



Media Release

Date: 2nd May 2019

Staying leisure visitors increase by 22% in Q1

Total staying visitors, the high value segment of the tourism market that spend at least one night in Guernsey, increased by a healthy **+9%** in quarter 1 (Q1) 2019 versus the same period in 2018 (+2,199 visitors), with those visitors staying for *leisure* purposes increasing by a very encouraging **+22%** (+1,375 visitors).

The total market of departing visitors (including cruise passengers and visiting yachtsmen) stood at **32,344** visitors during the quarter, an increase **+9%** versus the same period in 2018 (+2,728 visitors). Total departing visitors excluding cruise passengers and visiting yachtsmen also increased by **+9%**; this equalled an additional +2,677 visitors during the quarter compared with Q1 2018.

A breakdown of the Q1 2019 results above show that the growth in visitors during the quarter was driven by:

- a **+7%** increase in those travelling by air (+1,826 visitors) and a **+20%** increase amongst visitors travelling by sea (+850 visitors). Those travelling on visiting yachts also increased by **+18%**, albeit from a small base (+51 visitors). *Resident* travel, by comparison, saw a **-2%** decline during the quarter
- **+12%** increase in visitors staying with friends/relatives (+993 visitors)
- **+14%** increase in those staying in commercial accommodation (**+6,570** additional bed nights during the quarter)
- **+13%** growth in total day visitors (+687 visitors), with **+59%** increase in day visitors travelling for leisure purposes, **+10%** increase for those travelling for business purposes and **+23%** increase in day visitors travelling to see friends and relatives

Visitors from the UK saw the largest absolute increase compared with Q1 2018, with **+2,268** additional UK visitors travelling to Guernsey between January and March 2019 (**+11%** increase). This was followed by an increase of **+1,060** visitors from Jersey (a **+25%** increase versus Q1 2018). Conversely, visitors from France declined by **-24%** (-255 visitors) and from other countries by **-11%** (-371 visitors). This is likely due to the impact of and uncertainty surrounding Brexit during the quarter. For French visitors specifically, the closure of Hauteville House and its well-publicised re-opening during April (Q2) is likely to have influenced the decision to come to Guernsey during the first quarter.

Deputy Dawn Tindall, member of the Committee *for* Economic Development said:

“It is particularly good news that the staying visitor market, which generates the largest contribution to the local economy from tourism has shown such a healthy increase this year. The high value staying

visitor segment has suffered over 20 years of decline, but is showing signs of stabilisation and indeed, this market showed a modest increase between 2015-2018, with staying *leisure* visitors increasing by over 4% following the publication and implementation of the States of Guernsey and Chamber of Commerce Tourism sub group 2015-2025 Guernsey Tourism Strategy.

Deputy Tindall added:

“While Q1 represents a small percentage of the annual visitor market, it is a positive start to the year. Online visitor survey results indicate that the marketing surrounding the release of the Potato Peel Pie film last year is continuing to have a positive impact on visitors’ decisions to come to Guernsey; **25%** of visitor respondents to the survey in Q1 claimed that the film/book had some influence on their decision to come to Guernsey - an uplift of **+96%** versus the previous year”.

Mike Hopkins, Director of Marketing & Tourism commented:

“There are many exciting initiatives underway this year. These include increased off island marketing and PR activity surrounding the recent re-opening of Hauteville House, focussing on Guernsey’s Victor Hugo heritage; a prestigious partnership has been formed with TV historian, Dan Snow, who will be taking part in Guernsey’s sixth Heritage Festival during May; the popular Spring and Autumn Walking Festivals return in May and September respectively and members of the VisitGuernsey team will be attending the Chelsea Flower Show to promote the islands. This is followed by a new, month-long Floral Festival in June, organised in partnership with the Guernsey Floral Foundation, and the launch of the new events group ‘Eat, Drink and be Local’ and their food and drink events. Both groups are supported by the Committee *for* Economic Development’s Events Group funding awards, and the events will also be supported by VisitGuernsey’s promotional activity during the season. All of these initiatives are designed to give potential holidaymakers a reason to visit our beautiful islands and an array of things to do and see when they get here”.

Notes to Media

Issued by: Media team The Office *of the* Committee *for* Economic Development.

Contact: Wendy Pedder or Emily Queripel in the first instance.

Tel: 01481 234567 or email: wendy.pedder@gov.gg or emily.queripel@gov.gg

The Guernsey Travel Survey is based upon exit survey interviews undertaken at the airport and harbour, with a random sample of departing passengers. Findings are applied to the actual numbers of total passengers (provided by the airport and harbour authorities) to determine the passenger composition of Guernsey’s main air and sea routes, along with the number of visiting cruise passengers and visiting yachtsmen. The survey is conducted using internationally accepted Market Research and Survey methodology.

During Q1 2019, 4,700 passenger interviews were completed. This represented **9.1%** of total passengers departing Guernsey, of which 35.6% of respondents were departing visitors. At a 95% confidence level, the margin of error is +/- 1.4%.



Committee *for*
Economic Development