

JERSEY

CHANNEL ISLANDS



A small Island making big waves





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What is it that makes Jersey special?



Robert MacRae, Bailiff of Jersey

The answer to this question can be found in this journal, which provides an introduction to the history of our Island and its peoples.

The chapters that follow highlight the geography of Jersey, the other Channel Islands and the nearby Cotentin Peninsula, as well as the fascinating clues that the Island's earliest peoples left us about the way they lived, and the circumstances that have led Jersey to be what it is today and has been since 1204.

That year was a key date in our history, the date when Jersey politically separated from the rest of Normandy, having chosen loyalty to the English Crown (as it then was) in the person of the sovereign. It was this decision of the Islanders, and the political importance of the Island to the English and, later, British Kings and Queens that enabled Jersey to become a self-governing small island nation. It was a separation that enabled the Island to develop its own parliament, the States of Jersey, its own system of government and its own courts.

It is this political and judicial independence, the ingenuity of the Jersey people, the fertility of our soil, the richness of the seas around us and the opportunities that history has given to its people that makes the Island what it is.

I commend this publication to all readers, not just those who are new to these shores, but even those of us who live in and love the Island, as they will learn something – myself included.

Robert MacRae
Bailiff of Jersey

The Royal Mace, which was gifted to the Bailiff of Jersey by King Charles II in 1663





Foreword

Préface

Jersey, my home, is a beautiful island off the coast of north-western France. It is known for its stunning beaches, rich heritage and unique Anglo-Norman culture.



Jersey holds a special place in the hearts of its Islanders, whether, like me, they have ancestral connections or are valued newcomers to its shores.

forget the passion and enthusiasm that thrives within our sporting, arts and culture communities, many of whom represent us overseas.

I have always recognised the significance of preserving and nurturing our beloved Island's heritage and, together as a community, we shoulder the responsibility of shaping its future. Our collective aim is to foster a vibrant and thriving community that values its collective culture while embracing sustainable progress into the future. As the lead on the Island Identity Project – an initiative launched in 2019 to define and promote our unique cultural, social and constitutional identity – I am delighted to shine a light on the essence of Jersey.

This Island, like so many other places, has seen much change over recent decades.

The task of the Island Identity Policy Board has not been to look backwards and attempt to preserve our unique essence, but to shine a light on its many strands and look at the different ways they can be woven together in the future.



This is not a branding exercise. It is a process that involves asking not only who we are but who we want to be in ten, fifty or one hundred years. This will allow us to take an active role in shaping our future. The topic of our identity and international profile – what Jersey means to those lucky enough to call it home – is a fundamentally optimistic and forward-looking one. Within these pages, I want you to explore the nuances that contribute to Jersey's multifaceted collective identity and personality.

I welcome you to delve into the intricate tapestry of our politics, rich history, constitutional status and social fabric to gain insight into the interconnected threads that shape our Island's identity. I invite you to explore the dynamism of our local, rural and digital economies, the strength of our financial services, and the significance of our international relationships. I want you to appreciate the intricacies of our different environments, which encapsulate our Island's charm as you move from the shoreline to the woodlands, from the small parish villages into the bustling capital of St Helier. And let us not

While Jersey's essence is not easy to define, this publication illuminates the remarkable qualities that make our Island undeniably unique, offering a glimpse into the very heart of the Island.

Deputy Carolyn Labey
Lead on Island Identity Project



Deputy Carolyn Labey





In 1968, the future King Charles III took part in a dig at La Cotte de St Brelade while he was a student

Introduction

Introduction



When our Neanderthal ancestors stood at the top of the Island's towering cliffs and looked out over the plains below, they must have realised they had found a very special place.

They discovered a land of safety, relative plenty, strategic importance and astonishing natural beauty.

It is for each and every person who arrives on Jersey's shores to judge for themselves what makes this British island so special, a place of intriguing and apparent contradictions which find a peculiar and very special balance on this little isle measuring just nine miles by five.

Today, we can still stand in the footprints of those early humans and appreciate these qualities, albeit through the lens of a very different world.

Long before they had the capacity to write down their stories, Jersey offered a place of refuge and sanctuary. We know this because archaeologists have discovered tantalising glimpses of our ancestors' lives, their digs unearthing artefacts establishing La Cotte de St Brelade on the south coast as one of the most important Palaeolithic sites in the world. In this deep ravine, they have found bones and teeth belonging to nine woolly mammoths and a woolly rhinoceros, and thousands of stone tools. These finds tell us about how the seeds of community were sown, how our forebears were driven by some of the same instincts that bind our community today – collaboration, sharing and the use of natural resources. Archaeologists have found evidence at La Cotte of interbreeding between Neanderthals and Homo Sapiens, a discovery of

“La Hougue Bie dates back to around 4000-3500 BC

global significance. Jersey really is a crucible of human evolution.

The Island boasts one of the oldest ten buildings in the world, La Hougue Bie, a 6,000-year-old passage grave whose ancient chamber was once a sacred space for rituals and ceremonies. It is a remarkable place to be, most especially at the spring and autumn equinox, when the end of the tomb is illuminated by the rising sun.

From the earliest days, the Island's unique history is a rich tapestry of migration, settlement, community and commerce. Jersey has always been a place of sanctuary. It was on the gently sloping land facing Normandy on the east coast, far from established trading routes, that Celts buried their treasure more than 2,000 years ago, ahead of the advance of Rome's legions. More artefacts surface each year, and in 2012 two metal detectorists found the world's largest Celtic coin hoard, which included more than 70,000 coins and Europe's biggest collection of gold torque neck rings.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, Jersey became a haven for Protestant Huguenots fleeing religious persecution in France. As the French Revolution reached a bloody climax, French aristocrats found refuge in the Island, as did Jesuits in the 19th century.

Today Jersey is a model of ecumenical unity, with faith leaders across the Christian denominations working alongside leaders of different faiths.

