

3.16 Deputy S. Power of the Minister for Transport and Technical Services regarding remedial work at St. Brelade's Bay following the recent storms:

My question relates not just to the damage but to the loss of sand. Following the damage caused to St. Brelade's Bay by the January storms, bad weather and high tides, will the Minister consider clearing 2 or 3 sections of the beach now to provide a smoother path to a launching area so that damaged trailers, boats, tyres, rims and suspension can be minimised for fishermen, boat owners and indeed all operators on the beach? Thank you.

Deputy K.C. Lewis (The Minister for Transport and Technical Services):

Firstly, we need to remember that only 2 months ago we had some of the worst storms in living memory and the effects of those storms take time to recover. The positive news is that the beach is recovering and sand levels are coming up, but unfortunately not as quick as people would like. The management of beach levels is a difficult issue but the golden rule is not to interfere unless absolutely necessary. In all but extreme cases beaches will naturally recover with ensuing tidal cycles. While I sympathise with the Deputy's concerns for boat owners, fishermen and beach operators, the clearing of rocks from the beach may cause the natural sand build-up to be delayed. Those rocks form the foundation for the beach and collect sand from the tide and wind and prevent the tide and waves from taking the sand back into the sea. My staff have recently carried out a clearance of the beach and picked up all stones and debris, which is not naturally occurring beach stone, which should assist with the problem the Deputy describes.

3.16.1 Deputy S. Power:

I thank the Minister for that information so far. I am sure his officers are aware that there is no sand between the slipway at the Parish church end and an area extending to right over towards the first restaurant to the east of that. The problem that operators have is that the loss of sand is between 12 and 18 inches, so would the Minister and his department not consider a temporary feature to at least clear one pathway down to minimise damage to these trailers because some of these rocks are at least 12 inches high?

Deputy K.C. Lewis:

Yes, I am more than happy to speak to the department again about possibly making one area clear. But sadly the ... it was a terrific storm we had and I am very reluctant to interfere with nature but if we can assist then we will be more than happy to do so.

3.16.2 Deputy S. Power:

My final question: would the Minister and his officers be willing to meet with some operators on the beach in the next week or so to discuss what compromise might be achieved?

Deputy K. C. Lewis:

More than happy to do so.