

Ayre and Michael

Andy Wint

We're live tonight at Ginger Hall. Ayre and Michael is the constituency is the far north of the Isle of Man. The constituency of Ayre and Michael is at the far north of the Isle of Man and stretches along part of the west coast. It includes Andreas, Ballaugh, Bride, Jurby, Lezayre, and Michael and of course Sulby. We're in River Meadow land – and tonight the candidates with us: Tim Baker, Sos Bousougou, Alfred Cannan, Duncan Livingstone, Tim Johnston, Paul Weatherall and Madeleine Westall. Phil Corkill has chosen not to participate tonight, so let's go.

I want to go to start with Tim Johnston, why do you want to be MHK for Ayre and Michael?

Tim Johnston

I've lived in the consistency for 25 years, Andy. As a final farmer I'm president of the National Farmers Union. I think one of the great advantages of our system of having independent, mainly independent MHKs is to make sure that all sectors are covered, and I want to make sure that that food and farming and issues that affect rural economy are covered.

Duncan Livingston

Yes, I've decided to stand because I felt a sense of dismay and frustration at some of the lack of common-sense ideas that the civil service seemed to impose on us. Things like just not fixing the roads. I think I can help and that's why I'm standing

Paul Weatherall

Well, I keep moaning and groaning about what goes on in government. I have lots of ideas myself about how it might be improved, so I thought I'd put my money where my mouth is.

Alfred Cannan

I came into politics to make a difference, Andy. 10 years ago, when I came in there was a financial crisis going on. The island was facing a period of considerable austerity, unemployment was increasing and heading up to sort of modern day highs. 10 years later, we've restored a semblance of normality and credibility to our finances. We've got the lowest rates of unemployment for 20 years and our economy has grown significantly over the last five years. There are several challenges ahead and I want to continue making a difference.

Madeleine Westall

I've decided to stand because I want to raise awareness of the challenges that we face in the north. I feel that sometimes we've forgotten about and challenges about our housing and our young people about refurbishment of local government housing. Other issues such as the economy and bringing jobs to the area.

Tim Baker

Five years ago, I was a newcomer, had 25 years of business experience. I've now had five years in where I've shown that I can do and that can operate in the political environment. I've got a track record where I've taken on the tough challenges and there's so much more to be done. I think it needs people who are prepared to step up, take some, take some risks, and make things happen.

Sos Boussougou

Initially I wanted to run in Africa as a candidate for President, but I found that because I'm established here, and my family is here I've decided to run for Tynwald instead. So, I want to bring a new approach to political representation in the heart of man to help every single voter out there.

Andy Wint

OK, let's go to the candidates now just to see what they represent and what they want to bring to the table. Let's talk about the north of the Isle of Man, first of all, Tim Johnston, obviously as a farmer, embedded in the farming community has the agricultural sector faring at the moment.

Tim Johnston

Challenging, and I think it has been for many years. I think when you're in an industry that basically you what you sell is sort of below the cost of production. Generally, it's always going to be a challenge I I think looking ahead. COVID obviously has been being a big issue, we're very concerned about what effects that would have on our markets in some ways, it's strengthened things in the in the last 12 months we've we have seen better prices for red meat, beef and lamb and dairy. But always the challenges of farming on a on a small island. High input costs some the most expensive freight costs in the world to deal with getting things on and off the island, small fields, these are all challenges that Max farmers have to deal with and taking that into account, an amazing job at it.

Andy Wint

Madeleine Westall - obviously you know a lot about teaching, you know, know a lot about young people. Last night we talked in Arbory, Castletown and Malew - talking about bullying in school and the inability to suspend children, what's the atmosphere like in school?

Madeleine Westall

I can't honestly comment on having a lot of experience of bullying in schools, and neither about whether students are suspended. I do feel, however, that the students have lost an awful lot of learning and we should value each and every one of our children and ensure that not one of them is left behind because of COVID. And that means that we need to have a program which gives that to help to all the children, whatever they may have missed. In the north, here we have very poor connectivity for ultra-fast broadband is not due to reach us until nearly 2025, and that means it's been very difficult for some children to stay up with their lessons. So that's my that's my recent take.

Andy Wint

What would you do if you were in Keys? How would you address the idea of regional and rural connected?

Madeleine Westall

We need to get broadband into every secondary school child's house irrespective of parental income, because today's today it's technology. Today it's global. It's giving them a global perspective and it's allowing them to flourish and achieve their full potential. Our students today can't do that if they don't have access to.

Andy Wint

Paul Weatherall, as far as education goes, how is education in the north of the Isle of Man in this in this region?

Paul Weatherall,

I think the primary schools do a great job for the people living in our villages and I'd like to see those supported in the future and sustainable and our most of our secondary school pupils go to either Ramsey Grammar School or QE2 from Kirk Michael area in particular. And I, I think we need to strengthen the college, especially to allow more facilities for people to retrain and gain apprenticeships in green technology that we'll all be requiring over the next 5 to 10 years.

Andy Wint

Duncan Livingstone, tell us about that road scheme, did you get that road scheme changed?

Duncan Livingstone

I did, yes there was going to be 10 speed bumps on the main road through Kirk Michael, which I thought was complete overkill. It wasn't what the people of Kirk Michael wanted they wanted the pavements fixing instead. We've got a scheme which is better than it was but is still far more than I thought was required. Obviously, the new crossing has been there - the subject of much debate - and yeah, I just think we need to fix the potholes, make things fit for purpose.

