



States of
Alderney

COVID-19 Newsletter

Safe port of call

Harbour Master John Taylor reports great success from the free moorings offer for Bailiwick visitors. "We have had amazing feedback from vessel owners – many visiting for the first time – and we are confident that this will benefit the local economy for years to come."



I'll be back!

Gavin St Pier, President of Guernsey's Policy & Resources Committee, told this newsletter: "Having visited the island so many times over the years but always short visits on business, we loved the opportunity to enjoy a relaxing weekend taking in everything Alderney has to offer. We will be back!"

Cure or Vaccine?

Dr Sally reports: "We are going to have to learn to live with the threat of Covid-19 – it's not going away. Of course we hope for a cure or a vaccine but neither are imminently available. But there are many things we can do to improve our health and as a result reduce risk."

See her article on how to look after your health on pages 4-5.



Guernsey's top politician Gavin St Pier enjoyed a visit to Alderney recently. He is pictured at the Nunnery Heritage Site with his wife Jane and Visit Alderney hosts Helene Turner and Anne-Isabelle Boulon.

Why we are cautiously lifting travel restrictions

From September 3, some visitors from outside the Bailiwick arriving in Alderney can choose to have a SARS-Cov-2 test after seven days of self-isolation followed by release to 'passive follow-up' on receipt of negative result.

This means the island will be using the same protocols introduced by Guernsey on August 17, made possible by intense preparation by medical professionals.

"A lot of people didn't realise the logistics and practicalities involved in the seven-day testing system and we have limited resources here in Alderney," said Dr Sally Simmons, Island Medical Centre Clinical Director.

"But we have been working closely with Dr (Nicola) Brink's team and we are confident that we can achieve everything required to make this work properly and safely for the island. Health & Social Care have been very supportive in

helping us get to the current position.

"We are identifying and training staff and volunteers for swab testing. All will have to use the correct PPE and we will work with the Border Agency to liaise over contact details and maintain welfare checks."

All test specimens will be transported to Guernsey for lab analysis with results returned within 24-48 hours, although transport is weather-dependent.

President William Tate told QuayFM listeners the new measures will boost the island's economy and in part help those who have experienced mental health issues, especially people separated from their families. "We cannot remain in a state of suspended animation forever," he said.

Continued on page 6

The Alderney Spirit is Amazing!

Going into lockdown was easy but coming out is difficult. James Dent admits this is a perverse perspective.

Going into lock-down was easy. Well, it was when compared to the difficulties associated with coming out.

Take, for example, the archetypal 'Mr and Mrs Bloggs' who diligently complied with all the self-isolation rules. They thought some were crazy, maybe a little over the top, but the rules were there to protect us, weren't they? He is of course now downing his pints in the Georgian and she is just happy to be able to hug her granddaughter.

We all pulled together. Very few of us were going to be the one that let the side down. And the virus stayed away. The Alderney spirit was amazing.

So when I speak of difficulties, I am speaking from the specific perspective of my role on the Civil Contingencies Authority. We have had the delicate task of deciding how fast we move out of lockdown and, in particular, how fast we open our borders – those last vestiges of lockdown. Do we, in fact, move at all? Or do we just curl up, blond hedgehog style, and let fate take some inevitable yet 'out of my hands' course?

I get it from all sides.

I get it from those who enjoyed lockdown (yes, there were quite a few of those). They would have had it

continue indefinitely – they loved the peace and tranquillity. I get it from those who are nervous of any easing of the rules – they are understandably frightened. They may be old and frail or they may be just bamboozled by the myriad scare stories. And I get it from those who see another type of grim reaper coming – the economic doom-laden reaper who lurks conspiratorially behind every recommendation made by every Covid advisory cell and Covid operational committee. They would have us, 'bulldog spirit' to the fore, just 'carry on – coronavirus and committee rules be damned'.

So, let's look back over the last six months. We have lived through an extraordinary period. And the information we have before us and which is helping us make decisions is constantly growing and changing.

We thought, initially, we could kill the virus, eliminate it – outrun it, if you like. Four months ago that seemed to be the science – hadn't China done it already? Now we are not so sure. More and more scientists – scientists who are studying the epidemiology – are saying it is not going away. And vaccinations, if they come, may not be 100% effective. And so we are going to have to live with it. And when the 'facts' change, don't we also have to change?



Alderney will be opening up its borders (gradually, of course, at first). We are going to have to live with the new normal – but we are still going to have to protect ourselves.

