



The Jersey Accommodation and Activity Centre (JAAC)

Paradox Ltd – A brief History

Paradox Ltd was set up in 2007 by Petula Skinner and John Fox as an agency to organise bespoke holidays in Jersey. It was soon evident that the next stage would be to provide accommodation for these clients as a base. Negotiations started with Jersey Property Holdings in 2009 and Paradox Ltd started operations from the Hostel in 2011. The other part of the children's home (Aviemore) remains with Health and Social Services.

We continue to arrange bespoke holiday packages with the emphasis now being on large educational groups, sports teams, active and specialist interest groups. Each group receives a bespoke package.

Business growth.

Since re-opening Haut De La Garenne as an independent hostel in 2011 with a rebranded identity we shared the facility with the Lifeguards and operated from one wing of the building on an annual licence. After the departure of the Lifeguards and the option of a longer term lease, the Chief Minister agreed and signed a six year lease.

The chart below shows our bed nights sold and user types during our trading period.

	Room Nights sold	Adult Guests	Children Guests	Total School Guests	Number of visiting Schools	Number of other visiting Groups	Number of Fami- lies & Couples	Number of Solo guests	Bednights
2012	785	780	762	737	20	34	103	55	4313
2013	1233	841	879	902	26	31	154	75	5230
2014	980	952	1229	1249	43	23	128	80	5493
2015	1085	1093	1193	1269	40	27	123	91	6278
2016	1680	1422	1374	1339	38	49	170	167	7771
2017	1476	983	1392	1390	41	39	138	178	6465
Totals	7239	6071	6829	6886	208	203	816	646	35550

nb Any disparity between bed nights and room nights sold is down to our policy of:

1. Not mixing strangers in dormitories; for example we may have an 8 bedded room with only one person occupying that room.
2. Accommodating school/youth groups within one wing / area – leaving unused rooms deliberately vacant.
3. Dog related Festivals and Events where again only 1-2 people may accommodate a dormitory room due to a dog being allowed to stay in the rooms.

Demographics of visitors.

The majority of our guests are on Educational visits from France, mostly from the not so affluent areas of Normandy and Brittany who also enjoy the “English experience” of practising language skills (some of whom are twinned with local schools), eating Fish and Chips and visiting local sites of interest including Jersey Ormer Farm and Jersey Dairy.

The building has 23 rooms being single, twin, treble, quad, six, eight and ten bedded rooms (some en-suite), with 40 being able to camp.

School, youth and active/sporting groups comprise of 20 – 90 persons per group.

Schools: As mentioned above, the majority of visiting schools come from Normandy and Brittany, areas in France which are not greatly affluent. These schools would not be able to come to Jersey if good basic hostel facilities were not available. Over the years we have been advised that before the JAAC was available they used to stay in areas in/around St Malo and just come to Jersey on a day trip walking around St Helier. These schools now stay anything from 1 – 4 days (depending on the age group

of the students) and are able to enjoy Jersey as a whole rather than just St Helier. We have schools that have been repeat guests since 2012.

Active/Sporting Groups: This body of guests look for well-priced and basic accommodation as they visit the Island for their activity not especially the hospitality accommodation.

Dog Events: The Jersey European Dog Agility Festival takes the whole site for their annual festival now able to attract competitors from Europe and from as far afield as the USA. The 4 day Festival is hosted on the fields and competitors stay on-site in both rooms and camping. The event has grown a lot since the one-base facility has been available at JAAC.

Why do guests use the Jersey Accommodation and Activity Centre?

The building is in a good condition and fit for use as a hostel and activity centre. Visiting schools and youth groups like to stay at the centre as:

1. It provides good basic accommodation and is well priced. Group rate: £27.75 per person per night for bed and breakfast from February- November.
2. It is in a rural location, off the beaten track and well away from a main road / thoroughfare.
3. Being a rural location, teachers/adult leaders are comfortable that youngsters will not wander off which they may do if the accommodation was based in a built up area.
4. The fields provide room for the youngsters to use and run-off energy.
5. Where budgets are limited the team at the JAAC organise and run low-cost activities in addition to more expensive outdoor pursuits/visits.
6. The JAAC team organise the whole visit to Jersey from the moment the group arrive, if required.

