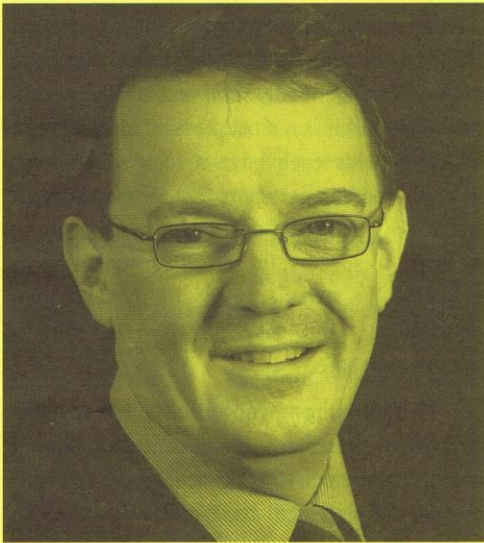


HOUSE OF KEYS GENERAL ELECTION
Thursday 29th September 2011
Sheading of Rushen

QUINTIN GILL | **X**



Since 2001 I have been honoured to be elected to serve the people of Rushen as one of your Independent MHKs. As I promised ten years ago, I have applied myself wholeheartedly to all the varied aspects of this work as your full-time member of the House of Keys and Tynwald Court.

I am, once again, seeking re-election and hope to have your support to allow me to continue to represent you and our community.

Thank you for taking the time to read my manifesto.

THE ECONOMY

This election takes place against a global backdrop of financial uncertainty and instability. In the Isle of Man a great deal of attention has, understandably and rightly, been given to our significantly diminished VAT receipts over the forthcoming years. *'Living within our means'* – means which will be seriously reduced – must be achieved by the next administration. This will involve making difficult decisions, taking sometimes unpopular yet appropriate action. However we should guard against unwarranted pessimism; our economy is currently worth over £3 billion annually and it is still growing and diversifying. Our financial foundations, including our international AAA credit rating,

will need to remain strong to support the next Government's financial re-modelling programme.

The culture of secrecy which has sadly characterised this Government is regrettable. As a former serviceman I understand the need to keep secrets when necessary, and on occasions confidentiality must, of course, be maintained. However, Government is about serving the public and should be about transparency. The next Government needs to reflect this as a matter of course. The new Chief Minister will need to engage Tynwald members and the public more fully and honestly if there is to be political consensus and support for the important work facing us.





The Review of the Scope and Structure of the Isle of Man Government is an important document which considers the advantages and benefits of a variety of comprehensive changes. I believe however, by refusing to even consider the merits of reviewing the scope of the public sectors activities this Government has missed an important opportunity. I remain unconvinced by the promised benefits of the restructure of Government. In my view this restructuring can only be of benefit if it is now complemented by a full and honest review of the scope of Government. This represents a pressing challenge for the next administration. It will not be a painless process and unpopular decisions will almost certainly flow from it, but I believe it is absolutely necessary.

As Chairman of the MEA I have already led such a review: we have cut 40% of our most senior management posts and made many other savings. By working with our colleagues across all of our activities, and the unions, we have identified revenue savings which will lead to new working practices as well as funding any future pay settlement. This model works for the MEA and I believe is applicable elsewhere in the public sector. It does not engender popularity, but – bluntly – **the next administration will have to forego short-term popularity and instead seek respect for addressing the serious financial position.**

I firmly believe that utilities such as the MEA should remain in public ownership. As we continue to move towards a low carbon economy, electricity will play a vital role in our domestic and commercial lives. At the request of the MEA, Government has agreed a funding mechanism intended to cap tariff increases for the next few years. The MEA have also recently introduced a new voluntary commercial 'Green Tariff', all the proceeds of which will be used to the direct benefit of domestic customers. I remain totally committed to the further utilisation of proven renewable technologies which are economically viable.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

One of the most worrying legacies of the last Government is the state of our relationship with the UK Government which I believe is at the lowest point for the last 25 years. In my 2006 manifesto I wrote; *Our principal relationship is with the United Kingdom and it is crucial that we maintain this in the most positive manner possible. This remains as true as ever.* The next Government must make serious and concerted efforts to promote a better understanding of the Isle of Man generally and especially within Westminster. This is a most pressing area of need, and your MHKs each have a role in this – as individual parliamentarians or as members of Government. For this Government to lay claim to any sort of success in this important area is to ignore the experience of the VAT sharing negotiations and the Reciprocal Health Agreement debate.

The VAT sharing negotiations which this Government has been conducting for several years almost led to the severance of that agreement. This would have quickly resulted to economically catastrophic consequences with, among other things, customs barriers between the Island and the UK.

The Reciprocal Health Agreement was another bitter experience for this Government; I voted against their abject and defeatist attitude. Together with a small but determined group of fellow backbenchers I fought to keep this vitally important issue on the political agenda, until our views were vindicated by the UK Government's last-minute change of heart. It was a very important victory for the Manx people.

In my opinion these examples underline the crucial value of maintaining and enhancing our working relationship with the UK whilst also working hard to maintain our autonomy. These two views are complementary.



