

Manx Wildlife Trust – 3 questions for MHK Candidates

Answers by Paul Weatherall, Candidate for Ayre & Michael

Manx Wildlife Trust is asking all candidates for MHK in the forthcoming election on September 23rd to answer three questions relating to Manx nature. Details are on Manx Wildlife Trust's website at:

[Election 2021 - Our 3 Questions | Manx Wildlife Trust \(mwt.im\)](http://mwt.im)



Question 1: How are you going to stop another species going extinct in the Isle of Man?

An MHK, or any other individual, can't by themselves prevent a species going extinct on the Island. What I will do though is raise awareness of the need to protect and increase biodiversity. Liberal Vannin is a Biosphere Isle of Man partner and we have made the following pledge as a political party:

The UNESCO
BIOSPHERE ISLE OF MAN
Pledge

THIS SIGNIFIES THAT
Liberal Vannin

PLEDGES TO HELP:

- protect our natural resources
- develop our economy in a sustainable way
- support and promote our cultural heritage
- make our environmental impact positive wherever possible
- engage with the local community
- promote our outstanding living landscape and seascape through active involvement with UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man

UNESCO
BIOSPHERE
ISLE OF MAN

f biosphere.im

I will support the strengthening of planning regulations and the Wildlife Act, 1990 to protect habitat, as well as individual species that are at risk, and promote the activities of the Manx Wildlife Trust and other Island organisations that are dedicated to protecting our flora and fauna. I also support the Curraghs Wildlife Park and its conservation goals and breeding programmes relating to endangered species worldwide.

Question 2: How will you work with nature to help solve the climate crisis?

The climate crisis requires action on a number of fronts. The most crucial in terms of reducing CO2 emissions is to stop burning fossil fuels for power generation, heating buildings and transport. Also key, is the need to preserve and increase carbon sinks. On the Island this can be done most effectively by seeking to conserve upland peat reserves, marine eel grass beds and planting more trees. I will argue for Tynwald to set targets for doing this and believe that we need to ensure, at the minimum, that a further 200,000 appropriate trees have been planted on the Island before the end of the next administration in 2026. Planting trees, preserving peat and encouraging eel grass is not sufficient though. Our moorland, woodland, marine and other habitats need to be conserved and expanded in a sustainable way with good management. We need to ensure that the skills to do that are available on the Island and that landowners, tenant farmers and our fishers are adequately rewarded for adapting their land management and fishing practices to ensure that it happens.

Liberal Vannin is a member of the Island's Climate Change Coalition. As such, our aim is to both encourage and support our government to address climate change by working in 3 areas: reduce emissions, (measured against interim targets), invest in renewables and keep our sustainability promises to UNESCO re our Biosphere status.

Question 3: Following COVID-19, how can we use nature to improve health and wellbeing?

People have always used nature to improve health and well-being, but the lockdowns over the last year or so have made many more value the Island's natural environment. From the bird song that lifts our spirits to the rejuvenating walks in the countryside, along our coastline or watching dolphins and other marine mammals surfacing in our bays.

Therapies that include contact with animals, walk and talk and just contemplating our surroundings, are known to prove beneficial for our mental health; this also has a knock-on effect on how we cope with physical ailments. I will support Manx Care having the resources to develop these over the next administration and encourage our schools to work with Manx Wildlife Trust and others to help develop an enduring interest in nature in our youngsters as they grow up.

Manifesto

Further information from my manifesto on ideas for climate change mitigation and the rural and 'blue' economy can be found at:

[Paul Weatherall, MHK Candidate for Ayre & Michael on Climate Change – A Green New Deal – Liberal Vannin](#)

[Paul Weatherall, MHK Candidate for Ayre & Michael on the Rural & 'Blue' Economy – Liberal Vannin](#)

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