

Comments on Cannabis Reform in Jersey

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Introduction

End Cannabis Prohibition Jersey has produced the following comments paper for consideration by States Members in response to [P.116/2025 Future Approach to Personal Cannabis Use in Jersey](#).

This comments paper complements and builds upon our discussion paper on [Considerations for Cannabis Reform in Jersey](#), which was shared with States Members at the end of July to provide context ahead of the debate.

We welcome the proposition from the Health Minister, which presents a well-considered, pragmatic and modern approach to cannabis use that aligns with the aims and objectives of [A Change of Direction: A Substance Use Strategy for Jersey 2023 to 2033](#).

It is important to note that the Options presented in the proposition which will be voted upon by States Members are to set the direction of travel in how we approach cannabis use in Jersey. There will be no immediate change to the current situation should Members adopt one or more of the Options.

The development of any of the Options will be a task for the next Government. There are no timelines specified in the proposition, which inherently provides flexibility in the prioritisation of future work plans. Detailed proposals arising from the agreed Option(s) will be subject to debate by the States Assembly at a later date.

End Cannabis Prohibition Jersey requests States Members to support all three Options as presented in the proposition.

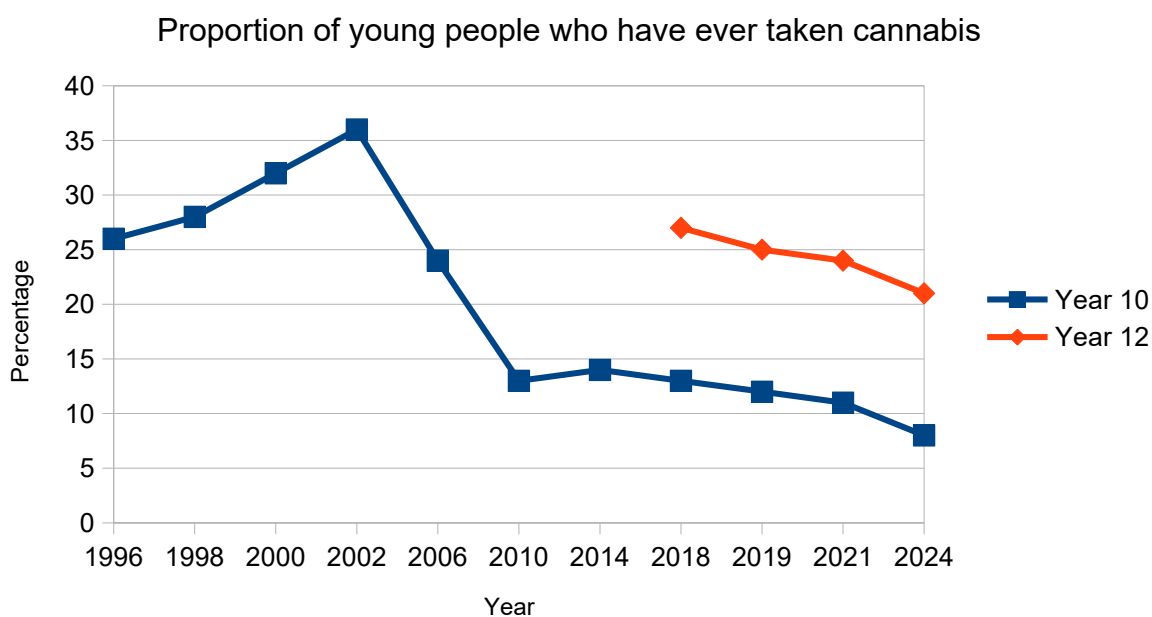
Comments

Lack of data

Due to the nature of cannabis being an illicit substance, we currently have little data available on the prevalence of cannabis use in Jersey.

The lack of baseline data is unfortunate as it will make it difficult to ascertain the initial effects of any change in our approach to personal cannabis use.

