**WRITTEN QUESTION THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING**
**BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. MARY**
**ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 18th JULY 2011**

**Question**

In his answer to written question 6381 on 20th June, the Minister wrote:

"Given that it is the Department's role to provide and manage homes for those in need . . ."

What is the department's definition of being "in need" and is the Minister satisfied that the department should only provide for "those in need"?

What work has his department done on the possible positive and negative effects of providing rented housing for a wider range of the population, and the advantages and disadvantages of doing this?

Has his department done any work to establish how many islanders might welcome the chance to rent accommodation provided by or through the public sector even though they are not "in need"?

**Answer**

The current eligibility criteria for social rented housing is set out in the Department's Allocations Policy which is published on the States' website.

The eligibility criteria set out in that policy are more constrained than I would like and presently deny people under 50 years of age on low incomes who do not have children or a medical condition, the opportunity to be provided with a States rental home.

The social housing sector needs to grow in a manner which is financially sustainable. I will be setting out proposals for that financial stability in my Housing Transformation Programme White Paper to be published in September.

That White Paper will also set out the findings of a joint review of social housing sector rents and Income Support carried out by Professor Steve Wilcox from the University of York, a noted academic and key advisor to the UK government on rents and benefit levels. Growth in the States' social housing stock and its impact on the wider market is considered.

The White Paper will also propose the establishment of an affordable housing gateway which will open up access to social housing to all residentially qualified residents and allow us to better understand long term social housing need.