Manifesto for Sarah Woodnutt

If you, or anyone you know, would like a large print copy, please let me know and I will deliver it.

This manifesto was created without any use of AI.



For those people who do not know me; I have lived on Alderney since 1968, when my parents brought me to the island as a baby. I received the majority of my education here on the island. Since then I have taken on many different roles, both working and volunteering, and a position on the States would be one I would be honoured to add to the list.

For the last 17 years, I have worked on the administrative team at the Connaught as head of the accounts and finance department. I have also, for the past 20 years, been part of the team that teaches swimming and life-saving skills to school children in the sea, helping to deliver both the RLSS National Lifesaving Academy programme and the Rookie Lifeguard programme. These responsibilities give me a certain amount of insight into, and understanding of, the island's issues at all points on the generational spectrum.

My promise

It is every States Member's job to act in the best interests of the island and to truly represent the island's people. If elected, I promise to do this to the best of my ability, to listen to the views and concerns of the people and, as far as is reasonably possible, to represent those views and concerns within the States.

What I stand for

Members of the states of Alderney are elected to be a voice for the wants and needs of the people of Alderney. If I am elected, I will strive to bring more transparency to the relationship between the States and the voters who rely on them. This would allow me to go forward with confidence on any issue knowing that I am in touch with the true opinion of the island, based on facts and figures rather than hearsay and a "whoever is loudest" mindset.

Alderney is not a victim! We should be working to create an island we can all celebrate and be proud of.

Ask me anything at asksarahwoodnutt@gmail.com

Population – we need to develop opportunities for young people and families.

Much has been said over the years about attracting new people and young families to the island. I believe that approaching the issue from that viewpoint is tackling the problem from the wrong end. By trying to entice new people to the island, without fixing the inherent problems, all that happens is that they disappear after a short honeymoon period. We need to ensure that the education that our children receive is gold standard, and that there are decent job opportunities and training for them when they leave school, to give them an incentive to remain on the island. Young people are the island's future citizens, future professionals and future voters. We should be investing in their wants and needs, rather than casting our net elsewhere.

Education and extra-curriculars – everybody needs room to grow.

Each child in Alderney should know that every effort will be made to help them develop their true potential – whatever that may be!

I was educated on the island through to age sixteen, with the exception of a short period in Guernsey. My daughter followed in my footsteps and went to primary school on the island, moving to secondary school in England when she was 11. As a result, I have first-hand experience of the island's education system both as a student and as a parent, and also of the pros and cons of island life for children and young people.

At a time when young families are regularly leaving the island 'to give their children more opportunities', our children are constantly being fed the message that they are somehow unworthy because they live in Alderney, that their dreams can only be met by leaving the island, that there will never be decent jobs for them. We should be actively working to create the opportunities for our children and young people to find decent jobs and chase their dreams. Examples of this could be through sport, supporting sportspeople on the island, and teams going away to the island games and other international sporting events; music, through facilitating opportunities for young musicians to perform and meet like-minded peers; or general education, and working with the school to be an educational hub, not just for the island's children, but for anyone looking to learn and expand their horizons

Every child has their own dreams for the future. Our young people should always know that we are proud of them and our aim should be that they are proud to call Alderney home.

Opportunities for further education and employment

At a time when more entry level work is being automated and computerised across every field of work, we should be looking at securing entry level jobs and supporting employers to provide school leavers with decent opportunities for training and progression through their chosen profession. I believe the States can play a part in this process by supporting employers who are able to take on trainees and provide them with a recognised training course.

I am aware that the States have recently set up a new initiative the "Education and Skills working group" to which I believe I could contribute positively should I be elected.

Young adults should be able to look back and say, "Thank goodness I grew up in Alderney," not just because it is a beautiful place to grow up, but because the opportunities they are given are above and beyond.

The older generation

Working at the Connaught, I see a lot of issues around the care of our older population, and there are initiatives that the States could be working on and encouraging in that area. In a world that is always evolving and changing, it is important that older people are not left behind in a society that, elsewhere in the world, is becoming less and less personal. It is important to continue to prioritise services that offer help and support with any issues that may arise, from real people who can provide a personal touch.

Alderney's greatest resource is its people.

I am a strong believer in the strength of the volunteering community in Alderney and over the last 40 years, have given my time to many causes – from spending time as a youth club volunteer and being a Guide and Rainbow leader to helping to train and supervise Duke of Edinburgh Award expeditions and co-running the fencing club, to name just a few. In support of local charities, I have also been known to serve the odd piece of cake at jumble sales!

In an age where society is increasingly concerned with ticking boxes and filling forms, and the administrative burden on charities increases proportionately, the States should be looking into ways of supporting those organisations who use volunteers, in order to facilitate the important work they are doing so well.

Health – making health more accessible.

Although a lot of work has been done to improve health care provision in Alderney, for example bringing visiting professionals to Alderney to reduce the number of trips to Guernsey required, there are still areas in which improvements could be made to the service provided to Alderney residents. Greater use could be made of technology to enable video link appointments where appropriate.

Relationship with Guernsey

I believe that Alderney needs more transparency from Guernsey regarding our finances. Should I be elected, I would be keen to work with existing States Members to this end.

Transport

It is no secret that our transport links are disintegrating in front of our eyes. Like every other candidate before me, I believe that the States need to be working towards solving this problem and building on the work already done by existing States Members to improve the travel to and from Alderney. All I can say is that I would work hard and keep an open mind to seek out possible solutions.

Airport and runways – no white elephants!

We need a safe and functioning runway! That is beyond question. We have two grass runways that served the island for many years and on which the Twin Otters are perfectly capable of landing. We should be pushing to have the grass runways put back into use to enable us to fly in cross-winds and reduce the number of cancelled flights. However, I do not believe we need to repeat Guernsey's mistakes with an overengineered building. Whilst every building needs refurbishing from time to time, I do not think we need millions of pounds worth of new airport buildings. We should be investing in basic functionality.

Environment, sustainability and resilience – our home needs protecting!

As an island, we should be doing everything in our power to protect our environment and wildlife - whether that be exploring all options for renewable energy, encouraging more local production of food, or supporting the tireless work of the Wildlife Trust to enable our island to be a thriving habitat for local wildlife. The States should be considering the environmental impacts of any potential developments.



Obviously a 2026 manifesto would not be complete without mention of data centres. However, I feel it is far too complex an issue to be covered in 5 lines in a manifesto. I am more than happy to discuss this with anyone who wishes to ask.

I would like to say a big thank you to my proposer Barbara Benfield and my seconder Brendan Noone.