

**DOUGLAS CENTRAL
HOUSE OF KEYS GENERAL ELECTION
24 SEPTEMBER 2026**



**Chris
Thomas**

***Isle of Man 2030: Fair-Firm-Free
Smaller, Smarter, Smoother Government
Please spend your vote wisely***

 **415820**

 **christthomasiom@icloud.com**

 **www.facebook.com/christthomasiom**

Published by Chris Thomas, Dolls House, Old Castletown Road, Douglas.
Printed by The Copyshop, Braddan.

POLICY AND MANDATE

Your votes should frame necessary change after the election. This includes the tax you pay, how your money is spent, what the law is and how the private sector is regulated.

But the relationship between Island voting and post-election Government has been compared to a **blind date**, with no clear connection between your vote and what happens next.

That's why my top 2021 priority was **agreement in the election how the big policy challenges would be tackled, before Chief Minister nomination and Government formation.**

Unfortunately, **post-2021-election political direction was unclear because key Ministers had opposite views.** Compromise and consensus are desirable; unworkable fudge is not.

That's why I declined to join the Council of Ministers in 2021 and voted against the Island Plan.

In 2026 I accepted to serve as Treasury Minister having agreed **the decisive budget change allowing you to keep more of your money.**

This manifesto makes proposals for a **fair, firm and free Island to 2030** and beyond, **for your consideration and decision.** Its values are those in our National Anthem: **fair**, equal opportunity and access to justice; **firm**, so the Island can punch above its weight; and **free**, respecting private activity and liberty.

Working with a group of similar minded MHKs, we can make Government **smaller, smarter and smoother** and our Island **fairer, firmer and freer.**



Please continue to **get in touch.** I have already learned so much.

Gura mie eu.

Our non-party rebel alliance in 2024 and others since are making real my 2013 Isle of Man 2020 concept, not party politics but "...mandate politics... manifesto politics...working together politics... we need to have more of an idea of where we are going"

CAPABILITY & RECORD

Thank you for electing me since 2013.



Election evening May 2013

I am **practical**, getting things done. For instance:

- Increasing tax allowance and slowing minimum wage rise first week in Treasury;
- Campaigning to keep the Ben, now so vital as the Manxman is out of service;
- Getting hold of significant e-visa and immigration challenges this year;
- Losing Ministerial role insisting on 21st century approach to gas field development;
- Persuading Keys alone to pass the bill that stopped MLCs voting for Chief Ministers;
- Working to improve community facilities, our schools, and resident parking;
- Championing living incomes, and action for emergency housing and disability;
- Leading charge to tackle monopolies with competition and gas laws, with significant contributions to other law including assisted dying and historic child abuse; and
- Chairing Culture Vannin for a decade when Manx music and language have flourished.

I am also **principled and probing**, not a weather vane blowing in the political wind, and **known for using facts to debunk myths** like the false 'Island is bust' narrative running since 2016.

Some personal background: I am married, with three adult children, educated at Millom Comprehensive and Balliol, Oxford, and a chartered financial analyst at UBS, London. Coming first to the Island in 1979 as double bassist, I moved here 20 years later to launch MSc degree. Alongside university teaching, I was expert in international projects, including Chief Technical Advisor for Luxembourg's Vietnam financial sector project (2009-11) and Project Director for EU China Financial Services Co-operation Project (2004-7).

People remark I don't mention my successes as MHK but, as US President Truman said, it's amazing what you can accomplish when you don't care who gets the credit

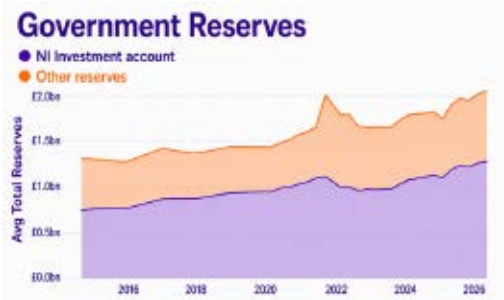
ADDRESSING OUR REAL CHALLENGES

"How dare Chris Thomas treat the electorate as if they are adult...he's got this analysis of the NI situation... and it seems pretty positive...I tend to believe his analysis from watching his work and exchanging emails with him... perhaps a job in the Treasury will beckon. After all it would be refreshing to have someone in there putting out unvarnished truths!"

