

RURAL

Jersey Country Life Magazine

Issue 52 | Autumn 2025

Happy 90th birthday, Mike

RURAL's regular columnist on nature related subjects, Mike Stentiford, celebrated his 90th birthday in August

Homage to the horse

A major art exhibition takes place this autumn, titled 'Equus - Art of the Horse'

2025 special theme: The future of rural Jersey

Our special theme this issue:

'REGEN'

Regenerative farming, fisheries – and finance; the future for Jersey's rural sector?



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Welcome

One morning I was delighted to find an unsolicited e-mail in my inbox with this title: THE FUTURE IS RURAL!

‘Excellent,’ was my immediate thought. ‘I must tell that to all my advertising sponsors: “Come on, chaps, the future is RURAL! Be a part of that — be there or be square!”’

Unfortunately, that title had nothing to do with my magazine. Instead, it was derived from an American organisation called, I think, The Post Carbon Institute (which, from its name, has obviously much to do with environmentalism). It was promoting a book written by one of its members.

But how *will* local rural communities and a local way of life fare in the future? How can our familiar home survive in the modern world? So, our four quarterly editions this year have an overarching special theme: Jersey futures – with particular reference to the future of rural Jersey.

In this present issue, we look at various aspects of regenerative agriculture and the regenerative economy and how these could benefit the Island in the future. At the time of writing, we are looking forward to the annual Regen Gathering in Jersey, which is all about, in general terms, the localisation and diversification of the rural economy.

That book, *The Future is Rural*, challenges the conventional wisdom about the future of rural life and farming in our modern, globalised world. It is a much-needed reality check that explains why certain trends we take for granted – like the decline of rural areas – are historical anomalies that will reverse over the coming decades.



Priorities, it says, will profoundly shift, and food will become a central concern for people to transition to more rural and locally focused lives.

Anyone interested in studying this theme further, just ask Mr Google about *The Future is Rural*, and he will be as obliging as always in producing the information you are looking for.

As we jolt from crisis to crisis, where future shocks to our economy and our familiar modern way of life can only be expected, there may indeed be a turning back to a more rural existence in the future.

The major value of events such as the Regen Gathering is the opportunity it presents to discuss and think about the future, and by doing so, we can help to ensure that the future is, indeed, rural.

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

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Front cover image:

Hannah Roynon-Jones, India Hamilton and Taylor Smythe, the team behind this year's REGEN Gathering
Photograph by Gary Grimshaw
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We start a new poetry series with this edition: Jersey poetry contributed by our readers. Our first contribution comes from David Levitt, whose poem coincides with the Autumn equinox — always (or rather, quite often) a spectacular event at La Hougue Bie

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Jock Pettitt
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Bryony Richardson
Taylor Smythe
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Becca Whitehead



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Over the wall

A RURAL view

By the time this edition of *RURAL* is published, the annual Regen Gathering will have come and gone. At the time of writing, it is still about a fortnight in the future.

So, when you read this, Regen will have happened, the speakers will have departed, and the media interest will have turned largely to other topics.

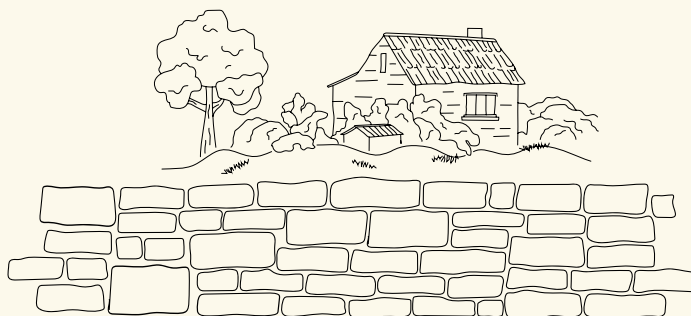
At this moment of writing before the event, one can assume that there will be encouragement to produce more food locally and for new entrants to become smallholders. Co-founder of The Sustainable Food Trust, Patrick Holden will have been one of the eminent guest speakers, speaking on Food, Farming and Health.

There will have been talks on soil health and on the potential links between local farming and local finance... and much more. All good stuff, of course.

But if all this sounds a tad predictable, it does not diminish the importance of the Regen Gathering and of the broad view of food and farming's future that this event encapsulates.

Importantly, Regen Jersey is just one aspect of a worldwide movement that is becoming increasingly more popular as a reaction to the globalised food system that has separated us from the sources of our food, thereby severing the land-based relationships that have informed our species' entire evolution.

If food lies at the centre of the problem, it is also central to the solution. By transforming our food systems – by transitioning away from large-scale, industrial monocultures for centralised markets, towards diversified, smaller-scale, place-based food production – we really can maximise productivity and feed the world, while simultaneously minimising resource use, healing ecosystems, and increasing the number of livelihoods.



Since the Second World War, governments around the world, wedded to an agenda of economic growth through increased international trade, have supported a process of economic globalisation. By contrast, at the centre of localisation is the renewal and strengthening of smaller-scale food production to supply local needs first.

Food-based localisation puts people back in contact with the resources around them, builds community and provides stable and sustainable livelihoods.

Small-scale agriculture is widely dismissed as 'inefficient' and incapable of feeding the world, despite the fact that small farms already produce most of the world's staple foods on a fraction of the acreage.

By fundamentally changing the food system, we can not only minimise resource use and pollution and cut down on food miles and packaging, but we can sequester carbon and repair much of the damage already done. If soil carbon on every acre of farmland globally were returned to pre-industrial levels – something that could be done – at least a trillion tons of carbon dioxide would be removed from the atmosphere, which is roughly equal to the amount of carbon that has been emitted since the dawn of the Industrial Revolution.

Farmers who sell to global markets and supermarket chains must provide massive quantities of a single commodity, and they receive low prices in return; it then makes economic sense to produce that commodity on as much acreage as possible, relying on ever more chemical inputs and ever larger equipment.

On the other hand, farmers whose markets are more localised serve a multitude of buyers who need a wide range of foods, thus encouraging farmers to diversify their production.

How insane that produce imported from the UK is cheaper than produce grown in the Island. Every year, the UK simultaneously imports and exports roughly equal tonnage of staples like milk, pork, bread and eggs. Local and organic food – which benefits from none of the subsidies lavished on global trade and has none of its hidden costs – has become unreasonably expensive and has gained the reputation of being 'elitist'.

Because big, industrial farms are managed by machines and chemicals, they provide few jobs; and because local retailers and small businesses have been replaced by national and global chains, the economies of entire regions have been decimated, propelling people into swelling urban centres in search of employment.

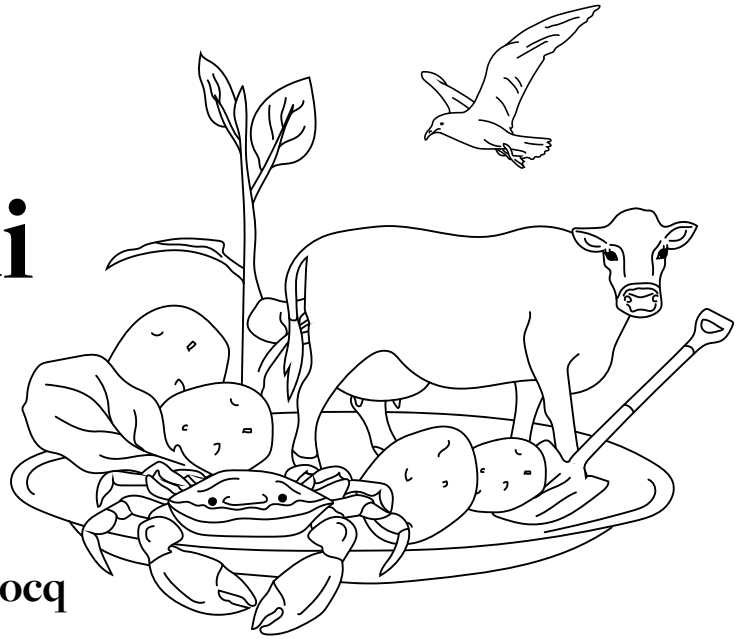
By shortening the distance between the production and consumption of our basic needs, we stimulate diversified production, rebuild resilient economies in which wealth circulates locally and reweave the fabric of community. It is no wonder, then, that we are now witnessing an international resurgence of interest in community-based, sustainable farming.

As we jolt from crisis to crisis, where future shocks to our economy and our consumerised way of life can only be expected, there could be a turning back to a more rural existence, closer to the life-giving earth.

It might be that Jersey's rural economy is not a relic of the past — it could be the foundation of the future — and Regen Jersey can only help towards that.

The Jersey Salmagundi

A mixed salad of events and news, with a bit of this, that and the other thrown in.
Salmagundi editor: Ruth Le Cocq



An invitation to view Jersey Heritage's not-oft-seen treasures

Jersey Heritage is showcasing some of the 250,000 objects that are not normally on display during its 'Meet the Collections' mornings at the Sir Francis Cook Gallery.

The 'Wildlife and Animals' event takes place on Saturday 11 October and will show archive material from the Gerald Durrell collection, mostly birds from the cleaned and reorganised natural history collection, animal remains and bones from the archaeology collection and some artworks featuring animals.

On Saturday 1st November, conservators will be giving demonstrations of how old cameras used to work. A range of cameras, dating from the 19th Century through to more recent times, will show how photography and technology has changed over time.

The events will take place from 9.30am to 1pm and there is no requirement to book – visitors can turn up at any point during the morning.

There will also be tours of the museum collection store, running alongside the 'Meet the Collections' events, for anyone whose curiosity is piqued and wants to see more. These will take place at 10am on the day and will last about an hour.

The Sir Francis Cook Gallery can be found on La Route de la Trinité, in the parish of Trinity.



The Farmers Inn wins All-Island Garden Competition

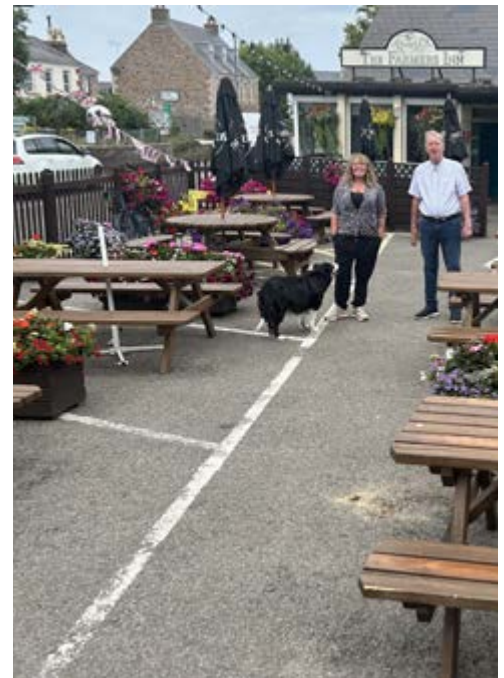
The All-Island Garden Competition for 2025, which was judged in July, awarded the most points to The Farmers Inn, St Ouen.

The pub garden received 99.25 points, and the pub was awarded the Andre Ruellan Memorial Rose Bowl by the competition organisers, the Royal Jersey Agriculture and Horticulture Society.

The garden is pictured, featuring pub managers Shaun Lynch and Rhos Lee.

The Judges' Award for Garden Design was awarded to Robert Perchard. The Jersey Beekeepers Association Shield for Best Pollinator Friendly Garden was won by La Mare Wine Estate. The Judges' Award for Best Use of Recycling Material was won by Collette Willmet. The competition was again sponsored by Ransoms Garden Centre.

Full details of the prizes and awards can be found on the RURAL magazine website www.ruraljersey.co.uk, by clicking on 'RURAL Day to Day'.



New polytunnel helps to grow our community

A new polytunnel at Grow Jersey, the St Helier-based community smallholding, means their sustainable food growing season can be extended thus increasing crop yields and providing a more diverse range of produce.

The polytunnel, which will also act as an indoor classroom during the winter months, is the first step towards further developments, including a new community building and a sensory garden.



Grow Jersey provides opportunities for school groups, charitable organisations and members of the public to access nature, engage in sustainable food growing and outdoor learning.

Minister for the Environment Steve Luce and the Connétable of St Helier, Simon Crowcroft, attended the opening ceremony.

Sheena Brockie, the co-founder and designer of the Grow model, said their presence underscored the importance of sustainable agricultural practices and community-driven projects in Jersey.

She added that she was 'incredibly grateful' to the key funders, St Helier Youth and Community Trust and Lloyds Bank International, for their support.

'This polytunnel represents a significant step forward for our community and we look forward to the many benefits it will bring.'

Lloyds Bank's sustainability director Nigel Cheesley said: 'This is a meaningful investment in community, wellbeing and sustainable education.'



Grow's work tackles vital issues like nutritional poverty, social isolation and mental health. By backing this project, we're helping to create a space where people can connect, grow and thrive.'

The RURAL Landscape awards

The RURAL Landscape Awards took place at the CCA Galleries International in July as part of the gallery's summer exhibition.

These awards recognise artwork in any form, provided it draws inspiration from aspects of Jersey rural life such as landscapes, lanes, farming, food, animals, plants, or the natural environment.

The first prize was *Sentinel* by Janine Graham. The prize of £600 was sponsored by BCR Law.

Second prize, also awarded by BCR Law, was *Silent Field* by Rachel Ara, who won a free holiday let of one of Jersey Heritage's properties.

Third prize, *Storm Ciarán*, was won by Caroline Hall, who received a cheque for £300 from BCR Law.

The judges were Alasdair Crosby and Gary Grimshaw of RURAL magazine, David Benest, managing partner of BCR Law, and Aras Amiri, creative commissions curator at Jersey Heritage.

An interview with the winner, Janine Graham, will appear in the winter edition of RURAL.



First prize: *Sentinel* by Janine Graham.



Second prize: *Silent Field* by Rachel Ara



Third prize: *Storm Ciarán* by Caroline Hall



Are you ready to take a walk on the wild side with John Blashford-Snell?

Put together two intrepid explorers, the late Gerald Durrell and Colonel John Blashford-Snell, and what have you got? To find out more, spend an evening at the Jersey Arts Centre on Thursday 30 October.

Hosted by the Jersey Scientific Exploration Society, John will be sharing some of his adventures involving the selection process, here in Jersey, of Operation Drake, as well as his experiences en route.

The expedition was a global circumnavigation project to develop young leaders which took place during 1978-1980. It involved over 400 participants, from 27 nations, and included 11 from Jersey. Its success prompted the then Prince of Wales, now HM King Charles III, to launch Operation Raleigh which has benefited over 55,000 young people worldwide, such as Dame Barbara Woodward, the UK's permanent representative to the United Nations, and astronaut Tim Peake.

John believes that expeditions are invaluable for encouraging young people to develop resilience.

'A lot of people have never been away from home before and Drake, and now Raleigh, encourage them to develop leadership qualities and inspire others.'

Islander Emma Kirby was one of those to be so inspired and, having been awarded a £2,000 bursary from the JSES, she spent three months in Borneo on a trip organised by Raleigh International. She will be sharing her experiences alongside John at the October event, which starts at 7pm.

'It was such an amazing experience. I really enjoyed it and I developed confidence in myself – I realise now I can do much harder things than I gave myself credit for!'



Now showing – the Jersey Horse of the Year Show 2025

The sparkle and magic of the Jersey Horse of the Year Show is back!

