

INFORMATION RE GUERNSEY AS AN ISLAND, LIVING AND WORKING HERE

Living in Guernsey

Guernsey offers you a completely different way of life. Be prepared for fantastic scenery, beautiful walks and cycle routes and a wealth of things to do. Islanders are extremely proud of their pretty cobbled town that rises up from the impressive harbour front and cries out to be explored.

Guernsey also boasts stunning views from the cliffs and the cleanliness of both the sea and its award winning beaches is well known. There are also plenty of opportunities to “island hop” to the other Channel Islands as well as travel by sea or air to France. Dinard is only 20mins away by air.

Where is it? Guernsey is situated 30 miles west of the Normandy coast in France and 75 miles south of Weymouth in England and lies in the Gulf of St. Malo.

How big is it? The island is approximately 29 sq miles (63 sq kilometres).

How many people live in Guernsey? According to data held in 2004, the population in Guernsey stands at 60,382.

The Bailiwick of Guernsey is a group of islands within the Channel Islands, located in the English Channel between the south coast of England and north coast of France.

Part of the Duchy of Normandy from before the Norman Conquest of England, the Channel Islands were retained by the kings of England when Normandy was lost in 1204. Guernsey and Jersey have remained as two separate crown dependencies, each with their own laws and customs, based originally in Norman practice.

Effectively independent yet coming under the protective wing of British government, Guernsey is part of the British Isles, but not the United Kingdom.

The Bailiwick of Guernsey includes a number of islands in addition to Guernsey.

Cost of Living

Living costs are broadly similar to the UK although there are variations between specific items. Items such as cars, household appliances and jewellery are generally cheaper than in the UK as are tobacco, spirits and cosmetics. The retail price index increases tend to parallel those in the UK, but at a slightly higher level.

Eating out

Guernsey is often spoken of as being a 'Gourmet' Island. Lots of restaurants feature fresh lobster, crab, oyster, sea bass, sole and brill, as well as Guernsey's own delicacy, the ormer. If you are not a fish eater there are also lots of mouth-watering alternatives. You can literally pick anywhere in the world and find a restaurant offering authentic cuisine. Indian, Mexican, Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Moroccan and of course, classic French restaurants all appear on the local eating out map. There could not be a greater choice.

Leisure Activities

In Guernsey there are things to do all year round. There are opportunities to swim, windsurf, water-ski or even surf from the islands beaches or to go sailing or sea fishing from the marina. There are three golf courses on the Island and a number of soccer, football and athletic clubs. Beau Sejour Leisure Centre has a sports hall with courts available for volleyball, badminton, football, squash, tennis etc as well as other facilities including a fitness studio, a bowling green and a large indoor pool with water flumes. There are also a number of private clubs and Hotels on the Island that offer sporting and fitness facilities and health and beauty suites.

Art and drama

During the summer months plays are performed within the walls of Castle Cornet in St Peter Port. You can bring a picnic and a bottle of wine and listen to Shakespeare or Oscar Wilde performed in idyllic surroundings. The Island has a Choral Society and an Amateur Dramatic and Operatic Club as well as other societies and clubs, representing a wide range of interests and activities. The St James Concert and Assembly Hall and Beau Sejour Centre also undertake to provide a programme of cultural events each year.

Nightlife

Many local bands entertain diners in bars and bistros around the island and there are several nightclubs.

Language

With nearly a whole generation being evacuated to England prior to the German Occupation of Guernsey (approximately 21,000 people in total) the local dialect, Guernsey Patois (or Guernesiais) almost died out. Today, few islanders speak Patois.

Currency

Guernsey is in the Sterling Area and Bank of England notes and UK coins circulate within the Island. The States of Guernsey also issue their own notes and coins.

Newspapers

UK national newspapers are available daily. There is also a local daily paper – the Guernsey Press and a weekly paper – the Guernsey Globe.

Radio and TV

UK national radio and television stations are broadcast to Guernsey. There is a local ITV contractor – Channel Television – and two local radio stations – BBC Radio Guernsey and Island FM, a commercial station.

Working in Guernsey

Work permits

Immigration is governed by the immigration Act 1971 as extended to the Bailiwick of Guernsey by the immigration (Guernsey) order 1993 and is administered by the Home Department, Immigration and Nationality Division.

Immigration status falls into three categories:

1. British nationals – free movement and rights
2. European Union National – free movement and rights

Please note that nationals from Bulgaria and Romania, although nationals of member states of the EEA, will still require a work permit before commencing employment. This will remain a requirement throughout the period beginning on the 1st of January 2007 and ending on 31st of December 2011 (the accession period). Permits will be issued only for eligible employment that falls within the Home Department Work permit Policy.

3. Non-European National - need permission to work.

Eligible Employment

Eligible employment is related to professionally qualified personnel in full-time employment, whose qualifications are recognised by the Health and Social Services department, who are registered with the appropriate professional body in the United Kingdom.

In the cases of nurses, this must be with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). A 6 month period for adaptation and competence assessment prior to registration with the NMC is permitted.

Unqualified Personnel

Immigration will **not** issue work permits for unqualified personnel, only nurses registered with the NMC.

