# Douglas South Constituency Debate

# Transcript

**Andy Wint**

Good evening and welcome live to the Pulrose community pub. It’s the constituency debate for Douglas South! It is the modern home the Island’s parliament, which is located in the legislative buildings on Bucks Road. The boundaries of Douglas South include the districts of Anagh Coar, Ballaughton and Pulrose. The MHKs before the House of Keys was dissolved on the 12th of August were Claire Christian and Paul Quine. There are four candidates for this constituency for two weeks tomorrow, Claire Christian, Gerard Higgins, Sarah Maltby and Paul Quine. We'll also hear from the audience at the pool Rose Community pub. I'll have to tell you I'm sitting just in front of the pool table by the oven, I've never done that before. Why do you want to be MHK for Douglas, Claire Christian?

**Claire Christian**

Thank you, Andy. My name is Claire Christian, I was born and I was also educated on the Isle of Man and I currently live in Saddlestone in the Douglas South constituency. I basically got into being a politician because before I got elected about six months or seven months before and that was due to the pandemic and I started helping with the local businesses and self-employed people and helping them to understand the business support and widening that support to them. Growing our existing economy is one of my three top national priorities. And because 70% of our local economy is based on small businesses and self-employed people. I want to be the MHK because I because I have, it's been it's my calling - it's been something that I've really, really put my heart and soul into absolutely helping the people of Douglas, South and nationally and really making a difference. And I've been reminded of that when I've gone around the constituency and at meeting people and seeing their point of view and then giving me wonderful feedback and seeing the effect, whether it be a motion, whether it be a vote or whether it be a speech that I've made or something actually that's in policy. It's really helped a lot of people

**Gerard Higgins**

Thank you, Andy. Good evening, everyone and I want to be a breath of fresh air to Manx politics, I think Government is working in silos. It's lost touch with its employers, namely, you the people. It's time to end, overspending on gold plated projects, endless layers of management and bureaucracy and the ever-increasing wage bill I'm standing for joined up government efficient government that's open and transparent and accountable, and government that goes back to the basics of working for you, the people are community and local business.

**Sarah Maltby**

Hello, in January 1985 I was born into a life where public service and duty and responsibility was taken very seriously. Although I didn't realize it at the time, my community first views before being formed by the customers in our family run business and the Douglas self constituents that surrounded me. I was not always shouted from experiences that highlighted the dire social inequalities we still sadly see today, and I spent a considerable amount of time listening and seeing how responding consistent concerns and always being available, it's just what you did. I've spent 20 years of my life caring for younger children and adults with additional and complex needs. In that time, my resilience, compassion, and ability to form trusted relationships has meant I can relate on a human level to people who rarely ask for help or live in a free of a system that doesn't always appear to fit their needs, this must change.

**Paul Quine**

Even ladies and gentlemen, I'm not one to sit on the side-lines, as a local lad who grew up in the area. I chose to stand in the by election last year because there were certain local issues which due to the lack of representation had been allowed to gather more men. In addition, there were certain national issues which had been allowed to drift, and we're proud and passionate Manxman who likes to get things done for the best of Douglas South and our island. Having served the constituency, I believe I've gained valuable experience that is something which, if we elected, I'm sure, will stand me in good stead for the times which lie ahead of us,

**Andy Wint**

I want to start with a local issue and will start reverse alphabetical order, Paul Quine, what is going on at Snaefell surgery and how can it be solved?

**Paul Quine**

It's a, it's a very good question, Andy and it's sort of something which you know matters to so many people not just here in Douglas out, but in the adjacent constituency of Middle and in the sort of wider and part of the town. To get to the crux of the issue, the issue is the funding of the surgery, or more particular, the mechanism. The formula off the funding, so that needs to be addressed, so we need to sit down. Whoever is re-elected needs to sit down with Department of Health and Social Care and we need to look at the actual formula because the formula is not working with regards to Snaefell surgery.

**Sarah Maltby**

We need to reassure our constituents if elected that their views matter and that they are listened to at the moment feel that the communication to residents hasn't been what it should have been there. There might be funding issues, but really, if you've got a bad knee if you don't feel very well, you need to know that your surgery is there, and it's ready for you and at moment. They just want the job sorted. Yeah, and obviously I want to be able to get in to have a House of Keys to be able to put these issues right.

**Andy Wint**

Has it been coming up on the doorstep?

**Sarah Maltby**

To be honest it hasn't as much as I thought it would because to me it's a massive issue. It's one that's dragged on really for the last year. I mean there was something came out not long ago, but there was previous discussions about this and we thought we'd had that issue sorted, but obviously not.

 **Gerard Higgins**

I, I think there's a wider issue here as well. Obviously, we have to look after our own Community first, but first and foremost, I think the wider issue here is getting more GP numbers on the ground, not just from the UK. We need to look wider and make sure that we have the number of GP's there to be able to give the support to our community. Because what people want more than anything is the ability to go along and see their GP rather than just phone calls all the time, they want that ability to be able to go in and talk to some, and this must be a major priority of whoever is elected in this constituency.

**Claire Christian**

There is a national GP shortage in the UK and if we want to attract GPs to the Isle of Man, we need to aggressively do this now. We need to get the Department of Enterprise to absolutely work with the with visit Isle of Man and get, get the GPs to know that we're here because it is a funding issue, but we absolutely need to attract these this higher level skilled and people to the Isle of Man and that is absolutely crucial for Douglas.

**Gerard Higgins**

We must look to incentivize it. You know, even if there's tax measures or something, we've got to look at some incentives to actually get GPs here and staying here because what else we're doing is we're just paying agency fees. We want to actually put the money.

**Andy Wint**

Well, there are locum's at Snaefell at the moment, aren't they? Which are expensive.

**Gerard Higgins**

Yes, but we if you actually look at agency fees paid out across government in the last year, it was the budget of 1.7 million. We paid about 9.8 million. Now that is not just necessarily health care, but again, it's just paying out agency fees rather than what we want to do is be paying salaries to get those people actually here on the island and more importantly, retaining them.

**Paul Quine**

And some of those locums, actually, our former partners off the surgery. I mean, they're passionate. They believe in in the people of Douglas South, they want to give the best provision and deliver the best health care and well being across the area.

