

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. JOHN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 10th SEPTEMBER 2019**

Question

Given that ‘Government Plan 2020–2023: further information on Additional Revenue Expenditure and Capital and Major Projects Expenditure’ (R.91/2019) states that “*approximately 87% of the Island is connected to the public sewer network*”, will the Minister –

- (a) state the percentage of domestic dwellings connected to the sewer network (including any blocks of flats that are connected) and indicate the total number of domestic dwellings available for occupation in the Island (taking into account that a block of flats incorporates multiple dwellings);
- (b) provide maps showing the location in the Island of individual domestic dwellings, or clusters of such dwellings, that are not connected to the sewer network or to the mains water system;
- (c) provide details of any plans to extend the sewer network and mains water system to domestic properties that are not currently connected and state the projected need for such connection in light of anticipated construction over the next ten years; and
- (d) consider increasing the budget allocation in future years for drainage foul sewer extensions from £1.5 million each year to £3 million each year to ensure the continuing health and wellbeing of the Island’s population?

Answer

- (a) A recent review of connected properties using data from our drainage database shows that 91% of properties are connected to the foul sewer network. This increase is due to new developments, together with now counting each individual unit as a dwelling where previously a block of flats was counted as one unit, thus showing that Jersey is setting a high standard. The number of dwellings available for occupation in the Island is currently estimated as 49,130 (extrapolated from 2011 Census data).
- (b) In order to get the level of detail required to view individual properties over 70 maps would be required to cover the whole island. The map attached is an example of what can be produced. Brown squares show properties with a septic tank/soakaways and green squares show properties connected to the foul sewer network. The database is available to view at the GHE Bellozanne offices. Specific areas can be supplied if hard copies are required. The other map supplied showing future potential foul sewer extensions is a good indicator of areas not currently connected to the foul sewer network. We do not have details of the mains water network, you will need to contact Jersey Water for this information.
- (c) The plan attached indicates areas highlighted in purple as potential future foul sewer extension (FSE) schemes. The last FSE was completed in 2006 (North of Becquet Vincent). There has subsequently been no funding available for FSEs; the emphasis has been on maintenance of existing foul and sewerage infrastructure assets. FSEs up to 2006 were identified and prioritised by the Sewer Working party, led by the Growth, Housing and Environment Department’s predecessors (Transport & Technical Services, Public Services, Resources Recovery Board, Sewerage Board). The Plan is for GHE to reform the Sewer Working Party and invite delegates from Environment, Jersey Water, Public Health, Tourism and Treasury to assess and agree a new priority list. This will be based on several technical and environmental factors. The cost of individual schemes will also be a factor i.e. cost per property for the scheme. A review of the FSE schemes will be carried out in 2020.

The first schemes proposed in 2020 have been prioritised as they are “Gravity Only”, and therefore will not require the potentially protracted process of identification and acquisition of land for a pumping station.

- (d) A review of the FSE schemes will be carried out in 2020 together with revised cost estimates. It may be that increased funding is requested after 2020, this will be part of the assessment process. The schemes will be prioritised by the new Sewer Working Party who will agree how this prioritisation will be undertaken, with available capacity in the network taken into consideration. Surface Water Separation Schemes however must take place in certain areas to free up network capacity so additional foul flows can be taken. The new sewage treatment facilities will also not be commissioned until 2023, this will be able to receive additional flows. Proceeding with extensions too early has the potential to overload the existing drainage network resulting in foul sewerage spills causing pollution.