
PLEASE
VOTE

MARY
LOWE



Proposed by: NOEL DUQUEMIN
(Dean of the Vale Douzaine)
Seconded by DIANE ARCHENOUL
WITH THANKS

Dear Elector

I would like to thank the Vale Parishioners who have supported me during the last 22 years/6 elections, allowing me to represent you in the States of Deliberation. It's been a great honour and privilege to do so. As the longest serving member of the States, I have the Parliamentary title of 'Mother of the House', or more commonly known amongst colleagues as 'MOTH'.

Education

During my time in the States I have seen St Sampsons & Les Beaucamps High Schools rebuilt and more sites given over to the College of Further Education, this only left La Mare de Carteret Schools to be redeveloped. When this current States started out in 2012 I certainly expected La Mare site to be well on the way to being completed by now. The debate last month on Education Departments plans and the outcome has now left not only La Mare de Carteret site development put on hold, the States also resolved they only wanted three High Schools after removing the 11+. All this uncertainty has now meant a very unsettling time for pupils, parents, teaching staff and the community. The question being asked now, will the next States overturn the vote after listening and speaking to the electors?

I would welcome the opportunity when canvassing to hear your views - Do you want some form of selection? Do you want the 11+? Do you want the Grammar School to remain? Do you want three High Schools instead of four?

The decision last month by the States needs to be either endorsed or a report taken back sooner rather than later as all this uncertainty isn't helpful.

Transport Links

At the time of writing this manifesto once again there are problems with Condor. This lack of service and unreliability cannot continue. All the money spent advertising these beautiful islands is being lost. Serious rethinks and debates need to take place next term as solutions must be found, putting in place a robust Plan B would be a start. Both the harbour and airport are key gateways to our economy, the States must do their utmost to encourage reliable operators with affordable links to/from Guernsey. Many residents, including the sporting fraternity have had their long traditions of day trips including to Jersey cease owing to poor timetabling or lack of any service. Serious discussions need to be held to address this failure.

Health

My views remain the same as the last election, we all want the best health service the Island can afford, but we must be realistic. If Health and Social Services Department start charging for various health services, this would be a retrograde step. It is unthinkable that barriers may be put in place restricting access by wealth to health. I will continue to oppose any policies or charges that could result in a two-tier health system depending on the ability to pay.

Waiting times to see a specialist must remain a maximum of 8 weeks under the new contract, there are some who would

like to extend this to 12 weeks. I do not wish to see a long waiting list NHS system.

In future more people will be treated in their own homes by Health and Social Services, providing good support systems are in place this should be welcomed.

Long Term Care Health Insurance Scheme

The Long-Term Care Insurance scheme was approved 15 years ago following what was becoming an unfair system with some people selling their property or placing it in family names to avoid paying for care. No longer did individuals or families find themselves in a position of worrying about their future needs in residential care. A review was agreed to establish the success or otherwise, plus revisiting the financial sustainability of the scheme now it's up and running. The scheme does need more funds, I appreciate the rising costs as with most things in life costing more. What I cannot support is having this scheme means tested as has been suggested by the working party. If the means-tested proposal went ahead we would find ourselves back to exactly how it was before the scheme commenced, people would find a way around the system. The Long-Term Care Insurance is an insurance scheme. When we take out house insurance, car insurance, travel insurance and the time comes to claim we are not faced with being means tested, rightly so. In the case of the States Long-Term Care Insurance Scheme, it is a compulsory contributory scheme, people shouldn't be means tested. I remember as a member of Social Security the worry people went through before this scheme was approved. If funds are getting low and the scheme is not sustainable a rise in contributions need to be considered.

Housing

The Housing market has seen a downturn and drop in prices for numerous reasons, partly the economy slowing and population reducing, all these elements take their toll on house prices, as a result there are many new developments still on the market after three years. Some developers are sitting on sites until the market improves, if more reasonably priced affordable homes were built on these plots instead of expensive homes this would help many locals desperate to get on the housing ladder and help many university students return as the cost of living in Guernsey has been seen as a prohibiting factor.

The Guernsey Housing Association have built many rented and partial ownership properties, the partial ownership may be another element that has affected the housing market prices.