In 1646 and again in 1649, the Prince of Wales set sail for Royalist Jersey, knowing that it was a place of safety. Two weeks after his father's execution, the Island's Royal Square was one of the first places that he was proclaimed King Charles II.

In Victorian times, Jersey was a destination away from the smog and pollution of British towns and cities at the height of the industrial revolution, with a reputation as a spa and health resort. It was this which drew Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels to the Island, with the latter encouraging those with "delicate chests" to visit Jersey to take in the clean sea air.

During the tourism boom in the decades after the Second World War, millions of holidaymakers flocked to the Island, with its easy-going lifestyle, cheap alcohol and cigarettes and golden sandy beaches. These tourists wanted entertainment, sun, sea and sand, but also a safe place to escape the stresses and strains of life at home. It was Jersey that the celebrated conservationist and author Gerald Durrell chose as the location for his Zoo and the headquarters of the conservation work carried out across the world in his name. Today, people come to the Island from across the globe for work or pleasure, contributing to the Island's economic success.

Though common strands are woven throughout Jersey's history, which contribute to its identity today, it is also a place that reimagines itself to seize opportunities in an ever-changing world.

The 12th-century chapel, known as Notre Dame de la Clarté (Our Lady of Light), atop the La Hougue Bie Neolithic monument



The beautiful Les Minquiers reef lies about nine miles south of Jersey and is the most southerly point in the British Isles

A beautiful island

Eune île dé bieauté

Today, most people arrive in the Island by air, the final approach offering glimpses of our emerald-green isle – a “gem of the sea” in the words of the Island’s anthem, “Beautiful Jersey”.

This stunning coastline is a dynamic and ever-changing environment, with Jersey boasting one of the biggest tidal ranges in the world. It’s so big, in fact, that the Island nearly doubles in size at low tide, exposing an almost moon-like landscape along the rocky south-east coast and creating something of a haven for low-water fishermen.

Many people also arrive by boat, perhaps sailing past Les Ecréhous or Les Minquiers reefs which lie between the Island and France. The first glimpses of these magical worlds of azure lagoons, golden sand bars and small granite-built huts offer a tantalising taste of what lies ahead.

You will not be alone if you have felt the powerful allure of islands. “An island is the ultimate adventure – remote, beautiful and full of mystery,” wrote the author Robert Louis Stevenson. Jersey certainly ticks those three boxes, and many more.

It is a place where seemingly discordant and jarring features exist in near perfect balance.

It is an island of lush meadows in which the morning commute can be held up by farmers moving their beautiful long-eye-lashed Jersey cows from field to milking parlour, and yet one which boasts some of the best internet speeds in the world thanks to fully integrated fibre broadband.

It feels entirely normal seeing men and women in supercars queueing behind a tractor in narrow lanes with a speed limit of 15mph.

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Jersey is a place where entire extended families still live a stone's throw from each other, but one which relishes embracing new members of the community from far-flung parts of the world.

It is a place where those engaged in the finance industry, the central pillar of Jersey's strong economy, are in constant contact with London and cities around the world, but where those employed in it can be having a sundowner and barbecue on an unspoilt and beautiful beach, a lunchtime sea swim, or a surf – all in the same day.

You are as likely to find yourself sitting next to a high-net-worth resident in a Michelin-starred restaurant as you are when eating a bacon roll or fresh crab sandwich at one of the many seaside kiosks which are such island institutions.

The accessibility of Jersey's natural beauty, its many clubs and associations, its strong sense of community and a desire shared by more than one in ten to give something back to the Island by way of voluntary work are all great levellers, bringing people together.

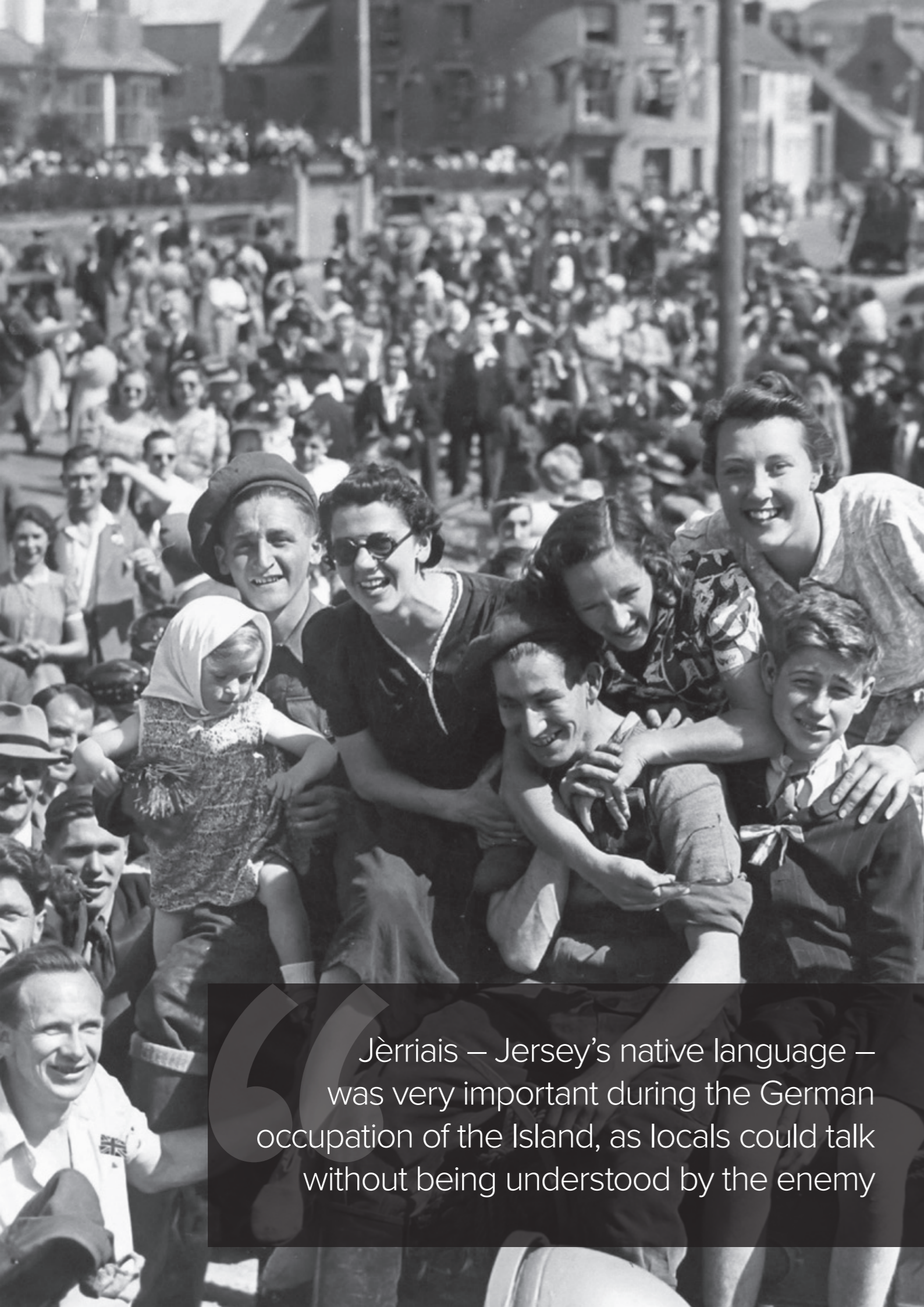
Layered on top of all this is the diversity brought by those from other places who make a home in Jersey, bringing with them aspects of their own culture. The Island's love of espetadas and Portuguese rolls and its insatiable appetite for a Thai green curry on the beach are ample evidence of that.

