

12 November 2014

Dear Mr Holland,

Responses to unChain questionnaire for Candidates in Albert Park in the 2014 Victorian Election

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to respond to the questions most concerning UnChain members and supporters.

Please find responses to the questions below.

The St Kilda Triangle: What is your vision for the St Kilda Triangle?

I support the community lead process to resolve the future for the St Kilda Triangle. Part of this is resolving the wider community vision for the project.

The St Kilda Triangle is a project managed by the City of Port Phillip. The Council has a process of working groups under way to co-design and resolve the future of the St Kilda Triangle project, in consultation with the community. The Council's goal is to create a locally loved space that the world admires.

Council has identified a series of issues from the St Kilda Triangle 2012 document that need consideration or resolution before it can progress to the next stage of determining the future of the area.

The Five Working Groups and Steering Committee that have been created to work through these issues and develop a set of parameters will move to its next stage in 2015.

I support this process of community leadership in the development of a sustainable plan for the sites future and the continued leadership by the Council for the project. I support the Council and the Community vision.

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

The Palais theatre is a Melbourne Icon in need of urgent repair.

The 87 year old Art Deco grand building is, from the City of Port Phillips own reports, at risk. This glorious building is in need of support from all levels of government, community and industry to secure both its short and its long term future.

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In responding to the Palais needs, the goals must be to develop a plan that brings everyone with an interest along to not just the repair the theatre but secure its future as the creative heart of St Kilda and Melbourne's creative economy.

I understand from Council, approaches have been made to the Napthine Government before the Caretaker period, for the support of the Theatre. Victorian Labor is not aware of any response from the Liberal Government in supporting the Palais. The only State contribution to the Palais to date was the \$2 Million the former Labor Government allocated for the new roof in 2010.

The Napthine Government have ignored the Palais over the past four years.

We understand that the City of Port Phillip is currently seeking Expression of Interest (EOI) for management and lease options for the theatre. Advice from Council is that this process is due to see applications for the EOI in December. We note also note the recent Council decision has been to set up a process to identify the priorities for work needed and the real costs of the repair schedule. At the time of responding to this questionnaire, the costs for the theatre's repair and renovation have yet to be established in any comprehensive or reliable proposal. We also understand that a costings and scheduling document will be available later this year.

These are important pieces of work that will inform the community and different levels of Governments on the work required to save the Palais.

The Council's EOI also raises issues around the final makeup of the partners needed to secure the Palais future. Any partnership to secure the Theatre must include the operator of the theatre, the community, creative industries and other levels of government. The continued operation and bookings of the site by a secure operator are one of the keys to its future.

These are threshold questions the community and different levels of Government needs to be clear on before binding commitments are given. Such information must be shared in a transparent way and considered by all stakeholders to identify the best model that secures the Palais' future well beyond the life of any Council, Government or theatre operator.

Victorian Labor has been working for the past 18 months with the Theatre Operator, community stakeholders and the Creative Industries sector to build ideas and support a long term plan for a vibrant, sustainable Palais Theatre and the iconic buildings possible wider uses.

We hope to have further to say on this issue in the coming weeks.

Fitzroy St and Acland St Trams: What is your position on the proposals for a tram 'superstop' on Fitzroy St for the 16 tram and the 96 terminus on Acland St?

The St Kilda precincts of Acland Street and Fitzroy Street are important to the local St Kilda community, the wider tourism and cultural scene of Melbourne. They also play a vital role in our public transport networks.

Ensuring the community's voice is heard for the area is critical to build wide and enduring support for any Council plans. Organisations like the St Kilda Tourism Group as well as local traders groups and the school communities are some of the stakeholders who need to be heard and recognised in this process.

The City of Port Phillip plays a role in these precincts in coordinating Community input into strategic planning.

From conversations I've had with local stakeholders, I understand the concerns of the community are not currently shared by the Council. The concerns of St Kilda Park Primary School to key aspects of the Council Plans are of particular concern to me.

Whilst Victorian Labor supports the enhancement of our tram network, protection of our Parks and the interests of our Schools, the Council needs to ensure its planning embrace the values and concerns of its community. I am not convinced this is currently the case.

Of particular concern to many is the location proposed by the Council and the State Government for the location of the Super Stop for the Number 16 Tram route in Fitzroy Street immediately opposite the School.