Home Farm Equestrian is once again hosting the event, including classes sponsored by RURAL magazine, over three weekends at its indoor floodlit arena in St John. The dressage classes have already been held but spectators can look forward to the thrills (and hopefully no spills) of show jumping on 19th to 21st September and showing classes on 27th and 28th.

**For more information visit
www.jhoys.co.uk**

Rocking the '80's vibe to celebrate Jersey Pearl's 40th birthday

Born in 1985
40 YEARS OF JERSEY PEARL

Opening a showroom out of town was a bold move 40 years ago, but Jersey Pearl has welcomed over 30 million visitors since June 1985 and is celebrating with an 80's vibe.

Vibrant 1980s-inspired displays at their St Ouen, King Street and Gorey locations nod to iconic styles from the decade and visitors can enjoy a taste of the past at the Pearl Café with prawn cocktails, banana splits and trifle.

Fred Scragg, the founder of the family-run business, has certainly fulfilled the saying: 'The world is your oyster. It's up to you to find the pearls.'

In the early days, he ran the company with his son and son-in-law, Mike Scragg and John Taylor. Now John's children, Julia and Mike, are leading the way with the business, which started in Jersey and has grown internationally across the UK and Spain.

John recalls: 'Some of my best memories are when we had ladies queuing around the building to spot John Nettles in our showroom during Bergerac's '80s heyday, coach drivers racing each other to grab a parking spot and unforgettable moments, like launching our Jersey Ormer collection and learning to string pearls with Queen Elizabeth II's pearl stringer. It's been an incredible journey.'

Jersey Post's six stamps mark last year's Royal Visit

Jersey Post has released a set of six stamps to celebrate last year's Royal Visit when HM King Charles III and Queen Camilla visited the Island.

On that July day, the Royal couple braved torrential rain, hailstones included, and the £2.30 stamp shows the Queen taking shelter and peering out from under a large umbrella.

Local photographers Max Burnett and Andy Le Gresley captured the Royal pair as they made their way through the town of St Helier while taking part in several special ceremonies and greeting the crowds.

Jersey's close ties to the British monarchy date back to 1204, when the Island became a Crown dependency following its allegiance to King John.

During the Royal Visit, the Royal couple were gifted with a framed selection of stamps from the issues of 'The Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III 2023' and 2024's 'New Definitives: Crest of Jersey and His Majesty King Charles III'.

More details about each of the six stamps can be found within the issue's first day cover and presentation pack which is available for purchase at Jersey Post's Broad Street Post Office and its headquarters at La Rue des Prés Trading Estate. The set can also be ordered online at www.jerseystamps.com



Sign to save the 128-year-old Victoria Marine Lake

Islanders wishing to save the Victoria Marine Lake at West Park are being urged to sign an online petition which garnered over 1,000 signatures within two weeks of its June launch.

The recently-formed 'Save Our Pool Working Group', comprising local stakeholders, is advocating for the historic pool in St Aubin's Bay to be restored and maintained.

The petition, lodged by Nina Zaech, describes the pool, dating from 1897, as of 'significant historical and cultural importance' and one of only two such pools in the Island, the other being at Havre des Pas.

'Despite some investment in the past, the pool has seen minimal maintenance over its 128-year history,' said Nina. 'Since 2023, the sluice gates have remained open, effectively rendering the pool unusable.'

She explained that Victoria Marine Lake predates the listed Havre des Pas pool by eight years, yet it remains unlisted and at risk.

'Preserving the pool would preserve a vital piece of Jersey's heritage while promoting health, leisure and tourism.'

Petitions signed by 1,000 people receive a response from the relevant minister, while those receiving 5,000 signatures will be considered for debate in the States Assembly.

To sign the petition visit <https://petitions.gov.je/petitions/201109>



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“ Our industries can be aligned, but the next step is to focus. We need action plans, clear responsibilities, and stories rooted in Jersey. If we do that, the impact will be real

Building Bridges

What connects, or what SHOULD connect resilient communities and farming with finance? What if Jersey could be a bridge between these two worlds? India Hamilton and Taylor Smythe (Regen Gathering), and Hannah Roynon-Jones (director of the lead sponsors, Alex Picot Trust) talked to Alasdair Crosby

This spring, something unusual happened at La Hougue Bie. Beneath one of the oldest sacred sites in the world, financiers and farmers met for the Luminaries Gathering around a shared question: What does it take to finance a future that's truly regenerative? How can finance help improve land, food and health to create more resilient communities and ecosystems?

These are not just theoretical questions – they have a practical application to Jersey – and these discussions were carried forward at September's annual Regen Gathering.

Hannah Roynon-Jones, Director of Alex Picot Trust (the lead sponsor for the Regen Gathering), said: 'At the La Hougue Bie meeting, there were many influential and well-placed attendees. It was a real achievement to bring all those individuals together, and to capture people's attention across industries. This feels like a pivotal point of change.'

The organisers behind the recent annual Regen Gathering are HYPHA Consulting, which is a team consisting of Taylor Smythe, India Hamilton and Jess McGovern. Regen, which celebrates farming, food and the future, is held at Le Tâcheron Farm in Trinity. The word 'Tâcheron' is Jërriais for 'The Team' – also a very descriptive name for HYPHA, a regenerative consultancy working in Jersey, with a focus on transitional strategies within food and farming.

Why the name HYPHA? Taylor explained: 'HYPHA refers to hyphae, the white fibrous structures of mycelial networks that connect everything in the soil.' So, now we know.

How can finance actually help to improve land, food and health?

India answered: 'At the heart of this question lies a quiet truth: finance – how it's used, invested, and controlled. It is one of the most powerful forces shaping food.'



Luminaries Gathering at La Hougue Bie

‘From the crops farmers grow, to the food that ends up in our supermarkets, finance determines what is viable, what is visible, and ultimately, what is valuable. Yet for decades, the systems of finance and food have operated on parallel tracks, rarely intersecting, and often misaligned. Most of the world’s financial systems are focused primarily on making money, often overlooking what’s good for our health, communities, or the planet.’

Taylor took up the conversation: ‘We started the year with a bold idea – as Jersey has roots in both agriculture and global finance, what if Jersey could be a bridge between these two worlds? What if we could turn that proximity into possibility?’

‘The problem isn’t just profit, it’s perspective. Today’s global food system is optimised for efficiency and scale, i.e. shelf life, yield per acre, maximum return. Health, ecology and human connection are afterthoughts. When a cocoa harvest fails due to climate change, markets respond with profit.’

‘When diets high in ultra-processed food lead to long-term health problems, the pharmaceutical sector steps in, not to solve the root cause, but to monetise the symptoms.’

“ **How can finance help improve land, food and health to create more resilient communities and ecosystems?** ”

‘This isn’t malice. It’s the logic of a system built on short-term returns and outdated assumptions. Assumptions that humans are fundamentally selfish, and that markets are separate from ecosystems. But what if we chose to evolve that mindset and consciously evolve the market to value all human needs, namely health, dignity, connection, water and biodiversity?’

Change is already happening, Taylor said. Major brands like Ferrero are diversifying into grains, recognising climate risk in cocoa. In the USA, a White House initiative named MAHA (‘Make America Healthy Again’, of course) is focused on improving public health, particularly addressing chronic disease and its connection to diet, food production, and environmental factors. It is investing in food as medicine models that reduce healthcare costs. And in the UK, banks are beginning to underwrite farmers’ natural capital, because degraded soil isn’t just an environmental issue, it’s a financial one.

At the same time, consumers are changing. Sales of ultra-processed snacks are down 19% this year. Appetite suppressing drugs may be part of it, but so is a growing appetite for clean, local and nutrient-dense food. After 70 years of processed convenience, we’re waking up to a reality: cheap food is no longer cheap.

‘Jersey is a living case study,’ said India. ‘Everyone would agree the potential here is enormous. Jersey has both a world-renowned agricultural legacy and financial sector managing global land-based assets, but they rarely sit and break bread at the same table.’





Regen Gathering 2024

‘It is no surprise that many in our finance industry come from farming families. The wisdom is still there, often unspoken. The empathy is there too. We don’t have to build bridges from scratch, we just have to walk across them.

‘Jersey has done this before. In the 1830s, a book published in Jersey, on wheat seed selection, influenced Norman Borlaug, the father of the so-called “Green Revolution”. Today, Jersey cows are improving food security in many African countries through the Dairy for Development programme. Our impact is often quiet, but it’s rarely small.

“ Everyone would agree the potential here is enormous. Jersey has both a world-renowned agricultural legacy and financial sector managing global land-based assets

‘That’s why we created the Luminaries Gathering ... to start a new dialogue. Not just about investment returns or climate targets, but about meaning. About reconnecting money to soil, data to story, and profit to purpose.’

As Masanobu Fukuoka wrote in his book, *The One-Straw Revolution*, ‘The ultimate goal of farming is not the growing of crops, but the cultivation and perfection of human beings.

Perhaps there is a deeper purpose for capital flows as well. What are the invisible threads that connect us to nature, to life, to each other?

That is not a question often asked at farming conferences, but the Luminaries Gathering on the Spring Equinox at La Hougue Bie asked, in India’s words: ‘What if we explore this question with integrity, vulnerability and honesty, weaving ancient and modern wisdom, building bridges between financial and food systems, ecological restoration, personal healing and social change. But what we’re really trying to do is rekindle something old: interdependence, kinship, and the felt knowledge that when we heal the land, we heal ourselves.’

Attendees asked: ‘What local projects already exist that need support? Where can capital meet the community, not just charity? How do we translate momentum into measurable steps?’

Jersey has an incredible base to build on, from the world’s first LEAF-accredited dairy industry to carbon sequestering farms. And, as dairy farmer Andrew Le Gallais rightly noted at the Gathering: ‘We don’t talk enough about what’s already working here. Global examples inspire, but Jersey examples engage.’

Hannah commented: ‘Our industries can be aligned, but the next step is to focus. We need action plans, clear responsibilities, and stories rooted in Jersey. If we do that, the impact will be real.’

HYPHA promotes a market mindset, but one that is in transition.

‘Markets are not fixed laws of nature,’ India said. ‘They’re social constructs. They’re stories we agree to believe in, and we can rewrite them. What we’re seeing now is not the collapse of the system, but its composting. From extraction to regeneration. From fragmentation to integration. Finance can be a force for good, but only if it’s connected to the living systems it depends on. That’s what regenerative food systems ask of us: to reimagine value, realign capital, and rediscover a deeper kind of wealth.’

The next Luminaries Gathering will be held on the Spring Equinox of 2026. Between now and then, HYPHA will continue developing this work of building bridges between capital and cultivation, mapping potential for a regenerative economy in Jersey, and anchoring global ideas in local relationships.

As Taylor said: ‘We don’t have to invent a new story. Jersey has always been a place of convergence, of tides, of trade, of traditions.

‘We just have to remember that regenerative change is not about fixing the world from the top down – it’s about healing it from the ground upwards, together.’

Rebuilding an Island's food system... *from the ground up*



Although RURAL focuses on Jersey, occasionally it's good to hear stories from beyond our shores. Here Jock Pettitt and Sasha Marsh, co-founders and owners of The Soil Farm and The Farm Shop in Guernsey, explain how they are working to bring about meaningful change in how food is produced, understood and sourced within their community

As a community, Guernsey has become seasoned to the fragility and disconnect that come from a food system with no roots in local soil. Much like the flavour and nutrition that has gradually disappeared from our plates, the systems that once supported local food production have quietly faded away. With 98% of what we eat (excluding milk) now imported, we've become almost entirely reliant on global supply chains.

This might be true across much of the UK, but living in an island makes it all the more apparent. A storm rolls in and the freight boat doesn't dock. A geopolitical event, a cyberattack, an Icelandic volcano, or a war – whatever the trigger, the result is the same: within 24 hours, our supermarket shelves are empty.

And it hasn't been a fair trade. The food we import is often processed, harvested before it's ripe, shipped vast distances, or grown out of season. It lacks the nutrition, freshness, and energy we need to thrive.

“ We launched The Soil Farm as a consultancy to support others working with land. But it quickly became clear that very few were actually growing food. So we started ourselves



Guernsey once had a proud heritage of agricultural and horticultural excellence. Today, farming is mostly reduced to a small dairy industry and a few remaining hedge veg stalls, allotments and smallholdings. Our fields are increasingly turned into gardens or housing plots. The greenhouses that once buzzed with productivity now stand as monuments to managed decline.

Looking through the eyes of our children – at the birds that no longer sing, the wildlife that’s disappeared, the soil that won’t hold water and the polluted water systems that sustain us – we knew we had to do something different.

Years of experimenting, growing food, starting community projects, and connecting with others pointed to one root issue – our soil. Decades of neglect had stripped it of life. Without biology, structure or moisture, it simply couldn’t function. That realisation pushed us to study, to learn how to rebuild soil health and regenerate the systems that sustain us.

We launched The Soil Farm as a consultancy to support others working with land. But it quickly became clear that very few were actually growing food. So we started ourselves. During Covid, a pilot plot produced 600kg of food from 100m² in just six months. That led to a veg box scheme and eventually a scaled-up production model.

From there, we saw the need to acquire land and build a multi-enterprise farm. But one farm isn’t enough. We need a network of diverse small-scale farms and a robust route to market.

“ Our children deserve nothing less

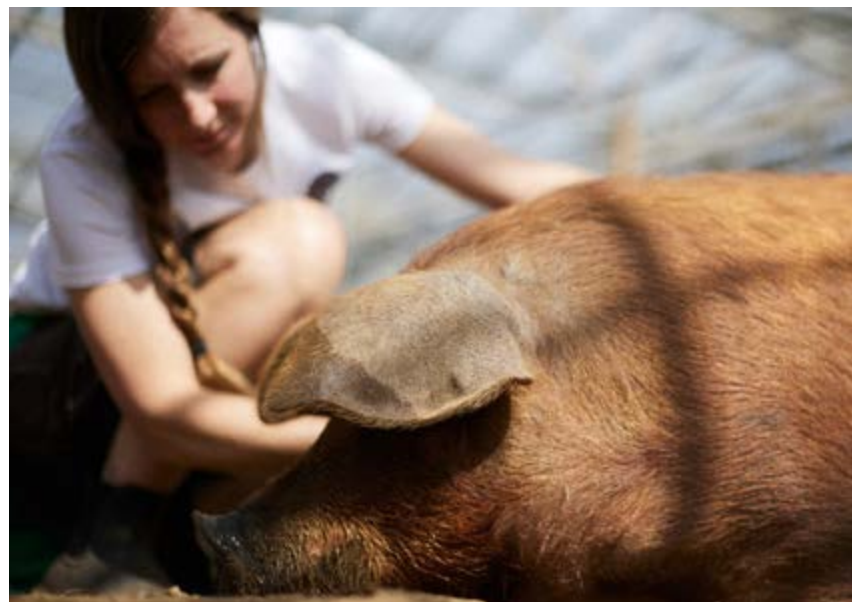
That’s why we created The Farm Shop, the first of its kind in Guernsey. The Farm Shop is a promise of values to the consumer including animal and environmental welfare, fair pay for farmers and supporting the health of our community. It reinvests 50% of profits back into growing the sector.

We’ve already partnered with 25+ local suppliers, and we aim to produce 30% of what we consume in the Island within 10 years.

Meanwhile, Jersey is showing what’s possible from peer-to-peer networks, reward systems and government traction to the inspiring annual Regen Gathering event. There is so much we can learn from one another.

A £20k Food Prize, launched by the Regen Gathering organisers, HYPHA Consulting, incentivises growers, entrepreneurs, and future farmers to come forward and share their ideas.

