



Press Release

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Survey reveals true value of Southampton-Alderney air route

The immense value of the Southampton-Alderney air route is revealed in the island's first Passenger Exit Survey, conducted over an entire year to the end of September 2019.

Despite a reduction in the number of scheduled flights on the Southampton-Alderney service compared with the previous year – down 7% from 2,726 to 2,584 – the number of passengers using the route was up by 3%.

The survey also reveals why people visit Alderney – half of the 26,177 air passengers* using both the Southampton and Guernsey routes were visitors to the island, 44% were residents and just 6% were second home owners.

The figures are unveiled as the island's residents and businesses have expressed dismay at Aurigny's reduction in flights scheduled between Southampton and Alderney in 2020 – 7,000 fewer seats between April and September with just two daily rotations during the popular Alderney Week compared with six in 2019.

The survey highlights the importance of Alderney Week and other summer festivals with the number of air passengers doubling from 2,000 in June to 4,000 in August.

Just over half (54%) of people travelling in and out of Alderney by air in the survey period used the Guernsey service, the remainder flying direct from Southampton.

The figures reveal the impact of any reduction in air services. For example, a 17% reduction in scheduled aircraft movements on the Guernsey service in the third quarter of 2019 (July-September), compared with the same period in 2018, adversely affected the number of Guernsey passengers which dropped 14% in that period.

But during the nine-month period ending June 30th 2019 when Guernsey flight numbers were only slightly down, passenger movements increased slightly.

When added together, overall passenger movements on the Guernsey service during the survey year were down 4% over the previous 12-month period. It's thought that the Little Ferry Company service, which operated during the summer, might have impacted air passenger numbers.

Jersey and Guernsey have conducted similar surveys for many years but this is the first time Alderney has been able to paint a true picture of how its air and sea links are used, as well as the business/leisure split and the use of the island's hotels, guesthouses and B&B accommodation.

"We are delighted with the findings generated from the first annual passenger exit survey," said Christian Harris, States of Alderney Chairman of the Committee for Tourism & Economic Development. "The results are immensely valuable in business development terms and certainly provide the hard evidence of how important the Southampton link is for the Island. I would also like to express my thanks to all the Alderney residents who kindly completed the survey during the twelve-month period."

The survey also reveals the value of sea passenger services such as the Little Ferry which, despite many cancellations due to adverse weather conditions, transported 2,169 passengers from Guernsey to Alderney and a similar number from Alderney to Guernsey between the end of May and end of September. Almost 60% of passengers using the service were visitors to the island.

The scope of the survey

The survey was undertaken by the States of Alderney using a small team of researchers at the island's airport and Harbour. A large representative sample of departing residents and visitors were invited to complete a survey card covering a number of questions such as chosen route, purpose of travel, and if a visitor, length of stay and accommodation used on Alderney.

In total, just under 4,000 surveys were completed during the year covering a sample of over 6,000 departing passengers – the total actual passenger numbers were provided by the States of Guernsey for air traffic and the Little Ferry Company for sea passengers. Margin for error when the figures were collated was a mere +/- 1.5% for air passenger movements and +/- 3% for sea passenger movements, making this an authoritative fact-based look at all passenger movements.

Why people travelled

The survey reveals the reasons why residents and visitors travelled on each route, emphasising the importance of Alderney's air links for both the island's economy and the medical needs of its residents. A snapshot from the survey shows that:

- Of the 11,968 passengers using the Southampton route, six out of 10 were visitors.
- Most of these visitors came for leisure purposes, around 1,000 for business.
- Of the 5,600 Alderney resident flights to Guernsey, half were travelling for medical purposes.
- Of the 6,965 visitors arriving in Alderney from Guernsey, just under half began their journey elsewhere.
- Of all 26,177 air passengers during the twelve-month survey period, 6% or 1,630 persons were second home owners plus immediate family. The majority of these numbers used the Southampton service.

**The figures quoted are actual numbers of people travelling and should be doubled for the number of passenger movements. Thus the 26,177 air passengers becomes approximately 52,000 movements.*

Photo Caption – L-R Christian Harris, Chairman of Committee for Tourism & Economic Development, Anne-Isabelle Boulon, Tourism Officer, Anthea Clarke of the Survey Team.

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