



Isle of Man Friends of the Earth  
Caarjyn y Theill Ellan Vannin

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Dear Candidate,

As you are standing in the elections in September the group would be grateful if you would find the time to let us have your considered views on a range of environmental issues.

We realise that your time is at a premium but if you could identify the **practical steps** you would take in each of the four areas below, we'd be very grateful. We hope that the range of questions will be of assistance.

It is our intention that the views of yourself and other candidates will feature on the Isle of Man Friends of the Earth website and assist people in making their choices.

### 1. Renewable Energy.

Friends of the Earth believes that the Isle of Man government should develop a renewable energy strategy to enable it to meet its climate change obligations and secure its economic resilience in the face of rising oil and gas prices.

What do you see as the chief challenges for the island in this regard and how could these be overcome?

*Cost. There is of course some resistance to wind farms despoiling our countryside, but the main issue is going to be "how will renewable energy be financed?" With inflation at almost 7%, and even the more optimistic assessments meaning it will add 1p to a unit of electricity (from 16p to 17p), would mean another increase of over 6%. Whilst the long term case is clear, fossil fuels are going to get more expensive as they run out, this is not the right time to be adding to people's fuel bills.*

Tynwald voted in favour of having 15% of Manx electricity generated by renewable sources by 2015. Most of this would depend on 10 or 12 turbines of on-shore wind generation. How can this target be put back on track?

*As I understand it, Government are already in talks with companies who have the rights to offshore fields. This is more expensive, technology, but represents something Government can support without direct financial investment at this time.*

How could we further encourage the development of a 'clean tech' sector on the island?

*Clean tech is having its own strategy developed under Brian Donegan at the Department of Economic Development. In addition it is being integrated into other strands of business, so there are greater opportunities to combine it with financial expertise to attract 'green funding' whether through funds, captive insurance or other cross-selling opportunities for the Isle of Man.*

How could the government encourage and promote improved home insulation and energy saving?

*The Manx Government must have done more than any other country to promote cavity wall insulation and energy saving. It has provided grants and undertaken a massive programme on its entire public sector housing stock. This are big achievements that the Island should be proud of.*

### 2. Waste management.

Friends of the Earth believes that levels of resource-consumption, world-wide are at an unsustainable level.

What can be done to reduce the amount of waste generated on the Isle of Man and how should the waste be best tackled?

*Hard to answer in a few lines! Food and green waste is everything from buying what you need to ensuring scraps are composted. Packaging waste is somewhat outside of our control, but the EU is making moves to regulate this which will help. As I understand it, these are the biggest 2 forms of waste product produced by our community.*

Would you like to see the policy of kerbside recycling adopted more widely?

Yes.

How can the public be best encouraged to recycle and reuse?

*Government (local and national) needs to make it easy. Kerbside is the ultimate expression of this, but even more recycling bins help. The wider the variety of recyclable material collected and recycled the better. However, we should only do this if material is genuinely being recycled. It may actually be greener overall to burn some things than have them exported from the Island and shipped all over the world!*

Should waste management be centrally controlled?

*I am indifferent as to where and how it is controlled, provided it produces the best overall result.*

Should we follow Ireland's lead and impose a tax on plastic bags?

*This is something that certainly requires looking into. My only slight concern is that with the retail sector under immense pressure to even survive, should we be burdening them with collecting more tax for government and the paperwork that goes with that?*

### **3. Transport**

The production and use of vehicles is responsible for a huge proportion of 'greenhouse gas' emissions.

Friends of the Earth believes that climate-change reduction agreements and the rising price of fossil fuels will mean that transportation must become more energy-efficient and sustainable.

What are the implications for vehicle emissions & taxation, public transport, cycle networks, or the current level of air travel? What actions would you support to bring about the necessary changes?

*I suspect that you will know more about this than I do. Cycle networks should be integrated where possible into our existing landscape, but do not justify expensive redevelopment as our climate and topography does not readily lend itself to a daily mass commute by bicycle. On a personal level, I am an avid user of public transport, I do not own a car and do a lot of walking. Occasional taxis are still cheaper than car ownership when you do the maths!*

#### **4. Biodiversity and the natural world**

Friends of the Earth believes that the Isle of Man must play its part in reducing world-wide loss of biological diversity.

What current initiatives and designations (e.g. ASSIs, marine reserves, financial support of the Manx Wildlife Trust) meet with your greatest approval, and how should these be improved upon?

Does the current system of Environmental Impact Assessments give sufficient weight to the value of wildlife and the natural world for its own sake, as opposed to its utility value for humans?

How could all government departments be required to consider their impact on biodiversity, and ensure that their actions are positive?

*I must confess that I am not au fait with the work government has been doing to preserve biodiversity.*

Many thanks for your time and best regards

Philip Corlett (Co-ordinator of IoM FoE)