



# Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny

## Panel

### Quarterly Public Hearing

### Witness: The Minister for the Environment

Tuesday, 7th September 2021

**Panel:**

Connétable M.K. Jackson of St. Brelade (Chair)  
Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier  
Deputy G.J. Truscott of St. Brelade  
Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin  
Connétable S.A. Le Sueur-Rennard of St. Saviour

**Witnesses:**

Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade - The Minister for the Environment  
Mr. W. Peggie - Director, Natural Environment/Acting Group Director of Regulation  
Mr. G. Morel - Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries  
Dr. T. du Feu - Head of Land Resource Management  
Dr. L. Magris - Head of Sustainability and Foresight  
Mr. K. Pilley - Head of Place and Spatial Planning  
Ms. K. Whitehead - Head of Regulatory Improvement  
Ms. A. de Bourcier - Head of Environmental and Consumer Protection  
Mr. S. Petrie - Environmental Health Consultant

[11:33]

**Connétable M.K. Jackson of St. Brelade (Chair):**

Good morning, Minister, and welcome to the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel quarterly meeting with you. We will introduce ourselves for the point of view of the record. I am Constable Mike Jackson, Chair of the panel. The others will all follow me.

**Deputy S.G. Luce of St. Martin:**

Deputy Steve Luce of St. Martin.

**Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier:**

Deputy Gardiner of St. Helier.

**Deputy G.J. Truscott of St. Brelade:**

Deputy Graham Truscott of St. Brelade.

**Connétable S.A. Le Sueur-Rennard of St. Saviour:**

Constable Le Sueur-Rennard of St. Saviour.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Over to your team, Minister.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Thank you very much, Chair. Deputy John Young, Minister for the Environment. I would ask my colleagues, please, to introduce themselves.

**Director, Natural Environment/Acting Group Director for Regulation:**

Good morning, Willie Peggie, I am Director for Natural Environment and Acting Group Director for Regulation within I.H.E. (Infrastructure, Housing and Environment).

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

Good morning, Chair, good morning, Minister, good morning, panel, Greg Morel, Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries at I.H.E.

**Head of Land Resource Management:**

Good morning, Chair and panel. Tim du Feu, Head of Land Resource Management.

**Head of Sustainability and Foresight:**

Good morning, Chair and panel. Dr. Louise Magris, Head of Sustainability and Foresight.

**Head of Place and Spatial Planning:**

Good morning, Minister, Chair and panel. Kevin Pilley, Head of Place and Spatial Planning.

**Head of Regulatory Improvement:**

Good morning, Minister, Chair and panel, Kelly Whitehead, Head of Regulatory Improvement.

**Head of Environmental and Consumer Protection:**

Good morning, Chair and panel, Alison de Bourcier, Head of Environmental and Consumer Protection.

**Environmental Health Consultant:**

Good morning, Chair and panel, Stewart Petrie, Environmental Health Consultant.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Thank you, I think you have heard the A team there.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Indeed. Certainly privileged, Minister, to have your full team present. We have quite a few questions so forgive me if I move things on a bit and interrupt from time to time, but it is in the interests of covering as much ground as we possibly can. Starting off with vessel licensing conditions, fisheries and relations with France, considering we are a few weeks away from the exploration of the extended 3 month amnesty period, what progress has been made regarding the licensing conditions and what will the next steps be for the French and Jersey fishing vessels from 1st October?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Thank you, Chair. I will do a brief introduction and then hand over to the officers because there has been a lot of work taking place with the technical officers, with all parties over the summer break. There are 2 fronts. One is the issues about the licensing qualifying criteria, it is one set of issues and there are further discussions as well about the nature and extent of fishing conditions, and then there has been series of discussions about what the options are if we do not get the progress that we are anticipating. I would like, if I can, to ask Greg Morel to take us through the technical changes, probably starting with the technical work on the licensing.

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

Thank you, Minister. Yes, I can update the panel over the last few weeks and months we have been continuing to work with the E.U. (European Union) through London and with France as well to try and gather this dataset together. Panel members will be well aware that the T.C.A. (Trade and Co-operation Agreement) clearly sets out the requirement for vessels to demonstrate a certain amount of activity over a certain time period in our waters and while that was relatively easy to do for larger

vessels which were equipped with this vessel monitoring system that allowed for data to be freely available as to where they are working, it is much harder for the smaller vessels that do not have that equipment fitted as a regulatory requirement. Some have some monitoring systems but some do not. This has been a quite a difficult issue to resolve with the E.U. and the U.K. (United Kingdom) and it has been very hard to move that matter forward in terms of the type of data that was available and the type of data that is acceptable. There are some datasets that merely require a fisherman to say where they have been, which in our mind feels a little bit loose, a little bit lacking in rigour in terms of whether they can demonstrate access to our waters. We have been working hard with the E.U. to try to resolve that. Several weeks ago, through the formal route into London, we wrote to the E.U. and asked them to provide some additional information in respect of logbooks data for these smaller vessels. All fishing vessels, all commercial vessels have to provide information as to what they are catching and where they are and we have asked for further information on that, particularly information that relates to those vessels identifying where they are fishing with respect to the Granville Bay Agreement. Under the Granville Bay Agreement vessels had to say where they were in relation to that agreement and that represents, we feel, the best set of data that we have available on a spatial scale in order for us to determine this demonstration of activity in our waters. We are still waiting for that information. Initially we heard that E.U. were able to provide it but it has not come through just yet. We are waiting for that and hope it will be received very soon. We are very conscious, as you have alluded to you in your question, that the end of the month was the timeframe set out to move forward certainly with the first phase of the licensing in the qualification criteria that the Minister has referred to. There have been very recent meetings with Ministers and French politicians this week that have been set up to try and again move this process forward for the reasons that we have talked about and we are also going to meet with the French fishing associations soon to try and help them to understand what information we need and to see what they may be able to do to help provide that in order that we can move forward the process to get these vessels that do and can demonstrate fishing in our waters to the satisfaction of us and also to the criteria that is required under the T.C.A. before the end of this month. Just before the Connétable comes in, I was just going to say also the Minister referred to the nature and extent question. That is something that is still not yet resolved so this is effectively 2 parts of the licensing. One is qualification and one is nature and extent. That is something that is still subject to further discussion between ourselves, the U.K. and the E.U. So that is an ongoing process. We are, I feel, making slow progress towards what should be a resolution.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just before I ask the Constable of St. Saviour to come in, in your view has the relationship between and France improved as a result of the amnesty extension?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I will give you my political view and the officers ... I do think the relationship has improved and certainly I am being told ... because we had a series of political meetings and if the Minister for External Relations and Financial Services were here he would say that the Normandy politicians are further advanced in that process of understanding the problems of what we have and our needs. Greg, would you like to come in, please.

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

Thank you, Minister. Yes, I think clearly the situation in March was not desirable, it was very unfortunate. It has not been easy. We cannot escape that fact. I has been very difficult and I think everyone has found the process of the formal reporting that is required to be quite difficult, especially as we knew a lot of these fishermen quite well and quite a few of them we knew by their first name and had dealt with them for many years. The formality of the new arrangement was very difficult to understand. I think some in France felt that we, as officers and we as Jersey, were being somewhat obtuse in the process and not being as open as we have been able to be under the Granville Bay Agreement because we were ... that agreement very much put Jersey in charge and the new T.C.A. is a different relationship. It is getting better. There is still, I believe, some way to go. Some parts of the industry are in a much better place now to understand what we are trying to do and what we are trying to achieve but I think there are some pockets in the industry that are still feel, perhaps, for whatever reason, that the relationship still has quite some rebuilding to do. It perhaps does vary slightly from port to port. Our own industry has done a lot in some ports to try and keep relationships going, particularly on a very local level, vessels going into Carteret quite regularly. On a very local, grassroots level, it is working much better and products are being sold. I think in some pockets, perhaps in some other parts, there is still some work to be done to regain the ground that was perhaps lost when there were difficulties when the T.C.A. was first announced and when it came in.

**The Connétable of St. Saviour:**

Thank you. A couple of points. You said about slow progress and it does seem to have been slow, which is a bit of a shame because we left Brexit, which we are not allowed to mention now, and this should have been all discussed before so our fishermen were not hung out to dry. We seem to have given in a lot to the French because we seem to be terrified of them and, as I say, our guys have been put out to dry. We have given a lot to the French. Can you tell me what the French have given to our fishermen, please?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

We did ask for licences. Greg, can we have an update of where those licences are from the French, because we asked for that. Those were the conditions that we put on the extension that is in place at the moment.

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

Thank you, Constable, for the question. I think from my perspective it was very unfortunate that industry were not involved at an earlier stage in some of these discussions but I think the panel will well know that the sensitivities around fishing in relation to the wider U.K./E.U. conversation were very difficult to be had openly before that agreement was signed. So, yes, I think there were some surprises that everyone found on, whenever it was, Christmas Eve last year but unfortunately that is just the nature of how the relationship worked.

