

READ SOPHIE LANOE'S BLOGS:

THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT & FUTURE ENERGY RESOURCES



Sophie Lanoe
Summer Intern blogs



info@gpeg.org.gg
www.gpeg.org.gg

Intern Update Week 1:

During my first week with GPEG I met with director and founder Jon Moulton to discuss areas of research to look into, many were addressed but the two main topics that were established were:

- **Guernseys Future Energy Resource: Green, Clean and Sustainable**
- **Guernseys System of Government: Would party politics work? A need for Government reform?**

On the 9th June GPEG will host one of their quarterly lunches with guest speakers, Dr Benny Peiser, Director of the Global Warming Foundation and Bob Beebe CEO of the Little Green Energy Company, which will discuss the impact of climate change and discuss the ongoing energy crisis. This last week I learnt more about Guernsey's commitment to reducing carbon emissions, the target by 2030 is a reduction of 57% from 1990 levels. Notably in the UK as per the Paris Agreement of 2015 and 2021 Glasgow Climate Pact, the United Kingdom has shown commitment to achieving net zero by 2050, and an ambitious target of achieving 100% clean electricity by 2035. As our island is such a small component in the total global scale of carbon emission output, this target of net zero and clean energy is also something Guernsey should be looking to aim for. However because we are such a small island, with a reliance on France for energy via the channel cables, achieving 100% green energy in the future will be a challenge. Setting up a sustainable and renewable energy supply which is secure and affordable on the island will prove challenging, which I have been exploring. One of the main issues is determining which energy system will be the most efficient, reliable, affordable, and cause minimal damages economically and socially in the longer term. Some alternatives taken into consideration were, tidal, wave, geothermal, solar, wind power, hydrogen and carbon capture to name a few.

Whilst we as an island are not feeling the full brunt of the energy crisis compared to other countries, in relation to energy on a local scale, electricity is a growing challenge, with the increase of demand as a result of the growing population. As discussed in one of the most recent [GPEG publications](#) on the need for an innovative electricity strategy, these listed above alternatives to fossil fuels provide greener options however they 'do not provide an immediate and a complete solution'. The Channel Islands Electricity Grid is set to expire in 2027, if negotiations are not complete by next year, the island will be in a vulnerable position to bargain with France (the main source of electricity via undersea cables). There has been a steep increase in European electricity prices, as a consequence of geopolitics, namely, Russia's war on Ukraine, of which the islanders will feel the impact of this if no effective and suitable strategy is implemented fast.

Another contentious topic to discuss is the notion of party politics with a future States cohort. Debates on education and tax have taken place over a long extended period of time, with no clear cut policy decisions being enforced and a large amount of inaction and indecision. In

recent press reports this has been termed ‘can kicking’, our machinery of government has proven over the last few recent years to be ineffective, which could be due to the lack of party politics and too much adoption of tribalism and ‘every man for themselves’ approach. Guernsey as an island reformed our system of election to island wide voting in October 2020 which proved far more equitable, so should this reform stretch to a change in our system of government? There is no denying that a lack of consensus/majority has led to states debates faltering, as many pressing issues are left to the next states to decide, and the cycle begins again. In my work with GPEG I will research other jurisdictions' modes of government and democracy style. Guernsey is a small island, a full scale House of Parliament style reformation in our government system, I appreciate, would not be appropriate for the population of our size, but could something similar be proposed to prevent this ‘can kicking’?.

Over the forthcoming weeks I will be researching these areas and producing detailed papers on the matter. If there are any other issues you would like me to explore, or discuss please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Intern Update Week 2:

This week as part of my internship programme I focussed on the energy debate, on a local and global scale, as the States of Guernsey Environment and Infrastructure committee released their report and 'strategic direction' for electricity for Guernsey and GPEG held a lunch meeting on the topic of energy.

