

## 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?

***I believe we should do all we can to increase voter turnout, however I believe we must have a sensible requirement for people to be able to vote, but open to review in the future if there is a public outcry and the reasons are wise.***

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

***My view is that everyone is entitled to their view and freedom of speech, and we should avoid, at all costs, any regulation of any freedoms. In recent years we have seen how quickly disinformation spreads. This has created real challenges for our democracy. We live in a modern global media environment that elevates falsehoods as much as truths and divides people as much as it brings them together. You are entitled to your opinion, but you are not entitled to your own facts. We must continue to listen to all voices that are not out to hurt others.***

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

***As above. But would add that everyone has a responsibility to be mindful of the unintended consequences and hurt that it could cause. Balance is the key.***

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?

***I believe this must be looked at with the LOD. The United Kingdom Equality act 2010 covers all of this very clearly, as long as the Jersey law has a clear structure and belief system and covers ALL religions. It is important of course that like the UK act, it equally covers people who do not hold a particular philosophical belief.***

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

***It depends on your definition of important. In the scheme of our current priorities and challenges, I would argue not a pressing matter. However, if we are going to update the Jersey Equality Law as above it might not be appropriate in a modern parliament other than for counsel to members. I believe much like anything that is change of the island's parliament, islanders MUST be consulted.***

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

***Again, I believe we must listen to our parishioners. It is their rate and tax paying money at the end of the day. Churches or places of worship are very important to many and provide the parish with a place of community and the community must be again consulted and we ensure fairness for all those who seek support.***

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?

***Jersey's personal tax system is complex although work continues to make it simpler. However due to the high cost of living, driven by the current very high inflation rates that continues to put pressure on all islanders, especially "middle Jersey" We have to reduce the threshold at which folk start paying tax to put money back into the pockets of working people. Those proposals need much scrutiny.***

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

***This is an area I have led and been consistent on from day one. We have failed to invest for so many years in providing appropriate services. Thanks to my work in scrutiny, we have increased targeted financial input and finally forced government to update Orchard House and build a new in-patient facility. We must secure the new Head of service and we must ringfence funds to increase school counselling and reduce waiting lists. But in all honestly, poor mental health is all our responsibility, is our island really enabling a good modern environment? We need a much-needed cultural change to move away from old Victorian style way of life and listen and value everyone, but it must start at an early age, and we must start to move away from the coattails of the past.***

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

***We must reward and encourage folk to be part of this. Jersey is an Island at the end of the day. There really can not be any more excuses now. We see more folk cycling and the bus service has improved. We need a consistent service by sea and by air but since the pandemic this is not so straight forward currently as many airlines for examples as we are seeing are still struggling to bounce back.***

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

***I feel we can do both are doing so. We are seeing more and more local businesses' lead the way on this, which again is how it should be. We should support and encourage a fair system for all to be able to achieve this, as it is clear as day around the western world that everything has risen in life, except wages.***

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

***A complex issue. In brief I will support a sensible and fair empty property tax, schemes to and other policies to enable young local islanders to access the housing ladder. But not at the expense of losing high numbers of social housing. Remove red tape to allow the surplus States land and properties to be released to build not just 1/2-bedroom flats but long-term homes for families. We also need to urge treasury, if possible, to bring some income tax rental relief for working people. Work together with landlords and tenants alike to make it fair.***

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?

***On the surface this looks a good idea, but we must ensure any such policy is fair against all sectors of the island. I would like to hear the views of the Charities commissioner and stakeholders on this before forming a complete view on it.***

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?

***I have always held the belief due to the islands history and what islanders saw first-hand during the occupation of the horrific treatment of all nationalities during***

***the Occupation. But we also know the famous stories of the compassion and heroic bravery of islanders who took in and sheltered those who need safety. On that basis and the serious and tight rules and regulations that must be required that if needed now or in the future, we should always seek to play our part to help shelter anyone if we can. We can only do so much but should try.***

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

***Again, following the recent world events, we should always try, if we have balanced means to do so, support overseas. Anything that is put forward to change this in a reduction or an increase should be debated & scrutinised.***

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?

We should not always look to the UK as the best way to create a Jersey law for its people. We are self-governed and independent to think and listen to our islanders when creating our island laws. I don't have a view on banning conversion therapy. We must respect and protect all genders especially female rights that deserve to be heard. And remember that it is a person's life we are contemplating and should governments control that if there is no harm being caused? We must be careful not to persecute and alienate any part of society.

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

***As my previous answer we should be doing all we can to be compassionate and supportive of the rights of the individual for their own human rights. This shouldn't be dictated by simplistic laws as the decision to take this common health intervention is often an emotional and complicated one. Sometimes in very harrowing situations. If we are committed to improving and combating Mental Health, then this should be carefully viewed and expanded and made accessible when required. We must always listen to women on this subject.***

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?

***Yes. Again, we as humans can be quite contradicting on what our fellow humans can and can't do. Do we not now live in the age when we accept and argue for fairness and equalities as you have suggested in your questions. So is the fundamental point here. We should have choice. We have agreed in the***

***assembly in principle this and now the process is underway to bring back a draft law to ensure it has all the safeguard and processes have been drawn up. I have great faith in our island that this will ensure it meets the compassionate and lawful needs required. We also have a great chance to raise the needs and funding for end-of-life care provided mostly by the charity Jersey Hospice. Why Should this just not be provided equally by our tax paying money as a vital service that needs enhancing so the choice is fair. We have the heart to do this.***

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

***It is just a matter of time before cannabis is decriminalised. We need to ensure the next Government bring forward the delayed amendment to the misuse drugs law. While we must protect those who turn to drugs for a lack of decent mental health support who when taking any form of illegal or legal cannabis sadly badly effects their mental illness. Further work must be done to review all this.***

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

***Faith is a wonderful thing. It is a personal choice that can build and bring communities together to help others without persecution. Like all bodies more can and should be done to ensure they are safeguarded and not above the law or equally oppressing or forcing their will onto others. While this is not a big a problem as many years ago, it would be unwise to be so relaxed about it again.***