

Carrying forward a torch to protect our beloved Hunters Hill

To The POINT
with Dr MEREDITH SHEIL



IT HAS been a great privilege for me to serve on council for the past nine years.

At times, it has been very tough.

It has been tough to fight against the forced merger of our council with Ryde City Council, which being so much larger would have effectively annihilated our self-determination as a municipality, and our capacity to control the development and character of our beloved area.

It would have risked massive insensitive over-development and risked losing everything so many local community members have fought to protect over the past 156 years.

It has been tough to fight to preserve the heritage and character of Hunters Hill while also bringing forward the planned revitalisation of our shopping villages.

The constant pressures of development and overdevelopment needs vigilance and skill in our elected councillors to hold to the character conservation principles set down in our community-determined plans.

THERE HAVE been tough choices to ensure that the council stays efficient and financially strong and viable, without giving up the services the community cherishes and to make sure the funds the community gives the council through rates are best directed to community needs.

Much of this work is done behind the scenes.

As I stand down now, I realise that the role of councillor is principally one of custodianship – of carrying forward a torch, a flame – a commitment to serve and protect the things we all love most about Hunters Hill.

So, when we go to council elections it is vitally important to elect people we can trust as custodians – to keep Hunters Hill in safe hands.

THE RISK of forced amalgamation with Ryde council has not gone away.

Sadly, forced mergers still remain Liberal party policy, and a vote for a Liberal Candidate will therefore be a vote to risk everything we have all fought to protect.

In reality, there is no need for party politics on local councils anyway – what is needed are independent skill-based people who have a dedication to Hunters Hill and will put the will of Hunters Hill residents first – not the will of their political party – and not their own political career.

WE ARE very lucky to have some wonderful local people prepared to run for election to council – local highly skilled people with proven dedication to Hunters Hill.

For Mayor we have Mark Bennett, our current Deputy Mayor and Ross Williams, a former Mayor and co-founder of Save Hunters Hill Municipality Coalition.

For Council, we have teams led by Mark and Ross in North Ward – and by Justine McLaughlin (current excellent councillor and Chair of the Conservation Advisory Panel) and Jim Sanderson in South Ward.

All these people have played a crucial role and contributed enormously to our success to prevent forced amalgamation with Ryde, (and Lane Cove).

They have each chosen teams of people with a passion for their local community, and the right mix of talent and skill to take on the custodianship.

If this seems too many to choose between – remember to make your preference count!

In the boxes above the line you can vote for your **NUMBER 1** choice – **AND ALSO** for your **NUMBER 2 CHOICE**.

Doing this is the best way to keep Hunters Hill in safe, local, independent hands.

Dr Meredith Sheil is a Councillor on Hunters Hill Council

<http://www.weeklytimes.com.au/carrying-forward-a-torch-to-protect-our-beloved-hunters-hill/>

