

Braddon: An Electoral Snapshot

Better health, education and services are the key issues in the March 20 election for voters in the electorate of Braddon.

We are calling on all candidates to help make a difference in these important areas, by urging their party to adopt the following measures as part of their election policies to deliver better health, education and services in Braddon.

This snapshot provides you with an outline of:

- the 'Our Island Our Voices' campaign platform for a fairer Tasmania;
- Braddon facts and challenges;
- key issues raised by Braddon voters; and
- independent Braddon polling findings.

As part of a broader platform we call we are calling on candidates to tackle the fairer Tasmania challenge by adopting the following measures:

Better education and training:

- Doubling funding for '*Raising the Bar, Closing the Gap*' to provide additional resources and recurrent funding for disadvantaged schools along the North-West Coast;
- Develop a state-wide adult literacy strategy, including funding for long-term adult literacy and numeracy programs in local communities;
- Increase access to affordable accommodation and transport for students from regional and remote communities to remain in education and training;
- Invest in supportive school environment programs and initiate a mandatory state-wide approach to tackling bullying;
- Support people with a mental illness to get into or stay in employment with a focus on early intervention and prevention strategies;

Healthy Tasmania:

- Start addressing the causes of Tasmania's poor health and not just the symptoms by increasing funding for health prevention strategies from 1.5% to 5% of all health spending;
- Tackle problem gambling, through tighter regulation of gaming machines including lower betting limits, shorter opening hours and less advertising of venues;

Stronger services, stronger communities:

- Prioritise funding for passenger transport services to connect communities with essential services including education, training, health services and jobs;
- Put public and community housing on a sustainable and viable footing by increasing recurrent funding by \$15-30 million;
- Address the cost of living pressures for low income households by guaranteeing concessions for electricity and water and sewerage to keep pace with future price rises.

Key Points:

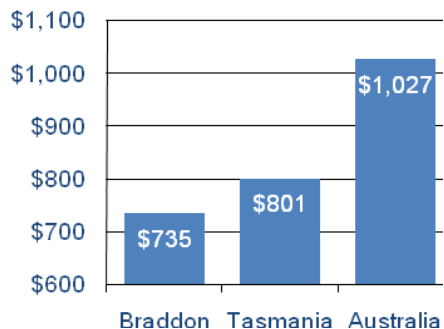
- 90.1% of Braddon voters prefer improving services such as health care and education over state tax cuts.
- Northern Tasmania has a year 10-12 direct retention rate of just 47.6%

Getting by

Over one-third of Braddon residents are dependant on government pensions for their primary source of income.

This contributes to a median household income in Braddon of \$735 compared to the Tasmanian median of \$801 and the Australian median of \$1,027.

In fact, Braddon is one of the most disadvantaged electorates in Australia with a poverty rate of 15.1%.



Health

Braddon’s obesity rate of 58.4% is higher than both the Tasmanian average of 55.8% and Australian rate of 54.9%.

Braddon’s smoking rate of 29.8% is 9.7% above the national average.

Current Health Department spending indicates that only 1.5% of their budget is spent on health prevention activities.

Housing

The Anglicare March 2009 Rental Affordability Survey indicated that for low income earners only 2.9% of housing was affordable for low income earners in the North-West Coast.



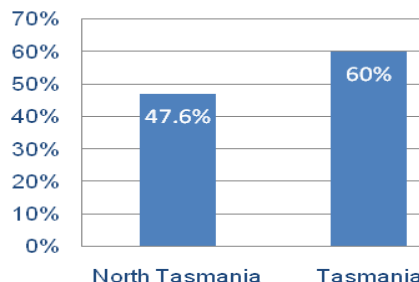
Education

Department of Education data indicates North Tasmania has a year 10-12 retention rate of only 47.6% compared to the state average of 60%.

The Tasmania Together Benchmarks highlight that 49% of Tasmanians aged 15-74 lack the basic literacy skills to cope with the demands of everyday life and work tasks in a knowledge based economy.

Education is vital not only for productivity in the economy it is arguably the most important determinant of a person’s life chances.