The JAAC does not provide accommodation for child or adult residential courses – all visiting groups are accompanied with teachers/adults who have responsibility for their group.

7. Families, couples, and sole travellers are able to take advantage of good accommodation at reasonable cost.

Outsourcing and contribution to the local economy.

Last year we outsourced £137,000.00, 45% of our turnover, to other providers in the local economy from our group visitor packages, these include but are not exclusive to: Jersey Heritage, Tantivy Blue Coach, Jersey Zoo, Jersey War Tunnels, Samares Manor, RD Catering, Jersey Adventures, Jonno's Watersports, Island RIB Voyages, Eco Laundry, Cecilia Cleaners not to mention normal running costs for maintenance, heating, lighting, water, consumables etc.

This figure does not include spending in local shops, café's, restaurants, Liberty Bus or methods of getting to Jersey.

Our research suggests that we are not in competition with other accommodation providers as many could not accommodate such large groups, particularly during the summer months, and that a large proportion of these guests simply would not come to Jersey if we did not provide this service.

Site Development and maintenance.

During our occupation of Haut De La Garenne we have renovated an old shower block for the use of camping guests and installed a sauna – with some assistance from the Tourism Development Fund.

Developed, for recreational space, an area of the first floor South wing. Renewed carpeting on part of the ground floor and one large dormitory bedroom. Redecoration of all of the bedrooms and lounges.

There are only 2 areas to be updated and renovated 1) is an old shower block used for storage and 2) an external 'gardeners' storage room.

Statement from Visit Jersey.

12 December 2017

"Research conducted among ABC1s who take at least two holiday/short-breaks per annum indicated that the second most preferred type of accommodation when booking accommodation was 'self-catering apartment / house / villa', just behind 4/5 star hotel. Unsurprisingly given the sample, 'youth hostel' was the type of accommodation least likely to be preferred.

Regardless of the type of accommodation chosen key considerations for potential visitors are whether or not there are places to eat and drink nearby, that there is tea/coffee making facilities on offer, that credit cards are accepted and that there is WiFi available.

A key challenge for Jersey centres around perceptions and experience of value for money, so it is vital that a range of accommodation that offers good value can be readily booked by potential visitors. This is key, because when looking at what drives destination choice the second most important factor is whether or not the destination offers good value for money, behind 'having time to relax' and slightly ahead of 'spending quality time with family and friends' and 'the attractiveness of the scenery'.

More recent research looking at the actual visitor experience in Jersey compared to other destinations found that, in relation to accommodation, the helpfulness and friendliness of staff at accommodation establishments performed above average, but that there was much scope to improve performance in terms of 'range of accommodation available' and 'value for money of accommodation'.

When looking at the types of activities that are done while on holiday visiting local markets, going for self-guided walks and visiting parks and gardens are the most frequently done activities, but with one of our ambitions being to attract a younger demographic to Jersey it is helpful to note that the activities that this cohort has an above average propensity to undertake include water-sports activities, going for a cycle ride for leisure and going sea/river fishing".



Sauna and shower room part funded through the TDF



All of the external windows were redecorated in 2017 by Property Holdings contractors and new windows fitted on the exterior of the South wing.



The restaurant has been redecorated throughout and has a liquor licence.

The fields surrounding the property are kept in good order and contribute to our offerings of activities where we run on site soft adventure activities used predominantly in team building.



Our multi function lounge can be used recreationally, for self catering groups or workshops / lectures.

Further development of the camping provision is also in our business plan, with extracts below.

Business plan extracts.

Develop the camping provision and brand as the Bay View campsite with three permanent family pitches to include picnic benches, barbecue area and small garden.

Re-carpet all of the bedrooms.

Replace all bedroom light fittings for softer lighting.

Replace shower mixers and heads for more comfortable showers.

Investigate the installation of solar powered water heaters.

Investigate the installation of a water catchment system for flushing of toilets.

Please Do come and visit to see first hand what we have to offer.