



House of Keys  
General Election

**Thursday**  
**23rd September 2021**



**VOTE**  
**CANNAN**

**For a secure and  
sustainable future**

**AYRE & MICHAEL**

Over the past decade the Island has faced up to series of significant challenges that started with the need to rebalance public finances following the financial crisis of 2008. In 2016, I wrote of the challenges facing the Island following the Brexit vote and the need for a change of emphasis away from austerity to a more targeted investment of public finances that supported hard working families. In 2021, I will address the present COVID pandemic, Climate Change, Healthcare, Education and future economic growth as the latest critical issues in a growing list of complex and defining moments for our Island nation.

Of course these challenges also present opportunities to make our Island more secure and sustainable for the longer term. Generating renewable energy for example will enhance our Island security. We can build warmer and more efficient homes. We can create new economic work streams. We can seek better ways of delivering healthcare and we can create a fairer society across the generations.

But in setting out the vision of a better future, I recognise that words, whilst important, need to be backed up by delivery and sustainable financial plans. That is why it will be vital that the next Government sets out at the earliest opportunity a plan for the Island that focuses on targeted delivery of services which is accompanied with the appropriate budgetary plans.

Of course such a plan carries at its heart a need for simplicity and the requirement to deliver essential services to a high standard. We must strive to create an environment that we can be proud of and that gives people and businesses the freedom and platforms to succeed.

There is a clear and growing need for greater input, transparency and insight into both policy and delivery from the community. Proper consultation is vital, but this manifesto also calls for more community based skilled individuals to undertake independent advisory roles, to provide strategic oversight and enhance decision making, at the senior levels of Government.

Underpinning the ideals and vision statements and plans must lie the traditional core values of hard work, determination and integrity - values that I see enacted daily by individuals, families and businesses across the Island and that must be reflected within Government.

It has been an honour and a privilege to represent you. If re-elected, I pledge my commitment to work hard for everyone across the constituency, to be a strong voice for your concerns and to engage across Government to deliver better services and outcomes for our Island.



# **An Island Plan**

Previously referred to as the Programme for Government, there is a need to deliver a plan with more defined outcomes to deal with a range of complex issues but this also needs to be accompanied by a medium term financial plan which sets out how the priorities will be resourced.

I will work with like-minded MHKs to develop an integrated plan that sets out:

- A clear vision for a modern and progressive society.
- Spending priorities and budgets.
- Plans for climate change.
- Plans for economic growth.
- Plans to improve health and education.
- Plans to provide a quality environment for our society.
- Plans to eliminate wasteful spending and provide services to a high standard.
- Plans that ensure proper resourcing for community policing.

The formation and delivery of this plan could be improved with an annual Tynwald conference at the Villa Marina in mid-September, where Government, political representatives and the public can come together to discuss policy and delivery.

## **The critical issues at the heart of the plan:**

### **COVID Response and Recovery**

The Island has faced up to the pandemic with fortitude and flexibility but COVID is now present on the Island and it is, apparently, endemic and with us for the long term. There are still certain matters that need to be considered:

- There remains the threat that we need to take immediate measures to protect public health and there is a need to consider what societal adaptations are needed as our understanding of the virus increases.
- We also need to carefully monitor the impacts of COVID on our economy and across society and take appropriate action which may be needed at short notice.
- We should seek the establishment of a new COVID Response Group to meet on an ongoing basis to improve the response, coordinate recovery and improve transparency around decision making.

### **Climate Change**

The Climate Change Bill commits the Government to achieving net zero emissions by 2050 but also the Government has indicated that by 2035 we will have achieved 75% of that target. The IPCC Report 2021 warns again that we are facing greater extremes of rising temperatures, extreme weather events, rising sea levels, flooding and coastal erosion. Closer to home the UK is intending on banning the sale of new petrol and diesel cars in 2030. I maintain that:

- Irrespective of our views on Climate Change itself, we should recognise the opportunities that this global crisis presents to improve our energy security, improve housing and improve our environment. This in turn presents better and more diverse economic opportunities.

- The Island's response is vital and the Climate Change Transformation Board must be enhanced to encompass skilled engineers and scientists who can properly advise on the strengths and weaknesses of multiple proposals that are likely to be forthcoming for energy supply.
- A Climate Change Plan will sit as an integral part of the Island plan but it is most important that this plan is well thought through and costed. It is crucial that financial impacts on the community and cost of living are factored in and these are disclosed in a transparent manner.
- The next administration will build the foundations for a critical decade between 2025 and 2035.