Year 10-12 Direct Retention Rate (%) North Tasmania 2008

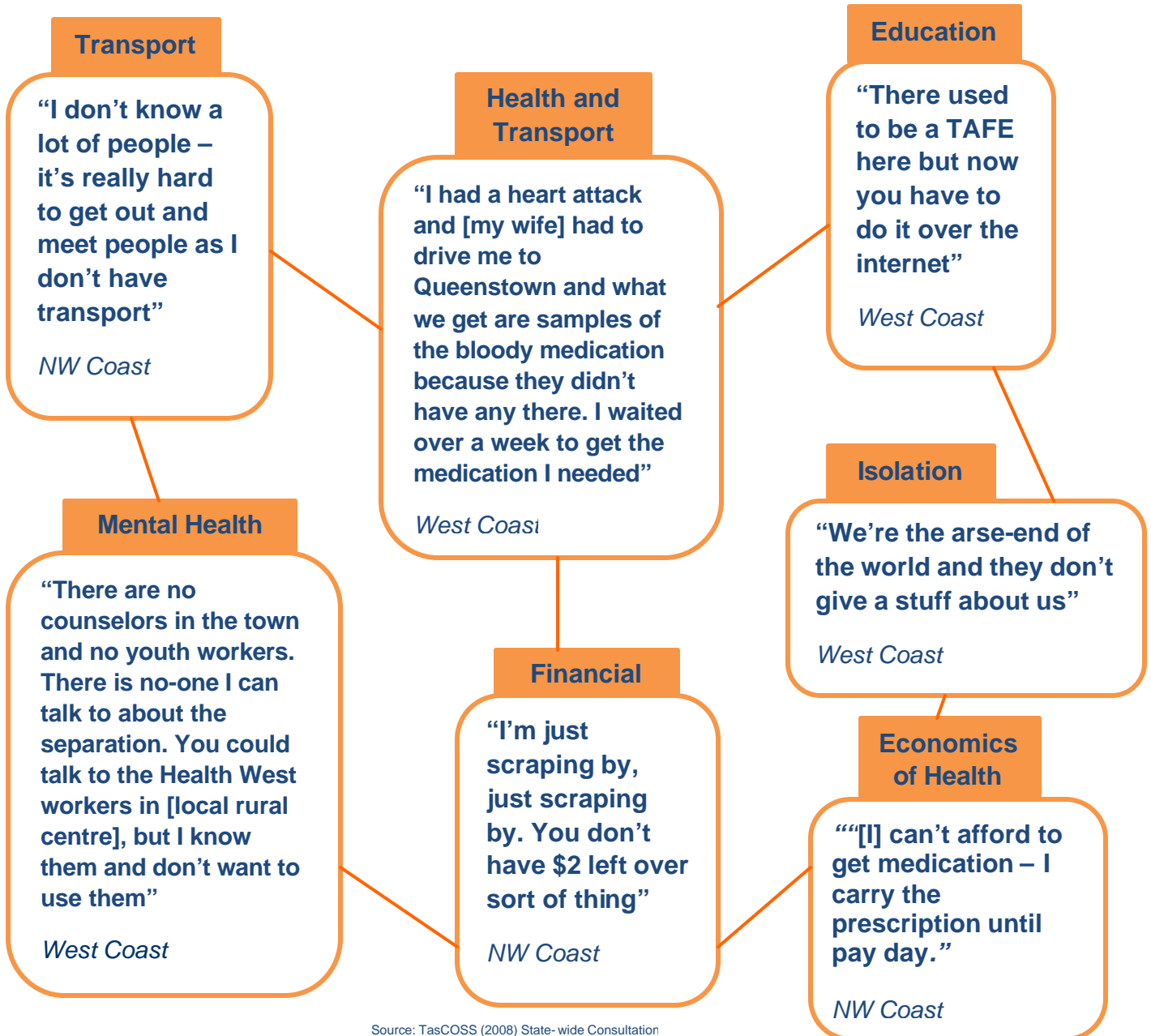


Transport

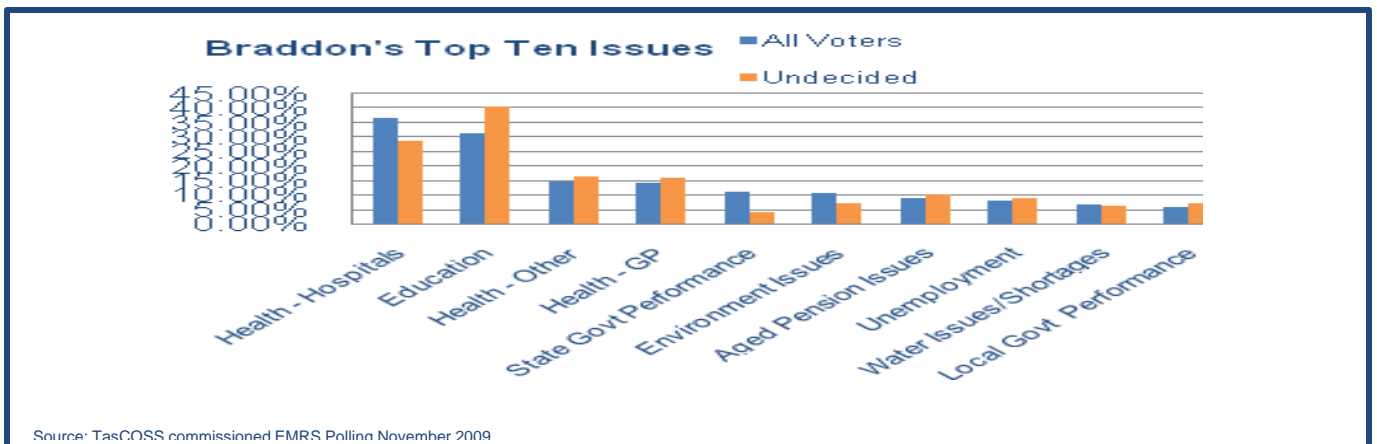
The Census data indicates that roughly 1% of Braddon constituents utilise bus services to travel to work.

“You can’t do years 11/12 in Zeehan – you can do it in Rosebery but the subject choice is limited. To do specialized subjects you need to go to Hobart.”

Student West Coast



Source: TasCOSS (2008) State-wide Consultation



OUR ISLAND OUR VOICES

Polling sends a clear message to all political parties and candidates in the March 20 election that health and education are the key issues in the minds of Braddon voters.

Visit Our Website for full details:

www.ourisland.tascoss.org.au

In November 2009 Our Island Our Voices commissioned independent polling by EMRS to find out the most important issues for Tasmanians in deciding who to vote for in the coming State Election.

The top ten issues nominated by voters in Braddon are:

Braddon's Top 10

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Issue</u>	<u>All Voters</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
1	Health - Hospitals	36.60%	28.80%
2	Education	31.20%	40.60%
3	Health - Other	14.60%	16.50%
4	Health - GP	13.90%	16.10%
5	State Gov't Performance	11.10%	4.10%
6	Environment Issues	10.80%	6.90%
7	Aged Pension Issues	8.90%	10%
8	Unemployment	8.10%	8.90%
9	Water Issues/Shortages	6.80%	6.20%
10	Local Gov't Performance	5.80%	6.90%

Our Island Our Voices Polling Results

The following independent polling statistics are the result of specific questions:

Community services:

- 90.1% of Braddon constituents prefer improving services such as health care and education over state tax cuts.

Education and training

- 86.1% of Braddon constituents believe improving the skills and qualifications of young Tasmanians is more important to our economy than reducing payroll and land tax.

Concessions

- 51.7% of Braddon constituents stated they would be more likely to vote for a political party if it announced it would increase the discount given to Tasmanian pensioners and low-income earners to help them pay their electricity, water, and sewerage bills. Only 2.5% said they would be less likely to vote for the political party.

Transport

- When given the choice between upgrading the Midlands Highway or upgrading public transport 48.5% Braddon constituents supported upgrading the Midlands Highway, whilst 37.1% supported greater public transport expenditure.