States released proposed electricity strategy for debate for the 25 year forecast until 2050:

Key points:

- Meeting Guernseys decarbonisation aims
- Economic costs/savings/affordability
- Meeting demand
- Socio Environmental consequences

Plan: 'Option D'

- Wind: to supply between 46-55%
- Solar: 8-10%
- New interconnected cable from France: 37-43%

I have created an interactive poll on the States report in the hope to get a sense of what the people of Guernsey view the released report as. It would be very much appreciated if you could fill it in and provide me with your thoughts on the matter. Whilst the new strategy highlights it's impossible to predict explicit financial costs and savings in the long term, I would argue that in terms of renewable energy and reducing carbon emissions, financial spendings should be viewed as an investment.

[The States Proposed Electricity Strategy - Google Forms](#)

GPEG Lunch Meeting Notes:

On the 9th June, GPEG hosted one of its quarterly lunches at the OGH with speakers consisting of, Dr Benny Peiser, Director of The Global Warming Policy Foundation and Bob Beebe, CEO of The Little Green Energy Company. I was delighted to attend alongside a collection of year 12 students from Blanchelande College, who also shared the same spirit of getting involved in the energy discussion and the Q and A chaired by Lord Digby.

Firstly the talk delivered by Dr Benny, primarily focussed on the net zero targets set by countries around the world by 2050 to begin with. 'Net Zero' refers to the balance between the amount of greenhouse gas that's produced and the amount that's removed from the atmosphere; it can be achieved through a combination of emission reduction and emission removal. Evidence shows our planet is getting hotter with global average temperature now 1.2 degrees higher than the pre industrial era. The effects of this are erratic weather patterns, heatwaves, floods, severe storms, loss of polar ice, acidification of oceans, rising sea levels.

Global temperatures are on track to increase as much as 2.7 degrees by 2100, based on current policies worldwide, rendering some places uninhabitable. Dr Benny suggested his take on the net zero targets by 2050 were 'highly unlikely, the targets set by governments set unrealistic policies'. He also urged that 'the process of decarbonisation is gradual', and there needs to be wider acceptance of this, rather than focussing entirely on the negative aspects, as we have come a long way since the 1970s oil crisis. For example, a positive aspect is that deaths relating to climate issues are down by 95%, compared to previous centuries. It is recognised there is a general consensus amongst global players/stakeholders to tackle the energy crisis and reduce the effects of climate change. Interestingly Dr Benny also touched upon that currently, 'there is no international agreement to decarbonise', there are lots of renewable options that have been explored and global pacts set by the IPCC, but singular solutions, only non legally binding (in some cases) commitments. 'Technology is the solution, but it is unknown which is the best option to use', although he did emphasise the need to look at all options, and be flexible in our approach to tackling the issue, 'a sole reliance on reliance on renewable doesn't work'. Dr Benny also suggested that the wind and solar energy alternatives receive a lot of funding, which penalises and disadvantages other forms of renewable energy systems. He proposed nuclear technology is something to be explored more and funded more generously in the future, as nuclear safety has progressed tremendously, and provides a longer term affordable solution to the energy crisis.

Bob Beebe, CEO of Guernsey company Little Green Energy, provided the second talk on the local agenda of energy/environment, as well as the work of the company. Over the last 10 years the company has installed over 1.2 MegaWatts of solar PV, and is a Tesla certified installer. Some of their vast range of renewable energy services include, commercial and residential solar panel installation, electrical vehicle charging, Tesla power walls and battery storage systems. Bob also shed light on their 'Bees and Trees' initiative and strategy for nature, as he highlighted that we have lost over 80 species of insects in Guernsey alone.

Key points condensed:

- Energy Security and Sustainability
- Need for greater energy independence, to relieve the pressure on the cable network, 'there are 54 reactors in France 27 last year were out of order, reflects the need for a diversity of fuel options'
- Need for a combination of private and public investment
- Distribution of battery energy systems
- Drive of education on the matter

The Little Green Energys battery systems currently have a 10 year warranty, the solar panels have a 40 year warranty, and even after this time as passed studies have shown the panels still operate as a 88% or more output. After their lifespan solar panels also currently are more than 75% recyclable, Bob indicated. If you are interested and committed to reducing your carbon footprint on our island I would definitely prompt you in the direction of the [Little Green Energy company](#).

