

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



STEPHEN BATES MP

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE ▲

Hi neighbour,

March has been a massive innings of Parliamentary Sitting Weeks - with three out of four weeks spent down in Canberra. Words cannot express how much I'm looking forward to spending the entire month of April back in the community of Brisbane.

In this edition of my newsletter, I'll provide a run down of what's been happening in the **Federal Parliament** including crucial climate and housing updates, as well as some updates about **local issues**, and some **upcoming events**.

ELECTORATE OFFICE

My team has now advocated for more than 775 community members who have been struggling with immigration, Centrelink, housing, aged care, health, education, development issues, and more. We've also personally responded to over 4,100 constituent queries. We have also facilitated the Stronger Communities Grants Programme Round 8, and I can't wait to see what the \$150 000 can achieve for eligible applicants in the Brisbane electorate.

POP UP OFFICES

My team and I will be hosting pop-up offices across April if you'd like to catch up with me in person.


**17TH
April**

Monday, 3:30PM – 5:30PM

Woolcock Park in Red Hill
(near the playground) 

**19TH
April**

Wednesday, 10AM – 12PM

QUT Kelvin Grove Campus
(Parer Place) 

*with Special Guest
Senator Mehreen Faruqi!*

Local Campaigns

STAFFORD BOWLS CLUB UPDATE

The fight against pokies on public land at the Stafford Bowls Club has been roaring. **You will have received a comprehensive explainer in the February Digital Newsletter**, and since then, the Office of Liquor and Gaming have conceded the Brisbane Racing Club's gaming license application for this site has "significant community impact".

Disappointingly, the Commissioner is still waiving the need for BRC to submit a Community Impact Statement, and despite finally advertising for community comment, has only allowed a two week submissions period when 28 days is normally required. The community has done an incredible job rallying for submissions, and I want to congratulate the Stafford Community Hub, Not Racing Club group for all of their efforts.

I was proud to assist in any way I could, including encouraging a mass submissions drive on my social media which amounted to 134 additional lodgements. **You can read my submission here.**

Now we must show our community's opposition through more than just submissions, **which is why I'm organising a free community breakfast BBQ!**

The BBQ will be an opportunity to connect with other local residents who are concerned about this development, and discuss how we can secure the best outcome for the community.

We need to show both the Brisbane City Council and the Queensland Government's Office of Liquor and Gaming the strength and size of community opposition, and stand up to the Brisbane Racing Club's parasitic pokies proposal.

**CLICK
HERE TO
RSVP**

**16th
April**

Sunday, 10AM – 12PM

Stafford Bowls Club site
352 Stafford Rd 

OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC GAMES 2032 UPDATE

The Brisbane electorate has ten Olympic and Paralympic Games venues already confirmed in our part of the city. Concern about impacts on greenspace is growing among locals, in particular at Victoria Park/Barrambin and Crosby Park.

At Victoria Park/Barrambin, residents have reported that Council is gradually removing bush along Herston Road, as well as laying large sections of concrete. Notably, last year, Council provided a draft master plan for the park. Thousands of residents provided feedback. Many objected to the amount of proposed commercial activity, buildings, hard surfacing and car parks proposed for the site, when they were promised the former golf course would become rewilded greenspace, described as the “green lungs of the city.”

A revised Master Plan is still expected by the community for further feedback. However, understandably, this work being undertaken at Victoria Park/Barrambin is causing residents to question if the consultation process has been sidelined or delayed – especially given the park will now become a two-week venue for the equestrian cross country and BMX freestyle events. **[I've written to the Council seeking more information and you can find that letter here.](#)**

Likewise, at the beginning of the year, I amplified residents' calls to protect the mature vegetation at Crosby Park where some trees are more than half a century old. **[If you're interested, you can also see my letter and the response from Council here.](#)**

Disappointingly, Council is saying this re-development is now solely in the hands of the Queensland State Government and referred the inquiry to them. Therefore, I question how Council intends to deliver on their commitments for this site, including a “185% increase in public greenspace” and a “130% increase in community-accessible sporting facilities”, if they no longer have a say in the re-development.

