Who Am I?

I am a businesswoman, wife, mother and daughter, but not always in that order.

After graduating with a BSc (Hons) in Geography from King's College, London University, I trained as a Chartered Accountant in the City of London. It was here that I met my husband Phil, to whom I have now been married for 23 years.

In 1990, I joined KPMG in Guernsey and was a director of their trust company for several years. Following a take-over, I became a director of Kleinwort Benson's Trust Company and headed up its operations department in Guernsey and Jersey. In 2003 I was appointed Chief Operating Officer of one of the largest law firms in the Channel Islands.

There ends the typical business profile. In 2006, having been disillusioned with the traditional business model, Phil and I set up The Mundi Group Ltd. A 'not just for profit' company, it aims to promote ethical business and make a positive difference. We are probably best known for our fair trade Mondomundi shops and have one of the largest fair trade retail businesses in the British Isles.

I also currently part-own and run a small fiduciary company called Parish Group Ltd, that provides support services to local businesses. I am a Member of the Institute of Directors, Guernsey Chamber of Commerce and Confederation of Guernsey Industry.

Education and training has always been close to my heart. My mother was a teacher and there are many more in my family who are involved in education. I currently sit as a business representative on the States of Guernsey Lifelong Learning Advisory Committee. I was also a member of the training committee of the Guernsey Society of Chartered and Certified Accountants.

I have 2 children; Alexandra, 12 and Dominic, 10, both of whom have gone to St Martin's Primary School. I was also Chairman of the School's PTA.

To relax, I like cycling Guernsey's green lanes, gardening and painting. I've also run a few charity races, including the Great North Run.

Why Vote for Me?

In a nutshell, the reason I think you should vote for me, and the principal reason I am standing, is that I believe I would provide a breath of fresh air to the States of Deliberation.

I have become increasingly exasperated over the last 4 years with the way the States is run. There has been a lack of accountability and transparency, operational inefficiency and absence of joined-up thinking. I believe I can make a difference.

As a Chartered Accountant, I understand the importance of balancing the books. I can tell when the figures don't add up and when more information is required to be able to make a rational decision.

As a geography graduate, I understand the environmental issues that face Guernsey and that we ignore the effects we are having on our Island at our peril.

As a businesswoman, I understand the current economic pressures that are being faced by local businesses. I have experience across varied economic sectors and organisations. I have had board level positions in large multi-jurisdictional organisations and have experienced the challenges of running my own small business.

As a wife and mother, I understand how hard it can be to balance work and home life. I know that the cost and availability of child care is a major issue for women who want to get back to work. I care about my children's education and the opportunities that will be available to them when they grow up, as well as being concerned about the availability of affordable housing as they start their working lives.

As a daughter, I understand the pressures facing our older generation, the rising cost of living out-pacing pensions, the availability of sheltered housing and costs of healthcare.

I'm in my mid-forties and full of passion and energy to help improve this Island. Some of our Deputies are out of touch with the Guernsey people, whilst others have run out of ideas. It is now time to elect people who bring new ideas about how things can be improved and have a long term vision for a better Guernsey.

I would like to thank Phil and my children for the moral support they have given me. I am also thankful to my proposer Peter de Sausmarez and seconder Lois Falla. Last, but not least, I would also like to thank all those people who have encouraged me to stick my head above the parapet and stand at this election.

For a Breath of Fresh Air

Hello. My name is Heidi Soulsby and I am standing as a candidate for Deputy in SE District. I hope you will be able to find time to read about me, what I stand for and what I want to achieve if you elect me as Deputy.

I often hear people say, 'all these politicians are the same'. However, I can assure you that there is no-one currently sitting in the States of Deliberation that is like me. I hope that this manifesto will make it clear that I am not a typical politician. I want to see change in the way Guernsey is governed to bring it into the 21st century. The prevarications and procrastinations over the last few years have held the Island back. Delays in decision making have cost us millions. A lack of accountability and transparency have caused distrust and directly affected the lives of the Guernsey people, young and old. The current system has got to change and it can only happen with new blood in the States of Guernsey.

This document just gives a flavour of what I stand for. If you are interested, I have provided a more in-depth analysis on my website. I will do my best to get to see as many of you as I can during my campaign as I really do want to hear your views and be able to discuss these with you. However, whether or not I am able to see you, always feel free to contact me by any of the means below.

www.heidisoulsby.com











🗜 Heidi Soulsby for Deputy 📋 07839201850 🥑 vote@heidisoulsby.com

A Flavour of What I Stand For

Reduce waste

I support kerbside recycling and believe that we will only meet our recycling targets through the 'polluter pays' principle. The waste strategy should be phased in with phase 1 focussing on waste reduction, thus giving us time to determine how far we can reduce waste before committing to any major contracts & expenditure dealing with what's left.

