

Dogged complaints

To CK Beacon, please stop putting all dog owners in the same basket, ('Dysfunctional dog owners' Letters, NGT Jan 19).

I have a companion dog and cat and I am a responsible reliable tenant, yet am unable to find an affordable rental (even though I have excellent references) because of irresponsible pet owners.

Next time you have issues with neighbours' animals, report to the RSPCA. They respond to complaints quickly.

Helen B. Hannigan

Big heart, tiny homes

It was great to read Diana Gosper's article on how to economically and reliably power your temporary, semi permanent or permanent abode, that has been situated at your friend or relative's property, using a solar system purchased from Nimbin's leading solar provider.

It would be great if there could be a follow up article on economically and reliably dealing with grey water and effluent in the same circumstances because even in your tiny house (or container/yurt/shed/cabin/boat/tipi/caravan/bush shack/trailer home/permanent tent etc.) you'll need a dunny and somewhere to wash, without having a negative effect on the environment.

Stan Palmer
Blue Knob

Gardening weeds

I felt compelled to reply to Matt Downie's article ('Animals Essential to Sustainable Food Production' NGT December '18), I suppose mainly because of his alleged credentials, and the scary possibility of his teaching people about growing stuff.

Whilst the article is interesting and well written, I was utterly appalled to read some of the recommended plants for this "Zen Gardening" idea. To whit: "Leguminous shrubs, such as leucaena, ice-cream bean, honey locust, pigeon pea..." etc.

Can it be possible that the author has no knowledge that ALL of the above are now established, serious weeds of this, and other areas? Once leucaena establishes, the seeds, being hard-coated legumes, persist for many years in the soil (personal experience).

Honey locust spreads very easily, and its noxious thorns can cause serious damage not only to car tyres, but also to human beings – these are serious weapons up to 75mm at least, and stoutly strong.

Ice-cream bean turns up in the most unlikely places, grows super-vigorously, and

NGT welcomes letters and other contributions received by email or post prior to deadline. Letters longer than 300 words may be edited for length, and articles for accuracy. Please include your full name, address and phone number for verification purposes. Opinions expressed remain those of the author, and are not necessarily those of NGT.

provides little in the way of human food, as with honey locust. Pigeon pea, though not so weedy, can spread, and again has long-lived seeds that may prove problematic in the future.

It is absolutely irresponsible to be promoting such plants, given the extent of other, even less useful plants that abound in the area, and also does not show "...responsible care for the environment..." as claimed by the writer.

To go anywhere towards conserving the amazing biodiversity that surrounds us, the less of these weeds the better, for they definitely will compete with and displace local species, producing thickets of unproductive, boring vegetation that offers little to local fauna, and encourages feral species such as Indian mynah.

To contend that there is no such thing as a weed is to confuse the issue, and to promote a moral laziness that ignores the fundamental requisite to at least make the effort to keep introduced weeds at bay.

With Matt Downie's published degree of experience, it is shocking, to say the least to read his recommendations. I hope upon reflection, the author can review his relationship with these species, and others, no doubt.

Chris Hoare
Upper Duck Creek

Open letter to Isaac Smith

I am writing to you in relation to emails that Uri Ross has sent you regarding the lack of safety where there is no footpath/bridge access along Sibley Street, between the entrance to the caravan park/pool and Alternative Way, which is truly a hazard.

And the overhanging tree branches on Nimbin Road south of Shipway Road where the overtaking area is. The road view is blocked which is very dangerous, as I'm sure you would agree.

I and many other people in the community would like to see urgent action taken to avoid any accidents at both areas. It is not that hard to fix both hazards to prevent tragic accidents from happening.

Council needs to start putting ratepayers' money back into this community – Nimbin. I urge you as mayor to take action and get Sibley Street fixed and the tree overhang dealt with asap please.

For too long, LCC has reaped much benefit from Nimbin, selling us off years ago and to this very day, as a tourist destination. We deserve a lot more than what Council provides with the amount we pay in rates.

So I'm urging you to fix these two issues now, because as you know this area is growing rapidly and to have no footpath/bridge right here in the village is appalling and unacceptable.

And we don't need a tragic accident.

This would not happen in Lismore/Goonellabah, please correct me if I'm wrong.

It's better to fix problems than deal with disasters.

Council needs to stop neglecting Nimbin and act now.

