

## Yarra Council Elections Candidate Survey (Nicholls Ward)

### Questions

1. Yarra's Climate Emergency Plan (CEP) aims to ensure that climate and the environment are central considerations in all decisions of Council. How will you advocate so that the CEP continues to be implemented with adequate budget allocations, despite the constraints of COVID 19 measures?
2. How should Council advocate for stronger climate action at State and Federal Government levels?
3. What is an impactful measure for Council to encourage businesses to reduce their carbon emissions from electricity consumption?
4. In addition to eliminating gas from its own buildings by 2030, how can council support residences and businesses to get off gas within that timeframe?
5. What is a priority action for Council to improve active transport infrastructure (for cyclists, pedestrians, public transport users) and users of electric vehicles?
6. What is a priority action that council could take to achieve the CEP target of diverting 72% of waste from landfill by 2025?

| Candidate              | Q1 response  | Q2 response   | Q3 response   | Q4 response  | Q5 response  | Q6 response  |
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| <b>Catherine Noone</b> | Taking action to protect our planet is an integral basis for any decision making and planning. I have experience in the public and community sectors and appreciate the challenges of making the most of limited budgets to meet community needs. I will work with local people and local groups to continue to advocate for balancing this and taking action. | Advocating for stronger climate action is important across every level of government. I welcome the opportunity to work with councillors, local people and local groups to advocate to other levels of government.  | I am not an expert on current measures and best practice, but look forward to learning and hearing YCAN's views for implementing appropriate action.  | I am not an expert on current measures and best practice, but look forward to learning and hearing YCAN's views for implementing appropriate action.   | Minimising barriers to active transport is vital. For example, improvements are needed to encourage pedestrian use of our streets. During COVID we're all more wary of high touch surfaces, advocating for fresh approaches to pedestrian lights is necessary. Overall, comprehensive mapping and planning of safe active transport routes and options (including charging stations, public toilets and walking rest points) and making sure people can find information about these in an easy way, is vital. | Learning how to live more sustainably shouldn't seem daunting. So many local groups have great information, advice and compost locations. Let's work together to keep helping people make informed decisions and take action - and let's make sure up to date information and straightforward guidance is readily available in formats that work for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, regardless of being owners or renters. Connecting broad education strategies across sectors and communities are going to be a key part of changing our approach to waste generation, recycling and waste disposal. |
| <b>Sophie Wade</b>     | I will advocate that the CEP be prioritised for budget allocations over certain or most other non-urgent matters, and also advocate (as Greens Councillors have already done), that where possible, COVID-19 measures also address the climate emergency. For example, the introduction of pop-up bicycle  | I think Council can do this many ways - some of which are already on foot, but could be ramped up. One, leading by example, which I think Yarra has done a good job at. By moving to carbon neutral operations, with a tiny budget compared to State and Federal Governments, a clear message is sent. There are more steps Yarra | One cost effective measure Council has taken already is funding the Yarra Energy Foundation, which allows businesses to get the best possible information for reducing their carbon emissions and/or installing solar PV. While Council's budget may not be sufficient to | Firstly, I think working with the State Government to ensure no new properties are built with gas connections, is critical. Secondly, Council could offer information and training (as I understand it already does, to some extent) to residents and businesses to support them in making | I think there are many opportunities in Yarra to make our streets more walkable (more trees, wider footpaths and breaking up wind tunnels) and cyclable. On the cycling front, I think we not only need more bike paths and more bike parking, but we need to take a longer term approach to fixing gaps in our  | The most obvious action is to ensure the organics bin gets funded as soon as possible. Another action would be to amp up advertising of the Clifton Hill Recycling Centre, the recycle and reuse bins around the municipality, and the supermarket 'soft plastic' bins, to ensure residents and  |

