

HOUSE OF KEYS
GENERAL ELECTION
SEPTEMBER 24th 2026

VOTE

STEVE CROWTHER

FOR ARBORY, CASTLETOWN & MALEW

'Time to deliver real change for our communities.'

Dear Constituent

The Isle of Man has the assets, skills and character to build a stronger economy and stronger communities. What we need now is delivery.

I am standing because many of the issues raised in my 2016 and 2021 manifestos remain unresolved: economic diversification, business licensing, failing infrastructure, affordable homes, healthcare, farming, security and reliable travel.

The Island responded well during Covid and our relative isolation presented opportunities. Yet too much government effort since then has been absorbed by **costly processes** and tick-box policies, while the everyday concerns of residents and businesses have grown. Our **reserves have been placed under pressure**, the cost of living has risen, **while key infrastructure has stalled**.

These problems are especially visible in our constituency. Castletown, Ballasalla, Colby and the surrounding communities have **enormous potential**, but we are losing facilities, investment and confidence. **Young people struggle to see a secure future here**, while many **senior residents feel increasingly isolated** as banking, post offices and face-to-face services disappear.

It is vital that we stem the loss of young people leaving the Island by creating **practical and affordable** opportunities in skills, employment and housing. I want a government that works with communities and businesses, not against them: a government that sets clear practical priorities, controls costs and follows projects through. The following pages will demonstrate how that can be achieved.

*'With the right infrastructure corrected our constituency
can be a key driver of a new Isle of Man economy.'*



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ABOUT ME

I am married, with a daughter and live in Castletown. My parents moved to the Isle of Man in 1973. We lived in Colby and I attended Castle Rushen High School before studying architecture in Manchester and qualifying in 1987.

After working for many years as an architect in Manchester and Asia, I returned to Castletown with my family in 2003. My career has given me practical experience of major development, international business and public-private partnerships.

My father, Dr Crowther, helped establish a group medical practice in the South. My mother, Nadene Crowther, was a driving force in the creation of Hospice Isle of Man and was awarded an MBE in 1995 and a Tynwald Honour in 2013. Public service and community responsibility have always been central to my family.

WHY I AM STANDING AGAIN

Our constituency needs a stronger voice at the centre of government, backed by practical experience and a clear plan.

In 2021 I highlighted the failure to deliver Castle Rushen High School and associated swimming pool, the regeneration of Castletown, Ballasalla village centre, the Ballasalla bypass connection, a strategic roads review, improvements to the airport and development of the Ronaldsway business parkway. Too little has moved forward.

Elsewhere on the Island, projects have advanced. Here, delays continue to hold back housing, jobs, investment and community confidence. Some private investment in Castletown is welcome, but it is not yet at the scale needed to unlock the area's full potential.

MY THREE LOCAL COMMITMENTS

1. **Deliver essential infrastructure.** I will press for affordable, practical solutions and clear timescales for the projects on which the South depends.
2. **Challenge Douglas-centred development.** Investment and opportunity which must be distributed more fairly across our Island.
3. **Represent the constituency at the highest level.** I will make the economic case for the South firmly and consistently at the heart of the next administration.

THE NATIONAL PRIORITIES

1. **Economy:** diversify our sources of income, rebuild confidence and stop the unsustainable depletion of reserves.
2. **Government finance:** generate income from the recently formed government property portfolio using land lease or sale if required.
3. **Inclusion:** retain face-to-face options for residents and businesses left behind by the digital transition. Put the heart back into our towns and villages.
4. **Resilience:** strengthen food production, education, healthcare, transport, energy and environmental protection. Ensure secure borders.
5. **Biosphere:** use our UNESCO status as the foundation of a credible long-term economic and environmental strategy.

The Biosphere is not simply a badge. Properly used, it can unite government policy, strengthen our international reputation and attract responsible investment. Growth and environmental responsibility are not opposites: with clear leadership, each can reinforce the other ensuring inward investment.

'I believe our constituency has all the ingredients to be a central powerhouse to the Isle of Man's economy while respecting the historic nature and beautiful local landscape.'

LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRAFFIC

Before we promise more development, we must resolve the roads, schools, parking and village infrastructure needed to support it.

The South needs a strategic transport review. The bottlenecks in Ballasalla and Castletown are not minor inconveniences; they affect investment, housing, business growth, safety and quality of life.