Andy Wint

And also you were a policeman for how long?

Duncan Livingstone

I did 31 and 1/2 years in the police

Andy Wint

In the road unit as well?

Duncan Livingstone

For 20 years I was a collision investigator, yeah. And I was also the advanced driving instructor.

Andy Wint

What do you think of the speed limit through Kirk Michael now?

Duncan Livingstone

I think 30 is acceptable and is reasonable there. There is an issue I know sometimes with every speed limit that they're not enforced as much as they should be, and that that's not any sort of reflection on the police. There's 168 hours in a week, even if they worked on every single speed limit for an hour a day, we've still got an awful lot of time where speed limits are not enforced.

Alfred Cannan

Well, Kirk Michael needed regeneration work, and it's got regeneration work, those pavements are being done at the moment they're being widened in certain areas. The school has got a new crossing going in into it. We're looking at enhancing Rd safety, but we're also looking at methods to try and slow the traffic down through Kirk Michael. This is positive news for Kirk Michael.

Tim Baker

Absolutely, and five years ago, a promise was made to the people of Kirk Michael that a scheme will be done. We're now doing it clearly, you can't keep everybody happy all the time, the reference that Donkey Livingston made there for speed bumps, was one of the options that was put forward. There was an extensive period of engagement and consultation where all the potential options were put on the table and the final scheme reflected the best mix of the feedback that was that was received. It won't keep everybody happy, but it's positive and it's getting things done.

Sos Boussougou

Yes, I think it's important because in the campaign trail, I've come across a lot of constituents mentioning the fact that a lot of people are not respecting the speed limit and it's very dangerous for people crossing the road, so I will advise that we look at it very carefully and that the authority intervene in order to help the constituents.

Andy Wint

Tell me how you think the Isle of Man should address climate change?

Sos Boussougou

I think climate change is a big topic, even mentally speaking, and we should look at different priorities. We have to look at air pollution, we also look at the water, the pollution of the water I'm mentioning the air pollutions, I would say that because we have a lot of cars on the road, we should make sure that we don't damage the fact that people want to move towards clean air. But in fact, the project is being enacted by the government are contrary.

Andy Wint

You want trains on the Isle of Man, don't you want a rail system?

Sos Boussougou

That's yeah, it's important because I want what we call an integrated transportation system here on the Isle of Man. That's means that will help reduce our carbon footprint. In the Isle of Man and have fewer cars on the roads and use the buses as well as the train.

Andy Wint

Is this new trains, new lines?

Sos Boussougou

Normally we used to have in the past some trains working even towards Kirk Michael by the fire station, if we can try to think about all those schemes before I can certainly study that scheme and come up with an answer to that will satisfy everybody.

Andy Wint

Madeleine Westall, how do we address climate change?

Madeleine Westall

I think we've got to set firm targets which the government doesn't hasn't done so far and make all efforts to meet those targets, looking at removing diesel and petrol cars gradually from our roads, but perhaps just by not allowing the registration of new petrol or diesel cars and incentivizing people to switch to electric or hydrogen vehicles.

Paul Weatherall

I think government has to help people adjust to climate change, but the government doesn't have to do everything we've got to bring in the private sector to work with us and everyone has a responsibility for tackling climate change.

Andy Wint

Has this come up on the doorstep?

Paul Weatherall

Yes, it comes up, it's not the biggest priority of people on the doorstep.

I think affordable housing is the biggest priority that's being brought. But on climate change, I agree with Madeline that we need to set targets. I think the government needs to work with the UK Government and Commission a second interconnector for electricity. I think the proposed scheme for grants to assist people in converting their homes to. Away from fossil fuels that's coming in in October isn't strong enough, so I think we need to review that and bring in a loan scheme as well.

Duncan Livingstone

I think that the government needs to lead by example. They did a fabulous job in St Johns with the building there, which is very environmentally friendly. And yet, at the moment we've got a new test center getting built and there's no ground source heat pumps in there, there's no solar panels in there, there's nothing which is recognized as being environmentally friendly being put into the new test set.

Andy Wint

Are you aware of any consultation when it was being planned?

Duncan Livingstone

I'm not aware of any, I don't know what exactly is going on with that.

Tim Johnston

What I'm concerned about is sort of anti-car movement that's sort of coming into government. Now living in a rural constituency like Ayre Michael. A car is a lifeline for a lot of people, small businesses as well - it's very important, it doesn't matter how good, and it's not great. Public transport is and great ideas about rail, huge costs. Let's not get into cuckoo land, stick to reality people need transport in the north of the island to move around and what I don't want through this scheme until the changes is for car drivers to be demonized and that that does concern me. It's all very well talking about electric cars, they're incredibly expensive, so if you can afford it, fine. But the irony at the moment is there, but they're using fossil fuel, power, electricity to charge them up, and they're not paying any road tax.

Andy Wint

What's going to happen to combines and tractors? What will they run on?

Tim Johnston

Good question, I mean, there's absolutely no way that battery power can be used in situations like that. Obviously, what we're looking at what we're hoping for, was developments, for example, within hydrogen and those sort of fuels, potentially using existing infrastructure, existing sort of combustion engines. But these are the big issues that we have to have to think about because what we're also going to be careful of is. Is the cost involved and that's one of the other big issues of all of this. It's right that the other man sets its targets, and we know there's the idea that there are targets, there is a climate bill in place. This idea that the government isn't making plans - there are plans there. The key thing is that we have a fair transition. We're taking everybody with us on that journey because there's a huge amount of costing involved in all of this, and that's my concern. It's just going to put huge amount of pressure on business and taxpayers.

