

HOUSE OF KEYS GENERAL ELECTION
THURSDAY 23rd SEPTEMBER 2021

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Polling Stations

Centenary Centre, Peel
St. John's Methodist Hall
St. Paul's, Foxdale
Glen Maye Methodist Chapel
Will be open 8am until 8pm

For more information contact 215577



Public Meetings

will be held at 7pm (doors open at 6.30pm)

St. John's Primary School

Monday 6th September

Foxdale Primary School

Thursday 9th September

QEII High School

Wednesday 15th September

If you would like a lift on the day please call 215577



YOUR CANDIDATE FOR
GLENFABA & PEEL

RAY

HARMER

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Let's seize our best future together.

Dear Constituent



It has been an honour to represent and support the people of Glenfaba and Peel as your elected MHK over the last five years.

The resilience of our community and our support for each other has been remarkable as we've weathered the storms of COVID-19 and Brexit. As Policy & Reform Minister, I have been looking to the future and to re-energising our economy, seizing new opportunities through technology and green initiatives to enable our island to flourish.

My passion is to improve lives in whatever way possible and to make our community and our island an even better place. Locally, I've led a number of key projects including the construction of the new Peel bridge, the rebuilding of Foxdale main road, the reconstruction of the Heritage Trail, the completion of Market Place and through the removal of silt, the protection of Peel marina.

With funding agreed for a sewage plant to be built in Peel and the location to be approved in early 2022, my aim is to see building commence later that year, producing safe bathing for all. Another project where funding has been approved is the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) block at Queen Elizabeth II Secondary School (QEII).

The West has led the way with an integrated health and social care model which now needs to be fully implemented to include residential and respite care. Nationally, we have helped to grow the economy through the fibre rollout, the purchase of the Steam Packet and the new ferry user agreement which includes the building of a new vessel.

While there's been much progress, there's still so much more to do and complete. I have built relationships across government and in the local community and worked hard behind the scenes to influence to get things done. I've made vital decisions and persevered to see things come to fruition. My hope is that you will continue to trust me to represent you well in the years ahead.

Ray Harmer

Let's seize our best future together.

Profile

Since being re-elected as MHK in 2016, I was first appointed Minister for Infrastructure and was approached in June 2020 to become Policy & Reform Minister. When I was first elected as MHK in a by-election in September 2015, I served in the Departments of Health and Infrastructure (DOI) and was Chair of the Post Office. I am currently Chair of the Public Services Commission, having previously been Vice Chair.

Being involved in local life is at the heart of what I do. I have been Chairman of the Peel Heritage Trust twice and am now its treasurer, Vice President of the Cronk-y-Voddy Society and billiards team, Vice President of the Peel Gardeners' Association, Treasurer of the Friends of the Centenary Centre, and a member of the Western Athletics and Peel Golf Club. More widely, I support the Manx Wildlife Trust and Manx National Heritage. I enjoy running and walking, annually doing the Parish Walk to Peel, most recently raising funds for Graih. I've also cycled Land's End to John O'Groats in 2018 for Scouts and Live at Home and I play the saxophone. I'm married to Adele and have a son, Nathan who, since completing his studies at QEII, is reading Natural Sciences at Durham University.



Having attained an Engineering degree at Cambridge University and later an MBA with the Open University, I have previously worked in business on the Isle of Man for over 20 years. This has included responsibility for setting up offices worldwide and implementing systems and processes to enable companies to expand and become more efficient.

I was elected a Peel Commissioner in 2009 and have served as Chairman four times. During that time we regenerated areas of the town such as Marine Parade and Commissioner's Housing, built Clothworkers' play area, promoted events such as the Soapbox Derby and the Western Open Studio Art Trail, provided more recycling sites, free library membership, free WIFI and free tennis courts.

My Approach

My approach is to be open, honest and always ready to listen through surgeries, newsletters, the website and social media.

My belief is that the way forward is working together to succeed in these tough times. It is also applying the valuable experience and understanding I have gained in order to make the right decisions at the right time for the benefit of our constituents and our community.

