

# A Manifesto for a Greener Recovery

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GEOFFREY BOOT  
Prospective MHK for Glenfaba & Peel  
General Election 23rd September 2021



## My Vision and Manifesto for a Greener Recovery

Working together to make  
the West the best!

On the 23rd September you will once again have an opportunity to choose two people to represent Glenfaba and Peel for the coming five years.

Looking back, we knew Brexit was going to dominate the political agenda and although climate change was in the background at that time, this has now become something that has the capacity, in due course, to change all of our lives and leave a legacy for future generations.

What we didn't expect was a pandemic, which has sadly caused too many deaths on Island and worldwide. This has also undermined our economy and caused ongoing issues with health, mental health, disrupted education and separated families and friends.

During the past 5 years, I have had the honour to be MHK for Glenfaba and Peel as well as Minister for the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture.

I have always made constituency work a priority and in my previous manifesto I promised to listen and communicate openly. I hope that I have fulfilled that pledge, holding joint surgeries with Peel Commissioners, newsletters, my web page and regular interaction using social media, almost in real time. I also promised to deal with individual constituents' issues and have diligently done so, generally replying within 24 hours of a matter being raised.

Going forward, the constituency and Island need proven, capable and experienced MHKs. The next administration will be no place for the meek. There is a lot of work to do, rebuilding the economy, dealing with the physical and mental fall out from Covid, resolving new educational challenges and creating a new national housing strategy. These are serious matters which need to be dealt with in a pragmatic and affordable manner.

I sincerely hope this manifesto will persuade you that I am the person to deliver, not just for the constituency but for the Island. I believe we have a great opportunity to work together to make the west the best, but also address the challenges facing the Island as a whole, building on the community spirit that evidenced itself during the pandemic, working for a healthy, economically successful, greener future.

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### Polling Stations 23rd September

#### Peel

Peel Centenary Centre, Atholl Street, Peel, IM5 1HQ

#### Glenfaba

North East Patrick - St Paul's Church, Foxdale. IM4 3HB

German - St John's Methodist Hall, Main Road, St Johns. IM4 3NA

Southwest Patrick and North Patrick -

Glen Maye Methodist Church, Glen Maye Hill, Glen Maye. IM5 3BB

You will receive a polling card shortly before the election and your polling station will be shown on the card. Even if you don't get a polling card you can still vote if you are on the electoral roll.

### Postal vote application dates

Ballot paper to be marked within the Isle of Man:  
**not later than Wednesday 15 September 2021**

Ballot paper is to be marked within the British Isles, but outside the Isle of Man:  
**not later than Thursday 9 September 2021**

Ballot paper is to be marked overseas (outside the Isle of Man and the British Isles):  
**not later than Tuesday 31 August 2021**

Use the link/QR code on the reverse of this manifesto or contact me for a postal form.

### Public meetings around the constituency

#### Peel

QEII School, 7.00pm,  
15th September

#### Glenfaba

Foxdale School, 7.00pm,  
9th September  
St Johns School, 7.00pm,  
6th September

## Greener Manx Solutions to Manx Problems

# My Personal Profile

I think that it's important that MHKs are from a background that includes not only political experience, but also non-political and business experience.

Consequently, I thought it would be useful to provide a resume of experience levels and where I come from both personally and in business.

I live with my wife Suzie at Ballagarraghyn, in the heart of the constituency in St Johns and have done so for the last 35 years. We have four children, two are married and we have six grandchildren, two of whom live on the Island and attend local schools.

I studied biochemistry and physics; but a serious motorbike accident left me disabled for a long time and made me realise just how fragile life can be experiencing first-hand the challenges faced by the disabled. A humbling lesson I have never forgotten.

My early working career was with the Midland Bank, now HSBC. This role provided a good insight into financial management. Banking led me into surveying, auctioneering and estate agency, where I qualified and became a partner. Six years later, we sold the company and I moved to the Isle of Man. A number of business ventures followed; my family's background was in farming and this led me to involvement in a substantial horticultural

business, which later diversified into leisure facilities, including a golf course in the UK.

During this time I qualified as a commercial pilot and have been involved in aviation related businesses as well as serving as an industry representative for twelve years on the UK Air Prox Board.