All these things offer a glimpse of who we are as an Island. Our past informs our present and there is plenty to rake over in the search for the identity of Jersey today, a small and tight-knit community with a global view and aspirations.

Clockwise from top left: Seymour Tower, off Jersey's south-east coast; Inquisitive Jersey cows; Huts on Les Ecréhous, a reef in the short stretch of sea between Jersey and the Normandy coast; Le Rat Cottage, a National Trust for Jersey property in the parish of St Lawrence



“ Jersey's offshore reefs, as well as an area along the south-east coast, are designated Ramsar sites of international importance



Jèrriais – Jersey’s native language – was very important during the German occupation of the Island, as locals could talk without being understood by the enemy



Above: Flags are waved during the annual re-enactment of the events of Liberation Day 1945
Left: Islanders celebrate their Liberation

Proud and independent Fièthement indépendants

It is often said that there are six degrees of separation, the idea that one can be connected to anyone else in the world through a chain of acquaintances – you know someone who knows someone who knows someone and so on, until a link is made. In Jersey, that chain can be compressed into one, two, or, on rare occasions, three degrees of separation.

To some extent, these bonds are a consequence of a relatively small population. In the decennial Census carried out in March 2021, there were 103,267 people living in Jersey, but to think this kinship is simply a numerical certainty misunderstands why Islanders feel so connected.

Jersey is distinct, and its community spirit so strong, because of the way that so many communities overlap with other communities, at work and school, through leisure activities and voluntary work, the arts, religion, the parishes and, of course, as clientele of good old British pubs.

Jersey also boasts a strong and fiercely independent media, which keeps people informed, cements relationships and underlines the distinct nature of the Island and its autonomy as a self-governing jurisdiction.

In 2021, around half of the people living in the Island were born in Jersey, with the other half being made up of people from the UK,

Ireland, Portugal, France, Poland, Romania, several African countries, the United States, the Philippines, Nepal and many more nations around the globe. Our community, its culture and identity are deeply affected by this migration, which has always been a feature of Jersey’s demographic profile. Le Gallais, Gallichan, Langlois, Le Breton are established “Jersey” names, but they mean, respectively, the Welshman, the Spaniard, the Englishman and someone whose family once hailed from Brittany in France.

Jèrriais, Jersey’s ancient language, is still spoken, although its use has declined over the years. It is believed to be the closest tongue to the French of the Normans who invaded England with William, Duke of Normandy, and later William the Conqueror after 1066. It is taught in island schools and still celebrated in art and music. Jersey also has, per 100,000 population, the largest Portuguese-speaking minority community in the world.

In a 2025 debate in the States Assembly, the Island’s parliament, it was decided that Liberation Day, 9 May, should be the official national day. It was on this day in 1945 that Jersey was finally liberated from five years of German occupation, ending one of the darkest chapters in the Island’s history. Today, it is a time to remember the hardships of living under the yoke of a Nazi regime and to celebrate freedom.



A Peculiar of the Crown Partitchuliéthement Rouoya



Jersey is one of three Crown Dependencies, along with the Bailiwick of Guernsey and the Isle of Man. All enjoy a distinct and privileged constitutional status and autonomy. This unique arrangement with the United Kingdom and the British Crown has enabled the Island to develop, over centuries, its own system of government with institutions and titles that echo terminology used in England and Wales, but which often have very different roles and meanings in Jersey.

As a proud, self-governing jurisdiction, the Island has its own legislature, the States Assembly, but in reality it is not a truly independent nation. With its own fully functioning government, it has the authority to raise taxes, enact laws and foster positive international relations, but it still looks to the UK for defence and foreign policy.

At Assembly sittings, a mace gifted to the people of Jersey by King Charles II on 28 November 1663 in recognition of the sanctuary he was given during the English Civil War is displayed as a symbol of his thanks and the Island's special status.

The majority of Islanders hold British passports, with around half born in Jersey. Indigenous Islanders are colloquially and affectionately referred to as "Crapauds" after a protected species of toad found locally, or "Jersey Beans" after one of the Island's traditional dishes, bean crock.

