

ROAD SAFETY

The continuing tragic events on the Island's roads lead me to think that there should be considerably more stringent restrictions on youthful newly-qualified drivers. I consider that for the first six months after passing the test, drivers under 25 should carry R plates and not be permitted to carry passengers. After that, for a further six months, they would carry green R plates, allowing passengers, but be restricted to 50 mph. In addition, the test should incorporate an element of driving within the hours of darkness.

PUBLIC SERVICES

The failure to recognise public opposition to the closure of Brunswick Road Post Office was an example of how Government agencies ride roughshod over the electorate. The DHSS now wish to relocate the Palatine Health Centre to Braddan - a further misreading of public expectation. It is acknowledged that the present premises are too small, but that is no reason to shift out-town. The former Jane Crookall Maternity Home in Demesne Road offers one alternative. There is no need for DHSS offices to be housed at this prime place.

HOUSING

Provision of first-time buyers' accommodation must continue, but the financial assistance scheme should be broadened to cater for those wishing to transfer to larger properties once their families expand. Local authority rents should more properly reflect the income of all persons in occupancy. Private home owners should not be expected to subsidise those who enjoy comparable income status.

ROADS AND FOOTPATHS

Most of those in West Douglas are dangerously sub-standard at present. An urgent programme of repairs should be launched without delay. The recent cost of alterations at Windy and Brandish Corners was totally out of proportion to what was needed and ate up money which could have been better used in our constituency. Service contractors who tear up footpaths and roads should not be allowed to get away with such poor restitution as has been evident in recent times.

SELLAFIELD

The continued high incidence of cancer deaths in the Isle of Man should be investigated once-and-for-all to establish whether nuclear reprocessing at Sellafield is a contributing factor. The possibility of an extension of activities there does not inspire confidence, particularly after a number of recent leakages went unobserved for a considerable time.

Geoff Cannell



House of Keys
General Election
WEST DOUGLAS
Thursday
23rd November
polling 8am to 8pm

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Vote
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Published by GT Cannell, 12 Ballabroole Way, Douglas
Printed by the Copy Shop, Buck's Road, Douglas,
Representation of the People Act 1995

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I am a freelance journalist and broadcaster, living in Ballabrookie Way with my wife Lynda and daughter Zoe.

In 2002 I was proud to enjoy a five-year mandate from the electors of Douglas West to become its Member of the Board of Education. In this role, I am chairman of three local primary schools and on the board of two others, as well as being a governor of two secondary schools and the IOM College.

My private interests include chairmanship of the Manx Foundation for the Physically Disabled and acting as Press Officer for the Manx Grand Prix.

Living in the heart of the Douglas West for over 35 years places me in an ideal position to be fully aware of the problems facing this unique constituency with its predominance of privately-owned residences.

DOUGLAS WEST

IMMIGRATION

This is without doubt the number one concern. Do we really know just who is living here now, let alone when hundreds of thousands more Eastern Europeans arrive in Britain, some of whom will inevitably make their way to the Isle of Man. Soaring crime rates are predicted and we must put up the shutters without delay. Foreign families are leaving children on school doorsteps without prior notice. They immediately burden health, housing and other main services already stretched by local demand. Although it is acknowledged that they perform tasks which others are unwilling to do, will subsequent generations be as willing? I doubt it. The principle of control is already agreed by Tynwald — let us fully implement the 2001 Residency Act forthwith. We ignore this threat at our peril.

ENERGY COSTS

The MEA debt is a fiasco. The rising charges are bad enough already without having this round our necks. Where were the Government auditors? The loan debt should be paid off from reserves. This is the people's money and should go straight back to them on this rainy day. Never again should Government quangos be allowed to operate in such cavalier fashion. Those genuinely struggling to pay their bills must be assisted and the bottom line benefit threshold substantially raised.

PROTECTION OF PERSONAL ASSETS

People having to sell their homes to fund nursing care is totally unacceptable. Those who have made sacrifices to buy and maintain their houses should not be discriminated against, while those without assets have all charges met. Everyone should be entitled to pass on their primary family home to whomever they wish. The cash shortfall would have to be found by Treasury pruning obvious areas of Government extravagance.

SECURITY

People no longer feel fully safe, even in daylight hours, these days. The threat of personal intimidation, theft and damage to property is far too prevalent, particularly in public places. Drugs and alcohol are being consumed with disdain. What is needed is a system of paid civilian patrols reporting to police on the whereabouts of gangs, particularly after dark.

SUMMERLAND SITE

As no-one appears to be able to decide its further use, how about putting up a multi-storey car park with a cheap park-and-ride promenade bus service? This would take away some of the congestion in Douglas. The horse tram track now only needs a single track with passing loops. This would also help keep traffic on the move.