

MARK FIRTH

VOTE 

***For Arbory,
Castletown
& Malew***

One of the people, for the people



About me

Born in 1993 in England, I moved to the island in 2001 with my family at the age of 7, therefore I consider myself Manx by choice. Being educated at Ballasalla primary school followed by CRHS, I've grown up (and still live) in the constituency. This is my home, I want to protect it, I want it to have a future, we all do and that's why I'm asking you to let me do everything I can to help make that happen as your MHK.

After school I qualified as a mechanic at the IOM college, a job that I took up from a desire to be hands on, as well as being able to help people, and I have continued in that trade ever since. For the last 15 years I have served the community in that trade, continually learning new skills as times and technologies have progressed. This career has also taught me about problem prioritising and consideration of the service to the people I am looking after, as well as honesty and openness when communicating with those I am serving.

Despite my trade I have only managed to earn a "comfortable" wage in recent years, so I have lived the problems in cost of living many are experiencing now, budgeting their way through life from day to day just hoping things will "work out". So, I know money doesn't grow on trees. Government money is OUR money, so I'll do my best to ensure we get the best value possible from every pound spent.

I later started hosting music nights, as music was a passion of mine for years from my childhood. When I started going to open mic nights, it crushed me that many of my new friends couldn't have their own gigs and chance to get something back for the efforts they made to perform on stage, either because they didn't have a long enough set or they simply didn't have the equipment to perform live.

Wanting to right this, I bought my own gear and with help from a friend we hosted our own nights combining artists to make one gig between them. We ran this for a while, until I knew what I was doing enough to go solo. I have invested thousands of pounds into the equipment I have, far more than I have made, so that I can help more and bigger artists on the island so that they and their audience can have the best experience on stage possible.

This is the kind of care, compassion and determination I intend to bring to Tynwald and the people of both the constituency and the Isle of Man as a whole.

Going forward we need a government that leads by example, who communicates with the relevant industries and those effected in them when making decisions and legislation, that leads by example and executes plans with common sense. We must ensure the island gets value for money but also ensure that nobody is left behind in the push for progress. We need a government that is looking to long term strategies that will protect the island for years to come and not just short term, reactive quick fixes that last for a sitting term. There have been too many instances of playground politics in the last few years, and we need an administration that will work coherently to a common goal.

I believe that I possess these qualities and the drive/passion to bring them into Tynwald where we can push for change, to deliver a better future for our island and that is why I stand before you, seeking your vote in the 2026 election.

I hereby present my plans for the changes I believe we need to set in place for the Island in the next administration and beyond...

Government / Healthcare reform

- Creation of singular digital systems for the islands Government and Healthcare. The biggest issue I am seeing and hearing is that the government does not have a unified system that integrates across departments. Having a system that operates as a singular source of information, with data access being restricted to relevant departments, would allow for a vastly more streamlined service that could automatically update various services from a singular point, i.e. registration of address via housing ownership/rental. This could also allow for better tracking of immigration, as well as auto updating for things like income tax/benefits, reducing duplication and bureaucracy.
- Review of wage increase scaling i.e. from minimum wage % increases within government, to prevent increased wage discrepancies and reduce the burden of large wage upper end civil servants as well as avoid future conflicts over staff wages within departments when new contracts are drawn up.
- Investigation into staffing shortages + causation, for staff loss/high staff turnover, to find + fix problem areas and improve efficiencies + staff welfare.
- Pushing for the use of alternative/preventative remedies in healthcare that reduce the reliance on expensive pharmaceutical drugs and should save/reduce expenditure and allow better service provision in other areas without increased budgeting. An example of this would be use of hyperbaric chambers via NHS funding as these promote faster healing amongst a variety of other benefits.
- Looking to improve police-public relations, by looking for more everyday enforcement alongside large scale crime prevention making residents feel supported.



- Push for review of Gov + Manx care processes/systems that bolster short term “fixes” to reduce back logs and shift to an increase in proactive/preventative systems, that reduce the burdens of prolonged high-cost late-stage intervention, such as: -

- Automated invitations for screenings at certain ages like 30, 40, 50 etc. for illnesses like cancer, when likelihoods increase and reduce recovery times and improve outlook prospects for those involved.
- Better education in self-care, to reduce expensive aftercare and improve quality of life.
- improved preventative care such as hygienist appts. In dental care to reduce tooth decay and more expensive rectification work later on.

By implementing these systems, we transition to a more proactive and preventative, rather than reactive type system.

- Trial introduction of optional extra NI contributions ring-fenced for Healthcare/ Manx care use, with incentive based on % of extra contribution relative to income. This would keep more money in the health service while avoiding costly private healthcare bills to achieve the same outcome.

- Look to create a southern district community hospital that would operate on a similar scope to Ramsey cottage hospital, looking to reduce and streamline the workload on Nobles hospital. Potential sites could be the old CRHS building on completion of the new school.