I remain **'glass-half-full'**. Our **£1.2 billion NI Fund is bedrock for social security and pensions**, with £800 million additional reserves. Our community cares.

But we have real challenges including:

- Businesses struggling locally, with pressures on export sectors, jobs and careers;
- Fragile public finances needing careful handling to recover strained healthcare, maintain infrastructure, and keep pension promises whilst treating younger people fairly;
- Many public servants feeling buffeted from one policy to another by perceived poor leadership, and the public seeing persistent poor public service productivity;
- Confusion around the use of gas and wind, and deteriorated air and sea services;
- Strong feelings around flawed migration and visa arrangements; and
- Real struggle for so many, especially around housing and day-to-day living.



To address them, **returning and new MHKs need to do so much in the first 100 days after the election, and lay down prioritised 2026-31 legislative and economic programmes, and a costed, funded action plan.**

Beyond that my priorities include:

- More productive and accountable public services;
- Remaking the Island as a place where you can, revitalising local economy and using MONEYVAL evaluation outcome for economic growth to finance healthcare and other public services;
- Settling energy transition and inviting interest to develop our gas field;
- Accommodating the housing needs of local people of every generation;
- Replacing any increased population target with targeted demographic policies;
- Maintaining ageing strategic infrastructure unless replacement is more effective; and
- Re-using vacant sites and derelict buildings to reinvigorate our community.

SMALLER, SMARTER, SMOOTHER GOVERNMENT

The next Government needs to **communicate better, respecting people** by making policy choices clear and obvious. For instance, we need **focused Government that costs less** - smaller, smarter, smoother Government. **We do not need bigger Government paid for by other people's money through more taxation.**

Smaller Government

Funds need spending on what matters most; line items in budgets no longer rolled over each year but replaced by spending on intended, aligned results. Treasury has worked with Departments and other bodies to prepare **priority-based budgeting** for bottom-up implementation and funding from this winter.

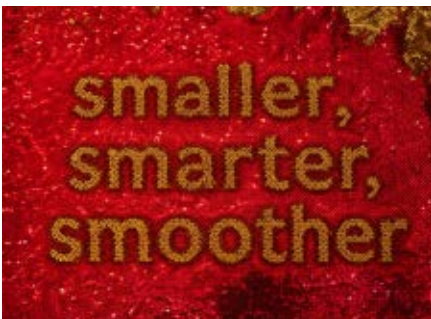
Smarter Government

Some service efficiencies are identified, some realised; **we need more for less**, with many millions saved. For instance:

- Recruitment controls and removing redundant roles, focusing on retention and fairer terms, conditions, multi-year pay agreements and pensions;
- Savings from procurement and contracts with local suppliers given a fair opportunity;
- Public property owned to optimise management, including disposals and maintenance, but with specialised management as necessary (e.g. healthcare, schools, etc);
- Better delivered 'digital first', not digital only, services alongside community hubs; and
- Empowerment of local expertise and elimination of generalised consultancy.

Smoother Government

Council of Ministers and Government should be **practically and culturally one body, with services joined up rather than shared, delivered smoothly rather than in silos**, and with **appropriate use and governance of state-owned companies, statutory boards and regional bodies.**



We need **better not more law and regulation.**

Now is the time for local government reform.

"A public representative is not qualified to run a department, he has only been given the opportunity to ensure that the department carry out the policies in the best interest of the public as a whole", Dominic Delaney

GROW LOCAL INCOMES

Higher incomes, and better career and life opportunities, improve our lives. **Economic growth allows us to stay on our Island, and others to come home.**

Unfortunately, incomes have stagnated in recent years, with non-manual earnings and company income falling causing real GDP to decline following decades of growth. Middling income households are squeezed most.

