

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER CENTRAL
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 13th MARCH 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 20th MARCH 2023**

Question

In relation to the recent rent increases for Jersey Homes Trust tenants of up to 9%, will the Minister advise –

- (a) what method of comparison, if any, to market rent was used; and
- (b) what action, if any, he is taking to support tenants facing significant increases in their rents?

Answer

(a) Jersey's officially recognised social housing suppliers, of which JHT is one, are subject to the Social Rents Housing Policy, which caps social rents at up to 80% of the market rate. It is important to note that the 80% represents a ceiling not a target. Social housing suppliers are responsible for ensuring the rents they charge comply with the social rents cap. This typically involves sourcing data from the private rentals in Jersey for a given type/size of property and then reducing rents accordingly to comply with the social rents policy.

JHT has advised that its managing agent, [Brunel Management](#), also manages a large number of private rentals, which provides a significant amount of real time data on rents being paid in Jersey's private rental sector.

(b) [Jersey Homes Trust \(JHT\) agreed to my request to delay its rent increases until 1 May](#). The request for a delay is intended to offer JHT tenants more time to get financial arrangements put in place, either by discussing options with the Housing Advice Service or Income Support. It will also offer more time for tenants to discuss their individual circumstances with JHT so that appropriate payment plans can be established.

The team responsible for benefit administration at Customer and Local Services have liaised with JHT to ensure support is available for tenants who are in receipt of Income Support. The Income Support team have already had tenants who are directly affected by the rent increase visiting the department. Officers have provided support as needed for people who are unclear about the situation.

Members of staff from Income Support and the Housing Advice Service will attend a JHT tenants forum meeting at the Town Hall, scheduled for 20 March 2023. They will be on hand to offer advice and support to tenants who have been affected, including on applying for additional financial support.