Victorian Labor does not support this proposed location. As part of our announcement on Saturday, 8 November to renovate Junction Oval and its accessibility, Labor supports the relocation of the Super Stop closer to the Junction Oval – at the Lakeside drive intersection with Fitzroy Street area. The specifics of the location and design details would be subject to expert and community consultations.

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'm a keen cyclist and a great supporter of riders. Last year, I assisted Albert Park College's Great Victorian Bike Ride team by joining the support crew for the event.

I often ride from my home to my electorate office in Port Melbourne, and I take the bike out on weekends with my kids so I understand the need to ensure safer cycling conditions for riders.

Victorian Labor has not yet released all of its policies in the lead up to the November State Election.

Labor supports cycling as a sustainable and healthy transport mode, which produces no direct pollution or greenhouse gas emissions.

Labor is proud of the record of support it demonstrated to cycling while in government. Our bike plan and its funding were scrapped by the Liberals.

Labor will encourage continued growth of cycling as a mode of transport across the whole of Victoria, not just in inner city suburbs of Melbourne.

Labor will:

- Improve the bicycle network, including the provision of marked bicycle lanes on roads, extensions to the off road networks and improvements to existing routes
- Ensure that new or rebuilt roads contain measures to improve the safety of cyclists
- Improve signage on bike paths
- Support measures that will increase access to bike parking
- Improve maintenance schedules on off-road trails
- Develop cycling strategies including bike paths along rail reserves

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 standards in the Structure Plan?

We need to stop the Liberals Fishermans Bend Nightmare. With no real consultation, no height restrictions, no plan to manage congestion and no plan for open space, community services or strategies to manage growth, this community is rightly concerned about the planning disaster heading their way.

As Planning expert Professor Michael Buxton stated, when he criticised the pace and secrecy with which the Napthine Government was approving skyscrapers, saying so many so quickly was unprecedented. *"This is a really irresponsible way of planning a City"*. (source: Age newspaper, 29 September).

The Liberal Government chose to force Capital City Zoning onto the area and scrap the City of Port Phillip's Montague Plan for staged sensible development. They deliberately called for development applications before planning controls or overlays were in place and which, three years later, are still missing. This process deliberately excluded the City of Port Phillip and the City of Melbourne and more importantly their communities, from a genuine partnership role. Now we see a rush to rubberstamp planning applications for thousands of apartments in an effort to force the pace to cram 80,000 people into the area. Besides giving rise to massive windfall speculation and profits this has let loose a frenzy of inappropriate development applications for mega towers that threaten to roll down to the bay.

Recently, we learned of the planning application sitting with the Liberal Government for a monster 74 storey building in Lorimer Street, Port Melbourne. I have been inundated by calls from locals who are concerned with the lack of process for community engagement, lack of facilities investment plan and no recognition of the impact that comes with a development of this magnitude. This is but one of many such applications with the Government.

Now we see media reports of the Governments deliberate rejection of advice to place overlays and protections for open space, community facilities and other community needs before it commenced development applications. More recent media reports suggest that the planning in Fishermans Bend has been subject to undue political interference and haste – with a clash between developer approvals and the political driven “Rail Link” project providing more confusion and uncertainty for community and developers alike.

The source of this confusion and uncertainty is the Governments political agenda to protect Liberal voting suburbs in the East and cram numbers in to other communities to cope with the 5 million people projected population for Melbourne. This was confirmed when the Minister for Planning sent a message via Social Media on 4 September which stated:

"Every apartment approved in Fishermans Bend is one less apartment approved in a quiet suburban street. Remember that when you vote." (source @Twitter @MatthewGuyMP)

Only Labor will work with the community and Local Government to avoid the massive congestion heading our way. Labor has pledged to review the Fishermans Bend Structure Plan because we only get one chance to get Fishermans Bend right.

Schools and pre-schooling: How can we ensure that our growing population in the seat of Albert Park has adequate schools and pre-schooling?

Labor has a proud record of public education in this community. When last in Government Labor built the hugely successful Albert Park College and provided capital funding to every school in the electorate to meet their enrolment growth.

At the 2010 election, we pledged to rebuild Elwood College and build a new primary school. Sadly, the Liberals scrapped that funding, and in four years have failed to invest in one permanent classroom for local schools in our community. Now we have some of the most overcrowded schools in the State.