**Sarah Maltby**

So what's going wrong?

**Paul Quine**

Well, what what's going wrong? It's a bureaucratic victory here. Yes, because the funding model is effectively broken, and unless we fix the funding model, we won't address the issues at the surgery.

 **Andy Wint**

But they said it was fixed?

**Paul Quine**

Unfortunately it wasn't because of the dynamic of the patients at Snaefell surgery does not suit the funding model. So what we need to do is take a fresh look at the funding model in order to be able to fund the surgery properly to deliver the health care that our people rightly deserve.

**Andy Wint**

Sarah Maltby let's talk about young voters, are you confident that young voters 16 year olds and upwards are going to be turning out two weeks tomorrow?

**Sarah Maltby**

Well, I'd like to think so. I've been banging the drum about it for a long time, this isn't just a one issue now we talk about in the run up to a general election. This has been something that I've been talking about for a long time. I work at Ballakermeen high school at the moment, so I've got those people at my disposable. I've been trying to talk to and invigorate, I mean even the people that I've been talking about when I go around the constituency the amount of kids that you get following year on their scooters, it's brilliant, you know they're asking questions so I don't understand how when they get from this to the actual registering, but what happens what? What stops him from registered in the 1st place is that parents are. Do they not feel confident in the system and they're concerned that they don't want their? And the children to get involved in it, you know, and distance himself from politics. And I think they shouldn't. There's nothing to be scared of this really we need to open. The up the door to more people.

**Andy Wint**

Gerald Higgins, what will be your message now if somebody is aged 16 registered to vote in Douglas South what will be your apart from vote Higgins of course.

**Gerard Higgins**

What I would say is we need to really address this whole issue of young people and getting them to engage. One of my proposals that we need to have focus groups where we're sitting down. We're talking with these people we're seeing what their needs are, but they are our future generation. We need to be investing in them. We need to be looking at what activities we've got for them are in the Community, not just in our Community alone, but across the island as well. So we need to be really engaging with them.

**Andy Wint**

Claire Christian, do you think politics and young people are connect?

**Claire Christian**

And I, I absolutely think they should be. I don't think they perhaps are enough right now. I think that's absolutely true, Andy. I know that when I've gone around on the doorstep and I have interacted with young people, a lot of it is being questions about. Well, who are you? What you know? What's an MHK? Even to that level? And it's just really just speaking to them just on a normal basis just saying, look how politics affects you, whether that's in your education, whether that's with your jobs. It's really just talking to them like normal people and just absolutely treating them like adults as they deserve.

**Sarah Maltby**

It’s a shame that you only tend to hear from people if there's a problem. It would be so much better if we can get more young people involved in helping to set policy and talk about that and be more proactive rather than just coming to us as if there's a problem, and I think that's.

**Paul Quine**

Thank you, Andy. Yeah, the one of the big issues about it is and young people. I've spoke to the quite upsetting thing is that don't wish to vote because they feel that there's nothing worth voting for and that that that's the issues that we have to address with people we have to engage with young people. You have to show them that their future is rightly their vote and their vote counts for something. So I think we have to ensure that that we provide something for them tangibly to see we're fighting for OK.

**Andy Wint**

And obviously every one of us were was young once we, when did you first when did you first become politically active, when did you first notice that politics matters?

**Paul Quine**

Well, at school. I mean, I've always had a keen interest in history and we used to have some very good debates. Actually, I remember at that balcony with the with the late Jeff Hawkins. He was someone who looked a question why certain aspects of history happened politically and it was very engaged and it really generated a lot of interest in the class, so I feel that's a really good way that that teachers can actually engender into young people. The desire to engage politically.

**Andy Wint**

OK, and Sarah Maltby, you’re at Ballakermeen high school, when I’ve spoken to people from Ballakermeen, they say we do politics, but we talk about America, we don't do Manx politics, we don't. Manx politics isn't on the current curriculum.

**Sarah Maltby**

Yeah, it's really frustrating, especially when you talk about Tynwald Day, ask kids what do you think of it? What you know why?

**Andy Wint**

We have the we have the oldest continuous Parliament…

**Sarah Maltby**

Absolutely, you know, I'm incredibly proud to be from the Isle of Man, but it really does frustrate me sometimes that you kind of I don't understand why other people don't think the same as me you know, I was obviously born into Manx politics, but at the same time I actively been involved in this myself for very actively for the last 15 years at least.

**Andy Wint**

Gerard Higgins, what's been coming up on the doorstep?

**Gerard Higgins**

Well, if we look at local issues, one of the main things that people are talking about is things such as our roads or pavements, they’re very much back to basics that people are seeing that money is being spent on these large projects, continual overspending of projects and what they're wanting is to basically have decent roads, decent pavements that is something that's absolutely key to people. And we need to be remembering as politicians that we need to look after our local community as well. I think there's many politicians that what happens is once they get elected, they distance themselves almost and it's getting into dealing with these projects at national level rather than dealing with thing at local level and it's, I suppose it shouldn't be surprising, but the number of times that things such as roads and pavements and our basic infrastructures come up, and I do really think we need to get back to basics.

**Claire Christian**

So on that roads and pavements I basically started when I when I first got in I did a strategy where I went round and logged as many as I could in the constituency because that mattered to me and.

**Andy Wint**

Sorry, you logged what?

**Claire Christian**

Logged with the DOI as many as I could, because as I say that there's exactly those local issues that matter to me then and they matter to me now, and one of the things that I also hear is obviously about the housing and a lot of parents and young people concerned about getting on the housing ladder and this has been a really big issue for many people of Douglas South and this obviously is a a national wider issue and there are solutions to this and we need to now build more social housing because there is a lack of social housing, it means there's more private rentals, which is driving up the private rental, and then obviously it's bright driving up the price house prices for buy to let. We haven't invested in social housing for such a long time, especially in Douglas South. And this got to be something that this next administration needs to address immediately.

