Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE2510223

Carrick, Fiona

Occupation Community advocate, Parliamentarian, Public servant

Summary

Fiona Carrick was elected as an independent Member of the ACT Legislative Assembly in 2024 following over 20 years of advocacy and leadership in representing community interests and needs to decision makers in the ACT government and elsewhere.

Details

Melbourne-born Fiona Carrick moved to Canberra in 1968 with her parents and three siblings when her father was appointed to the Commonwealth Public Service. Living in the then-rapidly developing Woden Valley, she grew up in a politically engaged family. Her mother, in particular, helped shape Carrick's awareness of local issues and the importance of contributing to community life. Carrick completed her schooling at St Clare's College and enrolled at the Australian National University, initially in forestry but then in a Bachelor of Commerce degree which she followed with accreditation as a Certified Public Accountant. Those twin interests would stay with her through career moves in horticulture, public policy and financial management.

Initially Carrick worked as an accountant in Perth but then switched to working for a tree surgery team. This led her to return to Canberra where she worked for the City Parks service and Yarralumla Nursery and completed Certificates in Horticulture and Arboriculture from the Canberra Institute of Technology. These deepened her appreciation for urban biodiversity and led to her volunteering with local Landcare groups and her local Community Fire Unit. On the finance and policy side, Carrick worked in the Commonwealth Public Service including the Budget Group in the Department of Finance, and the Rail Branch of the Department of Infrastructure and Transport, with responsibilities for major transport infrastructure policy and planning. She drew on this expertise and experience in her volunteer work on strengthening community planning and development in the Woden Valley in particular.

By the 1990s, and with young children, Carrick became increasingly concerned about the erosion of community infrastructure in the Woden Valley, as local social and sporting amenities were replaced by high-density residential developments. She felt that the southern parts of Canberra were being increasingly neglected by government compared to those closer to the city centre and the newer northern suburbs. In response, she joined the volunteer Woden Valley Community Council, chairing it from 2016 to 2024. Over this period Carrick organised some 60 public meetings and events to bring the community together, arguing that local voices were being ignored in the political process and that community collaboration and evidence-based decision making were essential to effective community development. She became a vocal advocate for holistic town planning that would balance the provision of more housing, active hubs and local jobs, services, public spaces and community facilities, as well as ensure adequate biodiversity and canopy cover in all suburbs. Carrick's leadership in this regard directly contributed to the ACT government's decision to base the new centre of the Canberra Institute of Technology in Woden.

Carrick stood for election to the ACT Legislative Assembly at the October 2020 election. Although unsuccessful, she attracted the largest vote for an independent candidate in the ACT. Undeterred, she continued her advocacy work and expanded her volunteer base over the next four years, and was elected as an independent to the seat of Murrumbidgee at the October 2024 election. She was subsequently appointed as Deputy Chair of three Legislative Assembly standing committees dealing with public accounts; economics, industry and recreation; and environment and planning.

Published resources

Webpage
Fiona Carrick MLA,
https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/members/current/carrick

Article
Fiona Carrick,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiona_Carrick

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