

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES  
BY DEPUTY L.V. FELTHAM OF ST. HELIER CENTRAL  
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 15th MAY 2023  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 22nd MAY 2023**

**Question**

“Concerning the public consultation: [Improving Residential Tenancies in Jersey - Residential Tenancy Law Reform proposals](#), will the Minister –

- (a) outline the Terms of Reference and provide details of the project scope, methodology, and anticipated outputs, including what qualitative and quantitative data that will be collected and how this will be analysed;
- (b) identify which representative groups, organisations, and individuals were consulted to inform the planning of the consultation;
- (c) outline the target audiences/stakeholder groups that the consultation aims to engage; and
- (d) outline how the consultation has been planned to ensure that it is inclusive and accessible to all the relevant stakeholder groups?”

**Answer**

(a) It is not standard practice for the Government of Jersey to set Terms of Reference or produce methodologies and scope for a public consultation of this nature. The policy context for the proposed changes to the Residential Tenancy (Jersey) Law 2011 (RTL) is well established, including through the work of the [Housing Policy Development Board](#), [Creating Better Homes Action Plan](#), and the [Minister for Housing and Communities’ Delivery Plan](#), which sets the agenda for improvements to residential tenancy legislation in Jersey.

The Minister for Housing and Communities has published proposals for residential tenancy reform ([Improving Residential Tenancies in Jersey](#)), which highlight the Minister’s intended direction of travel. A period of public consultation on the proposals is consistent with the Minister’s commitment to open and transparent engagement, where everyone in the community has an opportunity to contribute their views.

The consultation is not intended to be treated on a statistical basis. Rather it will seek to capture opinions from Islanders so that the qualitative aspects of people’s unique experience and perspectives on residential tenancy matters can be understood. The feedback will be reviewed and categorised according to general theme and specific issues raised by respondents to the consultation. It will help shape policy and legislation to meet the needs of tenants and landlords in Jersey, whilst helping to ensure that the resulting draft law is supported and implemented without delay.

(b) This question presupposes that The Minister should have embarked on a consultation about having a consultation. The Minister must also be mindful that he has a duty to deliver substantive and appropriate residential tenancy reforms in a timely manner for the people of Jersey.

(c) The audience for the public consultation in broad terms can be described as any Islander who has a stake in residential tenancy matters, irrespective of what community they are from. The Minister’s proposals and the public consultation will have particular relevance to tenants and landlords in the residential rental sector. The Minister and Government officers have considered who needs to be engaged

in the public consultation and how to engage them. Government officers are working to a bespoke engagement action plan (that will also record the output of engagement) as well as a bespoke communications plan. Some of the important actions that have taken place or are in train are as follows:

- Engagement of States Members (the political representatives of Islanders). There has been a States Members briefing (24 April); a briefing to of the Environment, Housing, and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel (25 April); and a 4 hour In-Committee debate in the States Assembly (2-3 May), which covered key areas of the Minister's proposals and offered States Members the opportunity to express their views.
- The Minister is taking part in a series of in-person meetings on his proposals with tenants-facing specialist organisations, which include the Older Persons' Living Forum, representatives from mental health charities, groups representing adults with learning needs, and the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Officers have hosted a series of individual meetings (w/c 15 May) with social housing providers, receiving feedback on the Minister's proposals for social housing provision. During these discussions the social providers have agreed to help publicise the details of the consultation with their tenants.
- Tenants' stakeholders (e.g., charitable organisations, minority community representatives, the Homelessness Cluster, Children's Commissioner etc.) have been contacted with the details of the public consultation and have been encouraged to publicise it.
- The Minister and Government officers have met with representatives of the Jersey Landlords Association (JLA), to receive their feedback and to discuss the Minister's proposals.
- Three major in-person events are planned for June. They will take place in St Helier Town Hall and will be attended by The Minister, supported by Government officers. The Minister will introduce his proposals and host a question-and-answer session. The events will take place on the following dates:
  1. Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 6 pm - 8 pm (landlord focused event)
  2. Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 6 pm - 8 pm (tenants focused event)
  3. Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June, 6 pm - 8 pm (all Islanders interested in residential tenancy matters)
- Government Officers will also be visible in St Helier town centre (Charing Cross) on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June between 12-2 pm. They will be on hand to publicise the consultation and facilitate Islanders offering their views on residential tenancy matters.

**The period of public consultation has been extended by two weeks and will now end on Friday 23 June 2023.**

(d) The launch of the Minister's paper was publicised in a [press release](#) on 14 April, which contained links to the paper and to the public consultation page, which are freely available to any Islander with access to an electronic device that is connected to the Internet.

The [consultation page](#) enables Islanders to offer their feedback to the Minister's plans in three main ways:

- by survey: [online survey](#)
- by email: [housingmatters@gov.je](mailto:housingmatters@gov.je)
- by post: **Residential Tenancy Law consultation, Strategic Housing and Regeneration Team, 19-12 Broad Street, St Helier, JE2 3RR**

The Minister has acted on feedback that the residential tenancy matters dealt with in his paper are complicated and therefore not readily accessible to a wide cross section of Islanders. To address this, four simple open-ended questions have been devised to make participation in the consultation easier. The questions deal with those residential tenancy matters in paper considered to be of most relevance to tenants and landlords. The questions are as follows:

- **What is your opinion about limiting the amount and frequency by which rents can be increased by a landlord?**
- **Do you think it's better for tenancies to have a fixed end-date, or no specified end-date, and why?**
- **Do you think a landlord should be able to give notice to end a tenancy without giving a reason?**
- **Is there anything else about renting properties in Jersey that you think should be addressed as a priority?**

The four questions, and simplified versions of the online feedback survey, have been translated into Portuguese, Polish and Romanian and made available to organisations working with the minority communities to ensure they can contribute their views.

The questions have been printed on postcards that will be distributed within the community (with a freepost address for responses), including translations from English into Portuguese, Polish and Romanian. This will assist those members of the community who do not have access to the Internet.

Additionally, if anyone wishes to access a printed copy of the survey, in English or any of the three aforementioned languages spoken by the minority communities, they will be able to do so by approaching the information points at Charing Cross (see answer to question c) as well as during the in-person events in St Helier Town Hall.

The Housing Advice Service, based at CLS in La Motte Street, is also available. Islanders can pop in during working hours to speak to a housing adviser.

All opportunities for in-person engagement will be covered in social media and the local press. It is anticipated that the use of social media will reach wider population of Jersey residents and give them the opportunity to contribute their views even if they cannot attend the in-person events.