If Labor is elected on 29 November, we will start work straight away to fix the education crisis in our community. Labor's local education package includes:

- Build the new South Melbourne Park Primary School in our first term of government. Located near MSAC, it will ease the pressure off existing local primary schools, where the greatest need is now. A

school with outdoor space for local kids to play and learn and incorporating an innovative music curriculum in partnership with Orchestra Victoria.

- Build a new Year 9 Campus and Arts and Science hub for Albert Park College at the Old Circus Oz site, to ease current enrolment pressures for the college.
- Deliver the Elwood College rebuild, a commitment Labor made in 2010 that was scrapped by the Liberals. This will deliver the facilities that this fantastic school needs. It will also take the enrolment pressure off Albert Park College
- Provide \$2 million to the rebuild South Melbourne Life Saving Club and make it a multipurpose facility with new learning spaces for nearby Albert Park College. This will create new learning and leadership opportunities for Albert Park College students whilst delivering new community facilities to the Club.

In addition Labor will give our kids the basics they need for their school, the skills they need for their career and the support they need for their lives. Uniforms, excursions, equipment, intensive support programs for kids with special needs – Labor will make sure that we deliver the best level of support and opportunity for all our kids because every child that is left behind leave us all behind as a community.

Our Schools can't afford another four years of neglect.

The Liberal's long promised, but yet to materialise, Fishermans Bend School is caught up in the Napthine Government's botched planning precinct. Securing the areas schools and education need are further reason why we must stop the Liberals' Fishermans Bend nightmare.

In recent weeks we learnt that the Fishermans Bend/Ferrar St site which is badly contaminated, will take to the middle of 2015 to demolish and to deal with the asbestos.

Despite the spin coming from the Liberals not one dollar has been committed to actually BUILD this or any other new primary school in our community. No plan for decontamination, no open space, uncertainty over enrolments and no community engagement plan has been released.

If Labor is elected we will move quickly and release available material on the contamination results for the site as well as identify details provided to the Napthine Government to fund the necessary community infrastructure in Fishermans Bend, and how this is will support the promised school. Once this is done and a proper plan worked out, we will work with the community to deliver the best multipurpose educational and community use for the site.

Despite the empty promises, the Liberals have delivered an education crisis for local families and provided no certainty. Instead Tony Abbott and Denis Napthine have cut nearly \$1 billion from education in Victoria.

You can't trust Liberals on Education.

Webb Dock: How can we ensure the appropriate development of Webb Dock to take into account the impact on neighbours including the new suburbs in Fishermans Bend?

The Napthine Government botched Webb Dock. Their secretive and rushed plans are now starting to unravel. The damage has largely been done.

But Labor will work with the community to repair the damage where we can.

The most immediate problem is Denis Napthine's botched promise to keep the millions of trucks off Williamstown Road and Lorimer Street. This commitment is falling apart.

Despite attempts to cover the issue up, media reports of the Webb Dock container movements being delivered through High Performance Trucks (B Doubles and B Triples) have been confirmed by the new operator and members of the Port Liaison Group.

Industry has confirmed that the construction underway for flyovers being built on Todd Road directly to the Port from the M 1 will not be able to accommodate these trucks.

This means that these Monster trucks will be forced to come off an already crowded M 1 at Montague Street and then make their way up either Lorimer Street or Williamstown Road.

This will be a disaster for the community, commuters and Industry. It will also pose problems for the botched Fishermans Bend project as trucks will likely make their way down the “grand boulevard” of Plummer Street, which is currently the designated alternative truck bypass for the port and logistics area.

These are all further reasons why Fishermans Bend needs a careful review

There is also the need to ensure the negative impact on surrounding Port Melbourne communities – or wider Inner South of Melbourne – is mitigated. Trucks unplanned impact across this area needs to be reviewed and worked on to ensure issues like the massive truck congestion risks for Beaconsfield road and Beach road is avoided. Breaches of curfew are regularly reported currently. Add a massive 24/7 Port facility into the mix and it can only get worse. Safety, amenity and congestion are all under threat from the Liberals failures to plan properly for the Webb Dock facility.

Labor will work with the community to fix this mess.

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

Victorian Labor is committed to a new approach to our cultural and creative sectors.

Labor will establish a new agency: Creative Victoria, to do the things the Liberal Naphthine Government refuses to do – including supporting our local community festivals and events across the State.

