



OFFICIAL REPORT

OF THE

STATES OF THE

ISLAND OF ALDERNEY

HANSARD

The Court House, Alderney, Wednesday, 22nd September 2021

*All published Official Reports can be found on the
official States of Alderney website www.alderney.gov.gg*

Volume 9, No. 10

Present:

Mr William Tate, President

Members

Ms Annie Burgess

Mr Ian Carter

Mr Kevin Gentle

Mr Christian Harris

Mr Rhys Jenkins

Mr Boyd Kelly

Mr Graham McKinley, OBE

Mr Steve Roberts

Mr Alexander Snowdon

The Greffier of the Court

Mr David Knight

Business transacted

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States of Alderney

*The States met at 2.30 p.m. in the presence of
Lieutenant G T Workman RN (Rtd), a representative of
His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of the Bailiwick of Guernsey*

[THE PRESIDENT *in the Chair*]

PRAYERS

The Greffier

ROLL CALL

The Greffier

Tribute to former States Member, Ray Parkin

The President: Before we proceed with the business of the meeting, it would be remiss of me if I did not pay tribute to a former States Member who sadly left us last week.

Ray Parkin was a Member of the States of Alderney between the years 1968 and 1973. It will not surprise those who know him well to know that he had a very direct approach to his responsibilities as a States Member, and I know from conversations that I have had with him – if I can put it diplomatically – he did not always see eye-to-eye with his colleagues. But he had a very clear vision, as I understand, and he understood how important tourism was, and continues to be, to our Island.

Now, looking back, sadly, I cannot find another living representative of the time that he served on the States but forgive me if I say to stop there would be simply reading one chapter of a book which makes, were it written, remarkable reading. I heard his very dear friend, Ronnie Cairnduff, describe him on the radio on Saturday as a true legend. Now, I think the words ‘legend’ and ‘celebrity’ are cast about casually these days, but frankly I think we can all agree that the word was made for Ray Parkin.

I just want to, if I may, take a moment’s time to just reflect on the contribution that he has made to the fabric of this Island for over 50 years. He moved here in the early 1960s and bought the Grand Hotel. He was quickly involved in local matters and remarkable to think that he was involved and led Alderney Week for some 27 years, in partnership with his dear friend Ronnie Cairnduff and a variety of other volunteers who supported him. But, between them and over the years, Alderney Week has gone from what I understand historically was a smallish event to really our principal tourist offering during the summer; and none of that, I suspect, would have happened had it not been for his determination, his drive, his enthusiasm, his humour and the friendships that he was able to forge with those around him, who he provided such inspiration for.

So, 27 years, and he did not stop there. I have looked and I have spoken to people over the last day or so who knew him better than I, although I have known him for 25 years, but when you look at the catalogue of achievements which he has delivered during his time here it is truly staggering. He started the Tennis Club and I know, having spoken to people today, that he was the driving force and even back then they raised £100,000-plus so that we have what is a world-class facility in our community. But he was committed to all sports, not just to tennis. He was a founder

member of the golf club, a founder member of the sailing club, a founder member of the cricket club who paid a very moving tribute to him over the weekend.

35 He came from, Ronnie described it as ‘a show business background’. He was immensely talented. He was a writer, he was a producer, he was a director, he was a musician’, and so he formed the drama group and they put on over *many* years countless productions which received huge critical acclaim, tickets selling out virtually overnight. And that is the sort of legacy that he will leave us.

40 He made the *Homecoming* play to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Homecoming. It took him 25 years to write, I am led to believe, but he wrote it, he wrote the music, he wrote the words to the songs. He truly was the person who made sure that that was delivered for the benefit of those who came back in 1945.

45 We hear a lot these days about ‘economic enablers’. These are methodologies whereby the economy is promoted and growth of economies is promoted. I would like to suggest to you that Ray Parkin was a one-man economic enabler, because he was responsible for putting in place the framework for the majority of social activity which had now become the very focus of our Island.

So, for that, I am sure that you will all wish with me to send our deepest sympathies to his family and to his loved ones. He is often described as ‘Mr Alderney Week’. I would prefer to leave this by saying, for me, he was simply ‘Mr Alderney’.

50 So would you please now stand and we will have a minute’s silence for the life of Ray Parkin, and also keep in our thoughts the families of those who have also recently lost loved ones.

Members stood in silence.

The President: Thank you, please be seated.

**Convenor’s Report of the People’s Meeting
held on 15th September 2021**

The President: Now, Mr Greffier, to the business of the day.

55 **The Greffier:** Thank you.
The first is the report back by the Convenor of the People’s Meeting.

The President: Mr McKinley, could you give us the details of people who attended the People’s Meeting, please?

60 **Mr McKinley:** Yes, indeed, sir.

I was there as Convenor, assisted by the Chief Executive. You were there, Mr President, with your wife, along with seven States Members, 21 other members of the public, and four members of the press.

65 **The President:** Thank you.

Billet d'État for Wednesday, 22nd September 2021

I. Chief Pleas – Two Chief Pleas received

1. From Mr Peter Baron, on the subject of the Arsenal Estate and the proposed marina
2. From Mr Nick Winder, on the subject of economic recovery and early years provision in Alderney

The President: Item I, Mr Greffier, please.

The Greffier: Item I, Mr President, is Chief Pleas

70 This is Persons whose names are included on the Register of Voters, and who have given due notice, will address the States on matters of public interest.

I have received two such letters, Mr President. The first, if we can deal in the order in which they were received, was from Mr Peter Baron, who I confirm is on the Register of Voters.

75 **The President:** Mr Baron, if you would like to come up, please, to the front.

Mr Baron: Mr President, and Members of the States of Alderney.

I have been introduced, Peter Baron. I represent Mount Hale Ltd today, a long-established Alderney company, a family company, that is the registered owner of the Arsenal. I would like to
80 thank you, Mr President, and your team for giving me this forum to address you all on the subject of the Arsenal Estate and the proposal for a marina development.