Tim Baker

Yeah, it's a really important journey the destination of net 0 by 2050 is being set, It's really important. We take a very considered approach to what we're doing. There's already processes underway in government. All the key drivers of our carbon emissions are being evaluated in plans being developed around the buildings around transport and around our power generation. These are fundamental issues, we get them wrong, we've got potentially will undermine. We cannot afford to be back in beta Max in in a VHS world and we've only got one chance to get this.

Alfred Cannan

I think I think you know, there's a number of views around the climate change. I think first of all, as an island, we need to recognize that this is now an international program and that we need to be with it, and we need to be at the forefront of it otherwise we will fall behind. Secondly, we also need to recognize it brings with it a number of opportunities, opportunities for better housing, potential, economic opportunities for a better cleaner invite environment. There's a couple of things that we really do need to think about. First of all, is the plan, and we need to make sure that we do have a proper road map and plan towards leading us towards net zero and something that the public can understand where the money is being spent and what the benefits are to society from spending that money. We need to make sure that that plan is properly costed. And transparently sold so that it does not impact adversely

on household budgets. It's pointless getting to the end of this road, only to find that the costs of energy supply is so high that no one wants to stay on the island. And also we want to be very careful and this means getting the right advice and the right people on the climate change transformation board that we don't end up chasing shadow. Those and end up spending millions of pounds only to find we're not getting to the end benefit or that technology has moved on so quickly that that we're already behind.

Andy Wint

But we have off offshore or onshore wind power?

Alfred Cannan

I think that's one of the critical things working out what the what the renewable energy supply will be. There's obviously a an opportunity here for the island to increase its energy security, there may be an opportunity here, and if there are supply to be onshore and for us to potentially look at offshore opportunities to export electricity to offset some of the costs that might be incurred from any onshore wind farms so, but ultimately Andy, this is the critical point: The cost is potentially substantial, we need to work that out carefully. We need to work, particularly with the private sector, and we need to make sure that the end outcome when it comes to utility bills is appropriate and it's right for our island.

Andy Wint

We're live at the Ginger Hall in Sulby tonight for Ayre and Michael for the 2021 General election, which is 3 weeks today in three weeks today.

I want to go back to Mr Cannon, because affordable housing time and time again runs through everything that people want to know about our young people getting onto the property ladder. The dispiriting nature of private landlords sucking the life out and getting returns from the housing that they rent out, what do you think?

Alfred Cannan

Well, it has come into a major focus post COVID if that's the right word, post the immediate COVID emergency. The housing market has somewhat exploded. Let me take you back five years Andy, we had a census which demonstrated that 500 people had left the island. Our house prices were stagnating. There were for sale signs all over the island. Fast forward four years, we've got 1250 more economically active people paying income tax. We've got 600 more businesses paying IP and National Insurance. We've driven the economy forward with the right balance of financial measures in the budgets, and we have somewhat of a success story on our hands. But now we have created this housing bubble and it is a real problem. The next government is going to have to deal with this as a matter of urgency. There are a number of policies that we could bring in and look at whether we start to restrict the number of House purchases or the type of individuals who can make house purchases, whether we look at freeing up government land, go do some more affordable billing, there's lots of policies that can be.

Madeleine Westall

I think it is a real need for a capital development program for more local authority housing, so that for single people for young families and for older people who wish to who wish to downsize, they can rent

or rent to buy local or full tree houses and that would take the heat out of the private rental market, which is just appalling.

Andy Wint

Do you think there's a sense of grievance with young people not being able to get on the ladder with reaching for something that they simply can't get to?

Madeleine Westall

I think grievance is one word. I think we're also seeing the impacts of it in our population dynamics in that we have so few people now returning to the island. In the 20 - 29 and 30 age bracket and those that do remain here are not having any children. Our birth rate has declined by 35% and that is testament to the situation with the housing market, it is totally unsustainable.

Tim Baker

Suitable affordable and accessible housing is fundamental for the island's economic future. But to keep our young people on the island and to attract the key workers that we need for our education, health and police services in particular. My first suggestion would be that we need to create a Minister for housing because there isn't one at the moment. It's fragmented, I'm responsible for social housing, but housing generally has no single focal point.

Andy Wint

Is this coming up on the on the doorstep for you?

Tim Baker

Absolutely yeah, it's a big issue. I mean everybody wants somewhere decent to live and to advance in their life aspirations, they need a suitable home, whether it's rented or purchased. And at the moment we've got northwest wage levels and Southeast house pricing element doesn't.

Sos Boussougou

Yeah, there are so many young people living in parental homes at the moment, and I think that's it's not acceptable with Isle of Man not being able to support the younger generation. It's appalling. So, what I would suggest that the government stepping even some investors to build. Some 1-2 bedrooms flat or apartments, housing stock so that young people can live and give the parents some breathing space as well because they want to have that time and also young people want to develop and have a family of their own.

Tim Johnston

Major issue, probably issue after I've come across on the doorstep. A lot of people probably worried about their kids or grandkids want him to come back to the island. You know, the bigger picture is how it's housing. There's no future plan for the island or our economy, if we don't have the infrastructure, we've got serious problems for the future. Government's got to tackle, for example, the power that the big developers who got on the island, they've just. They've just got carte blanche to do what they want and they and they just and they just do the absolute minimum requirement of affordable homes in

these new projects. I think that's a real issue, government do just do not stand up to these large developers, and I think that's a real problem.

