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Regional areas emerge as sanctuaries from the rental crisis

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Renters are being drawn to regional areas to escape the housing crisis.

The rental crisis continues to put renters under extreme pressure, however, new research has found a number of regional areas are emerging as “sanctuaries” for renters in search of relief.

MCG Quantity Surveyors found that there is a growing trend among Australians to reassess their living arrangements amidst the tough housing conditions in the capital cities.

Renters are currently drawn to regions like Armidale in NSW and Churchill in Victoria, which offer more rental options and a better lifestyle.

[MCG Quantity Surveyors](#) Managing Director, [Mike Mortlock](#), said the regions were appealing to a lot more renters.

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

He said the move to the regions started gaining traction during Covid, but the rental crisis had piqued the interest of tenants as well.

According to the research, in NSW, areas such as Armidale, Tamworth – North, and Orange and its surrounds, emerge as attractive options, offering a mix of affordability and lifestyle, with [vacancy rates](#) ranging from 2.04 per cent to 3.59 per cent and rents for units starting at \$310 per week and houses up to \$590 per week.

Notably, the Berry – Kangaroo Valley and Kiama Hinterland – Gerringong areas present the highest rental figures, underlining their desirability and unique offerings.

Across Victoria, areas like Churchill and Foster, where renters can find solace with vacancy rates of more than 2.86 per cent and rents as modest as \$280 per week for units in Churchill.

The Otway region stands out with a 4.08 per cent vacancy rate, offering a serene retreat amidst nature.

However, areas like Torquay and Lorne – Anglesea highlight the premium on coastal living, with rents reaching up to \$700 per week for houses.

In Queensland, locations such as Banana and Kin Kora – Sun Valley provide affordable options with vacancy rates above 2.43 per cent and unit rents starting at \$220 per week.

The coastal charm of Bargara – Burnett Heads and the serene lifestyle in Belgian Gardens – Pallarenda also offer appealing choices for sea changers, with vacancy rates conducive to a less stressful search for a new home.

South Australia's Renmark Surrounds shine with a vacancy rate of 5.21 per cent, presenting the best rental market conditions alongside affordable living options.

Tanunda and Nuriootpa, in the Barossa Valley, offer a combination of culture and convenience with vacancy rates above 2 per cent, catering to both wine enthusiasts and those seeking a peaceful community.

While in Western Australia, Mandurah – North and Busselton and surrounds are prime locations for renters looking for a blend of beach life and regional tranquility, with vacancy rates comfortably above 3 per cent and rents reflecting the premium on coastal living.

The research looked at more than 70 suburbs outside the capital cities, with vacancy rates above 2 per cent and at least five available rentals.

Mr Mortlock said the regions offered a lot more than just the availability of housing.

“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,” he said.

Mr Mortlock said the shift towards regional markets is a critical opportunity for change, given the appeal of these less congested areas.

“This trend is particularly timely for property owners in these regions, who find themselves well-placed to welcome new tenants fleeing the city’s constraints,” he said.

“This movement not only offers renters a chance at comfort and affordability but also benefits property owners, capitalising on the growing demand in these newly coveted areas.”