

I was impressed with your news paper. It is a shame that you are not on Chief Pleas (at least we would have one person on Sark who can do money maths)!

Got your Sarkee times, very interesting. I liked all the bits about mortgages, landform etc, I think you have some very valid points and good arguments, will anyone listen ? Probably not.

Very thought provoking and an excellent background perspective of land reform possibilities. Also very pleased to hear T.S. has/had no part in Sark News, a sad and nasty alienation medium.

I was delighted to receive the latest copy of the "Sarkee Times". It is an excellent, well-considered, well-constructed, practical, sensible and positive publication. My hope is that sufficient independently minded members of the electorate will take the time to read and digest the content.

I particularly like your "alternative" practical suggestion for Land Reform together with your detailed economic views on mortgages or other forms of borrowing against property. Please could you let me have another 3 copies of the "Sarkee Times" for some interested friends and family?

reading your doc with interest I have probably the longest lease on the Island. 80 years plus renewal for ten year every ten year if agreed on both sides.

How do you see I fair in your equations?

The Sarkee Times answers: Your lease is so long it is practically a freehold. The difference in market value between your lease and a freehold interest would be very small (or, in other words, value of your landlord's freehold encumbered with your lease is minute). So

- (i) the voluntary option probably makes relatively little difference to you, but would disadvantage you slightly (all leases would lose value, but the closer they approximate a freehold, the less they would lose);
- (ii) under the enfranchisement option, you would gain a teensy amount but your gain from enfranchising at a discount to market value would be very small because the market value of the difference between the value of your lease and a freehold is already small. This brings up an interesting point I missed in my article, so thank you for bringing it up:
 - (a) short (non-qualifying) leases would lose in value;
 - (b) long (qualifying) leases would gain in value (in the short run); but the most gain would be for leases which are just long enough to qualify - i.e. if the threshold were 21 years, a 21 year lease would gain the most. All qualifying leases would gain something (in the short run), but the closer the lease is to a freehold (e.g. the longer it is, or if it has a renewal option), the less it would gain, since the market value of the differential is smaller the closer the lease is to a freehold. I missed this point! In the long run, with time, all property would decline in value under this option due to trust (in government) issues already outlined in the article. The gain for leases just qualifying (e.g. a 21 year lease) may well outstrip the decrease due to general trust issue. But for a long lease like your own which is nearly a freehold, I believe your gain would be negligible but the loss would not be.
- (iii) under the "an alternative" option I outlined, I don't think you would be affected. Obviously, normal market forces would be at play and if people acquired various length leases, the longer leases would be more valuable. By the sound of things, your landlord is relatively more open to long leases than other landlords. I can't envisage a huge premium going from your lease to a much longer one. Also, another point I missed in my article is that currently, there is already uncertainty and lack of trust in the new government, as things stand. So under this option (since a constitutional guarantee would be provided), property values would likely all increase as there would thereafter be more certainty.