The committee for environment and infrastructure recently published policy letter on a new energy strategy, is brimming with good intentions and ambitions for reducing our island's carbon footprint. However, a strong takeaway message from the speakers is that we should not make commitments at present. Technological development is moving rapidly and expenditure on renewables could become quickly outdated, flexibility in strategies should be implemented/taken into consideration. Energy affordability is a key issue for all governments around the world and which is also a very applicable strong message for Guernsey. To conclude, the debate on energy is all about finding the perfect harmony/balance between energy security, affordability and sustainability.

Intern Update Week 4: The Guernsey Governmental System

For this article, I am going to focus on the Guernsey Governmental System, as the next area of discussion for GPEG will be on, 'the Machinery of Government'. I, as a young person, admittedly did not know much about Guernsey's machinery of Government, only the UK's system as it is often making the media headlines. In speaking to a few people of a similar age, a lot of the youth of today are unaware of the way their island's government is run and how policies and important decisions are passed. In this short article, I hope to condense what our government is composed of and how new policies/legislation are passed broadly speaking. Recently there has been some debate over Guernsey's machinery of government, as many policy proposals and legislation have been prolonged being approved, this has commonly been termed 'can kicking'. States debates over the years have gradually been getting longer, and more often than not, no decision is ever concluded. This has led to the introduction of the idea of party politics coming into play within our States. We first saw evidence of this in the 2020 first island-wide election with the Guernsey Party and the Alliance Party Guernsey. We are a small island to introduce a full-scale party system, but there evidently needs to be some kind of Government reform. The 'can kicking' is causing an apparent social 'tiff'. GPEG Chairman Lord Digby commented in an [article](#), eloquently summarising the issue, 'The system doesn't work very well and needs to be improved... The problem is the system gets them and in so many ways they become quite powerless. On this island, the system is incredibly powerful. I came here thinking it was refreshing there were no political parties but actually it means nothing gets done. The default position is doing nothing.'

Party politics is something that should be looked into, as with a majority party elected it is likely more things would pass through the first time, so to speak. Deputy Soulsby in a recent press article commented on the 'dirty politics' in the chamber during 2020 and evidence of 'tribalism'. To quote, 'Tribalism is destructive. Trust and mutual respect need to be re-established or the community will suffer. My belief is that, just like me, many deputies have had enough of the 'us and them' attitude that has pervaded this particular States.' Rather than Deputies forming cliques and unofficial alliances, it would almost be better to form a labelled party, rather than causing personal fall outs, which delay essential policy decisions being made. We elect these Deputies with the faith they will govern over us and not bicker. As I commented above about the introduction of party politics in the 2020 election, I feel we should further develop this concept, as the Guernsey Party was by and large very successful, the Alliance Party on the other hand failed to make the cut. If future candidates were to assemble with similar views into a group it would make candidate selection for the voter easier, therefore making it more likely the policies would get passed.

One side note I wanted to highlight was a component in my view that contributes towards 'can kicking', and that is the narrow demographic that has been consistently voted into the Assembly each election. We need candidates for the future generations that want to contribute to the progression of Guernsey as a society, and not introduce amendments and delays to these crucial progressive policies. As we are approaching another island-wide voting election

in June 2025, I would strongly urge the generation of today to enrol on the electoral roll. And to also keep an eye on the State's meetings, voting outcomes and policy decisions that affect us. Guernsey is passing more progressive legislation eg: the advanced Anti Discrimination law and becoming a more diverse place to live in all aspects of life. Significantly, you can vote from the age of 16 on the island, in the UK the voting age is still 18. Currently of the 38 deputies, only 8 are women. The Assembly has a complete lack of diversity, this isn't just with race and gender but also age, income/economic background and work experience to name a few. I must reiterate this is not to say that this is the sole cause of the 'can kicking'. However, the more people (in particular young people) that show an engagement in politics, a different demographic entirely has the potential to be elected in the next election.