The [Jersey Children and Young People's Surveys](#) are currently the sole account of the use of cannabis in the Island, with data recorded since 1996 which shows a steady decline in recent years.



It would be beneficial for future Jersey Opinion and Lifestyle Surveys to include questions on cannabis and other drug use (as undertaken by the [Guernsey and Alderney Wellbeing Surveys](#)) in order to better understand substance use in the community.

Our only other sources of data on illicit cannabis use relate to [seizures](#) by the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service and the States of Jersey Police, alongside data on [convictions and prosecutions](#), which all show reductions in recent years. This data has primarily been provided through Freedom of Information requests.

It would be preferable for information on drug seizures and offences to be published via the [Open Data platform](#) in future.

Consideration should also be given to reinstating annual reporting from the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service, which ceased in 2017 due to there being "[no current obligation for the report to be published](#)".

The adoption of Option A) of the proposition will allow for improved data collection by removing stigma and allowing open conversations about cannabis use.

Data relating to cannabis-associated mental health admissions is only available for 2025, ["owing to limitations in coding and reporting functionality"](#).

The collection of data on cannabis-associated health admissions should be prioritised in order to ensure visibility of any potential mental health implications arising from adoption of the Options.

Regarding medicinal cannabis use, the Medicinal Cannabis Dispensing Audit published in March 2024 provides data on the [number of prescriptions dispensed](#) in the Island via private clinics.

The provision of access to the EMIS portal for the Island's cannabis clinics will undoubtedly improve the monitoring of medicinal cannabis prescribing in Jersey, while also preventing potential instances of patients accessing multiple clinics.

Decline of the black market

The cannabis situation in Jersey has changed quite dramatically over the past few years as a consequence of travel restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted black market imports, and the introduction of medicinal cannabis prescribing.

Recent reports of medicinal cannabis patients becoming ["user-dealers"](#) should be considered in the context of the historical cannabis culture of social consumption and sharing.

Should States Members decide not to adopt any of the Options contained in the proposition, there is a risk that the black market could re-establish itself in the island. This risk could potentially be compounded if proposed legislation on the prescription of medicinal cannabis is too restrictive.

Public health

The [provision of information](#) on cannabis has been lacking for many years, largely because "the illegal nature of cannabis prevents large-scale public education or health advice."

To properly address concerns around the potential mental health implications of cannabis use in young people, we need to greatly improve health messaging and community support.

The [Icelandic Prevention Model](#), which is referred to within the substance use strategy, could provide an effective approach:

"Instead of just warning kids about drugs, the model builds strong community support systems and positive opportunities, making it easier and more attractive for young people to make healthy choices."

Aim 2 of Option A), in treating cannabis use as a public health issue, "introduces a significant number of harm reduction methods and prevention strategies."

Aim 2 of Option B), which on its own continues to treat personal cannabis use as a criminal justice issue, provides "generic and targeted health promotion messaging on cannabis use."

In order to provide effective public health messaging and to collate reliable data around cannabis use, we request that States Members support both Option A) and Option B) of the proposition.

Consideration should also be given to amending the [Restriction on Smoking \(Motor Vehicles\) \(Jersey\) Regulations 2015](#) so that it applies to substances other than tobacco.

Several local businesses sell legal CBD products that contain a small amount of THC (the main psychoactive component in cannabis), which provides islanders with an alternative to the medicinal and illicit markets. Health messaging around cannabis use would also be beneficial for this sector.

Businesses across the Channel Islands operating in this sector should be encouraged to adopt self-regulation, like that of [The Portman Group](#) for the alcohol sector in the UK.

Depenalisation

The disproportionality of criminalising the possession of cannabis in Jersey has for a long time been addressed by the Attorney General rather than the States Assembly.

As far back as 1974, it was noted in the [States of Jersey Police Annual Reports](#) that a number of persons arrested for drug offences were "not charged as a result of consultation between the Attorney General and the Drugs Advisory Committee", the majority of which were stated to relate to cannabis offences.