- Pushing to ensure that Manx Care NHS patients are given the priority, and that workload efficiency is matched up with demand from the community, with as many as possible procedures being carried out locally to reduce expenditure from travel/accommodation etc. from people being sent to the UK.

- Looking for reform of the rates system to reflect the modern and changed climate of the island.

- Continuation of the assisted dying bill as necessary, with the view to enhancing the strength of the bill before submission similar to Jersey, potentially looking for a government backed bill for a more robust structure.



Education

- Pushing for the development/Completion of CRHS before incurring further cost increases, with a facility that is practical and reflects cost effectiveness and long term value for money in the current economic climate over architectural grandeur.
- Access to training in critical courses like mental health for locals to get qualified while working/without having to leave the island, as well as ensure funding is provided to apprenticeship schemes to secure trade futures.
- Training/instruction on navigating things like taxes, self-employment, financial planning/budgeting.
- Push for increased parking and/or creation of a drop-off zone at Arbory Primary School.
- Look for targeted investment into schools for accessibility and capacity management for the best outcomes of pupils and staff. As well as long term strategising for future school development needs around the island.



Cost of Living

- Review of home carers contributions to ease pressures of those caring for family members.
- Adjustment of the max. hours part-time workers can perform per week from 16 hours to 20 hours with no change to income support payments to ease financial pressures while saving money.
- Look into the introduction/creation of an easy access mandatory superannuation scheme for all IOM residents to better protect future generations.
- Look to change the taxation of benefits & state pensions at source to prevent end of year taxable liabilities for low-income type households and pensioners.
- Review of support payments for people suffering from fuel poverty to allow direct payments for energy bills in benefits + one-off payments in extreme circumstances while retaining control on usage, as well as looking for a long-term solution to alleviate these circumstances.



Immigration

- Changes to house sale regulations, to provide better protections and allow residents priority access to the property market such as; homes below a specified value cannot be bought by non-residents until the property has been listed for 3-6 months and restrictions on property purchase for non-residents to 1 house only for the first 5 years.
- Mandatory ID provision for travelling to/from the island at all points of access.
- Maintenance of the population level rather than increasing the population count to maintain + improve the stability of infrastructure/services. With people coming to the island being targeted for skill shortage areas and value to the economy as a priority.
- Review of legislation to allow for more responsible immigration and monitor integration into Manx society.

Housing / Development

- Review of first-time buyers' scheme with modelling to allow it to automatically adjust with inflation to accommodate things like; wage + house value scaling increases. Ensuring that key workers like traders have access.
- Improved regulation on new builds: -
 - To prevent buy to rent acquisitions within the first 5 years from completion.
 - Greater building quality/materials, promoting more eco-friendly materials (i.e. hempcrete) while retaining actual affordability.
 - the mandated quantity of 1st time buyer housing included in estates is a strict requirement that is non-negotiable.
- Increased social housing, potentially via compulsory purchase on dilapidated/derelect or demolished properties that have been left inactive for 'x' years (to be determined).
- Review of rental protection for residents in rental accommodation being forced to live in properties unfit for accommodation (i.e. water ingress/mould development) but still having to pay rent at cost to personal health, and landlords who fall victim of non-payment or property damage. Working with landlords for a fair outcome on both sides
- Grants to promote the opening/development of new specific business models to expand/improve island living aspects (i.e. late-night opening entertainment businesses that aren't drinking establishments).
- Creation of apartments to facilitate a rent to buy type scheme, that will work by allowing young people to rent apartments for a 5-year maximum period. Upon leaving they will be allowed to claim a ring-fenced portion of the payments back to contribute to a deposit on a property. This money cannot be used for any other purpose.
- Look into large scale investors for development on the island to improve and diversify the islands GDP (i.e. renewable fuel generation or machine manufacture).
- Creation of an emergency accommodation complex for people who become homeless unexpectedly rather than using hotels/guest houses at high cost to the tax payer and assist domestic abuse victims who need to escape.
- Investment into schemes that promote outside spaces alongside usage for people as wellness areas.

