

Manifesto

Tim Baker



**Ayre &
Michael
Candidate**

**House of Keys
General
Election
2016**

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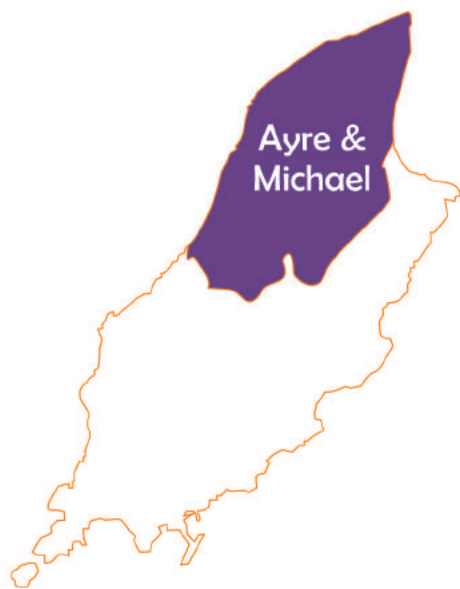


House of Keys Manifesto



Tim Baker

*"A fresh approach for
the times we are in"*



Dear Elector

I am an independent candidate for **Ayre and Michael** in the House of Keys election. I am standing in order to help the Isle of Man face its current challenges.

We must **make the right choices** for our future. With confident leadership, and working together, we can **steer the right course** in a rapidly-changing environment.

We need to be willing to adopt **fresh approaches**, but with **financial discipline**.

It's not just the immediate economic issues that we need to tackle successfully. We must take a balanced approach which properly values society, the environment and our heritage. We must not sacrifice what makes the Isle of Man such a special place. The Island we pass on to **future generations** must be in the best shape possible.

My upbringing on the Island, business experience and financial skills, together with my **commitment to the community**, mean I can make a positive contribution. I want to play my part, working in a committed team, for our Island.

I will always act in the **best interests of the Isle of Man** and be prepared to tackle difficult issues. The Island has managed its way through tough times before, and can do so again.

I would be delighted to receive your vote on **22 September** and to have an opportunity to bring future success to the Isle of Man.

With best wishes,

Tim Baker



*Read on to learn more about me and my plans
to restore the Island's future prospects.*





Who am I?



I am a Commercial Finance Director and have lived, with my wife Viv and two teenage daughters Voirrey (18) and Kerenza (15), in the constituency at Glen Auldyn since 2010.

Now 50 years old, I was educated at Ballasalla Primary and Castle Rushen High School, and in 1987 graduated from Cambridge University with a Master's degree in economics.

I joined the global accounting firm Arthur Andersen in Manchester and qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 1990, placing 12th in the UK in the final exams. I then spent 20 years working in financial and management leadership roles in businesses in the north of England. I have over 15 years' experience as a board director of major companies with up to £140m annual revenue. Most of these faced rapid change or challenging financial constraints.

Having always wanted to return to the Island when the time was right, I came home in 2009 as Group Financial Director of Snugborough-based DLP Limited, the private-equity owned specialist manufacturer. The Group also operates in the UK, Europe and the United States. I was responsible for all aspects of Finance and IT. I also led DLP in the Isle of Man, where it employs around 80 people.

