Jersey Youth Assembly Report Proposed Budget 2026–2029

In October 2025, the Jersey Youth Assembly (JYA) met at the request of the Corporate Services Scrutiny Panel to discuss three key aspects of the Proposed Budget 2026–2029 (P.70/2025): Housing, Health, and Funding. The purpose of this session was to gather the views of young people on these important policy areas and to ensure that our perspectives are considered as part of the wider scrutiny process.

Throughout the meeting, over 60 JYA members took part in a series of structured activities designed to promote discussion, collaboration, and critical reflection. These tasks encouraged the JYA to explore the outcomes of the proposed budget, share their experiences, and develop reasoned arguments about how government spending priorities could best meet the needs of Jersey's younger population.

The findings presented in this report capture the outcomes of those activities. Following the event, the JYA Executive Group reviewed and analysed the feedback from members. Each section of this report begins with a summary prepared by the Executive Group, outlining the key themes and conclusions drawn from the discussions, followed by a detailed presentation of the results.

This report aims to provide an account of our views on the Proposed Budget 2026–2029 and we would welcome any chance to discuss our views further.

JYA
JERSEY YOUTH ASSEMBLY

IS HEALTH THE PRIORITY?

Within the JYA it was clear that prioritising Health within the Government was a key issue, with almost all respondents viewing Health as a major priority.

The JYA was keen to introduce fines for the misuse of A&E, with 92% supporting the idea of those funds going towards the health services, and to discourage wasting professional time. There was also support for increasing tax proportionally for those on the highest incomes and raising tax on demerit goods.

An outstanding 92% of the JYA weren't in support of the privatisation of healthcare, but the majority were in favour of privatising non-critical medical services, that includes optional life-enhancing procedures.

Ultimately, Health is still seen as the biggest priority by the younger generation to be assessed by the Government.

Do we think it is right to prioritise health? Areas ranked in order of importance:

AREAS	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH	TOTAL
HEALTH	36	21	3	2		62
EDUCATION	13	15	23	6	5	62
HOUSING	7	20	25	8	2	62
INFRASTRUCTURE	5	3	5	37	12	62
SPORT & LEISURE	1	3	6	9	43	62
TOTAL	62	62	62	62	62	

Do we think that the proposed new fees are justified?

YES – Fees for misuse of A&E and for persistent missed appointments are a justifiable way of raising extra funds and changing behaviours.	**61**	**(92%)**
NO - Fees for using A&E and missed appointments are never acceptable; we already pay tax for hospital services.	**5**	**(2%)**

Some other ideas JYA members came up with for funding the increasing health needs in Jersey:

- Increased focus on health charities through centralised charity fundraising
- Paid tours of the States Chamber and other important sites
- Voluntary tax donations for the Health budget
- Set up a Jersey Wealth Fund – those who can, could make monthly donations into one fund that would then be invested responsibly with the income used for the benefit of Jersey people
- Give private companies some tax breaks (e.g. 1% less on their social security contributions) if they provide private health for their employees
- Attract more working people to add to the tax revenue
- Taxing unhealthy foods, drinks and goods e.g. cigarettes, vapes, fast foods with the money funnelled directly to the Health Service.
- Privatise the hospital
- Increase income tax (e.g. 1% tax increase for all)
- Top 10% of earners get an increase in tax and top 1% an even higher increase
- A higher fee if health appointments are missed
- Increase in Government contribution to the Health budget
- Move funding from Arts and Entertainment
- Fewer blanket subsidies for the elderly when some are very well off.
- Richer people to pay for health services (above a certain income bracket)
- Reintroduce GP fees for children and for prescriptions but nominal fees – earns some income for the department without being too expensive.

<u>**Is Private Health an option?**</u>

Which statement best matches your view?

1) Adults should pay monthly health insurance (same as home/car insurance). This would cover ALL medical services – GP, A&E, hospital appointments and any operations or treatment.	**5**	**8%**
Adults should pay at the point of use for <u>non–critical</u> medical services only – e.g. elective surgeries and any life enhancing (rather than life saving) treatments. A&E and emergency/lifesaving care would be free.	**35**	**53%**
No-one should be required to pay for private medical insurance on top of their taxes. The Government should manage their tax income and overall expenditure to continue offering free health care for all that need it.	**26**	**39%**

IS HOUSING IMPORTANT TO YOUR FUTURE?

In terms of Housing, the majority of the JYA members believed the Cost of Living is the most important factor when determining a future in Jersey; followed by Career and Job opportunities, with 40% of the Island workforce being in finance, limiting the diversity of the jobs and salaries available.