If elected we will work immediately to establish an arts and cultural policy for Victoria to make it clear that Labor supports our vibrant cultural scene. Labor will develop a Creative Industries framework to coordinate the wider economic and community benefits we all share through a vibrant, cultural community.

It is worthwhile to note that under the former Labor State Government the St Kilda Festival received support from Arts Victoria as the largest free outdoor festival in the State.

Under the Liberals this support was cut. Instead, the Liberals applied the approach that festivals and events supported by Local Government should be denied State funding from Arts Victoria.

Labor’s “Music Works” policy, and our Victoria Rocks \$8 Million package provides local festivals the ability to bid for support through a grants program. Labor would encourage such a well-known, successful, contemporary festival as the St Kilda Festival to apply to the “Victoria Rocks” funding stream for support. Such decisions will be determined on merit under a future Labor Government.

Given the Liberals have cut funding for Live Music and support for Artists by over 50% over the past four years, this package of support is aimed to invigorate festivals that focus on new and emerging bands, right across the State.

St Kilda Pier: Would you commit to early state funding for a replacement pier at the St Kilda harbour?

Despite requests for information to Parks Victoria the Labor Opposition has not been provided details of the costs or urgency of repairs of the much loved St Kilda Pier.

Labor, should we be successful on 29 November, would seek such costings and advice from Parks Victoria and then consult with user groups, local environmental partners and the wider community about the Piers future.

The basis of this advice would frame the commitment to the state of the pier, its costs of repair and management issues.

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

My long held view is that Albert Park Reserve is the wrong place for the Grand Prix.

I note that the Liberal Government has recently finalised a new contract extending the GP to 2020, and in doing so stipulated that the race must take place at Albert Park reserve.

This is a disappointing outcome for those who advocate for its relocation to a dedicated motor sports facility.

I will continue to advocate for that view. Equally in the interests of transparency I will continue to seek the release of all available information on the performance of the GP.

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's Melbourne Metro Plan will take people where they want to go and be the world class public transport system this community needs.

Melbourne Metro will double the capacity of the City Loop and deliver a new train line through the heart of the city with new additional train stations at the south end of the CBD, to stations in the north of the CBD, at the site of the Royal Melbourne Hospital and at Melbourne University.

Labor's Melbourne Metro Link has been planned over many years. It has a strong business case, received Infrastructure Australia's endorsement as Victoria's top-priority infrastructure project. It was supported by the Liberal government right up until May this year. Former Liberal leader and current Melbourne Lord Mayor Robert Doyle has called Denis Napthine's backflip on Melbourne Metro Rail a "100-year catastrophe for the city." The Melbourne Metro Link was promised by BOTH major parties at the last Victoria election.

Directly related to the Metro plan is the doubling the City Loop and directing the Metro through the heart of the City. This will free up congestion on our busy St Kilda Road and Swanston Street trams which is important to many local commuters.

In addition, as part of Labor's Project 10,000, we will reduce congestion and improve safety by removing the 50 worst level train crossings in Melbourne. I cannot overstate the number of times this issue gets raised with me by members of the community constantly as they travel through other parts of Melbourne.

As part of Labor's transport package we will also deliver Homesafe: 24 hour public transport on the weekends to get locals home safely. This will include our local 96 and 109 tram routes. Whether it's coming back from a night out with friends, or hospitality workers finishing a shift early on a Saturday morning, they can feel safe knowing they won't be stranded on a platform because they missed the last train.

In contrast, the Liberals' Melbourne Rail Link has no public business case, no public cost-benefit analysis, was developed in a panic a matter of months ago, and has been rejected by Infrastructure Australia, and economists and transport experts.

Even more disturbingly we now see serious questions over whether the planning necessary to deliver the project has occurred. Reports in The Age about the botched Rail investigation process with the Governments "Rail Link" in the Fishermans Bend and Docklands areas shows the lack of actual planning that has gone into the plan. The clash with the mega towers the government has approved in Fishermans Bend, the prospects of any possible site being closer to the Casino than to any future communities and the lack of detailed work on the plan reveal it for the sham it is.

Under the Liberals' dodgy scheme the new Domain Station will lose services direct to Flinders Street and will take three stops to get to Melbourne Central. Also scrapped will be four new stations to getting commuters to the Children's Hospital and University Precinct. To make matters worse the Liberals' scheme won't get started for years and won't be finished until after 2028, if at all.

