

Paul Craine

Manifesto *Fogrey polasee*



At the time of writing this manifesto I have visited more than one thousand two hundred homes in Braddan, Marown and Santon. It has been a privilege to meet so many people and hear your views and concerns. I have allowed ten weeks for door to door visiting. I hope to visit all households, but if I don't get to meet you, please forgive me.

In offering myself as a candidate in this election I am aware of the responsibility that is involved. I am committed to values of personal and political openness, honesty and integrity. I am proud to be Manx and care passionately about the Isle of Man. I want to see the Island prosper and develop as a caring and tolerant community.



If elected by the people of Middle I will work hard and represent you to the best of my ability. I will seek to work with others in the best interests of the Isle of Man. I will contribute to decisions that are evidence-based and balanced.

This manifesto provides you with an outline of how I see the main local and national issues - taking the views of constituents into account. It also outlines what I hope to achieve if elected to serve the people of Middle and the Isle of Man.



...it's about people



Confidence and Optimism

Doorstep conversations over the last few weeks have shown that many people are concerned. In difficult days it is important to recognise what we have and to agree a vision of where we are going. We all know that we live on a beautiful island with one of the world's lowest levels of crime and a great sense of community. The evidence tells us that there are many more positives.



We have enjoyed over 30 years of unbroken economic growth. For every man, woman and child:

- The Isle of Man has **reserves** of £18,000.
- The UK has a national **debt** of £24,000.

Our government owns (we own) our schools, hospitals, reservoirs and power stations (albeit with a loan) as well as nearly 6,000 public sector homes. In the UK, many of these things have been sold off.

Beyond all this, our greatest strength lies in our people and their commitment to the Isle of Man.

Too much negative analysis only damages confidence.

We have to get the balance right. I am under no illusions - the last eight years have been a perfect storm. The 'financial crash' of 2008 followed by the UK's reduction in the Isle of Man's share of VAT revenue hit the Island very hard. It has hit the money in our pockets too. The Island's economic model is in a period of transition and, with hindsight, our government did not do enough in the years of plenty to make us more resilient. But the Isle of Man has taken hard knocks before (in the 1950s and 1980s for example) and has bounced back.

There are some pressing and important issues to address (more about those later) but there are also some encouraging green shoots.

Recent data shows:

- Growth in the Island's reserves and in the National Insurance Fund.
- Growth in the number of people in the workforce.
- Economic growth running at over 5% in real terms.
- Falling unemployment.

The evidence gives us cause for optimism about the Island's future.



Vision: the Programme for Government

Programme for Government

If elected in September I will pursue the recommendation in the Lisvane report that a 'Programme for Government' should be prepared and agreed by Tynwald. This would provide direction for the work of Tynwald up to 2021 and would become the focus of the policy review (or scrutiny) committees. My vote for Chief Minister would require commitment to such a programme. There will then be a once in the parliament opportunity to put items onto the agenda for the next five years.

These are the key areas that I would want to see given priority in the programme:

The development of a clear population policy and strategy to restore sustainable population growth and secure a more balanced population (see page 7).

A full review of the Island's tax strategy to make taxation fairer, secure sufficient income to pay for public services but retain low tax rates (see page 6).

A revision of Treasury's Medium Term Financial Strategy to ensure that government is not removing money from the economy too quickly at a critical time.

The protection of front-line services ensuring that spending reductions are not based on 'cuts' to services but on genuine efficiencies and improved productivity.

The development of a sustainable strategy on the public sector pension legacy that helps recruitment of key groups.

The preparation of greater detail and safeguards relating to the £50 million Enterprise Development Fund (the flagship policy for economic growth and job creation).

A focussed revision of the 2015 Strategic Plan, for Island planning, to incorporate 2016 census data.

A review of transport policies to rationalise current 'closed ferry' but 'open skies' policies and develop better regulation of monopoly transport operations.

A review of work permit policy and regulations to consider the purpose of the permits and provide flexibility during a time of low unemployment.

The development of an integrated environmental strategy covering the full range of environmental issues as well as economic opportunities in these areas.

The development of a coherent technology strategy covering software tech-related manufacturing as well as impacts and opportunities of future ICT and robotics.

A review of our relationship with post-Brexit UK covering such things as teacher pensions, territorial waters, fishing grounds, taxation constraints, university fees and subsidised meats.



Government Income

The Isle of Man's economy has grown in every year since the last election. In some years the growth has been more than 5%. Measured by Gross National Product, the economy has grown at more than twice the rate of inflation.

