

Election for

Marown Parish Commissioners

Barrantee Skeerey Marooney

24 April 2008 – Marown Methodist Church Hall, Crosby

Dear fellow Marown resident

My name is **PAUL CRAINE**. I have been privileged to represent you on Marown Commissioners for the past year. I was “elected unopposed” in March 2007. It didn’t feel at all like democracy in action so I am pleased that the people of Marown will have a chance to vote on 24th April and I invite you to vote for me.

I am 52 years old and was born and grew up in the Isle of Man. I first lived in Marown when my parents moved here in the 1970s. I am married to Ann, we have two daughters and we have lived in Ballagarey for almost 8 years. I work in the Department of Education as the education adviser to the Island’s five secondary schools, a post I took up in 1999 after a successful 20-year career in teaching.



In addition to being one of your Commissioners I have, until recently been Chairman of the Island Games Association of Mann. I am currently Secretary of the Island’s Christian Aid Committee as well as a member of the Methodist Synod.

What have I done in 12 months as a Marown Commissioner?

I have attended every monthly meeting of the Commissioners. I have also represented Marown Commissioners on the Western District Housing Committee and on the Municipal Association. In turn I have represented the Municipal Association on the Richmond Hill Consultative Committee which monitors the work of the Energy from Waste Plant. That has been quite a workload over one year often taking up two very full evenings in a week.

Have I achieved anything?

If I thought I hadn’t achieved anything I would not be standing again now.

- I have sought to preserve the local environment. I studied the mountain of materials relating to the planning application for the tip at Archallaghan and helped to ensure that our Commissioners were well informed. I prepared the bullet-point material used by ASAP and sent to all Marown residents. I made my own submission to the inquiry and attended sessions.
- I have instigated the Commissioners’ actions to tackle the thorny issue of dog fouling. I prepared a sensitive but detailed options sheet for the recent consultation meeting on this issue.
- I have begun to champion support for children and young people within the Commissioners and have urged fellow Commissioners to give greater support to Marown Memorial Playing Fields Trustees who make a magnificent contribution to this community.
- I have encouraged the Commissioners to set up a sub-committee to explore ways to tackle the poor planning which leaves Marown residents lacking a wide range of local services.
- I have helped the Western District Housing Association to improve its organisational structure and appoint a Housing Officer (funded by DoLGE) to ensure improved management of the Westlands housing complex which offers sheltered accommodation for the residents of the western local authorities.
- I have encouraged the Commissioners to re-join the Municipal Association which brings together over half of the Island’s local authorities and I now represent Marown on this body.

Some of the issues facing Marown Commissioners and Residents:

Rates The Commissioners must always look for best value for money. Our recent 4% rate rise was in line with inflation. It might have been lower but in the previous year the rates did not rise at all. If we allow the rates to lag behind inflation we will soon have to play “catch-up” like Onchan. I am concerned about the impact of rate rises on pensioners as the rates system is unfair because it does not take into account a person’s ability to pay. I would support Tynwald in seeking a fairer system.

Children and Young People There are 430 children and young people aged under 20 years in Marown. The Commissioners do not do enough for the young people of the parish and our young people are not given a voice in parish affairs. We need to consult regularly with our young people. The Minister for Tourism and Leisure’s recent announcement of government-funded “community sports halls” in every village sounds great and I suspect that our young people (as well as our primary school) would want us to explore what is on offer.

Older residents There are 465 people aged over 60 years in Marown. The Commissioners don’t offer them any more than we offer our young people. We need to consult regularly with this age group too. Age-Concern are looking to work with a local authority to locate a Healthy Living centre and the Commissioners need to explore what the parish might gain from such a facility.

Services and sense of community There are over 2000 people in Marown but we do not have the level of local services that we should have and this does not help to develop a sense of local community. I have fought to secure a newly formed sub-committee of the Commissioners to look at opportunities to improve local services.

Website I recognise that not everyone has access to the internet, but we need to make the most of modern communications. We need a website to provide information about local news, events and the opening times of the Western Civic Amenity Site (St Johns) and the Western District Swimming Pool (Peel) etc. Minutes of Commissioners’ meetings should also be easily available for anyone to read.

Working with others I am not in favour of amalgamating with other local authorities. We need to retain our own identity and set our own rates. However, I am in favour of working with other local authorities to improve services and reduce costs. I am pleased that Patrick Commissioners now share both our small office and our hard-working, part-time clerk, Ian Maule.

Environment We need to tackle litter and dog fouling (providing dog bins will be a starting point). Dogs bring great benefits to many individuals and families but we need to encourage a small minority of dog owners to accept greater responsibility. We should prepare for kerbside collections for recycling in the future. Recycling one aluminium can saves enough energy to run a TV for 3 hours!

I have much to learn but I have worked hard in my first year as a Commissioner and would appreciate one of your five votes to allow me to continue. I have a vision of how this parish might be: with better services and a great community spirit. If re-appointed I will work towards that aim with common sense, integrity, commitment and drive. I may not be able to get round to talk to everyone in person. If you would like to talk to me, please contact me on 851861 or craine@manx.net.

Gura mie eu (Thank you)

Paul Craine



**If people don’t vote – democracy doesn’t work
24th April – please use your votes**