




Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Record of Proceedings, 11 March 2021

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Housing Affordability

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.24 pm): At the moment in this state we are facing a housing affordability crisis. It is incredibly important that we address this as quickly as we can. First home buyers are now basically unable to enter the market. We have people who cannot afford rent—in fact, there is a bidding war for rent—and our most vulnerable people on the social housing waiting list simply cannot get the homes they need. I could talk about that, but it is best if we actually experience what people are feeling themselves.

I received this message from a person just north of my electorate in the last couple of days and it really tugs at my heart. She says—

I appreciate you getting in touch. I am very anxious about my situation and very embarrassed. I cannot get a loan to move as I do not have the money up-front to pay for a move. I cannot find a rental place within my budget to support me and my three kids. I have no family here and they cannot help either. I am on my own and it is scary. I am struggling to find another job so I can break this cycle. Everything is going up but my salary. I work full-time yet I am unable to provide for my kids and put a roof over their head. The current owners are selling and I need to be out when the lease ends on 24 April. I am selling off things to help me to get funds to get by. I cannot move so far away from work or the kids' school as that will affect them as they see their dad on occasions and I do not want to uproot them and upset them. I can't sleep and most days is now a blur. I feel as if I'm just doing things emotionless. The feeling of being homeless soon is worse than my divorce I didn't want. I know I'm not the only one in this situation. How can this be? No-one is helping or listening. I have never felt more alone in my life. I'm scared. I'm terrified.

These are the sorts of stories about what is happening now. I know that every electorate office across the state would be hearing similar stories. We have an obligation to respond to this. The government must have a plan.

We have a situation at the moment where those on the social housing waiting list with very high needs number 16,000 people. That is an increase of 80 per cent over the last 18 months. We have an affordable housing crisis coming up as well with the NRAS scheme finishing. We have people who need help with regards to affordable housing. We need schemes from the government. We need to unleash the community housing sector, those that are best positioned to provide affordable housing. What I am hearing from the sector is that the government is competing with them rather than facilitating the construction of houses that are needed.

This goes far beyond politics. Shelter is a basic human right, and that is not being guaranteed at the moment by this government, which does not have a plan to address this crisis.