

Green hustings, Durrell

Answers to questions from Nigel Jones, St Brelade

I am standing for election as part of Reform Jersey. The answers that follow are my own answers to your questions. They not Reform Jersey policies or agreed manifesto statements.

My stance/opinion on climate change

Climate change represents the biggest challenge to society for a very long time. It will require changes to almost everything we do. It is vitally important that we manage these changes carefully to ensure a *just transition*, where nobody is left out or unfairly suffers.

Jersey's role/current commitment to tackling it

Since we declared a climate emergency in May 2019, we have had successive reports, but very little action. It concerns me that the latest plan seems to be a more watered down version of what we have seen before. 'Paris' commitments are inadequate in my opinion, and our plans barely meet those requirements. Without serious and immediate effort from every group of 100,000 people in wealthy societies, wherever we may live, we are imposing irreversible and unbelievable harm on millions of people here, in the Global South, and onto countless species, ecologies and habitats around the world.

My biggest environmental or sustainability-related political goal in the next four years

I want to see a comprehensive and just package of measures, from top to bottom and end to end of our Island life, to reduce the environmental harm that we will do, starting now and for at least the next fifty years. At the same time, we need to introduce all kinds of regeneration, protection and enhancement programs to protect and provide better chances for our wildlife – at sea, in fresh water, on land and in the air.

Priority areas for decarbonising within St Brelade

These are the similar to within every parish. We need a comprehensive package of measures to encourage property owners to increase the insulation of buildings, to switch from oil, gas and coal heating and cooking to electric, to reduce motor traffic on the roads, encourage active travel, make the buses more frequent and less expensive, and to ensure that the remaining road traffic is electric. We need to establish more pollinator patches, and also all kinds of other protected wildlife areas. We need to increase the amount of fresh drinking water available to wildlife by re-establishing more streams back onto the surface, and allowing them to form wetlands where they need to. We need to protect more marine areas from trawling, bottom dredging and other ecologically harmful practices as well as give more areas full no-take protection, as in Portelet Bay.

My stance on Jersey's current energy supply

While I would prefer not to have a huge nuclear facility on a nearby coast, and I don't like the ecological harm that comes with tidal barrages and dams, these are what we have, in France. The shorter-term answer, apart from looking carefully at careful and responsible use of all electric power, is probably offshore wind generation. This is proven and available technology. It has a nice spin-off that we get a free, small, marine exclusion zone around every turbine and some of the other infrastructure. One day, we may have access to realistic tidal-stream, wave, or tidal rise-and-fall generation technology, but these are all still at experimental stages, and currently suffer from serious reliability issues. If Jersey were to invest into wind turbine construction, either in conjunction with the French or independently, we could help safeguard Jersey's supply for decades to come, perhaps even provide the Island with a new source of export revenue too.

Managing the relationship between the main grid and distributed generation technologies at the household level

I have lived on a boat with two large solar panels and batteries for three years. These could not contribute to space heating or to cooking, but they provided electricity for all other needs. In the evening, when the batteries went flat, the TV or the laptop simply got switched off and it was bed time. The next morning, the batteries would often be almost fully charged again by the time I was awake. Not many people used to today's conveniences would like to put up with this, but it can be done.

Without batteries, having grid-connected wind or solar generation on the roof of a home contributes to the solution to the problems we face, and so should be encouraged, but they can never be the complete answer. Even large-scale, powerful offshore installations can become useless when the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine. This is why a number of good, reliable connections from Jersey into the European grid via France is essential. Using long distance (e.g. HVDC) connections across the continent, 100% renewable supply can be maintained to all users. Using plugged-in car, van and bus batteries to provide local storage will also help with a smart, extended grid, and – as with everything – if we want the benefits, we must provide our fair share of input.

To support the switch to low-carbon heating systems for residents on the Island

Many aspects of life, after we all begin to make a serious transition to low-carbon lifestyles, will actually become cheaper. It is cheaper not to buy petrol than to buy it; it is cheaper to walk and cycle than to drive; it is cheaper to make farm-based compost than to import nitrate fertilisers, etc, etc. However, some aspects of the transition will require big investments in new equipment, new insulation, retraining, reorganising and repurposing. The government has an essential role to play in bringing in the funds from those most able to contribute, and distributing them among the many competing requirements. It is fundamental to the whole concept of a just transition that no one should be left behind, no one should be penalised for doing the right thing, and everyone should be able to contribute in all the best ways they can.