Politically, I was 24 when I first entered politics by election to a Local Authority in the UK since that time I have been elected at Commissioner/Council level in the UK and IOM, been a Mayor and Council Chairman, and latterly a German Commissioner Chairman and Vice Chairman, resigning from my role as Commissioner when I was elected as MHK in 2015.



I believe this off-Island experience has been an asset in a business sense as well as political connections that I still have in the UK. My private business experience has enabled me to develop discipline in applying sound accounting principles, paying attention to detail and most importantly, communicating; if you don't listen to your customer base, you soon suffer and in politics this translates to listening to your electorate.

The last five years have been a testing time, particularly at ministerial level. I believe in teamwork and the present Council of Ministers have worked well together, supporting each other to bring about the right results for the island as a whole and I sincerely hope that you, the electors, will enable me to use this experience in the next Tynwald and Keys.

## Achievements and Progress

Very importantly, within the constituency, I have worked to resolve problems and in the majority of cases, have found solutions.

In my ministerial role, I pledged to keep the Meat Plant open and reform agricultural subsidies; the Meat Plant is still operational, providing good returns to the farming community. Working with the farming community we have reformed agricultural subsidies retaining an element of area payment and provided more money to fund environmental schemes for the public good. This provides certainty for the farming community and will help preserve our environmentally and biodiverse farms, whilst enabling continued productivity. We should never forget that over 80% of the Island is farmed and it is the farming community that maintains this land and the Isle of Man looks the way it does because of their dedication.

I was very conscious, at the beginning of the administration, that our fisheries were facing competition from boats outside of our jurisdiction, verging on unsustainable. One of my first ministerial decisions was to face down the Scottish and bring a halt to what I saw as a 'race to fish'. Careful

stock management and the formation of a new industry led Scallop Board has resulted in a far better industry interaction, which I'm pleased to say, is leading to a sustainable scallop fishery. I have recently been able to increase catch limits as a result.

We are reviewing the Crab and Lobster Fishery, removing potential access by vessels from other jurisdictions. We will recapture more fish quota as that is returned to the UK over the next few years. I have fought for and secured five tranches of fisheries support over the Covid period, injecting £1.5 million into the industry.

An acknowledgement of the climate change emergency was made by our Chief Minister and as a result of that, my department and I have worked on a Climate Change Bill, which I believe represents a pragmatic way forward. I took this through parliament earlier this year and it will shortly receive Royal Assent. Underlying this is a comprehensive plan of action already commenced, advised by our independent climate change expert, Professor Curran. Consultation is out on the next phase over the summer period.

We are, at present, looking at energy generation going forward. The plan is for net zero by 2050 or earlier, if possible.

The UNESCO Biosphere accolade, proudly received by the Chief Minister in 2011 has champions embedded in DEFA and we have made great strides forward. Biosphere is about the environment but encompasses all aspects of our lives, culture, heritage, sustainable businesses and development. Our Biosphere status is an acknowledgement of the wonderful place we live in, it helps with our reputation worldwide and is a tourism asset.

The Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture is much more than the three main headings. We are a regulatory hub that includes Forestry, Fisheries, Environmental Health, Environmental Protection, Health and Safety, OFT and RTLC among others. We have been at the heart of Brexit and UNESCO Biosphere. Our remit covers operational planning and building control including registration of buildings.

I have worked with many organisations including Manx Wildlife Trust, Manx Birdlife, Manx National Farmers Union and Manx Telecom and importantly, worked across Government with other departments. To break down the so-called silo mentality.

# Biosphere

It was a great accolade that, in this administration, we have become the only whole nation UNESCO Biosphere. I have worked closely with the Biosphere champion embedded in DEFA. We have made much progress, getting the community to buy into OUR Biosphere. We have Biosphere partners throughout the Island including many businesses as well as schools.

Biosphere is not just about the environment, although that's an important consideration; it's also about culture, heritage and working for sustainable development. This distils down to things like single use plastics, waste disposal,

sustainable businesses and housing. We have received a number of visits from senior people in UNESCO and I'm pleased to say that all the feedback has been positive. I thank all the stakeholders who attend stakeholder meetings, which I jointly chair with the Chief Minister, for their interaction. We have a great story to tell and it's plain to see that we live in a scenic environment steeped in our own unique culture and history. This is a great tool to sell the Island. In the next administration UNESCO will carry out a 10 year review to renew that status, all the indications are positive and I will use my knowledge and experience to ensure we continue to be a whole nation Biosphere.