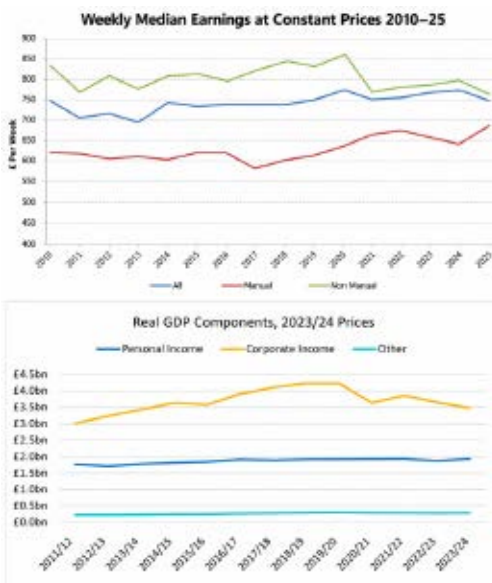
To address this my 2026 budget included the **largest ever personal tax allowance rise** which benefitted nearly everyone. The resulting spending and investment are self-sustaining with impact increasing with more local substance, people, premises and profits, **“trickle-up economics”**.

Economic initiatives should include:

- Measures aimed to maintain financial, professional and similar services, using things like the Life Insurance Business Scheme, regulatory sandboxing, and digital assets;
- Setting the minimum wage having regard to employment and competitiveness in lower paying sectors, and the interaction between it and the tax and benefit systems;
- Upskilling local people of all ages and bringing export-focused entrepreneurs here;
- Continuing our fantastic sports, cultural and other events for us and visitors alike; and
- Simplifying licensing, reducing regulation and improving payments and financing.

I welcome evaluation of Executive Agencies’ and Department for Enterprise’ actions and expenditure, and a new five-year economic plan and skills strategy based on a different population policy and assumption.

Failed Media Development Fund and Enterprise Development Scheme 10 years ago show risks of overreaching Government.



I added confidence to stability and security as the third byword for this year's budget, "confidence to secure jobs, confidence to increase private investment and confidence to export and grow the economy"

MAKE MONEY GO FURTHER

We cannot reduce world oil prices, inflation or interest rates, but we can champion local consumers and reduce living costs, focusing where we spend most - housing, transport, power, and food. Specifically:

- **Encourage building and refurbishment of more affordable flats and houses for local buyers and renters**, using tax and other levers to rein in exploitative investment, **for instance only raising non-resident registration fees**;
- **Introduce rent-to-buy support** and **improve** conveyancing and shared equity schemes;
- **Restrain i) electricity charges ii) Steam Packet fares and freight charges and iii) waste costs**, extending economic regulation to services provided in markets without the possibility of competition. This approach reduced gas prices relative to electricity prices by ensuring gas customers pay cost-oriented prices, by reducing gas company earnings to 2/3rd of what they were and by preventing over-investment;



- Use powers in **Competition Act** against unfair pricing by private companies and public bodies, perhaps including supermarkets, care homes and telecoms providers;
- **Move** public spending from processors to farmers and producers to limit food prices;
- **Work with airlines to increase service frequency and reliability, and reduce fares**;
- **Reform rates** by moving over five years to both fairer rateable values, fairer non-domestic rate use, discounts and rating of many currently zero-rated properties. This will **bring Douglas and water rates towards the all-Island level**; and
- **Reduce charging for Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment disposal**, and forthcoming **drinks Deposit Return Scheme**.



In 2015, as I told the Examiner newspaper, "flaws in the voluntary agreement made me decide to resign as OFT vice chair...cross-utility regulation is the way forward."

WHERE YOU CAN

We need to get back what **our Island lost in recent years: an Isle of Man, where you can**; a prosperous and caring Island providing opportunities, punching above its weight; where the private sector has freedom to flourish.

We need to thrive through accepting the need for change, remembering the Island's 3legs and Manannan spirit of adaptation and resilience.

Imagine:

- Financial services and other professionals freed from the risk of exclusion from core markets abroad once MONEYVAL is navigated;
- Douglas and our towns, countryside and seas flourishing, and brownfield sites and ageing professions seen as an opportunity to develop and refresh; and
- The Island Games coming home in 2029, the Golden Anniversary of our Millennium and what was created in 1979, and the new Isle of Man TT film stimulating new visitors.