More broadly, neither the Labor state government nor the LNP Brisbane City Council have provided transparency about Brisbane's Olympic bid, or the planning that has been carried out since. Compare this to Germany where they held a referendum in the two cities they were considering as hosts, Munich and Hamburg, and both cities' residents voted no.

In 2021 the Crime and Corruption Commission flagged the Queensland Government's Bill for the Olympics' Organising Committee as a corruption

risk, because elected officials will not be required to disclose conflicts of interest, or be subject to right to information laws. What's more, this committee is responsible for funding, with any budget blowout to be covered by Queensland taxpayers. Since then, the situation has only worsened.

The Premier recently announced that her government will assume control of the Games' infrastructure projects after scrapping a planned independent body - The Olympic Coordination Authority. At the same time, it was revealed that the original \$1 billion dollar cost for the redevelopment of the Gabba Stadium was not based on any business case, or viability investigation, but came from a press release put out by the state government. That's why it is extremely important that the planning and delivery of the Games be exposed to public scrutiny and accountability.

It's been estimated the Brisbane Games will provide \$8.1 billion worth of quantifiable economic benefits – but \$3.5 billion of that was for ambiguous social benefits like health, prestige and civic pride. I'm extremely cynical about this claim. The 2000 Sydney Games cost twice as much as budgeted and modelling from Monash University found that rather than producing an economic benefit, Australian household consumption was reduced by \$2.1 billion; there was no evidence that the Sydney Games left a tourism legacy; and instead of boosting employment, the Games displaced employment in other activities and sectors.

From Barcelona to Tokyo and L.A., we also know that the Olympics cause surging house prices and rents while pushing everyday people out of their communities. Incredibly, in July last year the Queensland Audit Office released a report that the state government had failed to model how the Games will impact housing affordability across our city.

The Greens are committed to ensuring the Games actually leave a positive legacy for our city through investment in public infrastructure for ongoing use. We have called for the government to guarantee that all planning for the Games delivers more, not less, green space to local residents (which should be a given as the Queensland Government has committed to the Games being carbon neutral).

We need to elect more Greens Councillors and State MPs in the upcoming elections to protect and enhance our city, because so far the major parties at both levels of government are failing us (and they are the jurisdictions largely responsible for the Games).



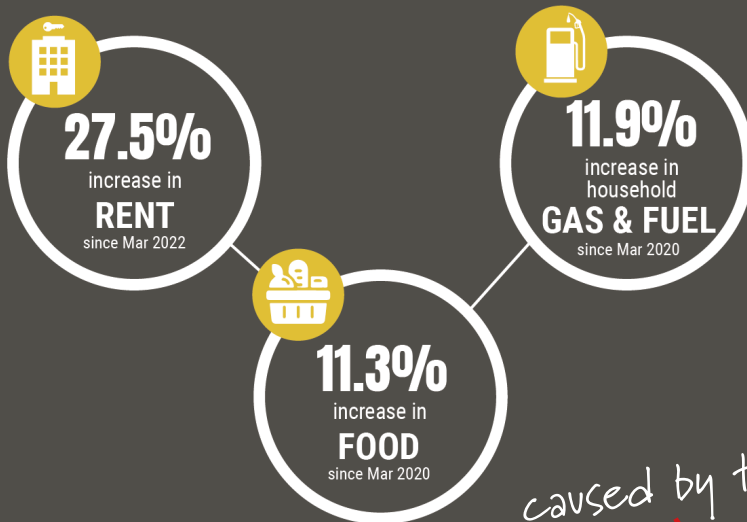
COST OF LIVING AND CORPORATE SUPER PROFITS UPDATE

The cost of living crisis is being driven by corporate profiteering and price gouging. This has been confirmed by a recent Australia Institute report, which has found that corporations in Australia increased prices by \$160 billion above the cost of wages, taxes and other inputs.

Without those excess profits, inflation would have actually been within, or near, the Reserve Bank targets.

The Government and RBA are punishing everyday people with harmful interest rate increases, while refusing to make big corporations pay their fair share in tax to fund the cost of living relief that Australians desperately need.

