



CAPABILITY. EXPERTISE.

The Isle of Man faces challenges at local, national and international level.

Middle needs a representative who cares for the community and brings capability, expertise and professionalism.



Bill
SHIMMINS

Bringing capability and expertise to local, national and international challenges.

Due to boundary changes, the constituency of Middle has expanded since the last election to now incorporate the parishes of Marown, Braddan and Santon.



As a result of these changes, the constituency will now be represented by two

Dear Resident of Middle,



I am pleased to present to you my election manifesto. This document outlines my key priorities for the next five years and offers my view on what action needs to be taken.

At the outset of my campaign, I invited the people of Middle to get in touch with me to discuss their opinions and concerns. These contributions have fed directly into my manifesto. I thank those of you who engaged with me and gave me a deeper understanding of the interests and desires of the people I am standing to represent.

After 34 years in banking, I now wish to serve the Island to ensure it continues to prosper as a community in the challenging times we face. In business, I take a decisive and responsive approach to overcome complex issues. I hope to be given the opportunity to use my skills, experience and commitment for the benefit of all.

This is the most important election for a generation - it is crucial that we all engage with politics.

To ensure the best future for Middle and for our Island, please make sure you exercise your right to vote on 22nd September.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ziel', with a horizontal line underneath.

MHKs. You can now vote for 1 or 2 candidates on your ballot paper.



Economy

There is much talk of the need to 'grow the economy to fund public services,' but all too few realistic suggestions as to how we should achieve this. Economic growth will benefit us all, if the primary objectives are job creation and income growth. I will ensure these are the cornerstones of all initiatives. Brexit is a major change for which we must plan. Here are some concrete steps we can take:

- Businesses need skilled people. We currently do not have enough workers to meet the demands of our increasingly diverse economy. We need to relax work permit regulations to overcome skills shortages and enable firms to grow their workforces. Presently, the number of people unemployed is much lower than the number of job vacancies.
- More effective regulation of the energy and telecoms sectors to reduce costs for businesses and households, to encourage business expansion and a better deal for consumers.
- Ensure that the Enterprise Development Fund is invested in a responsible manner to create thousands of jobs.
- Establish a broad-based think tank across the private and public sectors to work together to create strategy, ideas and policies we can adopt to drive economic growth.



Population

The population is declining and is getting older. We face a significant demographic challenge as more people retire and live longer. The young and economically active are the most likely to leave. It is essential that we reverse this trend to maintain our community and quality of life. My priorities are:

- Grow the population by 1,000 each year over the next parliament. This equates to 20 economically active people each week. If we do not grow, we will struggle to fund Health, Education and other key public services.
- Ensure growth is planned and managed in a sensible way. Much of our infrastructure (airport, hospital, power station, incinerator, telecoms etc.) was built to cater for much higher numbers than we have at present. Further growth is achievable without large capital expenditure. Additional front line public service workers will be required.
- Many aspects of the Island will function more effectively and operate more efficiently with a larger population.
- Accommodate much of the population growth by encouraging urban living. Douglas and other towns contain many unoccupied buildings and sites suitable for development. This would also improve the appearance of the Island.



@billshimmins

Health

It is clear to me that our Health Service is going through a period of intense change. It seems to be struggling to meet increased expectations at a time when demand is also increasing. My priorities are:

- Agree the key targets for the Health Service. Regularly monitor and publish performance against targets including waiting lists, quality measures and patient satisfaction. Recognise the good work undertaken whilst also identifying areas which require attention and action. We need to restore public confidence and the morale of our healthcare professionals.
- Ensure that cases are dealt with at the most appropriate level, be that GP surgeries, at Nobles Hospital or through external providers on or off Island.
- Reduce the dependency on locum and temporary workers. With targeted recruitment initiatives, we can attract health professionals who have a long-term commitment to the Island.

