

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE CHAIR OF THE COMITÉ DES CONNÉTABLES
BY DEPUTY H. JEUNE OF ST. JOHN, ST. LAWRENCE AND TRINITY
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 2026
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 28th SEPTEMBER 2026**

Question

“Regarding the Visites du Branchage, will the Chair advise –

- (a) whether the Comité des Connétables is undertaking, or planning to undertake, a review of the [Loi \(1914\) Sur la Voirie](#) in relation to branchage, and if so, to what timetable;
- (b) what mechanism, if any, exists, or is proposed, to allow individual parishes to adjust Visite du Branchage dates or requirements in response to environmental stress, such as drought;
- (c) whether the Comité will consider introducing a penalty or sanction for landowners or contractors who cut hedgerows and banks excessively or in a manner that causes lasting damage, given that the current law only penalises failure to cut, not how the work is carried out;
- (d) whether Connétables and roads inspectors currently have regard to the [Wildlife \(Jersey\) Law 2021](#) and its bird-nesting season [Guidance](#), which identifies March to July as high-risk for disturbance and recommends a phased sides-only/sides-and-tops approach, when scheduling or inspecting Visites du Branchage, and whether compliance with that guidance forms any part of checks; and
- (e) whether the Comité have engaged with environmental groups or the Jersey Biodiversity Centre on building greater ecological flexibility into the Law?”

Answer

- a) A project is underway by the Government of Jersey Department of Infrastructure, with the support of the Parishes, to review the [Loi \(1914\) sur la Voirie](#), and which will capture the Branchage. A timescale is not currently available as this will be dependent on the review process, consultations and legislative drafting timescales;
- b) Article 41(3) of the [Loi \(1914\) sur la Voirie](#) provides the statutory timeframes within which the Branchage is to take place being;
 - a. within the first three-week period from 24th June each year; and
 - b. within the first three-week period from 1st September each year.
 As per Article 41(2) of the [Loi \(1914\) sur la Voirie](#), the Connétable of each Parish will set the date that the Branchage is to take place within each 21-day statutory window (three-week timeframe). This date can subsequently be changed, if required by the Connétable, but must be within the 21-day statutory timeframe (each set three-week period in June and September). Due to the dry weather conditions in summer 2026, vegetation growth was minimal and any ‘cut backs’ completed were within the Branchage requirements;
- c) The [branchage-booklet](#) (entitled “Banque, Hedgerow and Tree Management” published on each Parish website) is an advisory booklet setting out guidelines on best management practice. This includes such matters as severity of cut of banques and hedges and, when reviewing the [Loi \(1914\) sur la Voirie](#) (as indicated in a) above), the Comité will consider whether it is appropriate to introduce into that law certain aspects now contained in those guidelines and, further, whether these should be enforceable by fines; and
- d) Connétables and roads inspectors take into consideration wildlife and bird-nesting seasons when conducting the ‘Branchage’. As per response c) the [branchage-booklet](#) contains ‘Banque, Hedgerow and Tree Management Guidelines on best Branchage Practice’. Additionally, it is noted that the [Wildlife \(Jersey\) Law 2021](#) itself contains sanctions for breaches.

- e) The Comité welcomes the engagement of all environmental groups during law amendment consultations and will do so when the relevant parts of the [Loi \(1914\) sur la Voirie](#) are reviewed. Members of the Environment Department have already been invited to attend the next Comité meeting.