

GARFF - GENERAL ELECTION
THURSDAY 22nd SEPTEMBER 2016



VOTE
SMITH







Dear fellow constituent

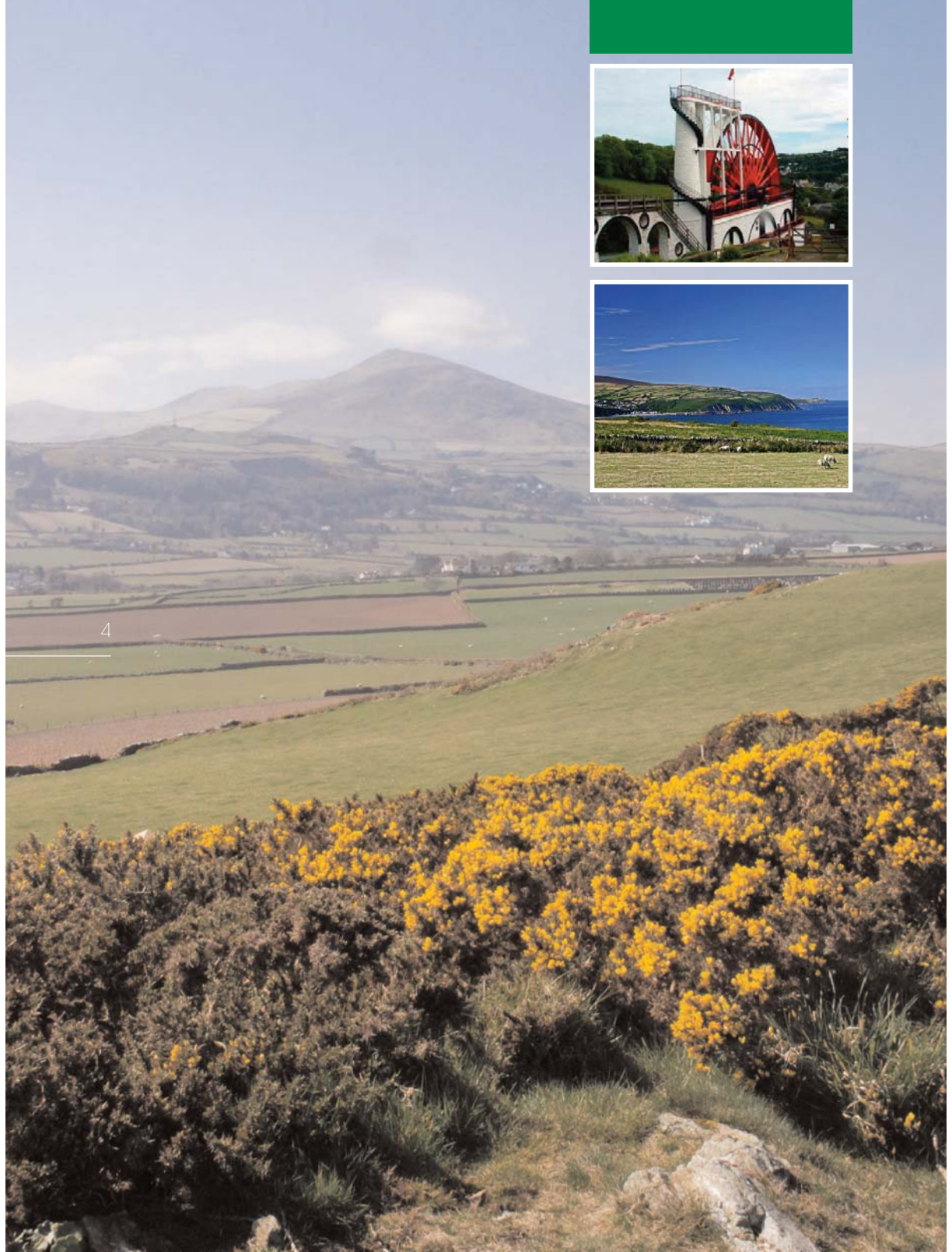
Background

I am 62 and married with a family. A resident of Laxey since my arrival on the Island from Yorkshire in 1986. I served on the Board of Laxey Village Commissioners from 1992 to 2001, holding the office of Chairman 1996/97, 1998/99 and 2000/01.

