



Media Release

Embargo: Thursday 11th May 00.01

Date: 10.05.2017

Quarter 1 Visitor Exit Survey Results

The first quarter (Q1) of 2017 saw an overall increase of total departing visitors of **+3.8%** excluding cruise ship passengers and visiting yachtsmen and an increase of **+7.1%** including cruise passengers and visiting yachtsmen. This was aided by a strong increase in visitors departing by sea of **+41.8%** versus the first quarter of 2016.

Total staying visitors were up by **+3.3%**, aided by a large increase in those travelling for business, with staying business up **+35.3%**. Leisure day and business day visits were up **+82.9%** and **+7.2%** respectively.

The results are particularly encouraging as 2017 Q1 figures do not include Easter, unlike 2016, when Easter fell earlier in the year and was included in the Q1 figures.

Quarter 1

Including cruise passengers and visiting yachtsmen, total visitor numbers increased by **+7.1%** from January – March 2017 (34,827 compared to 32,525 in Q1 2016). Excluding cruise passengers and visiting yachtsmen, visitor numbers increased by **+3.8%** (33,500 compared to 32,300 in Q1 2016).

Whilst staying leisure visitors were down by **-4.9%** (-400), total staying visitors saw an increase of **+3.3%** (+850), with total overnight stays (bed nights) also increasing by **+3.2%** (+3,350) and total staying in commercial accommodation by **+11%** (+1700). Total bed nights in commercial accommodation increased by **+15.2%** (+6,900).

A strong increase in those travelling for business helped contribute to the increase in total visitors, with staying business visitors increasing by **+35.3%** (+2,200) and business day visits increasing by **+7.2%** (+300). Leisure day trips also saw an increase of **+82.9%** (+600).

Despite relatively high levels of fog during the quarter, visitors travelling by air remained fairly static, with a slight decline of **-0.6%** (-200). The number of visitors travelling by sea, however, increased by **+41.8%** (+1,400) versus the same period in 2016.

Those visiting from the UK increased by **+1.5%** (+400), those from Jersey increased by **+15.4%** (+700), whilst other nationalities increased by **+5.3%** (+200).

As Easter fell during Q1 in 2016, this may have had an impact on the decline of both staying leisure visitors and those visiting friends and relatives in 2017. It is therefore encouraging to see an overall increase in the total staying visitors in Q1 despite this. It is also hopeful that the addition of Easter within Q2 in 2017 will have a positive impact on overall visitor numbers.

A spokesperson for VisitGuernsey said, “VisitGuernsey has been working hard to promote the island for 2017, with a new television campaign, which aired on national and satellite channels earlier this year, along with national press, cinema and digital advertising. Many exciting events have also been planned for 2017 to generate visitor growth such as the Channel Islands’ Heritage festival, Spring and Autumn Walking festivals as well as the Guernsey Food Festival in September.”

Deputy Jennifer Merrett, member of the Committee for Economic Development said, “It is encouraging to see a positive start to the year, especially visitor growth by sea which has improved year on year by +41.8%. However, this is comparing 2016 with 2017. Therefore, it may be more helpful and realistic to compare quarter one 2017 with quarter one 2015 which is when the Condor Liberation came into service. If we compare departing visitors by sea during this time frame we can see that the numbers departing by sea are still down by 1300 passengers (- 21.7%). There is still some way to go towards returning to pre-Liberation figures. It is good to see some confidence returning but it is imperative that we have resilient sea provisions for Islanders and visitors that includes regular day trips and that is a reliable service that evokes confidence in getting to and from our Island.”

Ends

Notes to Media

For media enquiries, in the first instance, please contact on email Wendy Pedder or Emily Dorey (firstname.surname@gov.gg) or tel. 234567.



Committee for
Economic Development