THE SOARING COST OF LIVING IN THE BRISBANE ELECTORATE



REAL WAGES HAVE DROPPED 4.5%

Source: ABS, Consumer Price Index: SQM

SINCE 2022, CORPORATE PROFITS HAVE SURGED:

coles

\$643 MILLION

↑17%

Woolworths 

\$907 MILLION

↑14%

 **AMPOL**

\$727 MILLION

↑29%



\$5.15 BILLION

↑9%

Santos

\$2.1 BILLION

↑221%

THE GREENS PLAN TO TACKLE THE COST OF LIVING

If we scrap the Stage 3 tax cuts and crack down on corporate profiteering using a super profits tax on big multinational corporations...

We could raise:

\$674 BILLION
in the next decade

With that we could:

- Implement a national freeze on rent increases
- Use existing federal powers to stop the RBA further increasing interest rates
- Add dental and mental health to Medicare
- Cut energy bills back to March 2022 levels, saving you \$567
- Forgive outstanding higher education debt, and make uni and TAFE free again
- Scrap state school fees and replace with government funding
- Raise the Age Pension and JobSeeker to \$1,232 a fortnight



CENSUS PETITION UPDATE

The Australian Greens share portfolio responsibilities across all of our federal MPs, and I am the portfolio holder for Youth and LGBTQIA+, which means I am responsible for leading the Greens' response on those issues at a national level.

We currently have no definitive data on LGBTQIA+ people in Australia - who we are, where we live, or even how many of us there are - because we are not included in the national Census.

We know that LGBTQIA+ people experience higher rates of mental distress, homelessness, and domestic violence. But our health, housing and socioeconomic needs aren't being met, and one of the reasons is because the state and federal governments don't have access to this critical data.

The 2026 Census is a chance to correct these issues, and it cannot be left up to departmental discretion. We must legally mandate the inclusion of LGBTQIA+ people in the census, so that the Australian Bureau of Statistics is always obligated to collect this essential data.

Without comprehensive information about our lives, health, housing, work or income, we can't properly provide the services our community needs. It's time to count us in.

If you believe that our census should accurately represent our communities, then sign the petition.

It is currently sitting at over 2,500 signatures, and will close on 5 April, so make sure you sign it to send a strong message to the Government that we deserve representation.

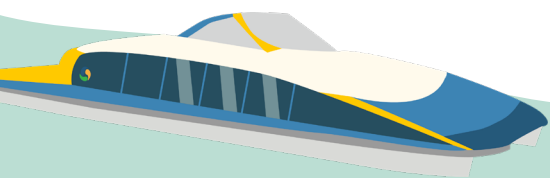
TRANSPORT FORUM

Are you sick of traffic congestion? Is the cost of fuel breaking your budget with no clear alternative?

My neighbouring Greens colleague in the electorate of Ryan, Elizabeth Watson-Brown, is organising a **free forum** about the case for free and frequent public transport at the University of Queensland St Lucia Campus on 16 April from 3 - 5pm.

Elizabeth will be joined by Greens MP for Maiwar Michael Berkman, Transport Planning Expert Jon Bryant, and Councillor for the Gabba Ward Jonathan Sriranganathan.

Make sure you RSVP to this event here.



CONTENT WARNING:

TERFS AND NEO-NAZIS SHOW THEIR UNITY IN AUSTRALIA

A national speaking tour promoting hate speech and the endangerment of transgender and gender-diverse people was allowed across the country this month. It reached national attention in Melbourne when anti-trans rights campaigners were joined by neo-Nazis hiding their identity behind face masks, and performing Nazi salutes on the steps of the Victorian Parliament.

I wrote to the Immigration Minister Andrew Giles back in January, informing him that the organiser of this tour has a history of associating with far-right figures, including neo-Nazis, and that their visa should not be granted in the interest of community safety. My letter amplified the concerns of thousands of community members who signed a petition against their entry into the country, and who rallied in the streets in each capital city. It was reassuring for my community that our allies outnumbered the far-right participants in extraordinary numbers everywhere.

