



The
Ladies' College
Guernsey

A General Guide to Living and Working in Guernsey For New Candidates

The information contained in this brief guide is intended to help with just a few of the questions you might have. Mostly, details have been taken from the States of Guernsey website and whilst every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, the Ladies' College cannot accept responsibility for any errors, law changes or omissions.

Further and more detailed information can be found by logging on to:-

www.gov.gg

Please go to our website at www.ladiescollege.com for full details of the school.

Introduction to Guernsey

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

How big is it? The island has an area of approximately 24 square miles (63 square km) and comprises ten parishes each with its own unique character.

How many people live in Guernsey? According to the last Census held in 2001, the population in Guernsey stands at around 60,000.

What can Guernsey offer me? 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 the pretty cobbled town of St. Peter Port that rises up from the impressive harbour front. Crime is low and people are friendly. Guernsey also boasts stunning views from the cliffs and the cleanliness of both the sea and its award winning beaches is well known. Outdoor living is an important part of being in Guernsey. There is so much from which to choose, both on and off the water. When you arrive in Guernsey you will find yourself confronted by many different restaurants ranging from relaxed continental bistro style dining to sophisticated menus at top class venues. Freshly caught fish and shellfish is among the best in the world. There are plenty of opportunities to 'island hop' to the other Channel Islands as well as travel by sea or air to France.



The Bailiwick of Guernsey



Guernsey and its six sister islands (Alderney, Sark, Herm, Brecqhou, Jethou and Lihou) are known as the Bailiwick.

Alderney is the most northerly and closest of the islands to England. It boasts excellent coastal walks, a quaint town, a nine-hole golf course, impressive coastal fortifications and some of the best fishing opportunities you could wish for.

Sark lies nearly 8 miles east of Guernsey. It has numerous coves – some which you have to climb down to reach. It is most famous for its enchanting and relaxed pace of life with no cars. Transport is by bicycle, horse & carriage or simply on foot. Sark enables you to step back in time – a visit here is like no other.

Herm is a small island paradise lying just off Guernsey. There is a regular ferry service taking just 20 minutes. Herm is a popular haven for Guernsey locals who adore it and visit for days or weekends in the summer. Most visit Belvoir Bay or Shell Beach, famous for the tiny shells washed up by the Gulf Stream.

Some Guernsey History

Why is Guernsey a British Crown dependency, rather than French?

It all began in 933 AD when the Channel Islands became part of the Norman Realm. In 1066, the Duke of Normandy landed his army in Sussex and became William I of England. The Channel Islands, however, remained part of the Duchy of Normandy and continued to be governed as such.

When Normandy was lost in 1204 the Channel Islands remained loyal to the King of England as the King promised to rule the islands as though he was the Duke of Normandy (i.e. observing the Duchy's laws, customs and liberties). This arrangement has been confirmed in charters of successive sovereigns that have secured for the islands their own judiciaries and freedom from the process of the English Courts. Indeed the Islands are independent in all matters with the exception of international representation and defence for which the United Kingdom is responsible.

The islands were the focal point of strife between England and France for many years due to their allegiance to England. At times, the French raided the islands and gained temporary footholds and, as a consequence, there are castles and fortresses around Guernsey that were originally built as a protection against invaders.

More recently, Guernsey and the other Channel Islands were the only part of the British Isles to be occupied by the German forces during WWII. The Liberation at the end of the war is celebrated annually on 9th May in our own special public holiday.

Guernsey's Constitution

The Lieutenant Governor is the Queen's personal representative and official channel of communication between the Crown and the UK Government and Bailiwick. The other key offices held under the Crown are those of the Bailiff and Deputy Bailiff, who preside over the States of Deliberation and the Royal Court, and HM Procurer (Attorney General) and HM Comptroller (Solicitor General), who are the legal advisers to the Crown and the States.

The Bailiwick is not represented in the UK Parliament. Acts of Parliament do not apply in the Bailiwick unless extended by Order in Council. The UK Government is responsible for the Bailiwick's international representation. Special terms were negotiated for the Channel Islands on the UK's accession to the EEC. These are contained in Protocol 3 to the Treaty of Accession and the effect is that the Bailiwick is within the Common Customs Area and the Common External Tariff (i.e. it enjoys access to EEC countries of physical exports without tariff barriers). Other Community rules do not apply to the Bailiwick.

Guernsey's Government

Guernsey's parliament is called 'The States of Deliberation' and is democratically elected. There are no political parties in Guernsey.

The States of Deliberation have the power to raise taxation, to determine expenditure and to pass legislation.

The functions of Government are carried out by ten Departments led by a Minister who, like the four ordinary members of the Department, is elected by the States. The Policy Council comprises a Chief Minister and ten Ministers. The Deputy Chief Minister is also elected by the States from among the Ministers on the Policy Council.

