

**STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY THE CONNÉTABLE OF ST HELIER ON
TUESDAY 24th JUNE 2003**

On Tuesday 20th May 2003 Deputy G P Southern asked a question of the President of the Housing Committee about interrupted refuse collections on a St Helier housing estate. In his reply, the Vice-President said that 'the (Housing) Department (had) never received notification from the Parish of a specific Health and Safety problem' and that it 'was first made aware of a Health and Safety issue on the day that the collections ceased.' I have in my possession, however, documents which show quite clearly that the Housing Department was advised as early as 1994 'for safety reasons we are keen to phase out these particular containers', while in July 2002 the Department was told, 'the bins themselves are deteriorating to such an extent that they are creating a dangerous operation for us to empty.'

However, my investigation into the handling of this issue has revealed a breakdown in communication between the management of the Parish and the Housing Department, to such an extent that neither the Chief Executive Officer of the Housing Department nor myself knew anything about the termination of refuse collection in certain housing estates until the Friday evening before the Bank Holiday weekend concerned. Had we been informed about the deadline and the likely problem even a matter of days earlier we could jointly have resolved the issue and hence have avoided the nuisance caused to the residents of some estates. We would also have avoided Parish staff being unfairly criticised in the last paragraph of the Vice-President's answer on 20th May 2003 .

Therefore I should like to apologise to the Housing Department and those residents who were affected by the removal of the palladin bins, and to assure them that steps are being taken to improve the management of refuse collection by the Parish.

I should also like to take this opportunity of thanking the Housing Committee and Department for the assistance they have been giving us over the new glass collection policy being implemented by the Parish.