

# Rhian Tooley



Dear St. Peter Port South Voter

I am standing as one of your representatives because I want to offer my experience, knowledge and passion to our island in confronting the challenging situation we face over the next four years.

Please vote Rhian Tooley on April 27th.



## About Me

I am a qualified teacher and have taught in both private and state schools. I have worked in the third sector as a Youth and Children's Worker and Advisor and I have also been employed as Human Resources Manager for multinational retail companies.

I have been married to Jonathan for almost 12 years and we have five children who are, or in the case of the youngest, soon will be, pupils at Vauvert Primary School in St. Peter Port South.

### Links to the local community

- \* PTFA Committee member at Vauvert Primary School
- \* Group Secretary of 1st Guernsey (Victoria) Sea Scouts at St Stephen's
- \* Group Secretary for the Guernsey Lilies WI at St Joseph's
- \* Run Guernsey Mums of Multiples, the only multiple birth support group on the island



## The Economy, Taxation and Public Spending

I strongly believe that there needs to be increased scrutiny around safeguarding the public purse, we need to make sure that the public has confidence that the mistakes of the past cannot be repeated. Control of States expenditure must be rigorous.

Careful consideration must be given to broadening the tax base.

I am not in favour of any method which places an additional burden on the pocket of the man in the street. GST is a regressive tax which always has it's greatest impact on those who can least afford it, it adds an additional burden onto small business owners, forcing them to become revenue collectors and has the potential to encourage anti-social behavior amongst those who find their lives easier operating in the black market economy. I would oppose such a tax.



At a time when costs of social and health care are rising and our ageing demographic means that this will increasingly be the case, we need to look at ways in which we can control costs wherever possible, while also broadening tax revenue.

While recognising that (by International standards) our unemployment rates are low, we should do more to encourage those on benefits and out of work into employment so that they can make a financial contribution rather than be a drain on resources, and we need to ensure that our benefits system does not have unintended consequences in encouraging people to stay on benefits or out of the workforce. We may need to means test some benefits such as family allowance, perhaps capping it for those on higher incomes but I would not be in favour of means testing pensions. We must do whatever we can to simplify the system and reduce the cost of collection, which might include streamlining by combining income tax and social insurance contributions.

We must not waste the hard earned money which is paid in taxes. Guernsey people must receive the value for money services they deserve in return for the taxes they pay.

If elected I would oppose any increase in the level of government borrowing and would have opposed the issue of the bond. We must not leave a legacy of debt and unsustainable interest payments for our children and grandchildren.

## Education

At such a challenging time for education in Guernsey, we need a period of stability to allow teachers and all island children to adjust.

I support the ending of the 11 Plus as I have long believed that the system serves only as a means of segregating our children and fails too many of them. However I recognise that some form of selection, through, for example, setting, is an appropriate and necessary means to enable all of our children to reach and fulfil their potential. All of the evidence suggests that the 11 Plus is simply not the best we can offer and is long overdue for change. Selection should be undertaken on a subject by subject basis, as is successful in our primary schools giving every child the opportunity to develop in their own time and to shine in their own area of expertise.

In addition we must work to more fully include the children and young people who study in our special schools, Le Rondin, Le Murier and Les Voies in our thinking and understanding of education in Guernsey. A truly inclusive society begins with an understanding of the abilities and needs of all of its members.

The “Every Child Our Future” initiative has been a huge success and we must build on this. We need to broaden the pathways into lifelong learning. Many who have left full time education with few qualifications come later to an understanding of the opportunities that lie ahead if they undertake further study. We need to increase access to academic and vocational courses so that the people of Guernsey can achieve their goals and increase their quality of life and employment potential. Partnerships with learning providers, increased access to study rooms and access courses will all support this.

## Community Support

I will encourage an ever greater sense of community starting with St. Peter Port South and extending across the island. There should be more support for teenagers and young adults of all abilities and from all backgrounds. We need to create opportunities for a wider range of positive social activities and open up access to sport and leisure pursuits for all.

We need to recognise the work done by unpaid carers in our society. These people are often isolated and overlooked despite providing a service which might otherwise fall on the States, adding to the cost of health and social care. It is crucial therefore that we support them and I will enter into dialogue about how we can best do this.



## Building Business in Guernsey

We need to unlock potential and harness local entrepreneurial talent and skills to the fullest extent to develop new ideas and nurture fledgling businesses to thrive on Guernsey in order to provide local opportunities for our children. While of course we need to continue support for the financial industry which has been the bedrock of our economic growth and prosperity for many years, we must ensure that we are making it easier to build businesses to expand and diversify our economy. We can build on the work of initiatives such as StartUp.gg and Digital Greenhouse and look to how we can build our economy in existing sectors such as tourism, growers and creative industries.



## Employment and Social Security

We can be proud of Guernsey's low unemployment rates but we can always strive for better. I believe we should reward companies who have family friendly policies which allow flexibility and support their employees when they need to take time to care for dependents, whether they be of an older or younger generation. This is particularly true at a time when our demographic is clearly ageing. We need to reward companies who help the long term unemployed back into work and those who make it possible for people with disabilities to enter the workforce and offer support to them once there.



## Environment

Improvements have been made to our public transport system and the new Bus App should further enhance passenger experience. We need to continue the work that has been started and build on it to ensure that we have a resource which is a shining example of what is possible in the 21st Century and which will encourage people to use it, to ease pressure on our roads and parking and reduce vehicle emissions.

It is important that we continue to encourage recycling and we should work with retailers and manufacturers to reduce the waste they produce to minimal levels.



## Island Wide Voting

I am strongly in favour of island Wide Voting. I think we would need to carefully consider models as we would not want the method to be unwieldy, and the current system has some benefits such as the link between the Electorate and their representatives. I believe that we need to have a properly conducted, informed and binding referendum to determine the true will of our community in respect of this important issue that goes to the heart of our democracy.

## Health and Social Care

We need to be certain that financial pressure is not a bar to timely essential healthcare. The current tendency of some islanders to delay accessing a GP due to cost should be better understood against the backdrop of subsequent expenditure arising from late presentation to a GP. We know, and it is inevitable that, with the ever ageing population the cost of long term care and nursing will rise in the near future. We must address this challenge, with care, humanity and responsibility.

## External Transport Links

It is very clear to me that we need a reliable means of travel to and from the island. We need to know that we can make plans for essential hospital appointments, business meetings, sporting events, holidays and to meet friends and family and know that travel will happen as planned, except in exceptional circumstances. Businesses that rely on tourism need to know that travel problems will not have a negative impact on them.



An independent review of island transport links is both urgent and essential. We should consider whether it is time for us to look for additional service providers to enhance transport options. We need to ensure that The States of Guernsey is doing all that it can to ensure the reliability, security and quality of our transport links.

Travel between the Channel Islands needs to be better supported to promote inter-island links. Transport links with the UK also need to be bolstered to ensure that islanders can access UK services and commerce as required and that visitors can reach us. The service we currently receive is expensive, restricted and often falls well below what travellers feel they have a right to expect.

I am prepared to consider, if necessary, a radical approach to addressing our crucial and strategic links with the United Kingdom.

If you would like to arrange to meet me to talk over these matters or any other thoughts please do not hesitate to contact me



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