[11:45]

In terms of our fisherman, they are subject to the same criteria, qualification criteria, as the French are to fishing, it is a reciprocal arrangement. When we originally considered the data, which was based on certain parts of the information, there were relatively few vessels in Jersey that could demonstrate that they had fished in French waters. Originally there were ... I would have to double check the numbers, but I think there 5 vessels that we put forward and 3 have been considered for licences to access the French part of the Granville Bay area that they could fish in before. There is a slight complication in that. Some of the vessels have actually been sold and changed hands now and they are now part of the replacement vessel question that still exists as to how replacement vessels are licensed because obviously they are not part of the original qualification group of vessels. We hope that consideration of Granville Bay zones and the log books that we are now proposing to use as a way of demonstrating effort in our waters will be reciprocated further down the line from the European perspective and that will allow more of our vessels to be able to demonstrate that activity. In terms of the relationship, it should be a reciprocal one.

**The Connétable of St. Saviour:**

It should be but it is not, is it? In fact, the French fishermen are doing extremely well in our waters and our guys are just hanging out to dry waiting for whatever the French decide to let us have.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Thank you, Chair. Time ticks on and we know we have a deadline that we are facing. Greg has said there has been some very slow and steady progress but from what I have heard this morning to describe it as meaningful progress would be difficult. Minister, are we looking at an ongoing and further extensions to amnesties here because unless I have missed something it does not look like we are anywhere near getting to a resolution before the end of this month.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Obviously we have had to very much gloss over a lot of the technical detail. We have looked at data or at least the UK has from this system which is a Sacrosys system where we know what the number

of vessels there would be if we use that system but that is generally accepted by the U.K. and ourselves as being completely inaccurate. So what we have gone for is we are pushing for the logbook system that Greg Morel outlined. We have asked for that data. I know Ian Gorst spoke to Normandy yesterday at the top level, the President, and made it quite plain that these requests for information have gone in. Of course we are planning on a number of scenarios that if we get that information I think that would allow us to be able to deal with licences in what we believe is a fair way, if we get that information before 30th September. But of course we have also got to plan for a plan B where that is not the case. I am not keen to carry on extending the amnesty which allows, if you like, completely free fishing by the French any longer than necessary. I think we cannot separate out what is going on with the T.C.A. from the bigger picture of the relationship between the U.K. and the E.U. and the whole situation there in Northern Ireland. I think there will be a decision to be faced. We could just dig in and say we refuse and have a standoff and run the risks of precipitating the sort of events that took place last April, setting us back in the work. There has been a lot of effort done to try and build those relationships because I think we have to go on the soft signs that things are more co-operative. We are not getting the complaints about issues to do with landings or hostility or anything of that nature anymore; that has gone away. A decision to just have a standoff at the end of the month is not a good one. There is an alternative plan B we have spoken about, is we do have a certain amount of information available ourselves that we could be using for licensing. But, unfortunately, my understanding of it - and Greg will be able to explain the technicalities of it - is this would not be compliant with the procedure in the agreement for us to use this information and would almost certainly lead to us licensing a reduced number of vessels than what we consider if we were to use the logbook data under the G.B.A. (Granville Bay Agreement). It is everybody's interests, including the French, that they provide us that detail and that is what we are being asked to do. But it is open to us at the end of September, purely to licence on the basis of this other reduced information set, which we have from our own observations. That decision, I think, we will have to take politically and I certainly will be taking that decision with the Minister for External Relations and Financial Services and possibly the Chief Minister. There are some discussions taking place as whether we try and organise some sort of summit with the French. Because I honestly think that though it is in both Jersey's interests and, I believe, our neighbours that we put ourselves more in control of this situation, rather than relying on the very unsatisfactory position that is going on between the U.K. and Europe, principally driven by the Northern Ireland issue. I do not know, that is a kind of a high-level view. Here we are on the 7th, we have got 2 weeks left ...

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

That is helpful, Minister, and I think a bit of banging of heads together has to be the right way forward. I just picked up that you commented that the Minister for External Relations and Financial Services had met politicians in Normandy because we have noted at the last meeting that the French

Government had forbade their fisheries management from communicating with Jersey, so have we overcome that situation?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I am not aware of that, Chair. I do not know if Greg has got any information.

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

Thank you, Minister. Thank you, Chair. I understand that and forgive me, panel, I am not External Relations, so I am being careful of speaking out of turn but I understand that the Minister has regular catch-ups with the President of La Manche and the President of Normandy on general matters of relationship, obviously fishing is the important one. Yes, I believe there was a conversation yesterday just to try and ascertain where we were with the situation, so that they can perhaps assist with, I do not know, possibly oiling of the wheels, getting the systems working if there is an issue on their side. But also I think really just about understanding, so they are able to report back to those in France where we are in terms of the conversation. You are absolutely right, Mr Chair, there was a time where certainly the administration in France were somewhat reticent perhaps of pursuing a line outside of the very formal channel. But I think for whatever reason they now feel that it is appropriate to perhaps have some discussions to try and make the system work. Just if I may very quickly in respect of the extension question that Deputy Luce asked, I sense that on the French side there is not a great sense of ... they do not really want to carry on with the extension. I think certainly on a very local level the ports in La Manche, they really want to get it solved. There has been so much uncertainty for their fishermen for quite a long time. I think they really feel that they want to get it sorted out and continuing that rolling process is not satisfactory to them for the fishermen and that is the sense I am getting from them on that local level, so perhaps just again useful colour to this.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you. You have indicated that you are drawing in evidence for the various applications that have been submitted, you are seeking to determine whether vessels held Normandy permits. Are they being evidenced?

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

Yes, it is a good point, Chair. Yes, we have had information submitted by the E.U. in relation to the permits held by French vessels. At this moment in time the data we have received does not distinguish between the Norman-held permits on the west side of the Cotentin and also on the east side but also in terms of the Brittany permits that are also issued. We have received the information, we are currently working through it to try and ascertain exactly which parts are relevant. A number of those Norman and Breton permits are not relevant to Jersey waters. But it is our view that the



Granville Bay data, the logbook data, will in some ways help us to not require quite so much detail of the permits because that will supersede that if we are able to have that information. Because it all is relevant to the waters in Jersey and directly around us.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Have we overcome the issue regarding landing at the criée in Granville, likewise at Saint Malo on the dock?

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

To the best of my knowledge the landings in Saint Malo, that has mainly been through the B.I.P. (Border Inspection Post) that is down there for those products that are required to go through the B.I.P. have been occurring, I think both by independent vessels and also on the ferry. I am not aware of any particular issues that have risen recently. With respect to the criée in Granville, I do not think that many Jersey vessels for various reasons have landed very recently down in the criée. But, as I understand it, where they have there have not been any particular issues that have raised their head. I think more Jersey fishing boats are direct-landing into Carteret at this moment in time. I think one of the big merchants tends to favour that port, whether it is slightly easier for his distribution network, I do not know. But that tends to be the port that the smaller Jersey vessels are using more regularly, rather than Granville at this moment in time. Products are getting into France through that mechanism, rather than perhaps the ones they have used before.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you. During our last hearing, Minister, you mentioned that under the T.C.A. a specialised committee for fisheries was to be set up and that Jersey would have a voice on the committee; you anticipated it would be in place by July. Is this now in place and what is its role?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I do not think it is, Chair. I think that is part of the bigger picture of our ... I would have to pass that on to External Relations. I have not had any new information on that. What we are trying to do, and I think your line of questioning, Chair, is spot on, we are trying to build upon local routes. We are trying to do that to keep that dialogue going, which, ultimately, I believe the penny will drop that it is in both our interests and I believe our French neighbours that we progress this information base and we can get to a proper licensing thing. What I am anxious not to do is that we do not just put ourselves in the crossfire between the U.K. and the E.U. on these matters. In fact the advice I had previously was that if we were to have some of our issues directed into the specialised committee set up by the E.U. and the U.K. for fishing, I think it is likely that these issues would go into the long grass pretty well for ever. I think what we are trying to do is resolve this locally and I think it is in everybody's interest if we can.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Going back to the data-sharing and you have indicated that is under development, are you satisfied that we are getting the right data and the French are understanding the data that we require?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I would ask Greg to give exactly the facts for now but my impression is that these requests are going ... there is a dialogue, that information is available and what we need to do is to get it released. It may well be that politics within the E.U. and France that is holding it up. But, Greg, can you give us an update on the exact, precise situation of that data flow?

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

Thank you, Minister. Yes, I think it is pretty much exactly as you have described. We have received some information through the official channels, quite a lot of information but it has been in different sources and it has been quite difficult to work through it all. We have received information about positioning data. We have received some landings data. We have some A.I.S. (Automatic Identification System) data, which is another positioning system. It has been a bit of a mismatch, a smorgasbord, I suppose, of types of information that has come through to us; some photocopies or pictures of chart-plotters to show where people have been. It has been a bit of a mishmash, depending on the type of vessel. We have gone through it very, very carefully and I think we have reached the conclusion that there are some ... there was data there that was not from Jersey waters, it was outside of the qualification period. It was a real match and yet counter to that there has been a number of vessels that we know extremely well that we have received very little information, even though we see them every single day - you can see them with a pair of binoculars if you stood at Gorey Castle - and they are working all the time.

