



## Darebin Council

### Central Ward

#### Candidate, Central Ward – Esther Kennedy

##### **If elected, how will you support making it easier for people to walk and ride in Darebin?**

Darebin's Streets for People program is terrific - reimagining streets to be safer and more inviting for people who walk, wheel and ride. This is sorely needed in Preston East, an area with inadequate public transport connections and a growing population. Our east-west connections across Darebin need improvement, particularly Cramer and Tyler Sts in Preston. Through the level crossing removal projects (particularly at Bell and Preston stations in my ward) I will advocate for safe and enjoyable bike and pedestrian paths and ample bike parking. The Octopus Schools program has been a success in promoting riding to school in Darebin through improved infrastructure as well as education. I would love to see this expanded to more primary schools and even to high schools.

##### **When you go out on your bike, where is your favourite place to ride?**

I tend to walk or tram when I'm travelling within Darebin, but I really enjoy cycling to work, from my home in Preston to my office in Richmond. I love riding down the smooth surface of the St George's Rd path, then through Fitzroy North and Clifton Hill to connect to Wellington St. The Darebin part is much safer, given I don't have to share the road with cars very much on that leg of the commute! Working from home currently means I don't get to do that ride, but I still love any excuse to ride on the St George's Rd path. My current wheels are a green bike with a Vote [1] Esther Kennedy placard on the back, so if you see me please give me a wave!!

##### **Are you satisfied with the progress being made with your council's bike strategy?**

I think Darebin is a terrific place to cycle. I can't help but compare to other places I've lived, including a mid-sized town in Louisiana in the US where we went around and spray painted bike sharrows on roads because we got sick of waiting for the city to care about cyclists! I'm not suggesting ANYONE do that in Darebin, and neither do I think it's necessary here, although there are parts particularly as you get further north where it's not as nice to ride. I think we need to keep improving, keep pushing for investment in safe and enjoyable routes for walking, wheeling and riding, and work toward a less car-dependent future.



## Candidate, Central Ward – Lina Messina

### **1. How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin?**

I have a fear since childhood of riding on the road due to a bike accident my father had. My riding is cycling indoors with my spin bike.

### **2. What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?**

Key issues are the lack of bike repair and water stations and the link of north/south and east to west.

### **3. Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.**

Bike paths made of recycled content and solar particles that will light up so that people are safe in the evening.

### **4. With the growing number of pedestrians and cyclists is it still feasible to have shared bicycle and pedestrian paths?**

Connective and connection with the community to access recreational reserves and public transport are required.



## Candidate, Central Ward – Craig Walters

### 1. How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin?

Never - I used to ride a lot and now it sits there with flat tyres (because I could never get them to stay inflated for more than a week - shit quality rubber I reckon; never used to be like) and now I sit here getting fatter

### 2. What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?

Getting run over and doored

### 3. Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.

1. Train stations employ people to stand guard all day over bicycles (no high tech combo app solutions)
2. Have little logos that can be put on fences, letterboxes simply saying BFPLH (meaning Bike Friendly Person Lives Here ) so that people know in that house someone gives a shit, if my bike breaks down I could leave it there or get help (not meaning Big F\*\*\* Prick Lives Here)
3. Stop supermarkets and department stores and the like from importing bikes made from shit quality components that the buyer discovers doesn't last a season

### 4. With the growing number of pedestrians and cyclists is it still feasible to have shared bicycle and pedestrian paths?

Yes - because it is on the whole done responsibly



## North Central Ward

### Candidate, North Central Ward – Louise Kenney-Shen

#### **How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin?**

Unfortunately, none of these answers reflect me. I ride occasionally, but less than monthly.

#### **What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?**

I think safety is the number one issue in terms of cycling. This includes cyclists themselves as well as pedestrians and other road users.

#### **Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.**

1. Implement better signage and lighting and maintenance of existing cycling infrastructure.
2. Encourage membership to cycling clubs
3. Education to ensure safer and appropriate road sharing.

#### **With the growing number of pedestrians and cyclists is it still feasible to have shared bicycle and pedestrian paths?**

I think in some areas, where path width allows, it is feasible, but by and large I think there needs to be a separation to keep everyone safe. Where joint paths are feasible, there needs to be very clear signage alerting pedestrians to the presence of cyclists and to ensure cyclists take enough care to mitigate dangers



## Candidate, North Central Ward – Monique Keel

### 1. If elected, how will you support making it easier for people to walk and ride in Darebin?

The current council in Darebin has invested heavily in cycling infrastructure, including two new cycle/pedestrian bridges in response to community demand (Beavers Road Croxton and Rathcown Road Bundoora) and have also overseen upgrades of cycle bridges (Wood Street Preston and Dundas Street Thornbury).