Duncan Livingston.

Yes, it's definitely. For people who are moving across, and we are losing talent which we need on the island. If the island is going to continue to flourish and grow we can't lose them

Andy Wint

So if you were in MHK, if you become an MHK, is that something that you'd see as a priority?

Duncan Livingston.

Yes, absolutely. I would like to see some form of residency act. And what I have suggested a few times is, I think for any new Greenfield development we should look at legislating rent caps and price caps on the price of new houses.

Paul Weatherall

Yeah, five years ago the first time buyer scheme was inadequate and now it's a joke, and there's proposals to improve it, and I think the next administration need to fully scrutinize what those proposals are and make sure they are adequate for the future.

Andy Wint

You represent liberal Liberal Vannin, is Liberal Vannin for more housing sustained housing?

Paul Weatherall

More sustained housing for both purchase and rent

(recording interrupted by mobile phone interferences with the debate)

Alfred Cannan

Anything from 30-40 to even in 70 or 90% more expensive than they were previously, and these sorts of elements have to be born into consideration.

Andy Wint

OK, I need to move on just by the way, can I just ask everyone in the room? Will you please turn your mobile phone off somebody mobile phone is playing up with our system at the moment and if you're listening at home if all they can just check your mobile phones because somebody got a particularly strong mobile phone signal that's interfering with us

Paul Weatherall

Could I just come in there though? Please Andy, I think government's been talking about having a housing strategy for the island for decades and we need to actually get to grips with that and the next administration needs to get a housing strategy that everyone can focus on with targets and move forward.

Madeleine Westall

I think I think Andy we also need to find out from the census how many of the units, houses and flats and apartments are empty because we may be building homes which don't actually have anybody in them, they're just assets to be sold in three- or five-years time. Well, there are certainly some houses in in this constituency that are only occupied for the minimum number of weeks per year, what would you do about those? Potentially you can take them back into ownership, potentially, but the other thing is is to look at the reasons why our young people don't want to want don't want to return to the island when they've finished university, and that is very much because they're looking for other things in at that time in their lives. If we want to attract our key workers back to the island, whether they're teachers or nurses, doctors GPs, then we have to give them an assured home when they arrive here and not just for one year. We have to be able to say if you bring your family here and take up this a key role, there will be a home for you. You can rent it to start with, you can rent it and then buy it.

Andy Wint

Right, it's a couple of minutes before we open things up to the audience here in the Ginger Hall. I just want to go very quickly, 30 seconds to each candidate and I want I want to talk about crime. I'm going to start with the ex-policeman, Duncan Livingstone how is crime in the north of the Isle of Man?

Duncan Livingstone

I think if you go to any of the Commissioners meetings, crime is relatively low. The probably overriding one which stands out is people are concerned about drugs. The truth, if you go to a commissioners meeting, the things that people seem to be concerned about our dog poo and speeding, if that's what people are concerned about, that speaks to the quality of life being good and crime being relatively low, Antisocial behavior? Yes, I don't think it's anywhere near as bad as it is in the bigger areas. I know Onchan have had a particularly bad problem with the antisocial behavior.

Tim Johnston

I would like to see the shift changes at the at the prison that the prison offers slowed down a bit on the way home I think you know a lot. A lot of concern and you know, joke. I mean the speed that we're seeing on vehicles on the road in Northern Ireland, and people will tell you it's been markedly changed since that since that business opening.

Andy Wint

No agricultural crime?

Tim Johnston

No, we don't see a great deal of that. I mean that is a big issue.

Paul Weatherall

I think so, yeah, I think there's crime, obviously in a rural area with sheep worrying, which it obviously affects farmers and everyone else.

Andy Wint

I mean crime, active, sort of visible crime levels are thankfully very low. But when you speak to the to the police, there is a lot of sort of underground drugs. Problem across the island really, so you cannot be complacent. In 2018 we did actually give £2 million more to the police to increase the community policing capacity. I'd like to see a more visible presence up in the north and be one of the things that I'll be looking to achieve if I get back in

Madeleine Westall

I would like to see a combined effort on mental health issues, especially for those that lead on then to crime whether it's some form of =social abuse or occurring and that needs to be the mental health team with the GP's and with the police all working together which I believe is going to happen in the North.

Tim Baker

Yeah, the big issue clearly is drugs come in from across the county lines. We need to be stronger borders the police need to be very much on top of that in terms of locally, it's about neighborhood policing and we just need more police that the police are hugely overstretched, there are not enough policemen and there needs to be more investment in that.

Sos Boussougou

To my knowledge, the crime rate is low. As for the rest of the island, but we must continue to maintain a zero-tolerance policy.

Andy Wint

Let's get some questions from the audience, then who have we got?

Julian

Two of these gentlemen, or and lady, is going to be elected to represent the constituency biggest constituency on the Isle of Man in in terms of area and, and it has the biggest coastline. Coastal erosion is a problem, now to do something about it. I don't think the answer is in major civil engineering works. I think the answer to this problem is environmental. You want people qualified in environmental issues to see about resetting grass and scope or whatever on the cliffs

Paul Weatherall

I think I take engineering advice, I think it is an engineering problem and an engineering solution is required in terms of coastal erosion in the Kirk Michael area especially.