## Bathing Water Standards

Working through DEFA, I got Tynwald approval for the 2006 EU bathing water standards. Peel and Laxey are sadly the only two areas that have no complete sewage treatment. I have arranged for Peel bathing beach to be monitored regularly, and there are now quick-read codes available that link to the DEFA website. They give an indication of bathing water quality so people can make a reasoned judgement. As stated elsewhere a new treatment plant for Peel is a priority.



## Environment & Planning

We are blessed in the Isle of Man with some of the most wonderful scenery in the world that not only presents an attractive looking environment but behind the scenes with our small farms, biodiversity is everywhere. There is always more to do, climate change is motivating more tree planting. We now have a Woodland Grant Scheme for the first time in a number of years, better environmental schemes including the Agri Environment Scheme for the farming community and peat land restoration. I would like to see more small-scale wind and solar power generation.

The Planning system should reflect biodiversity and the environment as well as economic need. There needs to be better communication between the different stakeholders. Research has recently been commissioned into blue carbon as 90% of our territory is sea bed, to determine what our sea bed environment comprises and can contribute to CO2 reduction, alongside preserving marine biodiversity and sustainable fisheries. Beach Buddies and Plastic Busters have done a great job with community help by cleaning up beaches and inland areas as well as clearing footpaths. I will encourage and promote this community effort to ensure it will continue.

## Climate Change

After the announcement by the Chief Minister of acknowledgement of the climate change emergency, Professor Curran was appointed as an independent advisor and produced the Impact Report. This was used to inform the Climate Change Bill which I took through the House of Keys and is now awaiting Royal assent.

The bill represents a pragmatic approach to net zero by 2050 or earlier and works in phases with a degree of public consultation and reporting to

Tynwald. Phase one has already begun and over the summer, further public consultation is taking place (please look on the government's consultation hub). This will inform the next phase, there are important changes on the horizon and as Professor Curran said "we have to make no-regret decisions", considering future energy generation and other large scale projects. Once we commit, as a small nation state with limited resource, these must be the right solutions for the Island. These decisions need to be made now due to the long

lead-in time, particularly when it comes to future power generation.

Working with the community has seen the establishment of a Citizens' Forum, comprising a mix of individuals with different views on Climate Change. This public forum is helping inform the Climate Change Transformation Board on which I sit at present. A phased approach is important but we need a Manx stamp on it and not simply buy off-shore carbon credits.

# Climate Change Transformation Fund

This fund has been established, which with match funding from the private sector should enable in excess of £20 million of expenditure annually, funding a Woodland Grant Scheme, Peat Restoration, the Peoples' Forest and other transformation projects including solar panels and smaller

scale wind generation. These initiatives, added to the new Agri-environment Scheme, will in the next few years result in considerable carbon capture and sequestration and a far more efficient housing stock taking us a step closer to Net Zero as well as providing a cleaner, less polluted environment.

## Transport, Roads and Pavements

It is imperative for community inclusion that we have an efficient transport network which includes a mix of public transport with a greater responsive element, cars and other motor vehicles, provision for cyclists and safe areas for pedestrians. I will work to ensure that we get responsive transport to areas where there are poor public transport links such as Foxdale, Glen Maye and Dalby. We should acknowledge that people are people whether they are pedestrians, in their motor vehicle or on bikes. We have to ensure safe and fair access for all. Dealing with speeding should be a priority and I will press for better enforcement and traffic calming where appropriate.

Whilst there have been a number of major schemes throughout the constituency, as well as resurfacing, including some of Peel's smaller streets, the state of our roads and pavements is still unsatisfactory. The lack of routine maintenance some years ago is catching up with us and some of the smaller lanes particularly require proper patching or resurfacing. There needs to be better coordination between DOI and Local Authorities who are responsible for hedge cutting and maintaining pavements and visual splays during the summer period. I would be happy to be a link between the two as well as pressure DOI to bring forward a comprehensive maintenance programme that deals with issues rather than just sticks plasters on.

The Heritage Trail has been a great success, we now need the link going north and work is progressing. Whilst at DEFA I have promoted more and better public access to the government estate and encouraged new trails as well as renewing old infrastructure and improving access. The public estate is just that and should be available to all.