Education

Education is an existing strength and we must ensure that it is adequately funded. The continued provision of a quality education is key to determining how successful the Island will be in the future. If our young people are highly skilled and motivated, this will stand us in good stead. My priorities are:

- Closer working between employers and education providers to anticipate and plan for future requirements.
- We should recognise and address barriers to learning, ensuring adequate and timely access to Health and Social Care support, including mental health, allowing every child the opportunity to achieve their potential.
- The University fee loan structure should be changed to encourage more graduates to return. For instance, if graduates come back to work on the Island, contributing to the economy for a minimum of 3 years, we should write off their universal loan (currently £2,500 per year).



Polling stations are open from 8am to 8pm



Transport Links

Reliable, regular transport links are critical for our Island to survive and prosper. Recently published statistics on the quality of service provided by airlines are one example of how we need to do more to ensure that the Island gets a fair deal from transport operators. My priorities are:

- Avoid state ownership of transport companies. Our Government needs to slim down, and a further expansion into this area is undesirable. We do not have the capability or resources to operate air or shipping lines.
- Explore all options with multiple private sector operators to ensure the Island has the best possible transport links. Negotiate proactively to secure the best deal for the Island.
- Encourage the development of a more specialised tourism sector, which will support and benefit from improved transport links. A coordinated, joined up approach is required, rather than isolated initiatives, if we are to increase visitor numbers.

Away on September 22nd ? Contact

Environment

The Manx environment is a national asset which contributes to our quality of life as residents, as well as being a key aspect of our tourism appeal. We need to learn lessons from the past and keep up with modern international initiatives and thinking. My priorities are:

- Introduce a 5p plastic bag tax with proceeds to be used to support recycling and environmental initiatives. We are the only nation in the British Isles not to adopt this measure, which is proven to reduce litter and damage to marine life.
- Encourage the development of brown field urban sites as a priority. For instance, reduce tax on urban sites whilst conversely increasing tax on green belt sites. This will help our towns and countryside.
- All new developments to introduce water metering to minimise waste, and have higher minimum insulation standards.
- Create safe routes to encourage more people to walk and cycle to work and school/college. This also reduces the impact of managed population growth in terms of traffic levels, and should lead to improvements in public health.



Roads

Whether it is the state of roads, speeding in residential areas, time taken on roadworks or difficulties the young and old have crossing the road, I have received consistently high volumes of complaints across the constituency about roads. I do not consider these minor matters as they impact on everyone's daily life. My priorities are:

- Work with local authorities, police and Infrastructure to improve crossing points on the main roads. It is too dangerous to expect the elderly and children to cross some of our busy main roads without traffic signals.
- Review speed limits in residential areas and improve enforcement of limits.
- Faster and smarter completion of roadworks for the benefit of residents.
- Empower local authorities to take responsibility for minor works and estate roads.
- Develop and implement a cycling and walking strategy to encourage more people to adopt these alternatives.



Local amenities

The three local authorities in Middle - Braddan, Marown and Santon - vary in size and approach. Additional responsibilities such as hedge cutting and gully clearing have recently been transferred from central Government, with the potential for more to follow. It is important that local people have a say in their parish community. My priorities are:

- Assist local authorities in dealing with central Government.
- Proactively encourage the local authorities in Middle to work together and with others to deliver appropriate local services and reduce costs to the ratepayer.
- Support the provision of a convenience store for Santon and the redevelopment of Mount Murray.
- Assess whether the proposed Strang Corner Field development is viable for Braddan ratepayers.
- Support the provision of a convenience store for Glen Vine/Crosby and a playground for the children of Glen Vine.



Santon polling station: Santon old school, School Lane, Castletown Road

Government

We all understand that these are difficult financial times for Government. Whilst canvassing, I have met many people inside and outside Government, who have voiced their frustration and provided examples where money continues to be wasted. My priorities are:

- Introduce prudent spending guidelines to reflect priorities, rather than needless spending to meet set budgets.
- Reduce the size and scope of Government to focus on key service delivery areas including Health and Education.
- Close the existing public pension scheme to new entrants and introduce a money purchase scheme for new employees, alongside a cash alternative. This is a more flexible and sustainable solution.
- Introduce a Government-wide programme to drive delivery of a customer service ethos and restore pride and morale across the public sector.



