

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING
BY DEPUTY G.P. SOUTHERN OF ST. HELIER**

ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 26th FEBRUARY 2008

Question

1. In view of the fact that Table 6.2 of the Jersey Annual Social Survey (JASS) indicates that less than 60% of users rate the housing maintenance service as 'Very Good' or 'Good' is the Minister satisfied that this finding is an accurate reflection of the service provided?

Answer

The Housing Department carries out regular Customer Satisfaction Surveys, the most recent of which in respect of the Maintenance service was carried out in August 2007 and was a random sampling of those customers who had received maintenance work during the preceding 6 months. This confirmed a 98% satisfaction level. The JASS is a useful survey and I am not at all discouraged by the responses.

Question

2. Would the Minister provide details of the sums allocated to, and spent on, repair and maintenance, in both emergency and routine categories, in each of the past 8 years? What sums does the Minister plan to allocate in the forthcoming Annual Business Plan 2009?

Answer

The current accounting system only dates back to 2003 and analysis of data prior to this has significant resource implications. Therefore the table below illustrates the expenditure on planned and responsive maintenance since 2003 and the anticipated spend in 2008 and 2009.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Planned Maintenance	2,139	1,683	2,319	2,198	2,504	2,746	2,886
Response Repairs	1,394	1,324	1,271	1,556	1,657	1,808	1,870
TOTAL	3,533	3,007	3,410	3,754	4,161	4,554	4,756

Question

3. Does the Minister intend to take any steps to improve the rating shown in the JASS and, if so, would he specify what these steps will be and the timescale envisaged? Does the Minister intend to take any steps to increase the monitoring of the quality of work undertaken by outsourced repair and maintenance contractors?

Answer

Significant work has already gone into improving the service and this will continue. This will include the vigorous pursuit of value for money as demonstrated by the adoption of fixed price repair schedules, seeking opportunities to make staff available for increased quality control and empowering the end customer 'our tenants' to certify their satisfaction with the quality of work before the contractor gets paid.

Question

4. Will the Minister undertake to lift any ban on repair work for those tenants who are in rental arrears to ensure that States properties do not suffer further unnecessary deterioration?

Answer

It is only those tenants in unmanaged arrears, that is to say those who refuse to engage in a repayment plan, who will not receive a routine maintenance service. However, capital improvements, planned maintenance (such as external decorations or heating system servicing), repairs of a wind and watertight nature or those with a significant Health & Safety aspect will always be carried out regardless of rent arrears.