Although the last 2 years have been dominated by combatting the threat of COVID-19 to keep our island safe, these are some of the projects I have been working on with others over the last five years:

- Acquired financial provision for the construction of sewage plants for Peel & St John's. Pipework already laid along East Quay and the location of the Peel plant site to be approved early 2022 with the aim of building later that year. Sewage plant also agreed as the way of disposing of Raggatt leachate.
- Established Western Wellbeing Partnership and surgery being extended.



- Completed Peel Road Harbour Bridge, the Heritage Trail and Foxdale Main Road projects.
- Obtained £1.1 million additional annual spend for improving our roads, many locally.
- East Quay Reconstruction to start this Autumn.
- Dredging of Peel marina completed and next step is to reduce any new contaminants.
- Launched Climate Change Action Plan which includes a new Green Living grant available from this October.
- Introduced statutory regulation for Manx Gas to have fairer prices.
- Purchased Steam Packet Company and signed new user agreement to secure our lifeline and new vessel.
- Passed Credit Union Bill & Manx Credit Union now established to support those on low incomes.



Sewage

A Peel sewage treatment plant was close to being built but in the end the chosen site was unsuccessful. However, other sites have now also been identified and a location will be submitted for planning approval in early 2022. If all follows the present course of action, building could begin later next year. I have contended for this desperately needed project over its long history which has taken many twists and turns. At last, we are now on the brink of seeing it come to fruition.

Health & Schools

Having served on the integrated care steering group, Glenfaba and Peel are leading the way with the establishment of a Wellbeing Centre – a one stop shop for health and social care, incorporating all aspects of wellbeing. This new community hub will mean healthcare focused around an individual's needs, directing them to the appropriate specialist care such as physiotherapists or mental health support. My aim is to continue to contend for more doctors, reduce waiting times and achieve overall better health care.

Having been able to acquire funding, our secondary school, QEII, is on course to lead the way through the planned building of a STEM block. This will enable young people to develop real life skills, promote better employment opportunities and even attract more young people back to the island.

Business & Infrastructure

The vital repair of our roads has been ongoing over the last five years, with around 19 km of reconstruction or resurfacing undertaken including the coast road from Peel to Kirk Michael and from Patrick to Glen Maye. As minister of DOI, I was able to realise the reconstruction of the Heritage Trail from Peel to Douglas. This is due to be extended from St John's to Kirk Michael. The improvements in and around Market Place were much needed and we've more recently seen renovations of property in Market Street and Douglas Street.

The Food Park has been updated and a new Art studio is now open, but even more can be done to attract businesses to Peel, such as creating small industrial units or office space to allow virtual working.

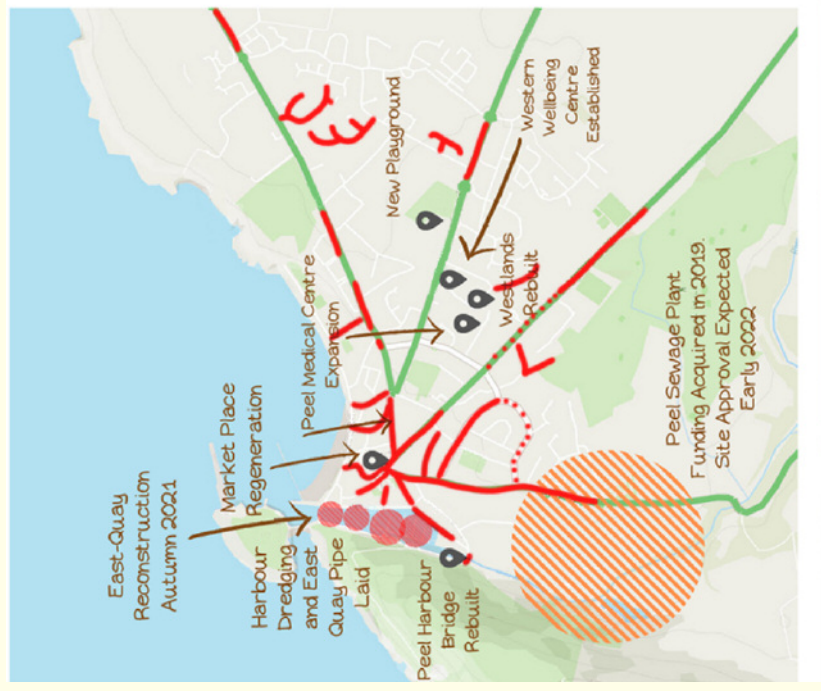
Having secured funding in the past for improvements to Michael Street, I will endeavour to do so in the future which will hopefully attract new businesses. Grants are available until October 2021 to update shopfronts and for events.