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|                      | lanes serves a clear dual purpose of addressing the health emergency (allowing people a safe way to travel in a socially-distanced manner) and the climate emergency (encouraging low-carbon forms of transport). Another example would be grants that allow businesses to transition to operate in a COVID-safe way that also help them transition to more climate-friendly operations. | could take to demonstrate best practice. Two, by teaming up with other Councils, and encouraging more to declare Climate Emergencies, a clear message is sent from Local to State and Federal Governments. Three, by campaigning with local residents and businesses.  | allow it to provide a large-scale grant scheme, I'd be interested in pursuing non-financial incentives to get businesses to reduce carbon emissions.  | the switch - and to understand the likely funds needed to commit to the shift. Any information and training could be advertised through social media to the Yarra area to ensure it's getting seen by the widest possible set of people. Landlords should be targeted as well. | bicycle network (eg. between Darebin and Yarra Councils, where the St George's Rd bike path ends, but before the Linear Park path begins).   | businesses know there are convenient ways to dispose of many products, other than through the standard waste stream.   |
| <b>Sasha Beitner</b> | This needs to be front and centre in every decision that we make, especially in planning decisions where I believe that CEP has fallen by the wayside over recent years in favour of large developments. On every initiative that comes to council for decision I would like to see a report from Officers on how this impacts the CEP, Resident amenity and other key factors.          | There are two approaches that I think CoY should adopt - one is leading by example, we are doing this in so many ways and I am keen to push the envelope further. Whether it be through empowering resident action groups, rollout of our waste strategy (beyond just the 4 bins) and making it easy for our residents to participate in and advocate for climate action. And at a state and federal level we must advocate and work with governments of all levels to change policy, challenge the status quo and ensure that climate action is not a standalone program, but rather inculcated in every action that they take. | Simply put, I would like to see a 3 year average electricity consumption from all businesses and set each of them targets to reduce this over the next Council term. I believe we could offer incentives through reduced cost of permits etc... if certain targets were achieved. This would also encourage and offset any cost that would be required from the business to achieve this. | Council should ensure that any new developments that are approved have strict guidelines or even restrictions on the use of gas. This could also be retrofitted to any residential extensions/renovation permits that may need to be issued as well.                           | At present I am only aware of suggestions to improve these things coming from the formal advisory groups. I would like to see a broad, consultative process with residents to ensure we are balancing resident amenity whilst improving infrastructure to all road users. I also do not believe Council has prioritised pedestrian infrastructure adequately and as a relatively new mother, so many footpaths around Yarra are incredibly difficult and poorly designed to push a pram. | Work with local businesses and retailers, including large supermarkets, to provide consumer information and even incentives around products that are purchased and their ability for that to be recycled/reused. I have recently changed the brand and style of milk I purchase for the same reason, and I believe a significant emphasis on consumer behavior can go a long way to achieving this. Nobody will deliberately purchase products that are bad or worse for the environment, so we need to help our residents understand the differences and options. |
| <b>Em Sage</b>       | Consistently apply the provisions in the CEP and encourage all members of council to do the same. Communicate the importance of the CEP to the community and explain how it is being used. Regularly seek feedback from the community and environmental lobby groups on the efficacy of the Council's actions and decision-making  | Network with the community, with climate action groups and use their support and expertise to approach State and Federal MPs Directly. I would also use the Australian Local Government Association to work with relevant Government Departments.  | Financial incentives and positive publicity. Expanding the Yarra Sustainability Awards to include categories for businesses who operate in a carbon neutral way.  | Financial incentives and positive publicity - Again, expanding the Yarra City Sustainability Awards to include categories for businesses operating Gas Free!   | Additional bike lanes, crowd source funding for electric buses, and locate battery charging stations throughout the municipality. Lobby State and Federal Governments for rebates on the purchase of electric vehicles.  | Introduce food recycling bins and compost the waste locally. Use the waste to sustain our green spaces.  |