But haven't we started well? We have made a huge success out of 'staycations'. We have made new friends. We, much more than many others, have shown that we are disciplined, community-spirited and will adapt. The virus will not stay away forever.

Border Agency

Guernsey Border Agency have everything covered by meeting all arriving passengers into the Bailiwick, including commercial services and private flights and vessels, to ensure passengers are fully aware of their obligation to self-isolate.

In Alderney, Customs Officers Jill Moore and Mark Williams carry out these duties and also conduct home visits to people isolating to ensure they are well and complying with their self-isolation.

They are also representatives on Alderney's Operations Group.

ALDERNEY VIEWPOINTS

Pandemic brings the islands together



The Staycation Club initiative has proved highly successful for Alderney this summer, and we have managed to salvage a relatively good tourist season when just a few months ago we thought we'd likely have nothing.

It has been fantastic to welcome so many visitors from the Bailiwick and

I'm yet to speak to any that that have had anything but the most wonderful visit to Alderney. There has been high praise for our restaurants, bars, our beautiful beaches, heritage sites and visitor attractions, but most of all the overwhelming comment has been just how friendly and welcoming we are in Alderney.

We should all be proud of the part we have played in promoting the Island we all love so much. Many are first time visitors, and some have not been here for many years, but they have all said that they will come again.

I never thought it would take a global pandemic to bring together the islands of the Bailiwick, but out

of difficulty has come great positivity and I'm delighted that we are now together more than ever.

The mini-Alderney Week proved very successful and I can't wait to welcome back our Bailiwick friends next year for the full AW experience.

It's hugely encouraging to see local businesses now taking bookings into October, a traditionally quiet month for the Island, and we hope to cement our relationship with the Bailiwick further during the shoulder months and beyond. While it often might not be easy to get to Alderney, our Bailiwick friends now know that the Alderney experience makes it more than worth the effort.

Chris Harris, States Member

We must not be complacent

Alderney's youngsters, both at school and those who finished their education in recent years, have proved yet again what an important and significant role they play along with all of us on the island. No matter what age, whether in years one, two or three at the start of their education at St. Anne's School, or the more elderly, the island has acted as one.

To see people of all ages helping within the community, especially when we were in full lockdown, is what makes Alderney a great and safe place to live in. We have been so fortunate not even having one case of Covid-19. We can certainly thank Guernsey, and especially Dr Brink, for maintaining a strict approach that has benefitted all of us.

But the past is the past. We must not now be complacent because of this success. The immediate future is where problems could arise. We understand we are reducing the 14 days isolation to seven days as from next month, and we are also aware that our direct Southampton flights might be reintroduced next month. Let's hope this will prove successful, but let's also be so very careful.

Could we cope with an outbreak of the virus? Let's hope we never have to find out.

As chair of the school PTA and a mother of two young children aged just seven and three, I think only about the future. It is our duty as parents to help safeguard this. For now this is the prime reason that we must keep the virus away from our shores.

As we start to leave summer behind and the shorter days begin to kick in, it would no doubt be a more difficult lockdown second time around. The rise of cases in other countries quite close to us and in certain pockets of the UK is worrying.

But if the worst were to happen, I can see Alderney once again keeping together with the support and help that always follows.

Beth Chapman, St Anne School PTA chair



Pictured with her children Benjamin & Grace

ALDERNEY HEALTH

Preparing for a healthy Autumn and Winter

By Dr Sally Simmons, Island Medical Centre Clinical Director



Medical academics are warning that the UK could face a second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, which could be even worse than already experienced in recent months. If Covid-19 and seasonal 'flu develop at the same time, we could potentially see both diseases spreading rapidly, causing a higher increase in death rates and serious illness. We could see a number of cases on the island and we need to prepare for this now, while we can.

One of the main reasons we reduced our Covid-19 risk on Alderney was by our early lockdown, reduced flights, restricted or no visiting at the hospital and the Care Homes, repeated messages about staying at home, shielding, self-isolating, social distancing and regular hand washing. Pretty much everyone followed the advice, which showed we were all helping to keep ourselves safe.

However, if we do start to see cases here, we may have to return to

lockdown again if necessary, although isolating, contact tracing and testing is still our active method of managing the disease if someone does test positive.

Reducing risk

There are several things we can all do, starting right now, even though it is high summer. We already know from global data that taking some form of regular exercise is beneficial in mitigating risk. People living with obesity are at a much higher risk of catching (and possibly spreading) Covid, so losing weight and keeping it off is a good starting point.

