

RURAL

Jersey Country Life Magazine

Issue 43 | Summer 2023

Don't call it 'waste'

It can be recovered,
reused, or recycled,
says Alan Langlois

Welcome to a meal at the long table

Changing the world
through food

Special theme:

**Jersey: the natural
environment and
sustainability**



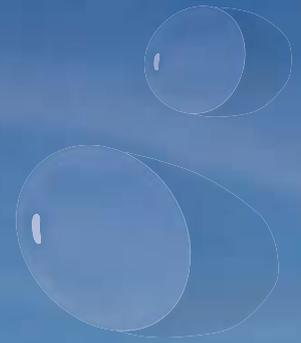
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Welcome

These days we are all green – dark green, light green, a bluish shade of green or a fiery reddish green. This edition of RURAL magazine has a green special theme of *Jersey: the natural environment and sustainability*.

An obvious example of non-sustainability is the easily perceivable effect of worldwide climate change, not least in Jersey. Who will forget the dangerously hot heatwave last summer with the highest ever temperatures both in the Island and in parts of the UK, together with the life-threatening forest fires in southwestern France and many places elsewhere?

Such major disturbances that are traceable to an environmental cause can only give us pause for thought about how we can best adapt to modern circumstances and how best to repair at least some of the ecological damage that we have wrought upon ourselves since the Industrial Revolution.

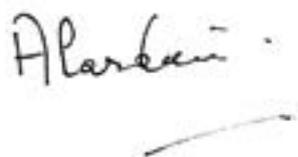
Unfortunately, there is an extremist element in certain of these green responses. The example of the Dutch government enforcing a cut of nitrogen emissions of 50% is a case in point. Large farming companies could meet this goal by using less nitrogen fertiliser and reducing the number of their livestock, whereas smaller, often family-owned farms would be forced to sell or shut down. As a European Commission document put it: *'extensifying agriculture, notably through buying out or terminating farms, with the aim of reducing livestock...'* would *'first be on a voluntary basis, but mandatory buyout is not excluded if necessary.'* A chilling and draconian threat that sounds like some pronouncement from Nazi or Soviet times.



Jersey's own farming sector has a creditable record in guarding the natural environment and practising sustainable methods of production. Other companies, such as AAL Recycling, whose owner, Alan Langlois, we profile in this issue, have fully demonstrated in practical terms the theoretical concept of the 'circular economy'. The many private individuals, who show by their actions and way of life what 'sustainability' can mean, are all to be highly commended.

Above all, the twin concepts of the circular economy and localism are ideas whose time has come – and not before time. Jersey still remains, thankfully, a small community – and as the title of E. F. Schumacher's famous book states, *Small is Beautiful*.

.....
Alasdair Crosby | Editor
www.ruraljersey.co.uk



Front cover image:

Alan Langlois of AAL Recycling Ltd, with recycled aggregate used on the surface of lanes and car parks to improve drainage, which means less potholes and less maintenance
Photo by Gary Grimshaw
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The King - Notre Duc

RURAL magazine salutes
His Majesty King Charles III
following his Coronation in
May

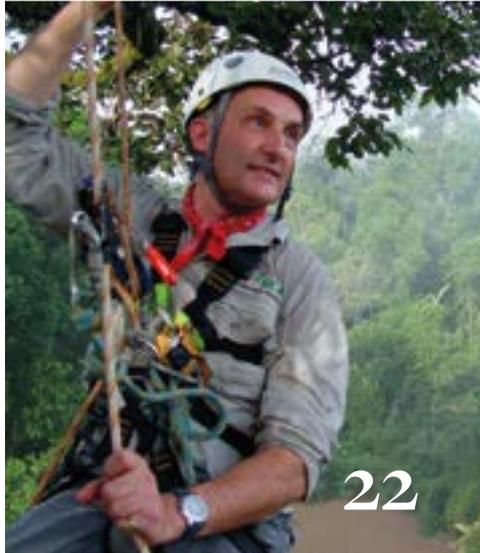
God save our gracious King!

The picture was taken in 2012 when, as The Prince of Wales, he visited the Island. In the course of his visit he met members of the public in the Royal Square.

The picture was taken by Rob Currie and is reproduced courtesy of the JEP.



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Over the wall

A RURAL view

Are Jersey farmers environmentalists? The answer to that question might well depend on the viewpoint of the respondent.

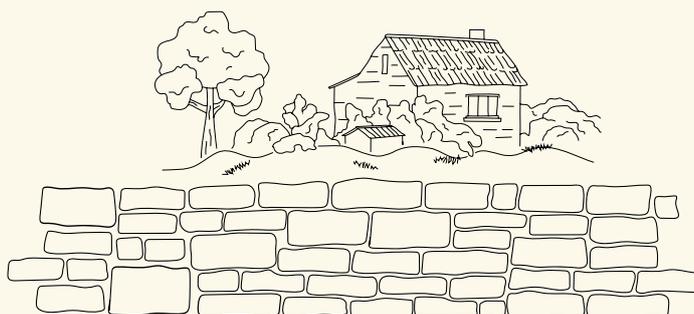
Anyone who is keen and green and who is not blinkered by prejudice can see that the Island's farming sector is just as much concerned with ecological or environmental issues – such as climate change or regenerative farming – as they might be themselves.

That the Island's farmers are indeed environmentalists is a proposition that would be most robustly argued by any Jersey farmer. In particular, the LEAF Marque would figure prominently in that argument.

Jersey commercial farmers have all signed up to achieve certification with the LEAF organisation (Linking Environment and Farming). This is a global environmental assurance system recognising high standards of environmental care, including more sustainable soil and water management, enhanced energy efficiency, improved biodiversity and landscape management, optimal animal health and welfare and stronger community connections.

In 2019, when all the local dairy and arable farmers became LEAF Marque certified, Jersey became the first 'LEAF Marque island' in the world.

The Jersey Dairy was the first dairy in the world to achieve the LEAF Marque – described as the gold standard for sustainable farming. It testifies to excellence in soil and water management, energy efficiency, high animal welfare and nature conservation.



The Island's dairy farms alone have over 2,500 species of flora and fauna recorded on their farmland. This equates to nearly a third of all currently recorded species in Jersey. Individual farmers engage in friendly competition to record which of them has the most biodiversity on their own land, or support the Branchage Group in their efforts to improve the environmental awareness of those who carry out the biannual hedgerow cut back.

There is much publicity given to methane from cows that is having a negative effect on the atmosphere by increasing greenhouse gas emissions – worldwide, it is responsible for 25% of climate warming. The Island's dairy sector has been hosting UK scientists who are using the latest technology to measure and monitor levels of methane across Jersey so as to get a better picture of how much and what is being emitted. Samples have been taken for analysis from different farms and from different areas of dairy production.

Jersey dairy farmers can use the information to cut back on their cows' methane emissions by making adjustments to the diet. The scientists are working on ways to destroy methane before it escapes into the atmosphere. Although Jersey is a tiny island, the research locally is a global first for the Island and the results can be extrapolated and used with advantage by the global dairy industry.

Moreover, the increasing sophistication of genetics applied to cattle breeding means that the digestion and metabolism of herds can be improved, with the result that more milk is produced from less feed, reducing methane in the process.

Jersey Dairy also has an important partnership with a company titled Trinity AgTech. This UK company (nothing to do with the Jersey parish!) provides a carbon emission and biodiversity evaluation programme for farms. Trinity AgTech was launched to help farms measure and leverage their carbon footprint and natural capital to create more resilient, sustainable businesses.

Turning to the other pillar of the Island's farming industry – the cultivation of Jersey Royals – the Jersey Royal Company was the first local farm to become a LEAF member in 1997 and it achieved LEAF Marque certification in 2005. The Jersey Royal Company is the first LEAF Demonstration Farm outside of mainland UK. These are working farms that are committed to delivering and promoting sustainable farming.

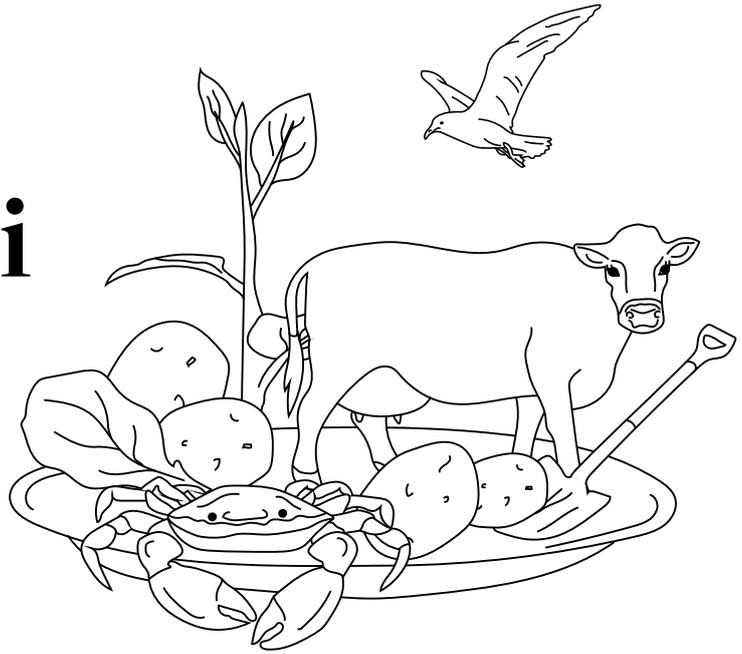
In the countryside, less volume of potatoes planted has resulted in more land available for rotation of fields and hence in far less intensive and more sustainable cultivation of the crop. It also allows for more local land to be used for growing cattle fodder rather than having to import this from elsewhere – which has self-evident environmental advantages.

The involvement of the Jersey farming industry with these two organisations illustrates the point that what it needs to deliver environmental benefits is quantifiable, data-specific information, rather than generalised aspirations – even if these aspirations are sincere and well meant.

If Jersey is ever to achieve its ambition to become carbon neutral, in line with international legal obligations, by 2050 – and the jury is very much still out on that – the Island will need this sort of quantifiable information rather than mere generalised aspiration ... and that is exactly what the farming sector is providing.

The Jersey Salmagundi

A mixed salad of events and news, with a bit of this, that and the other thrown in



Reviving a Jersey tradition

It's been a few years since Jersey had an active Young Farmers' Club but that could soon change.

Will Barker first had the idea of bringing Young Farmers' back to life, and then enlisted friends Harrison Cotillard and Jack Rondel, who was more than happy to get involved, because it's in his blood.

'Two generations of my family were in the Young Farmers'. My grandfather Lewis Rondel and my late father (Deputy) Richard Rondel were both chairman. My grandfather met my grandmother Pam there, and my Dad met my Mum Katrina there, so the club means a great deal to me. It's a big part of my life, my heart and my family,' Jack says proudly.

The Jersey Young Farmers' clubhouse at Trinity was a hub for young people with similar views and hobbies to come together and have a good time. And that's the atmosphere that the trio of friends want to replicate.

'There are not a lot of social clubs in Jersey at the moment. I think since Covid a lot of young people have been stuck inside, don't socialise much anymore... apart from at school and maybe in afterschool club activities.

'We've had a social event at Jersey Bowl which was very successful. Loads of youngsters came up who loved it. Now we're looking to form the new committee for the Jersey Young Farmers' Club, to keep the tradition going and keep young people interested in the history of farming and the Jersey countryside,' he said.

Competitions were a trademark of Young Farmers', and one of the first to be revived would be a Tractor Pull - from the Horse and Hound at Red Houses to the Dolphin at Gorey.

'We've got all the trophies for the competitions including Ploughing, which was called the Breezing Contest. There are other competitions like cauliflower packing and black butter making. There was also the Young Farmers' Concert which was always held at the clubhouse itself,' Jack explains.

Once the Young Farmers' is back in business, Will, Harrison and Jack hope the clubhouse will become a fun place for young people aged 14 to 25, not just with those competitions, but also quiz nights, barbecues, weekly club nights with table tennis and other games, and maybe even rehearsals for an annual concert.

“Keep the tradition going and keep young people interested...”

Jack hopes that it will provide a much-needed space for young people, many of whom, even if they're not from a farming background, are increasingly interested in the environment.

'It's a good time to bring together young people interested in those issues, because at the end of the day we're going to be paying the consequences for these issues in the years to come. Also, a social club like the Young Farmers' is a great place for young people to talk about issues, maybe talk politics, and just have fun!'

- Cathy Le Feuvre

If you're interested in getting involved in the Jersey Young Farmers' Club, contact them through their Facebook page.



Jack Rondel

Parish-based composting

Nurturing our soil to protect our future

Despite agriculture using up 36,500 vergées of Island land (56%) according to the RJA&HS, our soil has not received the care it needs over the last five decades or so, as Andrew Le Quesne, chairman of Earth Project Jersey, explains:

‘Up until the 1950s we collected all the vrac (seaweed) off the beaches to use as fertiliser, resulting in full regenerative agriculture. However, after the Second World War, fertiliser was being made cheaply and effectively. In addition to increased labour costs, collecting seaweed became too economically intensive for farmers.

‘This has led to increasingly poor soil quality, which is not just detrimental to the quality of our produce, but also to the structure of land and its ability to hold off events such as flooding and landslides.’

Soil food web microbiologist at The Carbon Farm, Glyn Mitchell, has looked into this problem: ‘Soil carbon levels have been depreciating dramatically because of how much we have taken from the soil to grow crops and don’t give back. They used to be up to 15-20%, they are currently around 3%.’

Soil organic matter significantly improves the soil’s capacity to store and supply essential nutrients and to retain toxic elements, allowing for changes in soil acidity, and helping minerals to decompose faster.

As part of Jersey’s attempts to meet carbon budgets and prepare for climate change via the Climate Council’s Carbon Neutral Roadmap, one local parish is looking to help Islanders collectively compost their green waste.

St Saviour ran a trial during the Covid pandemic by providing a temporary green waste collection, with it being delivered to La Collette for composting. It saved about 900 tonnes of CO₂ entering the atmosphere, which went a long way to the parish meeting its net-zero CO₂ commitment at very little cost, according to The Carbon Farm. It is now proposing fortnightly kerbside collection and delivery for a subscribing household cost of £35/40 per year.

Andrew suggests going a step further:

‘We (Earth Project Jersey) are proposing identifying a potential composting site within the parish and securing planning consent for its use as a commercial composting site.’

This was also proposed by Glyn Mitchell in 2021.

Andrew suggests that St Saviour could sell compost to its parishioners for domestic and commercial use, and it would also generate carbon credits which it can use to offset the carbon footprint of parish vehicles and buildings. Attractively, that feeds back into how much parishioners would have to pay in rates.

“ We are proposing identifying a potential composting site within the parish and securing planning consent for its use as a commercial composting site

He said: ‘Whether parish-based composting goes ahead or not, it is undeniably worth taking more time to consider increasing our soil organic matter at a domestic level and also helping support our farmers in doing so on a larger scale’

- *Tori Orchard*



The Windmill by Jersey Kitchen

From a small eatery in Cheapside 20 years ago to a farm-to-fork restaurant by a 19th Century windmill in St Peter – The Windmill by Jersey Kitchen is the latest venture for Tony and Helen Sargeant

In autumn last year, Tony and Helen Sargeant took a leap of faith and accepted an offer from Catherine Best to take on the restaurant, the Windmill, in St Peter, while still continuing with their outside catering business.

Tony explained: 'It was the week after we'd been given notice on our premises near the Airport, so we'd gone from potentially eviction, to finding our utopian venue within a week.'

Covid had also presented many challenges. 'We sunk everything into surviving,' Helen said. With their new business at the Windmill, Tony emphasised: 'Local is key, I'm Jersey-born and bred and it's always been core to our values. Supporting local, you cut down on many things – air miles, plastic etc.'

Helen added. 'We grow our own edible flowers and garnishes for our dishes. Flowers are unbelievably expensive – they are flown in a little plastic container and last for one day. Here it's pick as you need. We also take a big stand on sustainable products.'

Their head chef, Hector, is also a business partner. 'We've all been together for 20 years; it's a lovely working relationship we have,' she said.

Working with local farmers is another important business aspect.

'One of our local suppliers produces "moolloumi"' Helen said. 'They also do great Jersey Wagyu beef.'

The Windmill location is ideal.