These two items are inextricably linked in that, while the States has given exclusive rights to a company to submit a marina proposal in this area, it should be clearly understood that Mount Hale Ltd is not here to represent nor speak for any marina developer. If I may start with the
85 Arsenal, the only visit to the Arsenal by a States Member in many years was by Mr McKinley, who came out in July by invitation. Mr Roberts has been on a number of occasions but on business matters rather than States' matters, so I need to explain, I feel, a bit about the site.

Our company has invested very heavily over the years on the Arsenal, preserving this Victorian heritage from the fate that has befallen Fort Tourgis and Fort Albert. Our estate encompasses a
90 lot of services, including residential units, storage, garaging, sports facilities as well as industrial and commercial use. It is located in a key seafront position and while in private ownership it is, nonetheless, a very important asset for the Island. When we offered to sell the estate to the States of Alderney in 2018, the then Chief Executive declined to make an offer to purchase.

I have to also mention the Land Use Plan. During the 2016-17 Land Use Plan we campaigned
95 successfully to reverse a proposal in the pre-approved version of the Land Use Plan that showed a line that was drawn down the centre of Braye Bay, with only the harbour area designated as a development area. The final version of the Land Use Plan, happily, thus opened up the east end of Braye for a potential marina and any other business matters that might be positioned on that side of the Bay. We also appealed successfully to see that the land on the Arsenal Estate was
100 afforded the same designation of opportunity area as had been already assigned to the States-owned fortifications of Tourgis and Albert. We have held back on making further investments on this site that would be profitable for us, if this might be counter-productive to any proposed developed on the site or on seashore.

If I now move on to the potential marina proposal, and I draw your attention to a States of
105 Alderney press release, dated 8th October 2020, announcing a proposed marina development.

110 The press release, in summary, states that a terms of letter was sent from our CEO to Braye Harbour Developments, giving this company exclusive rights and requesting they draft a plan for a 250-berth marina at the east end of Braye Bay, and it is for meeting the Island's economic and operational objectives. Importantly, it also says that the States are to work in partnership with the developers, including the engagement of a project manager. Clearly, as the landowners of the Arsenal Estate where a marina *may* be connected to our land we have an interest, but no approach has been made from any party.

115 We learnt also from an article in *The Alderney Press* of 16th July of the formation of a sub-committee to focus on the Braye Harbour Development Company proposal. It was deemed to be, quote, 'A States task group' naming the members of the group and has been set up to work with the principal to focus on the States' and the developer's responsibilities for aspects of these proposals. It appears to me this is not happening.

120 I have had limited contact from Mr Gordon Owen and discovered that he has not been made aware of the existence of this task group. He has received letters from our CEO – letter or letters, I am not sure, and I have not seen these letters – and is yet to respond. Other than that he advises me he is receiving virtually no communication, other than indirect negative feedback. This seems to me to be not right. That the task group do not appear to be addressing the mandate of working in partnership with the developers to achieve a proposal from them that might just have a chance of approval if such input is provided.

125 With all the multi-business as usual tasks that the members of the task group and the States in general are engaged in we accept this is a very difficult task but it is made harder, clearly, without the expected appointment of a project manager to drive things forward.

130 So I ask the questions: that all members of the marina task group declare publically whether in principle they are for or against a marina being constructed at the east end of Braye Beach. Secondly, is the States planning an overall strategy for the whole of the harbour area, including any marina? And, if so, how does this current request for a proposal from Braye Harbour Developments fit in with this strategy? And, if there is such a strategy, what is the timescale?

135 I must end by saying, whatever strategy is being planned for Braye Harbour development area, this historically important Island asset, known as the Arsenal, should not be forgotten. I would be happy to extend an invitation to any Member who wishes to come to visit the Arsenal, by appointment please, if you wish, when you might see the vision that we see for this area for opportunity for development.

Thank you for your time.

140 **The President:** Thank you very much indeed, Mr Baron.

I am sure that the Members have all listened intently to what you have had to say and I think I can say with confidence that there will be some feedback to you as a result of that.

145 **Mr Baron:** Thank you, Mr President.

The President: Thank you.

Before I call Mr Winder, sorry ... Mr McKinley, I think, in fact, there was something mentioned about Chief Pleas at the People's Meeting?

150 **Mr McKinley:** There was indeed, Mr President, yes.

The Chief Executive advised that at the time of the meeting there was only one submission as a Chief Plea but a second submission, by Mr Winder, came in well within time, after the meeting.

155 It was queried that items raised through the Chief Pleas process usually get passed to the relevant Committees for further discussion or debate. However, looking through previous minutes and *Hansard* this has not happened in recent times. The public should be assured that this process is followed-up as a matter of public record. Action is required otherwise it is a pointless exercise.

The President: Thank you, Mr McKinley.

160 **The Greffier:** Mr Winder, please. I also confirm, Mr President, that Mr Winder has confirmed that he is on the electoral roll.

The President: Thank you.

165 **Mr Winder:** I shall try to be brief. I am using unfamiliar technology but I will try and keep it short and simple.

Our Bailiwick has formally ratified the UNCRC, the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is the consummation of all the initiatives that have derived from post-war research on child care. UNCRC is a revolutionary document. We cannot just sign it off and go back to business as usual.

170 Everybody knows that it takes a village to raise a child, but many still struggle to accept that if we want to safeguard children in accordance with the UNCRC we must work across generations to resolve social divides and build a secure, supportive community for everyone. It is that subject I would like to talk to you about now.

175 So, what should Alderney do? First I think we need to talk about the economy. I ask your forgiveness, I know you are discussing this and I am not an expert, but I have been doing a little reading and some of the things I read seem to be relevant. Guernsey's GDP *per capita* is about £51,000. In the UK that figure is about £48,000, so our GDP *per capita* is relatively high. The UK economy is heavily biased towards finance, which creates structural problems for them because finance and commerce are largely unconnected. That big money does not trickle down as perhaps we would like it to.

180 Now, 28% of UK GDP comes from finance. In Guernsey, as I understand it, that figure is close to 45%. The upshot of that is that the commercial economy in Guernsey can go to hell in a handcart and GDP will stay high. That is something that needs to worry us, not least because we do not have much of a finance industry.