If elected I would continue developing and maintaining good bicycle infrastructure, making key travel routes in Reservoir and Preston safer and more enjoyable for walking and cycling. I support the “Octopus Schools” program, suggested by the Darebin Bicycle Users Group, which provides a bike fleet, bike education and cycling infrastructure in the surrounding streets (eg. wombat crossings, traffic islands, etc) for one primary school each year. I would push for council to continue to fill the gaps in the cycling network across Darebin (bridges, bike lanes, etc), lobby the state government to improve northbound access onto the St George’s Road bike path, and continue the expansion of the Streets for People program.

### 2. When you go out on your bike, where is your favourite place to ride?

My favourite place to ride is along the Darebin Creek trail with my kids and partner. Before March I used to take the Merri trail and then Park St to Carlton to work. I loved this ride mornings and after work and I am Looking forward to getting back on that path when possible.

### 3. Are you satisfied with the progress being made with your council’s bike strategy?

Darebin’s active transport strategies provide an important framework for improving cycling across the municipality and whilst significant planning work has been undertaken greater financial investment would allow for identified priority projects such as bridges, traffic islands, new bike lanes, advocacy projects, and Streets for People implementation to be fast-tracked. If elected I would continue the ongoing work on the northern section of the “pipeline trail” – the bike path that travels along the train line (significant work was undertaken this term on the southern part, between Merri Parade Northcote and Miller Street Preston, but there’s still work to do on the section from Miller Street Preston to Regent Station/through to central Reservoir). I would also push for lower speed limits on local roads to make them safer for everyone and re-prioritise local roads for use for walking and cycling to create new shimmy routes. Unfortunately, none of these answers reflect me. I ride occasionally, but less than monthly.



## North East Ward

### Candidate, North East Ward – Adam Cursio

**How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin?**

Monthly

**What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?**

Safety, overcrowding, lighting on paths and access to repair stations and water.

**Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.**

Solar lighting, more repair stations, more water stations and separate paths for cyclists and pedestrians.

**4. With the growing number of pedestrians and cyclists is it still feasible to have shared bicycle and pedestrian paths?**

Perhaps not. We may need to consider paths for cyclists separate to walking paths, where possible. This could encourage more people to cycle which in turn benefits the environment, easing demand for vehicles on the road.



## Candidate, North East Ward – Bryony Edwards

### How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin?

Daily (commuting to town pre covid, now daily shopping and errands)

### What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?

- Lack of cycling paths separated from traffic - a bicycle route is only as strong as its weakest link and there are a lot of token efforts around Darebin.
- Lack of safe 'desire lines' or 'as the crow flies' possibilities when riding to amenities - such as Preston Markets or Bunnings
- Lack of separation between speed riders (including e-bikes) and pedestrians and dog walkers. It's so dangerous - particularly along the creek.

Also, lack of bicycle parking can be an issue

(for kids, riding on footpaths is not safe from cars backing out of driveways)

### Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.

I would love to see more arteries like Canning street in Carlton, from which traffic is diverted and rat running for cars becomes impossible. This is a relatively low cost way to bring bike safety and local residents of those streets are also likely to support it.

### With the growing number of pedestrians and cyclists is it still feasible to have shared bicycle and pedestrian paths?

Not really. I think paths such as along the creek needs to have separate lanes for cyclists to protect the pedestrians.



## Candidate, North East Ward – Dave Lee

### **If elected, how will you support making it easier for people to walk and ride in Darebin?**

The greens-led council in Darebin has already invested heavily in cycling infrastructure. For example, we:

- have built two new cycle/pedestrian bridges in response to community demand (Beavers Road Croxton and Rathcrown Road Bundoora)
- are implementing our Streets for People project, making key travel routes safer and more enjoyable for walking and cycling.
- have a dedicated Bicycle Advisory Committee comprising of local cyclists
- provide resources including cycling maps and bicycle repair stations throughout the municipality
- promote bike workshops and skills sessions for cyclists or people interested in getting into cycling
- publish a “Darebin loves bikes” newsletter to provide information to local cyclists
- sponsor local events including free breakfasts for Ride to School Day and Ride to Work Day
- promote cycling as a preferred mode of transport, as articulated through council policies, decisions, social media and other council communications

