




Speech By
Rob Molhoek

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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ADJOURNMENT

Horizon Housing

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (10.15 pm): A little over 20 years ago, a group of women of various ages and backgrounds gathered at Lifeline, Broadbeach and planted the seed of Gold Coast Vision Housing, now Horizon Housing. They were all in need of housing and could see this need was widespread on the Gold Coast. They were not looking for handouts, but were prepared to work on a voluntary basis towards their goal. In September 1993, Gold Coast Vision Housing was incorporated. It was a housing company not just for the now, but with a vision for housing into the future on the Gold Coast. The first funding grant came in 1995 and five duplexes were purchased. Three of the original members still occupy them today.

With a change of government policy in the mid-2000s came the realisation that to grow an amalgamation with another organisation was necessary. This was an extremely brave and risky decision at the time and one that demonstrated the enduring commitment of the Gold Coast Vision Housing members. At the time, Gold Coast Vision Housing was already sharing an office and staff with a similar organisation called Gold Coast Community Housing Association. In November 2007, a unanimous vote saw those two organisations amalgamate and become Gold Coast Housing Company.

Over the coming years, members continued to work towards providing community housing and developing a housing company that was well positioned to grow affordable housing. This was aided when, in 2007, local philanthropist Maree Alexanderson generously donated the land on which the company's first affordable housing accommodation was developed. Over the coming years, the Queensland government awarded \$15 million to the company to increase the portfolio of affordable housing stock on the Gold Coast, which assisted in achieving the company's aim of providing the Gold Coast region with a wider choice of housing options. While continuing the vital business of providing community housing through various programs, from 2007 to 2009, the company also focussed on expanding the supply of affordable housing for people in housing stress, redefining the role of the Gold Coast Housing Company as both a community and affordable housing manager and developer.

By late 2010, the Gold Coast Housing Company became Horizon Housing Company to reflect its expansion and operation outside of South-East Queensland. Throughout the years, the dedicated team at Horizon Housing has continued to build on strong relationships with its various partners and supporters and great efforts have been made to develop new relationships with other community organisations, industry bodies and prospective building industry partners. From this long journey, Horizon Housing has emerged as Queensland's largest non-profit housing provider, with a staff of

more than 60 and the management of more than 1,800 properties covering 17 regional councils from the Tweed through to Townsville.

In this time, Horizon Housing has been able to help over 3,000 people find safe, secure and affordable accommodation and will continue to be there to support our communities long into the future. From the end of 2007 to today, its housing portfolio has grown by more than 700 per cent, which is made up of social and affordable housing. While Horizon is still based in the heart of the Gold Coast, it has recently expanded to cover resource communities such as Roma and Miles, where market rents are on an upward trend, leading to a growing need for affordable housing for key workers. Horizon Housing is a strong and dedicated partner of the Department of Housing and Public Works—

(Time expired)

Mr MOLHOEK: I seek leave to have the remaining sentence incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

—and is committed to assist Minister Mander in delivering the recently released Housing 2020 Strategy.