As we approach this change, we should be more mindful of what proportion of the benefits and costs of public provision each generation can expect so that fairer decisions are made.

Focus includes:

- Making sure employment, social security and tax policies **reduce poverty** as income and expenditure statistics show that many households cannot afford 'normal' living;
- Help-to-move schemes to help some downsize to allow others suitable affordable housing;
- **Employment and training opportunities for younger people**, with some estimating a 'NEETs' proportion greater than across; and
- **Encouraging saving and financial planning**, including occupational pensions.



"I continue to beat the drum for our community and our Island. But why should I gloss over some realities and justify the continuation of some policies that I believe need changing? I am not boosting the knockers, only knocking the excessive boasting of some Government policies and achievements", my 2016 budget speech

MIGRATION AND BORDER CHALLENGES

Just loosening work permit and immigration controls to grow our population was wrong, with many deeply disappointed by the fallout including insufficient local training and employment, housing affordability worsened by off-Island purchase, and immigration non-compliance.

It was already clear by 2021 that this approach was failing with 2/3rds of us stating in surveys that the population should remain what it was; but Government continued planning for an estimated population of 100,000 by 2037.

The different approach suggested in the 2018/19 *Meeting our Population Challenges* and *Intergenerational Fairness* white papers should have been followed. For instance:

- **Making sure opportunities are available locally and infrastructure is sufficient; and**
- **Enabling younger people to save for a deposit and acquire a home by encouraging productivity and higher earnings in more sectors and rebalancing housing supply.**

Government's response to our migration challenges has now changed, acknowledging **we need to provide opportunities for local people and then respond to the needs of employers where skills cannot be found on Island by welcoming those coming to work through the work permit system and immigration visa routes.**

Some specific immigration responses include:

- **Electronic travel authorisation** for visitors, digital visas, and **detection of abuse;**
- **Stricter worker migrant visa controls** (local recruitment tests, higher skill/salary thresholds, dependent and job mobility restrictions) and closing intra company transfer route;
- Introducing **immigration health surcharge** this winter; and
- **Enhanced border security** though intelligence-led checks and enforcement.



In July 2025 Tynwald approved investment in upskilling Island workers, supporting more residents into work and welcoming appropriate inward migration. Maintaining border security and the integrity of the Common Travel Area were recognised as top priorities

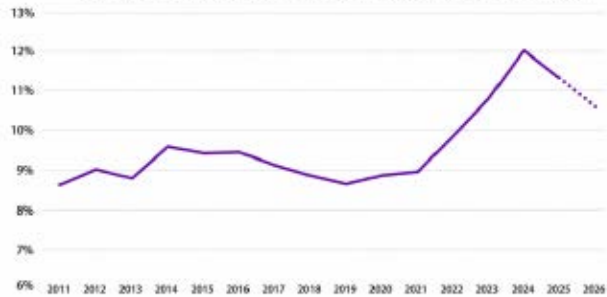
REBALANCING PUBLIC FINANCES

Public finances are solid but need attention.

Reserves are forecast to rise to £2.22 billion by 2030, but their real value is declining as interest is used to finance the structural deficit which cannot continue.

Our tax strategy is wise - to raise sufficient taxes and comply with international standards - but **the proportion of income paid as tax by those in the middle has increased too much**, rising to peak at 12% in 2024. Broadening the tax base within traditional Island tax limits helps, for instance Pillar 2 tax is contributing £30 million+ from large companies.

Effective Tax Rate on Median Earnings, Isle of Man



The Island's Aa3 stable Moody's rating acknowledges pragmatic policy making, prudent fiscal policy, low debt and substantial reserves as well as Transparency and Exchange of Tax Information compliance.

But the personal allowance rise this year should be the first of more changes to **reduce the effective tax and NI rate paid by nearly everyone**, including lowering 21% tax rate when possible.