We will continue to:

- fill the gaps in the cycling network across Darebin (bridges, bike lanes, etc)
- improve the paths along the Merri and Darebin Creeks
- continue the expansion of our Streets for People program
- work with the state government and private companies to improve bike parking beyond council-owned land (eg. Preston Market, supermarkets, train stations)
- lobby Vicroads for safer bike crossings on Vicroads-owned roads (eg. Bell Street, Murray Road, etc) or where key cycle routes cross tram lines (eg. High Street, Miller Street)

### **2. When you go out on your bike, where is your favourite place to ride?**

I enjoy riding my bike along Darebin and Merri Creeks to get outside and enjoy the fresh air.

### **3. Are you satisfied with the progress being made with your council’s bike strategy?**

I think the Greens-led council has made great progress with our biking strategy as it ties in well with our Climate Emergency Action Plan. Having said that, there is always more we could do by increasing the safety of our streets with better bike lanes, more bike parking, encouraging less car traffic and more bike trails to explore our wonderful neighbourhoods.



## South Ward

### Candidate, South Ward – Zac Galbally

#### 1. How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin?

Daily (although not as often since we have been in restrictions)

#### 2. What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?

As a cyclist, I would say the key concerns are twofold: continue to make the roads safer for cyclists; encourage more residents to start riding.

Over the years we have greatly improved the roads for cyclists. The large path down the centre of St George's road makes for a fast and safe journey for commuters to work each day. Many stretches along the Merri Creek are perfect for a weekend cruise.

There is still a lot of improvement to go and I would love to see that continue. So many areas could be greatly improved to not just provide safer roads for cyclists but also encourage more residents to ride. For example, Separation Street is extremely narrow and has very poor marked cycling sections. This could be simply upgraded with more signage and brighter marked cycling areas on the road.

#### 3. Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.

- Improve safety: continue to spend on widening roads/paths, signage, painted cycling areas.
- Promote and encourage cycling in and through Darebin. This will lead to numerous benefits such as decreasing emissions, reducing traffic, increasing business for hospitality industry as we all know cyclists love to meet up for a coffee!
- Assist and support community cycling groups.



## Candidate, South Ward – Hugh Morris-Dalton

Thanks for getting in touch. I'm a big bike rider so happy to be able to answer these questions.

### **1. How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin?**

Pre lockdown - every day.

Currently - Every 2nd day.

### **2. What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?**

Road safety around major shopping strips in the area. I feel that while there is room for improvement in connection to the city and other suburbs, current infrastructure is not too bad. I feel that riding safety around shopping strips like High Street and Station Street is really poor and discourages people from riding to do their shopping etc. I also feel there needs to be greater bike parking options.

### **3. Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.**

- More secure bike parking at train stations and key tram stops. This encourages people to use public transport more frequently but also reduce driving to train stations where there is parking.
- With increased use of shared paths like the Merri and Darebin Creek trails I think Council needs to consider alternatives that provide safer and more accessible use for pedestrians and more casual cyclists.
- Greater identified cycling routes for accessing different parts of the council area. There are some great examples in Moreland of signed cycling routes through less busy streets that help cyclists avoid major roads.

### **4 With the growing number of pedestrians and cyclists is it still feasible to have shared bicycle and pedestrian paths?**

I think more needs to be done to consider alternatives for both groups. Widening paths is one option but not available at all points. I think it is important to provide signs and education for more confident riders to ensure they consider the needs and feelings of less confident riders and people walking on the paths.



## South Central Ward

### Candidate, South Central Ward – Peter Willis

#### 1. How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin?

Monthly

#### 2. What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?

Bicycle users have spoken to me about their concerns with safety in Darebin. In my ward - South Central - there is particular concern with Separation St and High St, with cars racing up the left-hand lane and endangering cyclists. The lack of infrastructure to protect cyclists (e.g. bike lanes) is a big part of the issue.

In addition to concerns about safety, bicycle users have spoken to me about their ideas to promote cycling and encourage it. I strongly support this - both as a healthy way to exercise and as a way to reduce cars on our roads.