The key areas within the transport sector to address to achieve a reduction in emissions and benefit local Islanders

Private car use by healthy, able people for short journeys is the first area that needs addressing. There are numerous health benefits to all kinds of active travel, such as walking and cycling. Bus travel should be made more convenient and much cheaper so that it becomes the norm for most journeys where a bike is not ideal. This will leave the roads much clearer, especially at rush-hours, for other vehicles including work vans, deliveries and of course for all those with mobility and health problems. All remaining road traffic should become electric within the shortest possible timescale.

Supporting the development and funding of active travel in the Island

Funding should come from the carbon-zero budget. This will be enhanced and maintained from all normal taxation. Reform Jersey has a comprehensive plan to increase the revenue derived from those with the most ability to pay, and a proportion of this will be used to achieve carbon zero. As I said above, as the transition progresses some aspects of life will become cheaper, but we need the investment in a relatively short, sharp burst to make the transition start and to get over the hump. I would like to see all future property development take account of 15-minute community principles: there should be work, recreation, education, services and social amenities built into every residential area. The idea of everyone living one end of the island, and travelling almost to the other end to do anything, is from the past and needs to be corrected. We need enhanced cycle and bus routes.

Initiatives within St Brelade to support the Sustainable Transport Policy and encourage increased sustainable transport amongst in the parish.

St Brelade is already well served by buses and the Railway Track provides an excellent artery through the St Brelade for active travel. I personally would like to see a 'Bike and Bus' scheme where substantial cycle storage facilities are married with excellent, very frequent bus services to town, and north up into the other parishes. We could cycle or ride our mobility scooter a short distance to the Bike and Bus park, leave the machine safely for the day, and hop onto a bus within, say, three to five minutes, to get where we need to go. Bike and mobility scooter hire at the bus station and at other Bike and Bus parks elsewhere in the Island would allow us to complete our journey.

None of this should be expensive to use. For those that need it to be, it should be free. I imagine an Island-wide 'Active Travel' card or app, that you wave at the relevant hire and bus-boarding machines. The card would have been confidentially calibrated according to your needs and abilities. The machine beeps and you go on your way. No one knows whether you paid a fair fare, a reduced fare, or nothing at all.

Addressing the gender gap for active travel and encouraging cycling for all young people in the Island

Maybe dicing with traffic and swerving through busy junctions is seen as requiring macho bravery? We need safe, wide and realistic cycle-path provision for every possible journey. Cycle paths that take you up every side-road then make you cross the road with stop-lines are not adequate (see La

Route des Quennevais). Nor are cycle paths that peter out for no good reason and dump you back onto the main road. Cycle paths should be separated from motor traffic by a lot more than a painted white line, which many are in St Brelade. Although I have praised the Railway Track, cycle paths should not be shared with pedestrians either. To achieve all of this, some road-space will have to be reclaimed from motor traffic and given over to cycling, mobility scooters and other 'electric wheels' almost entirely. Choosing the best cycle routes, and the best car, bus and van routes, will need consultation and clever transport planning. The more people who ditch their cars and take to electric wheels, the easier the decision-making will become, but we have to make a start.

My views on walking routes to school and developing them within St Brelade. My priorities for developing safer walking routes to schools within the parish

The three main schools within St Brelade are La Moye, Mont Nicolle and Quennevais Schools. They are all on main, busy roads that are also used as main routes by car commuters and commercial drivers alike. Walking alongside a busy, fast road is not only unpleasant and antisocial, but it is also dangerous. There is the perceived danger of the risk of being hit by a passing car or van, but also the real and daily danger of breathing the fumes and the dust from the passing traffic. If we ever reduce the traffic to the point where these dangers recede or disappear, it will have been a huge community achievement. In the meantime, the only alternative is to provide safe, separated walking and cycling lanes and paths, well away from the main roads. Personally, I regularly walk and cycle through Clos des Sables to get a bus or to the shops. Unfortunately, no such off-main-road route exists beyond Elizabeth Avenue to get to La Moye School. It should. There are similar problems with getting to Quennevais and Mont Nicolle. I don't know if it will be easier to negotiate the land for such a route, or to persuade people to use the main roads much less by car, but until we start to do one or the other, or both, no progress is being made. Consultation, laying out to people the realistic and limited options and asking for their feedback, thoughts and inventiveness is the only way I know to tackle such seemingly impossible dilemmas. We need to call on the collective genius of the people involved; those who care, and who will benefit.