Marie Cameron
Nimbin

Zoning change petition

Our community has stood together in the recent past over many issues such as CSG. Is there a similar response in regards to the Lismore City Council plans to change rural zoning to residential in our area?

The Nimbin infrastructure, our roads, our culture and our community as we know will not cope with such changes. The size of these development proposals is enormous.

A better way is to preserve what we have, build a large environmental centre like at Mossman Gorge, where jobs, creativity and environmental harmony can work together to build a better Nimbin.

Rural land should not be rezoned but it should be protected. It is clear our community, its uniqueness, its character, its beauty, and its ability to play a key role in providing a sustainable future will be drastically impacted by mid-20th century style development. Even the Department of New South Wales Planning Authority sent a copy of my petition to the LCC. Please help by signing the petition, at Mark Pestell on Facebook, before it is too late.

Mark Pestell
Nimbin

Political priorities

Our politicians are astonishing and so are political commentators, who appear to belong to different denominations of the same church — the church of the wall (Trump would have it "WALL" that came to him as divine revelation).

Worshipping the wall and



the walls that surround them, politicians and political commentators see nothing of the actual world, but stare at virtual walls upon which images are projected which simulate people, animals, houses, cities, oceans and continents... they see virtual realities that feign life.

Australia is burning hot and in many places actually on fire. But to Australian politicians and commentators what's most important are the differences in policies between political parties.

Our rivers are dying, fish are suffocating, towns are becoming uninhabitable because there's no water. Our politicians are too preoccupied with power-plays and internecine gossip to notice. Their brains and their mouths are detached from life, they have set themselves apart from the living continent they are supposed to govern and nobody is holding them to account.

Where I am in the Northern Rivers, what appears most distressing and dangerously neglected is the land, the environment, the river systems which nurture it. We are in drought and it's killing everything. But all that's discussed in Australia is political fiddling, played with an out of tune violin with broken strings... anybody want to discuss negative gearing with a farmer whose cattle are dying, who has nothing in the bank and his water tanks are empty?

Talk to the dairy farmer friend of mine about the subtleties of trickle-down economics — he'd likely deliver you a bunch of five knucklers; he's selling his milkers for dog meat because he can't afford to bale-feed them.

I'd advise, as a matter of urgency, that politicians and commentators turn to looking at the actual hard graft, sweltering hot, increasingly degraded country they profess to love, and turn to realities which urgently need attention.

The changes planet-wide that nature is beginning to inflict on us make political shenanigans and the salivating of journalists fatuous.

Michael Brooke
Kyogle

Rail and climate change

A recent report from the Climate Council, *Waiting for the Green Light: Sustainable Transport Solutions to Climate Change* states that "Transport is now Australia's second largest source of greenhouse gas pollution after electricity and the sector has seen the largest percentage growth (62.9%) since 1990."

"Compared with other countries, Australia consistently ranks at the back of the pack when it comes to tackling its transport emissions." It goes on to say that our relative investment in public transport is lower than other countries and we have no plan to reduce transport emissions. Also nearly 8 out of 10 Australians travel to work or education by car.

Of course in Northern NSW that statistic is much higher as we have no trains. Instead we see huge trucks burning along our highways and intense traffic congestion going into Byron while growing steadily elsewhere.

Our governments continue to support oil and road companies by funding roads instead of rail and its not good enough. In this area we have to pay hugely for our transport needs, thousands

more per year than for electricity, meanwhile our climate footprint will risk our children's future.

The Casino to Murwillumbah railway line is the only way to make a significant cut in transport emissions in the short term by acting quickly to repair the track and introduce a regular, commuter rail service.

Beth Shelley
Booerie Creek

Dispirited and cynical

Australians are increasingly distrustful of politicians and becoming cynical about our democracy. In this area around ¼ of residents did not register to vote, did not bother to vote, did not fill in their vote properly or had their vote excluded.

It is easy to see why people feel disempowered when government seems to ignore what the people want. Over 70% of the community wants action on climate change.

People feel squeezed by living costs. Affordable housing is desperately needed. Over 80% want the choice to die with dignity. Why is nothing happening?

One thing is certain. Things will not change if we don't vote for change. By avoiding voting or voting informal it actually gets harder to achieve change. It meant that the current Nationals MP, Kevin Hogan, needed ten thousand FEWER votes to win because the total number of votes was smaller than it should be.

