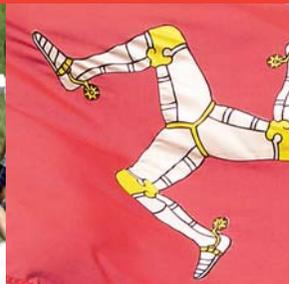


a vote for your future

manifesto

VOTE

JOHN SHIMMIN



“I can confidently say that I now fully understand how the system works; why it sometimes fails; where the decisions are made (and why); how to influence those decisions and how to make a difference.”

John Shimmin MHK

here to
protect and
enhance
your future
for many
years



Dear Constituent,

My manifesto is designed to provide a brief and readable summary of my views to allow you to consider whether to vote for me in the forthcoming election.

The person you elect will have to share their time between constituency, parliamentary and governmental work. If successful I assure you of my commitment to balance these responsibilities without any disadvantages to the people of Douglas West.

The most regular issues that have been raised with me during the current election campaign are set out in boxes throughout this manifesto.

However, the main purpose is to briefly look at the past, prepare for the future and explain my vision of what should guide our decisions.

Of course I have limited space here, but please contact me if you would like to discuss in more detail any aspects of my policy approach, or to raise other issues that you would particularly like me to address.

who am I?

I am 46 years old, married with two teenage sons. Born and educated on the Island, I taught in secondary schools in England, before returning to work at St Ninians.

As a Head of Year responsible for 13-16 year olds I became increasingly frustrated that decision-making seemed to come from civil servants and politicians who were not dealing directly with young people on a daily basis.

In 1996, I was successfully elected to the House of Keys and now work for improvements from within the system.

what experience do I have to offer?

I have now served 10 years as an MHK for Douglas West in a range of governmental and parliamentary roles.

These have involved working in DAFF, DTI, Chairman of IOM Post, Minister of Transport and I am currently Minister of Home Affairs. I have also served on numerous parliamentary committees and charitable organisations.

I can confidently say that I now fully understand how the system works; why it sometimes fails; where the decisions are made (and why); how to influence those decisions and how to make a difference.

As we are now a significant player at an international level it would be foolish to ignore the influence and impact that others can have on our economy and quality of life.

However, what really affects most people are the workings of domestic government and the way it impacts on each of us, our families and our work. We have many things to be proud of (and life for the vast majority has improved in recent years), but there is so much more that can and should be done.

I believe that I now have the level of experience and influence where I can bring about the changes necessary for all of us to realise the ambitions that we have for our families, our home, our work, our environment and our Island - in short, to secure a "prosperous and caring" society. We can achieve these ambitions through our efforts as individuals, but we can be greatly assisted by an effective and well-focused government.



immigration

"requires assessment of current regulations regarding work permits, benefit system and controls on dependents reaching our Island. The first 6 months of the new house must be able to reassure the public that the safeguards are working, or consider the introduction of Residency Act."



the last five years...

We should be proud of the real successes and achievements in the last five years.

We have completed our new hospital, the energy from waste plant and made significant progress with the IRIS sewerage scheme (67% of population now connected). We have a refurbished Villa Marina, new and improved school buildings, 430 new public sector homes and over 300 first-time buyer units and so much more.

The work goes on, but we should not underestimate the achievements.

In commercial development we are growing an impressive reputation in the film and space industries; our shipping and aircraft registers are achieving worldwide interest and respect; 'e' business continues with a world class infrastructure which opens major opportunities for the future. We have maintained our international economic security AAA rating and achieved what is now 20 + years of continuous economic growth. We maintain less than 1.5% unemployment and much of our economic success has been channelled into infrastructure improvements, increased benefits and services, or used to grow an impressive level of reserve funds.

nursing care provision

"we require on-going dialogue with providers to ensure our elderly are protected at an affordable cost. Changes may be necessary"



However, we have not always ensured effective financial monitoring, nor have we developed specific policies designed for the Isle of Man - very often preferring to shadow those developed for other countries.

I also believe we have failed to adequately communicate openly and systematically both the achievements and the problems faced by government.

We are here to serve you - you have a fundamental right to know more about the operations of government.

energy costs

"we must protect the vulnerable and consider a sliding scale of benefits to reach more people."



the next five years...

Most people acknowledge there will be significant challenges in the future and we need a united approach for the good of the Island.

The overarching priority must be to maintain and grow our economic success if we are going to be able to provide the services people expect.

We must strive to maintain and where possible improve:

- **our first class healthcare**
- **our excellent education standards**
- **our safe environment**
- **our mixed opportunities for work and leisure**
- **our public and private housing sectors**
- **the efficiency of our government**
- **our benefits and pension provision**
- **our 'e' technology capability**

If we are to achieve these goals then the cost must be met from our income. Just because we have been so successful in recent years we must not be complacent. Everyone is concerned about our level of expenditure and your government has a duty to take some difficult decisions to address this.

Given the costs of maintaining and improving our core services and quality of life some structural reforms will be essential. In recent times we have commissioned several reports on a range of important areas that will assist the priorities of the next government.

We need the political strength to take action on these issues and for that we will need to tighten our belts in other areas. We cannot, and must not, assume that we can continue to expand public services and the associated increase in staffing levels, rather we must focus on what we can afford.

I anticipate two or three difficult years where we will face some public opposition to some of the decisions which will be necessary, but I hope that enough of you will support the efforts to reprioritise the expenditure of public money. All politicians are very good at spending your money - it is my belief that the public is now demanding to see us spend it more wisely.

I believe there must also be a greater priority on generating income, alongside a "back to basics" philosophy of expenditure.

There are many hurdles to overcome, but unless we begin soon the challenges will be even greater.

These are not new issues, but we have repeatedly failed to take some unpopular decisions in order to allow us to have a leaner more efficient and affordable structure.



road safety

"I remain in favour of an all Island limit and we must consult on a new policy to deal with all parking issues."



mea

"we will monitor the costs of legal action and consider long term implications and options"

To those of you outside government this may seem like further bureaucracy, but it is the benefits that the reforms will provide which will produce the economic savings required to achieve success. I ask for your trust and belief that this reform will be necessary to achieve the cultural and philosophical changes required. If we fail to deal with these matters during the next administration then I fear that our competitors will overtake us and this may lead to significant economic difficulties.

The Island will shortly return 24 MHKs and it will depend on their collective will whether we have a really successful future. I believe that you expect your MHKs to manage these areas for your benefit. Please give me your support to make the difficult decisions before it is too late.

my vision...

I want to live on an Island where:

- **all people are respected and valued**
- **all people feel safe and happy**
- **the elderly and vulnerable are protected**
- **all people's quality of life continues to be improved**
- **our young people have a range of opportunities**
- **all public bodies have the highest integrity and ability**
- **businesses continue to be encouraged to flourish and grow**

in conclusion...

I am very proud to have been your representative for the last ten years and would welcome the opportunity to continue.

I believe that you wish to entrust your vote to the person you feel will most ably address the important issues and I hope you will feel able to support my efforts.

All my life I have been a team player and none of the current successes or future opportunities will be achieved by individuals. If elected, I would look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure a bright future for all.

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Assistance: **Do you require an absent vote/proxy vote?**
Do you require transport on election day?
Would you display a poster?
Would you like to assist on election day?

VOTE

JOHN SHIMMIN



douglas
west