Tony reflected: 'If we open the kitchen back door, we see potato fields – they've just started seeding. We buy from a local family. We're very much in favour of creating virtuous circles, so we'd like to see the farmers dig their potatoes and hand us a bag over the wall.'

'It's sustainability over profit every time. It costs a fortune but it's morally and ethically the right thing to do.'

The business will be open as a 'posh café' during the day, with regular theme nights and events. With little waste and limited transport times, the menus promise to be fresh and flavoursome.

'We're thinking of holding a paella night or lobster and chips every other Thursday – or if a fisherman rings us and has lots of fresh mackerel, we'll take the opportunity. We'll also do a veggie/vegan option and if we sell say 80 tickets, will do just 80 portions.'



'We're incredibly excited about having a new venue and handpicked staff,' Tony finished. 'We've already got bookings for 60 birthday parties and anniversaries.'

A far cry from a small urban restaurant.

- Kieranne Grimshaw



Tony Sargeant (centre, back row) with team. Chef Hector (with beard) on right

“ If we open the kitchen back door, we see potato fields – they've just started seeding. We buy from a local family. We're very much in favour of creating virtuous circles, so we'd like to see the farmers dig their potatoes and hand us a bag over the wall

Royal farms assist Jersey Dairy industry with restocking programme

In 2022, the Royal Jersey Agricultural & Horticultural Society and the Jersey Milk Marketing Board arranged to make a presentation to Queen Elizabeth II of seven heifers, to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee and to acknowledge Her Majesty's long reign

A group of maiden heifers that represent a cross section of breeding from the leading herds in Jersey were selected, and remained in Jersey to be bred with the view to creating a lasting legacy within the Windsor herd of a breeding line that traces back into the heritage of the Jersey Herd Book and the origins of the Jersey breed.

Following the accession to the throne of His Majesty King Charles III, arrangements were in hand for the shipping of the animals to Windsor, when, in December last year, Woodlands Farm at Mont-à-l'Abbé, one of the leading herds in the Island, suffered the tragic loss of the majority of its milking herd.

The loss of milk supply, in an Island that does not allow for the importation of live animals, can only be replaced by retaining milking stock and in-calf heifers. The challenge this presented to the JMMB, as the Island's milk co-operative, was met by the members who pledged animals to help the affected herd restock as quickly as possible.

His Majesty, aware of the loss of cattle and the efforts of the members of the co-operative, graciously gifted the seven in-calf heifers to assist with the restocking programme in support of the dairy farming community.

“A lasting legacy within the Windsor herd of a breeding line that traces back into the heritage of the Jersey Herd Book

The heifers were presented to the Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey, Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd, who, on behalf of His Majesty, gifted them to the Le Boutillier family of Woodlands Farm to help them restock their farm. The progeny of these animals will be recorded within the Jersey Herd Book with the affix 'Platinum' to their pedigree name to mark the deep links between the Sovereign and the Jersey breed in the Island.



Members of the Co-operative, who bred the heifers, and the Lieutenant-Governor presenting the animals to Charlie Le Boutillier in front of Jersey Dairy.

From left to right: Vicky Huelin (Freedom Farms); Phil Le Maistre (Master Farms); Paul Houzé (Lodge Farm); Rob Perchard, president, RJA&HS; Tom Perchard (La Ferme); Charlie Le Boutillier (Woodlands

Farm); Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd, Lieutenant-Governor; Phil Le Maistre, chairman, Jersey Milk Marketing Board; Andrew Le Gallais (Cowley Farm); Jim Carter (Trinity Manor Farm); John Le Feuvre (Les Augerez Farm).

Photo credit: Ollie Jones Photography

A new life for Morel Farm

Morel Farm in St Lawrence – one of Jersey’s oldest and most attractive farms, began a new lease of life recently when the Lieutenant-Governor, Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd, opened the newly restored and converted farm as self-catering holiday accommodation. The property is owned by the National Trust for Jersey and was gifted to it by Arthur Morel in 1939

The Trust recently stated: ‘Imagine waking up in a delightful bedroom in an historic early 18th Century farmhouse, surrounded by lovingly restored antique furniture and paintings and perhaps even a traditional Jersey press in which to store your clothes.

“With almost one third of the Island’s population living in an urban environment, a stay at Morel Farm would be a peaceful escape. For others, time away from home would be in a unique farm stay vacation

‘Well, this imagining is now nearing reality as the main house, the “Bake House” and the outbuilding known colloquially as “The Chapel” have been refurbished and furnished with beautiful furniture repurposed and repaired from our store as a result of a fiscal stimulus grant from the Government of Jersey.’

The restoration has not been without controversy, with some Islanders expressing concerns about noise and disruption during and following the transformation of the farm, and whether a more suitable role for the farm could be found other than as self-catering accommodation.

Asked whether the farm might have been better transformed, for example, into an educational establishment to encourage and train new entrants into agriculture, the CEO of the National Trust for Jersey, Charles Alluto, replied: ‘The idea is certainly sound, and something that the National Trust would support. Unfortunately, the only funding we have available came from the Fiscal Stimulus Fund and is for the express purpose of creating self-catering accommodation for tourists.



The Lieutenant-Governor with CEO of the National Trust for Jersey, Charles Alluto

‘However, tourism needs to be encouraged in the interests of the Island’s economy. There are far fewer hotels in Jersey than there were just a few years ago and fewer outlets that cater for tourists. We hope that the “new” Morel Farm will do something to attract tourists and to reverse the current trend of decline.

‘If we wish to encourage new entrants into the agricultural sector we need to have a concerted effort by all sectors of the industry, including government, to identify suitable premises with adequate land, infrastructure and long-term financial sustainability. Unfortunately, the Trust does not have adequate resources to undertake such an initiative single-handed.’

He added: ‘With almost one third of the Island’s population living in an urban environment, a stay at Morel Farm would be a peaceful escape. For others, time away from home would be in a unique farm stay vacation. It is rural but not remote, and of course visitors to the Island can enjoy a wonderful rustic experience in a stunning old farmstead.’



Horses' health and sycamore seedlings

NOW is the time for Jersey's horse owners to keep checking their fields for sycamore seedlings which can contain a toxin that kills horses within days

Suspected cases of atypical myopathy or sycamore poisoning are on the rise in the Island as the number of horses affected by the disease continues to increase steadily in the UK.

Specialist equine vet Róisín Wood said she had seen 'a handful' of suspected cases this year and recently sent blood samples to the UK for testing. During the last decade she has seen two possible cases in Jersey.

'Both horses that we lost in the past had really high muscle enzymes and the way they presented made me very suspicious, but I've never actually had a positive confirmed case of atypical myopathy because the people weren't motivated enough to test,' she said.

“With sycamore poisoning you really are in the hands of the gods because once horses get it they either survive or they don't

Ró explained that sycamore trees release seed pods in the autumn – the 'helicopters' often feted by children – and these can have high concentrations of hypoglycin A which can be toxic to horses.

However, not all sycamore trees produce leaves, seeds and seedlings with high concentrations of the toxin and not all horses react adversely to having high concentrations of the toxin in their blood.

'What is really interesting about atypical myopathy is that ten years ago we didn't understand it at all. Horses have been grazing paddocks with sycamore trees for thousands of years so it was a bit of a mystery about what was causing the deaths,' said Ró.

Sadly, statistics reveal that three quarters of those horses diagnosed with sycamore poisoning die within days of showing muscular disorders.

'Unlike acorn poisoning, which can be treated, with sycamore poisoning you really are in the hands of the gods because once horses get it they either survive or they don't,' said Ró. 'There aren't that many treatment options available so you are much better testing the plants rather than waiting for your horse to show clinical signs because atypical myopathy tends to happen in little groups so you have people who lose all their horses to it.'

She added that ongoing research in the UK is examining whether there is a connection between climate and management factors which might make certain sycamore trees more toxic.

'It could be that, as the climate in Jersey is very different from the UK, we may not have the toxin in such high concentrations in sycamore trees here,' said Ró.

She suggested that if anybody was concerned they could arrange for saplings to be tested for hypoglycin A levels at the Royal Veterinary College in the UK.

In the meantime, Ró advises horse owners to rake up sycamore seed pods in the autumn to prevent the seedlings sprouting in the spring or to fence off affected areas and pull the plants out by hand.

Other options include mowing the saplings regularly or using an appropriate weedkiller, although the plants will need to have died back completely and rotted before horses can be reintroduced onto the pasture which can take several weeks.

'Pull the saplings out, kill them,' said Ró, 'and remember there is a high variability in the time it takes for germination so you can get further seedlings once the fields have been sprayed.'

– *Ruth Le Cocq*





Don't call it
'waste'...



...otherwise Alan Langlois, the owner of AAL Recycling Ltd, might have words with you. He believes waste can be recovered, reused, and recycled and as a result landfill could be stopped or slowed right down.

Alan spoke to Alasdair Crosby

Out of sight, out of mind. For most Islanders outside of the construction sector, or who have no need to collect topsoil for gardening, there is little reason to visit the area at the extremity of La Collette where AAL Recycling Ltd operates. It is a dusty wilderness of mounds of rubble, sand and old glass – and yet, this wilderness is an exemplar of recycling waste in the Island – waste that would otherwise go to landfill.

‘You call it waste,’ said AAL Recycling’s owner Alan Langlois, ‘but we don’t think of it that way. I want to stop landfill. Even if you just reuse recycled material once, it saves on something being extracted from the ground. You name it – we can recycle it.’

Alan is an advocate of the concept of a circular economy: ‘As far as the construction industry is concerned ... well, that sector is one of the world’s largest waste generators. The notion of a circular economy is a helpful solution to diminish the adverse environmental impact of the industry. For example, end-of-life buildings can be deconstructed, thus creating construction elements that can be used for creating new buildings – as well as freeing up space for new development.

‘I do like the fact that we are almost like a problem solver for how to handle Jersey’s waste. We have phenomenal technology. The material that comes out of our wash plant is all reusable, be it stone, soil or sand.’

The wash plant to which he referred is a giant aggregate washing and grading machine, acquired in February last year.

‘It is an amazing bit of engineering,’ he said, ‘but it is a bit of a monster! It’s a big piece of kit – I don’t know if there are many other bits of kit that involve

air, hydraulics, electrics and water. You throw everything into it. It’s like making a stew, then deconstructing it: it takes mud, dirt – the lot. Not only does it give us clean, crushed stone (which is our core business), it gives us sand ... which, with gravel and crushed stone, is a major component of the aggregate used in the production of concrete.

“ You call it waste, but we don’t think of it that way. I want to stop landfill. Even if you just reuse recycled material once, it saves on something being extracted from the ground. You name it – we can recycle it

‘That is important because there is a query over the availability of future domestic supplies of sand. If that were to dry up, we would have to import it. This machine can give us supplies of sand from washed mixed soil and clay.

‘This washing plant, powered by the energy derived from the Island’s household waste, turns discarded building and demolition aggregates into viable, construction quality materials. It is a major step to the Island’s ambition of reaching carbon neutrality by 2030.’



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Destroyed field banks are regenerated by AAL Recycling using its own recycled product, 'Agri-soil'

Alan continued: 'We are also able to supply recycled small stone for landscaping projects rather than the Island having to extend existing quarries to extract fresh supplies.'

'The wash plant enables us to recycle 100% of all waste received, of which 32% is soil, 23% is sand and 45% is aggregate. Last year we washed 43,000 tons, and every single ton that came through our gate went back out as material. In total, with both the wet and the dry aggregates, we've sent 129,000 tons out of the gate. And there's been no waste to that at all.'

'Agri-Soil' is the name they give to the recycled soil. He was asked whether this was used as part of regenerative agriculture to improve the soil in the Island's fields?

'A lot of fields are very stony, and the decrease in crop rotations does not improve their quality, either. Some fields over the years have had their soil washed downhill, possibly on to the surface of an adjacent roadway. We can restore the soil by spreading around 40 tons of Agri-soil per vergée. Grazing cows tend to destroy banks; we repair the banks with the same Agri-soil.'

In short, AAL is trying to recycle waste so it can be used again. But although recycling is rightly seen as environmentally beneficial, there is still in many quarters a prejudice against recycled material, since it is perceived to be of inferior quality to fresh material. So, Alan's company is on a mission to convince Islanders – be they construction companies, engineers, or landscape gardeners – of the merits of recycling.

'We are so successful at washing,' he said, 'that we've got an abundance of material – and being an island, our market is necessarily finite. We now bag our recycled sand, and sell the bags to the construction industry and builders' merchants – 3,312 20kg bags in March. In addition, we make our own non-structural concrete.'

The sandbags used at Grands Vaux during the recent flooding came from AAL, and there are a host of other applications for its recycled products.

“ A lot of fields are very stony, and the decrease in crop rotations does not improve their quality, either. Some fields over the years have had their soil washed downhill, possibly on to the surface of an adjacent roadway. We can restore the soil by spreading around 40 tons of Agri-soil per vergée. Grazing cows tend to destroy banks; we repair the banks with the same Agri-soil

To improve the surface of carparks, ‘eco-grids’ (interlocking mesh containers filled with AAL recycled aggregate) are placed on the surface of sandy carparks, which facilitates drainage and means less potholes, a smoother surface for cars and less maintenance.

A prime example is the Frances Le Sueur Centre off the Five Mile Road, St Ouen, where, in his words, the surface used to be ‘horrible’ for car drivers but is now both level and firm. Among other places to benefit from recycled products are the Jersey Model Aircraft Club at Les Landes, a new footpath at St Peter, the car parks at Grosnez and the lower end of St Catherine Woods – there are many different contracts whereby the aim is to use recycled materials that blend with the environment.

Using material such as eco-blocks and flood bags, AAL Recycling assisted with the restoration and creation of the new Platinum Jubilee Footpath between Gigoulade Mill in St Peter’s Valley and The Elms in St Mary.

The rise of AAL has been swift and noteworthy: Alan started out with one digger and his first employee was his father. It is now the Channel Islands’ most extensive commercial and domestic demolition, haulage, recycling and excavation contractor, employing over 80 people with a fleet of 40 lorries and over 30 plant machines.

‘The investment needed is fantastic,’ Alan acknowledged. ‘It’s been risky at times but it’s worked because I am still here 31 years later! And very successful it is too because, like a farmer, I have to put in 12 to 14 hours of work a day. You’ve got to love what you do. There’s not a night I wake up thinking about something I haven’t done. I have a list on the kitchen table with all my notes and thoughts and sometimes I’m up three or four times a night to add things to it.’

His capacity to tolerate long hours of work derives, perhaps, from his family’s historical involvement in farming, although he was born on Le Squez Estate and went to St Helier Boys’ School until he was 15. He would have left earlier if he could have done so – he was far more interested in being a motor mechanic at Bel Royal Motors than in academic work. He left school on his 15th birthday and never went back.

Aged 21 he travelled to Australia and then to America and afterwards came back to work in the Island. His company’s journey began with him buying that first digger.

‘The reward is there – it’s just trying to find more people that are interested in what we are doing and who care about the Island.’

‘People have got to start caring a bit more. We live in a very spoiled society in Jersey.’

“**To improve the surface of carparks, ‘eco-grids’ (interlocking mesh containers filled with AAL recycled aggregate) are placed on the surface of sandy carparks, which facilitates drainage and means less potholes, a smoother surface for cars and less maintenance**

‘I like to think of what we do as part of a circular economy. When buildings are demolished, we take the rubble that would otherwise go to landfill – clean it, crush it, and produce lots of quality assured products that can be sold back to the building industry.’

‘Once, all the building rubble would have gone to landfill. But the Island is almost at full capacity for that. We can use the rubble to produce aggregate from the crushed stone, which is a component of concrete and asphalt, and we can also use it equally to produce chippings for garden paths.’

‘Why quarry rock for making aggregate or producing chippings, when exactly the same product can be used from recycled material? Our solutions have minimised extracting sand and aggregates having to be quarried.’

He added: ‘We are trying to get people to think about what they are buying and to buy sustainable products. Don’t buy raw materials that have to be imported or extracted; give waste products the chance to have a productive use. The key thing for us is to stop the landfill and to recycle waste.’

‘Recycle it – Make it – Use it! The advantage of that for the Island’s construction industry – and for the whole of the Island – speaks for itself. I am proud to be at the forefront of this change.’



Alan at Frances Le Sueur Centre, demonstrating recycled aggregate



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Any old wood?