In Australia we have no bill of rights. What freedoms we do have are being eroded. Previous generations had to fight long and hard to get the basic right to vote for a better future. Right now we have a government that won't listen to the people, won't listen to the scientists and won't even face reality.

If you are unhappy with the government then don't leave it to someone else to vote them out. You may not like the other candidates on offer but it is the policies of their parties that is important.

Voting is not so hard. If voting on polling day is difficult you can vote days earlier at a pre-poll station or possibly get a postal vote on line. For politicians, if you don't vote then you don't matter. Show them you do matter and that you want action, not spin. Get an enrolment form from a post office. Your chance is coming soon.

Greg Reid
Mt Burrell

Change the World

Brazil has just elected a new president. He plans to deforest the Amazon rainforest, ride rough over the native people and any opposition, and make quick money. Politics matters. Who

you vote for has consequences for a cascade of local and international situations.

In Brazil the mafia-style ranchers got their way. In Australia the National / Liberal coalition are at the mercy of the 'farmers'. Not the small farmer who wears an Akubra hat and has run his farm for generations, but the big cotton and beef farmers and miners who plunder the rivers and forests leaving a trail of death by imbalance.

The recent fish die-off in the Murray river system and the plight of koala bears are just two examples. The current NSW state government has allowed logging adjacent to national parks, fracking, and a host of bad environmental decisions.

The state election in March is the time to make your values have power in the decisions politicians make. In Lismore the Greens candidate is Sue Higginson, a single mum who studied to become an environmental lawyer, and was the leading lawyer for the Environmental Defenders Office (the organisation that legally stands up to the mining industry). The Nationals candidate is Austin Curtin and the Labour candidate is Janelle Saffin, both fine people who are shackled to parties that are chained to vested interests.

The Greens have a policy of not accepting donations with strings attached, and are focused on more than the environment, indeed, Sue Higginson says she will break down barriers for small farmers, put more staff in hospitals, improve public transport (including reviving the local train system), invest in clean energy, support schools and protect the region's forests. She has had years of experience working in the political field and knows how to get things done.

So in March, make it your resolution to change the world into a better place. Vote for Sue Higginson.

Think Green, act Green, vote Green.

Yagia Gentle
Nimbin

Let's clean up politics

Right now, politics seems completely separate to what really matters in our day-to-day lives. But it shouldn't be this way. All of us should have our voice heard and have the values of our community represented in parliament.

Politics in Australia needs a major shake-up. For too long, our parliament has played out behind closed mahogany doors, shutting out communities and making decisions about people, without those people.

Our democracy should be the best tool we have to care for people, plan for the future and protect the environment,

but it has to work for all of us. Right now, corporate influence in politics is getting in the way of progress on everything from tackling climate change to housing affordability.

Instead of delivering a better future for all of us, the Liberal, National and Labor parties take millions of dollars in donations from big corporations, hold private meetings, and organise cushy lobbyist jobs for ex-politicians, with no transparency or accountability.

They donate for a reason. In return for their donations, big agribusiness, property developers, the banks, gambling corporations and mining giants have received billions of dollars worth of favourable policy decisions from Liberal/National and Labor governments.

While the major parties continue to take money from big corporate interests, they will never be completely focused on what is good for our communities or our environment. From local decisions on the site of the new Tweed Hospital and water mining approvals, to national issues like the management of the Murray/Darling, it is clear that the major parties, and the National Party in particular, will put vested interest ahead of community interest every time. We deserve better.

Unlike the major parties, the Greens refuse to take donations from corporations trying to buy influence. The Greens are focused on outcomes that are good for our community, not outcomes that suit big donors. The Greens can't be bought and they won't sell out. They have a plan to return integrity and transparency to the political system and hold politicians and major parties to account.

Now is the time for us to work together and build a democracy that works for everyone. The Greens are committed to cleaning up politics. We need a better way that builds a future for all of us, not just those with vested interests and big pockets.

Mick Hidden
Cabarita Beach

No life without water

The recent death of one million fish in the Darling River near Menindee Lakes is yet another wake-up call of the consequences from over-using and abusing our water systems. According to an Environmental Defenders Office report, a river is like a piggy bank, if you keep taking money out without saving for the future you end up bankrupt. The causes of this devastating fish kill include extracting too much water from the river, failing to set limits on extraction that take into account climate

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NEXT DEADLINE: Wednesday 20th February

Email nimbin.goodtimes@gmail.com or put stuff in our pigeonhole at the Nimbin Community Centre.

change, and prolonged periods without rainfall.