Our children deserve nothing less.





Gone fishing

There is a vision for Jersey to become a regenerative fishing industry – as Taylor Smyth discovered, in conversation with Ben King of Pesky Fish

This autumn, as conversations around Jersey’s rural economy gain momentum at the annual Regen Gathering and the Jersey Farming Conference, it’s worth asking: What role does the sea play in all of this?

While farming has found a renewed voice through the Rural Support Scheme and the Agricultural Loans Fund, fisheries, equally important to our Island’s identity, remain largely adrift in a system that’s neither economically resilient nor ecologically sustainable.

If we’re serious about improving local food production and ensuring we have a critical mass of local farmers and fishers, we have to look not just to the land but to the ocean. We must rethink how we fish, who we fish for, and what kind of legacy we want to leave in our wake.

What Is Pesky?

Pesky is a business that a frustrated Ben King created in 2017. Frustration that the best, freshest seafood in the UK was being caught by independent boats, shipped halfway across the world, and then sold back to us as a commodity product. Frustration that fishers earning £4 per kg saw their fish sold in restaurants for £45 per kg, without ever seeing the upside.

At its heart, Pesky is a daily landings market of regenerative seafood, built on a network of over 80 British boats and producers. Pesky is a technology-enabled seafood marketplace, but what they’re really trying to do is fix the food system. Their aim is to build a system where boats can land fish in a way that sustains stocks and the marine environment, while also supporting and growing fishing incomes.

A system where chefs, home cooks and wholesalers can access truly local, seasonal, regeneratively harvested fish, and arguably more importantly, know exactly where it came from.

A system where we can sell a scallop, not because it’s cheaper or faster, but because it’s better for the stock of scallops caught in a way that actually helps the sea to recover.

In 2022, Pesky developed the first regenerative framework – enabling every buyer to use their consumption to help regenerate the ocean’s fish stocks and marine environments. As part of Pesky’s Project Jersey, their supply chain is being expanded with the specific goal of building a fully regenerative fishery – one where consumption will regenerate shellfish stocks, increase fishing revenues and grow processing jobs on the Island. Ben spoke at this year’s Regen Gathering on 5 September about moving supply chains from commodity to food with a story.

What Is Regenerative Fishing?

You can think of it like regenerative agriculture but at sea. Instead of trying to extract as much as possible as quickly as possible, regenerative fishing frames it like this: How do we fish in a way that helps the ocean replenish itself? This isn't ideology; it's both biology and economics.

It means not catching species in decline. It means not trawling through seabeds that take decades to recover. It means giving fishers a price incentive to do the right thing, instead of relying on guilt or bureaucracy to enforce compliance.

Pesky works backwards from the question: What has to be true for fish stocks to recover? Then they rebuild the supply chain – catch, process, distribute and sell – around that answer. The result is a market that regenerates value in every direction: ecological, economic, cultural.

Why Jersey?

Jersey is an Island. And that matters. It means everything is close, visible and interconnected. Many would see that proximity as a gift or a leverage point. We can test new systems here and know within weeks what works and what doesn't.

Ben says: 'If we get this right, Jersey can become a global reference point, like the US state of Maine, where V-notching (which protects egg-bearing female lobsters) and buy-back schemes have helped keep fisheries regenerative for over a century.'

Jersey has some of the UK's best hand dived scallops, spider crab, lobster, and even octopus – high value species with unique provenance. But much of this produce is undervalued, inconsistently processed, or exported as a raw commodity without capturing its full potential. And because the infrastructure isn't built to support quality-at-scale, boats often chase volume over value because they have to.

'That's not a failure of individual boats. It's a failure of systems,' says Ben.

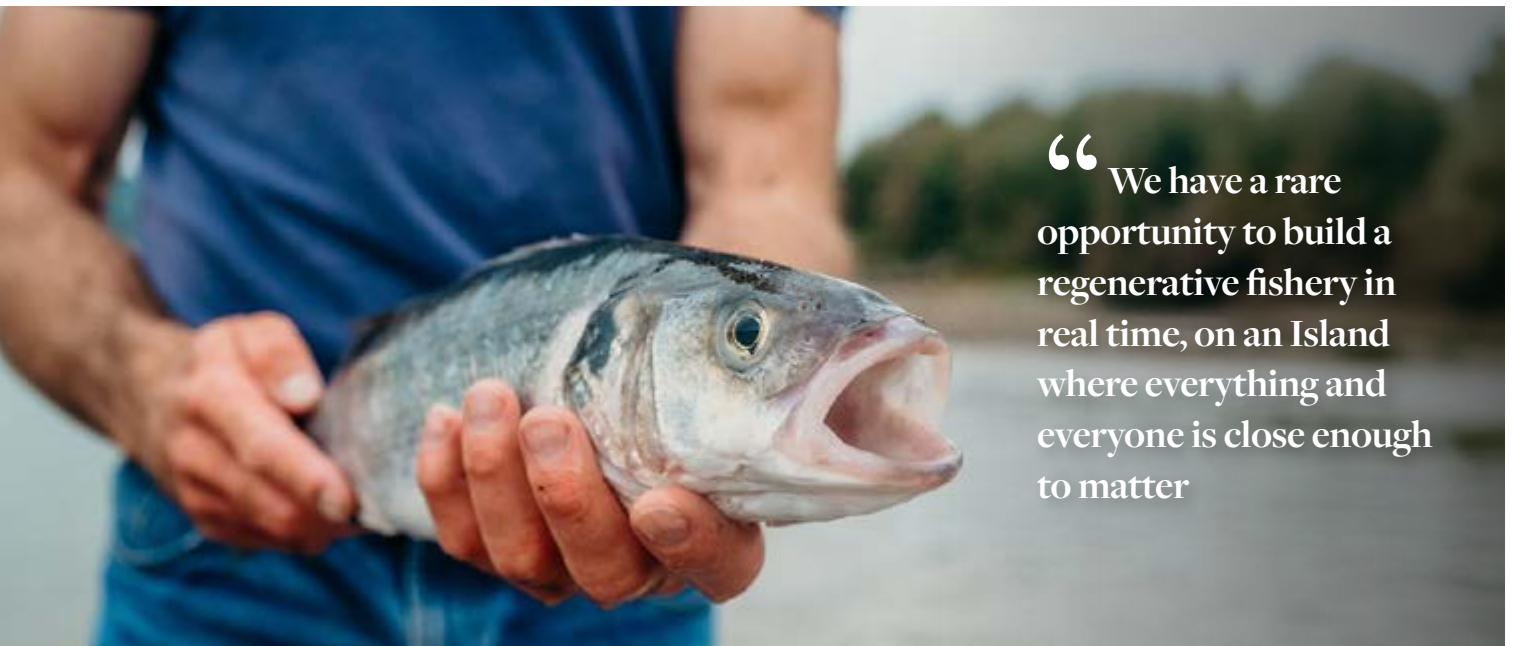
Like our agriculture, Jersey's fishing industry has been in decline. In 1996, there were 328 registered boats. By 2021, just 114 remained with only 30 full time fishers still active.

Today, nearly 98% of Jersey's seafood is exported, with little control over price, processing, or story. However, Jersey's success in niche, high value products like oysters, stems from its exceptional growing conditions and unique tidal ranges. Notably, one beach encompassing a 50 hectare site on the south coast accounts for half of the UK oyster market.

'We don't need massive factories or complicated cooperatives. We don't need to tell fishers to "do better" without giving them a way to benefit. We just need to remove friction,' says Ben.

Pesky is working with seafood wholesaler Fishwise and other Jersey fishers to discuss different tactics. In the future, the business would like to see a system where, for example, a scallop boat in Jersey grades their catch at sea by shell size; they land it into a small clean room on Victoria Pier; the catch is shucked, blast-frozen, and labelled by boat and size before it's sold to UK chefs, with a story, a face and a fair price.

Fishers earn more per kilo. The ecosystem is not exploited. And Jersey builds a system that balances independence with interdependence, our unique strength as a tightknit Island community.



“ We have a rare opportunity to build a regenerative fishery in real time, on an Island where everything and everyone is close enough to matter



Beyond the Market: Culture, Story, Trust

This isn't just about seafood. It's about identity and being part of the solution.

'Every time a customer buys from us, they trust they're not just getting fish. They're helping regenerate the ocean,' says Ben.

Their boxes include 'football card' profiles of the boats and crew. Their chefs send videos back to fishers saying thank you. The supply chain becomes a human chain, which is how you build trust. And ultimately, it's how you build change.

Ben explains: 'What we've learned is that people don't change because of data or directives. They change because they feel part of something better. And that's exactly what regenerative fishing offers, a chance to feed ourselves without eating away at the future.'

What's Holding Us Back?

The most damaging thing about Jersey's fisheries isn't overfishing; it's under-imagining. Policies still allow landing of berried hens – lobsters carrying eggs – despite overwhelming ecological evidence that protecting them stabilises stocks. The UK banned this practice years ago. Maine pioneered the buy-back scheme decades ago. Yet here, we're told there's no evidence that a ban would be feasible and cost effective, phrases often used when the real issue is inertia, not ignorance.

'Regulation has its place. But right now, what's missing is imagination, and the will to back boats, not just monitor them,' says Ben.

Reeling Jersey Back In

In the end, building a viable food future in Jersey is about high tides, high trust, and high quality seafood that reflects the best of who we are as Islanders, fiercely independent and deeply interconnected.

We have a rare opportunity to build a regenerative fishery in real time, on an Island where everything and everyone is close enough to matter. The fishers are ready. The markets are ready. The chefs are hungry. All we need is the courage and patience to connect the dots. If we get this right, people will look back and say: That's when Jersey reeled itself back in, and the world took notice.

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Open Day at La Croix

Going beyond conservation

The Jersey Conservation Awards support habitat restoration, public education, and scientific research. This year, La Croix Regeneration Centre, led by Nikki de Gruchy, was recognised as runner-up for its pioneering agroecological work. She showed Alasdair Crosby around the centre



The Insurance Corporation marked the 35th year of its Conservation Awards this year, honouring individuals, groups, and young people dedicated to protecting and restoring the Island’s environment. The top honour for 2025 went to the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust for its red-billed choughs programme.

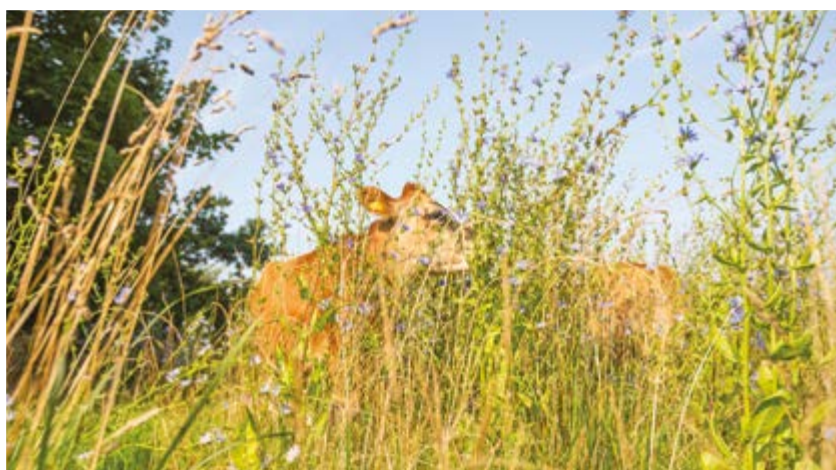
Runner-up was La Croix Regeneration Centre, recognised for its pioneering agroecological work. An organic certified regenerative farm, it is led by Nikki de Gruchy, whose family have farmed for at least five generations – doubtless for longer!

“ If I were able to convert the land to organic, stop the use of harmful artificial inputs and biocides, and plant a load of trees to restore the hedgerows — then I would be happy!

‘I was super surprised at being runner-up, as the only individual and a newcomer,’ Nikki said. ‘The others were all big organisations, such as Durrell, the National Trust, Jersey Sea Cadets and Acorn’s Woodshack.

‘When I came back to Jersey after some time abroad, I knew I wanted the farm to go organic. My late father had converted some fields to organic production, but these lost their status on his retirement, when the land was rented out for potato production. I’ve experienced first-hand the detrimental effect of agrochemicals in my personal health story.

“ The cattle graze in the long grass – not usually seen in Jersey and against conventional dairy wisdom



'Living with the long-term effects every day, I wanted to make sure I didn't add to the problem but instead become part of the solution. If I were able to convert the land to organic, stop the use of harmful artificial inputs and biocides, and plant a load of trees to restore the hedgerows — then I would be happy!'

The de Gruchy family have always lived in the area of Trinity surrounding the Rue de Brabant. Her family's La Croix Farm was where she grew up, and since her return to the Island has now become La Croix Regeneration Centre – Nikki wants to keep it as a working heritage farm.

Her grandfather had cows – a reasonably sized herd for the 1950s. She remembers cows and pigs on the farm, and it was very much a market garden mix, with all the winter crops that are rarely seen now. They supplied the local market and the hospitality trade, as well as growing flowers for the Battle of Flowers, for Jersey and Guernsey.

After qualifying locally as an accountant, Nikki lived and worked in many countries worldwide before changing career to the arts and healthcare, so, as she said, she came back to Jersey with a very broad set of eyes!

'I was saddened by how Jersey's small farmers had been pushed out and by people's general disconnection from the countryside. And, at the farm, two decades of intensive chemical-system potato production had resulted in biologically dead and compacted soils.

'There are two main ways to rebuild soil organic matter to regenerate soil – with plant material or livestock. I didn't have access to the quantities of quality compost or wood chip required, so I had to turn to livestock. First of all, some of Aaron Le Couteur's Manx Loaghtan sheep came to graze the meadows and now I have guest heifers and my own small herd of Jerseys and heritage and rare breed poultry. My other main regeneration tool is trees.

'I'm using permaculture and agroecology principles to give nature a helping hand in rebuilding ecosystems. It's a wilding project, as much as is possible in an Island farming context.'

Perhaps the aspect of La Croix that most immediately catches the eye is the long grass, giving it a wild, almost 'jungly' appearance. The cattle graze in the long grass – not usually seen in Jersey and against conventional dairy wisdom.

'I fence off small areas to contain a high concentration of animals, who pass through quicker, then the area gets rested for a much longer period. This "mob grazing" or AMP (adaptive multi-paddock) grazing simulates the natural movement of wild ruminants and is a regenerative grazing technique that promotes soil health and carbon sequestration.'

Then there are the chickens, whose evident wellbeing among the long grass and nettles recalls the fact that chickens derive ultimately from jungle fowl. The free-range chickens graze the long grass down to nothing.

'Nettles are amazing for lots of different insects and wildlife. They are really busy at the moment with the caterpillars of the Peacock butterfly. As the land becomes more diverse, it is an absolute wildlife haven. On hot days, walking through the big enclosures is like walking in a subtropical rainforest, the vegetation is so tall that it keeps the humidity.'



Nikki keeps three dual-purpose poultry breeds. The idea of keeping heritage traditional breeds is that they are better on a grass range than conventional hybrids, and have a lower requirement for high-performance imported feed.

‘One of the other horrible parts of the poultry industry is that the male chicks are promptly killed when they are a day old. At La Croix, the males are kept; they have life expression, and become breeding stock or very sizeable meat birds. We are getting 2½ kilos processed dead weight – a turkey size rather than a chicken size!’

