



The Federal Redistribution 2008
Tasmania



Public Objection Number 20

Jordan River Service Inc

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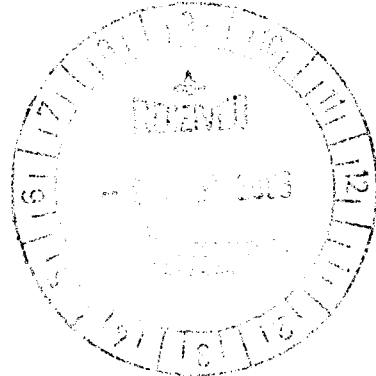


SERVICE INC.

Jordan River Service Inc
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5th September 2008

Australian Electoral Commission
Division of Franklin
GPO Box 1556
Hobart 7001



To Whom It May Concern:

As the Coordinator of the Jordan River Service Inc, I write to object to the proposed redistribution of the Franklin electorate, specifically Bridgewater and Gagebrook.

The Jordan River Service Inc is the management body for the Gagebrook Community Centre, Bridgewater Community Centre, Bridgewater Gagebrook Family Support Service and Pete's Community Workshed. Our organisation offers a wide variety of programmes and activities for residents of the Brighton Municipality with a particular focus on the suburbs of Bridgewater and Gagebrook.

The Jordan River Service purpose is to work as a community operated organisation, building community capacity in a socially isolated and disadvantaged area. We aim to:

- Achieve quality services that improve the well-being of the community
- Enhance the well-being, independence and self-sufficiency of all residents
- Provide for the safety and support of all residents who are at risk of abuse or neglect
- Build and support community networks
- Build and support the personal skills, knowledge, abilities and resilience of each person in the community
- Support and extend training and employment opportunities

To assist in our endeavours to achieve these aims we encourage, at all times, unity between the two communities. Bridgewater and Gagebrook are geographically very close together with community members facing the same issues and concerns. Physical divides are already in place and cannot be changed but attitudinal change and improved social connectedness can be overcome with time and leadership. The Jordan River Service, by providing services from both communities for all residents, is trying to break down the barriers to participation and social inclusion. Our organisation works extremely hard to encourage, not only members of the community, but the three tiers of government and other services and organisations to see Bridgewater and Gagebrook as one community with shared visions and aspirations.

The recent decision to rename one half of Gagebrook to Herdsman's Cove is a prime example of divisive decisions made by others. The proposal to split the communities of Bridgewater and Gagebrook across two electorates is another example.

It is very disappointing that all the hard work being undertaken by not only our service but many others can be so easily undone by this irrational decision. As a service provider I wonder at the impact of the division on my work and at having to build relationships with State and Federal politicians in Lyons to support the Bridgewater sites and programmes while also maintaining relationships in Franklin to support the Gagebrook site and programmes. Bridgewater and Gagebrook residents have been fortunate to have elected members both Federal and State who have a strong understanding of the needs, issues and concerns they may have and genuine empathy for the circumstances in which they may live. This is not to say that the same won't apply with different representatives but these relationships take time and effort to build and will be problematic given the lack of local knowledge and inaccessibility.

I also wonder at the impact on seeking funding for specific programmes and activities. As previously stated, the Bridgewater and Gagebrook communities face the same issues and concerns and more positively are increasingly seeking possibilities to participate in community life and re-enter education and training, for example. Will the change in boundaries affect the chance of a submission for assistance being funded? What will be affected is the ability to discuss on a regular basis ideas and thoughts on how our community can 'explore the possibilities' with our local politicians from all political parties, not only elected members. The two communities working together and speaking with one voice is the only way for change to occur and for residents' self-esteem, confidence and pride in their area to increase. This proposal is not conducive to this

process and in fact will create a wider divide and a 'them and us' mentality.

Although my objection has focussed on the suburbs of Bridgewater and Gagebrook, we provide services to anyone from the Brighton Municipality which is already difficult given the various demographics and obvious divides between the socio-economic groups. Another separation just makes everyone's job more difficult, particularly not-for-profit organisations already operating on a shoe-string budget working at the grass roots level within communities.

I would be willing to discuss this further if necessary and can be contacted on 62636097.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Manser'.

Helen Manser
Coordinator