

Good morning.

I understand that the parish rates system will be discussed this month by the Government and Parishes Review Panel.

May I please ask for this to be raised:

WHY ARE RATES ASSESSED ON HOW MANY BEDROOMS A PROPERTY HAS RATHER THAN ON THE FLOOR SPACE IT OCCUPIES?

I ask because I pay £60 a year more than some of my neighbours in this block of share-transfer flats, all of which have much the same footprint but some are configured as bedsits and some as one-bedroom flats.

My own flat used to be a bedsit. The kitchen sink and units from the tiny kitchen in my flat were transferred to a corner of the sitting-room by the previous owner and Hey Presto! a one-bedroom flat and £60 more on the rates. Why?

Some years ago, Edward Trevor was a guest on a BBC Radio Jersey phone-in about rates and I put the question to him. (He was then a St Helier Rates Assessor but I'm not sure if he still is.) The reply was a lot of mumbling and then "Because it's always been done like that".

That is not an explanation and it is not a satisfactory answer.

Could the Panel please investigate and explain?

Jacky Hows