“**The education piece is key for children but we also offer our elders a remembering of how things used to be. On one of our Open Days our youngest visitor was seven weeks old and our oldest 91 years old. The centre is truly multi-generational and inclusive**

She admits that she chose the three breeds partly for their colouring – Norfolk Greys (black), Light Sussex (white) and Cuckoo Marans, which lay chocolate-coloured eggs. The breeds mature a lot slower, so they should be laying for six to seven years. Nothing like hybrids, which have a laying life of only about two years. Sustainability is at the heart of every decision made at La Croix.

Nikki’s therapy background informs her vision of La Croix as a community wellness centre.

‘There is scope for the land and buildings not just to be an organic regenerative farm, but a place to encourage the public to experience going “back to the land” and to consider where their daily food comes from. That’s why I hold so many open days. The education piece is key for children but we also offer our elders a remembering of how things used to be. On one of our Open Days our youngest visitor was seven weeks old and our oldest 91 years old. The centre is truly multi-generational and inclusive.

‘People don’t normally have the opportunity to enjoy long grass meadows – we encourage “bring-your-own picnic” as part of our Farm Open Days, or to spend more time here wild camping and making the most of this area’s dark skies.’

The centre offers Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) days as part of its volunteer program and Nikki is keen to support social prescription referrals.

‘Mental health is such a big issue, and the land and the animals really do work their magic.’

Her cows are halter trained – equine therapy has been around for a while but at La Croix Nikki is developing bovine therapy!

In the historic wet meadow, or pré, she has undertaken a four-year programme to clear hemlock water dropwort – Britain’s most poisonous plant. What was once a free-flowing watershed, documented on the Duke of Richmond Map of 1795, had become stagnant with a lake forming each winter. In the first year she had to take a chainsaw to its stems, and 1.5 tons went into the incinerator. Then she had to dig the roots up by hand and spread lime – hemlock doesn’t like changed soil conditions. Now the land can be conservation grazed and camping spots have been created.

There are three tree nurseries for all the trees she is planting, and bee hives. She points out an area which she would like to be an organic market garden – incredibly fertile land which she would also rotate with her chickens.

Agroforestry is an important element of her farm. She plants alder, willow and hazel for browsing cattle, and pears for fruit. They act as shelter belts and windbreaks for the cattle and the poultry and fill in gaps in the hedgerows. She has lost count of the number of trees she has planted, but they include a horse chestnut avenue.

‘Conkers are very high in saponins, so you can make soap out of it and it is good for varicose veins. Willows are very good at filtering agrichemicals out of the soil. I am trying to get as many native tree species on my land as possible.’

All very interesting, but where does her income come from?



‘My organic free-range eggs are my first income stream. The Rural Support Scheme has increased annual payments, but I have been largely self-funding because I believe in what I am doing. Agroforestry projects were funded in the UK under the Sustainable Farming Incentive — it would be fantastic if such diversity, and other income streams, were encouraged in our Island. The farm needs this diversity to keep it sustainable.’

There have been numerous boundary disputes with her neighbours, which has not made her too popular in the parish.

‘I’ve been told to my face that I am the most hated person in Trinity,’ she said.

But, like her or loathe her, Nikki’s energy, commitment, fighting spirit and enthusiasm for regeneration of land and health are absolutely undeniable.

*Nikki welcomes enquiries about volunteering, CSR days, corporate sponsorship or anything else. She can be contacted at:
lacroixregenerationcentre@gmail.com*



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Happy 90th
birthday, Mike

RURAL's regular columnist on nature related subjects, Mike Stentiford, celebrated his 90th birthday in August. Instead of his regular column, Alasdair Crosby talked to him about his life and work



Mike as a 15-year-old teenager, with his father, Harold

Mike Stentiford's support of Jersey's countryside and natural environment is demonstrated in a staggering list of achievements – yet he reflects on them with his customary modesty.

'What I find,' he said, 'is that when we all get to advanced years, and in my case, I think 90 is not too bad a cricket score, I've got to the stage where I am not particularly planning ahead because what can I realistically plan ahead for? The only option is to look back and to say to myself: "Come on, Mike – have you achieved anything at all in that time?"'

“ Mike was co-leader of the campaign to save Plémont, to demolish the redundant holiday camp and to restore the area to nature

Well, Mike, if you have forgotten, may we remind you?

Picking a few major events from Mike's full and long life: he received the MBE from Queen Elizabeth II in July 2000 and the following year he was the first recipient of the Jersey Heritage Millennium Portrait Award. Mike became president of the National Trust for Jersey from 2008 to 2011 and was chairman of its Coastline Campaign.

Readers with long-ish memories will remember the Line in the Sand in 2009, one of Jersey's biggest ever peaceful demonstrations, when over 6,000 people formed a line across the sands of St Ouen's Bay at low tide to demand better, permanent protection of the Island's coastline and for it to retain its natural state. That led to the formation of the Jersey National Park two years later. And who came up with that idea? Mike, of course.

Mike was co-leader of the campaign to save Plémont, to demolish the redundant holiday camp and to restore the area to nature.

During the 1980's, he was group leader of the Young Ornithologists' Club and was the Jersey representative of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; he received the RSPB President's Award in 1991. He received the Norman Le Brocq services to the community award in 1999 and organised three annual Environment Weeks from 1994 to 1996. In 2000 he escorted a group of Jersey enthusiasts to the Falkland Islands for a 16-day wildlife tour.

Even today, he remains a voluntary officer with the Jersey National Park, responsible for coordinating conservation volunteers and providing regular park updates to the JEP. He contributes regularly to the newspaper and, of course, we are proud to say, to RURAL magazine.

Oh – and he has also written three books on natural history, including his own autobiography, *Blame the Badger*.

Why blame the badger?

'It explains the origin of my interest in wildlife,' Mike said. 'I am a West Country man, born in Exeter. I was four years old when the war broke out, and at seven I was evacuated. That was because our house was destroyed in the awful German bombing raid on the city. As we ran from the house, my mother covered my eyes so that I could not see the bodies of neighbours who had been killed. I remember a church steeple looking like a red, burning skeleton.'

'I was taken to a farm near Lustleigh on the edge of Dartmoor. One evening, the farmer, Mr Pengelly, took me and the other six evacuees billeted with him to view a badger set nearby. It made a lasting impression on me. They were magical days – and that is where my love of nature started.'

“
... I retired in 2000 – well, sort of retired! But as soon as I did, that's when everything seemed to take off!



An innocent
12 months (1936)



Mike received a rather disjointed education, shifted about from one school to another. Following the war, and the demob of his father from the RAF, the family moved to Torquay where he attended a secondary modern school and then to technical college, which he hated.

'Education, I felt, passed me by. Not a bad thing, I suppose, but that's why I picked up on the environmental side. I joined Torquay's Junior Library, and I remember my mother complaining that I had read all the nature books – wasn't it time that they got a few more in?'

After his education, he became an apprentice signwriter, married young, had a son, Keith, and then for two years did his National Service in the RAF. Just before his demob in 1958, his parents moved to Jersey, when his father became the manager of the Home and Colonial Stores in King Street. His parents invited Mike and his family to move to Jersey as well ... in those days there was no restriction on living or working in the Island.

After a while, Mike got a signwriting job at Tubeolight and worked there for 25 years, before becoming a messenger for Hambros Trust. But his heart was always in the natural world. He ran the Young Ornithologists' Club, and the Jersey branch of the RSPB, and enjoyed regular spells of voluntary education and conservation work. Most weekends he was out and about with the young people and the volunteers, planting this, digging that, mostly in the St Ouen's Bay area.

His enthusiasm was noticed by Michael Romeril, Jersey's first conservation officer and later the States environmental adviser. So he joined Planning in 1992, as Interpretation Officer working firstly at South Hill and then at the newly built Frances Le Sueur Centre off the Five Mile Road, St Ouen.

'It was a lovely, lovely time,' Mike recalled, 'and I retired in 2000 – well, sort of retired! But as soon as I did, that's when everything seemed to take off!'

His busy life culminated with the establishment of the Jersey National Park in 2011.

'It has been a bit of struggle to inform the public of our *raison d'être*. People think of a National Park as being like the Lake District, for example. The four of us who administer it do our very best to promote the Jersey National Park and to explain why it's needed. We are preparing a report for Government on where we have come from, where we are, and where we know we are going.

'The big issue, of course, is that everything will change in about 18 months' time. Nobody knows who is going to be elected and what their reaction is going to be to having a National Park. At least it is functional now and people are appreciating its significance.

'The education side of it is also going well. Schools visit the Frances Le Sueur Centre and eco-events take place there continuously. All we can do is just keep going, with financial and volunteer support. Like the National Trust, we depend an awful lot on volunteers.'



Is it realistic to say that there should be no development within the National Park’s boundaries?

‘The key word is inappropriate development, and not “no development”!’

Our conversation took place while sitting on a log – a sunny day in the patch of woodland adjacent to the Frances Le Sueur Centre.

‘Here we are sitting in a wood in the middle of summer,’ Mike said, ‘and there is no birdsong, no butterflies. It’s people pressure. And the more our open spaces are developed, the less room there is for wildlife.’

‘The state of nature in the Island is not good. But that’s not surprising – the nature just isn’t there. For example, we have lost far too many bird species. OK, we’ve gained one or two, the Birds on the Edge project and the reintroduction of the choughs has been a success story.

But cuckoos, swifts and turtle doves are having a really bad time. When I first started working here at the Frances Le Sueur Centre, I could guarantee that every year by 11 April I would hear a cuckoo. The Island’s human population has risen and so many houses don’t want a garden at all, just pebbles or a parking area.

‘When I look back to the time when I ran the Young Ornithologists’ Club, we could regularly spot 60 species during the course of a single outing. It would be almost impossible to tick such numbers these days. The changing climate is not helping either as the seasons appear to be merging. It’s a sad old story, really.’

He reflected: ‘The good thing about being 90 is that you can dwell on happy memories of happy days. People rightly say: “We must look to the future”. But at my age, I prefer my memories – and I’m so very thankful for those.’

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Photography inspired by nature

A magazine should always be as much pictorial as it is 'wordy' and much of the success of RURAL magazine over the years has been the photographs taken of Jersey rural life and rural landscapes by our photographic editor, Gary Grimshaw.

This year, we are featuring four pictures from him, one in each of our quarterly editions, that show the Island and Island life in the four seasons.

For this Autumn edition, we present Le Neuf Chemin, St John.

To see a full range of Gary's pictures, see his website at www.photoreportage.co.uk, or contact him at info@photoreportage.co.uk



A walk on the wildflower side and so much more

La Mare Wine Estate's wildflower meadow has burst into colour this summer, showcasing the Estate's commitment to sustainability and regenerative farming. By Caroline Spencer

Sponsored by



La Mare Wine Estate's wildflower meadow was not designed to attract visitors... human ones, that is. It was planted to enrich the soil and enhance local biodiversity. The fact that humans have been thoroughly enjoying the space as much as the insects this summer is a bonus.

The meadow has taken shape on the site of an old apple orchard. The opportunity arose after trees were lost in the storm of November 2023. Vineyard manager Andrew Smith said: 'I'm trying to regenerate the soil without using any chemicals. It hadn't been ploughed in 40 years. Sometimes you don't have the luxury of the space to leave fields like this.'

Last year, preparation began when Andrew planted 80% grass and 20% flowers, to break up the soil.

'It grew for a year, there was a lot of oxeye daisy in there, including weeds and dock. I cut it at about 10 inches high, leaving it until it dried out and then flailed it. Then it was cut at four inches, which exploded the flower seeds everywhere. It was then rolled, ploughed and harrowed.'

In March this year, it was ready for a bird and bee 100% wildflower mix from Normans. It took Andrew four hours to cast 30 kilos of seed. Spanning 3.96 vergée (approximately 1.78 acres), the meadow was sown with a specialist mix of native wildflowers and fine-leaved grasses, creating a vital habitat for pollinators and enhancing local biodiversity.

With 15 different varieties in there, it's the poppies, cornflower, daisies and borage that are standing out.

'It's like a chameleon – it's changing each week,' Andrew said. 'I am expecting another change, this is the third look it's had and I'm expecting at least two more. I would be disappointed if it was over in September, but it depends on the weather. I would now like some rain.'

This is stage 2 of 6 of his masterplan for the site.

'This wildflower meadow can go one more year – maybe bolder next year,' he said. 'It will go back to orchard when the soil is back up to scratch. Or I might experiment, with different blocks of vines interspersed with wildflowers.'



Seeds of success for your own pollinator patch

1 Prepare the soil

Make sure your soil is prepared, as early as the autumn before. You want soil to be as 'fluffy' and aerated as possible so the seeds can quickly germinate, and their roots can find their way to depth quickly. You will benefit from a south-facing aspect on a slight slope, which will help with drainage. Full to partial sunlight is preferred.

2 Timing is key

In the spring, make sure the seed is touching soil, not sitting on the top of grass or other debris, and slightly pushed onto the soil, but not buried. Wait until there is going to be rain. Andrew waited a week until he saw 10mm of rain forecast.

3 Be patient

Spread plentifully, according to packet instructions. It might take a couple of attempts to get it right. Germination should happen in 10 to 21 days and you should see your first flowers in five or six weeks.

'It's not just a pretty thing so people can have a nice walk. It's great for local biodiversity and it's acting slightly as a windbreak.'

He says that some people have even come with sketchbooks and picnic baskets, which he doesn't mind – so long as people don't try to make their own paths and trample on any flowers.

“ It's not just a pretty thing so people can have a nice walk. It's great for local biodiversity and it's acting slightly as a windbreak

La Mare's meadow and traditional orchards are now in the final stages of receiving organic certification from the Soil Association. Established to encourage natural ecosystems, the wildflower meadow complements the Estate's broader agricultural practices, which include vineyard cultivation and apple production. The current orchard plots will complete their conversion to organic status by September 2025.



Preserving our Island gem

Katharine Marshall, Charles Le Maistre, Tim Bechelet and Emily Sieroczuk of Ogier write about the laws in place to protect our Island's environment from pollution

The threat of pollution is an ever-present concern for Islanders who cherish the waters that surround them.

This concern is reflected in a series of laws designed to protect our seas, reservoirs and streams.

Jersey's Water Pollution Law 2000 was introduced to guarantee the safety of the Island's water sources, making it a criminal offence to discharge polluting matter into water sources. Discharge permits allow, at the discretion of the Minister for the Environment, for certain emissions by Jersey industry, while maintaining high environmental standards through ongoing, meticulous surveillance. These permits are subject to conditions regarding quality, quantity and duration of polluting discharges.

Jersey's regulatory framework has evolved further with the Water Pollution (Water Management) Order 2020, which sets out clear requirements for the management of polluting matter and materials. Its primary objective is to reduce the risk of water contamination across the Island. In addition, the Water Pollution (Water Quality) Order 2020 defines quality standards and ensures regular sampling and monitoring. There are also clear measures in place to restore water quality and investigate the cause of pollution in the event of a breach.

Agricultural practices are also addressed through the Water Pollution (Code of Good Agricultural Practice) Order 2005, which focuses on the unique role of Jersey's historical farming traditions. The objective of the 2005 Order is to minimise the risk of water pollution through farming activities and provide practical guidance to agricultural workers and landowners on the best practices to protect water quality.

“ The team offers expert advice and representation for commercial farmers, businesses and landowners including on the impact of environmental regulations or potential nuisance claims

Jersey's lush woodlands and fields are also protected from fly-tipping via the Waste Management Law 2000. This law regulates waste management through licensing, helping to safeguard Jersey's beautiful scenery.



