

RYDE GLADESVILLE CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION GROUP – SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

RYDE LOCAL COUNCIL CANDIDATES - WHERE DO THEY STAND ON CLIMATE ?

Council elections are on Saturday 13th September and local councils have an important part to play on climate. In 2007 Ryde Council produced a draft Greenhouse Gas Reduction Action Plan (a requirement under a wider Federal government program). Our submission argued that the targets for emissions reductions were out of date, no funding had been allocated and the strategies were token (eg buy books for the library on climate change/ educate staff to turn out lights). We asked Council to send it back to the drawing board. Council ignored our request as well as the suggestions we had proposed for the draft plan. The City of Sydney Council has just announced it is carbon neutral and is purchasing 100% Greenpower. Ryde Council plans to purchase 10%. Local government can do much more than Ryde has.

Ryde Gladesville CCAG think that those who represent us (and get up to \$20,000 a year each), need to be informed and ready to act now. We asked a series of questions of the 26 out of 64 candidates for whom contact details were available on the Australian Electoral Commission website. We had 6 responses. Their answers are below:

	Sarkis Yedelian Independent Central Ward	Zachariah Duke Independent Central Ward	Keir Vaughan-Taylor Labor East Ward	Gabrielle O'Donnell Labor East Ward	Judith Webster Greens East Ward
1. Do you accept that climate change is a severe and immediate threat to the environment in Australia and globally?	Yes definitely	Absolutely! The Howard government did not realise climate change to be an issue, however, he landed "mud on his face".. when he was proven wrong by scientific reports.	Yes	Yes.	Yes - If action is not taken immediately temperature rises will exceed 2 degrees within the next few decades creating more extreme weather events, and major sea level rises. Current estimates indicate that we are on track to a 6 degree rise
2. Would you support strong immediate action by Council to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change for both	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes. This is already being done. Council in 2007 produced an Environmental Strategy. Council is in a strong position to take a	Yes - In NSW Greenhouse gas emissions have risen to 158 million tonnes per year. It is imperative that every level of government work towards reducing

council and the community?				leadership role and to educate the community about what they can do on an individual basis.	these levels.
3. Do you think that council should become carbon neutral within five years ?	Yes	Yes	Five years is an arbitrary time period We should do it sooner if it is possible. While we are constrained by vested interests there are many energy policies that can reduce our carbon footprint,	It is great to have goals such as becoming carbon neutral within 5 years however this may not be possible. As long as Council is heading in the right direction at a reasonable rate I would be satisfied.	Yes
4. Would you undertake to embed sustainable policies within council?	Yes,my track record, my notices of motions in past 4.5 years show that I am already on that track.	Definitely	Yes	No answer	Yes
7. Going beyond the basic BASIX building code, will you support stronger sustainable building and business policies?	Yes, we should think beyond the basic BASIX and encourage further sustainable policies.	Yes. I am a strong believer for building and constructing buildings, roads, footpaths, etc., with eco-friendly materials. This creates a "sustainable" practice and policy towards the environment.	Yes	Going beyond the basic BASIX code means stronger building and business codes. There needs to be a balance between stronger building codes and development and by making things too difficult may mean that we stifle development.	Yes - Residential buildings are responsible for generating more than 20% of all greenhouse gases. Building codes such as BASIX make new buildings more efficient, however even higher building standards are needed to avoid climate chaos. Higher building standards are needed for new structures, and the retrofitting of existing buildings.
8. Would you support residents reducing their emissions through council funding for a comprehensive network of bike path and lanes	Yes, I am a member of Ryde Bicycle Advisory Committee and I supported many new cycleways in Ryde LGA, the latest one was today I	Definitely	Absolutely	Council has increased its funding for bikeways and is working towards a comprehensive network of bikeways. Council is also working towards a system	Yes - there should be better articulation of bike paths with major public transport hubs, schools and shopping centres in the LGA. Many of the

