

JANE STEPHENS

CANDIDATE FOR ST SAMPSON'S PARISH GENERAL ELECTION 27th April 2016



I would welcome your responses and ideas. If you would like to talk to me or want me to visit you then my telephone number is

713143.

Or for a personal written response please email me at

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MY BACKGROUND

- I live in St. Sampson's Parish between Capelles and Camp de Roi and have lived in the North of the Island for 40 years. I want to protect and promote a good quality of life in the Parish
- I represented the Parish during 2008 - 2012, and as an experienced politician I have a strong record in supporting individual parishioners and raising your concerns. To do the job well I discovered that I had to be a full time Deputy and I promise to be equally as diligent if elected this time. As the reform of the Political system is tested I will always have time to listen to your point of view and support you in appropriate ways
- I always look for the best solution for as many people as possible and would never impose my personal agenda on the community
- I am very cost conscious and would not support vanity projects, neither will I support expenditure without clear reason to do so
- I have no interest in 'playing politics'. My energies would be directed to serving the community not my own interests.
- I strongly support gradual, considered change in Guernsey unless an emergency response is necessary
- I have a Master's Degree in Education and have taught in both of the Parish primary schools. I volunteer as Independent Chairperson of the Foster Panel and the Adoption and Permanency Panel, as a Lay Member of the Mental Health Tribunal and chair meetings to progress the Disability Strategy

1 EDUCATION

Any restructure of secondary education is profoundly important to everyone, parents and future parents, students and their potential employers. My message to the next Assembly when planning for the future is firstly, 'Do no harm'. Existing standards have to be maintained and improved upon throughout any period of remodelling. I strongly believe we need to be vigilant and demand solid information from Education. I have forty years previous experience in educational change and I was successful in holding Education to account, when in 2011, I insisted that the Education Department answered my questions on the history of GCSE results attained in the High Schools. I believe that standards have risen in those schools because of the additional help that was delivered once the results were known. I also called for an inspection of the Education Department, which was reported on last year.

My role, if elected, would be one of quality control and risk assessment of any restructure plans. The 11+ exam is not a reliable predictor of future performance and so I hope the abolition of the 11+ is confirmed. But because there will have to be some assessments to allocate students to streams, and streaming can be on one site or across more than one site, I am not yet convinced that any schools must close. I would like to see the detailed planning on which to base decisions. Evidence of the quality of the teaching and learning must be made available to everyone. On the three or four high school option, I want a value for money solution. But I would not support an expansion of the St. Sampson's site if that would be detrimental to our students. I support change only if Education can show in some detail how they will manage that change and that the 'value' issue applies to the quality of education as well expenditure.

1 EDUCATION (continued)

Key to future success of Education's plans are the development of a new Education Law to better support parents and students, greater flexibility in what until now has been a rigid system and the continued focus on the best possible standards of teaching and learning.

To get my vote, the anticipated report on changes to States support for the independent colleges must show that some support will continue. The new structure must detail the route for high school students to the Sixth form/College of Further Education / Tertiary provision and the levels of funding that part of the provision requires.

Special needs education, primary and preschool education must remain in focus during the debate about the secondary phase. The plans to pay for some preschool education are laudable but support for families should include breakfast clubs and after school clubs in all primary schools to assist working parents and to stagger the traffic flow around schools. Relaxation of catchment area rules would assist families where relatives who look after children before and after school currently have to drive across the island to fulfil their commitments.

2 HOUSING

Our comfort and security relies to a great extent on our homes. I served as a Housing Board member when the projects to rebuild the residential homes and remodel the Bouet were designed. As well as social housing we need to facilitate owner occupied second and third homes. Progress must be steady and planned for taking into account all interests both of those needing housing in any sector and those providing housing. Builders will not build what they cannot sell and I know that restrictions on amenities like residential parking spaces can reduce the appeal of new builds. Green areas in our parish are just as important as green areas in other parishes.



Sir John Leale Avenue

3 TRAFFIC

In this Parish we have plenty of experience of traffic. I am a car owner and I value the independence my car affords both to others and myself. I also walk and cycle and have a bus stop by my house. I would oppose any measure that attempts to engineer my choice of transport. I can make sensible choices on traveling around the Island without help from the States of Guernsey.

4 TRANSPORT LINKS

As I write this manifesto problems with the ferries are not resolved and the prosperity of the Island and welfare of Islanders depends on the security of transport links by sea and air. I would use my vote to support improvements to those services.



Longue Hougue Recycling Yard

5 WASTE MANAGEMENT

Elements of the strategy have disappeared and the full cost of household waste management and recycling has yet to be understood.

I am worried about the costs to householders. I do support recycling but I am disappointed that plans for a materials recovery centre at Longue Hougue and the processing of food waste are lost from the plan. We are told everything is progressing but with no firm decision on the destination of exported waste. This matter has to return to the Assembly for further direction.

