



Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Enoch**


**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**

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Record of Proceedings, 22 June 2022

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Social and Affordable Housing; Neighbourhood and Community Centres**

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Alger—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (10.01 am): Many communities and industries across Queensland have been impacted by rising cost-of-living pressures, the flow-on effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent flooding events. That is why we are investing a record \$2.9 billion in social and affordable housing over four years. This will increase the social and affordable housing supply by almost 10,000 over the life of the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027, including 7,400 new homes under the current Housing and Homelessness Action Plan to be commenced by June 2025. Last year's record investment of \$2.9 billion remains intact. Our target under this investment remains the same, as it responds to constraints that are being felt across the nation.

We have a proven track record, with 4,153 new social and affordable homes commenced across the state since the Palaszczuk government came to office. This includes us being on track to meet our target for this year of 727 new social homes commenced.

We are not just building new homes; we are also helping Queenslanders right across the system to find housing solutions. In fact, just last year my department helped Queenslanders with over 205,000 forms of housing assistance. We also acted quickly during the South-East Queensland floods to expand the eligibility for bond loans and rental grants, easing added pressure on people in the private rental market.

Last week we launched our Help to Home initiative. This program is designed to encourage investors sitting on vacant properties to sign up to a government headlease. As I explained yesterday, it incentivises private investors to sign up, with a guaranteed lease for two years and three months rent in advance paid each quarter. This will mean 1,000 more housing solutions for vulnerable Queenslanders.

Neighbourhood and community centres in communities across Queensland also play a vital role in supporting Queenslanders impacted by cost-of-living pressures. Neighbourhood centres have reported significant increases in presentations from community members requiring assistance with emergency relief and responses to increased costs of living. That is why the Palaszczuk government is providing an additional \$115.8 million of funding over four years to support and expand our network of 127 government funded neighbourhood and community centres. This includes \$51.8 million to support the largest single increase in base operational funding for neighbourhood and community centres. This will allow them to hire more staff, to deliver more services and supports for people in need and to run more programs and activities in the community.

Each of our 127 state government funded neighbourhood and community centres will now receive base funding of at least \$230,000—up from the present minimum of around \$124,000. This is great news for communities. I know that every single member in this House who has a community and

neighbourhood centre is very pleased to be able to support them. This boosts our investment in neighbourhood and community centre operational funding from \$12.7 million in 2013-14 under the LNP to \$31.05 million in 2022-23 under this Palaszczuk government.

We are also committing \$39 million to build or significantly redevelop centres in areas of greatest need. This is in addition to our investment of \$4.55 million for a new neighbourhood and community centre for Rockhampton that I was thrilled to announce last week along with the member for Rockhampton and the member for Keppel, who is a great supporter. Neighbourhood and community centres are at the front line of local responses to social isolation and loneliness. They have also reported increased presentations relating to mental health.

At the heart of this budget is the historic Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan. Our record health investment to deliver three new hospitals, 11 hospital expansions and 2,509 extra hospital beds, and a record investment in mental health, will be complemented by our record investment in neighbourhood and community centres across Queensland. Our record investment in neighbourhood and community centres will play an important role in supporting early intervention for many in our communities impacted by mental health concerns.

We continue to work with homelessness services, with a \$122 million investment to support those most at risk. These are Queensland solutions to national issues impacting health systems, communities and housing across our country. Through our record investment in housing, neighbourhood and community centres and health care, our government is supporting some of the most vulnerable community members across Queensland.