

STATES OF JERSEY



REPAIR OF THE STEAM CLOCK

**Lodged au Greffe on 8th September 2020
by Deputy M. Tadier of St. Brelade**

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

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

- (a) that the Steam Clock should be repaired, if possible, by 31st December 2020;
- (b) to request the Minister for Treasury and Resources to transmit the view of the States to Ports of Jersey; and
- (c) to request the Minister for Treasury and Resources to report back to the States no later than 30th November 2020 with an update.

DEPUTY M. TADIER OF ST. BRELADE

REPORT

'Even a stopped clock is right twice a day' – Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach.

Our Steam Clock is better than the one envisaged by the Austrian writer, Marie von Ebner-Eschenbach. Because our clock has 2 faces, both of which are stopped and both of which show different times. Our clock can claim to be right 4 times a day. One side (facing the tunnel), is fixed at 9:19 am/pm; the other is fixed on a completely different time.

Replying to [@DeputyTadier](#) and [@StHelierJsy](#)

One side: December 2017 v

December 2019



I am not sure how long the Steam Clock has been broken, but I certainly remember it having come up at one of the Senatorial hustings in the by-election of 2016.

By those more critical than myself, the Steam Clock has been called an appropriate monument to recent Jersey government administrations – or politics more widely:

“It is broken?”

“It doesn’t work and it hasn’t worked for as long as we can remember.”

“It is two-faced, neither of which can be trusted.”

“It has seized up and is beyond repair.”

‘It serves as neither use nor ornament.’

However, whether we like it or not, the Steam Clock is a cultural asset. It stands near the entrance to our Waterfront, and it will be seen by thousands of Islanders and tourists alike. It reminds us of Jersey’s important historical maritime links, as well as the way the sea still shapes us today.

Process

Under normal circumstances, this should not need to be the subject of a formal States proposition. Unfortunately, I feel that I have exhausted all other reasonable steps to try and get movement on the Steam Clock, by e-mailing Ports of Jersey, contacting the Minister, asking Parliamentary questions. I have documented these in the Appendix below.

This whole process – of something that should be a relatively straightforward and simple matter to resolve but has not been – underlines a more serious problem with some of the

aspects of recent changes that have been made in the *quasi-outsourcing* of certain State functions.

It should have been the case – and would have been the case in the past – that someone at a political level, maybe the Minister for Infrastructure, the Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture, the Minister for the Environment (or even, dare I say it, the (Assistant) Minister for Economic Development, Tourism, Sport and Culture) would simply give a direction that the Steam Clock should be fixed, and it would be done.

Now, one can only request the Minister for Treasury and Resources (“*what does a steam clock have to do with the Treasury department?*” one might reasonably ask) to request Ports of Jersey to do something about it. Well, this is what we will have to do.

It may well be, of course, that Members feel the Steam Clock is not worth repairing. I would suggest, it is at least worth trying. As Alan Simon Crowcroft, the Connétable of St. Helier, asked in a recent supplementary question on the subject: could it not at least be repaired with an electronic mechanism, and; is the steam mechanism too costly or impractical to fix?

If this is beyond the means of Ports of Jersey, then it may be that we need to think about either transferring ownership of the clock and its surrounding grounds to the direct control and ownership of the States/Government of Jersey. But let’s at least try.

Financial and manpower implications

It is envisaged that all reparatory costs will be met by Ports of Jersey from within existing budgets.

APPENDIX

1. [Oral Question by Deputy Tadier to Minister for Treasury and Resources, 21st January 2020](#)
2. Correspondence with the Treasury Minister, as shareholder representative of Ports of Jersey:

RE: OQ.19.2020 Maintenance Of Derelict Properties Within The Portfolio of Ports of Jersey.

From: [REDACTED] On Behalf Of Susie Pinel
Sent: 12 February 2020 11:46
To: Montfort Tadier <M.Tadier@gov.je>
Subject: OQ.19.2020 Maintenance Of Derelict Properties Within The Portfolio of Ports of Jersey.

Dear Deputy Tadier,

Further to my answer to oral question 19/2020 on the 21st January within the Assembly, I have a further update.

[REDACTED]

I met recently with the new Chair of Ports of Jersey and raised this specific matter with him. I understand that there are plans to ensure that the clock mechanism on the Steam Clock is repaired in order that it tells the correct time and they hope that it will be operational again relatively soon.

Kind regards
Susie

RE: OQ.19.2020 Maintenance Of Derelict Properties Within The Portfolio of Ports of Jersey.

From: Montfort Tadier
Sent: 12 February 2020 14:27
To: Susie Pinel <S.Pinell@gov.je>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: OQ.19.2020 Maintenance Of Derelict Properties Within The Portfolio of Ports of Jersey.

Thank you for the update.

I understand the Jersey Post situation.

With regard to the Steam Clock, can you provide more detail?
How will it be fixed, what is the timeline and the cost?

Kind regards,
Montfort

RE: OQ.19.2020 Maintenance Of Derelict Properties Within The Portfolio of Ports of Jersey.

SP Susie Pinel
Fri 2/28/2020 9:19 AM
To: Montfort Tadier

Dear Deputy Tadier,

My apologies for the delay in responding.

Preliminary investigations undertaken since you originally asked your question suggest that there is no easy solution. Ports of Jersey are looking at the feasibility of getting the clock itself working but, given the overall fabric and condition of the structure, there is a risk that it may not be possible, and even if it is possible it may still be very expensive. They do not have a final figure or timeline as yet but will let me know when this is available.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, Officers from Ports of Jersey would be happy to meet with you.

Kind regards
Susie

3. [Written Question asked by Deputy Alves to Minister for Treasury and Resources, 23rd October 2018](#)
4. [Question by Deputy K. Lewis to Minister for Infrastructure, 4th July 2017](#)

5. [Question asked by Constable of St. Helier to Minister for Treasury and Resources, 14th June 2016](#)
6. [Question asked by Constable of St. John, 5th April 2005](#)