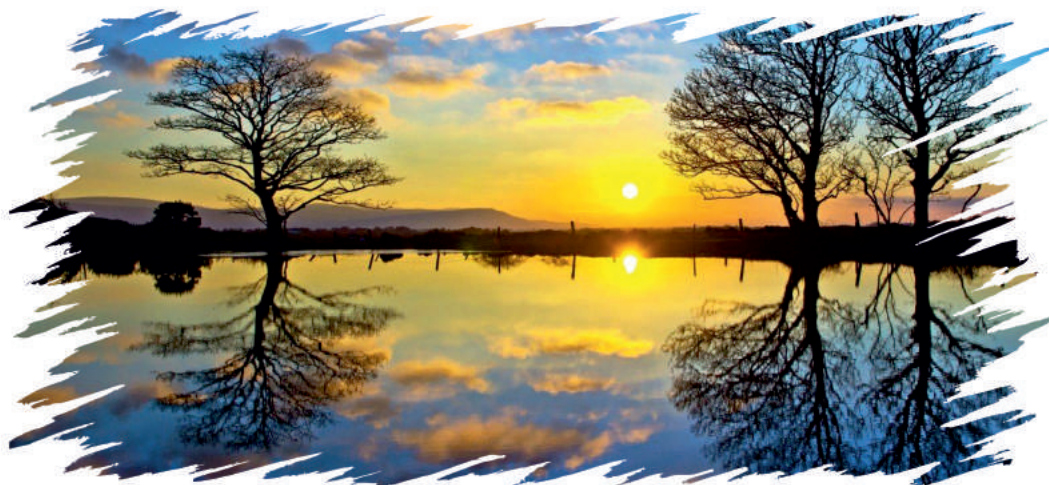
Over the last 7 years Viv, Voirrey, Kerenza and I have become fully immersed in Island life. We have actively contributed to the community of the north of the Island, being involved in many different clubs and organisations from Church to Ramsey Town Band, hockey to Girl Guides, table tennis and the Manx Youth Games. I have successfully completed the Parish Walk (in 2013) and End-to-End Mountain Bike Challenge (in 2011). Voirrey and I have just walked the whole of the Island's Coastal Footpath.

We have also made new things happen in the community. I helped the team to start-up Ramsey's SureStrike Bowling Alley in 2011. For the past 4 years I have been its principal financial backer and chairman. Viv has managed it for this period. Working with other passionate and committed people, we have turned it into a valued and vibrant facility used by a wide cross-section of the community. Operating as a social enterprise serving the community, it provides 6 full-time jobs in Ramsey and high quality part-time work for around 20 young people from the north.

In 2013, I also founded the new Ramsey Table Tennis Club. I run it in Ramsey Grammar School gym on Thursday nights. This is now the biggest table tennis club on the Island with 5 league teams and over 30 members playing each week, most aged under 16.

These examples demonstrate a commitment to building community which I view as vitally important and an out-working of my Christian faith. A strong and vibrant community is still a positive feature of the Isle of Man, particularly in the north of the Island. Whatever our economic circumstances, by the community working together we will make sure this is a great place to live and work.

Working full-time as a Member of the House of Keys, I would be able to make a difference on a much larger scale. I have a lot to offer in my home constituency of Ayre and Michael.



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What issues do we face?



The Isle of Man

The VAT reductions, increased tax transparency & international austerity have been difficult issues for Government. Progress has been made, but many economic & social challenges face the Island:

- ◆ Economic growth has been maintained, but has not benefited everyone and so **inequality** has increased
- ◆ The **austerity burden** has fallen disproportionately on hard-working ordinary people, whilst rules around, for example, tax and planning matters do not seem to be applied equally to all people
- ◆ The things that make the Isle of Man special are being **eroded**
- ◆ Poor government decision making has led to a general feeling of **discontent** and disillusion.

We have a lack of overall **vision, unity** and **sense of purpose** about where the Island is going. Much needs to be done. Many difficult issues are still to be properly addressed. **Fresh thinking** is required.



Ayre & Michael

We are one island and our lives are not lived within constituency boundaries. The issues in Ayre & Michael mirror those of the Island as a whole. But there are several specific concerns:

- ◆ As a rural constituency, we **need a successful Agriculture sector**. Government must work more closely with the farming industry to address the issues it faces and help it develop. The future of Isle of Man Meats needs resolving urgently. More widely, Agriculture is fundamental to the fabric of our Island life. It can potentially provide significant economic growth if approached correctly.

Ayre & Michael (continued)

- ◆ **Coastal erosion is not being properly addressed** by Government. It affects both West and East coasts. Many family homes are at risk in Michael. So too is the old landfill site at the Ayres and potentially the Balladoole Sewage Treatment Works now being built. Failure to act decisively will have severe financial, social and environmental consequences. Doing nothing is not an option.
- ◆ **Broadband and mobile phone services are inferior** in much of the constituency. High quality fast broadband and a reliable mobile phone signal is important for both business and social life. Both need to be improved.
- ◆ The north and west of the Island has not benefited sufficiently from economic development and government policy decisions. We need to **improve local employment opportunities**, particularly in Jurby and our adjacent towns of Ramsey and Peel.
- ◆ Financial austerity measures threaten our **essential community services** such as schools, transport links and medical services, including Ramsey Cottage Hospital. We must protect what we have and improve them where possible, within sensible financial constraints. As a community we must also support our local pubs, shops and post offices so they remain sustainable.