185 Regressive taxes hurt both the poor and the commercial economy, and the effect, with great respect to Guernsey States, cannot be offset with tax allowances if people are not earning enough to pay tax. It is particularly damaging for charities and NPOs, which have to spend in order to provide public services and which do not receive tax allowances. We are going to have to incur extra costs in order to provide services to the community. Okay, so that is the economy, it is just background information.

190 What else should we do? I think we should stop talking about Alderney's ageing population. I know that is a strange thing to say but the total dependency ratio in Guernsey is slightly less than that in the UK. There is not very much in it, the difference is quite small but, if our problems in Alderney were caused by ageing, our dependency ratio would match Guernsey's because it is the same baby boom. This is not about the baby boom, it is about the in-migration of elderly people and the out-migration of young families. That is our big problem. The ageing population is a problem for everybody, but that is really background noise for us.

195 The question I would like you to consider is: why do young families leave? I would like to suggest that there is actually a deep poverty trap. We tell people Alderney is a wonderful place to raise children, but it is actually quite difficult. Carers are locked out of the workplace until children turn two because there are not enough registered childminders. Incomes here are low, living costs are high and childcare is very expensive. I mean, actually childcare costs in Alderney are absolutely low but expensive relative to people's incomes. If carers are not earning enough to make insurance contributions – that is to say the people looking after the children – then they get no maternity or sickness pay at all. Even if they have a contribution record they do not get it for very long.

205 We give mothers about half as much paid maternity leave as in the UK. It is a maximum of 26 weeks here and many only get 14 weeks if they have not been in the job market long. We provide very little support for carers juggling two or three jobs, raising children on low incomes or

210 struggling with mental health issues. All of these factors make it actually extremely difficult to raise children here in Alderney on a low income.

Now, the pre-school at the Island Hall, which I serve as voluntary treasurer, is doing what it can. We provided free pre-school services in the wake of the two lockdowns. We have extended our hours to the point we are now competing with other users of the hall, and this is not really acceptable. There are lots of legitimate uses of that hall and we are taking to pretty much every spare hour. We have lost 40% of our bank balance to COVID alone.

215 We are actively recruiting younger staff and trying to train them up to take responsibility for this work. But they are falling into the same poverty trap that affects other people on low incomes. They cannot find childminders to look after their own children, which makes it hard for them to come to pre-school to look after other people's two- to four-year-olds. I mean, it is such a catch-22, it is really tough. Since they cannot come to work they cannot earn enough to pay their own contributions, so those that are not on family allowance do not even get stamp credits, and those that *are* on family allowance do not get any of those benefits that they need if their children need support.

220 If you want to change the dependency ratio and meet obligations under the UNCRC, I suggest you start with that poverty trap. We have really got to think about that one.

There is a fine children's centre in Guernsey called Bright Beginnings. I am a great fan of Bright Beginnings. It is has a resident pre-school, a cafeteria run by volunteers, it has training programmes, open groups and ready access to healthcare services for children and carers during the precious 1,000 first days of life.

230 Some of you will remember the Bowlby Report, written just after the war, which showed that negligent and disruptive parenting in the first 1,000 days of life created trauma in infants that damaged their cognitive development for the rest of their lives. It is almost like hitting a child on the head with a mallet. Every performance, every measure of performance, they failed; their social skills did not develop, their intellectual competence did not develop. We have really got to support people who are having a tough time when their children are young because their children are extremely vulnerable.

235 Now, places like Bright Beginnings, happy, well-adjusted children thrive in them. Carers under stress can acquire parenting skills by watching their own children play with staff. People get access to healthcare, and language and literacy support. Estranged parents can even have supervised access to their own children. This is a wonderful facility. I think Alderney needs one of these. I would like you to consider making some representations to the States of Guernsey to see whether we could get such a centre over here.

240 So, to summarise, there are two things I would like you to consider: first, I would like you to look at that poverty trap. It really is very deep, very profound. People manage because they are independent, because they are proud and because they do not want to come to the States for help, but they are struggling and many of them manage by leaving our community.

245 Second, think about a children's centre. See if we can get Guernsey to think about a children's centre, it is after all a transferred service.

Thank you very much for your attention.

250 **The President:** Thank you very much indeed, Mr Winder.

**II. The Medicines (Human and Veterinary) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law
(Amendment) Ordinance, 2021 –
Item approved**

Item II.

The States of Alderney is asked to approve “The Medicines (Human and Veterinary) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021”

The Greffier: If we may move on to Item II please, Mr President.

It is the Medicines (Human and Veterinary) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021. The States of Alderney is asked to approve the Medicines (Human and Veterinary) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021. This is proposed by Mr Carter, seconded by Mr Snowdon.

The President: Thank you.

Mr McKinley, any observations at the People’s Meeting?

Mr McKinley: There were no comments on this Item, sir.

The President: Thank you.

So now, Mr Carter, in the absence of the Chair of Policy and Finance, you will be proposing this Item.

Mr Carter: Yes, that is my honour, sir.

The Medicines (Human and Veterinary) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021, was made by the Policy & Resources Committee on 17th August 2021, using the powers conferred to it by Article 66 of the Reform (Guernsey) Law, 1948. Prior to the Committee for Health and Social Care making those Regulations for the commencement of the Ordinance, confirmation of its approval from the States of Alderney is required.

The Ordinance will replace the need for regulations to be made by the Civil Contingencies Authority (CCA) every 30 days, as at present, which limits the liability of the States of Guernsey to £120,000, should a vaccine recipient suffer any significant adverse consequences having been administered a COVID-19 vaccine with temporary authorisation.

The Ordinance will remain in place until the proposed amendments to the Medicines (Human and Veterinary) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law, 2008 are passed by the States and subsequently approved by the Privy Council, at which point it would be repealed. This achieves the aim of placing the existing emergency regulations of the CCA on a more robust statutory footing at the earliest opportunity, initially through Ordinance and later through a change in primary law.

I would be grateful if the Medicines (Human and Veterinary) (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2021 is hence placed before this meeting for debate.

Thank you.

The President: Thank you very much indeed, Mr Carter.

