

Be.Bendigo
www.bebendigo.com.au

Phone - (03) 5442 7816
Email - admin@bebendigo.com.au

276 Hargreaves Mall, Bendigo

PO Box 113
Bendigo Central, Victoria 3552

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Be.Bendigo welcomes the Regional Australia Institute's February *Regional Jobs Update*, highlighting issues associated with skills shortages in Regional areas.

The Report, notes that "Bendigo & High Country" vacancies grew by 50 per cent in the twelve months to December 2021, and was one of only two regions in Victoria that did not experience a seasonal dip in vacancies in December.

"This reinforces the stories we have been hearing from businesses in Bendigo regarding difficulties in attracting staff and filling vacancies right across the skills spectrum", said Interim CEO of Be.Bendigo, Rob Stephenson.

"In a recent survey we conducted, support in helping to attract skilled professionals to Bendigo was highlighted as a major issue for 2022, and this was coupled with concerns regarding a shortage of appropriate rental and other residential accommodation for those seeking to make the move."

"One of the potential impacts of the Covid-related exodus to regional areas, is that 'work from home' rules have meant that many professionals have relocated but are continuing to work remotely in Melbourne-based roles. This is likely to be exacerbating the issue in the short-term, but as people settle into the Bendigo community, it is hoped that they will also look toward the added benefits of becoming part of the local business community as well."

Mr Stephenson also stressed the importance of young people becoming more connected to the world of work, and understanding more about their interests and strengths, and where the jobs of the future were likely to be. "That will enable them to choose the courses and training they will need to fill the well-paying, rewarding roles that are continuing to develop in the region", he said.

Contact: Rob Stephenson, Interim CEO, Be.Bendigo 0429 447 823

Source: <http://www.regionalaustralia.org.au/home/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Internet-Vacancy-Index-Quarterly-update-Dec-2021-RAI.pdf>