[12:00]

It has been very difficult, it has been a real mix. As I say, we have and we think that we are getting somewhere, albeit slowly, with some of the understanding of what we need to demonstrate this. I think we have to admit that there is a real change in what was required under the Granville Bay to that which is required under the T.C.A. It is a demonstration of being here not perhaps a slightly looser desire to be fishing in these waters and there would have to be a change in mindset in understanding what is required. But I think we are getting there on the data. The French fishermen's associations now seem to be very keen to understand what we are missing and what we need to resolve the problem. I am hopeful that we will reach a place relatively soon whereby we can get the right licences issued to the right vessels, provided that they qualify under the criteria of the T.C.A.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Given that the whole direction of the T.C.A. was to enable us to manage our waters, are you satisfied, Minister, that we are going in the right direction?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Look, the T.C.A., if you like, was not our choice. What came out of the T.C.A., as the Connétable of St. Saviour told us, took us by surprise. We did not have any input into it. We have had to try and make it work. Plainly, things have not gone well, whether they are teething troubles or long-term defects in the agreement I think time will tell. But I certainly think at the moment that our efforts to try and improve our sustainability of our fishing activity has not been helped, at the very least. In fact I have already started to ask the team to assess if we can make an estimate of the effect of what has gone on for the last ... certainly at the end of September it will be 9 months of a year. Because I do not think this uncontrolled situation that we have ended up having to accept can go on, it just cannot. I think this is what I meant, I think we should take a firmer line of control ourselves and I think it is in everybody's interests. This is what I am planning to discuss with the Minister for External Relations and Financial Services and the Chief Minister. When I last spoke to the Chief Minister, in fact I spoke to him yesterday, he was talking about having a physical meeting in person in France with those political representatives. Because the situation is not good and there we are, I cannot dress it up but I am anxious that I do not make it worse.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Yes, while I appreciate no one wants to inflame the situation, have we stopped any or inspected any French vessels in our water for compliance since our boats have been back on service?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Greg.

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

Thank you, Minister. We have not changed our policy with respect to boarding French vessels and checking French vessels from a fisheries perspective because the legislation still stands. But what has had a significant impact is the pandemic in terms of which vessels we will board. We have seen and have significantly reduced the boarding of vessels that we have done in our waters, that is true but that is really down to a COVID response, rather than a fishing response. We do utilise, the boats would come alongside French vessels and if we believe there may be a problem we can take further action. But there has been a reduction in the number of inspections that has been undertaken on French boats in recent months but that is the reason.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you. I will just go to Deputy Luce, please.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Thank you, Chair. Could I just ask Greg, following on from his last answer, given that COVID statistics in mainland Europe are now improving at quite a dramatic rate, in fact better than British ones, when do you see that policy of not boarding French vessels changing?

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

My view would be that it has changed as of now, if you know what I mean. I think we should revert back to our boarding of French vessels. Officers will obviously need to be careful. We will have to make we are obviously following all the rules that are in place from a health perspective but I see no reason why we should not move back to the place that we have always been with boarding French vessels. I think it is interesting and I think COVID, notwithstanding the fact it has caused enormous problems for obvious reasons, has been quite difficult from that particular perspective. Part of the way that we have worked with the French previously is to have very many conversations with them day in, day out by boarding the boats and talking to them. I think the inability for us to do that very recently has made some of these decisions, this journey perhaps slightly more complicated than it needed to be. But I see no reason why we should not be boarding French boats regularly going forward. We do have to be honest and that there is still some question marks being asked about some of the conditions that we have in place on the licences that have been issued. But obviously the legislation that is in place, that has been through the States, applies to everyone, as set out in that legislation and we would look to enforce that without fear or favour to any vessel and anyone fishing in our waters; that would not be something that we would want to do, so that is the way we would approach it.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Deputy Luce again.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Thank you, Chair. Just taking that a little bit further, if I may and I know I am going a little bit off-piste here but I am going to go first to licensing conditions. We know that bluefin tuna is not a fish that is allowed to be caught in our waters and some of us, myself one of them, may disagree with the data on the population of bluefin tuna and what we might do with them. But notwithstanding that, they are at the moment not allowed to be caught in our waters and then we had recent reports of French vessels apparently or potentially taking that species in our waters. What are we doing about that then?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Can I just come in and then I will hand to Greg? I am aware ... I have been at a briefing on the investigation that has taken place and Greg can go into that particular incident. But of course we are also heavily engaged in scientific work, which will, I think, provide data in the longer run, which will enable an assessment of the future of that species in our waters. Greg.

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

Yes, thank you, Minister. Yes, so on both of those points that have been raised I am sure that the seagoing folk among you, perhaps the Chair and you, Deputy, may have seen there are quite a few sightings of these tuna around at the moment. They are present in our waters and they have been doing so with increasing regularity perhaps over the last 3 or 4 seasons. The legislation from a fisheries perspective is very clear, you cannot directly fish for or land within our water a bluefin tuna; they are prohibited. But obviously you can transit our waters under the fisheries perspective if they have been caught legitimately in another jurisdiction because that would sit outside of our rules. You will obviously understand I am not going to go into specific details about specific cases, suffice to say that obviously we were aware of allegations of fishing in our waters from particular vessels and those investigations are ongoing. When we are in a position to report and to move those forward we will do so. Just on the point the Minister has picked up on, we have fantastically been awarded and been able to use some funds that have been allocated to us to do something on marine science. One of the projects we have put that to is to do some work, together with colleagues from the U.K., to make a better assessment and gather the information in terms of these pretty impressive beasts, to be honest and that work is ongoing at the moment. There is a study to try and work out the interconnectivity between the fish that are in our waters and where they are elsewhere, whether they are cross-Atlantic, whether they are Mediterranean and that is happening as well. That is being gathered with a view to deciding what is the most appropriate management measures to put in place for this particular stock and to see what options we may have moving forward. But I think we should be certain that we have got the best data available to do that before we make any precipitous decisions on that front.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Could I just ask and maybe the Minister might want to answer this one, given that you are going to look for some scientific data, is this not a fantastic opportunity to work with the fishing industry to come up with that on a catch, release and tag basis?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I do not want to go into the details, please, if you would not mind, Chair, but there is work that is currently going on, very advanced. I would prefer it if you give us the opportunity to complete that work. You are right in principle but I think we are already aware that these fish are present in our waters. We need to grab the opportunity, if you like, to find out what is going on with that species.

But of course we are part of the bigger picture and if you push me anymore ... I think at the moment I would prefer if we are just allowed to carry out that work. We are alive to the point that people are making, that we need to understand that species more and that, I think, will inform what I believe will be done, what the rules will be about this species in the future. But at the moment we are enforcing the law as it currently is.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

I am grateful for the Minister's answer.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Okay, thank you. Deputy Gardiner.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Sorry, I beg your pardon?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Deputy Gardiner. No, she is not there. Deputy Truscott.

**Deputy G.J. Truscott of St. Brelade:**

It is either for the Minister or Greg. Deputy Luce is absolutely right, the clock is ticking and plainly we all want to get to an agreement that is fair for all, an amicable agreement that works for everyone. But knowing what you do, Greg, the amount of data that still is outstanding and it still needs to be verified, how confident are you that by the end of this month we are in a position to put this issue to bed or are we realistically looking at an extension to the agreement again?

**Head of Marine Resources and Fisheries:**

Thank you, Deputy. It is an extremely good question. I am confident that officers in the team are in a position to analyse and to work through this data and then to issue, on instruction by the Minister, licences, yes, in quick order after we receive this information. We have done as much preparatory work as we possibly can and so it is difficult to put a timescale on it exactly because we do not quite know what we are going to get. If we get a data set that is already well thought out, well set out and has been properly checked before we receive it, my view is that they can press the button pretty quickly. If we get a data set that needs quite a bit of work it is harder to do. But I have to say I think it is a very, very good question. If we get the data in a reasonable order I think we can move this forward to a place that we will be able to issue the licences for those vessels that comply. I still think we have a lot of work to do with this nature and extent question, as the Minister has alluded to and that is another big piece of work that is required, but we can certainly finish the first phase of this process before the end of the month if we get that information. But it is very difficult to say exactly

how that might be. Sorry for a slightly woolly answer, Deputy, but it is quite difficult. Yes, I think the answer from our perspective is that we are as ready as we possibly can be to make it work once we are helped and provided with the information that we need.

**Deputy G.J. Truscott:**

Thank you, Greg.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I am going to move on now, Minister, to the Wildlife Law and it is a good move from bluefin tuna. We have noted that the Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2021 was enacted in June this year, noting that the accompanying guidance would comprise several tiers. What guidance has been finalised and how can it be accessed, please, Minister?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Can I ask Dr. Tim du Feu, please, to pick up on where we are with that progress?