My views on Jersey being a hub for innovation, used as an innovation test bed for electric cars and other electric wheels

Of course, we have no distances in Jersey that should tax or stretch the range of most modern electric vehicles. People still use their cars to get on a ferry and drive across Britain or into France. Perhaps they can be persuaded to consider long-distance trains and maybe car hire for this in the near future, to give them one fewer reason to want to keep a car in the Island. Jersey people have always been delighted to try the latest technologies, and import them into the island to meet local needs. I don't think there's much the government can realistically do to encourage this other than providing safe and attractive lanes and paths, along with public transport and joined-up thinking, to bring out the best in people. Public education will help. A lot of the messaging we have had from the media in recent decades has been less than enthusiastic about the climate and biodiversity crisis and the actions we need to take to tackle it. Maybe the government can also have a role in promoting clear and positive messaging.

Initiatives to bolster the green credentials of St Brelade to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030/Net Zero by 2050

The Parish as an employer and a provider of services can go a long way to set an example. One example is using electric vehicles, including the pull-along electrically powered hand-carts that are used in St Helier to make deliveries and to empty bins. Much of our parish is seen and is indeed set out as a series of fast, unobstructed roads, designed to get housing estates full of commuters into and out of town as fast as possible by motor car. This is a legacy from the 1960s and 70s. We need more facilities for work, play, and the consumption of goods and services all over the parish to reduce the need for this. As the need to dash into town for everything diminishes, so should the need for straight, fast main roads full of jaded motorists. Traffic calming including benches, trees, islands and lane reductions will make it less and less convenient to try to continue to live a 1960s dream in the 2020s and 30s. This should encourage people to stay where they are, or cycle or scoot themselves around the corner to where they need to be. Then we will be making some real progress.

To ensure that Jersey takes action to significantly reduce carbon emissions during the next term

This will need significant changes to planning and building regulations, to road design and to facilities for active travel. Much of the funding that is needed is one-off, capital projects to change the ways we plan our lives and live our days. No one can seriously think that we can find some magic technology or offset scheme that will allow us to carry on as we are and somehow still meet our commitments. The sooner we make a concerted start, the better. The first steps will require public engagement, consultation and welcoming every realistic and constructive proposal. There is no more time to lose, so this process has to start straight away, and produce actual results on the ground and in people's lives very quickly.

My role in implementing the greening of St Brelade

I would like to take a role in consulting on and drawing up a masterplan for the future of St Brelade. This is likely to involve educating and inspiring parishioners that a better world is not only possible, but necessary, and now urgent. The better world I envisage would involve more trees, more green spaces, more wildflowers and more fresh water on the surface. It will have less traffic, less danger, more birdsong and more time to stand and chat. More benches, more outdoor cafes, more chance of our voices being heard than over the roar of passing traffic. More room for children to play, more makeries, more menderies, more craft and skill, and more time to care about the important things in life. If people can see the future world I have in mind, I hope that they will be more than willing to come up with ways to make it a reality. Not in 20 or 30 years time, but starting right now.

I will continue to do everything I can to this end. I will never stop talking about it; I will never stop reminding people that this is the most important project of our age, and that we must never forget it. If I get a chance to encourage people to visualise a green parish and island of the future, then I will use every word in my vocabulary, every trick in my oratory repertoire, and set every personal example I can – while pointing out all the others I know who are already doing the same, and have been for years.

Measures during the next term to ensure that environmental biodiversity will be protected and enhanced

Our dunes and parks need the strongest possible protection. Hedgerows everywhere should be widened and filled with native plants, shrubs and trees, perhaps interspersed with fruit and nut trees to provide foraging for wildlife and humans alike. Grass should be allowed to grow for much of the year with pathways mown through it, and hay-making style cuts when necessary to keep it open if that is what we need. Non-native plants and invasives should be controlled and removed. Streams that are buried in pipes and culverts need bringing back onto the surface and allowed the space to meander and braid as they see fit. I don't know if anyone will let me implement such measures straight away, in the next term and on any scale, but I will never stop trying. In the meantime, safe road-crossing measures for squirrels, hedgehogs and toads might be easier wins, along with bat boxes and birdboxes – and leaving more standing deadwood wherever it is safe to do so. We need habitat, wild space, food and water for wildlife like never before.

