

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a candidate standing in Sailors Bay Ward, Willoughby City Council, in the upcoming local government elections. I am standing with candidates in other wards under the banner Willoughby Community Independents.

Willoughby Community Independents have discovered that a domain name almost identical to that of our website has been registered and used to direct voters away from our website. We believe that this has been done for the sole purpose of deceiving or misleading voters in the Willoughby City local government elections to be held on Saturday 14 September 2024 and wish to refer this matter for investigation. I am lodging this request on my own behalf and that of the other WCI candidates namely, Anna Greco (Naremburn Ward), Andrew Nelson (West Ward) and Kristina Dodds (Middle Harbour Ward). Details follow.

Our website domain name, www.willoughbycommunityindependents.com.au, was registered on 7 August this year by a volunteer supporting our team.

A search of the .au Domain Administration (auDA) whois database, provides the following details:

```
Domain Name: willoughbycommunityindependents.com.au
Registry Domain ID: 17f506b419c24046b083e84574b652f4-AU
Registrar WHOIS Server: whois.auda.org.au
Registrar URL: https://elb.www.netregistry.com.au/contact-us/
Last Modified: 2024-08-07T23:22:12Z
Registrar Name: Melbourne IT
Registrar Abuse Contact Email: abuse@webcentral.com.au
Registrar Abuse Contact Phone: +61.279080901
Reseller Name:
Status: serverRenewProhibited https://identitydigital.au/get-
au/whois-status-codes#serverRenewProhibited
Status Reason: Not Currently Eligible For Renewal
Registrant Contact ID: 7ff38f0b3faf4afab9199d27a8ccc381-AU
Registrant Contact Name: ██████████.
Registrant Contact Email: willoughbyindependents@gmail.com
Tech Contact ID: 78b86dffac434b90a547c1642e01019f-AU
Tech Contact Name: ██████████.
Tech Contact Email: willoughbyindependents@gmail.com
Name Server: ns2.wixdns.net
Name Server: ns3.wixdns.net
DNSSEC: unsigned
Registrant: ██████████.
Registrant ID: ██████████.
Eligibility Type: ██████████.
Eligibility Name: ██████████.
>>> Last update of WHOIS database: 2024-08-28T01:48:20Z <<<
```

Source: <https://whois.auda.org.au/>

Three days later, on 10 August, after our website was published on the Internet and advertised via email and social media, another domain name, www.willoughbycommunityindependents.com, was registered.

A search of a whois database containing .com registrations, provides the following details:

```
Domain Name: willoughbycommunityindependents.com
Registry Domain ID: 2906898885_DOMAIN_COM-VRSN
Registrar WHOIS Server: whois.synergywholesale.com
Registrar URL: https://synergywholesale.com
Updated Date: 2024-08-10T13:35:10Z
Creation Date: 2024-08-10T13:35:10Z
Registrar Registration Expiration Date: 2025-08-10T13:35:10Z
Registrar: Synergy Wholesale
Registrar IANA ID: 1609
Registrar Abuse Contact Email: notifications-registry-
abuse@nexigen.digital
Registrar Abuse Contact Phone: +61 3 8399 9483
Domain Status: ok http://www.icann.org/epp#ok
Registry Registrant ID: Not Available From Registry
Registrant Name: Domain Privacy
Registrant Organization:
Registrant Street: PO Box 119
Registrant Street:
Registrant Street:
Registrant City: Beaconsfield
Registrant State/Province: VIC
Registrant Postal Code: 3807
Registrant Country: AU
Registrant Phone: +61.385145121
Registrant Fax:
Registrant Email: willoughbycommunityindependentscom@obscure.me
Registry Admin ID: Not Available From Registry
Admin Name: Domain Privacy
Admin Organization:
Admin Street: PO Box 119
Admin Street:
Admin Street:
Admin City: Beaconsfield
Admin State/Province: VIC
Admin Postal Code: 3807
Admin Country: AU
Admin Phone: +61.385145121
Admin Fax:
Admin Email: willoughbycommunityindependentscom@obscure.me
```

Source: <https://synergywholesale.com/domain-tools/>

This search show that the person who registered the latter of the two domain names has deliberately kept their name and contact details secret by using the Domain Privacy service provided by Synergy Wholesale of Beaconsfield, Victoria.

A user entering or clicking on the www.willoughbycommunityindependents.com domain name is immediately redirected to another website.

A redirect analysis of the www.willoughbycommunityindependents.com website shows that it only contains a simple redirect to another website, <https://www.tanyataylor.net/>. This is the campaign website of the incumbent Mayor of Willoughby, Tanya Taylor.

The redirect analysis provides the following details:

```
>>> http://willoughbycommunityindependents.com
```

```
> -----  
> 301 Moved Permanently  
> -----
```

```
Status: 301 Moved Permanently  
Code: 301  
Content-Type: text/html; charset=UTF-8  
Date: Wed, 28 Aug 2024 02:29:02 GMT  
Location: https://www.tanyataylor.net/  
Content-Length: 358
```

```
>>> https://www.tanyataylor.net/
```

```
> -----  
> 200 OK  
> -----
```

```
Status: 200 OK  
Code: 200  
Accept-Ranges: bytes  
Age: 61878  
Content-Type: text/html; charset=utf-8  
Date: Tue, 27 Aug 2024 08:02:30 GMT  
Etag: W/"7b398dd66814187da0d9e3c21c83b9ec--gzip"  
Expires: Thu, 01 Jan 1970 00:00:00 GMT  
Server: Squarespace  
Set-Cookie:  
    crumb=BWIXSfjtB7DhNzM4MDRlYmRiZjAwZDEwMzE5MWQwYjYzNTdlYTY3;Secure;Path=/  
Strict-Transport-Security: max-age=0
```

Vary: Accept-Encoding
X-Content-Type-Options: nosniff
X-Contextid: jBSL5Hfg/VKJsetWg

Source: <https://www.redirect-checker.org/index.php>

As the Willoughby Community Independents are concerned to ensure that voters are not deceived or misled, we ask that this matter be investigated as quickly as possible.

We have contacted Mayor Tanya Taylor to inform her of our concern.

We are also aware of similar behaviour in relation to the Tasmanian elections, in March this year – [Jacqui Lambie says she's 'absolutely ropeable' about a Liberal Party website](#) – except that in this case there is no misleading website created, just a misleading domain name directing people who use it to an opposing candidate's website.

Yours Sincerely,

John Moratelli
for the Willoughby Community Independents
www.willoughbycommunityindependents.com.au

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Castlecrag NSW 2068
Phone: [REDACTED].