 **Paul Quine**

I mean just in on the roads and papers and what Gerard just said about politicians in the national view as opposed to the to the local view. So when I was really elected like sorry when I was elected last year at the by election, one of the first things I did along with Claire was to was to ensure that we, we, we tried our best to bring pavements and roadways up to some sort of acceptable level and this issue. This involved such things as improving access in and out of the park for people of impaired mobility, because I was staggered walking around the state of the payments and it's only when you actually see someone who has mobility issues that you actually appreciate the sheer difficulty that they have in just their day-to-day life having reasonable access to anywhere.

**Andy Wint**

Sarah Maltby, what have you picked up on the on the doorsteps?

**Sarah Maltby**

Well, there's two things. First thing, walk around Spring Valley, people are absolutely terror.. that they are so fed up of false promises of plans that have been cast and then changed. Then I I'd like to sort of listen to the people obviously and create some sort of residents association I want to see if we can maybe do that if elected. I think that at the time we need to be to talk to those people and actually hear their views and get communication approved. The second thing, but when it comes to roads and pavements, I have a 6 year old son if there's anything that's going to go wrong, my son going to find it. If there's a crack in the pavement, he's going to trip over it, and so I don't just see these as an outsider. I walk the streets of South Douglas and I have done for 36 for a long time. Six years and even more so now with my children.

**Andy Wint**

OK, and Claire Christian I want to talk about police and law and order and antisocial behaviour. It's been reported, we talk about it on the Mannin Line all the time, Pulrose, Anagh Coar isn't a stranger to anything like that. How do you view that situation?

**Claire Christian**

So I view it very much so that we do obviously have to put plasters on the problem. Obviously the police help with that, but that's not really fundamentally solving the real issue. And the real issue is, is that all our young people don't have enough to do on the Isle of Man and we really need to concentrate on building some kind of really great community and society, something for them to do. We need to liaise and talk to them about what they would actually want and this is really quite a holistic approach. It's more, it's more fundamentally, really building a society, a young society and giving something back to them and, and I think that's really what we should be doing as a government.

**Paul Quine**

Yeah, Claire’s just touched that on something for younger people to do. I mean, when I grew up as many people in here will probably remember, this was actually the pole Pulrose Youth Club and which was a a focal point in the community for young people and to gather and to socialise. So we need to try and reconnect that because if we don't have any such places, children find their own entertainment. And sometimes it can be of an antisocial variety. So since I was elected at the by election last year, I've been working with the police very closely with Sergeant Graham Corren and PC Graham Best, who were appointed to be the the neighbourhood police officers the community officers for this area, and engaged with the Council through what's called the Hills Initiative. And there are serious issues in the in the area. I mean, I I've sat with people who are part of our older generation who are actually afraid to go out. I've sat with a lady who's in tears because of the antics of their neighbours, so we have to address these issues and we have we have to ensure that people who do behave in such a way actually feel the force of the law and that they are the ones who are persecuted and not the honest, decent people.

**Andy Wint**

About 100 yards away from here. There used to be a police station, I mean and people will look around and see, say who made that sort of decision, there used to be neighbourhood police stations everywhere and we had bobbies on the beat, Sarah Motley.

**Sarah Motley**

I've got to disagree, I think there was a lot of things for children to do on the Isle of Man. However, it costs money and people haven't got that money to spend at the moment. If you've got to decide on how you prioritize your money. Then spending £50 on a day out but lunch and tickets to different things. It's going to cost it. It's too expensive and we need to give people the opportunity to upskill to be able to get employment first of all, and also to be able to give them the opportunity then to spend money on these facilities that we do have in the Isle of Man's teenagers…

**Claire Christian**

Where are these places that they spoke that you're talking about very young children? Where are the teenagers that there's only pubs and things like that that? Where can they go?

**Sarah Motley**

We've got a football club across the road…

**Gerard Higgins**

You have to be sporty…

**Sarah Motley**

We had a shelter, it’s fallen to bits. We need to invest in those places, not ask for parents to constantly entertain children. As a government we need to be to find a way to be able to support community based projects in order to be able to provide the facilities that you're talking about, the teenagers.

**Andy Wint**

Do you think there are enough police on the streets of the Isle of Man in particular in Douglas South?

**Sarah Motley**

And well, we know that the police…

**Andy Wint**

And flat plainly, if older generation, the older generation are living in fear in their houses. It's the Isle of Man in 2021.

**Sarah Motley**

Well, of course we need more police officers, but also not just police officers, but for like first responders. But people that might not necessarily, like that we do have, but they invested more into that area because I think if people just see a presence and they see somebody walking round, like your wardens, I think people would feel certainly more secure.

**Claire Christian**

Thank you and so what I was going to say is basically the I've I've obviously gone in the night time with the police done one of those run. And I was quite shocked that how there was only say, three or four of the actually the vans that were one was in down South, one was, you know, they could be split. I was really shocked at how actually we are short of police and that's something that we really need to look at and invest in, especially as crime is going up.

**Paul Quine**

Yeah you utilize the police better. I mean they are spending 20% of their time sitting in the station doing paperwork, now that has to be, you know, we have to cut down on the bureaucracy and get the police where they needed out meeting the people and ensuring the general public.

**Gerard Higgins**

I have a point and I was speaking to the Chief constable only a week now he's got 219 officer or 219 staff in his force. That may seem a lot, but when you think of shift work when you think of cybercrime when you think of drugs, a financial crime that doesn't add up to be an awful lot. So what I would also say yes, we need more police, but equally what we need to do is have more joined up government because one of the things that Chief Constable was saying to me is when there are issues, there's difficulties in talking to social services in talking to education. We need to be investing in early years.

**Andy Wint**

You've been in treasury for how long?

**Gerard Higgins**

I've worked in Treasury for 39 years, but I've worked on. The tax side of things Andy?

**Andy Wint**

OK, so you know all about empire building in in the civil service. You know how, as you mentioned, silos inside government, how can you break that down?

**Gerard Higgins**

Because you've got to have a strong enough voice to break it down, and I would hope that whoever gets in in this constituency will fight for that will. Yes, it really has to be and it has to be shouting loud enough because you're doing it for the people out there and for not just the S Douglas community, but for the whole of the Isle of Man.

**Andy Wint**

OK, Paul Quine everything has to be paid for and the businesses of the Isle of Man and the economy has to go up, how are we going to do it?