Departments

Treasury and Resources Department

Commerce and Employment

Culture and Leisure

Education

Environment

Health and Social Services

Home

Housing

Public Services

Social Security

Each Department comprises a Minister and four States members, elected by the States. Each Department may appoint up to two non-States members who do not have a vote. Each Department elects a Deputy Minister from amongst the four States members.

All Ministers must be members of the States of Deliberation.

Taxation in Guernsey

Guernsey has had a personal income tax rate of 20% for about 40 years. There are no higher rates. The levels of income tax and other taxes are designed to ensure that sufficient funds are available to cover forecast expenditure. Tax on rateable value and parish rates are charged but are low in comparison with similar charges in the UK. Excise duties are charged on tobacco, beer, wines and spirits and petroleum products. These are also generally lower than the UK.

There is no VAT or GST in Guernsey. There are no capital taxes in Guernsey. There is no council tax in Guernsey.

General information about living in Guernsey



What is the 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.

How about eating out? Guernsey is often spoken of as being a 'Gourmet' Island. Many restaurants feature locally caught seafood including Guernsey's own delicacy, the ormer (related to the abalone). If you are not a fish eater there are also lots of mouth-watering alternatives. Indian, Mexican, Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Moroccan and of course, classic French restaurants all appear on the local eating out menu.

Are there good 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 sports clubs offering everything from softball to rugby, athletics to fencing, football to cycling and dozens more activities. 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. There are also a number of private clubs and Hotels on the Island that offer sporting and fitness facilities and health and beauty suites.

Are there opportunities for the Arts, Music & 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, Symphony Orchestra, an Amateur Dramatic & 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. There are several excellent museums.

What's the nightlife like? Many local bands entertain diners in pubs, bars and bistros around the island and there are a couple of nightclubs open 'til the early hours.

Is there a local 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 but attempts are being made to revive it in some schools.

What currency is used? 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. Pound notes are still widely circulated and preferred here!

Can I get a newspaper? UK national newspapers are flown in daily, provided there is no fog at the airport! There is also a local daily paper, the Guernsey Press, read by an estimated 87% of the population.

What radio and TV channels are available? UK national radio and television stations are broadcast to Guernsey and the usual licence fee is payable. There is a local ITV contractor – Channel Television – and two local radio stations – BBC Radio Guernsey and Island FM, a commercial station. Satellite stations are available, on subscription, as in the UK.

Housing in Guernsey

As Guernsey is such a small and attractive place to live there are strict controls on the occupation of housing. These are in place in order to provide sufficient houses for locally qualified residents (as set out in the Law). Houses are categorised into two distinct sectors.

Local Market. Approximately 90% of the properties in Guernsey are “local market”. They can only be occupied by residentially qualified persons or by non-local persons who have been granted a licence by the Housing Department.

Open Market. Occupation of “open market” private houses is not controlled. There are approximately 1,600 open market properties and these are generally rather more expensive.

Persons who are not locally qualified residents need a housing licence to occupy any dwelling in Guernsey unless it is on the open market register. It is an offence for any person to occupy a controlled dwelling without a housing licence.

The Housing Department may grant housing licenses to persons entering Guernsey to fill positions deemed essential to the community. An essential licence holder may accommodate their spouse/partner and children as members of their household. Essential licences are sought by the employer. They are tied to a specific post and are issued in respect of a specific dwelling. It is the States of Guernsey’s policy that such licences are for a fixed period, usually five years and are rarely renewed or extended.

Licence holders have a TRP (similar to ratable value) value imposed on them and this is directly linked to the salary scale offered for the post. Broadly speaking, a higher salary will be linked to a higher TRP graded property which will be more costly.

For some very senior posts where long-term continuity is required, the department may grant a fifteen year licence. Holders of fifteen year licences tied to employment, their spouses and children stand to gain local residential qualifications once that period is completed. At the Ladies’ College some fifteen year licences are granted for senior positions.

Relocation Expenses

Removal expenses of up to £2,000 for household furniture and effects plus one motor vehicle will be met by Ladies’ College, provided that in the event of the teacher leaving the service of the college within two years of taking up the appointment, he or she will refund to the college a proportion of the initial payment relative to the number of months remaining in the two years. Estimates from two reputable removal firms must be obtained. Payment will normally be paid direct to the chosen firm.

Healthcare in Guernsey

The Health and Social Service Department operates the island's hospitals, community health services and social care services. These include acute services, elderly care services, a public health department, services for people with learning disability, mental health services and children services.

Guernsey healthcare is funded differently from the UK National Health Service. There are three primary care groups in the community and a medical specialist group that provides second level care by consultants. There are no junior doctors employed by the group.

Primary care doctors are in private practice and patients are required to pay for their visits to the surgery, for house calls and care provided in the A & E Department at the hospital. Patients must also pay for dental treatment, chiropody, physiotherapy and opticians. A number of Provident Associations and Friendly Societies run local private insurance schemes, as well as the large healthcare insurance providers, to assist with these charges.