## **The Economy & Jobs**

It has been an immense effort by so many across the business community to navigate through COVID and it has been my job to deliver COVID taxpayer funded support to protect thousands of jobs and household incomes across the community. The Economic Recovery Group (which I lead) commissioned a new economic strategy for the Island which is currently being written. This vital document due later this year will provide a platform to focus our efforts over the next decade. We should:

- Accept the continued growth of the economy is vital.
- Continue to support business growth with appropriate investment and ensure that digital infrastructure is both advanced and appropriate (I have been pleased to support the rollout of high speed fibre across the Island).
- Continue to oversee and if necessary financially support the transition from COVID to "the new normal", liaising with businesses and assessing the impact on the economy over the winter of 2021 / 22.
- Consider the Visit Agency becoming a stand-alone board to drive tourism and leisure.
- Seek more proactive engagement with the Steam Packet to determine how ferry pricing can assist both the economic and social welfare of the Island.
- Re-assess the business agencies model to deliver targeted growth in a transparent manner.

## **Education**

Education remains of vital importance and we should empower schools, their teachers and Governors to create the environment for success with as little central bureaucracy as possible. There is significant room for education to improve:

- Schools should be inspected every three to five years and graded accordingly. Internal assessment should end and this should be conducted externally. This can be an IOM based quality assurance standard and framework.
- Primary school children should be tested to ensure basic skill levels are present.
- There is a need to recover some ground from the COVID disruption and funding should be made available to support children who may have fallen behind because of COVID disruption.
- Educational funding needs a full review as soon as possible.
- The Economic Recovery Group has created over a thousand new training opportunities in the last twelve months and these include new initiatives such as the learning company at UCM, graduate internships and graduate employability training program. These types of initiatives should continue.

- UCM has a vital role in offering the skills and training needed for a fast developing world. We must ensure that apprenticeship training works for both student and employer and courses must be designed to match new building standards changing technologies.
- New tougher penalties are needed for drug importation to schools and zero tolerance to drug use in schools. Head Teachers and Teachers must be given full backing in ensuring that our children are educated in a safe environment.

## Healthcare Transition and Delivery

In recent years, healthcare delivery has been beset by overspending and performance issues. As your Treasury Minister, I initiated the Sir Jonathan Michael Review into Healthcare on the Isle of Man which has led to the establishment of Manx Care. This review was driven primarily by the question of appropriate healthcare funding but also because I, like you, want a "best in class" healthcare service on the Island. To move forward urgent issues need addressing:

- COVID induced waiting times need to be reduced.
- GP's need to recommence face to face appointments.
- Community support and nursing remains vital; we should explore how basic care and medical appointments can be delivered in the community.
- Active lifestyles must be encouraged.
- There is an urgent need to deliver more accessible respite care in the community for those at home caring for loved ones.
- Welfare support for those caring at home needs review. Homecare offers many benefits and eases pressures on care services but carers currently need more support.
- Means testing elderly nursing home care fees remains controversial. This matter remains open for redress.

## Housing

Housing on the Island is fast approaching a crisis point. Young adults are struggling to buy first time properties both to lack of availability and cost and in fact the rising cost of property is causing problems for anybody who for whatever reason finds themselves in need of a home purchase or rental. We must urgently:

- Review our first time buyer policies with a view to allocation and pricing.
- Develop the range of assisted purchase schemes including rent-to-buy.
- Use the Manx Development Corporation (established via the Economic Recovery Group) as a vehicle to build affordable housing on brownfield sites.
- Incentivise the development of housing on brownfield sites and focus efforts on regeneration.
- Green belt development should be warranted, proportioned appropriately and environmentally efficient.
- Strengthen powers to enforce action to address empty or derelict houses.

## Infrastructure

The maintenance and upkeep of the basic infrastructure around us is vital to our quality of life, the protection of our environment and indeed our safety. Many of you tell me consistently how disappointed and frustrated you are in this respect and I am calling for a back to basics approach to restore pride in our Island:

- The DOI must be broken up into smaller more accountable bodies.
- The Creation of a new Airport Board to ensure our key strategic air routes are properly managed and that the airport functions commercially and to expected standards.
- That Bus Vannin deliver a more transparent and accountable transport policy.
- That a Major Projects Unit is formed immediately containing a board of (local) experienced engineers and qualified persons to examine strategy and major project proposals to bring more confidence and scrutiny to the implementation of Government construction and engineering projects.
- That the DOI deliver the maintenance and roads plan. All Island roads should be first maintained and new road schemes and layouts should then be prioritised accordingly.
- The return of gully clearance, drainage and roadside maintenance to central Government or firmer guidance and support be issued to local authorities as to required standards in these areas.
- The delivery of a new maintenance plan for the Island that includes bi-annual drainage inspections and roadside verge cutting.
- Hedgerows to be inspected and trimmed annually.
- Overhanging branches and extending/dangerous bushes or boughs to be cut back on report.
- Road signs to be made visible.