Do we need more habitat protection, in order to conserve wildlife? What type of land areas should be protected and what can a Deputy do to implement this?

We need every type of habitat: woodland, open grassland, wetland, coastal dunes, hedgerows... I would like to see open habitat directly connected with the beach again, with streams running through and straight out onto the beach. This would mean demolishing and removing sections of the Nazi anti-tank wall that we have lived with for nearly a century. I don't know if, as a States Deputy, I will be able to get such measures through. I hope that I can at least set a sense of direction that will inspire and enable further action in the years to come. People's gardens are also an important source of habitat, as is farmland. I hope that a huge reduction in the use of poisonous chemicals can be brought about so that this land can begin to thrive again and to shelter and feed all kinds of wildlife. We need to encourage and bring back the microbes, fungus and nematodes in the soil, slow worms, grass snakes and toads, insects, bats and other mammals, eels and small fish in the streams, birds and predators.

Mandatory introduction of nature-based financial disclosures for organisations based in Jersey, particularly within the finance sector

I would love to find ways to bring Jersey's finance industry into the work we have ahead of us regarding climate change and biodiversity. Finance is one of the areas where Jersey 'punches above its weight' on the global stage. The efficacy of 'green' finance as a market sector, as a reputation enhancer, and simply as a money-maker has been well established in recent years. There is no excuse for the Island's finance industry not to get on board. There is no way that the millions of pounds that flows through Jersey should still be getting invested in moribund, counter-productive and dead-end investments. I will use every political lever I can find that will help Jersey's finance industry stop being any part of the problem, and be a proud and vocal leader in building a sustainable and ethical future.

How would I have voted on the recent Marine Spatial Plan proposition?

I would have voted for the recent marine protection plan. We cannot do too much to protect and enhance our special and unique local marine habitats, and at the moment we are not doing nearly enough.

The need for sustainable farming practices, particularly policies of regenerative agriculture

Regenerative agriculture is essential if we are to meet the needs of our land, our soil, and the future needs of the island for home-produced food, and the same time as protecting and enhancing local wildlife. Some farmers may need some retraining, and there may need to be more people employed on the land. I can't see these two factors as anything but overall positives.

The Island's level of food security. What would I change and how?

We need to be growing a wide range of local crops for local consumption. The financial pressures that have forced the majority of the Island's farmland to be given over to a tiny number of cash crops for export, have done Jersey a disservice. We should be growing fruits and vegetables, grains and pulses. We should be making compost and gathering vrac, building the soil and reducing waste. I want to see farmer's markets, organic produce, and well-stocked honesty boxes at the farm walls and gates. We have people in Jersey going to food banks, while local farmers struggle to get rid of perfectly edible crops, simply because they don't fit the needs of some off-island market conditions. This is inefficient, wasteful and actually immoral. There's a lot we can do about food security, and we need to get out of the race for the bottom.

Supporting and developing the agricultural industry within St Brelade

When I was a kid, there were cows in the fields to the left of the Quennevais Road as you go towards the airport. There are still farm fields all over the eastern side of the parish, and to the south from Beauport to Corbiere. I would like to talk to those farmers about organic growing, diverse crops, compost, crop rotation and regenerative practices. I have been involved in secondary school gardening projects, the creation of community gardens and the management of allotments. I have visited and been shown around multilayered permaculture forest gardens in England. There are so many ways that we are not moving forward in Jersey's agricultural thinking, it seems to me. I know that the financial pressures on farmers and growers has been extreme and stultifying. But things are changing. Carbon sequestration is now a real thing. There have to be ways that we can get out of these double-binds and start to flourish and experiment again in the growing fields of Jersey.