**Head of Land Resource Management:**

Thank you very much, Minister. Yes, it is a good question. The Wildlife Law we were expecting, after your review by the panel, to come back around September of this year following acceptance by the Privy Council. In fact it was fast-tracked for some reason and it came back in June and has been enacted since 4th June. The rapidity of it coming back meant that we could not put the guidance documents in train prior to when the law was enacted. Notwithstanding, since your review we have been actively engaged in drafting the guidance. There is a few levels of it, what we call the Level 1 guidance, which is a legal interpretation of the Wildlife Law, particularly in terms of breeding, resting sites and disturbance and what does that mean for particular species? The important guidance I think you referred to is a Level 2 guidance, which is currently being drafted and as we speak that is being discussed with the various stakeholders. That is really looking at the practical guidance for businesses, for land users, tree surgeons, farmers and a whole plethora of people who may interact with the Wildlife Law and detailed guidance on what that means for their daily activities. That is being drafted as we speak. This week it is being discussed with local businesses, as to ascertain what else they would like to see in the guidance and that will be published within, hopefully, this month.

[12:15]

Then in October we have got further sessions with stakeholders to explain and to let them know more about the Wildlife Law and the impact of the guidance on them. It is all being progressed. It

was just, which is fortuitous, that the law came back early from the Privy Council but we are fast-tracking the guidance and we are on it.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Could you update us on the progress of the department's internal review of the Natural Environment team to identify whether it comprises the sufficient level of expertise required for the implementation of the new law?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I think before the technical side, there is a political aspect to this. You know that this target operating model of the One Government is still going through a process of finalisation in I.H.E. and I think this is something that has bedevilled our whole effectiveness, I believe, throughout my term so far. Obviously that has resolved a huge amount of change and at the moment the resources are tight. Where I am very, very pleased is that I now believe I have secured the agreement to the Council of Ministers, fingers crossed as it were, when the draft Government Plan is lodged that that issue is going to be addressed in 2022. I am pleased with some of the issues, which we have recognised there. But there is also an adjustment between what is done under the new regulatory structure between the planning statutory team and in fact the wildlife team. I do not know if you want to pick up the details of that, please, Tim. That work is still ongoing and it has caused a lot of change and to some extent disruption.

**Head of Land Resource Management:**

Thank you very much, Minister. Yes, we were fortunate to be awarded a Government Plan bid of £60,000 a year, so that money is being used both for the guidance and will set the groundworks and be used for the internal review as well. What we needed to do was to see how T.O.M. (target operating model) settles, particularly the new relationship between a Regulatory Department and, if you like, the Scientific Department of Land Resource Management, which I head, which the Wildlife Law comes under. Quite an exciting future of how the science then interacts with the regulatory forces and enables us to be advisers and scientific officers under the law. However, still having that stick approach, being able to pass that to our regulatory colleagues, in order then to implement the more regulatory aspects where we need to of potential infringements under the Wildlife Law. That relationship is now clear on paper, so Natural Environment are the science and the advisers and we do have the Regulatory Department. It is anticipated the regulation of the Wildlife Law will be undertaken by a planning in habitat section within Planning, so that is being set up. That is where we are at the moment, so we wanted to see where T.O.M. landed. On the back of that now we want to do the internal review. We are going out at the moment to expressions of interests really to use it as a good opportunity to get the regulation right, also to firm up on the relationship between the science and advisory element in our Regulatory Department and, importantly, to benchmark



ourselves against the U.K., that we are regulating and using the law in the correct way. That is out for interests at the moment. Fair to say as well we would like to use it to link in with the planning system and see how the Wildlife Law and the provisions within it interlink with the planning process, if we know there is holes and difficulties historic and we want to try and use the internal review to shed more light on that and come up with some solutions.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Given that there is quite a lot of local scientific expertise, do we use that or do we just slavishly go to the U.K. for scientific input?

**Head of Land Resource Management:**

No, absolutely, it is all on the right ... our ethos is to build on and support local expertise where we can. The Level 2 guidance is being drafted using local expertise. We have also got a licensing framework being drafted using local expertise, linking up with U.K. colleagues but working in partnership because it holds great value. The beauty of that is they know our stakeholders. For example, the stakeholder workshops which are operating this week are being run using local ecological consultants in liaison with the local stakeholders, so very much that is our ethos and that is a sustainable way of implementing the law, is by everybody being on board and being party to that.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

I presume these workshops will be raising awareness within the local community of the new law, is that the direction of the workshops?

**Head of Land Resource Management:**

Absolutely. There is 2 elements, so the workshops this week are asking the stakeholders to look at the guidance documents, consider them, both from a practical matter of how the guidance can work in daily operations, say, of a farming life or a land management company but also of other aspects we may have missed that they would like to see included in the guidance, so that is very much the case, yes.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Deputy Luce.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Thank you, Chair. Minister, I am getting a bit of a sense of cart before horse here and I would like your take on it. I just wanted to know, do you think it is satisfactory to bring in quite an extensive new law into being when, firstly, we do not have the guidance and, secondly, even if we did have

the guidance in place it appears we do not have the staff to implement the guidance? I guess the other question is, surely is this not a case that we needed to come back to the States with an Appointed Day Act before we started on laws?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Firstly, I have to confess that it did take me entirely by surprise that the law came into effect much earlier than we had expected. I have been kind of used to the legal drafting process and process of doing the laws which seems to take such an age and all of a sudden this one has come through. But I think I am very, very satisfied that the team are working hard to try and complete this work on the guidance, it is obviously very technical. At the moment I am not getting any complaints about it. I think what matters is how we are doing things in practice. I am not aware that we are doing anything at the present time with a heavy hand because we do need to gear up, as Tim has said, to be able to do this job effectively. Because it is a transition, it is a big transition from where we were before to where we are now. It is not unusual, I do not think, in my experience that if you like that we set ourselves the legal powers to do things that ultimately take some time to do. At the risk of touching nerves of course I highlight the Residential Dwellings Law, which came in in 2017 but we still are not able to do it for other reasons. I am not aware ... I do not know that there is a case ... I am not hearing at the moment any case for going back to the States. I do not recall whether or not what we put in that law about the appointed day but, as Minister, I will absolutely make sure that this important new law, which is really important with all the commitment to biodiversity and so on that we need to embrace, that is enforced in a way which I think is within the community's capability and part of that are guidance and skills. We have got the money, I am very pleased because not only have we got the money this year in the climate emergency funding but there is more money to follow next year in the Government Plan as well. We are making good progress I think.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you. Minister, I am going to move on to the draft Bridging Island Plan, could you briefly update us on the progress regarding the draft Bridging Plan, tell us where we are?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Of course, Chair, I think when we last met we were at the tail end of the process of public consultation, which finished on 12th July on the draft plan and indeed the deadline for States Members' amendments. Of course, since then, since 12th July, there has been a phenomenal amount of work which the officers have done over the holiday. I did not read every single word of the 977 pages of response that we had done but I did review them all at a high level and discussed with the officers. There has been a lot of work done and that is probably where I would like to concentrate. I have not been able to give the usual focus on other matters but I am trying to keep them going as best as possible. We have published, as you have seen, a very, very comprehensive

document, which at the moment the media are feeding on, if you like, all of the comments that people put on since April and, quite rightly, focusing on the key issues which are going to be the main subjects of the planning inquiry, which is going to be taking place in November. As you know we have got the 3 inspectors. All that information ... the inspectors had the plan in April and they have had all of the documents, all of the follow-up and they have also had my responses. Within the space, I think by the end of the month, they will be setting out, if you like, their thoughts on the agenda for the inquiry, the kind of technical nuts and bolts about how it will operate, what opportunities there are for people to attend the inquiry. I am hopeful that we can have physical inquiries but we have had to gear up for either because we do not know what the COVID situation will be. But I think out of that all of those people that have made those responses and all the States Members' amendments, there will be the opportunity to have those tested in the inquiry. I think there has been a misunderstanding, the comments that I have published people have interpreted, or the media has, as rejected. No, what I have tried to do is to give a high-level view, putting into context all of these 2,000 comments and 60-odd amendments, trying to relate them to the overall plan. Because I am looking at it as a Minister as a whole point, to try and make sure the sustainability of the plan and it achieves its objectives at a very high level. But of course Members and others have a different focus, they are focusing on detail or particular issues and it is right that that is the case. I think those decisions will come out after the planning inquiry and there will be some change. There will be some change. I do not know if the Scrutiny Panel has any thoughts on that but I am content that this is better this time, that the amendments and the issues have come out early, which gives us time to make sure that they are tested properly throughout the remaining process.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you, Minister. What joint working and collaboration, if any, has been undertaken with the Minister for Housing and Communities? How can the proposed rezoned sites be utilised for affordable housing? This is what the public want to know.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Yes, I think that, first of all, obviously Deputy Labey was elected right in the middle of the process and of course I have certainly had meetings, first of all, when I went to the Council of Ministers to have a discussion with them about the housing strategy, the high-level approach to meeting the housing numbers, that I got this agreement. But what it was not possible to do was to come forward with the details of the individual sites and seek a C.O.M. (Council of Ministers) blessing. In fact that would not have been possible because Members of C.O.M. are bound to have individual views on different sites and so on and the process needs to accommodate that. But anyway I did go through ... we went through those sites, the ones with Deputy Labey. He was content to go along with what is proposed, I think because obviously they are meeting high-level objectives. In terms of the detail, as I have tried to explain, what the plan does, the draft plan, it puts in place a framework of policy

with a degree of zoning of open land, which is the least damaging choices were made to protect our countryside and also States sites and also other sites in the pipeline. Those policies, they are at a high level. How they are worked and transacted into achieving objectives of affordable housing, there has been a lot of discussion with the Minister for Housing and Communities. I think you did have a discussion with me about this previously and there was follow-up discussions with the Minister for Housing and Communities. The key thing is the rules of the Housing Gateway, the planning obligation agreements and particularly the rules about right-sizing and so on, all those things. The planning policy will set the framework.

