

A Manifesto for Positive Action

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My Manifesto for Positive Action

It seems to me on many occasions over the last five years our economy has survived not because, but in spite, of our political leaders. Positive change and action has been rare.

We live in a rapidly changing world and sadly many of our politicians seem to look inwards with a rosy glow at what used to be, rather than what is happening now on the other side of the Irish Sea and, more importantly, Europe and the rest of the world. The success of our small ships and latterly the aircraft registry show what can be done with some forethought and forward thinking.

Unfortunately our political leaders look out of touch and lack business experience and contacts in the greater world when it comes to dealing with UK government, which has treated us with undue influence. Unbelievably, it took an enquiry by the UK government to point this out

to our politicians!

More importantly for the future, it is essential we retain our status as a successful financial centre that doesn't just rely on low taxes but on a pool of experience, whilst at the same time nurturing and protecting our culture and unique landscape. The guardians of our landscape are our farmers and small businesses that thrive all over the island, making one of the world's most pleasant environments.

At local level it is important that we feel engaged with our MHKs and that they don't only engage with us when they need our vote. I would like to think that if I'm elected we will have a new era of co-operation between government, our Local Commissioners and you.

At government level, despite restructuring, in essence to save money, there is still much to do as we

continue to fund a very high level of bureaucracy based on old-world, inward-looking politics, ignoring in some cases the requirement to make substantial structural changes.

Our Commissioners have done a good job over the years, particularly in Glenfaba, keeping our rates as some of the lowest on the island whilst providing excellent services. This needs to be encouraged and excellence championed.

We need to make dramatic changes to the way in which we manage our affairs with the UK, and in particular Europe. We should not continue to accept willy nilly UK and EU legislation. This is a crazy approach: we need legislation that's fit for purpose on the Isle of Man and to examine the way in which it impacts us, not whether it pleases those across.

*Need a lift, or help getting to the polling station on election day?
Please ring 801027.*

Voting — your vote really counts

The election takes place on Thursday 29 September. You will be sent a polling card by post in the next few weeks. Your polling station is shown on that card and will be open between 8:00 am and 8:00 pm. You will only have one vote so please make it count.

If you are going to be absent or unable to vote please ring me on 801027 and I will be happy to bring you an Absent Voter's application form or alternatively you can get one from the Chief Secretary's website (<http://www.gov.im/cso/>).

Time for positive action. Manx solutions to Manx problems

Why I wish to represent Glenfaba

‘Represent’ being the operative word! I started this campaign with an Elector’s Survey sent to every household on the electoral roll. I wanted to find out what your aspirations are as frankly, without that I would be representing my own views, not those of my constituents.

This is not a one-off. I take constituency work very seriously and if elected will continue to work with you, keeping you informed of what’s going on with regular newsletters, consultation/questionnaires where necessary, face-to-face surgeries and regular contact with the Local Commissioners.

St Johns and Glenfaba are at the heart of the Isle of Man and it’s where the world’s longest standing parliament, Tynwald, was founded. One cannot help but be in awe of over a thousand years of continuous parliament.

I have lived at Ballagarraghyn for nearly 30 years and, whilst I have not hands-on farmed the land that goes with Ballagarraghyn, I have worked with local farmers to ensure that the farm has continued as a productive and environmentally friendly unit.

The constituency’s shape and feel rely heavily on farming and I would like to think that with proper input we could do more to secure the future of farming in the Isle of Man. At the same time there is diversity with pubs, restaurants, shops and small businesses, all a microcosm of the Isle of Man as a whole.

Sadly I think there is a lack of overall vision, in what can only be described as a lot of government that results in little positive action.

This requires clear and concise action, not only at a national level but also work in reflecting



Mines Road, Foxdale. Why did it take so long?

constituents’ views at a local level.

Continuing to ignore some of the key issues, like the problems we’ve had in the financial sector, the arrogant way in which the UK treated us over the VAT issue and reciprocal health agreements, will mean they will continue in the future and reflect on generations to come.

I could not wish for a better place to stand than Glenfaba and would be privileged to represent you.

My Personal Profile

The experience level and ability of many of our MHKs has come in for criticism, which means you will obviously want to know more about me.

I am married to Suzie, we have four children, all of whom have now left home: two are married and we now have one grandchild.

We live at Ballagarraghyn in St Johns at the heart of Glenfaba and have owned a house and farm there for nearly 30 years. Leaving school I studied Bio Chemistry and Physics but a serious motorcycle accident left me unable to walk for three months, leading to a complete career change. This humbling start taught me a lot.

