engagement, Jackson Hills are available for further comment and interview.

NOTES FOR THE EDITOR

About the Rental Affordability Index:

National Shelter, The Brotherhood of St Laurence, and SGS Economics and Planning started releasing the Rental Affordability Index (RAI) on a biannual basis in 2015, and on an annual basis since 2019.

The RAI is a price index for housing rental markets, and is a clear and concise indicator of rental affordability relative to household incomes, applied to geographic areas across Australia. The report assesses the rental affordability situation for various Australian household types, focusing on cohorts at risk of rental stress.

The RAI uses the 30 percent of income rule, with individuals, couples and families paying close to 30 percent or more of their income on rent generally seen to be in housing stress. RAI scores relate to the severity of housing affordability, and scores of 100 and less indicate that households spend 30 per cent or more of their income on rent.

About Q Shelter

For over 35 years, Q Shelter has worked as a peak body to improve housing outcomes for Queenslanders.

Over this time, we have remained an unwavering voice for solutions through advocacy, strategic engagement and capacity building.

Besides influencing solutions and policy, Q Shelter provides professional development and shares resources to assist other organisations to be effective, so that our combined capacity to respond to housing need is strengthened.

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