It can take some time to fully understand the history, culture and institutions of the Island, its structures and nomenclature, but you will always

find someone willing to offer guidance and an explanation. It is, officially, a so-called Peculiar of the British Crown.

The Bailiff, for example, is not a debt collector, but the civic head of the Island, its first citizen who sits as an apolitical Speaker in the States Assembly. Officially appointed by the Crown, the Bailiff also acts as the Island's chief judge, bringing together roles and powers that have been separated elsewhere, but a peculiarity which has consistently won the backing of successive States Assemblies. The arguments for the persistence of this arrangement, which might seem odd from the outside and offend the modern sensibilities of other jurisdictions, are many. But, like so many of the Island's apparent anomalies, the answer to critics is simple – it works and a better model has yet to be found that is right for Jersey.

Another quirk is the fact that Jersey issues its own distinct bank notes, retaining the £1 note lost decades ago in the UK, mints its own coins and produces its own stamps.

There are three classes of States Member: Senators, who are elected on an Islandwide mandate, Deputies, who represent electoral districts, and Constables, who are the heads of the 12 Island parishes and cement the ancient link between whole-Island and parochial municipalities. The 49 elected Members sit with unelected ex-officio colleagues – the Dean of Jersey and the Attorney General, who can speak in debates but are not permitted to vote.

Top: In Jersey, traditions live on — black butter is slow-cooked over an open fire, lovingly stirred for hours, filling the air with the rich aroma of apples and spices
Bottom: The Island's parliament, the States Assembly



A long-standing tradition within the Assembly is the foot-stamp. Instead of clapping, Members stamp their feet to congratulate someone or to welcome someone into the meeting

Jersey has 12 parishes,
each of which is divided
into vingtaines, except
St Ouen, which has cueillettes



The 12 parish crests



St Saviour's Parish church

The parishes

Les pâraisses



Parishes have distinct administrations, characters and identities with their own crest and traditions. They sit at the very heart of Jersey's governmental system. Each has its own volunteer honorary police force – comprising ranks of Centenier, Vingtenier and Constable's Officer who are answerable to the Chef de Police – which complements the paid professional States of Jersey Police. The honorary force is one of the oldest police forces in the world.

These officers conduct speed checks, manage traffic flows, marshal at events and prosecute in the Magistrate's Court. They clock up thousands of hours of unpaid work each year.

Parishes are responsible for maintaining many of the Island's roads, lanes and footpaths. Landowners and occupiers also play their part in ensuring the Island looks neat and tidy by cutting back hedgerows and verges twice a year in a process known as "branchage".

Another quirk of parochial life is the Visite Royale. Each year, the Royal Court visits two parishes to check the branchage is being properly managed, to look at the parish accounts and

receive reports from officials. Don't be surprised if, during one of these visits, you come around a corner to find the court in full session, gowns and Panama hats on, deciding the fate of a wall or tree that may be protruding too far into the road. A hearing is convened there and then to decide the outcome.

Each parish has an ancient parish church and a Rector, and parishioners pay rates for their maintenance and other local services.

Meanwhile, Parish Assemblies, open meetings which can be called by parishioners, enable citizens to have a political voice and nurture grassroots politics and community involvement.

While proud of their distinct local identities (it is often joked that you need a passport to travel to the north-west parish of St Ouen) parishes also help cement international relations through Jumelage. This twinning programme enables cultural exchanges based on friendship and co-operation, and forges relationships with communities across Europe in countries including France, Germany, Ukraine and the Portuguese island of Madeira.

Building global relationships

J'griyons des r'lâtions partout l'monde



The historical link between “old” Jersey and New Jersey in the United States is becoming ever stronger. The relationship dates back to the 17th century when the American state adopted the name as a tribute to the Island colonists, and in recognition of the exploits of Sir George Carteret, a celebrated naval captain in the service of the Crown who established settlements there. In 2020, St Helier was formally twinned with the New Jersey capital of Trenton during a signing ceremony in the US state. The reciprocal signing in St Helier came two years later, after being delayed by the Covid pandemic.

While proud of its peculiarities at home, recent years have seen Jersey taking proactive steps to secure much stronger international relations as far afield as the Middle East, Africa and China, in addition to the ties it enjoys with nations across Europe. The Island has offices in London, Brussels and France, and representatives of the government and the finance industry regularly visit centres in Asia and the USA to promote the Island. Their efforts are supported by countless organisations and businesses which fly the Jersey flag around the world, making the Island seem far larger than its geographical size and population might suggest.

The publicly funded Jersey Overseas Aid (JOA) spearheads this work by providing humanitarian assistance to developing countries, either as part of long-term projects or in the wake of war or natural disasters. In the two years after the start of the war in Gaza, for example, JOA gave more than £2 million to aid projects in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

JOA concentrates its development grants in six countries selected on need, low levels of corruption and strength of relationship with Jersey. It focuses on three themes – conservation livelihoods, dairy for development and financial inclusion.

In Africa, for example, it has helped Rwandan communities to become more self-sufficient and thrive through the introduction of one of

Jersey’s most famous exports – the Jersey cow – under its Dairy for Development programmes, partnering with the Royal Jersey Agricultural and Horticulture Society. The prized animal is a prodigious producer of high-fat nutritious milk. JOA seeks to leverage many of Jersey’s strengths to assist people around the world, enabling sustainable and economic development.

