

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT  
BY DEPUTY J.M. MAÇON OF ST. SAVIOUR  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 9th OCTOBER 2018**

**Question**

Will the Minister explain how his Department has prioritised responding to the Asian hornet threat to Jersey and will he advise whether it is intended to make the response a higher priority and, if so, how; and will he further explain what has been committed in the way of resources by the Department to this issue, if any, and, if none, will he explain why?

**Answer**

The Department for Growth, Housing and Environment (GHE) prioritise the existing and increasing threat of Asian Hornets highly. The seasonal operational requirements provided by this species and the strategic approach to managing associated risks are increasing. Senior officers and staff from several disciplines across the team have been working tirelessly throughout the summer to combat and control this invasive species. This includes working in partnership with the Island's bee keeping community, a group of dedicated hornet hunters and with the support of technical experts from Exeter University. Monitoring of the threat has been ongoing since 2016.

It is recognised that Asian Hornets and the wider global challenge of Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) require the seasonal use of resources and staff. The ongoing development of an INNS strategy for Jersey will tackle not just Asian Hornets, but a miscellany of species, which historically may not have been prevalent in our geographic region. These species are now becoming more regularly seen and may have detrimental effects to our way of life and to our local and regional biodiversity. This issue will gain increasingly higher priority in future years.

Resources allocated to this work to date have been proportionate, and allocated with a great deal of consideration and consultation with partner organisations, bearing in mind the risks, the resources available, and other work streams and priorities. Funding, personnel and equipment has been put in place to better control Asian Hornets. This includes using local expertise, contracting of scientific technical specialists, delivering bespoke training both in Jersey and France; and following recent discussions with the bee keeping community and hornet hunters, the contracting of a coordinating resource. An extra £25,000 has been made available from existing GHE budgets, and £14,000 has been spent (excluding officer costs) year to date on Asian Hornet matters. This has allowed continued responses, training, equipment purchase and, where necessary, hire; and the offer of financial recompense to volunteers working in partnership with States officials. To date in 2018, 52 nests have been dealt with and appropriate budgets will be allocated for 2019 following evaluations of the 2018 season.

Jersey, being the closest of the British Isles to the larger population of Asian Hornets in France, is at the forefront of techniques to identify, track, and destroy hornets and their nests. The Natural Environment team within GHE recently hosted a British Irish Council (BIC) workshop. This involved scientists and government officers from all the BIC jurisdictions sharing technical knowledge, techniques and experience. The work undertaken in our Island is now contributing to the training of officers and experts in those jurisdictions, assisting them in their readiness for when Asian Hornets arrive. This cooperation is something that those jurisdictions have been thankful for and something the Island should be proud of.