

Margaret Murray-Benge

Q1. Contact Details

Name	Margaret Murray-Benge
What Council are you standing for?	Western Bay of Plenty District Council
What position(s) are you standing for on the above Council?	Mayor / Kaimai ward

Q2. What drives you to run as a candidate in the local body elections? What do you hope to achieve?

We need to change our culture and put people first. We need a change manager to make sure our next chief executive is responsible to councillors and not staff. Our staff have doubled our rates have doubled and are programmed to double again. We cannot allow that to happen. We need people to be able to live here. We are the most important Kiwi fruit growing area. Te Puke is well named 'The Kiwifruit capital of the world'. Let our small villages with good schools expand rather than pull up 800 hectares of gold kiwi fruit to build another town.

Q3. How will you support the kiwifruit industry?

Talk to the industry and make sure we are meeting their needs. As mayor my door will be open so I am listening, involving councillors and staff so we know and can solve any issues you have. Making sure access to and on our roads so you can get your trucks to the Port.

Q4. What will you do to support the development of seasonal worker housing, especially in rural areas?

Our zones have to be changed to ensure you can provide for your workers. Fundamental and we will talk with you to make sure we have got it right.

Q5. How will you ensure kiwifruit growers have reliable access to water, and how will you balance competing demands?

We have enough water to meet your needs and we must share with you any options that need to be explored.

Q6. What is your stance on protecting productive horticultural land from urban sprawl and subdivision?

We need houses but there are places like Upper Ohauiti where hundreds of houses could be built and it is unproductive land. Plan change 95 the fact it was turned down is disgraceful because it was needed.

Q7. How will you improve rural road infrastructure to support the movement of produce?

We must ensure funding is available to do our very basic requirements- roading is everything and NZ is only just beginning to deal with our roading network- getting through Te Puke is a nightmare and we need a bypass as we do in Katikati.

Q8. What policies will you support to help growers adapt to climate change impacts?

Listen to growers and work with them before we do anything