To achieve this, we need **public service efficiency, budget hardening to minimise overspends, and priority-based budgeting.**

Making these hard decisions will take place alongside audit and budget reform.

State pensions and benefits will rise with inflation helped by interest from the NI Fund, and **I welcome the 2027 NI and social security review.**

Reduced benefits, increased contributions and cost sharing inside an envelope are improving public sector pensions situation, but the £3 billion+ 'legacy funding gap' actuarial liability remains.

Treasury should use its credit rating and assets to finance the substantial infrastructure investment the Island needs, building on the bond which raised £400 million at 15/8% annual interest rate to finance sea services and utilities.

MAINTAINING INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure policy is overshadowed by the Ferry Terminal, as the current cost at outset would have been “a far harder political ask for the DOI, even in light of the strategic link and public popularity of the Liverpool link,” as Public Accounts Committee wrote in 2023. It concluded this project went wrong in 2016, before it started: “The imminent expiry of the existing landing stage lease, along with the public preference for Liverpool as a destination, were significant factors which limited the Department’s options and affected the decisions being made during this early stage of the project.”



Government’s £80 million or so annual capital programme is focused to **maintain ageing infrastructure unless replacement is more effective.**

Seeking Tynwald approval for **new investment follows design and feasibility study in the Project Development Fund process** which was introduced in 2023 and is now under review. This includes taking more time over feasibility, design, how tenders are drawn up and bids assessed. Contingency funds are held centrally. A new Major Projects Board challenges project management and reports to Tynwald on performance.

Government needs to bring **costed, and prioritised strategic needs assessments to Tynwald for phased funding as a National Infrastructure Plan**, including sub-plans for airport, education and health facilities, energy generation and supply, flood and coastal defences, harbours, heritage, highways, home affairs, sewerage and water, telecoms and transport.

A funded multi-year project pipeline will help the Island’s construction sector.

Law and arrangements are being developed to strengthen cybersecurity and resilience of critical national infrastructure.

Even the Island’s 2017 National Infrastructure Strategy to ensure the reliable, secure and resilient infrastructure we need has not been maintained!

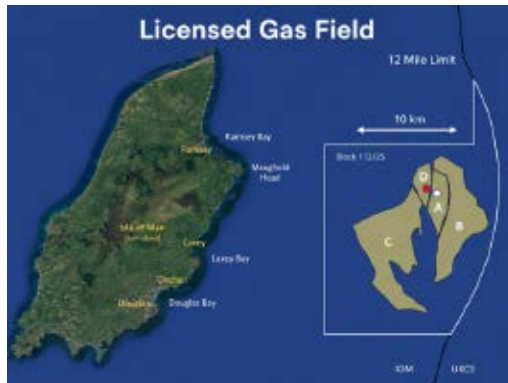
ENERGY RESILIENCE AND TRANSITION

Offshore wind, gas and tidal leases resulted from the Government's Vision 2020 economic strategy in 2014 and were agreed following Tynwald's approval of the Offshore Energy Production Strategy that year. My vote against that strategy - "given the **absence of both the details of the legal framework and the lack of a fully developed Marine Spatial Plan...whatever the merits of the various offshore energy options**" - has proven right.

A **cost-effective, pragmatic and funded Energy Strategy** is needed for Manx Utilities and private sector. **Our transition must aim to reduce energy costs, increase resilience and focus on adaptation to climate change.** The Development and Marine Plans are important to balance economic, environmental and social elements including decommissioning, and offshore wind agreement should be published so choice is clear and obvious.

What is clear is that:

- **Pulrose gas power station will operate for many years** pending commissioning of an alternative, the electricity network needs investment, and any new electricity interconnector is expensive and years away;
- Government should **invite applications for gas exploration and production** in previously licenced block 112/25, including seismic data options, and should complete stewardship and operatorship arrangements for all marine infrastructure;



- Offshore wind assumes unsecured UK market access, and **the consenting and parallel taxation processes need lawful and publicly acceptable completion;**
- **2026 Heat Wise Home scheme needs reworking**, with other housing measures; and
- **Vehicle duty rates need rebalancing** so that highways are maintained more fairly.

