

DOUZAINE

Report with Propositions to Budget Chief Pleas Meeting , 19th November 2025

RPI INCREASES TO LICENCES AND FEES FOR 2026

The Douzaine has reviewed all the licence fees it sets as part of a review of budgets for 2026 and beyond including a consideration of necessary levels of expenditure in the future.

Douzaine expenditure covers not only public works costs such as rubbish collection, but also expenditure on island works such as maintaining the cliff paths, roads, public toilets and island properties. Expenditure on the Constables and Procurer costs also fall within its budget.

Other than the charges levied for rubbish and sewage collection and disposal, the Douzaine has no sources of income directly allocated to it, even for the areas of work it manages. Island rents and licence fee income from road users such as tractors, carriages and bicycles all form part of the general island budget.

Given the nature of the Douzaine's expenditure budget, it is reasonable to assume that, in effect, the money from licences and rents comes back to the Douzaine, but most of its revenues come from general revenues including taxation, which is not unreasonable as its work serves the whole island.

The extent to which particular income streams such as licence fees from road users should be specifically allocated to specific uses such as road maintenance is a different conversation, but one that the Douzaine would welcome.

The Douzaine is aware of much work that needs to be done as part of its service to the island, both this coming year and in future years. As well as the well known planned stabilisation works on La Coupée and the cliffs around the harbour, including the harbour quarry, work is needed to bring the roads up to a better standard, to repair the public areas of the Old Island Hall, and to improve the facilities for sewage and rubbish disposal.

As part of the process to prepare Douzaine budgets for 2026 and beyond, we have reviewed all licence fees set by the Douzaine. In an ideal world, there would be no increases in licences, but in the real world, no increases means that our income will fall further behind our costs, which will, inevitably, rise by at least RPI.

To take only one example, as the Douzaine's verbal report to Michaelmas Chief Pleas on the 1st October 2025 noted, the income from our road users such as tractor drivers is around half what it costs to maintain Sark's public roads, which means that the rest of the costs must be covered from other revenues such as general taxation. Compare this to the UK where road taxes raise more than twice what is spent on the roads.

It has also been some years since licence fees were last increased and, consequently, they are significantly lower in real terms than when they were last considered.

Consequently, the Douzaine believes that an increase based on cumulative RPI since that last increase is not unreasonable. For clarity, this would use the States of Guernsey Inflation Calculator as generally used by Chief Pleas and available on the States of Guernsey website. The RPI given for the most up-to-date whole years is used.

It is the case that tractors and trailers are, as you'd expect, the heaviest users of our roads and give rise to significantly more road maintenance than other road users. Given that tractors are used by businesses to generate their income, it's not unreasonable that they should contribute more.

Lastly, carriage licences were last raised in 2010. If we were to use RPI since then, that would mean a 60% rise across the board. We felt this would be unfair to take in one step so have proposed rises less than inflation over that period.

As a general rule, and subject to future Douzaine discussions, we think that a regular RPI-based increase each year will be easier for licence fee payers than big rises every few years or so.

The Propositions match those presented to Chief Pleas on previous occasions. To take them in turn:

Proposition 1 covers Horse, Dog, Bicycle and Bicycle Taxes

These fees were last increased for 2021. In the last 5 full years available, RPI has increased by some 28%. It is therefore proposed to increase fees by 28% rounded to the next whole pound.

	2021	proposed for 2026
Horse	£25	£33
Dog	£13	£17
Bicycle	£14	£18

If approved, these increases will come into effect from the 1st January 2026.

Proposition 2 covers Tractor Vehicle, Driver Fees and Electric Bicycles

The increase for the Tractor Driver's licence is in-line with the principle of "RPI since last raised" being, as before, 28%. It is obvious that the proposed Tractor licence is significantly higher than that. RPI since last raised would mean a rise to £192. But in discussions, and we're fortunate to have tractor users on the Douzaine, we did feel that it is reasonable to ask Tractors to contribute more as a percentage than they do now. And, has been pointed out to us by other tractor users, it is still less than a pound a day. That is not an unreasonable charge for a business using a tractor to generate income.

Construction Vehicles remain at the same level as Tractors. There is also the potential need for a Licence for Combine Harvesters, but the only one there is on the island is not currently in use as no-one is growing corn. That will be considered by the Douzaine if it becomes needed.

The rise for Electric Bicycles is the same as for Bicycles in Proposition 1.

	2021	proposed for 2026
Tractor	£150	£300
Construction Vehicle	£150	£300
Tractor Driver	£15	£20
Electric Bicycle	£14	£18

If the above charges are approved, the Douzaine will draft and sign a Regulation to bring them into effect. This Regulation will be laid before Chief Pleas at the next available meeting.

In the preparation of the new Regulation for the Douzaine to sign, it became apparent that the previous Regulation had not been made and then laid before Chief Pleas. This was an administrative oversight at the time and is regretted. The new Regulation will therefore amend the Regulation made originally in 2014. The Covid-19 pandemic at the time would have been a contributing factor.

Proposition 3 covers Carriage Licences

The current level of Carriage Licences was set in 2010. RPI has risen some 60% since then. If we followed the RPI principle, this would mean Vans having to rise to nearly £50 and the other categories in proportion. The Douzaine did not feel comfortable in asking for such a large increase in one step – particularly from something that is a special tourist attraction for Sark. We therefore propose a lower increase as in this table.

	2010	proposed for 2026
Carriages – 2 wheeled	£7.50	£10
Carriages – Victoria	£15	£20
Carriages – Wagonette	£20	£30
Carriages – Van	£30	£40

Proposition 4 covers Carriage Driver Licences

Carriage Driver Licences were also increased in 2021. It is proposed to increase these slightly less than the RPI principle for the same reasons as outlined above.

