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*With thanks to my Proposer Colin Robin and
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Manifesto summary: The island needs to get **BACK TO BASICS** with real **priorities. HOUSING, HEALTH, EDUCATION, ECONOMY & TAX.** With 26+ years States experience my interest in politics has not waned. Having sat in the public gallery for all but one States meeting over the last 4 ½ year term I have seen the issues which need addressing, except can kicking happened. The island cannot afford a repeat of another 4yrs, real priorities must be dealt with. We must continue to bear down on expenditure and to pursue efficiencies. Even so, there is no escaping the fact the States have to raise more money to pay for our essential public services.

Dear Elector

Designing policies and producing reports is often the easy bit, compared with finding the money and bringing the plans into effect. Delays reached a high level once it became obvious funds were not available. Many of the approved reports included costs at an extortionate amount from using **consultants** beyond our shores when the **talent available on island** with **local knowledge** is excluded far too often. This has to change and reflect confidence in local businesses and expertise thereby keeping the money on island. Many tough decisions and action must take place this term.

HOUSING The lack of action addressing the housing crisis has been stark. It's also embarrassing how the States criticise developers for stockpiling land with the potential for 1500+ homes when **the States has the largest land bank. The States must step in and use their own land to build more affordable and social housing.** As well as easing the current shortfall in housing it should encourage locals, as an example, our young people who left the island for University to return and contribute to island life and the community.

Listing the Castel Hospital tied up the site and **needs to be reversed.** With so much States land, building affordable or social houses gives the potential for some homes to have gardens instead of people living in high rise flats which has been suggested. Why should those on lower income be housed in high rise flats when the States has enough land to build homes like, for example, Courtil St Jacques.

Quality of life remains important, cramming people into small places has the potential for social problems in the future. The north of the island cannot take much more development, it's looking overdeveloped in parts.

Planning applications each week have many wanting to extend their properties. This is understandable owing to the high cost of properties available. But as a result many of the one or two bedroom 'starter homes' including small cottages are removed for those desperately wanting to get on the property ladder. The void needs to be filled by the States if they are going to help first time buyers.

EDUCATION, SPORT & CULTURE (ESC) Educational outcomes must be a priority before buildings, our education system needs to excel and receive the necessary resources to do so. Investing in children's education benefits all.

Moving the Sixth Form Centre students to La Mare de Carteret High School supposedly for 1 year, then 2yrs now more likely 5yrs wasn't the best decision by ESC especially when it now turns out the Sixth Form Centre at Les Varendes will be used to accommodate ESC staff. I have concerns for the students during exam time with all this disruption when it's so vital they have stability and continuity.

The La Mare de Carteret Primary rebuild has now been taken off the prioritisation list whilst waiting for the outstanding primary school review. At least two ESC Committees over two terms have yet to do this work. In the meantime, teaching staff, pupils and parents still remain unsure what will happen to their school.

Not enough time by ESC has been spent promoting and investing in **sport and the arts.** As well as the benefits to health and well-being involving both, it would also help our hospitality/retail sector with sports/arts tourism there for the taking. For this reason, I would like to see a **Sports & Art Committee re-established.**

HEALTH. Delaying the hospital extension would be a retrograde step, it must be seen as one of the priorities. It is unthinkable if barriers are put in place restricting access to health by wealth and I will continue to oppose any policies/charges that could result in a two-tier health system depending on the ability to pay.

The message the island needs to address the **'ageing demographic'** problem sends out an unfortunate message to those who worked hard making this island successful. They should not be seen as a problem. There will unarguably be a cost as there are more older people relative to younger workers. But many older people are very active helping parents by looking after grandchildren, older relatives or friends and providing invaluable help with voluntary community services.

Long-Term Care Insurance scheme commenced 20yrs ago, ensuring individuals no longer had to worry about their future care needs by using home equity against care costs. Before the scheme was in place people would find a way around the system by transferring property in name only to family members, or put the property into a company or trust. If the States do go down the route of charging against the property once sold, I believe the same avoidance will happen, typically by the better off who are used to dealing with financial and legal professionals.

I would like to see **legislation** in place covering **food allergies** as more and more people are being diagnosed with at times life threatening allergies. Legislation exists in Jersey and the UK, which we should follow.

ECONOMY/TAX Throughout my previous time in the States, I was known for keeping a close eye out for unnecessary spending and waste within the Committees. We must continue to bear down on expenditure and to pursue efficiencies. But even so, there is no escaping the fact that we have to raise more money to pay for our essential public services.

The States approved a **GST PLUS PACKAGE**, and **not GST** in isolation. The GST Plus package will raise money annually from companies, thousands of visitors and the wealthiest quarter of local households. The **PACKAGE, which includes changes to social security and tax allowance will benefit low and middle income earners. Seven out of 10 households will be better off.** I do believe that food and children’s clothes should be exempt from the tax. An amendment would help to freeze the agreed GST figure for a set number of years ensuring the rate wasn’t abused by the States spending on ‘nice to have schemes’. Unless something viable is produced without long delays, I will back the GST package.