Duncan Livingstone

I think I would support the idea of looking at natural solutions as well, but we are losing coast and places like Kirk Michael, people want their houses to be protected Tim Johnson can.

Andy Wint

Tim Johnston, we can't turn back nature?

Tim Johnston

No, you can't, but you can help manage the situation. You can help mitigate and I think Julie is right. I think, it's also talking to the people in the area and listening, and that doesn't happen. People who know that the land the lay of the land, they know where the water goes and where the culverts go, these things are matter as well, because it's not just about coastal erosion, drainage is causing big problems. I

Tim Baker

Yeah, it's already in hand in terms of protecting the key risk area with Kirk Michael.

Andy Wint

Are things getting worse? How much worse are they getting?

Tim Baker

Kirk Michael is suffering quite significantly in terms of annual loss of loss of land, and because of that, we've accelerated the priority of Kirk Michael. It's now been elevated into the high priority areas, along with other parts of the island. There's some rock revetment schemes, detailed design that was funded in the in last budget. It that's underway at the moment and we're committed to, let's say.

Madeleine Westall

I was just going to say the same, rock revetment schemes are they going to be the keyway.

Andy Wint

Rock revetment, what is that?

Madeleine Westall

So, putting large boulders down because it takes out the energy. Big boulders, it saves the land. It slows the rate of erosion and rock revetment scheme just to take out the pounding of the waves.

Alfred Cannan

This has been going on for hundreds of years, and if you measure it consistently across that period, particularly around the critical point Kirk Michael, where millions of pounds and assets of people property it threatens at the moment you'll find that rate of increase of erosion is about roughly about a meter a year, so it is significant. It is serious and I'm afraid the only solution at the moment available for that type of protection is a hard engineered one. That's why we've got the design and drawings underway and very much trusting that that will form a fundamental part of the next capital program.

Andy Wint

Have you had letters about this?

Alfred Cannan

Of course, we've been working on this for decades, because you can see the damage that is being done, which does bury or be it from winter to winter, but consistently over time it's averaging at about a meter a year, and it's getting closer and closer to significant habitation.

Sos Boussougou

I believe that the origin of the cost is a very serious issue, but it must not be done at the expense of the constituent real needs. There has to be a balance when we especially cost wise

Andy Wint

OK another question please.

Peter Lillywhite.

There are two things, but maybe three that I would like to ask, we love the Isle of Man my wife and I, and we've been here for 9 years, and we've built a nature reserve, but I believe that the legal system is broken and nobody mentioned that.

Andy Wint

What's your question sir?

Peter Lillywhite

I want to ask people what they think about the adequacy of the legal system, OK?

Andy Wint

And briefly, what are your other two questions you said there were three?

Peter Lillywhite

One is the building industry. And the other is not relevant maybe to Isle of Man, but I believe population control is the biggest problem on the planet.

Andy Wint

OK, let's go to the legal system, Tim Johnston - you don't have to give a comprehensive answer.

Tim Johnston

You're not going to get one, I'm afraid.

Andy Wint

Do you see any glaring inconsistencies or inadequacies in the legal system?

Tim Johnston

I'm not standing sitting here now. I can't answer that, but what I would say is obviously if elected, I'd want to understand, have conversations with constituents. If there are issues trying to try and understand it and try and find out what the issues are?

Duncan Livingstone

I think everybody has heard stories of legal inequality's it's not just here, it's across the world we are luckier than lots of places. I'm sure it could be improved. I would like to be in a position where I could try and improve it.

Andy Wint

You don't have to comment on this, but is the Isle of Man better served by a Manx or an Off Island chief constable?

Tim Johnston

Personally, I think off island is better.

Andy Wint

OK, Paul Weatherall – the legal system

Paul Weatherall

I think one of the issues is the cost of getting access to legal aid and so I think that's one of the major factors in fairness in justice on the island

Alfred Cannan

A significant room for improvement. There's just been a quite a lengthy report undertaken by Jane Paul Wilson, a member of the legislative counsel, but the critical factor that and one of the big issues here is when things go wrong when people are not getting proper legal service or are being ill advised, there is very little recourse, independent recourse to have a proper judgment made to resolve that and to take a proper view as to whether or not advocates have given proper advice in line with their professional standards and that's a glaring problem and it continues to be a problem and it needs resolution.

Sos Boussougou

The legal system, especially with regards to crime, I believe it must be dealt with fairly. I think that if I'm elected, I will advocate the fact that it's important that the sentencing fits the crime. For example, if I take an example, somebody who are still something in the shop, or somebody who was maybe raped a woman and somebody maybe a sentence for maybe a week, and shall say a few months and then he's out while the one he sent us for maybe five years, so it has to be adequately assessed.

Tim Baker

At a high level fundamental, you've got to have a good justice system on the island, otherwise, confidence in the island's of jurisdiction is completely undermined without going to the detail of Mr Lillewhite's, particular situation, there needs to be a mechanism for redress for him, and there's the Justice Select Committee, which is now part of the scrutiny setup of Tim Walden. And very much would encourage that root for the particular issue.

Madeleine Westall

I think legal aid has to be made available to everybody. And I think it's been fairly stagnant for the last decade in terms of who...

Andy Wint

Well, the advocates would agree with you.

