

## **Election 2022 Jersey Evangelical Alliance Questionnaire**

(Please respond by 2 June 2022 to [secretaryjea@gmail.com](mailto:secretaryjea@gmail.com) )

1. Would you be in favour of expanding voting rights to all resident Islanders over the age of 16 and eliminating the two-year residency requirement before a person is allowed to vote in elections?

1. I would favour eliminating the two year residency requirement dated immediately before an election, demanded for a person to be allowed to vote, provided that the individual had previous residency in the Island of a minimum of five years.

I am not inclined to extend voting rights to all Islanders over the age of 16 as I consider that 16 yr olds may be highly intelligent but do not have sufficient "worldly experience" to exercise the responsibility of a vote. I would prefer to raise the requisite age for voting rights.

States Assembly debates on this subject have been beset by unchallenged and inaccurate assertions. Whilst it is true that 16 yr olds can join the armed services, they are not sent to fight until they are significantly older. References are also made to being able to get married at the age of fourteen with parental permission, which may no longer be legal, but the opportunity did exist - clearly designed to avoid the social stigma of being "out of wedlock". Any relevance to voting was illusory.

2. What are your views about legislation which would regulate speech or the freedom of assembly?

2. I do not consider that speaking in private or public should be regulated. Similarly, I support freedom of assembly, unless it conflicts with other freedoms being exercised, such as the freedom to attend at a workplace or to use public transport.

3. Would you describe yourself as a free speech absolutist or should there be certain limits on free speech?

3. I may be a "free speech absolutist". I consider it more important to know what people think, as expressed in speech - rather than to suppress views and not be aware of undercurrents within society.

4. Currently "religion or belief" is not included in Jersey's equality law as a protected characteristic. Would you be in favour of amending the law to make it illegal to discriminate against anyone because of their religion or belief?

4. I don't really believe in passing legislation to condition how people think. Consider the value of "Human Rights" legislation to a Rwandan who had limbs hacked off during the Hutu/ Tutsi genocidal tribal war. Religion and belief is personal and best kept to oneself. Making discrimination against religion illegal simply moves the behaviour "underground" and what exactly is wrong with discriminating against "throat cutting ISIS"? They may be a religious cult, but I would find it difficult to accord them the same understanding as other religions.

5. How important is it to you that Jersey maintains the role of the Dean in the States Assembly?

5. I would like to retain the role of the Dean in the States Assembly, but not if that opens the position to inter-faith sharing.

6. Are you in favour of maintaining tax-payer support of parish churches?

6. The parish church is an historical building and should be the responsibility of the parish for care, maintenance and preservation. This is a separate matter from the business of the church and remuneration of the incumbent which has to be down to the congregation.

7. Are you aware that current government plans to eliminate marginal tax relief for married people will result in tax burden shifting to poorer Islanders as it lowers taxes for wealthier Islanders? Are you in favour of eliminating marginal tax relief for married people? Would you be in favour of allowing married couples to share their marginal tax relief allowances across a family unit?

7. Taxation should be applied on an individual basis and I have never seen the need for "rewarding" married couples with tax relief, which does not apply to other partnerships. It should be eliminated and certainly not shared out over a "family unit".

8. What improvements do you think need to be made to improve the mental health and well-being of islanders, particularly young people?

8. This is not a subject I have researched and I am not in a position to comment on the mental health of young people.

9. What would you propose to improve transport links within and to the Island?

9. There is plenty that could be done to improve transport to and from Jersey. One obvious element is the impact of high seas and stormy weather. I would commission, probably with Guernsey, an "All Weather Ferry" that is guaranteed to sail in all conditions.

As the original Transport Minister I have numerous solutions for improving transport within the Island. If I am elected they will begin to emerge.

10. Are you in favour of a raise to the minimum wage or to institute a living wage in Jersey?

10. I support a minimum wage, but I have reservations with a living wage as it would have to respond to inflation and sudden economic pressures. This makes a living wage "unpredictable" and in some scenarios it may actually reduce. That said, these lower end wage levels assist the least well off in our community and as they are most likely to spend their income within the local economy, there is obvious benefit to the Island.

11. What are your views about how to make housing more affordable in Jersey?

11. In the face of the highest property and rental prices in living memory, how clever to think of "affordable housing" as a solution. I query what affordable means, whether the price of affordable homes is fixed or open to bidding and how exactly these homes are to be allocated. This actually has all the hallmarks of "electoral promises" to spend tax cash on a lucky few, whilst reeling in votes at election time.