At the time of devolution of funding to schools I was the first Community Governor of Laxey School. My support of Culture, Heritage and the wider local community is well documented. I have had a key role in organising Laxey Fair since 2003 and regularly support Laxey and Lonan Heritage Trust and the various churches throughout Garff.

An accountant by profession I have worked within the Agricultural, Banking, Construction, Fund, Insurance, Oil and Gas, Shipping, and Yacht and Aircraft industries. I was also employed by IOM Government Treasury Financial Services Division from 1997 to 2008. I am currently a business associate at Fairy Cottage Filling Station, Laxey. I first contested the Constituency of Garff By-Election in 1995.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. J. A.', written in a cursive style.



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Overview

This General Election is exceptionally important for the future wellbeing of our Island. We have experienced a time of extreme financial turbulence, which has left a legacy of inherent debt and disillusionment amongst the electorate previously unknown.

The next five years will be critical, set against a backdrop of lowest recorded bank interest rates and debt ridden Pensions and Utilities. Add to this the turmoil within the UK and Europe Post-Brexit, and this could result in extremely challenging times ahead. The Isle of Man will need clear strategies, priority budgeting, contingency forecasting and political leaders with extensive vision and experience.

The Island's future economic security is totally dependent upon our freedom to control domestic legislation and taxation. We must robustly defend our national interests from outside political pressure be that from the UK, EU, all Regulatory bodies, International Monetary Fund, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development or Financial Action Task Force.

I strongly believe in and support continuing positive dialogue with other external governments and organisations BUT not to the detriment of the Island's longstanding and unique independent position. In the words of John W Gelling "Let the nations boast of countries vaster, mightier far than Thee, but to us thou has no equal Ellan Vannin, Ben my Chree."

Our Economy

It is important that we continue to strive for a strong and diverse economy. Many threats are before us but within these pressures also abound opportunities. It is imperative for us to act both with our UK and Offshore counterparts but also upon our own volition.

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We do not have to wait for the UK to act on our behalf. Now is the time for us to look further, both at, and beyond the UK and Europe for our future growth.



Our Economy

I would enthusiastically encourage all Island politicians, past and present, captains of industry and business leaders to come together and formulate an updated and enhanced “Vision 2020” document.

In every threat there is opportunity and we must consider all possible prospects. Within our Island community there is extensive intellectual property and we need to engage all those key skills to assist us to grow the economy.

We must seek new opportunities, but equally as important, support existing businesses through investment initiatives, training and further developing the skills of our work force.



Health and Social Care

It is important to note that healthcare across all areas will always require significant funding if it is to fully provide for the needs of the Island's diverse population.

The current Minister has admitted that achievements have been made over the last five years but that more needs to be done. If necessary we should reassess priorities and ensure that the right treatments are available and not be constrained by financial objectives.

We must recognise and be aware of the expertise already offered by our health and social care professionals and to ensure a cohesive approach to care Island wide. However, we must also look to the future and plan both recruitment and training to ensure holistic needs are met, giving particular attention and encouragement for all within our health and social care workforce.

We have excellent facilities run as third sector charities, Hospice, Breast Unit and Hyperbaric Chamber to name but a few. It is crucial for us to work in conjunction with all these facilities which provide immeasurable support to complement our health and social care services, but we must not rely upon these as primary care services.



Education and Youth Services

Our recent A-Level and GCSE exam results clearly demonstrate that we have an exceptionally high level of tuition offered on the Island. Previous planning and foresight in building both St Ninian's Lower School and Henry Bloom Noble Primary School provides a positive outlook for the future education of our children.

In addition the accreditation of Isle of Man College of Further and Higher Education to University College Isle of Man status is a great accolade for the Island.

Consequently, the UCM now gives the opportunity to those wishing to undertake certain higher education courses to be able to complete their studies on Island. Although recognising that course work and examinations are a key part of any educational system, I believe more emphasis should be focussed preparing students for the work place and developing life-skills.

It is important to embrace all levels of learning, to ensure those who are not in education, employment or training (NEETS) receive equal opportunities in relation to employment. Education and Youth Services should be endeavouring to create accomplished individuals prepared and conversant with an integrated working and social life.

Pensions and Senior Citizens

We must safeguard the equilibrium of both contributors and beneficiaries within our pension arrangements. Pensions and other forms of support to our elderly population have become a very emotive subject and these must be treated with the utmost sensitivity.

