

**Government doesn't listen**

**But I do.**

I have held surgeries the second Saturday morning of every month at Ramsey Town Hall and, if re-elected, will continue to do so. I am always available to listen and help.

**Can I help you?**

On election day, Thursday September 22, will you be away? Or if you need transport to the polling station, housebound and require a vote at your home or help in any other way, please don't hesitate to contact me on 816307 or my mobile: 309090. You can also email me on: [leonard@leonardsinger.im](mailto:leonard@leonardsinger.im)



**YOU HAVE UP TO TWO VOTES.  
PLEASE USE YOUR VOTE.**

**DON'T LEAVE IT TO OTHERS;  
THEY MAY BE LEAVING IT TO YOU**

**VOTE FOR LEONARD SINGER**  
**EXPERIENCE WHERE IT COUNTS**

For news and views log into my website: [www.leonardsinger.im](http://www.leonardsinger.im)

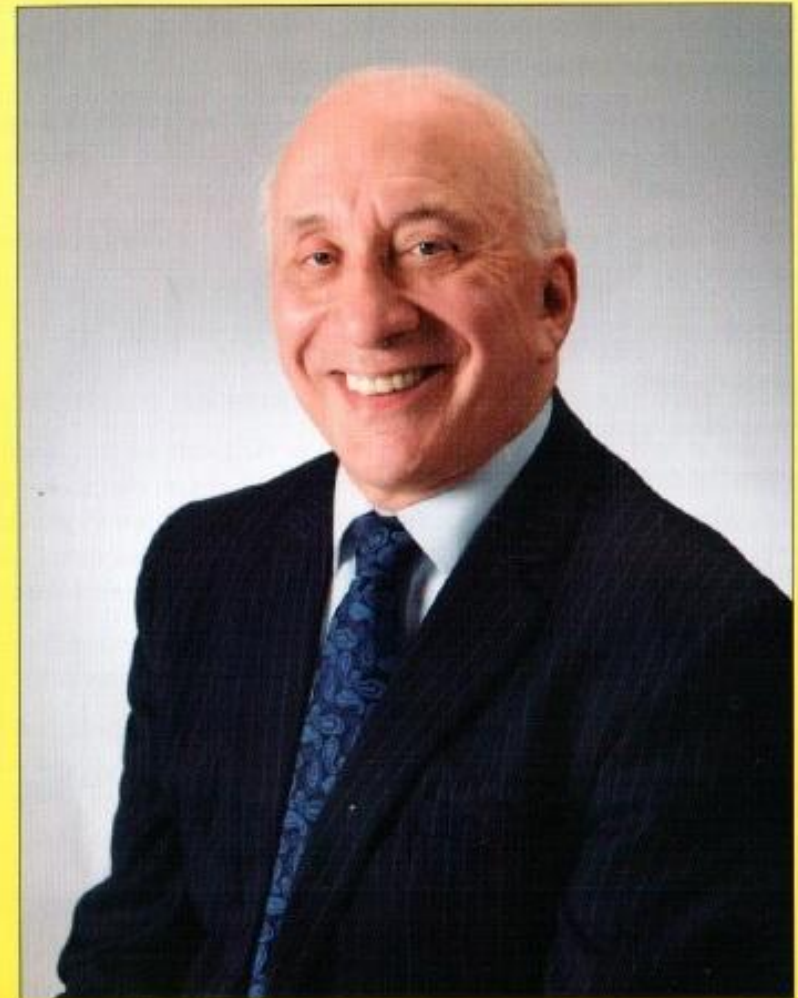
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# **LEONARD SINGER**

## **for Ramsey**



**Giving the people of Ramsey a voice**

*"I have been a Ramsey resident for more than 27 years, the town where I was in business as a pharmacist and where I brought up three children, so I have gained a deep understanding of the issues that matter to the people of this town."*

**Experience where it counts and when it counts**

## Why I am seeking re-election

Being an MHK is a full time commitment and that is what I have given - and will continue to give to Ramsey. I am seeking re-election because:

- I have represented Ramsey for 25 years;
- I understand what matters to the people of Ramsey;
- I understand the workings of government;
- I can bring experience, insight and stability to the next House of Keys - which will welcome many new Members - at a time when far-reaching challenge, change and uncertainty are facing our nation;
- I'm not afraid to speak my mind...even if that means stepping on some people's toes.

## This government has broken its promises to you to:

- Balance its budget;
- Deliver value for money;
- Resolve the public sector pension deficit;
- Introduce a fair rating system;
- Provide adequate pre-school provision.

