

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES BY DEPUTY
R.G. LE HÉRISSIER OF ST. SAVIOUR**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 29TH APRIL 2008

Question

“What are the weekly running costs for Greenfields?”

Answer

The new Secure Unit on the Greenfields site was opened in October 2006 at a cost of £6m.

I perhaps need to remind the Deputy that the purpose of Greenfields is to provide a high standard of care for children – children who may exhibit extremely challenging behaviour. This extremely challenging behaviour can put these children themselves at risk (from self harm), which puts other children at risk, and which puts staff at risk. To provide the appropriate level of care to children and the appropriate staffing resources to protect against harm – as well as optimising the life chances of the children residing there, the weekly ‘running costs’ of Greenfields are £15,873.00 per week when the secure unit is fully operational with eight clients residing there. This means that the weekly cost of placing a child at Greenfields is £1,984.00.

It is a mark of the success of Greenfields and the supporting range of services to children and families provided by the Children’s Executive that the new Greenfields Centre has never been fully occupied. Occupancy levels have varied since its opening in October 2006 from no child being located there to five children at the same time.

It will always be the case that in a small island community there will be considerable volatility in the numbers of children placed in such a specialist centre. When staff are not required to work in Greenfields they are deployed to other services which includes the children’s homes of Heathfields and Le Preference, the Youth Action Team and other such services. This ability to “flex” staffing in this way to meet sharp and volatile fluctuations of demand at Greenfields is good practice in a small island and a means of ensuring good value for the tax payer.