

## Candidates pitch their positions!



### Voting is compulsory

Just a reminder that before 6 pm on **Friday 22 October**, you must make sure your vote is in the mail or deliver it in person to the election office.

It's no longer optional for people over 70 to vote following law changes that came into effect last year. If you do not vote, you may get a fine. Further information is available on the Victorian Electoral Commission [website](#).

Last week, candidates presented their positions and responded to questions posed by interested parties at a series of Election Ward based forums. The lead articles summarise the responses.

# Making news in this edition - Monday 11th October 2021

You can click on the underlined titles to get the full story or letter.

Final Candidate responses to the Just Transition Council Matters Survey can be found [here](#).

## [Tarwin Valley candidates “see a better way forward”](#)

Sentinel-Times 8/10/21

The 10 Tarwin Valley candidates generally all performed well at a candidates forum via Zoom on Thursday night this week. (*more available*)



## [Candidates zoom in with bid for votes](#)

Sentinel-Times 7/10/21

Candidates in the Strzelecki Ward addressed up to 80 voters online at a Zoom forum this week. (*more available*)

## [Candidates’ views on our climate](#)

Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

VOTERS in the South Gippsland Shire Council elections can now see the views of candidates on climate change action for the region.

**Just Transition South Gippsland** (JTSG) has been surveying candidates for their views and level of support for a just transition for South Gippsland. Detailed candidates’ responses can be seen at the JTSG website at [jt-southgippsland.org](http://jt-southgippsland.org). All 26 council candidates were invited to participate in the survey, with 13 responses received at the time of writing. JTSG spokesperson, Neil Barrett, said the level of response indicated that many of the candidates in the upcoming

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elections didn't see climate change as something that required leadership from council. "Candidates should realise that there is growing backing across the shire for work to begin properly on a transition to a low-carbon economy and society," he said. "Initiatives such as the declaration of a climate emergency and the development of a climate action plan are now seen as fundamental to local government policy-making across the country."

Mr Barrett said the survey shows that there are, however, a number of candidates looking to take the lead on climate action, particularly in areas like low-carbon farming and protection of the natural environment.

JTSG has been working towards developing a plan of action for the region for the past 18 months, focusing in particular on the vast opportunities in the food and farming sector. The community-led group has recently released both a roadmap and a draft strategy as part of a vision that aims to further transform South Gippsland into a sustainable, democratically empowered, culturally rich and prosperous community for all.

The survey, the road-map and the strategy are all on the JTSG website at [jtsouthgippsland.org](http://jtsouthgippsland.org) and visitors to the site can sign up to show their support for climate action through a just transition.

### ['Positive alternative', Tarwin Valley candidates say](#) Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

TARWIN Valley Ward candidates Clare Williams and Adrian Daraki say they're blazing a path of generational change straight to the South Gippsland Shire Council chambers. If elected, 36-year-old Leongatha resident Mrs Williams will provide greater representation of females in local government, something many in the community believe will improve community outcomes through



positive and diverse role models, the two said in a media statement. At 33 years old, Mr Darakai is a strong supporter of balance and equity both on council and within the community, currently working in the fields of mental health, disability, and the arts, they said. "I made a point of speaking with every other

candidate in our ward to nurture a sense of collegiality and respectful campaigning.

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From the very get-go, I could tell Clare was one of the few candidates who could and would serve this community with the kind of passion required in council,” Mr Darakai, of Leongatha, said. Mr Darakai believes Mrs Williams is exactly what the community needs - someone “to go above and beyond, to give 100 per cent every time, and to be respectful to everyone”. Mrs Williams said she was similarly convinced by her interactions with Mr Darakai, saying: “Adrian is such a genuine and intelligent individual. He’s a born and bred local with so many forward-thinking ideas. ”Both candidates have declared they are “absolutely independent and not affiliated with any political parties”.

