

HOUSE OF KEYS
GENERAL ELECTION
Thursday
29th September 2011

Garff

STEVE RODAN

**BSc (Hons), MRPharmS
is aged 57, married with
two grown-up
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**A graduate of Heriot
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STEVE RODAN

Dear Elector

This is a critical Election for you, and for the Isle of Man. At a time of great challenge, those elected to the House of Keys will have to offer vision, leadership, clear policy and critical judgment on the difficult decisions ahead.

I believe my experience, and the political principles and policies I have set out in this Manifesto can help in that task.

My 16 years of experience include government service, with two years as Chairman of the Planning Committee, five years as Education Minister and two as Minister at the Department Health and Social Security. More recently, after the last General Election in 2006 I was elected Speaker of the House of Keys.

My role as Speaker has enabled me to build valuable political contacts at Westminster and in the devolved parliaments at Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast. It is vital that the Island is well represented internationally, and I have attended the twice-yearly British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly with enthusiasm.



What are my priorities for the Isle of Man?

National wealth creation and full employment.

The vigorous defence of our national interests and the Manx way of life against unwelcome outside political pressure and interference.

To rebalance the public finances following the UK raid on our VAT sharing and indirect taxation income.

To maintain the 5 key planks of Manx economic policy viz.

Low, internationally competitive rates of corporate and personal taxation

A statutory Budget surplus

No external government borrowing

Build up Reserve Funds

Sustain high quality public services

To enhance and promote our unique parliament, Tynwald – the institution which defines the Isle of Man, and whose legislative independence has made possible our unique fiscal, economic and social environment within the British Isles. If Tynwald did not exist we would not exist as a nation. We would simply be part of the UK, like the Isle of Wight or the Isle of Skye with, at best, one MP at Westminster... and a poorer place as a result.

It is with great pleasure that I for the fifth time offer myself as your elected representative. Since first being elected in May 1995, I have always done my best to ensure that you and the people of Garff have had strong representation in Tynwald, and it has been a privilege to assist many individual constituents with their concerns.

I thank you for reading this Manifesto, and greatly look forward to your support again on 29th September.

Yours sincerely

HOW IS THE ISLE OF MAN DOING?

We are now richer than the UK. We have sound foundations to face up to world economic recession, global financial turmoil and severely reduced national income. In recent years Government's legislative programme and fiscal and economic policies have enabled private business and commerce to generate the wealth which has maintained strong and positive economic growth, good jobs and the strong tax revenues necessary to fund high quality public services.

Proactive engagement with international tax and regulatory authorities has maintained the Island's good standing at the forefront of reputable global business centres.

However, other direct external challenges have been handled with political ineptitude. The Government response to the UK's proposed ending of the Reciprocal Health Agreement, for example, was one of weakness and capitulation, with pitiful political fight-back before the last minute reprieve achieved thanks to external support.



THE ISLE OF MAN HAS A GOOD FUTURE

Politicians must be careful not to run our country down, or talk ourselves into recession. Life in the Isle of Man is surely immeasurably better than the world around us. Just look at the UK where economic slump, massive job redundancies, spending cut-backs, crime and social unrest prevail, and national discontent is the norm. We must be thankful we are as well as we are.....

- Unlike the UK, we are a relatively safe community. Recorded crime is now at its lowest rate for 25 years.
- We have virtually full employment, good work opportunities, low rates of personal tax.
- We live in a beautiful Island that retains a strong sense of community and national identity.
- We have started to tackle the black-hole of Public Sector Pensions liability, and ensure pensions are affordable in the future – greater certainty for the employee, and reassurance for tomorrow's taxpayer.
- We continue to maintain our system of student support for our children's Higher Education – paying full tuition fees, and maintenance grants. I wish to see this principle continue, but inevitably the terms of the scheme will have to be kept under review to keep it affordable.
- While many people continue to find the cost of housing unaffordable, and the demand from our young people to get on the housing ladder is still especially acute, our House Purchase Assistance Scheme is envied in the UK. Tynwald recently raised income thresholds to be eligible for the scheme, also the maximum value of property that can be purchased – this will let more first time buyers enter the housing market, and stimulate further house building.
- Much of the "Big Ticket" spending by Government on replacement infrastructure has now been accomplished in recent years: new Hospital, health centres, MEA Power Station, Prison, Energy-from-Waste Plant, new and replacement school buildings, Iris Sewerage Strategy (but work is still outstanding in north of the Island including Laxey and Garwick Bays - and PLEASE no more talk by Government of a local sewage treatment plant at Laxey Harbour. This I will continue to vigorously resist).