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| <p><b>Annabelle Wilson</b></p> | <p>I support Yarra’s Climate Emergency Plan (CEP) that was unanimously adopted by Councillors earlier this year. I will lobby for and use all levers possible to be a vocal advocate in the practical implementation of this plan. Namely bulk buy schemes for energy efficient appliances, a focus on solar energy and support of the Yarra recycling service. COVID-19 has no doubt placed considerable pressure on council budgets, but the specific impact of that is something that is still largely unknown.</p>  | <p>Yarra Council and Yarra councillors can be vocal advocates for systemic change at a State and Federal level. Yarra Council is a leader in addressing our climate emergency, so we can use the experiences and learnings from environmental initiatives to provide proof and lobby for larger-scale policy change.</p>  | <p>I believe that this is an area where Yarra Council can go further than it has. A few ways I think we can encourage business is to incentivise buying 100% renewable energy, and phasing out fossil fuel usage, including natural gas. These and other policies are outlined on the Yarra Labor website:<br/><a href="https://yarralabor.org/policies/">https://yarralabor.org/policies/</a></p>   | <p>In addition to Yarra Council eliminating gas from its own buildings by 2030, which I support, it is also important that industry is included in this vision. I support bulk buy schemes for energy efficient appliances, solar panel and batteries in conjunction with the Yarra Energy Foundation to assist local industry to transition off gas.</p>   | <p>I support active and sustainable transport that is affordable and accessible for all in our community, including upgrading train stations, tram and bus stops in Yarra so they are DDA compliant and accessible to all, and better footpaths and safer pedestrian crossings, especially around schools. In terms of users of electric vehicles, I support increased access to electric vehicle recharge stations.</p>   | <p>Yarra Council will soon implement an extra bin for recycling glass, plus food and organic green waste (FOGO) collection. This will decrease the waste transferred to landfill. However, the system has not yet been extended to public housing estates. One priority action in particular that I support is extending FOGO recycling to public housing estates.</p>   |
| <p><b>Amanda Stone</b></p>     | <p>Climate change has the potential to cause economic damage, social disruption and health impacts on the scale we are seeing with COVID 19. Unlike the pandemic, climate change is still unfolding, we have time to mitigate its worst impacts. Further, the measures we need to take to recover from COVID 19 - building community connectedness and resilience, investing in a green more sustainable economy and reducing social inequalities – are also those measures needed to address climate change. We have to respond to these two challenges together. Investing in the Climate Emergency Plan is investing in the future resilience of our community, an essential part of post-COVID recovery. I am confident it will be also recognised by the new Council who will have the best interests of the Yarra community at heart.</p> | <p>The most effective advocacy is through councils collaborating, through their collective impact. Yarra is an active member Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action, Climate Emergency Australia, and ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, with their local and global reach. Local councils represent millions of people and their collective voice is powerful. Council can also take direct action, e.g. our submissions to close Hazelwood power station, increase the renewable energy target, support the transition to renewables. Best of all is demonstrating what’s possible. By declaring a Climate Emergency, setting a zero emissions target by 2030, commissioning a new wind farm to supply council’s electricity, creating Yarra Energy Foundation, Yarra Council has demonstrated what’s possible when other levels of government can’t or won’t. The most powerful advocacy of all.</p> | <p>Yarra’s businesses range enormously in size and complexity. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to reducing their emissions. The best way to reduce their carbon emissions will vary: from installing a solar array on a large flat roof of a microbrewery, to an audit and retrofit of an old Victorian era building, to purchasing renewable energy, to using technology to switch from gas to renewable energy, to upgrading to more energy efficient machinery and equipment. Yarra has recently introduced Energy Upgrade Agreements to facilitate many of these actions. The most impactful measure is informed tailored advice to each business, based on their individual needs. The Yarra Energy Foundation is providing that advice and needs to be funded to continue and</p> | <p>Council can support businesses by funding the Yarra Energy Foundation to provide tailored advice on getting off gas and identifying suppliers of alternative products and renewable energy providers. Half of Yarra’s residents are renters. Yarra Energy Foundation can work with landlords to switch gas appliances to electric and install solar panels. New buildings can and should be gas-free. Yarra is working with other councils on a Zero Carbon Buildings amendment to our Planning Scheme which will require all new buildings to be zero carbon in their performance over their lifetime. Gas is simply not part of a zero carbon building. Council can give confidence that switching is economical, efficient and easy. Demonstrations of induction cooking, advice on</p> | <p>Active transport needs to be safe, available, and easy to use. It also needs to be connected up. A priority action must be an Integrated Transport Plan to identify the priority actions for funding, and the main actions needed to connect up key routes to and from public transport and for walking and cycling as transport. Continuing to view these forms of transport separately will not provide the accelerated uptake of all forms of active transport that we need if we are to avoid unacceptable congestion on our roads, with the consequent cost to liveability, the economy and the environment.</p> | <p>Half of Yarra’s household landfill is food waste. A food and organics (FOGO) waste collection must be a top priority to get food out of landfill and reduce the methane emissions. Packaging and plastic make up a large proportion of the remaining landfill. Supporting residents to make consumer choices which avoid packaging, continuing the Plastic Free Yarra campaign and advocacy to state and federal governments on packaging are also important. The consequences of waste are extremely costly. Reducing and re-using are preferable to recycling which is both expensive and inefficient at present. Preventing the production of waste in the first place is the best action environmentally and economically. The Abbotsford Waste Revolution trial has shown that Yarra’s residents are keen as mustard to reduce their</p> |