Similar principles apply to water mining. You just can't keep taking water out of our aquifers without a risk of them drying up. Eventually the 'piggy bank' will be empty. Our aquifers are our buffer against the increasing threat of climate change and ongoing drought. As our rivers and creeks dry up, we will be more reliant on our underground water supplies for domestic and agricultural use.

Our aquifers belong to us, the community, not the greedy few selling our precious life-sustaining resource to make a profit. The Tweed community has raised concerns on numerous occasions about the lack of evidence of the sustainability of water mining operations, impacts on the rural character of the area and on the road network.

So why do the Labor, Liberal and National Party-aligned Tweed Shire Councillors continue to approve water mining applications? If they continue to ignore the outcry from the community they are supposed to represent, they will pay the ultimate political price.

I commend our Greens Mayor Katie Milne for her persistence in calling for water mining to be removed as a permissible use from the Local Environmental Plan. It is now in the hands of the State Government. If elected as the Tweed State MP, I will push for this resolution to be ratified. I will also investigate ways that existing water mining approvals can be revoked so that we can put an end to this environmentally-destructive water mining industry once and for all.

Bill Fenelon
Greens state candidate for
Tweed, Fingal Head

Save Tweed hospital

It is crucial that Greens candidate for Tweed, Bill Fenelon, is elected. He represents the only party advocating that the current Tweed Heads hospital be retained and expanded. The Nationals want to build a nine-storey hospital on state significant farmland at Cudgen and the Labor Party at Kings Forest. In either location, it will give the green light to high rise and Gold Coast style development, increase traffic congestion and destroy the rural and beachside villages in the area.

Both Labor leader Michael Daley and Premier Gladys Berejiklian recently visited the Tweed and claim that they have overwhelming community support to build the hospital in their chosen locations south of the river.

Did Mr Daley or Ms Berejiklian visit any of the locals north of the river? They are outraged that their hospital is being taken away from them. Many are retired and moved there to have easy access to the hospital in their old age. They also cannot understand why the Tweed Heads hospital is to be shut down and relocated when there is plenty of room for expansion at the current site. Why has health minister Brad Hazzard disregarded the North Coast Regional Plan, which states that it was always intended that the current Tweed hospital would be expanded?

There is no valid reason why the Tweed Heads Hospital cannot be expanded. It is zoned for high rise. Recently both the Lismore and Robina hospitals underwent major expansion and refurbishment works whilst the hospitals continued to provide health services.

Lyn Dickinson
Pottsville

Tai Chi

New beginner's class in yang style Tai Chi starting end Feb. This will be on Mondays at 4pm at the Nimbin Community Centre. Please call Mel on 0431-958-443 to register interest and for more info.

Nimbin Open Learning

Term One begins Wednesday 13th February, offering classes in: Ukulele, Creative Writing, Tai Chi, Conflict Resolution and Trauma Recovery and Cultural Healing.

All classes are \$60. Enrolments open on Wednesday 6th and Thursday 7th February, from 10am to 3pm at the Community School room at Nimbin Community Centre.

For more information, check the facebook page at: nimbinopenlearning or phone 6689-1477.

Valentines Day wishes

Roses are red, and violets are blue,
You gave me your pink love-heart sunglasses,
And I love you.

— anonymous (of course)

Building for Rent

The Fig Tree building at the Nimbin Community Centre is available to rent. Internal area is 104.62m² composed of large central room with kitchen, two offices and bathroom.



Would suit many different purposes.

Rent from \$983/month for non-profit (net GST)
Commercial rate offered on application

Phone: 6689-0000

Email: ncci@nimbincommunity.org.au

Rental Vacancy at the Nimbin Community Centre

Room A5:

Small room (11.20m²) in Acacia House available from the 1st of February 2019. This room is small but would make a perfect office, craft room or storage space. The room has been used as a studio/office for many years. It comes with a desk and has 1 window. Great location and security.

Rent will range from \$209.05 – \$256.26 (excluding GST) per month, depending on the use of the room. You will need to pay Bonds of 6 weeks rent + electricity bond + key deposit.

If you are interested in renting this room, please direct a written Expression of Interest to the Nimbin Community Centre Management Committee at 81 Cullen Street Nimbin, or email: ncci@nimbincommunity.org.au You will need to provide 2 rental references.