Anything to add, Mr Snowdon?

Mr Snowdon: I am happy to second and reserve my right to speak.

The President: Thank you very much indeed.

Would anybody like to speak on this particular motion? Then back to you, Mr Snowdon, do you wish to speak?

Mr Snowdon: I do not need to use my right, but thank you, sir.

The President: Thank you very much indeed.

Well, that being the case, I am assuming that we are all in agreement that that should pass.

The Greffier: The item is passed, sir.

300

The President: Thank you.

III. Questions and Reports – Eight questions for verbal reply

Item III

*One question from Mr Gentle for the Alderney Representatives on the States of Deliberation:
(1) Would our Guernsey Representatives be supporting any initiatives for the Bailiwick to take in its fair share of Afghan refugees - a matter that has been raised in the media by Guernsey Deputy Jonathan Le Tocq and a former Chairman of our own Policy and Finance Committee, James Dent?*

*Three questions from Mr Snowdon for the Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee:
(1) Can the chairman update on the Nunnery situation and what progress is being made with the accommodation section?
(2) Following updates given at the Peoples meeting - 'open forum' would the Chairman be able to inform the public about P&F decisions around Harbour House and if we can request a public presentation from AHA?
(3) Regarding major projects such as Marina, Tourgis and FAB Link, do working groups/sub-committees for the States of Alderney have any updates on these major projects?*

*Two questions from Mr Snowdon for the Chairman of the General Services Committee:
(1) The freight service to the island is absolutely essential, please could the chairman reassure us that measures are being taken to strengthen the service during the winter months?
(2) Does the Chairman have any GSC updates he wishes to share?*

*Two questions from Mr Snowdon for the Chairman of Building and Development Control Committee:
(1) Could the Chairman please comment on whether there are plans to further protect Longis Common following the protection of Lager Sylt.
(2) With the present housing crisis, please could the chairman of BDCC and member of the Housing Action Group outline future housing plans for local families, key workers and potential Afghan refugees?*

The Greffier: Item III, Questions and Reports. There are two States Members that have questions posed before the States this afternoon. The first of which comes from Mr Gentle.

305 **The President:** Now, before Mr Gentle rises, notice was given of this in good time, it in fact appeared on the Billet so was spoken of at the People's Meeting, I think.

Mr McKinley: Yes, indeed, sir.

310 **The President:** So could you tell people what was said about Mr Gentle's question, please?

Mr McKinley: Yes, indeed, sir, should I start by just letting everyone know the question? (**The President:** Yes, please.)

315 The following question was received from Mr Gentle: would our Guernsey Representatives be supporting any initiatives for the Bailiwick to take in its fair share of Afghan refugees, a matter that has been raised in the media by Guernsey Deputy Jonathan Le Tocq and a former Chairman of our own Policy and Finance Committee, Mr James Dent?

The question that was submitted was asked, 'Would the States of Alderney support any moves to provide homes in the Bailiwick for the Bailiwick's fair share of Afghan refugees?' And it would be particularly useful also to hear the views of individual Members on this subject.

320 Mr Snowdon stated that he and Mr Roberts will be answering the question from Mr Gentle in the full Guernsey States' Meeting next week and was sure that this issue will be followed up at a meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee.

325 **Mr Snowdon:** Sorry to interrupt, point of order or correction, please. He is answering it in this Chamber, Mr McKinley, sorry to interrupt.

Mr McKinley: Oh, all right, sorry. But you will also be raising it ...?

330 **Mr Snowdon:** No.

Mr McKinley: No, okay.

It was noted that housing is already an issue on the Island, 'We need to look after our own people first'. It was also commented that there is no plan or structure for this idea, as the Island has certain laws which these plans need to work alongside.

335 A comment was made that this is just another 'Nothing Billet', something raised at July's People's Meeting also.

The President: Thank you, Mr McKinley.

Taking-in of Afghan Refugees

340 **The President:** So that is your question, Mr Gentle.

Mr Gentle: Yes, sir.

The President: Would you like to answer that question, Mr Roberts?

345 **Mr Roberts:** Yes, I would like to, and perhaps Mr Snowdon.

The President: I am sure he will.

350 **Mr Roberts:** Sir, I consider it to be a bit of a rhetorical question; and I just thank Mr Gentle for his somewhat rhetorical question.

Jersey is giving £360,000 towards the Afghan refugee relief; and Jersey's statement is 'Jersey has no plans to accept refugees from Afghanistan at this time'.

355 Guernsey's Jonathan Le Tocq has asked the same question as he did when we had the Syrian humanitarian crisis a few years ago and it was far worse than this one, in my own view, as those people were getting bombed and bombed every day. Nevertheless, it is always concerning when our fellow man, in other parts of the world, faces the ravages of war.

Of course I sympathise with these displaced people, and I am sure that anyone with an ounce of decency will feel the same way. But what I would say is: where would we place them? We have a waiting list of 15 for the AHA or States' houses. Some of these people who are waiting on that waiting list are disabled. We are told we cannot house our own key workers.

Sir, I feel that the 'key workers' term is used perhaps too freely. Our staff in our shops, our taxi drivers, our States' workers, our building workers, our Alderney Electricity workers, our Aurigny staff are all key workers and part of this Island without whom the Island would collapse. Look at Whitegates, neglected by the States so they can sell it off as irreparable – it is an excuse, it is a derelict property so it is easy to use that. Our Old Connaught, purpose-built with kitchens, lifts and common rooms, left neglected. If we have a housing crisis, and we do, why have we not followed up with the roof repairs and with internal repairs? Perfect for sheltered housing and key workers' accommodation. So can we get our own house in order and then ask the same question as it was when there was a Syrian crisis?

There were Alderney refugees too, remember, many years ago. Three generations of my family were on the boats along with my unborn sister, so I am the son of a refugee. But we hold a housing crisis, not being able to house our own people, let alone housing more. We also do not have Jersey's money to contribute to that cause in that sum.