I joined the then Midland Bank, which provided me with a sound experience of financial management. I transferred to estate agency, auctioneering and surveying where I became a partner in a



leading firm in the UK. My family’s background in farming led to the sale of this business and enabled me to expand into farming and development of a large-scale horticultural unit with later diversification into leisure facilities, including a golf course and latterly a subsidiary business in publishing.

Somewhere along the way I found the time to train as a commercial pilot and became involved in a number of aviation related businesses and formed AOPA (Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association) in the Isle of Man, of which I am still chairman.

I have always been interested in politics, dealing with many regulatory and legislative issues in most of my businesses. This has inevitably led to many contacts in the Isle of Man and the UK, EU and at international level. Both my wife and I have been elected at

council level in the UK, where I was chairman for four years and chaired a number of committees.

During this time I developed further contacts whilst scrutinising regulation/legislation, forming policy in some cases.

Working in private business has led to a discipline in applying sound accounting principles and paying attention to detail. Communication skills are paramount but, most importantly, delivering what the customer wants. In politics this translates to what we as an electorate want.

I currently occupy committee or board positions in a number of organisations including the Civil Aviation Authority, General Aviation Accident Review Board and the UK Airprox Board; I am Regional Chairman of Isle of Man AOPA, Vice Chairman of the UK organisation and director of a private investment company based in the Isle of Man with a UK subsidiary.

My commitment to you is

that, if elected I will within 7 days stand down from the majority of these positions as, although I enjoy the diversity and contacts that come with them, I want to give you and the Isle of Man 100%.

Once upon a time off-island experience in our politicians was viewed with suspicion. I believe it is now a great asset and the experience and the contacts that I have across and in Europe can be put to good use in Tynwald.

At local level I will continue with the rapport that I have already started, with regular newsletters, leading to better consultation locally, face-to-face constituency surveys and close liaison with our Commissioners.

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Your interests are my interests

I know only too well how frustrating it is when you need help or advice and it is in short supply. It may be through serious illness or accident, employment problems, family unrest, financial problems, housing difficulties or planning difficulties, but when these things happen

you need to know that you can get help and advice.

My pledge to you is that, if such problems do arise I will be there for you. Not only will I consult regularly and keep you posted with a regular newsletter, but I will hold regular surgeries and/or

call on people to discuss the problems.

Since the last election we now have an embryo Freedom of Information Act but we remain a very secretive society: I will endeavour to drive this through. We need more transparency in government. When changes are proposed to the health service like dentistry, podiatry or breast care provision, it is not rocket science to provide people with more information and consult to

see whether the changes are absolutely necessary. This also applies to things like re-scheduling bus services, where a little money spent up-front on a consultation process would save a lot of problems further down the line.

I think it is beholden on your MHK to keep you informed so that you don't learn about these things in detail from the local paper or radio, but are able to talk or correspond with the elected member.

National government

With little or no party politics it is difficult for you as a voter to have any idea of what national priorities are likely to be after an election.

Yes, you will choose the personality and an individual's policy objectives in your constituency, but when the new government is formed it will be a coalition that will depend on your selected individual's ability to garner support for those policies.

I already have some rapport with existing members, who may or may not be re-elected, and a number of the candidates who may also be elected and share common views.

The time is undoubtedly right for a considerable amount of new blood in the Keys to determine a new way forward and break the vested interests that resist improvement and transparency.

At government level my priorities will be :

- 1) To resist imported regulation and legislation. We already have a degree of independence that is the envy of the Scottish and Welsh Nationalists: I would like to see this exercised on more occasions.
- 2) We lack transparency, we need the embryo Freedom of Information Act passed as soon as possible. Pundits say this will cost a lot of money to implement but the accountability that it brings will be worth the cost.
- 3) I will continue to support changes made in rationalising departments.

We are far too top heavy and this costs a considerable amount of money.