## Government has failed you

So the next government needs to be:

- United with a clear five-year plan. Anything less will be disastrous;
- Identify clear priorities which all Ministers follow; not each Minister working solely on their own department's objectives;
- A smaller, leaner more efficient administration, focused on cutting back on waste of resources and relentless in its pursuit of value for money. There is no money for 'pet projects';
- An administration that confides in its backbenchers and engages with, not hides away from, the people.

And government must signal its intentions honestly - no matter how difficult the decisions it may make - on issues such as spending cuts, increased charges and taxes - if it is to retain the confidence and respect of the people of the Isle of Man.

## Experience counts

The present government has been disunited and in disarray, its budgets under pressure, its reserves depleted, and it is faced with a massive public sector pension fund deficit, so the Isle of Man needs experienced, committed and united leadership to secure long-term economic security and growth.

## Brexit and beyond



## Brexit means uncertainty ... but it also means opportunities

Government has no direct say in negotiations as the Isle of Man is not a sovereign nation so must rely on the UK to represent the Crown Dependencies. I therefore welcome UK Prime Minister Theresa May's statement when she said: 'It is right that the Crown Dependencies are kept informed and offered the opportunity to contribute where it is relevant and appropriate to do so.'

I have also been encouraged in my discussions with the Manx business community, which sees Brexit presenting new opportunities.

With Brexit there'll be no quick fix but we must promote those sectors of our economy which have the power to attract inbound investment, create more jobs and stimulate growth.

And for this to happen we must have assured leadership when negotiating with the UK. **We need a strong voice for the Manx nation.**

## National priorities

### The future of the economy:

Government reserves are depleted, its public sector pension fund in a parlous state and it is spending too much. The UK anticipates a downturn in the economy and it's inevitable that what happens there will happen here, too.

So we have to be prepared. Unlike the UK we can't boost the Manx economy by printing more money. Instead we have to think smarter, be more entrepreneurial.

**'Sticking plaster' solutions won't work.**

## **My work within the Department of Economic Development**

This has involved networking with decision-makers in the UK, China and South Africa and has helped to boost the Island's visibility and encouraged new trade opportunities for the island.

The economy has grown, but still not enough skilled jobs are being created. The outflow of money, as government is forced to dig deep into its reserves, has eclipsed that growth.

There is some good news, however. Banks may be having a difficult time but the financial services sector continues to flourish and the Alternative Banking Regime, for private banking, is attracting much interest from off-island institutions, although any impact will only be felt in the longer term.

In addition, there has been the highest number of business proposal leads for five years, the Isle of Man Ship Registry reports a healthy pipeline of new ships on order, and the Isle of Man private aircraft register is the sixth largest and fastest growing in the world.

There is a world shortage of skilled ICT workers and if the island's economy is not to stagnate then it must attract more of these professionals. I am pleased that from this September the e-business sector working with the government's education and economic development departments will be providing opportunities for people to begin two-year IT apprenticeships. Apprentices will be employed for the duration of their training while attending University College Isle of Man.

### **Combating threats to our international image:**

It is vital the Isle of Man be recognised globally as financially unimpeachable.

The Island has been constantly under attack from global regulatory bodies which question our reputation and integrity. The next government must continue its vigilance in order to counter these threats, mindful of the need to work with other Crown Dependencies facing similar challenges.

### **Public sector pensions:**

Whatever the solution, there will be no winners. Government will have to pay more and its employees will have to pay more to receive less. Government could be faced with an estimated overall deficit of £135 million by 2022.

How will it resolve this?

- A cut in services?
- A cut in employee numbers?
- A cut in pensions?
- ...Or a cut in all three?

In June I supported an amendment in Tynwald that called for an independent review of the government's 'half-baked' proposals, because there have been so many questions that it has failed to answer. Regrettably the amendment was defeated.

By way of example, consider the large lump sums paid when government employees take retirement, some of which have amounted to more than half a million pounds. Given the complexity of the issue and the need to ensure long-term viability of the scheme we must seek professional independent advice.

## **Sea and air services**

### **Sea:**

The future of our sea links is uncertain.

- Steam Packet is calling for extension of the User Agreement to 2036;
- Company proposes £65 million investment for two new vessels despite mounting debt;
- Tynwald recommends select committee be formed by new administration to investigate all aspects of company's operation;
- Tynwald agrees to purchase land at Liverpool dock to ensure it controls landing facilities at both ends of routes.

**We must not 'bend' to the company's pressure to give a quick answer.**

### **Air:**

- Unacceptable and unexplained last-minute cancellations and delays;
- 'Open skies' policy makes for fragile system; but airlines do not want licensed routes;
- Carriers free to discontinue services at will;
- Lack of carrier continuity undermines business confidence.