We need to ensure the Post Office network is adequately supported and there is the availability of cash in our community, which may need to be government subsidised.



PROJECTS COMPLETED OR UNDERWAY

- █ = Road Resurfaced/Reconstructed
- = Road Resurfacing Planned this Year



Economy

Innovation is at the heart of enabling the island to flourish. Digital and green technology and reskilling are helping to build a healthy economy.

Working in the Economic Recovery Group, we have reduced unemployment to under 500 with schemes such as Restart, where people are paid by the government to retrain on the job. Virtual working has proved to have excellent benefits, enabling flexible hours and bringing business to the Isle of Man.

Following Brexit, it is important to seize good opportunities such as new trade deals in financial services with countries like Japan and Australia. We also need to keep attracting global workers and entrepreneurs, through high quality public services and a safe setting.

Tourism is a key part of the economy but needs to be all year round and present the best the island has to offer, both culturally and environmentally, to the widest possible market. With the reduction of global travel, the Isle of Man may benefit from increased tourism from the UK and Ireland. In similar fashion, where other economies such as Iceland have spread their tourism across the year, we can do the same.

I argued for raising the tax allowance threshold and we have seen an increase of £3750 over the last five years, helping those on lower incomes.

As an island, we need to remain tax efficient and nimble. There will be challenges to our corporation zero/ten tax regime. As with changes to beneficial ownership rules, we can lead by positioning our legislation to meet these challenges. Increasingly, expertise and innovation can be our competitive advantage.

We need to keep investing in our high quality legislation drafting team so that it can respond quickly to change and take advantage of new opportunities as in the case of medicinal cannabis.

Health

I am a member of the Health Transformation Board which directs new changes such as the creation of Manx Care, bringing together primary and hospital care, but critically separating policy and delivery.

Other positive steps are to improve data and communication, make better links to specialist services in the UK and fully resource primary care.

I would like to see more funding in mental health for all ages with specialist resources so that treatments and support are offered locally.

As there are still too many unnecessary trips to the UK for short consultations, we should make provision for these to be undertaken virtually.

A new capacity bill is needed to protect the vulnerable on the island and we need to progress long term funding for residential and nursing care.



Housing

We have seen an increase in house prices since COVID-19 and so it's more important than ever to provide affordable housing. While DOI minister, we devised a mid-rent pilot scheme which has been very successful and should be expanded across the island. In addition, a deposit guarantee from the government for first time buyers would supplement existing schemes. New legislation will protect the rental deposits while regulations are tailored not to become overly burdensome. As minister responsible for the Eastern Area plan, brownfield sites were designated for new housing and formed the framework for urban regeneration. We have created a development agency to transform derelict government sites and provide modern housing.

Homelessness legislation is needed in the Isle of Man to provide pathways to help people who are sofa-surfing or relying on friends or family for shelter.



Education

A well-funded school-led education system with the aim of raising standards for all our children is the way forward. A fit for purpose Education Bill, in dialogue with our school leaders, needs to be developed. It is essential to invest in the wellbeing of all staff and enable separation of delivery from policy and inspection. I campaigned for the expansion of pre-school credit which has happened and needs to continue further. We can open more possibilities of lifelong learning by allowing people to retrain or do an apprenticeship, taking advantage of virtual learning as a mode of engaging.

Environment & Climate Change

Our Biosphere status is one of the qualities which makes our island special. So we need to protect it.