BALLASALLA AND THE BYPASS

1. Complete the missing **roundabout connection** between the bypass, Balthane and Ballasalla. Its absence restricts housing, business access and the regeneration of the village centre.
2. Use the completed road scheme to reshape the village respecting local stakeholders. Landscaping and safer walking routes could **reconnect Ballasalla** with its historic centre and the Silverburn.

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3. Plan for education capacity. Government-held land north of Ballasalla should be assessed as a possible site for a **primary school** capable of serving the growing population.
 4. Protect residents around Balthane. Businesses need effective access, while neighbouring homes need confidence that vehicle and pedestrian movements will be managed safely and efficiently.
 5. Reduce unnecessary traffic through **Ballabeg and Colby**. Completing the junction would remove journeys currently forced onto the A7 Western route.

CASTLETOWN

1. Develop a long-term approach to traffic management and parking with Castletown Commissioners, relevant government departments and local stakeholders. Any future proposals must be evidence-led and developed through meaningful consultation with residents, property owners, businesses and those who use the town.
2. Review Victoria Road and Alexandra Road early, before additional redirected traffic creates more serious congestion.
3. Deliver the long-promised **street refurbishment** of Arbory Street and Malew Street. Residents and traders have waited too long for work first proposed six years ago. Traders need to be able to plan.
4. Connect Castletown and Ballasalla safely. A practical cycle and walking link should form part of the wider road and landscape strategy.

JOBS, INVESTMENT AND HOUSING

The South should be a place where young people can build careers, afford homes and choose to remain on the Island.

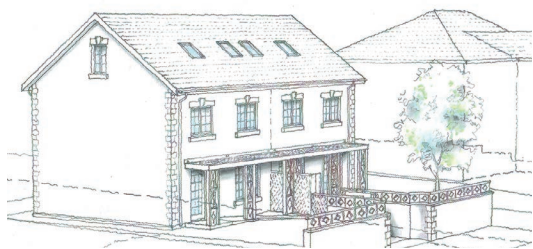
RONALDSWAY, BALTHANE AND MEDICAL INVESTMENT

Our constituency sits beside the national airport, yet for too long Ronaldsway has been treated mainly as a route to Douglas. The airport, Balthane and government land nearby, should form a strategic employment corridor – **a gateway to the South and the Island**.

A properly planned **technology and medical park** opposite the airport could attract high-skilled jobs and new income. We have a ready-made industry in residents travelling away for their own private treatment we can harness this potential with private medical facilities on-Island retaining part of that spending, also attracting visiting private patients, effectively medical tourism.

The trade-off is the benefit for our NHS, help with reciprocal training opportunities for Noble's Hospital and to re-achieve its **centre of excellence**. This would make the best staff recruitment more efficient.

Government does not always need to provide the capital. It can use long leases, appropriately priced land and carefully designed incentives to attract responsible private investment, while retaining control through clear agreements.



AFFORDABLE HOMES

Ballasalla has absorbed substantial development **without adequate infrastructure**. Castletown also needs new homes, particularly for younger residents and returning families. A proposed affordable eco-home model uses modular construction to significantly **lower the build cost** and with **minimal running costs**. If we add government-provided leasehold plots to reduce the initial price this could provide a **practical government roll out** that is effective. I feel my skills in this area can make an extra contribution.

Government should create a practical pilot aimed at **homes genuinely affordable to local first-time buyers**, with safeguards preventing immediate conversion into buy-to-let investments. Modular and modern construction can support this approach while creating work for Manx designers, suppliers and subcontractors.

We must also review the effect of homes bought purely as **large-scale investments** and then left vacant. Holiday accommodation for tourism is welcome, however policy should avoid **distorted ownership and inflated prices**. We must respect that any change made to this market must avoid damage to the **legitimate private housing market**.

CASTLE RUSHEN HIGH SCHOOL

The new Castle Rushen High School and pool have stalled for too long. The project needs significant intervention, a realistic brief and an assessment of modular or phased construction using local subcontractors. An education project of this importance cannot remain dependent on procurement arrangements that repeatedly fail to produce a deliverable tender. **This has gone on too long and must be resolved.**

RETAIL, CONNECTIVITY AND LOCAL ASSETS

Dormant retail sites in Castletown must be addressed through **firm negotiation** and, if necessary, stronger measures. Ballasalla and Colby also need viable centres with shops, services and meeting places. Mobile reception remains poor in parts of the South and reliable 4G must be secured before promises about 5G carry any meaning.