Government, working with Travelwatch, needs to be engaging with the airlines so that they fully understand they have responsibilities to our community and must protect our essential air links.

## Health Service Spending and Saving



Hospital waiting lists are reducing very slowly, although £millions are being poured into the Health Service.

This cannot continue; if it does there will be no money available for other government services.

What is needed is commitment from everyone working in health services to streamline services, make savings and achieve efficiencies.

We need to look at, for example:

- Overstaffing of non-medical posts;
- Ensuring consultants provide a full NHS service;
- Nurse practitioners being empowered to make full use of their skills at Noble's Hospital;
- Preventing the over-prescribing of repeat medications;
- Focusing on providing services that enable people to remain in their own homes and communities, among family and friends;
- Introducing more 'prevention better than cure' services for earlier detection of illness, resulting in long-term savings and a swifter return to health.

### Mental health:

One in four people is likely to suffer from some form of mental ill health. Thankfully mental health issues are gaining recognition and I have been pleased to support the proposed new Acute Adult Psychiatric facility at Noble's Hospital, which will offer support for those living with mental illness and their carers.

### Blocking free health treatment for non-EU citizens:

In April, during the passage of the new Health Bill, I received an assurance from the Minister of Health that the practice of non-EU citizens visiting the Island and receiving free health treatment 'would be blocked.'

### The scourge of drugs:

One of the greatest threats to our community, particularly the young, is from suppliers of illegal drugs. We no longer have a dedicated drug squad and in my view it is imperative it be re-established. **We have to remove the dealers at all supply levels.** Education on the dangers and consequences of taking illegal and psychoactive substances has to be a recognised priority in schools.

### Ramsey Cottage Hospital ... League of Friends

I have recently been re-elected Chairman and am delighted that we are continuing to provide facilities for the hospital including our investment of £380,000 which established the Wound and Podiatry Clinic. The committee values your support for our hospital and its staff.

### Protecting the vulnerable. Spreading the burden

In its efforts to balance its budgets government has imposed a series of increased charges by stealth which have, in the main, fallen on those less able to pay – the vulnerable and the elderly.

### Fuel poverty in the Isle of Man:

It saddens me deeply that there is fuel poverty in the Isle of Man.

Fuel poverty is defined as a household spending more than 10% of gross income on fuel. A recent report from the government's Economic Affairs Division stated: 'Isle of Man households spend more on fuel than seen in the UK, at present 40% more. The poorest 10% of households spend around 14% more than the average.'

There is some evidence that there may be some under-spending on fuel by the poorest 10% of households and this would be higher had the price of heating oil not dropped dramatically. In 2015, the percentage of households of people over 65 in fuel poverty was 19% and the figure for one-person households was 15%.

Government, charities and the third sector can help to identify those at risk.

### Caring for carers:

I applaud the selfless devotion of this 'invisible army' who deserve greater recognition and support. Their selflessness in taking care of the vulnerable relieves the pressure on our social care system. Carers' access to benefit entitlements needs to be made clearer and more efficiently handled by the Department.

## Withdrawal of Free Television licences for over-75s:

Recently I have met many senior citizens who are affected by this change, often mostly confined to their homes, relying on their TV's and their only income is the state pension. Finding the licence fee will be difficult. The cost to government of the free licences for those not on benefits was £600,000. The next government can help protect the quality of life for the over 75's by providing their free TV licences.

We need to be having serious discussion with the BBC who provide minimal investment service for the Isle of Man. The broadcaster, however, spends £1 million a year providing Jersey with a full BBC service.

## An unfair rating system:

- Unfair and unchanged since 1971;
- No account taken of an individual's ability to pay;
- Government proposes banding system based on capital value; if accepted it must protect those least able to pay;
- No indication of when new, fairer system might be introduced.

## Assisted house purchase scheme

The current first-time buyers' shared equity schemes are unsuitable for some prospective purchasers. An alternative scheme would be to build on government-owned land on a self-build basis to approved designs. A mortgage could then be drawn on staged payments and the freehold purchased later at a pre-agreed price. This would reduce their overall mortgage payments, easing the way for them to own their own property.

## Working for you as your MHK

### Opposite-sex civil partnerships:

It was my amendment to the Same Sex Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill which will now give equality to opposite-sex couples wishing to enter into civil partnerships. This makes the Isle of Man the first country in the British Isles to have introduced such legislation.

### Road Races Bill:

My successful amendment now limits hours of Sunday motor racing on the TT course, introduces public consultation and ensures proposals are advertised and Council of Ministers' approval is sought. (TT arrangements remain unchanged).