A worrying sign seen within the JYA members was a staggering 51% not wanting to return after further education, and 20% being unsure. The uncertainty could be fuelled by the lack of support given to first time buyers and renters, which was the most prominent demand on improving access to housing. The members of the JYA were divided on initiatives when it came to improving the access to housing, with 12% wanting to tax the owners of empty properties to encourage renovation, use, or sale, followed closely by 11%, who were advocating for supporting first-time buyers with their deposit through Government grants or loans.

When asked for final thoughts, the majority of the respondents said that housing in Jersey is too expensive, and a need for financial support for first-time buyers is crucial.

Factors in order of importance to us, when deciding on a future in Jersey:

AREAS	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH	TOTAL
COST OF LIVING	32	15	9	3	3	62
CAREER/JOB OPPORTUNITIES	15	18	17	6	6	62
HOUSING AVAILABILITY/COST	11	20	19	6	6	62
LESIURE AND ENTERTAINMENT	3	3	13	21	22	62
EASE/COST OF TRAVEL	1	6	4	26	25	62
TOTAL	62	62	62	62	62	

59 members completed a survey on housing:

1) **YOUR EXPERIENCE OF HOUSING: What sort of accommodation do you currently live in?**

A flat/house paid for by a mortgage (bank loan)	**21**	**36%**
A flat/house that is rented (from a landlord)	**14**	**24%**
A flat/house that is already owned (no monthly payments)	**14**	**24%**
A shared flat/house with other family members or friends	**4**	**7%**
Between two homes	**2**	**3%**
No fixed address	**0**	**0%**
Other	**4**	**7%**

- 2 homes – one house with mortgage, one rented.
- 2 homes – one with mortgage, one already owned.
- Andium Housing Flat.
- House owned by parents' boss rent free, pay bills only.

2) **YOUR ASPIRATIONS FOR HOUSING: What plans do you have for accommodation in the future?**

I plan to buy a flat/house in Jersey	**13**	**22%**
I plan to rent a flat/house in Jersey	**1**	**2%**
I do not want to live in Jersey in future	**30**	**51%**
I am not sure what I want to do	**12**	**20%**
Other	**3**	**5%**

- Live in the UK and return to Jersey when I am older
- Buy a house in Jersey or somewhere else
- Buy a house in Jersey or another place I would enjoy.

3) **YOUR VIEWS ON HOUSING: What should be done to improve access to housing? Rank the following policies in order of preference.**

	Policies	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1st	Financial support for first time buyers/renters	**35.6%**	**37.3%**	**20.3%**	**6.8%**
2nd	Adding to the housing stock by repurposing empty properties	**28.8%**	**23.7%**	**33.9%**	**13.6%**
3rd	More availability of cheaper social housing to buy or rent	**23.7%**	**27.1%**	**30.5%**	**18.6%**
4th	Adding to the housing stock by building more homes	**11.9%**	**11.9%**	**15.3%**	**61%**

4) **YOUR VIEWS ON HOUSING: What should be done to improve access to housing?**

Pick your TOP 5 initiatives out of the 14 choices below.

6th	Improve key infrastructure (water, sewers, electricity) to allow more housing projects to go ahead.	24	8%
9th	Build more houses in the less populated country parishes.	18	6%
13th	Build new houses in urban areas such as St Helier, St Clement and St Saviour.	9	3%
1st	**Tax the owners of empty properties to encourage their renovation, use or sale.**	**35**	**12%**
4th	**Permit house building on disused and derelict glasshouse sites.**	**27**	**9%**
2nd	**Help first-time buyers with their deposit through Government grants or loans.**	**32**	**11%**
3rd	**Scrap Stamp Duty completely for first time buyers.**	**29**	**10%**
10th	Place the first £5000 of a young person's social security payments into a savings fund towards a house deposit.	15	5%

8th	Allow 100% mortgages for first-time buyers on higher incomes (no deposit required).	19	7%
14th	Encourage large private companies to purchase homes to rent out to their employees at lower rates.	7	2%
12th	Prioritise social housing projects with their commitment to building more affordable homes.	12	4%
11th	Improve the availability and choice of rental properties by encouraging more landlords into the market (fewer rules, fees and taxes).	13	5%
5th	**Improve the quality and affordability of rental homes with more controls on landlords (inspections and rent rise restrictions).**	**26**	**9%**
7th	Lower the age of access to rented social housing so that under 25s can move into their own place earlier.	20	7%
15th	OTHER: Lower rent for houses	1	0%

5) OUR FINAL THOUGHTS ON HOUSING:

Too expensive :(
I think that there should be more houses built instead of flats to make housing prices more affordable
Many abandoned houses and unused buildings in St. Helier, those should be repurposed or repaired
Buying and renting should be a lot cheaper. I also think the registered and licensed system isn't fair as some people pay a lot more.
First time buyers should be assisted financially, and those struggling to find houses to live in should be provided with cheap social housing. Flats should also be better quality.
Should subsidize money for new families
To make less fancy homes and more family, simplistic homes. Especially in the abandoned or rundown buildings no one resides in.
Too expensive
Support for first time buyers