Concerns regarding a whole raft of topics surrounding pensions has been ongoing and well known over a number of years with no realistic solutions until recently being attempted or achieved. Pensions are, and will continue to be, a major challenge. Proposed increase in retirement ages and plans to further reduce benefits to existing pensioners, has only increased anxiety and exacerbated the issue.

I believe that an urgent long-term strategy is required to ensure responsible and sustainable funding. The Treasury proposals for a New Manx State Pension is a positive start but there are still many areas requiring detailed analysis and discussion.

I firmly believe in supporting the retired population and would seek to remove restrictions regarding Bus Passes, reinstate the Christmas Bonus payment, TV Licences for the over 75's and the Age Allowance to its previous level of £2,020. There is no immediate possibility to reverse the removal of the concession to provide assistance with TV Licences for the over 75's. However, it has been agreed to prepare an Issues and Options Paper for consideration by Treasury after the General Election.



Homeland Security and Immigration

Although the recent Chief Constable's report shows a reduction in certain crime figures, the demands upon the constabulary have become much more varied and complex.

We must not become complacent about any aspect of policing and ensure that the Island's police force is fit for purpose. We must continue to consider both on and off Island recruitment in order to pool resources and have an effective skills set.

I fully support a community policing approach which engenders respect and a reassuring sense of security.

I believe it is also important to have some record of who visits our shores and would support the introduction and inspection of photographic identification at the sea terminals both on and off Island. This could then assist the police in crime prevention.

I support controlled immigration providing that there is a clear definition which safeguards the Manx population. I would certainly support a points system that would attract migrants with specific skills identified by, and pertaining to, the Island's economy.



Infrastructure

The lack of ongoing maintenance on roads, rivers, drains and gullies has a continuing detrimental consequence upon the Islands population. The major flooding suffered by the Island in December 2015 was testament in part to this lack of maintenance.

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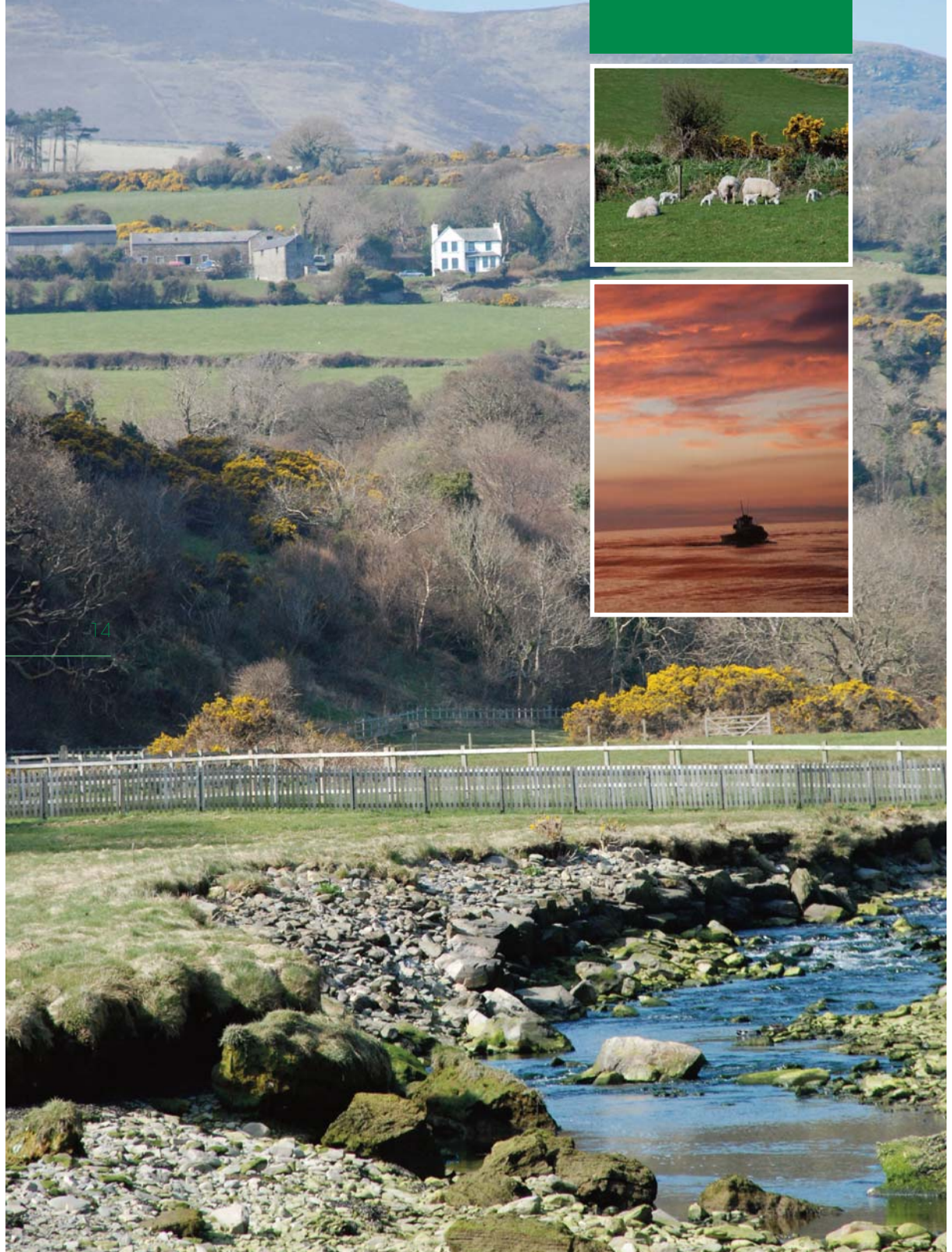
Many parts of Garff were severely affected and it is imperative that an all Island flood plan is put into place as an urgent priority. Currently a topographical survey is underway regarding the Laxey River and its tributaries and I am also in the process of collating information on other flooding issues within Garff. The serious flooding problems affecting Garff are indicative across the whole Island.