#### 3. Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.

1. Increase infrastructure to protect cyclists travelling on our roads, for example by building bike lanes or crossing points for bicycles on busy roads.
2. Ensure that a significant number of bicycle parking racks are provided and maintained across Darebin so that bicycles can be safely parked across the city and so that it is convenient to commute on bicycle.
3. Educate drivers and new bicycle users on how to safely share the road, for example through videos shared on social media like the City of Westminster:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAvZH0qiZuk&feature=emb\\_title](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAvZH0qiZuk&feature=emb_title)

#### 4. With the growing number of pedestrians and cyclists is it still feasible to have shared bicycle and pedestrian paths?

I'm not sure if there's a specific place you're referring to but, in general, I think it's best to separate bicycles, pedestrians (and cars). Whether I'm walking, riding or driving, I personally feel safest when separated.



## South East Ward

### Candidate, South East Ward – Julie O'Brien

#### 1. If elected, how will you support making it easier for people to walk and ride in Darebin?

I have been a paid-up Bicycle Network member since 2016 and sustainable transport was a key part of my remit in the Sustainability Manager and Environmental Advisor roles I held for La Trobe University.

In these roles, I and members of my team, worked proactively with staff, students, Darebin Council and others to improve local cycling infrastructure as organisations, partners and as part of the wider Northern Regional Trails Strategy Group.

As a candidate, and if elected for South East Ward in Darebin, I will continue to be a passionate advocate of sustainable transport including active transport options like cycling.

With people connected more than ever to their local communities and cycling increasing as a leisure and exercise activity for individuals and families, I think more people than ever before appreciate the importance of this infrastructure in our communities. The current council in Darebin has invested significantly in cycling infrastructure and I would work to ensure this focus continues.

Examples of projects recently undertaken that have added value to our local experiences include:

- Upgrades of cycle bridges (Wood Street, Preston and Dundas Street, Thornbury)
- Two new cycle/pedestrian bridges in response to community demand (Rathcoun Road, Bundoora and Beavers Road, Croxton)
- The implementation of the Streets for People project, making key travel routes safer and more enjoyable for walking and cycling.
- Implementation of bike parking for local businesses at no cost to businesses.
- The "Octopus Schools" program, inspired by the Darebin Bicycle Users Group, which provides a bike fleet, bike education and cycling infrastructure in the surrounding streets (e.g. wombat crossings, traffic islands etc.) for one primary school each year.



*Councillors Trent McCarthy (Darebin) & Mark Riley (Moreland) Celebrate the new cycling bridge @ Merri Creek*



The new council needs to build on these successes and items below are areas that I think are important in our ward and Darebin-wide.

- Continue to improve the paths along the Darebin and Merri Creeks.
- Continue to fill the gaps in the cycling network across Darebin (bridges, bike lanes, etc.)
- Continue the expansion of the Octopus Schools program, including extending to high schools
- Lobby VicRoads for safer bike crossings on state-controlled roads (e.g. Bell Street) or where key cycle routes cross train or tram lines (e.g. Victoria Rd, Station St).
- Work with the state government and private companies to improve bike parking beyond council-owned land (e.g. Alphington and Preston Markets, local shopping centres, train stations).

## 2. When you go out on your bike, where is your favourite place to ride?

My bike riding habits have shifted a lot in the last year as a result of moving house and then working from home through Covid restrictions, but for a couple of years I rode to work at La Trobe University most days and I loved it.

I loved the connection to nature along Darebin Creek each morning, saying hello to the local magpies, the headiness of the gum tree fragrances in the air and the brisk cool morning wake up – nothing quite like it.

Riding home in the evening was the perfect way to unwind after a busy day and to clear the mind for the evening ahead. I witnessed some spectacular sunsets and took a lot of photos!



*Sunset ride home @ Darebin Creek, La Trobe University, Bundoora Campus.*

One of my favourite memories was riding home through Bundoora Park from the La Trobe Wildlife Sanctuary one evening and having a kangaroo bound right across the path in front of me. It was a magical moment!

Now I am not cycling for commuting purposes, my riding is a bit more relaxed but is also far too sporadic so I hope to integrate it more into work and hopefully council life if I am elected in October.



### **3. Are you satisfied with the progress being made with your council's bike strategy?**

I think Darebin is very progressed and progressive when it comes to active transport. Sustainable transport is an area where there's always more to do as our neighbourhoods evolve and we must continue the good work done in recent years.

Darebin's active transport strategies provide an important framework for improving cycling across the municipality and significant planning work has been undertaken but greater financial investment would allow for identified priority projects such as bridges, traffic islands, new bike lanes, advocacy projects, and Streets for People implementation to be fast-tracked.

