

# Yarra Langridge and Nicholls Ward Candidate Councillor Questions 2020

## Annabelle Wilson

[facebook.com/annabellefornichollsward](https://www.facebook.com/annabellefornichollsward)  
[yarralabor.org](http://yarralabor.org)

[annabelle.wilson@vic.alp.org.au](mailto:annabelle.wilson@vic.alp.org.au)

### **Q1. Why have you decided to stand for the Yarra City Council? (200 words)**

I'm Annabelle, Mum to 2½ year old Primrose and a born and bred local. I'm proud to be an endorsed Labor candidate and I'm running for Nicholls Ward because I want to see Yarra council do more for our vibrant community. I love this area and the people in it.

I'm lucky to have been brought up surrounded by local activism. My Mum has been a member of the Carlton Residents Association for many years and I remember accompanying her to meetings growing up. I even went to VCAT with her once and I distinctly remember a council meeting where she brought a jar of waste and passed it around for the Councillors to see.

Grassroots advocacy is a passion of mine, and I am proud to now be the Head of Advocacy at Cure Brain Cancer Foundation. I advocate with a deeply personal connection (my husband Josh was diagnosed with brain cancer and passed away in 2017, two months before the birth of our daughter Primrose) so I understand the importance of listening to and learning from those in the community with lived experience, and the value of the community voice.

### **Q2. Are you a member or supporter of a local group or organisation? (100 words)**

The local groups that I was a part of pre-COVID were mainly centred around connecting with other young families. As a working single mother for the first two years of Prim's life, I know how critical these sorts of groups are. Council services were vital to my ability to cope, so my core values include maintaining these local programs and services, as well as our community spaces.

### **Q3. Have you been a participant in a local project or campaign? (200 words)**

I'm no stranger to local activism. Last year, as part of a group of veterans and families, I worked to get a traditional RSL that was focused on veteran wellness and community connection established in Yarra. Being a part of this push (which was eventually backed by council, but unfortunately blocked by other factors) allowed me to gain an understanding of council processes and experience in presenting at several council meetings. I am now the Secretary of my RSL, and proud to still be working alongside the veteran community.

### **Q4. What experiences have you had with the Yarra City Council? (200 words)**

## Yarra Langridge and Nicholls Ward Candidate Councillor Questions 2020

Even though I've lived here all my life, I really began to engage with council once I bought my house. My personal experiences with Yarra City Council are generally positive and I found that most councilors to be attentive to my concerns whenever I've presented at council meetings.

### **Q5. What role does the community play in council decision making? How can this be made more effective? (200 words)**

Community consultation and connection is an absolute priority of mine and I congratulate the Fitzroy Residents Association for being a trailblazer in enacting grassroots change in Yarra. An example of this is the recent Planning Amendment for Queen's Parade, which came as a response to your huge community campaign. It's success was through the huge amount of work from the community, in writing submissions, researching building history etc.

The Yarra community is vocal, organised and passionate- and the example above shows that council and community can work together to achieve positive change. I do feel that there are opportunities to do this more effectively, and I would love to be able to work with council and community to explore and implement those, if elected.

### **Q6. How do you propose to communicate with the community if elected as a councillor? (100 words)**

My first step would be to listen. Rather than coming in to this with a set of opinions on what is the best way forward, I would prefer to listen and learn from community leaders, council officers and resident groups who have been working in this space for years (and in many cases, decades). I aspire to be the type of councillor that listens to my neighbors and represents my community in a way that is fair and measured.

### **Q.7. What are your priorities if elected to the Council? (300 words)**

Apart from maintaining and improving council services and programs (as mentioned above) I have a natural focus on healthy living and accessibility. Prior to working for Cure Brain Cancer Foundation I was a clinician at Peter Mac, so that's why I'll continue to promote healthy community connections and open accessible spaces.

I'm committed to providing safe and accessible spaces for all residents and the broader community. This includes managing a range of physical amenities that create appropriate usable space for everyone and maintaining green space to give life to council's commitment to action on climate change.

I am also committed to reviving our local economy and providing job opportunities for our young people, and to consulting with the local community to develop collective responses to expenditure priorities.

A complete list of my specific policies are already outlined on the Yarra Labor website:  
<https://yarralabor.org/policies>

## Yarra Langridge and Nicholls Ward Candidate Councillor Questions 2020

### Q8. The FRA has identified the following key priority areas - (500 words)

- Heritage Protection and Conservation
- Planning Permit Information and Advocacy
- Yarra Council Strategy, Policy and Guidelines
- Homelessness and Social Issues
- Climate Action

What priority would you give to each and how would you respond to your top 3 if elected as a councillor?

The key priority areas identified by the FRA are all valid, and many have also been identified as priority areas by myself and my fellow Labor candidates, and listed on our website <https://yarralabor.org/policies>

I would like to make a particular note of your point about Heritage Protection and Conservation, which is of particular significance to me. I grew up one of the 19th century terraces and a couple of years ago, I bought a terrace of my own here in Carlton North so I can bring my daughter up here too. So the heritage homes in Nicholls are particularly special to me. If elected, I would lobby for and use all levers possible in the planning scheme to be a vocal advocate in the protection of our heritage properties. New developments are important to the growth of our community, but I feel need to respect the cultural, social and historical significance of their surroundings.

### Q9. What should be the role of Yarra City Council in relation to State and Commonwealth governments? (300 words)

I believe a constructive relationship with State and Commonwealth governments can only be positive, some issues that are brought up in our community will require State and sometimes Federal intervention, so it is important for our councillors to understand the roles of each level of government and the process involved in enacting change.

### Q 10. What relationship should the Yarra City Council have with neighbouring councils? (200 words)

Similar to the question above, a constructive relationship with neighbouring councils is important. An example of this is the proposed re-development of Ikon Park which, although sits within Melbourne City Council, will directly impact our Princes Hill community- and so it is important we work with Melbourne City Council to make sure that they are a part of the community consultation process.

