

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR TREASURY AND RESOURCES  
BY DEPUTY G.C.L. BAUDAINS OF ST. CLEMENT  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 6th DECEMBER 2011**

**Question**

Further to the answer given on 22nd June 2010 when it was stated that scaffolding had first been erected at St. James' Church in September 2006 at a cost of £15,000 a year, would the Minister state –

1. what the total cost to date is of the scaffolding;
2. the nature and estimated cost of repairs,
3. how long the defects have been present and, if from the date of purchase, whether professional surveys were carried out and taken into account at the time of purchase?

**Answer**

1. The scaffold was erected in 2006 as part of the works undertaken on the building. The scaffolding was hired from 2007 and the costs incurred are as follows:

2007 –	£ 5,036 (part year)
2008 –	£ 15,500
2009 –	£ 15,700
2010 –	£ 15,190
2011 –	£ 17,221 (forecast)

2. The building was constructed around 1829 using solid masonry walls in random rubble granite and brick. The more detailed architectural elements, normally constructed using stone in churches, have in the case of St James used a combination of in-situ and pre-cast sand cement. This was obviously done to cut costs at the time.

It is this low cost method of construction which, having deteriorated over the last 185 years, has resulted in the external fabric of the main façade being in a dangerous condition.

Various proposals have been prepared since 2007 to address these building defects. The most cost effective proposals have all been rejected by the Planning and Environment Department on the basis that they would detract from the intrinsic qualities of the building and its status as a Site of Special Interest. The estimated cost of repair has ranged from £88,000 to £750,000 dependant entirely on the scope of work.

Following discussions with the Historic Buildings Advisor in 2011 the view was expressed that most of the applied cement work could be repaired. This was contrary to the professional advice received to date. It was decided therefore to invite a company from the United Kingdom, who specialise in this type of repair to assess the site. The company, Szerelmey, visited the site and confirmed that partial repair and partial replacement should be possible. Szerelmey were then paid to return to undertake a detailed survey with a view to providing a method statement for carrying out the work, a schedule of approximate quantities and an

estimate for the work. It is anticipated the repairs now proposed will cost in the region of £300,000.

The proposal is to obtain competitive tenders for the work from local contractors based on the information provided by Szerelmey, who would also be invited to submit a tender. It is the intention to invite tenders early in 2012 with repair work to follow in 2012. The costs of the works will be borne by Jersey Property Holdings (JPH) maintenance budget. Once work has been completed the scaffold will be removed.

3. The original building was poorly constructed in 1826 and very little restorative maintenance had been carried out by the previous owners. All of the extensive dilapidations were obvious to the naked eye at the time the Vicarage and Church were leased by the States of Jersey in 1992 and subsequently purchased in 1994 for £160,000 and £360,000 respectively. The principle reason for the purchase was to acquire St James School which was already used by the Educational Department at a cost of £400,000. There was no identified use for the Church building at the time. A total of £290,000 was spent on repair and maintenance of the buildings between 1993 and 1998.

In 1998/99 the Jersey Arts Trust spent £1.53 million converting the Church to an Arts Venue and rectifying major defects uncovered during the conversion work. A further minor Capital budget was allocated in the sum of £75,000 in 2003.

In 2004 a planned maintenance survey estimated almost £500,000 would be required over seven years to 2011 to keep the building operational. This funding was not made available.

In 2007 it became apparent that the deterioration to the pinnacles to the twin towers was more serious than previously envisaged. The scaffold which had been erected to provide safe access for inspection purposes has remained in place to protect the general public, staff and others using the building. The alternative course of action would have been to close the venue and cordon off the site.

The original purchase was undertaken by the Planning and Environment Committee prior to the existence of JPH and file information regarding whether condition surveys were carried out prior to the purchase is not held by JPH. It is, however, evident that the budget allocated at the time was not sufficient and JPH is now seeking to solve this legacy issue in the most cost effective manner.

The long term future for the building is much brighter. JPH, together with officers of ESC, are undertaking a feasibility study to examine the potential to co-locate Youth Service facilities to St James and enhance the performance space for both the Youth Service and other arts bodies. The proposed relocation will improve the operation of the Youth Service in St Helier and will release the La Motte Street site for much needed residential development.