I know from my experience at La Trobe University that one of the trickiest things to navigate in this space is the connection between local and state road infrastructure and hope my experience previously working for state government would help build successful partnerships and community based approaches to resolving these issues, particularly where there are safety concerns in Darebin.

Darebin has made great progress on active transport programs and infrastructure in the last few years and I hope to be part of a council team that continues this work for the benefit of our community in the next four years.



## Candidate, South East Ward – Philip Sutton

I have never owned a car (born 1951) and have owned and ridden a bicycle since I was 10.

I work from home so don't have a huge need to travel far afield (especially during lockdown!!). For longer trips I use train/bike combinations

Here are my answers to your questionnaire:

**1. How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin? Weekly**

**2. What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?**

Good question - I personally cope fairly well with the roads as they are. There are some crossings on large roads that are a bit challenging to cross (there's one on St. George's Road in Preston that comes to mind. Has the Council systematically asked bike riders in Darebin what the issues are for them?

Most people think they need cars to carry large items. I have owned a bike trailer for decades and I've moved quite large items and over multiple trips quite large volumes of material (when moving flat). This is probably a hidden issue for most people.

**3. Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.**

This question seems like the previous one but asked from a different angle. We should find out what the bike accident data is so we can see where the trouble spot or situations are. We should also find out from cautious cyclists what puts them off riding and test changes to the riding environment to see if people actually increase their riding.

**4. With the growing number of pedestrians and cyclists is it still feasible to have shared bicycle and pedestrian paths?.**

This is an interesting question. What's the data?

If I was writing this questionnaire I'd come at it less from the candidates' personal experience and ideas and more from the angle of whether the candidates are keen to find out what cyclists needs are and how cycling can be encouraged. I think I heard on the ABC recently that Denmark and the Netherlands made a policy decision after the OPEC oil crisis in 1973 to foster a large switch to bike riding from car driving. It would be interesting to explore what has worked best in various places around the world to boost bike use and bike riding safety and pleasure.



## South West Ward

### Candidate, South West Ward – Trent McCarthy

Darebin Councillor standing for re-election in South West ward

**If elected, how will you support making it easier for people to walk and ride in Darebin?**

**As a Darebin Councillor since 2008, I've ensured that Council invests heavily in cycling infrastructure, for example:**

- Two new cycle/pedestrian bridges in response to community demand (Beavers Road, Northcote and Rathcown Road, Bundoora)
- Upgrades of cycle bridges (Wood Street Preston and Dundas Street Thornbury)
- The implementation of the Streets for People project, making key travel routes safer and more enjoyable for walking and cycling
- The “Octopus Schools” program, suggested by the Darebin Bicycle Users Group, which provides a bike fleet, bike education and cycling infrastructure in the surrounding streets (eg. wombat crossings, traffic islands, etc) for one primary school each year
- Community consultation for the upgrade of the St Georges Road path with wonderful results! (Now it's a lovely wide, smooth path.)
- Ongoing implementation of new cycling infrastructure, including bike lanes, crossing points, closure of roads to cars to improve cyclist safety, improvements to cycle paths and shared paths, safety barriers and the creation of new paths
- Implementation of bike parking for local businesses at no cost to businesses
- Implementing advice from a dedicated Bicycle Advisory Committee comprising of local cyclists from different parts of the municipality
- Resources including cycling maps and bicycle repair stations throughout the municipality
- Bike workshops and skills sessions for cyclists or people interested in getting into cycling
- A “Darebin loves bikes” newsletter to provide information to local cyclists
- Local events including free breakfasts for Ride to School Day and Ride to Work Day
- Promotion of cycling as a preferred mode of transport, as articulated through council policies, decisions, social media and other council communications
- For more info see: <http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Darebin-Living/Parking-and-Transport/Transport#Cycling>
- The next term of Council needs to build on these successes by
- Continuing to fill the gaps in the cycling network across Darebin (bridges, bike lanes, etc)
- Lobbying the State Government to improve northbound access onto the St Georges Road path
- Continue ongoing work on the northern section of the “pipeline trail” – the bike path that travels along the train line (significant work was undertaken this term on the southern part, between Merri Parade Northcote and Miller Street Preston, but there's still work to do on the section from Miller Street Preston to Regent Station/through to central Reservoir)
- Push for lower speed limits on local roads to make them safer for everyone
- Re-prioritise local roads for use for walking and cycling to create new shimmy routes