For further information on what to include in your Expression of Interest, please contact our co-ordinators during office hours Monday to Thursday between 10am and 2pm on 6689-0000.

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Turning the Page on water sustainability

by Patrick Deegan
ALP candidate for Page

Who do you trust? Former Prime Minister John Howard made trust his central campaign theme in the 2004 Federal election.

In 2019, Australians will again go to the polls, and the issue of trust will once again be front-and-centre.

This time, however, the question will be "who do you trust to manage our precious water resources?"

Our waterways are precious, but they are also fragile. If anyone had any doubts about this, then the massive fish kill disaster near the Menindee Lakes last month has put those doubts to bed once and for all.

That is exactly why it is so important that the people and institutions responsible for managing our waterways are seen as unscrupulously fair, honest and professional.

In 2017, *Four Corners* detailed very serious and worrying allegations about potential corruption and large-scale water theft by some irrigators along the Murray-Darling river system.

The former National Party Leader Barnaby Joyce, however, dismissed the *Four Corners* revelations as some sort of shadowy conspiracy against the bush, telling drinkers at a Shepparton pub that "it's about them trying to take more water off you, trying to create a calamity."

Mr Joyce even bragged "we have taken water (out of the rivers), put it back into agriculture, so we could look after you and make sure we don't have greenies running the show."

Sadly, these comments reflect a cavalier attitude in the National Party towards sustainable water management, and a tendency to play cheap, divisive politics on major issues of national importance.

As Minister for Water Resources,



Patrick's campaign office launch at 17 Woodlark Street, Lismore. Drop in for a 'chat with Pat'.

Barnaby Joyce also made a crucial decision in 2015 to change tack from water "buy backs", to a focus on direct subsidies to irrigators for infrastructure improvements.

It sounds OK in theory, but there have been concerns that the infrastructure subsidy program is inefficient, ineffective and easily rorted.

For example, last year it emerged that a National Party candidate in Victoria had received \$474,000 in tax-payer funds for water savings measures on his irrigated property that were not even done.

Perhaps the biggest problem with the management of our water resources, however, is the veil of secrecy over what is actually going on.

After the *Four Corners* exposé, the former South Australian Labor Government announced a Royal Commission into water management in the Murray Darling Basin.

By the time this edition of the *Nimbin GoodTimes* is published, the findings of the Royal Commission will have been handed to the South Australian

Governor.

One of the most telling aspects of the South Australian Royal Commission was that the Federal Government banned its own public servants from appearing as witnesses to answer questions.

In fact, the Federal Minister for Agriculture and Water – the National's David Littleproud – even lodged an injunction with the High Court to challenge the SA Royal Commissioner's power to compel witnesses.

It makes you wonder – just what are the Nationals trying to hide, and why?

There is no doubt that water management is a complicated business, and managing the competing demands for our limited water resources requires difficult choices, compromises and trade-offs.

The realities of climate change, and the likelihood of more intense and frequent droughts, make this even more challenging.

But there is a fundamental bottom line that's beyond compromise: if there's not enough water, the rivers run dry. And when the rivers run dry, everyone suffers.

The missing piece of the education puzzle

by Dr Mehreen Faruqi,
Greens Senator for NSW

Hundreds of thousands of students of all ages will soon be attending O-weeks at universities across the country.

But along with the hopes and dreams for their future comes a depressing reality: a decade of debt upon graduating on top of increasing costs of living and high youth unemployment.

This burden of higher education debts is unsustainable, particularly for those who choose a career of public service.

The average female teacher will take thirteen years to pay off a twenty thousand dollar debt. The average male early childhood education and care worker will take twenty years to pay off their vocational training debt.

It doesn't have to be this way. The Greens have a plan to make university and TAFE fee-free. We already have universal free primary and secondary education. Free public higher education is the missing piece of the puzzle.

And it is not just young people who will benefit. As



technology rapidly advances, many of us will be working in jobs we haven't yet imagined. To manage this change we will need to acquire new skills, and be prepared to learn and unlearn.

The prospect of accumulating massive debt is a significant disincentive for anyone to pursue further education to retrain, reskill and change careers.

Universal fee-free TAFE and university means everyone will have lifelong access to higher education. This will help nurture a creative and innovative society where we can shape the future we want.