There are also other less obvious, but potentially equally harmful, forms of pollution which Jersey law aims to prevent, including excess noise and various types of air pollution. The Statutory Nuisances Law 1999 exists to prevent nuisance smoke, fumes, gas, light or energy as well as unacceptable noise levels emitting from premises.

While not enshrined in statute, the Ministers for Planning and the Environment and for Health and Social Services co-introduced the Jersey Air Quality Strategy (JAQS Feb 2013 FINAL) in 2013. This provides recommendations for managing air quality risks, including those posed by high levels of car ownership in our Island.

Jersey enjoys a generally high standard of air quality resulting from the Island's agricultural heritage. A local emphasis on service-based industries over the industrial sectors has also limited heavy industry over time. The Government's strategy is a visible reassurance that it aims to preserve those high standards.

This robust legislative and regulatory framework allows for the preservation of Jersey's wonderful marine and land environments for current and future generations.

Ogier's Local Legal Services experts are on hand to advise on elements of that framework for the benefit of Islanders. The team offers expert advice and representation

for commercial farmers, business owners and landholders who may be affected by environmental regulations or potential nuisance claims. Our experienced lawyers can guide you in navigating Jersey's pollution laws, assist in compliance matters and provide support in the event of alleged breaches or claims relating to land use, pollution or nuisance.

For confidential, practical legal support, contact Ogier's Local Legal Services team.

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Eune frouqu'thée d'jèrriais (a forkful of Jèrriais)

We continue our series of articles in Jèrriais – Jersey's own traditional native language. The 'frouque' in question is a digging fork, rather than a table fork. An English translation follows. This contribution comes from Sarah Jordan

Parmi les photographes siez mes pathents

Y-a-t-i' tchiques uns parmi vous tchi sont à liéthe ch't' articl'ye et tchi p't-êt' ont déjà ieu l'expéthience émouvante dé viédgi la maison à lus pathents?

Dans man cas, siez mes pathents, y'a des choses atchumulées duthant pus d'eune souaixantaine d'années, auve tchiques choses des généthâtions dé d'avant. Pour mé, les choses principales tchi m'ont donné lé pus d'mémouaithes sont les photographes, spécialement tchiques uns d'la vie auve ma Manman et man Papa, Âda et Ph'lip Godé, tchi 'taient fèrmièrs à St Louothains.

Ch'est étonnant comment si vite un photographe peut évotchi des mémouaithes et j'sis chute p'tite éfant dé quatr' ou chinq ans acouo!

Papa avait eune Hillman Husky vainne. I' soulait nouos cachi à l'Êta où'est qu'j'avions eune gliaiche dite 'choc ice' acatée à la Marina, ou un patchet d'brueûques, lé chein auve lé p'tit bliu satchet d'sé; ou dév'thiezi haler l'satchet du patchet et châtchi l' sé en d'dans, un goût tout à fait difféthent des brueûques qu'nou peut acater achteu.

Quand j'èrtouônnions siez-ieux (mes grands pathents), i' y' avait d'la soupe d'andgulle (auve du lait et des pétales dé soucique du gardîn) ou des pais ou d'la caboche et des pais ronds (auve du pain Jèrriais), dépendant d'la saison, siéthis par du pâté d'pommes et d'la sauce dé vannil'ye pour finni.

Manman et Papa allouïent mes pathents un becqu'ton connu comme 'The Patch'. J'ai des bouannes mémouaithes dé:

- Prépather la tère
- Plianter les patates auve du guaïno preunmiéthement
- Défoui les pliantes auve eune frouque
- Éloper
- Gliainer les patates et les mett' dans les pangnièrs, s'pather les radigotes et les mouoyennes et pis les renvèrtchi dans les bathis
- L'assenteu d'la tère et les s'nichons – j'peux les senti acouo!
- Et pis, finalement, en Octobre, quand j'tais pus vielle, mâter les patates dans les câsses à patates pour l'année tchi veint. Pon toute seule, comprann'-ous, à ch't' âge là!

En pâlant d'la tère, ch'na m'rappelle quand ma méthe travaillait dans les clios siez divers fèrmièrs alentou du pathage. Duthant les vacances d'Été d'l'école, l's éfants dé tchiques travailleuses soulaient nouos jouaindre pour jouer ensembl'ye. J'soulais attendre fête l'écot des chucrîns d'frâses ou d'bananes, acatés dans la boutique à Sion par tchitch'un en pâssant, ou du 'cherryade' un baithe graie par 'Quencher' ou 'Corona', tchi n'existent d'aut' achteu.

Parmi l's aut' mémouaithes, ma pièche favorite du montage d'la ferme 'tait la machinne à battre trainée par un j'va. Pour mé, ch'tait raique tchiquechose à monter et jouer d'ssus.

“ Dans man cas, siez mes pathents, y'a des choses atchumulées duthant pus d'eune souaixantaine d'années, auve tchiques choses des généthâtions dé d'avant. Pour mé, les choses principales tchi m'ont donné lé pus d'mémouaithes sont les photographes...”

J'aimais bein donner la nouôrritithe ès couochons dans les cottes, étout. I' y'avait eune 'p'tite maison' dans l'gardîn en d'avant auve tchiquechose chimique – j'm'èrsouveins l'odeu espéciale! I' y' avait eune pompe dans l'bel auve dé l'ieau si fraide et si cliaithe. Ch'tait ma djobbe dé remply la jougue à ieau pour le dîner, quand j'mangeais à la ferme. Tout comme, i' y' avait d's utilités modernes comme du gaz en bouteille, l'électricité, un téléphone et eune télévision.

Eh bein, ch'est assez pour achteu, tandis qu'j'arreune les photographes, j'sis à r'touônnner à la vie véthitabl'ye mais l'temps dé ramémouaith' thie sus les mémouaithes précieuses 'tait spécial.



Among my parents' photographs

Are there some of you, reading this article, who have already had the emotional experience of emptying your parents' house?

In my case, my parents' home contained items accumulated over the last 60 years or more, including heirlooms from previous generations. For me, the main things which brought back memories are the photographs, especially those of life with my 'Maman' (Grandma) and 'Papa' (Grandad), Ada & Philip Godel, who were farmers in St Lawrence.

It's amazing how quickly a photograph can evoke memories and I am that child of four or five again! Papa had a Hillman Husky estate. He used to drive us to L'Etacq, where we would have an icecream called a 'choc ice', bought at the Marina, or a packet of crisps, with a little blue wrapper of salt; you had to unwrap the wrapper and shake the salt inside the packet – a totally different taste to the crisps you can buy now.

When we returned to theirs (my grandparents), there would be conger soup (with milk, and marigold petals from the garden) or soups made with beans, or cabbage and peas, depending on the season (with cabbage bread), followed by apple pie and custard for pudding.

Maman and Papa allocated a small plot of ground to my parents, called 'The Patch'. I have some good memories of:

- Preparing the ground
- Planting potatoes with guano first
- Digging up the plants with a fork
- Shaking the potatoes from the stalks
- Picking the potatoes and putting them in baskets, separating the chats and the mids and then tipping them into the barrels
- The smell of the ground and the groundsel – I can still smell it!
- And, finally, in October, when I was older, standing the potatoes in boxes for the next year. Not alone, you understand, at that age!

Talking of the ground, that reminds me of when my mother worked in the fields of various farmers around the area. In the school summer holidays, the children of some women workers used to go with them to play together. I used to look forward to the strawberry or banana sweets, bought at the Sion shop by anyone passing, or cherryade, a drink made by 'Quencher' or 'Corona', which aren't made any more.

“ In my case, my parents' home contained items accumulated over the last 60 years or more, including heirlooms from previous generations. For me, the main things which brought back memories are the photographs... ”

Among other memories, my favourite piece of farm machinery was the horse-drawn threshing machine. For me, it was something to climb and play on. I also liked feeding the pigs in their sties. There was an outside toilet in the front garden with something chemical – I remember the special smell! There was a pump in the yard with cold, clear water. It was my job to fill up the jug for dinner, when I ate at the farm. However, there were some modern utilities like bottled gas, electricity, a telephone and a television.

Well, that's enough for now, when I put the photographs away, I am returned to real life, but the time spent reminiscing on precious memories was special.



Remembering John Berger - one of Jersey's 'characters'

The late John Berger was one of Jersey's renowned 'characters'. Cathy Le Feuvre takes a glimpse into his life, with the help of a collection of old press cuttings loaned to RURAL magazine

Jersey has known some interesting and, let's say, unusual characters... people who we might classify as rather 'eccentric' but who help make a community and its history a little less 'ordinary'.

One such character was John Dobbs Berger.

In later life he was sometimes known as 'The Birdman of Jersey', for his championing of the cause of pigeons in the Royal Square... he vigorously opposed the States of Jersey in court when a cull of the birds was proposed.

Mr Berger could often be seen feeding food scraps to those pigeons, and, to most onlookers, he was a curiosity. Dressed rather shabbily, many people didn't know, or had forgotten, his history.

Some may have remembered that this articulate gentleman had once been a well-dressed and even dapper antiques dealer, but as an article in the Jersey Evening Post on 5 August 1979 commented, '... his appearance seemed to indicate that the business had not been a great success'.

However, that could not have been further from the truth, because the headline on that same article reads... 'Bird Man leaves a £½m Muddle'.

In fact, despite appearances in later life, John Berger was a wealthy man ... the owner of many properties, a collector of antiques, a lover of classic cars and yes, a character who could be described as 'eccentric'. Looking at documents relating to his life, when Mr Berger passed away aged 71 in October 1978, his monetary worth far exceeded that JEP headline.

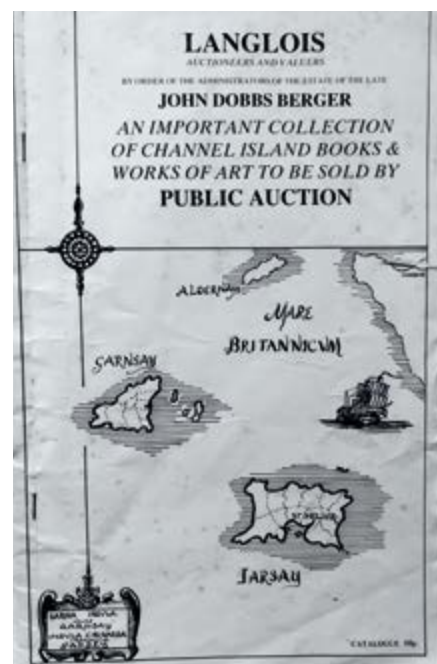
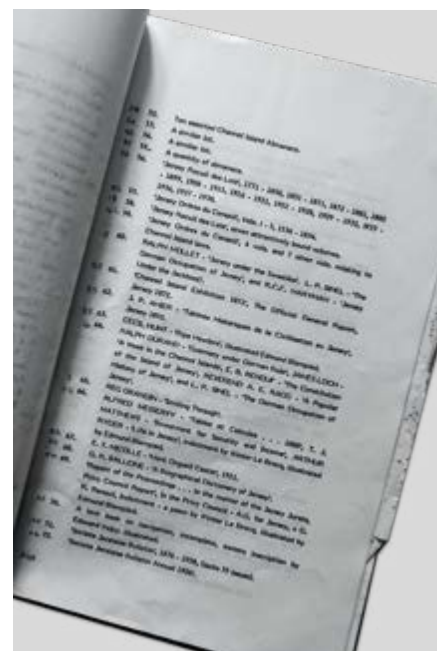
There's no doubt that John Berger was an old fashioned 'collector'. John's father was British and his mother Corsican. His was a wealthy family... his father had sold his shares in the old family business, Berger Paint, before moving to Jersey in the early years of the 20th century, and apparently Berger Sr was an avid collector of books. John, who spent much of his life looking after his mother, and never married, grew into a love of books. It's said that he could pick up a book and immediately judge if it was worth buying!

“ Books, antiques and collectibles – John Berger was certainly an expert, great enthusiast and dealer on an international scale

Books, antiques and collectibles – John Berger was certainly an expert, great enthusiast and dealer on an international scale. Locally, he frequented antiques sales at Le Gallais and Langlois and some of his homes and properties were full to brimming with his collections.

Down the years, Mr Berger butted heads with Jersey authorities, and not just about those Royal Square pigeons. One of his properties in Rouge Bouillon was deemed an 'eyesore' – he received an order from the then Island Development Committee to clean it up and remove several classic but derelict cars from out front. He apparently also once confiscated the wheelbarrows of workers widening the road outside one of his homes as part of a dispute with the authorities about that.

But it was Mr Berger's one-time main home – Savile House, on the corner of Savile Street and Elizabeth Place in St Helier – that resulted in most media attention and headlines.



In 1972, the imposing walled property which had access straight into the Parade Gardens opposite the General Hospital, was subject to compulsory purchase by the Public Health Department, who subsequently built hospital staff accommodation on the site.

John Berger fought, of course, including citing the 1963 Protection of Birds (Jersey) Law – he claimed that many protected species nested in the ivy covering the walls which bounded Savile House, and the demolition of that wall would contravene the law.



“ In later life he was sometimes known as ‘The Birdman of Jersey’, for his championing of the cause of pigeons in the Royal Square... he vigorously opposed the States of Jersey in court when a cull of the birds was proposed

Latterly, it was John Berger’s will and estate that captured public interest. As that short August 1979 JEP article indicates, when he died, Mr Berger left a bit of a ‘muddle’. Contemporary press reports indicate that Mr Berger’s estate was finally determined by the Royal Court after almost a year of argument over various wills and codicils which he made before his death.

The court even placed adverts in the British national press and a French newspaper to try to establish various beneficiaries named in his wills and appointed a detective agency to search for possible members of his family.

When finally settled, his estate was worth £700,000 (close to £3m today). It included many properties and the proceeds of several high profile antiques sales which made headlines in June 1981.

Dealers from across Europe and the UK were among attendees at the auctions of John Berger’s treasures, held over five days. The tables at Langlois auction rooms were overflowing with antiques, artwork and collectibles, mostly from Tivoli, Mr Berger’s home at First Tower. The auction of antique books earned around £300,000, and then followed sales of prints, drawings, watercolours, oil paintings, sculptures and statues, silver, jewellery, glass, ceramics, clocks, violins, rugs, furniture, and many other collectors’ items including ‘swords from just about every country in the world’.

According to the auctioneers, many of more than 1,700 items on sale would have fetched higher prices but for their poor condition. Many of the paintings were torn and damp, and other objects had also suffered from being stored ‘haphazardly’ in Mr Berger’s properties.

Among the auction lots were what the JEP headlined as the Island’s ‘Find of the Century’ – eight ‘highly important and rare’ Gothic, enamelled-silver engravings, each depicting scenes from the Passion of Christ, the final days of Jesus.

Produced in the second quarter of the 14th Century, the Berger enamels are thought to have been part of a relic casket, certainly French, from Paris or Limoges. They had, the auctioneers observed, been ‘amateurishly glued to an almost worthless 19th Century German cabinet’ but were, nevertheless, deemed ‘priceless’.

However, they did eventually sell, to the British Museum, for £74,000, at the time a record Channel Islands auction price.

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The Alex Picot story

Alex Picot Trust has been a part of the Jersey community for 140 years and has an important place in the Island's rich local heritage

Happy anniversary – 140 years of heritage and still going strong.

The story of Alex Picot Trust starts in a very different era in Jersey's business history. A time of gas lighting in the streets of town, when the rumble of traffic was caused by horse-drawn vehicles, and professional men wore top hats as they walked to and from work.

