

Vote DOBSON on 14th November

On the 14th of November there is a By-Election for a vacancy on the Board of Onchan Commissioners. I have put my name forward to be included in the ballot.

My name is Nigel Dobson and I have lived in Ballachrink Drive for the last 10 years. Prior to that my wife and I had a house in Kerrocoar Close and when we first moved to the Island back in 1997 we were the landlords at Molly's Kitchen and Tavern on Harbour Road.

In September 2000, we took over the Liverpool Arms in Lonan and remained there until its closure 7 years ago. We also opened Niarbyl Café, ran the Sound Restaurant and various other catering sites around the Island.

While living in Lonan I was elected to Lonan Commissioners and was a leading figure in the creation of the new authority of Garff, combining Lonan, Laxey and Maughold and served as the Chair for three years.

At the last local authority elections, I stood down from Garff as I no longer had a business interest or home in the area and instead, I stood in Onchan but was unsuccessful.

I mention this to show I have experience in both business and local government.

In a normal election I would be presenting a manifesto outlining my hopes for the next few years. This is not a normal election.

The whole authority goes to the polls in April next year at the end of the usual 4-year term. It is unlikely that any candidate will make a huge impression with effectively a five-month term of office.

What the successful candidate WILL be able to do is listen, learn and plan for the future. They will also have a voice on the rate setting and plans for the next year.

They will be able to get true picture of the Authorities finances, learn about their fellow Commissioners, equip themselves so if they get re-elected in April, they will be able to hit the ground running.

It is no secret that there are personality clashes on the current Board, you only have to attend one meeting to get that impression, so I would aim to learn and see where members can work as more of a team together for the good of the people of Onchan.

As an Independent, my aim is to be an accessible member of the Commissioners and hear what you have to say and hopefully discover what *your* priorities are and helping to bring them about.

**You can contact me at nigel@suremail.im or on
07624 215515**

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OLIVER LOCKWOOD



I am an actuary currently living in Douglas but seeking to move to Onchan in early 2025, at the same time as my partner, Lorna, moves to the Isle of Man. I believe that my experience in overseeing the financial management of businesses to ensure that **what gets budgeted for is what gets delivered** makes me well suited to serve on Onchan District Commissioners (ODC).

Due to the current composition of ODC, many members are unlikely to seek re-election in 2025. This makes it essential for Onchan residents to ensure **continuity** of membership by electing a Commissioner who is prepared to continue in the position after the April 2025 elections. If elected, I would certainly seek **re-election in 2025** to continue my work in areas such as those I describe below, on each of which the progress that can be made before April 2025 is limited.

Social Housing Rents

The current process for setting social housing rents is **deeply frustrating** for Onchan social housing tenants. ODC have in recent years recommended **zero or small increases** in rents each year, because their social housing stock is in sufficiently good repair that no increase is needed to fund maintenance costs. However the Department of Infrastructure (DoI) imposed a **7.5% increase** in rents on all local authorities for 2024-25, with no transparency around how this figure was calculated, and may impose a substantial increase again for 2025-26 despite ODC's recommendation of no increase.

The possibility of allowing each local authority to set their own social housing rents has been considered in the past, but has been deemed unworkable in a system where deficiency payments are made to local authorities whose rental income is insufficient to cover their social housing expenditure. I believe that ODC should instead call for **transparency** in how the DoI set rental increases. The DoI should consult with local authorities on the **method** to be used to set the rental increases. My expertise as an actuary would help me to support the development

of such a method. Once the method has been settled, rental increases will follow directly from the data and will not depend on opaque judgements made by the Dol.

Waste Management

The timing of this by-election campaign overlaps with the timing of a public consultation by the Dol into principles for a national waste management strategy for the Isle of Man:

<https://consult.gov.im/infrastructure/isle-of-man-waste-strategy-principles/>

ODC has already agreed to submit a response to this consultation making reasoned arguments as to why refuse collection should continue to be operated at local level. However, in reality, ODC has limited influence over whether or not the approach to refuse collection is harmonised across the Island.

If refuse collection is harmonised, then a **fair funding model** is essential. The cost per ratepayer of refuse collection should be lower in Onchan than in more rural local authority areas due to the greater **economies of scale** and shorter distances between properties in an urban area. I believe that ODC should liaise with the Dol to develop a funding model ensuring that these differences in costs are reflected in what is charged to local authorities, and therefore in rates. My expertise as an actuary would help me to support the development of such a funding model.

Fees and Charges

Every public authority in the Isle of Man charges fees for some of its services that do not reflect the true cost of providing those services, resulting in the services being **subsidised** by taxpayers/ratepayers. This is justified in some circumstances but should be the result of a **conscious policy decision**. In many cases, even if the costs were fully analysed at the time the fees were first set and the fees were set in line with the costs, the fees have not been increased for **inflation** since then and are now insufficient to cover the costs.