The problem is basic supply and demand economics. There are too many people in Jersey, all seeking improvement in their accommodation. Start by limiting the progressive increase in our population. This will take time, so in the interim a series of measures must be investigated, such as dealing with those who buy to let - but don't let.

I think higher building structures will have to be accepted, but the primary solution is to "build more Jersey". La Collette 1 and 2, plus West of Albert represent nearly 200 acres of "new Jersey". The Island needs more, carefully considered reclamation schemes.

12. Would you be in favour of creating a special category of licensed employee for not-for-profit organisations that would give charities the ability to hire and offer housing to trained charity workers who are not currently resident in Jersey?

12. I am resistant to any sort of special category in government legislation and "not for profit" organisations are a seriously questionable category.

13. Are you in favour of allowing allow Ukrainian nationals without family ties to stay in the island? Would you be in favour of Jersey receiving refugees from other areas of the world where there is a clear humanitarian crisis?

13. The law is pretty clear that once refugees are accepted from one location, they must be accepted from all. The planet is about to be overwhelmed by numerous humanitarian crises and Jersey has too many residents already - in fact 20,000 too many according to a government study. The best solution, for those who are troubled by global issues, is to send money to groups that work in the field. It's simple logic that the money will go further in an underdeveloped community.

14. Do you support maintaining a minimum overseas aid budget of .7% of GDP?

14. The important aspect of the Overseas Aid budget is how it is being spent, not how much it is. I consider that a percentage of GDP allocation is "easy cash" for those tasked with administering it. It may be "efficient", but the responsible approach is to target projects, cost them and then apply for the relevant budget, with allocation for unforeseen emergencies. The present system is an unquestioned handout, but altering the "status quo" is not high on my list of priorities.

15. In view of the UK's proposed conversion therapy ban would you be in favour of a similar ban in Jersey? If so, what are the specific practices which would be made illegal?

15. I am not cognisant with the full extent of "conversion therapy". For example, is it an aspect of exorcism, which - in the past - has been linked to local suicides. I do not actually believe that making any of these ritual practices illegal would assist. They would simply become covert.

16. Would you be in favour of expanding abortion provision in Jersey or making abortion more accessible in Jersey?

16. This is a very sensitive subject for many, but accessible abortion is far preferable to illegal "backstreet" abortion. The overall level of availability for terminations is a complex issue that, in my view, cannot be tackled in a 20 Questions format.

17. Are you in favour of legalising Assisted Suicide in principle in Jersey? If so, what safeguards would you propose creating as a part of any draft legislation put forward in the States assembly?

17. I am in favour of Assisted Dying or your more pejorative Assisted Suicide simply because it allows an individual to determine their own method and time of dying.

Those of many religious persuasions do believe that suicide has very serious implications for an individual's "afterlife", but humans exercise "choice" - even if mistakenly.

Right now, in the Ukraine, soldiers are being blown to pieces by artillery and missiles. Facing certain death and dreadful pain, it is pretty certain that some will beg their colleagues to "finish them off" swiftly - should they be denied that?

The fact is that palliative care, so often hailed as the correct alternative is - in practice - Assisted Dying. The difference is that you are never quite sure when your end is coming and usually the individual is unconscious when it does.

18. Are you in favour of legalising recreational cannabis use?

18. The facts are plain. If alcohol and tobacco had arrived at the same time as ecstasy, they would both be classified as Class A drugs. Nicotine in tobacco is strongly addictive, whilst standard cannabis is not bio-chemically addictive at all. It is better described as habit forming, like having a cup of tea and a biscuit with the morning newspaper. It should never have been made illegal in the first place - the influence of Egypt - and the former UK government chief drug adviser, Professor David Nutt, was correct to advise that cannabis was less harmful than alcohol and tobacco and should be downgraded to Class C. Legalisation would essentially put most of the crooks behind the trade out of business.

19. What is your general view of religion, churches and other faith groups in Jersey?  
What is your experience with these groups?

19. In my youth I did a tour of most active churches in Jersey, so that my father could decide which congregation he wished to attend regularly. It turned out to be St Paul's in New Street, of which I have some experience. I have some fairly strong views on religions, churches and faith practices, which I will not trouble you with. The bottom line is whether one believes in a 5th Dimensional existence and has also bothered to consider how many dimensions there might be.