Responding to our Challenges



I believe we must properly address the issues we face and our Government must engage fully with all of us. We need to keep our focus on what matters.

In this election we've got the opportunity to have a real change and bring in fresh talent. We face a long journey, but let's start to move forward.

My **Island Progress Plan** to restore the Island's fortunes consists of the following elements:

- 1 **Set the Island's direction**
- 2 **Grow the economy**
- 3 **Control Government spending**
- 4 **Review our tax and benefit strategy**
- 5 **Reform pensions**
- 6 **Develop agriculture**
- 7 **Maintain our physical Infrastructure**
- 8 **Transform public services**
- 9 **Resolve our sea services**
- 10 **Stimulate the housing market**
- 11 **Encourage local expenditure**
- 12 **Manage Brexit**
- 13 **Improve social justice**
- 14 **Harness our collective strength**
- 15 **Preserve our distinctiveness**



This plan is founded on the fundamental principles of:

- ◆ **sound economic management**
- ◆ **community**
- ◆ **good stewardship of our Island**
- ◆ **fairness**
- ◆ **transparency**
- ◆ **respect for our heritage and culture**

Take a look at each point in detail in the full **Island Progress Plan** at the end of my manifesto.



Why Vote for me?



- ◆ I'm **passionate** about the Isle of Man and want to continue to make a difference to our community
- ◆ I bring a **fresh** approach, looking simply to work with others to get the best job done for our Island
- ◆ I have a clear **vision** of what we need to do – my **Island Progress Plan**
- ◆ I'm **committed** to solutions for the Isle of Man coming from the Isle of Man. Nobody will do this for us. There's lots of ability and ideas on the Island. I want to help us find ways to harness our collective energy
- ◆ I **make things happen**. Let's get beyond talking and arguing, and get on and do things
- ◆ I'm politically **independent** and prepared to challenge the status quo. So in each situation, I am free to make the best decision for Ayre and Michael, and the Isle of Man
- ◆ I have over 25 years' **experience** in business and am confident I can work with all our stakeholders – government, local authority, third sector and private business
- ◆ I am experienced in guiding organisations through **change**. I also have the financial skills, commercial awareness and leadership experience to help the Island face its current challenges
- ◆ My family and I have already clearly demonstrated our commitment to the **community** of the north of the Island. As your MHK, I can make a difference on a bigger scale and in different ways.



Your vote counts, use it wisely on 22 September.
Together, we can get this Island progressing



Island Progress Plan



Published by Tim Baker

Many people are able to identify that things need to improve. There is no shortage of ideas. However, few people are able to articulate a clear plan which defines **WHAT** needs to be done and **HOW** it will be done.

This is my plan:



- 1 Set the Island's direction** – like any successful organisation, Government needs a clear, coherent and agreed vision of where it is going. It also needs a plan of how to get there. This needs to be developed and shared and then must underpin the decisions that are made. However, we must remain adaptable as external factors change.

The team which leads the Isle of Man after the election must develop and communicate this as a priority, and it must be for the Island as a whole. Without it we will continue to make ad hoc decisions which are often incoherent and move us in different directions.

We cannot be all things to all people. We must make choices and prioritise.

This part of the plan will ensure that we move forward based on a solid foundation of both what the Isle of Man aims to be and where it intends to go.



- 2 Grow the economy** – economic success sustains jobs, public services and living standards. However, growth must be achieved without sacrificing the qualities which make the Isle of Man such a special and distinctive place. So, we must grow our national income, whilst improving our financial management so that we use our resources in the most effective way possible.

2 **Grow the economy (continued)**

Many economic factors are outside our control. However, astute policy making can protect and stimulate the economy. Government spending is a large element of overall demand on the Island. Accordingly, it needs to be managed in a way which achieves the best overall impact.

Effective Economic Development is also key. We must identify and back the best long-term growth areas for the Island and then go out to deliver them. This will not happen overnight. It will inevitably involve accepting change, which needs to be properly considered and communicated. This relies on a well-educated, committed and adaptable workforce. So we must continue to invest in education and training at all levels.