across the LGA ?	participated in Parramatta river foreshore cycleway opening..			of connecting lanes wherever possible especially in the Macquarie Park area.	day-to-day trips within the local community could be undertaken by bike.
9. If financially feasible, would you support the council in bulk buying Solar Hot Water systems for residents to buy at a discount?	Yes	Possibly, with a significant amount of research and surveying done to make sure it is feasible and obviously worthwhile. Personally, I would support the motion.	Hot water systems represent the largest electricity consumption by households,... Gas hot water is more carbon efficient (3 times) than electricity. Subsidised solar systems for households should be considered	With regards bulk buying Solar Hot Water Systems Council is not usually in the business of buying and selling. I do not know if this is the most practical way to operate.	Yes
10. Should Ryde council investigate ideas for generating its own electricity such as installing a community owned wind turbine or tri generation plant (such as in Woking UK)?	Yes	That is a long-term goal for Ryde... However, if it benefits the environment, I am for it!	Wind turbines are not suitable for our area because there is not enough wind however I very much support the idea of investigating other power generating initiatives.	10. Maybe Woking can install a community owned wind turbine however I do not see anywhere in Ryde where it would be even a remote possibility. It needs space and wind and Ryde has neither spare space or much wind.	Yes - Woking Council in the UK is a fantastic example of a Council that has been proactive in generating power for its constituents. Ryde Council should look at adopting a number of these initiatives.

Councillor Terry Perram Councillor Independent West Ward declined to answer the questions but provided the following response.

I don't think anybody knows for certain the full extent of what is happening and what is the best way forward or effectiveness of supposed solutions... The real question in my mind is not about whether climate change is occurring, but instead what is the appropriate response. There seems to be a range of options from one extreme of "just let it happen and deal with the consequences" to "go all out to prevent it from happening regardless of the cost or effect on people". I am sure the appropriate response is somewhere between those extremes and will become clearer as more information is known. Meanwhile the role for community leaders and councils is to evaluate additional information as it becomes available and take appropriate steps based on that information to respond in a meaningful way. That might mean encouraging solar water heating among the community, or it might mean other more cost-effective measures. By the way, I have had a solar water heater on my roof for 28 years. As an engineer, I am not one of the people you have to convince about energy efficiency, but I do have to be convinced about the cost-effectiveness of supposed solutions.

The following candidates did not respond. (time provided was 5 days- No responses received 7 days later).

<p>Central Ward CAMPBELL Nicole (Labor) BEINKE Caroline (Liberal) NETTERFIELD Connie (Independent) DABER Denise (Independent) COLSELL Peter (Independent) BROWN Philip (Independent (email bounced))</p>	<p>West Ward PETCH Ivan (Independent) SMOLDERS John (Independent) TAGG Vic (Liberal) SANGKUHL Helge (Independent) JENSEN Coralie (Independent) DITCHAM Amelia (Labor) TSANG Mario (Labor) LEE Mark (Independent) LADOMATOS Harry (Independent)</p>	<p>East Ward POWE Brad (Labor) CARSON Gaye (Labor) TAYLOR David (Independent)</p>
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MEETING WITH JOHN WATKINS – MEMBER FOR RYDE

RGCCAG were due to meet with Mr Watkins on Friday 5 September to ask questions about how the power sell off would help reduce emissions and to urge him as Deputy Premier to take some leadership on climate change in the state government. We had been attempting to meet with him since July, having met with him last February. At that time we found him to be interested and receptive and we are disappointed not to have the chance to meet with him again.

MAKE A SUBMISSION TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ON ITS EMISSIONS TRADING PLAN BEFORE WEDNESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER

We suggest the following points be made:

I urge that strong interim targets for reducing greenhouse pollution also be adopted.

I am very disappointed that Professor Garnaut's recommendation not to compensate coal-fired power generators has been ignored.

Investment in large-scale renewable energy should be a priority, with a strong Mandatory Renewable Energy Target for 2010.

Money raised from the scheme should be used to assist low income Australians to invest in energy efficiency, rather than tax cuts and increased benefits.

Forlink to make a submission and more info: http://www.climatecampaign.info/take_action_now/tan0807_goingwithgarnaut.htm

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

14 September – Sustainable House Day

7th annual Sustainable House Day. Open houses across Sydney including Epping, Northbridge, Turramurra, Gordon and Pennant Hills, Manly, Newtown. Talk to the owners about what they did, what it cost and the impact on energy use. \$5 per house and children free.

www.sustainablehouseday.com/index01.shtml

2 October 5pm – Climate Emergency Protest

1 Macquarie Place Sydney (outside Xstrata Coal office)