

Electoral Representation Review - East Gippsland Shire Council - Preliminary Submission
Kieran and Rosemary Martin - Mallacoota - 13 March 2019

We submit that East Gippsland Shire should have a Wards system of local government so that it truly reflects the wishes and needs of all residents and ratepayers.

At present smaller towns such as Mallacoota are neglected by Council because we have no direct representative to whom we can bring our problems. There are multiple instances of our concerns being ignored. The most notable was the Bastion Point breakwall where 88% of locals surveyed were against the option pushed through by Council, despite the findings of an Expert Panel. Other instances of our wishes being ignored include there being no Authorised officers available for the controlling of stray and dangerous dogs and other animals: by the time an available officer has obtained permission to travel the 240 km. to Mallacoota the dog/owner can not be located. Illegal camping, illegal clearing, etc are also problems where a timely response is imperative.

Unfortunately Council has not agreed to have any fully Authorised Officers even over the very busy holiday periods. Issues such as reducing speed limits in the town took years to be resolved because of lack of access to a locally informed Councillor. There are a host of other issues which we need not go into now.

A Ward system could give large centres such as Bairnsdale and Orbost the majority of Councillors, with smaller towns and rural areas grouped geographically. We believe 9 to be the optimum number of Councillors for the Shire.

Kieran and Rosemary Martin

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