

# Andy Le Lievre

## Manifesto

Dear Voter

My name is Andy Le Lievre and it is my intention to stand in the forthcoming General Election. I have been a deputy on two previous occasions 2008 -2012 and 2012-2016. I have also served as a non-states member on the committee for Employment & Social Security Authority (ESS) 2016-2020.

I am married and my wife and I have just celebrated our 49th wedding anniversary. Sue and I have three children (all with partners) and four grandchildren, all of whom live in Guernsey. I am naturally very concerned that at some future date our grandchildren will be faced with the prospect of finding a place to live in Guernsey should they decide to stay here. The probability at the moment is that they will all leave.

The severity of our current housing crisis and the dire consequences it will bring, if it is not neutralised, will befall all of us, from the very young to the very elderly. Nobody will escape the failure of our current services as they collapse through lack of funding and a similar lack of suitably trained workers. It is for the above reason, above all others, that I have been prompted to seek election.

Being a States member is hard work, but it is also very, very rewarding. I have come to regard my first term as a form of apprenticeship. I already knew how the States worked having been a civil servant for some 37 years before I stood for the first time.

During my first four years I served on ESS, Health and Education. In retrospect three major committees was too much, and I think I would have done better if I had concentrated my effort solely on Social Security issues. Which is exactly what transpired in any event. Just before becoming a politician, I had started work for the Housing Authority initially on a redesign of the Rent Rebate scheme and then mostly off my own bat on the amalgamation of the Housing's Rent Rebate and Social Security's Supplementary Benefit schemes – the Islands two biggest means tested schemes costing in aggregate £25M or so at that time and with a budgeted expenditure of £58.1M in 2025.

I'll spare you the convoluted route on which my chosen mission took me but suffice to say that in 2016, at the very last meeting of my time in the States it approved all the recommendations of the Social Welfare Benefits Investigation Committee (SWBIC) of which I was chairperson. It was a further 2 years or so

before the introduction of Income Support (the amalgam of Rent Rebate and SPB) came into effect.

I've gone into some detail on this issue because it underscores the length of time it can take to effect policy change and at the same time underscores the need to work closely with your colleagues (both civil servants and fellow deputies). The formation and operation of SWBIC had not been easy, being a mix of politicians of radically different political persuasions.

As an example, the late Deputy Roger Perrot became a very reluctant member of SWBIC but was nevertheless elected as the representative of Policy and Resources to keep an eye on this potentially rogue committee. Initially I would say he held slightly outdated views on social welfare benefits but as time progressed his position changed such that by the time we went to the States he had become the Committee's champion. It is likely that without his ardent support the committee would have failed. I will always be grateful for his support.

My SWBIC years and those leading up to it have prepared me for this next term and in particular tackling the Island's growing housing problems.

The Press very kindly printed an article I had submitted on the very successful actions of two previous States when they had been faced with what looked like insurmountable housing issues in 1918 and 1945. The committees of the day tackled the issues with determination and fortitude supported by a population who had come through times of extreme trauma both home and away yet still supported their politicians 100%. We must all learn from them and do the same. As a population we must support difficult even painful changes of policy with fortitude if we are ever to create an Island where the younger generations are encouraged to stay due to the provision of quality homes with all the usual amenities, and all at a price that is not totally unaffordable.

We can do it again and should I be successful in this election it is my intention to bond with other like-minded deputies to ensure that we tackle this problem with the same attitudes and determination of our predecessors.

I realise that this manifesto portrays me very much along the lines of a 'one trick pony' but that isn't the case at all.

I am equally concerned about long-term social issues which are going to impact the Island over the next couple of decades, the cost of long-term care and maintaining the value of the Old Age Pension against a backdrop of demographic change being just two. Both are going to hit us hard and there is no way we can avoid them. Dealing with these items together with our housing issues is going to call for strategic thinking linked with determination to get the job done.