Public access to the countryside should remain safe and reasonable as rewilding schemes develop. We must also support the restoration and productive use of local assets, including the **Derbyhaven golf links**, wherever a sustainable partnership can be achieved.

St Marks also has never fully resolved the speed of traffic on the main road which needs to be addressed.

A STRONGER AND MORE DIVERSE ECONOMY

Economic growth is the foundation of better public services, affordable living and secure pensions.

The Island cannot continue drawing heavily on reserves without a convincing plan to replace lost income. We need a transparent short-, medium- and long-term strategy that restores confidence and creates new revenue rather than defaulting to higher taxes on ordinary residents or reducing pensions to our seniors.

SHORT TERM: RESTORE CONFIDENCE AND REMOVE BLOCKAGES

1. Review areas of uncontrolled or duplicated spending, including administration within Manx Care and costly environmental programmes, while protecting essential frontline services.
2. Simplify the process for small and medium-sized businesses. Enterprise, planning, environmental regulation, banking and finance must work as a **streamlined system** rather than sending applicants between departments.
3. Review whether targeted, **time-limited tax measures** could attract responsible capital and unlock funds for productive investment, with full safeguards and transparent evaluation. While not addressing all the cost overrun it indicates the direction we intend with government spending.

MEDIUM TERM: USE PUBLIC ASSETS STRATEGICALLY

1. Government's **land and property portfolio** must be managed as an economic asset. Long leases, selective disposals and development partnerships can release capital and support housing, education, healthcare and commercial projects. Every agreement must demonstrate value for money and retain appropriate public control where required.
2. We must also address the loss of control over core banking and telecommunications services. The Island needs reliable access, effective regulation and a clear understanding of how decisions made in other jurisdictions affect Manx customers and businesses. Creating a **sovereign fund or Manx bank** could be highly effective particularly if evolving from some of the capital described above.

LONG TERM: BUILD NEW INCOME STREAMS

1. Economic diversification should include technology, private healthcare, hydroponics and food production to example a few described elsewhere.



2. Specialist international registrations and other sectors where the Island can provide trusted administration.
3. The UNESCO Biosphere should underpin this strategy as evidence of long-term, ethical governance.
4. The Island already has high net worth residents capable of investing locally. To unlock that capital, government must project stable policy, competent delivery and well-defined opportunities. International investors will expect the same.

TAX, PENSIONS AND THE COST OF LIVING

1. Growth is the best defence against broad and punitive tax increases. New income should come from economic activity and innovation, not from undermining the Island's competitiveness or placing an unfair burden on working households.
2. The pension divide also needs attention. Many self-employed people, subcontractors and tenant farmers for example approach retirement with limited provision and no easy way to hand a viable business to the next generation.
3. Carefully designed incentives could help older workers transfer skills, build retirement security and create opportunities for younger people.
4. Protecting the pension triple lock ultimately depends on a stronger economy and we must protect both. I care passionately that our pensioners are protected.

ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Practical environmental policy should lower bills, improve resilience and protect the landscape that makes the Isle of Man special.



Our weather is becoming more extreme. We need homes, food systems, utilities and transport infrastructure capable of coping with greater pressure. The answer is not a single grand project, but a balanced programme of affordable measures tested against cost, reliability and environmental impact.

HOMES AND LOCAL ENERGY

1. Develop affordable homes to high energy standards, reducing the need for complex heating systems and lowering household bills.
2. Support practical upgrades to existing homes: appropriate insulation, draught reduction, better windows and small-scale heat-recovery ventilation new to the market.
3. Explore solar generation on homes, farms, industrial units and public buildings, supported by tariffs that reward useful contributions to the grid.
4. Examine hydrogen storage using surplus electricity, new interconnectors, wave power and emerging geothermal technology, subject to independent technical and environmental assessment.

5. Redirect a proportion of capital from unaffordable prestige schemes into grants and pilots that demonstrate what works at household and community scale.

I am deeply concerned by any rush towards large projects, including wind schemes, without transparent assessment of cost, security, landscape and marine impact. Our coast and countryside are among our greatest economic and cultural assets. Protecting them is central to the Biosphere commitment and therefore future investment. As an architect I am passionate with regards to our islands beauty.