Finance & Diversification

The island relies heavily on the finance industry, which employs nearly 7,000 people, and although successful we must continue to look at ways to diversify our economy. All businesses within our community are not always recognised, they too play a significant part in our economy and must be supported wherever possible to expand and grow without too many obstacles, the new Island Development Plan will go some way to assisting them to expand and flourish.

Transport matters

I do not support paid parking and will continue to vote against. Why hit the workers to park in town? Shop and office workers are the very people we need to encourage to keep town thriving.

CTPlus tracking buses system that is currently on trial will ease the frustrations of passengers wondering when their bus will arrive. A welcome initiative.

The Environment Department must in future have a time limit on whether bus routes are successful. CTPlus run the P2 route with 1 or 2 passengers per day is a prime example of allowing a service to continue whilst losing money. I'm sure a private business would have stopped this loss making route before now, in the same way they would have stopped the loss making P1 route.

The Transport Strategy wasn't designed for Guernsey lifestyles, it suits some people who have time to catch up to four buses to get to a destination and back. I suggest there are more needing their cars to fit in with family lifestyles taking children to school/childminder, going to work, shops and other messages on the way to work/home. If Guernsey wants an available flexible workforce, the States must recognise cars are a necessity for most and must be part of any future strategy.

Seafront plans

I was the only Deputy to oppose the Seafront Plans when published last year, it wasn't long before the chaos of removing two traffic lanes into one simply didn't work. Although this happened in St Peter Port, it did have huge ramifications for our Vale community as much as others around the island. I led a campaign to have the two lanes reinstated ensuring traffic flowed again. The traffic hold ups cost thousands of pounds for many businesses as their staff were held up for an hour or more sitting in the grid lock and unable to carry out deliveries or get from one destination to another. Plans to close the seafront all summer are still on the wish list, I will object if elected.

Albert Pier & Cruise Passengers embarking/disembarking

I welcome the cruise ships coming to Guernsey, we have a beautiful island to offer visitors whilst here. I do share the concerns expressed by many we will see the Albert Pier parking removed again when cruise ships are in. Those wishing to pop into town last season faced frustration at an empty pier all day and nowhere close to park to pop into town. Some told me they went back home and used the internet. We need to make sure the town traders are supported wherever possible, the next States must review the cruise landing facility.

The cost of having two policemen helping people cross the road on cruise liner days was not the best use of taxpayers money when three sets of pedestrian traffic lights are available to use.

States Departments and Committees

The time spent on strategies and reviews this term has beaten all other States terms I have been in over the last 22 years. How did we manage before – well we got on with the work in hand to get things done. Senior staff have been so tied up going from one strategy or review meeting to another some have seen their day job suffer. Many of the strategies that have been completed and approved have yet to be implemented, as funds are not available until the review of the priority list takes place next term.

Most Departments have made cutbacks, do I think more can be done? Yes. Should this happen before more charges are brought against our population? Yes. My view remains as custodians of the taxpayers purse, a mindset must always exist of whether it is a case of 'need or want' before agreeing expenditure. Monitoring must be key on all policies and expenditure.

I would like to see in the future Public Meetings with the Chairman/member of each of the new Committees making themselves available quarterly in a public forum as a way forward to engage, listen and work with those whom we serve in the States.

Public & Private Partnerships

The States are increasing the numbers of Private & Public Partnerships, this approach must be welcomed and encouraged wherever possible. A prime example of the States learning more by working together is with the Guernsey Disability Alliance, with their input assisting with policies and the Disability Strategy, we as a community have a better understanding resulting in a better informed strategy.

Communication

The Youth Forum held recently in the States Chamber with the Bailiff as Presiding Officer saw the elected representatives from all the High Schools, Elizabeth College, Ladies College, Grammar School and Blanchelande College conduct a day's debate on various issues. What a credit they all were to their schools but just as important for our islands. Finally, at last after many years there's now a formal group of young people working with the States for our island and their future.

Technology

Will the States have Webcams available on States Days for those at home or work to watch their government in action in the same way many other Parliaments do? Will the States have a listen again facility of States meetings? Will the States use Social Media more for instant engagement with the public? The States needs to encourage people to get involved, all ideas welcome.

Transparency

The States still has a long way to go to achieve openness and accountability, if anything this States has been more reluctant to share information publicly than previous States. I remain of the view the States should have a robust Freedom of Information in place that doesn't have brick walls in place as reasons why information cannot be shared.