So I cannot give a definitive answer, Mr Gentle, for the reasons I have already stated. I will indeed listen to Deputy Le Tocq when or if he brings it to the States; and, again, I am sympathetic, of course I am. This question is laced with good intent. Perhaps the UK may be better to answer to it than I, given our current situation.

Thank you, sir.

The President: Thank you, Mr Roberts.
Do you have a supplementary question for Mr Roberts?

Mr Gentle: No, sir, thank you.

The President: Thank you very much indeed.
Would anybody else like to ask Mr Roberts a question arising out of what he has just told us?
Thank you, Mr Snowdon.

Mr Snowdon: Firstly, I would just like to say thank you to Mr Gentle for putting this question forward. I think that we need to ask more questions in this Chamber.

I think we have all seen the awful events that have sadly happened, and the horrible acts taken in Afghanistan recently. I think it is important that we do debate this and maybe it is something for P&F to debate a little bit more in detail rather than just a question here. But thank you for getting the ball rolling, Mr Gentle.

As Mr Roberts has highlighted already, Jersey is giving £375,000 in aid. That is split between three different organisations – the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, £150,000; Street Children, £125,000; and British Red Cross, £100,000.

I think it is just important – and I thank Mr Roberts for looking back in time a little bit – to also highlight that Alderney has played its part before. I think it might have been a little bit forgotten. We did have Jewish refugees that were taken to the Island here for protection in 1938 and 1939, and that was actually done by the German Emergency Committee, which was trying to help refugees that were trying to get out of Germany at the time. I am touching on that, but I just want to touch on the initiative. The initiative was to bring 40 refugees into Alderney before the outbreak of the war to give agricultural training on the Island so they could be deployed somewhere else.

Now, what I am highlighting that reason for is that I think if you are bringing refugees into the Island you have got to think about the whole work programme and what your aims and objectives are, so a relocating plan to bring those refugees into the Island, if that is something that P&F and the States of Guernsey is minded to do.

410 So, what work plan would you put in place to bring those refugees in? What level of support would you bring? We have all had those conversations with social security. What education and training would you put in place? So although this may seem an easy question and an easy answer it really is not. It is a very complex subject. But, as I say, I do thank you for raising it. Mr Roberts has already highlighted the housing issues and sadly we do have people unable to find a house here, and we cannot even get nurses and teachers to the Island.

415 But what I would like to say in answer to Mr Gentle's question is, I am more than happy if P&F – and I suggest you put this on to the P&F agenda, hopefully – to request Deputy Chris Blin, the President of Overseas Aid & Development, to come over to us and talk about what their plans are. Maybe there is a financial package that they will be doing similar to Jersey, or other methods; and also Deputy Le Tocq. But I think probably the best place to take this forward is to submit a paper to P&F for Members to consider and debate if we want to take this forward or not.

420 But it has been brought with good intention this question and it is right that we start talking about this. Thank you.

The President: Thank you very much.
425 Mr Gentle, anything?

Mr Gentle: No, sir, thank you. I would just like to thank them both for their response.

The President: Would any other Member wish to ask a question? No.
430 Thank you very much indeed.

Update on the Nunnery

The President: We now move on, Mr Greffier, to questions from Mr Snowdon, who is certainly making his attempt to get more questions before the States! I think your first questions, Mr Snowdon, are to the Chairman of the Policy and Finance Committee.

435 **Mr Snowdon:** Sir, in the absence of Mr Abel, I think Mr Carter is kindly answering these questions. The first question is: Can the Chairman update on the Nunnery situation; and what progress is being made with the accommodation section?
Thank you, sir.

440 **Mr Carter:** Thank you for the question, Mr Snowdon.
The ABO, as you all know, have received a termination of lease letter and are due to vacate the property by 1st October. P&F agreed to receive a report on how to move forward, setting out a process of invitation for expressions of interest to find organisations or groups, or organisations locally and further afield who would want to lease the property, respecting the current residents contract and the heritage of the site.

445 This report is due to come to P&F in October, with a recommendation to proceed as advised by the Law Officers. The aim is to gain as wide and varied interest to the property as possible for the benefit of Alderney.

450 **The President:** Mr Snowdon?

Mr Snowdon: I do not have a supplementary, thank you.

The President: Thank you.
455 Does anybody else have a supplementary question for Mr Carter?

Harbour House

Mr Snowdon: Thank you, sir.

Following the updates given at the People's Meeting 'open forum', would the Chairman be able to inform the public about P&F decisions around Harbour House and if he can request a public presentation from AHA?

460 Thank you.

The President: Mr Carter.

Mr Carter: Thank you; and, again, thank you, Mr Snowdon.

465 With regard to the AHA they consulted with P&F with a proposal to sell Harbour House, at some point in the future, to fund a development to increase the overall social housing stock on the Island. Whilst the Committee was agreeable to the acquisition of new stock, with financial support from the States, there were reservations from a majority of members over disposal of Harbour House, particularly in the absence of a development plan for the Harbour.

470 The Committee's view has been communicated to the AHA so that dialogue can continue on options for an alternative and mutually agreeable strategy which will meet the cost of that new acquisition.

475 With regard to the request of a meeting, there is a protocol in the framework agreement to engage, and I would suggest that at the very next meeting that we have, that proposal to have an open meeting with AHA as a public presentation will be put. I would hopefully ask that they receive it and actually undertake it.

Thank you.

480 **The President:** Thank you.
Mr Snowdon.

Mr Snowdon: No supplementary question, sir, thank you.

485 **The President:** Anybody else?
Thank you.

Updates on major projects such as the Marina, Tourgis and FAB Link

Mr Snowdon: Regarding major projects such as the Marina, Tourgis and FAB Link, do working groups or sub-committees of the States of Alderney have any updates on these major projects?
Thank you.

490 **The President:** Mr Carter.

Mr Carter: Thank you.

495 Yes, with regard to the three projects that you have highlighted there – the Marina, Tourgis and FAB Link – there have been communications with interested parties regarding the marina development and Fort Tourgis. The external party interested in the marina development has been requested to provide further information to assist P&F in consideration of that project. That is commercially sensitive material, therefore no further detail can be provided at this time.

