



ALDERNEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Alderney Channel Islands
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THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2026 By Andrew Eggleston

Dear Member

May 2026

I trust that most of you will be able to join us for our AGM on Wednesday 3rd June at 6.00 at the Georgian followed by drinks and chats in the garden.

This report is really a brief synopsis as to what has been achieved by your Council during the year and what we are currently working on. ***But to start with, how do we work?***

I would like to stress again that our constitution states there to be six Council Members – this puts a lot of work on very few people. We do negotiate around this by co-opting which include Holly Chandler our hospitality lead, Ilona Soane-Sands who works her magic continually for us with the plethora of emails that are sent to our members – whether they are from our States or from Chamber.

Communication is so important. This is one of our prime roles on the island – to make everyone aware of what is happening whether it is road closures, inbound cruise liners, GST or the infamous Leasehold problem that seems to rattle around year after year. This news is put directly on to our Chamber website and several relevant media platforms.

I would like to tell you of three new co-opted members who are joining us – Paul McCormick who will act as a direct liaison between ourselves and the Guernsey Chamber. Paul's parents lived in Alderney (many will remember his father MickMack behind the Aurigny desk for many years). Paul enjoys a senior role with Gower in Guernsey and visits Alderney clients on a regular basis.

Chris MacGregor, the lead at Alderney Electricity also joins us for his expertise and forward thinking ideas in renewables and the future of Alderney Electricity within the island itself. And we also welcome Saul Woodruff who co-ordinates a remarkably non-stop schedule including running the builders merchants at the harbour with his wife Petra, a member of the Lifeboat crew and building his family home.

Without our six Council members and our co-opted, we would be a far poorer Chamber. Our meetings are normally held at 5.00 after our days work. So, a serious thank you for all who take the time to put something back into the island.

Apologies for the time this has taken to try to explain how we work. But it is important and should not be taken as a fait accompli body. It is all on a voluntary basis and takes several hours every week for some of us.

Some of the Major Issues we are currently involved with:-

Leasehold Properties - This stems from our wish for younger people to be able to purchase property and therefore commit to the island as opposed to moving from pillar to post from one let to another. Leasehold properties are predominantly flats and are at the more affordable lower end of our property market. It is not as though banks don't want to lend, it is because banks are not legally able to lend against leasehold as they cannot take a first charge. Leaseholds are regarded as Personalty and not Realty – and that is where our problem lies. We brought this problem to the States some years ago. We are pleased that our current States are being far more pro-active on the issue. Once solved, it will open the door for younger people to buy and establish themselves here.

GST - Our last two surveys on this worrying issue demonstrated quite categorically that the Alderney business community is against the introduction of GST. Guernsey, however, seems to be pushing ahead down the path of GST with backing from the Guernsey Chamber. We understand that Guernsey is debating this issue next month, but we still remain unaware as to where our Alderney States Members stand on this issue. Together or split and, if so, in which direction.

Duty Free - This is another thorn that seemingly cannot be surmounted. Barnstormers has been ready to operate this service for a long time. The stumbling block is the incredibly heavy security bond required in case of theft at the bonded and secure store. Again, we are trying to assist but keep coming across blocks. This is another problem we need to dismantle for the benefit of tourism.

Land Use Plan - When implemented, it was decreed that it be reviewed every five years. This has not happened. It has been looked upon as a gold plated device to break a small ordinary acorn – and at very considerable cost. Just under £500,000 to formulate at the outset and now a further £400,000 for its first very late review – almost £1million in these serious fiscal times.

There is no doubt that a form of a Land Use Plan is advantageous but as people have been telling me in our office, it is a comprehensive piece of work that would be well suited to a city the size of Bristol with its population of 500,000 – not the 2,200 of us within the three and half square miles of Alderney.

To complete this subject, the Land Use Plan must work as an economic enabler not a disabler. Let's not tie ourselves up in unnecessary and expensive bureaucracy.

Runway - I have almost resisted the urge to bring this to the fore yet again. We simply now need to know a date for the starting of works and an estimate for the length of time it should take. Some pain is obviously going to be felt while the works are in progress but please look upon this as a short term blip as, for decades to come, we shall have the runway that is absolutely essential to the economy of the island. Contingencies will be put in place. They are being discussed as I write this.

A Brief Selection of Our Meetings within the Year

- Breakfast meeting with GFSC to discuss possible extra impact on Alderney if GST is implemented
- Lunch meeting with Guernsey's Chief Minister Lindsay de Saumarez to discuss, among other topics, the detrimental effect on Alderney's younger people by banks not being able to lend against leasehold properties (i.e. flats)

- A subgroup of Council has met to further the Leasehold issue under the lead of Brendan Noone
- Several meetings with James Robinson (Head of Ops) about a myriad of issues
- Our more recent 65th birthday party was a great success offering a networking evening for about 50 Chamber Members
- Several meetings with Stuart Clarke, Chair of Economic Development, about air and sea transport, the harbour, a proposed drone business from France. Chamber has been impressed at the pro-active approach from EDC
- An open meeting with representatives of Guernsey's Civil Service in the Anne French Room to discuss what effect GST could have on all of us
- A waste management meeting with Tara-Jane Sutcliffe of Bannerman Partners who could create more efficient ways for Alderney's recycling and waste
- An open meeting led by former Guernsey Deputy Chris Brock on closer relation between Guernsey and Jersey – including an interconnecting undersea vehicular tunnel
- We have also met with Gavin St Pier (former member of Guernsey's Policy & Resource Committee) extolling the virtues of GST
- We also hold full Council Meetings each month
- The more recent Economic Survey produced a plethora of ideas from which we have had meetings with EDC. We have concluded that as opposed to initially discussing the many individual ideas put forward, the two priorities to deal with in order to attract off-island interest are connectivity and housing

A few points in conclusion –

- We are concerned at the abandonment of this year's Literary Festival – an absolute necessity for the island along several economic paths, and something that is so well attended and looked forward to as is Guernsey's annual Literary Festival.
- We are hoping for a resurgence in the annual Fly-in which should revert to the numbers in recent years assuming we have our own Avgas and Jet fuel. This again is so important to our economy.
- Following the tragic death on the access up to Fort Clonque a couple of years ago, the Landmark Trust has now agreed to place an adequate signal strength on site where mobiles will now work. Thanks to Council Member Vanessa Main for her work in furthering this.

As always, thank you for your support throughout the year.

If any Member wishes to help in any way, please contact any on Council – info@alderneychamber.com

Chamber's Council –

Andrew Eggleston, *President*,
 Vanessa Main, *Vice-President*
 Jeannie Cameron
 Nicky Burland
 Brendan Noone
 Agnes Perry

Rowie Gaydon – *Secretary*
 Tony Haywood – *Treasurer*

Co-Opted Members -

Ilona Soane-Sands
 Holly Chandler
 Paul McCormick
 Chris MacGregor