First of all the wider background, Guernsey is a self-governing crown dependency with its own directly elected legislative assembly, own administrative, fiscal and legal systems. Guernsey's parliament as a whole is called the 'States of Deliberation'.

How our Government works:

Composition of the Government:

- 38 elected Deputies via island wide voting and 2 Alderney Representatives
- The States is structured into 1 Senior Committee (**Policy and Resources**) and 6 Principal Committees along with several other Committee Boards authorities and Commissions.

Principal Committees:

1. Economic Development
2. Education, Sport and Culture
3. Employment and Social Security
4. Environment and Infrastructure
5. Health and Social Care
6. Home Affairs

Some of the authorities boards and and commissions include, development and planning authority, transport and licensing authority, overseas aids and development commission, States trading supervisory board, States assembly and constitution committee, scrutiny management committee, civil contingencies authority.

- All information about the Committees can be found in the 'Blue Book'.

General Principles:

- Allocate the functions of government
- Carry out the functions of government which they have retained
- Debate and vote upon proposals to enact, amend or repeal legislation
- Debate and vote upon proposals for taxation and expenditure

- Scrutinise and hold to account the policies, decisions and administration of those functions of government which they have allocated to their Committees

The **Rules of Procedure** of the States of deliberation and their Committees:

The Legislation:

- The Reform (Guernsey) Law 1948 as amended
- The States Committees (Constitution and Amendment) (Guernsey) Law, 1991
- The States Reform (Guernsey) Law, 2015

The Rules of procedure contain 2 sections:

- Section 1 Rules of Procedure- procedures to be followed before and during States' Meetings generally
- Section 2 Committee Rules- govern the operation of the Committee of the States

Code of Conduct for Members of the States of Deliberation

All States members are expected to comply with the provisions of the code in all aspects of their public life. Does not seek to regulate what they do in their private life, but must be aware some private and personal matters may impact on their public role. The code is in addition to the Rules of Procedure. I have listed below a few of the key codes of conduct:

- Declaration and oath of public duty, promise to perform their duties 'well and faithfully'
- Acting in the public interest, represents the interest of those who they have been elected to serve. Members shall base their conduct on consideration of public interest, avoid conflict between personal and public interest
- Respect the rule of law and administration of justice and give effect to the ideals of a democratic government
- Priority of attending States meetings, should be present in the meeting unless there is a reasonable excuse
- Personal conduct principles: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, leadership
- Uphold political impartiality of the Civil service

How Policy and Laws are passed:

States Resolutions:

After each States meeting a document setting out the decisions of the States of deliberation that day is produced and published.

Voting and Voting records:

The States as of September last year use electronic voting. Traditionally votes of procedural motions meaning the presiding officer asks the members to call out their vote in French,

‘Pour’ or ‘Contre’, meaning for or against. ‘Je ne vote pas’ is the term used for abstaining in a vote.

There are many French terms/expressions used within States meetings, the most common being:

- ‘Présent(e)’: Answer given by Members to the roll call to show they are in the Assembly
- Absent(e) de l’Isle: Answer given at the evocation by a Member on behalf of another member who is absent from Guernsey
- Indisposé(e): Answer given at the evocation by a Member on behalf of another member for a member who is ill
- Billet d’État: The document containing the convening notice, legislation, propositions, policy letters and supplementary material for each States’ Meeting.
- Sursis/Sursis Motivé: This in French means a delay or a stay and is a motion to do just that in respect of an item before the Assembly. A sursis which directs a course of action during the period of deferral is a sursis motivé.
- Simultaneous Electronic Voting (SEV): The electronic voting system used by the Assembly to register their votes on Propositions. After the Presiding Officer has declared the result of a vote the full voting record is immediately published on statesvoting-records.gov.gg
- Aux Voix /Appel Nominal/Division: Aux voix means to go to the vote. Appel nominal means a vote by roll call of Members. Division is a widespread parliamentary term for going to the vote on something