Good groundwork has been done with the £50m Enterprise Development Fund and recent investments made in training for IT, Nursing and Engineering. Newer technology-led areas such as renewable energy and the IT sector clearly offer opportunities for growth, however we must not neglect the potential of established areas such as Agriculture and niche tourism. We must recognise the assets that the Island has and then look at how we can best utilise them for economic benefit.



3 **Control Government spending** – all Government expenditure must be managed robustly, with appropriate commercial disciplines applied. Waste must be eliminated. Proper financial management is needed around all spending decisions, to ensure value-for-money.

We must be confident in investing for the future. But, investment decisions must have clear purposes and be subject to robust financial appraisals. The days of silo-thinking, vanity projects and wasteful spending must be put firmly in the past. We also need to stop providing expensive, gold-plated solutions, they need to simply be fit-for-purpose and be designed with appropriate consideration of likely future requirements.

Overall, Government needs to recognise the value of money and to manage it properly at all times.



4 Review our tax and benefit strategy – we must incentivise and reward hard work, whilst ensuring that those who can afford it pay appropriate and fair levels of tax. We must also protect those who are not able to provide for themselves.

As a just society it is right to provide a safety net for the less advantaged through the benefit system. However, we need to ensure this does not become a lifestyle choice or act as a disincentive to work.

Government income must grow appropriately as we achieve economic growth, as that is what pays for public services. While we should not be afraid of considering where tax revenue can be increased, this cannot be a soft option for failing to control Government expenditure.

We need to check that our current strategies towards high net worth individuals and the tax cap are working effectively and in the best interests of the Island as a whole. Tax systems can only be maintained as long as the population sees them as equitable. Let's have an open and transparent review.



5 Reform pensions – recent progress has been made, but continued reform is a priority. We must ensure that our long-term payment obligations are sustainable, given expected lifespans and an ageing population.

Future pension arrangements must be fair – it cannot be right that public sector pensions are so superior to those available to the general public. Government and employee representatives must work collaboratively to reshape public sector arrangements to make them both sustainable and supported by the people of the Isle of Man as a whole.

However, we must remember that these pensions are the future incomes of those receiving them. We need to proceed in a balanced and considered manner and involve the right expertise. We must achieve an outcome which is fair to both those receiving these payments and those who are going to have to fund them.



6 Develop agriculture – despite the welcome development of the Food Matters strategy, the core agriculture sector has been let down by the current Government. It is an integral part of both our economy and the fabric of our Island society. It also underpins the tourism sector and the management of our environment and unlike many other sectors it is not going to be relocated internationally! It is of strategic national interest and needs to be thought about in that way.

We urgently need an agreed strategy between Government and the industry. This must recognise the bigger-picture role of the sector and support its long-term development. It needs to specifically include resolving the future of IOM Meats and increasing Government's purchases of locally produced food for school, hospital and prison meals. It should start by defining what is best for the Island as a whole and then work to develop solutions to achieve this.



7 Maintain our physical infrastructure – we must derive the maximum benefit from our substantial annual spend on the internal structure of the Island. Much of it is deteriorating due to poor prioritisation and short-sighted “savings” that simply result in costs being incurred elsewhere.

At a minimum we must maintain our asset base in the same condition as it is at the moment. We must also improve it where feasible. This includes our phone and broadband services, which are sub-standard in many rural parts of the Island.

Meanwhile urgent action needs to be taken to protect the Island's coastline from erosion, particularly in Michael and Bride parishes. We cannot continue to see the Island literally crumble around us whilst we just talk about what is going to be done.



8 Transform public services – overall our public services are both too costly and not as good as the people of Mann deserve. In many areas they fall below what would be considered best practice. We must modernise the way that our public services are structured, managed and delivered, to provide better services more cost-effectively to support the overall direction of the Island.

This will not happen unless Government commits to it. It requires a catalyst to make it happen effectively, working across various Government departments.

I would propose to set up a new team to lead this, consisting of appropriately skilled and experienced people from both within and outside the public sector. They will have complementary backgrounds including finance, technology, customer service and human resources. This team will have a mandate to drive change across the whole of Government and headed by a suitably experienced, credible and pragmatic leader who has the united support of the Council of Ministers.

Government employees of all levels must be fully involved and engaged in this process, embracing the opportunity to improve their working practices. Managed properly this will improve services, save money and change working practices, thus freeing up resources to improve our front-line services.