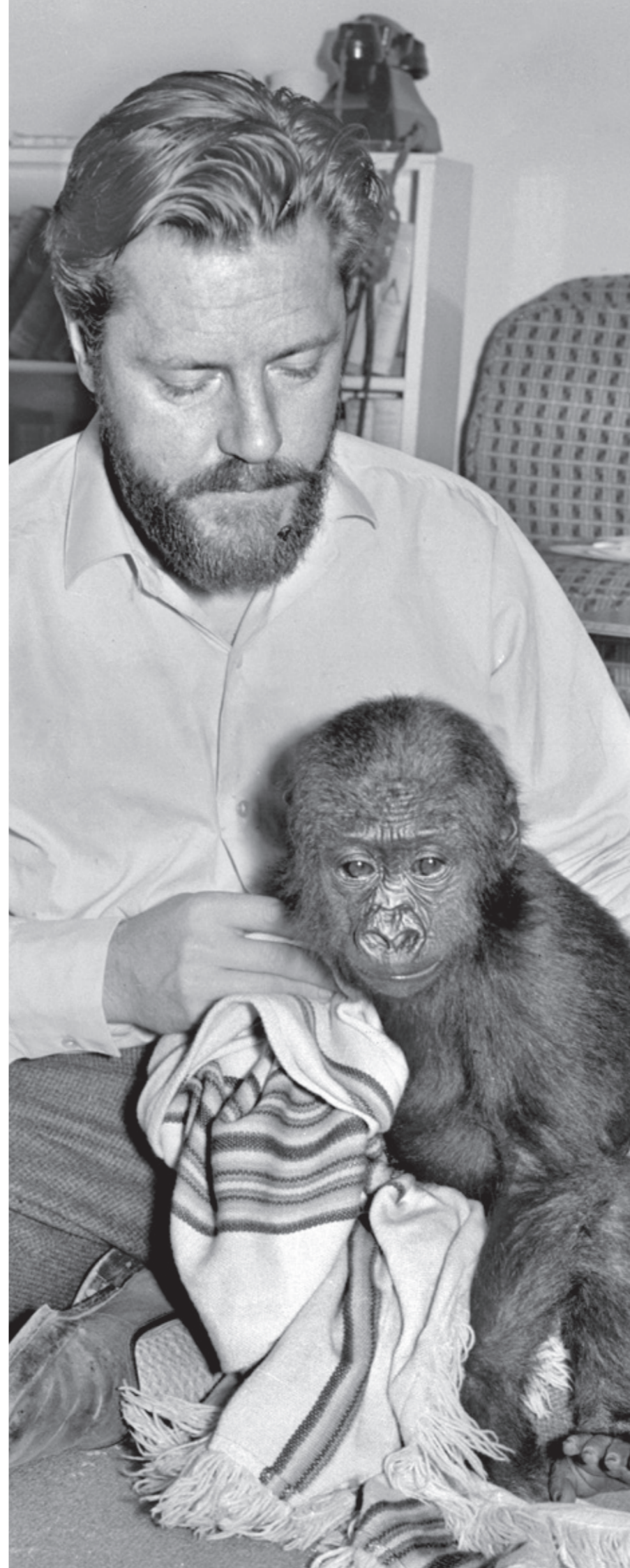
With the weight of the Island’s financial services industry behind it, JOA also focuses on financial inclusion projects. Conservation livelihood projects are a key focus, with JOA working in partnership with another great Island ambassador, the Durrell Wildlife and Conservation Trust.

The trust’s collaborations and programmes contribute to global wildlife conservation and sustainable environmental stewardship in many parts of the world.

The Island currently maintains its commitment to international sustainability by participating in the Conference of Parties on Climate Change, and has pledged to reach net zero emissions by 2050. Ports of Jersey, which runs the Island’s airport and harbours, is collaborating with international partners to develop electric and carbon-neutral aviation, to make Jersey a leader in sustainable air travel.

The Island is included in the UK’s membership of the United Nations and the Commonwealth. There is a Jersey branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association which facilitates conversations about how diverse international communities can learn from each other’s experiences and share best practice. Collaboration has always been key to the Island’s success, both locally and internationally.

And, of course, there are thousands of residents who relish the opportunity to talk about their island when away on holiday or on business with such fondness and pride – enthusing about its lifestyle, opportunities and natural beauty.



Left: Founder Gerald Durrell nursing a baby gorilla at Jersey Zoo in 1959



From the top: A parade through the German town of Bad Wurzach, where hundreds of Islanders were interned during the Second World War and which is now twinned with St Helier. Three pictures from projects undertaken by JOA in developing countries

The power of community Lé pouver d'la c'meunauté

One of Jersey's great strengths, and the vital glue which binds so many people together, is a long and proud tradition of volunteering, often for charitable and not-for-profit organisations. Thousands actively support more than 500 voluntary and community organisations by taking part in a diverse array of fundraising events that happen throughout the year. You would be hard pressed to find someone in Jersey who has not been involved in some way in this ceaseless effort to raise money for good causes. From running, cycling and myriad other challenges, including the annual 48-mile annual Round Island Walk, and the Jersey Marathon, money is raised for an astonishing number of charities.

And one day each December, hundreds head to the Royal Square for the annual Soup Kitchen – something of a Jersey tradition – which raises thousands for the Shelter Trust.

In all, around 11,000 Islanders, or more than one in ten of the population, volunteer in some shape or form, putting Jersey among the top regions for community in the OECD's Better Life Index.

The diversity and depth of these charitable endeavours is astonishing. A two-time winner at the Jersey Evening Post's Pride of Jersey Awards is the inspirational Healing Waves charity, which combines a strong passion for

the sea with a mission to support those who have experienced trauma and/or have other mental or physical disabilities by getting them into and onto the water.

Meanwhile, Jersey Post pioneered the Call&Check scheme, where posties provided community support while on their rounds, including organising home grocery and prescription deliveries.

The scheme, which was designed to tackle isolation and loneliness, went on to attract global recognition and is now managed by another organisation.

Islanders are also invited to regular social events to get together with friends and meet new people over a cup of tea and cake. There is a real warmth to Jersey's cultural identity fuelled by thousands of volunteers.