Simultaneous Electronic Voting

Simultaneous Electronic Voting was once again rejected, if only Guernsey was like Jersey where their States Members welcome and support SEV, why do the majority of Guernsey States members reject the opportunity to be open and accountable? If elected I will continue to support Simultaneous Electronic Voting and try once again to get this implemented so you can hold States members to account.

States members Pay - I didn't take any pay rises again this term.

After much resistance my amendment to have States Members remuneration published annually was approved, although many objected at the time – why?

Vale Parish

One of the concerns for the Vale Parish remains the Mont Cuet tip and all the problems that come with it. The rubbish mound continues to rise above road level yet the States waste disposal still hasn't been finalised and agreed by the States yet. The difficulties associated with Mont Cuet site keeping bags and debris inside the perimeter especially on windy days continues. This problem needs a permanent solution sooner rather than later.

Vale Douzainiers & Parish Officials are all volunteers who work continuously and tirelessly to keep the Vale Parish in good order for all of us to enjoy, and for those outside the parish who venture north and visit our lovely recreational areas and beaches. I'd like to publicly thank the members of the Douzaine and Parish Officials as too often they are the unsung heroes of our Parish.

The Vale Parish have an excellent new website encouraging parishioners to find out what's happening in the Parish, the States are trying to do similar but obviously on a larger scale. People are looking for an easy way to communicate these days, the internet enables 24hr access to information that previously was only available during office hours. Have the States got it right yet? No not at all but with people now employed to address previous communication shortcomings I have no doubt great things will be happening in the near future.

Island-Wide Voting

I remain a supporter of Island-wide voting. The people of this Island should be able to vote for any member of their Government, not part of it. For as long as I can remember politicians have been elected who do not live in the Parish or District they are representing. Candidates have the choice where they wish to stand at each election yet the electors have no choice other than the candidates in their district.

If only the 2012 candidates had followed through their promise at election time Island Wide Voting would have been in place for this Election.

The States also rejected last month the opportunity to present and debate my amendment to carry out a separate coloured voting slip on the 27th April to ascertain if you support Island Wide Voting yes/no. This could have saved the added expense of a Referendum on another day.

Postal Voting now available for all on the Electoral Roll, not just those off island.

If you have long working days with little time to vote, or you dislike queuing, or you are reliant on public transport or friends to take you, or busy with after school activities, meal times or getting youngsters to bed – for your convenience Postal Voting has been introduced for all who wish to vote.

Relevant dates for Application, Registering and Postal Voting forms are as follows:

Applying for registration forms can be made now at Sir Charles Frossard House, the Greffe, Vale Douzaine Room, Guille Alles Library, at www.election2016.gg or if it helps I can deliver one for you.

Postal Voting Registration Forms must be returned by noon on the 22nd April 2016.

Postal Voting Forms must be returned by noon on Election Day Wednesday 27th April 2016.

Thank you for taking the time to read my manifesto. I hope should I get re-elected, I can continue to use my 22 years experience representing the Vale electorate to give some continuity and stability towards the well being of the island. This being my 7th election I would like to ask you please consider my nomination when placing your vote on 27th April.



Contact details

If you would like to discuss my manifesto or any issues not covered here, please do not hesitate to contact me on 255984 or email marylowe@cwgsy.net or through my website <http://www.marylowe.gg>

Government – my past and present Department & Committee membership

Minister – Social Security Department
Chairman – Inheritance Law Review Committee
Chairman – States Members Induction Working Party
Vice-Chairman – States Assembly and Constitution Committee
Vice-Chairman – Joint Committee's Good Governance Group
Vice-Chairman – Parochial Ecclesiastical Rates Review Committee
Vice-President – Guernsey Gambling Committee
Vice-President – Guernsey Telecoms
Member – Health & Social Services Department
Member – Policy Council
Member – Home Department
Member – Environment Department
Member – Scrutiny Committee
Member – Recreation Committee
Member – Children Board
Member – Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Executive Committee
Numerous Sub-groups and working party Groups

My Non Government membership – past and present

Chairman – Guernsey Women's Refuge
Director – St John Ambulance & Rescue Service
President – Hautes Capelles Primary School Management Committee
President – La Mare de Carteret High School Management Committee
Subscriber – Friends of Les Bourg Hospice
Subscriber – Friends of St James Concert Hall
Subscriber – National Trust
Subscriber – Friends of Lihou Island