RONALDSWAY AIRPORT

Ronaldsway is the Island's front door. Its entrance, building fabric and landscaping currently project the wrong image. Terminal energy use, cargo handling and passenger experience all require improvement, limitations at the airport are already affecting business performance.

A properly structured long-term joint partnership could bring specialist expertise and finance while government retains majority control and shares risk. My experience of airport and rail projects tells me that this model can work when the public interest, performance standards and accountability are written clearly into the agreement.

The airport improvements, nearby medical and technology development, the bypass and landscape corridor should form one coherent gateway strategy. This is vital for our constituency and the island's image.

LAW, ORDER AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

A safe Island requires secure borders, joined-up public services and early support for young people.

The Isle of Man's prosperity and location make it a target for organised crime, particularly drug networks and financial crime. I welcome improvements in drug detection and the establishment of the **Border Force**, however resources must keep pace with **changing threats**.

Pressures in neighbouring jurisdictions will affect our borders. Enforcement must combine visible checks with intelligence-led and covert capability. Identification for ferry passengers is reasonable, as it is for air travel, although identification alone will not deter sophisticated crime. It is important to have accountability from our security and police regarding progress on these matters. **We must give reassurance to our public.**

1. **Support a practical Manx identification card when the economy can sustain the investment and the privacy protections are clear.**
2. **Create stronger operational links between police, education, health and social care, particularly around drugs, exploitation and vulnerable young people.**
3. **Immigration arrangements operate within the Common Travel Area and are closely aligned with the UK. The Island must ensure it has the data and resources needed to understand population change, protect services and preserve our identity and culture.**
4. **Develop youth sport, arts and community events alongside modern online-safety education. Prevention and belonging are stronger long-term defences than criminalisation alone.**

Social media, isolation and substance misuse all connect with mental health. Government must address the source of harm earlier, rather than waiting until families require crisis intervention.

EDUCATION AND OPPORTUNITY

Education must prepare young people for changing careers while developing creativity, confidence and practical skills.

Artificial intelligence and new technology will reshape work and learning. The Isle of Man should be at the front of this change, using technology to transfer skills between generations and create opportunity – also recognising that importing every skill we need is neither resilient nor affordable.

APPRENTICESHIPS AND VOCATIONAL LEARNING

The minimum wage is important, but its interaction with apprenticeships, college placements and entry level hospitality jobs must be examined carefully during difficult economic periods. Too many routes into work have disappeared. Schools, employers and University College Isle of Man should provide more vocational experience before students leave compulsory education.

SCHOOLS WITH DISTINCTIVE STRENGTHS

1. Continue opportunities for sixth-form students to move between schools particularly those that have achieved centre of excellence.
2. Encourage schools to develop centres of excellence – building on strengths such as the arts and drama – and share those skills across the Island.
3. Judge education by more than examination results. Reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and give teachers space to develop creativity, confidence and problem solving critical to the future of our young in the world of technology.
4. Protect access to music, instruments, drama, sport and other activities that strengthen our culture and develop teamwork.

DIGITAL RESILIENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH

Young people need help navigating social media, digital isolation and online pressure. Team sport, drama, arts and properly chosen educational applications can build communication and resilience. This work must begin in primary school and early secondary years; prevention is more effective and humane than treating avoidable mental-health crises later.

A FUTURE-FACING COLLEGE

Government should be prepared to use its land creatively and consider partnerships for a modern college or skills campus that can also support conferences and summer activity. The precise location should follow evidence, but the principle is clear: release value from underused assets to fund education that serves future industries.

ENDING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Digital services should create choice and convenience, not fear, exclusion and longer journeys.

I support the expansion of online government services and fibre connectivity. Forcing every citizen however onto digital systems without adequate support is not inclusive. Older residents, people with disabilities and many small businesses have been **left isolated** by the loss of **banks, post offices, cash machines and accessible government contact**. Many are travelling large distances for simple resources, which is environmentally unacceptable and stressful.

COMMUNITY SERVICE HUBS

I propose local hubs built around an expanded Isle of Man Post Office role. Banks, government services and community organisations could share secure, accessible facilities at modest cost. Ballasalla, Castletown and other larger towns and villages should be considered first. Different banks can use facilities in rotation.

