

Christchurch City Council - Innes Ward

Mark Wilson - Council - Innes ward

Hi XR Otautahi

Well first of all I would like to say I'm part of extinction rebellion, though I haven't taken part in any actions yet. I am 100% supportive of the group and the principles it holds true to.

- What changes have you made in your life, personally, in response to the climate crisis?

I still drive a car but it's the smallest car possible 'Toyota Starlet' that fits the eclectic family I have, and we try to bike around as much as possible, my daughter buses to school. I haven't flown by aircraft for over 5 years, and when looking at travelling any large distance will consider carbon footprint first. I have personally been battling the Northern Arterial Motorway, engaging and motivating the local community to demand council prioritise Traffic Demand Management strategies for the commuters using this motorway, not the current CCC focus of mitigating increased traffic and allowing the status quo.

2. Will you, if elected as councillor, vote to reaffirm the Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration?

Yes absolutely, and I would move to have all targets CCC set with regards to carbon emissions line up with the latest IPCC report of 12 years (now 11 years) to reduce by 50%.

3. Are you willing to make the climate and ecological emergency the overarching priority for everything that you do/every decision you make? How will you do that?

Yes it will be the first question I ask in all projects considered by council and investments made by council. I won't support anything that doesn't assist in reducing the carbon footprint of Christchurch, and will actively seek support from fellow councillors in this position. We should be hearing from all voices of society, but particular weight should be placed on verified academic studies, as these are based on fact without bias and not driven by profit (as opposed to the commercial sector), and so I would be hopeful of having a lot more input from universities and other technical groups to make the right decisions to get our emissions down but increasing the functionality and accessibility of our city at the same time.

4. How will you ensure that all voices are heard equally in matters relating to the climate emergency?

Well the key point here is making sure that the generations who are going to inherit the current mess we find ourselves in, need to have a much larger say in decisions made now.

1) To start if the youth felt empowered to turn up and vote, governments would have a completely different focus and mandate. Here in Christchurch we need councillors who are going to change the status quo, that means people who want change must vote and vote in big numbers. Local body politics are often pretty apathetic occasions with some areas the turnout being under 33%. A lot of voters are not well informed, but do vote, other people within the electorate are well informed but don't get around to voting. We need informed voters to be heard.

2) Collaboration and then empowerment is what is needed to help all voices to be heard equally. Presently we have a system which is based on informing and a degree of box ticking consulting with a decision already made. I want council to go to the people, to collaborate with people on the street, in schools, shopping centers, universities, hold community meetings in the community. 3) I don't really like saying 'create a new committee' but I think it would be beneficial for a 'carbon neutral towards carbon zero' committee to be formed with an equal representation from academics, youth, climate action groups, council staff, councillors, industry and resident associations all sitting on it. It would be large but it would ensure everyone could be heard. The committee would consider all issues regarding to carbon emission and environment impact, and would be a required step for all projects dealing with urban development, public transport, waste management, commercial development, tourism, resource management, to have an approval from this committee before being considered by council.

Thanks for the opportunity to answer your questions, I hope I get the opportunity to make a difference at council after the elections. Check out my Facebook page for a bit more background to me. Mark Wilson - Councillor Candidate for Innes Ward