[12.30]

The Minister for Housing and Communities, I think, is already advanced in work and has published proposals in terms of how those powers are put into practice. Bearing in mind I think to go from a zoning to people moving into a house is probably 3 years. I think that timescale, that work, can be firmed up by the Minister for Housing and Communities, but what we need now is the framework of policy and I am very clear that ... that is why I am defending it strongly. We will talk about the detail of that, Chair, but that is my high-level position.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Some will argue, Minister, that Government are just not releasing their own sites quick enough and causing haemorrhaging in the system, were quick to want to rezone green fields but not dealing with the sites we have got. What are your thoughts on that?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I think I pointed a lot of that out in the comments. Obviously we have had a lot of comments that are saying, for example, we have got amendments that say ... just to illustrate where there is a conflict between the localised issue of an amendment to the Island Plan and a conflict between the strategic view. The localised amendment says that we should not allocate those sites in the urban area for any other use until we have made the decisions about schools; as a principle, that is a sensible thing. But of course, potentially, that could stymie the prompt development of those sites for homes and so that is an issue where I have to take a strategic view. I have been very, very open about this, I have been disappointed with the rate of progress, of the way the Government has with its Property Holdings and I.H.E. hat on made those strategic decisions. But the plan, I think, provides for that framework but, again, the plan does not do implementation. What we need is - and I think this was my message last time - we have to have joined-up operations of the Government. The plan is a part of the story, it is an essential part of the story because without it we have not got a policy base. But we need the other bit, the doing bit to see it through and also, as you know, we need the

regulatory part, which I am happy to say I am making progress on some of the resources for that in the future to do that job more effectively.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Going to the various States Members' amendments, are there any that stand out, in your view, which would provide further benefit in respect of the outcomes of the plan?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

There are some amendments that talk about the equality of the urban environment, which I think are important because I do not want to see wall-to-wall housing without the associated community facilities to go with it, play space and also I am personally very supportive of the proposal for a country park on the edge of town. I am very supportive about the things about public access and also transport and so on. Those sort of amendments are very well intentioned in principle. But, again, this example where what I have had to do in the amendments, I have had to try and look at them with a strategic hat on and sometimes some of the detail in those amendments gets in the way. I am hopeful that some of those can be sorted out in a tidying-up process with some amendments and that after the planning inquiry. Unfortunately, where we have got the biggest issue, which I think is a real difficulty, is that on the housing sites chosen I am asked to face both ways at once or the States are. Yes, we want a spatial plan that concentrates housing in the built area because we want to maintain our coast and countryside that we have done for decades very successfully, but by the way we do not want those which are sited on the edge of the urban area to try and minimise the effect of scatter potting all around the countryside and also where there are community links, churches, shops, buses, drains and all those things. But on the other hand I am being told, well, we want all these extra sites in the countryside. I tried to take the view of the minimum zoning necessary to meet the housing targets and doing these in the village communities in a way that does not spread these sites all over into locations well out of line with amenities and all those other things and become isolated communities. But we have a number of amendments that do the reverse. There is going to have to be some choices there. I am worried about the overall decisions of the States which could end up with an unbalanced plan. An unbalanced plan because at the moment what we have got is a balanced plan, if you like. We are not going to please everybody. I think I am looking for a point where we can live with what we have got. There will be people that like this bit and not that bit. If we end up with it all one way I think the plan becomes very unbalanced and throws the sustainability out. Those are my messages that we need to please think carefully about that.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Deputy Luce.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Thank you, Chair. Could I just ask the Minister, the most recent review by the Infrastructure Department into the estate of the States of Jersey, the buildings and land that we own, barely has the word housing in it, is that a big disappointment for you?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

When I saw their strategy it is full of ... I have got to be careful here because it was just all sort of management speak and strategic structure. I was looking for specifics and I have not had that. I think that is where I worry about generally at the moment because maybe I am just a pragmatic, practical person, that I like to get into the issues really. I think I am not seeing that clarity, I am really not. But, nonetheless, the policies that are in the Island Plan make it quite plain that we want to see those sites developed for homes but not wall-to-wall homes, as I said; play space, open space, other amenities and so on that go with that in town, that is what I want to see. As you know, I am not part of the Regeneration Steering Group, I do not have party to those decisions. Is it satisfactory? No.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

The Constable of St. Saviour.

**The Connétable of St. Saviour:**

Yes, thank you. You have been talking about protecting the countryside and yet you are trying to take fields in St. Saviour to build, which are agricultural fields. You are taking agricultural fields which are also organic in St. Helier. Do you not think it would be better to have some sort of immigration policy and then we could sort of handle what we have here? Why do you want to keep building in St. Saviour and St. Helier, who are already oversubscribed now?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Constable, I have stood on the basis of a commitment that we needed to control our migration. I have not been successful in persuading my colleagues. We have a commitment at the moment from Deputy Rowland Huelin leading that work. The jury is out on whether he can succeed but in the meantime the reality is here, that we have the backlog, we have the unfulfilled demand and we only have to look at the pressure on house prices and rental and so on to realise the situation we have, which is grim; it is a crisis. I think it is not a thing I do willingly. I have had no choice. I have been put in that position by the reality. The Island Plan is there to provide for the land being used in the best interests of the community, that is what the law says and part of that means meeting our needs, our community needs and you could not get more basic than homes. I have had to do that. How do we go about it? I did this decision with the Council of Ministers: "Do you want to follow the previous strategy of concentrating much more building within a built-up area?" The answer was yes. Okay, then so we had a process of evaluating all 800 sites and we published the detail in the

documents about how they were all rated and we tried to make sure that we pick the ones that had the least damage. I was not party to those decisions because that was done as a technical planning officer evaluation, but I did have to sign off on the final sites and I did go round and see them. Of course I noticed that obviously of the sites, taking the Five Oaks sites, I think I have put this in my comments, the large ones, which are next to where Jersey Milk used to be, Princes Tower Road, that is not currently in agricultural land, is it? It looks to me like that land has been very much like left fallow for some time. But I did notice that the fields opposite the old *J.E.P. (Jersey Evening Post)* offices were in beautiful agricultural condition. I did say to the officers: "Could we not have some of this area leased for play and community and open space for others?" The view was taken, yes, this can be done but it can be done in a supplementary guidance that is issued or the development briefs that happen if the States were to approve those sites, then they need not be - and I would not want them to be - just wall-to-wall homes crammed in. Talking about ...

**The Connétable of St. Saviour:**

I am sorry to interrupt you but I do not want any more homes at all and as for saying about the Milk Marketing Board old place, that valley, you want that valley to be filled in so it can be built on; that is just pathetic, when you are turning down sites on other parts of the Island that could be used and other parishes want you. St. Helier and St. Saviour do not want any more. I am sorry and you are going to have a hell of a fight on your hands, not just from me because I am really angry and so is Inna.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I can see that, I can understand and I respect your view and so on. But, of course, one would have to look at the individual sites. What I have said in the comments is that if Members back the position that you have taken and go for the sites in the countryside, there are sites which are more sustainable on a list which we did not include to those sites and we have listed those. Those sites, we have said to the inspector there is a B list, there is a plan B, that if those sites ...

**Deputy I. Gardiner of St. Helier:**

Minister, would you agree that the rural area of St. Helier, we are talking about 3 fields, 3 organic fields, it is the countryside, it is not a built-up area and are you aware about the campaigning? Islanders have called Prince Charles for support to save 3 fields, they are home for 2 organic dairy herds and where would they move them?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Yes. I can tell you what I had done, I had asked for the agricultural advice to be revisited because I was as concerned as everybody else is about the loss of organic farm because we are down to such a low number. But of course these fields were put forward by the landowner, not by the farmer,

by the landowner, which is not the farmer. The advice that I was given is that the farmer does not have security of tenure. It is absolutely far from certain whether or not that activity of organic farming on those fields would continue. I think I have had to separate out the issues of ownership from the issue of zoning.