- 4) I will make it my priority that wherever possible I will be transparent and communicative about the decisions I am making.
- 5) Nearly 40% of our workforce is in the public sector. A priority, bearing in mind the draconian budget cuts imposed on us by the VAT cut amounting to nearly 40% of the present government budget, will be rationalising the public sector and looking at opportunities to incorporate and commercialise some of the services provided.
- 6) Take a deep, hard look at health and safety regulation and endeavour to reduce its impact and certainly contain any further expansion.
- 7) Use my UK political links to rebuild political contact with the UK, something that has increasingly been identified as one of the problems behind the UK's undue influence in our affairs and particularly the lack of knowledge in the UK generally over what we consider to be a refund of our VAT but they consider to be a subsidy to us.
- 8) My Elector's Survey seems to indicate that there is a majority in favour of electing the Legislative Council (ie MLCs). I will support this in principle.
- 9) There also seems to be a majority in favour of some form of directly elected Chief Minister. I will keep an open mind on this subject as I have not seen any proposals which I

feel would command my support or the support of the majority of the electorate. More openness and declaration prior to the election by those who wish to stand would help, as would public debates by the declared candidates.

- 10) At local level I am committed to working with the Local Commissioners and I am a great believer in the adage "if it ain't broke don't fix it". Glenfaba has been well served over the years by Local Commissioners, who provide excellent value for money and I will support them wherever possible.

I am concerned about our present Member's publicly expressed support for a 12-seat, two-member reform of the Keys. This will result in Glenfaba joining with Peel where they have in excess of 1700 voters more than we do. I don't favour this proposal, not because I don't like people from Peel, but because I believe it would result in a rural constituency with its own distinct character being submerged in one of an urban nature.

The deal is not yet done. I would prefer to retain single MHK status by perhaps redrawing boundary lines. I believe single candidate constituencies lead to far more accountability of the elected member.



Time for positive action. Manx solutions to Manx problems

Public and Civil Service

Much of our island's earlier success can be laid at the door of our competent Civil Service and its generally good relationship with, and understanding of, the private sector.

I well remember someone saying, "I can actually talk to a senior civil servant, or indeed a minister, in the Isle of Man" – something virtually impossible in larger jurisdictions.

Unfortunately, whilst there are a number of good things about the system, one

of the big problems is that we are more and more slavishly adopting UK and EU regulation without adapting it appropriately for the Isle of Man. This means that increasingly our health service, education system, social service provision, building regulation, planning, etc are no longer our regulations but those of the UK or farther afield.

This has a number of consequences, not least of which is one of making us all feel helpless. Those who suffer from over-regulation become demotivated as their voices are not heard.

Worse still, this endless regulation emanates from a

centralist state of what is a very small country, leading to a bureaucracy that continues to grow and has become too large, top-heavy and too expensive for us to support. The words "empire building" come to mind.

I support some of the recent changes in terms of bringing departments together, but we need to readjust our whole economy to start addressing our problems, not those perceived by others across.

I've spent a lot of time working with UK politicians and bureaucrats and I am also fairly conversant with their dismissive attitude towards problems we have in

our country. I think there is an air of scepticism about our sustainability; they chip away at us and by foisting unwanted regulation for long enough they think we'll hold up our hands and become part of North West England.

We don't have to go down this road but we must put our house in order and make sure that we do get legislation and regulation that is fit for purpose in the Isle of Man — making positive change, not change for change's sake; also regulation that lets people feel empowered rather than feeling that they can do nothing but go along for the ride.



UK, Europe and the rest of the world

We are lucky to have the world's most ancient parliament in Tynwald and whilst our neighbours in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland are

flexing their muscles seeking yet more independence we, on the other hand, seem to be sinking into more dependence.

The UK have presented, and we seem to have adopted with little change, a steady stream of new laws and regulations that continue to require more bureaucracy. Maybe the tide is turning, time will tell.

A recent review by the UK Justice Committee on Crown Dependencies admitted that they had found undue influence and interference in our affairs. If they found that, what of our elected Members? Why haven't they stood up for our interests and prevented this happening?

I suspect that this is because our politicians increasingly find it easier simply to adopt all that the UK adopts from the EU, rather than think things through and shape policy to our own needs.

Things won't change overnight: mindsets are difficult to change, but my commitment to you is that I will endeavour to make these changes and when I say "Manx solutions to Manx problems" I really mean it. That's why I asked you in my Elector's Survey to let me know what you wanted, rather than me just telling you what I think you should have.

Local problems and solutions

We are very fortunate to live in a beautiful part of the isle of Man and a cursory look at our environment leads you to believe that all is well. However, scratch the surface and we have all the problems that occur in a diverse community.