- Improve the paths along the Merri and Darebin Creeks
- Continue the expansion of the Streets for People program
- Continue the expansion of the Octopus Schools program, including extending to high schools
- Work with the state government and private companies to improve bike parking beyond council-owned land (eg. Preston Market, supermarkets, train stations)
- Lobby Vicroads for safer bike crossings on Vicroads-owned roads (eg. Bell Street, Murray Road, etc) or where key cycle routes cross tram lines (eg. High Street, Miller Street)

## **2. When you go out on your bike, where is your favourite place to ride?**

I cycle along the Merri Creek Trail with my kids and along the length of hilly Gilbert Road, near where I live. I also love the new bridge at the end of Beavers Road, which I'm proud to have championed for the past seven years. When I'm riding on my own (recreational, not commuting rides) I like to ride along the streets that run either side of the Mernda train line, where we have recently made some significant changes to create cycling and pedestrian priority zones, before zipping across to High Street.

## **3. Are you satisfied with the progress being made with your council's bike strategy?**

In previous terms I initiated the Darebin Bicycle Advisory Committee and Darebin Cycling Strategy, along with making it Council policy that cycling is the number one form of transport for local trips.

Darebin's active transport strategies provide an important framework for improving cycling across the municipality and significant planning work has been undertaken but greater financial investment would allow for identified priority projects such as bridges, traffic islands, new bike lanes, advocacy projects, and Streets for People implementation to be fast-tracked.



## Candidate, South West Ward – Adrian Whitehead

**1. How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin?** Daily (well almost)

**2. What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?**

- Commuter or fitness cyclists using shared pathways at high speeds with little or no attempt to slow or alter their riding behaviour when passing people, and particularly when passing young children, toddlers and people walking dogs.
- Lack of off and on road paths into some areas.
- Lack of secure bike parking opportunities in some strip shopping centres.
- Significant problems with the bike path on Merri Creek connection to the main Yarra trail including the Moreland Road Crossing, the width and flooding of the trail between WillowBank Rd and St Georges, an extension of the path on the West side to Rushall reserve, the lack of direct link on the West side between Rushall Reserve and the trail south of Rushall Station and the ridiculous steep section just south of Heidelberg road which could be easily fixed by putting an new trail section along the creek

**3. Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.**

- A new pedestrian bridge under Moreland road. This is a significant impediment to people travelling north and south on the Merri Creek.
- Progressively build a wide hard surface path from Merri Creek to Edwards lake.
- Progressively widen all existing off road paths, including the pedestrian bridge over the Merri Creek between Kendell St and Harding St.

**4. With the growing number of pedestrians and cyclists is it still feasible to have shared bicycle and pedestrian paths?**

Yes, but given some high speed cyclists lack of willingness to change their cycling behaviour there needs to be speed limits set on paths when passing close to people and pets and paths need to be widened to allow safer passing. High speed cyclists should be discouraged from using shared pathways if they cannot exhibit reasonable and safe behaviour.



## West Ward

### Candidate, West Ward – George Kanjere

#### 1. How often do you ride a bicycle around Darebin?

At the moment I do not ride around Darebin. I have two young children and it is not practical at the moment. This says a lot about bike infrastructure in Darebin.

#### 2. What would you say are the key issues or concerns regarding cycling in Darebin?

Currently I do not ride in Darebin, although at various times in my life cycling has been my main method of transport. From what I can see one of the main issues is that there are few designated bike lanes or routes. This means that it is only very capable cyclists who are prepared to ride on main roads etc. and less confident riders are left by the wayside. The lane down St George's Road is well used but I was always concerned as to how the road crosses the bike path – I myself had a few near misses. The safety along there could certainly be improved.

#### 3. Can you suggest 3 measures that the Council could implement to make cycling in or through Darebin safer and more appealing.

- a. Advocating for clearer and safer bike lanes. This has to be blamed with the functionality of roads, but as it bike lanes in Darebin are not prioritized. This would make it safer and encourage more people to ride.
- b. Lanes and signage that enabled cyclists to safely cross the junction as Reservoir Station
- c. A bike path that followed the train line up past the junction and up towards Keon Park.

#### 4. With the growing number of pedestrians and cyclists is it still feasible to have shared bicycle and pedestrian paths?