Jersey also has a thriving arts scene. At grassroots level, youth theatres, choirs, amateur dramatics societies, dance academies

and a pulsing music scene fire the imagination and foster talent, with many performers going on to enjoy international careers.

Among the artists who have achieved international fame are Henry Cavill, or Superman to the legions of fans of the film franchise, internationally-acclaimed cellist Gerard Le Feuvre and globetrotting soprano Giorgi Mottram.

Arthouse Jersey, a not-for-profit arts organisation, brings another dimension to the Island's arts scene with thought-provoking exhibitions and installations, which have included Luke Jerram's Floating Earth at Queen's Valley Reservoir that attracted thousands.

Among the historical luminaries of the Island's artistic tradition is John Everett Millais, one of the most fashionable artists of his day who painted Jersey actress Lillie Langtry at the height of her fame in 1878. The work is a prized part of the Jersey Heritage collection. Millais was the youngest ever student at the Royal Academy at

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For a small island, Jersey has an incredible number of charities. More than 250 are registered with the Association of Jersey Charities



Above left: Superman Henry Cavill, who was born and grew up in Jersey, takes part in the 13km fun run, the Durrell Challenge. The actor is a passionate ambassador for the wildlife conservation charity



Above right: Many cultural, sporting and charitable events are held on land and sea

...Continued

the age of 11 and went on to become one of the founders of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

He stands with Edmund Blampied, best known for his drawings and etchings depicting rural life in Jersey. Blampied was also a prolific illustrator, and designed the cover of the 1939 edition of J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan and Wendy. The surrealist photographer, sculptor and writer Claude Cahun, whose work challenged traditional gender roles and explored themes of identity, resistance and self-expression, also found inspiration in the Island's unique surroundings. Jersey is now home to the world's largest collection of Cahun's art and Jersey Heritage has loaned works to museums and galleries across the world.

This rich artistic tradition today finds expression in several festivals celebrating music, poetry, film and literature.

The Jersey Festival of Words, which takes place in the autumn, has a diverse programme of events for all ages, with local authors appearing alongside international best-selling writers.

The Liberation Music Festival has brought a new musical dimension to Jersey's national day, and the Jersey Weekender music festival ensures that there is something to excite those who prefer something a little more modern.

The 13th Parish independent film festival, held in the spring, brings the best of international

cinema to Jersey and the Island has its own national ballet company, Ballet D'Jerri, which boasts a troupe of local and overseas talent, from companies including the Rambert school.

It is not just those who were born and grew up in Jersey and call it their home who have found inspiration in the Island. Authors George Eliot and Victor Hugo, and the composer Claude Debussy are among influential figures who have been inspired creatively by Jersey.

Passion for the arts is more than matched by Jersey's love of sport and outdoor activities. Millions are being invested in the Island's sporting infrastructure.

The natural environment lends itself to many watersports, such as stand-up paddleboarding, surfing, kayaking, sea swimming, triathlon, kite surfing, sailing, fishing – in fact, if it's an activity that requires water the chances are that someone is out there doing it.

The limitless possibility of the sea is complemented by golf courses and a state-of-the-art skateboarding park, and award-winning cricket pitches on which Jersey regularly hosts international tournaments. These impressive sporting facilities sit alongside more humble venues such as the many terrains de pétanque which are a feature of parish public spaces across Jersey.

Les Landes racecourse is situated in the north-west of the Island, its race meetings popular dates in the equestrian calendar. Jersey also has a rich motorsport tradition and today hosts the annual Jersey Rally with stages across the Island, hill climbs, the Jersey International Motoring Festival, sand racing, go-karting and motocross.

Jersey might be a small island with a relatively small population, but that has not prevented it from enjoying national and international success. The Jersey Cricket Men's team have been ranked 21st in the world for T20 Internationals and Jersey routinely excels in shooting, bowls and swimming on the national and international stage.

The Jersey Bulls football team and Team Jets netball team fly the flag in their respective national leagues. Among those who have represented England on the international stage is Serena Guthrie, a former captain of an exceptionally successful England netball team. Footballer Graeme Le Saux is another of Jersey's famous sporting stars, while Formula 1 racing drivers Nigel Mansell and Derek Warwick, and golfers Harry Vardon and Ian Woosnam, have all called Jersey home.

First-class facilities have helped put Jersey in the spotlight. International rugby teams,

including the British and Irish Lions and the South African Springboks, have visited for pre-season training, while events such as the prestigious Superleague Triathlon and surfing competitions have brought world-class participants and spectators to the Island.

The Island really comes alive during the summer, with a host of events and festivals to suit all tastes.

One of the highlights of the holiday season is the Battle of Flowers – a spectacular colourful carnival traditionally held along St Aubin's Bay. The event was first staged in 1902 to celebrate the coronation of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra. There quickly became a tradition of picking flowers from the floats and throwing them to the audience – and this developed into flowers being thrown back, and the Battle of the Flowers was born. It has since become a firm favourite for Islanders and tourists alike, although flowers are no longer thrown and the floats survive to take part in a subsequent night parade.

Each September, thousands line St Aubin's Bay to watch new and historic aircraft, including the world-famous Red Arrows, at the Jersey International Air Display.

The free display – which is such an institution that children get the day off school – is seen as the last big public event of the lively summer season.

Crowds gather each year for the National Trust for Jersey's much-loved Sunset Concerts





The 'V' sign laid in the Royal Square by stonemason Joseph Le Guyader during the German Occupation of Jersey

A rich history and heritage

Des richesses d'histouaithe et d'héthitage



One of the key ingredients of nationhood is a collective understanding of the story of the jurisdiction, its history and heritage. The publicly funded Jersey Heritage Trust is one of a number of organisations which invites Islanders and visitors to better understand this story through immersive exhibitions and events. Its portfolio includes two museums, castles and other historic buildings. Around 17,000 Islanders actively engage with their history as members of this much-valued organisation.

