

MidCoast Independents

What is your Platform?

Our Group is called 'MidCoast Independents', (Vote 1 Group B above the line!) and, as the name implies, we are truly independent of any party or other line. We seek to REPRESENT the local area in Council. Put simply, our platform is "For Locals, For Community, For Action". We call the Council our 'Local Government', but how local can it be, covering 10,000km² and with no elected Councillors, nor unelected Directors/Managers, being from anywhere near our area? All of my Team Members are closely and intimately involved with several community service groups, and have each done much to improve our area as members of their groups, as well as private citizens. This election is a rare opportunity to get a **local** onto the Elected Council of MidCoast, to represent our forgotten and neglected **communities**, and to use the system to its fullest capability to achieve real **action** by delivering and promoting our local voice within Council itself. We believe in the inherent value of democratic legitimacy that comes from being elected to such a position, and will employ the Local Government Act to its fullest extent.

What will you do to make sure the southern area is properly represented?

Our first goal is Local Representation – our agenda is to understand, articulate and represent the needs and concerns of the people of our area, which includes, but is by no means limited to: TGHN, NAC, Pindimar/Bundabah, Carrington, Tahlee, Nerong, Bulahdelah, Stroud, Markwell, and all surrounding locales here in the southern area. In an approach that will be seen as quite novel in the modern age, as an elected Councillor I will actually engage directly with these local communities, and make myself known and available to discuss the local issues that matter the most. I have done as much in my current role with the local newspaper, the Myall Coast NOTA, and will only be extending that service, amplified by the legitimacy and capacity that comes from being a Councillor. I and my Team actually enjoy going to the townships, meeting the people, listening to their concerns, and then seeking ways to actually do something about it all. We certainly will not be vanishing into the aether once elected, like so many politicians have done before – I seek to be a true Representative, which is why I am not toeing any party line, too.

Brief info on your team

Most of this can be found on our official FB profile:

- 1) THOMAS O'KEEFE Team Leader (and top of the Group B column)
I live in Hawks Nest, having moved here two years ago, and having visited the region every holiday since I was born. Since March 2023, I have had the absolute pleasure of meeting many locals and community groups in my role as a freelance reporter for the Myall Coast News Of The Area (NOTA), listening to their trials, triumphs and tribulations. All seek to have their voice heard, but so many around our area feel forgotten and neglected. I have experience as a teacher of adults, a telecommunications engineer, in international trade, hospitality, tourism, and more. I value democratic legitimacy above all else, and prioritise our roads, infrastructure and basic services, environment, community welfare, and strong local representation. I am also proud to have a Team of such experienced and locally-connected people to support me on the ballot.
- 2) BRUCE MURRAY
Bruce is a local of Tea Gardens, President of the HNTG Progress Association, and member of

the local Bowls, Bridge, Masters Swimming, SLSC and Lions Clubs and has served 41 years with the RAAF. He is committed to improving our community at every opportunity, and has actual results to show for it. He supports giving our community a voice on Council, ensuring sustainable development, infrastructure that meets community needs, safe roads, clean amenities, and keeping our coastline pristine, and looks forward to being part of the MidCoast Independents' team representing our stunning local area on MidCoast Council.

3) JEANETTE HART

Jeanette is a long-serving member of the HNTG Progress Association, and has been instrumental in actual works to improve the local area. She convenes and organises the local Myall River Art Walk Group, and has contributed an enormous amount of time and energy with many artworks and murals in the beautification of our area. She also loves swimming, and supporting people with disabilities, having worked in special education previously, as well as home economics, and is extremely compassionate about helping her community and others.

4) MAL MOTUM

Mal's family has lived in Tea Gardens for four generations, and Mal himself has a strong connection to the community via many groups, including as current President of the local RSL Sub-Branch. A graduate of Duntroon Military College, with 34 years in the Australian Army as an aircraft engineer, he also worked on procurement and multimillion dollar projects. With a love of animals and nature, he is committed to our beautiful environment, and to upgrading our community services in the region, including roads and sporting facilities, keeping them up to standard so our community can be healthy and happy.

5) TERRY MUNRIGHT

Terry has lived in Tea Gardens for 34 years, with a career spanning the Army, Department of Motor Transport heavy industry, and workplace safety and reform. He currently serves as Trustee of the local RSL Sub-Branch, and President of the Tea Gardens Country Club. He is a Founding and Life Member of the Local History & Family Research Group, helped found the Community Technology Centre, has been with the Red Cross for two decades, and brings his lifetime of community service and experience and dedication to the Team's efforts to represent our local area.

6) HEATHER VAUGHAN

Heather's family has been in Tea Gardens for seven decades, and her personal career has been extensive, including customer service and hospitality, real estate and administration, all in the local area. As a volunteer, she helped establish the local Playgroup and Preschool, helped with the SLSC Nippers, and contributed to Meals On Wheels and MidCoast Assist. She has proudly served on the Board of the Tea Gardens Country Club, and her passions include family, fishing, socialising, reading, and supporting our vibrant local community.