In that year, Karl Benz produced the first 'Motorwagen'; John Kemp Starley demonstrated the Rover safety bicycle, regarded as the first practical modern bicycle; Gladstone was defeated in a general election, British troops in the Sudan defeated 'the Mad Mahdi' ... and in Jersey, a firm of agents for commission was founded, which would evolve into the accountancy firm and the trust company of Alex Picot.

It was at 12 Hill Street that we first hear about this company; two years later the name Charles G Roberts was cited at this address, and in 1891 his business address was shown as 24 Hill Street. It was not until 1898, in fact, that the description 'accountant' was added to his professional heading.

Its history took shape when Alex Ewart Picot joined as a trainee in 1901. He proved himself to be not only industrious but particularly capable, taking 11th place in the 1913 finals examination of the Society of Incorporated Accountants and winning a Certificate of Merit.

The then principal of the company, Charles Brockhurst, soon took his able employee into partnership, and in 1915 and 1916 respectively the firm of Brockhurst & Picot was appointed auditors by both Ann Street Brewery and Le Riches Stores Ltd.



Brockhurst eventually retired on 31 May 1926, when Alexander Picot continued as a sole practitioner, practising as Alex E Picot & Co. The first trust work was undertaken in 1932, for a family who are still clients of the trust company today!

The late 1920s and early 1930s saw a significant growth in the practice. Alex also introduced two of his sons into the business, Donald and Leslie.

Leslie, who was to become a Jurat, recalled that when he joined the company in 1931, the total number of staff was 12, and he earned 10 shillings (50p) a week. Work was carried out at high desks, with stools. The single telephone in the office had the number 150. All writing was in ink... A different world!

Alex Picot's reputation was that of a strict disciplinarian who tolerated no talking in the office and he was often known to be waiting at the top of the stairs with his stopwatch at 9 o'clock in the morning.

As strict as he was, however, he was also known as a good employer, and one who was compassionate and caring. It was said of him that he was 'the cleverest man in Hill Street – and the worst dressed'!

In June 1940, the German Occupation of Jersey disrupted the Island's way of life, forcing many local businesses to close. Sensing the increasing threat, Alex Picot paid his employees, urging them to 'do what you think best'.

The following morning, only two employees remained in Jersey, although others were recruited later.

Refusing to accept defeat, Alex Picot decided to brave it out and keep the firm afloat, joined by colleague Lilian du Feu, who became the longest serving team member, dedicating almost 50 years to the company before retiring.

In the months that followed, while other local businesses unfortunately closed, they made the best of the situation.

One notable aspect of the work done during the Occupation was the formation of the Jersey Insurance Pool, in which Alex and Hedley Luce played a prominent part. Local insurance policyholders were maintained, and premiums collected, resulting in a sizeable insurance pool ready to be turned over to the appropriate insurance companies. This preserved a feeling of normality on the Island and enhanced the firm's reputation for trust and reliability.

The Liberation of 1945 brought a very welcome end to the Island's occupation and set in motion the healing process of Jersey, and of the Picot firm. Alex's sons, Donald and Leslie, returned home and took over the firm when Alex died in 1948.

Directors (L to R): Chris Cotillard, Hannah Roynon-Jones, Steve Gully, Sarah McBrearty, Jean-Luc Piazza, Solange Rebours, Paul Rondel



The firm continued to grow as a family-oriented business, with more members of the Picot family joining over the years. Donald's second eldest son, Anthony, joined in, followed by his third eldest son, Rodney. Rodney recalled that even then ballpoint pens were banned, and high stools and inkpots were still in evidence. Anthony and Rodney became partners in 1967, and their cousin, David Picot, became part of the practice in 1976.

The firm's evolution beyond its family roots began in 1973, when Rod Amy became the first non-Picot partner helping to shape the growth of the trust company.

This was followed by Andrew Le Cheminant joining in 1980 and becoming a partner in 1990.

In 1992, the last remaining descendant of Alex Picot, Rodney Picot, retired. That same year Derek Rhodes joined the firm and became a partner in 1997.

In 1983, after 98 years in Hill Street, the company recognised that it had outgrown its accommodation, and moved first to Broad Street, then seven years later, to Paragon House in Halkett Place.

After 31 years there, and after their formal split, Alex Picot Chartered Accountants moved to Le Gallais Chambers whilst Alex Picot Trust moved to 6 Esplanade in 2021.

Alex Picot Trust currently has some 55 staff and seven directors and still prides itself on the longevity of its staff. Board Directors Solange Rebours and Chris Cotillard mark major milestones with the firm: Solange celebrates her 40th work anniversary this year, while Chris will celebrate 20 years at the firm next year.

In the words of David Picot: 'The word we value above all else is "integrity".'

And director Hannah Roynon-Jones adds: 'We want to build on the hard work of our predecessors and, we hope, by 2085 there will be a celebration to mark the bicentenary of what is still a Jersey firm, continuing to serve the local community. We look forward to continuing a dedicated service to our clients for generations to come.'

With deep respect for our predecessors, we proudly celebrate 140 years of history, and we are excited to carry this heritage forward and look forward to celebrating 100 years of providing trust services in 2032!



Partners in 1990 (L to R): David Picot, Steve Gough, Rodney Picot, Andrew Le Cheminant, Rod Amy



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Keeping Jersey's horses healthy

Vet Ralph Maalouf, who heads up the equine team at New Era Vets, looks at how everyone can work together to help keep the Island's horses protected from disease

Every owner wants to keep their horse healthy, and protecting them from contagious diseases, through vaccination and following good hygiene practices at the stables, is key to this. It's not only important for individual horses, but it can also have a positive impact on the health of horses across the Island and the whole of Jersey's equine industry.

There are a number of equine diseases that are highly contagious and can spread between horses by direct physical contact, through coughing or sneezing, sharing contaminated equipment or transmission via human clothing or footwear. They include strangles, equine influenza, EHV Virus, salmonella and ringworm. Some of these have the ability to make horses very ill and, in serious cases, they can be fatal.


Infectious diseases don't just cause issues for horses. They can also affect equine businesses such as equestrian centres and farriers, physios or riding instructors because, if there's a disease outbreak, riding centres may need to be placed under restrictions and individuals may need to stop visiting yards, which could lead to a loss of revenue. This is why it's important that everyone on the Island works together to put horse health first.

For owners, taking a proactive approach is the best way to protect their horses, which includes keeping vaccinations up to date and following biosecurity measures.

Biosecurity might sound like a daunting concept, but essentially it involves taking simple precautions that will help prevent diseases entering a yard or being passed to other horses.

The first step should be quarantining new horses that arrive on the Island, to make sure they're healthy and disease-free before they mix with others. Even if horses look outwardly okay, there's always a risk they could be harbouring hidden infections.

Ideally, they should be isolated for two or three weeks in a stable and paddock away from the main yard. They shouldn't have physical contact with other horses and only one person should handle or care for them. This person should wear protective overalls or change their clothes and footwear before touching any other horses, as well as using hand sanitiser or washing their hands.



“ It's not only important for individual horses, but it can also have a positive impact on the health of horses across the Island..”

It's best practice for a horse to have been swabbed for strangles before arriving on a new premises but to alleviate any concerns, vets can run a full blood profile on arrival to make sure there's no infection. Strangles is a common, highly contagious bacterial infection that can have dramatic signs including a thick nasal discharge and swollen lymph nodes in the throat. However, some horses can carry strangles silently and will shed the bacteria and pass it on to other equines who then become sick.

Quarantined horses should have their temperature taken twice a day (the normal range is between 37.5°C and 38.5°C) and be monitored to check they are eating and drinking and passing normal droppings.

Good horse hygiene is also something you should remember if you take your horse away from home, such as to a show or training event, and you should avoid them touching noses with others or sharing equipment like buckets or grooming kits.

We are lucky in Jersey because disease outbreaks are rare, but it doesn't mean we should be complacent, as any level of horse movement onto the Island will increase the risk. As always, prevention should be the preferred option, and it is far better for our horses if we do all we can to stop them being ill rather than trying to manage and control a disease outbreak.



“ We are lucky in Jersey because disease outbreaks are rare, but it doesn't mean we should be complacent



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Louise Le Monnier (left) with three retired racehorses, including Jersey Jack led by Nicole Campbell (right)

Racehorses, who can no longer keep up with the pace of the ‘Sport of Kings’, may face an uncertain future. However, some thoroughbreds, particularly those in Jersey, can make wonderful riding horses. Ruth Le Cocq found out more

The woman cups her hands to her mouth and calls out as the wind whips her words and carries them to the far end of the field where a group of thoroughbreds are grazing.

One lifts her head and looks in our direction. Seconds later the others follow suit, and they all set off at a gallop heading, rather fast, our way. As the retired racehorses career to a stop, a few feet in front of us, Louise Le Monnier laughs. She forgot to mention that sometimes their brakes aren’t quite so reliable.

Louise and her partner, former Jersey trainer and jockey, James Whiting, run a livery yard in the north of the Island and their hearts beat with a passion for racing. Above all, they care for the future of those thoroughbreds who are past their prime, injured or just not fast enough to continue on the track.

Louise spent several years working alongside former trainers, Angie Corson, who sadly retired due to ill health, and Christa Cuthbert. Since then, she has enjoyed re-educating racehorses so they can transition to a life as a riding horse.

‘Thoroughbreds can make lovely riding horses,’ she said. ‘We are quite lucky here in Jersey that the racehorses do a fair amount – they go hacking on the road, they go on the beach and some go into sand schools, so they have a more varied life than most horses in England.’

“**Above all, they care for the future of those thoroughbreds who are past their prime, injured or just not fast enough**

However, Louise emphasised that the transition from going ‘fast, fast, fast’ to slow is still huge.

She explained that some Jersey trainers tend to advertise racehorses straight off the track. While some of these horses settle into their new lives smoothly, others may struggle.

‘The trouble is that the transition to ridden work is not always as easy as planned and this can put people off if they don’t get the correct help,’ said Louise.

Veterinarian Roisin Wood, of Island Equine Veterinary Services, who used to officiate on race days, said: ‘Louise and James have been putting lots of amazing work recently into Jersey Jack, who is a racehorse that retired because of tendon injuries. They have reschooled him, retrained him and they have done everything with him – they have got him out hacking on his own and he has completely adjusted to his new life.’

However, she stressed that this change can be a slow process when medical bills, riding rehabilitation and show entries still need to be paid.

In the UK, a percentage of the race entry fees is placed in a fund to support Retraining of Racehorses (RoR), British horseracing’s official charity for the welfare of horses who have retired from racing.

Unfortunately, racehorses in Jersey do not qualify for this support and Louise and James are wondering whether a similar scheme could be introduced locally.

‘It would be amazing to give some more racehorses that extra chance of finding a new career, whether it be in Jersey or elsewhere,’ said Louise.

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Homage to the horse

Anna Le Moine Gray

The CCA Galleries International in Hill Street are hosting a major exhibition this autumn, called ‘Equus – Art of the Horse’.

By the exhibition’s curator, Laura Hudson



Cate Hamilton

Prepare to be captivated by the majesty, grace and timeless appeal of equestrian life at Equus: Art of the Horse, an exhibition in celebration of all things relating to horses and equestrian life.

This event brings together a stunning collection of paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, textiles and sculptures by an exceptional line-up of artists, both from Jersey and further afield.

Among the top names from the UK and France are sculptor Nic Fiddian Green, photographer Janos Borbely, and painters Elizabeth Armstrong and Pierre Benjamin. They will be exhibiting alongside a wonderfully diverse selection of Jersey-based artists and photographers. These include painters Cate Hamilton, Kay Le Seelleur Ara, Anna Le Moine Gray, Carol Ann Sutherland, Alice Leng, Rosemary Blackmore, painter and printmaker Nick Romeril, sculptors Raewyn Riva and David Ormsby, photographers Barbara Pustelnik and Madalin Spataru, and poet Sharon Champion.

There are so many amazing artists in Jersey who specialise in depicting horses – I didn’t realise there was such a large and dedicated community of equestrian artists here. This will be the first time that CCA Galleries International has presented an exhibition focusing on equestrian life and the horse.

“ This event brings together a stunning collection of paintings, drawings, prints, photographs, textiles and sculptures by an exceptional line-up of artists, both from Jersey and further afield



Barbara Pustelnik



Rosemary Blackmore

Alice Leng, a classical painter is, at 25, the youngest artist in the exhibition. Alice was this year's winner of both the Jersey Summer Exhibition/ RBC Emerging Artist Prize and the Audience Choice Award. She presents new drawings and portraits of her family's own horses.

Two of Jersey's best known artists, Nick Romeril and Kay Le Seilleur Ara, are playing to their own strengths – Nick is working with Luddite Press to make an etching edition specifically for the exhibition, while Kay will be showing some of her quirky romping nudes galloping on horseback. Raewyn Riva presents beautifully delicate horse heads sculpted in paper, alongside David Ormsby's more weighty stone sculpture.



Elizabeth Armstrong

Janos Borbely, Barbara Pustelnik, and Madalin Spataru are the photographic specialists in the show. Janos captures the beauty and grace of horses through his lens. On his website he says: 'With a deep passion for both photography and horses, I strive to create stunning images that showcase the unique bond between these magnificent creatures and their human counterparts.'

Barbara Pustelnik has a background as a horse trainer and is making a name for herself photographing horses in Jersey and around the world, while Jersey-based photographer Madalin Spataru presents a photographic series of her own horse, the late Amber.

Of the wonderful visual artists, Rosemary Blackmore is perhaps better known for her pictures of the Jersey cow but is also a very keen exponent of artistic representations of horses. Cate Hamilton is well-known for her commissions of military and royal horses and is also showing more personal work of her own horse.

Artists Anna Le Moine Gray and Carol Ann Sutherland each have a unique style that has the image of the horse at its core. Elizabeth Armstrong is the artist in residence at the Royal Windsor and Newbury racecourses and is best known for her paintings of racehorses and race meetings. She has created new work for this exhibition in textiles. Meanwhile, French artist Pierre Benjamin depicts the racegoers with a wonderfully pared down pallet and stylised form.

A Nic Fiddian Green sculpture is being brought to Jersey for the exhibition by the gallery's UK-based managing director, Gillian Duke, who is herself a passionate horsewoman. Nic Fiddian Green is one of the best-known British sculptors. He specialises in the horse and has created some of the most beautiful drawings and stone carvings of horses' heads, as well as several public art works on a monumental scale.

All these artists bring their unique perspectives to a shared passion for the equine form.

The exhibition coincides with the 2025 Jersey Horse of the Year Show, creating a perfect opportunity to be immersed in the world of equestrian artistry.

The exhibition was opened on 18 September by the Bailiff, Sir Timothy Le Cocq.

For further details contact Rebecca Flath, honorary secretary of the Jersey Horse Association, info@jerseyhorseassociation.com

CCA Galleries International at 10 Hill Street is open from Monday to Friday, from 12-6pm. The Equus exhibition runs from 19 September to 17 October. Admission is free and open to all.



The dog massager

Lara James is a Galen Myotherapist practising a remedial massage technique that enriches the lives of dogs. By Alasdair Crosby

We are all dog massagers. Anyone who shares their lives with a dog knows how much their canine companion enjoys being stroked and how well they respond to being petted. It is a major part of the special bond between owner and dog.

A dog in pain is one of the most upsetting sights there is. Any dog lover would wish that somehow the pain of their beloved pet could be transferred to them.