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|                        |   |  | increase its reach. Business champions, who demonstrate and share their success in reducing emissions will also be impactful  | alternatives to gas heating, and providing a panel of reliable providers for alternatives to gas hot water systems would help         |  | waste and Council can help them to do that.   |
| <b>Bridgid O'Brien</b> | I will continue to ensure the climate emergency is central in all decisions and decision-making processes of Council and that Yarra further supports our community to consider the crisis in every aspect of our lives. I will continue to advocate that much capital expenditure for new projects should be redirected toward the Climate Emergency Plan implementation and the protection of our environment. I will continue to argue the COVID-19 pandemic is inextricably interconnected with the Climate Emergency and that action at the local government level and the CEP is crucial to recovery and the future resilience of our community. | Elected representatives need to have greater input into how Council staff, the CEO and the Mayor advocate to the State and Federal Government. Councillors need to ensure that the Climate Emergency, environmental conservation and biodiversity are central to all advocacy opportunities. The community needs to feel confident that such advocacy is actually working towards our desired outcomes, is strategic and effective. Also, Council has a major role to play in supporting (including resourcing, skilling and interconnecting) local community groups and individuals in their efforts toward stronger climate action at the State and Federal level. | There are many measures Council can implement to encourage local business to reduce their carbon footprint generally. In terms of emissions from electricity consumption Council has some power to exert both a carrot and a stick approach. This is a very complicated and delicate issue and I would like Councillors to have access to the best advice on an ever-evolving approach toward maximum success for emission reductions of local businesses. I would like to see an Advisory Committee that focuses on this issue and that provides information and strategy input to all elected representatives that can then be put forward at Council meetings for resolutions and thus more immediate implementation (where possible). | Education, education, education. Rate relief. Support and advocacy for the provision of infrastructure for alternative power sources. | Advocacy for improved PT along Heidelberg Rd particularly, a submission to DoT for 30km speed limits in residential streets, big developments required to provide off street parking to make way for bike lanes and measures toward safety in public spaces for all (women particularly) to freely walk, ride and use PT at all times of day or night. | Aside from actions already underway such as removing plastics from Council facilities, the 4 bin waste revolution and encouraging community composting, Council should return to weekly rather than fortnightly waste pickups, but also encourage, support and educate around reduce and re-use actions in business and by residents. |