Liquid waste is currently managed in ways that we can afford and I am not convinced this strategy needs to change unless new important evidence arises.

6 POPULATION

I support proposals to deal with managing population to give us confidence that we will not be swamped in terms of land use and services, but that we have sufficient workers to maintain the tax revenue. A 'cap' on population has advantages. I want our population policy to allow for a managed influx of working people and will always vote for the protection of Islanders' rights. I want the security of knowing my children and grandchildren and all those born here are able to move away and return to the Island, and that there is employment, housing, education and healthcare here for them.

I recognise that there is a balance to be maintained between the number of the working population and those whose working life is over, for services to be maintained. Flexibility in immigration will serve us best through the use of work permits.

7 HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

We know the costs of health and social care are rising and will continue to do so. I would accept as my responsibility as a Deputy the monitoring of value for money within what will be a growing need for services. As in the case of the maternity services, all significant areas of medical and social care need to be reviewed and reported on to the public. We need to know when the service is not as good as it might be and to be kept informed of progress towards improvement. There are gaps in social care and when I was elected by the community to be the first Political Champion for Disability I witnessed many of these issues, some of which four years on, have been ignored. It has been my privilege to work with politicians, civil servants and community members on the Disability Strategy that is beginning to influence the Bailiwick, but which needs adequate funding to be completed.

8 TAX STRATEGY

I am not convinced that the Island should 'borrow' to provide services or consolidate trading entity debts or to fund capital projects. I am disappointed that the last Assembly chose to create for us a debt to service. I am not in favour of GST but would rather extend the boundaries of Zero 10 and impose the discipline of firmly prioritised expenditure. The structural deficit has risen and receipts from general revenue are down. If we spend too much then the quality of services will decline and we will increase our individual tax burdens. I support value for money spending when we can afford to spend in the first place.

9 FLOOD DEFENCES

There is so much to be gained from a regenerated Bridge but there are some essentials to tackle first. These include flood defences, traffic and parking and the provision of services for increased residential development. If these concerns are satisfied then I would support the project wholeheartedly.

I want to see action on plans for sea defences rather than money wasted on experiments to rearrange routes through St. Peter Port.



St Sampson's Harbour

10 EMPLOYMENT

Our economic activity, which supports pensions and benefits, has to be focused on growth and development of small and large businesses including well-embedded industry such as finance, legal and regulatory activity. As well as introducing low footprint new ventures, it is important to support local small trade businesses by releasing premises and reducing the 'change of use' stranglehold. Self employed people and small employers need assistance not discouragement.

Government has a responsibility to support wealth creation at all levels and not make earning a living harder than it need be.

11 PENSIONS AND BENEFITS

The quality of life for many depends on pensions and for some benefits, rather than earned income. Younger working people do need a personal or a secondary pension scheme to fund their retirement. But for those receiving state pensions now, I am committed to maintaining state pensions and benefits so they are not raided or eroded in real terms by uncaring decisions of our Government. I will always vote to protect pensions and to help people on low and fixed incomes, but ongoing costs of the rent rebate and benefit merger must be clearly reported on.

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

I want the States Assembly to progress these matters in the next term -

- The prioritisation of the educational and life interests of all our children and young people because here lies all our futures
- Solid movement towards 'Freedom of Information'
- Island Wide Voting - or at least larger electoral district voting in the first instance
- The development of a Scrutiny Management Committee that functions with independence and rigour. I was previously a member of the Public Accounts Committee and worked on reports that if taken full notice of might have made financial procedures of the States less vulnerable in this current term
- Continued reform of the civil service. There is room for increased accountability and I want to be active in making that happen
- Changes not just to systems of appeals against administrative decisions but also to the wider availability of appeals against decisions of States Committees. No States Committee should hear appeals against it's own decisions
- Measures to positively influence the prosperity of the Island so that services may be maintained and improved
- Maintenance of national and international diplomatic activity to further our prosperity and develop business.
- The continued introduction of anti discrimination legislation and any measures to recognise diversity and promote social inclusion
- Respect for older peoples' interests with continuing opportunities for them to independently enjoy life and provision made to maintain them in dignity should they need help
- The wise and careful use of revenue. In the 2008 - 2012 Assembly there was a clear prioritisation process to support decision making and that needs to be reviewed and reapplied
- Continuing concern for our environment and sustainability of our Island
- Maintenance of a developed strategy to guide energy usage

IF ELECTED I WOULD SERVE YOU IN ANY POLITICAL ROLE THAT WOULD BENEFIT THE PARISH AND THE ISLAND

By now you will be aware that my particular interests are

- The maintenance of educational opportunities and standards
- The well-being of working families and the fair distribution of pensions and benefits
- The rigorous scrutiny of expenditure

If you share with me the conviction that decisions of the States Assembly should improve our quality of life and preserve the legacy we leave to our children then

**Please vote for me on
April 27th 2016.
Thank you**