If a patient is referred for secondary care provided by the Medical Specialist Group, all care and in-patients facilities are free. This includes radiology, pathology, physiotherapy and other services. This second level care is funded by a compulsory health care insurance payable by the working population and another level of insurance covers long term care. Patients may still choose to be treated privately and there is a private ward in the main hospital.

Long-stay elderly care is mainly provided by private nursing and residential homes and those people requiring places are assessed on need and a level of funding is provided by the Social Security Department.

Education in Guernsey

The Education Department is responsible for the administration of education in the Bailiwick of Guernsey. Compulsory schooling is from 5 to 16 years. Free primary education for children of 5 to 11 years is provided with children attending the designated school within their catchment area. There are also several fee paying schools for primary school aged children.

In the final year of primary education there is a secondary education selection test and those children who, as a result of this, are assessed as being suited to a more practical and less academic type of education, are placed at one of the high schools depending on their catchment area. These schools provide a comprehensive range of GSCE, NVQ and GNVQ courses. Many pupils who achieve good grades progress from these schools to the 6th Form Centre at the Grammar School or to further studies at the College of Further Education.

Those children who are assessed as being suited to a mainly academic curriculum are offered places at either the Grammar School or at one of the independent Colleges.

The Ladies' College, Elizabeth College (boys) and Blanchelande College (a Roman Catholic School) take fee paying pupils. Parents who wish their children to attend the above-mentioned schools can opt to pay the school fees.

The majority of pupils with special educational needs attend their local mainstream school. For those whose needs cannot be met in this way, the Education Department maintains special schools. In addition to the support offered in the mainstream schools and in the special schools, support is also offered to pupils, parents and schools in the form of a variety of different services supplied by the Health and Social Services Department and the Education Department.

Further education is provided at the College of Further Education. The college has full time NVQ, GNVQ and AVCE courses in an array of subjects including catering, leisure and tourism, art and design, IT and trades such as plumbing and carpentry. The College also offers day release courses and a number of evening courses. There are no universities in Guernsey so students wishing to take a degree course leave the island to further their studies.



Social Security in Guernsey

Social Insurance. A person who has attained school leaving ages is liable for the payment of insurance contributions under the Guernsey social insurance scheme. The contributions relate to social benefits, health benefits and long term care insurance. A person pays contributions as an employed, self-employed or non-employed person. Liability for social insurance contributions currently ceases at age 65, but liability for health & long term care insurance contributions continues. Contributions for a person over 65, and a non-employed person under 65, are income related but subject to an upper limit.

Social Insurance Benefits. The payment of contributions provides for a range of social insurance benefits including old age pensions, sickness benefit, invalidity benefit, death grant etc. Contributions paid under the UK social insurance scheme and some other countries, may be taken into account to assist with entitlement to some of these benefits.

Health Benefits. Benefits available to residents who live in Guernsey and are liable to pay contributions are pharmaceutical benefit which provides prescription drugs and a limited range of medical appliances for a nominal prescription charge, health benefit grant which is a fixed rate grant towards the cost of consultations with GP's and practice nurses. Specialist medical benefit is the provision, free of charge to the patient, of specialist medical care supplied under contracts that the States have with the medical specialist group practices.

Long-term Care Insurance. This scheme helps residents meet the costs of residential and nursing home fees. You must have lived in Guernsey or Alderney for at least 5 years, including 1 year immediately prior to claiming benefit to be considered.

Family Allowance. An allowance is payable for every qualifying child of a family resident in Guernsey. It must be claimed within 3 months of taking up residence or of the child's birth. All children under school-leaving age qualify, as do any who are on a full-time recognised educational course until the 1st

August following their 19th birthday. A contribution credit is awarded to protect your old age pension entitlement if you are not otherwise liable to pay contributions. Family allowance is not taxable, but there is no income tax allowance for dependent children.

Families entering the island from the United Kingdom or Jersey are normally entitled to the allowance on taking up residence. Agreements also exist with other countries, but in the absence of any such provisions a qualifying period of residence of up to 12 months may have to be served before the allowance is payable.

States of Guernsey Public Sector Pension Scheme

Membership is compulsory for all full-time staff employed by the College. Part-time staff may also elect to join if they wish. Staff who have previous pensionable service in another similar scheme in the British Isles can transfer to the Guernsey one. All staff participating in the scheme pay in 6.5% of their salary. Full details are available on request.

Some Useful Websites

www.lovellsproperty.com

www.swoffers.co.uk

www.thisisguernsey.com

www.visitguernsey.com

www.guernsey-airport.gov.gg

www.bbc.co.uk/guernsey

www.heritageguernsey.com

www.guernseysports.com