

HOUSE OF KEYS BY-ELECTION THURSDAY 23 MAY 2013

DOUGLAS WEST

# QUINTIN GILL

On May 23rd you have the important responsibility of electing a representative to serve Douglas West and the Isle of Man in the House of Keys, Tynwald Court and Government. Your MHK has, I believe a duty to represent you, all members of the Manx communities and the Isle of Man's national well-being. I am standing in this election as I believe I am the right person to represent Douglas West in a positive, independent and professional manner.

Your MHK will need to be able to understand the parliamentary and governmental systems; appreciate the political agenda at a national and international level whilst maintaining a compassionate role as a constituency representative. With my professional background allied with a decade of service as an MHK I am the most experienced candidate in this election with a proven track record in these diverse but complementary areas.

As this Government faces up to the pressing challenges it must address in the next few years it is more important than ever that your MHK can 'hit the ground running' in all the varied duties of an elected member. The short time between this by-election and the 2016 General Election will be a crucial period when extremely important and far-reaching decisions need to be taken – decisions which will affect us all.



*Thanks*  
*Quintin Gill*

QUINTIN GILL



# PRIORITIES

The priority for our Government – indeed any Government – has to be maintaining and growing a diverse and sustainable economy. Despite a global economic slowdown and recession across the Euro zone and the UK the Isle of Man's economy is still growing and our Government deserves credit for this. However, the change in our VAT sharing agreement with the UK will result in a loss of around a third of our net income and this will require Government to adopt a balanced response utilising three strategies:

- **EARN MORE**

- **SPEND LESS • UTILISE SAVINGS**

**Earn More** – is more than the simple and easy increases in charges, fees, taxes and penalties which Government has introduced. It is about promoting policies which further diversify the economy – initiatives such as developing the highly regulated E Gaming sector and supporting the Aircraft and Ship Registers. I have had political responsibility for these Registers during their significant growth periods and I know how important it is to facilitate the freedom for officers to work closely with our private sector colleagues – building on these relationships will be crucial for continued economic success.

Our most important relationship continues to be with the United Kingdom and we must work hard to develop this relationship and maintain mutually beneficial trade arrangements. Leaving the open trade arrangement we currently share with the UK and potentially introducing trade barriers between the Isle of Man and the UK, would be risky and, in my opinion be economically and politically harmful. However, as the ill conceived European Union and particularly the Eurozone lurches from one bail out to another we need to have clear contingency plans for a situation where the EU unravels or splits; for a small and responsive economy with good international contacts and reputation this could be as much of an opportunity as it is an uncertain threat.

**Spend Less** – Government can make small but telling changes such as making senior public sector salaries - which have been allowed to become inflated by the previous administration - more reflective of the market forces. But, there remains a need for fundamental review of all of Government's structures and roles. The Agenda for Change programme which Tynwald has debated can move this forward - but **only** if Government is serious about addressing the pressing issues it faces. We need to make these decisions to protect the public services we expect and the high quality of life we enjoy in the Isle of Man.

Whatever happens we must absolutely resist the temptation to introduce a further re-structure of Government – the last one was a cynical distraction to buy time before the last General Election and has proved to be costly and divisive; I voted against it for these reasons and will always hold Government to account to introduce appropriate cost savings measures which do not impact on our most vulnerable members of our community.

Government must make tough decisions which will not be popular – and they can expect continued criticism of their actions until and unless they start to communicate their thinking and reasoning in a more open and respectful manner. The recent bail-out of the Sefton Group is a classic example of this and Government must learn and apply the lessons of this episode.

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## Utilise savings

Our reserves are not only a source of short term cash relief they are also the foundations of our financial stability and international reputation. We are all aware of the inherited debts which will need to be addressed and clearly the current dependence on using reserves is unsustainable. The Government's budget balancing programme is the best way to move this important matter forward. Government has a clear duty to lead this process and advise the public more clearly about its actions.