**Paul Quine**

I mean this is the fundamental thing we have to have a good, strong, robust economy. Because if we don't have an economy, we don't have anything we can talk about policemen talk about education, health care, pensions, everything else. It's all underpinned by the economy, and you cannot give something to someone until you have first taken it from somebody else, so. We must ensure that our economy is robust and flexible. We need to go out, we need to reach out into the world to ensure that we attract business in. Our biosphere needs to be promoted for all it's worth. We need to look at biotech companies looking to redeploy here. We need to embrace green energy because I understand that the UK generates like over £200 million a year from a stakeholder who has a wind farm on a sea area approximately about 20% that of Manx territorial waters. So, we need to engage in in the new generation of stakeholders in order to build a new economy and to derive these services.

**Sarah Maltby**

Morally pulling people out of poverty is not only the right thing to do, but it's a way of making revenue for increasing revenue. I agree with what Paul said on the international and the national scale. However, you don't look at a look after the domestic issues. Then you've just piling money into patching up services that are never going to be fully funded or looked after properly.

**Andy Wint**

But who's going to create the jobs?

**Sarah Maltby**

Well, first of all you need to find get people upskilled you know to get more vocational courses and schools you need to introduce these areas more early on and let people see that the element is a good place to be. They see it, that's a good place to be. They want to stay here. They buy a house, see hopefully and the racer. Only here and then that's will put money into the system. At the moment they're just leaving, so you might have the biggest and the most fanciest place for the Isle of Man to be, but if you can't get people to come and stay here, then it's not worth anything.

**Andy Wint**

Do you think the education apart from the students who go to university, the Chamber of Commerce, issued a report said that 50% of the students coming out of school that didn't go to uni, they found them difficult to find jobs because they weren't properly educated?

**Sarah Maltby**

Yeah, we need to change how we measure success at the moment. Success is based on hammered GCSE's you've got and we need to change that. That that's a big piece of work, obviously, but the ethos it needs to be more holistic, more person cantered, and it needs to be able to say that the element is a good place. We look after our people here. We don't just say, well, you haven't got 10 GCSE's, you haven't got your A levels, you haven't been to university, we're not interested. We need to look after the people, put the people first.

**Gerard Higgins**

We have to invest in apprenticeships and internships as well, we need to have more excuse me more courses available on the Isle of Man, we have to really invest in our young people, but equally we also have to grow and we have to diversify our economy because we are becoming increasingly dependent on various sectors within the economy and but also if we're wanting to pay for things, we need to cut the waste as well. We need to reduce the size of government departments. We need to stop the gold plated projects and the project overspend. That's equally as important to me as well as growing our economy

**Claire Christian**

Obviously joined up government, that's one way that we can streamline and make more efficiencies. We want value for money in our government and we have to prioritize our actual spending and we have to communicate that and be really far more open and transparent about it. On the other side, in terms of the economy and people, and as I said before we talk about diversity, but we actually do have quite a diverse economy here on the island, but it's made up of very small businesses and that's because we don't have the bigger companies here so we do have to support those local business and show them and bring them along with how they can grow from a two man business to attend man business so that other people from university can come in and they can be film producers, fashion designers, art design, whatever that is. That's how we build up the diverse economy because you're not going to have 20 or 40 or 50 different industries on the Isle of Man, it is just not going to happen, but we we can pick very specific industries like bio med if Fintech and we can build jobs that way where there's sort of three or 400 jobs, but again, that's all relative to the education.

**Andy Wint**

OK, OK we've just got 5 minutes or 4 minutes left before we go to questions from the audience, so I want to talk about just a very small subject. The climate challenge, just for about a minute.

**Sarah Maltby**

The climate challenge, in a minute wow, yeah. There's quite a few businesses on the Isle of Man already that currently don't receive the support or the encouragement that they could do with to be able to grow their business. If we make those, if we can support those places, I'd obviously really support that as well. But yeah, the climate crisis

**Andy Wint**

The UK is introducing E10 petrol next month at the 10% ethanol. The Isle of Man government has chosen not to do it while stating that we're going to be carbon neutral by 2030. And that's one thing they could have introduced straight away - solar panels there are no solar panels / ery few solar panels on government buildings. Do you think the government connected with the that? Do you think they take the climate challenge seriously?

**Sarah Maltby**

I think all buildings going forward on houses as well should be properly insulated. Said that, those things should be done before we even consider or give anybody any planning permission that that should definitely be part of legislation.

**Gerard Higgins**

We need actual regulations to ensure that when work is being done on existing properties or new properties, whether it's social housing or new bills that we need to need to be making sure that they are environmentally friendly. And I think we also need to be ensuring and this ties in with the housing crisis as well more urban regeneration. We've got sites like Park Road School, we've got sites like the Island Man prison. The government owned those they could be using them and building on them.

**Claire Christian**

So let's make this clear. The people of Douglas South, they want to know how climate change, what they can do for climate change, and how it affects them. So, we need an administration that's going to be very clear and give you an estimate of when and what when you need to do things, whether that might be heat sort pumps, whether that might be solar power, what you can do, and it's very good point about the E 10 as well. I think this administration is missing a trick on not bringing that in. I've looked into it and I think it's something that we could absolutely effectively do now. The Isle of Man can make a change with climate change. Some people think that it's not and it will be costly, but that's where we've got to get external investment. Back to what Paul was talking about and so that we don't cost that bill, but Douglas South, you need to plot a clear plan of what you need to do going ahead.

**Paul Quine**

Yeah, just touching all Claire said ladies and gentlemen, you know we have to ensure that the future is properly mapped out and costed correctly because ladies and gentlemen, it is you who will ultimately end up paying for this. So, we have to ensure we have a proper map from where we begin to and where we're wanting to get to and how we go about it. And it has to be properly laid out as I say, we can't just set sail with blind idealism on this issue so we have to look at it. In a wider context, we have to look at government buildings, we have to change the building regulations. So as solar panels are incorporated into certain new bills, I mean there's a new vehicle test centre I think being built right now. Where's the ground source? Heat pumps? Where's the solar energy? I stood up in the House of Keys and that's why the Manchu Utilities Authority was reducing the tariff payments per kWh from 9.2 to 8.2 pence effectively an 11% cut for the domestic generation of electricity, in my opinion, just sends out all the wrong messages.

