

House of Keys General Election
Thursday 29th September 2011

Gareth
Kelly



Malew and Santon

My name is Gareth Kelly, I am 29 and I have lived in the parish of Santon all my life.

I went to Marown Primary School, followed by Castle Rushen High School. After gaining my blacksmith's qualification I went on to set up my own business, branching out into different areas, which I have built up over the years. I have had a varied work life and continue to do so, to meet the ever changing ways in which the Island heads.

I put myself forward because, like a lot of you, I have become disheartened by the government and the MHKs, the choices they make and the things they do. Particularly the Mickey Mouse approach to dealing with the first VAT problem; most of the savings in the first year have been from internal accounting adjustments - on paper it reads well, the reality is different.

Why will I be better than the current member? Well I will be transparent, ethical, leave no stone unturned to get the answers, actually give you an answer when you ask me something (it may not always be the answer you like but at least you will have an answer), bring new ideas, new views and new solutions to the problems of the Island and the local area.

- To always have the interests of the Isle of Man at heart
- To be honest, to act with a conscience and be willing to make the difficult decisions.
- To be forward thinking and look at long term aims not just the short time gains
- To bring a commercial sense to government while still retaining a quality service

The Future

Over the next five years jobs will be cut - there are no two ways about this - and taxes could well rise, and I can't see any way that we can bring the deficit down in a short space of time without these measures. But what will help is if we can make more savings and attract more companies to the Island.

Frontline services may well be affected I think in the short term which is the worst part about all of this. But hopefully it will not come to this at all if we can make the savings needed.

Rent to Buy

If elected I would push to introduce a policy that would bring a "rent to buy" scheme to the Island.

This would give people a chance to save up for a deposit and show they can be trusted to pay back a mortgage. This would help young people get a home, where normally they could not. It would give people who have to pay £500-700pm in rent a chance to own a home, because at the moment many cannot afford to save and pay rent. It might encourage local housing tenants to take a step into home ownership as they can see it's viable and can afford to, so freeing up social housing.

Health

I will try and reduce waiting lists, improve systems and facilities to provide a better service and look at ways to increase the basic wage for the nurses when they first start. This may not happen for 3-5 years when we have the house in order, but I feel this is achievable once other sectors are looked at. And also more NHS dentist spaces are needed, as we are very much lacking in this area on the Island. I also have an idea for a new way to care for and help the elderly so they can feel more a part of the community.

Transport

I will aim to bring about a better bus network, one that can cope with the requirements of all types of roads, areas and customers; to reduce costs at the airport in order to maximise its potential to offer a service with value; to make sure we do not sign one more harbour linkspan agreement without the necessary legal clauses to stop the sale of the agreement happening again.

Government Pay and Conditions Modernisation

We need pay scales that reflect the work they do and we need to take away the extras they get paid to do a certain job. That way we can budget for all costs.

Staff should be employed to work in shift patterns to cover hours that fall outside the normal working week; this alone will save thousands of pounds in overtime payments.

Privatisation

We need to look at how government can reduce its scope, and save money.

The MEA shops should be shut after a period of time if they cannot get their books in order. The Villa and Gaiety Theatre should be leased out to private companies, with more favourable terms until they can be established as profit making industries on the Island.

The MEA, the Airport and the Buses cannot be privatised without major repercussions for the Island; this would be a short term gain for the government and a long term loss for the Island people. But more needs to be done to streamline their working practices and improve their services.

There is scope for government to put a lot of work out to the private sector, as long as it shows a cost saving while keeping services the same. This would have to be done on a project by project basis over the coming 5 years.

Corporation Tax

I believe the bulk of companies in the Funds, Fiduciary, Insurance, Aircraft and Shipping sectors would leave if even a 0.5% tax rate were to be levied on the Island. Many of these companies are here for one reason only, and that is the 0%. Why would they stay when they can get the same 0% elsewhere in the world? I would fight to keep the 0% rate as it is in our Island's best interest. What we need to do is look at increasing the level for the sectors that are not here just for the 0% tax rate, rather than cutting off our nose to spite our face.

New Business

We need to actively approach companies in the UK and further afield. We have to sell the plus points of the Island.

We need to offer companies incentives to come here, be it land leased to them or a reduction in NI payments for their staff to offset the cost of transport. You may say that we need the NI cash and yes we do, but if it takes people off the dole for those first 3-5 years while we sort the Island out, then that will more than make up for the loss of NI in those years.

Pensions

Pensions need to change for new entrants into government. We can no longer go on paying huge pensions to public sector workers including MHKs; it has to be balanced and, from a government's view, budgeted at the time, not in 20 - 30 years' time. MHKs should pay into their pension just like everybody else.

One option could be that a contributory pension is available up to a fixed level; for those on a higher salary there would be an option to make additional voluntary contributions. Those on higher salaries have a very good chance to plan for later life. And if they cannot plan for later life, how can they run the government? . Controversial? Yes. Needed? Most definitely.