Madeleine Westall

Yeah, they haven't had an increase either for their legal hate for giving legal aid, but it's more of the fact that people should be able to access legal aid if they're entitled to it. May I also say that in terms of nature reserves, we need a strengthening of designation in terms of size, sites of Special Scientific Interest so that places like Jurby airfield cannot be inadvertently built over and we lose species which we know are in decline. We have to protect habitats on our Biosphere

Andy Wint

OK, our next question.

Andrew Roberts

Bearing in mind the last person to win the MLC election, after their election about two days before we went into lockdown that their priority was some kind of media investment, how do you feel about the way we appoint and elect or MLCs? (Member of the state Legislative Council)

Tim Baker

Baker, well, we've changed it quite significantly in the last five years, and I think there's still. There's still a fair degree of dissatisfaction with what we've got, and we've now got MLCs now standing for Keys

Andy Wint

Whilst remaining MHKs

Tim Baker

I mean, that's obviously they haven't anything wrong there, but it may it doesn't quite feel right

Andy Wint

You feel uneasy about it?

Tim Baker

That yeah, I think because if they don't get reelected then just going to go back in as a as a as an MLC and carry on as if nothing had happened whereas other MLC have stood down to fight the constituency. And I think that was the right thing to be done. I think we can keep on talking about the structure of MLCs and how many MHKs there should. For me, it's about what's going to deliver the best outcomes for the people of this island.

Alfred Cannan

There's been a significant blurring of the lines of what the role of the MLCs actually are, which is to provide scrutiny when it comes to legislation, and that distinction is being significantly blurred as they've continued to persist in wanting to carry on forming and shaping policy without the public mandate to do so, the issue really revolves around do you need 9 full-time members of the Legislative Council? Lord Lisvane suggested that was powered down and that the individuals went in on a day rate to scrutinize legislation. That is my preferred stance. That's where the position should be and the full-time politics and policies should be left to the members of the House of Keys.

Paul Weatherall

Yeah, I think we need to review the need for the Legislative Council in the 1st place

Andy Wint

In principle, we need it don't we?

Paul Weatherall

Yeah, we need to review whether we need it and all and if we do need it then we need to review its purpose. But if we do have legislative councilors they should definitely be directly elected by the public.

Duncan Livingstone

Yes I would say the same as Paul I think. It should be election by the public to the MLC, I also think there are too many MLCs and too many MHKs, and I would support a reduction. I know it's turkeys voting for Christmas, and I might be a lone voice, but I definitely think that we should be looking to reduce the number.

Andy Wint

Have you heard that from constituents from voters?

Duncan Livingstone

I've had conversations with people previously and on the doorstep about it.

Tim Johnston

I think the key is their job description, which is scrutiny, and that's all it should be. And along that's in place, I don't think they should be elected. I think if they're doing that job, that's fine. I mean the key thing here is that is primary thing is the Keys, the Keys will always have the final say and that is the right way around. That's the democratic way, and as long as that stays, that's the right structure.

Sos Boussougou

In my view, in my view there must be a level of a content accountability, but the bottom line is the voice of the people. The voice of the constituent must be heard.

Andy Wint

Time for the next question...

Katrina Livingstone

I'd like to know people's position on how effective current sentencing is for drug abuse crimes and legalization of cannabis. People are arrested for drugs and they go to prison and they come out and they do drugs again and they go back to prison and it seems like an awful waste of time. Do they have any ideas for a more effective way of tackling this? Especially with young people whose lives are wasted?

Tim Baker

I mean it's a it's a huge issue that's facing us I would be very much guided by the views of the of the chief of Police, Chief, Constable and also in terms of the other aspects of Miss Livingston's question

around the public health aspects, but we need to protect the Isle of Man and we need to make sure that we are not opening ourselves up opening Pandora's box, but what we've got at the moment is not working.

Andy Wint

Madeleine, people will be listening to us around the world live all over the world and they think the Isle of Man, drugs? It just doesn't sit right, how have we got this far, what what's your answer to the question?

Madeleine Westall

Education, education and more education. Simply get the young ones, don't hold back. Tell them exactly what drugs do to them, and I include in that legal drugs such as alcohol and just let them be educated. Those that do take the wrong path tend to be young adults and they will because they're at the risk-taking site time of life. And it's you're quite right. Sending them to prison is often counterproductive, but it's not counterproductive to help them get back on the right track.

Alfred Cannan

Well, I think rehabilitation is the key here, particularly for first time offenders who are going to prison. I think we've lost a lot of potential of the ethos that we used to have with prisoners in terms of giving them opportunities. I know within the prison people are being given educational opportunities, but it used to be the case that prisoners were brought out. We were given jobs to do around. The island those types of work schemes where they were and received a small, very small income would help in in the rehabilitation and I think we let need to be less circumspect about that and look to be a bit more positive in terms of allowing people to undertake that kind of rehabilitation work because I think it'll have a positive impact on them at that at that early stage and to try and prevent reoffending.

Andy Wint

Where do you stand on the legalization of cannabis?

Alfred Cannan

I think the government is looking at the moment in terms of the medicinal cannabis we've now got the legislation in place. We've got the GSC looking at the regulations around it. I'm very hopeful to see a diversification industrial diversification which might also present opportunities for some farmland or certainly some farm. And industrial areas to carefully and a controlled way grow the medicinal cannabis and I think we should take it one step at a time. I think we should get that project underway.