Reducing the amount of timber being thrown away in Jersey.

By Caroline Spencer

Acorn Woodshack has been instrumental in holding discussions aimed at reducing the amount of timber that is being thrown away in the Island. It has been speaking to government ministers and building contractors to find ways of reducing timber waste.

The Woodshack, a social enterprise providing work and training opportunities for people who have a disability or long-term health condition, prides itself not only on reusing waste timber but also on being a zero-waste operation.

Woodshack manager John Hill said: ‘We reuse demolition timber, which we de-nail and sell to the public for a third of the cost of buying new. We create bespoke items for the home, such as tables and bookcases, and an array of items such as planters and picnic benches for the garden.

‘Any unusable timber is put into our industrial wood burner which heats our workshop. The only waste product that we produce, sawdust, is turned into briquettes, which are a great alternative to burning fossil fuels and in turn generate an income and are sold to the public, alongside our other firewood products.’

The Woodshack makes up to 7,000 bags of kindling every year which are supplied to local supermarkets. In 2021, with the support of the Rotary Club of Jersey, compostable cardboard boxes were introduced, with the intention of phasing out plastic packaging.

The Woodshack also sells timber to the general public, providing an eco-friendly alternative – and cheaper option – to buying new.

“ We reuse demolition timber, which we de-nail and sell to the public for a third of the cost of buying new. We create bespoke items for the home, such as tables and bookcases, and an array of items such as planters and picnic benches for the garden

One demolition contractor who has supported the Woodshack since it started in 2014, is Alan Langlois, owner of AAL Recycling Ltd.

‘I teamed up with John Hill and Acorn general manager Steve Pearce in the early days,’ he said. ‘I quickly realised when I set up my business that everything we were throwing away could be reused. We take all our timber to the Woodshack. Very few weeks go by without us speaking.’

Wood from demolished hotels like the Revere, the Stafford, the Fort d’Auvergne and the Portelet has all gone to Acorn and been reused instead of being incinerated. Alan believes that all contractors should have to do the same.

‘The majority of demolitions are in town so most goes to the incinerator out of convenience,’ he said. ‘What we at AAL do differently is take care at the stripping stage so that materials are clean when they come out. In demolition, it’s all about deconstructing, reversing how you built it, and it’s not difficult to do. What’s more important is saving the planet’s resources and reducing the amount of material imported into the Island.’

John said: ‘Alan’s commitment to us and recycling in general is second to none. Many hotels which have been demolished in recent years were in St Helier and it would have been so much easier for them to dump this into the waste stream, but Alan and his team brought the timber to us at no cost.’

‘Although we have great support from companies such as AAL Recycling and from the Energy Recovery Facility at La Collette, we believe that there is so much more that can be done to reduce the amount of demolition timber ending up in the waste stream.’

Last year the Government of Jersey introduced a new initiative to prevent useable wood from entering the waste stream. A new skip has been placed at La Collette’s Household Recycling and Reuse Centre, allowing Islanders to segregate items of wood. All the material will be sent to the Acorn Woodshack, for reuse or resale.

Wood that is painted, varnished, badly damaged, split, rotten or containing woodworm is not accepted.



John Hill



Changing the nature of money

By Andrew Mitchell, vice chairman of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosure (TNFD) Stewardship Council

I grew up on a Jersey farm learning the language of chickens. You might think this an odd occupation. Studying 50 Sussex hens and a few cockerels, at a young age, I soon understood how they clucked for food, growled at risks, or cocked their heads when seeking new opportunities.

During a lifetime attempting to save rainforests and tackle climate change, I have found this insight to be surprisingly useful when attempting to decipher the incomprehensible language of scientists, policy makers, and more recently, asset managers and bankers.

Further education came when a love of natural history cultivated on our Grouville farm led me to Durrell, zoology, and decades of expeditions into rainforests. I found their canopies to be one of the most unexplored regions on Earth. Building walkways up there in the treetops enabled me for the first time to experience the interface between life and the atmosphere. It wasn't a pretty sight. In subsequent years I watched dumbfounded as commerce sent rainforests up in flames as addictively as any smoker burning out the lining of their lungs.

Settling in Oxford, I created a research group, Global Canopy, dedicated to using the language of science to combat the unsustainable advance of industrialised agriculture and logging across the world's rainforests. I concluded that unless we change the movement of money that financed such activities, we will finance ourselves into extinction. By hugging trees, I could not save them, so I started hugging asset managers and bankers instead.

“What if we could green the Jersey finance industry? What if we could wake up finance to its footprint, not just on forests, but all of nature?”

Sitting on the Écréhous one summer, I penned the Natural Capital Declaration. It was a bold call to action to the financial sector to halt financing the destruction of forests and declare their impacts on nature. To my surprise, quite a large number signed up. The Declaration was launched at the UN's Rio Earth Summit in 2012 and led to the formation of the Natural Capital Finance Alliance.

With the Alliance at my back, I could accelerate a discussion about footprints. 'Ah yes, you mean on my way to work,' one banker said. 'No', I replied, 'I mean your global one, flattening forests.'



“**Sitting on the Écréhous one summer, I penned the Natural Capital Declaration. It was a bold call to action to the financial sector to halt financing the destruction of forests and declare their impacts on nature. To my surprise, quite a large number signed up**

Forest Footprint Disclosure project was later merged with the Carbon Disclosure Project to create CDP, now the largest disclosure organisation in the world.

After 35 years of winters in the Cotswolds and family summers on Jersey beaches, the beaches won. My wife and I returned to live permanently back in the Island two weeks before lockdown. I had plenty of time to contemplate the movement of money and spring flowers in the lanes. Ideas began to germinate.

What if we could green the Jersey finance industry? What if we could wake up finance to its footprint, not just on forests, but all of nature?

Well, the first turned into ‘Jersey for Good’, Jersey Finance Ltd’s excellent plan to make Jersey the leading international Sustainable Finance Centre in the markets it serves by 2030. The second translated itself into the global Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosure or TNFD as it is now known.

This latter beast has grown well beyond its Jersey nest. We were fortunate in recruiting two outstanding co-chairs: David Craig, the former head of Refinitiv, one of the world’s largest financial data providers, and Elizabeth Mrema, then the executive director of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and chief cheerleader for COP 15. This balanced the language of finance and nature.

The risk management and reporting framework that we have been working on since lockdown, will finally be released in September this year. Already 200 organisations are testing Beta versions of it around the world, before the final one has even been released. They may not be hugging trees yet, but the financial sector is already embracing TNFD worldwide.

So, what does all this add up to? Ultimately it is a battle between values and valuations. We all use banks and some of us have pension funds, but do we ever ask them what they are doing with our money? A new understanding of risk is emerging, that affects everyone of us. Climate risk has catalysed a revolution in the global energy system. Nature risk might catalyse a revolution in the global food system. Investors are increasingly hungry for a climate and nature-positive economy.

And that could be good for all of us.



Andrew Mitchell is an international thought leader on natural capital finance and tropical forests, who provides strategic advice on natural capital to the finance sector.

On 5 June (World Environment Day), Andrew is due to receive the Royal Geographical Society’s Founder’s Medal, its highest Royal Award, for a lifetime of achievement protecting rainforests and combatting climate change.



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To rewild or
not to rewild...

... could that be the question for Jersey?

Mike Stentiford of the Jersey National Park reflects on the future

Think grazing bison, howling wolves, dam building beavers, or even an occasional lurking lynx, and there you have it – rewilding.

It's a comparatively new eco buzzword that continues to gain traction in Britain and many other parts of the world.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), rewilding is all about 'restoring ecosystems in order to allow an increase in, and healthy return of, biodiversity'.

Whether or not it's a subject that would find favour here in Jersey is, of course, open to question. Depending on the scale of any local rewilding project, a majority show of hands in favour, as opposed to those against, might at least offer a hint of engagement.

Certainly, finding itself completely adrift on a local environmental score sheet would be any grandiose inklings of introducing major herbivores or beasts of a predatory nature. Doing so, as demonstrated in many of Britain's most successful rewilding initiatives, would require a generously spacious degree of diverse landscape, a gloriously major attribute that the Island sadly lacks.

When it comes to vast and truly enviable tracts of limitless land, then it's worth acknowledging some of the UK's most successful rewilding projects – the Knepp Estate in West Sussex (951 hectares), Blean Woods in Kent (415 acres) and Allestree Park in Derbyshire (130 acres).

Attempting to compare such impressive acreage with what we might boldly claim as open landscape here in Jersey would be somewhat silly and pointless. Nevertheless, it would be quite wrong

to dilute or diminish the true meaning of rewilding which, after all, is simply the recovery of ecosystems in order that nature can take care of itself.

“**Doing our bit, by proposing a specific local area where modest degrees of worthwhile rewilding might create a visible difference would, I'm sure, deliver a unanimous show of hands in favour of the wide, open landscape of St Ouen's Bay**”

This, then, might offer an opportunity to carry out what could arguably be regarded as small scale rewilding initiatives, proving that as a modestly small island, we're at least doing our bit.

'Doing our bit', by proposing a specific local area where modest degrees of worthwhile rewilding might create a visible difference would, I'm sure, deliver a unanimous show of hands in favour of the wide, open landscape of St Ouen's Bay.

As Jersey's largest area of open managed landmass – think National Trust, the States natural environment team, farmers, growers and private landowners – then the opportunities for collaborative rewilding initiatives become blindingly obvious.

Apart from embracing the Island's largest open expanse of dune, scrub, wetland, grassland and farmland, it also has the added protected bonus of national park status. Such attributes surely offer the kind of landscape whereby a small scale collective project might be seriously considered.

But, being prepared and fully aware of the environmental nuts and bolts of such worthy intent obviously requires a measure of thoughtful planning.

In 2022, the National Trust for Jersey and the Jersey National Park commissioned separate reports setting out a future vision for St Ouen's Bay in its entirety.

Compiled by ecologist John Pinel, these visionary documents offer a clear indication of what can be environmentally improved and achieved in order to make St Ouen's Bay 'special' again.

Much is already being undertaken to improve the lot of local biodiversity, but more could be ambitiously accomplished should an element of genuine collaboration be garnered.

Improving ponds and better managing reedbeds, the planting of new hedging and the creation of random copses. All those simple improvements that create significantly important wildlife connecting corridors in an area known for its comparative openness.

A regime of grassland restoration at La Mielle de Morville has been on the seasonal schedules of the Environment Department for quite some time, with extra appreciated voluntary assistance recently arriving from the Rotary Club of Jersey.

As adept conservation grazers, the Manx Loaghtan long horn sheep are also making valid environmental contributions although, unsurprisingly, not quite on the same scale as the UK's imported herbivores.

“With so many tasks regularly being undertaken by various other voluntary conservation groups, a spate of joined up partnerships could create an environmentally productive rewilding project that would surely work beneficial wonders for biodiversity

With so many tasks regularly being undertaken by various other voluntary conservation groups, a spate of joined up partnerships could create an environmentally productive rewilding project that would surely work beneficial wonders for biodiversity.

With such ideal components already in place – tailor made livestock, charity organisations, conservation volunteers, potential sponsors plus a well informed roadmap for future conservation initiatives – there's little to hinder St Ouen's Bay from becoming a rewilding hot spot.

It would, however, be extremely disingenuous to imagine that every rewilding project, whether major or minor, is hailed as a resounding success. Dramatic failures can also be guaranteed when ambitions prove a smidgen 'over-wild'.

An intended long term project, kick-started in the Netherlands some 40 years ago, involved the introduction into a large area of reclaimed land of Heck cattle, Konik horses and red deer.

No matter how sincere the initial rewilding intentions were, the animals failed to be managed properly and could neither find nor move to new territories. Overgrazing of the degraded native vegetation during a spate of harsh winters finally led to a loss of 30% of the animals.

In 2018, a dramatically revised management plan was introduced but the initiative clearly shows the potential perils and pitfalls of such large scale rewilding projects.

So, let's not underestimate what can be reasonably achieved locally in a modestly small but determined way.

Small, they say, can be beautiful, and especially so should thoughtful and responsible partnerships be put to sound environmental use.



Saving Jersey's seeds

In the face of climate change and biodiversity loss, building agricultural resilience is more important than ever

Some 40% of plant species are at risk of extinction, but one way to preserve the world's flora for future generations is through seed banks.

With this in mind, a new seed bank has been established in Jersey to safeguard the Island's native and naturalised edible plant species. It joins some 1,700 other seed banks around the world.

The goal of the Jersey Edible Seed Bank is to store backups of as many species as possible, using seed donations from local partnerships and community seed keepers over the next two years.

'Some of the biggest threats to plants are monoculture crops and insect loss through the use of pesticides,' said India Hamilton, the project's founder.

'Seed banks are a cost-effective tool for conserving plants, providing an insurance policy against potential threats.'

India is encouraging local growers to take part in the project. The Jersey Edible Seed Bank will host a series of seed collecting training events, and contributors will be given collection kits to help harvest and categorise their seeds.

Up to 200 seeds will then be displayed at the Jersey Museum as part of the Jersey Heritage food themed exhibition – Bouan Appétit! – starting 15 July 2023.

'This new exhibition will be about action and impact, as well as education, using the process to create an ongoing provision for Jersey,' India said.

'Each seed will be accompanied by its historical and cultural story – where the crop grows, who collected the seed, what recipes have traditionally been made from the plant.'

'Through food, we can connect with nature, and in turn improve soil strength, ecological resilience and human health.'

Seeds will be dried, frozen and stored underground in ceramic pots made by four local potters: Evangeline Yates, Lindsay Rutter, Andrew Sinclair and Land and Moon Ceramics.

Two community partners will then maintain the seed bank – the horticultural project GROW Jersey, and the Sustainable Cooperative, SCOOP.

Seeds from the collection will be planted periodically to restock the seed bank and ensure the plants adapt to changing environmental conditions.

If you would like to donate seeds, first visit <https://pfaf.org> (Plants For A Future) to see if the plant is edible. Visit the Jersey Heritage social media channels for more information on the seed database

– Hannah Voak

“This new exhibition will be about action and impact, as well as education, using the process to create an ongoing provision for Jersey



L-R: Fiona Murphy, India Hamilton, Sophie Carroll



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Growth for the community

The parish of Grouville has been leading the way by being one of the few parishes to have a climate action group. Now, it is evolving into something else - and it is all about community and change. By Caroline Spencer



Clos des Pauvres

Every parish has a Clos des Pauvres, the legacy of Jeanne Gruchy, who died on 6 January 1848, aged 84. In her will she bequeathed 1,728 silver livres to each of the 12 parishes. It was the equivalent of each parish receiving £725 to buy land which had to benefit the poor and needy of the Island.

Three years after the creation of the Grow community project at Sion, there are calls for the model to be replicated in smaller versions in every parish.

Each parish has a Clos des Pauvres, a legacy of Jeanne Gruchy who died in 1848. The fields are let out to farmers, who pay approximately £1,000 per year, which must benefit the poor and needy.

Sarah Howard, who's behind a group called Grouville Community, Environment & Change, wants to see community growing schemes across the Island.

'£1,000 doesn't go very far,' she said. 'If every parish could release at least one of their Clos des Pauvres fields for community growing schemes, then there is free food for the most vulnerable members of the parish. That's helping the food crisis and the cost of living crisis. Also, people come to volunteer, which helps their mental health and wellbeing, and everyone reconnects to the environment.'

And Sarah wants to take it a step further.

'What I have in mind is even bigger than that. We expand the regenerative elements of this into regenerative leadership, from business leaders and politicians to children and young people, and we link with a university living systems lab researching design for sustainable futures.

'We can start to incorporate the personal development journey and community change through connection to growing. As we grow food, we grow as individuals in community.'

Sarah, a former Jersey College for Girls student, was beaten by 72 votes in the election for Constable in Grouville last year. In 2019 she facilitated the development of a carbon neutrality strategy for the parish, which led to the creation of Environmental Grouville.

“We can start to incorporate the personal development journey and community change through connection to growing

'After the election we realised we were becoming something different and Grouville Community, Environment & Change came out of that. Regenerative change was the big theme. That's the work I do anyway in my business, Synthesis Transformation Ltd. It's all about cultural and behavioural change, from the inside out.'