Similarly, Education appears to lack a clear direction for our older pupils at a time when they should be experiencing stability and a feeling of oneness with the community. Now there appears to be no surety as to where their school may be built with existing schools being made into offices and build costs more or less doubling as you read this. Our youth is occupying a building that should have been demolished years ago with a leaky roof and inadequate facilities. As they represent the Island's future, they should expect better from government. Whilst on the subject of education, I have always thought that our apprenticeship scheme has never received the acclaim that it should – I would like to see it looked upon as a key enabler for the island's youth - promoted from its current second fiddle status.

I am no expert in such matters, but education is key to ensuring that we retain sufficient numbers of well-educated youngsters to ensure our ability to support ourselves without unnecessarily importing staff to service the Island. Once again housing plays an important role in this respect.

Just maintaining the services we enjoy now will be difficult enough especially when we are running a budget shortfall. Somehow, we are going to have to grow new businesses or build on what we have already, to maintain the standard of living and services we enjoy currently. Alternatively, we will once again have to consider income raising mechanisms.

I would hope that the new Housing Committee together with all those other committees involved with home building, land usage, education and job creation will get together and select the best way forward for all parties. For sure, there will be bumps in the road, but a 'one for all, all for one' approach should overcome most issues.

We will have to accept that from time-to-time different subjects will arise where agreement simply cannot be reached. My advice would be to move on. One of our current failings is that we appear not to move forward until everybody agrees about everything and consequently, we go round in ever decreasing circles discussing matters in minutiae. The result being that we do nothing or very little.

I also have more than a passing interest in our coastline in general and Belle Greve Bay in particular, having grown up near to it in the 1950's and 1960's. I am told that our responsibility for coastal waters now extends to some 700 sq. miles as a result of increasing our local limit from 3 miles to 12 miles.

These waters contain most of the wildlife that supports our local fishing industry whilst the shoreline represents a key investment in our tourist industry. Without the beauty and the health of our beaches we can say goodbye to what remains of our tourism industry. It would also heavily impact on what Guernsey means to most of us. I would like to see greater protection provided both for our seas and our coastline over the next States. The sea is part of our heritage and if we choose

to abuse it, we will lose it, as well as costing us dear. I am told that our 'sea grass' and Mearle beds are massive fixers of carbon dioxide – far greater than land based species and despite this we have only 'mild' (read weak) legislation to protect them. It doesn't seem good enough to me. I don't want these beds, which are very susceptible to damage from anchors and sea floor developments, and which are slow growing, damaged at all. I would hate to put a spanner in the 'Black Rock Development' but the States and the public should be presented with an environmental impact assessment before this development goes ahead.

Most of my time as a civil servant and as a politician have been in matters surrounding social welfare.

The cases I dealt with at the Public Assistance Authority and Social Security exposed me to the serious and not so serious problems experienced by single persons, families and communities. Despite the grimness of the job it (and on occasions it was very grim) it proved to be an ideal learning ground for what was to become a near life-time career in the civil service and the States.

As an aside, I also ran the Dairy over two periods. First for four years and then for a year to provide cover between managers. Running a business at a zero-profit margin is far more difficult than it sounds – invariably we ran at a loss which caused an outcry from the farming community, who couldn't understand why producing the best milk in the world didn't result in sales that proved profitable for the Dairy.

I sympathise with the staff and management of the current Dairy as they are taking a lot of stick for stopping the production of Guernsey cheese. The simple answer is that the value of the milk used in the production of cheese is by far greater than the cheese so produced. Should the Farmers be successful in their bid to run the Dairy they will find this out for themselves. It doesn't help towards profitability but when it becomes more economic to dispose of milk down the drain you must ask yourself if producing cheese is good option even though it might be very good cheese.

I will keep a close eye on future Dairy matters.

I pledge to work with my fellow Deputies and Civil Servants should I be successful in my bid to become a future representative. I further pledge that I will devote as much of my time to working with others as it takes to overcome our current housing crisis. No Matter how long that is.

I would be most appreciative if you gave me your backing in the form of your vote.

Andy le Lievre