



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

To the House of Assembly

by

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Minister of Tourism & Transport, Culture & Sport

UPDATES AND IMPROVEMENTS TO GOVERNMENT CAMPING FACILITIES

Friday 20th March 2026

Mr. Speaker,

I rise today to provide this Honourable House with an update on improvements being made to the Government camping facilities at Darrell's Island and Paget Island, which fall under the management of the Department of Sport and Recreation.

Mr. Speaker,

These islands have long served as special recreational spaces for Bermudians. For generations they have hosted youth camps, church retreats, school trips, family gatherings, and community

programmes. They represent an important part of our outdoor recreation offering and reflect this Government's commitment to ensuring that Bermudians have access to meaningful recreational opportunities in our natural environment.

Mr. Speaker,

Over the past several years, the Department of Sport and Recreation has received valuable feedback from users who regularly utilize these facilities. After reviewing this feedback, the Department identified opportunities to improve the facilities, expand access, and enhance the overall camping experience.

In response, several upgrades and improvements have been implemented to better meet the needs of the public.

Mr. Speaker,

I am pleased to begin with Paget Island, where a significant improvement has been made with the addition of a new camping facility. This renovated three-bedroom cottage can accommodate up to twelve campers and includes a full private kitchen equipped with a refrigerator, stove, and deep freezer, as well as a private bathroom. This cottage facility provides a comfortable option for

smaller groups such as families, staff retreats, leadership groups, and small organizational programmes.

With the addition of this cottage, Paget Island **will no longer operate strictly as a single-use island**. Instead, it will now be able to accommodate multiple groups simultaneously, significantly improving access and maximizing the use of this unique public space.

This new accommodation complements the island's existing facility known as the Barracks, which remains available for larger group bookings of up to fifty campers. The Barracks provides access to a large commercial-grade kitchen, a dining hall, and washroom and shower facilities.

This space continues to be ideal for Girl Guides, Scouts, Duke of Edinburgh Award participants, school trips, church retreats, and other large community groups.

Mr. Speaker,

Turning now to Darrell's Island, the Department is pleased to report on the completion of improvements to the bathroom and shower facilities, which have been fully refurbished. Importantly, these upgrades now include separate accessible accommodations

for individuals using wheelchairs, ensuring that our facilities better reflect Bermuda's commitment to inclusive recreation.

In addition to these improvements, the camping experience at Darrell's Island has also been expanded. The island has grown from two (2) rustic camping areas to seven (7) unique rustic sites, each named to honour Darrell's Island's historic role in the early days of trans-Atlantic aviation.

Mr. Speaker,

Across the Government Islands programme, we have expanded the total number of available camping sites from six (6) to twelve (12), significantly increasing the opportunities for community groups and families to enjoy these spaces.

We have also maintained affordable pricing to ensure that these recreational opportunities remain accessible to the public. Rustic camping sites will be available for \$60 per night, while dormitory accommodations will be available for \$85 per night.

Mr. Speaker,

These improvements respond directly to the feedback we received from the public, many of whom expressed the need for greater

availability, improved facilities, and more flexible options for different types of groups wishing to utilize the islands.

To complement these improvements and make the booking process more accessible and transparent, the Department of Sport and Recreation will be reopening the online booking system for the Government Islands on April 6th, 2026 at 9:30am on www.sportsandrec.bm.

Beginning on that date, members of the public will be able to make reservations online for Darrell's Island, Paget Island, White's Island, and Port's Island camping season. The online system will allow residents to view availability, review facility options, and submit booking requests in a more efficient and convenient manner.

Mr. Speaker,

These improvements reflect the Government's continued investment in recreation and our commitment to ensuring that Bermudians have access to safe, well-maintained, and meaningful outdoor spaces.

Through the work of the Department of Sport and Recreation, we are ensuring that these historic islands remain vibrant places where

young people can learn, families can gather, and community groups can connect with Bermuda's natural environment.

Mr. Speaker,

This Government remains committed to ensuring that Bermuda's natural spaces remain accessible to Bermudians first, while strengthening opportunities for recreation, community engagement, and youth development.

I would also like to thank the dedicated staff of the Department of Sport and Recreation for their continued efforts to maintain and enhance these facilities, and I encourage the public to take advantage of these wonderful spaces once bookings reopen in April.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.