	Should be more rentals compared to fully buying properties to help younger people who are in jersey
	We don't need more houses on Jersey, we need cheaper houses. Even places to rent— some places need to be cheaper. It's crazy how expensive it is to rent anywhere on Jersey and the places may not even be up to scratch for the price they are selling for. Even then, house mortgages are extremely expensive and drag on for years and years.
	Have an increasing tax, based on how much the rent is. The higher the rent, the higher the tax, to encourage landlords to have lower rent (or better, not rent at all) and add to government funds
	Cost of rent/housing in Jersey is really expensive and should be lowered
	I don't believe more houses should be built at all as jersey is already overpopulated by buildings and houses. But making these houses more affordable and repurposing abandoned land.
	Housing in jersey must be made more affordable while also maintaining quality of housing, we must prevent exploitative landlords from taking advantage of the most vulnerable people
	Tax based on use of house. More utility of house leads to lower taxes so empty such as for investment gets taxed more than holidays homes which gets taxed more than being lived in with owned for rent get taxed more than owned for own living if there is little to no increase in rent prices.

HOW SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT BUDGET BE FUNDED?

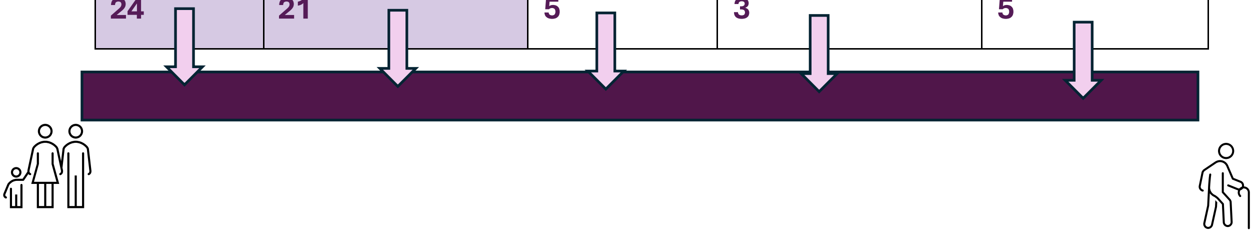
The JYA were conclusive in their findings, with the majority in favour of the Government spending more money now, particularly to benefit young people and families.
It is the opinion of the JYA that, as the Social Security Fund is currently in a strong position, with reserves of more than £2.5 billion and £184 million still being added in this Budget, it is more important to invest in services and facilities that will prevent young people from leaving the island and to sustain the economy.
Furthermore, in terms of how the Government Budget should be funded, the JYA members are in great support of reducing contributions to funds and instead they should use the surplus to cover additional costs.

Do you think the Government should reduce payments into the Social Security Fund for 4 years to increase spending on services for young people/families?

- **YES / PROBABLY** the Government should put less money into the Social Security Fund in order to spend more <u>now</u> on young people and families, to keep them in Jersey and sustain the economy

- **NO / PROBABLY NOT,** the Social Security Fund should be protected to ensure the elderly, sick, disabled and new parents get the support they need, particularly with an ageing population

YES	YES PROBABLY	NOT SURE	PROBABLY NOT	NO
24	21	5	3	5



FUNDING METHODS

TASK 2: Rank these methods in order of preference when deciding on how extra services should be funded by the Government

Funding methods	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH	TOTAL
KEEP IN BUDGET (no increase in spending)	30	11	7	8	2	58
EARN THE MONEY (raise taxes)	8	9	17	8	16	58
SAVE THE MONEY (reduce other services)	7	22	13	10	6	58
BORROW from its own funds/reserves	9	11	9	16	13	58
BORROW the traditional way	4	5	12	16	21	58
TOTAL	58	58	58	58	58*	

(*Please note – some JYA members had left by this point to attend their school's Open Evening)

As there was some contradiction in the responses to Task 1 and 2 above, the Executive Group reapproached Members with a clearer wording of the question with additional explanation and clarification to ensure a clear understanding of the opinion of the JYA. The results of this, whilst from a smaller pool of Members, was in keeping with the findings of task one; we have included both data sets for transparency.

TASK 2 REPHRASED: Rank these methods in order of preference when deciding on how extra services should be funded by the Government

Funding methods	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	TOTAL
RAISE TAXES (To be able to spend more)	3	4	7	16	30
SAVE THE MONEY (By reducing services)	3	11	13	3	30
REDUCE CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUNDS AND USE SURPLUS TO COVER ADDITIONAL COSTS (Funds include Social Security Fund)	20	8	1	1	30
BORROW the traditional way (from banks/lenders)	4	7	9	10	30
TOTAL	30	30	30	30	
OPT OUT – I don't think there should be an increase in spending					0