

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HOUSING
BY DEPUTY H.L. JEUNE OF ST. JOHN, ST. LAWRENCE AND TRINITY
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 16th FEBRUARY 2026
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 23rd FEBRUARY 2026**

Question

“In light of [the recent changes to the age criteria for the Affordable Housing Gateway](#), will the Minister clarify –

- (a) how the Government intends to ensure that young adults aged 18 to 24 who are now eligible to apply for social housing through the Gateway, but who may be unable to afford rent, will have access to adequate housing support;
- (b) what assessment, if any, has been undertaken to understand any gap affecting this age group between access to the Affordable Housing Gateway and practical rental affordability; and
- (c) what policy options are being developed or under consideration to prevent the risk of housing insecurity for young people aged 18 to 24 who are on the social housing waiting list, but who cannot sustain private rental costs or access the housing component of Income Support due to the age requirement?”

Answer

- (a) Extending eligibility for social housing is an important step in giving young adults aged 18 to 24 stability and confidence about their future. The recent changes are focused on young adults who are able to afford the social housing rent levels and will benefit from a secure tenancy in a well-maintained home.

Existing support continues to be available for those aged under 25 who may need more help in identifying housing options and moving toward independent living. The Gateway will work closely with each applicant to understand their circumstances, discuss affordability and identify the support they may need to successfully manage a tenancy. This includes exploring financial options and signposting to services, if required, that can help them prepare for independent living. The aim is not simply to assess eligibility, but to ensure that young adults are ready for, and supported into, a home that is suitable and sustainable for them.

Where a young adult is not yet ready to take on the costs or responsibilities of an independent tenancy, the Gateway will help them access more suitable options. This may include referral to established young people’s accommodation such as JAYF or the Shelter Trust’s Strathmore 16-25 Project, which provide accommodation alongside practical support.

For young adults who need a stepped approach toward independence living, the Partnership Pathway, managed by Andium Homes, provides accommodation with coordinated agency support, enabling them to move into long-term, secure social housing when they are ready.

Through these pathways, Gateway will ensure that young adults who do not have the financial independence to maintain their own tenancy are supported into accommodation that is appropriate and sustainable, with a clear route toward independent living.

- (b) The decision to lower the age criteria to 18 is based on the assessment that young adults who have left full-time education and moved into employment will often have financial independence and be able to sustain a social housing tenancy.

It is also recognised that some young adults aged under 25 may not yet have the income to meet rent and the wider costs of managing a tenancy. In such circumstances, Gateway plays a critical role in discussing whether their housing plans are sustainable. For some, that may mean exploring alternative pathways or, where relationships are safe and supportive, considering staying in, or returning to, the family home.

In all cases, Gateway's role is to support young adults to make informed choices that promote their long-term housing stability.

- (c) Since the revised age criteria came into force at the beginning of February, Gateway has begun monitoring applications from young people aged 18 to 24 to understand any emerging themes or requirements, including any challenges around affordability. I am receiving regular updates and will review progress in due course.

These insights will help shape improvements to policy guidance and strengthen the support and advice available through the Gateway. They will also highlight where different accommodation options or additional support could better reflect the needs of young people.

It is important to emphasise that young people experiencing housing insecurity are already supported through established pathways and policies, which are designed to intervene early and prevent homelessness.