Government income, however, has not grown. Increases in government income since the last election have not kept pace with inflation. In real terms, government income has fallen. Existing policies are not making up for the loss in government income that we suffered when the UK reduced the Island's share of VAT revenue. 'Growing the economy' has not produced growth in government income.

To rebalance the budget we are simply trying to cut spending and to pass a range of small, and not so small, charges onto the general public. There is considerable evidence that front-line government services (health, education, police) are being affected. This is not a good time to be taking money out of the economy.

We need government to increase its income. But we also need to ensure that the Isle of Man remains competitive for businesses to invest here.

The best way to ensure that the Island's tax rates can remain unchanged is to ensure that tax at the existing low levels is paid in full.

If elected I will:

- Seek to maintain the existing tax rates for individuals and companies.
- Push for a review of taxation to increase government income without increasing tax rates (see page 6).
- Encourage caution to ensure that government cuts do not damage and delay economic recovery.
- Challenge the tax strategy that allows profits made here to be taxed elsewhere.

Government Spending

Government spending has remained higher than government income but there have been considerable steps taken to reduce government spending. Since the last election there have been cuts in departmental budgets and pressures on departments to secure better value for money. There have been staff reductions, a regrading of posts and pay freezes in some years. The centralisation of some services has been undertaken, although no external review has been carried out to establish whether this has generated savings.

If elected I will:

- Support spending and staffing reductions through increased efficiencies and improved productivity as well as through the effective use of technology.
- Oppose expenditure on grand capital projects when something more functional would be more appropriate.
- Oppose budget reductions that would impact on front-line services and affect vulnerable people.



Making the Economy work for everyone

Last year, although the economy grew by over 5%, the mid-point level of earnings fell by 2.5%. Some people are doing very well, whilst others are not. The recent government attitudes survey showed that almost one third of households believe their financial situation is worse now than one year ago. We need to make the economy work for everyone.

In February this year, Treasury Minister Eddie Teare announced in his budget speech in Tynwald: 'I am advised by the Assessor that she is now frequently seeing tax planning around our Zero-10 regime. I do not consider this to be acceptable and I have asked the Assessor, when working on proposals for a new tax strategy, to include simple ways to tackle this and other unfair behaviour.'

We all understand why we pay taxes. They provide pensions, roads, ports, police, firefighters, doctors, nurses, teachers and more. We cannot have quality services if government does not receive adequate funding. We cannot expect to attract workers if we do not have quality services. We have a responsibility to pay taxes.

In the Isle of Man, we have very competitive tax rates to attract inward investment - but these taxes need to be paid. The UK estimates losses due to tax avoidance of around £3 billion per year and is taking steps to close legal tax loopholes. We do not have a government estimate of revenue lost due to tax planning in the Isle of Man.

The Treasury Minister has returned to this theme twice more during the year in June and July. He has also referred to some of the methods being used to avoid National Insurance contributions. The Assessor has been asked to consider whether legislation is needed to: 'ensure that everybody makes a fair payment'. I fully support these efforts.

A former Assessor of Income Tax has suggested that: 'Manx income tax can no longer be said to be 'fair' as it is only required to be paid by those residents who are unable to channel their incomes into their companies'. It adds weight to the idea that we need to take steps to ensure that our taxation system is fair and fit for the purpose of raising funds to pay for public services.

The best way to ensure that the Island's tax rates can remain unchanged is to ensure that tax at the existing low levels is paid in full.

If elected, I will

- Seek to ensure that a full review of the Island's taxation strategy requires everyone to make a fair payment in taxes.
- Work to ensure that the tax strategy generates increased tax yields.
- Support the monitoring of applicants for Enterprise Development funding to ensure that they offer good pay.
- Oppose departmental cuts in front-line services such as education and healthcare.



Earlier this year I published the 'Isle of Man Population Atlas'.

In the 1950s the Isle of Man experienced a severe economic recession and depopulation. There was a spiral of decline. The population fell by more than 7,000 people in ten years. Local businesses suffered, wages fell, government income fell, jobs were lost and unemployment grew. More families moved away.

The population growth that the Isle of Man has seen over most of the last fifty years is not something that should be taken for granted. In recent decades there have been large movements in and large movements out. The balance of these movements is important.

