

Written Submission 2.7

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Reference: Environmental Policies

Submission

Firstly I ask, 'do you actually have an environmental policy?'

If you do then it is not working.

It is a contradiction to have a Planning and Environment Department. One is trying to build, which by its very nature will destroy habitat, and the other is about saving our world and species. (or at least it should be)

In the last ten years we have seen the Yellowhammer, Cuckoo and the Turtle dove become extinct in Jersey, whilst other birds are in decline. Our hedgerows are constantly battered by the methods used, or are pulled up for fences.

The one good department that was working for the environment, promoting the cheap tree scheme and hedgerow plants, you have closed. That says it all really for the States attitude. It seems that we may worry about the rainforests, but not notice our declining habitats here; if we cannot look after our own home environment, then there is little hope elsewhere. An environmentally friendly way of maintaining hedges is to trim once every three years, not twice a year. Obviously there is a need by the road, but why is it done through all the fields? Please don't talk about maximising crops; we see how much is dumped near Plemont. The banks are cut down to bare earth, for what purpose? Where will the small invertebrates live if these banks keep being hammered?

Unless we start to really take a grasp of our own environment here in Jersey, and that every loss of habitat, no matter how small, will effect bio-diversity and effect us, nothing will happen. You need to be much more pro-active in safe-guarding our hedges and banks. This may involve being on the branchage coach tour, or lecturing the road committees before branchage. Obviously the people actually doing the trimming need to be educated. Children are taught the importance of the environment and then what happens when they leave school; what example do we give? Not a good one.

Your advertisement in the paper shows a hand holding a seedling, so mentally you are thinking along the lines of planting new growth. Why are we not seeing it? The tree and hedged lined esplanade car-park is about to go, what planting to compensate this loss has been done? This is what it is about. No more loss, but gain. Approximately 50 million acres a year is being lost of rainforest around the world (an area of England, Wales and Scotland combined), we have to do our utmost to protect all areas of habitat. It starts at home. We need to build upwards, we simply cannot afford to keep losing land.

Our biggest issue facing us is the population growth that we have world- wide. This is one of the major cause of the problems that we face, and effects us all. We need to find a way to sustainable growth or level population. The demands on our resources is simply not sustainable, and this is easily seen on our island, as the present rate of growth will destroy the pleasant island that we enjoy in the not too distant future.

Your policy of letting in migrant labour has had the effect of displacing local labour from the shops, in receptions, offices, building sites etc with the result that we now have over 1000 permanently unemployed. This also means a greater demand on schools, hospital, social services etc. This was an extremely short-sighted policy not to have had a simple work permit scheme, i.e. you let in people who are needed.

Our way of life, of infinite growth, in a finite planet, is not sustainable.