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# Rental hunger games: Where QLD tenants should look now

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5–6 minutes

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Queensland tenants desperate for a reprieve from the rental hunger games should look beyond the city, with 12 locations offering higher vacancy rates and cheaper housing.

A report by MCG Quantity Surveyors looked at over 70 suburbs outside of the major capital cities nationally, identifying “welcoming rental markets” in each state.

The results were then narrowed down to include only those suburbs with vacancy rates of 2 per cent or higher and at least five vacant rentals.

It was a task that managing director Mike Mortlock said spotlighted “the acute scarcity impacting broader regions”.

“The allure of regional living is becoming increasingly irresistible, especially as urban centres continue to tighten their hold on renters,” he said.

“For those feeling the urban rental market’s pinch, these regional areas provide more than just a residence; they offer a chance to be part of a community.”



*129 Bundock Street, Belgian Gardens, is listed for \$500 a week*

But it was slim pickings in Queensland, with just 12 SA2 areas making the cut compared to 26 each in NSW and Victoria, both of which have seen substantial migration to the Sunshine State since the start of the pandemic in 2020.

“While the list may be smaller than desired, it underscores the reality of Australia’s tight rental market,” the report said.

Of the 12 areas that made the cut in Queensland, Woodford-D’Aguilar had the highest vacancy rate at 3.32 per cent, with typical units and houses renting for \$365 and \$620 respectively.

The area includes suburbs such as Mount Mee, Neurum, Belthorpe, Woodford, D’Aguilar and Delaneys Creek.



*114 Durundur Street, Woodford, is listed for \$620 a week*

Belgian Gardens-Pallarenda in Townsville has the second biggest vacancy rate at 3.2 per cent, with typical units and houses renting for \$390 and \$575.

The statistical area includes some of the garrison city’s most desirable suburbs, including Rowes Bay.

Cambooya-Wyreema in the Toowoomba region, which includes suburbs such as Hodgson Vale, Top Camp, Mount Rascal and Preston, has the third most renter-friendly vacancy rate at 2.7 per cent, with a typical house costing \$460 a week.



*2B Esmeralda St, Cambooya, is listed for \$330*

In Greater Brisbane, the best options for tenants can be found at Narangba (2.22%) and Burpengary East (2.02%), with units typically going for \$500 and houses between \$580 (Narangba) and \$600 (Burpengary East).



*73 Cambus Circuit, Narangba, is listed for \$600 a week*

The cheapest locale was the Banana shire area, which is inland from Rockhampton and Mackay.

Rents there typically range between \$220 (units) and \$360 (houses), according to the report.

Kin Kora-Sun Valley (2.61%), The Range-Allenstown (2.17%), Frenchville-Mount Archer (2.39%), Oonoonba (2.15%) Bargara-Burnett Heads (2.05%) and Landsborough (2.06%) also made the top 12 list for Queensland based on vacancy rates and relative affordability.

“As remote work transitions from a temporary solution to a permanent fixture, the geographical bonds tying us to metropolitan centres are weakening, unlocking the doors to Australia’s regional treasures,” the report said.

“This shift presents an unparalleled opportunity for renters.

“It’s not just about finding a new place to live; it’s about discovering communities where the cost of living aligns more closely with quality of life.”

The report comes after SuburbTrends revealed that Queensland tenants could be facing rent hikes of more than \$300 a week by the end of the year.

The analysis found that the average rent for a unit in Brisbane is expected to jump from \$546 a week currently to \$729 per week by the end of the year — almost as much as the average house rent of \$774.

But in suburbs like Regents Park, Bray Park, and Sandgate, tenants are facing rises of around 50 per cent or about \$250 a week for units. On the Gold Coast, similar increases in rent are predicted in Mermaid Waters, which would push the weekly cost of leasing a unit up by \$326 to \$1066.

SuburbTrends founder Kent Lardner said the meteoric predicted rise in unit rents was being driven by affordability.

“People are being squeezed out of houses, so they’re going into units and that’s driving rents higher,” Mr Lardner said.

The latest figures from PropTrack reveal Queensland’s available rental pool has shrunk by almost two thirds in just four years, with the share of rental properties vacant and available in both Brisbane and regional Queensland now 58 per cent lower than it was four years ago.

Despite this, Queensland’s population increased by more than 138,000 people in 2022/23 alone, with record overseas migration accounting for 84,000 of those new residents.