

# Awakening Democracy

CAPaD – the Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy

MAY 2021

G'day members and friends

In this [Awakening Democracy](#): Our Democracy ACT progress; Demfest 21 – save the date, and lots of new stuff so listen to, watch or read.

## COMING UP

### Demfest 21 – Awakening Democracy 2021

We have set a date: **the weekend of November 6 and 7<sup>th</sup>**. Please put this in your diaries.

We want to bring together community groups who are active in their electorates seeking better representation for themselves to share their learnings and experience. We want to enrich the movement for better democracy in Australia.

We would be grateful for anyone who wants to help with organising this to volunteer. Specifically, we are looking for people with Zoom management and design skills.

## Active projects

### Our Democracy ACT

Interest in the Our Democracy ACT is growing. The group is still working through how it is going to work and what it is going to do exactly. Ideas so far are to have one group working on strategic and coordination, which is going by the name of Our Democracy ACT. As the focus comes more onto working with each of our MPs then up to three groups, one in each federal electorate, might emerge to work with the MPs in those electorates. Our next event is on May 16, 2021 01:00 pm. [Register to attend here](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. [Contact the Secretary](#) if you don't have it and want to join in.

## New stuff to read and look at

[Political Gadgets](#) - an **AMAZING website** (and I don't use amazing lightly)

"Free tools providing insights into what our politicians stand for." Actually "this site is all about information. Shining some light on what's going on. Giving people tools to understand what their representative is really doing."

"There is little true debate; and votes follow inevitable party blocks. You may have a perfectly pleasant local member; but as long as they vote the same as the hard edge of their party, their personal views are irrelevant."

### A thought experiment: what if Australia was more democratic?

How would an Australian politics work where the community was involved in deliberations for making the big decisions about issues such as climate action, jobseeker rate, NDIS, infrastructure development, urban planning, asylum seekers and immigration, defence budgets, and many others? A recent ABC item, [If Australia was more democratic, would its economic policies be better?](#), took a peek but didn't delve deeply enough. However it is worth a look.

It does beg the question about how to make such a democracy. How could community participation within a representative democracy system work?

[Read more on the CAPaD blog site.](#)

## Democracy as fun 'collection'

Though collection isn't the correct word. Examples of democracy and politicking being fun are sought. As an opening example, [from the Jackie Lambie merchandise store](#), (sent in by Margaret Lewis).

The Australia Institute launches a new **Democracy & Accountability Program**. There is an [introductory video here](#) and their [first webinar in the series here](#): Kristina Keneally on Accountability. The focus is on the practicalities of better good governance. It's the zeitgeist; making democracy stronger.



**Peacock Politics** Adam Peacock asks politicians and leading commentators to cut the crap and to explain simply how the Australian political system functions, why it was set up the way it was and if they think it needs an overhaul. [Here](#) or your favourite podcast app.

*From your committee, with best wishes*

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