

# Staff Hand Book 2010

Herm Island

## Welcome to Herm Island

First of all, a very warm welcome to Herm Island!

With this handbook we would like to inform you about living and working on Herm Island.

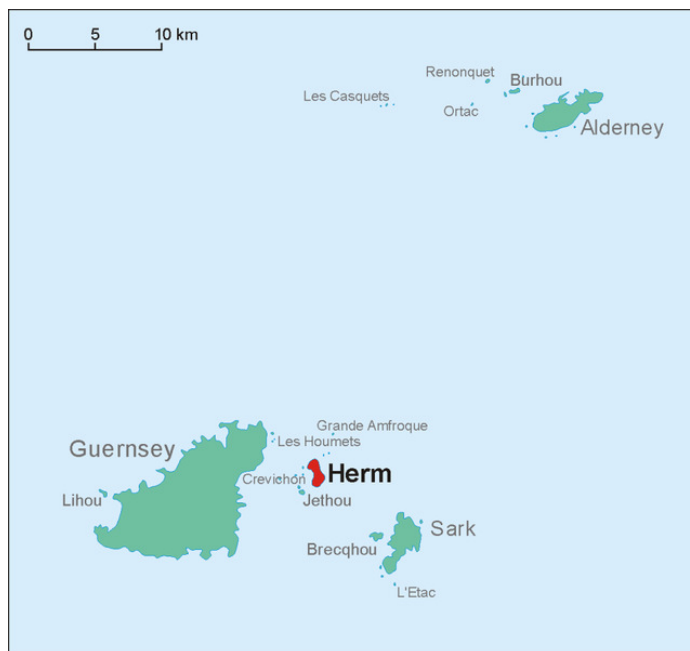
You will find a lot of information about the island, the residents, the other islands around Herm and of course what there is to do on your day off.

Also you will find information about doctors, dentists and other information relevant to you whilst living on Herm.

## Location

Herm Island is a small Island situated of the coast of Guernsey.

Herm is one of the smallest islands of the Channel Islands, measuring one and a half miles long and half a mile wide. There are no cars on Herm, goods and guests luggage are transported by tractor and essential workers have quad-bikes. We try to keep this traffic to a minimum as peace and tranquility are of paramount importance.



The Island of Herm is leased from the States of Guernsey by Starboard Settlement. The main income for the Island is derived from tourism: The White House Hotel is the only Hotel, there is also a pub complex, The Mermaid, which has a restaurant, snack bar and small grocery shop. In addition there are 20 self catering cottages, shops and post office, a camp site, a school and chapel.

## **History of Herm Island**

### **Major Peter Wood**

The late Major Peter Wood and his wife Jenny fulfilled an ambition most of us can only dream about. In 1949 they opted out of the security of a normal 9 –5 existence and bought the lease to a tiny neglected island that had no proper water supply, electricity or drainage.

Today the 500-acre island has been transformed into a little patch of paradise – a holiday retreat where visitors can escape everyday worries and languish in the island's natural tranquillity and beauty.

Herm not only became the Woods' life work but also their family home – they raised six children on the island and established the tiny school (now thought to be one of the smallest working schools in Europe). A teacher travels over the water from Guernsey on the early morning boat to take lessons.

The Woods also took charge of restoring the 10<sup>th</sup> century chapel of St. Tugual's and laid the foundations for the flourishing Herm businesses.

Sadly, Jenny Wood died in 1991 and Major Wood died in 1998, but the story of their remarkable struggles lives on in Jenny's book 'Herm Our Island Home'.

The third child of Major and Jenny Wood, Pennie, married Adrian Heyworth who managed the island until October 2008.

The Woods bought the lease of Herm with the help of a £15,000 bank overdraft, from the Guernsey States. Guernsey had recently bought Herm from the Crown and decided to lease it out to one tenant who would be required to open up the island to the public.

When the Woods arrived, brambles and weeds hid many of the fine buildings which are now restored and used as family homes or high quality self catering cottages for holiday visitors.

Herm today is the result of a Major and Jenny Wood's hard work and vision. It was Major Wood's dream to build a small self contained community where children would feel as much involved in the day to day life of the island as their parents.

Tourism is the mainstay industry on the island. Up to 100,000 visitors pass through during a busy summer season but the essence of Herm is still natural peacefulness and calm – very much the atmosphere the Woods fell in love with so many years ago.