**Andy Wint**

OK, now it's time we're live by the way, at the Pinewood Community pub in Pulrose today with the candidates of Douglas, South, Claire Christian, Gerard Higgins, Sarah Maltby and Paul Quine. By the way, there is what they used to call an old fashioned requisition meeting, now they call the pre election meetings and it's Thursday the 16th of September. That being a week tomorrow, from 19:00 till nine at Anagh Coar Primary School and you're more than welcome to just pitch up there. We've got an audience tonight at Pulrose. So who's got a question for other candidates?

**Frank**

So the question is one I asked other candidates before, and it's probably one of the most important ones. The last administration was supposed to reduce the size of government. It was a big thing, everyone talked about. The size actually went up. What will you do to reduce the size of government to make things more efficient, so in five years time we don't sit here with another thousand more people?

**Paul Quine**

Well we can look at certain outsourcing and my background. Commercial aviation, I think when I started work at banks airlines many moons ago, practically all the employees at the at Romans were airport where government employees a lot of that is being outsourced, but we can look at over outsourcing. That's which is the Fire Brigade, for instance. In addition, as an. It's all fair and good saying about cutting the amount of people in government, but we also have to look at increasing the amount of people in government because we want more teachers. We want more policemen. We want more. GPs you know we want a hospital better staffed so we have to actually qualify how we go about it. We need to cut out the waste. There's no two ways about that, but that shouldn't put us off from actually recruiting. The right is the best into the government to ensure our future. OK, well this is your mantra.

**Gerard Higgins**

We need to see an emphasis more on frontline services. Like Paul said, we need those GPs. We need those teachers but we also need to reduce the workforce. We need to transfer away from the bureaucracy and layers of management into providing frontline services for you, but we equally need to save money. If you actually look at the public sector, turnover over a year, you will find through natural wastage and retirements, et cetera, that you lose about 5% of your staff. If you saved 1% of that in year one 2% in year two 1% equals £4 million, because if you actually look at the government accounts, the wage bill the government is actually 414 million pounds. Inspective of what's said in newspapers. If you actually taught everything up in the government accounts, it's 414,000,000, so saving 1% a year, 4,000,000 first year, 8,000,000 a second year. You can save up to £60 million in the first administration, £100 million in the second administration, but equally we have to convert. A lot of those management jobs into the frontline service. This is for schools and hospitals.

**Claire Christian**

So I come back to joined up government because actually what a joined up government means and we've just seen this during the Covid pandemic. We've proved that government can actually work together. You can move employees to other departments when there's pressure drones there, and that's exactly what we need to do. We need to make it far more flexible. And this is actually great for the employees because they can learn new skills they can upskill, they can move, and they can move into higher senior. Roles and actually that's far more beneficial. So it is about cutting off the factors. What my what my colleague said Paul Klein and it is about cutting off that, but actually looking at the government as a whole and working it in that way.

**Sarah Maltby**

Kind of like I just said though we need to be actually asking people what their skills are, what the how, how can we use people more smartly? At the moment it's not that it doesn't happen, so you just think well. We need more people to be to do this. Yes, but for coming from a background work from working in government for a long time and obviously working in a place where we don't get new staff or we do get stuff, it's kind of like well you could have two ESO's for the price of that member of staff. You know, and that that. Really is what it is. But we all work hard in government people do, but I think like I said, it's just about working smarter. And making sure that that when decisions made, everyone involved in that decision making, and you understand if people feel like they're getting value for money. They don't necessarily have a complaint with that, when they what they have their complaints people perceived to be taken in a lot of money. And not doing a lot for it. Yeah, and that's what we need to find out it is. What is the reality data on the Isle of Man is historically very poor and we don't have a very good record of keeping records and sharing that data as well. So if we could do a little bit more of that, then maybe we might find that you would have a group of staff that would. Quite happily, take on another area and and to develop that.

**Andy Wint**

In that case I want to go to poverty and a message that came in just to say we talk about the rich people on the Isle of Man, but how can there be a layer of people who are struggling to get by when they talk about no, unemployment on the Isle of Man.

**Claire Christian**

So poverty is on the Isle of Man and I think it was a quite a big realization in the last administration, which is shocking. But we've really got to address this and I see this for it from a from a constituency level that it it's so important that just little things like, uhm, I mean, I'm an employer. I pay my staff the living wage. I think that's really important and that can help contribute to my staff and being able to contribute back to the economy and also obviously paying higher National Insurance and taxes from a business point of view too. And I think that we need to try and move towards that with the government have already agreed that in the last administration. So we've got a five year plan now to address in this next administration to bring everybody up to the living wage. This should hopefully bring a lot of families out of poverty. In my manifesto I also talk about because we've obviously got a low birth rate as well and I talk about how we should actually fund, like many other countries do, a fund for people who have a baby in the first year of their term, and this really gives them far more support to be able. It encourages people to have children because at the moment they're struggling with the decision of having more children or going back to work. And this just isn't acceptable.

**Paul Quine**

Yeah, poverty. The fact that it's around should is, is the shame on all of us really in 2021 that that people are actually living in in in Douglas South, in abject poverty. And people who I've hoped. And cost to visit over the over the course of the last year and with children and older people as well who have become isolated from community. They effectively have ceased to live any sort of active life, so we need to address the wide spectrum of poverty, how it affects people and basically I mean I went to the food banks to speak with Mr Mellon who's doing a fantastic job, but there are different types of poverty. There are people who use the food bank who are actually asset rich, but cash poor. Right, so we have to, you know we have to work with people like them to ensure that you know we give the best to our people to help them actually work themselves out of poverty.

**Sarah Maltby**

Well, the statistics tell you that any children on free school meals tend generally tend to underperform when it comes to education.So that we know that this is a problem and it's been a problem, right from the very beginning, so.Breakfast clubs we need to introduce more options for that, making it free.I don't think we should be asking people to pay for a service that really we should be providing and I feel like we need to give our people the best opportunity to learn.And if we can't, don't give them the best opportunity to learn then of how are we expecting people to be able to get where they need to get, it cannot…

**Andy Wint**

It can often be though contact you have a young family, maybe a couple of children and they simply can't afford childcare for people to go out to work so they're trapped before and after school. Childcare is notoriously very difficult to find and to pay for this big family, yeah?