1. **Post Office and banking:** secure counters, paying-in facilities and private consultation booths, with banks attending in rotation.
2. **Guaranteed access to cash:** a reliable cash machine and protection for residents who need to pay with cash.
3. **Paper remains available:** a right to use paper forms and receive paper documentation, using AI and scanning to read documents.
4. **Practical advice:** help with online security, government applications and access to local services.
5. **Community partners:** space for organisations such as Age Concern, Crossroads and local groups where appropriate.

Comparable postal-banking hub models in the UK show that shared facilities can work. They support not only older residents but also traders who need to bank cash or cheques and customers worried about online fraud.

If the Post Office and major banks will not lead, government should examine delivery through local authorities and legislation. Technology should broaden access, but a modern society must preserve a safe human route for those who need it. We cannot isolate our senior generation any further, **this is causing real distress**.



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

We need firmer control of health spending, less duplicated administration and better care closer to home.

Manx Care must provide clearer reporting and stronger accountability to ministers and the public. Simply abolishing it may sound decisive, but a major structural change would carry cost, disruption and a long recovery period. Patients should not pay the price for another poorly managed transition.

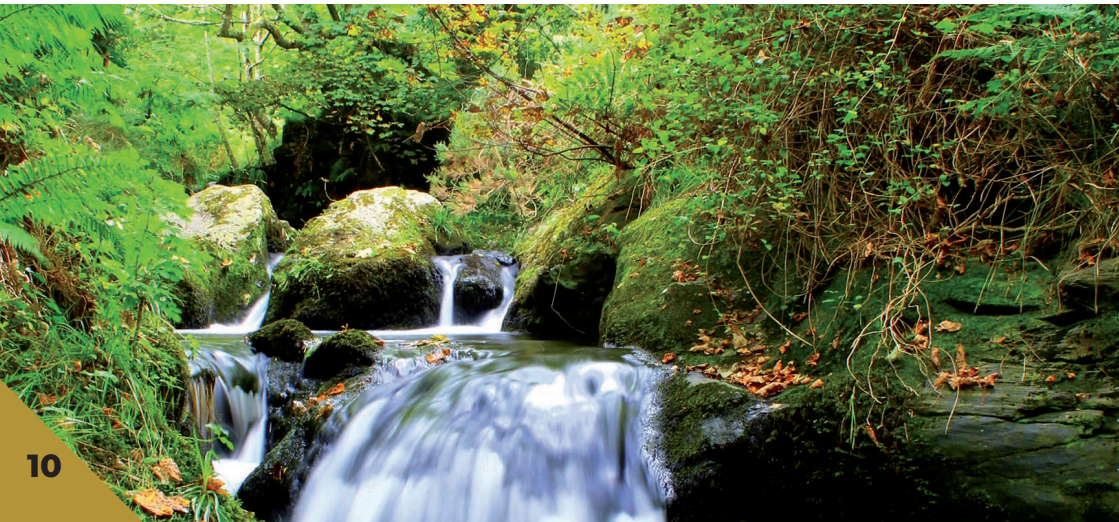
The priority is rapid improvement based on evidence:

1. Use independent expertise, including appropriate input from private medical providers mentioned, to identify duplicated management and streamline decision making.
2. Develop more treatment capacity on-Island where it is safe, clinically justified and less expensive than sending patients away.
3. Use partnerships with new medical facilities to expand training and rebuild **Noble's Hospital as a centre of excellence.**
4. Integrate health and social care more effectively so that charities are not continually filling gaps caused by fragmented government services.
5. Prepare for an ageing population through dementia planning, falls prevention, rehabilitation and support that helps people remain independent.

The new falls service is a welcome example of prevention, but this approach should be expanded. Early intervention improves lives and can avoid far greater costs later.

Mental-health services remain essential, but education, sport, community connection and early referral must become a stronger part of prevention.

While many of these proposals would save money long term, the prevention work and social care need financial input, which can only be achieved by a strong economy, everything outlined earlier.



TOURISM, HERITAGE AND LEISURE

Our Biosphere, heritage and culture should generate pride, year-round activity and sustainable income.

Investment by Manx National Heritage and a new private hotel and restaurant projects are helping to revitalise Castletown. They must be supported by progress on retail sites, public space, transport and parking. Ballasalla also has the ingredients for a revitalised village centre linked to its historic river and walkways.