"A clear roadmap is required to fully understand how the existing electricity network can be transitioned into a low or zero carbon system", Arup, Future Energy Scenarios, July 2021

TRANSPORT CONNECTIONS

Reliable, frequent and affordable transport is vital.

Air

But air services have got worse and fallen behind other places.

This requires immediate attention including review of alternative ways to work with airlines and public fund use, and passenger duty. A strategic partnership with a locally based airline seems helpful to encourage younger people to live and work here and for international-facing business.

Our airport is receiving special attention and requires £6 million+ subsidy and investment. Air traffic control is improving. Other priorities include airport governance and regulation, security and baggage, and how to develop airport perimeter.

Sea

An opportunity to reset the 25-year Sea Services Agreement regarding **Steam Packet fleet, sailing schedules, fares and charges and employment** was missed in 2024/5, despite Tynwald resolving in November 2023 this would be considered.

This reset is needed and a call for evidence about sea and air services should be launched urgently. Matters include **determining dredging and investment for Douglas Harbour and the berth in Liverpool**, as well as the Manannan replacement vessel, fuel price hedging and the surcharge, schedules, and fares and freight pricing in coming years.

Bus

Our bus service is good, and plans for a new timetable based on national and feeder routes is an opportunity to improve bus provision around Douglas.

Taxi

Taxi services are currently subject to policy development and users, operators and drivers need to engage in this.



Off-Island travel cost and convenience have been described as the worst thing about living here for decades, for instance in the 1991 and 2002 Quality of Life and 2017 Social Attitudes Surveys. They need tackling

FIXING HOUSING

A costed, prioritised national housing plan is needed to house local people. That's clear. But what that means in practice is disputed.

Housing affordability needs fixing, particularly for younger people.

Higher earnings improve affordability, as years of steady house prices would. Specific initiatives for local ownership of flats and houses include:



"We can and should provide more security for young people, from the jobs they do to the homes they increasingly rent... we can promote asset ownership for younger generations so that owning a home...is not a distant prospect" Lord Willetts, "A New Generational Contract", 2018

- **Support rent-to-buy, improve shared equity schemes, and use mortgage interest relief, section 13 agreements, land registration fees, and other levers;**
- Encourage saving for home deposits, and mechanisms for people to downsize;
- Introduce rental deposit protection and arbitration scheme;
- Launch Vacant Properties Initiative to bring several hundred properties back into use with grants, rates and planning mechanisms, and sell plots for self-build;
- Improve online property information to aid conveyancing and leasing;
- Consolidate and modernise housing (party walls, maintenance) and letting law; and
- Increase social housing rents only by inflation until means tested rent rebating in place.

Emergency housing pathways are in place, alongside enhanced budgeting loans.

Government has reviewed use of its Housing Deficiency Fund as £8.5 million public funds are used annually already to supplement rents to cover social housing costs. Additional spending could result from recent increases to income thresholds which will further lengthen waiting lists.

Housing policy should be separated from housing authority operations, as soon as standards of performance and financing mechanisms are agreed with regional housing bodies. These already operate sheltered housing and could leverage the experience and equity in local authority housing stock for more social housing.

REVISITING PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Planning

Good planning matters, with examples of bad planning here in Douglas, like the Police Station built for development that never happened, and a bus depot with doors leading into a hedge and Tesco car park.

One priority is following up the Strategic Plan 2021-41 consultation and launching an All-Island Area Plan to have **a full Development Plan in place as early as possible**.

An important consultation finding is that that **many are rightly concerned about infrastructure capacity to cope with future development**.

There is also scepticism about net projected residential housing need, so **population projections need reducing**. Concerns about renewable energy and support for built heritage are obvious.

Development

Around £50 million is spent or committed on Manx Development Corporation and Island Infrastructure Scheme brownfield site initiatives, making them the most important tools for the last Government.

I announced a review of both this February and published an interim report this July which examined the impact of rising costs on construction.

Challenges to both include construction costs rising here at a faster rate than across, significant delays in planning, and a shortage of skilled construction professionals.