Planning policy should enhance the environment and going forward Manx Wildlife Trust should be given interested party status in the planning system. We need to leave large hedgerows and spaces for wildlife to flourish in our countryside. Our birdlife is under threat and funding has been invested to create coastal reserves. While chairing the Climate Transformation Board, an action plan was developed to achieve net-zero by 2050. Tynwald approval was given for the Green Living grant which I brought forward in July 2021, for any property where it's most needed. A free energy audit would be offered with a view to providing a grant. Solar energy should become the default for government buildings as well as for all new housing and developments. Using green electricity from Ireland and the UK could meet much of the increased demand. Hydrogen and biogas may ultimately replace natural gas as technology improves.

Research is being carried out into our seas looking at planting sea grasses and developing our coastal wetlands to reduce our carbon footprint. We do not need unnecessary or expensive schemes as we move to net carbon zero, but we need to build sustainably.

Infrastructure

Communications and low transportation costs are vital to the island's economic prosperity.

Telecommunications enable us to operate a business globally. I have pushed for an all-island fibre network which is now being rolled out and will contend for it to cover all rural areas.

The Douglas promenade is now nearing completion. While initially I instigated a quick resurfacing of the road, providing some relief to vehicle drivers, I then made the critical decision to take on the huge project to reengineer the promenade, where there were serious underlying problems untouched for many decades. Gas pipes, power lines and sewage pipes were crumbling under the road and fire hydrants were unfit for purpose. The final finish is going to provide a welcoming and ultimately safe gateway to the island.

Acquiring the Steam Packet Company and the procurement of new vessel the Manxman, were vital to secure our links to the UK. However, as post-pandemic travel resumes, we need to review our open skies policy to ensure our need for connectivity is met.



Farming & Fishing

Brexit has potentially opened the way for more fishing rights but we need to protect, support and restore our local fishing and processing industry.

Although the meat plant now provides better pricing and scheduling, it remains a concern. We need to focus on ensuring that the local market is fully served instead of underselling our produce in the export market.

We have seen artisan producers beginning to lead the way and even excel internationally. We can encourage this further by making grants available and removing red tape.



Policing & Crime

We have returned to community policing through additional resources. This is most welcome and will see an increased presence on our streets. The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Offences Bills were important examples of social legislation. We need to combat the increase of dangerous drugs and a future border force is a way to tackle this.

A combined police fire and ambulance base in Peel could improve response times and outcomes.

Governance

In my last manifesto, I outlined the importance of cross-departmental teams. Over the last five years, we have worked well together through cross-departmental boards on climate change and housing both of which I chair, as well as economic recovery and health transformation. This is a model for the future and works best when accompanied with full financial freedom. Earlier this summer, I launched a consultation on regulation. It is critical that the regulators are independent from operations and I support an independent regulatory authority taking on responsibility for regulatory functions within Government.

Ensuring budget spending is justified and not assumed was a policy from my last manifesto. I took this on board in my role as minister and we were able to make many savings including £1 million by outsourcing the airport baggage handlers.

COVID-19 has radically changed the way we live and put immense pressures on people in all walks of life. I have great admiration for people who have worked tirelessly in essential sectors where the day never stops. The same is true during the floods and storms. The government has also had to adjust and become more flexible. We have created various virtual 'task and finish' teams. As chair of the Public Services Commission, work is underway to embed these lessons in the New Public Service project, which is delivering more empowerment, less days lost to sickness and better outcomes.

Pensions/ TV licences for over 75s.

Since the last manifesto, I was committed to make TV licences free for over 75s and argued for flexible pensions, both of which have been introduced. Tynwald have approved reforms I brought forward to put public sector pensions on a more sustainable footing and have allowed flexibility to move towards fully funded defined contribution schemes.

Legislation

In my last manifesto I argued for increased drafting capacity for legislation. This was needed not just for Brexit but to enable reform. Within Policy and Reform I am responsible for the delivery of the legislative program and over 30 bills (44%) completed their passage during that time, with additional sittings used to tackle areas around climate change, adoption, competition and gas regulation.

