

My submission supports the retention of council Ward structures within the Northern Grampians Shire.

I believe that the Ward structures are designed to ensure that the diversified nature of the Shire is properly represented by a diversification of the people who live and work in the Shire.

I believe that all of Australia is currently consumed / engaged in righting wrongs of the past predominately in not giving diversified groups a voice in the way they are governed.

To this point, I cite indigenous Australians, LGBTQIA+ and Women as sectors of our broader community who have current and active actions in play to ensure that their rights are respected and representations properly provided. I add to this list, partially as evidence of Australian people wanting fairer and better representation the success of independent candidates at all levels of elected government. Further, I refer to discussions within the Liberal Party and actions in the Labour party to Quota women representation as proof that 'if left alone, it will never happen'.

Let us not allow the institutions that were designed to provide fair representation be dismantled, especially when there is evidence of the importance of these structures (or lack thereof) to cater for proper representation is dominating our political landscape.

Specifically relating to NGS, to allow for a concentration of elected representatives to gravitate to the population centres of Stawell, St Arnaud and Halls Gap would be to the detriment of the small communities, such as Great Western, Marnoo and Navarre that already struggle to be heard above the noise of the more populated towns.