500 Fort Tourgis developers have recently been in contact with the Chief Executive and have requested a meeting in October with her to discuss the next steps. States Members will obviously be updated accordingly.

The States does have an agreement with FAB Link Ltd that includes a half-yearly update report on the project to be provided to the States every October and April. The October report will be reviewed by the Policy and Finance Committee once it is received. The detail provided by FAB Link is received under commercially sensitive cover so the information is not all in the public domain.

505 At the time of the previous feedback, dated 2nd April 2021, FAB Link did take the opportunity to report publically on progress indicating that development activities were continuing to secure land rights in the UK. This information has raised compulsory purchase orders and is publicly available; and secondly, that no decision has been made on the routing of cables either around or across Alderney.

510

The President: Thank you very much indeed.
Mr Snowdon.

Mr Snowdon: No supplementaries, but just thank you to Mr Carter for answering for Mr Abel.

Freight services during the winter

515 **The President:** Thank you. Would anybody else like to ask a question?
No, in that case, we now turn your questions, Mr Snowdon, to the Chairman of the General Services Committee.

Mr Snowdon: Thank you, President.

520 The freight service to the Island is absolutely essential, please could the Chairman reassure us that measures are being taken to strengthen the service during the winter months?
Thank you.

The President: Mr Kelly.

525

Mr Kelly: Thank you, sir.

I absolutely agree with Mr Snowdon that the freight service to the Island is vital and, like he, I am disappointed that due to strong wind conditions the motor vessel *Trinity* has not been able to dock its cargoes on every occasion.

530 Prior to this question being put to myself and in order to ascertain the facts against some of the rumours, I asked the Harbour Office to report to the last GSC meeting the amount of times this year the *Trinity* was unable to berth. There have been four occasions on the Poole to Alderney schedule when the Ship's Master aborted berthing due to weather; and there were five occasions when on the Guernsey to Alderney leg that also happened. I repeat, the decision was made on
535 each occasion by the Ship's Master.

As I said, this was discussed at last week's GSC and Members unanimously agreed that no action would be taken at the moment as all of the breaks in the schedule had not been prolonged but the situation would be monitored. We are all very well aware of the disruption it causes to Island residents be they retailers, the hospitality industry or private residents.

540 Questions have been raised regarding the suitability of the vessel. A smaller one would be able to berth with greater ease; however, it would not be able to cope with the winter seas and as the schedule is not merely to Alderney but carries freights to the other islands south of here, a larger vessel is required. A dedicated Alderney vessel would only be possible if it was Government funded, as are smaller vessels that supply the Scottish islands.

545 The difficulty is when there is a wind stronger than 17 knots in a northerly or north-easterly direction. It is at the stern of the vessel and anyone who knows anything about mooring a boat, whether it is a little one or a big one, knows that you moor it bow to wind, not stern to wind.

As I said at the beginning of the answer we, that is GSC, are monitoring the situation and I have already spoken with Mr Kay-Mouat and I am aware that he is equally keen to ensure the disruption is kept to a minimum.

550

Thank you, sir; thank you, Mr Snowdon.

The President: Thank you.

Mr Snowdon, any supplementary question?

555

Mr Snowdon: No, but thank you for the answer.

The President: Would anybody else like to ask a question?

560

Mr Roberts: Yes, please, sir.

The President: Mr Roberts.

Mr Roberts: Thank you.

565

In the past the boat use to anchor until the weather abated. Can he give be any feedback or knowledge on this? It used to actually anchor outside and wait for the weather to go down.

Considering this boat actually serves Jersey now, so it has got more commitments, is Alderney suffering because of that extra commitment with the Jersey run when they cannot actually wait until the weather abates?

570

Mr Kelly: Unlike Mr Roberts, I do not have the advantage of being born and brought up here and spent time here, so I do not know what happened when he was a youth and boats used to anchor off. (*Interjection*) Perhaps not the youth! I do not have your history, Mr Roberts, so I do not know whether they used to anchor off.

575

I am told that, historically, smaller vessels used to use the anchor as a way of turning around whilst they were in the bay but that is not possible with a vessel of this size.

In relation to your other question then, no, I disagree. They have to have a larger vessel to serve all the islands and hence it is not suitable for Alderney in poor conditions.

580

The President: Thank you very much indeed.

And your final catch-all question, Mr Snowdon.

General Services Committee updates

Mr Snowdon: Thank you, President.

To the Chairman of GSC again: Does the Chairman have any GSC updates he wishes to share with us?

585

Thank you.

Mr Kelly: Thank you, Mr Snowdon; thank you, sir.

590

I am sure non-GSC members – because we are back to the Harbour again – will be interested in hearing the research that is being undertaken regarding the pontoon. You will all be aware of the issues surrounding the current pontoon over the last 18 months to two years and that subsequent repairs, fortunately *this* season, enabled a full pontoon to be reinstalled in the last half of this season.

It is the desire of GSC members to have a more substantial pontoon structure to replace the current one. We all accept that the current position of passengers having, on occasions, to either

595 climb a vertical ladder or transfer via the water taxi is far from ideal; and it is our desire to replace
the current pontoon, which was purely designed for yacht tenders, with a structure that is capable
of serving charter vessels, the Inter-Island ferry and the tenders.

To scope, budget and build such a structure is not achievable for next season. We have
therefore agreed, and budgeted, for an engineer to examine the current piles which posed us
600 problems this year and their connecting pieces of mechanism, to ensure that the current system
is sufficient for use next year but still only to be used for mooring tenders.

In addition, we have budgeted in 2022 for the scoping and preparation of a replacement for
2023. It is not a cheap option. This morning I had the pleasure of the company of RNLI engineers
and surveyors because they at one stage were contemplating joining us in building a pontoon.
605 Unfortunately the wave conditions in the Harbour are not suitable for the sort of pontoon design
that they wished, and they reaffirmed that the wave conditions are such that whatever we build
is going to need regular servicing and repair.

As I said at the beginning of the answer, we are monitoring the situation, we are coping with it
and I hope to be able to report that next year we have something more substantial in place for
610 2023.

Thank you, sir.

The President: Thank you, Mr Kelly.
Mr Snowdon.

