

Trent McCarthy (Rucker)

1. How serious a threat are global warming and climate disruption?

Global warming is the most serious issue facing life on this planet. As a species, we need to rapidly transform our systems and behaviours to reduce our emissions and avoid / mitigate a 'runaway' climate scenario (some believe we are already in this phase). I have consistently supported calls for a climate emergency to be declared by State and Federal Governments, and participated in the 2008 Sustainability Convergence where this idea was initially proposed.

2. Do you support the following Darebin Council initiatives? Please comment briefly on each.

a. *Climate Change Action Plan 2007-2009* including the aim of carbon neutrality for council operations by 2020?

Yes, in 2008 I ran on a climate change platform which including bringing forward Council's carbon neutrality target to 2015. While other Councillors were not willing to support this shift, I have been able to champion key projects, eg. street light replacement, cogeneration at Northcote Aquatic Centre and Reservoir Leisure Centre, that enable Council to exceed its yearly targets. If re-elected, I will again propose that Council moves to achieve carbon neutrality by 2015 or sooner.

b. *Darebin Community Climate Action Change Plan 2009-2015* including the aim of carbon neutrality for Darebin municipality by 2020?

Yes, I was the councillor representative on the steering committee that developed this plan. When the council officers and consultant proposed a 50% emissions reduction target, I lobbied other councillors to support a zero emissions target and succeeded in getting this position adopted. Through my role on the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action Executive, I have worked with other councillors and staff to upscale Darebin projects to achieve regional emissions targets, as part of NAGA's TZNE Plan. Just like Woking UK and other leading climate action cities, we can make the shift to a zero emissions municipality.

c. *Darebin Climate Change and Peak Oil Adaptation Plan 2009?*

Yes, I led Council's adoption of this plan, including connecting Council with Transition Darebin (of which I was part of the original initiating group) to ensure that Council's internal activities to adapt to the impacts of climate change and peak oil were integrated with community-based adaptation activities. This led to Council adopting its first Food Security Policy, Sustainable Food Strategy and Heat Wave Action Plan, of which I was also the proponent.

d. *Membership of the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action?*

I've served on the NAGA Executive since its establishment. When Council voted earlier this year to suspend NAGA membership, I argued against this and outlined the many reasons for continuing Council's involvement. I have moved numerous

motions for Council to resume its membership, and other motions that demonstrate the value of NAGA membership to the community, eg. Darebin's share of the \$900K grant to assist small businesses and the \$10M grant (expected to be received) to support low-income households in the NAGA region. If re-elected, my first item of general business will be to rejoin NAGA.

3. What action have you taken to influence climate change and/or sustainability policies at the local, state or federal level?

I've been continuously involved in climate, environment and sustainability campaigns for 17 years. I helped re-establish the Cross-Campus Environment Network in 1999 and served as de-facto State Environment Officer. In the early 2000's, I developed the 'Environment Ambassadors' project, in partnership with the Australian Conservation Foundation, Environment Victoria and The Wilderness Society. This project up-skilled 100 grassroots environment groups and activists to be more effective in their campaigns. I've worked with Merri Creek and Darebin Creek Management Committees, Greenpeace, Sustainability Victoria, EPA, ECO-Buy, waste management organisations and community groups to influence policy and decision-making at every level of government.

4. What action would you take on climate change and/or sustainability policies if [re]elected to council?

If re-elected, I will move to bring forward Council's carbon neutral target to 2015. In collaboration with DCAN, Transition Darebin, Community Solar and other local groups, I will push for Council to support a medium to large-scale solar project. I'll ensure the new Greenstreets Strategy (currently out for comment) is adopted by Council with an increased target for tree-planting and canopy cover across the municipality. I proposed this new strategy in 2010 and have since supported a complementary Community Forest Strategy. I'll push for more raingardens, community food production projects, bulk offers for solar PV, hot water and electric bikes.

5. We are also interested in your community campaigning in areas other than climate change and sustainability. What other community groups or campaigns have you been active in and what was your role?

Since 2009, I've been a White Ribbon Ambassador for Darebin (the international campaign to prevent violence against women). I volunteer as a mentor / adviser to the Sudanese Lost Boys Association, as well as other community groups. I'm the co-founder/director of the Whitelion Bail Out, an award-winning theatrical fundraising event that has raised over \$2M to support young people in detention, poverty and at risk of imprisonment. The Bail Out has engaged over 1,000 business leaders in these issues and last year I was a finalist in the Australian Human Rights Awards. I've been active on other issues since 1995.