

Tasmania Division Council Election 2025

CANDIDATES

Please note:

- Candidates are presented in alphabetical order.
- Biographies are supplied by the candidates.
- Where a * appears at the start of a candidate's name, this means that the Council supports the re-election of this candidate.

The Council does not conduct an assessment process for new candidates seeking election to the Council or re-standing Councillors. However, where the Council considers a current Councillor to have made a valuable contribution to the Council or the AICD during their term, the Council has the discretion to indicate to members that it supports the re-election of that Councillor.

Where a Council supports the re-election of a current Councillor it does not constitute an assessment against other candidates. Members should consider the skills, experience and potential contribution of all candidates when casting their vote.

***Donna Bain GAICD**



Donna has served on Boards for over 30 years in a diverse range of sectors in NSW and Tasmania, including adult and community education, disability sports, migrant and refugee services, Launceston Chamber of Commerce and disability services. She is currently the Chair of the Tamar Community Peace Trust.

Donna has accumulated a portfolio of executive and volunteer roles in the not for profit sector. She has held senior roles at the Law Society of New South Wales, helped the long term unemployed find work, provided policy advice at the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, run the Foster Care Association of NSW, managed a social research consultancy firm, worked as technical writer for the United Nations and served on several Commonwealth and State disability advisory committees.

Donna is the CEO of the Launceston Community Legal Centre, a not for profit organisation providing free legal assistance, support and information to members of the community prioritising those experiencing disadvantage. Donna has been a member of the AICD Tasmanian Divisional Council since 2022.

Donna is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and winner of the Telstra White Pages Community and Government (Tasmania) Award in 2011.

Nominators: Katrena Stephenson FAICD and Miles Smith GAICD

Brendan Blomeley FAICD

MBA FIML



Brendan has extensive corporate, government, community, and not-for-profit board experience, having worked as a ministerial adviser at both a state and federal level, leading a national industry association, heading up Government Affairs for a top-50 ASX-listed entity and as Chair of a national suicide prevention charity.

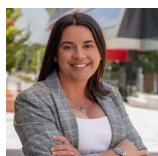
Brendan currently serves as the Mayor of the City of Clarence and as CEO of the Tasmanian Racing Club and has strong ties across the State. He also currently serves as Deputy Chair of the Institute of Managers and Leaders Australia New Zealand, Vice President of the South-East Region Development Association and as a Director of Destination Southern Tasmania.

Brendan holds an MBA and is a graduate of the Company Directors Course. Brendan has been a member of the AICD since 2002 and was made a Fellow in 2011. In 2017, Brendan was also made a Fellow of the Institute of Managers and Leaders Australia New Zealand.

Nominators: Ian Nelson GAICD and Dion Lester GAICD

Claire Connelly MAICD

FCPA, CIA, B.COM



Claire Connelly is a Principal at Synectic Accountants & Advisers, leading the Advisory and Assurance team across Tasmania. With 20 years of experience spanning finance, governance, and strategic leadership, she brings deep expertise to board and committee roles.

As President of the Devonport Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI), Claire has driven membership growth, strengthened stakeholder relationships, and delivered the organisation's first Strategic and Annual Plans.

She is a Fellow of CPA Australia, a Certified Internal Auditor, and serves as Tasmanian Divisional Councillor for CPA Australia and Chair of the Tasmanian Chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors. Her governance credentials are further demonstrated through her role on the Department of Treasury and Finance Audit & Risk Management Committee and TCCI Board.

Claire is committed to supporting professional bodies and business, fostering community and improving performance. Her leadership is grounded in integrity, strategic insight, and a passion for enabling positive change.

As an AICD member, she upholds the highest standards of directorship, including diligence, good faith, and conflict management. Claire's broad skill set and dedication to Tasmania position her as a strong contributor to any board seeking strategic growth, regional representation and effective governance.

Nominators: Kathy Schaefer PSM GAICD and Naomi Walsh FAICD

***James Dryburgh GAICD**

BSc, MEnvPln



James has been a director on a wide range of boards, both not-for-profit and for-profit. These boards include software company Microwise Australia (CouncilWise), MAV Insurance Board, Wildmob (eco-tourism business), Spring Bay Mill, Tasmanian Heritage Council (Ministerial appointment) and the South-central Workforce Network (State Government-funded 'Regional Employment Hub'). These experiences have been remarkably diverse.

They have also involved complex governance requirements due to both public ownership and constitutions that required non-standard ESG standards, such as conservation outcomes or attaining B-Corp status.