Mechanisms recommended include deferred land payment and overage, and equity participation within joint ventures including land contributions.

The report also stated the need for a credible multi-year capital programme to deliver needed infrastructure and housing as well as to retain and grow the capacity of the local construction sector.



The recommendation this July was for “the establishment of a stable project pipeline, targeted financial support mechanisms, investment in skills and labour capacity, and more flexible approaches to land and partnership structures”

HEALING HEALTHCARE

Healthcare needs turning around, reworking how the public, professionals, and politicians are involved.

But heads rolling and another new governance framework will not stop 'patients coming to serious harm despite concerns being raised within the hospital at all levels', as I first heard in 2013, nor will they stop mushrooming healthcare demand and unacceptable waiting lists

Healthcare annual expenditure now exceeds £400 million and is an increasing proportion of public spending, **so healthcare must be smarter and smoother for Government to be smaller.**

That means **staying within budget by completing transformation, cost improvement and financial recovery projects.**

It means everyone working in healthcare **respecting each other and working together to deliver safe, joined up, and efficient care.**

Achievements include wellbeing partnerships, mental health first contact practitioners and talk service, intermediate care and frailty services, with plans in train for advocacy, adult autism pathways, moving Douglas ambulance station and improving patient transfer on- and off-Island.

Priorities include:

- Continuing to localise employment reducing wasteful agency spending and helping local people build careers;
- Adjusting GP and dentist contracting so it is fairer to Douglas practices, with in person appointments within a wider primary care system, and improved patient records;
- Maintaining safe healthcare on Island with appropriate transfer to specialist centres;
- Emphasis on prevention and early intervention in the community, supporting carers;
- Communicating better, and learning from mistakes and complaints; and
- Development of ring-fenced social insurance fund for younger people to fund nursing, residential and home care, finalising work underway for many years.



"We can deliver the health and care older generations deserve without simply asking younger workers to bear all the costs" Willetts, "A New Generational Contract"

ENRICHING LIVES

School funding should increase with need and deprivation, and education is smoother when joined up with social care and timely access to mental and physical health provision.

I welcome **higher childcare credit, more additional needs support** and the primary literacy scheme.

Reducing class sizes and additional school resourcing in our schools is aided by responsible technology use and could be by rationalising primary provision elsewhere.

Significant investment in Douglas schools has included new HBN primary, St Mary's refurbishment, Ballakermeen 6th form centre, and wings at UCM.

A new Park Road Scoill yn Jubilee school and HBN modular extension are high up in a huge school investment programme, alongside QE2 and CRHS projects.

Education law and arrangements need amending for children in care, for those studying outside schools, and for those with additional needs.

School governance, staff morale and relationships between schools and those outside remain important.

Quality assurance and tribunal frameworks are developing.

Fuller labour market and skills gaps knowledge should help employability and inform work placements and modernise vocational training including apprenticeships. Funding of these needs to be fairer given rising numbers of people studying on Island.

Continuing **investment in youth activity, outdoor learning, sport, arts, heritage and culture** enriches lives.

Villa Gaiety sound system is improved, and I look forward to NSC improvements in the next two years and additional sports facilities elsewhere.

I propose that our sports, arts, cultural and heritage bodies are empowered with grants, lottery and similar funds to achieve even more.



Horse Tram re-opening April 2023

"The measure of a nation is how it uses the big things to allow it to take care of the little things to enrich the lives of its people", Family Library, 2021

RESIDENTIAL CALM?

A Douglas highways maintenance schedule was published in 2016, with some schemes carried out, but much more needs doing, and a **5-year highways plan with funding** is needed to improve roads, kerbs, pavements, crossings, and line painting (including parking space marks).

Parking is a huge challenge, and it was disappointing that the specific H zone residents parking permit review around the proposed Westmoreland Village was replaced in Tynwald by a national review that has not yet started.

Local parking zones need and will get immediate attention and action, particularly around the number of discs issued, continuing validity and how large vehicles are included.

Fixed penalties and new arrangements for wardens and controllers should help.