Until 1999 there was a dairy herd of Guernsey cows on Herm. The milk was shipped over to Guernsey each day in churns. With a drop in milk prices and an increase in hygiene legislation which would have been difficult to adhere to with the milk being transported in churns the farm was no longer profitable. There is now a herd of around 50 cows. Over the winter 2000/2001 the farm buildings were transformed into units of staff accommodation, a village hall and additional facilities for campers

## **Pennie Heyworth**

The third of Major Wood's six children, Pennie was the first baby to be born on the island for over a century. She grew up in Herm where a love of nature and wildlife flourished, which Pennie has now put into practice by developing a strong conservation policy for the island. Special care is being taken to restore the tree population on the island. Each winter a couple of thousand new mixed woodland trees are planted. Pennie knows a lot about Herm's varied birdlife; some 100 species land at some time during the year on the island.

After schooling in England and later working on the mainland Pennie returned to Herm with husband Adrian in 1980. They have raised their 3 daughters on Herm. The Heyworth family lived in Lady Perry's House, in the heart of the Manor Village.

## **The Island Management**

Mr. John Singer is the chairman of the Island and his company Starboard Settlement owns the lease of the island. Mr. John Singer and his wife Julia live on the Island with their two dogs.

Herm Island is run by a board of 3 directors who are jointly responsible for the Island;

Jonathan Watson is the director of Hospitality and is responsible for the Hotel, the Mermaid Tavern (the pub), the campsite, the Holiday Cottages, the gift shops and the beach cafés.

Andrew Bailey is the director of Finance and is in charge of keeping the islands finances on track and the Islands administration.

Simon George is the director of Technical Services and is in charge of the maintenance and up keeping of the Island.

## **The Hotel**

The hotel has 40 bedrooms, two restaurants, two bars, lounges with open fires, a tennis court and swimming pool. We pride ourselves in providing a very high standard of food, service and customer care and are rewarded with 75% repeat business.

The atmosphere within the hotel is that of country house style, with friendly and highly competent staff. A 10% discount on food is offered to staff dining in the main hotel restaurant and the Ship restaurant.

The hotel is closed in the winter when the office is manned by Siôn Dobson Jones, the General Manager and Linda Gijbertsen the Head Receptionist. The Head Chef, Nigel Waylen, also works on the Island in the winter.

## **The Administration & Reservation Office**

Located by the Harbour, the administration office deals with all aspects of Island administration.

Situated in the same office is our reservation team, who deal with all the reservations for the Island, such as the hotel, campsite and Holiday Cottages bookings.

## **The Mermaid Tavern**

The Mermaid Complex comprises a friendly pub, black rock grill restaurant, BBQ, snack bar and small grocery shop. A 10% discount on food is available to White House staff in the Black Rock Grill restaurant. The Mermaid Tavern is managed by Tom Jones and his assistant Mark Latter.

## **The Gift Shops and Herm Island Post Office**

The gift shops offer a wide range of goods from small tourist items to high quality gifts. There is a daily post from the Island to Guernsey. Post generally takes two days to get to and from England. The shops are managed by Neil Waterhouse and his assistant Edwin Dyer.

## **The Herm Island School**

About 15 families live on Herm all year round. The school has around 10 pupils of primary school age and a teacher, Mrs Mary Carey, who comes over from Guernsey every day. The children attend Vauvert school in Guernsey on a Wednesday to experience a bigger school and interact with other children. Children over the age of 9 attend school on Guernsey as weekly boarders.

## **Belvoir and Shell Beach, Beach Cafes**

All staff is most welcome at both beach cafes which sell hot and cold drinks, snacks, Herm ice cream etc. The cafes are managed by Helena Rowe.

## **St' Tuguals Chapel**

This small 10<sup>th</sup> century chapel is situated in the center of the Island close to the main group of houses on Herm. A half-hour, ecumenical service, is conducted every Sunday at 10.00am.

## **Island Walks**

One of the great advantages of a summer on Herm is the chance to enjoy the Island itself. The south end of Herm offers spectacular cliff walks whilst the north side is dotted with beautiful clean beaches. We have had some problems

with sand erosion during recent storms, so we would ask you to take great care on the beach paths and avoid any damage to the fragile plants and grasses. We are most keen to generate a community spirit of mutual cooperation for the benefit of everyone. Please pick up litter if you see any. Portable radios are not permitted on beaches or public areas. This applies to guests and staff alike. To see the walks available on the island it is best to get the Herm Island map, sold at the gift shops for around £1.00.

## **Telephones**

There is a public phone in the staff canteen which takes incoming calls – 01481 711098.

Other public phones on the island are:

Rosiere Steps	(01481) 711844
Harbour	(01481) 711655
School Playground	(01481) 711848

## **Staff Facilities**

All seasonal staff working on Herm are housed in staff accommodation. All rooms are clean and well appointed with central heating, fire alarms, sinks and storage space. Duvets, pillows, linen and towels are all provided.