I believe that for every fee charged by ODC, a proper discussion is required on whether the cost of providing the corresponding service should be subsidised by ratepayers. Where the decision is that the fee should reflect the full costs of providing the service, a complete analysis of all those costs should be conducted, which my expertise as an actuary would help me to contribute to. Due to the large number of fees that need to be set, this will be a **rolling programme of work** that will not be complete before the April 2025 elections. Where it is not possible within the available resources to conduct a complete analysis, the default option should be to increase the fees in line with inflation, not to hold them fixed.

Contact details

Any Onchan resident wishing to ask me questions on any topic within the responsibility of ODC, including the topics I have highlighted above, is invited to contact me via my **Facebook** page <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61567798671761> or by **email** at Oliver.Lockwood.FIA@gmail.com. I will be posting the answers I give on Facebook, so please check to see if I have already answered your query before contacting me.

By-Election to Onchan District Commissioners Dr Scott Wilson

14 November 2024

Mobile Number: 07624 398227

Email: Drscottwilson2024@outlook.com

Dear Onchan Voters,

As an Onchan resident for many years, I feel that I have a clear understanding and knowledge of the issues that are important to me and may be important to you and our community. I have lived, worked, and engaged with the community for many years, and I know first-hand the challenges and opportunities we face.



As a passionate advocate for positive change and progress in our community, I am standing as a candidate for Commissioner because I believe that our future is shaped by the decisions we make today. Our neighbourhood is full of potential, and together, we can build a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable environment for all.

In this manifesto, I will outline my key priorities and the values that guide me. My vision is one where your voice is heard, your concerns are addressed, and we work together for a brighter future. I am confident that with your support, we can make this vision a reality.

It has been a real pleasure speaking with many of you, and I thank you for considering me as your commissioner, and I look forward to earning your trust and vote.

Key Priorities

1. Community Safety and Well-being

Safety is the foundation of a strong community. I will work to ensure Onchan is a safe, clean, and welcoming environment for everyone.

- **Increased neighbourhood policing:** Collaborate with the Isle of Man Constabulary (IOMC) to ensure a visible presence and quicker response times.
- **Safer streets and public spaces:** Install better lighting, and pedestrian-friendly crossings in areas identified as risk-prone.
- **Community policing:** Collaborate with the IOMC to ensure that children who may display anti-social behaviour, or commit low-level offences, can be administered by the community, and encouraged to change, rather than criminalised.

2. Environmental Sustainability

Protecting the environment is crucial for future generations.

- **Improve recycling and waste management:** Advocate for increased access to recycling bins and community education programs on waste reduction.
- **Create more green spaces:** Advocate for the development and maintenance of parks, community gardens, and other green spaces.
- **Promote clean energy:** Encourage local businesses and homes to adopt renewable energy solutions through incentives and education.

3. Local Economy and Job Creation

A thriving local economy is essential for the prosperity of the entire community. I will work to create new opportunities for businesses and residents alike.

- **Support for local businesses:** Launch initiatives to promote shopping locally to support small enterprises.
- **Job creation programs:** Work with local businesses to create apprenticeships, work-placements and training opportunities for residents, particularly young people.
- **Develop community markets:** Encourage local producers and artisans to participate in community markets, fostering a strong local economy.

4. Education and Youth Services

Investing in our children and young people is investing in the future of our community.

- **Education and Youth Support:** advocate for improved services, and funding especially for children, young people and other groups by seeking and improving access to free study areas.
- **Youth engagement programs:** Support for improved services, clubs and sports programs, and skill-building workshops to ensure young people have access to enriching activities.
- **Vocational training and mentorship:** Partner with local businesses to promote, provide and offer practical skills training for those looking to enter the workforce.

5. Onchan Park

Improve diverse and affordable facilities especially during school holidays times in Onchan Park, encouraging greater use, accessibility, and enjoyment by the community.

6. Street Lighting and Crossings

I will ensure that street lighting continues to provide a safe, reliable, and well-maintained service for all residents.

7. Dog Park

There are plenty of us dog lovers in Onchan and a small minority can give us a bad name. There has notably been an increase in people not clearing up after their dogs. I will therefore be advocating the following: First, the creation of fenced dog park. Second, more dog litter bins around Onchan.

How can this be achieved?

1. **Engage with the community:** Hold regular public consultations and community meetings to ensure that residents' voices are heard and integrated into decision-making processes.
2. **Collaborate with local organisations:** Work closely with charities, businesses, schools, and law enforcement to deliver community-driven solutions.
3. **Effective use of the Commissioner's resources:** Ensure that the Commissioner's funds are used effectively and transparently, with a focus on delivering the highest possible value to residents.

Why Vote for Dr Scott Wilson?

I am committed to being a proactive and accessible representative for Onchan. My goal is to work with the community to create a safer, more vibrant, and inclusive environment for all. With your support, we can make Onchan a place everyone is proud to call home.

Together, let's build a better future for Onchan.