To ensure that the Carbon Neutral Roadmap receives appropriate funding to reach net zero by 2050

There is no option but that we must reach carbon net zero at the very latest by 2050. It is now enshrined in agreements we have signed up to, but we also have a moral and ethical imperative. A graph that shows our carbon emissions between now and 2050 can take three forms. It can belly upwards for the first few decades then suddenly drop at the last minute, it can go down more or less in a straight line, or it can quickly go downwards in the early years, then level out as we finally

creep down upon the agreed and necessary goal. At the moment, I think the plan is to go for the first option – perhaps hoping that someone invents something amazing in the 2040s that will make it easy then. (A more cynical view might be that we do virtually nothing now, and leave it to a future generation, because some decision-makers thought they might be dead or comfortably retired by then). What we must not do is waste vast sums of money money on fancy carbon-offset schemes, which may or may not be working in some far-off land, while we carry on without real change here. What we must not do is waste our time now, leaving it to future. What really matters in terms of the overall harm we are doing to the rest of the world, and to ourselves, is the *area under* those graphs. By using our financial resources and our extensive island ingenuity to pull down that graph, hard, now, we not only help to kill and impose unbelievable suffering on so many countless humans and animals, but we also buy ourselves time, to adapt and adopt before time gets tight and things start to go irreversibly wrong for everyone.

The circular economy and its applicability to Jersey

Global industry makes money by digging things up on one side of the planet, to use them for a few years here, then burying them straight back into a hole in the ground. We may be burning our junk here before we dump it on the beach, behind ever-receding sea walls, but that does not make any more sense. I mentioned making and mending businesses and establishments earlier. We have to get into a system where we make things, largely from relatively local and natural materials, repair and maintain them for years or decades, pass them on to our children who continue the care, and finally, put them onto the compost heap for nature to recycle them back into fertile soil, full of healthy microbes and fungi. We are a long way from that now, but these should be the sustainable craft skills that some people get retrained into, the natural materials like wood, basketwork, linen, flax, hemp and wool that we use, and the thought process that keeps what we use working for decades. It's a distant goal, but now is the time to start working towards it. Of course, our world is more complex now, and we have to take account of obscure metals, electronics, resins, paints and inks. The principles still apply. Things have to change.

Initiatives to encourage the adoption/transition to a circular economy for the Island

Our recycling should not be an afterthought. Where we send our recycling to be processed should not be decided on purely financial grounds. If we had to pay for every bag or every kilogram of non-recyclable waste that we put out – as they already do in Guernsey, I believe – maybe that would focus minds. Manufacturers and local suppliers should be forced to include repairability and recyclability in their spec-sheets. Perhaps, due to surcharges or regulation, irreparable and unrecyclable goods should be forced out of or removed from local shops and markets? Building construction and demolition waste is another huge aspect that at the moment is not being sufficiently factored into decisions. Concrete and steel have a huge carbon footprint. Where are the incentives to reduce and reuse? Where are the incentives for more use of wood, lime mortar, vegetable oil based paints, and other less carbon-intensive building materials? There's a lot more to do.

My views on parish recycling and how to develop recycling rates within St Brelade

St Brelade has a kerbside recycling scheme and this is to be praised and appreciated. As I mentioned above, perhaps the time will come when charges are appropriate for every household and business's non-recyclable waste. I believe that schemes to collect garden and kitchen waste for recycling in St Brelade are also under discussion. Of course, this should be expedited. Organic wet waste should be used to make good, rich, living compost that can be spread straight onto the soil in farm fields and gardens, not burned. Due to the awful anaerobic potato dumping disaster at Beauport some years ago, we have unnecessarily blunt and regressive laws in Jersey about the treatment of organic waste. These laws must be looked at without further delay. Local laws need to protect us from bad practice, but should positively encourage the recycling of organic waste into organic, living compost.

Building relations with global delegates to further play our part in meeting agreed climate targets. How would I plan on Jersey expanding its impact and representation at the next COP

Jersey needs to have proven ideas and a proud track record in tackling the global climate and biodiversity crisis here in the island. Then our delegates to COP and elsewhere can expand our impact on the world by describing and representing our own best practice on these vital matters. With nothing to say, there's nothing we can say. If we have excellent things going on here, we will raise the status and reputation of Jersey in the world. We have opportunities to act in every field, from sustainable finance to regenerative farming, from marine protection and enhancement to rewilding and rebuilding our countryside and rural economy, from eco-tourism to fine and sustainable dining, while at the same time looking after and properly feeding those in our community who are struggling.