If your dog has arthritis, chronic or severe muscular pain, there is a treatment available to help it by enhancing its mobility and health. This is Galen Myotherapy – essentially, remedial massage for dogs. It uses appropriate, effective and targeted massage techniques and exercise to manage chronic muscular pain, reduce inflammation and to maximise muscle function.

Lara James is a Galen Myotherapist practising in Jersey.

She said: ‘The welfare of dogs is a myotherapist’s primary concern. I have always loved dogs, ever since childhood, and I always wanted to work with dogs, so it is a pleasure to be able to do so now.’

When Lara was 28, she was working at a big pharmaceutical company in sales and marketing. Her career was going well but she was beginning to think that, instead of studying sport and business at university, she should really have studied some animal-related subject, as that was what her heart was telling her to do. So, she went back to University at Plumpton College in Sussex and completed a part time animal science course over four years in order to fit it around full time work.

‘As I was finishing the degree, we were given a talk by Julia Robertson, the founder of Galen Myotherapy, and that inspired me to start the course when I saw some “before and after” examples of dogs that had received treatments. The difference was staggering.

‘I was absolutely blown away by what a difference it could make and also, because I do a lot of sport myself, I know how much better I feel after a sports massage. I thought, if you stand a dog up on its hindlegs and you put a human skeleton beside it, they are not too different at all.

“ **The welfare of dogs is a myotherapist’s primary concern. I have always loved dogs, ever since childhood, and I always wanted to work with dogs**

‘So, why wouldn’t dogs benefit from rehab exercises and massage to keep their muscles in their best condition? Galen Myotherapy just really inspired me, and I knew at that moment it was what I wanted to get involved in.

‘I call myself “The Dog Massager” – which is nice and simple and tells people what I do, and is more understandable than “The Canine Myotherapist”. What I do is massage and I offer advice on rehabilitative exercises that help with certain conditions. Also, I offer advice on plenty of things owners can do to help their dogs in the home, like providing grippy rugs so that they don’t rush helter-skelter over a polished wooden floor. That is why I love to see dogs in their own home.’

Galen Myotherapy can be a highly effective rehabilitative therapy for many different causes of lameness and conditions including arthritis, repetitive strain injuries, ongoing and undiagnosed lameness, and behavioural indicators such as licking, chewing and itching. Even if a dog is healthy and in the prime of life, massage can help, just as it can for healthy humans.

Lara said: ‘I love the thought of helping dogs release tension, to ease their aches and pains and help them lead longer, better lives. My own dogs love being massaged and I make it a happy experience for them. People are often surprised that dogs need massage and laugh at the thought.’

‘But a dog’s anatomy and physiology is not a million miles away from a human’s, and humans feel aches and pain and enjoy a massage. Dogs also feel pain, but they are good at hiding it, because of their stoic nature.’

Lara offers owners exercises and environmental recommendations – sometimes she can offer advice about what they can do when they are out walking. If a dog has weak back legs, she might say: ‘Why don’t you try walking him through long grass, so they pick up each limb? It makes them use and activate those muscles. It’s just much nicer to do it on a walk, than to do in a clinical environment. Do it where and whilst it’s fun.’

When Lara first meets her (human) clients, she explains that she is going to spend a lot of time just asking questions and getting to know the patient.

‘The dog will be around, to get used to me in a calm environment. It’s so important for me to build that trust.

When I do the treatment, I do it low down, I never put them on a table, so they don’t feel any fear. If they want to walk around or get some water, I’m not going to drag them back to a treatment area. So, hopefully, that sets the theme for any repeat visits. When they see me the next time they think: “Hooray! Another massage day!”

‘They are not frightened of it. If we are doing a human massage, we can say: “This is going to feel a bit weird, but just bear with me.” But a dog thinks: “What are you doing there? This is really strange!”

‘I never restrain a dog – it’s the dog’s choice. The dog will determine what I do, and I will never go against that. You can often see results quite quickly.’

Dogs bounce and jump all the time, of course, and people can over-exercise a young dog. Despite good intentions, they can do potentially things that will damage them later on, because their bones are still forming.

‘A lot of people throw balls to their dog, and the dogs love it, and become addicted to it, but if it is done repetitively, it can really put a strain on the joints and muscles.

‘When I see dogs, I ask clients: does your dog love chasing balls? And if they answer “yes”, I suggest that we could perhaps try rolling a ball, so it’s still fun and they can have a good chase, but you are not going to have jumpy, twisty, sudden stops, which put intense pressure on the limbs.

‘The other thing that surprises people is slippery floors. All the wooden or laminate floors are so popular, so, if the doorbell suddenly goes, and the dog goes spinning round, it can overextend the limbs, which is quite damaging. So, I always say: “get more rugs! Just give the dogs a chance.”

Some dogs are especially prone to back problems – long dogs, such as dachshunds or bassets may be particularly affected, however carefully their owner looks after them.

‘I ask in my practice, has your dog stopped going up and down stairs? Or if they are grumpy and hesitate at the top or bottom of the stairs – that could be a sign of pain.



“ I never restrain a dog – it’s the dog’s choice. The dog will determine what I do, and I will never go against that. You can often see results quite quickly

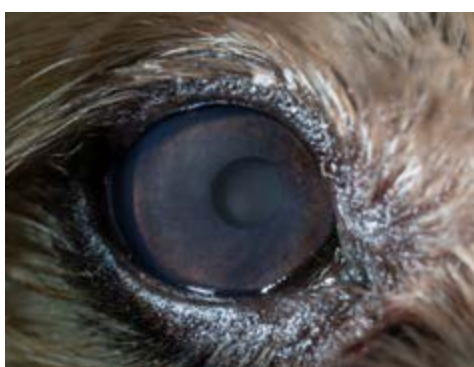
Dogs try and communicate, and it is our job to pick up on that and give them that respect. They don’t want to be grumpy or snappy!

‘It is a real pleasure to give something back to dogs — after all, they always give us so much.’

Lara can be contacted through her website: www.thedogmassager.com; e-mail lara@thedogmassager.com, or phone 07797 922355

Through the eyes of a dog

Have you ever wondered how your dog views the world? Clinical animal behaviourist Becka Whitehead of Companion Conundrums delves into the structure of a dog's eyes and how this supports them in perceiving and responding to their environment



Dogs use their sense of sight as a means of gathering information about their surroundings. A dog's response to this information may vary depending on the individual; nonetheless, some element of body language will be displayed to convey their emotional state, prevent conflict and develop or maintain social bonds. To understand how dogs use their eyes to learn about their environment and to communicate, a familiarity with their anatomy and physiology is beneficial.

The eyes are specialised sensory organs; they contain several sophisticated structures which work together and function to provide animals with the sense of sight. Dogs have a large cornea and lens – the cornea acts as a window, controlling the entry of light into the eye and directing it towards the lens, which focuses light onto the retina, allowing dogs to see in lower light levels.

The retina contains specialised photoreceptor cells called cones and rods, these filter and convert light into electrical signals which are interpreted by the brain to create an image.

Cones detect colour – dogs have less cones than humans and as a result, they see fewer colours. Dogs see shades of yellow, blue and combinations of these colours, suggesting that their vision is mostly greyish-brown. Rods detect light – dogs have a greater number of rods than humans, allowing them to see better in the dark. Dogs also have a reflective structure called the tapetum lucidum, a mirror-like layer behind the retina which reflects light back towards photoreceptors, further enhancing vision in lower light levels – this appears to glow in colours ranging from green, blue and yellow.

The pupil, a black circular-like structure in the centre of the eye, acts as an opening which dilates (enlarges) or constricts (narrows) to control the amount of light that enters the eye. In lower light levels, the pupils will be larger, allowing more light to enter – this is relevant to dogs since they are a naturally crepuscular species which means they are most active at dawn and dusk, although dogs have developed sleeping habits that accommodate the lifestyle of humans. A fearful or excited dog may have larger pupils, allowing them to take in more light and respond appropriately to their surroundings, for example, to find an escape route or to catch their favourite toy.

When a dog feels stressed or fearful, their facial muscles become tense, pulling the skin backwards and causing the sclera, the white part of the eye, to look more prominent. A fearful dog may turn away to avert eye contact and avoid conflict or may stare out of the corner of their eye, exposing the sclera, often referred to as the whale eye.

A nervous dog may squint or frown with minimal blinking to communicate their discomfort to another dog or person, although this is often missed by humans and can result in bites. Nonetheless, mutual eye contact between a dog and caregiver can stimulate the release of oxytocin, known as the love hormone – slow blinking may be noted in this situation and is thought to be associated with positive social interactions.

“ **Mutual eye contact between a dog and caregiver can stimulate the release of oxytocin, known as the love hormone** ”

The dog's eyes are positioned to the side of their face, which provides them with a greater field of vision. However, they have a blind spot above their eyes, which can cause them to become startled when humans pat them on their head. Moreover, dogs have reduced depth perception (the ability to gauge distance) compared with humans and, for this reason, they may appear uneasy when they see objects or movement right in front of their face or far in the distance, and they may find stairs challenging.

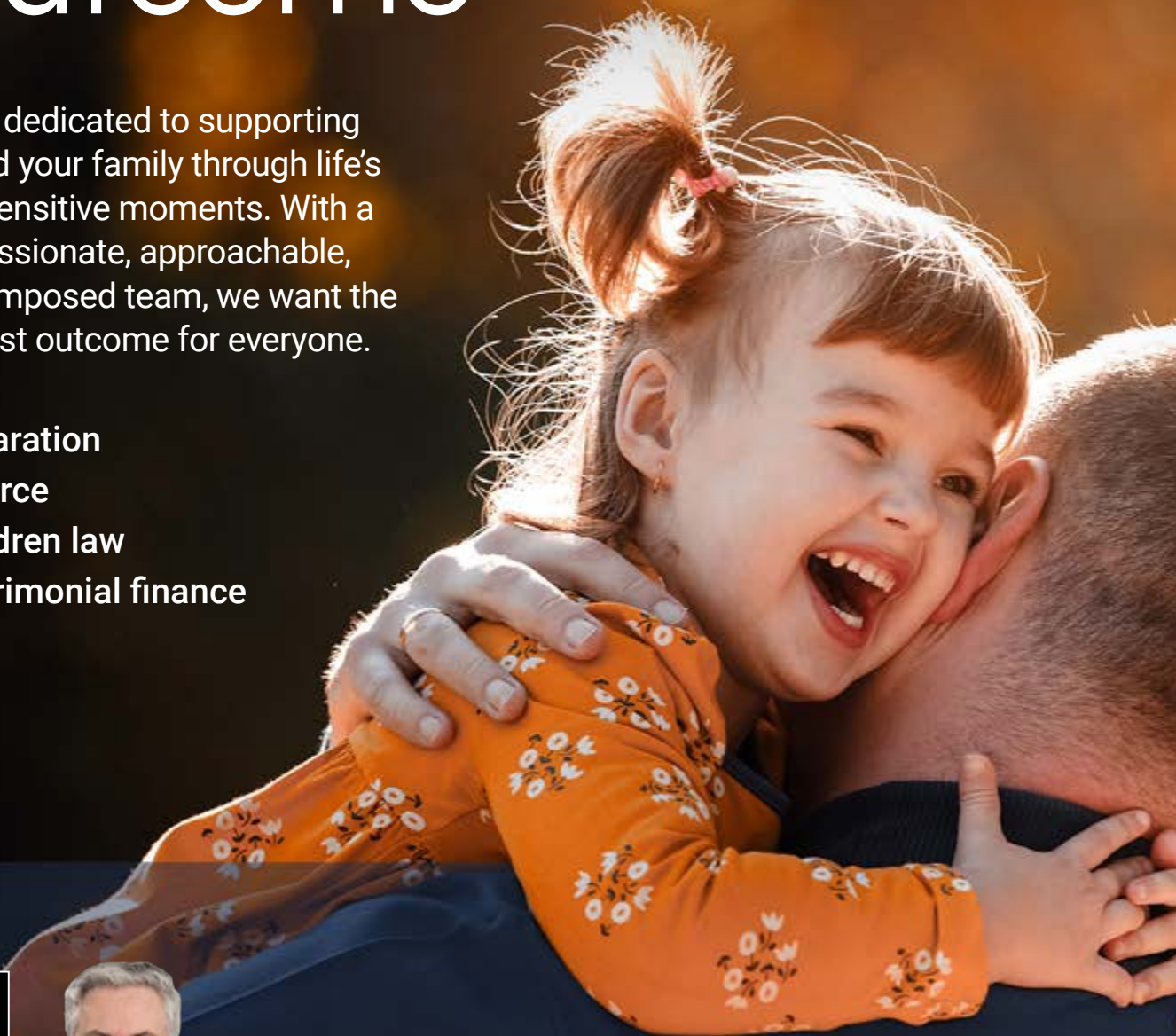
Sudden changes in behaviour can indicate underlying physical health complaints and may warrant a veterinary visit. However, some behaviours that appear strange to us may be normal for our dogs ... so try to view the world through their eyes – what do you see?

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The day the vets came to tea

All Pets' fear free approach brings comfort, care, and calm right to your door.
By Summer Lister

In the soft golden light of a recent summer morning, Leo – a distinguished 17-year-old ginger gentleman – is holding court from his favourite windowsill.

Outside, the hedgerows are alive with sparrows and the occasional tractor hum but inside, all is calm. Leo knows the drill. He's not going anywhere – and that's precisely the point.

This is *The Day the Vets Came for Tea*. Emily, one of the owners of All Pets Veterinary Practice in St Peter, arrives not in a white-walled clinic room, but here at Leo's home, carrying her vet bags and a quiet confidence that this visit will be nothing like the trips he remembers with a shudder.

Today, there's no carrier, no car, no indignity of being stared at by other furry strangers in a waiting room.

Instead, the consultation begins with a few minutes of polite feline negotiation – an exchange of glances, a tail twitch, maybe a little treat and eventually, a slow blink of consent.

For Ruth and Emily, owners of All Pets, this isn't just about convenience – it's about rethinking what good veterinary care can feel like. While home visits aren't the primary focus of All Pets, they're a valuable option to have in the toolkit, especially for patients who simply do better in their own familiar space.

Their practice is built on a 'fear free' philosophy, taking the time to reduce anxiety in both pets and their owners, so that every appointment is calmer, safer, and more effective.

'When an animal is stressed,' says Emily, 'their whole physiology changes – heart rate, blood pressure, even their breathing. By reducing fear, we're not just making them happier, we're also getting more accurate results and better outcomes.'





That approach starts long before a stethoscope appears. At All Pets, longer consultations of 20 minutes as standard mean animals can approach the humans attending to their care in their own time, owners can share every detail without feeling rushed, and tests can often be carried out there and then. And if that means an extra chin scratch or a pause for a treat, so be it.

‘One of our regular furry patients has a penchant for having his pre-anesthetic in the comfort of his own car, before being driven gently around the block by his owner. He drifts off without ever feeling stressed, before coming in for his procedure – waking up none the wiser, still convinced the vets are the best place in the world,’ shares Emily.

‘The result? More relaxed animals, more accurate diagnoses, and less of the escalating fear that can make future vet visits so challenging.’

Leo's Story

Leo's dislike of travel is legendary in his household. His owner, Donna, admits that even the sight of a carrier can trigger a disappearing act worthy of Houdini. Yet here, in the comfort of his own domain, he's remarkably compliant.