Having been an academic for many years, I know first hand the struggle students go through to make ends meet, especially those who move to big cities from regional areas. Everyone has a right to education regardless of their

postcode or their parents' bank balance.

A student graduating in 2019 will, on average, be repaying debt for ten years. Under our plan they will have twenty thousand extra dollars in their pocket for living expenses, food and rent in the decade after they graduate. That's more than \$5000 in the first four years after graduation alone.

Australia is a wealthy country, but too many are being left behind. We can afford to make higher education fee-free by making corporations pay their fair share.

By ending the enormous fossil fuel subsidies that help big mining companies minimise their tax and making offshore gas companies pay a flat 10% royalty rate for extracting gas, we could raise almost \$140 billion over ten years, more than enough to provide free uni and TAFE.

In fact, it's enough to also significantly boost long-overdue university funding, plus measures to improve job security for staff and a \$75 per week increase to Youth Allowance and other income support for students.

If we made higher

education free again, we would be in good company. Germany, Norway and Finland already have free higher education, and New Zealand's Labour party have begun the process of making university degrees free.

We need bold and transformational plans that shake up the status quo. Liberal and Labor governments have cut funds to universities and TAFE while giving massive tax handouts to their corporate donors.

Australians are sick of being told that they have to go without while the big end of town evades tax and dictates government policy. We need to reclaim education from the politics of austerity and neoliberalism. Universities and TAFEs are educational institutions, not money-making business units.

An education system that gives everyone lifelong access to learning and retraining in TAFEs and universities without being mired in a decade of debt helps us build a future for all of us.

To read the Greens full education policy go to: <https://greens.org.au/campaigns/free-education>

On the same PAGE

by Kevin Hogan MP,
Member for Page

I hope everyone had a great Australia Day. It was wonderful to attend Lismore's Australia Day celebrations. My congratulations and thanks to all the Award winners and nominees.

The 1979 Terania Forest Blockaders won for Services to the Community. It was in recognition for the group which this year marks the 40th anniversary of action that eventually led to the creation of the Nightcap National Park.

I would like to congratulate 12-year old Nimbin teenager Hunter Roadley, who last week received one of my Young Sporting Champions Awards.

Hunter represented our community at the Primary Schools Sports Association Athletics Championships. It was held last October at the Sydney Olympic Park Athletics Centre.

As well as a certificate, Hunter also received \$550 to help cover transport costs.

The Local Sporting Champions program provides financial assistance to young people aged between 12 and 18 years to compete, coach or umpire in their chosen sport.



Hugh Nicholson accepting the Services in Community (Group) award for the 1979 Terania Forest Blockaders.

Many people on the North Coast have had their lives affected by chronic symptoms associated with tick bites. Debilitating symptoms include fatigue, arthritis, chronic pain and

headaches.

That is why we announced \$3 million for research to better understand the causes of these symptoms and to develop diagnostics and treatment for patients.

Kyogle Council notebook

Council started 2019 with the wonderful news that the State Government will provide \$4.2 million so Council can seal the final 15km gravel section of the Clarence Way.

The funding, through the Government's Fixing Country Roads Program, was announced by retiring Member for Lismore, Thomas George and Nationals Candidate for the seat, Austin Curtin.

The \$4.2 million will be added to the \$3.55 million already committed to the project by the Federal Government. This combined funding commitment of \$7.75 million from the State and Federal Governments is a fantastic outcome for the community after years of planning.

Council could not have achieved this success without the community's support in preparing a business case for the project.

As I have said before, everyone wins when the State and Federal Governments work hand-in-hand with Council on projects such as this that provide the



by Cr Danielle Mulholland

community with real and lasting outcomes.

Meanwhile, Council will be lobbying hard in the lead-up to the upcoming State and Federal elections for funds for the projects identified through the Visions of the Villages process and the \$35 million Tabulam Agribusiness Precinct.

As always, roads and bridges remain a priority. Council is proud of what we achieved in 2018, with completed projects and works including a long list of new bridges, renewal of more than 58km of Council's road network, grading 454km of unsealed roads, and filling more than 87,200 potholes.

In 2019, Council will seek further funding for the Clarence Way, as well as lobby for funds to undertake community-identified projects such as the Kyogle mountain

bike trail, Stage 2 of the sports centre, and projects for the villages (as identified in the Visions of the Villages process).

Council will work hard to make sure 2019 is equally, if not more, profitable for all the communities in our Council area.