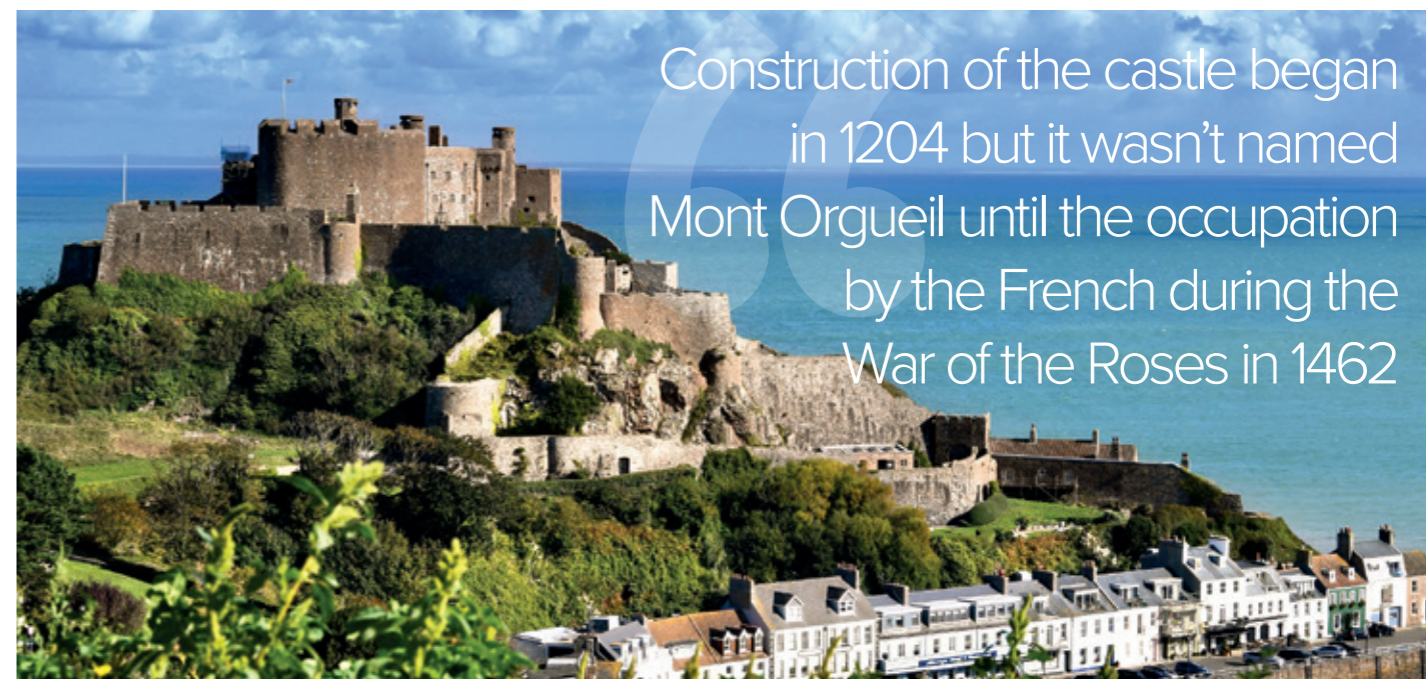
The Jersey Museum is constantly looking at new ways to interpret Jersey's history, with its work complemented by the National Trust for Jersey and the Société Jersiaise. They bring people together to celebrate time-honoured Island events, including black butter making. The delicacy is a preserve made with apples, sugar, spices including cinnamon, lemons and liquorice. Each autumn, the Trust organises for volunteers to peel thousands of apples before the mixture is cooked for many hours over a roaring fire in a pot called a bachîn.

The Island is architecturally diverse, the style of its buildings influenced by a wide variety of places and traditions.

French influences can be seen in Island churches and high-status houses, including the impressive Trinity Manor. Many of the traditional houses were built with granite – the stone being relatively plentiful – and are one of the many lovely sights enjoyed during a stroll or cycle through Jersey's lanes. On such adventures you will encounter another very Jersey phenomenon – honesty box roadside stalls, where you can pick up fresh veg, eggs, flowers, jams and all manner of delicious and beautiful produce from nearby farms.

In St Helier, the Central Market is a jewel of the town and offers a diverse range of international cuisine for a spot of lunch.

In the 15th century, the Royal Square, home to the Island's parliament building and the Royal Court, served as the central marketplace. Today, it is a place to meet friends or just to sit and watch the people walking past, as pigeons skitter about and arc through the sky. It was here that on 6th January 1781 the Battle of Jersey briefly raged. Led by Major Francis Peirson, the British forces successfully defeated the invading French in a gun fight which lasted no more than 15 minutes. The battle claimed the life of the British Army



Construction of the castle began in 1204 but it wasn't named Mont Orgueil until the occupation by the French during the War of the Roses in 1462

officer, whose tragic end was depicted in John Singleton Copley's famous oil painting, 'The Death of Major Peirson', which hangs in the Tate Gallery.

St Helier showcases an array of architectural styles from medieval to Georgian, Victorian, art deco and beyond. To fully appreciate the beauty and eclectic nature of this architecture, one must look above the modern shop fronts while wandering the patchwork of streets.

It was in the Royal Square that Laurens Hamptonne proclaimed Charles II King in 1649 and again it was in the square that King Charles III, accompanied by Queen Camilla, addressed Islanders as part of a tour to celebrate his Coronation in 2024. And it is here that a mason called Joseph Le Guyader incorporated a V for victory into the design of the granite paving in defiance of the German forces in the dying months of the Occupation in 1945.

Road names in English, French and Jèrriais attest to the multilingual nature of the Island, a key factor of its cultural identity.

The defensive heritage of Jersey finds expression in other landmarks within St Helier, such as Elizabeth Castle, a bastion for Royalists during the English Civil War, and Fort Regent. Both were constructed to protect the Island from French invaders, the former now a popular Jersey Heritage attraction.

