

Value Your Vote

The essential safeguard inherent in real democracies is the opportunity to change a Government with free and fair elections. Many regard participating in such a system as a privilege, some value their vote to such an extent they risk their lives to cast a ballot.

Enrolment

Utilising data from The Australian Electoral Commission, Highlands Eye calculates approximately 1.045 million Australians, who are eligible to vote, are not enrolled. Applying the data to our Shire suggests about 2,200 eligible local voters are not on the electoral rolls.

We believe engaging in the electoral process is a fundamental responsibility of citizenship. During July we urge concerted efforts from our readers to encourage voter enrolment, especially for late teens, young adults, and people recently relocating to the Shire.

Vote with Care

Incumbency provides a definite head start in most elections. Studies indicate it gives a massive fund raising advantage, and far higher name recognition.

Elections are effectively incumbent referendums. Unless the electorate is dissatisfied with sitting politicians they seldom seriously consider an alternative.

Those seeking to remain in office often cite their experience, especially when an anti-incumbency mood is apparent. This is a valid tactic, and in some cases justified, though it is a stretch to a claim being in office suffices to warrant another term.

It also provokes a predicable voter response - surely our experience of an incumbents'

Incumbents may refer to their record in office; though most usually avoid responsibility for decisions or policies with troublesome consequences.

First time candidates are often elected because voters want to change the prevailing culture, attitudes and specific personnel in a Government. Good reasons, although electing fresh candidates without due diligence is foolhardy.

It is important for us to make best efforts to understand the issues and their impact on our Shire's future. An informed vote for candidates offering sensible solutions to the challenges, which face us, is a personal and direct contribution to the preservation of the integrity, character, and heritage of the Southern Highlands' lifestyle.

Fear of the electoral unknown manifests in the "better the devil you know" attitude, which influences election results. This form of apathy is extremely dangerous since it may encourage and embolden incompetent, self serving Governments.

Please Value Your Vote

Polling days are a 12 hour event; nonetheless, they significantly impact our lives for years, and possibly decades.

Being unduly influenced by habitual socio-economic allegiances, peer group pressure, or advertising frequency, negates the value of your vote.

Exercise care, consideration and discernment, and make your own choice. Value Your Vote.



Shire Facts

2004 WSC Election

Enrolment	28,725
Voter Participation	87.3%
Formal votes	23,550
Informal votes	1,540



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Heritage of the Southern Highlands**