Qualified Personnel

The immigration department issue work permits to qualified staff up to a maximum of 4 years from date of entry into the UK, after which the employee must leave the island.

Qualified personnel can apply for a work permit to a maximum of 4 years from the date of entry into the UK, after which the employee must leave the island.

If an employee starts their employment in the UK then comes to Guernsey, time spent in the UK will be taken into account and the employee can only remain in Guernsey for the remaining years up to the maximum of 4 years. UK work permits are not valid in Guernsey and vice versa.

When an employee leaves after 4 years service, they can only reapply to return to the island after a 12 months break in residence outside the UK.

Right to work document

The right to work law requires everyone, including self employed persons, who starts or changes employment in Guernsey to hold a “right to work document” issued by the housing department indicating they are lawfully housed.

What type of right to work documents are there?

A Status Declaration – is issued to a person who is a qualified resident as defined in the Housing Control Law. These are permanent documents that cannot be revoked.

Employment Related Housing Licences – are for both ‘essential’ employees and those employed under short term licences. This type of licence specifies the dwelling that can be occupied; the employment for which it is valid; and has an expiry date.

A Declaration of Lawful Residence – is for people who are not themselves residentially qualified but who are lawfully housed, for example as spouses or members of the household of qualified residents or licence holders. Health and Social Services will obtain the necessary documentation for nurses resident in the health and Social Services accommodation.

A Temporary Exemption Certificate – may be issued, for example, to people who have applied for one of the other documents, in cases where there may be a delay in issuing that document. A Temporary Exemption Certificate has an expiry date and can be subject to conditions.

Housing and Accommodation

Employment related licences

As Guernsey is such a small island and is considered to be an attractive place to live there are strict controls on the occupation of housing. These controls are in place in order to provide sufficient houses for locally qualified residents (as set out in the law). There are two sectors of housing in Guernsey, which are known as the '**Local Market**' controlled dwellings and the '**Open Market**' dwellings inscribed in the housing register.

'Local Markets'- Local Market housing is reserved for people with local residential status and certain types of licence holders.

'Open Market'- is for non-licence holders. There is no time limit on occupation on such a dwelling and it carries an automatic right to work. However, this occupation does not count towards residential qualifications and the properties are at the more expensive end of the market.

The right to occupy all dwellings on Guernsey, apart from those inscribed in Part A of the "Open Market housing register, is strictly controlled. The occupants either need to be qualified residents or in possession of a housing licence.

Housing licences issued in connection with employment fall into three main categories:

Short term licences

These licences are designed to recognise a manpower shortage and are generally issued for periods of up to 9 months, but may be for up to 3 years for supervisory posts. They do not allow the licence holder to accommodate dependants and accommodation that can be occupied is usually restricted to board and lodgings or '**en famille**' accommodation.

Employment-related licences of less than 15 years duration

Employment-related licences are often referred to as 'essential' licences because the post for which they are granted must be deemed to be 'essential' to the community. They are issued for specific posts of employment, to a named dwelling and with an end date.

The holder of this type of licence is eligible to either rent or buy property on the '**local market**'. The housing department will assign the licence holder a '**TRP**' which determines the size of the property the licence holder will be able to occupy. The '**TRP**' is set based on the remuneration package of the licence holder and the higher the package the larger the property that will be available to the licence holder.

In addition to signing a '**TRP**' the licence holder will be given the option to occupy a smaller unit of accommodation based on the number of rooms it has. Typically this would enable the licence holder to occupy a flat with one bedroom regardless of the '**TRP**' of the property. The exact accommodation options that would be available to you can only be set once your remuneration package has been agreed.

Licence holders can accommodate **'direct family members'** who must live **'en famille'** with the licence holder. If they wish, the family member can take up employment on the island for as long as the licence holder is legally resident and the family member obtains a Declaration of Lawful Residence.

However, a partner or a common law spouse is not covered by the householder's licence and will require a separate licence. These licences are issued where the Department is satisfied that the couple are genuine companions.

Fifteen year licences

For some posts where long-term continuity is required the states may feel that granting a fifteen year licence is justified. Fifteen year housing licence owners can rent or buy property on the local market with a **'TRP'**, which determines the size of the property the licence holder will be able to occupy.

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However, a partner or a common law spouse is not covered by the householder's licence and will require a separate licence. These licences are issued where the Department is satisfied that the couple are genuine companions.

After fifteen years employment in the post for which the licence was granted, the licence holder will stand to gain **'local residential status'** their spouse and children will also stand to gain **'local residential status'** at that time, but this will depend on their circumstances during the period of the licence.

Glossary of Terms

'Local Residential Status'- means that a person is able to live and work in Guernsey with no housing restrictions or controls.

'En Famille'- this term is used when the licence holder occupies a room in the house of either a locally qualified resident or another housing licence holder who has a housing licence for 5 years or longer.

'Direct Family Member'- is restricted to spouse or child (including adopted or step child) father, mother (and father and mother in-law) and grandchild.

'TRP'- as at January 2008 properties in Guernsey will have a **'TRP'**, attached to them, based on the unit value of the property. The unit value is determined by the size of the plan view, with a multiplier being applied for each storey.

