

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER CENTRAL
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 19th JUNE 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 26th JUNE 2023**

Question

“What work is the Minister undertaking in relation to the research and development of future Housing policy, particularly with regard to living costs for tenants in private housing and the subsequent levels of available income left after rents are considered?”

Answer

I recognise that in the short term, it is challenging to deliver a targeted, fair and sustainable solution to what is a very dynamic housing market. Nevertheless, I am taking steps to better support those in housing need – for example, I am widening the eligibility criteria for the Gateway so that more people can access social housing, and I am updating the Residential Tenancy Law to give better protections to tenants across all sectors.

I recognise Islanders’ concerns about the cost of renting a home, and the pressure that these costs can place on household incomes. The Jersey Household Income Distribution preliminary report 2021/2022 provides evidence of the impact of housing costs on household incomes, and the distribution of these housing costs across different groups. The forthcoming final report will enhance the evidence available to inform policy decisions regarding Jersey’s rental market, including matters such as rent stabilisation measures set out in my Residential Tenancy Law proposals.

I have also set out in my Ministerial Plan a priority to progress a sustainable response to the challenges in Jersey’s housing market, including increasing the supply and affordability of housing. As part of the Plan, it is my intention to publish the Island’s first long-term, sustainable housing strategy, which will establish the action we need to take to alleviate the housing issues facing Islanders in the longer term. As we develop the strategy, we will consider the further research and evidence required to understand the drivers of housing affordability in Jersey, and to inform policy solutions, including in relation to the rental sector.