## Our Health Service

The pandemic has proved a great challenge here and around the world. Fortunately, our great health service and staff have risen to the challenge. Sadly, lives were lost but our Islands' great community spirit and co-operation regarding restrictions and earlier strict border controls let us avoid the extended lockdowns seen elsewhere. This was truly an unpredictable and unprecedented storm. Could we have done better? Maybe, but hindsight is a wonderful thing. Lessons have been learnt and if the same happens in the future we will be better prepared.

We will be living with Covid and its aftermath for the foreseeable future. This will mean us taking responsibility for ourselves in terms of social distancing, mask wearing, etc. where appropriate. We should also take advantage of any further booster vaccination programmes.

Manx Care has now taken over operational control of our health service with much reorganisation. It's early days but I will be scrutinising the same to ensure that the improved service and efficiencies that we were promised materialise.

Manx Care will however need proper resources to address the treatment backlog as well as a Covid vaccination booster programme.

In short:

- **REDUCE WAITING LISTS AND THE BACKLOG**
- **AS MUCH ON-ISLAND HEALTHCARE PROVISION AS POSSIBLE**
- **ENSURE THE NHS IS PROPERLY FUNDED**
- **ADDRESS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES**
- **IMPROVE SOCIAL CARE**
- **ACKNOWLEDGE LONG COVID**

## Health and Wellbeing

Peel surgery is being extended but there remain problems around the recruitment of medical staff including Doctors. The Western Wellbeing Centre is starting to establish itself, the variety of services that it provides are being promoted, which means a more joined up approach to medical and social issues. The centre will also act as a government hub, bringing services into the community.

After the sad loss of the Corrin Memorial Home, I have been working with the health department to secure a future for the site for health and respite care.

I am presently working with others on a Peel Men in Sheds project that may utilise unused buildings on the Corrin site.

## Electric Vehicles (EV's)

Having owned one for the last two years, I am a great advocate of EV's. They are still expensive at the moment, but prices are coming down and ranges are extending with a more extensive range of charging solutions. I am fully supportive of cheaper installation of charging points, as well as many more public access charging points. There are solutions available to people that don't have off road parking and I hope that these can become mainstream in due course. Whilst at present electric vehicles seem to be the way forward we should not ignore developments that include hydrogen and biofuels.

## Future Electricity Generation

The diesel generators in Peel will shortly be phased out and the combined gas cycle turbines in Douglas will reach the end of their design life by 2035 but this demise may be hastened by the addition of hydrogen to the UK gas supply. I have been involved in reviewing future energy scenarios and believe that a mixture of interconnectors, biomass, wind and solar, are the way forward. Tidal could play a part but at present, its development is still in process and not scaled up sufficiently.

## Post Offices and Banks

I thank the Community for joining in the battle to save the Isle of Man Bank branch in Peel. This is a sad loss to the community and local businesses. They treated us with disdain when they made the decision to close, despite having a petition with over 3000 signatures, without considering any other options.

We have been working through Tynwald, on preserving our local Post Office counters and the possibility of offering expanded services. We are lucky that we still have Foxdale and Peel sub Post Offices, which could offer more banking services. As a matter of urgency, the new administration needs to consider the preservation of the regional Post Office network and how these can be bolstered to provide some sort of community function, including banking.

## Education and Schools

Our education system is going through a refresh following the Beamans Report, which I supported. There is now less of a 'them and us' attitude between the government and the teaching profession. The teaching fraternity will be more involved in the decision making process.

The recent introduction of the Graduate Role Incentive, offering local businesses 20% of the first year salary, up to £6,000 and an employer National Insurance rebate for each graduate hired will help in retaining younger people on-island and attract some to return after graduating from university. There is an on-going need to re-examine how we bring the younger generation back and incentivise them to

## Regeneration Shops & Retail

I encourage everyone to shop locally, not only does it support the circular economy, every £1 spent in a local store generates from £1.50 to £4.00 through the local economy, whereas money spent in offshore retailers, for instance, leaves less than £1 in our local economy. Online shopping is even worse in terms of the local economy although renegotiation of the VAT refund from the UK has started to capture some of this income but it is far better to buy on Island.