We have young people who can't find affordable housing and the elderly, who need care and transport services; we have farmers struggling with ever-changing and more complex regulation, animal welfare, farm husbandry and changing markets; small businesses struggling to survive in a competitive and changing environment and larger employers coping with increases in VAT and changes in Health and Safety regulation, much of which comes from the UK or Europe; people struggling to get planning consent for what could be

termed sensible expansion or redevelopment; waste disposal, noise pollution, medical facilities being withdrawn, a search for an NHS dentist.

There is no easy fix for any of these perennial problems but what will help is having an elected member willing to engage with the Local Commissioners and assist them to provide local services, as well as being available to deal with local problems and the complex national issues.

We are fortunate in Glenfaba that we have a number of people very willing to engage in voluntary work. Charity begins at home.

I will be available and will make it my priority to champion your aspirations. My Elector's Survey has helped me identify areas you believe are priorities and this is where I'll start.



Time for positive action. Manx solutions to Manx problems

Responsibility

Whether you agree with retiring MHK David Cannan or not that the last five years have seen the worst government in living memory, it is a fact that they have presided over one of the largest financial disasters to face our country ever — lots of smaller, but nevertheless cumulative problems, such as IRIS, the reciprocal health agreement, loss of meat derogation, dentistry problems, little scrutiny and large capital projects that have not gone to plan will, and have, cost us all dear.

Despite dramatic cutbacks in our VAT refund some two years before they happened (the Chief Minister stated that the UK government has to give two years' notice and therefore must have given notice

when they re-negotiated the agreement), they made little provision for the necessary cuts that should have started three years ago.

As I suspected, the Chief Minister and presumably the Council of Ministers knew for some time that further reductions in the VAT refund were in the pipeline. The truth is now out and the total £189 million. However you look at that it is nearly 40% of our present government spending.

How did they let this happen? Where are our UK political contacts? Where were the lobbyists? Yes, our civil servants by all accounts stood their ground well, but were frankly let down by our politicians. When the going gets tough dealing with other

governments you arrange meetings with the politicians — they're the ones who dictate policy.

This debacle must be partly put down to our own naïve politicians, who by all accounts boasted on visits to Westminster about how well the Isle of Man economy was doing. When UK government members visited the Isle of Man they were shown an array of shining citadels of expenditure—the power station, the incinerator, hospital, prison, our new schools. Who can blame a socialist government that has spent to the hilt looking to clip the wings of its perceived buoyant, tax haven dependency.

What's more, it seems our politicians have long given up any pretence of networking in the UK. At party conference after party conference that I

attend there is always a Gibraltese stand and they host receptions with their chief minister; the Falkland Islands have a stand; but where is the Isle of Man? These are networking opportunities that should not be missed. This has simply got to stop. We desperately need to rebuild political contacts in the UK and Europe.

New members have a hard task in front of them. Tynwald needs new blood and this election is a one-off opportunity to make those changes and stop the rot, break the vested interests, get some transparency and proper consultation into government with people who are not just functionaries in an ongoing political process but visionaries with an ability to formulate policy that does not rely on interference from external forces.

Manx solutions to Manx problems

For some time now I have watched new laws and statutes appearing in the Isle of Man that are totally unsuitable in many cases, addressing problems that simply do not exist here.

It seems that the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland Assemblies continue to exercise newly-found independence whilst Tynwald, the oldest parliament in the world, has been content to accept UK and European regulation and legislation without, it seems, much question.

Recently the UK Justice Committee on Crown Dependencies reported that they had found undue interference with our affairs. To quote, "It is the informality of this process together with these rather broad responses which leads us to suspect that the UK government does indeed influence island legislation at policy level. This seems a rather paternalistic approach to island legislation."

So just what is going on? It seems to me that our ministers have

lost the will, or maybe the ability, to produce legislation and regulation appropriate to our island. Undoubtedly it is very easy to let so-called progress from Europe and the UK wash over us: it is a lot easier for our Civil Service than having to conceive our own legislation/regulation.

In the future civil servants should be allowed to investigate and propose legislation as appropriate to us on the Isle of Man and simply say NO when the UK or Europe try to impose inappropriate regulation or legislation.

In addition to this, elected politicians would do well to interfere less in the minutiae and concentrate more on policy and strategy appropriate to the Isle of Man — Manx solutions to Manx problems!

In the meantime, as a matter of priority we need to ensure we have better representation in the UK and we must improve our lobbying ability in Europe. Whether this means co-



operating with some of the other dependencies like the Channel Isles and Gibraltar (who I'm sure, having spoken to their elected members, face similar problems), or keep going it alone needs to be determined.