615

Mr Snowdon: Thank you for the updates, Mr Kelly.

The President: Mr Roberts.

620 **Mr Roberts:** Yes, please, sir.

Can the Chairman assure me that something is being done to stop the crane being stored at
the end of the quay in all weathers, which is to the detriment of the new crane rusting? Because
it is not only when we have rough weather, any time the water comes across there is a spray of
salt that goes on to that crane. I would like to see the crane stored further up, when it is out of
625 use, more often.

The President: It is a bit of a stretch, the question, Mr Roberts.

Mr Roberts: Sorry, sir, I do apologise.

630

The President: But, Mr Kelly, do you wish to answer it?

Mr Kelly: I think I can stretch an answer, sir, yes, if I am allowed.

I am grateful to Mr Roberts for asking the question because he knows the answer, as well as I
635 do, and he has therefore given me the opportunity to tell other States Members what the answer
is.

We are looking at storing the crane by Fort Grosnez. We have been handicapped in that
because there is a Jersey Telecom (JT) wire going across that prevents the crane going in for trials
but the area is almost ready to store. We have given a directive, of which Mr Roberts is fully aware,
640 to the Harbour as a matter of policy rather than an operational matter, that the crane will be
stored off the quay when it is not in use.

Thank you, sir.

The President: Thank you very much indeed. Anybody else?

645 Finally, Mr Snowdon, we move to the Chairman of the Building and Development Control
Committee.

Protection of Longis Common

Mr Snowdon: Thank you, President. We are getting there, sorry, apologies.

To Mr Gentle: Could the Chairman please comment on whether there are plans to further protect Longis Common following the protection of Lager Sylt?

650 Thank you.

The President: Mr Gentle.

Mr Gentle: Mr President, sir, colleagues, thank you for not leaving me out, Mr Snowdon.
(Laughter)

655 Registration of conservation areas on the register does not take place as part of the Land Use Plan, instead it follows the process set out in the Building, Development and Control (Alderney) Law 2002, as amended. Section 46 of that law allows the BDCC to register areas of special historic or architectural interest, the character and appearance of which is desirable as a matter of public importance to preserve. Currently there are seven and very soon to be eight with the addition of Sylt.

660 Part 7 of the law, section 46, gives BDCC the power to designate the area as long as they abide by section 48 with reference to consultation, and a desire to seek that conservation can be sought without reference to the full States under the terms of BDCC's mandate. Under this consultation reference Sylt was advertised in the correct manner and the closing date – and I think you were curious as to when – for representations is tomorrow. So we are almost there, where Lager Sylt becomes C/008 on the Historic Buildings, Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas List.

665 Longis Common and the surrounding area is currently number 4, registered in June 1991. And we are all aware of the Roman site alongside it, as well as the more recent World War II heritage aspect. In fact it is listed as Alderney asset AS023 under World War II areas of significance and sites of wartime relevance.

670 BDCC will be looking to continue to afford the important areas such as this as much protection as possible, and whatever can be done by BDCC under the terms of its mandate and with reference to the law will be. It is incumbent upon the Committee, of which I am just one member, to control the narrative and not allow it to be driven by outside influences.

675 Thank you, sir.

The President: Thank you.

Mr Snowdon.

680

Mr Snowdon: No, but thank you, Mr Gentle.

Mr McKinley: May I ask a question?

685 **The President:** Mr McKinley, please do.

Mr McKinley: A question for Mr Gentle, I understand Longis Common is a protected area but it is very difficult ... Lager Sylt you can actually say it is quite easy to know where the borders are there but on Longis Common we have no idea where the borders are. Does it extend to the area that the FAB Link wants to go through?

690 **The President:** Mr Gentle.

Mr Gentle: I have to say I am not sure how to answer that question.

695

The President: Well then that is, I suppose, what you will have to say.

Mr Gentle: Can I get back to you, Mr McKinley, when I have looked at the map?

Mr McKinley: Most certainly, please, it would be of interest to the public.

700

Mr Gentle: I am sure it will be, yes.

Mr McKinley: It is such a large area.

705

The President: Mr McKinley, this is not a two-man debate, please.

Mr McKinley: It is a discussion rather than a debate ...

710

The President: Yes. I am sure Mr Gentle, when he has reflected on your question, will come back to you.

Mr Gentle: I thank Mr Snowdon for asking the question.

715

The President: Well, be careful what you wish for, you see. *(Laughter)* Anybody else? No. Your final question for this afternoon, Mr Snowdon.

Future housing plans

Mr Snowdon: Thank you, President.

With the present housing crisis please could the Chairman of BDCC and member of the Housing Action Group outline future housing plans for local families, key workers and, potentially, Afghan refugees?

720

Thank you.

Mr Gentle: Thank you for the question, Mr Snowdon, Mr President, sir.

I am not sure I can actually answer this without giving a personal opinion but I will do my best.

725

The housing group to which you refer is currently unmandated and will remain that way until Policy and Finance next week, and the first job will be to come up with a policy. At present we have nothing that encompasses all needs so we need to target survey information as well as looking ahead at the ageing population.

730

Today Mr Kelly, on behalf of the group, has written to the Hospital, care home and school surveying their immediate and medium-term needs for essential worker housing, and is in dialogue with Age Concern through Barbara Benfield concerning the needs for sheltered housing.

735

We are all aware of the areas as highlighted in the question but we need to look at *who*, *why* and *when* – the particular need. We have to understand the different housing needs of Islanders both now and in the future; how this housing can be provided, looking at the roles of both the Government and the private sector; and identify those matters that need to be addressed to support the actual delivery of homes.

740

The local family that you mention, may well be the first-time buyer, who by their very lack of property equity are likely to require smaller, less expensive houses than other buyers; and the key barrier to this presently is access to the property as well as access to both a deposit and a mortgage. So we need to look at investigating putting mechanisms in place to make it easier for the young local family to actually purchase a property; and, if the market does not provide the required housing, then the States of Alderney, in conjunction with the Alderney Housing Association, must take steps to ensure that such housing is provided. Because, as we have just heard in a Chief Plea, retaining the younger generation is paramount.

