

State of Alderney



Alderney is situated on the North of the Channel Islands. It is part of the Bailiwick of Guernsey, a British Crown dependency. It is 3 miles (4.8 km) long and 1.5 miles (2.4 km) wide, and 3 square miles (7.8 km²). It is around 10 miles (16 km) to the west of La Hague on the Cotentin Peninsula, Normandy, in France, 20 miles (32 km) to the north-east of Guernsey and 60 miles (97 km) from the south coast of Great Britain.

While Alderney enjoys full autonomy in law, under the provisions of a formal agreement (known as "the 1948 Agreement") entered into between the Government of Alderney and the Government of Guernsey, certain matters have been delegated to Guernsey. Those transferred services include policing, customs and excise, airport operations, health, education, social services, childcare and adoption. The States of Alderney retains policy control of aviation to and from the Island.

KEY FACTS

Capital St. Anne

Legislature States of Alderney

Part of the Bailiwick of Guernsey (British crown dependency)

Population estimate 1,903

Source: Wikipedia

Transportation

In common with all small, remote islands, Alderney suffers from limited and expensive transport links to the wider world. These undoubtedly hinder economic development, and are regularly identified as the highest priority issue facing the island.

MARINE

Alderney is located 60 miles across the busy, tidal waters of the English Channel from the UK, and about 20 miles from Guernsey. Tidal streams around the island are particularly fierce with rough seas in even light winds. Apart from a cargo ship, there are only a couple of small (12 passengers or less) ferries offering any regularity of service. Over the years a number of larger ferries have operated from the UK, but all have failed within a year or two owing to poor profitability/operating difficulties.

The States of Alderney are currently issuing a Public Service Obligation to all leading ferry operators, specifying the type of service we need, and seeking bids for subsidy

AIR LINKS

These are constrained due to short runway length (880 metres) permitting only small passenger aircraft, and a general lack of investment over many years. The airport is operated and funded by Guernsey as part of the transferred services, at an alleged loss of £750k p.a. The States of Guernsey

are now committed to reviewing the adequacy of the airport as a key part of an overall economic review of Alderney, but funding issues will still dominate the debate.

Air transport is operated solely by Aurigny, a small airline wholly owned by the States of Guernsey, utilising ageing Trislander aircraft, carrying up to 12 passengers. These are due to be replaced in the autumn by more modern turboprop Dornier 228 aircraft carrying up to 19 passengers. Only two routes from Alderney are operated, to Southampton in the UK, and Guernsey. Passenger numbers have been falling for several years, at least in part owing to very high fares, up to £250 return on Alderney/Southampton and frequency is periodically too limited with highly seasonal trends. Other operators have all withdrawn from Alderney over a number of years.

We are seeking a Service Level Agreement with Aurigny to establish sensible parameters on price and frequency on our two 'lifeline' routes, which do however lose significant amounts of money.

TOURISM

After years of decline in tourism, in the face of steeply rising air fares, a new tourism strategy was established early in 2013, focusing on six key areas: Wildlife, Heritage, Walking, Fishing, Flying and Sailing. The first two of these have been the subject of a specific project, 'Living Islands', designed to maximise the economic benefit to be derived from sustainable tourism. Increasing emphasis is being placed on social media and sophisticated website design and Search Engine Optimisation to attract interest and enquiries. Most tourism emanates from the UK, but we have good contacts with our near neighbours in the Cotentin district of France, particularly on wildlife tourism matters. The lack of sustainable, viable transport links to France hinders development of a potentially significant market.

LIVING ISLANDS

This project is funded jointly by the States of Alderney and the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts in the UK. Alderney is singularly well endowed with iconic wildlife species, including gannets and puffins, and extensive military fortifications of WW2, Victorian and Roman origins. The project has started to excavate and tidy up some of the forts, creating public access and interpretive materials. Much of the work is undertaken by volunteers with professional help from States employees. The project is driven collectively by the Alderney Wildlife Trust, the Alderney Society (custodians of the Island Museum) and the States of Alderney.

Local people and businesses are involved and energised by the project, which has a strong emphasis on sustainability

Tourism is still affected by high air fares, though the specific niche markets now being targeted are probably slightly less sensitive to these costs than the traditional family holidaymakers. There has been a serious decline in hotel beds over recent years, with two major hotels currently empty and unsold. This situation is not aided by high rates of business property taxes set by Guernsey under our fiscal union.

ENERGY

Alderney faces a significant predicament in terms of the production of clean, low cost, secure energy. Even if the precise timing is unsure, the long-term future is known - Alderney Renewable Energy is developing over 3 Gigawatts of tidal power that they are expecting to be on stream from around 2021, with pilot work before then. When fully developed, this represents enough energy to power around

1.8 million homes. Arrangements to supply Alderney are already being made – switchgear to handle supply from tidal power, even in the testing phase, has been installed in the island’s power station. The dilemma is therefore in identifying an energy strategy that has this end point in mind, but that also offers a way out of steeply rising energy prices in the interim.

A joint venture company has been established to develop an interconnector between France, Alderney and Britain. This link, known as FAB Link, will allow energy to be traded between Britain and France and will enable tidal power generated in Alderney's territorial waters to be exported to European markets. Alderney will also be able to receive less expensive energy from Europe via the FAB Link.

Alderney has an aging population with over 38% of islanders in retirement and only 41% of the population in full-time work. Households without members in full time employment are more likely to have greater need for domestic energy as they spend a greater proportion of their time in the home. This can result in significantly higher fuel bills, and means these households are more sensitive to rises in fuel prices.

The majority of householders on the island are owner occupiers (77%) with 15% privately renting and only 5% renting from the state. Therefore improvements to the housing stock are reliant on encouraging home owners and landlords that it is in their interests to improve the energy performance of their own homes. These high energy prices raise the concern about energy poverty in Alderney. We do not have sufficient data to evaluate this risk.

We have established the Alderney Enterprise Group (AEG) to drive change. For Energy, our vision is:

To ensure a prosperous future for residents and businesses of Alderney based on the objectives of safe, affordable, secure and environmentally sustainable energy. Alderney will be 100% energy self-sustained from renewable sources in five years.

Alderney will be the most self-sufficient and innovative renewable energy efficient region in the Bailiwick and British isles.

Alderney could be producing more than 10 per cent of its electricity from waste by this time next year.

A diet of animal slurry, grass trimmings and domestic food waste could be fed to an anaerobic digester to produce a steady 55KW of energy, a study on the proposal has found.

And turning fallow land into energy crops to feed the digester could see up to 80 per cent of the Island’s total energy needs met within the next couple of years.

The findings are part of study examining how the Island’s waste disposal can be improved, and how it could feed into a plan to make Alderney 100 per cent energy self-sufficient within five years.