It makes sense to minimise risks of collisions like this one in Somerset Road, but the 2021 proposal for traffic calming measures around Ballakermeen High School resulted eventually in a sign-only 20mph scheme, with limited evidence of either compliance or enforcement.

An important objective is to **minimise the use of residential roads as commuting short-cuts**, and to avoid potentially dangerous proposals for places like Tromode Road.

Sports facilities, squares and other open spaces need investment, and I welcome Council and charity engagement on how to use and maintain them.

The wilder places we have are also valuable for wildlife and nature.

Things like rates discounts should be considered for the newly designated Douglas Head conservation area and other conservation area improvements.

Pollution needs monitoring and tackling when necessary, and lighting needs to be adequate.



Dol fed back on public calls in Living Streets engagement for new pedestrian crossings, better pavements and on-street parking, poor visibility at junctions, use of residential roads as a cut-through and speeding in 2023

REBUILDING CONFIDENCE IN OUR DEMOCRACY

Voters deserve to know in which direction candidate MHKs would take our Island.

Then we need **solid debates to draw out policy differences between potential Ministers and backbenchers** so that the Chief Minister and Ministers have a mandated, prioritised and coherent agenda, not another fudge.

I tried to make this happen in 2021 and am trying again. In fact, **the next Chief Minister will be nominated in 2026 as I proposed in 2021**, just as the 2021 Chief Minister was nominated by only MHKs after my decisive 2017 resolution in Keys. Specifically:

"That each candidate for nomination as Chief Minister shall make a statement (in Keys); that when statements have been made, the candidates shall answer questions from Members..."

We don't need Westminster-style politics but other reforms should include:

- Collective responsibility only for budget and nationally important policy decisions;
- Allowing the Legislative Council to scrutinize legislation before House of Keys clauses stage, making it a legislative committee of experienced part-time members;
- Introducing statutory offence of misconduct in public office, and completing FOI regime;
- Fixing 5-year legislative plan next January, including audit, budget and legal aid reform;
- Referendum and citizens jury legislation, and accurate and complete electoral register;
- Merging President and Speaker roles so presiding officer is always impartial;
- Resetting role, governance and budget of Tynwald Auditor General and ombudsman;
- Directly electing the Chief Minister, perhaps pioneering principle for regional services, and considering confirmation of Ministerial team in the House of Keys; and
- Independents overseeing members' standards given July 2026 embarrassment.



The rain on a wet Tynwald Day in 2015 was telling us something!

We need "continuity between how voters vote...the Ministers that arise out of the process and the policies that develop", as I put it in 2021.

MEETINGS AND VOTING

Constituency meetings

Douglas Central election meetings in September include:

Manx Radio debate, Wednesday 2nd, available to listen back;

Vote 2026 - Question Time, Monday 7th live, YouTube and other social media; and

Cabinet Office constituency pre-election meeting, Tues 8th 7pm at Ballakermeen High School. No registration and meeting broadcast live and on catch up.



Some voting information

Each registered voter can **vote for one or two MHK candidates**.

Those unable or who chose not to vote in person can request a postal vote using Douglas Central form (<https://elections.gov.im/media/5tznhzg0/douglas-central-postal-vote-application-300726.pdf>).

Last day for postal ballot requests is **10th (off-Island within British Isles)** and **16th (IOM)**. Postal votes need to be **received before 5pm on 23rd** although those not mailed can be used at polling station.

Proxy requests, when someone votes for you, can be made until 23rd.

Support to vote for those who need assistance is available.

Please don't hesitate to ask me for any assistance, **including postal vote application**.

Official elections contact details are: 685754 or elections@gov.im.

"Illiham Dhone might symbolise defiant Manx identity. But I hope he would advocate establishing facts to secure the best interests of the Isle of Man and of those for whom it is home...Let's work together encouraging evidence-based policy making rather than policy-based evidence making", my Illiham Dhone speech in 2017

Polling stations, open from 8am to 8pm, are:

All Saints Church Hall;

Scout Hall, Demesne Road;

St Andrew's Church.

Trinity Methodist Hall.

Please vote Chris Thomas