**Sarah Maltby**

You know when we talk about that, it goes back to the question before you know how can we the before an obscure childcare can be, it can range to like sort of 10 to 15 pounds. You know, just for an hour and you have another child then it kind of goes up, it? It's very expensive and but obviously it's very important because these are your children that you're given over to somebody else and you I'm not expecting it to be free, but at the same time it needs to be affordable for people

**Gerard Higgins**

On a tax background, what I've seen in the past is yes, we just keep putting up personal tax allowances and not. I’m not saying that, we shouldn't put them up to some degree, but the trouble is if you don't pay any tax, then you are not benefiting from that at all. So, I want to see some of that money being invested in helping with childcare costs, helping with energy bills, because what I'm seeing go around the constituency is people living in abject poverty, and we really need to by the end of the term of this administration have wiped out poverty on the Isle of Man. We are a wealthy nation.

**Andy Wint**

If people aren't getting paid enough and they're skilled enough, does that mean we have some lousy employers then they aren't paying the proper wages?

**Gerard Higgins**

We we've also got to work on that as well, Andy. because we need to have we need to have the minimum wage or something of the past. We need to be working to having a living wage and we also need to be locking in to ensure that that's inflation proofed as well.

**Sarah Maltby**

And just on that, the government, the government is the worst example. I mean we have how many zero hour contracts we need to lead by example.

**Paul Quine**

I think the movement up to the living wage I think will put about £5180.00 per year into the pockets of those families. But we need we need to address the issue of education. We need, you know, I was brought up in a in a tight sort of house where my mother had to budget, you know my brother I only had so much money to spend every week. You know, by my father, and she had to budget to ensure that myself and my three siblings and her and my father were fed and she managed it every day. So, it's about actually teaching people to make the best value of the money that they have.

**Marion Kenny**

The funding of long term nursing and residential care is a pressing issue for the Isle of Man. The UK government go to sorry yeah the UK government is putting up taxes to pay for social care. What should the Isle of Man do?

**Gerard Higgins**

Well, I see what the UK Government is planning on doing. They're planning on raising National Insurance in raising National Insurance. You are hitting the everyday people in our case the community. Our supermarket workers, our nurses, our frontline staff that only last year we were praising for the work that they did in the pandemic. We shouldn't be doing that first and foremost, but what we need to do is we need to take stock of our current position. I'm going back to what I was saying. Here if we need to look at where the waste is, where savings can be achieved and then we need to decide how we're going to actually split those out because we shouldn't have this knee jerk reaction of let's go and get extra money for social care at the moment because my worry with it is it's going to hit those people hardest. The workers in our community. It's going to squeeze the middle in our community that squeezed middle in our community. And yet people who have got dividends, rental income they will not be hit by National Insurance. The wealthiest will not be paying their fair share in this.

**Claire Christian**

So, since I've been elected, I've obviously worked in two departments and one of the things that I've seen is the departments get given budgets which they spend, and they often have fear if they don't spend it, then they won't get it the next year and we see this at the very top level all the way down. And this is what we've got to. We've got to stop again, it's that joined up policy joined up government. We've got to set, but budgets that are go across the way, not down the way, and it's so important because actually we if we make cost benefits cost savings. We don't have to raise the National Insurance they have.

**Andy Wint**

Claire Christian, could you just clarify that then for the for the layperson? What do you mean if you don't spend them the budget?

**Claire Christian**

So, for example, if you get a £2 million budget and you and you don't spend that budget, you spend £1.5m of it’s very unlikely that Treasury will give you that 1.5 that 2,000,000 the next year.

**Gerard Higgins**

It’s a horrid approach Andy to pay your marks the.

**Claire Christian**

So it's exactly so they spend up to that limit, and that that's that, of course you're going to buy the extra folders by the extra equipment, or you know whether you needed to or not and it's at that level. So I would say National Insurance we do, we should not absolutely be raising that for that purpose to fund care, I think we can look and absolutely address this situation. That's one of the reasons why if I'm elected, I want to go into Treasury so that I can absolutely address these issues on the forefront.

**Sarah Maltby**

If you're living on the Isle of Man, you're taking advantage of our lower tax rates, then you should be have a social conscience social responsibility to look after our social care. End of story.

**Paul Quine**

I mean you know Gerard touched on it and also while Claire said the fact by putting up taxation you actually end up with less money in the pot because all it does is drive wealthy people who pay tax off the island into the arms of our competitors so it actually has a as a negative effect.The way we need to go about it, like Claire says.I mean, if you look at department after department, that was a idiotic incident with the with the slot resurfacing and back about eight years ago.Department spend the money like drunken sailors as it comes up towards the end of the year because they fully know that it will not be getting it in the following year.So we need to look at how the funding is dished out.And that way we can make the savings to put into health.

**Andy Wint**

Now a lot of people know that, but there may be many voters and maybe young voters who don't know that principle of government. If by the 31st of March you haven't spent the money, you won't get it - it won't come back to you.

**Andy Wint**

Why is that then? Well, why isn't it rolled over?

**Paul Quine**

It covers it covers such a vast part of government, Andy and it's all about procurements. It's about again what we said before about the silos of government, each having their own budget each. And procuring their own contracts we need, we need to take that out. We need to cut out that waste. Cut out that marzipan from the cake and be able to be able to actually fund something that people come to have a proper business case for.

**Steve Doyle**

Well, I really want to know how we're going to fund all these changes. It's fine saying there might be some savings, but we've spoken here tonight. We need more GPS, we need more police and we're also going to have similar to the UK. The issue that Boris is facing at the moment where Anna is going up so that people don't have to sell their homes. That's going to become an issue here in the Isle of Man. We've got the landing port in Liverpool, which is escalated beyond all comprehension with.

**Andy Wint**

OK, can I just ask you one thing Sir, in principle, do you think that it's the government's job to provide social care for older people?

