

STATES OF JERSEY



LE CLOS GOSSET: UPGRADE OF HEATING SYSTEM – PETITION

Lodged au Greffe on 19th July 2010
by Deputy J.M. Maçon of St. Saviour

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

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

to request the Minister for Housing to abandon the proposed upgrade of the heating system at the Maisonettes at Le Clos Gosset; and work with residents in order to find a heating solution that is more acceptable to both parties.

DEPUTY J.M. MAÇON OF ST. SAVIOUR

REPORT

This petition has been presented to the States Assembly on behalf of the residents of 84 – 113 Le Clos Gosset. All 29 residents have signed the petition save for 3. Two were in Hospital and one felt that they could not sign as it may prevent them from moving to a more disabled-friendly flat as the doorway of the current flat was not wide enough for their electric wheelchair.

The residents received a letter from the Housing Department on Friday 28th May 2010 informing them that the Housing Department had decided to replace the heating system in the maisonettes to switch from the current oil system, which the entire estate currently use, to an electric system.

The residents have lodged this petition as they object to an electric system being installed in the maisonettes for the following reasons –

Lack of consultation by the Housing Department:

The residents feel very aggrieved that, in their view, the Housing Department has not consulted with the residents, removing the opportunity to discuss what changes to the heating system would be the best introduced.

Cost:

The residents are of the opinion that the choice of an electric heating system is the most expensive option. Many of the residents are elderly and are on Income Support – a section of society that the States Assembly acknowledges as having greater heating requirements during the daytime and particularly during the winter months. The evidence to support this is the extra support that the Social Security Department gives during prolonged cold periods. Therefore, elderly residents will require the use of electricity at peak times and not really be able to take advantage of Economy 7 initiatives, leaving vulnerable people in a situation whereby the heating bill will rise significantly, leading to the ‘heating or eating’ dilemma. Some of the residents have had previous experience of the suggested system and found them to be very expensive and question the overall effectiveness of the system.

Age:

Many of the residents are elderly, including one who is 101. The work that is required to happen within the maisonettes in order to upgrade the system to electricity will cause much stress and discomfort to the residents, many of whom deserve peace in their twilight years.

Health:

Many of the residents suffer from various respiratory diseases, such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Chronic Bronchitis, Emphysema and Asthma. The elderly residents and their doctors are very concerned that a change from a wet system of heating to a dry system will only worsen their conditions.

Refurbished:

Several residents have made various upgrades to their flats (new carpets, etc.). They are concerned that with the works required to put in this system, these upgrades would have been for nothing. Also, the residents are concerned that if the electric system is introduced, the new heaters will be much larger than the ones currently in place, reducing the space in already modest flats. Furthermore, the residents are concerned that if the Housing Department installs this system, that after removing the old heaters

Housing will not cover the costs of doing the necessary refurbishments, such as filling in holes and painting the vacant spaces, fitting new carpets, etc.

Alternative solutions:

The residents accept that the current system needs to change, as there are oil leaks and there is an inequity in being connected to the main estate's system whereby thrifty residents subsidise those who leave their heating on. The residents would like to point out that the individual boilers to the maisonettes are less than 2 years old, which cost thousands of pounds to the Housing Department. However, doing some research, the residents have come up with a solution that would be cheaper for residents.

In conclusion, the elderly residents of Le Clos Gosset, for the reasons stated above, hope that the States Assembly will acknowledge the implications that changing the heating system will have on their overall well-being and quality of life. The residents pray that the States Assembly will give a clear message to the Housing Department that the introduction of such a system is not acceptable and should not be implemented. Finally, that the Housing Department should work with residents in order to find a solution that is much more acceptable to both residents and the Housing Department.

Financial and manpower implications

For a new 500 gallon oil tank the estimated cost is £1,400.00. For all the maisonettes in total the estimated cost would be under £10,000.

Each group of residents would pay for their own oil as and when required.

The manpower implications would be minimal as the Housing Department is constantly ordering and organising the installation of different equipment.

Fri, 28th May 2010

FRIDAY 11th JUNE 2010

COMMUNITY NEWSFLASH

States of Jersey

84 to 113 Clos Gosset

Replacement Heating System

Dear Resident,

A fundamental requirement of any good quality home is the provision of a decent heating system which is clean, reliable, efficient, cost effective and sensitive to the environment.



Your existing heating and hot water system is fuelled by an underground oil distribution line supplied from a central oil tank, this type of system does have inherent risks associated with leaks which can be hugely damaging to the environment.

You will also be aware that the price of oil can be very volatile and costs have generally been increasing year on year.

Having reviewed all of the options we have decided to replace the existing wet heating system in your home with a new off peak electric heating system comprising of storage heaters and panel radiators.

We are aware that the decision to replace your heating may be a surprise to you and that the new heating will change the way we currently provide the heating and hot water to your home. I can reassure you that our decision to replace your heating was not taken hastily and was made after careful evaluation of our options.



The installation of an independent electric heating system will change the way in which you pay for your heating and hot water. The Department will no longer include the heating/hot water surcharge with your weekly rent.

Your heating and hot water charges will be added to your electric bill which you will pay direct to The Jersey Electricity Company.

There are clear benefits to paying The Jersey Electricity Company directly for your heating and hot water, the obvious improvements being that you will have full control over your heating and hot water twelve months of the year and that you will only pay for what you use, this gives you the flexibility to make savings in your annual fuel bills.



The new electric heating will be far more reliable and in the rare event that a heater fails the remainder of the system will continue to operate as normal.

Understandably you may have some concerns with regard to the annual running costs of the replacement electric heating system, to keep costs as low as possible we have made allowances within our budget to improve the loft insulation where possible. This will keep your home at a more even temperature and will help reduce the heat loss from the property, ultimately saving on energy.

We are currently in the process of tendering for the works and will be providing you with further details with regard to the above as soon as we are able to do so.

Yours sincerely



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