

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND TECHNICAL
SERVICES BY DEPUTY G.C.L. BAUDAINS OF ST. CLEMENT
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 15th MAY 2012**

Question

Would the Minister advise how many square man-hole drain covers have been replaced with round ones in the last three years, why they have been changed, and at what cost?"

Answer

Approximately 230 square manhole covers have been replaced with circular ones in the last three years at a total approximate cost of £107,000.

They are being changed for a number of reasons. Some changes have been necessary as the existing covers have been damaged or have been showing signs of surface wear which is a hazard to traffic.

However, there is also an ongoing long term programme to phase out the use of the square covers due to the difficulty and risk to personnel that exists when these covers need to be opened. The existing square covers are very heavy and require at least two men to lift them and as a result pose an injury risk to those operatives tasked with this operation, particularly as many of the covers are 'jammed' into the frame and require a significant effort to release them.

The decision to use the circular covers currently being installed was based on their method of opening and the fact that this could be achieved by just one operative with little risk of injury to the operative involved. These covers also incorporate a neoprene seal in the frame which will reduce the risk of the cover becoming jammed over time.

The approximate cost to replace one manhole cover in isolation is £575. However, approximately 70 manhole cover replacements included in the total given previously have been incorporated into the current road resurfacing programme which has reduced the overall unit replacement cost to approximately £465.