745 The formalisation of a housing group will go some way to looking at a system in rectifying the housing shortage for all groups. As things stand presently BDCC, of which I am the Chair, is currently mandated to be responsible for the preparation of policy and strategy for housing. However, social housing currently falls squarely under the mandate for Employment & Social Security in Guernsey and is therefore mirrored here by the Rep. Key worker housing is under the remit of GSC and, as for first-time buyers, who knows? So the group needs to liaise with the relevant political figures and attempt to tidy up the mess that we are in or otherwise we will just all be pulling in different directions.

750 I can acknowledge the idea of relinquishing somewhere like Whitegates, for example, if proceeds from that are utilised to replace with social housing elsewhere but, for me, it is not logical and justifiable if the alternative is a greenfield site. We would retain a States asset if we rebuilt there and provide an income stream which the States need – and I am sure that my colleague, Mr Kelly, does not agree.

755 This current shortage was forecast over a year ago but the buying-up of properties was seen then, I believe, as of benefit to the Island without recognition of the wider and long-term issues. There is an inequitable situation which needs addressing with reference to employment, residency and property purchase rights and perhaps going forward we need to look at certain methods of control. Matters that were previously not felt necessary now need serious consideration before it becomes much too late in a couple of years. So this new group will certainly take matters like this into account. We need to be able to determine whether the recent property market sales have reduced the number of units of private market rental.

760 A fundamental point has been made recently where lower-income workers have been shown to be the mainstay of the Island. Without them no one fills the shelves up, provides a service function in hospitality or gives the care and hospital facilities; and, without them, the Island infrastructure will begin to fail, leading to the Island's attractions failing just before we plunge into another recession. So if we do not grasp this quickly, in the next few months, then the longer-term issues will become both more complex and certainly more expensive to resolve.

770 As regards to your point about potential Afghan refugees, Guernsey – and therefore the Bailiwick – needs UK approval to take part in any resettlement scheme, and the UK scheme is not yet anywhere near open. Evidence-based truth-seeking, global awareness, empathy and humility are things that we should all embrace. As we as a race become more educated we become more aware of the suffering of others and of our own moral responsibility to do something about it. 'Me first' ideologies tend to wither in the light of wisdom.

775 However, that said, I must stress that I believe that Alderney itself could be seen as totally unsuitable as a location and community to accept them today. We are all aware of our own problems. Dealing with traumatised refugees, possibly needing specialist counselling, healthcare and professional help to overcome what they have experienced, does not bode well for someone needing to fit in and Alderney quite possibly does not have the resources to hand before we even look at the housing problem.

780 Taking refugees in without ensuring that specific needs can be met may well be unwise, ignorant and selfish, and any decision taken would need to be pragmatic as well as virtuous. There is a definite moral imperative to help house potential refugees but it does not follow that there is a definite moral imperative to house them in houses that we have not got; and, for me, that is saddening. I admire the humanitarianism and feel that we as an Island – in a better position – would be jumping at the chance to offer assistance. I fear that at the present time housing the refugees here, unfortunately, ignores practicality but I certainly hope that we are in a position to offer those more unfortunate than us in the future.

790 Thank you, sir.

The President: Just to be clear, Mr Gentle, the observations you make about the Afghan refugees, are they made on behalf of your Committee or are they your own personal views?

795 **Mr Gentle:** No, they are personal. I said I would struggle to not go down the personal route at the beginning.

The President: Do you have a further question, Mr Snowdon?

800 **Mr Snowdon:** Yes, I have got a paper here actually about Whitegates that I will be submitting to P&F in the future but could I just get some reassurances, when this new housing group is put together, that they will be looking at Whitegates basically knocked down and rebuilt before selling-off? Selling-off should be the last resort. Can I get some reassurance, or even personal opinion, from Mr Gentle?

805 Thank you.

Mr Kelly: Point of order, sir, if I may.

The President: Yes, please.

810

Mr Kelly: As the Committee has not been informed yet I would struggle to see how Mr Gentle can give a view of the Committee.

The President: Well, that might be your opinion. We are here to listen to Mr Gentle's opinion.

815

Mr Kelly: Very good, sir.

The President: Mr Gentle.

820 **Mr Gentle:** Would you mind repeating that question please, Mr Snowdon? Sorry.

Mr Snowdon: Absolutely. I was just trying to seek some reassurances that using Whitegates as a States' asset would be looked at first for social housing rather than sell off, which should be a last resort. That is what I just wanted clarification on, that it will be looked at first as a States of Alderney asset rather than sell off, which should be a last resort if it is not viable to actually hold on to.

825

I would just like that reassurance, if you can. You might not be able to give it, but thanks.

The President: As Chair of the Building and Development Committee, not your personal opinion.

830

Mr Gentle: As Chair of BDCC, Whitegates is currently zoned for social housing and until it is taken out of social housing, following the next Land Use Plan review, until it is taken out, it remains in social housing.

835

The President: Thank you, Mr Gentle.
Does anybody else have a question for Mr Gentle?

Mr Snowdon: Could I ask a supplementary question, Mr President?

840

The President: Yes, please do.

Mr Kelly: In relation to Mr Gentle's last reply concerning Whitegates and its position in the Land Use Plan, is there an opportunity *should* the Committee decide to use it not for social housing the provision for them to do so?

845

The President: Mr Gentle.

Mr Gentle: Let me get this clear. I think you are asking is your Committee able to take out social housing and somebody give you some other land for social housing. Just nod if I have got it right.

850

Mr Kelly: Absolutely spot on, sir.

Mr Gentle: Right. I think the section of the law that allows Whitegates to move, figuratively speaking, is section 16. I have not got the actual details in front of me but there is a mechanism that is allowed for in the Building and Development Control Law.

855

Mr Kelly: I am grateful, sir, thank you.

The President: Thank you very much indeed. Anybody else?

860

Well, I think that brings an end to the Items on the Billet so in those circumstances, Mr Greffier, would you please move to close the meeting.

PRAYERS

The Greffier

The Assembly adjourned at 3.35 p.m.