Tim Johnston

I think there's a danger of making sure that we separate rehabilitation, which is really, really important. Just because when we're maybe failing the our children in in prison doesn't mean we should like we should legalize cannabis. I think you know, I think there's a huge step. I agree with the idea that you know we, we've got new legislation on cannabis oil exports as a as an industry, and that's very positive. As I've said, we're talking about looking, looking at medicinal cannabis, and that's again a positive thing. But to go from that to suddenly say that stepped aside and say, well, let's just legalize all of it. Yeah, that is not something I could I would support at this state.

Andy Wint

What about the split between medicinal and recreational?

Tim Johnston

As I say, having proper legislation in place for medicinal cannabis understanding that having that conversation, I think that's a that's a, that's me I would support, but going from that to fully legalizing is to me a very two bigger step without having a much bigger consultation about what the impacts of that would be on society as a whole.

Duncan Livingstone

I support legalizing cannabis, recreational and medicinal.

Andy Wint

You'd happy for people to spliff up?

Duncan Livingstone

I think that we should also be decriminalising all drug use for users. I think what we should be doing though is, but by doing that. We can make revenue from it, we can grow a quality product so that we know that the product that people are using is not cut with PCP or something else and also it needs to be treated as a welfare issue.

Tim Johnston

But as a traffic officer, how would you feel about people driving around the island basically under the influence of potentially hard drugs?

Duncan Livingstone

There are tests out and alcohol is legal, people drink and drive. It's not the fact that alcohol is legal is why people drink and drive.

Paul Weatherall

Yeah, well, the abuse of drugs and alcohol is a mental health issue I think. I think we should be reviewing the Misuse of Drugs Act 1990 over the next said ministrations. Go out to public consultation and I like Duncan. I support of legalizing cannabis. I'm not sure I'd go as far as decriminalising all drugs, but Portugal has in Oregon in the United States and jurisdictions all around the world are changing their views. The war on drugs has failed. Build I think we need to move with the times and get to grips.

Sos Boussougou

With it, yeah, prison is not necessarily the answer, so I will push for a program, a scheme to try to integrate our young people into our society and then get the social workers to support and help them.

Andy Wint

Next question, oh it's Vivian Quane...

Vivian Quane

And we've got all these large developments around the island, and you were talking before about heat and electricity and, why is there not some way of saying they should either have solar panels or underground heating when they're building the estates?

Paul Weatherall

I didn't quite catch the question, but I think it's referring to solar panels on the hour.

Andy Wint

If we're going to build it if we if we're going to build new houses, why don't we make them eco-friendly?

Paul Weatherall

Yeah, I think planning regulations, building regulations are slowly changing not quickly enough and I think yeah, that certainly needs to be brought in.

Andy Wint

Oh, but don't you find that's where the public don't quite get it, the Isle of Man can create its own laws. We can create laws, change laws. If Tynwald wanted to get it into its head to make solar panels mandatory, they could. And the public will probably follow and do it if you make if you, if you put a a discount on them or a tax break or whatever, yeah.

Paul Weatherall

This is this is for new housing, but the problem we have is that we've got all of the housing that we're all living in unconverted, and what we're going to do about that. That's a much bigger issue I think.

Madeleine Westall

I want to see solar fields at a patch of land the size of a football pitch with solar panels will generate enough electricity to power 100 homes. So if you couple that with giving people grants to put solar panels on their own homes on the roofs, and you don't leave anybody out by making them pay large amounts for this, it's a winner.

Tim Baker

I mean building regulations have been have been upgraded and they're going to continue to be upgraded as we journey towards more carbon neutral housing. Then this is all part of the whole debate around power generation and we need that holistic approach in the list.

Sos Boussougou

I will support solar panels as long as the scheme is followed by a scheme that is affordable for every person.

Alfred Cannan

Well, it goes back to the whole climate change program and the and the need to have a proper costed road map these potentially are quick wins, but they also impact in terms of the costs of those how they

are paid for and if they're going to be subsidized by the taxpayer in what circumstances they're going to be subsidized needs to be thought through. If we don't put together, this is absolutely critical about the whole climate change program. If we don't put together a road map for that everybody can understand in terms of the phases and where public money is going to be invested in more capacity we're going to lose the public on this journey, and it's important that everybody is engaged and comes with us on.

Andy Wint

OK, now we've come to the point in the evening where each candidate will have one minute to tell you why you should vote for them to be one of the two MHKs for Ayre and Michael, first is Sos Boussougou

Sos Boussougou

My DR Sos Boussougou. I am coming with a new approach that is no one is left behind and no issue is discarded. That's the new approach I am bringing into Manx Political representation, viola.

Tim Baker

It's vital that the people of the Isle of Man make the right choices on the 23rd of September, we've got some difficult challenges ahead of us as we build back from Covid, and we forge a new economic future in a changed international environment. I've demonstrated over last five years of track record and shown what I can do on the back of my 25 years of business experience. I've got a very widespread of experience right across government, and I've stepped up and taken on the tough stuff. Stepping in where people may have stepped back due to political risk, we need people who roll the sleeves up and get things done, I'll hit the ground running. I'm a team player, I'm focused on improving outcomes for the people of the Isle of Man, I will put the Isle of Man first and I will not let you down.

