

# Lyons: An Electoral Snapshot

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

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 Lyons.

## Key Points:

- 80.5% of Lyons constituents 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%. The South-East has a direct retention rate of only 42.5%.

This snapshot will provide you with an outline of:

- the 'Our Island Our Voices' campaign platform for a fairer Tasmania;
- key Lyons facts and challenges;
- people's concerns; and
- key independent 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 in Lyons;
- 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;

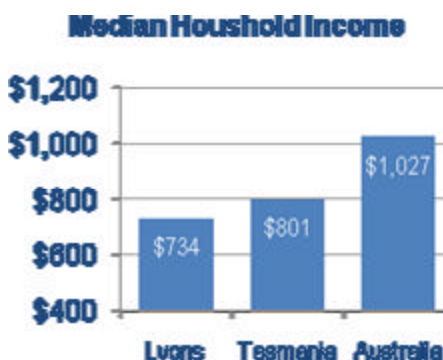
## Stronger services, stronger communities:

- 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; and
- 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.

### Getting by

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

This contributes to a median household income in Lyons of \$734 compared to the Tasmanian median of \$801 and the Australian median of \$1,027.

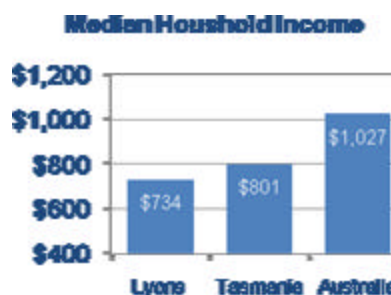


### Education

Department of Education data indicates Northern Tasmania has a year 10-12 retention rate of only 47.6%, whilst the South-East has a direct retention rate of only 42.5% 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.



**“If I go to Launceston and if I’ve got the money, I can get three times the amount of groceries I can get here”**

*East Coast*

### Health

Lyons has an obesity rate range in the order of 53.7% to 59% compared to the Tasmanian average of 55.8% and Australian rate of 54.9%. The prevalence of cardiovascular disease in Lyons is between 21.3% - 27.2% which is higher than the national average of 16.4%.

Despite the growing need for health prevention policies the Tasmanian health budget is focused on the acute health sector (i.e. treatment) rather than prevention.

### Housing

The Anglicare March 2009 Rental Affordability Survey indicated that for low income earners 2.0% of housing was affordable for low income earners in the South and 9.4% in North Tasmania.

### Transport

The Census data indicates that less than 2% of Lyons constituents utilise public bus services to travel to work.

**Transport**

“The Sunday bus stopped, so students who want to get up to Launceston on the Sunday for school or uni on the Monday, they can't. They have to be there early, it's a real struggle every week. It's ridiculous, local kids trying to go to university, it's ridiculous.”

East Coast

**Poverty**

“The thing that is the worst is when you come off a double pension and you drop back onto the single pension, there is now way, even owning your own home, that you are going to find it easy. Unless you have a little money invested, with that extra that you will be able to manage. You will love from week to week otherwise.”

East Coast

**Child Care**

“If you've got kids there's no child minding down here on weekends and after 6pm, so if you don't have family you can't take jobs that require you to work during those times.”

Tasman Peninsula

**Cost of Living**

“The shop here is as dear as anything, what you pay for a three litre milk in (next biggest town) you pay for a two litre one up here.”

Midlands

**Financial**

“If I have to buy groceries here instead of going to St Helens then it's more expensive, even with the \$20 in the car for petrol.”

East Coast

**Isolation**

“There's never anything up here to do, unless you are a drinker and you want to go to the pub.”

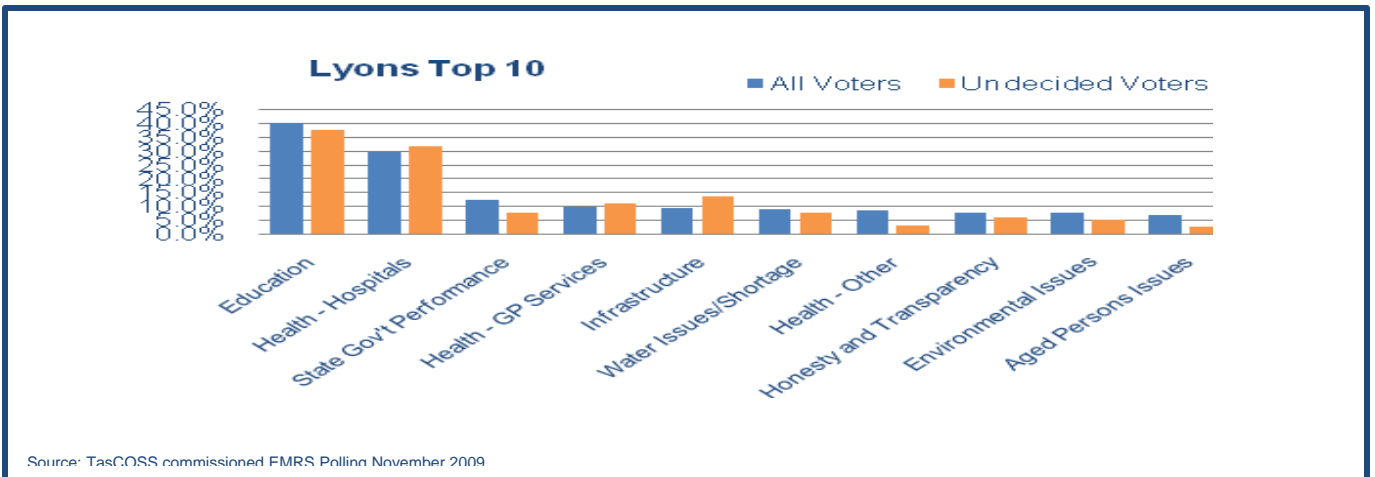
Midlands

**Infrastructure**

“Mobile coverage is off and on in this area. No public phones up the other end, there is one in town”

Midlands

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 Lyons voters.

Visit Our Website for full details:

[www.ourisland.tascoss.org.au](http://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.

### Lyons Top 10

	Issue	All Voters	Undecided
1	Education	<b>40.2%</b>	37.9%
2	Health - Hospitals	<b>29.7%</b>	31.7%
3	State Govt Performance	<b>12.4%</b>	7.8%
4	Health - GP Services	<b>9.8%</b>	11.1%
5	Infrastructure	<b>9.2%</b>	13.6%
6	Water Issues/Shortage	<b>9.1%</b>	7.6%
7	Health - Other	<b>8.5%</b>	3.0%
8	Honesty and Transparency	<b>7.8%</b>	6.0%
9	Environmental Issues	<b>7.7%</b>	5.1%
10	Aged Persons Issues	<b>7.0%</b>	2.7%

### Our Island Our Voices Polling Results:

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

#### Community services:

- 80.5% of Lyons constituents prefer improving services such as health care and education over state tax cuts.

#### Education and training

- 80.5% of Lyons constituents believe improving the skills and qualifications of young Tasmanians is more important to our economy than reducing payroll and land tax.

#### Concessions

- 47.2% of Lyons 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 6.7% 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 52.3% Lyons constituents supported upgrading the Midlands Highway, whilst 37.4% supported greater public transport expenditure.