Travel / Commuting

- Seeking better fares on the steam packet for islanders, that are not isolated to the benefit of families only and supporting all residents equally. This I hope to achieve by looking to grow the SPC fleet and using the vessels for charter whenever possible with the expected increase in revenue generated being used to supplement islander travel.
- Twice annual roadside safety checks instead of winter only to help reduce the quantity of unsafe/unroadworthy vehicles on the road.
- Pushing for the completion of the Ballasalla bypass roundabout/junction before costs escalate further.
- Better teaching of vehicle operation + basic maintenance to improve standards of vehicle safety on the road's/ vehicle maintenance.
- Exploration into an express commuter service tram running via the steam railway network to provide a streamlined southern public commuter service.
- Pushing for improved road + footpath maintenance programs.
- Explore the introduction of variable speed limits in problem areas like the mountain road, this could reduce; impact into racing sessions from RTC's pre-road closures + road closures during adverse weather conditions.
- Review of road regulations to attempt reduction of aggressive/ anti-social driving and improve road safety (i.e. installation of trackers/black boxes as standard under specific circumstances).
- Introduction of a tracker system as standard to taxi/private hire service vehicles that would increase protections to both drivers and passengers of misconduct or false accusations. This I would look to achieve by piggy backing on the Bus Vannin system but with the data being segregated from the service.
- Improved/expanded bus service provision but with the fleet being managed via a targeted approach to vehicle use (i.e. late-night bus provision all year round with links to all corners of the island (within reason) which would allow for a better island nightlife but increased use of minibuses to reduce running costs of low occupancy services on non-peak hours + allow the continuation of the Sound/Cregneash bus service).
- Investment into natural traffic calming measures in key areas such as; Schools, entrances to housing estates and town shopping centres that will reduce speeding instances without the need for police enforcement.

Culture / Tourism

- Look for investment into TT entertainment to a more broad “old school” type setup (such as Douglas prom stunt shows + displays) that will increase appeal/ tourism and promote spending in the community.
- Extra support/promotion of events that enhance/celebrate the culture, heritage/ history and traditions of the island (i.e. Oie Voaldyn).
- Creation of a heritage fund to support/maintain our heritage sites, funded by adding voluntary donation point on the exits of heritage sites with scope of support from Gov. Grants, with the funds being ring-fenced for restoration/maintenance purposes only.
- Addition of the Manx language to local currency as a celebration of the year of the Manx language.
- Continued /improved promotion of the island as tourist destination outside of motorbike races, i.e. rally/hill race events, or as a cool climate destination for hot climate tourists.
- Pushing for the restoration of the Peggy to the Nautical museum as well retention of the old police station for use as a tourist centre point in Castletown, that displays the various sites in the as well as the heritage of the building itself.



Sustainability

- All imported Diesel + heating oil to be renewable for cleaner + instant carbon neutral transport/heating without upfront costs. This could potentially allow insulation from fossil fuel energy cost spikes.
- Push for renewable energy generation with a focus on alternative generation schemes such as:-
 - Micro generation, looking to start a scheme that would allow for the conversion of homes to electric only power/heating with self-sufficient generation, funded in place of the home-owners current energy payments with no payment increases for 5-10 years as an incentive.
 - Investigation into the viability of power generation via small-scale salt reactors, with excess power generated being sold to the UK and allowing the capacity to expand our electrification capacity in the future.
 - Installation of anaerobic digesters on appropriate farms for electricity production, with incentives like the farm gets free electricity for the installation and all excess then is transferred to the grid, to ease pressures on local farmers.
- Investment into bulk energy storage for the grid to allow/accommodate increased green/micro generation + neutralise uneven spikes in usage/generation following investigation into the most practical option to suit the island.
- Look to ensure that any major renewable developments are underwritten with assurances like price freezes/reductions as well as pushing for increased installation on developed areas instead of agricultural/green areas (i.e. solar panels over car parks instead of fields) to better benefit island residents and the islands landscapes.



- Creation of district hubs like/with the farm shop, on each corner of the island selling only local produce to bridge the access gap for locals and allow for better uptake/bulk supply of produce. This should allow more for competitive pricing and encourage growth of the sector over time. This would be operated with farmers having a majority shareholder control styled as a co-operative similar to the creamery, and government having a minority arm's length style share for the sake of investment return.
- Covenants on traditional farmland to protect it for long-term agricultural/farming use only so that it cannot simply be acquired and used for "lifestyle land".
- A mandate in the sea services agreement that agricultural products have priority to maintain consistency for exports + import for things like fertiliser/meat products, which cannot afford to be delayed.
- Investigation with the view to overhaul the productivity/value for money of the meat plant to allow for increased/faster processing.
- Increased pressure on supermarkets to supply local produce wherever possible.
- Potential creation of a scheme that would look to invest in high end style equipment, that would allow local farmers access to more high-tech style farming via a rental system. I.e drones, combines etc.
- Looking into investment for training and startup access for new farmers to get into the life.



Election Day
24th September 2026



The polling stations for Arbory, Castletown and Malew are:

Ballabeg Methodist Hall, Main Road, Ballabeg, IM9 4EH

Ballasalla Village Hall, Mill Road, Ballasalla, IM9 2EG

Castletown Civic Hall, Farrants Way, Castletown, IM9 1NR

Castletown Royal British Legion, King William Road, Castletown, IM9 1DH

Colby Methodist Hall, Station Road, Colby, IM9 4NW

**I am asking for your vote at this election, so that together,
we can work for a brighter, more compassionate future for our island**



@MarkFirthIOM

If you wish to discuss my
campaign, or require assistance
on polling day or with voting,
please feel free to contact me:

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