9 Resolve our sea services - early resolution is required of the ongoing discussions with the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company (IOMSPCo). We need to eliminate the current uncertainty, secure a more acceptable service and avoid further deterioration as the expiry of the existing agreement approaches. Government must be commercially astute to ensure that the Island achieves its fair share of the substantial shareholder value that will be created by a contract extension. This must not just flow to the banks and hedge funds which control the IOMSPCo.

It is not for Government to run our lifeline sea services. However, they cannot be left solely in the hands of a private commercial operator who inevitably will be motivated by self-interest, not the wider good of the Isle of Man.

9 Resolve our sea services (continued)

A true partnership is required. It must work in the best interests of both parties and be sufficiently flexible to adapt over time.

If this cannot be achieved through dialogue with the IOMSPCo, then Government must be prepared to act to protect the Island's best long-term interests. It must consider other operating or ownership models, including potentially taking public ownership or establishing a social enterprise model to do so. It needs to be robust in this process as failure to get this right will have severe consequences for the Island's future.

On a specific point, any future sea travel agreement must provide an enhanced service to Ireland (Belfast and Dublin). The Irish market is poorly serviced and would undoubtedly grow with more frequent, reliable ferry connections. Ireland also provides a potential direct route into the European Union post-Brexit, which could be of major strategic importance to the Island's economy.



10 Stimulate the housing market – the housing market affects both the economy and society more widely. It impacts homelessness, young families getting on the housing ladder and older people being able to trade down as their need for space reduces or health deteriorates.

Many properties are empty or in poor condition and some have been for sale for several years.

Rather than just accepting the situation, Government needs to identify the root causes and consider what steps (if any) it should take to stimulate the market. An open minded approach is required. We must consider all possible initiatives, conclude what should be done and then get on with doing it.

I have a number of initial potential ideas which could be implemented quickly and at low cost to get the market moving:

- ◆ extending the first time buyer schemes to cover existing as well as new-build properties
- ◆ Government offering to buy houses which have been on the market for a long period (at a discount) and then re-selling them when the market is stronger

10 Stimulate the housing market (continued)

- ◆ using short-term incentives for a period of time to assist people buying their first home
- ◆ creating or supporting a not-for-profit organisation (such as a housing association or trust) to buy up existing properties across the island, renovate them where required and then let them out to tenants at fair market rents.

There must also be many other ideas that are worthy of consideration. In addition, work to improve standards of housing in the rented sector must continue. In some areas these fall way below acceptable standards.



11 Encourage local expenditure – economic theory recognises the significant benefits to the economy of additional spending. Yet, time after time it seems that expenditure is going off-Island un-necessarily.

There are various external constraints which limit our flexibility. However, Government policy must properly recognise the local possibilities and its impact so that we are helping our own economy to prosper and grow. Introducing a “Local First” approach will pay substantial economic dividends. This applies most obviously within agriculture, but in other sectors too.



12 Manage Brexit - the Isle of Man firstly needs to ensure it has a clear understanding of its own interests. These must be fully represented in negotiation with the UK. We should also work with other nations with whom we share common interests or can develop trading relationships.

The position is likely to remain far from clear for the foreseeable future. Brexit brings a complex mix of threats and opportunities across the whole of our economy. Indeed, the interests of various sectors will at times conflict. So, our response to this will need to be managed as a strategic national issue.

A Brexit steering group will be required to focus specifically on this issue. It will identify and evaluate the various options and engage with key parties, both internationally and within the Island. This will require a clear leadership structure, accountability at the senior level and adequate resourcing.

13 Improve social justice – the Isle of Man must operate on modern principles of social justice. Practices which exploit the vulnerable or are unfair must be stamped out.

We need to start by tackling the unacceptable behaviour of some landlords and lenders. We must also review Government policies in areas such as planning, tax and benefits to ensure that they are fair and transparent. If not, then we must take action to remedy the situation.

Working with charities and other groups, we must identify and address other priority areas. Our social policies and care systems must be appropriate for a 21st century society. We must modernise where appropriate, based on best practice. It is not right for us to blindly adopt UK methods and standards.



14 Harness our collective strength – as an Island community we are closely connected. So, we need to fully use the incredible collective talent, ability and understanding of the Isle of Man that is here amongst our people. Government does not have a monopoly on good ideas – or always need to use expensive off-Island service providers or consultants to get them!