Local produce is wholesome, healthy and climate friendly. In Glenfaba we have a garage and convenience store in Foxdale, the Tynwald Inn stepped in and provided a community shop for St Johns when the Post Office closed and Tynwald Mills continues to thrive under new management.

Peel has unrealised potential. There has been some controversy over the regeneration schemes, however, it is long overdue but must be sympathetic to the historic significance of Old Peel Town. I have had meetings with traders and I do hope that they will work with the new Commissioners to come up with schemes that link the seafront to the shopping area. There are examples in some of the streets of what can be done with hanging baskets and planters. There would be benefits for all with increased footfall, if people can be guided into the shopping area from the seafront and vice versa. I will continue to work with both sides and where possible, bring in central government funding to aid this process.

There are possibilities to develop niche shopping opportunities and develop Peel as the cultural centre for the Island.

Parking has always been a problem but my wife and I shop in Peel most Saturdays and we always find a space. Not forgetting our excellent eateries which offer great food and a further incentive to come to Peel town centre, seafront and harbour.



do so. I would like to see more work done in this area.

We are blessed with five wonderful schools in the constituency, including the world famous Bunscoil School teaching in Manx Gaelic, which will continue to have my full support.

In the last administration we secured funding for the new QEII STEM block, which is now in process. I'm only too aware that the Clothworkers School has inadequate buildings and will press for funding for improvements in the coming administration. There is scope for better pre-school provisions and I will encourage a review as a priority.

# Government Reform

I am a great believer that Government and Parliament should be constantly evolving where improvements are necessary. I served on the Council of Ministers Single Legal Entity Committee and have been at the centre of the new regulatory hub concept.

Incremental reform, rather than 'big bang' is the way forward. The next administration will have to respond to the consultation on independent regulators and the regulatory hub concept as well as how the government itself evolves. I have worked with the Department for Education, Sport and Culture (DESC) and over the next few months Thie Sileau Whallian, (that's DEFA

HQ in St Johns) will welcome the DESC team, which is a further regionalisation of government and has been made possible by rationalisations within DEFA. The number of Directors have been reduced from 9 to 5 with associated staff savings. This is something that needs to happen across departments to provide a smarter and more economic government.

At local level there is still scope for some voluntary amalgamations of Local Authorities. Our rating system is in need of an overhaul, if we are able to continue to supply services that people require locally as well as nationally.

## Economy and Taxation

If we are to sustain our standard of living and the things that we all take for granted, then a greener economic growth is paramount. We cannot continue to rely on finance and e-gaming, we must look to new sectors and revive some of the old ones. Changes to the worldwide taxation system may result in the end of zero-ten regimes. The recent grey-listing of some of our competitors highlights the need to be alert and be a compliant jurisdiction. There will be opportunities to attract business in this respect. We are a very safe environment, one that has good energy resilience, which may lend itself to digital storage solutions, along with other niche businesses. For example we have recently introduced a regulatory regime to enable medical cannabis production. We are also, as a UNESCO Biosphere, a very pleasant place to live and work; something that

we cherish and others may want to be part of. In many parts of the UK you might have to commute for an hour or two per day and certainly can't access the countryside in 5 or 10 minutes with all of the recreational wellbeing and scenic advantages that are available to everyone in the Isle of Man.

Connectivity to the UK and the rest of the world is paramount. The purchase of the Steam Packet has proved to be a real bonus, particularly during the Covid pandemic crisis, keeping the island supplied and linked to the UK.

A review of our air services and open sky policy is long overdue.

Even factoring in the impact of the pandemic unemployment has fallen.

Our businesses continue to expand and

hopefully we will be able to attract new people to the island with much needed skill sets, who will pay taxes and ensure we have a sustainable economic recovery.

Taxation is always a controversial subject. One of our unique selling points is that we are a low tax economy and whilst I believe in fair taxes if we lose this we run the risk of our economy simply turning into a microcosm of the UK without the subsidies that devolved administrations in the UK benefit from.

Homeworking during the pandemic has proven the concept. This will result in a different work home balance but more profoundly it has proved that individuals can be based almost anywhere in the world and still be productive. Exploited correctly, with our great lifestyle offering, it is already resulting in companies and individuals relocating to the Isle of Man.