**The Connétable of St. Saviour:**

Could I just say it takes 2 years because I am an organic dairy farmer? None of these fields are mine, they belong to the other person who is organic. But it takes 2 years to convert the land to be organic. It only takes 6 months for the animals but it takes 2 years to convert the land. You are going to whip it away in 2 minutes because the landowner has decided he could get more money possibly from that than from having a dairy farm. You are going along with it, I think it is very sad. Anyway, I will leave it with you.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Chair, obviously I have spoken a lot on this part, Kevin Pilley is the officer and has done all the work on these plans, could I ask if you could hear from him to see if he has any extra comment on these questions?

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Yes, please do.

**Head of Place and Spatial Planning:**

Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. I think the Minister set the position out quite clearly in the sense that we are conscious that there have been a range of representations on a number of sites. The sites in St. Helier, we are conscious of the status of the land and its value to the agricultural industry and particularly the dairy industry. I think we are cognisant of the fact that, particularly with dairy farming, there is a requirement for the fields to have a physical relationship with the dairy unit. But I think, as the Minister has set out, where we are at the moment is that the Minister has taken a view that of all of the sites put forward, notwithstanding some of the challenges around these sites, these were the most sustainable options when you take the plan as a whole. These issues should be tested and examined through the examination in public where people will have an opportunity to speak further to their representations, to make their views known to the planning inspectors and the planning inspectors will then provide the Minister with further advice.

[12:45]

That provides the Minister with further opportunity to consider the issue in more detail and, if necessary, to make amendments to the plan or proposed amendments to the plan before it goes to



the States Assembly. I think there is a robust process there that allows all of these issues to be taken into account and discussed. The purpose of the exercise is for the Island to come out with the plan that it thinks is acceptable and, ultimately, that is a decision for the States Assembly.

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

Yes, you are speaking about the robust process. Have you been in communication with Jersey Farmers' Union and were they involved in consultation prior to these fields being earmarked for housing? If not, why not?

**Head of Place and Spatial Planning:**

As part of the assessment of all of the sites that we received ... as the Minister said, these sites were put forward to us by the landowners and ...

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

No, my question is, have you been in touch with the Jersey Farmers' Union and consulted with them before you put 2 organic fields forward?

**Head of Place and Spatial Planning:**

We were in consultation with our colleagues within the Government who deal with agricultural matters, so that is colleagues at Economic Development and at Natural Environment who deal with land control. We were aware of the status of the fields in terms of their assessment. Clearly, as part of the consultation on the draft plan, we engage with key stakeholders, like the Jersey Farmers' Union, the R.J.A. and H.S. (Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticultural Society) and Jersey Dairy. In fact the Minister has had meetings with them both prior to and subsequent to the publication of the draft plan. As I say, we have engaged with colleagues who are aware of the agricultural status of the land and that has been further supplemented by the views that we have secured from the J.F.U. (Jersey Farmers' Union) and R.J.A.

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

The response that you received from the Jersey Farmers' Union and the Dairy, were they objecting, opposing or were they in support of developing these fields?

**Head of Place and Spatial Planning:**

In terms of each of the sites that are being put forward for housing, they have given us a view as to the relative significance of each of those sites to the agricultural industry and ...

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

No, my question was, were they in support or were they opposed? It was a very simple question, not that they are giving their views. What was the reaction from them?

**Head of Place and Spatial Planning:**

As I have just said, they have given their views on all of the sites and all of their responses are set out in the Minister's report. You can see in terms of the fields to the north of St. Helier because of the significance to the dairy industry and the fact that this was one of 2 organic dairy herds in the Island, they did not support the allocation of that specific site.

**Deputy G.J. Truscott:**

Testing your joined-up thinking, Minister, and with regard to your plans for Les Quennevais urban centre plan. Plainly that will result in an increase in volumes of traffic. Arguably we already have some of the highest volumes of traffic. We are all aware of the pinch-point of Beaumont and pretty much all day now you are caught in a traffic jam. Where are we with traffic management going forward with this proposal?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Let me just kick off the by saying that certainly the reaction to the Les Quennevais designation that we have suggested has resulted in an overblown situation where somehow or other we want to achieve a massive urban development. Members in the town see it as being a commercial threat. That is not at all what is proposed. It is about having a limited recognition that area principally dates from the 1960s and would benefit from any urban improvement uplift. But of course that is not an open door to any sort of development. The areas that I personally would have seen as more potential for development would be on the effluent lands, but that is an issue for the future. What we are talking about is much more limited. There is a lot of detail in those amendments, which I am hopeful we will resolve at the inquiry. Because I do agree with bits of the amendments. For example, I do not want to see night-time/evening economy and all that kind of stuff over in Les Quennevais, no. On the traffic side, what my logic was, and the officers supported this, was that at the moment everybody has to go into town for everything. Therefore, the traffic at Beaumont and so on is very much more increased. If it was that we had to use the existing retail facility in Les Quennevais that could avoid it and that would be a good thing. For example, I would much sooner go to Anderson's in Les Quennevais Parade to buy my screwdrivers and screws than go all the way into town and be in a queue. That is the kind of scale I had thought of this. Kevin, could you come in now on Graham's point, please?

**Head of Place and Spatial Planning:**

Yes, thank you, Minister. As you have said, it is not envisaged that Les Quennevais would be developed in competition to St. Helier. As you have suggested, it is really about looking at those

parts of the Island's existing built-up areas and looking at how they might contribute to the Island's overall need for development. We have just had a discussion about the release of greenfield land to provide homes, which has not found favour in some local quarters. Homes need to be provided somewhere and there are opportunities for that to happen in some of the Island's built-up areas. As you have suggested, Les Quennevais was generally developed throughout the 1960s at what is a relatively low density. There is opportunities there to use some of that land more efficiently and effectively. We can see some of the examples of some of the recent development done by Andium Homes, for example, which has delivered very successful housing schemes in the west of the Island, but which has used land more efficiently and more effectively. So that is the type of development that is envisaged behind the Minister's proposed amendment. As he has suggested, there should be greater opportunity for local travel, for people to live and potentially work in the west of the Island, thereby reducing the pressure on places like Beaumont junction.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Can I take us back to Deputy Gardiner who is going to explore green fields a little bit further. Thank you.

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

It was a comment about the built-up area. This field is not only the home for organic herds, they also have an abundance of the wildlife, including bats and wildlife flowers. In your view, would developing housing on these fields not go against the Government strategy to protect Jersey wildlife, life and biodiversity?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I would prefer to see no green fields developed. It is the hardest thing that any Minister for the Environment could bring forward. It is only because we have got ourselves in this dire position that we have to even think about it. Therefore, what one does is try to choose the sites where we can get the least damage. The sustainability report says, yes, it is a negative. Zoning those green fields is the only negative sustainability factor in the Island Plan draft. It is a question of balance. Could I produce a plan that is entirely sustainable? Yes. I could do that by saying we will not provide the housing. I could do that.

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

Yes, Minister, but the question is when you have St. Helier and St. Saviour saying: "We have had enough, they are our rural areas. It is our rural areas, not worse than any rural areas in the country parishes." Why do these fields need to be destroyed for extra housing in our green rural areas? Why should our biodiversity be destroyed? Why does our organic herd need to move? We also would like to have our rural areas in our parishes, even though it be the capital and the urban ones.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

That is why I support strongly, and I have done, the Constable of St. Helier's proposal for the country park at Warwick Farm. If I could magic up a country park in the middle of town I would. I also support the community use of land in town. I support the shared use of open land in schools and so on for the community. Anything we can do to create the open space. But, if we are to stick with the strategic policy of maintaining the developments in the built areas or on the edges of them, with limited expansion of the villages, then ... if the States do not go with that, then fine. My job as Minister is to bring the proposals forward and give the States clear information about what are the effects and the consequences of that. I prefer not to be in that position but it is my duty to do that. But, in the end, it is the States that will have to decide on those choices. When I stood for election, I said: "Because of our population being so out of control, there is going to be choices." We are going to have to face those choices and we have not made them as a community or a States. That is where we are. So you are right.

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

This is really important strategically for agriculture, environment and the people who live in that area as well. Considering the strategic importance of these 3 sites for all the reasons that I mention, maybe this has been overlooked in your view. Are there any other potential fields that should be reconsidered in respect of the agricultural environment value and elsewhere?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Yes, that is what I put when I said about the plan B. There is a list, which I published in the comments, of alternative sites. But of course it will not please people and I will be quite frank. There were a number of fields in St. Clement, which rated highly. Those are included on the B list. There is a field in St. Brelade, which rated highly. I can see the reactions of Members but there we are. These choices are stark and in the evaluations that we published we tried to assess ratings or the information based on the work the officers did. But of course all that is what the officers say, all these need to be tested, because we recognise that there are strong opposing views. What we need to do is to bottom out and try to find a place where as a community as a whole we can live with it. We can live with those choices.