## Agriculture & Environment

Our agricultural community are facing continued challenges but they remain a key pillar of our economy and environment. The new agri-environment support scheme is designed to enhance biodiversity, sequester carbon, reduce flood risk and address land management matters related to Climate Change, but food security and the production of food remains vital. I will:

- Seek to support the best agricultural practices.
- Support a food security plan and local produce.
- Seek a new partnership model for the meat plant drawing on skills from the private sector and farming industry, supported by Government, to deliver best value for the taxpayer, industry and meat supplies.
- Support the development of a new flour mill at Jurby.

## A budget for success

In my first budget of February 2017 I set out a five year financial plan that aimed to meet the Island's needs and put people and families first. We should recognise:

- The subsequent economic performance of the Island for the period 2017 – 2020 meant that our financial targets were met and exceeded through a combination of prudent budgeting, supporting families address the cost of living and targeted investments into priority services such as Health.

- Pre COVID (March 2020) economic returns were increasing and unemployment was reaching 20 year lows.
- As part of COVID management and recovery, there is the requirement for a new five year financial plan and a focus on recovering our economic performance and thus our revenue income.
- We need a measured and sensible plan that may require us to draw again on reserves to balance the spending plans as we recover from the immediate COVID crisis.
- Our externally invested reserves currently stand at £1.8bn and we will have increased our capacity to address Climate Change through a sustainable Bond issue of up to £400m.
- Our Reserves have grown despite the pandemic and we must never underestimate the value of strong and sustainable financial reserves.
- That £400m sustainable debt issue should be used carefully to ensure a fair transition in line with a costed Climate Change plan as well as to install the relevant infrastructure.
- That every department report to Tynwald (and the public annually) with spending and performance reviews and annual plans. This will increase transparency and accountability.

*This manifesto recognises that public finances remain strained following the COVID pandemic and that increased spending in areas will require sensible balancing in others.*

- Throughout my tenure as Treasury Minister I have endeavoured that budgets should put people and families first.
- A return to the pre 2017 budget austerity policies that saw freezes in personal tax allowances and other vital supporting expenditure such as child benefit must not feature.
- We have made progress in recent years although household income pressures will always remain.
- I remain committed to putting you and your families at the forefront of budget considerations.

## Local Issues

**It is my view that a successful society is built around unified and committed local communities. Many of the issues already highlighted in this manifesto extend to and impact on the constituency. I am not in favour of devolving powers to local authorities but I will:**

- Work with the local commissioners to enhance the environment and quality of life paying close attention to the North & West Area Plan.
- Support and encourage local retail businesses to provide a range of quality local produce and other key essentials.
- Encourage new and existing businesses in the community.
- Continue to support and work with interested parties to develop Jurby as a business park and village.
- Support and encourage community events.
- Listen to local community concerns and act appropriately according to the majority view.
- Support ongoing work to establish coastal protection and flood prevention.
- Work with local communities in respect of the new area plans.
- Deal appropriately with road safety concerns.
- Support the continued operation of the mobile library.

## **ALFRED CANNAN**

Educated at King Williams College and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst I served as an Officer in the Royal Regiment of Wales in Northern Ireland and Hong Kong. I returned to the Isle of Man in 1994 and commenced employment in the finance sector with Nationwide International.

In 2011 I was elected MHK for Michael. I have served as Chairman of the Civil Service Commission, Vice Chairman of the Public Section Pensions Authority and on both the Departments of Health and Economic Development. I have acted as Chairman of the Manx Utilities Authority and the Public Accounts Committee and I have been Treasury Minister since October 2016.

I am a keen sportsman and a former Captain of Ramsey and Vagabonds Rugby Clubs. I continue to support Manx sport in my spare time.

Aged 53, I am married to Bella and have three children.

**I would welcome your help and support on Election Day, Thursday 23rd September 2021. I can be contacted by email ([alfcannan@manx.net](mailto:alfcannan@manx.net)) or telephone (898159).**

VOTE

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