Government has a duty to introduce fundamental and courageous policies to address the fiscal challenge even if this proves to be unpalatable and unwelcome. However, I think most people respond positively to a presenting national need and feel Government should be constructive in promoting public / private sector / charitable and voluntary partnerships in responding to the challenges ahead. If elected I will hold Government to account in a positive, constructive and open manner – I will support them in their responsibilities when I believe they are right and oppose them when I believe they are wrong. I will continue to act in a fair and independent manner in reaching these decisions and will be accountable to my constituents to explain my thinking and actions.



**Getting involved  
matters**

I am a Manxman from a Douglas family; my late father grew up in Hillside Avenue and my mother was born in Castletown but raised in Douglas. I have lived in Port St Mary for the past twenty years and served as a Commissioner and as MHK for Rushen between 2001 and 2011.

At the 2011 General Election I increased my share of the vote to 1, 722 but lost out in a keenly fought contest. This mandate in terms of electoral support is greater than many successful candidates in other constituencies, and, I believe reflects the need for a more balanced division of the House of Keys constituency boundaries. If the advisory committee looking at this issue can achieve such a fair distribution then I will support their recommendations for the sake of fairness across the island.

Of course I totally respect the 2011 result and whilst it was a disappointing experience it has tempered me to be even more determined to apply myself to my public service. I have recommenced my social work career and am now employed in a very professional team committed to working with older people in the hospital or community. However, I believe I can make a positive difference for the constituency, community and Isle of Man by using my experience, knowledge and commitment in a political role.

I moved to Douglas last year and it is my absolute intention to live permanently in the capital. My priority, if elected, will be to serve my constituents; part of this will be about community engagement and I will emulate the many successful initiatives I introduced in my service as an MHK for the benefit of my constituents. It is important for as many constituents as possible to fully understand how their parliament works and bringing a variety of groups into Tynwald Chambers is important work which I will continue to do.

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

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**Team working works**

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## DOUGLAS WEST

### ABOUT ME

I am 53 and have a long and varied career in public service. Having served in the Royal Navy I qualified as a Probation Officer and Social Worker. In my current role working with older people I have direct experience of the genuine hardship some members of our community face; when faced with such issues I believe we each have a duty to do what we can to assist others. This was my motivation to co-found Southern Befrienders, a charitable Live At Home Scheme which together with partner schemes was recently awarded The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. I believe public service is about constructively applying oneself to meet needs more than sniping and negative criticism. I am a team player and know from my parliamentary experience that it is absolutely necessary to be able to form alliances to progress any political agenda.



I am actively involved in many charities, am a school governor and as a keen motorcyclist serve as a TT/MGP Marshal at Brandish and on the Southern 100 course.

Between 2001 and 2011 I served as MHK for Rushen; during this time I had relevant experience working in many Government Departments, on numerous parliamentary committees and in leadership roles as Chairman of the Office of Fair Trading and the M.E.A. I was unanimously elected as Deputy Speaker and have sat as presiding officer in both the House of Keys and Tynwald Court – I understand the need to act in a fair, consistent and even handed manner, maintaining a good humour even in the face of trying situations, acting as a team player or standing up to be counted as an individual. I have a variety of interests including walking, naval history, football and the arts; and 2014 will present a chance for us all to engage in the Year of Culture. As a former Chairman of the Arts and Sports Councils I regard this as an opportunity for Government and the community to work together to provide a legacy to celebrate the arts across the Island in the same manner that the Commonwealth Youth Games did so successfully.

I have tried to visit every home in Douglas West but I realise it will be impossible to meet everyone; however, I will respond to any call or e mail and will make myself available at any reasonable time which is mutually convenient. I believe this election is very much about the qualities and record of the candidates to bring relevant experience, evidence of political competence and independence at a national level and a commitment to take the necessary decisions. What we really need now is a Government that can – and will – govern. We need a Government that will engage more fully and openly with the public it serves. We need to address the many pressing issues which have been avoided for too long. We need politicians who will be constructive, be part of a team, show leadership qualities and act according to the national interests. We need politicians who will put earning your respect above seeking to be populist. Your decision about who is the best suited candidate to perform these tasks is a matter for you, but it is a matter which will have implications for all of us.

When I was first elected I promised that I would work hard, be fair and honest. I know that I have fulfilled that commitment – and that is the promise I now make to you. I very much hope you will support me to become your full-time and wholly committed independent MHK for Douglas West.

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