**Steve Doyle**

Yes, will be my answer to that. I also like to just pick over more what Paul said about wealthy people coming to the island. We have good tax rates here, why shouldn't they pay a little bit more of income tax?

**Andy Wint**

OK, well let's go to the man who's been working in income tax.

**Gerard Higgins**

If we look at in terms of tax caps now that that that can be seen as quite controversial. But if you look at the last time, I think the Treasury minister said in 2017/18, in terms of tax and National Insurance, that was worth £36 million in terms of the employees that were directly related to people that had come in, who were tax caps and brought their business to the island. They pay their own tax liability. What you have to be careful of here is that you don't drive them away. We have to remain competitive against the likes of Guernsey or Jersey. And you know, I agree with what Paul saying here. We've got to be careful if you drive them away, we can actually be in a worse position and lose tax receipts. We don't really lose the tax receipts we lose. The jobs we lose to spend in the economy from those people who are contributing and through our VAT sharing agreement with the United Kingdom, it can have an effect right through the economy.

**Paul Quine**

Yeah, I mean, the you know the whole the whole thing of social care, for older people I personally it's in my manifesto. I want to see more sheltered housing and built like Hazel court like Saddle Mews so people can live in their in their older years with the dignity that they wish. You know where carers can come and visit them on the day and on a daily basis rather than sitting in a in a residential care home I mean the cost of staying in Salisbury St Residential care home for one year is £57,000. It would be cheaper to live on an ocean liner and you get your bedding changed every day there be non stop entertainment, you'd be fed and we've got a fully equipped hospital on board you know, in Salisbury St you don't even get a bar of soap you're making profit out.

**Gerard Higgins**

Who’s making profit from that Paul? Someone’s making profit.

**Paul Quine**

That’s exactly that's what we need to be…

**Sarah Maltby**

I think it's a fallacy. I don't think people would leave. I think that people that come to the Isle of Man, will stay on the Isle of Man. They their children are in our schools. They I think, more if you. This theory is never been tested. Have we ever tested? The Isle of Man would still be a desirable place to be for those people because the tax would never get to the levels that it is in the UK. I understand your point about Guernsey in Jersey. However, I think that we still have a very favourable to system over here that people would still come to the island.

**Gerard Higgins**

We have put the tax cap up from 100 to 200,000 pounds. Where's that tipping point?

**Andy Wint**

OK, I just want to ask you one thing Sarah, Moltby, I mean, do you think we we have a demographic time bomb coming our way? The argument is questions mentioned the birth rates falling, we have people getting older all the time. There is a time bomb coming, we do need to fund social care. Where would that come? Do you think we should sequester people private assets? Then do you think people should have to sell their houses to go?

**Sarah Maltby**

No, I I've spoken to a lot of people who fear that that's what's going to happen. There going to be buried in Pauper, because they're going to have everything taken away from them, and that's a real fear that people have and people shouldn't be living with that fear.

**Claire Christian**

So back to your question about where the funding will come from, and I actually go back to my last question. Obviously I'm talking about streamlining the government with joined up government and looking at budgets, but also there's some you know, there's definitely, I mean investments. that's really, really key right now. Long term investments, and so that it can revenue generate revenue. And one thing I would say about nursing care fees and things like that is there also, does need to be some regulation on it because at the moment I've met many constituents that even just in this last August, the home cafes have been put up by £6000 a year with very little notice, and that they're paying for this privately themselves. And this is an absolute strain on them, and that the government need to put in regulation with this and they got one month notice for this. And this is really appalling that people got treated in this way.

**Steve Doyle**

I agree with your comments on the tax cap, but I dispute that tax cap has been attractive to what the island probably thought they would get out of that the tax cap, I don't think we've had an answer yet to say in reality how all these changes will be funded. We need more, you mentioned young people looking for employment. The fact is I don't think we have enough choice for young people in terms of industry, commerce, whatever. So I think we…so I think we need something drastic in terms of diversity.

**Andy Wint**

It’s no coincidence that last week strict new factory opened in China, so how do we get different and diverse industry to the Isle of Man Paul Quine?

**Paul Quine?**

It’s a question, I mean we, you know our brightest and our best are leaving us, and they're not coming back. You know we have to get our, you know our brightest and best back here to the island where they can support us and they can and they can drive our own economy forward. So, the way I would look at it and you know we need more doctors, we need more nurses. We need key workers back here. So from my profession from aviation. I would take an abundant system, so if I was to join, say, EasyJet tomorrow, it cost about £25,000 of pilot through a conversion course, including the simulator work. Now what you do is you sign a bond after that to ensure that you can't just clear off and work for another airline the following day. So, you bond for five years, so that's what we should be doing with our younger people. We should be looking for people who wish to be doctors, wish to be dentist. You know teachers etc. And we should pay their university fees on the understanding that we bond them. For five years that when they finished university they come back here and they begin work here instead of drifting off, and I had an appalling incident which was I spoke to a young gentleman this week. We talked about mental health. Now as a young gentleman who has, he's got a degree in psychology through the Open University, Richard Kate, which he was awarded the 22. He's worked for autism initiatives. He works currently in mental health. Although he's now handing in his notice because he's going on to do his masters, he's fluent in sign language. His partner is a psychologist as well she specialises in child psychology they. They are both Manx born and bred? He has asked for funding to help with his masters and he's being refused because he didn't have a 2:1. So this is a classic case of bureaucratic stupidity driving away the very people we need. They are Manx born and bred and they you know, they are so upset by this they have no inclination to come back here to the island.

**Andy Wint**

OK, so remotely how do we diversify the economy?

**Sarah Maltby**

Just on what Paul said before that, I don't agree that we should be bonding people to come back to the island man immediately. I think that we should allow our young people to go off and see the world. Find out what's going on and bring those skills back to the island, right? We haven't got the house to give them then, how on Earth can we say promised them a life that we they did deserve.

**Gerard Higgins**

We've got to make the Isle of Man the attractive place for them to come back to. Yeah, as and when they do come back in terms of affordable housing education, a decent health service, family friendly.