Constitutional Reform

The way Government works has been criticised. The processes for electing the Chief Minister and Members of the Legislative Council have been the subject of debate, amongst others. Over the last five years, the unprofessional conduct of certain Members has also weakened public confidence in the system. An independent review was carried out by Lord Lisvane earlier this year. I broadly agree with the findings of this review, which makes a number of specific recommendations. My views are:

- I do not feel this is an immediate priority. Action is required now on the economy and public services, rather than a long debate about constitutional matters. However, we should implement these recommendations over the five year term of the next parliament.
- The quality of MHKs you vote into Tynwald will have a more urgent bearing on our success, rather than tinkering with the system.
- There is growing awareness that Government needs to 'up its game' to meet the challenges we face. The arrival of a number of new Members should inject fresh energy and professionalism that will help to restore public confidence in how our Island is run.



Questions



Q Do you think over 75s should pay for their TV licence?

A No, I feel this is poorly thought through and it is causing enormous upset for many elderly pensioners. I question whether the financial saving is accurate, due to the additional administration cost. Many pensioners who previously have not claimed benefits will now do so, reducing any cost saving. A rethink is required.

Q Why don't we just put up taxes ?

A Whilst some changes to tax may be needed, I would urge extreme caution before implementing any significant increases. There is a real risk this will trigger further population decreases with the larger tax payers and the young most likely to leave. This will put the Island in a very bleak position socially as we enter a downward economic spiral. It would be irresponsible to go down this path.



Left: My last day at the bank was 22nd July to provide two months to campaign for the election.

Right: In a hairnet at the opening of the new milk carton plant at the Creamery.

and Answers



Q If you are elected, will you support the agricultural sector?

A Yes, I have consistently supported the farming sector in my previous career. I recognise the importance of this sector for our food security and the contribution it makes to maintaining our beautiful countryside. I also believe it has potential to grow exports further and generate positive international awareness of the Island.

Q Do you support Manx independence from the UK?

A At times this is very tempting but no, the sober reality is we lack the scale and resources to be an independent country.



Q Would you reduce the residential qualification period for benefits from 5 years ?

A No, this is an important control which ensures we attract economically active people who contribute positively to our Island.

Left: I am a keen supporter of the aerospace manufacturing cluster.

Right: I am a long term supporter and friend of the Children's Centre; this is after cycling across the Alps to raise funds in 2015.



About Bill Shimmins

I have lived in Glen Vine for the past 13 years. My wife, Alison, teaches at Braddan Primary School and our children attended Marown Primary, Queen Elizabeth II and Ballakermeen High Schools before studying at university. In July, I resigned after five years in my role as Managing Director of Isle of Man Bank Limited and Island Director for RBS International in order to campaign to represent the people of Middle.

My years in senior executive positions here mean I have gained an in-depth knowledge of the Island's economy, as well as a comprehensive understanding of the challenges we currently face and how they impact on the day-to-day lives of residents. What is important, more than ever, is the ability to deal effectively with the decisions we will have to make in the current economic climate. In my career, I have managed various businesses for different banks on the Island, in the UK, Europe and Asia and, during this time, I have frequently needed to make strategic decisions.

In the community, I have been involved in many organisations in the constituency and across the Island. To avoid any conflicts of interest, I have now stepped down from a number of boards, however, I remain a Governor of Marown Primary School. I enjoy walking and cycling in the Manx countryside, live music events and theatre.

I care very deeply about our Island and the community of Middle and I believe that my skills and experience can be of benefit in the times ahead. I request your vote and undertake to represent and support you with an energetic, friendly and proactive approach at all times.

Contact:



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On 22nd September, vote Bill Shimmins for Middle