

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHIEF MINISTER  
BY THE CONNÉTABLE OF ST. MARTIN  
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 27th FEBRUARY 2023  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 6th MARCH 2023**

**Question**

Following a report in the Jersey Evening Post on Tuesday 21st February regarding the increasing number of pensioners and children using food banks in Jersey, including a 41 percent increase between January 2022 to January 2023 in the number using the Salvation Army's Minden Street food bank, will the Chief Minister advise whether the Government intends to develop and deliver a strategy to ensure that Islanders do not face difficulty in purchasing enough food for themselves and their families; and, if not, why not?"

**Answer**

The Government works in partnership through the Financial Impact Action Group to monitor and to support a number of organisations who operate food banks.

Work to collate food bank usage data is ongoing, which will help develop any future strategy and developments.

In addition, the Government committed to an extensive package of measures to address the cost-of-living crisis, which formed part of the Chief Minister's 100 day plan.

This ongoing package will equate to almost £42 million of support in 2023 and includes.

- An increase of 12% in Income Tax thresholds and allowances, including Child Allowances, Additional Allowance and Child Care Tax Relief, from 1 January 2023
- Income tax threshold for a single person raised from £16,550 to £18,550
- Increasing Income Support components in January 2023 to provide increases of at least 10.4% for the year with higher increases for carers and private sector tenants.
- Increasing cold weather payments to £70 a month from October 2022 to March 2023 regardless of the temperature

In addition, short term measures implemented rapidly in 2022 included

- Cost of Living Temporary Scheme (COLTS) payments to low-income households increased to £40 per person per month (£160 for a couple with 2 children)
- Social Security contributions for individuals reduced by 2 percentage points (e.g. 6% to 4% for employees)
- Doubling the 2022 Community Cost Bonus (CCB) to £516.50 and extending eligibility to include households who paid less than £2,735 tax in 2021.

The Government has also introduced the Parental Support Payment for parents or carers who are living, working and looking after their children in Jersey, but have been on the Island less than 5 years.

A range of benefits are provided to pensioners who do not pay income tax and/or have incomes below the income tax threshold. These include:

- Community Cost Bonus – an annual fixed value payment
- Pension Plus – support for dental, optical and chiropody costs
- Health Access Scheme – support for GP and primary care costs
- Cold Weather Bonus/Payment – support for heating costs
- Christmas Bonus – annual payment before Christmas

The Jersey Old Age Pension is uprated every year in October. The uprate always at least matches the increase in pensioner RPI as measured in June. In years where wages are rising faster than prices, the pension increases above the RPI increase. In October 2022, the pension increased by 7.7% to give a full rate single pension entitlement of £253.40 a week.

In addition to the measures listed above, this Government is committed to working with key stakeholders to support all Islanders, and remains ready to take further action if it becomes necessary.