

Last-chance saloon at

Final opportunity for Senatorial hopefuls to get their points across

The evening's questions

- What are your thoughts on implementing a proper living wage?
- Is there anything that can be done about onerous planning regulations, particularly ones that dictate the changing of windows and doors in listed buildings?
- Of all the questions asked in the Senatorial campaign what question have you found most difficult (apart from this one)?
- When are English companies going to pay tax?
- What do the candidates propose to do about States reform to improve how decisions are made?

By Lucy Stephenson

lstephenson@jerseyeveningpost.com

ONLINE voting, a new youth parliament, party politics and more regular youth assembly events were all suggested as ways to improve voter turnout, particularly among young people, at last night's Senatorial hustings in St Helier.

The 13th and final chance for the 18 candidates vying for the eight available seats to impress Islanders before the polls open at 8 am tomorrow was at Wesley Grove Methodist Centre, and the meeting was attended by almost 200 people.

As well as ways to improve election turnout, the issues raised included introducing a living wage, States reform, onerous planning regulations and taxing UK-owned companies to ensure a level playing field with local businesses.

After making their final opening speeches of the current campaign, the candidates were challenged by questions from the audience, with priority given to parishioners and those who were not present to support a certain candidate.

Yann Mash (17) asked the candidates if they had suggestions for improving the very low voter turnouts experienced in Jersey, especially among young people. He also asked if they would consider adopting anything like the Brazilian model, in which voting is compulsory.

Chris Magee was the first to respond. He said people should not be forced to vote but that an accountable government would encourage better engagement. He reiterated a promise that if elected he would post a video online following every States vote explaining his decision.

Senator Ian Gorst said that a youth parliament should be set up to encourage young people to take an interest in politics and that plans were already under way for one.

Geoff Habin said that the same issues had existed 40 years ago and until trust was built in the Assembly nothing new would be achieved.

David Richardson said an effective person



Yann Mash (17) asked the candidates about low voter turnouts Picture: JON GUEGAN (6153310)

was required to go into schools to encourage young people to take an interest in politics and explain the system. He added that educating them in other life skills like mortgages and APR would also encourage them to engage.

Improving engagement was also put forward as the solution by Dr Zoe Cameron, while Deputy Andrew Green said that one of the main problems was that many people did not understand the current system.

Guy de Faye's answer received the biggest laugh of the night. He said: 'Shut down the mobile phone network, close the internet and confiscate all Xboxes.'

Senator Lyndon Farnham, however, said: 'Rather than switching the internet off, perhaps we should engage with the internet and make young people vote on the internet.'

Deputy John Young, meanwhile, said people did not feel connected with government. He added that education was also key.

Malcolm Ferey said social media and e-voting should be combined with traditional methods to improve turnouts.

'I don't like the idea of forcing people to vote. Somehow that feels counter-intuitive to me,' he said.

Senator Philip Ozouf said: 'People don't vote

because they don't think that their vote is going to be delivered and mean anything. The representatives need to listen and then work on your behalf.'

Reform Jersey candidate Anne Southern agreed and said that party politics would help to improve the system.

'People don't vote because they don't feel their vote will make a difference,' she said. 'We would be able to explain our policies clearly [if party politics were introduced].'

Senator Paul Routier said that he was one of a number of Members who did go into schools to speak to young people, but more should be done. For example, he proposed increasing the frequency of youth assembly events – where young people take over the States Assembly – from once a year to once a month.

Konrad Kruszynski also highlighted the lack of Polish Islanders taking an interest in the election, not just young people. He said: 'It shows that somewhere along the way we have failed.'

Senator Alan Maclean said the solution was simple – better decision-making by the States, which would encourage people to engage. He also said that in Estonia currently 34 per cent of votes were cast online and that he would support a youth parliament in Jersey.

Deputy Sean Power questioned why a generation used to doing everything online and using electronic devices were still being asked to go into a plywood box with a pencil on a string to vote.

Senators Sarah Ferguson and Sir Philip Bailhache ran out of time and did not answer the question, instead choosing to focus on the two others asked at the same time, one on taxing UK companies and the other on States reform.

Senator Ferguson said that ministers needed to recognise the importance of Scrutiny to make the current government system work.

Senator Bailhache then pledged that if elected he would work for consensus in the new Assembly on States reform.

Reasons to vote – in a sentence

JUST before the hustings concluded St Helier Constable Simon Crowcroft, who was re-elected unopposed last month, asked the candidates to say in one sentence why parishioners should vote for them. Here are their responses.

