

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 6th DECEMBER 2010**

Question

Will the Minister inform members what the total provision of accommodation for social rental housing for single persons or couples without children exists in the public and housing trust sectors, giving the proportions of 'bedsits' and 1-bed flats in each? Is the Minister aware of the equivalent figures for private sector rentals? Will the Minister further indicate what levels of provision of new units of single accommodation are planned over the coming 2-year period? What policy, if any, does the Minister have over the provision of 'bedsit' accommodation in the public sector?

Answer

The Allocations Policy for States rental homes generally excludes single people or couples under 50 years of age, without children or serious medical conditions, from qualifying for social housing. This is to ensure that the stock is used for those most in need.

The numbers of bedsits and 1 bedroom flats in each of the public and Housing Trust sectors is set out in the table below.

Unit type	Number of units – States Rental	Number of units – Housing Trusts	TOTAL
BEDSIT - FLAT	297	16	313
BEDSIT BUNGALOW	19	0	19
TOTAL BEDSITS	316	16	332
1 BED BUNGALOW	39	0	39
1 BED FLAT	1,623	496	2,119
1 BED HOUSE	25	25	50
1 BED MAISONETTE	3	0	3
TOTAL 1 BEDROOM UNITS	1,690	521	2,211

The Housing Department does not regulate or monitor the private rented sector and I have no reliable evidence of the numbers of such accommodation types.

The delivery of new accommodation is overseen by the Planning & environment Department and they have been able to confirm the following supply of bedsit and 1 bedroom accommodation.

Occupancy Classification	Flats (Incl. studios & bedsits)	Houses (all types)	Total
Category B Homes with permission or Under Construction	489	54	543
Known Social Housing Commitments	44	(19) demolitions	25
Known First Time Buyer Commitments	0	0	0
Known Life Long Homes Commitments	2	0	2
TOTAL	535	35	570

It should of course be noted that just because a development has planning permission doesn't guarantee that it will be developed, let alone developed in a short time frame.

As for future policy on bedsits in the social sector. Bedsits do I am sure have their place, albeit that I believe, it should be limited. It is fair to say that as a form of long term housing they do suffer from limitations, particularly for couples, and offer minimal living space and privacy. The development of bedsits should not feature in new build social housing schemes. Where they are already present on existing sites my Department will actively seek to improve them so that they offer full 1 bedroom flat standards. This might sometimes, but not always, necessitate that 2 bedsits be converted into 1 larger more suitable home.