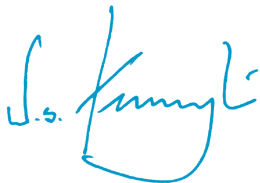


Fifth - We live in an increasingly technical, complex and fast moving world. We draw our representatives from a pool of some twelve hundred people, few of whom are prepared to stand for election. This means we cannot have experts on all matters on the States. One of the first steps in being able to move forward successfully is realising when one does not know enough about a subject to make an informed decision. When one comes to that realisation one consults an expert, one does not try to bodge it oneself. If you are ill you go to a doctor, if your car breaks down you go to a garage, etc. Fortunately we have States members who recognise their limitations, unlike some of their detractors.

In conclusion the message I want to convey is this.

- The States is democratically healthy, and acting according to law and established procedure.
- You, the people, have a dedicated group of representatives working hard on your behalf. Engage with them positively to assist them in their work for you.
- We have major issues facing our Island, and tough decisions to make. We have some solutions and need more.
- We need people to come forward and help implement what solutions we have, and put forward additional ones. Stand for the States.

Yours sincerely



W S Trought
President, States of Alderney

Please address any comments to the President's Office:-
PO Box 1001, Island Hall, Royal Connaught Square, Alderney GY9 3AA
Tel: 01481 822060, Email: president.secretary@gov.gg



PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

March 2014

Dear Reader

After the by-election in April we should once again have a full complement of States members, and I think the time is right to bring your attention to some matters affecting our home, Alderney. Some are obvious, some a little more obscure. It is a reflection of our times that this message needs to be stated. People are rightly concerned about our future: the world we knew prior to 2008 is not going to return soon. We, as many others, have some difficult decisions to make. Some argue that our size is against us. I would argue that this can be an advantage as we do not need as big a result as larger jurisdictions in order to turn us around in a successful direction.

First - We live in one of the most democratic places in the world. Indeed a previous Solicitor-General OBE QC of three Crown dependencies, described Alderney as the "most open democratically functioning constitution in which he had worked" (see Sir Noman Browse's letter to the Alderney Press issue 123). This means that people are voted in to represent you from across all sections of our island, and just as some of you will hold different views on matters so will States members. This is normal and healthy. I believe all individual States members have equal rights to express their views within the established custom and procedures of the States. I have heard suggestions that matters have not always 'been carried out according to procedures or in a correct manner.' I can assure you that this is not the case. Whilst individuals may not agree with some of the results, at all times decisions made in the States have been made within the law and procedures in place at the time, in accordance with guidance from the Law Officers where appropriate.

Second - This leads to the elections due in April and November. I would urge all of you to use your vote in the upcoming elections. I would also urge those interested in the Island to consider standing for the States. It is becoming increasingly uncommon for people to put themselves forward for public service, which is detrimental to our community. It can be a rewarding position when the hard work, dedication and selflessness of those working for the benefit of all on the Island comes to fruition. It can be a thankless task, particularly when those who think they know better continually criticise, often negatively, on occasion viciously and personally, those working on their behalf.

Times are difficult, solutions are not easy, but I do know the Island has a better chance of pulling through more successfully if everyone works together. States members will have differing opinions, but as long as they can reach a majority decision on the matters being decided they can take us forward. Some of you will have differing opinions on certain issues, but I urge you to support the people who are doing their best for you. It does not mean you have to agree with them, but recognise what they are doing selflessly for the Island. Pointless personal or negative criticism will hamper the Island by discouraging people from standing.

Third - What is the way forward? Many of you will have your own ideas and priorities. Your representatives have for the first time in March last year unanimously agreed to a strategic plan to try and lift the island out of this trough (see minutes P&F 25th March 2013). To give you an overview of the work currently being undertaken by the States on the Strategic Plan please see the latest report found at www.alderney.gov.gg (Government and Administration, "*States of Alderney Strategic Plan 2014 (V4 March)*"). The CEO would be pleased to discuss this further with any interested parties. It is plain that the main issues to be resolved are depopulation, and its attendant consequences, and transport links to assist in resolving them. They are interlinked. Unless the Island subsidises transport links a commercially viable case will have to be made in order for new ones to be introduced, or possibly existing ones continued. In order to have money to spend we must introduce new revenue streams. This is something else that is being worked on by your States members. Hopefully you should see some results from this work shortly. If we are to be prosperous in the future decisions must be taken which are bold and innovative, and the States must be resolute in seeing them through. This will necessitate change which will not necessarily be popular with everyone. The choices are there: we successfully manage change and move forward to a brighter future, or we do not change and will stagnate.

Some changes are already taking place. As the Crown Dependencies are being encouraged to establish their own identity, for the first time Alderney is engaging regularly, directly and vigorously with several UK government ministries, such as the Ministry of Justice, Home Office, Department of Energy and Climate Change, the Treasury and others. This is in order to promote some of the proposed new revenue streams, and assist in building our identity. You may not be aware, for example, that now the UK government has a team of only four people responsible for ALL the Crown Dependencies, as a result we have to do more ourselves. Much work is also being done to increase Alderney's profile. I have established and am in regular contact with leading business and political leaders, this in order to garner support for some of our new initiatives, and to provide a pool of excellence to which our States can refer for advice and help.

There are other areas where the States are making innovative progress. The thorny issue of re-organisation of States works has been grasped. The pension deficit has been tackled here, unlike in many other jurisdictions. A complete review of the way work is done by the Building and Development Committee and Planning Department is taking place, in order to produce a more transparent and user-friendly service. In addition, if renewable energy on a successful scale is to happen only the States can carry out many of the negotiations that are necessary at Government level. These include agreements with France, French government entities, UK government, OFGEM, etc., all of which are work streams which hitherto were not Alderney's to action. Our States members also need support in many of their new business initiatives. All these activities create extra work, and due to inherent changes the role of the CEO has changed radically from that of the old position of Clerk of the States.

Fourth - Engagement with you, the public. Times are changing, and understandably there are members of the public calling for greater engagement with, and transparency from, our States. Progress is being made. More remains to be done. Recently Hansard has been introduced and press releases are issued after internal meetings. Whilst, in the opinion of some, States press releases may appear to be of the glass half full variety there are plenty of people willing to take them to task and present the glass half empty version, prompting healthy debate. Further ideas to improve communications are under consideration.