

Driven by the science of climate change

JOANNA SANTA BARBARA

This is a series on the climate policies of mayoral candidates for the upcoming local council elections. Climate policy is gaining momentum in our region. Much will depend on who will sit in the mayor's seat for the next cycle.

Mayoral candidate Tim King is driven by the science on climate change. He sees the changes already influencing what crops grow well in this area and believes the focus must be on resilience and adaptation to expected changes such as sea level rise. He believes that Tasman District Council must minimise its own emissions but he is doubtful about the ability of TDC to influence the bigger picture of emissions outcomes. On the other hand, he thinks council has a responsibility to continually examine and reduce its carbon footprint.

This should include council-controlled organisations (CCOs) such as the Port Authority and the airport.

Tim thinks it would be counterproductive for Council to declare a Climate Emergency as it would, he believes, cause most people to shirk their responsibility for action.

Tim points out that the present council is about to authorise measurement of its emissions and a Climate Action Plan.

He favours low emissions vehicles for the council, and believes energy efficiency should be designed into new buildings such as the Motueka Library. He thinks the council could do more in both advocacy

in the climate action area and in education of citizens.

We need more and better roads, according to Tim. Fast lanes for multiple occupancy vehicles between Richmond and Nelson may cut emissions by lowering car numbers. Public transport in the widely dispersed population of this district is not economically viable, he believes; Tim favours a private option such as Uber taxis.

He thinks ride-sharing should be better promoted and coordinated by the council.

Regarding future development strategies to accommodate a growing population, Tim is doubtful about the idea of making our towns denser living areas (which would be the lower carbon emissions option.). Although submissions from citizens on this issue strongly supported 'intensification' as it is called, a survey has shown that most citizens favour living on larger blocks of land. In addition, according to Tim, construction of intensive housing is more expensive.

He is aware of the conflict between this set of values, and the importance of protecting productive land around cities and other advantages of intensification. He sees his decades of experience on council as helpful in negotiating these value conflicts.

On the issue of adaptation to climate change, Tim points out most people were not panicked after receiving information on projections of the impact on their properties of sea level rise. He thinks a conversation should start about 'managed retreat' - the planning for the appropriate time in the



Tim King pictured during the Pigeon Valley fires. He thinks the council could do more in both advocacy in the climate action area and in education of citizens.

MARTIN DE RUYTER/STUFF

future to relocate areas of a town or village. Council should not allow any development below a line delineating five metres of sea level rise.

In terms of carbon sequestration, Tim favours the strategy of combining the planting of native trees with pines.

With climate change and other issues, Tim points out the import-

ance of cooperation with Nelson City Council, Marlborough District Council, central government, iwi, nongovernmental organisations and landowners. He confronts the difficulty that people want simple answers to complex problems, and that many people struggle to make changes in their way of living.

Regarding setting up a Climate

Forum to bring together the major actors on the climate breakdown issue, Tim is wary. He wants to be sure it will 'add value' to action on the issue.

Joanna Santa Barbara is a retired physician living in Motueka. She is a member of Zero Carbon Nelson Tasman and Our Climate Declaration.

Shake, rattle and roll with it when the big one hits

LAUREL KETEL

Don't expect help when the Alpine Fault ruptures. The damage in the South Island will be so widespread, residents could face weeks without services.

The public should also have emergency supplies to last two weeks, a public meeting has heard.

Wakefield volunteer fire chief Fritz Buckendahl organised a public meeting at the fire station last week following discussions about the Alpine Fault with other emergency services.

"We want the community to be aware and understand that this quake is going to happen, and the more we understand it ourselves prior to the event, the better we'll be prepared."

Buckendahl said people need to understand the 'big picture' to grasp how they will be affected.

"The worst time for a rupture will be between 6am and 6pm, that's when most families are apart at either school or work."

With many travelling north of Wakefield during this time, Buckendahl said it was possible they would not be able to get back home if the Brightwater and Appleby bridges were damaged.

"This is what people need to plan for, they need to realise they may not be able to get home, their children may not be able to get home."

The Alpine Fault is the boundary between the Pacific crustal plate and the Australian plate and runs 800 kilometres along the spine of the South Island. It has ruptured 27 times over the last 8000 years with an average of 300 years between each rupture.



Wakefield Volunteer fire chief Fritz Buckendahl says if the Alpine Fault ruptures between 6am and 6pm it could mean Wakefield families might be separated as bridges in and out of Wakefield could be damaged.

BRADEN FASTIER/STUFF

Speaking at the meeting was AF8 [Alpine Fault Magnitude 8] co-ordinator Alice Lake-Hammond, who said the last known significant quake was in 1717 and the next one was due.

"We can't predict when but it will likely be in our lifetime, or that of our children."

AF8 is a collaboration between scientists and Civil Defence - the Alpine Fault is a shared hazard between the six South Island Civil Defence groups.

"We all need to work together and be prepared for the next big rup-

ture," she said.

If a magnitude 8 or greater earthquake was to strike, the entire South Island would be affected.

With scientific modelling showing many areas will be cut off due to landslides, as happened in the Kaikoura quake, resources will be severely stretched, she said.

"There will be no knights in shining armour flying over the hills to help us so we must be prepared to look after ourselves."

Lake-Hammond said it was not necessarily the initial rupture that will cause the most damage.

"We then have cascading hazards such as aftershocks, landslides, dam breaks, flooding, fire and interruptions to power supplies."

Kathy Solly from Nelson Tasman Emergency Management said Civil Defence now recommended people have enough emergency supplies to last for 14 days, unlike the previous recommendation of just three days.

"We won't have the people coming to help like we did with the Pigeon Valley fires, you will need to be resilient and prepared."

Solly said getting to know your neighbours was important so you

"This is what people need to plan for, they need to realise they may not be able to get home, their children may not be able to get home."

Wakefield volunteer fire chief Fritz Buckendahl

could identify who would need help during an emergency and who may be able to provide assistance.

Buckendahl said residents should plan to face up to 14 days without power or petrol. "All services will be interrupted, you won't be able to pop down to the Four Square and stock up on supplies."

With only 20 volunteer firefighters in Wakefield, Buckendahl was already compiling a list of those in the community with a particular skill set including doctors, nurses, engineers and IT specialists.

"When the fault ruptures we will need help, we will need to pool resources."

Both Buckendahl and Lake-Hammond urged those in attendance to help spread awareness.

"We can't do anything to stop this from coming, but when it does the best thing we can be is ready for it, being prepared will be what helps us get through it."

AF8 will be holding a public meeting in Nelson on October 23 with three of its lead scientists.

Public Science Talk - Nelson Wednesday 23 October, 7pm Old St John's, Hardy St Nelson