



Speech by

Hon. R. SCHWARTEN

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Hansard 19 November 1998

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Riverview Community Renewal Project

Hon. R. E. SCHWARTEN (Rockhampton— ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Minister for Housing) (9.56 a.m.), by leave: I wish to inform the House of progress on the Riverview community renewal project at Ipswich. As honourable members would know, the Community Renewal Program commenced at Leichhardt at Ipswich in 1995. It has since encompassed about a dozen projects of various sizes around the State in areas containing a high concentration of public housing. This year, we have injected an additional \$7.5m into the Statewide program, taking the total budget to \$27m.

The Riverview project was also started in 1995. To date, 190 public housing dwellings have been upgraded and 228 houses have been fenced at a cost of \$4.8m. The Ipswich Moreton Community Apprenticeship Scheme has been the contractor at Riverview and has employed an average of 21 apprentices for every 20 houses upgraded. Since 1995, a total of 32 apprentices have completed their apprenticeships at Riverview. In the same period, a further six trainees have been employed. The project's budget for 1998-99 is \$1.5m, some of which will help fund the upgrading of almost 50 houses.

Recently I was pleased to approve the provision of a surplus public housing dwelling for use as a Police Beat at Riverview. This shows what can be achieved for local communities when Ministers such as my colleague the Minister for Police and I are committed to worthwhile projects such as the Community Renewal Program. As has already been proved at Riverview, urban renewal projects can result in a substantial drop in crime, as well as a fall in the fear of crime. At Riverview, local police report a 60% decline in crime over the past few years.

This Government has shown that results will flow when urban renewal schemes focus on people, and not just on bricks and mortar. Since becoming the Minister for Housing, I have stressed the need to involve local communities in urban renewal programs. This is a view shared by the local member for the Riverview area and my ministerial colleague the member for Bundamba, Bob Gibbs. As part of that process, a review of the Riverview Community Action Plan is due to begin soon and will work in conjunction with representatives of local residents and the Ipswich City Council. The Government's commitment to community renewal in Riverview is strong and will continue.
