

## Media Release

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### Wombles arrive on Alderney



*Steve Roberts with Uncle Bulgaria at the Airport*

The mystery surrounding the arrival of five Womble statues on Alderney has been unravelled.

The 4ft, 250-kilo statues carved from English oak placed at locations around the Island last week were kept under wraps until their unveiling today by Steve Roberts, the States Member behind the imaginative project.

“There was an issue with planning permission so we were asked to keep them covered until formal permission had been received,” said Mr Roberts. “That’s now been resolved by the Chairman of the

Building & Development Control Committee, Kevin Gentle, so the Wombles can all be revealed, although some local people hadn't been able to resist a sneak peek!

"The statues have cost taxpayers nothing as they are sponsored by several local businesses. There was a plan to organise a Guess the Womble competition with the infant classes but now the Wombles are out of the bag, so to speak.

"I'd like to thank all the local businesses plus States Works and the Harbour Office for their support."

The statues, by artist Mike Burgess, will have concrete plinths supplied by States Works. They are stationed at the Harbour, The Butes, Airport, Woodland Trail and Lighthouse areas for the enjoyment of Islanders and visitors alike. The exception to Womble characters is a statue of a blonde hedgehog reading a Wombles book, placed at the woodland trail. On The Butes is a child's seat with a lion, representing primary sponsor The Lions Club of Guernsey, on one side and a Womble on the other.

Other sponsors include The Blonde Hedgehog, Alderney Shipping, Blanchards and Ravenscroft. Permission to site the statues on States-owned land was agreed by the General Services Committee with BDCC responsible for planning approval.

The Wombles were created by children's author Elisabeth Beresford who lived in Alderney permanently from 1978 until she died in 2010.

The original Womble soft toys were donated by Elisabeth Beresford's family to the Alderney branch of Cancer Research UK and are now displayed at the Alderney Museum together with memorabilia donated by people on and off Island.

**Ends**

**Media enquiries and high-res images:** Alistair Forrest, [Alistair.Forrest2@gov.gg](mailto:Alistair.Forrest2@gov.gg)