My message to the LGBTQIA+ community is strength and solidarity. Know that I am with you, the Greens are with you, and we will continue to fight for your rights in this country.

If you have been impacted by these events, know that there is help available. **You can find a list of local and national support organisations here.**

ANZAC DAY



I will be spending ANZAC Day laying a wreath at the Shrine of Remembrance in ANZAC Square and Memorial Galleries. There are a number of other ANZAC Day events I was invited to but sadly cannot attend. I thought I would promote them here for your interest and attendance:

- **St Andrew's Memorial Hospital ANZAC Day Ceremony** on 25 April at 2:30pm at 457 Wickham Terrace, Spring Hill
- **Submarine Association Australia** on 25 April at 11am at Submarine Walk Heritage Trail, Macquarie Street, Teneriffe
- **Windsor District Historical Society** on 25 April at 9am at Roblane Street, Windsor
- **Kedron Brook Catholic Community Dawn Service and BBQ** on 25 April from 5am at St Columba's Catholic Church, 23 Lovedale Street, Wilston



HOUSING AND THE MEGA WEEK OF ACTION

Labor has proposed terrible housing legislation, called the Housing Future Fund Bill, which you can read an extensive update about in my last electorate mailout [here](#).

Figures released this month indicate that 300,000 people across Queensland are in housing insecurity or homeless. That's a whopping 22% increase in housing insecurity since 2017. In an electorate like Brisbane, where more than 50% rent, the stress and misery this is causing is enormous.

That's why I joined the Australian Greens' portfolio holder for Housing and Homelessness, Max Chandler-Mather MP for Griffith, and hundreds of Greens volunteers across the country for a Mega Week of Action. We hit the streets to ask people what they think of Labor's housing plan that does nothing for renters and will make the crisis worse.

We spoke to people who have been hit by massive rent and mortgage hikes, and let me tell you, the vast majority were not impressed that Labor is spending \$368 billion on nuclear submarines while claiming they can't find an extra cent for housing.

Rather than invest directly in housing, Labor's housing plan is to gamble \$10 billion of public money into a "future fund" and if they get any returns, then they'll put that money into housing (but they'll also cap the amount to a maximum of \$500 million a year). Not only that, but this plan is so insufficient, it will see the housing waiting list grow significantly, and does nothing at all for renters or those in mortgage stress right now.

The feedback from 80% of the conversations we had across the country was crystal clear: The Greens should not support Labor's plan, until Labor is willing to make substantial changes that include direct investment in more public housing and a national plan for renters.



The Greens are pushing for:

- at least \$5 billion of investment in public and affordable housing every year
- a freeze on rent increases
- a national plan to strengthen renters rights
- more support for frontline homelessness services and crisis accommodation

You can add your voice by following this link to quickly send a pre-written email to the Minister of Housing and Prime Minister supporting the Greens' demands.



SAFEGUARD AND NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION FUND

This week, the Greens voted to pass Labor's Safeguard Mechanism after extensive negotiations that delivered a number of important wins for climate action! Most significantly, **we've stopped about half of the 116 new coal and gas projects in the pipeline.**

Under Labor's original Safeguard Mechanism, actual emissions could have increased by up to 30% by 2030 (up to 184 mega tonnes). It was bad policy that reeked of the fossil fuel industry's influence over Labor.

- ✔ Instead, the Greens have secured significant improvements for the climate, which means that **emissions will be forever capped at their current rate**, and must be decreased over time.
- ✔ **The Greens amendments also established a climate trigger for the first time in history**, which means any new coal and gas projects can be stopped if they will increase emissions beyond this hard cap. Before now, there were no legal grounds to reject new coal and gas projects because of their impact on the climate.
- ✔ **New offshore gas fields' CO2 emissions must be net zero** (including for existing plants), placing a huge financial barrier and making many projects unviable.
- ✔ **We have derailed significant gas projects like the Beetaloo and the Barossa from going ahead.** The Beetaloo was projected to emit up to 34 billion tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions in its lifetime, which is equivalent to 68 years of Australia's current total pollution levels.
- ✔ **We have introduced independent audits of offsets.** Currently, fossil fuel corporations use dodgy, low-

integrity offset schemes to buy their way out of reducing emissions. This will reduce the number of offsets available by as many as a quarter, forcing more actual cuts to emissions.