Alfred Cannan

The issues facing the island are many and complex from Covid to climate change, from housing to hospitals, we need a refreshed and renewed government to deliver solutions and better outcomes for the island. I have a five-year track record of delivery with the nation's finances delivery that meant consistently budgets that. Put people first by raising personal allowances, raising child benefit, bringing about targeted investment into public services, and much more, including purchasing the Steam Packet. 18 months ago I delivered a full package of support and state intervention to combat the COVID crisis. These unique packages were delivered were based around salary support, business support schemes and the banks earnings replacement allowance, and these have helped protect and support thousands of jobs, families and businesses across the island. I have the ability and experience to tackle the big issues. I ask you to vote Cannan for a secure and sustainable future for island home.

Andy Wint

Phillip Corkill is standing but has chosen not to take part in tonight's debate so alphabetically, Tim Johnston.

Tim Johnston

Since early June, I have traveled around Ayre and Michael to talk to as many of you as I can and listen to your feedback and concerns. In an isolated constituency like Aaron Michael, you want a visible accountable MHK working hard for you. I want to do my part in ensuring that government works for

you, not for itself. A government that regains your trust by being open, transparent and accountable, the new administration must provide clear political leadership and set out a comprehensive joint of economic plan as soon as possible to take us towards a post Covid recovery and face the big issues like housing, health and infrastructure. I will question and scrutinize on your behalf and I will not forget my responsibilities to you as your MHK.

Duncan Livingstone

I like to think that I have common sense. I'm honest, I'm open, I listen to what people say I care passionately about the Isle of Man and the north of the island in particular .If you vote for me, I will do the best that I can, I will listen to what you have to say and I will take advice where I need to take advice what I would say though is please use your vote. Don't waste it. Make sure you vote for the candidate who you think is going to do the best for the Isle of Man.

Paul Weatherall

I've got the energy and the commitment to work in your best interests alongside whoever else is selected with me if I'm successful on September the 23rd. I hope you will read my manifesto. It's got a whole raft of policy, discussions, and ideas in, and then you will consider me to give me one your vote together I really believe we can make a difference in Ayre and Michael, thank you.

Madeleine Westall

I want to stand because I want to be s MHK who acts to scrutinize government bills and government spending and stop the waste that is going on in and wasting taxpayers money. I believe I'm the right person because I have experience. I have been a local Commissioner both in Maughold and now in Lezayre. I'm committed to the island, I'm committed to rural life, I'm committed to speaking up for the people of Ayre and Michael, and whether it be housing or not being able to get access to a GP not being able to get hold of a bus at any time of day. Those are the things that are important and I want to make sure that this island moves forward sustainably and also economically, powerfully into the next decade.

Andy Wint

Ladies and gentlemen, you've heard the candidates for Ayre and Michael. I just want to remind you that there are, it used to be called requisition meetings, but now organized by the government last night of course, there was one at Andreas Primary School next Tuesday the 7th, as at Jurby primary School Thursday the 9th at Ballaugh Parish Hall Wednesday the 13th at Sulby Primary School on Thursday the 16th it's at Michael Primary school and Monday the 20th of September the Bride Methodist Church Hall holding those meetings. So I urge you to go to those to engage with your prospective MHKs and to quiz them about what it is that you want from them and how they can connect with you. Because the Isle of Man, well, it's been said tonight, maybe the Isle of Man has too much politics. Too many politicians. Well, I don't see any slacking off in attention for our key general election, which will be three weeks tonight .

Now, we're going to be out and about fairly shortly, ladies and gentlemen, because Manx radio all next week for the next two weeks we're going to be live for Douglas East next Monday will be at Jack's bar and Steakhouse on Tuesday, for Douglas North at UCM on Homefield Rd, for Douglas South on the 8th at the Pinewood Community Hub in Paul Rose, on the ninth for Garth, will be at the shore in Laxey

Friday the 10th, a week tomorrow for Glenfaba and Peel at Peel Golf Club, Monday the 13th at the Mitre in Ramsey with the many candidates for Ramsey. On the 15th will be at Douglas Rugby Club for Middle, and then on the 16th at Ocean Views in Onchan Park for Onchan. Monday the 20th will be at the Bay in Port Erin for Rushen, and finally on the 21st 2 days before the election will be at 7 kingdoms for Douglas central.

Ladies and gentlemen, it's been a pleasure to be with you tonight. I want to thank everybody who's been with us. Beth Espey is with me, Beth, what do you think of tonight's performance?

Beth Espey

I think it just shows how much people really care about their constituency. We've got a roomful of people here, I know we didn't get to everybody's questions, but everybody really seems to have a focus on this election. I know it's been mentioned about people using their vote. Obviously, today was the last day to register to vote, too late now if you haven't already done it. But, what we haven't talked about is young voters and I don't know whether any of the candidates have been speaking to the young voters on the doorstep. There's a real feeling that young voters hold the key in many of these constituencies, and in some places really can change the outcome.

Andy Wint

Well, it will be interesting to see you know we take Mannin Line out to the schools. And if anybody wants a bit of a laugh, but it is serious in the end, go to manxradio.com and look when we sent Elliot Turnbull out to Strand Street on a rainy Friday night, what the people on Strand Street thought of politicians and whether they thought they would go in to vote. Now you could say that's funny, but everybody has to vote because democracy is like a machine, it's like a muscle. Any personal trainer will say you use a muscle or you lose it. All I'll say to you is democracy is a muscle and unless we use it and unless we participate you will not get the most out of it. And if you don't vote, you can't moan. And I'll be saying that to everyone on the Mannin Line, ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank the candidates for coming here tonight. For some, it's been hell on Earth. Others know exactly what they're doing, but we really appreciate your time here tonight at Ginger Hall in Sulby.