Trust me and I will endeavour to solve some of these problems. I've seen it from both sides of the fence and it frequently seems to me that we react after the event, rather than being proactive and using contacts who have prior notice or, better still, educate and nip problems in the bud.

Time for positive action. Manx solutions to Manx problems

WHAT I STAND FOR—MY MANIFESTO—POLICIES FOR POSITIVE ACTION

The economy

We must work towards full employment with more private sector jobs replacing those in the public sector. At the same time we must ensure that there are continued opportunities that keep our younger people on the island: apprenticeships and internships that lead to real jobs, not just cheap labour.

My Elector's Survey revealed that your spending priorities nationally are health education, police, roads and immigration. There were no surprises here, but to achieve these priorities and maintain services the economy is absolutely the most important factor as the money produced is the tool for providing all these services. To prevent further disasters like the VAT refund we need to address the lack of political contact with the UK and Europe to pre-empt problems of this sort in the future. We are not out of the woods yet, the UK is talking about reviewing our duty agreements so it is imperative that we build these contacts back as soon as possible.

In the meantime, the economy is top-heavy in the public sector. We have got to explore options for rationalisation, corporatisation and commercialisation although I am not in favour of wholesale privatisation, which may transfer our assets on a one-off basis to off islanders who will then recoup the benefit of a continued income stream.

I am also not in favour of a wholesale cull of civil servants advocated by some, which will just translate employment to unemployment. This must be a gradual, well-thought-out process based on proper business goals. We also have to resolve the pension problem amicably. We mustn't break existing agreements but must ensure all new public sector employees fall in line with the private sector in terms of final salary pension and contributions. MHKs must fall in line with any new regime. We must also encourage employers, via the work permit scheme, wherever possible to offer opportunities to Manx people or those wishing to return to the island.

Consultation and transparency

Proper consultation and transparency go hand-in-hand with accountable government. I will continue to press for the Freedom of Information Act, which should have been passed in the last parliament. On a local basis I will consult and keep you informed with regular newsletters, face-to-face surgeries and, more importantly, work with the Local Commissioners for better local outcomes. I know from the doorstep campaign that it is vitally important that you the electorate feel involved and informed and I will make it my priority to rebuild that link.

Agriculture

Agriculture is an important part of Glenfaba. Many people are engaged in it and our landscape is a result of farmers and landowners acting as custodians. There can't be many better places to be on a sunny summer day but we should remember it's not always like that, many farmers work long, hard hours in cold, dirty and often dangerous conditions, frequently for small return.

All is not well behind the scenes. Our meat processing plant is in jeopardy and if we lose that we lose a method of adding value to our produce on island. The present farm subsidy scheme is in essence a scheme imported from the UK and stirred a little. In the UK there is talk of change again in 12 months' time. The original schemes were conceived when there were surpluses and removed the emphasis from production to countryside custodianship. I will press for open consultation with the farming industry to look at ways that we can stimulate production, which will add more viability to food production on island and hopefully give some incentive to young people to remain in farming.

Education

We must work with teachers to provide a system that addresses our present future requirements and not those perceived by the UK and say no to adopting UK failed policies. Over the last few months I have visited the primary schools in Glenfaba and have been impressed by both the professionalism, skills and enthusiasm of the head teachers and teaching staff. We must be careful when looking for cuts that we don't jeopardise a system which would be the envy of most countries.

We are also lucky to play host to the world's only Manx Gaelic school, the Bunscoil in St Johns. Some people see this as an extravagance but having spent time with the head teacher I think it is an important part of our Manx heritage and culture. As long as there is an equitable cost per pupil it will continue to have my support. This is reflected by you the electorate, who see the preservation of our cultural and unique heritage as paramount..

Immigration

Immigration has not featured heavily in the campaign and I think the reason for this is that the work permit scheme and restricted benefits for those who have not been on the island for over five years has meant that we have avoided the mass immigration that parts of the UK have experienced. We must retain this vigilance but be careful not to be too inward-looking as the majority of us have relatives and children who are working in other countries and it is important that we are seen to be able to reciprocate, but on fair terms.

Constitutional change

I will support changes that make the Legislative Council more accountable, continue support for rationalisation of departments and support a referendum if major constitutional change is proposed. The Elector's Survey also revealed that the majority of you are in favour of a Chief Minister elected by common suffrage. I will continue to keep an open mind on this but at the very least I think candidates for Chief Minister should expose themselves to public scrutiny prior to members voting.