Utilities and Sewerage

High energy costs, increased sewerage charges and other standing charges are having a major impact on household finances. Fuel poverty has increased dramatically in recent years. I would support an all Island rating system which would assist in bringing a much better balance and address these inequities. There is also exceptional disparity between properties regarding water usage and I would support the introduction of water meters for those on low water consumption.

The IRIS sewerage renewal project has still not reached Garff and currently it remains many years away. I believe at least primary screening should be installed to prevent the continual polluting sea outfalls at Laxey and Garwick. It would be a really positive outcome for our beaches to achieve 'Blue Flag' status again.



Agriculture and Environment

Farming is one of our hardest hit industries. It is already difficult to compete with imports for various reasons, acreage, imported base products seeds, fertiliser, feed etc. In addition there is competition from supermarket imports. Further threats could ensue following the UK withdrawal from Europe. Goods produced in the Isle of Man could be subject to quotas, tariffs and potentially additional administrative costs when exported to the EU.

Furthermore, Isle of Man goods exported to countries which have a trade agreement with the EU are presently treated as if they originated in the EU, this treatment would cease. We need to actively support the agricultural sector ensuring that those who take the financial risks in securing the sustainability of Manx farming receive the relevant funding. It is also essential that farming is profitable to ensure food security, longevity and investment for the future.

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I fully support waste reduction, reuse, recycling, zero emission technology and favour tidal wave power as an alternative energy source. Tidal power is a renewable energy, does not emit any climate gases and requires very little space. It is more reliable than wind power, guaranteed two tides each day, ocean currents generate relatively more energy than air currents, as ocean water is much denser than air which consequently applies greater force on the turbines.

There is also much less visual impact than wind turbines. Biodiversity and green technology is forever advancing and I would support any project that encompasses these to reduce emissions and enhance our environment.

SMITH X

The Election takes place on Thursday 22nd September 2016

Polling stations are open between 8am and 8pm

If you are away or unable to attend on Polling Day and require an Advance Voting Form, please let me know and I will assist with the necessary procedure. This Form must be submitted by Friday 15th September 2016 for applications within the Isle of Man. If you require transport to the Polling Station or would like to assist with my candidature please contact me.

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**Competent, Conscientious and Caring with a Dedication,
Passion and Resolve to assist our Island Nation and it's resilient
people who work towards a brighter hope for the future.**

Quocunque Jeceris Stabit

"Whithersoever you throw it, it will stand"

- Representation of the People Act 1995 •
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