New Legislation:

If a previous piece of legislation is no longer fit for purpose and needs to be repealed or completely replaced the requirements are variable. Additionally some pieces of legislation may only need to be updated through what is called an amendment. Once the States agrees with a resolution to create a new or amend a piece of legislation, the new law has to pass through several check points before coming into force:

The Process:

1. States Resolution to draft legislation
2. Legislation prioritised
3. Drafting commences
4. Draft with Committee
5. Committee approval
6. Legislation review panel approval
7. Commencement (enforcement)

All of my information has been taken from [States of Guernsey \(gov.gg\)](https://states.gov.gg) website documents.

Intern Update 5:

This is my final blog post for GPEG, and week 5 of my internship. This article is going to focus on different jurisdictions' modes of government, in particular other small populations of similar size to Guernsey. Guernsey's current population, to put into perspective, is estimated to be around 63,530 in 2023 according to projections of the latest United Nations data. As I previously mentioned in my week 4 update, the next area of discussion for GPEG is on Guernsey's machinery of government. Here I have researched these small jurisdictions' systems of government for you to look at briefly and provide some insight as to how these islands operate. Perhaps this short article may provoke some debate and thoughts on whether Guernsey should adopt or implement something similar, as our government is evidently not working as well as it could in its current form.

Jersey System of Government:

Population: 111,300 (January 2023)

Over the sea is our neighbour Jersey, their machinery of government is similar to Guernsey however instead of Committees they have, 'The Council of Ministers'. Here is a brief summary on how it works:

Composition:

- The States Assembly, Jersey's elected parliament made up of 49 members which include, Deputies, Constables, Ministers, Constituents
- Council of Ministers (11)
- Supported by 11 departments of Jersey's public service, each department support Ministers to deliver on their policy objectives and deliver services to islanders
- Departments are led by the 'Director General/ Chief Officer'
- 1 Chief Executive Officer, also referred to as Head of the Public service, currently Suzanne Wylie
- Additional non executive and legal departments that form part of the public service but sit outside the government structure

1. Children, Young People, Education and Skills
2. Chief Operating Office
3. Treasury and Exchequer
4. Strategic Policy, Planning and Performance
5. Office of the Chief Executive
6. Ministry of External Relations
7. Justice and Home Affairs
8. Infrastructure, Housing and Environment
9. Health and Community Services
10. Department for the Economy

11. Customer and Local Services

Other points:

- States meet every 3 weeks, with breaks in Easter, Summer and Christmas
- Island wide voting, most recent election was in 2022, next election is due in 2026
- Minimum voting age of 16
- Need to enrol on the electoral roll

Isle of Man System of Government:

Population: 86,320 (June 2023)

Similarly to Jersey and Guernsey, the Isle of Man is a self-governing crown dependency with its own parliament, government and laws. The island has a ministerial system of government, and is called the 'Manx' government.

Composition:

- Political head of the 'Manx' government is the Chief Minister, who is nominated by Tynwald from amongst its own members and appointed by His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor.
- Chief Minister selects Ministers who have responsibility for the major Government departments and alongside the Chief Minister form the Council of Ministers, the Manx Cabinet
- Tynwald is the Isle of Man's parliament which is tri-cameral it has three key components:
 - Legislative council and House of Keys which meet separately, and discuss legislation
 - Tynwald Court where the above meet all together

Departments of the Political members are chaired by Ministers with Members:

