



KAREN RENKEMA-LANG & TEAM

INDEPENDENT YOU'RE IN S.A.F.E. HANDS

S.A.F.E. KIAMA POLICY - FAMILIES

KIAMA • MINNAMURRA • GAINSBOROUGH • KIAMA DOWNS • JAMBEROO • GERRINGONG • GERROA • OCTOBER 2021

FAMILIES ARE OUR FUTURE

Kiama is being 'revitalised' with more young families moving into our municipality. However in a community that has a high proportion of retirees, young people and families can feel under-represented.

S.A.F.E. Kiama understands that investing in our children and our youth, and providing the services, infrastructure and facilities that families need to thrive will lead to a resilient and cohesive future for everyone in our community.

Young people and families within the Kiama community have repeatedly told us that youth mental health is of most concern. The [S.A.F.E. Kiama Mental Health Policy](#) focuses specifically on this challenge. We understand that our families need more events focused on families and youth to provide much needed connections. They need more quality and affordable child care and preschool spaces, improved walking and bike paths for adults but also safe places for kids to learn to ride, new and upgraded playgrounds catering for different ages, sizes and abilities, infrastructure upgrades to keep pace with the rate of development, and parent specific parking places.

DISADVANTAGE, VULNERABILITY & THE RED ZONE

S.A.F.E. Kiama acknowledges that *inequalities in health arise because of inequalities in society – in the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age¹*. While Kiama is amongst the most advantaged municipalities in NSW, disadvantage and vulnerability does exist in our community.

For example, according to the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District Needs Assessment, our municipality is in the 'red' zone for unpaid assistance to persons with a disability. Younger people with ageing parents are often required to take on this role, which can be particularly challenging if they are raising children of their own at the same time, and disability support and aged care services for those without carers / adult children living nearby is also lacking.

The Kiama local government area is in the 'red' zone for *dangerous alcohol consumption and for hospital admissions because of assault*. We fall short with regard to female labour force participation and the ratios of medical and dental practitioners required to match our community needs.

Sadly, many people who live in neighbouring municipalities are significantly disadvantaged, with areas around Lake Illawarra having some of the highest rates of vulnerability across New South Wales.

¹ <https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review>

THE EARLY YEARS & CHILD CARE ISSUES

We know that the early years of child's life are a good indicator of their chances of succeeding at school and their ability to thrive as an adult. In spite of our advantages there are vulnerabilities in the Kiama Local Government Area in regards to childhood development when compared to the rest of NSW. Specifically relating to metrics associated with *physical health and wellbeing and communication and general knowledge skills* - as defined in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District Needs Assessment.

Access to high-quality, accessible and affordable early childhood services are an important part of giving children the best start in life. Finding such services in the Kiama municipality has been a challenge for young families for some time. We understand there is a lack of day-care spaces leading to long waiting lists.

S.A.F.E. Kiama will draw from initiatives such as the Minderoo Foundation's *Thrive by Five*, to advocate for Council services and facilities to provide quality child care, school holiday programs, and before and after school care programs all of which meet the needs of children, families, and education providers.

Many concerns expressed by families and young people in our municipality are validated by the poor 'liveability' findings as detailed in the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District Needs Assessment, particularly in relation to Minnamurra, Kiama Downs and Kiama Heights.

All towns and villages in our municipality are assessed as amongst the most disadvantaged with regard to average distance to nearest playground, street connectivity, access to regular public transport, and the number of daily living destinations (schools, shops, and local services) within 1.6 km. There are also inconsistencies across our towns and villages with regard to access to public open space, affordable housing, and healthy food outlets.

SAFE & INNOVATIVE SOCIAL SPACES

We have heard from young people that Kiama desperately needs venues and spaces for entertainment and socialising. Young people need somewhere 'funky' with indoor and outdoor seating, a place for parents to enjoy a cuppa or refreshments while the kids play close-by.

S.A.F.E. Kiama will call for new and improved 'nature playground facilities' for kids of different ages. For example, themed playgrounds that include climbing walls, water splash pads, and fenced off areas for kids to safely ride scooters and bikes. We will advocate for sun shades to be installed over all playgrounds and for material used in playgrounds (or any built form) to be cognisant of the detrimental effects of plastic material and rubberised surfaces currently used in our existing playgrounds. The surfaces at Black Beach and Surf Beach playgrounds are already breaking down and making their way into our waterways and beaches.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE SQUARE

S.A.F.E. Kiama understand that in order to provide broader employment opportunities for families, a rethink of Council's usual approach to economic development and tourism is required. While we acknowledge that tourism and local jobs in accommodation, food services, and retail trade will remain an important part of our economic base, we recognise the need to promote diversity in the number of career pathways for parents and young people.

For example, by fostering job opportunities in the finance sector, new clean technologies, rural and agricultural ventures, and importantly career opportunities in the protection and preservation of our natural landscapes, wildlife habitats and marine and land biodiversity.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Finally, the importance of a secure and safe home is fundamental to enable families and young people to thrive. However, there are people in our community experiencing rental stress and finding it increasingly difficult to purchase their first home.

In response the [S.A.F.E. Kiama Housing Policy](#) identifies strategies for managing housing supply and growth in a more sustainable way and for improving quality of housing and housing affordability in the municipality.

When elected **S.A.F.E. Kiama** will work with neighbouring Councils, relevant NSW Government departments, non-government organisations, and local businesses to address the above-mentioned short-falls and to ensure families and young people within our community have access to the support and services needed for them to thrive.

S.A.F.E. KIAMA PRIORITIES

S.A.F.E. Kiama priorities that underpin our policies for a better Kiama LGA & secure future are:

1. Ensure Council's financial position is known and understood by all ratepayers, and that Council staff have the skills necessary to develop, monitor and enact a 10 year plan to strengthen Council's economic base
2. Provide opportunities for diversification of local businesses so that our economic base is resilient and able to provide interesting, well paid and secure job opportunities.
3. Introduce greater transparency and accountability in the way Council conducts its business.
4. Tighten planning and development controls to stop unrestricted urban creep, over development and inappropriate development.
5. Develop and enact a plan to manage our natural environment more responsibly.

MEET THE S.A.F.E. KIAMA CANDIDATES



KAREN RENKEMA-LANG & TEAM



SARAH MARLAN



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OUR MAIN POLICY IS AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

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VOTE FOR US:

PRE-POLL 22 NOV-3 DEC, ELECTION DAY 4 DEC 2021

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