Law & Order

Bearing in mind the terrible events in the UK and the much higher crime rate there generally, we must ensure proper support for our police force and continue to pass sentences that are appropriate to crimes committed and that continue to act as a deterrent.

Environment

We need a planning policy that reflects our population's requirements and aspirations. We should adopt green initiatives where they bring real benefits, and not perceptions, to the Isle of Man. Thankfully, after a lot of wasted money the Archallagan dump scheme has now been dropped. Why this took so long and cost so much money is another matter. Fortunately the Lhergy Dhoo sandpit which

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was a cause of concern appears to be in resolution, with a planning consent that will result in its restoration.

At the last election the environment and green initiatives featured heavily in debate but no doubt because of the austerity that appears to be facing us over the next few years people are cautious, and rightly so, that we should not do anything pre-emptive in terms of green energy initiatives unless they are 100% proven. This does not, however, remove the obligation from all of us to maintain a clean, rubbish-free environment and participate in recycling initiatives where these have proven environmental benefit. The island has some of the most scenic countryside in the British Isles and we must work to preserve that.

The Planning System

This should be more transparent and democratic and pay more heed to local input from the Commissioners. A planning committee that is unelected and lacks transparency looks sadly outdated compared to the planning processes in other jurisdictions. Planning Committee members should all be elected, whether they be Commissioners or MHKs, with professional officers' support. There should be an opportunity for both applicants and opponents to appear and speak at planning meetings.

Housing provision

There is undoubtedly a requirement for lower cost and rental housing to keep young people in Glenfaba and I will support that wherever possible, with perhaps the introduction of a housing association system sponsored by government to provide long-term rental housing and maybe equity share. At the other end of the spectrum we have some excellent examples of housing provision for older people. We should build on that example. I will support local housing provision on the old Farmers' Arms/Mart site which is now in government ownership.

Health provision

Health was a number one priority in my Elector's Survey and quite rightly so. It is important that we have on-island health care and expertise wherever possible, continue to reduce waiting lists and ensure availability of NHS dentistry. I will resist so-called efficiency savings that do not stack up and are carried out without consultation with the users.

I have been less than impressed by the handling of the breast care specialist post. This has been one of my larger items of correspondence with people, some of whom have been genuinely scared by the implications. It showed a complete lack of regard to perceptions and reality for people who are very vulnerable and of course strikes at the heart of all women and their partners, who undoubtedly want to feel that they are going to get the best possible care in the event of such an illness.

This lack of consultation and forethought seems to have run as a theme. The cancellation of the podiatry clinic, where 370 or so vulnerable, elderly people now have to attend a clinic in Douglas instead of Peel with the attendant transport costs, doesn't seem to be an efficiency saving to me and discounts completely the fact that many of these people will qualify for assisted transport or home visits. No savings there!

Importing the UK NHS system for dentistry (surprise! surprise!) has resulted, as in the UK, in a shortage of dentists. Some people are finding it difficult to get NHS dentistry cover.

Sending people across for treatment—yes we need to do that where clinical expertise is paramount and only available there, but when it comes to follow-up consultations with no clinical intervention why can't this be done on island to save often very vulnerable people having to travel over a whole day to hospitals across.

Transport and roads

We must pay more attention, and I certainly will in conjunction with the Commissioners endeavour to get roads repaired as expeditiously as possible. I know we had a hard winter but there seems to be money to burn on schemes like Richmond Hill and various other schemes, yet when it comes to basic repairs, particularly in Foxdale, they seem to take an age or never get carried out. There are a number of issues with pavements that should have been addressed a long time ago. These are trip hazards, particularly for elderly people.

It is important that we review and promote road safety, in consultation with the local communities. Public transport in the Isle of Man is well-provided for but when there are to be changes to schedules and destinations it is surely better to consult prior to the event.

I continue to be concerned about the fuel price differential with the UK. On average our fuel is 7p/10p+ more per litre than in the UK and also some of the remoter areas of the UK where transport costs must be as high, if not higher, than shipping to the Isle of Man. I will make it my business to investigate this rather than continue to sweep it under the carpet, as has been the case.

When it comes to the user agreement with the Steam Packet I would like the opportunity of investigating this further. I don't think an open seas arrangement like our open sky would be appropriate as it is imperative that we have a reliable sea connection on an everyday basis come what may. In retrospect the government should have retained a golden share. How we address that in the future is open to debate.