Mrs Williams and Mr Darakai were both stunned when they saw Don Hill and Rosemary Cousin also giving it another go. Mr Daraki said: “Both Don and Rosemary were part of the former council that was dismissed by the Victorian government due to concerns of dysfunction. It was a big deal and a tumultuous time for our shire. Do they honestly think our community members are simply going to forget something like that? ”Mrs Williams said she was just as shocked, citing the Municipal Monitor’s report about the former council.

Mrs Williams and Mr Darakai are promising a “refreshing and positive alternative” to what they refer to as the “old guard”, a sentiment they say is shared widely by almost all fellow residents they’ve spoken with while on the campaign trail. With ballot papers arriving in the mail this week, the duo say they are in lockstep on their way to the finish line.

[Dirty doings at the election diggings](#) Sentinel-Times 8/10/21

IT HAD to happen. The race for the South Gippsland Shire Council has taken a turn for the worse. *(more available)*

[Fix the roads, they say](#) Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

A COMMUNITY survey being run by Outtrim resident and former Victorian MP Susan Davies is showing clear messages already for prospective South Gippsland councillors.

Respondents were asked to list three-to-five of the most important issues they want a new council to deal with. The top issue was for council to “improve local roads and footpaths” (65 per cent of responses) .In percentage order, “ensuring a fairer distribution of services/assets into smaller communities” (49 per cent), “ensuring ratepayers receive value for their high rates” (46 per cent) and supporting action to reduce carbon emissions (41 per cent) are the other priority issues.

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The equal top-most wanted characteristics of a good council included “able to work cooperatively together as a whole council” and having a diverse council, including balanced gender, aged, back-ground and occupations (both 58 per cent of responses). Councillors being able to “listen and follow through” and not wanting council-lors “pushing their own agenda” were also highly rated. “Democracy returning” and “more open and transparent governance” are what respondents are most looking forward to (47 per cent of responses) and “having the same bickering/infighting as before” is what 58 per cent are least looking forward to.

A couple of the shorter ones include “don’t stuff it up”, “thank-you” and “be fair, be honest”. The survey is still open and will continue until a full report can be delivered to a new council. Residents and ratepayers are encouraged to respond at [surveymonkey.com/r/MY3HC55](https://surveymonkey.com/r/MY3HC55). Respondents can also contact Susan on 5657 3108 for an email link or to answer directly at the time. Anyone who responds is able to ring and ask for the complete summary of results so far.

### Youth congress proposed Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

A GREENS-ENDORSED candidate in the upcoming South Gippsland Shire Council election has committed to establishing a ‘youth congress’ with the South Gippsland Shire Council, if elected.

Coastal Promontory candidate Mat Morgan said young people had been departing South Gippsland in their droves in recent years, and council needed to rethink how it connects with youth.





Mr Morgan wants to lead the council to set up a youth congress to ensure young voices help shape the community’s future. “Hearing directly from young people on the issues affecting them and giving them the opportunity to raise new issues and make recommendations will help us build the future for our youth,” he said.

“It will also help build our youth for the future by giving them the training and experience they need to become our next generation of leaders. “Young people deserve more than occasional consultation by council on singular issues.

Actually hearing their perspective is vital and this can be done through a youth congress that meets regularly to advise council.” “If we want young people to stay in the area rather than move to the cities, we need to build a community that is better suited to their needs, now and in the future.

“Ten years ago, housing affordability was a strong incentive to keep young people in the region, not only is housing now unaffordable, it’s simply unavailable. We need to counterbalance our ageing population desperately or our local economy will shut down. To keep young people here, we need to give them a much greater voice and actually listen to their needs.”

## How to Vote cards for Tarwin Valley Ward

ADVERTISEMENT		ADVERTISEMENT		ADVERTISEMENT		ADVERTISEMENT	
HILL, Don		LOVE, Lindsay		CORCORAN, Andrew		HARMER, Leslie John	
	Authorised by Don Hill, 7750 Murrumbidgee, Mitcham North West, Mitcham North		Authorised by Lindsay Love, 22 Bigg Street, Longwarry		Authorised by Andrew Corcoran, 28 Gulf Link Drive, Mitcham North		Authorised by Leslie Harmer, 1 Dunbar Road, Mitcham North
8	CURTIS, Jeremy	6	CURTIS, Jeremy	5	CURTIS, Jeremy	7	CURTIS, Jeremy
2	LOVE, Lindsay	1	LOVE, Lindsay	4	LOVE, Lindsay	3	LOVE, Lindsay

Four candidates in the Tarwin Valley Ward election, Lindsay Love, Andrew Corcoran, Don Hill and Les Harmer have joined forces in putting out a joint 'how to vote' card which seems to maximise the chances of Don Hill getting elected.