Sarah is now working on a business case for the community growing schemes and needs to speak to more stakeholders, landowners and municipalities. And in the meantime, she is setting up a not-for-profit called Community, Environment and Change.

'I hadn't realised that community development was a thing, but it is what we are doing. It's the voice of the community tackling difficult problems and working with the Government and the municipality to fill the gaps.

'I have high hopes for this assembly, but they need groups like Community, Environment and Change out there on the ground to make things happen.'

She admits that it is an ambitious plan, but she says there is no reason why Jersey should not be a vanguard for regenerative change through environmental matters. 'It shouldn't be difficult, but the difficulty is the resistance to change that we see at parish level. With the community growing schemes, we need to be creative, pick up a thread of history and throw in a bit of innovation.'

'I continue to stand on a mandate for change, and if that makes me green, then we all need to be green. Climate crisis is our biggest problem, and we must bear that in mind with every action we take. We have to leave the planet in a better state than when we arrived.'



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Sustainability and Climate Change Engagement Manager for the Government of Jersey, Jane Burns, talked to Caroline Spencer

In the heatwave of 2022, just three years after the States Assembly declared a climate emergency, Jersey recorded a new record high of 37.9°C. The average temperature for the year was 13.56°C, exceeding the previous warmest year (2014) by 0.22°C. The sea temperature was also remarkable, staying above average for each day throughout the year until 13 December, and the rate of sea level rise has doubled since 1993.

Jane Burns is Sustainability and Climate Change Engagement Manager for the Government of Jersey. She and her colleague Abigail Syvret hold regular meetings with the eco active business network and are spreading the word to businesses and individuals about the need for everyone to change their habits.

‘It’s no longer a matter of talking about whether there is climate change,’ she said.

‘The Carbon Neutral Roadmap, which was voted through in April 2022, outlines the proposed policies to start our journey to net-zero.

‘We publish our greenhouse gas inventory two years in arrears, so we won’t see how we are progressing for a while. But we are already seeing the effects of climate change. 2022 was by far Jersey’s warmest year on record and there are changes in our weather patterns.

‘The Roadmap focuses on how we are bringing down our Scope 1 emissions, which are those that are generated by burning fossil fuels in the Island, essentially our transport, heating, cooking and cooling. Transport remains Jersey’s biggest emissions sector.

‘What we really want people to consider is the bigger cloud of emissions, those that come from all the goods and services that we consume. As consumers we buy a lot of stuff, and that stuff is generally made somewhere else in the world. We are concerned with the emissions associated with manufacture, extraction of raw materials and logistics to get it to us. Those emissions are counted in other countries but they are generated on our behalf. Our reach is global so we do need to think about what we are consuming, how we are buying, and what we are doing with things when we have finished with them.

‘For example, instead of buying new, could you buy second-hand or could you borrow what you need? What could you repair instead of throwing it away? Before disposing of items, consider the waste hierarchy. Can it be sold on, reused or repurposed?’

‘It’s all about trying to get people to change their consumer habits. And in a cost of living crisis what we are asking people to do fits very well with helping to save money.’

Jane says that her department is keen for ‘carrots’ rather than ‘sticks’.

‘We fully recognise this is a journey we are on. We are not expecting people to change overnight,’ she said. ‘We have talked about reducing our emissions by 68% based on 1990 by 2030. 2030 isn’t very far away but it isn’t tomorrow. We have to be realistic about it.

‘As individuals it’s about pushing yourself and making the next step. But we are very anti green-shaming. I have no interest in telling people what they are doing wrong. It’s about encouraging people to make the right choices. We are very much about the carrots which is why we have incentives like vouchers for e-bikes, and campaigns like the Love to Ride cycling scheme and “NOT a load of rubbish”.

‘But I have no doubt there will be sticks coming and the Roadmap does have legislation suggestions, such as a recommended date where we won’t be able to import any fossil fuel vehicles, or a date where you can’t install a new fossil fuel burner.

‘We are responding to an emergency and if we don’t act and make those changes, it’s going to become more expensive because we are going to have to mitigate in other ways.’

“**It’s all about trying to get people to change their consumer habits. And in a cost of living crisis what we are asking people to do fits very well with helping to save money**

Jane, whose first graduate job was as an environmental youth and community worker, said that community was really important to her, and she had wanted to make sure that the seldom heard voices were better represented.

‘We worked really hard on that in the Roadmap. We spoke to lots of different Islanders in different ways all the way through.’

With weather patterns already changing, Jane points to the Climate Warming Stripes piece of art on the Waterfront, created by Ian Rolls.

‘It’s really important from an education point of view,’ Jane said. ‘It’s not a subjective piece, it’s essentially a bar graph based on Jersey Met data. The different colours represent different temperature points and is part of a global initiative. You can look up the stripes in different countries and you will see that although a country’s “fingerprint” is unique, the overall trend is the same. Climate change is very real.

‘The targets we have set ourselves are challenging, as are the international targets. Personally, I am optimistic that we will do it, but Government alone cannot do it. It is a collective responsibility and so we need everyone to play their part.’



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Growing a sustainable future

Sheena Brockie is at the centre of many initiatives aimed at making Jersey more environmentally friendly and sustainable. Despite being such a busy person, she made time to talk to Caroline Spencer

While talking to Sheena Brockie at a country café, I become conscious that I have ordered a plastic bottle of sparkling water. I apologise but she is quick to make me feel better. After all, she says, she drove here in her second-hand petrol-fuelled car.

We all do what we can, she says.

To be fair, she is doing more than most. She is co-founder and director of Plastic Free Jersey, chair of Natural Jersey, she is on the Jersey Pollinator project, is co-founder of Climate Guides, writes the nature connection/sustainability blog The Good Jersey Life, as well as being a sustainability consultant in her own right. She is also co-founder and creator of Grow Jersey at Sion, more of which later.

Water Refills

Plastic Free Jersey has launched the Refill app in Jersey (details can be found at www.refill.org.uk) which shows where you can refill a bottle with tap water at no charge.

Sheena is keen for more businesses to sign up to be on the app and can provide posters and stickers for their windows and doors.

'Jersey imports something like 40 million plastic bottles a year,' she said. 'Only 8% make it into the recycling stream, despite bring banks, kerbside recycling and the household recycling centre at La Collette.'

'You get into the habit of using the app and it can be anywhere. I used it in Paris, Rome and Venice last year.'

The Refill app also shows businesses which allow customers to take their own reusable cup for tea and coffee or lunchbox for salads on the go, plus places to go for plastic-free shopping.

Beach Clean Boxes

Plastic Free Jersey has launched community beach clean boxes, thanks to funding from the Co-op Eco Fund.

'Every parish now has a box,' Sheena said. 'Anyone can borrow the box for litter picking on beaches, parks and lanes, whether you are an individual, family, school, business, or community group. The box includes buckets, gloves, first aid kit, a sharps box and hand sanitiser.'

'I would like to offer to run one beach clean a month with a parish so that in the course of a year I've done at least one in each parish,' she said. 'We are also looking to set up a beach guardian group under Plastic Free Jersey. There are so many people doing beach cleans but we are not yet collecting that important data.'





Sheena Brockie

‘It would be good to know whether we need a big group to target a specific area or be able to respond to a pollution event.’

The Growth Of Grow

Grow project at Sion has taken up a lot of Sheena’s time over the last two years.

It has, literally, grown from an empty dusty field into a thriving vibrant piece of land full of plant life and trees, all of which is attracting birds, insects and small mammals.

The next stage in the project is to apply for planning permission for polytunnels, raised beds for mobility/disability access, sensory garden, a wildlife pond, forest school and a small production kitchen.

‘One thing we would like to talk about is food waste,’ she explained. ‘If you go to a field after the Jersey Royals have been dug there are always just as many still in the ground as out of it, because they’re too big, the wrong shape, whatever.’

‘There is so much food waste in the world, estimated to be a third of all food produced. I don’t know how many times food goes from supermarket to fridge and fridge to bin, and it doesn’t even feed anyone. With food poverty and nutritional deficit happening in Jersey, we want to find ways of doing things differently.’

“**With food poverty there is often fuel poverty. With a production kitchen we can cook food and deliver it to groups such as The Salvation Army or the Grace Trust for those who need it. We can make big hearty soups to keep all our amazing volunteers and visitors going through the winter**

‘With Grow, overarching everything is education. We want to talk about how you preserve the long life of food, whether that’s how you cook it, how you freeze it, dehydrate, jams, jellies, chutneys, canning. We want to teach people those skills. And because we’re talking food security and having a biodiverse range of foods, we need to make sure people know how to cook them as well.’

‘With food poverty there is often fuel poverty. With a production kitchen we can cook food and deliver it to groups such as The Salvation Army or the Grace Trust for those who need it. We can make big hearty soups to keep all our amazing volunteers and visitors going through the winter.’

And with the theme of education, Grow work with Jersey Mencap, Acorn Enterprises, Grainville School and Highlands Life Skills, among others.

‘We are looking at delivering a basic horticulture qualification as a pathway into work and are talking with the Jersey Employment Trust, RJA@HS and Highlands College about the delivery of that.’

‘Our growth has happened a lot quicker than I expected. We’re not short of people who want to come and use the space,’ Sheena said. ‘What we’re short of is the people facilitating it. We have a committed and hard-working core team but need more people across the project. We could have a school group there every day of the week if we had the volunteers to deliver it.’

***To get in touch with Grow, email sheena.brockie@gmail.com**

Healthy and happy days at the pond project

Cathy Le Feuvre joins a very special group of people working hard to create a countryside space with a difference

In a secluded spot in St Martin, set off the main road leading to Rozel and down a farm track, the sun is trying to break through the clouds and there are spots of rain.

But that hasn't stopped a team of people with a passion for the environment spending the morning caring for a piece of land which boasts a small reservoir, woodland and marshland.

“ Jersey Mencap have been caretakers of the Pond Project for about 12 years and it's one of several projects run by the charity offering adults with a learning disability more opportunity and choice

Alex Wiles, the manager of the charity Jersey Mencap, greets them with a smile.

'Jersey Mencap have been caretakers of the Pond Project for about 12 years and it's one of several projects run by the charity offering adults with a learning disability more opportunity and choice. At the pond, we can learn new skills, including horticultural skills as well as soft skills like working as a team.' Alex says.

We take a moment to breathe in the fresh air and listen to the birds. On the pond, surrounded by mature trees and bushes, a couple of ducks swim into view. On a slope on the far side of the water, young trees are thriving. A woodchip path encircles the pond and the sound of voices and laughter – evidence of work already underway – can be heard on the breeze.

'We offer a wide variety of tasks. We know our members well and we can adjust what they do. It might be watering, or planting a tree sapling. They might be using tools, like the shears, it might be using a wheelbarrow – all those things that perhaps people haven't done before,' Alex continues.

The Pond Project is a partnership with the National Trust for Jersey from which the land is leased.

'On a Wednesday there are often around eight members of Jersey Mencap here, and on Friday the Life Skills students from Highlands College come down. They're nearing the end of their education – they all have a learning disability and/or autism – and they come here as part of their curriculum. There are often around 15 students who volunteer on Fridays,' Alex says.

That's how Harvey first came to the Pond Project.

'I've been coming since I graduated from college and I decided to come back as a volunteer on a Wednesday,' he says. Whether it's cutting back undergrowth or wheelbarrowing it to the compost heap, or getting stuck into other tasks, Harvey is in his element.



A view of the pond

‘It’s fun because I get to be with my friends, and I like being here,’ he says. An important part of the day are the social break times in the recreation area, complete with picnic tables, at the top end of the site.

Matt, who’s been coming to the Pond Project for a few years, particularly enjoys helping to set up for the refreshments, making hot drinks on a campfire. But for him the experience is much more life enhancing.

‘I get the bus all the way up to here, I get off, come here, do some cutting back, light the fire, do the kettles, then go back on the bus. It’s awesome to be here!’ he says.

Daniel is watering saplings, with the help of his support worker Tiffany. Filling up the birdfeeders and putting them out for feathered friends is today’s job for Neville and Pedro, assisted by their support worker Martyn.

The sunshine chases away the rain spots, and near the picnic tables Matt, Alex, Harvey and other volunteers are cutting back the undergrowth – brambles, hemlock and stinging nettles.

‘We had a botanist come down and she said that this would be a bank of seeds just waiting for the right conditions. Once you’ve cut back all the brambles other things will come through. We don’t eliminate things, we just cut back so other things can grow. And it’s working ... it just takes a lot of time,’ Alex says.

Helping people to grow is also a vital element of Jersey Mencap’s work at the Pond Project and that goes beyond learning horticultural or even life skills.

‘For some of our members it’s more therapeutic, being outside, being in nature,’ Alex adds.

‘There’s lots of evidence now ... we know that we feel better when we’ve had some time out in a green space. And if you’ve got any kind of disability, it’s that much more important – having time in a space where there are not the triggers of traffic or dogs or crowds, those things that might be difficult for some of our members. It’s just very calm!’

For more information about Jersey Mencap and the Pond Project, including how to get involved in Corporate Social Responsibility opportunities there, go to www.jerseymencap.org.



Alex Wiles



Some of the team (L to R: Harvey, volunteer, Tiffany, Daniel, Judy (volunteer), Alex, Matt)

Reusing and recycling with a purpose

Cathy Le Feuvre meets Lou Carson, an inspirational champion of the environment

Lou Carson has long been interested in green issues. She was using reusable shopping bags years before the law encouraged us to ditch plastic carriers.

Then she was an HR manager in the finance industry and trying to live a green life, but it was when Lou learned that she was to become a grandmother that her focus really shifted.

'I had become too sick to work and my daughter got pregnant, and I had a bit of time on my hands. I was reading lots about green issues, and that's when I realised that my granddaughter might not have the experience of the world that I have, and that I have a responsibility to her to make sure she can see the world, the beauty in the planet.

'You know, if the tides rise like they're anticipating, what's going to happen to Jersey? She might not be able to experience the beaches that I did, the environment could change so significantly. That kicked me into looking into it more, and more. I fell down this rabbit hole and one thing led to another thing, led to another thing.'

Today, granddaughter Katie is four and Lou is an award-winning and renowned local reuse and recycle champion. And despite living with fibromyalgia, chronic migraine and pain – that eventually put an end to her office-based finance career – Lou's enthusiasm for the environment knows no bounds.

“**The charity, which also provides medical equipment and runs training and education to help reduce the stillbirth and premature birth rates and complications at birth, relies entirely on donations**”

In 2021 she was Jersey's Inspirational Woman of the Year, and she has received a BBC Make a Difference Award.

With friend and fellow activist Vicki Lucas, Lou runs the Jersey Sustainable Period Products Project which, with the financial support of Soroptimist International Jersey, offers education and free sustainable products to girls.

Many of her connections are through social media and among other projects, she supports Plastic Free Jersey, Grow and the Refill app, is a speaker and workshop leader on environmental issues and reducing the use of plastics, and bakes and crochets for local charities. Lou also came up with the idea of the Borrow a Bucket Box – the big colourful boxes on beaches full of buckets, spades and beach toys.

But her main focus is raising money for Philip's Footprints, a Jersey charity which exists to support parents after the loss of a baby or child.

The charity, which also provides medical equipment and runs training and education to help reduce the stillbirth and premature birth rates and complications at birth, relies entirely on donations. Three years ago, Lou took on responsibility for their small recycling fundraising scheme.

Today, working entirely as a volunteer, she makes Recycle for Philip's Footprints thousands of pounds a year from collecting and selling products which can be recycled or resold. You can spot their recycling boxes around the Island, and at Lou's home, which she shares with her carpenter husband David, a good deal of space is taken up with recyclable materials.

One of her partners is TerraCycle, a large recycling plant in the UK which runs schemes to enable charities to collect and be paid for delivering recyclable products.

'I'm a home collector! TerraCycle know that we're based in Jersey, but they don't operate here so we use a company called Book My Space. They take the recyclable materials for free to the UK and TerraCycle pick up from their depot on the south coast. Without Book my Space it wouldn't be possible – the transportation costs would far outweigh the funds we receive for the recycling.'

Ink cartridges, broken technology and jewellery, and console games. All these and much more can be sold through different specialist recycling companies.

Lou – who is often unwell and has to pace herself accordingly – has recently stopped collecting CDs and DVDs because the volume of donations became overwhelming. But she's developing another project – the recycled craft arm of Recycling for Philip's Footprints, which last year raised more than £6,000.