On the other hand.... The rising Island cost of living – often thanks to imported inflation due to the state of UK and world economies, and rising global fuel prices – comes at a time when many people's incomes are frozen. Job security is no longer certain – and many worry about pension provision as they approach the end of their working lives. We also continue to suffer from high travel costs off-island – whether by airline or ferry.....traffic congestion; longer hospital waiting lists; we have an appalling record of children's dental health; the Island experiences high rates of alcohol abuse.

RE-ELECT RODAN AGAIN FOR GARFF



WHAT THE NEXT GOVERNMENT MUST DO

For Government, and for Tynwald, the great task will be to

- **Generate wealth, grow the economy and maintain full employment**
- **Reduce Public Sector Expenditure**

STEVE
RODAN

The economy will need to grow sufficiently to generate the replacement tax-revenues to make up the recent £190m losses in VAT sharing and indirect taxation. We must always remember that without wealth creation by the private sector Government simply cannot do anything - social housing, education, policing, health, social welfare, buses or anything else.

Without sufficient tax revenues we will be unable to meet the challenge of Demographic Change – the ratio of retired to working people is growing, with rising demand for pensions, healthcare services, social support and homecare from an ageing population.

While unemployment is only 2%, much of it is in the 16-24 age group, those not in education or training – the problem of the so-called “NEETS”

How to reduce the costs of government, streamline the public administration, increase efficiency and reduce waste will be the biggest challenge of all.

AND WHAT IT MUST NOT DO.....

What, emphatically, we must NOT do is disturb our present **successful fiscal policy**.

It is vital that we maintain our Zero-Ten Tax Regime. A zero rate of company taxation (with ten percent for banks and local land transactions) is what give us the internationally approved taxation platform and the reason our financial services industry locates here in the first place.

This global business could easily disappear overnight to our competitors in other parts of the world - leaving us with instant mass unemployment, collapse of the housing market, loss of national income and economic slump.

We tamper with company taxation policy at our peril.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE REVENUE SHARING AGREEMENT – “COMMON PURSE”?

The loss of Government income is very serious, has severely tested our relationship with the UK, and will further test our capability for sound financial management in the years ahead.

But we are seriously mistaken if we believe the answer to recent problems lies in ending the Customs and Excise Agreement.

I am NOT in favour of Abrogation. Even with the reduction in VAT, the Agreement remains vital for the Isle of Man's economic interests. This is because the arrangements for revenue sharing from joint VAT collection and common duties ensure that part of Isle of Man commercial and consumer spending in the UK economy is returned back to the Isle of Man. A system of collecting VAT only from local on-island spending would not do this.

Without the Agreement, our trade with the UK would become imports and exports. For businesses this would mean higher administration, compliance and cash flow costs since they would need to separately register and file indirect tax returns and customs declarations.

Island residents would face customs barriers when they travelled, and the possibility of double taxation on goods bought in the UK, unless they complied with the UK's retail export scheme.

And for Government, there would be the costs of this new bureaucracy required to recoup tax on imports that would otherwise be lost through such UK shopping trips, mail order or internet purchases.

Some people argue for renegotiation of our VAT sharing with the UK (with no certain outcome), for termination of the Agreement, or for a review and referendum on the matter. All these ideas risk great damage by creating uncertainty and loss of business confidence.

Worse still, they fail to appreciate that in order to prosper Isle of Man companies must be within the UK and EU Customs area and VAT collection system.

THE CAMPAIGN TO SAVE THE RECIPROCAL HEALTH AGREEMENT...

When Isle of Man Government Ministers had all but given up the fight, telling us "the UK Government's door is firmly locked on this issue" and "their policy decision is NOT open to negotiation", some of us in Tynwald refused to take NO for an answer. Simply drawing up schemes to have everyone take out individual health insurance was NOT the answer!

I enlisted political support at Westminster, and among contacts within the British Irish Assembly, to directly confront the UK Health Secretary for the opening of face-to-face talks with the Isle of Man Government. These were ultimately successful, and this grave threat which caused such great anxiety to the travelling public was lifted.