Since the last election there has been a very significant shift in the Island's population. Population growth slowed to a halt by 2013. Instead of growing by 800 every year, the 2016 census is likely to show total growth of less than 800 over the last five years. Since 2013 the population has almost certainly been in decline. More young adults and families are leaving than arriving. The annual number of births has fallen by more than 23% since 2010.

Our population is vulnerable. This vulnerability can be increased or reduced by government action. Depopulation would be very damaging for the Island and our economy. Sustainable population growth and economic growth are interlinked.

If elected I will:

- Ensure that population issues have a high profile - they are too important to be ignored.
- Work to improve population monitoring - there are ways that we can estimate population change on a quarterly basis.
- Support the aim of the Enterprise Development Fund to provide the right business climate to attract 500 working people per year.
- Work to develop greater clarity of government policy in relation to population.
- Urge that existing policies that are pushing young people away are revised.
- Seek out the best ways to encourage the Island's young people to remain or return and to attract new working people.



Health Services

Healthcare has been the topic raised most often by the residents of Middle. This summer, health issues have rarely been out of the headlines. The positive news is that our healthcare professionals are 'dedicated', 'hardworking' and 'determined'. But the morale of these professionals is not high.

In June a report from the Health Services Consultative Committee described the model of healthcare as 'unsustainable'. One line was particularly telling: '...pursuing value for money is laudable, but it is unlikely to resolve the issue'.

In mid July, the latest report from the West Midlands Quality Review Service spoke of the 'shortage of nursing and midwifery staff' and highlighted that the 'job plans of some obstetrics and gynaecology consultants were not sustainable'.

Noble's Hospital has overspent its budget in each of the past 15 years. Conversations with residents of Middle have raised concerns over management structures and administrative inefficiencies. These are things that we must get right. But there is also under-funding. Data released in May 2015 showed that health funding per person in the Isle of Man would have to rise by 21% to reach the level of funding in England. How can we expect good health care if we do not provide adequate funding?

The strategy to provide better care in the community and reduce the need for acute services will only work if doctors' practices and community care generally are adequately funded. Medical practices would need an increase of 34% in their funding per patient to match the funding in England.

If elected, I will

- Work to ensure that spending on healthcare is evidence-based with regular publication of data on waiting lists and outcomes.
- Strive to secure adequate funding for the Island's essential healthcare.
- Support action to move the balance of healthcare towards community-based care with a flow of funding to support this transition.
- Work to secure better community care for older people living at home.
- Seek more support for GP surgeries to reduce acute medical needs.
- Support an on-going health awareness and education programme.
- Support steps to improve efficiency in healthcare including the use of digital solutions in administration and Skype/iphones to prevent patients travelling off-Island for 15 minute chats with a consultant.
- Support action to improve communications between consultants.

**Do you need a lift to the polling station on Thursday
22 September 2016?**

Please contact me on 471317 or mail@paulcraine.im



Reports on the National Insurance Fund, which pays for pensions and benefits, show a problem. In the simplest terms, there is not enough coming into the fund and too much going out. The current position is unsustainable. Projections show that the fund could run out later this century - that cannot be allowed to happen.

State pensions

Some of you are concerned about your own pension or future pension (the state pension). There are several issues:

- the recently agreed £170 per week flat rate and removal of the supplementary pension from 2019 for those who made a higher contribution (paid a full stamp)
- the new requirement for those who worked in the UK to obtain a pension for those years from the UK government
- the phasing out of the Manx pension supplement
- the removal of the free TV licences for people over 75 years
- the raising of the pension age for women who had not made preparation for work beyond age 60
- the concern that there will be no pension for today's younger workers when they retire
- the reduction in the age allowance (an additional tax allowance that had been given to people of retirement age) in 2014/15.

If elected I will:

- Work to reinstate free TV licences for the over 75s.
- Seek to ensure that a long term view is taken on managing the National Insurance Fund.
- Push for action to reduce any inappropriate avoidance of NI contributions.
- Be committed to no further use of the NI Fund for other purposes.
- Be committed to no further erosion of state pensions.





Education and young people

Education is hugely important for the future of our young people and for the future of the Island. I know the Island's education system to be broadly good and this is borne out by the 2016 Island GCSE results. Many people on the doorstep have spoken in positive terms about schools and teachers. There were four areas of education that brought concerns.

Pre-school nurseries

Issues voiced included concern over access for children with disabilities or special needs, and the cost of short-day provision (over £500 per month), which prevents some parents from taking up employment.

Extended schools

Some working parents are struggling to find convenient child care before and after the school day.

