

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES  
BY DEPUTY R.J. WARD OF ST. HELIER  
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 19th APRIL 2021  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 26th APRIL 2021**

**Question**

Will the Minister advise –

- (a) what oversight has been undertaken of any spending of the Le Seilleur Fund, and what spends have been made in the last 5 years; and
- (b) what due diligence was undertaken when selling the main Le Seilleur building in central St. Helier, and what oversight there is of the remaining buildings gifted to the States in this legacy?

**Answer**

- a) In 1996, nine sites were bequeathed to the public of the Island ‘for the benefit of the aged, infirm and needy residents of the Island’ by the late Mr Harold Ernest Le Seilleur.

In accepting the bequest, it was decided that the administration of the estate should be carried out by the Minister for Health and Social Services (formerly the Health and Social Services Committee).

In May 2014, the Minister for Health and Social Services adopted a property strategy which recommended the sale of several of the properties and requested that the Treasurer invest the non-property (cash) assets of the fund in the Common Investment Fund. Proceeds of £4.655 million from the property sales were attributed to the Le Seilleur Fund.

As at 31 December 2020, the balance of the Fund, including the value of the property, was £9.39 million, of which £2.1 million was held through property ownership, £197,000 was held in bank accounts, and the remainder held in the Common Investment Fund. Performance of the Investment Fund investments is reviewed by the Treasury and Investment Management team and overseen by the Treasury Advisory Panel.

In June 2020, the Minister for Health and Social Services agreed the distribution of £1.02 million from the Le Seilleur Fund. £0.8 million was used to fund additional palliative care services at Jersey Hospice Care. This was to ensure that patients continue to be cared for consistently in their preferred place of care, with advanced care planning, palliative care support and system-wide expertise in end of life care.

The remaining £0.22 million was used to purchase 34 defibrillators and two automated external defibrillators (portable defibrillators) to replace equipment originally purchased in 2010 which was in need of renewal.

In July 2020, the Minister for Health and Social Services agreed the distribution of up to £50,000 from the Harold Ernest Le Seilleur Fund to the Charity Age Concern Jersey to meet the costs of procurement of kitchen equipment to fit out a commercial standard kitchen in the new Age Concern

facility that will provide meals in-house and for delivery for the aged, infirm and needy service users of the charity. Following completion of the kitchen, £49,000 was distributed to the Charity in March 2021.

Income from the Fund has been used to carry out maintenance and refurbishment works to the Le Seelleur properties. Maintenance works include electrical works, plumbing works, and building and grounds maintenance.

The Le Seelleur Fund is overseen by a government-wide Charitable Funds Oversight Board, which provides an independent assurance function for all charitable trust funds. A proposed operational structure is currently being considered for the future management of funds. This will run first as a pilot during 2021 to allow for full evaluation before any permanent, government-wide structure is adopted.

- b) Following the bequest of the Workshops to the then Health and Social Services Committee (H&SS) in the late 1990s, several public-purpose uses and private community uses for the premises were investigated, including one by the former Employment and Social Security Committee (E&SS) for sheltered workshops.

However, factors including the listed status of the property, its condition, and the very basic standard of construction, led to the schemes being deemed unfeasible. For example, the E&SS scheme in the 1990s was costed at c£1million, excluding the site purchase price from H&SS.

It was therefore decided that the property should be sold and it was marketed for sale on two previous occasions, but the disposal was not concluded.

Prior to the property being sold in 2017, a scheme to convert the property into residential units was submitted to the Planning Department and approval was granted. This was done with the intention of increasing the value of the site by having development consent in place.

The property was then marketed by a local property agent, with advertising in the usual media.

Whilst there was a high number of viewings of the property, only two bids were received by the closing date. It is understood that the cost of altering and upgrading the historic building simply wasn't attractive, financially, to prospective developers. This reflected the position that the States found itself in when looking at development schemes.

The property was deteriorating and incurring increasing costs in safety maintenance and unauthorised entry, and the sale of the property was therefore recommended to the highest bidder.

In relation to continuing oversight of the remaining properties in this legacy, in 2015 Health and Community Services (HCS) agreed with Jersey Property Holdings that JPH should take-over the letting and maintenance responsibilities for the Le Seelleur properties, and a Service Level Agreement was set-out between the two departments. Prior to that, HCS had maintained and managed the portfolio direct.

The purpose was to keep the properties properly maintained, and occupied as leaseholds, with the rental proceeds being used by HCS for the purpose of the bequest.