Mont Orgueil, an impressive castle overlooking the Royal Bay of Grouville on the east coast, acted as a central hub for covert intelligence during the American War of Independence and Napoleonic Wars and provided sanctuary for French aristocrats during the French Revolution.

In the 18th and 19th centuries a ring of coastal towers was constructed, fortifications which sit alongside the concrete bunkers, tunnels and control towers of Hitler's Atlantic Wall.

Jersey's Central Market in St Helier, a Victorian landmark at the heart of island life





“About 14,000 people are employed in Jersey’s financial services industry”

St Helier, including the International Finance Centre on the Esplanade

Industry and innovation L’industrie et l’innovation

Until the Occupation, Jersey’s economy was dominated by fishing and agriculture, two industries which had a profound impact on the Island that went way beyond their monetary contribution. Both are deeply entwined with the Island’s culture and have shaped the coastline and its green interior. They provided lucrative exports, with the Jersey Royal new potato, discovered in the late 1800s by Hugh de la Haye, becoming a prized product across Europe.

Since the 12th century, the Island’s fishermen have been exporting their catch, but it was in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries that a substantial part of the economy relied on the extremely lucrative but perilous cod-fishing industry. Islanders would set out from the small but strategically critical harbour at St Aubin and sail across the North Atlantic to the plentiful fishing grounds off Canada’s east coast. Today, reminders of this era can be seen in so-called Cod Houses – all built in a similar design with the fortunes amassed by plundering the rich seas.

But it was not just fish and delicious new potatoes which put Jersey on the map. The Island boasted a prodigious knitting industry producing its world-famous fisherman’s jumpers and socks, a pair of which were famously worn by Mary Queen of Scots on the scaffold when she lost her head. The Island was also a celebrated centre of cider production with, in

1800, around 16% of the total land area devoted to cultivating apples.

Now a peaceful half-moon bay of golden sand, St Aubin’s Bay was once alive with craftsmen building ships to sail the oceans. Today, there are relatively few Islanders employed in fishing and agriculture, but their impact on the cultural and physical landscape remains clear to see. Cattle and horticultural shows are still a part of the traditional Jersey calendar.

The Jersey cow has been sent to farmers around the world since around 1850, and the animal and the milk it produces remains one of the Island’s best-known exports. Today, for example, 7 million litres of Jersey milk are consumed each year in Hong Kong.

Since the first Victorian visitors, tourism has developed and plays a key role in the Island economy. The decades following the Second World War saw the industry boom, the population doubling in the peak summer months. The biggest names in music, comedy and light entertainment came to delight sell-out crowds. Challenge from cheap package holidays in places such as Spain has forced the industry to diversify away from its previous mass-market model, now offering outdoor adventure activities, wellness experiences and a plethora of ways to explore the Island by bike, car and on foot to enjoy its natural beauty.



The Island offers a very wide variety of water sports and marine activities, including RIB trips to the offshore reefs, sailing, kayaking, coasteering, surfing, kite surfing, windsurfing, diving, spear fishing, and so much more.

St Helier, with its shops, cafés and restaurants is just minutes from the solitude of relative wilderness. It is a breathtaking dichotomy that provides endless days of exploration, calm and fun.

Today, Jersey is perhaps best known globally for the expertise of its dominant financial services industry. It is the powerhouse of the economy. The sector employs thousands of people and has for decades been a driving force behind investment, infrastructure development and job and wealth creation. It is often said that the Island punches well above its weight and the finance industry, with its global reach, illustrates the point.

The Island’s financial and professional services sectors have a significant impact on the world economy, supporting more than £170 billion of global economic output, and helping to sustain 5.1 million jobs worldwide.

There is a growing and important shift ongoing across the industry in positioning Jersey’s finance industry as a champion for sustainable development and towards sharing its expertise

to support developing nations. Allied to all this is a focus on philanthropy, and the finance sector is a key supporter of environmental and humanitarian projects undertaken by third-sector organisations and Jersey Overseas Aid, the Island’s official aid agency.

High-class governance and world-renowned regulation underpins the success of the industry. The quality of the Island’s financial services has consistently been evidenced by the OECD and in 2024 a positive MONEYVAL report. But it is also renowned for its ability to pivot to explore new opportunities, in finance and beyond.

In the vanguard of this change are those marrying technological advances with financial expertise to boost productivity. Government delivery services such as Digital Jersey and Jersey Business are key to supporting this innovation.

The agricultural industry, too, has been keen to embrace change. While the Island’s famous Jersey Royals continue to be the dominant export product, some farms have diversified their crops. Fields of tea, for example, can now be seen in some parishes.

Jersey also has a nascent medicinal cannabis industry, the latest diversification for an innovative agricultural sector.



Guardians of the environment

Les gardgeins d'envithonnement

Successive consultation exercises have revealed a very consistent finding – that Islanders' number one concern is the protection of the environment. While that sentiment is strong, it is also true that being more sustainable, aiming for carbon neutrality and protecting the land and sea from excessive and damaging exploitation, is easier said than done.

Pragmatic solutions are being found to enable necessary development, and especially the provision of affordable homes, while also seeking to protect and enhance the environment.

One of the landmark events in recent years was the creation of the Jersey National Park, an initiative

that has its roots in a peaceful protest against the over-development of this beautiful island.

On 4th October 2009, an estimated 7,000 people joined hands for the A Line in the Sand demonstration in St Ouen's Bay. Organised by the National Trust for Jersey in opposition to the overdevelopment of coastal areas, including the headland at Plémont, the event did exactly what it said on the tin. A line against over-development was indeed drawn, and two years later the States of Jersey officially endorsed the Jersey National Park. The park now covers 2,145 hectares – 16% of the Island's land mass – and any development within it is strictly regulated by the planning department.

