




Speech by

Ian Walker

MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

Hansard Thursday, 1 November 2012

ROCHEDALE COMMUNITY GARDEN

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (8.58 pm): It was my great pleasure on 23 September to attend a wonderful event in my electorate. That was the regular meeting of the Rochedale Community Garden. This is a wonderful community initiative in the Mansfield electorate which has grown quite dramatically in a very short time thanks to the dedication of its many members. Since its first meeting in June this year, a 600-square-metre plot of land that has been vacant for 14 years has been turned into a large, thriving community space. Close to 100 different types of vegetables, fruits and herbs have now been planted, and membership of the Rochedale Community Garden has doubled to about 35 to 36 families. People come from Rochedale, Mackenzie, Daisy Hill and Kuraby to experience and enjoy this garden, which is really the only facility of its type in that area. It is a great project and it has the potential to create a real sense of community and connection to the environment.

The garden helps educate people, particularly children, about where their food comes from and how it is grown. It also encourages people to be closer to their source of food. In doing so, it manages to take the conversation about big issues like food security and sustainability down to a local, practical level. It also has the obvious benefit of feeding the volunteers and their families.

I would like to draw particular attention to the garden's founding members—Steve Griffin, the president, and Carolyn Collins, the vice-president, whose leadership and dedication are in fact the backbone of this project. Steve has donated the land on which the garden is based as well as materials used in the construction of the garden beds. Carolyn, who runs Turner's Garden Centre on Miles Platting Road at Rochedale, has contributed garden products and plants and her vast knowledge and experience of horticulture. They have both donated a significant portion of their time and energy to get the garden underway.

I would urge people to drop in and have a look. The address is 160 Rochedale Road, Rochedale. The formal meetings are each Sunday afternoon from three o'clock. There is one this coming Sunday afternoon. It is great to encourage your family and children, in particular, to get involved. There is a membership fee of \$40 per family.

So what is next for the garden? They have received some grant money from Councillor Adrian Schrinner for a composting toilet to be situated on-site. They are building a shed and some more garden areas and they would like to move towards a permanent shelter and a clean storage facility. Those are the aims for the garden in the forthcoming months and years. I very much look forward to working with them and watching the garden grow. I encourage the residents of the Mansfield electorate to go and join the garden.