

Climate Change Balmain-Rozelle President's Annual Report 2016-17



Political environment

Globally, Donald Trump's withdrawal of the US from the Paris climate agreement has, if anything toughened the resolve of many within the US and elsewhere to act more strongly on the climate. The Australian Federal Government appears to be following a different path, on the one hand claiming that its policies are on track to meet our Paris targets, on the other hand aggressively fighting all the efforts by State governments to move away from fossil fuels.

Climate Change Balmain-Rozelle has developed a three-level program over the year. We have engaged with **nationally-based campaigns** such as the *Climate Emergency Declaration* and *Stop Adani*; we have made **submissions** to as many relevant enquiries and discussion papers as we can manage; and we have developed local presence through our regular **Climate in the Pub** discussion meetings. As well, we have an active **social media** profile on Facebook, Twitter, our website and email newsletters.

Climate in the Pub

Our meetings have slowly grown and become a well-established part of the program at the Three Weeds. Over the year our bi-monthly meetings have covered:

- *Not another Carbon Tax?* with Adrian Enright of WWF and Howard Witt of Citizens Electoral Lobby
- *Money's not for Burning* with Daniel Gocher of Market Forces
- *Debate: We know it's an emergency but does it help to say so?* with Phil Bradley and Felicity Wade
- *Climate for Murder* with filmmaker Greg Miller and NCC's Kate Smolski
- *Climate Change and our Energy System* with Daisy Barham of NCC
- *Guarding the Galilee* – film screening presented by the director Nell Schofield

Posters in the district before the events raise our profile and increase attendance - now around 40. But this, together with increased catering expenditure, and hire of screening facilities, brings our costs well above the cash collection we take up, so they are met from our general membership fees and donations.

Campaign Activities

AGL AGM

In September we gathered at Ballast Point Park for a photograph holding signs urging **AGL to go fossil free**. The following month we joined a demonstration outside the company's AGM at Angel Place.

Climate Emergency Declaration

We supported the nationally-based **Climate Emergency Declaration** campaign by collecting petition signatures outside Orange Grove markets. In January, CCBR organised a welcome at the **Man o'War Steps** near the Opera House for campaigner **Steve Posselt**, kayaking from Ballina to Moruya then Canberra to present the 18,000-strong petition to Parliament.

Stop Adani

We collected **650 signed letters** to Anthony Albanese calling for Labor to stand clearly against Adani. A video of about 30 CCBR supporters lining up to **deliver the letters** to Albo's office was widely viewed on Facebook and YouTube. Later we met with Albo, but gained little ground. This campaign is continuing.

Submissions

Over the year we have written 9 submissions:-

- August: to Anthony Roberts – State Resources & Energy Minister re COAG meeting
- August: to Queensland Government: Advancing Climate Action in Queensland
- October: to Standing Committee on Treaties: Ratifying the Paris Agreement
- October: to NSW Govt: Rocky Hill coal project
- November: to Senate Inquiry on Retirement of Coal-Fired Power Stations
- March: to Finkel Review of National Energy Market
- March: re Greater Sydney Commission Draft Central Sydney Plan
- May: re Federal Review of Climate Policy Discussion Paper
- May: to IPART review of NSW Feed-in Tariff

Many thanks to those who wrote or contributed to those reports – especially Derek, Angela & Rob.

We have also **written to Anthony Albanese** on several occasions: regarding cuts to ARENA, regarding Labor's equivocal policy on Renewable Energy Targets, as well as on the **Adani coal mine** project.

Individual members of CCBR continue to write to the press with occasional success. In February we had **three letters** (from Angela, Dominic and Derek) published in the SMH in one week.

Inner West Council

Since council committees were terminated in the council merger, there has been less opportunity for participation. We hope to see a more participatory structure when councillors are re-elected.

Footprints Festival

At the August 2016 Footprints Eco-Festival CCBR mounted a "Think Before you Throw it" display, and distributed samples of **Kate's climate-friendly soup** all around the festival site.

CCBR's anniversary picnic

CCBR was officially incorporated as a community organisation in February 2006. We didn't get around to celebrating until just before Christmas - **ten years, ten months and ten days** after our incorporation - when we organised a barbecue picnic at Ballast Point Park for supporters past and present. It was attended by about 20 people, including founding members **Jenny Curtis** and **Sue Lewis**.

Social Media

We have changed from a Facebook Profile (officially reserved for individuals) to a linked Organisation Page and a Group. We have **270 group members**, and **320 'likes' on the Page**.

Our **Twitter** presence has grown, thanks to active tweeting by Rob and Jemima – now with about **380 followers** and over 600 tweets. Our Twitter feed also appears on the home page of our **website**, which has had some considerable updating over the past year, based partly on improved analytics of which pages were attracting viewers. As a result we have seen a slight but steady increase in page views.

Newsletters and lists

CCBR's newsletter list remained steady over the year at about 750. Each month sees 3 or 4 'unsubscribes' and a similar number of new subscribers – more when we are actively campaigning. As usual, we send out about one newsletter per month, and a few single-issue reminder notices.

Membership and Finances

We have **21 financial members**. Several of those make additional e donations to CCBR, for which we are extremely grateful. The separate financial report will show that CCBR has a comfortable though not vast bank balance, so we have been able to carry out activities at the level we have wanted to. We also have a growing **circle of helpers** outside the committee and formal membership circles, to whom we are grateful for their turning out when needed for leafleting, petition-gathering etc. The **ccbr-core** email group is a slightly different circle of supporters yet again – currently numbering 24 members.

Committee

Kim resigned as Secretary/Treasurer, but continued to host our meetings with wonderful hospitality. **Kate** took over as Secretary for the year, capturing our rambling meetings in the form of clear minutes. **Gavin** resigned as Vice President mid-year but continues to support CCBR as an active member. **Derek** returned to the Treasurer role, and has also smartened up our membership list, managing renewals and reminders more effectively – as well as his usual sterling work with submissions. In the time he can manage between bursts of study **Michael** has managed our good relationship with the Three Weeds – ensuring that our Climate in the Pub sessions run harmoniously. New committee member **Rob** took on the Steve Posselt reception event with great thoroughness – and hasn't looked back! Finally, **Angela** has been a tireless organiser of most of our campaigns and activities this year, adding her trademark capability and attention to detail to everything we do. Thank you to all the committee, as well as to all those who have contributed their time and efforts to what we do.

Looking Forward

While recognition of the growing dangers of climate change is becoming more accepted, rearguard action by business-as-usual deniers seems to be becoming more entrenched. The StopAdani campaign continues, we have a promising Climate in the Pub program rolling out, and much more to do.

Dominic Case
President, 2016-17