

WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH 2023 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Q Shelter urges community to support vital rental reforms

With more Queenslanders renting in an increasingly tight rental market, peak body Q Shelter is calling on property owners, real estate agencies, and the broader community to support reforms that protect tenants.

The latest REIQ rental vacancy report shows the rental market continues to be strained, with some of the lowest vacancy rates on record. Most parts of Queensland are well under 1%, which is considered extremely tight.

‘Queensland needs to embrace reforms that limit rent increases and that reduce the number of increases to only one per 12 months,’ says Fiona Caniglia, Q Shelter’s Executive Director.

‘The level of uncertainty and fear of the future is driving deepening anxiety among renters. People cannot pay escalating rents and should not have to face more than one rent increase in a year’.

‘The rising costs of mortgage holders is acknowledged but renters can only absorb so much before they tip into homelessness or the risk of homelessness’.

‘The community, including property owners, need to step up and actively support reasonable reforms that aim to provide people with the most fundamental aspect of wellbeing: a secure and affordable home’.

‘People can’t settle, connect to services, or sustain connections at school if they are constantly uprooted’.

‘We know that families are going without other things because rents are rising too fast and too much. This means children can’t participate in recreational and social activities that connect them to friends and the community. People can’t afford excursions at school or the cost of groceries, fuel and utilities’.

Q Shelter is calling for acceleration in the provision of build-to-rent housing, a housing model that is underpinned by institutional investment.

‘Build-to-rent helps move towards greater stability for renters because institutional investment creates long-term tenure. Individual owners of investment properties leave many tenants vulnerable to market changes and individual choices about that property’.

Q Shelter has heard from property owners that have prevented excessive rent increases because they know renters are struggling and they value their tenants.

‘We spoke to one property owner who decided against market rent increases for the sake of their tenants. They saw an opportunity to help and they did.’

‘Another property owner rejected a proposed increase and asked the agent to consult the tenant instead.’

‘While we need rental system reforms to provide certainty, there is nothing to stop landlords and real estate agencies from doing the right thing in the interim’.

‘The housing crisis is a community-wide challenge and there is a role for everyone to support real solutions now. The broader community can step up to ensure their elected representatives know that they support reform so that people have a more certain future.’

Q Shelter is part of the Make Renting Fair in Queensland Alliance, which supports progressive reform of renting laws so that all Queenslanders can make the place they live in their home, whether they rent or own.

ENDS

Media opportunities available by appointment with Q Shelter Executive Director Fiona Caniglia, and Policy Manager Jackson Hills.

Q Shelter Media Contacts: Helen Gearing and David Hill – Phone **0432 433 719** or **07 3831 5900** or email comms@qshelter.asn.au