	2021	proposed for 2026
Carriage Driver	£12	£15
Carriage Driver from 1 Jul (1/2 year)	£6	£7.50

Proposition 5 covers Firearms & Shotgun Certificate charges.

These are currently very low and haven't been increased since 2002 when set at £5. The RPI principle outlined above means a proposal of £11. This is still very low compared to other areas such as Guernsey (initially £50, then £30 renewal) or the Isle of Wight (£198 for 1st five years). This may be reviewed in 2026.

	2002	proposed for 2026
Firearm or shotgun certificate	£5	£11

Mobility Scooters

The last category is Mobility Scooters. This is currently set at £20. These are obviously vital for those who need them to get about, and therefore the Douzaine has no proposal to increase fees.

Summary

In summary, the Douzaine does not like increasing fees. We are very aware they are costs many people will have to pay. That said, we are also very aware that the demands on general taxation are very large over the next few years – not least for major projects falling in our brief such as La Coupée, the Harbour Quarry, the Old Island Hall, Rubbish disposal and sewage.

We think these increases are reasonable in rebalancing the contribution from the heaviest users, reasonable for all of us with bicycles and fair on the tourist attraction of carriages. We ask that these Propositions are carried.

Proposition 1 -

That Chief Pleas approves the draft Ordinance entitled ‘The Financial Provisions (Variation of Rates) (Sark) Ordinance, 2025’.

Proposition 2 -

That Chief Pleas approves the changes to the Electric Bicycles, Construction Vehicle, Tractor and Tractor Driver fees.

Proposition 3 -

That Chief Pleas approves the draft Ordinance entitled ‘The Road Traffic (Horse-Drawn Vehicles) (Amendment) (Sark) Ordinance, 2025’.

Proposition 4 -

That Chief Pleas, pursuant to section 2A of *The Road Traffic (Horse-Drawn Vehicles) (Sark) Ordinance, 1968*, by resolution prescribes the fees for the grant or renewal of a horse-drawn driving license to be £15 for a full year, and where an application for a grant of horse-drawn vehicle license is made on or after the first of July to be £7.50.

Proposition 5 -

That Chief Pleas approves the draft Ordinance entitled ‘The Firearms (Sark) Law, 2001 (Commencement and Fees) Ordinance, 2002 (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025’.

Conseiller Mike Locke
Chair, Douzaine

The Financial Provisions (Variation of Rates) (Sark)

Ordinance, 2025

THE CHIEF PLEAS OF SARK, in pursuance of their Resolution of the 19th November, 2025, and in exercise of the powers conferred on them by sections 12, 20 and 28 of the Financial Provisions (Sark) Law, 1978^a, and all other powers enabling them in that behalf, hereby order:-

Variation of taxes.

1. In the Financial Provisions (Sark) Law, 1978 –
 - (a) in the Third Schedule (rate of horse tax), for "£25" substitute "£33",
 - (b) in the Fourth Schedule (rate of dog tax), for "£13" substitute "£17", and
 - (c) in the Fifth Schedule (rate of cycle tax), for "£14" substitute "£18".

Citation.

2. This Ordinance may be cited as the Financial Provisions (Variation of Rates) (Sark) Ordinance, 2025.

^a Ordres en Conseil Vol. XXVI, p. 480; this enactment has been amended.

Commencement.

3. This Ordinance shall come into force on the 1st January, 2026.

ORDINANCE OF THE CHIEF PLEAS

ENTITLED

The Road Traffic (Horse-Drawn Vehicles) (Amendment) (Sark) Ordinance, 2025

THE CHIEF PLEAS OF SARK, in pursuance of their Resolution of the ** November, 2025, and in exercise of the powers conferred upon them by section 2(2) of the Road Traffic (Horse-Drawn Vehicles) (Sark) Law, 1969^a, and all other powers enabling them in that behalf, hereby order:-

Variation of vehicle licence fees.

1. For the Schedule to the Road Traffic (Horse-Drawn Vehicles) (Sark) Law, 1969, substitute the following -

"SCHEDULE

Sections 2 and 3

Categories of horse-drawn vehicles	Amounts of annual fee
Two-wheeler	£10.00
Victoria, commonly known as a low	£20.00

^a Ordres en Conseil, Vol. XXII, p. 112; this enactment has been amended.

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carriage	
Wagonette, commonly known as a high carriage	£30.00
Van	£40.00
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Repeal.

2. Section 1 of the Road Traffic (Horse-Drawn Vehicles) (Amendment) (Sark) Ordinance, 2010 is repealed.

Citation.

3. This Ordinance may be cited as the Road Traffic (Horse-Drawn Vehicles) (Amendment) (Sark) Ordinance, 2025.

Commencement.

4. This Ordinance shall come into force on 1st January, 2026.

ORDINANCE OF THE CHIEF PLEAS

ENTITLED

The Firearms (Sark) Law, 2001 (Commencement and Fees) Ordinance, 2002 (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025

THE CHIEF PLEAS OF SARK, in pursuance of their Resolution of the ** November, 2025, and in exercise of the powers conferred on them by section 54 of the Firearms (Sark) Law, 2001^a, and all other powers enabling them in that behalf, hereby order:-

Amendment of the 2002 Ordinance.

1. In section 2(1) of the Firearms (Sark) Law, 2001 (Commencement and Fees) Ordinance, 2002, for "£5" substitute "£11".

Citation.

2. This Ordinance may be cited as the Firearms (Sark) Law, 2001 (Commencement and Fees) Ordinance, 2002 (Amendment) Ordinance, 2025.

^a Order in Council No. XII of 2002; this enactment has been amended.