Andrew Mackinlay MP
Isle of Man Champion

SO HOW MUST GOVERNMENT ACT? WHAT POLICIES ARE NEEDED?

- ◆ By better management of our relationships with the UK Government, EU, United States and the outside world. This means stepping up constructive political and diplomatic dialogue with external governments and organisations. We should be making friends and allies of UK and international politicians, thereby enlisting greater outside support for the Isle of Man; a policy of "exchange-secondments" between top UK and Isle of Man civil servants should be developed.
- ◆ By giving better critical scrutiny to policy imported from the UK and EU before it is adopted wholesale into Isle of Man law and regulation. More effective governance – full use of the new system of Tynwald scrutiny committees (which I introduced into Tynwald this year), and early introduction of the Ombudsman and Auditor General services will be critical.
- ◆ By rigorous downward pressure on public spending, while protecting where possible front line services and the more vulnerable in society. This must include reviewing the Scope of Government – I am in favour of continuing public ownership of many key strategic State assets, but Government is not necessarily any good at running them, and a policy of service-level agreement partnerships with the private commercial sector should be examined.
- ◆ By generating significant savings within Government through enhanced productivity and reduced bureaucracy.

We will need to:

- radically shake-up employment structures and the management of the public sector work force.
- streamline and centralise Government Departments' procurement, personnel and accounting functions to avoid duplication
- invest in improved technology and improve procedures, to reduce administration costs and improve management information for better strategic decision making.

As part of its budget rebalancing, elements of Government's £70m annual capital expenditure programme must be put on hold – but only with careful thought. Our construction industry currently relies on Government schemes for 70% of its work. More rigorous scrutiny of proposals for Capital Projects and Government's use of External Consultants is required - to ensure such schemes are needed in the first place and that there is value for money to the Isle of Man taxpayer.

- ◆ By a "Government of National Unity" aimed at wealth creation - this will include setting up a high powered National Productivity Commission of top business people, to identify the unnecessary red tape and regulation which hinders business, competitiveness and wealth creation, and advise on action required to generate new business investment and diversify the economy; similarly, ongoing and corresponding engagement and dialogue with Third Sector voluntary organisations, and Trade Union bodies will also be vital.
- developing bilateral trade, financial and commercial opportunities with India, China and other emerging markets.
- placing greater emphasis on our Manufacturing Sector, and building on existing commercial successes of creating world-class products and services for export into the global supply chain serving blue-chip companies and household names. The IOM/NW England Aerospace Engineering Cluster is a notable success story.

- encouraging “Clean Tech Business”. There are currently more than 100 new companies in the Isle of Man specialising in low carbon technology and renewable energy - with a turnover of £4.6m and paying nearly £1m in tax. The Island is attractive to business wishing to trial new technology here, with the financial benefit of allowing intellectual property to be held offshore. By strategically introducing legislation into areas such as Patents and Copyright relating to “cloud computing”, we can generate even more outside investment. Such businesses, along with e-commerce, space industry, shipping and aircraft registration keep our economy growing – without “putting all our eggs in one basket”.
- stepping up support for export marketing of high quality Isle of Man produce – meat, scallops, cheese.
- developing a proper Heritage Tourism Strategy, involving better coordination with coach operators, marketing deals with air and ferry operators and hoteliers.
- developing more skills training programmes to prepare local individuals for work within the Hospitality and Service industries. Greater emphasis on vocational training through Isle of Man College and apprenticeships, so that all young people reach their full potential.

OUR DEMOCRACY

It is plainly undemocratic that individual voters in the Isle of Man do not have equal voting power – in Onchan or Rushen you have 3 votes, in Douglas or Ramsey 2, while everywhere else – which includes Garff – you only have one. I have made strong representations to the current Boundaries Review Committee (due to report later this year) about how the system should be reformed to give equality of representation.

Similarly, it is profoundly undemocratic that 8 members of Legislative Council, who vote in Tynwald making important decisions on policy and public expenditure, and who discharge policy in Departments are not ultimately accountable to the electorate. I have always supported legislation to correct this – including my own Constitution Bill to have 32 members of Tynwald elected by the public at a single election. This failed. I will continue to support constitutional reform.

I support the early introduction of Freedom of Information legislation, and have recently assisted constituents to use the existing non-statutory Code to obtain certain information that ought to be in the public domain.



INDEPENDENCE FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM?

