

John Castrilli MLA



Representing the people of Bunbury

Today I am calling on young people in our community to speak up about their experiences in Bunbury's central business district.

As a father of two daughters in their early 20s and as someone who enjoys sampling the city's quality restaurants, I believe we have a serious problem with violence in our CBD.

I have heard too many cases of unprovoked assaults on hotel and nightclub patrons in recent times and assault statistics for the region are soaring.

Several young people I've spoken to say they no longer feel safe while on a night out in Bunbury and prefer to socialise with friends at home.

This apparent trend disturbs me and I fear we may be losing grip of the chief appeal of this city – its friendly, country-town feel.

All regional areas suffer a city drift with young people moving to bigger and brighter pastures but I fear that could worsen in Bunbury if this growing danger continues to take away their social opportunities.

To hear young people say they feel safer partying in Perth has made me realise how serious the situation is and I want it addressed.

I believe the key to reversing this trend is to return a visible police presence to the CBD and I made Liberal Leader Troy Buswell aware of that yesterday when he visited our city.

South West Police are doing their best but they need more hands and feet on the beat to reverse this worrying trend.

As a born and bred South West resident, Mr Buswell has already announced his intention to end the neglect of the booming region's infrastructure and service needs.

And I believe addressing this visible breakdown in law and order is a good place to start that process.

I now want to hear from residents who frequent our CBD to canvass your views, as well the reasons behind why some of you are now staying away.

To share your view please visit www.johncastrilli.com.

While on the topic of anti-social behaviour – I would like to remind people that I have organised a Choose Respect information evening tonight. Choose Respect was developed by an Armadale chaplain to run continuously through schools and the community to promote and foster a culture of respect.

While police resources and our justice system hold the key to curbing the current growth in violence, this program allows us to start making changes to our culture now that will brighten our future.

To attend please RSVP by calling 9791 3636.

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