

Question on Notice
No. 432
Asked on 13 March 2008

MR GIBSON asked the Minister for Public Works, Housing and Information and Communication Technology (MR SCHWARTEN)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Gympie Electorate which is currently experiencing a chronic housing shortage with very little public housing available and as private rentals are prohibitive to anyone on a low income and as I am aware of the Hilltop Motel project that will provide some relief to the situation when it comes on line mid-year but still falls a long way short of what is required to provide adequate long term public housing—

Will the Minister advise what permanent public housing is planned for the near future in the Gympie Electorate?

ANSWER:

In recent years, the costs of properties to purchase and rent have soared throughout Queensland, placing accommodation out of reach of many low income earners. While the department is committed to improving the lives of individuals and families by providing access to appropriate housing solutions and contributing to the sustainability of communities across Queensland, the demand for assistance continues to increase at a faster pace than the resources available to meet this demand. The department is working with the Australian Government to develop a national rental affordability scheme that will assist to increase the supply of affordable private rental properties for people in housing need.

The last State Budget saw a State Government housing assistance budget of \$719 million, including a \$479 million capital program that will assist more than 250,000 Queenslanders with a housing solution that best meets their needs, for the duration of that need.

Since 1998, the State Government has invested more than \$26 million in the Gympie electorate to deliver social housing assistance to people in need. This has included more than \$20 million in capital works and maintenance of social housing dwellings.

In 2008–09, the Department of Housing plans to complete construction of two, three-bedroom and two, two-bedroom duplex units in the Gympie electorate for an approved budget of \$1.035 million.

Since January 2008, the department has purchased two, two-bedroom duplex units, a four-bedroom detached house and a land development site in the Gympie electorate for an approved budget of \$0.784 million.

The department continues to source suitable land development sites and existing properties in the Gympie electorate. Acquisitions are dependant upon the availability of properties and their ability to meet the department's acquisition criteria.

The department is experiencing unprecedented demand on its services, with more and more people finding they are not able to meet increasing rents in the private sector.