## Policing

The Isle of Man is a very safe place to live and has one of the lowest crime rates in the British Isles. Our Police do a great job and I welcome the new community policing initiatives which are supported by many who believe that a visible police presence is necessary. I will resist any moves to become like the UK where minor crime seems to be ignored which leads to an escalation of offending.

## Library Provision

I recently attended the mobile library in St Johns and Peel. While this only reaches a minority, it is a valuable community service. I recently voted for continued funding and will carry that message into the next administration. I will also continue to support Ward Library in Peel, a valuable asset.

## Marina Silt

While dredging has taken place and the Marina remains operational, there needs to be a longer term solution. My department along with DOI have been doing work in the catchment where the silt comes from and plans are being drawn up to reduce the amount of sediment coming into the Marina. DEFA has secured £500,000 to deal initially with Kionslieu reservoir

to trap contaminated silt and later deal with runoff from Snuff the Wind Deads, where much of the contamination comes from. In the meantime, dredging needs to continue and a proper solution found for the silt. Moving forward after catchment treatment, it may well be that the silt reaching the Marina will be suitable for sea disposal. As DEFA Minister, I have been very conscious of the risk to our fisheries and not allowed contaminated silt to be dumped to the sea.



## Integrated Waste Strategy

It is paramount that the Isle of Man has an integrated waste strategy. DEFA and DOI are commissioning a report that will examine waste streams to determine whether recycling is viable or the waste should be burnt in the energy from waste plant.

Local Authorities are responsible for

refuse collection and there is a lack of consistency. A new policy and strategy could ensure that all local authorities work to the same standard. As a matter of urgency we need to address landfill issues. The new Turkeylands needs progressing so that Wrights Pit North can finally be closed and capped.

## Pensions

Reform of the Public Sector Pension Scheme has been ongoing during this Administration which has resulted in a more sustainable situation for the future. In terms of State Pension I will continue to support the triple lock principle.

## Waterfall Hotel, Glen Maye

The loss of what used to be a wonderful pub and restaurant is causing much concern in Glen Maye. My department has served a pre-registration notice to prevent any pre-emptive damage or demolition. I am committed to working with any or all parties to ensure its future.

## Further Residential and Commercial Development/Planning

With the North/West plan in preparation, many sites have come forward around the constituency, and fields around Slieau Whallian Park have raised some controversy. I will be opposing further development in that area particularly in the open countryside. I am also opposed to any further extension of Peel into open countryside. We should be using brownfield urban sites wherever possible and there are opportunities in this respect around the constituency but particularly in Peel.

As well as a residential development, which can help alleviate the availability of housing for first time buyers. We also need commercial development to keep people in Peel and reduce the dormitory effect.

As Head of Operational Planning, I have driven reform but we continue to need to make the system more transparent as well as digitised and user friendly. We have recently changed operational procedures to make sure that issues around trees and ecology are flagged up more positively to appropriate parties.

## National Housing Strategy

A review of housing needs is in progress. This will be a lengthy process and builds on the housing conditions survey commissioned through DEFA in the current administration. It looked at a sample of all types of housing on the Island and will inform Building Regulations as well as schemes going forward to address climate change issues and tenure type. First time buyers are struggling to get onto the property ladder and although we have schemes available these require review and better funding.

The availability of Commissioners Housing through planning gain in new developments will be aided by a Community Infrastructure Levy on larger developments that combined will provide more accessible affordable housing.

It is imperative that housing for young people is available or they will be lost to the UK or elsewhere.

At the other end of the scale, we have a gap whereby there is excellent provision of sheltered housing by the state, but unlike the UK, elderly people who have capital often don't qualify under the points system and there is nothing to buy that provides some form of sheltered accommodation. I await the outcome of this review and would welcome the opportunity to have an input.



## Government Spending

A number of projects in this Administration have caused concern. All large projects have unknowns, but contingency planning has been poor. The Tynwald appointment of a new Auditor General will strengthen the scrutiny process but better project management and planning for large projects is imperative in future. Scrutiny after the event is useful if lessons are learnt but government needs to be more proactive before projects are commenced.

## Tourism

Sadly, the tourism and hospitality industry have been badly affected by Covid border restrictions. Lockdowns and social distancing have had a severe impact. Business Grants have been made available to maintain capacity and I look forward to a relaunch of the TT. We need to take advantage of niche markets, glamping and eco-tourism come to mind. We have a great story to tell as a whole-nation Biosphere. I will continue to press for support to retain capacity and preserve businesses where necessary.