My role in helping Jersey contribute to the pledge to end and reverse deforestation by 2030, despite the limited support for this pledge within the Carbon Neutral Roadmap

Jersey needs every kind of wild place and habitat, from dunes to wetland, grassland to tree cover. Space must be made for each of these, for our local species and for the biodiversity that makes their future sustainable. I have long argued for wider hedgerows around fields. Apart from new native woodlands where these are appropriate, we can greatly increase our overall tree cover by saying that every field should have a wild border, perhaps four metres wide, planted with native species and allowed to develop with little attention apart from the removal of non-native invasives. Where two such broad hedgerows run alongside each other without a road in between, perhaps there can be room for a human-sized path also to be maintained for people to access. The wide hedgerows would provide invaluable migration corridors for all kinds of animals and plants, and the human paths would provide an ideal way for people to enjoy and learn to appreciate the wild countryside through the changing seasons. Sometimes, a stream could be routed through these wild corridors, providing drinking water for wildlife. Perhaps it will extend itself into small ponds and vital patches of wetland dotted around the countryside. This may mean a percentage loss in 'productive' farmland, but I believe the benefits to wildlife and to society will far outweigh the small loss in revenue to the

farmer. There are many areas of the current edition of the Carbon Neutral Roadmap that need revisiting. I believe it is far too tame.

To support Jersey's finance industry in collaboration with the UK to provide a solution in their decarbonisation journey

Jersey's finance industry has a vital role to play in driving decarbonisation not just in the Island, but worldwide. The vast sums of money that this island deals with should be funding the solutions, not the problems. I understand that industry leaders have more than adequately shown that green and sustainable fund management is already more profitable than its opposite. Why would we be promoting investments into harmful and outdated industries and practices, when there is a known risk of these soon may become stranded and worthless assets? These same thoughts must be percolating through the institutions of the City of London. There should be no excuse in the 2020s to be still trying to make a quick profit out of the dying industries that are killing the world.

As a Parish, what policies or strategies would you hope to implement in order to reduce our Scope 3 emissions

Scope 3 emissions are those emitted elsewhere to produce the goods and services that we consume here. This includes everything from tinned food to electronics, from concrete and steel to jet travel and fast fashion. By helping to provide the infrastructure and incentives for local production, local repair, local leisure, and sustainable construction methods we can encourage people to buy local, and to reduce our outgoings on frivolous, harmful junk. As a parish, there's not much we can do to counter global marketing and global markets, but we can help inspire and develop a local masterplan that sets the scene. With things you can't control directly, the best you can do is to set things up so that the best outcome becomes more likely, and so that going the wrong way becomes more difficult or less attractive. We already have thriving local markets inside and outside the St Brelade Parish Hall very regularly. If commercial shop rents could be controlled and even reduced, perhaps some of those stallholders would be able to migrate their businesses indoors. With good premises, who knows what they could achieve?

What would I do to support the Government of Jersey, or St Brelade, in producing a carbon offsetting policy

Carbon offsetting seems to me to be an expensive distraction. Money spent outside of the island on such projects is money gone that we can't spend again on retraining our local workforce, restructuring our local economy and building a local infrastructure that encourages thrift, localisation, and active travel. In the end, some offsetting will probably always be necessary, but this should literally be the last thing we do, after we have done all the local things we will still need to do to reduce our carbon emissions and to set our own economy and lifestyles onto safe and sustainable paths.

I will make many commitments as a politician, but how will I actually ensure these are achieved?

The main reason that a politician's commitments are not achieved is because, when they are presented to the Assembly in the form of propositions and so on, they are voted down by the other

members of the States. I have tried to guard against this by collaborating from the start with my very good friends and colleagues in Reform Jersey. Some of my views and ideas may be new to them, and may even be outside of where they have directed their efforts in the past, but I have found that strong environmental messages are easy to understand for people who already have a background in social democracy and justice. By working within Reform Jersey, and by emphasising the fairness and justice aspects of the environmental cause, I will already have good backing from willing colleagues in the debates that will follow. I have growing faith that the time is right, that the need for fairness and justice – locally and globally – will enable me and my colleagues to take the right steps for real change during this next Assembly and beyond.

Nigel Jones

28 May 2022