Lou believes we can all do something for the environment.

'Reusing is better than recycling – like the bucket boxes and the period products! But no one has to throw their whole life into looking after the environment in order to look after the environment,' she says, encouraging us all to make even just one small change that may have next to no impact on our life, but may make a world of difference to the environment and to future generations.

For more information about Recycle for Philip's Footprints check out their Facebook page and email: recycling@philipsfootprints.org



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Not quite
the good life...



...But not too bad at all!
**Mark Le Lay describes restoring a
derelict country cottage – and greening
it in the process**

When we were joined by a new baby, it meant a move from our beloved cottage in St John... but finding the perfect property was not an easy task.

During a Sunday afternoon drive we spotted a dilapidated property on a leafy green lane in the neighbouring parish of Trinity – Le Rocher – but we weren't really looking for a 'project' of such a size at the time.

Months of house-hunting later and we kept coming back to the idea of what a perfect 'forever home' Le Rocher could potentially be... with some TLC and tons of imagination!

It took over two years to finally secure the house, and so the journey began.

Le Rocher is located on La Rue du Mont Pellier, once a winner in the 'Jersey's most scenic lane' competition. The three-bedroomed traditional granite cottage had last been permanently occupied some three decades before; when the owner passed on, she left the house to her two nephews who resided in the UK. Although the brothers used Le Rocher as a holiday home from time to time, with no permanent resident the cottage and the surrounding grounds received minimal maintenance and it became quite a sorry site.

Luckily we could see beyond this and we had the vision to breathe new life into the house, creating a sympathetic blend of traditional and modern styles and in keeping with the beautiful natural surroundings. What's more, my background as an engineer specialising in renewal energy meant that not only could the house become fitting for our young family, but it was the perfect project to showcase some innovative technologies completely new to the Island.

An 'eco friendly' approach to everyday living was a really important consideration for us, as was the incorporation of energy efficient elements into the entire design. We installed a rainwater harvesting system, the latest double glazing within heritage wooden frames, thermal lined the internal walls, as well as installing cavity insulation in the new blockwork. LED lighting was fitted throughout the property.

A large part of the sustainable approach was to introduce a form of technology which was completely new to the Island – Biomass heating, which provides energy for central heating and domestic hot water using wood pellets. This is a different approach to the more common use of solar panels or air source heat pumps, which in a mature wooded area would have limitations.

Set in a quiet country lane with the backdrop of a large steep garden and wooded area, this project also presented an opportunity to enhance the biodiversity of the area, with wildflower planting and rejuvenating hedgerows.

The green and contoured surrounding site features were the inspiration for the subterranean garage. The building was designed so that the mass is gently absorbed by the landscape and the topography allows the landscape to mature and soften its setting. The natural gradient of the site creates a wildlife corridor, where squirrels leap from tree to tree. The gardens and wooded areas surrounding Le Rocher are home to a wide variety of birds from warblers to woodpeckers.

Over 30 years worth of unkept excessive foliage including Japanese Knotweed was removed and hollows and dips have now been filled to help even out the c  til to encourage the return of natural flora and fauna.

The original 18th Century fa  ade and quoins were retained and we were pleased to incorporate many traditional details into the build such as wooden sash windows, cambered dormer windows, a slate roof and the reintroduction of chimneys which enhanced the classic character of the existing building.

“ An 'eco friendly' approach to everyday living was a really important consideration for us, as was the incorporation of energy efficient elements into the entire design. We installed a rainwater harvesting system, the latest double glazing within heritage wooden frames, thermal lined the internal walls, as well as installing cavity insulation in the new blockwork. LED lighting was fitted throughout the property



Biomass Boiler System

The Pellematic Condens is the world's first pellet boiler with condensing technology that can be integrated into any heat supply system. In this project the Okofen Condens boiler was used. The pellet store holds approximately 1.5 tonnes of pellets – just over two deliveries per year.

The combustion process is so refined that coupled with the low water content of the fuel, the wood pellets gasify at combustion temperatures in excess of 750°C, resulting in a very low ash waste from the process – approximately 5kgs of ash per year! Due to the condensing nature of the boiler and the ingenious technology within, flue gas temperatures are below 40°C as the flue gases leave the boiler, hence the high efficiency rating of the boiler which surpasses most oil / gas boilers. Wood Pellets have one more environmental benefit over fossil fuels in that they are considered a sustainable resource. The trees from which the wood pellets are made are continually growing and with careful forest management will not be depleted.



“ Future plans include a hidden garden office in the c til, pollinator planting and the creation of a vegetable patch. We hope that all we have done to enhance the appearance of the property will be enjoyed as part of the architectural landscape for years to come



A few years on and the work to restore this historic hidden gem continues. Recently a patio has been added and part of the area at the front has been laid to lawn. Future plans include a hidden garden office in the c  til, pollinator planting and the creation of a vegetable patch. We hope that all we have done to enhance the appearance of the property will be enjoyed as part of the architectural landscape for years to come.

Not quite the 'Good Life' but certainly not bad at all!

Mark is a consulting engineer working within all areas of energy management and renewable projects including biochar and other pyrolysis projects.



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Towards a Zero-carbon future

Jersey Electricity is committed to doing more to protect our environment and inspire a zero-carbon future, says its CEO, Chris Ambler

As the Island's energy partner, Jersey Electricity (JE) takes its environmental responsibilities to the Island very seriously. The Government of Jersey's Carbon Neutral Roadmap outlines the Island's ambitions for a net-zero future and we all have a role to play in achieving this goal.

JE has been importing low carbon electricity from France for nearly 40 years. This strategy has reduced Jersey's overall carbon emissions by more than a third over this time and has provided the Island with reliable and cost-effective power, with electricity tariffs currently around half of those paid by UK customers.

“ This strategy has reduced Jersey's overall carbon emissions by more than a third over this time and has provided the Island with reliable and cost-effective power

The rise of renewables

We are acutely conscious of the Island's desire for energy independence and its pursuit of renewables.

We are rapidly expanding our solar capacity, particularly for larger scale developments that tend to produce lower cost power, with four community scale commercial solar arrays generating power directly to the grid for the benefit of all Islanders.

Two more roof top solar arrays are due to start generating energy soon, and the Planning Department has approved Jersey's first ground-mounted solar installation, which is helping us to progress towards delivering our target of 15MWp of solar capacity on the Island – meaning more than 2,000 average sized homes would be powered by locally generated solar electricity.

The falling costs of offshore wind generation is making this form of energy more viable. We are investing significantly to properly integrate wind into our energy network, which will be an opportunity that could deliver benefits for all Islanders.

Projects like these will offer long-term protection to Jersey's energy supply and we hope it will create economic opportunities for other stakeholders – including affordable, secure and sustainable energy for consumers.

Low carbon transportation

Road transport accounts for around a third of the Island's total carbon emissions, meaning it's critical that the Island has the infrastructure in place to meet increasing demand for low carbon transportation. Our collective challenge is to encourage overnight charging, when the network has significant spare capacity, which will allow us to keep costs of e-mobility as low as possible. Powering EVs (electric vehicles) is already less than a quarter of the cost of fuelling a petrol car on a per mile basis and we want to keep it that way.

As well as developing a home EV charging solution, JE has invested in the Island's public charging network of 109 charging points in strategic Island locations – more than twice the density of chargers in the UK. Investment continues and JE will be significantly upgrading the Evolve public charging network over the summer to ensure it can meet future demand for EVs.



JE staff planting trees above Mourier Valley

Community partnerships

A key area of JE’s environmental focus can be seen in our commitment to the community and the wider environment.

Our planting initiatives help replace hedgerows to boost biodiversity, creating natural corridors for habitats and wild animals. As the trees mature, carbon sequestration will help to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. In partnerships with others, JE has planted more than 8,000 trees and shrubs in recent years.

JE recently renewed its significant support of the National Trust for Jersey’s Education Officer for a further three years. The Trust and JE share a vision to educate Jersey’s children on key environmental issues and empower them to become environmental agents of change.

By effecting change at a grassroots level, we can be sure the future of our Island is in good hands.

“**By effecting change at a grassroots level, we can be sure the future of our Island is in good hands**”

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The glory of the garden

The gardens at Les Aix, St Peter, opened again this summer to benefit the Jersey Association for Youth and Friendship. The owner, Ariel Whatmore, talked to Gill Maccabe

Come any day to visit, I garden every single day, rain or shine,' trilled Ariel Whatmore the gardener, in her wonderfully mellifluous tones, when we spoke on the telephone to arrange a tour around her gardens at Les Aix in St Peter.

For the first time in many years, they were due to be opened to the public for one day in June.

'If I'm not in the garden, I'll be in the studio – I paint at least one portrait a week,' added her alter ego Ariel Luke, the artist.

At a time of life when most of us would be perhaps taking life a tad slower, the renowned artist who is best known for her lavishly detailed and textured tempera on gesso garden paintings, is still accepting commissions.

She loves to work and shows no signs of slowing down.

In the last few years, she has also painted exquisite oil portraits of children, written a book called *Garden Painters* with a foreword by Sir Roy Strong, and, as if an afterthought, she adds: 'Oh, I've also just written and illustrated a children's book. It's with the printers at the moment.'

Inside the house it is like Charleston-on-Sea – the centre for the Bloomsbury group in Lewes: canvases stacked everywhere, walls lined with works by Ariel and her friends collected over the years, pictures of the work of one of her daughters (sculptor Poppy Whatmore) and lots of screen prints – Ariel's original genre after graduating from art school.

Everywhere there is light and colour and energy and interest.

Every surface is covered with something unique.

There's even an original red letterbox in the kitchen.





“ ‘If I’m not in the garden, I’ll be in the studio – I paint at least one portrait a week,’ added her alter ego Ariel Luke, the artist



Painting by Ariel Whatmore, who paints as 'Ariel Luke'

‘I’m going to paint this wall this weekend,’ Ariel remarked, as she led me through the narrow, creaking corridors to her studio, a huge light-filled room overlooking the courtyard, jam-packed with completed works, all of which are for sale.

She and her late husband Richard – who amongst other business successes was the man who brought commercial radio to Jersey – first arrived in Jersey in the 1960s, eventually settling in 1984 at Les Aix, the historic 17th Century granite property with parts dating back to the 12th Century.

Here, they brought up their three children, two of whom have pursued artistic careers.

‘When we came here there wasn’t really a garden to speak of, and year by year it has been slowly developed and transformed,’ she said.

The total plot is around 45 vergées; to ensure privacy, Richard bought up surrounding fields which are now leased to farmers.

However, it is the exuberant gardens which wrap around the property in a cornucopia of textures and rhythm, weaving and flowing as they go with their distinctive rooms full of colour, style and themes, which are pure Ariel.

‘I paint other people’s gardens, so I get ideas from them and incorporate them into my own,’ she explained.

Just as she weaves magic and texture into her paintings by asking carpenters to include borders or panels on the canvas for various vignettes, she does the same thing outside, creating various rooms – each of which has a name.

And so, we have ‘The Pink Garden’, ‘The Red Border’, ‘The New Border’, ‘The Foliage Border’ and the longest border of all, ‘The Manuel Border’, which is named after their old gardener who used to throw everything in it.

Her artistic element loves to frame a room and give it a focal point – for example, ‘The White Border’, which is full of perennials such as dahlias, *Anemone Japonica* and *Macylea X*

keuwensis, is edged with laurel to protect it from the prevailing winds.

The room called ‘The Avenue’ is lined with lime trees and nut trees and leads on to the focal point: an arch of yew with a clipped topiary bird above.

‘I am mad about that lovely bird, he is looking a bit distressed at the moment though,’ she said ruefully.

‘I didn’t have any training, you know, I just loved it and got on with it. Richard didn’t like gardening, he just used to peel the ivy off the trees, that was it.

‘One of my daughters, who is a landscape architect, decided the area beyond the kitchen window was boring and so she designed the red border just in time for our ruby wedding anniversary.

‘We took all the earth out and put in a Ha-ha, we had tractors and goodness knows what, it was a huge project.

‘Then a friend of mine called Allan Scott, who produced *The Queen’s Gambit* Netflix series, decided I needed a maze.

‘I told him “I don’t want a maze, I want a rose garden.”

‘He said, “You need a maze.”

‘I said, “I want a rose garden” – I’m bonkers about roses.

‘But on we went, batting back and forth until I got a maze. His brother-in-law was a maze designer – he did Longleat – and so I have ended up with this rather special maze which is in the shape of an artist’s palette.’

And ‘rather special’ it certainly is.

The outline is in yew which is interspersed with arch-shaped windows and inside are five small gardens coloured individually in purple, pink, yellow, blue and green. There are around 800 to 900 box plants, grown from cuttings by Ariel.

Where the artist’s thumb would hold the palette is an old cider press that they found in bits in the garden, which has been painstakingly rebuilt to form a water feature with giant lilies and a fountain to symbolise Les Aix, which means ‘The Waters’ in old French.

‘We did have some fish in here, but a heron saw them off and we haven’t got round to replacing them.’

There is also a gorgeous bench just made for artistic contemplation.



‘Oh, I don’t have time to sit there, I don’t sit,’ she said, with a delicious laugh.

“When we came here there wasn’t really a garden to speak of, and year by year it has been slowly developed and transformed

Ariel loves floral arches, and they are everywhere. There are no fewer than three large ones around the old swimming pool created from hornbeam and rose Blushing Lucy.

‘I hate swimming pools – I prefer swimming in the sea – but it was here when we bought the house so I tried to make it look more attractive.’

She adores camellias and magnolias (there are seven magnolia trees), and also tries to have a tree peony in each border.

She cuts and snips as we walk around, telling tales about each plant and getting excited when she sees an old friend: ‘I grow lots from seed.’

She grew the camellia hedge framing the pool and tennis court from seeds left by some Australians who came to visit.

‘I have no idea what they are called, but aren’t they beautiful?’ she asked, snipping off a giant red and white stripy bloom and presenting it to me with a flourish.

Ariel has split the garden into twelve and every day completes a number.

Today, her fork rests at a jaunty angle in the front border, close to where the teas will be served during the forthcoming open garden.

‘This is section three,’ she laughed, ‘I’ve got a couple more hours to go.’

Les Aix gardens were open to visitors this year for one day only, on 4 June. Details of other open gardens and events are on the JAYF website www.jayf.org.je

If you would like to know more about Ariel’s art, visit www.arielluke.co.uk



A photograph of a tree-lined path. The path is flanked by large, mature trees with thick, textured trunks and dense, green foliage. The path leads towards a white topiary bird sculpture in the distance. The scene is bathed in bright sunlight, creating strong shadows on the grass.

“ Oh I don't have time
to sit there, I don't sit



Gardens for A Dry Summer

Last year's drought, which resulted in a hosepipe ban lasting until November, has forced many local gardeners to think about creating a garden that doesn't need watering. By our gardening writer, Gill Maccabe

Picture by Beth Chatto

Sponsored by



Dry gardens or gravel gardens are not a new idea. Possibly the best known is at Beth Chatto's nursery in Colchester. Once a car park, it was set up as an experiment many years ago and is now famous for the fact that it is never watered.

Closer to home, however, the Mediterranean walled garden at Trinity Manor, created by head gardener David Room for the owners, Pam and Paul Bell, is a stunning example of how such a garden can work in a seaside environment where drying winds can all too quickly strip the soil of moisture.

'We established our Mediterranean garden here three years ago in an effort to deal with the predicted dryer, hotter summers resulting from climate change and also to provide a garden with a very different feel from the other areas of garden here at Trinity Manor,' said David.

'Last year, during the drought and extreme temperatures when other gardens here were suffering, the Mediterranean garden flourished – indeed, it was better than it had ever been.'

“ Last year, during the drought and extreme temperatures when other gardens here were suffering, the Mediterranean garden flourished – indeed, it was better than it had ever been

So why not get ahead of the curve and start planning your own dry garden? You could do it gradually and earmark a small area of garden as your experiment.

Start by looking at your soil: it needs to be fairly free draining, so avoid or improve areas where water naturally sits, but don't feel you have to give up if your soil is heavy. Instead, just incorporate plenty of organic matter from your compost heap or use farmyard manure to improve the drainage.

Apply sufficient fertiliser at the outset, as plants use water most efficiently when nutrient levels are adequate. But be careful not to use too much: if you make it too rich, you will get lush, green growth which will end up needing more water.