# Gang of four revealed in Tarwin Valley race

AS WELL as the ballot papers for the South Gippsland Shire Council elections arriving this week, voters across the shire will also be receiving statements, and in some cases, 'How to Vote' cards from candidates.

But one candidate, at least, is crying foul over how some of these how to vote cards have been produced, claiming inappropriate collusion.

Adrian Darakai, a candidate in the Tarwin Valley Ward election, believes four candidates in that electorate; Lindsay Love, Andrew Corcoran, Don Hill and Les Harmer, have joined forces to put out a joint how to vote card which seeks to maximise the chances of at least one of their group, Don Hill, getting elected.

And it certainly appears as if that's the case.

While Les Harmer is listed as 4th, 4th and 3rd on the how to vote suggestions of Hill, Love and Corcoran, Don Hill gets the most favourable treatment from the other three with a 3rd, 2nd and 2nd position from Love, Corcoran and Harmer.

It might not seem much of a difference, but it could prove crucial if it's close and enough people follow the Hill, Love, Corcoran, Harmer joint ticket.

At the same time, the cards have appeared to disadvantage Clare Williams in particular by recommending voters put her last or second last in the voting.

Mr Darakai claims Lindsay Love acknowledged to him in a text message that

Don Hill "got it sorted for printing".

Mr Darakai also noted that Les Harmer and Andrew Corcoran had told him that "someone else" was organising their how to vote card during a conversation about sharing preferences.

Speaking about the situation this week, Lindsay Love said that the four candidates had simply combined resources to get a how to vote card printed.

"It was just a way of getting it out at short notice and minimising costs," Mr Love said.

There's nothing illegal in what they are doing, but if nothing else, it has indicated a link between these four candidates about which voters might not previously been aware.

**Why are you running for council?**

To help develop a council grounded in transparency, empathy, integrity and accountability. Councillors and the community deserve an open, respectful and functional council.

**What are your top issues?**

I have spent recent years working with small businesses and studying, and have developed a keen interest in good governance, developing on social infrastructure for children and families, sustainable development, social justice, and stronger initiatives on climate change. I am a first-time candidate; I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I will listen with empathy and compassion. I am eager to learn with a strong desire to help.

**What is the best and worst thing about South Gippsland?** I absolutely love the life we have created here - with all its beauty and vibrancy - this community has welcomed my family and I and given us a place to thrive.

**How will you improve council culture?**

I am one of six new female candidates, and I am truly inspired by the calibre and the intentions of each and every one of them. My sole intention as a candidate is to give back to the community however I can. If elected, I will work to help create a productive, open-minded and encouraging council culture. I live to be a good example for my daughter, always working within the confines of my moral compass. I want to be part of a council that ensures sustainable development while protecting the unique and natural beauty of the region. What I lack in council experience, I make up for with steadfast determination and a genuine desire to help.

**What do you do for fun or recreation?**

I love to travel, be it local day trips, interstate or internationally. I lived abroad for over a decade in the US and UK and was fortunate to be able to travel frequently. I love to learn about different cultures and engage in the arts, taking my daughter to musicals, the ballet and visiting travelling exhibitions whenever possible.

## Letters to the Editor

**Just Transition not fielding candidates** Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

We would like to correct a few misconceptions found in the letter from Otto Ippel in the Sentinel Times (28/9). Firstly, Just Transition South Gippsland isn't fielding any candidates in the South Gippsland council elections.

We are, however, campaigning for the future council to support a Just Transition for South Gippsland in any way they can.