- ✔ **We have increased monitoring of methane**, which is the main pollution from coal mines and is more damaging than carbon dioxide. Methane emission will now be properly accounted for under the new hard cap, leading to even greater cuts in overall emissions.
- ✔ **We have banned public funding for coal and gas** under the Powering the Regions Fund and the Industry Research and Development Act, which was formerly used to hand out millions in subsidies to fossil fuel corporations.

This is in addition to the Greens recently securing an agreement from the Labor Government that the \$15 billion National Reconstruction Fund Bill will not be spent funding coal and gas projects or logging native forests. (A huge congratulations to our newly-elected Greens Senator for Queensland, **Penny Allman-Payne**, for her work on these negotiations!)

This is what we're in Parliament to do. To ensure our communities are put first, not the coal & gas corporations, and to show that we can make massive investments in the regions while protecting our climate and environment.

We know that the people are with us in this fight. We are in solidarity with First Nations people, climate scientists, our Pacific Island neighbours, and the majority of everyday Australians who want to tackle the climate crisis by stopping all new coal and gas.

Despite Labor's unwillingness to listen, The Greens have used our balance of power to stop about half of the 116 new fossil fuel projects currently in the pipeline, **and now we're coming after the rest.**



SUBMARINES

It was appalling to receive the news that the Labor Government has committed to a \$368 Billion submarine deal, and then doubled-down with an additional 220 nuclear-capable missiles, during a cost of living crisis.

To put this in perspective, getting dental into Medicare is costed at \$77 billion over ten years, wiping student debt is costed at \$60 billion over ten years, and free mental health care under Medicare is costed at \$4.8 billion over ten years. Remember this next time Labor says “we can’t afford it”.

The Greens took a comprehensive policy platform on Peace, Disarmament and Demilitarisation to the last election. We seek to stop handing out public money to corporate weapons manufacturing and instead refocus our defence forces on keeping people safe from the climate crisis, building cooperative relationships with our friends and neighbours, and renegotiate our military alliance with the United States. We know many Australians want our government to stop being at the beck and call of the United States and their imperialist military ambitions.

This submarine deal does the opposite - it will only inflame regional tensions and further drive a regional arms race. War is not inevitable and the Greens join a growing chorus of former Prime Ministers, defence experts and ordinary people from across the political spectrum who are pointing out the sheer recklessness of this deal.

If you’re interested you can read our full policy platform for Peace, Disarmament and Demilitarisation [here](#).

CARE AND WORK REPORT

Anyone else wishing the weekends could last a bit longer?

Well, you’re not alone. Australia is mired in a work and care crisis which demands bold reform to fix an economic, gender equity and workforce catastrophe.

Australians combine their jobs with the care of others - of children, parents, people with disabilities, of frail and aged friends and family. Many are time poor, face unpredictable hours at work and are forced to juggle their caring responsibilities with high costs and inflexible conditions.

It’s clear that this situation particularly affects women who pay lifetime penalties in lost income, reduced superannuation and relationships that are

stressed and pressured. For too many, the system is not working.

A landmark Senate Report, delivered by the Senate Select Committee on Work and Care (chaired by Greens Senator Barbara Pocock) has called for a major overhaul of Australia’s workplace laws to fix the crisis affecting workers with caring responsibilities.

The report recommended a 4 day work week trial along with 12 months paid parental leave, and a right to disconnect from work by not answering calls or emails outside work hours. The case for a 4 day work week was so strong, it was also backed by Labor Senators.

You can read an extensive overview of the report’s recommendations, and what the Greens are advocating for [here](#).

WATCH MY SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT

- › [Stafford Bowls Club](#)
- › [The Brisbane Arts Sector](#)
- › [Trove - The National Library’s Online Archive](#)
- › [Renters Forced Out Of The “Utopia” Building](#)
- › [The Government’s “Safeguard” Mechanism \(Before the Greens Improved It\)](#)

DROP BY OR GET IN TOUCH!

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