Raising funds in some form of a **States Investment Bond for people to invest in**, needs further consideration.

The difficulties travelling to the island with unreliable transport connectivity hasn’t helped our economy. The States need to recognise the **airport & harbour are our gateways to the island and benefits the economy.** If it means subsidising or reducing fees this should take place. Once passengers are here the subsidy would be recuperated by those spending on island benefiting the **retail/hospitality sector.**

An **INTER-ISLAND FERRY taking vehicles once a week is not enough.** Solutions need to be found. The new passenger-only service is great, but those wishing to take vehicles to Jersey are unable to do so. This not only affects holidays in Jersey, but the motor racing fraternity/horse boxes/animals can no longer be transported in vehicles , unless they charter a ferry. Guernsey is also losing out on Jersey people coming here and those from the UK who used to visit both islands for a short break with their vehicles. They can no longer do this unless it’s for a week waiting for an inter-island ferry.

Moving **cruise line passengers** to the Albert pier saw a reduction in visitors previously walking through the town into shops with some on their way to the bus terminus for the round island bus routes. As smaller cruise ships can now enter the harbour, cannot all tenders revert to the ro-ro ramp side where passengers have more space to walk to Liberation Monument away from traffic on the piers and walk through town helping our **retail & hospitality** sector?

As shareholders of **AURIGNY** the States must address reliability with them as it’s costing the island dearly

The local cottage industries on show at Seafront Sundays has to be welcomed and encouraged along with small startup/pop-up shops, all contributing to our economy. **All local retail**, wherever positioned across the island, **needs our support**, money spent on-island helps us all.

A **YOUTH STATES MEETINGS** was held in the Royal Court with the Bailiff and myself as Mother of the House. Participants took part from across all the High Schools and Private Colleges. This was an extremely successful day. I would like to see a Youth States Meeting reinstated and held annually. The youth are our future, it’s their island.

RELOCATION PACKAGES need to be reviewed. The island is losing out on locals coming back as they are exempt from the generous packages given to those moving here on a permit.

CHARITIES - it’s important that States & Charity groups meet quarterly and work together.

A review of the **POPULATION MANAGEMENT** will need to take place, if tweaks or changes need to be made there will be enough evidence and data, plus feedback from the community, this will all contribute.

ENVIRONMENT Solar panels and heat pumps have been used on States premises with many more sites expected, once funds are available. Businesses and individuals have also seen the benefit installing these.

Form an **independent SCRUTINY & PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**, not including politicians.

THE GOVERNMENT BELONGS TO THE PEOPLE, it’s up to the people to decide what voting system they would like. Parish Deputies? District Deputies? or a mix of Island Wide and Parish Deputies? The public must decide. **A referendum must be prepared soon after this election**

States members voted to award themselves £4,000 if they lose their seat. Yet they know before standing as a candidate it’s for a set term. I would welcome the next pay review reducing members pay and **removing this £4k payment. What happened to public service? Being a States member is about service to the community not what you can get out of the community financially or otherwise.**

I was elected as a States Deputy continuously from April 1994 - October 2020, yet I’m still contacted by members of the community seeking my help, which I have been pleased to give, using the knowledge and contacts gained through my time in the States.

Political parties split the States last term by pitching against one another causing tension and backbiting. Where has the respect gone to agree to disagree? Personalities rather than the system has been a problem I still support our independent consensus system.

When **States members served a 3yr term** we saw more action, it meant they needed to get on with things. 4yrs has seen a lot of coasting with little action and decisions. Time to revert to 3yrs? Time to review?

If you wish to contact me by email or phone, I will do my best to answer any questions you may have, or if you’d like to make arrangements to meet up just let me know please. I would like you to please consider my nomination when placing your vote. Thank you

Kind regards

Mary Lowe

My States and Charity experience

Government – Department & Committee membership

- President – Home Affairs
- Minister – Social Security
- Member – Health & Social Services Department
- Member – Policy Council
- Member – Recreation Committee
- Vice-President – Guernsey Telecoms
- Member – Environment Department
- Vice-Chairman – States Assembly and Constitution Committee
- Vice-President – Guernsey Gambling Committee
- Chairman – Inheritance Law Review Committee
- Member – Scrutiny Committee
- Member - Children Board
- Member – Home Department
- Vice-Chairman – Joint Committees Good Governance
- Vice-Chairman – Parochial Ecclesiastical Rates Review Committee
- Member – Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Executive Committee
- Plus numerous other sub-committees/working groups

Non-Government membership

- Chairman/Director – Guernsey Women’s Refuge 18years
- Director – St John Ambulance & Rescue 9 years
- President – Hautes Capelles School mgt com 35years ongoing
- President – La Mare High School mgt com 35years
- Member – La Mare Primary School mgt com 9years ongoing
- President – Vale Primary School mgt com 7 months ongoing
- Vice-Chairman Women’s Refuge management com 18years

