

unChain Inc

Questionnaire for Candidates in Brighton in the 2014 Victorian Election

Elwood is now in the electorate of Brighton (previously Albert Park). Therefore the unChain executive has decided to survey the candidates from the major parties in Brighton, with an emphasis on Elwood issues. The candidates' replies will be put on the unChain web unedited. We also intend to letterbox a flyer to Elwood residents (from Dickens to Head St - bordered by Brighton Rd and St Kilda St) that will list the questions and direct any interested voter to our website to see what the candidates are saying about the particular issue or issues that concern him or her.

1. Elwood College: Do you and your party support funding the Master Plan for Elwood College?

Yes. Elwood College is a fantastic local school, with an active, inclusive school community. It deserves to be supported by the State Government. In 2010, Labor pledged to rebuild Elwood College, but the Liberals scrapped this when they were elected.

Labor has now committed \$10 million to building the first stage of the Master plan at Elwood College. This rebuild is long overdue and only a Labor Government will make it happen.

2. Elwood Primary School: Do you and your party support the construction of a pedestrian crossing for Elwood Primary School at Glenhuntly Road?

It was the Labor Government that provided funding for a Lollipop attendant for Elwood Primary School. Making sure it's safe for kids to get to and from school is vital and if elected I will work with the local school community to develop the best outcome for the kids of Elwood Primary.

3. Flooding in Elwood: What can be done about flooding in Elwood, especially of the Elwood canal?

Climate change is an issue that I am incredibly passionate about, in fact many people in the community may have seen me at a stall and stopped to chat about it!

Elwood is particularly vulnerable to flooding and sea level change. I'm strongly committed to long-term action to reduce emissions.

In 2010 Victorian Labor introduced Australia's most progressive climate change and renewable energy policies. Under State and Federal Liberals we have gone backwards in fighting the effects of climate change.

I have met with Eflag and the reality is that it is a multi-pronged solution is needed. The obvious main one is significant drainage improvement as the run off has increased. But planning for future developments upstream needs to include better drainage diversions so that the canal is not inundated in future. Also considering some sort of lock system at the bay end may be an option. Providing residents with inflatable sandbags and installing flood vents would also be helpful.

Unlike the current Member for Brighton, if I am elected I will not take the Elwood community for granted. I will work hard to lobby both local and state government for action on the Elwood Canal.

4. The Palais: Do you support substantial state government funding for emergency repairs to the Palais?

As a professional actor, I am committed to supporting the arts and have been to many great concerts at the Palais, and believe that we need to care for such an iconic building. The building sits outside my electorate boundary, and the Member for Albert Park is better placed to provide a detailed response to this question.

5. St Kilda Festival: Do you support increasing the state government's contribution from \$100,000 to \$500,000?

I, personally, am in favour of funding several kinds of annual events in St Kilda. I have long held the idea of perhaps St Kilda hosting a similar event as to Sydney's Sculpture by the Sea that supports artists, local businesses and increases visitors to the area.

6. St Kilda Pier: Would you support early state funding for the replacement pier at St Kilda harbour?

Similar to the Palais, the St Kilda Pier is outside of the Brighton electorate.

7. Public Transport. Do you have a realistic plan for Melbourne's public transport and, in particular, what are the respective merits of Melbourne Metro versus Melbourne Rail Link?

Labor will build Melbourne Metro, which has been identified by Infrastructure Australia as Victoria's highest priority. It will increase the capacity on the city loop, which will then allow for further rail development. We need train stations at the places where people go e.g. the hospital and the university. Labor also has Homesafe, a plan to provide 24 hour public transport on weekends to help commuters and workers get home safely. In addition Labor will remove 50 of the most dangerous and congested level crossings in Victoria.

8. Fitzroy St and Acland St Trams: What is your position on the proposals for a tram 'super-stop' on Fitzroy St for the 16 tram and the 96 terminus on Acland St?

Having worked on Fitzroy Street for a long time, I have seen the negative effects that lack of community consultation has on businesses and the area e.g. the raised tram tracks etc that have narrowed access to one lane. I do not believe the current plans for the positioning of more super stops have fully considered the needs of the community or supported their plans with proper research. The decision to halt the process to investigate fully the effects on traffic and the area is the right decision. The traders and the locals who use these streets need to have their say.

9. St Kilda Rd Bicycle Proposal: Do you support the proposal to build Copenhagen-style bike lanes along St Kilda Rd from Carlisle St to Southbank?

I like the idea of providing safe lanes for cyclists but it is about striking a practical balance between all the road users. Of course I cannot make a definitive statement without greater investigation into traffic modelling and consultation. But, wherever possible, I support looking for ways to reduce our carbon emissions.

10. Fishermans Bend: How should we ensure the appropriate development of Fishermans Bend? Do you support the early building of the Yarra Crossing Bridge and the inclusion of sustainability requirements in the Structure Plan?

Fishermans Bend sits outside the electorate of Brighton.

11. The Grand Prix: What is your position on the Grand Prix at Albert Park and, in particular, should the Grand Prix Corporation be required to accurately record attendance numbers?

The Grand Prix race in Albert Park sits outside my electorate.

12. Neighbourhood Zones and Affordable Housing: Do you support the new zoning system introduced by the state government?

I strongly believe that affordable and social housing should be high priorities.

13. Apartment Design Standards: Do you support mandatory design standards for new apartments in Melbourne?

I do believe we need to provide standards in design for decent apartments by considering appropriate sizes, access to natural light and good soundproofing. Currently, thousands of apartments are being approved with no minimum standards creating new high-rise ghettos.

14. Melbourne Metropolitan Strategy: Do you support the new planning strategy and the new Metropolitan Planning Authority?

If Labor wins government, we won't do what the Liberals did in 2011 - they put the state on hold while it ran review after review. We broadly support Plan Melbourne and the Metropolitan Planning Authority. Plan Melbourne started in the right direction, but five of six authors of the plan quit, citing the influence of the Minister and his office. There would need to be some small changes, and removing the central tenet of the document - the East West Tunnel - but it is a fair strategy to cater for our growing population.

15. Other Important Issues: Many unChain supporters will be interested in wider issues such as fracking on agricultural land, methods of funding infrastructure, aged care, men's health etc. Are there any such issues that you are particularly interested in?

There are several areas in which I will focus on.

Climate change action is one. I have recently trained with Al Gore in *The Climate Reality Project*. The time for serious mitigation is now. I am particularly concerned that this conversation is not our agenda consistently.

The structure and support for the mentally ill in our society, particularly in regards to the lack of housing, concerns me. We have lost major funding to many valuable social services in a recent restructure. Streamlining is important for the ease of clients but losing funding from an already underfunded area is short sighted.

We need to listen to the practical suggestions and concerns of the carers and service providers. As we transition to the NDIS, we must ensure that mental illness coverage is maintained.

The more we underfund this area, the more pressure we put on the hospital, ambulance and police services, financially and in terms of personnel. We also need to support carers so that their health and well being is maintained.

The arts as an industry, besides providing a large number of jobs, have a less-recognised benefit. People, through being involved in the arts, remain in touch with their humanity. People learn more effectively, connect with others, express themselves, recognise and reflect on the human condition and relate to others experience. So often the political conversation is only about numbers but it needs to be about more. It needs to include what is needed to be a society in which it is worth living and working.