Bill Walden

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Dear Alderney Voters,
I am asking you to kindly vote for me in the 2026 election.

About me

I have been an Alderney resident for over 35 years. I am a former Member of the States, during which time, for six years, I chaired the General Services Committee, which oversaw the completion of several major infrastructure projects, among them the Commercial Quay rebuild, the Vallee sewer replacement and the improvement and modernisation of our Water catchment and water treatment plant. I also served for 6 years as an Alderney Representative in the States of Guernsey.
My previous States experience has taught me that persuasion, cooperation and compromise achieves far more than confrontation and rigidity.

My passion for and commitment to Alderney speaks for itself. As a father of two, now adult children, who grew up, attended school and now live and work in Alderney, and as the grandfather of an Alderney teenage girl, I have a strong vested interest in the future prosperity and viability of our community.

Airport/Air transport.

We face a number of challenges, not all of which the States of Alderney can directly solve. Some, such as the continuing and entirely unavoidable state of disrepair of our airport runway, fire station and control tower will require cooperation from the States of Guernsey.
Another area where common sense and cooperation seems to be lacking is the lack of duty-free availability. Visitors are astounded that they cannot buy duty-free on their return to the UK. An operator is ready and willing to supply but is being thwarted by Guernsey red tape. This, combined with having no fuel available in recent years has been a deterrent to private aviators, many of whom used to fly over for a good lunch, some duty-free goods and inexpensive fuel. Having no fuel availability also creates logistical issues for Aurigny, or any other potential carrier. Basing aircraft here, for instance for medevacs, becomes more difficult if there is not a fuelling facility. A recent States invitation for fuelling proposals was, I believe unsuccessful. However, we shouldn't just give up. There way be other ways it can be achieved. Whatever the state of play, losing our airport is not an option. It is quite literally our lifeline in the case of medical and medevac flights and is a crucial enabler of our economy. If support is not forthcoming we must not be afraid to look at all legal and constitutional options to ensure that the States of Guernsey complies with its obligations to Alderney.

Aurigny, Guernsey's airline that bears our name.
Air connectivity is at an all time low since Aurigny sub-contracted the Alderney routes to Skybus. My wife, Mel, runs Bonjour Guest House, so we see first hand the damage to the economy that frequent cancellations cause, not only to us in the accommodation sector but also to other businesses wholly or partly reliant on visitor income. Many of us attended the protest at the airport earlier this year and were met with half-hearted apologies and empty promises from Aurigny CEO Nico Bezeuidenhout. It is plain to see that the current model is expensive and fragile. It is inadequate to provide a reliable service and has insufficient resources to provide timely recovery when, inevitably, problems arise. If only Aurigny would take off their "big airline" blinkers and return to using a small fleet, maybe six or seven, small aircraft to serve all the inter-Channel Islands routes, Alderney-Southampton, maybe C.I. - Dinard. They would not need so many ATR aircraft to service their Guernsey-UK routes. It worked before and could work again if there is a will to make it work. Sadly, the States of Alderney have no direct say in how Aurigny serves Alderney but can and must continue to strongly press Aurigny management and the airline's owners to improve the situation.

Ferries
Spring/summer ferry services have in recent years provided a more affordable alternative to flying and at times a "rescue" service for Aurigny passengers stranded by technical, crew shortage, or weather issues. The States must continue to provide a per passenger subsidy to a small ferry operator for the April to October period. While a larger, all year round ferry would be attractive, it would almost certainly run well below capacity for much of the year and would have to be heavily subsidised, so is possibly not a viable option. However, we should be willing to look at all proposals to supplement Alderney transport links that come forward.

Data Centre
A divisive subject if ever there was one. For my part, I am sceptical about both the commercial viability and the environmental suitability. I don't believe the States have handled things well so far and this has led to widespread suspicion. I try to keep an open mind but it is difficult to say whether or not there is merit in going to expressions of interest when so much information is not available to the general public.

Housing.
There is a dire shortage of rental properties in Alderney. It is difficult for young couples and families to find a home to rent and when they do, rents are high and not all properties are of a decent standard. Young, economically active people are the future of Alderney. We can't afford to lose them. I am encouraged that the States has recently announced it is seeking expressions of interest from potential developers for the old Connaught and the Val field. The former could provide several rental flats for younger people while the latter, due to its proximity to the care home and GP surgery, could provide sheltered housing rentals for some of our older residents. I would support such schemes provided there were adequate safeguards put in place to prevent rapid rent hikes or change of use. I would also like to explore the possibility of a rent-to-buy scheme or an updated "Banquage " type of self-build scheme.

Sustainability and self-sufficiency.
We have seen how world events can have negative effects on supply chains, particularly fossil fuels, petroleum, diesel, heating oil, etc. This increases not only the cost of those fuels but also

the cost of every single thing that is transported to Alderney. Alderney Electricity is making moves towards renewables such as solar PV panels. I support this and other renewable energy initiatives to diversify and safeguard our sources of electricity. I also believe the States must encourage self-sufficiency initiatives and encourage the growing and production of food on the island, both commercially and by individuals. The States is a major landowner and could possibly provide and manage an allotment scheme, perhaps with support , for a reasonable charge, from the agriculture team for the less physically able, to allow more people to grow their own vegetables.

These are my thoughts on just a few of the subjects that will face the States in the near future. I know from experience that this the tip of the iceberg but I don't want to waste your time reading through page after page of my thoughts. So, if there are other specific matters that you want me to cover, I'd be happy to hear from you. I'll finish by saying that, if elected, I will do my best to represent all Alderney residents and act in what I genuinely believe is the island's best interest.

Bill.