

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
BY THE DEPUTY OF ST. MARTIN
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 18th MARCH 2014**

Question

Will the Minister inform the Assembly of his intentions regarding the following coastal footpaths in the Parish of St. Martin -

- (a) the footpath between St. Catherine's Breakwater and Fliquet, which has been closed for some years now;
- (b) the footpath between Archirondel and St. Catherine's Lifeboat Station which has been closed since March 2013; and,
- (c) the footpath between St. Catherine's Breakwater and Rue de Fliquet which has been closed since February 2014.

Will he further inform the Assembly what work needs to be done in these various locations and when it is expected this work will be completed?

Answer

In answering this question I provide some background information which I hope will help States members better understand matters concerning each of these footpaths.

- (a) *the footpath between St. Catherine's Breakwater and Fliquet, which has been closed for some years now;*

Following a period of strong winds over a decade ago the section of coastline supporting this footpath was severely eroded and localised landslides made the footpath which followed the coastline unsafe.

At this time, the footpath was administered by the Public Services Department (now Transport and Technical Service or TTS).

The soft nature of the bedrock in this area made engineering solutions very difficult and States of Jersey engineers advised at that time that the footpath should be permanently closed.

There are no plans to reinstate this footpath as access can be made across the beach at low tide, and there is an alternative path immediately adjacent to it, which takes people to the same destination.

- (b) *the footpath between Archirondel and St. Catherine's Lifeboat Station which has been closed since March 2013;*

The coast road is supported by an artificial slope created with the spoil resulting from the building of the road. During the snows, rain and big tides of March 2013 this slope became unstable and slipped onto the footpath, making it dangerous for pedestrians.

A report has been received by TTS from consultant engineers this week and gives an indicative cost to stabilise the slope of between £300k and £350k. This report will need to be reviewed in detail and the States will need to explore funding options.

The timeline for the project so far is as follows:

- Feb 2012
 - there was a rock fall along the footpath at Archirondel.

- Geomarine advised the Department of the Environment and carried out remedial works involving netting and anchoring.
- at the end of those works Geomarine were going to remove loose debris from the slope that had fallen on the coastal path approximately 250m further along this path. However when they went to clear the material they found the slip on the slope area to be more serious than first thought.
- May 2013
 - TTS became involved and asked Frederick Sherrell Limited to carry out a preliminary inspection.
 - Frederick Sherrell Limited provided a preliminary report and asked for some site investigation works.
- Jul/Aug 2013
 - quotes were obtained for Site Investigation Works and the contract was awarded to Geomarine
- Nov/Dec 2013
 - site investigation works were carried out by Geomarine and samples were taken and logged
- Feb 2014
 - Lab testing of samples completed
 - Frederick Sherrell Limited confirmed that their report would be completed by 7th Mar 2014.
 - to speed up possible works Frederick Sherrell Limited have produced a preliminary Bill of Quantities for these works and asked Geomarine to provide a preliminary price
- Mar 2014
 - Report received

At present the footpath remains closed to walkers, but there is a safe alternative route along the road, above the footpath.

(c) *the footpath between St. Catherine's Breakwater and Rue de Fliquet which has been closed since February 2014.*

Due to the recent high rainfall, a rock face under public administration collapsed at St Catherine's, behind Gibraltar Rock. The Department of the Environment were first made aware of this on 10th February 2014.

The rock face supported a footpath (referred to in part (a) of this question leading from St Catherine's breakwater to Rue de Fliquet) which is now considered too dangerous to use.

A site meeting was held with engineers on 11th February and a quotation was later received to make the slope safe. Work is presently under way to remediate and make safe the slope. The section of footpath closest to the edge of the rock fall will be diverted inland to create a permanent, safe route.

It is intended that contractors will be making this area safe in the next week or so. Once safe to access, my department will put in a permanent detour which has already been planned. This path should be open before Easter.

In addition, thanks to private landowners and the Department's Countryside Enhancement Grant Scheme, a new alternative route has been created. Diversion signs are in place to direct people to this new route which has magnificent views and provides a superb walk across the top of the escarpment.

Also in St Martin, a small section of footpath has collapsed alongside the slipway at Belval. Following a site visit discussions are taking place to agree how the footpath can be made safe and re-opened as soon as possible.

In addition to the above, works are being carried out to repair numerous other footpaths across the Island following damage caused by the recent storms.