We also know that people with long term health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD/emphysema), cancer, depression and other mental health problems, chronic fatigue as well as other conditions requiring numerous medications, are at higher risk. Many of these people have been shielding for several months and their lives will be so much harder if they must do this all over again.

Nutritional changes

Nutrition plays an important part in keeping fit and healthy. Jane Durston at Boardman's gives plenty of advice: Now is a good time to review and upgrade your nutrition to make sure you are in good shape for winter. Whatever point you are starting from, start slowly and make one or two changes. Stick with that for a couple of weeks before making more changes.

Changing how we think about food is often the most important part. Start by being honest about how much processed food you eat; it is not about being self-critical or judgmental, so do not beat yourself up. Just acknowledge where you are and commit to move on.

Then replace processed food with a healthy alternative. Concentrate on increasing the amount of vegetables you eat. Again, start slowly. If you currently eat three portions of veg a day, increase it to four for a week and let your gut get used to it. The following week add another portion, so you are up to five a day. The more veg and fruit you eat, the more nutrition you get, but eat more veg than fruit. Fresh, good quality fruit and veg are always better but do not worry if using tinned or frozen.

To support your immune system, aim to eat two portions of oily fish a week such as salmon, tuna or mackerel. Fresh is best but tinned is fine too. This also helps to increase your Vitamin D intake. The best way to get Vitamin D is to get out in the sun between March and September for twenty minutes without sun cream on, so early in the day is best. If you cannot get out in the sun, then take a supplement such as Quest Super one-a-day, which is a multivitamin supplement. Finally, it is always a good idea to have a small portion of nuts and seeds each day as this will help with healthy fats and give you valuable trace elements like magnesium and selenium.

ALDERNEY HEALTH

'Flu and Covid-19'

The annual 'flu' vaccination will still be offered to everyone who requires it, with those over 65, pregnant women, young children, those with long term conditions, health care workers and so on, entitled to it free of charge as priority patients. There may be potential supply problems with getting this year's vaccine, which is another reason to start protecting your health earlier than usual. The IMC will let you know when vaccines are available.

In order to protect those who cannot have vaccinations, it is more important than ever to make sure all your jabs are up to date, not just the 'flu jab. This is especially

important for children and pregnant women. Managing cases of flu together with a possible second wave of Covid-19 would put extreme pressure on our health and hospital resources.

I would like to reassure people who are concerned by this article that it is not all doom and gloom out there. You may want to hide away in order to keep safe and that is understandable. We do know that many people have suffered from deteriorating mental health problems while shielding and isolating, so please let us know at the surgery if you are shielding so we can make sure you are OK.

We must balance the economy of the island (particularly those who

must go out to work) with the health of islanders. It is not easy to do this but if we all take the opportunity now to get ourselves as healthy as possible in the coming months, we may be able to better protect our more vulnerable from these diseases.

Sometimes it is difficult to know where to start, but if you would like help in reducing your weight, taking more exercise, getting hold of a quality multivitamin product, managing your mental health, diabetes, blood pressure, COPD or asthma, please contact us at the IMC and we will signpost you to the best practitioner to help you. If you are new to the island, please also register at the Surgery.

STAY HEALTHY THIS WINTER!



Continuing with hand sanitising and observing personal space will still be important as we move into the Autumn and Winter, not just from a Covid-19 aspect but to try to reduce seasonal coughs and colds as much as possible.

Paul Durston (pictured) at Boardman's reports: "We have already completed our seasonal medicines order and will be expecting supplies to start to arrive

over the next few weeks. However, the supply chain is still very fragile after the prolonged shutdown in the UK and we will have the added problem of Brexit to deal with at the end of the year."

He reminds everyone to do what you can to prepare yourself: "Make sure you have some basic medicines at home for coughs and colds and start to think of possible lifestyle changes such as weight loss, smoking cessation and regular exercise to ensure you stay as fit and healthy as possible," he says.

"We are very fortunate to have excellent medical services here on Alderney, but it is very important that we support these as much as possible by following some basic healthcare advice and, dare I say it, common sense."

