

Susan Rennie (Cazaly)

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

These pose catastrophically serious threats to individuals, communities, species, and ecosystems here and internationally. Inundation of island communities, extreme weather events in Australia and Europe, and melting polar ice all tell us that industrialisation is taking its toll on the planet's health.

The threats posed by the climate emergency offer us opportunities to re-vision our community at local and global levels. We need to significantly limit new emissions of greenhouse gases and increase our preparedness to respond to and manage the effects of global warming. Local government has an important part to play here, especially in terms of climate justice.

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?

Council is a consumer of energy and a change agent. I welcomed council's formal commitment to using both roles to address climate change. The plan mandated a range of good sustainability programs conducted by council staff.

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

This current plan provides a solid framework for action. There is a disconnect between the plan itself and the commitment of some councillors. I strongly support the 2020 aim and would work to improve funding for projects towards that end.

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

I endorse both the plan and the practice of reporting on the status of planned actions.

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

I would immediately initiate/support rejoining NAGA.

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

With my neighbours, I started a local sustainability street. We have a range of street-level practices that support sustainable living. I grow organic vegies, "freecycle", commute on my bike, and buy second-hand wherever possible.

I am a member of CERES and also wrote a successful application for our childcare centre to receive a federal grant for water tanks.

I supported the introduction of a carbon tax by attending demonstrations, signing petitions and writing to politicians. Recognising the limitations of that tax and the need for stronger action to address the climate emergency, I have also attended several Transition Darebin meetings.

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

Council should utilise the powers it has available to take a more proactive role in encouraging sustainable building and development. Accordingly, I will push council to:

- reduce rates on any new or renovated property that achieve 8+ energy ratings
- explore incentives for Green Star certification for new commercial buildings and commercial retrofits
- reduce landfill by amending by-laws relating to hard rubbish collection and introducing community composting facilities
- continue solar purchasing schemes and consider other large scale solar projects.

I will push for at least biannual status reports on council's climate related plans.

See www.susanrennie4cazaly.com for more details on these policies.

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?

I am active around a range of community issues:

- Recognition of the rights of children with same-sex parents (I lobbied the only Liberal politician who crossed the floor to vote for this legislation)
- Gambling (I succeeded in preventing the Stolberg Hotel's application to introduce pokies)
- Planning (I coordinated several neighbourhood campaigns and made submissions to VCAT).

I have been a member of the board of Women's Health in the North for seven years (two as chair).

I am a member of the regional advisory group for the prevention of violence against women.