



Simon Peter James Vermeulen

Parish: Castel
Experience: New candidate
Party: The Guernsey Party

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- We need to stop ruining our island and focus on the growth of the economy.
- Guernsey needs to thrive, be built back better post Covid-19 and provide the best possible services and education for all.
- This needs to be underpinned with one of the strongest economies in the world.
- A thriving economy will mean lower taxes and the ability to pay back our borrowing. No GST.

Personal statement

I want to secure Guernsey's future for generations to come. I'm an experienced businessman with a proven track record, a father, grandfather and husband. I have a vested interest in future proofing Guernsey's success.

I am a Guernseyman who is passionate about our island and its people. I want to use my skills and experience to set Guernsey on the right course and make the island's economy prosper for all.

Manifesto

Here are my thoughts on a few key issues, please visit www.simonv.gg for a much more detailed manifesto (including my views on Sustainability, Connectivity, Infrastructure, Health, Population and Governance).

The Economy

- No to GST. We need to keep our taxes low and be internationally competitive;

- We need to reduce the costs of Government without reducing front line services;
- I fully support the Revive & Thrive Strategy but believe we need to make sure we develop and fulfil the action plans swiftly to enable economic growth to happen;
- I would support suspending the internal capital expenditure processes and place the process with individual committees, under direct or delegated control from Policy & Resources with specified budget limits;
- This is the right time to review current commitments which carry significant capital costs and re-evaluate the priorities or those that need to be withdrawn from. We need to focus on investment which provides significant, measurable social or financial benefit;
- Review the duty on alcohol brewing and distillation to encourage local production and exports. Support local;
- Review the effectiveness of the GFSC as the regulator;

- Our digital connectivity is vital, and we need to put in place the best digital infrastructure possible.

Education

- Guernsey school children deserve to have clarity and certainty on what the future holds for education and this should be a priority for the new States;
- Everyone deserves access to the best education;
- If we were debating a two versus three school model, I would support a three-school model plus a sixth form college;
- I would like to see the re-introduction in some form of bursaries for academic excellence given on a means tested basis to States educated children to attend the Colleges;
- I believe the College of FE is of vital importance to the local economy and is more important than ever as we are facing the largest skills gap in generations. The redevelopment of CoFE should be treated as a priority.

Tourism

- The value of the Tourism sector needs to be properly recognised and should be at the heart of Government. The sector alone employs 2,000 people and retail, a supporting sector employs 4,000 islanders. These jobs need to be protected;
- Guernsey needs sustainable, reliable and affordable air and sea links;
- We need to build on the recently approved Sports Strategy and develop a coordinated strategy for the music and arts which could further enhance Guernsey as an attractive destination. Sports tourism is a massively undervalued area;
- We need to improve our offering as a destination, and I would support an enterprise grant scheme to support start-ups and entrepreneurs wanting to create new attractions or services aimed at the visitor economy.

Traffic

- We need to halt the removal of parking spaces in Town. We need to increase parking facilities to help St Peter Port thrive;
- I would support extending all parking to five or ten hour spaces, thus encouraging people to spend longer in Town and make it a more attractive location for businesses to base their businesses;

- A multi storey carpark needs to be considered, albeit sympathetic to the surroundings to provide additional parking;
- We need to encourage islanders to transition to electric vehicles and provide the supporting infrastructure and potential grants for low-emission cars;
- Reduce fuel duty to make it competitive with the UK and Jersey.

Housing

- Introduce new schemes to help first time buyers and increase the affordability of property ownership including a review into re-introducing a "help to buy" deposit loan scheme.

Infrastructure

- The island needs to invest in its island infrastructure in particular at the Harbour and Airport;
- Consideration needs to be given to investing in infrastructure funds to fund capital projects;
- There needs to be a greater focus on the use of Public Private Partnerships;
- Guernsey needs to protect its existing infrastructure and maintenance needs to happen in a timely manner. Fix it and fix it fast. The steps at the Bathing Pools, the Fermain sea wall, the Japanese pagoda at Saumarez Park - just a few examples;
- Island wide fibre broadband connectivity by 2025.

Regulation

- Guernsey needs as few constraints as possible to thrive and I advocate as little regulation as possible. The island has a habit of creating unnecessary legislation which is both time consuming to produce and costly to execute. We need to think before we legislate.

I'm an independent candidate and have grouped with other independents in The Guernsey Party.

It's aim is to create a political organisation which provides a rallying point for Deputies and candidates who are minded to deliver cooperative, reliable and cohesive government at the centre-right of Guernsey politics, focused on delivering value for money, a thriving economy and a high standard of living and quality of life for all residents of the Bailiwick.

Let's #GetGuernseyGoing - Vote Vermeulen. Please do get in touch, to have a chat.