Since [1998](#), Attorney General Guidance has permitted Centeniers to issue written cautions for the first offence of possession of small amounts of herbal cannabis and cannabis resin. Initially for up to 7g, the limit was increased to up to 15g in [2015](#).

Updated Guidance extended written cautions to second offences in [2019](#), with £200 fines for [third offences](#) of possession introduced following the adoption of the [Crime \(Public Order\) \(Jersey\) Law 2024](#).

The latest iteration of the Guidance issued in [September 2025](#) applies the same approach of written cautions and fines to the personal importation of cannabis, effectively separating personal importation offences from those of commercial importation.

Aim 1 of Option A) requests the Attorney General to consider issuing new Guidance that includes the personal cultivation and social supply of cannabis, with police discretion like that implemented by the [Durham Constabulary](#) since 2015.

Aim 1 of Option B) allows the States Assembly to provide clear direction by repealing/amending the Law with regard to personal possession and cultivation, which would reinforce the Guidance issued by the Attorney General under Option A).

In order that we no longer criminalise islanders for the personal use of cannabis, we request that States Members support both Option A) and Option B) of the proposition.

There is also a disparity in the current Guidelines that should be addressed whereby the possession of up to 2g of synthetic cannabinoids can be dealt with at Parish Hall Enquiry, while the possession of "cannabis oil", i.e. natural cannabinoids, is deemed zero tolerance – despite it's recent reclassification.

Article 20A of the [*Misuse of Drugs \(General Provisions\) \(Jersey\) Order 2009*](#), which prohibits the smoking of medicinal cannabis, should be repealed, especially given that there is no such prohibition on the smoking of non-medicinal cannabis.

In relation to the possession of other illicit drugs, consideration should be given to introducing a [*Good Samaritan Law*](#), which would provide an amnesty for drug users requiring emergency services.

Cannabis social clubs

The inclusion of the consideration of cannabis social clubs within all Options of the proposition is a welcome addition to the proposals.

It should be noted that consumption spaces for medicinal cannabis patients are currently viable under existing legislation, provided that no smoking occurs. For example, [*Green Retreat Guernsey*](#) provides a space for patients to legally vape their medicinal cannabis on their premises in a comfortable environment that offers informed guidance and peer support.

Should cannabis social clubs form part of the future proposals for cannabis reform, consideration should be given to permitting collective cultivation, which would benefit those members who do not or cannot cultivate their own cannabis.

Regulated sales

The decriminalisation/legalisation of personal amounts of cannabis does not in itself adequately address the issue of supply.

Cannabis social clubs could potentially meet demand, but they would effectively be operating in a grey area.

In order to subdue the black market for cannabis in the Island, we need to develop a self-sufficient, well-regulated alternative.

As an island jurisdiction, Jersey provides an ideal situation for undertaking research into cannabis use, which could help inform the development of policy by the governments of the UK and the other Crown Dependencies.

Option C) of the proposition presents a practicable means for trialling non-profit regulated sales of cannabis through a phased approach that would be monitored and analysed by a research institution.

We request that States Members support Option C) of the proposition alongside Options A) and B) to enable the next Government to take a holistic approach to the development of cannabis policy.

Conclusion

A growing number of [jurisdictions around the world](#) have, to varying degrees, implemented policies in recent years that move away from criminalisation to instead addressing cannabis use as a public health issue.

The adoption of P.116/2025 would enable the next Government to explore evidence-informed approaches to cannabis use that are appropriate for Jersey, which would then be subject to future debate by the States Assembly.

There are clearly issues with our current approach to cannabis, all of which can be moderated through effective policy that incorporates public engagement and safeguarding measures.

The proposition on the Future Approach to Personal Cannabis Use in Jersey provides a promising starting point for changing the direction of cannabis policy for the betterment of all Islanders.

We look forward to the debate in the States Assembly, in which we hope Members will vote *pour* on Options A), B) and C) of the proposition.

Mèrcie bein des fais,

End Cannabis Prohibition Jersey.