Agriculture

The recent CAP reforms have in effect devastated our farming community, with there being a real chance of our meat plant being closed thereby costing the government even more money which will come out of the pockets of the farmers and maybe the tax payer. The present government has really put farming on a one way track to the bottom where there can be no recovery. This has been a short sighted view by government once again. We need to listen to the farmers more and take their views on how we can turn this around before it is too late because they know their industry better than any MHK.

Not in Employment, Education or Training

Primarily we need to work to bring more companies into the Island in order to reduce this problem. We could also offer work placements or apprenticeships with companies to allow young people to get experience and training, and maybe their first step onto the job ladder.

The People we Represent

It's time we, the public, all took an active role in the Island and made our MHKs listen. It's all too easy to sit in a pub saying how or what you would change and I myself have done just that in the past, but if you think you have an idea or ways to make things better, tell your MHK! On my travels around the area, I have so far picked up 2 or 3 ideas that I feel would make a difference. People have given me a brief outline of their ideas and I have told them that if I'm elected I will be calling back to see them to talk more about these ideas and how to best implement them. This could save thousands over the 5 years.

Ballasalla

There are a few local issues that need to be looked at, but the main one is the community house that is no longer. I have gathered from people in Ballasalla that the unit was very much welcomed but was mismanaged from the start by those who should have shown guidance and advice. Why was planning never applied for when first getting the house, as there was always going to be limited time in the old premises?

In my view this should have been done so as to keep the project alive and on course, as when the house closed the new one in the school would have been ready to move into. I will endeavour to support this and to bring back the community centre, including increasing public awareness Island wide in order to help raise funds.

And we need to look at ways to speed up the traffic flow in Ballasalla at peak times as it backs up and causes blockages. Many have mentioned the by-pass but the truth is we have missed the boat on that one as I can see no way that the government will go ahead with this project in the next 5 years. This really should have been done in the last 5 years if not 10 years.

Santon

There are problems with traffic and the pavements in Santon and Newtown which need to be resolved. It is time the DOI did something about this.

This has been ongoing for 5 years at least and still nothing has been done; we have pavements that have fallen into disrepair and simple lack of maintenance of the hedges. Once again the government was looking at a short term saving, but not seeing the problems in the long term. Some of these pavements are not wide enough for access with either a pram or a wheel chair. This needs to be addressed.

Mount Murray residents have been fighting a 13 year battle to have the maintenance company set up. I will endeavour to push this and take the lead in respect of this to finally get this problem sorted out. With my background in construction I will seek to offer advice and keep the management company from paying over the odds for repairs that badly need doing.

What I Want to Achieve:

A detailed look into each department's spending across the board, and to reduce that spending without damaging frontline services; more efficiency and waste reduction before frontline services get hit. A reduction in the number of consultants/consultancy services we use - surely we have plenty of bright people in the government capable of doing these jobs without spending thousands on them?

Investigate how we can achieve fairer social housing for people and the self funding of new social housing builds. Introduce means testing for new entrants to social housing to make it fairer for all.

Prioritise the roads. Stop grand building schemes and divert the cash to the repair and maintenance of our existing roads. Streamline the whole department to give value for money.

Reduce the capital budget to only pay for the things that we need, not that we wish for, and to scrutinise the cost of any such project in order to achieve the budget set.

Work more closely with the people and the community of Malew and Santon, the commissioners, the residents and local clubs.

Look into ways that the Police force can use their time more effectively in solving crimes whilst reducing paperwork and similarly for the court system; petty crime to be dealt with in a different way than we do at the moment.

Offer more support for people, young and old, wishing to start their own business, because they are our lifeline; without new businesses and ideas then we will stagnate. More financial support, along with peer help, is needed to help push ideas from nothing to being on the market.

This is my pledge to the voters of the constituency of Malew and Santon and I hope that you will take time to read it through.

I hope that you will see that we need a change in government with new faces and fresh ideas.

Time is now getting very short, so if I do not catch you at home I will call and see you after the election. You will see me more than once in 5 years!

I have enjoyed canvassing and as a new person to politics appreciate the time people have taken to listen to my ideas and to give me their ideas of how we can get out of this financial crisis. I have gathered a wealth of information from the voters with many wishing to help to resolve the situation.

You, the voters, need to let your legs do the talking and go along to the polling station and use your vote.

If you have a problem getting to the polling station, please contact me and I will arrange transport for you.

VOTE for change. Vote for a modern government.

Vote for Gareth Kelly

Please contact me with any views or ideas, or if you would like to arrange to see me:

Email: gkelly@gkelly.info

Phone: 483990

Address: Croit-y-Kelly
St Marks Road
The Braaid
IM4 2AX

Website: www.gkelly.info