The UNESCO Biosphere accreditation offers a distinctive international identity, yet the link between tourism, heritage, business and DEFA remains too weak. We should use the **Biosphere** to tell one confident story about our landscape, culture, food and quality of life.

PRIORITIES

1. Require the Department of Infrastructure to work closely with TravelWatch and passenger groups to improve the reliability and efficiency of sea and air services.
2. Move the glamping strategy forward and expand well-run festivals celebrating Manx music, food, sport and culture.
3. Improve affordable connections between ports, the airport, accommodation and attractions, and secure better value from the Liverpool ferry terminal.
4. Work with hospitality businesses to improve training, careers and service standards.
5. Consider credible independent accommodation accreditation so visitors can compare facilities with confidence.

Tourism depends on the same essentials as community life: attractive town centres, reliable travel, good food, accessible countryside, strong heritage and confident local businesses. Investment in these areas serves residents and visitors together.

AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL RESILIENCE

A strong farming, aquaculture and food sector is essential to our economy, identity and security.

Food production complements tourism supports rural employment and makes the Island more resilient. After the early success of the Food Matters strategy, momentum has been lost. The next administration must rebuild a practical partnership with producers, processors, retailers and hospitality businesses.

1. Make environmental support workable. The Agricultural and Environment Scheme must serve tenant farmers as well as landowners, with simpler applications, timely decisions and less bureaucracy.

2. Secure the future of the meat plant. It remains central to food security but requires stronger commercial management, promotion and appropriate private investment.
3. Revive Food Matters. Manx produce needs coordinated marketing, procurement and routes into hotels, restaurants, schools and public services.
4. Support smaller and tenant farmers. Policy must address succession, access to land, retirement security and the transfer of viable businesses to younger farmers.
5. Encourage new production. Hydroponics, protected growing, aquaculture and other appropriate technologies can reduce imports and create skilled work.



A good illustration of hydroponics are extensively exemplified in Holland. Using solar panels fixed to agricultural buildings in the Isle of Man, would allow for the high-energy at low-cost, required for our own hydroponic agricultural industry. We could effectively develop a cooperative business across the island providing a significant increase

in perishable foods for our island, while providing potential income for our smaller farms. The hydroponics could be grown in the new hurricane proof poly tunnel, an example of which I have recently completed at the hospice.

BETTER GOVERNANCE

The Island needs joined-up leadership, clear accountability and representatives prepared to see the whole picture.

Democratic government is being challenged around the world. The Isle of Man, with one of the world's oldest continuous parliaments, a strong culture and an exceptional environment, has an opportunity to demonstrate a more confident and effective approach.

The Lisvane Review identified weaknesses in our system before the previous administration. Central to reform is a genuinely joined-up government. Friction and contradiction between departments delay projects, repel investment and frustrate residents.

UNESCO Biosphere status can provide a unifying long-term framework. It expresses the balance we need: a productive economy, thriving communities and responsible care for our environment. Used properly, it can strengthen government decisions and reassure ethical investors that the Island has a clear sense of direction.

‘Practical government focused on our economy and communities.’

WHY VOTE STEVE CROWTHER?

- **A strong voice for delivery:** I will press for the road, school, airport and community infrastructure our constituency has been promised.
- **A practical economic plan:** I will pursue short-, medium- and long-term action using public assets intelligently and developing new income streams.
- **Affordable homes and skills:** my professional experience can help turn modern, efficient first-time buyer homes into a deliverable programme.
- **Loss of Post Office & banking:** I will challenge digital exclusion with practical solutions and campaign to restore accessible banking, postal and advice services to our communities.
- **Control of living costs:** energy, food, housing, transport and access to services must be treated as one practical challenge.
- **Better health and social care:** stronger oversight, streamlined administration, prevention and more appropriate treatment closer to home.
- **A secure and resilient Island:** secure borders, joined-up services, local skills, food security and support for young people.
- **A clear long-term ethical vision:** put our UNESCO Biosphere status at the heart of responsible investment, tourism and government decision making.



HOUSE OF KEYS GENERAL ELECTION

THURSDAY 24th SEPTEMBER 2026

VOTE 

STEVE CROWTHER

FOR ARBORY, CASTLETOWN & MALEW



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