WHERE TO FIND HELP

Alderney Wellbeing
Contact: IMC 822077

Alderney Serenity
Janine Page via FaceBook

Island Medical Centre
822077 imc@cwgsy.net

Jane Durston, Life coach & Nutritionist
boardmanspharmacy@hotmail.co.uk

Walking for Health
Julia Hetherington 822034

Mignot Memorial Hospital 822822

MIND Lisa Millan, 07781 140886
Lisa.millan@guernseymind.org.gg

Boardman's Pharmacy 822126

Lighthouse Physiotherapy
Charmaine Johnson
www.lighthousephysio.co.uk

Lynne Roscrow
lynne@naturalflowtherapy.co.uk

EDUCATION

Still smiling! Alderney youth rise to the challenge



Picture courtesy of the Theatre Group

By Kevin Gentle,
States Member with responsibility for Education, Sport & Culture

From an Education perspective the teachers, parents and pupils all embraced the necessary changes implemented when we were in an earlier stage of lockdown.

Obviously the Year 11 students have been impacted the most as they were about to enter the OFQUAL algorithm lottery and prepare themselves for the next part of their academic life, but the news from Guernsey that all Year 11 students are to have their offers of post-16 places honoured based on teacher-predicted grades is welcome news.

There is a fair amount of trepidation amongst our GCSE students, but despite all that they are still smiling.

The pandemic and ensuing lockdown was challenging but the children and young people showed resilience and adaptability. When teaching became distance learning, the Youth Commission moved online as well so that young people across the Bailiwick could still

engage, have something to do, and most importantly seek support if needed.

The island's young people feel extremely grateful that we have got to the position we have and that they are able to have their freedom and their 'new normal' lives back. Those students either about to return to Guernsey or make the move for the first time are all aware that a support programme is in place and is available from the team led by Cleo Thomas working in close partnership with Guernsey College of Further Education, and that similar pastoral care arrangements exist at the Guernsey Grammar School.

From a Sport standpoint, the clubs have all seamlessly picked up the slack as our dedicated army of volunteers continue to offer sporting opportunities across the board, and are all busy in planning intra-Bailiwick travel for their various sports in order to give young people competition experience.

SEVEN-DAY TESTING

Continued from page 1

How it works

Jurisdictions outside the Bailiwick will be divided into Group A, Group B and Group C countries which are listed and updated daily at www.covid19.gov.gg

Anyone arriving in Alderney from a Group A country within the previous 14 days must enter compulsory self-isolation for 14 days. Anyone arriving from a Group B country can self-isolate for 14 days, or self-isolate for seven days then elect to take a test for SARS-Cov-2 with release to 'passive follow-up' on receipt of negative result.

'Passive follow-up' means reporting any symptoms consistent with Covid-19 and return to self-isolation and arrange a further test. They must not visit a hospital unless for emergency care with prior notification if possible. They must not visit a care and residential home, GP or clinic without prior arrangement.

Anyone arriving from a Group C country – currently only the Isle of Man – is not required to undertake any self-isolation or testing.

Are tests free?

Tests in Guernsey are free of charge under that island's public health system and discussions are being held with Health & Social Care as to how testing will work in Alderney. At this stage it is not expected there will be a charge for those who opt for a test after 7 days, but that may not be the case for regular business related travel or those who are seeking these tests for other reasons. No final decisions have been made at the time of going to press but social media speculation that it could be more than £100 is wholly inaccurate.

BUSINESS NEWS

Opportunity knocks but 'proceed with caution'



Alderney's business community has welcomed the seven-day isolation ruling as it will boost retail and hospitality spend from next month.

Second home owners and a strictly limited number of visitors will welcome the easing of restrictions and build on the gradual business revival seen since travel to and from the other Bailiwick islands was allowed.

"More people equates to greater spend power within our retail and hospitality sectors to name but

two," said Andrew Eggleston, President of the island's Chamber of Commerce.

But he warned against complacency and stressed the need for vigilance.

"We will have to remain constantly alert to the possibility of further disruption to the lifestyle that we sometimes take too much for granted," he said.

"The resilience of our business community during the height of lockdown was testament to how we, as a small integrated island,

worked together in the most positive fashion.

"Various businesses that were able to operate during this time very quickly set up websites for online shopping while others called in volunteers to help distribute food and essential supplies to homes throughout the island.

"Should a second wave of the virus hit, we will at least be prepared having learnt from the first lockdown. As the months progress and life continues on hopefully a more stable footing, we must not allow ourselves to become complacent.

"Recent weeks have seen a superb upturn in business and we are probably enjoying the best relationship with Guernsey we have had. We have shown off our island in an excellent way and the feedback from visitors has been so positive. It is now essential for us all to maintain this momentum."