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

If I am not mistaken, all amendments that suggested to take fields out of the plan, you are not minded to accept. All amendments that suggested to add fields to the plan, you are not minded to accept. So it was no movement absolutely around the fields.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I do not accept that. I know that has been paraphrased because people have not read the 900-odd pages. If they read them ... what people have done is they have just taken a scan summary and jumped to that view. I do not accept that. There has to be a discussion when we go through all of those sites, all the 60-odd amendments of them. Some of the sites that were put forward in the countryside, in my view, are completely utterly isolated, well away from all the amenities. Others are better allocated and the comments I put say so. But, in the end, what I have had to take is a strategic view. Do we stick with the choices being proposed based on the strategy, which we have had for the last decades, or do we abandon it and do something completely different, or do we not do it at all? Those are the choices.

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

Did you consider the strategy that was worked for decade and maybe after a decade it does not work and we need to look at some flexibility?

[13:00]

**The Minister for the Environment:**

In a way I am not sure if we have an amendment that gives us it clearly like that. The inspectors will say ... if there are a number of amendments, which taken together effectively refocus on that strategy, maybe that is what they will do in the inquiry.

**Deputy I. Gardiner:**

Thank you, Minister.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Minister, that leads nicely on to the natural environment and trees. A member of the public recently raised concern regarding the protection of natural environment and has questioned why the Government is not putting these natural environments, and especially trees, at the forefront of the decisions it makes. What is your view in that regard?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

We are very pleased that you managed to get the commitment to the Government Plan to give us money to advance our work very significantly. Of course we had anticipated that, Gregory and I, right from the start. We were very keen to see the Planning Law powers extended to trees. Of course now we have the Wildlife Law as well. But of course there is a load of work to be done and Kelly is leading this in detail. I wonder, Chair, if you could let Kelly just talk us through where we are with the pieces of work in making that a journey. Because there was a lot to be done in reaching a point where we can hand-on-heart say we are doing better.

**Head of Regulatory Improvement:**

Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. I presented to Scrutiny about a month ago this blueprint that we had for the tree strategy work as part of the Climate Emergency Fund. I am pleased to say that in the 6 weeks or so that has passed we have completed a series of workshops with local expert stakeholders. The opinions of that group were then presented in a public survey, which closed 2 days ago on Monday. We had over 300 responses to that public survey. We are now going through the period of collating those responses and we will have a second workshop with our local expert stakeholders towards the end of this month in September. With the idea of having a blueprint to the Minister at the end of September, which will start to look, refine and test, the recommendations of that for a tree strategy for Jersey. Along with that, we have prepared the amendments to number 8 and the Minister has lodged those for consideration and debate on 5th October, which introduces an enabling power, which is any works to trees to be part of a definition of development. That is a very broad enabling power and our intention is then to draft secondary legislation by an Order, which will then give allowances for certain types of works to certain types of trees in particular circumstances. Those details are to be worked out as part of the feedback from the expert stakeholders and our public survey. Then we will be working through that secondary legislation. We have also started work on resurveying all the trees that are currently on our protected tree list. There are over 300. We have been out to visit those and to G.P.S. (Global Positioning System) tag them and we are working through their current status and health. We are looking to then tidy up the public register essentially on protected trees. We are also currently underway with the business analysis of the protected tree process and also protecting trees by planning condition. We also have in development new mapping facilities for trees. That work is underway. So we are moving quite swiftly on our agenda and in terms of the project that was outlined to you we are still on track, on budget, and on time, I am pleased to report.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

My question was to do with the Draft Bridging Island Plan but seeing as I have been given the opportunity, can I just ask a question about trees? Minister, as an ex-farmer, I am hugely enthusiastic about anything to do with biodiversity, trees and hedges in particular, and I am a great believer in planting more trees. But I have to say to you that a broad enabling power such as the one being described by Kelly terrifies me. I very much hope that you are going to have a very, very serious look at exactly what we are going to do here because I can see a huge amount of administration, officer resource, and all sorts of things that are going to be needed if this comes into force. We have more trees in Jersey than we have probably ever had ever, certainly for centuries that is for sure. This is a sledgehammer to crack a nut. I understand that special trees get knocked down and that should not be allowed to happen. But the effect on those who look after the countryside by this law is going to be enormous.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Thank you, Deputy. We are expecting that you are going to have a review. You have called in the Planning and Building Law ...

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

If I can just interject there, we discussed that earlier. What we will do is ask your team to give us a presentation on that and we will take it from there.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

There is no question, the Deputy is right that this is a very, very significant change. But the change to the law is a very simple almost one-liner. But I do agree that it has power. It needs to be used with proper authority and wisely, which will be for future Ministers and not me. The way we see that power being used, it could not be used without having subordinate legislation in place to try to define with much greater clarity what trees we are wanting to protect, where, when, what circumstances, what type of species. But there is a lot of work and we have to do that with those who know trees. We have to do that work with the stakeholders. I did ask for an Appointed Day Act provision to be put into the draft law amendment with the intention being that there would be a safeguard. The safeguard that an Appointed Day Act would allow that power to be turned on when, and only when, Members are satisfied that the work that needs to be done to get to that point is in place. That is the work. But we are on a journey here and it is absolutely right, given the importance of carbon neutrality and the way we have lost too many mature trees. There are lots of trees that are not a problem, losing them, but that work is ongoing. Kelly has given you the timescale. But it is an enabling power and no more than that. As I say, it will not be me. Given the way that the community cares for the environment and has expressed its view, even the views expressed today, we do need powers in the law to be able to do things. But those things need to be done wisely and in accordance with judgments we make as a society. What Kelly has mapped out is a process to get to that point.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you, Minister. One of the difficulties is that there is proper management of the countryside, to which the Deputy alludes, but there is also the very controversial issue of development sites and trees being razed to enable developments. That is a very emotive subject with many Islanders. The direction in which your department is going is admirable.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

That reflects my postbag, Chair, and my emails, I can tell you now, and all the phone calls I get. People get so upset, wisely, when mature trees in their neighbourhood suddenly disappear.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just to dig into P.76, in terms of consultation obviously it is quite a broad proposition, what has consultation has been carried out with the identified stakeholders to date? Kelly, you mentioned quite a few. Are you at a point now where that has been done? Do you consider you need to do more?

**Head of Regulatory Improvement:**

The consultation that I outlined with the stakeholders was regarding the tree strategy. The consultation and the discussion for P.76 in relation to the definition of development and the protection of trees, the stakeholder list was very broad. There were 50 or so individuals covering a wide range of areas such as the environment and biodiversity, but also farming, health and well-being, heritage, community groups. In terms of the remainder of the amendments posed under P.76, the stakeholder list were internal Government stakeholders, not external. The reason for this is the more significant amendments, one being the changes to the definition of development for trees. We felt that was being covered by the consultation under the tree strategy. The others, one was the power for the Minister to call a panel to determine public inquiries, which the Minister has cited as a long-standing ambition of his, makes for a more robust planning process. Likewise, the third more significant change is the enabling powers to create conservation areas. This has been a long-standing will of the States Assembly in previous Island Plans to create conservation areas. This is finally the enabling power to do that. Both the trees definition of development and the enabling power for conservation areas are both tied to secondary subordinate orders. As the Minister explained, there is an Appointed Day Act that Members can bring forward to ensure that those enabling powers are only brought into force when the subordinate orders have been agreed and signed. The remainder of the amendments in P.76 are what we would consider minor procedural issues arising from practice, from case law and from appeals and Planning Inspector recommendations. In effect, they bring the law up to speed with the department and the Chief Officer's current practice and protocols. So those have not been publicly consulted.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Just going back to the tree strategy, which overlaps what we have been talking about, the meetings that were held in July with the stakeholders and groups and farmers, could you summarise the themes that were uncovered during that meeting and what the further outcomes might be from that?

**Head of Regulatory Improvement:**

The main themes that came from ... the group was very wide and the opinions of the stakeholder group were wide. The opinions of the public survey essentially were quite supportive of all of the key points that were raised.



**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

The other point, which really is linked to this, considering the strategy on trees will take time before it is developed and implemented, how can trees be protected in the interim? Given your enforcement team is not strong, do you consider you are able to do that?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I can go back to the point that I did make earlier. Since our last meeting, I certainly pushed my colleagues on the Council of Ministers very, very strongly about the need to strengthen our regulatory resource. We have the target operating model changes but, as you know, we struggled in a number of areas to adequately staff those areas. I do not know where we are with the lodging of this, but the last draft, the one that has been signed-up on, does include a modest - it is not going to break the bank of the States - but for me, as Minister, this is a really good chunk of resource. So with more capability on the case, we can do more. At the moment the reality is, apart from the fact we can deal with the Wildlife Law, where we have offences being committed, which are deliberately committed, and we have had that discussion about the Wildlife Law, we can deal with them. But we have to accept that the progress of the way we deal with trees will be improved. That is going to take some time. I do not think anybody should be expecting an instant change. We will deal with the worst excesses as we do now, or seek to do that.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you. Kelly, did you manage to collect the results of the July meeting?