James' journey to becoming a leader in local government has given him expertise in communities and how they work. He works as a council CEO/General Manager which requires a high level of expertise in governance, including in relevant areas such as risk, audit, and complex decision-making landscapes, all within a sector that has a high level of scrutiny. It also ensures an excellent understanding of how the three tiers of government operate.

James is also an author of two books and has worked as a writer and volunteer internationally.

James is a Graduate of the Company Directors Course and has been a member since 2014.

Nominators: Miles Smith GAICD and Dr Katrena Stephenson GAICD

George Elkhair FAICD

B. Com (Hons), FCPA, MICDA



George is an experienced Non-Executive Director, a Fellow of CPA Australia (FCPA) and the Australian Institute of Company Directors (FAICD). With over 30 years' experience in Commerce, Corporate governance, Professional accountancy, and Business. He brings a wealth of strategic and managerial expertise gained across diverse sectors, spanning services, property development, and ASX start-ups/ IPOs.

He currently serves on several private company boards and contributes to the boards and subcommittees of key community not-for-profit organisations, including Launceston City Mission, Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania, Cancer Council Tasmania, and Home Base.

George is recognised for his value-based leadership through strong relationships and focusing on driving social impact and sustainable outcomes. Strong governance mindset and work ethics underpins significant contributions to strategy, culture, diversity, and sustainability.

He is dedicated to improving the lives of disadvantaged Tasmanians through the power of collaboration, by fostering partnerships between government, business and community to achieve positive and lasting outcomes.

George brings extensive experience in board performance and is keen to apply his skills and lived experience to contribute meaningfully to the Tasmanian Division Council. He takes every opportunity to participate in AICD events, forums, webinars and is currently mentoring young members through their directorship journeys.

Nominators: The Hon Peter Gutwein GAICD and Dianne Underwood GAICD

Mr James Irvine GAICD



Having recently retired from full-time work, Jim was an executive director as well as senior manager of a large civil construction company based in Tasmania

Jim commenced his board experience in 2015 when he was elected as an executive director. Jim has performed the following roles:

- company secretary,
- risk committee and remuneration committee
- nominations committee

With over ten years of experience as a director Jim played a key role in developing the processes that resulted in strong governance.

As a director Jim was involved in the development of board policies that enabled strong governance and provided confidence to shareholders.

Jim has experience in risk management, governance and restructuring associated with mergers and acquisitions and is seeking to volunteer his skills to the AICDs Tasmanian Council. Jim has an unwavering commitment to the to the AICD.

Jim has been a member of the AICD since 2015.

Jim has an MBA, Grad Cert/Diploma in management practices.

Nominators: Joe Luttrell GAICD and Kevin Sturzaker GAICD

David Morris GAICD

LLB



David is National Vice President and Non-Executive National Board Director of the Housing Industry Association.

For over 40 years David has been a Partner and then Director of the Tasmanian legal firm, Simmons Wolfhagen Pty Ltd serving as Managing Partner for a number of years and heavily involved in the corporate and strategic direction of the company as it has evolved to a statewide established legal entity with over 100 employees.

As Director supervising Simmons Wolfhagen's Local Government Division, David's expertise extends to corporate governance advice and regulatory response to Tasmanian General Managers/Management teams.

David's corporate experience includes as a National Non-Executive Director of Possability (NFP) (a national NDIS provider) [including as Chair], Non-Executive Director Oak Tasmania, Board Chair The Hutchins School and Board Member The Fahan School.

Nominators: James Dryburgh GAICD and David Mazengarb FAICD

Mr Mark Neo GAICD

BEC (UWA), LLB (Hons) (USYD)



Mark commenced his legal career at Clayton Utz in 2002 and was admitted as a solicitor in 2004. Following 7 years in corporate private practice in Perth, Sydney and the Cayman Islands, Mark moved in-house with Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd and has been Group General Counsel and Company Secretary for the past 12 years for the Interflour Group - a flour milling and malt company with operations in Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia and Philippines.

As secretary, Mark has extensive experience with board operations and corporate governance in Australia and Southeast Asia. While based in Singapore, Mark volunteered 8 years of his time helping the Australian and New Zealand expat community as Secretary and Vice-President for the not-for-profit Australian and New Zealand Association.

Using his experience in Asia, Mark would like to foster stronger links between the Tasmanian business community and the Asian region.

Mark has a Bachelor of Economics degree from the University of Western Australia and a Bachelor of Laws with Honours from the University of Sydney. Mark is a 2015 graduate of the AICD Company Directors Course and has been a member of the AICD since 2015.

Nominators: John Groom GAICD and Daniella Polita MAICD