Whether or not the elected council gets on board is up to them, and you can find out everything we have been up to, including the notes from every meeting we have held, on our website and/or Facebook page.

Otto is right to point out that South Gippsland is home to hard-working, high risk-taking land managers. We see as central to a Just Transition the region's food and farming sector, which has the chance to develop, even further, into leaders in the transition to a low-carbon economy.

It is worth noting that some of our region's most successful and highly regarded farmers are members and supporters of JTSG.

Rather than let big business from overseas determine how the transition plays out in South Gippsland, we see it as imperative that the community itself comes together to work towards a transition.

Far from weed-infested landscapes, we envision a South Gippsland that has moved away from carbon-emitting forms of economic activity, led primarily by the region's farmers, a move that is already underway.

**Tony Walker for JTSG, Fish Creek.**

[Exercising your democratic right](#) Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

On October 23, the communities in the Shire of South Gippsland have the opportunity to put in place councillors you believe will give a good representation of your needs.

It is very important for you to exercise your democratic right. In the coming weeks, you will read in various forms of media communication what each candidate has to offer - read this communication, don't disregard it. Have a look, take it in what is said, then place your vote. It is very easy to just go down the line on the voting card and place your numbers from one to 10; you may not get your preferred candidate this way.

The numbers 1 to 10 must be in the order in which you prefer; remember, you cannot complain about the outcome if you do not fully exercise your democratic right.

**Leslie Harmer, candidate for Tarwin Valley Ward, Mirboo North.**

[Introducing Nicole...](#) Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

My name is Nicole, I am a first-time candidate, a student, and a working mother with a background working with families and small businesses.

I decided to run because, like so many others, I have a genuine concern over the current state of politics.

I read the 2019 Municipal Monitor report, along with the minutes cited within it, because I wanted to understand the fractures which led to the breakdown in the previous council.

I found myself quite upset reading the contents regarding the conduct of its councillors and I believe they were dismissed with due cause.

Those who volunteer to stand up with a genuine desire to represent their community deserve to be treated with respect and courtesy and, in turn, the community should expect integrity and transparency from their elected councillors. It is my hope, whether elected or not, that we will elect



nine candidates that will genuinely care for the community and make the effort to listen to the voices from all towns throughout South Gippsland.

Democracy is beautiful; it allows us to have a say in who we want to represent us by getting to know what they believe and what they stand for. If we elect councillors with a diversity of platforms, we stand a greater chance to have broad representation across a larger variety of issues.

I am not a seasoned politician; this is my first time standing for election. I am one of six brand-new women standing for South Gippsland and, like I said, I am truly inspired by their journeys and their commitment.

What I can tell you about me is that I do not have all the answers, I will not pretend to have all the answers; I will listen with empathy, compassion and respect - qualities I believe should be important in elected officials, and what I don't know, or don't understand, I will make my mission to learn. I am currently studying a Master of International Relations with a double specialty in Humanitarian and International Law as well as Diplomacy. Combined with life experience, this has nurtured and encouraged a keen interest in good governance, social justice, climate change and sustainable development.

South Gippsland is my home, it is the place I have chosen to raise my daughter, our community has given us a place to thrive where opportunities are endless, and we are surrounded by tranquillity and beauty in all directions. If elected, I will throw myself wholeheartedly into the role of councillor and make every effort possible to give back to the community that has offered my family and I so much.

**Nicole Edwards-Galal, P.O. Box 515, Leongatha.**

[Regenerative – yes, everything else – no](#) Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

Neil Austin was right to point out the great potential for regenerative agriculture in the shire but utterly wrong on every other claim in his recent letter.

His claim of “researching with due diligence” is misplaced as he has almost all his “facts” wrong!  
*(more available)*

**Richard Nankin, organic farmer and proud Greater Gippsland Greens member, Allambee South.**

[Former councillor sheds some light](#) Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

Winston Churchill said those who don't learn from history are doomed to repeat it. Absolutely no-one in South Gippsland wants council's history repeated. The removal of a democratically mandated government is something that no-one, not councillors, nor the Minister for Local Government, nor Parliament, took lightly, as attested by Hansard records of State Parliament's discussion on the Act that dismissed council. *(more available)*

**Rosemary Cousin, Allambee South.**

[Councillors should take Frank's lead](#) Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

I refer to the article, 'Frank's unorthodox pitch to voters' (Sentinel-Times, September 28).

