

Notes from Kitchen Table Conversation - Yarralumla
8 April 2024 - 6 people

(✓ = how many times mentioned)

1. What do you love about your suburb and Canberra's south generally?

Friendly people ✓ ✓ ✓

Beautiful environment ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

Diversity - economic, cultural, background ✓ ✓ ✓

Layout of suburb - trees, lake ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

Family focus ✓ ✓

Liveability, safe, comfortable, feel at home, ambience ✓ ✓

Sense of community ✓ ✓ ✓

Active YRA ✓ ✓

Regeneration ✓

Want to see happening more:

Put limitations on how much people can build on sites to leave space for trees/planting, and on community facility land leave room for community events/facilities, parking etc. Need more people in the suburb who are less wealthy/educated.

2. What issues most interest or concern you? What could be done about this?

Retain community gathering spaces ✓

Climate change impacts addressed - planning, tree canopy, resilience ✓

Better liveability

Public transport - better planning, electric buses

Housing - adequate, combat homelessness ✓, avoid houses being replaced by huge new houses

Vacant shops - shopping centres belong to community, need government involvement ✓ ✓

Government needs to be more active about taking back/terminating leases of land/shops left unoccupied and addressing vacant housing. Densification to go hand in hand with diversity of people. ✓

More co-ordination/co-operation needed between levels of Government eg on housing ✓

Planning process needs better attention and laws/rules

Safer road crossings for children and seniors and better traffic management through, for example, chicanes, planting etc ✓ ✓

Establish Yarralumla Wetlands, including to address flooding and avoid rubbish entering the lake.

Infrastructure issues - inaction of government on stormwater, ageing infrastructure, destructive development where there is a lack of infrastructure

Land values and rates are too high which negates diversity. Need more focus on poverty alleviation, more public housing spread broadly rather than centred in one area, and need better maintained social housing

3. Do you feel represented by your ACT and federal politicians? What would you like to change?

NO:

Need more independents/less party line ✓

Compare with Gillard and European minority governments which have been effective.

More transparency, women's rights, environment

More social/health/welfare/education support

People first - vote for things they support

Current politicians don't represent us ✓

Need politicians to listen to people, make a decision and then give justification

Need more politicians like David Pocock ✓
Too much spin, not genuine, don't have party line voting ✓
More representation for our population eg compare Tasmania and ACT ✓
Secure, stable government with more independents ✓
Better qualities of leaders and representatives ✓
Party line captured by donors - more independents avoid this ✓
23 years too long - open to corruption etc ✓

YES:

Mix in the ACT eg support climate change action that has been done well, Pocock has done well ✓

4. What do you think makes for a really good political representative? Why?

Honesty, transparency, integrity etc ✓ ✓ ✓
Real life experience, in it for people, real connection to the community, real interaction with community, have to be effective ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓
Equity and fairness, accountability ✓ ✓
Think about artificial intelligence - issue of control of power, and how to manage
Decency and respectability, law abiding ✓ ✓ ✓
Require at least 5-10 years of real life experience before going into politics or being staffer ✓ ✓
On the ground experience and list what types of experience
In politics - avoid lowest common denominator - need communication, representation and to be culturally attuned ✓
(See also attached list provided by one participant of proposed principles, attitudes, values, possible job criteria)

Feedback on the Kitchen Table Conversation approach

Rules to let everyone's views be heard - don't have a debate in KTC. There is no time for discussion.
Make sure everyone is heard.
It's crucial to make sure you get the right people to the group - diversity of people. Use different ways to get to people including online. Run groups in places where can reach representation of different people/groups.
Less educated/wealthy people may not attend group meetings on new topics as no time or inclination - one-on-one is better or 5 minute "sell" piggy-backing on sports or playgroup regular meeting.
Depends on where the outcome of the KTCs is going. Politics is seen as personal issue. Need to make this non political.
Too late to run general KTCs in Canberra where candidates are already nominating.

SUMMARY

Valuable feedback on issues
Too late to use KTCs as candidates are already nominating
Could tag onto KTC activities of Canberra Alliance for Participatory Democracy
Issue of the possible role of KTCs in building a movement

One Participant's suggested list of Principles, Attitudes, Values, Possible job criteria for prospective candidates

Equity, fairness, equality (of access, intergenerational, \$, etc)
Transparency
Accountability
Non-discriminatory
Environmentally sound
Technology-supervised/regulated
Non-ideological
Communitarian/humanist/secular
Role of government (not just a default one) (vs neo-liberalism)
Truth as foundational (eg political advertising)
Fiscal rectitude/no pork-barrelling/cronyism/benefits for the boys etc
Values common good over party's interests
Long-termism vs short-termism/pro the big picture
Capable
Competent
Law-abiding
Patient
Tactful/diplomatic
Ethical/moral
Respectful and respectable
Open/inclusive/tolerant/accepting
Communicates well (cut out the spin - level with the voters)
Honesty, integrity, truthfulness
Respect, decency, civility, integrity
Measured, calm, firm (Wong-like)
Approachable
Kind, compassionate, empathic
Curious, intelligent, well-informed
Willing to compromise when needed
Brave and forthright
Approachable, available
Presentable
Industrious
Resilient
Responsive
Proactive and reactive
Wise/exercises balanced and sound judgement

Vehicles and tools

Individuals, groups, communities, areas (YRA, Neigh. Watch, ISCCC, shop windows, *City News*, *Canberra Weekly*, store fronts, shop meetings, kitchen tables, 'Voices of...'), X, Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok Politics: elections: **DO WE WANT MORE REPRESENTATIVES? Why? Why not?**

Frequency
Informed voters
Legislative changes (FOI, whistle blower, use of sunset clauses)