This year, we will see the public artworks that have added colour to Kyogle's streetscape, implemented in our villages. This will include murals painted on telegraph poles by local teacher and artist Bec O'Meara in conjunction with local schools.

I will be bringing back the mayoral outreach meetings with the first meeting to be held at Grevillia in February and then Cawongla in March. If you're interested in meeting with me about a particular issue, please contact Council on 6632-1611 to make an appointment so you don't miss out.

My wish for 2019 is that we can all work together to make the Kyogle Local Government Area the best that it can be.

For further information, contact Cr Danielle Mulholland on 0438-931-425.



The Sustainable Australia Party campaign bus on a recent visit to Nimbin.

On the road to sustainability

Sustainable Australia is an independent party with an agenda to secure an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable Australia.

They believe in an evidence-based approach to policy – not an extreme left or right ideology – and have carefully developed a comprehensive policy platform.

Within this platform, they have prioritised four big issues:

- Secure jobs via a more diverse economy;
- Affordable housing for first home buyers and renters;
- Better planning to stop over-development; and
- A sustainable environment and population.

For the NSW 2019 election, they are focusing on better planning to stop over-development:

There are a range of policies required, including tax reform to discourage housing speculation, better investment in education and skills training for local workers, returning real planning power to local communities and investing more into renewable energy to help address climate change.

Urgent policy reform must also include ending Australia's politically engineered rapid population growth by lowering permanent immigration from a record high 200,000+ per year back to the long term average of 70,000.

Refugees would still sit within this, at the current level of around 14-20,000.

This is not about "blaming migrants" or anti-immigration, they argue, but about ending unsustainable population growth and helping to achieve secure jobs, affordable housing, better planning and a sustainable environment.

The policy is also pro-migrant and pro-immigration, in order to rebuild and maintain public confidence in the immigration programme for the long term.

Sustainable Australia support sustainable immigration and proudly boast migrants born in many countries and every inhabited continent on Earth in our party.

Sustainable Australia blame politicians and vested interests for this unsustainable policy and its impacts on our infrastructure and environment, not migrants.

Sustainable Australia's full "common sense" policy suite can be found at: www.sustainableaustralia.org.au/policies

Over one million Australians voted for the Sustainable Australia Party in their top six Senate choices in the 2016 federal election and they are now using this momentum to launch State parties.

They have registered in the ACT, NSW and Victoria.

Greens commit to fund roads and parks

Greens State Member for Ballina, Tamara Smith and Greens Candidate for Lismore, Sue Higginson are committing to needs-based funding for roads and parks in regional NSW, and an injection of \$195 million to address the backlog in road maintenance across the Northern Rivers.

The road maintenance backlog as it stands is \$70 million for Byron Shire, \$65 million for Lismore, \$42 million for Kyogle Shire, \$10 million for Ballina Shire and \$8 million for Tweed Shire. Tenterfield Shire will be added in a further announcement.

"Why do we pay taxes if only city folk get good roads and infrastructure for public amenity?" said Ms Smith. "Over the next 10 years, every single Sydney-sider will have \$1,900 per year, per person spent on them just for roads!

"That would translate to about 90 million dollars per year every year for the next ten years for the Ballina electorate alone – imagine our councils being able to count on that money and plan accordingly!

"We are supporting needs-based funding for regional NSW that isn't tied to the politics or government of the day. I have constituents approaching me about the potholes at least once a week. It's ridiculous that ratepayers and voters in regional NSW

are expected to put up with substandard local roads while those in the city access the best."

Ms Higginson said, "Instead of recognising this, and providing the much-needed support and investment, the State Government continues cost-shifting its responsibilities to Local Government thus eroding the ability of local councils to provide the services their residents expect and deserve.

"We have a number of significant environmental and climatic factors, such as high rainfall, volcanic soils, high temperatures and humidity that contribute to the state of our roads. Our Northern Rivers councils need real support and investment to get our road networks up to scratch.

"We also need investment into research and development to build better roads so they are fit for purpose and long-lasting. There are so many new technologies and materials that we should be working with and our State Government should be taking the lead."

"The State Government is happy to reap the tax rewards of Byron Shire's thriving tourism industry, but it doesn't want to maintain the infrastructure used by tourists, leaving local councils with a never-ending backlog of broken roads and failing infrastructure," Ms Smith said.