This community knows they can't trust the Liberals when it comes to Public Transport. At the 2010 Election the Liberals' promised, Avalon Rail, Doncaster Rail and they've been talking about an Airport Link since the Bolte Government. None of these promises were kept.

Port Phillip Bay: What can be done about pollution of the bay and the threat of rising sea levels in the seat of Albert Park?

The issue of pollution and threats from rising sea levels are a problem for our planet, our nation and our community. With so much of this community being low level and close to sea level the threats from human induced climate change is very real.

Equally the impact of high density living and problems with rubbish litter coming down the catchment to our waterways, bays and beaches is real.

The Liberals' denial of the reality of Climate Change in Victoria, their cuts to the EPA, their failures to support renewable energy sources, their cuts to the Climate Change Action plan and their attacks on National parks all point to the one problem - you cannot trust the Liberals on environmental issues.

The 2011 floods showed us how vulnerable we are to rising sea levels.

In Victoria we have seen the syphoning of millions of dollars from our Environmental Contribution Levy paid through our water Bills to prop up Denis Napthine's budget. A report released earlier this year by Victoria's Auditor-General into Environmental Contribution Levy paid by all water users, showed that millions that should have been spent on improving the health of our rivers and landscapes is instead propping up the Liberals' bottom line including \$22.5M to bankroll the botched Office of Living Victoria.

As a result water reform, climate change response and efforts to support both State wide and local action groups to combat these trends have all gone backwards.

As a long-time supporter, volunteer and member of many of the local beach patrol and environmental groups in our community, I have a strong understanding of the work required to combine local action with State wide policy.

Labor will work to undo the damage caused by Denis Napthine's environment cuts and anti-science policies of the past four years.

CCTV and Public Safety: What is your position on Closed Circuit TV and public safety in Albert Park generally and Fitzroy St in particular?

Public safety is important to this community. We have seen CCTV be successful as part of a wider community effort to tackle bad behaviour across the State. CCTV is a part of the community safety efforts.

It is important to make sure that this is part of a wider strategy to deal with the causes of crime rather than the focus solely on the consequences of crime.

Under the Liberals we have seen crime rates go up. That this should be occurring is no surprise when we consider the rise in youth unemployment, young people disengagement, homelessness, cuts to TAFE and education and other services. Locally we have seen this play out through the savage cuts to St Kilda Youth Services and HEAT who have now been forced to merge with Melbourne City Mission to survive.

When the Liberals invest more in Prison Beds than Hospital beds then we know there are problems in our crime and our justice system.

Government needs to be tough on crime locally, but it needs to be tougher on the causes of crime.

That is why Labor recently announced funding for St Kilda Community Housing and Sacred Heart Mission in a support package for the residents of the Gatwick Private Hotel. These vulnerable members of our community deserve the opportunity to build better lives and avoid being readily associated with criminal activity. Labor will provide \$600,000 to St Kilda Community Housing to improve services to Gatwick, including upgrading facilities.

They will work in partnership with the Sacred Heart Mission to provide support programs related to chronic homelessness, health and wellbeing issues, alcohol and drug issues, and physical and intellectual disabilities.

More widely Labor's plans to free up 400 serving police officers by creating Custody Officers to take over the management of police cells is important to putting Police back patrolling the streets in our community, where they are needed most.

The plans of The Napthine Government to move to super police sites are a further issue of concern for our community. It is widely anticipated that the small and in many ways non-compliant South Melbourne Police Station will be an early victim of this policy. Labor has made its position clear that there should be no loss of Police coverage for this or other communities.

Neighbourhood Zones and Affordable Housing: Do you support the new Neighbourhood zoning system as it has been applied in Albert Park?

Planning Minister, Matthew Guy's zone reforms are based on politics, not good policy.

Leafy, safe Liberal seats are locked up from any development, and a frenzied, developer free for all is applied to cram thousands of apartments in inner city communities like ours.

Melbourne is growing and it is becoming harder for people to get into affordable housing, but we need a balanced planning strategy to ensure we have a variety of housing for people to live in. What we have with the Neighbourhood Zones is a wrecking ball approach to some areas, enforcing inappropriate development which will ruin Melbourne's famous liveability.

Labor will review the botched planning zones imposed on councils and allow communities to have their say.