We must draw on all the expertise available to us, whether in Government, Local Authorities, business, charities or individual people. Our Island is full of capable, experienced people who have done amazing things in their lives.

These people and their ideas can make a huge contribution to our collective success. Accordingly, I advocate establishing a “Resource Bank” database and a “National Ideas Scheme”. These will enable interested individuals to offer their skills and expertise for the benefit of the wider community and to put forward suggestions to improve our Island.

Both schemes would be properly structured and internet-based so they are easy to access and effective. We would filter these to ensure we quickly identify and act on those with potential.

This could be a really valuable contribution to moving the Island forward. It would create a closer connection between Government and the people, alleviating feelings of alienation & apathy – and reducing unnecessary expenditure.



15 Preserve our distinctiveness – the Isle of Man is special. It needs to remain so. We must look after the things that make this difference, including our heritage, culture, identity and Manx way of life, as well as our important historical physical assets.

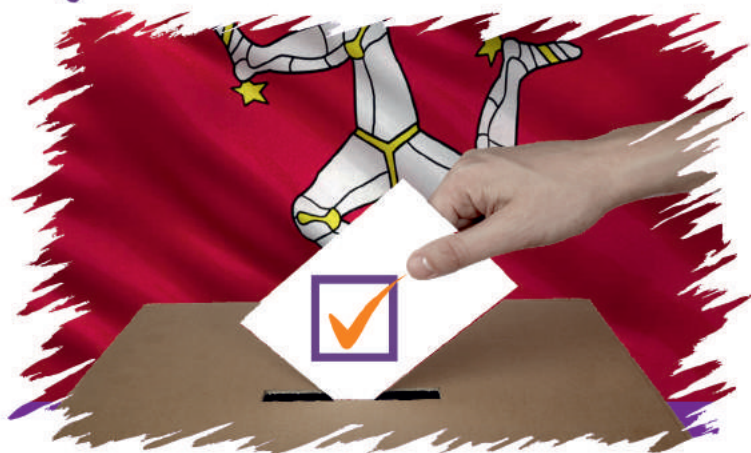
These aspects need to be properly recognised, valued and reflected in our decision making so that they are not lost as time progresses. Too often their importance to the Isle of Man is over-looked in Government decision making. This must change.



This Island Progress Plan provides a clear and coherent approach which will make our Island a better place to live and work. It will address many of the issues we currently face and will help make the Isle of Man the success that it deserves to be.

This plan can provide the cornerstone on which the Island's direction is built and our future prospects restored.

Tim Baker, August 2016



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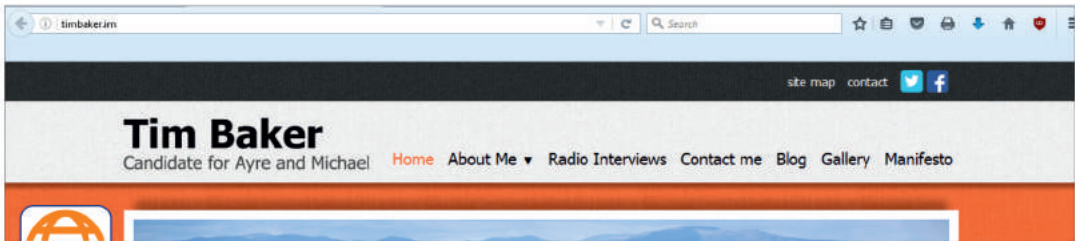


Ayre &
Michael
Candidate



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timbaker.im



Contact me for assistance with:

Advance or Proxy Voting

Transport on Polling day

Details of Public Meetings

Vote for Progress on 22nd September




Vote for Progress


22 September 2016

Vote Tim Baker


Experienced professional, bringing independence of thought and action to provide a fresh approach to restoring the fortunes of the Isle of Man



Blends a pragmatic can-do attitude with the intellectual rigour of his Cambridge University Master's degree in Economics and Chartered Accountancy qualifications



Is passionate about the Isle of Man, having been brought up here, but has an external perspective from 25+ years UK business experience



Committed to finding innovative solutions to improve Ayre & Michael and the Isle of Man as a whole



Offers a balance of the financial management skills, commercial awareness and business leadership experience we need, yet with due regard to wider considerations such as social justice, community and the environment

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