We have approximately 90 staff living in staff quarters during the summer and it is essential that all staff act with consideration to their neighbours.

You are most welcome to bring radios and televisions with you (most rooms have TV points) but please keep the volume down! Noisy parties are not allowed. It goes without saying that any willful damage will be strictly dealt with.

Staff are expected to keep their own rooms clean (please use only Blue Tack on the walls) and staff are also in charge of keeping the bathrooms and common areas clean.

The management regularly inspects staff accommodation.

A staff Social Committee is set up every season and arranges various events such as beach parties, rugby matches, football matches and any other ideas you can come up with. Profit raised from the staff canteen drinks machine goes directly into the social committee fund.

Staff may use the hotel tennis court when the hotel is not too busy, by booking through reception.

Within the hotel there is a staff canteen equipped with colour TV and a DVD player. In addition to this there is also free wireless Internet access or if you don't have a laptop there is a communal computer for free internet access. All meals are taken in the canteen.

On your day off you can bring your laptop to Guernsey and sit in one of the many pubs and/or restaurants that offer free wireless Internet connection.

## **Employment on the Island**

If your application is successful, you will be sent two copies of our Contract of Employment.

Please read this carefully and if you have any queries let us know. Then, please sign and return ONE copy to the hotel along with tax forms, which will be included. The other copy of the contract is for your records only.

## **Your Arrival on Herm**

When you get to Guernsey, phone us if you need advice about boats. You will be met by a member of your departmental management team and shown to your room. A key deposit of £20 is deducted from your first wage, which is fully refundable at the end of the season provided that there is no unreasonable damage to your accommodation and the room is left clean. A replacement key will be charged at £10.00

## **Hygiene and Personal Appearance**

At all times when on duty, you must be smartly presented. Uniforms must be kept clean and well-pressed, shoes polished and hair neat and tidy. We expect the usual rules of personal hygiene to be strictly adhered to. Jewellery should be kept to a minimum.

## **Training Policy**

Whilst you are on the Island, you will receive on and off job training. We believe that training of staff at all levels is vital in maintaining standards and improving the service we give our customers.

The ultimate responsibility for training lies with the Individual departments but each individual has a responsibility to train. Please ask if you want more training or if you are unsure about anything.

## **Hours of Work**

Hours can vary in each department according to the business demands. Your basic pay covers all hours worked. Occasionally extra work is available in other departments. Any queries regarding hours worked and pay should in the first instance be taken up with your head of department. Lieu days accrued from working bank holidays must be taken on the direction of the Head of Department, occasionally in advance, as pressure of work permits. Holiday entitlement (one and a half days per fully completed calendar month worked), terminating bonus and an equal share of gratuities will all be paid at the end of the season.

## **Timekeeping**

Please ensure that you are always punctual. Being late for work is unfair on your colleagues and seriously affects the efficient running of the hotel.

## **Absence**

All staff is asked to co-operate with management to enable complete and accurate records of absence. All absences from duty as a result of illness must be notified as soon as possible. If you cannot attend work, you must notify your Head of Department or the Duty Manager as soon as you realize that you are going to be absent from duty.

## **Grievance Procedure**

Speak first of all with your Head of Department and if you still have a problem please inform your General Manager.

## **Dismissal**

All employees are liable to summary dismissal for offences such as theft, violence, and possession of illegal drugs, wanton damage to Island property and failure to comply with a warning.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is strictly forbidden in all areas of the hotel and grounds apart from the allocated areas. It is illegal to smoke in any indoor areas in the Channel Islands. If you do smoke, please take great care.

The risk of fire on Herm is of great concern to us. Make sure you put out cigarettes properly in ashtrays provided and not on the ground.

Please DO NOT smoke near the kitchen steps.

## **Doctors Surgery**

The Islands surgery is the Rohais Medical Centre 01481 723322 or Boots the Chemist (every weekday between 11.00am and 1.00pm) 01481 711237. Please book your own doctors appointment, reception is too busy to arrange appointments for you.

## **Medical Costs**

There is no doctor resident on Herm though there are qualified first-aiders. The UK National Health Service does not cover people working in the Channel Islands.

Visits to a GP on Guernsey have to be paid for, however Herm operates a compulsory insurance scheme to cover visits to a GP, which costs each employee £2.60 a week.

The Herm insurance scheme does not cover visits to hospital or specialist consultations. Specialist consultation costs may be payable up to 13 weeks of employment. Injury or illness incurred at work, are covered by Guernsey States Health regulations.

## **Boats**

As a hotel employee you will qualify for a free pass on Travel Trident, our main passenger link to Guernsey. (A replacement pass will cost £5.00). To obtain this pass, please provide two passport photos with your contract of employment.