Vocational courses

Some parents and pupils would like to see more applied learning or pre-vocational provision in the 14-16 year olds' curriculum.

University Tuition Fees

The cost of university attendance has increased and support from government is means tested based on parents' incomes. Many students remain heavily dependent on parental support and some feel that their independence is reduced compared with fellow students in the UK.

If elected I will:

- Seek a review of private pre-school provision with a view to ensuring that the needs of all children are being met.
- Support a further increase in pre-school credit to match that available to parents in England.
- Support the provision of a range of chargeable services and activities beyond the school day to help meet the needs of children and families.
- Encourage the development of vocational qualifications alongside the International GCSE.
- Seek a review of alternative methods of paying university tuition fees to secure greater independence for students.

Leisure and entertainment

Some young residents of Middle have very full leisure time: sports, theatre/dance groups, scouts/guides etc. If you are not involved in those, leisure activities are more limited. I heard the same comment from a number of households and covering a wide range of ages: 'there is not enough to do'.

If elected I will:

- Seek to promote local entertainment for the local population and for tourists - and combine these where possible.



Speeding, road-safety and road maintenance have all been regularly raised as I have visited homes in Middle.

The number of drivers exceeding the speed limit needs to be addressed. Whether that is through the use of traffic calming, more speed checks, higher penalties or, as a last resort, speed cameras does not appear to matter very much to those who have voiced these concerns. They just want to feel safer.

Road surfaces in residential areas are deteriorating. A number of residents have shown me nearby pot-holes and patchworks of repairs or road surfaces that have completely broken up. There needs to be adequate investment in this aspect of the Island's infrastructure.

If elected I will:

- Work tirelessly with local communities, the local authorities and directly with the Minister for Infrastructure and the police, as well as in the House of Keys, to bring about a reduction in speeding and improvements in road quality in Middle.

The publication of the Area Plan for the East is due in the near future. This Plan must respond to the 2015 Strategic Plan, which identifies a need for 2,400 houses in the East of the Island. On doorsteps, many Middle residents expressed concerns about the possible scale of development in our three parishes. Their conversations focussed on how development might impact on landscapes, wildlife, traffic, noise and communities.

Two of the parishes in Middle do not have a local shop. Many residents have a round-trip of over 5 miles just to obtain a pint of milk or a loaf of bread. In all three parishes there are concerns about affordable housing. These are issues that need to be addressed by the planners.

Recent correspondence from the Manx Wildlife Trust has indicated their wish to see the development of a 'country park style facility on the edge of Douglas' as a gateway into the wider countryside.

If elected I will:

- Seek a focussed revision of the 2015 Strategic Plan to incorporate 2016 census data and reduce the pressure to designate so much land for housing in the East.
- Work alongside local authorities to ensure that the Area Plan for the East addresses the need for local amenities, such as a shop, as well as the need for affordable housing to purchase or rent.
- Actively support environmental initiatives that help to preserve green space between Douglas and Middle.



Other actions

There is not space in this manifesto to cover every issue and every area in which I would hope to be involved. These are some of the additional areas I would hope to influence.

If elected I would also:

- Support initiatives for economic growth (e.g. in tourism and technology sectors).
- Seek growth in the working population but not in the government workforce.
- Support good use of the UNESCO Biosphere region status in marketing.
- Encourage improved ferry services for residents and tourists.
- Encourage ferry schedules that allow fast-craft day-trips to the Isle of Man.
- Seek improved air services to reduce the number of cancelled flights.
- Support area planning to secure the Island's character and environment.
- Encourage actions to increase confidence in the future of farming.
- Support a Manx provenance label to identify quality Manx produce.
- Work to improve the Island's international reputation and credibility based on meeting international obligations on tax information, the environment and aid.
- Seek the focussed reform of the local rating system to make it fairer.
- Seek to appoint an Older People's Commissioner to provide a stronger voice.
- Seek the refurbishment of Douglas Promenade, starting as soon as possible, and the redevelopments of the Lord Street and Summerland sites.
- Support adequate funding of the police to maintain low crime.
- Encourage response to the Lisvane report to reduce government department members, revise MLCs' roles and selection procedures and strengthen scrutiny committees.
- Support consideration of the transfer of additional responsibilities to local authorities including basic planning approvals.
- Recognise and support local authorities working sometimes independently and sometimes jointly or in regional groups depending on the task in hand.
 - Support the implementation of the Disability Discrimination Act.



22 September - please use your votes
Vote Paul Craine for Middle



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