Not now. This would be cutting off our nose to spite our face, in the naive belief that recent challenges from them and external pressures from other agencies would thereby simply go away.

But when it is judged to be in our best interests, and at the time of our choosing, we should not hesitate to do so. Meantime a re-examination of the options and

consequences of becoming a fully sovereign state is responsible and essential contingency planning.

As for the European Union, we must continue an “at arm’s length” relationship.

Our Protocol 3 treaty guarantees free trade for Manx goods into the UK and Europe, but without the political and fiscal take-over of the Isle of Man that full membership would bring.

The countries of the British Isles - UK, Ireland, Isle of Man, The Channel Islands - form The Common Travel Area. No borders, no passports. This must continue. I have worked to stop proposals which threatened this long standing arrangement.

RE-ELECT RODAN AGAIN FOR GARFF



I welcome the "All Island Approach" to renewable energy generation agreed at the recent British Irish Council summit, which would encourage projects in Isle of Man territorial waters to supply electricity to the UK market. Leasing the seabed for off-shore development could generate significant long term revenue streams for us. The Island's position in the Irish Sea offers a business opportunity to be a central hub for interconnectors linking wind farms in surrounding waters to the UK electricity grid.

Experience shows on-shore wind-farms require fossil-fuel generated back-up when the wind doesn't blow, heavy subsidy from the taxpayer or consumer, and disfigure the countryside. Rather than be going down that route, we should step up incentives for energy saving and insulation. In the longer term, the Isle of Man is ideally placed to take advantage of tidal and wave power, when such technologies become economically viable for commercial enterprise to develop.

Any exploitation of our seas must be done with care. I support the designation of Ramsey Bay Marine Nature Reserve as the start of a new future for Manx seas. The creation of such closed areas, with protection zones closed to trawling and dredging such as along the Maughold coast, will allow scallop fisheries to replenish. With growing international markets for Manx queenies, a small but important local industry is supported.

WHAT ARE MY CONSTITUENCY PRIORITIES?

To continue to head up the Laxey Village Regeneration initiative to improve the built environment of the commercial centre. I was pleased to set up the Laxey Regeneration Committee, now in the early stages of bidding for central funding. The extension by Tynwald of the Town and Village Regeneration Fund into the next financial year and beyond will be an early national priority of mine.

To actively support Laxey and Dhoon Primary Schools. Very much at the heart of the community, the educational start in life our children receive cannot be bettered – anywhere. As Education Minister I drove forward a programme for modern extensions and upgrade at these schools.

To continue to work with Laxey, Lonan and Maughold Commissioners towards closer cooperation so as to enhance efficiency and ratepayers' value for money. But there also needs to be a shift of power to local authorities from central government to deal with local priorities – such as the neglected maintenance of roads and footpaths, street cleaning, weed and litter clearance and trimming of hedges which is so apparent in parts of Laxey and the Parishes. To do this there will need to be a new relationship between local government and cash-strapped central Government which is ill-equipped to perform such duties. Use of rate income must be considered – however rates are a tax on property, and the present system is unfair, decades out of date and a national revaluation would be urgently required.

To promote Laxey Valley and its historic industrial heritage, nationally and internationally – I am currently Chairman of Laxey and Lonan Heritage Trust.

To protect the peaceful countryside of the rural parishes of Lonan and Maughold. I opposed plans for the extension of quarrying at Dreemskerry.

And to continue my support of numerous community organisations in the constituency. I previously served as Chairman of Laxey Village Commissioners and of Laxey Traders' Association, and as a Trustee of the Working Men's Institute. I am currently President of Lonan and Laxey Branch of the Royal British Legion and Chairman of Laxey Fair Committee, Laxey and Lonan Live at Home Scheme, and a member of other local groups.

WHERE TO VOTE

LAXEY**LONAN NORTH****LONAN SOUTH****MAUGHOLD NORTH****MAUGHOLD SOUTH****Laxey Working Men's Institute, New Road****Laxey Methodist Church, Minorca Hill, Laxey****Baldrine Methodist Church Hall, Baldrine Hill, Baldrine****Maughold Church Hall, Maughold Village****Dhoon Church Hall, Main Road, Glen Mona****DO YOU NEED TRANSPORT TO THE POLLING STATION? Phone 464319 or 424591****Election Day Committee Rooms: Laxey Football Club, Glen Road, Laxey**