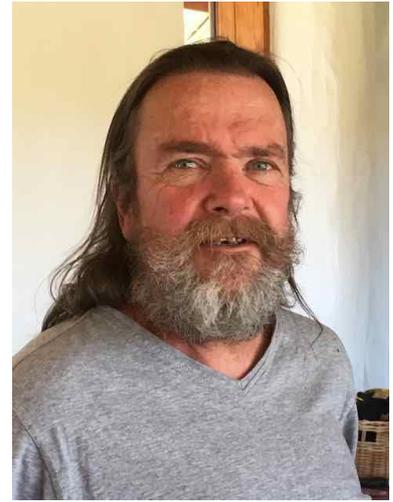


MICHAEL WAHREN

Hello my name is Michael Wahren and I am standing for election to Mansfield council. I am a 64 year old married man living in Merrijig. I arrived here in 2001 from Melbourne, after migrating to Australia in 1971 from Finland via Sweden. I worked mainly in the IT industry dealing with private individuals, industry and government departments. Having arrived in Merrijig, we built a straw bale house and planted an olive grove. We established the Bakers Creek Bakery to the delight of Mansfield Shire's many bread lovers. Sadly, my brother Henrik (the main baker) and wife Annie decided on a family career move interstate which brought our successful enterprise to an end. I am also a volunteer fire fighter and a lieutenant at the Merrijig CFA.



Mansfield shire is a unique part of the world, filled with innovative, skillful, artistic, industrious, quirky, wonderful people. It looks and feels like an Australian country shire with a twist, winter and summer sports, myriad of outdoor activities, greatest wine and food, bush ranging history, gold and the list never stops. I want to contribute to building on this uniqueness so that business, community and residential development says *I belong in Mansfield shire*. I would judge development projects on their environmental sustainability, energy/water efficiency, as well as capacity to provide not only function but form sympathetic to Mansfield's style.

The fires of last summer and the current pandemic has challenged our community resilience. Both the community and Government acted decisively on medical and scientific advice in regard to the pandemic. We must be no less decisive in tackling climate change. The science is clear, farming groups and businesses have been strong in asking for action. We as a community must take this into account as we make plans and aim for zero emissions future.

We must strongly support our emergency management organisations as well as our wonderful and amazing hospital, the crown jewel of our community. Our council must always be its strongest and loudest ally.

Resilience is also built through local power generation/security, water security, local farm production, local non-farm related business as well as business development which enhances and uses local production, including cooperative 'Made in Mansfield Shire' enterprises, becoming a zero net waste shire, and actively supporting humanitarian and welfare efforts.

We must always be fiscally responsible. To help achieve this Council should always consult widely with ratepayers, the many and varied community groups and particularly youth, drawing on community expertise wherever possible. Council should always argue strongly and forcefully, whenever possible, for greater support from state and federal authorities and form strong bonds with those who represent us at state and federal level.

I want to also directly address the non-resident members of our community. You have invested years, possibly decades, in making this shire your second home and you have directly contributed to making this shire what it is today and I presume to think you agree with me about what makes this district unique. I intend to work hard for you just as I would for our permanent residents. I love the ability for people to visit our beautiful shire and discovering our many great attributes.

Finally, what is most important for the future of our shire is a diverse council, that means you the younger people of Mansfield need to put your hand up this election and the next, so that you can help guide this shire forward, after all your future goes much further than mine, you will get my vote when you do and I will listen when you want to talk. Youth is the future your voice is very important, so do not let the council become an old fogeys club. Diverse views lead to better decision making.

I welcome your support and feedback. Email: michaelwahrenforcouncil@gmail.com