

STATES OF JERSEY



PROPOSED BUDGET (GOVERNMENT PLAN) 2026-2029 (P.70/2025): THIRTY- FIRST AMENDMENT

EMPTY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

**Lodged au Greffe on 24th November 2025
by the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel
Earliest date for debate: 8th December 2025**

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSED BUDGET (GOVERNMENT PLAN) 2026-2029 (P.70/2025):
THIRTY-FIRST AMENDMENT

1 PAGE 3, PARAGRAPH (b)(viii) –

After the words "Appendix 2 – Summary Table 5(i) and (ii) of the Report", insert the words –

“, except that, in “Summary Table 5(i) – Revenue Heads of Expenditure”, £250,000 of the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure for 2026 should be reserved as a ring-fenced budget line for the development of policy mechanisms to address empty residential properties, with this funding not to be drawn from the existing Housing budget within the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure.”

ENVIRONMENT, HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY
PANEL

Note: After this amendment, the proposition would read as follows –

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

- (a) In accordance with Article 16 of the Public Finances (Jersey) Law 2019 (the Law) to approve an amendment to the Government Plan 2025 – 2028 (entitled “Budget 2025 – 2028”) to a reduction in the 2025 head of expenditure “Grants to States Funds” as included in Table 5(i) Revenue Heads of Expenditure of that Government Plan from £119,821,000 to £69,821,000.
- (b) To receive the Government Plan 2026 – 2029 (entitled “Budget 2026-2029”) specified in Article 9(1) of the Law and specifically –
 - i. to approve the estimate of total States income to be paid into the Consolidated Fund in 2026 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 1 to the Report, which is inclusive of the proposed taxation and impôts duties changes outlined in the Government Plan, in line with Article 9(2)(a) of the Law.
 - ii. to refer to their Act dated 24th June 2003 in which they approved that no new ‘user pays’ charges be introduced without any such charge receiving prior in principle approval by the States Assembly and accordingly to approve the introduction of two new charges, to be levied by Health and Care Jersey to promote appropriate use of the Emergency Department and for repeated non-attendance of outpatient appointments, detailed in the section entitled “Departmental Income Sources” as set out in the Appendix to the accompanying Report.
 - iii. to approve the proposed Changes to Approval for financing/borrowing for 2026, as shown in Appendix 2 – Summary

Table 2 to the Report, which may be obtained by the Minister for Treasury and Resources, as and when required, in line with Article 9 (2)(c) of the Law, of up to those revised approval amounts.

- iv. to approve the transfers from one States fund to another for 2026 of up to and including the amounts set in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 3 in line with Article 9(2)(b) of the Law.
- v. to approve a transfer from the Consolidated Fund to the Stabilisation Fund in 2026 of up to £50 million, subject to a decision of the Minister for Treasury and Resources based on the availability of funds in the Consolidated Fund as at 31st December 2025 in excess of the estimates provided in this plan, or from budgeted underspends identified before 31st December 2026.
- vi. to approve a transfer from the Consolidated Fund to the Agricultural Loans Fund in 2026 of up to £5 million, subject to a decision of the Minister for Treasury and Resources based on availability of funds in the Consolidated Fund as at 31st December 2025 in excess of estimates provided in this plan, or from budgeted underspends identified before 31st December 2026;
- vii. to approve each major project that is to be started or continued in 2026 and the total cost of each such project and any amendments to the proposed total cost of a major project under a previously approved Government Plan, in line with Article 9(2)(d), (e) and (f) of the Law and as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 4 to the Report.
- viii. to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from the Consolidated Fund for 2026, for each head of expenditure, being gross expenditure less estimated income (if any), in line with Articles 9(2)(g), 10(1) and 10(2) of the Law, and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Tables 5(i) and (ii) of the Report, except that, in “Summary Table 5(i) – Revenue Heads of Expenditure”, £250,000 of the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure for 2026 should be reserved as a ring-fenced budget line for the development of policy mechanisms to address empty residential properties, with this funding not to be drawn from the existing Housing budget within the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure.
- ix. to approve the estimated income, being estimated gross income less expenditure, that each States trading operation will pay into its trading fund in 2026 in line with Article 9(2)(h) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 6 to the Report.
- x. to approve the proposed amount to be appropriated from each States trading operation’s trading fund for 2026 for each head of expenditure in line with Article 9(2)(i) of the Law and set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 7 to the Report.