IN TYNWALD COURT AND THE HOUSE OF KEYS

Since becoming an MHK in 2001 I have worked with my Rushen colleagues in the interests of our constituents wherever possible. However, as an Independent MHK I have always acted in a manner which I believe has been consistent and coherent; I have not joined either the Government/establishment 'block vote' or the negative or irresponsible 'opposition to everything' camp. I have acted and voted according to the merits of individual cases and policies and in many instances this has led to justified and vigorous opposition to this Government, especially when they have got things seriously wrong.

On other occasions I have moved private member's legislation to enhance child protection, worked on many Government and parliamentary committees and presided in the House of Keys in my role as Deputy Speaker. I have loyally supported my Minister in the Department of Community Culture and Leisure and I am proud to have been part of the team which oversaw the development of the Bowl Stadium, a national asset which is the centre piece for The Commonwealth Youth Games. In the DCCL I have responsibility for Communities – an important political role, as we have sadly seen from the failures to instil community cohesion in England.

I have worked hard, tried to be positive, frank and fair – acting decisively without being unnecessarily destructive; working for the interests of the Isle of Man.

IN RUSHEN

After years of Tynwald questions and pressing I am glad to see that my efforts to get Southlands more fully utilised have been successful. Residential services however, are only part of the range of necessary supporting provisions. We

need to provide assistance to allow elderly people the chance to remain in their own homes if they wish to. This is what led me and others to form *Southern Befrienders*, a charity which is now well established and valued across the south. Services for the elderly across Rushen must be provided and maintained to allow them to get the fair reward for their lives and work which have been the foundations of our society.

The bid, led by Rushen MHKs, to have a government-funded activity hall which will be run by community groups built at Rushen School is moving ahead. Whilst this will be for use by all sorts of groups it will certainly enhance local sporting facilities which will benefit many people from across the south of the island. I very much welcome the move by Colby FC to their new ground; they and Rushen United are to be congratulated for their continued work to encourage children and adults into regular organised sporting activity. Many other southern sporting and social clubs are prospering and we should recognise and applaud the work of the many volunteer coaches who make this possible.

There has been significant investment in housing across Rushen; the First Time Buyer's scheme at Ballacubbon, the new build project at Four Roads/Marashen Crescent and the improvements to properties in Edremony and St Mary's Avenue, Port St Mary are to be welcomed. Demand for housing remains an issue however, particularly for our young people hoping to set up their first home. I have seen the success of housing associations, shared equity schemes and housing co-operatives; all of these models have a role to play in this important area.

With all the uncertainties and anxieties which are understandably at the forefront of our thoughts it is still important to reflect how fortunate we are to live in Rushen. It is a Sheading characterised by small, safe communities that have benefited



from investment and support. Development work is progressing at the former Marine Lab. which will rejuvenate this highly visible part of Port Erin and I welcome this private venture. However, the faltering Regeneration Schemes for Port Erin and Port St Mary must be utilised more effectively to enhance the commercial viability of both Ports.

Investment is not just about money. I have committed a great deal of time and effort into supporting our communities. Since I initiated a formal visit programme, hundreds of children from our primary schools have learnt about the House of Keys and Tynwald Court. At a secondary level, Castle Rushen High School students annually take part in Junior Tynwald. I know from my personal experience just how praiseworthy our young people are and we should appreciate them and recognise the community cohesion which we enjoy.

People invariably respond positively to being treated with respect and courtesy; that is why, for example, I supported lowering the voting age to sixteen and why my time spent in all the sectors of the communities across Rushen is time well invested. I have arranged or supported many community, charitable or social activities throughout the years. I regard this as an enjoyable and important part of the work of an MHK as it does so much to maintain my understanding of the needs of our communities.

ABOUT ME

I am 51, married to Joy and we have three grown-up daughters; Laura 22, Emma 20 and Alison 18. Our home is in Port St Mary. I have served as your full-time MHK since 2001 and have been guided by the principles of a fair distribution of wealth across society, working hard, showing respect,

trying (but not always managing!) to be good humoured, and above all, being honest.

CONCLUSION AND LOOKING AHEAD

We face pressing economic challenges which will require particular skills and experience from our politicians. Teamwork and shared endeavour will need to be the guiding principles of the next Government; openness and candour will need to characterise their relationship with the wider public. I do believe that a well led Government can get the backing of the responsible members of Tynwald and the respect of the Manx public to make the right decisions which are going to be required of us.

I am a team player, I work hard to foster a good personal relationships with my Tynwald colleagues and I was very honoured to be elected unopposed to the role of Deputy Speaker of the House of Keys. I am also an Independent MHK who stands up to be counted on matters of important principle.

I hope you will consider candidates on their record not their rhetoric. Thank you for taking the time to read my manifesto; please do read all the literature of all of the candidates to help you decide who to cast your vote/s for. It is an important task.

It has been a great honour to represent the people of Rushen in the House of Keys and Tynwald Court.

It is a privilege I hope you will grant me again.

Yhiats, Quintin Gill

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