Under Labor's plan, new planning zones will be reviewed with a full report tabled in Parliament. The review will examine:

- The Napthine Government's consultation process
- The role of Planning Minister Matthew Guy and his office in that process
- Departmental advice on zone application and what weight is given to heritage, local character and the housing needs of the state
- The impact of the zone changes on our suburbs

- Alternative ways to meet our housing needs
- How the zones can better fit within the framework outlined in Plan Melbourne

Apartment Design Standards: Do you support mandatory design standards for new Apartments in Melbourne?

As Melbourne continues to grow, and as the Victorian economy continues to change, we will see an increase in population within the city bounds. An increase in apartment dwelling is going to be part of accommodating this population growth. This requires a thoughtful government, one which looks beyond the electoral cycle.

The current Minister for Planning has approved an unprecedented number of high-density mega tower dwellings. But he has done so without considering the bigger picture - what that is doing to Melbourne and our inner city communities.

As Planning expert Professor Michael Buxton stated, when he criticised the pace and secrecy with which the Napthine Government was approving skyscrapers, saying so many so quickly was unprecedented. *"This is a really irresponsible way of planning a City"*. (source: Age newspaper, 29 September).

The consequences of this bad planning can be seen in the 74 level of micro apartments approved by the Melbourne City Council in Lorimer Street and sitting on the desk of the State Government.

This building is an example of why we need mandatory design standards.

Apartments are places where people live. They need to be built on sustaining both communities and the wider environment. Therefore, these should be places that are at a minimum, pleasantly habitable. This means having minimum levels of light, air flow, sound proofing and size.

From a market perspective planning schemes should be required to set out a diverse range of options of housing to deliver a diverse range of peoples and backgrounds to make our future high density communities interesting places socially as well as design wise.

While short term investors may be willing to snap up apartments, developers should be building something that people themselves want to actually live in, so as to ensure we don't have a market glut.

Labor's plans change will around the need for design standards. This will be led by a team built around the Government Architects Office and will ensure these standards are clear and enforceable- and even more importantly contribute to our status as the world's most liveable City.

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

If Labor is successful on 29th November, we won't do what the Coalition did in 2011 and put the State on hold while review after review is undertaken.

We broadly support Plan Melbourne. We just don't think the Government is serious in implementing it. We will make it effective and make it work in the communities interests. Plan Melbourne started in the right direction, but five of the six authors of the Plan quit, citing the influence of the Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy and his office. There would need to be some changes and the removal of the central tenant of the document - the East West Tunnel - but otherwise it is a fair strategy to cater for our growing population. It just needs to be actually delivered – rather than ignored.

Locally our promise to deliver leadership and implementation for the inner urban aspects of the strategy.

16. 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?

The community of Albert Park District is a diverse and creative constituency. I have found that what unites us is a strong sense of pride of where we live, commitment to social justice, and a passion for community. We love this area and we want to keep that vibrancy and soul. But we are also concerned about the pressures of unregulated growth let loose by the Napthine Liberals on those aspects of the place we so love.

To secure what we value about this community and manage the growth that threatens it, we need a strong planning approach and leadership from our government and community. We don't need hands off, pro developer, rubberstamping approach that has dominated the last 4 years.

As the Shadow Minister for Equality one of the most pressing social reforms is to build the equality framework for LGBTI Victorians. This means removing discrimination in the law for LGBTI people. Denis Napthine and the Liberals dragged us back to the 1950s, when they amended the Equal Opportunity laws and made it easier to discriminate against LGBTI Victorians. If elected, Labor will act immediately to reform these discriminatory laws. I've also lobbied successfully for further progress in this area, including around adoption law and just recently, have enhanced the provisions of the expungement of historical convictions for gay sex.

Support for our vibrant Arts and Cultural community is a big issue to me. I was appalled when we saw attacks and censorship against a local gallery and young artist damage St Kilda's reputation as a place that supports creativity. That this attack should have been launched by local, conservative fringe elements in our community is of even greater concern. It shows the need to champion creativity and freedom of the arts, as their values are regularly under threat from conservatives.

At the end of it all, what drives me is to do what I can to make sure my kids, as the fourth generation of my family growing up locally, have a better, fairer and more sustainable place to call home. That and seeing St Kilda win a premiership before I die.

Once again thank you for taking the time to write to me regarding these issues.

If you or your members have any further questions please feel free to contact me at martin.foley@parliament.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Martin Foley', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

Martin Foley
Labor Candidate for Albert Park