We must also continue to monitor airlines and ensure that there is real competition in fares and jump on unfair practices like compulsory charges for credit card use when that is the only way you can buy a ticket.

Tourism

This is an important part of our economy. Some pundits say that it's dead—this is not the case. Consider the TT this year with over 6,000 more visitors but better than that, we have a very good story to tell. We have a unique heritage and culture. Whilst it is expensive to get here, when people do arrive everything, our scenic landscapes, our culture, restaurants, beaches, are all contained within a short distance: surely an advantage if promoted properly. There is also much potential for eco-tourism but we must see proper promotion of the same.

Health and Safety

Unfortunately we seem to have imported much of the health and safety culture that pervades the UK. Whilst I can't argue with the concept, when it starts to become an industry in its own right and prevents businesses expanding, people from employing people and schools from carrying out activities that stretch pupils, then there is something wrong.

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A new Health and Safety Department is in prospect, with an initial budget of £360,000—that'll be a million or more in government-speak in a year or two. This does nothing to help our ailing economy but simply imposes more burden on the productive end of the economy. Strangely, government seems to be one of the worst offenders. It's about time health and safety inspectors started giving advice rather than fining government departments and that we cut back and relied more on common sense and the courts for serious breaches. I will strongly resist further health and safety creep.

TV coverage on the Isle of Man

There is a lot of disquiet over the TV licence fee and what we actually get for it. I think we must press for more refund of that fee to fund local media, at the same time pressing for better coverage, perhaps on a par with that seen in the Channel Isles. However, with the advent of better internet protocol TV, which with our excellent broadband connections is a very feasible proposition on the Isle of Man, the problem of local low-cost coverage may well solve itself in the near future.

Young People and the vote

Don't forget that the Isle of Man is one of the few countries in the world where people of 16 or over get the vote. I've come across a number of young people who are not yet on the electoral roll. There may still be time if you act quickly.

On the other hand, there seem to be some who are on the register but don't feel inclined to

vote or show an interest in politics.

Please don't waste your vote. If you would like me to call and brief you on Isle of Man politics I would be only too happy to do so. As many of you are more likely to be IT proficient then please visit my website (www.geoffreyboot4mhk.org) or that of Manx Radio (www.manxradio.com) or 3 Legs (www.3legs.com).



A message from my wife, Suzie

I am holding public meetings and, whilst I appreciate that with the advent of modern communication these are not as popular as they used to be, if I haven't spoken to you or met you on the doorstep and you want further information, or even just to question me publicly, then please feel free to attend.

Public meetings

Thu 8 Sept	<u>Cronk-Y-Voddy Young Men's Club</u>	7 30 pm
Mon 19 Sept	<u>Foxdale School Hall</u>	7 30 pm
Tue 20 Sept	<u>Dalby St James Church Hall — Requisition Meeting</u>	8 00 pm
Wed 21 Sept	<u>Dalby St James Church Hall</u> CANCELLED <i>(superseded by above Requisition Meeting)</i>	7 30 pm
Mon 26 Sept	<u>St Johns Methodist Church Hall</u> <i>(this is now a Requisition Meeting)</i>	7 30 pm

I've been behind Geoffrey all the way with his campaign, sometimes even in front! Boots come in pairs so by default I come as an integral part of the package.

I just want to assure you that Geoffrey has my full support, I'm used to working with him and who knows, in the future if elected I may be your initial point of contact. I can endorse Geoffrey as a person with a proven track record of getting things done and getting to the core issues. I've watched our government flounder over the last 5 years and I believe Tynwald needs new blood and capable politicians with the drive and initiative to make positive change.



Finally

My apologies for such a lengthy document, but there is a lot to say. It's been a long campaign and I think I can say I've knocked at least once, and in some cases several times, on nearly every door in Glenfaba. Sadly there are still a lot of people I haven't seen.

I started the campaign in January with the Elector's Survey as I want to represent you and I hope that in the manifesto you see a lot of what

that survey brought out and has been discussed during the campaign.

If I have not spoken to you yet and you want me to call please don't hesitate to telephone or email me as there is still time. I do hope you will be able to support me.

If I'm elected things will change locally, there will be more communication and I won't let the connections that I've tried to build in

the last 9 months fall away. At the same time I am ready and enthusiastic about working on the problems that face us nationally and internationally.

Time for positive change. Manx solutions to Manx problems