



Speech By
Martin Hunt

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

Record of Proceedings, 26 August 2025

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Nambour, Community Safety

 **Mr HUNT** (Nicklin—LNP) (2.42 pm): I rise today to speak on an issue that has become a deep concern for my community of Nambour and across the Nicklin electorate—that is, the growing challenge of community safety, particularly in the context of homelessness. For more than a decade, Labor neglected the housing system and that neglect left us with a full-blown housing crisis—one that is now playing out on the streets of Nambour in a very real and visible way. The community has made their voices heard, and I want to particularly thank local Helen Tagg, who presented a petition to council for urgent action, with over 1,500 signatures from locals. They want to be able to walk their dog in the dog park, take their children to the playground at Quota park and enjoy our green spaces.

Nambour has always been a town of compassion, looking after our most vulnerable, but over recent months the number of people sleeping rough in Nambour has doubled or even tripled according to reports from those working in outreach services. This has not just happened by chance. With the neighbouring council's enforcement activities against illegal camping in parks, more people have been pushed into Nambour. As a result, we are seeing more tents along creeks, in parks and in public spaces. This is not safe for families and it is not safe for those experiencing homelessness themselves, particularly given that Nambour has endured three significant floods in the past year.

Last week we welcomed the minister, Sam O'Connor, and we held a meeting with important stakeholders, including Sunshine Coast Council, housing officials, health officials, police and, importantly, people who have lived experience of homelessness. We brought everyone to the table to identify both short- and long-term solutions. This is not an issue that one level of government can solve alone. The state has a responsibility, and we are acting. I can confirm that the HOME teams from housing have doubled their outreach presence in Nambour. They are engaging with rough sleepers, offering assistance and working hard to find safe accommodation alternatives. Minister O'Connor has been in Nambour twice in the past fortnight. Along with the meeting with stakeholders, he has joined me walking the streets and parks, engaging with rough sleepers and seeing firsthand the challenges we face. That is what a government that cares looks like—listening and acting, working alongside the community to find answers.

The Queensland police have also responded locally, with increased operations and patrols. Ultimately, it is the Sunshine Coast Council that needs to make decisions around managing local parks. While it is not my role to dictate their decisions, I have been working closely with them to try to identify solutions so that families in Nambour can once again enjoy Quota park, the dog park and other important recreational areas. At the same time, my commitment to community safety in Nambour is rock solid. That is why I fought for and secured a permanent police beat shopfront in Nambour's CBD which will be delivered by the end of this year. This is something the people of Nambour have asked for for years and something that will make a difference.

I want to acknowledge that our home town of Nambour is facing a difficult situation with no easy solutions. Our town cares deeply about those who are homeless but we also care about the safety and amenity of our public spaces. The community have been patient and they have been compassionate, but they also deserve action. Nambour is a proud, resilient town. Our people deserve to feel safe, and they deserve a government that backs them. After 10 years of decline and neglect under Labor, they finally have a government that is listening, acting and determined to deliver results, particularly when it comes to longer term housing solutions.

Yesterday I was pleased to tour the Common Ground supportive housing project in Brisbane with Sunshine Coast Mayor Rosanna Natoli and Councillor David Law to see what might be possible on the Sunshine Coast to deliver this housing first model to better support those with barriers to tenancy, including addictions and mental health issues. Those longer term plans and discussions continue while we also look to urgently address the immediate need in Nambour. I can assure the people of Nambour that I will keep fighting every day to make Nambour a safer, stronger and more vibrant community for all.