- xi. to approve the estimated income and expenditure proposals for the Climate Emergency Fund for 2026 as set out in Appendix 2 – Summary Table 8 to the Report.
- xii. to approve, in accordance with Article 9(1) of the Law, the Government Plan 2026-2029, as set in the Appendix to the accompanying Report.

REPORT

This amendment, if adopted, allocates £250,000 from the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure in the *Proposed Budget 2026-2029* ([P.70/2025](#)) (the ‘Budget 2026-2029’) for the development of policy mechanisms to address empty residential properties.

The Environment, Housing & Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel (the ‘Panel’) propose this amendment in response to clear evidence from the Jersey Youth Assembly (JYA) that the Government of Jersey should prioritise making better use of existing housing by addressing empty residential properties.

In October 2025, the JYA met at the request of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel to discuss the Budget 2026–2029, with a particular focus on health, housing, and how public services should be funded. The JYA subsequently published the key findings from that discussion in a [report](#), which highlighted that:

- Adding to the housing stock by repurposing empty properties ranked as the second most preferred policy option for improving access to housing.
- An empty homes tax was the highest single response out of fourteen initiatives to improve access to housing.
- Numerous comments stressed the frustration at seeing abandoned or unused homes, and the belief that these should be repurposed or repaired.

Overall, the JYA’s feedback demonstrates a strong youth mandate for Government to treat empty homes as a priority housing issue and to invest in mechanisms that bring such properties back into use.

The States Assembly has already agreed, through its adoption of Deputy Tadier’s proposition on Empty Property Tax ([P.48/2022](#)), that an effective mechanism should be introduced to discourage domestic properties from being left vacant long-term. However, during an Oral Question on 25th February 2025 ([OQ.44/2025](#)), and in subsequent scrutiny hearings, the Minister for Housing confirmed that there are no resources within the current budget to undertake empty homes policy development. He also confirmed that the previous £500,000 allocation for this work was almost entirely surrendered as underspend at the end of 2023, with only very limited activity completed. Furthermore, that he cannot progress key measures such as an Empty Residential Property Tax or Empty Property Management Orders without new and dedicated funding. The Minister has expressed regret that he had to suspend work on tackling empty homes and said, during the February 2025 States Assembly sitting, “*I do not have resources within my budget at this point to pursue the kind of option that I would like to, to help tackle empty homes*”. The Budget 2026–2029 contains no allocation for this work.

In light of the States Assembly's existing decision, the Minister's confirmation that work cannot progress without funding, and the strong call from the JYA for Government action on empty homes, the Panel considers it necessary to ringfence a specific allocation for this purpose. However, recognising the Island's broader fiscal pressures and the need for prudence in the current budgetary climate, the Panel proposes setting this allocation at £250,000, half of the sum previously approved. The Panel considers this a proportionate level of resourcing that enables substantive work to begin, while acknowledging the wider financial constraints facing the Government. This amendment ensures that the programme can be restarted without diminishing the existing Housing budget line and responds directly to the needs and expectations of younger islanders, who face the greatest long-term consequences of Jersey's housing pressures.

Financial and staffing implications

The amendment allocates £250,000 within the Cabinet Office Head of Expenditure, which will need to be met from existing Cabinet Office resources. The precise financial and staffing impacts cannot yet be determined, as they will depend on where the Cabinet Office identifies capacity to absorb the reduction.

Children's Rights Impact Assessment

It is considered that this amendment has no direct or indirect impact on children and that the duty to have due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does not arise. Accordingly, a Children's Rights Impact Assessment is not required under the Children (Conventions Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022.