

John Castrilli MLA



Representing the people of Bunbury

Taking a tougher stance

With great pleasure I deliver only good news in my first column for 2009.

Firstly, I advise that Bunbury has been assigned promised funding that will expand the Closed Circuit Television surveillance network and importantly, employ someone to monitor it.

I made the request for this funding to our new State Government prior to the last election and it is great to now see the delivery of this \$390,000.

In recent years I have been approached by people of all ages who were concerned by a growing scourge of anti-social and violent behavior in our CBD.

These funds will help to stamp out such behaviour which has turned some people away from the great hotels and restaurants we have to offer, particularly on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

It will allow police to better pinpoint where trouble is brewing and respond faster.

Furthermore, I welcome the recent strengthening of penalties for graffiti vandals and hoon drivers. These include:

- Re-forming the successful State Graffiti Taskforce.
- Doubling penalties for graffiti vandals from one years' imprisonment to two years' imprisonment and the maximum fine from \$12,000 to \$24,000.
- Introducing a mandatory three-month impoundment of hoon's vehicles on the second offence, up from 28 days.

Funds to foster Choose Respect

I was pleased to announce the delivery of another important State Government pledge last week.

And that was the release of \$160,000 over four years to support the progression of the Choose Respect initiative in our city.

Choose Respect has successfully fostered and promoted a culture of respect in many schools and other smaller communities in WA where it has already been adopted.

However this is the first time a city has taken it on, and let's hope that Bunbury can one day act as example to others.

Last week's release of State Government funding will allow a part-time coordinator to be employed to drive the initiative further.

The coordinator will be on hand to support the great work already being done by the local community through the Choose Respect Resource Team which formed last year.

I firmly believe this important step towards 'Choosing Respect' will benefit our community greatly into the future by eventually reducing levels of anti-social behaviour, vandalism and violence.

As the old saying goes; 'One generation plants the seed, and the next enjoys the shade.'