

RESIDENTIAL REGISTRATION SCHEME

**Lodged au Greffe on 11th August 1998
by Deputy A. Breckon of St. Saviour**



STATES OF JERSEY

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion -

- (1) to establish a residential Registration Scheme;
- (2) to appoint a Special Committee -
 - (a) to conduct a full housing survey to establish the actual number of residents, together with their age and length of residency; and
 - (b) to investigate and make recommendations to the States for measures to control population growth to ensure a long-term sustainable population policy;
- (3) to request the Policy and Resources Committee, in consultation with the Finance and Economics and Establishment Committees, to provide the Special Committee with sufficient resources, both finance and manpower, to enable it to undertake its task within a reasonable period of time.

DEPUTY A. BRECKON OF ST. SAVIOUR

REPORT

To quote from the 1997 Strategic Review and Action Plan -

- “1.8 Even with nil migration the Island’s population will still continue to grow through natural increase, because births are expected to continue to exceed deaths until well into the next century. Population projections on the assumption of nil net migration as compiled by the Government Actuary show the population increasing by a further 1,623 to 86,773 by 2008. If an annual rate of net immigration of 200 is assumed, the Office of the Chief Adviser calculates that the population would be 89,472, and if the assumption is of net immigration of 500 annually, the population in the year 2008 would be 93,433.”
- “1.10 The effect of continued population growth on the quality of life and the environment should be self-evident. Even with nil net migration, by the year 2006 it is estimated that there will be 770 new households to accommodate, and some 1,400 more cars on the Jersey roads. If net immigration of 200 per annum occurs, the number of households to accommodate increases to 1,580 and the additional number of cars increases to 3,450. If net immigration of 500 per annum occurs, the number of households to accommodate increases to 3,100 and the number of cars on the road would increase by 6,600. There will also be further pressure on education, health and other essential services. The impact on the environment of providing for the new households (770 households would require 100 vergées of open land) could be reduced, however, if the present aspirations of Island residents could be tempered and if the construction of new dwelling units form part of a programme of urban renewal.”
- “1.11 Present population trends are incompatible with the objective of sustainability referred to in the mission statement in the 1995 Strategic Policy Report.”

“1.13 Few, if any, quarrel with the idea that the objective agreed in 1995 of keeping the permanent resident population the same or less than the then current level should be retained as a vision, and that action must be taken to secure that vision.”

“1.17 Others such as the Housing Committee want more information about the existing residential population, and in particular those who may lay claim to residential qualifications in the future. Attention also has been focused on what needs to be monitored. Some consider it should be the total resident population, others have suggested the total economically active population, and others that it should be the permanent resident population who have rights of residence or are building up those rights.”

I believe these projections have already been overtaken by events and the **resident** population of Jersey already exceeds 86,733, which is the Government Actuary’s **assumption** for 2008.

Continued population growth is putting increasing pressure on the Island’s natural resources.

While the supply-side of population control remains **unlimited**, the demand-led requests for revenue and capital **will continue unabated**.

A key factor for any forward planning has got to be: “for how many people”. Our current practices are based on guess work (or estimates).

There is a Committee/Department trend to work towards three-year budgeting and five-year plans. Without a more accurate population plan, this method, although an improvement, lacks the necessary focus that a proper immigration and population strategy would give.

Demand will continue for housing with increasing traffic and pressure for car parking. The Island Plan is under review, but without more accurate population numbers this is all attempting to hit a moving target.

Education and health will both continue to be hungry for capital and resources to cater for increasing numbers of people. Social Security will need more funds. All of the aforementioned are demand-led budget needs - there is no attempt to address the supply-side problem - the increasing population.

Existing population

Five-yearly census figures give a snap-shot of the population at that time; but what happens in between to the fluctuating number of people is a matter of guesswork.

If the States are serious about running the Island efficiently for the mutual benefit of the population, an accurate assessment of the population is vital. How can you plan for the future when you do not know for how many and when, with any degree of accuracy?

A Residential Registration Scheme will firstly record the existing population, and the States can then decide if such a scheme should have restrictions, and give rights, for example, for employment and housing. The first step is to establish who is resident here.

“Strategic Policy Review and Action Plan” 1997 - paragraph 1.21 (page 11)

“Considerable importance is attached to obtaining a more comprehensive statistical base. However, while much more information is required to assist with the analysis of what action would be most effective in achieving the population policy objective, there is little need of additional information to identify the fact that there is a problem to address. It is clear that the pressures being faced cannot be left unchallenged while model building and data collection is undertaken.”

I believe this is necessary now so that any associated problems with an increased population can be identified and addressed, rather than side-stepped or left for someone else.

I believe a Special Committee is the appropriate body to investigate and make recommendations to the States on any measures that they

consider appropriate to control population growth. **THE STATES WOULD THEN DECIDE HOW TO PROCEED.**

Also, a Special Committee should **conduct a full housing survey** to establish who is resident in Jersey, their age and how long they have lived here, as well as what accommodation they occupy and what facilities they have. This information is usually included in the Census information but is **not** available for specific use, only general. The implications of not being able to act more responsively to specific circumstances, I believe, is a mistake, and the purpose of gathering and acting on this information is positive, not negative.

The services and technology of the Jersey Post Office, for example, could be used to contact every address and co-ordinate responses. Various other sources are already available and could be used through a Special Committee to cross-check and gather the information.

Existing officers could be used from a number of departments as project officers on secondment, and, where necessary, assistance could be obtained on a contract advisory basis.

There is a cost involved in doing this. However, in my opinion, there is far greater cost in doing nothing.

I believe that where the general quality of life of Island residents is being adversely effected by an uncontrolled increase in population, they will agree to suffer a slight pain for a longer term gain.