**Claire Christian**

I agree with Sarah actually I think it is really important and I'm proof of the pudding, I went away for 20 years and I worked in the fashion industry. I lived in Italy, I lived in New York for some of that time as well. Well and I came back to the island and I'm investing back in that. And yes, you might have wanted me 10 those 15 years younger. But I came back when I did.

**Andy Wint**

Why did you come back?

**Claire Christian**

Family. I came back to be with family. For that reason, I wanted to be closer to family and I think that's really important, and I think the island man has a natural draw. Think that and think so yeah, you get to a certain point where you actually, you you've had enough of Mayfair and you want to come back to here and but I would say about diversification. So what we want to do is I and I spoke about it before industries you if you pick the film industry for example, we really we absolutely that that was such a massive mistake that the government made. You could have had script writers you could have had continuity. You could have had film producers. You could have the jobs that that could have provided. Were huge catering everything. Cleaning it could have reached very many sectors and that could have been a really good industry for us.

**Andy Wint**

We're in Douglas South, so I want just a very quick word from all of you, all about ‘Dingy Douglas’ and how we can make Douglas more attractive.

**Sarah Maltby**

Dingy Douglas wow yeah brownfields yeah brownfield yeah Brownfield sites needs urgent development we shouldn't be giving away our green fields to anymore developers.Brownfield sites, broken pavements, crumbling roads.We need to invest in those areas and make those areas work for **Paul Quine**

Yeah, I mean you remember the concept of Douglas 2000.What happened there? I mean, that's 21 years ago and we're still talking about it now. So yeah, we, we, we, you know national government needs to work with the with the corporation and we need to identify you know what's wrong and how we put it right.

**Claire Christian**

I actually I'm in Douglas South. I'm actually really proud of how people look after their properties and look after the places around them. And I have to say I think it's fantastic and. I've really seen that over this time.

**Andy Wint**

But look at Victoria St, it's crumbling, the road is crumbling.

**Claire Christian**

So Victoria streets obviously where my store is and I can. I can tell you and I take pride in my sort, I will get out and I will go and jet wash those pavements myself.

**Gerard Higgins**

It's back to what we were talking about at the outset. It's back to basics as making sure that our roads or infrastructure are supported and also with what Sarah said was we got to brownfield sites. We need to be developing on brownfield sites, forget greenfield sites.

**Andy Wint**

Each candidate will now have a minute to sum up, Claire Christian.

**Claire Christian**

Remember when you come to vote on the 23rd of September, I am the candidate who has continued to be the conduit between businesses, self-employed people and the government. I also challenge Treasury to implement the. Isolation current capacity benefit which helped support you those 14 days where you had to isolate. I will always put Douglas South constituents first and I will look for the problems that will affect you. I will focus on the services that government provide and strive to get that right for our current population so growth can happen later. Our existing and growing economy, affordable housing, a robust mental health system. All affect the constituents of Douglas South. I am the candidate who is strong, decisive and not afraid to challenge government to do better because we must do better.

**Gerard Higgins**

Thank you Andy on the 23rd of September you have a chance to turn the tide. You can either continue with the inefficiencies, the endless layers of management and the spending spree on wages and projects. Or you can make sure that the money that you contribute to pay MHK salaries and to spend on your behalf is used for what matters to you. It is time to park the gravy train once and for all we need better frontline services and financial support in health care and education, better roads and pavements and a better tomorrow for future generations.I believe I have the skills, experience, energy, dedication, compassion.And above all, the ability to listen and support you, the people of Douglas South for the next five years.If you want actions rather than words solutions rather than problems, I would ask you to. Please vote Gerard Higgins on the 23rd of September, fondly.

**Sarah Maltby**

Sticking up for people and putting people first is what I do best. I've been an employer representative for a number of years and I have a track record of continuously fighting for workers rights. I'm right, sadly one of the minority Manx people that, after acted at attending university. We've put returned back to the island as a homebird. There was no question I would choose to settle here, I'm incredibly proud, proud to be Manx. But it's not working for me it for everyone. I've been on the periphery of Manx politics a long time, but it's time now to help foreign policy and play my part in supporting the community and Ireland that helped raise me. We've heard a lot tonight about international national agendas. I want to look after the people, domestic issues is where my strengths play out and I really hope that you can support me on 23rd of September.

**Paul Quine**

Ladies and gentlemen, is a proud Manxman has been an immense privilege to have represented you the people of Douglas South since I was elected at the by election last year. Yeah, in that time I'd like to think I have striven to work as hard as I can for the constituency. Rolling up my sleeves and getting stuck in addressing many issues as well as not being afraid to take the government to task and scrutinize it on issues such as the Steam Packet employment practices, MUA, tariff reduction for private generation of electricity and wasted money at Ronaldsway airport. And so I seek your confidence again. The time that lies ahead for our island will require representatives with experience and who are not afraid to speak up for what is right, such as a strong economy, affordable housing and investing in our youth. I am just such a person. I have gained that experience during my time as your representative and have never been afraid to take. On my feet and speak up for you and your family so please on the 23rd of September. Think positive, act positive and vote Quine.

**Andy Wint**

Ladies and gentlemen, tomorrow night Manx Radio is going to be live in Laxey at the Shore for the constituency of Garth, and on Friday will be at Peel Golf Club for Glenfaba and Peel, and I would urge you you've seen the candidates tonight, not just for Douglas South, but when they come knocking on your door. Remember, these people have given part of their lives over the past few months. They're putting their heart and soul into this, and they obviously want you to connect, so I urge you to speak to them, to think deeply about what you're going to do 2 weeks tomorrow when we get to that general election. And of course you can go to maxradio.com. Everything is there, including the translations in Manx, Russian, German, Portuguese, Ukrainian, Chinese, Afrikaans, Greek, Hungarian and Polish. We got an election timeline information for voters, everybody who's standing on there as well, and the ones who've agreed to do videos and do podcasts are there as well. There's lots and lots of background, we've even got videos in Strand Street with drunken people. Elliot ~~Turner~~ Turnbull was there, took his life in his hand, ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank Claire Christian, Gerard Higgins, Sarah Maltby and Paul Quine. This has been the Douglas South constituency debate from the Pulrose community pub.