Pursue renewable energy options

As a small Island, surrounded by the power of nature, Guernsey is ideally placed to make the most use of renewable energy. Alderney has stolen a march on us and Guernsey now needs to catch up. We have the ability to set an example to the rest of the world with a sustainable energy system that will make us more independent and reduce costs.

Effective public transport system

The current bus service is under-utilised and does not meet the needs of those who would be happy to use it. I want to see a system of smaller fuel efficient shuttle buses that operate more frequently and with longer operational hours. A system that costs more, but is used more, is more economic than one that is not used at all.

Strategy for healthcare

Healthcare is a ticking time-bomb. With an ageing population the demand for healthcare will grow. This has been obvious for some time yet nothing has been done to consider how this will be resourced or funded. We must come up with a solution as soon as possible.

Help mums get back to work

It can be hard for mums to get back to work, whether they have supportive partners or not. The cost of child care can sometimes make it uneconomic and some may worry that their skills are out of date. I would like to see child care tax allowable and support given to help bridge the skills gap. Families will gain and so will Guernsey.

Action plan for overseas aid

The current provision of aid to the world's poorest is shameful, as is the view expressed by some Deputies recently that charity begins at home. An action plan is required which should be about more than cash. We are of the size that we can provide more innovative solutions that engage Guernsey people directly.

Reduce fossil fuel consumption

We must reduce the use of fossil fuels for economic, environmental and health reasons. I support the implementation of a carbon tax, in conjunction with initiatives to cut traffic pollution through improvements in flow and incentivising energy intensive businesses, such as data centres, to adopt alternative sustainable energy solutions.

Environmental Sustainability

Sustainable funding policy

Spending is being paid for through hidden indirect taxes. Zero-10 has also disproportionately hit local working people and businesses, whilst other organisations benefit from paying no tax at all. This has to stop. A fundamental review of our contribution, benefits and tax structure is essential.

Support local businesses

Local businesses have been hit hard in the last 4 years. The self-employed have seen increases in indirect taxes, the same company fees as non-local big businesses and above inflation premises costs. I will be a voice for local businesses and seek progressive solutions that will enable competitiveness in a tough economic environment.

Strong & Diversified Economy

Operational efficiency

Some States procedures are archaic and do nothing to help get things done. Electronic voting should be brought in and States meetings should be modernised. Structural inefficiencies in the way the States operate need to be addressed urgently.

A Government Fit for Purpose

Accountability & transparency

Reporting lines, roles and responsibilities in the States are not well-defined, resulting in low accountability and opaque decision making. It needs to adopt a more business-like approach to bring clarity and restore confidence in how the government is run. I also support a more directly accountable voting system.

Caring & Cohesive Society

Develop housing strategy

The availability of affordable housing continues to be a major issue for young and old. Part of the solution is to progress the Housing Association model. However, other more radical solutions should be considered.

Leadership & direction

Lack of leadership has resulted in fragmented policy development. The departmental structure creates a silo mentality, causing inefficiencies which, in turn, cost time and money. I want to bring in more joined-up thinking where departments sign up to agreed policy priorities, with Key Performance Indicators in place to assess success.

A Top Class Education for All

Promote lifelong learning

We must ensure that people have the opportunity to develop their skills throughout their life. Needs change and it is important that Guernsey people are given the opportunity to acquire new skills which help them and Guernsey as a whole. I therefore support the development of the Skills Strategy which is currently taking place.

Cut red tape

A growing amount of legislation is stifling businesses and making it harder for them to compete in the global marketplace. Small businesses have to deal with the same bureaucracy as those with their own support departments. I want to see a more flexible approach to take into account the resources available to small businesses.

Balanced regulatory environment

We have, necessarily, a strongly regulated finance sector. However, it is important that open dialogue exists between Government, the regulator and industry to ensure that the finance sector, which makes up 40% of our GDP, retains its competitiveness globally.

Encourage new start-ups

Guernsey is blessed with bright, imaginative people with great ideas and the Guernsey Enterprise Agency provides helpful advice for start-ups. However, Government should be more pro-active in supporting our own talent rather than just wooing big names who have no allegiance to Guernsey.

New education law

The current education law was brought into force before I started school. A lot has changed in educational best practice in the intervening years and I want to see priority given to bringing in new legislation which will set the course for future education provision in Guernsey.

Locally managed schools

A school can only be successful where there is positive interaction between teachers, parents and pupils. The current central management of schools counteracts this. Giving more control at the school level means issues can be dealt with more effectively and leads to more accountability and transparency.

Excellent teacher scheme

The current licence system has had a detrimental effect on our children's education. I want to see an Excellent Teacher Scheme that encourages the retention of the most successful and talented individuals. Inspirational and engaging teaching will motivate children and raise standards for the long term benefit of Guernsey's population.