[13:15]

**Head of Regulatory Improvement:**

Thank you for the time. One of the key areas that we discussed in the workshop was around putting the right tree in the right place and ensuring that the correct species and type of trees are planted in the right environments. The group felt that Jersey did have a thriving and diverse population of healthy trees and that hedgerows are also increasing in number and growing fuller as a result of fantastic management practices in place and they did not want to lose that. On farmland, the trees and hedgerows did provide a multitude of benefits to farmers and nature and the issues with trees and the management of trees was also raised. Jersey's trees and hedgerows support thriving wildlife populations. They are seen by everyone on the Island as well. They are very much in the public eye. Despite increase of trees in some areas remaining open, it does allow people to experience Jersey's beautiful landscape. People in Jersey feel a very strong connection to nature through the visibility of trees on the Island and particularly in urban trees providing the shady streets, the recreation opportunities for locals and also visitors. We had representation from Visit Jersey there as well. It was felt very important to maintain the green network of roads and paths that are

lined by trees and hedgerows and connecting people between the town and the countryside areas. So the enhancement area was around security, diversity and good management of the Island's trees and hedgerows needs to be all part of that co-ordinated tree strategy.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

That is good. So we can now talk about perhaps carbon sequestration and the carbon neutral strategy, Minister. Noting that the in-committee debate on the Citizens Assembly report and recommendations has been undertaken, for the public record could you briefly summarise the next steps and timeline regarding the development of the strategy for the carbon neutral roadmap?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

I am going to open with a brief apology and hand over to Louise if I may. Because I have had to concentrate very much on Island Plan, during the summer I did ask Deputy Guida to lead on some work on carbon neutral and he is at Council of Ministers at the moment. So I wonder if Louise could please pick that answer up?

**Head of Sustainability and Foresight:**

Certainly, Minister. Thank you, Chair. I am going to have to apologise, I had a timeline on my second screen that I was going to use to answer this question, which I had anticipated. That screen has just literally fried due to the heat. So I am struggling a little bit with screens, so if you could be patient with me. But essentially the work is being undertaken as outlined in the in-committee debate report, which was about the preparation of a preferred strategy. As you rightly point out, we have gone through a huge public consultation and then the Citizens Assembly process. Then the recommendations were of course looked at very closely in the in-committee debate, which also gave us a great steer on the political representation and the view on carbon neutrality and that of the Citizens' recommendations. As was promised, a preferred strategy is now being prepared and will be published in mid-October. In the preparation of the preferred strategy, so this is an approach very much like the Island Plan preferred strategy whereby a number of key strategic principles are being worked through and worked up as a positioning and a framework of strategic position to lead into the carbon neutral roadmap, which will be coming forward at the beginning of next year. C.O.M. have delegated a steering group to work on the preferred strategy - and it would be a lot easier if I had my second screen but I am going to do it anyway. Deputy Guida is chairing the steering group. So, as the Minister outlined, he is unable to be here with capacity just at the moment, but Gregory Guida is leading. On the steering group is Deputy Morel, Deputy Ash, Constable Mezbourian. I am running out of names as my screens were not helping me. But I can make sure that I put it in the meeting chat before I finish giving evidence. Deputy Johnson as well. So we have a couple of non-executive members on the group and then some representation from the executive part of Government. That preferred strategy workshops are unpicking some key work around emissions

trajectories and the Paris alignment, the financing strategy for the carbon neutral roadmap, the energy landscape now and into the future, and the policy package. So there is really quite a large piece of work there to really give the bones of what ultimately will be the carbon neutral roadmap. There are 2 steering group meetings this week and 2 next, which are also long workshops. So really focused policy development with the people that I have just mentioned, which will then go to the Council of Ministers who will have input into it. Obviously the Minister for the Environment as well. Then the preferred strategy should be ready to be published in mid-October, which gives us the steppingstone to then go forward. In parallel, we are doing the work to work up the policy package, which will be in the carbon neutral roadmap. So that is an outline of the very busy programme we have on this policy development at the moment.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you very much. It sounds like a plan. I am going to jump ahead. I know time is running out. Deputy Luce has a few questions to ask on water storage and reservoirs.

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Thank you, Chair. Can I just ask the Minister how work is progressing to ensure that Jersey is able to comply with a new drinking water directive by 2024 as mentioned in the previous hearing?

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Sorry, Chair, I am going to have to ask Dr. du Feu to give you the technical answer on that. I know that work is building up on P.F.A.S. (Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances), that is advancing, but on that technical answer I need the advice of the officers.

**Head of Land Resource Management:**

Thank you, Minister. Yes, you are correct, work on P.F.A.S., the lowering limits there and what it means to the availability of potable water in Jersey is continuing. Obviously, we are talking about the wellfields in St. Ouen's Bay and the contamination of Pont Marquet as well, particularly during drought situations where the loading increases and those limits get ever nearer. On the water directive, can I refer to Alison de Bourcier who is leading on the revision of the Water (Jersey) Law 1972 because that is in that connection and the baton that is being passed now to Environment and Consumer Protection?

**Head of Environmental and Consumer Protection:**

Sorry, if I could refer to Stewart Petrie who is working on that legislation as we speak?

**Environmental Health Consultant:**

I do not think I have anybody to refer it to.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Chair, you can see how dynamic this target operating model is, it is called musical responsibilities.

**Environmental Health Consultant:**

The buck has landed here. Preparatory work is ongoing. We hope to be able to bring to Scrutiny and then through the democratic process a new draft Water Law. This is required because the last one was 1972. Apart from water supplied by the Jersey Water Company, we do not have a definition of potable water. Neither do we have anything at all about private water supplies and we still have several thousand of those. The new proposed Water Law will be typical of the sort of new Laws that come forward, which means that we will not need to change primary legislation as things move. When things are moving fairly quickly in terms of the materials that water companies, plumbers, et cetera, are allowed to use with water, in terms of the materials needed to be able to be used safely to remove P.F.O.S. (Perfluorooctanesulfonic acid) and other things and to make sure that we keep up with the expected water quality of a western democracy. At the moment, happily, we are doing so and we envisage that, given a fair wind, we will be in the right place or be in the same state as if we had to comply with the Water Directive within the timescale as the U.K. will and the E.U. There is a slight divergence in the way the U.K. and the E.U. are dealing with it. The E.U. have put forward levels but have not yet agreed how they can be measured because there are no accredited methods of measuring them. The U.K. have put through a target but say they will change that when the methods are there. So it is just a very slightly different approach but coming to the same targets. Happily, we are meeting all the targets that are set out in the E.U. Directive already and we do not envisage a situation where that will not be the case.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

That is helpful. With regard to the reservoir and storage facilities in the Island, what is your view on that, Minister? You have dismissed the concept of building a treatment plant.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

This takes us back to the Island Plan and takes us back to the mineral strategy where we have had to deal with the issues of water needs and our own construction material issues at the same time. Again, there are choices. There has been a view abroad that the alternative for St. Mary's Quarry was to use it as a water source, my lay understanding - and it is a lay understanding - is that the technical advice belied that. That it would not work. It would leak a lot, would not store large quantities, and would need huge amounts of expenditure to make it work. I thought that Jersey Water had accepted that. Therefore, there are other possibilities that were open to Jersey Water in that report, which was to increase or raise the height of Val de la Mare, extend it, or indeed rely on the desalination plant and also to upgrade management of water. That is my recollection of the

needs. But of course we are very dependent on population trends. We do have a deficit at the moment and we are here now in 30° and we know that climate change is going to give us more extreme weather. We are going to get hotter summers, I believe, this is a lay understanding, and then very dry periods for long times and then all of a sudden the rain is going to come all at once. That means you need to capture it. So there are issues there. Kevin, do I have that correct?

**Head of Place and Spatial Planning:**

Yes. As you said, Minister, the work to prepare the Island Plan looked at the strategic options that the Island had relative to use of various holes, if I can use the phrase, dotted around the Island in terms of the options for minerals extraction, water supply, and also waste management. The recommendation arising from that work was that the use of La Gigoulande for that purpose did not represent the best strategic option for the Island. We have discussed that with Jersey Water and the draft plan sets out a policy framework to enable them to enhance levels of water supply during the Bridging Plan period. Potentially through enhancing the use of the desalination and increasing the capacity of the desalination plant, but then working together with Jersey Water, with Government, to look at a longer-term water plan for the Island and to work out how the Island can best deal with the challenge.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you, Kevin. Deputy Luce?

**The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Chair, I would only prolong what has just been said, so I will not bother to ask the question, thank you. I know time is short.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Thank you. Minister, we have several further questions regarding the planning process, planning applications and planning portal, but clearly we have run out of time. So, if it is all right with you, we will submit those in writing and you can answer those in due course. I would like to conclude this meeting by thanking you and your team for presenting so clearly this morning. It has been extremely helpful. We look forward to meeting you in due course. Thank you very much.

**The Minister for the Environment:**

Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you for your questions. As always, they are very helpful and constructive and this dialogue is always really important to us. Obviously we have some tough issues to face but at least they are out there on the table.

**The Connétable of St. Brelade:**

Indeed. Thank you very much. I will close the meeting.

[13:29]