## Digital Inclusion

There are sections of society that find it difficult to grapple with the new technology. Digital inclusion must ensure that these people are not overlooked. Whilst the rollout of fibre has been ongoing, this needs to accelerate to cover rural areas so that these communities are not disadvantaged. Manx Telecom have indicated that most of the outlying areas including Greeba, Dalby and Glen Maye should receive fibre upgrades within the next 12 months. I will be holding them to this. The pandemic has led to many individuals working from home and this trend is likely to continue and can only succeed with good internet speeds. In a very beneficial way to the Island, businesses are discovering that staff can be based almost anywhere in the world and we must ensure that we are able to play our part and exploit new opportunities, attracting new businesses and individuals to the Island.



## Heritage Buildings and Improvement Grants

We should explore the possibility of reintroducing Registered Building Grant Assistance. During this administration I have been responsible for registering buildings and have registered more in the last five years than previous administrations over the previous 20. I am a great believer in preserving our heritage and culture.

## Peel Sewage

We nearly got there! In this administration funding was agreed, plans submitted but the scheme was thwarted at the last minute by a UK Planning Inspector's decision. He considered that Manx Utilities has not explored other sites sufficiently and consequently, the scheme has been lost in this administration. However, the North/West plan, which is in the review stage at present, will identify a site or sites for sewage works going forward and when ratified by Public Enquiry will mean that there will be no question mark over the chosen location. It is essential that we have a sewage works as soon as possible in the next administration. This will also address the Ragatte leachate issue; this will be a high priority for me.

## The Cost of Covid

It's difficult to assess the impact of Covid at the moment; it continues to have an effect on our health, mental wellbeing and economy. The vaccination programme has been a success. I would implore anyone that hasn't been vaccinated and can be, to do so. Government has tried to move away from mandating restrictions and it is now a matter of individual choice in terms of whether you wear masks, socially distance or choose to visit crowded environments. This is not the government abdicating its responsibility but allowing you to make your own decisions based on how all of the above affects you directly. It's difficult to predict what will happen in the future but we appear to be moving in the right direction. Contingency plans for the Borders and other mitigations are in place until a new administration is appointed, let's hope we don't need them.

## Animal Welfare

Unfortunately, the Animal Welfare Bill failed in the Keys. All the work including consultation is complete and I will press for this to be reintroduced as part of any new programme for Government at the earliest opportunity.

## And Finally ....

This manifesto covers many of the main areas where I have an interest or commitment but will inevitably leave out some matters that will be of concern to some. If I have missed something, please let me know and I will endeavour to supply an answer.

At the end of the day, this is my vision reflecting your vision gleaned on the doorstep and from feedback over the last five years. To move that vision forward I need to be a team player and

convince fellow MHKs to pursue similar policies for the good of the community, as I have done for the last five years, successfully working with the Council of Ministers and Backbenchers. I have not succeeded on every occasion but have a positive track record.

I sincerely hope that you will give me a further opportunity to put my manifesto into action. Working together we can make the West the best and contribute to a greener economic recovery island wide. Thank you in advance.

Geoffrey Boot

## Green Living Grant

This received Tynwald approval in July and is part of the Climate Change Initiative. It will make grants of up to £6,000, being 50% of expenditure in a household to improve energy efficiency. To start the process, a free Manx Energy Assessment will be available so that applicants can determine priority items to address. The smaller Energy Efficiency Grants that offer up to 100% of expenditure continue to be available. The possibility of introducing more general improvement Grants, particularly for low income households should be revisited as many of these issues relate to inefficiency and poor living conditions.

Quick link for an application to vote by post

<https://www.gov.im/media/1373486/postal-vote-application-glenfaba-and-peel-v2.pdf>



Quick link to the voting registration form

<https://www.gov.im/categories/home-and-neighbourhood/elections-and-voting/register-to-vote/request-a-voting-registration-form/>



Quick link to young voters information

<https://www.gov.im/categories/home-and-neighbourhood/elections-and-voting/2021-general-election/voters/young-voters/>



## Greener Manx Solutions to Manx Problems