- SENATOR SIR PHILIP BAILHACHE: 'I think I am obviously the best candidate.'
- KONRAD KRUSZYNSKI: 'Because I am almost the youngest and I'll engage young people to vote.'
- SENATOR ALAN MACLEAN: 'I'm hopefully the second-best candidate and I support St Helier receiving rates.'
- DEPUTY SEAN POWER: 'Hard work, commitment and my work in the third sector. And I'm the third-best candidate.'
- CHRIS MAGEE: 'I am not afraid to speak out. I'm not afraid to tell the truth. And there are a couple of people sat in front of you here who will find that very difficult.'
- SENATOR IAN GORST: 'I have put before you a manifesto that I believe I can deliver – it is not empty promises.'
- GEOFF HABIN: 'I am new blood for you and

I have very much a will to get on with it.'

■ DAVID RICHARDSON: 'I am a scientist, teacher, originator of DNA fingerprinting, population expert, trained as an accountant. I am very level-headed, love the challenge and have lots of ideas.'

■ ZOE CAMERON: 'In the next three years there is a lot of money going to be spent on your health service and I think it would be very helpful to have somebody who is experienced and who also knows the gaps guiding the process.'

■ DEPUTY ANDREW GREEN: 'Because for the last six years I have dedicated my time as your St Helier Deputy. I have courage and vision and I think independently and I have a track record of getting things done.'

■ GUY DE FAYE: 'I was born in St Helier, played in the streets in St Helier, educated in St Helier, worked in St Helier, live in St Helier and I know how St Helier has been messed around over the years and will stop that happening.'

■ SENATOR SARAH FERGUSON: 'Common sense, practicality, no spin.'

■ SENATOR LYNDON FARNHAM: 'Vote for me

if you like my views, vote for me if you share my visions, but more importantly just get out and vote.'

■ DEPUTY JOHN YOUNG: 'I was brought up in an urban area in London, came to Jersey 35 years ago and it has given me everything. What you see is what you get with me, open and honest transparency, no spin.'

■ MALCOLM FERREY: 'I have given three years of my spare time as a Centenier in St Helier and I understand the problems of St Helier, but I also understand the problems of all the Island.'

■ SENATOR PHILIP OZOUF: 'I don't want to be the best, I just want to be in the top eight. I am the only candidate that has made a special and new deal for St Helier.'

■ ANNE SOUTHERN: 'I live in the parish, I listen to people's problems, I understand them and I want to get into the States to do something about them.'

■ SENATOR PAUL ROUTIER: 'I hope I have shown I have a track record of being caring, compassionate and understanding people's needs.'

the Methodist centre



Almost 200 people went to the meeting at Wesley Grove

Chief Minister Senator Ian Gorst; “Our Parishes form the heart of our community and Connetables connect the community with the States. By keeping the Connetables we are linking our Parliament with the people and with our tradition, heritage and history”.

16 year old student Amy Vatcher; “The role of the Constable is an invaluable asset to the States Assembly. Their approachability and accountability as head of the parish allows them to form a unique awareness of the issues that parishioners face, which is important when making decisions in our legislature”.



Local resident and entrepreneur, Nigel Mansell C.B.E.; “Since we moved to Jersey, I have been impressed by the special role the Constables play in supporting their communities. I consider they are a vital part in the island’s stable government and are a major reason why my family continue to have confidence to invest in Jersey’s future”.

Businessman Kevin Keen; “I believe that in any electoral reform it is essential that some link with the Parish system is retained. The Constables have provided this link for centuries and therefore in my opinion they should continue to represent their parishioners in the States Assembly”.

The following candidates have all endorsed the “Yes” campaign:

Ian Gorst, Philip Ozouf, Lyndon Farnham, Sir Philip Bailhache, Paul Routier, Alan Maclean, Sarah Ferguson, Andrew Green, Sean Power, Malcolm Ferey, Zoe Cameron, Geoff Habin, Guy de Faye, John Refault, Kristina Moore, Mike Paddock, Richard Renouf, Chris Lamy, Juliette Gallichan, John Le Bailly, Mark Evans, David Johnson, Deirdre Mezbourian, Eddie Noel, John Le Fondre, Chris Taylor, Philip Le Sueur, Hugh Raymond, Anne Pryke, Michel le Troquer, Steve Luce, John Le Maistre, Carolyn Labey, Len Norman, Susie Pinel, Simon Bree, Sadie Rennard, Terry MacDonald, Maureen Morgan, Christian May, Steve Pallett, Mike Jackson, Murray Norton, Jeff Hathaway, Natalie Duffy, Jane Blakeley and Graham Truscott

**This referendum is vital for Jersey’s Future.
Please use you vote wisely and PLEASE VOTE YES !**