Alderney reboot could hit winter blues

Builders' merchant Blanchard's reports 'steady' retail trade but warns some tradesmen fear the 'coronavirus effect' heralds a slack winter.

"Some of our tradesmen are predicting a bad Winter due to the knock on effects of coronavirus while others seem to be unaffected and have enough work on the books to see them through," said Blanchard's director Sharon Donaldson.

"Our retail trade is relatively steady but has suffered due to the absence of our second home owners visiting

the island this summer. The seven-day testing policy may help but I feel it will be too late in the season for most families especially if they have children of school age."

Sourcing materials, especially bakeware, paint, concrete products, compost, timber and plaster, is proving difficult.

"Hopefully the world will return to some sense of normality soon but with various places in the UK threatening to return to lockdown it seems unlikely at present," she added. "I count my blessings and feel incredibly lucky to live on this

beautiful island and hope that we can stay Covid-free and enjoy the freedom that so many others have had taken away."

Taking a break from fixing a domestic boiler, plumber Rob Neill put his optimist's hat on and declared: "There's always a silver lining. We now have a restored relationship with Guernsey and a reboot for our island. It's hard to think of anywhere in the world lucky enough to have an opportunity like this."



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

“ Over the course of the last six months we have seen our way of life change in a way few, if any of us, could ever have imagined. By dint of our extraordinary efforts we have worked together as a community to ensure that we have kept everybody safe.

There is, however, no room for complacency by resting on our laurels. As I have said many times we may have won the battle for now, but the war goes on.

Much as some would like to see the “Bailiwick Bubble” continue, we have to accept that for the good of the economy and people's mental health we have to carefully move to the next stage of the Exit from Lockdown Strategy.

The relaxation will inevitably slightly increase the risk but Dr Simmons, in consultation with Dr Brink and her team, have concluded that the increase in risk can be safely managed. If we do have a case Dr Simmons is confident that with the test, track and trace protocol that she and her team will be able to manage the threat.

We each have our part to play. The key will be to maintain good personal hygiene and be mindful of the distance between ourselves and people we come into contact with. I suspect, like a lot of people, I have not always been as scrupulous about hand washing recently as I was some months ago.

Dr Brink has said that we have to accept that we will be living with the threat for “decades to come”. This need not create an environment of fear. We already live with the risk of ‘flu on a permanent basis. We can still go about our lives enjoying our unique way of life but always mindful that the threat has not gone away.

Now is not the time to risk losing the gains we have all worked so hard to achieve. By protecting ourselves, we are protecting each other.

William Tate



Spotlight On Alderney Businesses



Alderney Shipping holds a steady course

Alderney Shipping's QuayFM jingle, *Shipped in, shipped out, safe and sound*, has played throughout the crisis but few have been privy to the effects of such stormy trading conditions.

Like everyone, the company has faced uncertainty and fear of the unknown and Bruno Kay-Mouat's smile does not disguise the fact that it's not over. Clearly, these past six months have required a firm hand on the tiller.

Early conversations with Condor and Sark Shipping appeared to indicate that the shipping companies could expect an 80% drop in business. In the event, because Alderney Shipping is not focused on passenger numbers, this amounted to a 65% reduction in freight during lockdown.

“April was the worst when our trade customers weren't working and building sites were closed, and May was also extremely difficult,” says Bruno. “On top of that, some of the supply chains were reduced despite the UK Government wanting to keep them open to prevent companies going out of business.”

All of the Channel Island ports and the vital hub at Poole remained open but were very hard-hit, all of them agreeing to extended credit terms so that the islands could receive vital supplies. Poole is critical for Alderney as 80% of the island's food comes through the port.

Alderney Shipping played its part with everyone, from the top down, being paid the minimum wage and staff working a four-day week for six weeks. The 35 shore-based employees were split into two teams to ensure continuity in the event of an outbreak.

“It's not about money,” says Bruno, “it's about survival. This was a total unknown and we had to react quickly. But credit to everyone, the shore staff, the port authorities, the Trinity and Spike Islander crews, we have kept going and Alderney has been supplied throughout the crisis.”

Meanwhile, the Spike Islander is bringing a steady stream of Bailiwick visitors up from Guernsey. “They are experiencing Alderney's wonderful community spirit and that is a major plus-point to come out of this difficult episode,” adds Bruno.