Share paths are not that great if bike paths are being used for practical transport because in the case the riders are travelling at speed, and it becomes dangerous for pedestrians particularly. Where possible wider paths with allocated bike and pedestrian sides would be ideal, or something along those lines. This is something the community could discuss and come to a shared decision.



## Candidate, West Ward – Susanne Newton

I am the Deputy Mayor of Darebin, seeking re-election to be a Councillor on Darebin City Council representing the West Ward.

### 1. If elected, how will you support making it easier for people to walk and ride in Darebin?

As part of the current council in Darebin, over the last four years we have invested heavily in cycling infrastructure, for example:

- Two new cycle/pedestrian bridges in response to community demand (Beavers Road Croxton and Rathcown Road Bundoora)
- Upgrades of cycle bridges (Wood Street Preston and Dundas Street Thornbury)
- The implementation of the Streets for People project, making key travel routes safer and more enjoyable for walking and cycling
- The “Octopus Schools” program, suggested by the Darebin Bicycle Users Group, which provides a bike fleet, bike education and cycling infrastructure in the surrounding streets (eg. wombat crossings, traffic islands, etc) for one primary school each year
- Community consultation for the upgrade of the St George’s Road bike path – with wonderful results! (Now it’s a lovely wide, smooth path.)
- Ongoing implementation of new cycling infrastructure including bike lanes, crossing points, closure of roads to cars to improve cyclist safety, improvements to cycle paths and shared paths, safety barriers and the creation of new paths
- Implementation of bike parking for local businesses at no cost to businesses
- Implementing advice from a dedicated Bicycle Advisory Committee comprising of local cyclists from different parts of the municipality
- Resources including cycling maps and bicycle repair stations throughout the municipality
- Bike workshops and skills sessions for cyclists or people interested in getting into cycling
- A “Darebin loves bikes” newsletter to provide information to local cyclists
- Local events including free breakfasts for Ride to School Day and Ride to Work Day
- Promotion of cycling as a preferred mode of transport, as articulated through council policies, decisions, social media and other council communications
- For more info see: <http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Darebin-Living/Parking-and-Transport/Transport#Cycling>

The new council needs to build on these successes. If re-elected, in the next term I will advocate for the following:

- Continue to fill the gaps in the cycling network across Darebin (bridges, bike lanes, etc)
- Lobby the state government to improve northbound access onto the St George’s Road bike path
- Continue ongoing work on the northern section of the “pipeline trail” – the bike path that travels along the train line (significant work was undertaken this term on the southern part, between Merri Parade Northcote and Miller Street Preston, but there’s still work to do on the section from Miller Street Preston to Regent Station/through to central Reservoir)



- Push for lower speed limits on local roads to make them safer for everyone
- Re-prioritise local roads for use for walking and cycling to create new shimmy routes
- Improve the paths along the Merri and Darebin Creeks
- Continue the expansion of the Streets for People program
- Continue the expansion of the Octopus Schools program, including extending to high schools
- Work with the state government and private companies to improve bike parking beyond council-owned land (eg. Preston Market, supermarkets, train stations)
- Lobby Vicroads for safer bike crossings on Vicroads-owned roads (eg. Bell Street, Murray Road, etc) or where key cycle routes cross tram lines (eg. High Street, Miller Street)

## **2. When you go out on your bike, where is your favourite place to ride?**

I have an electric bike, and I actually love riding to the city along the St George's Road track, because I can get there as quickly as I would going by train, and can lock it outside wherever my destination is. The advantage of the e-bike too is that I can wear one set of clothes without needing to change when I arrive. I also love riding my e-bike along the Darebin Creek to work at La Trobe university – something about being in nature for those 20 minutes there and back would set me in the right frame of mind for work in a way that driving absolutely wouldn't. I can't wait to get back to those times when lockdown ends!

## **3. Are you satisfied with the progress being made with your council's bike strategy?**

I think we are on the right track but with room to improve. One challenge I have noticed is that even if COUNCIL is on the right track with this, some roads are ours and some are VicRoads roads, and I think there could be more integration between the two so that there is a seamless, easy ride which means people can choose cycling easily. There are also big divides between the north and south of Darebin – the further north you go it becomes more car dependent and cycling can be scary. We have more work to do in the North. I am really proud of the Streets for People program and Octopus Schools program but what I would really aspire to be like in my dreams is to be like the Netherlands with amazing bike and public transport connections, CBDs just for pedestrians and cyclists etc – we have a long way to go but I do aspire to that for our city.