Frank has offered to donate his entire councillor's allowance, less legitimate expenses, for the full four-year term if elected to council in the upcoming elections, following two years of local government administration. *(more available)*

**Barry Gilbert, Walkerville.**

[Put Hill, McEwen and their mates last](#) Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

Finally, the movers and shakers of the previous sacked council have revealed themselves as candidates for this election. Former sacked councillors, Hill and McEwen, are putting themselves forward as the only experienced candidates capable of leading any new council to their so-called new direction. It was these same people who, in the early days of the infamous 2016 elected council, promised their strong and experienced leadership would result in great outcomes.

The result of their leadership during that time was a sacked and disgraced council. It is intriguing that they are promoting this same line for the 2021 council election with candidate Hill in his election statement stating that he believed new inexperienced councillors would have no idea how or what to do.

Their desire to teach new councillors is both patronising and laughable given their previous history and the dismissal of the last council. They are so determined to gain election they will employ the same tactic from the 2016 election of organising a string of supporting candidates who will provide a strict preference flow in their favour. Voters will easily identify these 'mate' candidates once preference choices are made public. Look for an orchestrated number 2 and 3 preference flow to them.

This manipulation of the voting system is easily avoided by simply putting Hill and McEwen and these two or three 'mate' candidates last when you vote.

**Melanie Ryan, Leongatha.**

[Let's play nice](#) Sentinel-Times 5/10/21

It is unfortunate that some people running for the South Gippsland Shire election have shown their hand.

I have had a number of signs removed from the Poowong area over the past week. I believe that everyone has the right to their opinion, but your personal opinion should not influence others by removing electoral signs, which is a criminal offence under the Local Government Act.

This election we should be looking for people with integrity and passion and not people that are sneaky and manipulative. I personally am not doing a how to vote card as I believe that the voter has the right to research the candidates and choose who they would like to represent them if I am unsuccessful. Of course, I would like people to put a number 1 next to my name, so that I represent them as a true independent with no allegiance to any people or group.

There are only a few weeks left in this campaign, so I ask with the utmost respect that we all play nice.

**David Amor, candidate for Strzelecki, Korumburra.**

*A reminder, if you have any insightful articles, editorials, letters, social media posts that have been missed, please send them to [Council Matters](#) for inclusion in the next Digest. We will circulate the Digest weekly for the moment.*

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## SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2021 ELECTION TIMELINE

Council primary enrolment data	JUL 12	MON	(Date fixed by VEC)
Public notice of Close of Roll Date (Published during this period)	AUG 7	SAT	
	AUG 13	FRI	
Close of Roll	AUG 27	FRI	4.00 pm (57 days before Election Day)
Publication of Election Notice (Published during this period)	AUG 30	MON	
	SEP 4	SAT	
<b>Opening of election office</b>	SEP 15	WED	
Certification of voters' roll	SEP 16	THU	
Opening of nominations	SEP 16	THU	
Nomination Day	SEP 21	TUE	Nominations close at 12 noon Ballot draw to follow
Lodgement of candidate statements, photographs and questionnaires	SEP 22	WED	Candidate statements, photos and questionnaires close at 12 noon
	SEP 24	FRI	
Mail-out of ballot packs/ Uncontested ward leaflets	OCT 5	TUE	
	OCT 6	WED	
	OCT 7	THU	
<b>CLOSE OF VOTING</b>	OCT 22	FRI	Voting closes at 6.00 pm
Election Day	OCT 23	SAT	
Postal vote receipt period	OCT 25	MON	
	OCT 29	FRI	Postal vote receipt closes at 12 noon
	NOV 2	TUE	Melbourne Cup Day Public Holiday

**All elections to be declared by Friday 5 November.**

\*AFL Grand Final public holiday – TBD

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