It's a good idea to buy smaller, younger plants as these will get established more easily than larger, more mature ones. Ideally, plant them out in autumn so that they can become established in damper conditions. However, if planting Mediterranean plants, do so in spring when the soil is warming up. Planting them in the autumn could lead to root rot when conditions become colder and damper over the winter.

Remembering why drought tolerant plants work can help you in your design and planning. Basically, they tend to share a range of characteristics that help them conserve moisture so that they can cope in areas of low rainfall.

So, for example:

Hairy leaves help reduce the effect of the wind – think *Nepeta* (catmint) and *Phlomis fruticosa* (sometimes called Jerusalem sage).

Grey or silvery leaves reflect more of the sun's rays which helps to conserve moisture and keep the leaves cool. See *Artemisia vulgaris* (Mugwort) and *Eryngium*, which is more commonly known as sea holly and brightens up any border with its bright purple thistle like hue.

Succulent plants with thick fleshy leaves which store water such as *Sedum acre* and *Sedum Touchdown teak*, a rich mahogany colour.

Thin needle-like leaves that have a very small surface area lose little by evaporation. Some plants such as *Festuca glauca*, commonly known as blue grass, even roll their leaves inwards, which reduces their exposed surface even more.

Tiny leaves which lose less water by evaporation e.g. *Ozothamnus hookeri*, or kerosene bush, lavenders and *Verbena bonariensis* are good examples of this genre.

In addition, and most surprisingly, many bulbs such as nerine and alliums can survive thanks to rainfall alone once they are established.

Don't forget to remove weeds regularly to prevent them depriving your plants of valuable water. You may even decide to do without a lawn in your drought friendly garden – although if you really cannot do without a patch of green, then you will be pleased to know that lawns are surprisingly drought tolerant and usually recover well in the autumn rains, even if they have been brown and parched most of the summer.

David Room has kindly compiled a list (below) of some of the plants which thrive in the Trinity Manor Mediterranean garden, all of which can ideally be planted out in the spring:

Echinops ritro 'Veitch's Blue'

Eryngium yzabelii 'Big Blue'

Cistus purpureus 'Alan Fradd'

Perovskia 'Blue Spire'

Convolvulus cneorum

Anthemis 'Sauce Hollandaise'

Erigeron karvinskianus

Kniphofia 'Tawny King'

Kniphofia 'Bees' Lemon'

Euphorbia wulfenii

Lavendula 'Hidcote'

Rosemarinus Prostratus

And some grasses that have done particularly well in these conditions are:

Anamanthele lessoniana

Stipa tenuissima

Stipa gigantea

Pennisetum alopecuroides 'Hameln'

In addition, you may purchase a drought resistant, 12 plant collection direct from Beth Chatto at £95. **Go to her website – www.bethchatto.co.uk**

“ We established our Mediterranean garden here three years ago in an effort to deal with the predicted dryer, hotter summers resulting from climate change and also to provide a garden with a very different feel from the other areas of garden here at Trinity Manor

Sections of Trinity Manor's 'Mediterranean Garden'





Jersey's impact on horseracing in Europe

In the first of a two-part series of articles, Jonathan Perrée told Alasdair Crosby how, in his role as Head of Racing for the Channel Islands Horseracing Authority, he is helping to maximise Jersey's impact in the world of racing beyond the Island

The Channel Islands Horseracing Authority (CIHA) is the governing body of the sport in the Channel Islands. Jonathan Perrée is Head of Racing for the Authority and, on a race day at Les Landes, also acts as Chief Steward.

He started his career as a volunteer steward in the 1990s. The attentive reader will note that his surname suggests his Jersey origin: his grandmother and her brother owned Reynolds Brothers, the fruit, vegetable and fish shop in Halkett Street. He used to help out on Saturdays and because the family were keen to place bets on races taking place throughout the day, he would be sent across the road to the betting shop as a 'bookie's runner' to place the bets on behalf of his family.

His father had been a trainee jockey, before a riding accident forced him into a different career, but Jonathan's exposure to racing and gambling at this early age piqued his interest – it still does.

Jonathan made his career in financial commodities, working first in the City and then moving to Moscow during the Boris Yeltsin years to set up an emerging market debt brokerage, but flying back to Jersey for race meetings, which gave him the opportunity of seeing his family and becoming a volunteer steward. His work in Moscow was, he said, 'good fun' until a number of financial crises – the worst one being in 2008 – rather took away the fun element. So, he and his wife moved back to Jersey and on his return, he became a non-stipendiary steward. Ten years later he was appointed Head of Racing, after the Channel Islands Racing and Hunt Club formed the Channel Islands Horseracing Authority in 2018.

“ Last September I was invited to Romania to advise on the re-emerging racing scene there and I expect to return there on a couple of occasions this year. They have huge ambitions: the Bucharest racecourse was stolen by the then Communist government and they are fighting to get compensation from the present government so that they can build another one

Note that he is not an official of the Jersey Race Club: obviously it is difficult at the same time both to run a racecourse and racing and also to be the regulatory authority – too many instances where there might at least be a perception of conflicts of interest and vested interests in the personnel involved. So, the CIHA is totally independent of the Jersey Race Club.

In the same way and for the same reasons, the Jockey Club in the UK has ceded its regulatory powers to the newly-formed British Horseracing Authority.

The CIHA is, of course, a less well known and smaller body than, say, the British Horseracing Authority, France Galop or Deutscher Galop. But, as usual, as it is often said, Jersey ‘punches above its weight’.

Since 2013, he has been the appointed representative of the Channel Islands Racing and Hunt Club (from which the CI Horseracing Authority evolved) to the European and Mediterranean Horseracing Federation (EMHF) - the grouping of turf racing authorities across Europe and the Mediterranean.

‘It is only an advisory body,’ Jonathan said, ‘so they do not dictate anything.

Its role is to try to align global rules and deal with global issues in horse racing, collaboratively, rather than dictating from the top.’

In 2016 he was elected to the executive council of the EMHF, where he champions the cause of smaller countries and areas: The Romanian Jockey Club and other authorities such as Latvia, Libya, Portugal ...and of course, the Channel Islands.

‘Many of these Authorities are quite small and manned by volunteers and in some cases, as in Romania, they are still emerging from their Communist era. They need all the help and assistance they can get.

‘Last September I was invited to Romania to advise on the re-emerging racing scene there and I expect to return there on a couple of occasions this year. They have huge ambitions: the Bucharest racecourse was stolen by the then Communist government and they are fighting to get compensation from the present government so that they can build another one.

‘They have the same problems as all racing authorities: to separate the running of the sport from its regulation. This is still work in progress, but Jersey has been seen to be of help in the ongoing resolution of these issues.

‘Sometimes you do need an outside pair of eyes to come in and say: “have you considered doing something another way? The change might result in increased economic benefit.”

‘Similarly, I have been invited, in my capacity as Jersey’s representative, to visit Libya to advise on stewarding matters. Covid prevented me from going, and the British Foreign Office were not too keen on me going, either – nor was my wife! It is an adventure still to come.’

“ Similarly, I have been invited, in my capacity as Jersey’s representative, to visit Libya to advise on stewarding matters. Covid prevented me from going, and the British Foreign Office were not too keen on me going, either – nor was my wife! It is an adventure still to come





“ So, once again, although the Channel Islands are quite small, we can walk tall and make a very big footprint on the world of racing

He continued: ‘Within European racing circles, the Channel Islands are very well respected. Michael Shenkin, our Head of Integrity, has been advising the EMHF on moving their jurisdiction from Belgium to Ireland and has drafted a new constitution for them.

‘I am having fun at the moment creating a Channel Islands thoroughbred studbook, so that every thoroughbred racehorse that comes into the Island is entered into it. The reason for having a studbook here is because in the UK a horse will disappear off the studbook when it comes into the Channel Islands. But if you sell it in France, it magically appears on the French studbook 12 months later. There is a hole in the universe that is the Channel Islands. In modern “track and trace”, that cannot happen. Thoroughbred racehorses now need to be tracked and traced from birth to death – which comes back to equine welfare.

‘We don’t want racehorses entering the food chain, or getting maltreated, so every movement in its life should be documented. Therefore a Channel Islands studbook would put us on a global map.

‘You need to breed racehorses through selective breeding, rather than just pure DNA manipulation, because we just don’t know where that ends up. We don’t want breeders setting up here, trying to circumvent welfare standards elsewhere. People might say: “In the Channel Islands they don’t have a studbook, so there is no DNA profile for any of the racehorses.” We need to ensure we do have a DNA profile on record. It would ensure that if you do move a racehorse from the UK to Jersey or Guernsey and then to France, the move is recognised, approved and catalogued.’

‘There is also the high health status of thoroughbred horses to be considered: showjumpers and dressage horses as well as racehorses. We need to ensure that high health horses are kept in high health, so we are recommending stronger quarantine legislation for all horses arriving from the UK.

‘So, once again, although the Channel Islands are quite small, we can walk tall and make a very big footprint on the world of racing.’



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FROM OUR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS

RURAL magazine has a settled policy of only accepting contributions from Islanders or those with a strong connection to Jersey. However, we are aware that there is a wider world beyond our shores, and so we have made exceptions whenever we feel that a correspondent has something pertinent to say that would interest us in the Island.

This article, to start an occasional new series in RURAL magazine, is by David Finlay, who farms at Rainton Farm, Castle Douglas, Galloway in western Scotland. He calls his business...

The ethical dairy

The image of a dairy cow suckling her calf encapsulates their message of the dairy business



It's more than 30 years now since Wilma and I met and embarked on a whirlwind. Romance? Well, yes. That came into it too.

But it was more than that. It was a belief-changing, roller coaster of a life journey that has brought us to a place that is quite central to the challenges now facing humanity.

I guess that sounds pretty pompous (as my London cousin has described it), and the name, The Ethical Dairy, would seem to support his scepticism. Allow me to explain.

Our original plan had been to make our fortune from diversifying the tenanted, family, dairy, beef and sheep farm into a tearoom with adventure playground and the manufacture of artisan ice cream. That had worked well through the nineties and early noughties (give or take the odd crisis, like foot and mouth disease) as we transitioned to organic and fair trade. We were selling ice cream from the Isle of Wight to Shetland and our visitor numbers rose to peak around 75,000.

But it didn't last. Competition in the luxury ice cream market became increasingly fierce as the years of austerity following the recession of 2008/9 shrank people's disposable income. No one is making any money when two out of three litres of ice cream are being sold on promotion. The strength of the brand was getting lost in the rush to sell volume. This was a big boys' game and small fry like us just couldn't compete.

Also, the success of farm-based visitor attractions spawned a flurry of copycat attractions, spreading a declining spend even thinner. For the first time, our diversified businesses struggled to turn a profit. It was time for a change.

“**Organic farming had brought us into contact with people who were talking about climate change, biodiversity loss, diffuse pollution, animal welfare and such like**

This wasn't entirely unexpected. Since the fall of Northern Rock and the subsequent near melt down of the global financial system we had been making plans for a total change of direction. Change is easier said than done. It involves costs – foreseen and unforeseen. It involves risk, it involves retraining and, most difficult of all, it involves a change of mindset.

Organic farming had brought us into contact with people who were talking about climate change, biodiversity loss, diffuse pollution, animal welfare and such like. The so-called ethical food market was growing rapidly, albeit from a small starting point.

We knew from running farm tours for 20 years that separating the calf from its mother in the dairy industry was deeply unpopular. Particularly with women.

Once we had got our heads around how to farm organically (and there wasn't a lot of help in those early days) we found that our pasture yields were recovering as our crops and soils recovered their biological health after the agrochemical hammering they'd received over previous decades.

In fact, the recovery in production and reduction in costs led us to our most profitable years in dairy farming. Working with natural processes could, eventually (and that is the problem), deliver the goods. And it was these findings that helped us formulate our Big Idea.

Our organic farming methods were delivering good results. Crop yields were high, stock health and productivity were excellent, biodiversity on the farm had risen dramatically and our soil organic matter was rising, locking up carbon. These were 'nice to haves' but not major drivers of a buying decision. The message had to be simple, powerful and emotive. And the image of a dairy cow grooming her calf encapsulated all of that.

How to get the product in front of the customer? Our ice cream had to go through frozen food distributors and retailers who each were looking for a 30% cut. Plus, there was the 20% VAT. Which doesn't leave a lot. Cheese, on the other hand, could be packed in a bag/box and delivered anywhere in the UK (well, mostly) next day. No wholesalers, no retailers, no VAT!





“ We are producing a range of artisan, raw milk cheeses and sending them mostly direct to customers throughout the UK

All we had to do was build a new cow dairy complex (as the old dairy was unfit for purpose), a new cheese dairy and crack cow-with-calf dairying, which everyone in the industry said was impossible, at least at a commercial scale. What could possibly go wrong? Well, here we are, 14 years into the project and seven years into cow-with-calf dairying. We are producing a range of artisan, raw milk cheeses and sending them mostly direct to customers throughout the UK.

The suckling effect of the calves has increased the cows' milk production by 25% and the rapid growth of the calves has meant the calves are going for beef or breeding sooner, releasing forage that allows us to increase cow numbers by 25%. This means that the total milk produced for our use has recovered to previous levels and we have 25% more calves to sell.

Sure, it hasn't been a walk in the park to get here, but we have proved (at least to ourselves) that a nature-based food system can deliver good environmental, social, welfare and profitable outcomes.

And that is why we were (eventually) talked into branding ourselves The Ethical Dairy.

For more information, see the website www.theethicaldairy.co.uk

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Temporary work permits for agricultural workers

By Jeremy Heywood, partner, BCR Law LLP

Agriculture is an important part of the Jersey economy and plays a crucial role in maintaining and protecting our natural environment and Island life. It's also labour intensive, which means a significant requirement for staff, both generally and on a seasonal basis.

Like all industries, the agricultural sector has faced increasing challenges in recruitment. The Government has sought to address these challenges, in part, by the temporary work permit system.

Why is there a staffing shortage?

There are a number of reasons. In part, it's a consequence of Covid. The reality is that the demand for labour as economies open up after lockdown has risen much more rapidly than the supply of labour. Part of the problem with labour supply is that more people are now economically inactive – meaning they are not in work and are not looking for work.

Another factor is the impact of Brexit. Under the new rules anyone wishing to work in Jersey must hold a work permit unless they are a British or Irish citizen. This has seen a noticeable decline in the number of people from EU countries coming to Jersey to work.

A final element playing into this shortage of labour is the impact of the cost of living and the ever-increasing cost of housing, which makes Jersey a less attractive prospect to those on lower incomes.

What do employers need to be aware of?

When looking to employ someone, it's important to identify if the potential employee needs a work permit. If so, the employer needs to be sure that they have the necessary permissions from the Population Office. There could be restrictions imposed by the employer's business licence as to how many 'licensed' or 'registered' individuals they can employ – this can sometimes be zero.

What is a Temporary Work Permit?

Employers within agriculture are entitled to apply for a nine-month temporary work permit for their workers. This permit is available to those employed in agricultural roles on working farms. Where certain criteria are met, this is also extended to tree surgeons and landscape gardeners.

Under this permit the employee:

- can only carry out duties for which the permit was acquired
- can take on additional work within the agricultural sector with their employer's consent
- cannot extend the permit beyond the set nine months
- cannot switch employment within the first continuous 12 months
- must leave the Common Travel Area for a minimum of three months before reapplying for a permit
- cannot bring any dependants to join them in Jersey

The employer of an employee on a temporary work permit must:

- apply for the permit before the employee arrives in Jersey
- pay no less than the 'going rate' for a full-time role of 40 hours a week
- have a signed and valid employment contract which states the wage and hours
- ensure all employees are adequately housed
- not terminate employment before the end of the nine-month period
- make their employee aware that they are under no obligation to take on additional hours beyond what they are contracted

The process for applying for a permit and receiving it usually takes around three weeks and enough time should be left so that the employee also has time to apply for a visa prior to landing in Jersey.



Temporary Employment Contracts

As is required, all employers must hold signed employment contracts for all their seasonal workers.

A temporary contract is an agreement to work for an employer for a specific, limited amount of time. Temporary contracts are similar to fixed term contracts; they are there to enable the employment of personnel to meet a particular need or complete a particular project but without any intention that the role will be a permanent one.