- **Cabinet office**
- Department of Education Sport and Culture
- Department for Enterprise
- Department of Environment, food and agriculture
- Department of Health and Social Care
- Department of Home Affairs
- Department of Infrastructure
- The Treasury
- Council of Ministers is supported by a number of committees and subcommittees which are chaired by the ministers which are, Economic Strategy Board, National Security Committee, Housing and Communities Board, Legislative Committee and Brownfield Regeneration Steering Group

Council of Ministers Functions:

- Key function is to determine policy and priorities
- Council considers proposals from the Treasury for the annual budget and decide on legislation to be brought forward from across Government during its term in office
- Discuss important matters concerning the islands with other countries will also come under the councils branch

Other Points:

- As with any system of government there is a ministerial code of conduct to follow
- Council meetings commence weekly on a Thursday, although meetings can be held at any time at the discretion of the Chief Minister
- Papers are submitted to the council by Government departments which are either to 'seek approval', 'seek direction' or 'information only'

Bermuda System of Government:

Population: 61,596 (June 2023)

Bermuda's system of government is based on the Westminster Model of parliamentary democracy. The system heavily relies upon the existence of organised political parties each laying policies before the electorate for approval in a general election.

Composition:

- The Governor, appointed by the Queen
- The Deputy Governor, appointed by the Governor
- The Premier, the Majority leader in the House of Assembly
- The Cabinet who are appointed by the Premier
- The Legislature made up of:
 - The House of Assembly, comprising 36 elected members from around Bermuda.
 - The Senate, comprised of 11 members appointed by the Governor, (5 from the governing party at the recommendation of the Premier, 3 from the official opposition at the recommendation of the leader of the opposition and 3 as independents, chosen by the governor)
- Bermuda is divided into 36 constituencies each represented by one members in the House of Assembly
- The party who wins the most seats in the general election, or who has the support of a majority of members in the House of Assembly, forms the government.
- Largest minority party becomes the official opposition

The Legislature Main functions:

- Enact laws
- Implement taxes
- Evaluate government policies and proposals for expenditure
- The legislature helps to bring the relevant facts and issues before the electorate

Other Points:

- The Constitution of Bermuda was introduced in June 1968 and has since had further amendments
- Contains provisions relating to, the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual, the powers and duties of the Governor; and the composition, powers and procedure of: the Legislature, the Cabinet, the Judiciary, and the Public Service.

UK Local Council System:

The UK constitution is also unique, it is uncodified (unwritten, the legislation is not centralised), unlike many other countries. The government has an Executive composed of: the government, the ultimate locus of state power, the administration the body responsible for running the country, and the initiating power, the body that designs public policy and proposes new laws. In addition to MPs on the mainland there are councils, whose function is to work in districts/local communities to develop a vision for their local area and improve services and the quality of life for the citizens. Guernsey's system of government has often been compared to the UK local council system, in reading my condensed summary you will immediately be able to see the similarities to our States of Guernsey:

Key Points:

- Councillors are elected on four year terms to single or multi member wards
- All elected local councillors must declare any interests, gifts or hospitality they they get that could influence decisions they make, off which will be published
- If you feel as if the council service has not properly been delivered official complaints can be filed
- Many parts of England have 2 tiers of local government, county councils and district/borough/city councils
- However some only have 1 unitary tier of local government which provide all the local services for example, unitary authority in shire areas, London boroughs, metropolitan boroughs

County Councils:

Services for the county include:

- Education
- Transport
- Planning
- Fire and public safety
- Social care
- Libraries
- Waste management
- Trading standards

District, borough and city councils:

Cover a smaller area than county councils, services are more limited but include:

- Rubbish collection
- Recycling
- Council tax collections
- Housing
- Planning application

Decision Making:

- Full council is responsible for all decisions, but most of the work is given to smaller group of councillors or council officers which are paid staff
- The council must publish, details of when key decisions will be taken, papers of meetings (atleast 5 working days beforehand), and the minute of meetings to show the decisions that were made
- Anyone can attend most of the council meetings, but won't be able to speak at them