### Licensing Amendment Bill:

My Private Members' Bill empowers police to seize alcohol from individuals engaged in antisocial behaviour in a public place.

## Local issues

### Local government reform

For the past 23 years I have been supporting proposals to reduce the number of local authorities to four plus Douglas to deliver efficiencies and cost savings. Regrettably any such reform in Tynwald has been opposed by 'country MHKs' who outnumber their 'town' counterparts and are protecting small parish councils with few responsibilities.

If re-elected I shall be campaigning for reform.

### Marina? Maybe:

Government proposals first aired more than 10 years ago to create a marina in Ramsey never came to fruition. Since then marinas have been successfully developed in Douglas and Peel and both have brought those areas regeneration, investment and jobs.



I have recently been approached by an experienced Isle of Man consortium interested in building a privately funded full marina development in Ramsey.

This proposal is at a very early stage, but if a full environmental study were undertaken and provision for boat owners presently using the marina agreed, would a private development of Ramsey harbour - with the potential to attract investment, create jobs for the Ramsey harbour and quay areas, reinvigorate the town and boost the local construction sector - be acceptable?

**What are your views?**

Call me on 816307 or 309090 or email [leonard@leonardsinger.im](mailto:leonard@leonardsinger.im)

### Roads:

£450,000 has been spent on the (far from heavily used) Sloc road and another £400,000 has been wasted on a new diesel locomotive that doesn't work. I could point out to Minister Gawne how that money would have been far better spent on repairing road and pavement surfaces in Ramsey which currently pose potential dangers to motorists and pedestrians.

### Seaward side of Mooragh Promenade:

After meeting with the director of highways I am assured that this autumn, money will be made available to repair, at the very least, the worst affected section from opposite the car park adjacent to the rugby clubhouse towards the northern end of the promenade.

## Future of Ramsey Courthouse:

Whatever the future holds for this flagship building it must not be used as a nightclub or late-night drinking venue, and I have written to the Minister of Home Affairs to this effect. The Courthouse is the ideal site for a community centre.

**What are your views?**

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## Queens Pier

I applaud the efforts of Tom Durrant and the Queens Pier Restoration Trust in their proposal that the refurbishment of the pier be carried out using private funding. I was pleased to secure an introduction for Tom to DEFA Minister Richard Ronan to see how government might help with the cost for the wooden decking. The fundraisers are doing such an amazing job. I shall continue to support the cause in whatever way I can.



## Regeneration:

### A success?

Ramsey is looking more welcoming. The Courthouse area, the Market Square improvements and new pavement surfaces have all contributed to projecting a positive image of Ramsey as a well-run and thriving town.



I am aware, however, of complaints about the height of kerbs and crossing points, and the installation of the 'mini roundabout' near St Paul's Church which can be navigated by few, if any, vehicles.

I will take up these issues with the local regeneration committee.

## Planning:

It is absurd that planning decisions affecting Ramsey are made by the planning committee in Douglas. I am a supporter of local planning decisions made locally by those closest to the people affected, Ramsey Town Commissioners.

## Barriers to development in the north:

Development, and therefore investment, has to be in line with the current area plans: south, east, west and north in that order. The northern plan is out of date and will be the last to be re-written, so will not be completed for several years. Meanwhile, proposals are being considered based on the old plan. This is a major obstacle to investment and provision of new jobs in the north. There is no reason why an island the size of the Isle of Man should need more than one plan and that is a matter I will seek to have changed if re-elected.

## Ballure railway bridge:

I supported the call for repairing this long-neglected bridge, which showed no sign of any structural repairs for 116 years. Had the work not been done, it would have meant permanent loss of the MER's Laxey to Ramsey service.

## Schools:

We are very fortunate to have such a great standard of education in primary and secondary schools in Ramsey and that they are so closely involved in the local community.



There is also a recognition that not all students wish to go to university. I congratulate Ramsey Grammar School on supporting the initiative which encourages representatives of the banking, e-business, manufacturing and other business sectors to come into schools and explain the career opportunities available in their sectors.

I am also pleased that the Department of Economic Development is formulating schemes to encourage university graduates to come back to the island to work after completing their courses.

## Encouraging young voters

Government must always look to the future.

And young people are our nation's future with the power to shape our thinking and contribute to a better tomorrow. And if we aspire to a better Isle of Man we must encourage young people to use their vote.

The only politics most young people are familiar with are those seen on TV, which is likely to dampen rather than spark any interest in current affairs.

For parliamentary democracy to be truly inclusive we must engage better with potential young voters. To this end I supported the call for Manx politics to be included in the curriculum from the age of 14, leading up to the voting age of 16.

Regrettably, this was rejected by the Minister of Education.