Temporary contracts should be properly drafted and should contain, among other things, the name of the employer and employee; job title; start date and end date; payment terms; statement of working hours; and any entitlement to holiday pay and benefits.

For more information contact
Jeremy.heywood@bcrlawllp.com

“ Like all industries, the agricultural sector has faced increasing challenges in recruitment. The Government has sought to address these challenges, in part, by the temporary work permit system



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Do I need planning permission to cut down a tree?



Katharine Marshall

By Katharine Marshall (*partner*) and Claire Smith (*consultant*) at Ogier

As our evenings grow longer and the summer sunshine beckons, it is tempting to consider how to improve our gardens. These improvements might include cutting back or removing trees to maximise those all-important sunshine hours. But would you need planning permission to do so?

Last year, the States Assembly approved plans to improve protection for trees by bringing works to them under the definition of development within Jersey's Planning and Building Law. Once in effect, operations to or on trees will require planning permission before proceeding.

As part of the proposed amendment to the General Development Order, the chief officer of the Planning Department must advise whether an application for planning permission is necessary following notification.

“**Last year, the States Assembly approved plans to improve protection for trees**”

The new legal process would mean that if the chief officer does not decide within 28 days, the applicant would be entitled to assume that planning permission is not required.

However, with present resource constraints in the department resulting in applications taking up to eight weeks to be registered before a further, perhaps months long, wait for an application to be determined, waiting a month for a decision on a pre-notification process seems impractical.

The current proposal does include a list of exceptions specifying operations that can proceed without permission. These exceptions include works where a tree:

- is diseased
- poses a danger to the public
- is causing damage to a building
- is in the interests of the health, preservation, amenity value or utility value of the tree
- is a commercial fruit tree
- is living and requires the removal of dead branches
- is growing in a container (other than a container located in a public place)
- is a stock item in a garden centre or nursery
- is required by or under an enactment
- has a diameter not exceeding 8 centimetres (measured over the bark at a point 1.5 metres above ground level)



Notably, the proposed amendment does not appear to cover branchage, which requires landowners to cut back any vegetation growth (including trees) overhanging roads and footpaths twice a year.

Jersey already has a system of tree preservation orders to protect trees with a landscape or other value to the community. Therefore, it is hard to see what merit this new legal process will add to the existing legislation. But it will almost certainly cause delays to standard garden maintenance tasks.

It is currently unclear what the consequences of non-compliance will be and how strictly it will be enforced – at the time of writing this article, further details on the amendment are awaited, following the closure of the consultation period on 7 May.

If you are uncertain whether any operations you intend to carry out would require planning permission, contact the Ogier property team. A member of our expert team will be happy to help and advise.



“ Jersey already has a system of tree preservation orders to protect trees with a landscape or other value to the community







Art, inspired by nature

In each issue of RURAL we profile works by contemporary Jersey artists, who draw their inspiration from Jersey's landscapes, natural environment or farming heritage

In this issue, we feature a picture by Patrick Malacarnet, titled 'The Red Barn, St Clement'. The medium is acrylic on board.

This painting has been submitted to the Jersey Summer Exhibition at CCA Galleries International, which will run from June to July.

All art submitted to the exhibition that has a theme featuring the Island's natural environment is automatically entered into the RURAL magazine landscape competition, which is judged separately. Winners receive a £500 top prize.

The Jersey Summer exhibition is now in its seventh year and continues to be a highlight in the calendar at the gallery. The exhibition is open to emerging and established artists alike. All visual art forms are welcome, including original prints, paintings, drawings, sculpture, film and photography. CCA accept applications from artists with links to the Island who may be working elsewhere, as well as Channel Island artists.

For further details, contact Tom Parker at CCA Galleries International: tom.parker@ccagalleriesinternational.com

Photo expedition adventure in Yasuni National Park

Photographer Mark Fox was responsible for the cover of the very first edition of *RURAL* in 2013, which showed a red squirrel. That same image was reproduced on the cover of the last Spring edition of 2023, to mark the 10th anniversary of the first edition

Mark has spent the last five years documenting indigenous communities deep in the Amazon rainforest in Ecuador. He is very passionate about conserving the Amazon, as well as all the culture and wisdom the indigenous people hold within it.

He invites readers to join him on 8 August for an eight day epic 'Photo Expedition Adventure' in Yasuni National Park – the most biodiverse region on the planet.

“ He invites readers to join him on 8 August for an eight day epic 'Photo Expedition Adventure' in Yasuni National Park – the most biodiverse region on the planet

He said: 'I'm very grateful to have experienced many rainforest adventures, and I'd love to create an opportunity for other Islanders to experience its beauty under my safety, while receiving photography masterclasses.'

To see more of Mark's work or hear more about his adventure expeditions, visit his website www.markfoxphoto.com





Agriculture and survival in a time of war

What was the relationship between Jersey farmers and the German occupying authorities? The author of a new book, retired Head of History at Victoria College Andy Gilson, writes for RURAL magazine on farming in Jersey during the German Occupation. His book is expected to become the seminal work on this subject

In early 1945 the Island faced the possibility that the existence of its population, its way of life and culture, would disintegrate after five years of pressure and interference from the German authorities. The level of social cohesion amongst the population crumbled as groups and individuals began to reel against those they thought had been too close to the German administration or military forces.

There had been differing relationships between the Superior Council, State's Members, farmers and locals with the occupiers. It simply had not been a case of Jersey authorities, civil servants, farmers and locals ignoring all Germans.

When a German Staff Officer asked about local collaboration, he was told that the locals' relationships with the Germans were either as 'Ghosts or Prostitutes'. This was wrong. The relationship between the two groups was not binary. The evidence is clear that there were many shades of relationships between differing classes and individuals with German personnel.

The 'elite class' of approximately 25 of the top Jersey farmers had a very different 'structural relationship' with the Germans than did a small tenant farmer, milk tester, Department of Agriculture officer or agricultural worker. The evidence demonstrates that the German authorities were cognisant of the political, social, and cultural importance of this class of 'elite farmers' and as far as was practical they kept on good terms.

In 1939 the Island authorities put in place a series of directives that would alter the traditional agricultural model. Previously, farmers had been independent, growing potatoes and tomatoes for the UK markets, dairy products for the local population, and competing to breed pedigree cattle for export. Farmers attempted to be self-sufficient and carried out a mixed agricultural model. Why purchase cereals for cattle, pigs, fowl or horses when it could be grown on the farm?

The idea promulgated by the post-war Bailiff in his memoirs, that cereal growing on the Island had ceased, is proved by official documents to be a misleading statement. The documentation demonstrates that there were 2,500 vergées under cereal cultivation in 1940. This figure also does not account for farmers who grew cereals without informing the Department of Agriculture (DOA) and harvested their cereals with 'illegal' threshing machinery.

“**Farmers attempted to be self-sufficient and carried out a mixed agricultural model. Why purchase cereals for cattle, pigs, fowl or horses when it could be grown on the farm?**”



KVR Dr Egon Pelz



Francis John Genée in his potato field at Greenhills Farm in St Brelade. This was probably taken sometime during the Occupation. Picture courtesy of his great-great-grandson, Kevin Roberts

Pre-war agriculture accounted for 4,500 of Jersey's workforce and was the basis for prosperity. The Occupation changed this model, as it was brought under the control of the States. The reasons were: the signing of new contracts with the Germans to export produce on its behalf, as happened to Danish agriculture; the immediate necessity to provide agricultural produce to the resident military and civilian population; and the importation of live continental cattle after 150 years total prohibition. In pre-war times up to 13%, some 1,300 animals, of the Island's cattle population were exported annually. It therefore became of the utmost importance that the German and Island authorities, along with the leading farming community, cooperated to protect their most important asset – Jersey's pedigree cattle.

The new agricultural model established and nurtured new and unique 'structural relationships' between the German administration (Field Command 515), the civil authorities led by the Bailiff, the DOA and civil servants, an inspectorate, and the 'elite' class of farmers who formed an important community in both Island politics and the parish honorary system. It resulted in the successful development of a network of these 'structural relationships', that worked for the mutual benefit of both the civil and military authorities.

Why should the German administration use its resources to supervise agriculture when the States and civil service would do the same? This template worked brilliantly in Denmark where contracts were signed by Danish and German government officials. When reading academic papers on occupation Danish agriculture you can almost cross out 'Denmark' and replace it with 'Jersey'.

Between 1940 and late 1944 this model worked well as the two senior and extremely able people in charge of agriculture, KVR Pelz and Touzel John Brée, worked closely together.

The evidence demonstrates that the German authorities were cognisant of the political, social, and cultural importance of this class of about 25 'elite farmers' and as far as was practical they kept on good terms. The members of this group were the only Islanders allowed formally to have licences from the German authorities to keep hunting rifles.

The German Occupation of Jersey – Agriculture and Survival in a Time of War, is expected to be published this September. For further details of publication contact the author: aggilson99@gmail.com

“ Between 1940 and late 1944 this model worked well as the two senior and extremely able people in charge of agriculture, KVR Pelz and Touzel John Brée, worked closely together



Touzel John Brée

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In the kitchen

‘Bouan Appétit!’ is a new food-themed exhibition opening at Jersey Museum on 15 July. It will celebrate the Island’s traditional recipes and the rich culture of Jèrriais customs and sayings associated with these dishes. By Lucy Layton and Geraint Jennings of Jersey Heritage – with thanks to their team of volunteer cooks and helpers

Time rolled back at Hamptonne Country Life Museum one morning recently... but time always does roll back at Hamptonne – that is its special charm. On the morning in question it rolled back to some time in the mid-20th Century, when Olive Syvret, whose home, naturally enough, was the Syvret House, was cooking up a dinner of traditional Jersey food.

Olive is a bit of a time traveller. She is played by Jo Thorpe, a member of Jersey Heritage’s living history team, who can more usually be encountered as the Bouonnefemme in the 17th Century Hamptonne House. The main course was Bean Crock, *des Pais au Fou* and as her family had a sweet tooth, there was a choice of desserts: *des fliottes* (a type of dumpling cooked in milk), that were traditionally eaten on Good Friday. A lot of milk was needed to cook them, so this may have been one way to use up milk on a day that it couldn’t be sold at market. As the Jèrriais saying goes: *Au Vendredi Bénit nou mange du lait bouoilli* (on Good Friday one eats boiled milk) – of course, they could be eaten at any time of the year.

Jersey Wonders - *des mèrvelles* - were popular throughout the year but were also especially eaten at Easter. It was said that they should be cooked when the tide was going out or the fat would boil over. As the saying went: *Ch’n’est pon Pâques sans mèrvelles* (It’s not Easter without Wonders).

The traditional recipes will give you a taste of Jersey, so why not give them a go? And remember - *Ventre affamé prend tout en gré!* (Hunger finds no fault with the cooking).



Jo Thorpe, in character as Olive Syvret

“The traditional recipes will give you a taste of Jersey, so why not give them a go?”



Des Pais au Fou

- un piot
- des fèves
- des pais d'mai
- des gros blancs pais sés
- des châlottes (ou d's ouongnons minchis)
- du sé

M'ttez les pais et fèves à tremper pour eune niet, pis empliez-en les trais parts d'un pot à lait.

Vèrsez-y dé l'ieau jusqu'au haut du pot, couvrez l'pot atout eune vielle assiette - y'en a tch'amathent lé haut du pot atout du gris papi - et m'ttez ch'la dans l'grand fou en enfouonnant l'pain.

À la r'traite, laïssiz la potée à tchuithe douochement acouo pour eune heutte ou deux.

Sèrvez l'fritot caud et païvrez s'i' vouos pliaît. Lé lend'main nou peut r'cauffer ch'tchi reste.

Bean Crock

- A pig's trotter
- broad beans
- French beans
- large white beans (dried)
- shallots (or chopped onions)
- salt

Leave the beans (all types) to soak overnight, then fill three-quarters of a milk crock with them.

Pour in water to the top of the crock, cover the crock with an old plate - some people secure the top of the crock with brown paper - and put it into the bread oven when the loaves are put in.

When the loaves are taken out, leave the crockful to cook slowly for another hour or two.

Serve hot, and pepper to taste. The next day, leftovers can be reheated.

Des Fliottes

- ½ livre d'fieu
- 1 quart d'lait
- 1 quart'ron d'chucre
- ½ tchul'lée à théé d'sé
- 2 oeux, et
- un peton d'beurre.

Démêlez la fliou, lé chucre, les oeux et l'sé. Ajouôtez un gouttîn d'lait d'extra.

Mettez la quartte d'lait à bouoilli, atout l'beurre, pis mettez la farce à tchuithe dédans, la valeu d'eune tchul'lée à soupe à la fais. Ou trou'v'thez qué la farce lève et fliotte dans l'lait.

Laïssiz les fliottes mitonner pour tchiques minnutes. À m'suthe qu'i' tchuisent, mettez-les dans un pliat et gardez-les caudes. Eune fais qué toute la farce est tchuite, sèrviz les fliottes caudes avec lé lait dans tch'est qu'il' ont 'té tchuites.

Y'a des gens tch'aiment un p'tit d'muscade poudrée d'sus d'vant les sèrvi.

Fliottes

For Good Friday – and not only for then!

- ½ lb of flour
- 1 quart of milk
- 1 quarter of sugar
- ½ tsp of salt
- 2 eggs
- a pat of butter

Mix the flour, sugar, eggs and salt. Add a drop of milk.

Set the rest of the milk to boil, with the butter, then put the batter in to cook, a soup-spoonful at a time. You'll find the batter rises and floats in the milk.

Leave the fliottes to simmer for a few minutes. As they cook, put them on a plate and keep them warm. Once all the butter is cooked, serve the warm fliottes with the milk in which they've been cooked.

Some people like a bit of powdered nutmeg on them before serving.



Pictures from Melissa Rodrigues Photography



Du Solyi

- 2 livres d'pâte
- ½ livre d'chucre
- des pommes suthes en quartelles

Mettre eune couchoe dé pâte au fond d'eune lache fraie, pis eune couchoe dé pommes et d'chucre: dèrché eune couchoe dé pâte, et couchoe dé pommes et chucre par-dessus ch'la, atout finalement eune dreine couchoe dé pâte. Tchuithe douchement un coupl'ye d'heuthes.

Solyi (Jersey apple pie)

- 2 lb of pastry
- ½ lb of sugar
- cooking apples cut into segments

Add a layer of pastry at the bottom of a baking dish, then a layer of apples and sugar; another layer of pastry, and a layer of apples and sugar over the top, with, to finish, a final layer of pastry. Bake in a low oven for a couple of hours.



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Welcome to a meal at the long table

Changing the world through food,
by Alasdair Crosby



Vicky Boarder

Imagine – a field above Anne Port with views over the Écréhous to France, a warm summer evening, a marquee, a meal with local produce, as much of it as possible grown in the fields of the farm just a few paces away from where you are sitting.

It's not a restaurant – it's help yourself and afterwards clear the table and put the dirty dishes on a trailer. It's just like home from home, except that you are probably meeting new people. That is The Long Table – a concept that originated on a Gloucestershire farm five years ago and which has now come to Jersey.

Vicky Boarder explained: 'I got this bee in my bonnet – this concept came from a farm near Stroud to try and use up seasonal gluts of produce. I thought: "we could do the same in Jersey – we could make meals for people." If the weather were good, we would put 30 tickets on Eventbrite and invite people to come and share our food. The produce will come from Anneville Farm, where The Long Table is going to be located.

'You don't bring your phone, but you can rediscover conversation, and – more importantly – you rediscover nature and you reconnect with it, without the excessive stimulation that we get in every corner of our lives. This will be a way of getting away from it.

“It will be a lovely way of getting everyone together – and maybe meeting people you don't yet know

'Primarily, it's a way of reconnecting with nature and also a way of using up excess produce in a way that is going to be beneficial to everybody: the farmer, us, the Island. And it's also a way of saying "we have produce here... Look! It's right here! It's local.'"

When you book your seat, you can also book a 'freezer of love' meal to benefit the Grace Trust – and if there's an abundance, other local charities will benefit. The newly revamped farm shop at Anneville will be open so that you can buy your vegetables, before or after your supper, and maybe there might be some musical accompaniment, if somebody tinkers on the piano or guitar.