Boat times (approx. hourly) are posted daily in the staff canteen with the appropriate landing stage. Trident lands at the main Harbour three hours either side of high tide and at Rosiere steps, three hours either side of low tide. You must carry your pass with you in order to board the boat. When the island is very busy, you will be asked to board last, behind paying passengers. On rare occasions you may have to wait for the next boat.

Due to the very high tides in the Channel Islands, the boat may depart from Guernsey from one of three places. The Weighbridge Steps (high tide), Cambridge Steps (most often) and Inter Island Quay (very low tides). Ask at the Travel Trident kiosk if you are unsure.

**ALWAYS** help to carry luggage, goods etc on and off the boat. This inter-departmental cooperation is really important and an essential part of island life.

The last boat returns from Guernsey at 5.15pm (4.15pm in low season). In exceptional cases, permission may be sought from Siôn Dobson Jones to catch the evening dinner boat which leaves Guernsey at 7.00pm and Herm at 10.45pm. This is a private charter and not normally available to staff.

## **Dentist**

Surgery information is posted in the staff canteen. Most dentists will expect payment in full on the day of your visit. Charges are usually higher than in England.

## **Illegal Drugs**

The Channel Islands are extremely strict when it comes to illegal drugs importation. Customs carry out random body searches and also employ the use of sniffer dogs.

All post is also screened, for which addressee's of post containing drugs are arrested. Anyone caught with drugs is likely to receive a custodial sentence, heavy fine and subsequent deportation.

Please do not even think of bringing drugs to the Channel Islands. The possession of illegal drugs on Herm will lead to instant dismissal.

## **Herm Island Safety Policy**

It is the policy of Herm Island Ltd that accidents should be prevented wherever possible. It is the duty of every employee to report to their head of department any potential health or safety hazards which come to their attention and conduct themselves in such a way to minimise risks. Both employer and employee have legal obligations under the Health & Safety at Work Act to prevent and report accidents or possible dangers to health and safety. If you witness or sustain an accident or notice a possible danger, please report the circumstances to your head of department or a member of the Management.

## **Leisure Activities in Guernsey**

LIBRARY: The Guille Alles library in St Peter Port is situated in Market Street. It is open Monday to Saturday (half day closing on Thursday). Non Guernsey residents may enroll on a returnable deposit of £15.00.

BEAU SEJOUR LEISURE CENTRE: A 10 minute walk from the boat, the Beau Sejour leisure centre offers a variety of entertainment for everyone: Cinema, leisure, swimming pool, pop concerts, sauna and solariums, gymnasiums, squash, badminton, tennis, trampolines etc, Phone 728555 for information and 726964 for bookings

FISHING: The Island is ideal for fishing from the shore, or the rocky coast. Half or full day boat fishing trips can also be arranged. This is already a regular event with seasonal staff on Herm ask around.

GUERNSEY BOWLING CENTRE: A five minute taxi journey brings you to a great bowling centre with bar and restaurant.

HORSE RIDING: A variety of stables offering tuition or hacking. Guernsey Equestrian Centre 725257 or Manor Riding Stables 38275

WIND SURFING: At Pembroke bay, instruction for beginners and experts. Boards for hire.

DRIVING SCHOOLS: Many staff like to take advantage of their free time to learn to drive. It is reputedly cheaper to have lessons in Guernsey and is also easier with stringent speed restrictions.

CAR HIRE: There are a number of companies offering car hire at very reasonable rates. Sarnia Car Hire: 723933 Avis Car Hire: 246919. A good idea if a group of you have the same day off to go exploring in Guernsey.

GOLF: There are two courses: An 18 hole links at L'Ancrese and a 9 hole course at the St Pierre Park hotel, on the outskirts of St Peter port.

CASTLE CORNET: Military and wartime museum.

FORT GREY: Maritime museum on the west coast

VICTOR HUGO'S HOUSE: A past inhabitant of Guernsey, this famous writer converted a house in Hautville, St Peter Port. It contains some amazing furnishings and décor. Well worth a visit.

THE GERMAN OCCUPATION MUSEUM: In the Forest parish where a unique collection of equipment and memorabilia from the occupation.

SAUSMAREZ PARK: Guernsey folk museum and stately home

SOUTH COAST CLIFF PATHS: Starts at St Peter Port. Follow a well sign posted cliff walk with stunning views. The path ends at Pleinmont, some 15 miles later.

VISITING SARK: A trip to Sark is a must whilst you are on Herm. There are three trips weeks in the summer months directly between Herm and Sark, check for details with reception. Another must to do with friends on your day off.