Health and Social Services Department has an agreement with the Housing Department that all full-time nurses may be issued with a 5 year housing licence.

Income Tax

The standard rate of income tax is 20p in the £. No death duties or turnover taxes are payable in Guernsey and there is no surtax. Mortgage relief in Guernsey is more favourable than in the UK.

Pension Scheme

Membership is compulsory for all full-time employees on a permanent contract, with contributions of 6.5% deducted from your salary. Part-time employees and employees on short fixed term contracts have the option on whether they wish to contribute to the pension scheme. Previous pensionable service maybe transferred to the States of Guernsey Public Servants' pension scheme pension.

On leaving employment with the States of Guernsey you will have the following options:

- a. A refund of the pension contributions, which consists of the employee's contributions plus 3% compound interest per annum less 10% tax.
- b. Accrued pensions rights transferred to your new employer's pension scheme.
- c. Accrued pension rights transferred to an approved personal pension plan.
- d. Accrued pension rights preserved (frozen) in the States Pension Scheme.

Education

The provision of education in Guernsey is broadly similar to the UK. Pupils must legally attend school between the ages of 5 and 15. The school leaving age will soon be raised to 16 and from the school year 2008/2009 all pupils will have to complete their year 11 studies before being allowed to leave school. The leaving date for year 11 students from 2008/2009 is still to be fixed.

The education department has responsibility for 10 primary schools, 3 infant schools, 2 junior schools, 4 secondary schools and a co-educational grammar school. In the private sector, the ladies college, Blanchelande Girls College and Elizabeth College (boys) take fee payers, with some scholarship places awarded at the age of 11.

Creche Facilities

There are numerous child care facilities around the island. Details of these can be accessed via the Children's Services website www.scuf.gg.

Early Years

There is no standard pre-school provision run by the Education Department although there are a number of privately run pre-schools and nurseries throughout the island. For further information please contact Children's Services website www.scuf.gg.

Primary Schools

Free primary education for 5 to 11 year olds is provided in infant, junior and primary schools. Children are usually admitted to the primary or infant school in their catchment area from the school year in which they reach the age of 5. Reception classes in all the local primary and infant schools 'are given extra teaching support and pupils build up their attendance from a few mornings a week, initially, to the full school day during their first term. There are also some private fee-paying schools from primary aged pupils.

Children from Roman Catholic families may attend one of two Roman Catholic primary schools if they choose.

Pupils undergo an election process (the 11+) in the final year of primary education to decide on their secondary phase place. Pupils attending the two Roman Catholic primary schools also sit the 11+ to decide on their secondary phase place (there is no Roman Catholic secondary school under the control of the Education Department).

The majority of children will be awarded places at the secondary school which serves their catchment area. Around a quarter of all children who are assessed as being of high academic ability and aptitude will be considered for a place at either the Grammar school and Sixth Form Centre, or as special place holders, one of the three colleges (Ladies' College, Blanchelande Girls' College or Elizabeth College).

Post 16 Education

Around three quarters of young people in the Bailiwick continue into post-16 education with the rest leaving school to start work or continue their training through a work-based scheme such as an apprenticeship.

There are now an increasing number of choices and opportunities available to young people once they have completed year 11 if they decide to leave school or continue with their education. Pupils can go on to study A and AS levels, vocational qualifications, apprenticeships, and other full-time courses at either the Sixth Form Centre at the Grammar School or the college of further education if they fulfill the entry requirements. The grant-maintained colleges also offer post-16 study opportunities.

The Careers Service and careers teachers in schools can help young people make the right decisions about what to do and where to go. Visit the careers service website www.careers.gg to access all the information you need or make contact on (01481) 733044 or email careers@education.gov.gg

Further Education

Further education is provided at the College of Further Education where full-time and day release courses and a wide variety of vocational and recreational evening classes are available. The college also offers degree courses in construction management, architectural technology and financial services and operates the Guernsey Business School offering a range of courses to local industry.

The Performing Arts Centre offers students the opportunity to study full-time vocational performing arts courses for the first time on the island. The centre also offers part-time or short courses. These courses

include all elements of performing arts from acting, dancing and singing to stage-management, lighting, sound and set design as well as performing arts business, booking systems and the legal aspects of performance.

Special Needs Education

For those pupils whose educational needs cannot be met in mainstream schools the Education Department maintains two special schools: one for primary age pupils and one for secondary age pupils. Both of these schools cater for pupils with moderate learning difficulties with additional needs, severe learning difficulties and complex needs.

Primary aged pupils attend the newly built primary school (Le Rondin School and Centre) which incorporates the Child Development Clinic, operated by the Health and Social Services Department and is the base for occupational and physiotherapy services and the Education Support Services.

Pupils of secondary school age with special educational needs currently attend Oakvale School and the College of Further Education provides post-16 opportunities, but will transfer to a new purpose built secondary special school (Le Murier School) which is due for completion toward the end of 2008.

A centre for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties currently operates from Granville House in Mount Durand and will move into the vacated Oakvale premises once Le Murier opens and some conversion work has taken place.