In short, as Vicky said: 'It will be a lovely way of getting everyone together – and maybe meeting people you don't yet know.'

The Long Table will be operating by the Summer.

Vicky and her business partner Chris Binney met and worked together at The Fresh Fish Company shop at La Collette before setting up their outside catering business at Anneville Farm, where a farmyard building had just been converted into a kitchen. They have given a new lease of life to the existing farm shop, from where they sell their own products as well as the vegetables grown by the Le Gresley family of Anneville Farm.

Throughout the pandemic they did weekly menus for home delivery, using everything they could grow on the farm, and they also supply the meals for Gamma Aviation's private aircraft, as well as cooking prepared meals for the Anneville Farm Shop and for Midland Stores at Maufant.

However, as is quickly apparent when talking to Vicky, there is a strong educational theme in addition to their commercial activity.

“Imagine – a field above Anne Port with views over the Écréhous to France, a warm summer evening, a marquee, a meal with local produce, as much of it as possible grown in the fields of the farm just a few paces away from where you are sitting

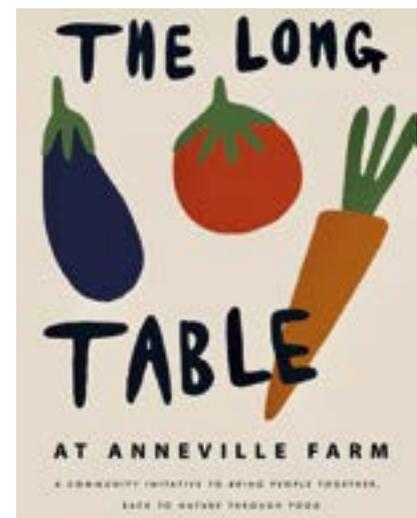
‘Food security is a massive issue for the future, so we have to try to educate people to understand that relying on 90% of food coming from the UK is not sustainable in any way. The Island is importing produce when there is much better produce grown in the Island – it is nonsensical! If Jersey wants to achieve carbon-net-zero, buying asparagus from Chile is not the best idea. Buy seasonal and fresh – it is more delicious and more sustainable.’

Asked whether feeding a population of 110,000 people with local produce was at all possible, she replied: ‘It could be possible, but sadly, there are so few farmers left to do it. Even if we could feed 20% of the population with local produce, it would still be better than just feeding 1%! At the moment, 90% of our food comes from the UK on a boat. And now they want to open France up so we can buy even more from France, when the potential food supply is already here, produced locally.

‘To feed 20% would be amazing – and to bring young people back to farming would be amazing as well. The government needs to buy a farm and make it an educational facility for young people. Wouldn't it be wonderful if the National Trust used one of their properties as a working farm, a place where local young people can learn all about growing and small holdings?’

As for The Long Table: ‘It's a vision – something we have faith in. You have to be constantly coming up with ideas to keep things alive. You can't just sit back and wait for things to happen – so we are trying to do something about it, ourselves.’

For more about The Long Table concept, go to www.thelongtableonline.com



Chris Binney and Vicky Boarder



The farm shop, Anneville Farm

Whispering Angel

A rose – or a rosé - by any other name?

Prize-winning wine writer Hamish Marett-Crosby has a sniff(ter)



Whispering Angel – it could be the theme of a mediaeval hagiography or a legend about a revered anchorite many centuries ago, but it's not. It is a highly upmarket wine created (both in price and taste), to top the market.

To those of us in our late teens during the 1960s, pink consumers were never considered seriously, nor were they brought up to follow any rules about what to drink and when.

Anjou Rosé, full bodied, sweet and on sale everywhere at an affordable price, took over as an easy to drink, easily available, plonk. Every 'bring a bottle' event would always have a large selection of that wine available after bemused and confused guests would pop into the nearest off-license and take a bottle of that familiar pink drink with them on the way to the party.

But fashions, not to mention palettes, changed and the bulk produced medium sweet wines at that end of the price spectrum lost their appeal and those who searched for something similar, but different, headed to Portugal and the new craze, Mateus Rosé. Meanwhile others, the brave crowd, headed south to Provence which was already making a name for light-coloured dry rosés with enough complexity of taste to accompany the astonishing variety of food to be found in that region.

Which brings us very neatly to Château d'Esclans, a 270-hectare estate (including 45 hectares of vineyards). The current château was built in the 19th Century and sold in 1875 and then changed hands several times over the years. In 2006, Sacha Lichine bought the company and ran it until it was bought by Moët-Hennessy in 2019.

By that time M. Lichine had installed state-of-the-art facilities and a team of winemaking experts to help him create a premium rosé to age gracefully in oak barrels. From the Esclans cellars comes Whispering Angel, legendary in its native Provence. You can tell this rosé is top-notch as soon as you open it.

“It's little wonder that Provence has attracted entertainment stars to enjoy its lifestyle and beautiful landscapes. Thus, a new category was born, the celebrity rosé

Liberation Quality Drinks (formerly Victor Hugo Wines) are importers of Whispering Angel and managing director Tim Hubert makes no apology for offering a rosé as a speciality wine at the high end of the market. He is not dictated by previous perceptions of what a rosé should be and what price range it should fall into. Here is wine made with combinations of those Provence grapes – to which we are gradually getting used – and they include the heart of Provence rosé, which comes from the fact that Grenache, the mainstay of so many wines, has a relatively pale skin.

Visually Provence rosé can range from pale shell pink to 'onion skin', copper, deep salmon, and every shade in between. Generally dry in style, the wine is typically very fruit-focused, with a wide range of fruit at its core.



Château d'Esclans Vineyards

It's little wonder that Provence has attracted entertainment stars to enjoy its lifestyle and beautiful landscapes. Thus, a new category was born, the celebrity rosé, and of course this appealed to the heavy hitters within the industry, the biggest of all being Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy (LVMH). It took control of the most famous name in Provence rosé; Château d'Esclans, producers of Whispering Angel.

Made from Grenache, Cinsault, and Rolle (Vermentino), the grapes are sourced from vineyards in the Esclans Valley and Côtes de Provence region. Harvested at night to ensure freshness, grapes are sorted at the winery for the purpose of health and quality. After that, soft crushing occurs followed by rapid temperature cooling (7-8°C). Free run juice is then produced, which gets vinified in stainless steel.

As Tim Hubert from Liberation Quality Drinks said: 'It can be served as an apéritif, an accompaniment to a variety of cheese boards, or pair alongside your favourite seafood dishes.'

'However you use it, whatever it is served with, Whispering Angel is a class act.'



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From Jersey to the Philippines with love

A local company with a strong people first culture has just enhanced its already generous benefits package. Saltgate, a fund administration company headquartered in Jersey and with offices in London and Luxembourg, is becoming well-known in the industry for its raft of work-life balance and family friendly initiatives for its 200 strong workforce.

Last September saw a Saltgate Summit, an event at which colleagues from all jurisdictions came together to brainstorm ideas to further strengthen the company's offering and people proposition. All ideas were considered, and employees were then able to vote for their favourite initiative.

The winning proposal was called Engage 222. This is a new benefits package which is focused firmly on improving work-life balance by giving employees increased flexibility initiatives.

As an example, the company's remote working allowance has been increased, and a new 'working elsewhere' benefit has been introduced allowing staff to work anywhere outside their jurisdiction (offshore finance rules permitting) for two weeks a year. This means that families can take longer holidays or stay with family abroad, whilst one parent works.

In addition, employees can also 'flex' their working week by two hours every week. They can arrive later or finish earlier on any day and make up the hours across the week at a time that works for them, allowing Saltgate's team to pursue outside of work hobbies and interests and to provide greater flexibility when it comes to caregiving responsibilities.

“ This is a new benefits package which is focused firmly on improving work-life balance by giving employees increased flexibility initiatives

Simon Riley, Saltgate's CEO, believes that Saltgate's people first culture is a key differentiator in the market.

'As working models and patterns develop with technology and changing attitudes, we are focused on continued innovation,' he said.

'Our teams work hard and have demonstrated diligence and accountability through both a fully remote period during Covid, and subsequently, since we developed a hybrid model.

'We believe that by looking after our people, asking for feedback and acting on it, and remaining focused on adapting to changing needs and preferences, we will not only help our team thrive as professionals, but benefit Saltgate (and our clients) in the long run too.'

Saltgate also doesn't hesitate to put its people first when supporting charitable causes: their Global Giving programme is structured so that all employees – no matter what their contract or length of service – can nominate a charity, club, or association to receive a donation from the Global Giving fund. Employees can nominate once a year.

June Galon, a senior fund accountant in Luxembourg, suggested that next time the company updated its equipment it donated the redundant computers to schools in the Philippines where he was born.

The archipelago is considered to have one of the largest numbers of accounting schools in Asia and the offshore finance industry has long been a popular choice for highly skilled Filipino accountants.

The first consignment of 40 computer units, stripped and cleaned and returned to factory settings by the IT teams in Jersey and hand packed by June in his own time, have already landed at the Progreso Este Elementary School in Tablas.

'It has been a dream come true for them,' said June. 'They have acquired complete sets of computers and units, which will help both with computer literacy and ensure students become globally competitive. The school has more than 3,000 students, with up to 50 students in each room, and before the delivery up to three students would have to share one fairly old and inadequate machine.'

Deliveries to two other schools, this time in the Cebu Region, are also being planned.

June also hopes to be able to donate books in the future, as books have to be paid for in many schools in the region.

“ The first consignment of 40 computer units, stripped and cleaned and returned to factory settings by the IT teams in Jersey and hand packed by June in his own time, have already landed at the Progreso Este Elementary School in Tablas

If you would like to know more about a career with Saltgate visit <https://saltgate.com/careers/>



Chemins Des Morts

Donna Le Marrec has the last word

Our road system was historically made up of farm tracks and paths connecting settlements with the church, fields to the mills and pathways to the beach for the collection of vrac.

I have always been fascinated with the names of these long-lost tracks, such as Chemin de Moulin, Chemin de Voisin and, in particular, Chemin des Morts.

The latter, rather macabre name, refers to the pathways used to transport a coffin. But it could also refer to our modern roads – as one of the most distressing things when driving around the Island is the litany of dead animals one sees. I find it really distressing seeing a once, living, breathing creature obliterated. Even a dead rat upsets me hugely.

As an animal lover, I just don't understand why car drivers can't see these animals, especially late at night when driving around with headlights on full beam. It can be difficult avoiding, for example, a squirrel as they seem to leap kamikaze like on to the road in order to scurry across to the other side. But it's not impossible if you follow the speed limit and – like me – drive constantly on the lookout for suicidal squirrels, rabbits and hedgehogs.

I can never fathom why people, who live in an island five miles by nine with a top speed limit of 40mph, drive at much faster speeds than that and often in enormous cars in the middle of the road. Where are they going and why do they need to be there in such a hurry?

An improved road network was constructed in the early 1800s because of the threat of a French invasion. They facilitated the movement of soldiers and weapons, and we have General Don to thank for these 'military' roads that evolved into today's road system used by modern road traffic.

It is interesting to note that in 1920 there were an estimated 4,000 cars registered in the Island, driving tests were only established in 1936 and speed limits were introduced in 1962.

In the last 100 years the number of vehicles recorded in the Driver and Vehicle Standards (DVS) register had grown by 2021 to 127,661 vehicles. I was once told that Jersey had more cars per capita than Bangkok – not too sure whether this is true or not, but I don't doubt it when I see the number of cars on the road and when you see the latest population statistics.

Jersey's total population in the 2021 census was 103,267 persons. I imagine that many of these people are children and older people that don't drive – so who is driving the spare 24,000 vehicles? I can only presume that this figure is made up of commercial vehicles and perhaps private collectors.

Years ago, I met a wonderful politician, the Constable of St Peter 'Mac' Pollard, who had, with a small team of parishioners, created in his parish a linked trail of Green Lanes with their 15mph speed limit and distinctive road sign.

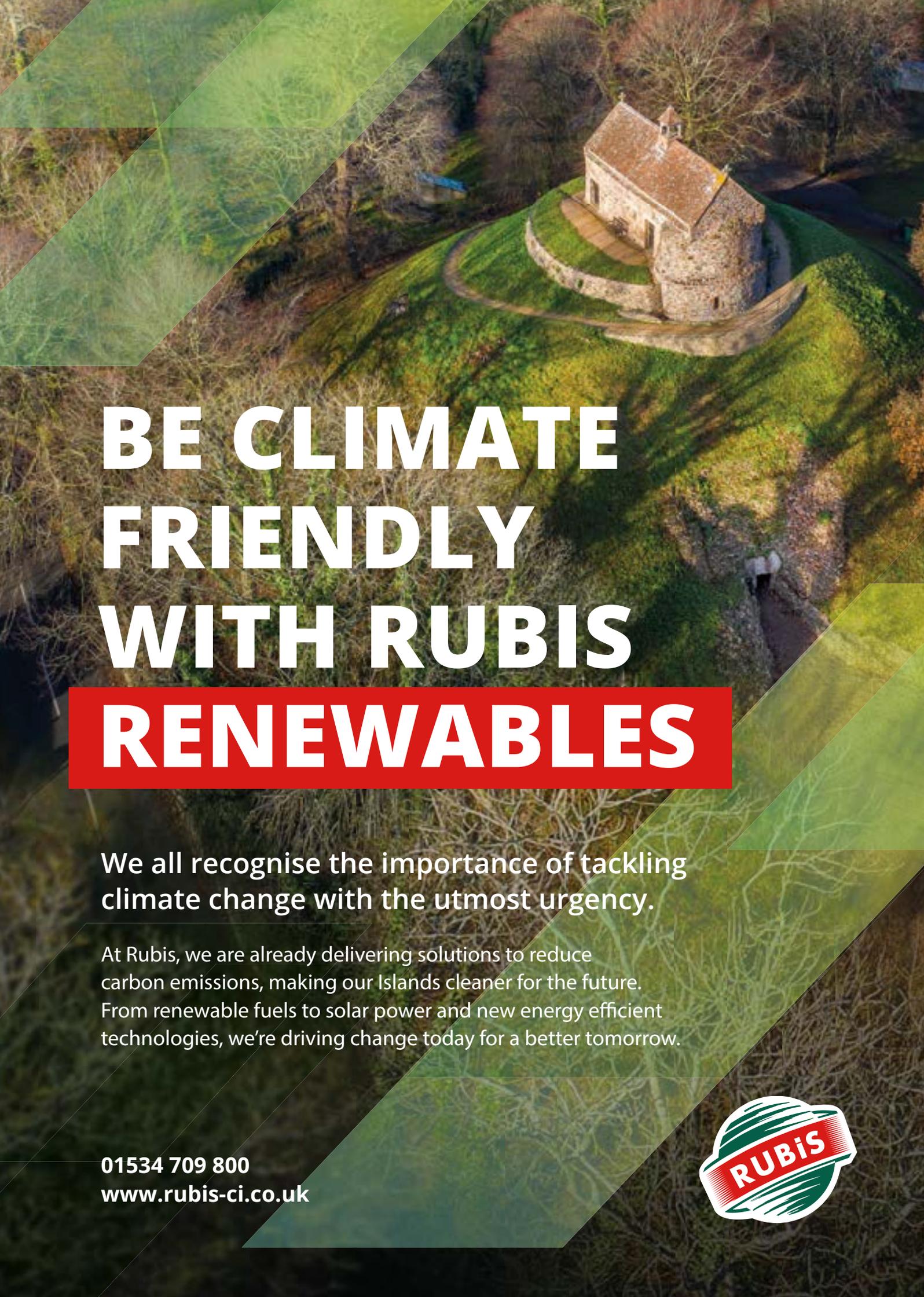
Green Lanes were first mentioned in the Island Plan in 1986, which referred to the need to identify tree-lined lanes which 'were particularly attractive or of great character and antiquity'. Quite simply, the Island Plan identified the need to maintain the natural beauty of the Island's narrow, tree-lined lanes and to create a sustainable leisure amenity for walkers, cyclists and horse riders where people, not the car, had priority.

This initiative was swiftly followed by the introduction of the Jersey cycle network and the blue cycle signs, aimed initially at visitors who liked to walk and cycle.

It does seem that cycling has taken off and it is fantastic to see so many commuters cycling to work.

But rarely, if ever, do I see car drivers driving at 15mph along Green Lanes – which may account for all those dead animals on our modern Chemin des Morts.





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