This morning, Emily slips seamlessly into her work – a gentle blood pressure check, a swift blood draw, and a discreet glance at the scales (Leo, it seems, may have been enjoying the life of luxury a little too enthusiastically). All done with the kind of calm assurance that turns potential protest into quiet cooperation.

‘Cats are territorial,’ explains Emily. ‘For many, the clinic environment is just too overwhelming – new smells, other animals, the journey itself. At home, we can work with them in a space where they feel secure. That calmness makes all the difference.’

And it's not just cats. Dogs, rabbits, guinea pigs – even the occasional parrot – can benefit from the reduced stress of home visits. For elderly animals, multi-pet households, or owners who find travel difficult, this approach is as much about human welfare as it is about animal health.

A Happier Ending

As the appointment wraps up, Leo stretches, flicks his tail, and returns to his sunbeam without so much as a backward glance. He's had his health checks, his tests, and more than one treat – all without leaving the house.

For Ruth and Emily, that's the goal – veterinary care that protects not just physical health, but the emotional wellbeing of both pet and owner.

Because sometimes, the best medicine isn't found in a bottle or a needle – it's found in the comfort of home, with the sun on your back, knowing you're safe.

Many of the best things in life are... rescued

Kieranne Grimshaw spoke to the JSPCA's recently appointed CEO, Pam Aubert, to learn about the charity's aim to continue helping rescued and injured animals

The Jersey Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals provided consultation, care or treatment for thousands of animals, both wild and domesticated, last year. This is the working environment in which its new CEO, Pam Aubert, finds herself.

After moving to Jersey 13 years ago, Pam fell in love with the Island, and also met her husband here.

'I feel very much like I've come home,' she said.

Formerly the head of fundraising and service for Macmillan Jersey, Pam subsequently became Jersey Cancer Relief's first CEO. In 2025 that charity funded the Island's second breast screening unit at the Enid Quenault Health and Wellbeing Centre.

Over the years since arriving in the Island, Pam had become aware of the recent challenges faced by the JSPCA and she wanted to help.

'Having the opportunity to be in this role is a true privilege. I'm also very humbled by both the staff and volunteers,' she said.

'I feel I've moved from one emotive subject to another. Both my PG Certificate in Philanthropic Studies and my Diploma in Fundraising are now completed. I'm passionate to understand about why people give.'

“ Having the opportunity to be in this role is a true privilege. I'm also very humbled by both the staff and volunteers

When she took up her new post in May this year, Pam was following in the footsteps of interim CEO, Tom Noel, and she acknowledges the excellent work he had done.

'To me it's about keeping that momentum, being open and working with the multidisciplinary team as well as vets and wildlife experts. We also work with the States vet, emergency services, including the police, fire service and the Comité des Connétables, who we work with for stray dogs.'

Explaining the costs of running the charity, Pam highlighted the need for qualified staff, such as vets, as well as dealing with building expenses, insurance and ambulance costs. With 45 employees, which includes an animal behaviourist with a BSc in Animal Welfare and Behaviour, the organisation needs to raise around £1.5 million per annum.



The JSPCA runs some innovative projects. For anyone interested in looking at dog or cat ownership, but who might be a little unsure about what to do, the charity runs a guardian scheme. People can register with the JSPCA and have the pet live with them on a trial basis to see if it works for them.

There's also a home-to-home scheme to avoid any disclaimed animal spending unnecessary time at the JSPCA. Pam explained that they try to rehome a disclaimed animal in a suitable environment which has already been vetted by them.

'It's a better outcome for both the animal and the owner,' she said.

Recent negotiations with the States vet resulted in an on-site quarantine section for dogs arriving by boat without the relevant paperwork. This can include issues with pet passports or vaccination details. The JSPCA team is also on hand to reunite owners with their pets.

Pam emphasised that the staff often work in a challenging environment, especially when dealing with wildlife. A welfare and ethics panel meets regularly to help address any difficult decisions and/or offer expert advice.

With such diverse roles and responsibilities, the charity recognises the need to publicise their work.

'We're about to publish a charter to help educate the community about what we do and why we do it,' Pam said.

'Another focus is looking at what welfare means, so we have a welfare officer here, which is a new post. We need to look at the welfare law, how we can support that and use it. We're also hoping to have conversations with the RSPCA in the UK, GSPCA in Guernsey and other agencies, to see what they can do.'

Unlike the RSPCA, Pam explained that the JSPCA doesn't have a legal team, so the charity does not investigate or deal with prosecutions. However, with proposed updated animal welfare legislation for Jersey currently going through a consultation process, it is possible that the JSPCA may have an inspector role in the future.

Looking ahead, the charity hopes to bring back their Education Centre, ideally a multi-purpose site which other animal charities might also use. Another aspiration is to have a field for stray dogs to visit, and to reintroduce dog boarding, which would provide an income.

Recognising the need to involve the younger generation, the JSPCA hopes to reestablish a kid's club next year.

'Children are our future supporters, volunteers and employees,' Pam stated.

Unsurprisingly, animals have always played a part in Pam's life, particularly cats. She described her role as a 'step mum' and, when her last cat died, she was devastated.

When she started her new role at the JSPCA, one of the first questions her husband asked was ... 'When's the first pet coming home?'

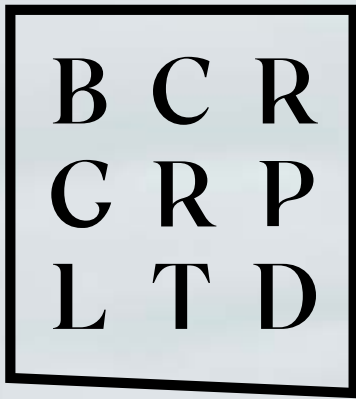
'I've resisted so far,' said Pam, 'but we have a little kitten here at the moment and I'm so in love with him. I think he might be the first one!'



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Changes afoot

By our interior design writer, Bryony Richardson



As the leaves change colour and the nights draw in and the fruit trees and hedgerows brim with their bounty, we may start to yearn for different colours and textures within our homes.

A change in season can provide the energy boost we've been waiting for to bring about change in our homes and for many, autumn is all about cossetting velvets, heavy, textural linens, fireglow umbers and scented candles.

You can autumn-up your house without a complete decorative overhaul. Depending on your base colour scheme, adding layers of deeper jewel tones taken from that scheme can instantly turn up the cosy volume. Adding textural, drapey throws in bouclés, woollen tweeds and thick pile rugs also ramps up the perceived warmth within spaces. Replacing pale, shiny receptacles you're using for your houseplants with woven baskets, antique terracotta pots and studio pottery can also provide effective finishing autumnal touches.

Autumn may also mean a change in what you want from your home – perhaps less time in the garden results in more time reading gardening books to prepare for the next growing season. Moving an armchair into a different area – an otherwise unused landing perhaps – and pairing it with an occasional table and a lamp, will result in a different perspective and potentially a new favourite corner of your home.

“ Depending on your base colour scheme, adding layers of deeper jewel tones taken from that scheme can instantly turn up the cosy volume



Over the last few years many lighting companies have committed to developing their rechargeable product offering. A huge array of these fully portable, wireless lights are now available, offering total flexibility for lighting around our homes. Dark, forgotten corners left out of your original lighting plan can now be brought back into the mix without requiring an electrician. Try the website pooky.com as a starting point for cost-effective options.

An open fire or a log burner is surely the cherry on top of a perfect autumnal evening. For homes where a flue is not practicable, there is a widening offering of electric heaters available. Having a source of instant warmth can revolutionise a home and your enjoyment of it. Try everhot.co.uk to see their electric stoves.

Bryony would love to hear from you – please e-mail any interior design quandries and questions to br@bryonyrichardson.com



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Tommy A'Court clears his desk



Following the final retirement of Tommy A'Court on 31 May 2025 from Maillard & Co, he recalls some of his experiences from the time he first started work on 10 May 1971 at the age of 20, for what was then HW Maillard and Son

I was 'The Boy' and Clive Hacquoil, who had worked for Maillard's since leaving school, had just taken over the business and he was my boss. It was a relatively small firm but very involved with farming life in Jersey especially with cattle sales. The cupboards were full of dairy equipment including more bull rings than there were bulls in the Island. Many of the conversations were in Jersey French. We were auctioneers, estate agents and funeral directors plus, to a lesser extent, cattle exporters.

On my first day at work, I was taken into the workshop to be shown how to prepare a coffin. However, the funeral manager was not impressed with my first attempt and never again was I asked to prepare a coffin!

On my second day, I was sent to Glencoe where we conducted collective auctions every fortnight on a Wednesday afternoon. I was in charge of setting up the sale but the whole premises were basic, the auction shed being very dusty with no toilets, no water supply and no telephone.

However, I soon became aware it was a mecca for the rural community and was well attended on Wednesday afternoons throughout the year. The sale was advertised in the JEP as 'The usual collective sale of Cattle, Pigs, Poultry and Farm Effects'.

I soon established that I would receive commission for selling property. Between the auction sales I was based at our offices in Great Union Road and started to become involved with negotiating property sales. On clearing my desk last month, I found in a bottom drawer a box full of photographs dating back to 1971 including a black and white photograph of this lovely old farmhouse which we had for sale with 22 vergées, 16 perch and 10 pieds of land and which was sold for £21,500.



Any information regarding this farmhouse please write to Alasdair Crosby at editorial@ruraljersey.co.uk

I suggested, in my early days at Maillard's, that the company use photographs more often and I was sent into town to purchase the cheapest camera available. Photographs of other interesting properties, taken on a little box camera, will feature in future editions of this magazine.

Chris March, managing director at Maillard & Co, commented: 'It's truly remarkable that Tommy has dedicated over five decades to representing our company – starting as a fresh-faced 20-year-old in 1971 and growing into our longest-serving team member. Tommy's retirement not only closes a chapter but also marks the end of an extraordinary era. Thank you, Tommy, for your exceptional service, and here's to the next chapter!'

Valuations and sales of agricultural land have now been transferred to Julian Roffe FRICS MCI Arb at jroffe@sarreandco.com or telephone 883197 at Sarre & Co (sister company to Maillard & Co).



est. 1928

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An update on the Jersey property market

By John Quemard, president of the Jersey Estate Agents' Association. September 2025

The Jersey property market is showing encouraging signs of stability after a prolonged period of adjustment. Following two years of price declines, average values have now steadied, and the latest figures point towards a market that is beginning to regain momentum.

During the second quarter of 2025, a total of 228 residential properties were sold. This represents an increase compared with both the previous quarter and the same period last year, underlining a gradual but welcome improvement in activity. While average prices remain approximately 14% below the peak recorded in 2022, this adjustment has created more realistic conditions for buyers and vendors alike.

Recovery Signs

A closer look at the data shows a mixed but overall positive picture. One and two-bedroom flats have maintained stable values, making them attractive to first-time buyers seeking an affordable route into homeownership. At the same time, three-bedroom family homes – a key segment of the local market – saw a modest rise in average price during the quarter. Four-bedroom properties recorded a decline, though this largely reflects the absence of unusually high value sales that boosted earlier figures.

The Role of Interest Rates

A significant factor supporting the upturn is the reduction in interest rates. The Bank of England has cut rates four times since last summer 2024, bringing the base rate down from 5.25% to 4.0%. For households, this has translated into improved mortgage affordability, lower monthly repayments for some, and greater confidence to commit to a purchase. With many buyers previously constrained by affordability checks, the easing in borrowing costs is already feeding through into higher demand.

Rental Market Influence

The rental sector is also playing a part in shaping the sales market. The number of licensed rental properties has fallen slightly as some landlords have exited the sector. This has reduced choice for tenants and nudged more households towards considering homeownership, adding to the pool of active buyers.

Outlook

The evidence suggests that the sharp slowdown experienced in 2023 and early 2024 is now behind us. The combination of steady prices, improving sales volumes, and lower borrowing costs is creating the conditions for a more balanced and sustainable market. While global economic pressures and future interest rate decisions remain important factors to watch, Jersey's housing market appears to have found its footing.

Bottom line

The market is not yet racing ahead but confidence is returning. With realistic pricing and improved affordability, we could finally see the beginning of a more stable phase for Jersey property.

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Set Lunch for two people at Bohemia



An unforgettable dining experience

The Bohemia restaurant crafts seasonal, modern European dishes that highlight Jersey's finest local ingredients.

Providing an unforgettable Michelin Star dining experience since 2005, their menus blend the freshest island produce with French influences, right in the heart of St. Helier.

Led by Chef Tom Earnshaw, his impressive career has been established in Michelin-starred kitchens including the three-star Moor Hall Restaurant (then two-star) as well as Northcote and The Samling hotels.

Tom joined Bohemia in 2023 as Sous Chef and took over as Head Chef in 2025.

Terms and conditions

No cash equivalent available and cannot be resold. To be used between September 2025 - March 2026. Open to Jersey residents only.

www.bohemiajersey.com
01534 880588

Simply answer the following question:

What year did Bohemia start providing a Michelin Star dining experience?

- A: 2004
- B: 2005
- C: 2006

Please enter online at ruraljersey.co.uk/competition

Closing date for entries is 30 November 2025.

Winners will be contacted via email.

Good Luck!

The gardens of Villa d'Este

A botanical landmark in an exceptional panorama of beauty, these lovely gardens are a must-see for any traveller to this picturesque region of northern Italy. Philippa Evans-Bevan is a frequent visitor

On the shores of Lake Como in the foothills of the Italian Alps sits the elegant and much acclaimed Villa d'Este.

This world-renowned luxury hotel owes much to its magical and romantic surroundings including the 25 acres of intriguing and beautiful gardens and grounds.

The location was a favourite holiday place for ancient Romans and the Villa was originally built as the summer residence for the Cardinal of Como in 1567. European royalty, aristocrats, Countess Peluso (a famous La Scala Ballerina), and a Napoleonic General were among the many notable owners who followed.



Caroline of Brunswick gave the Villa the name Villa d'Este which refers to the name of an ancient and noble Italian family.

In 1873 Villa d'Este was acquired by a wealthy group of Milanese businessmen and for the first time was opened as a luxury hotel. Over the past 150 years this iconic destination has

attracted Hollywood stars, celebrities and Heads of State and it is little surprise that this captivating jewel has earned a world class reputation as one of the leading hotels of the world.

A botanical landmark in an exceptional panorama of beauty, the Villa d'Este gardens and grounds became a National Monument in 1913 and are part of the 'Grandi Giardini Italiano', the work of significant Italian botanical treasures.

Predominantly a garden of the Baroque style, there are also features of Renaissance, Italian, Romantic and Picturesque Garden design. Such rich variety and the harmonious blend of styles is a reflection of the eras and owners who have curated and embellished the grounds. The Villa d'Este Gardens are a statement of wealth and inspiration that echo the prevailing epochs of art over the centuries.

Royalty included Caroline of Brunswick, Princess of Wales the estranged wife of the future King George IV of England, who was encouraged to live abroad and took ownership in 1815.

“ Bestowing shade, form and beauty the trees give immense grace to the overall splendour and serenity of Villa d’Este, its magnificence and enchantment



The Mosaic Garden and the Nymphaeum (a grotto dedicated to nymphs) is a notable example of the Renaissance period. Myriads of pebbles form ten reliefs and the texture is edged and complimented by large beds of Impatiens.

The long perspective avenue leads from the mosaic garden and stretches up to the sculpture of Hercules and Lica, flanked on either side by tall Italian cypress trees. This lawned walk is edged by one of Villa d’Este’s most ancient features, the Viale dell’ Ercole, a double chain of stone basins arranged like a staircase with water flowing gracefully from one to another down a gentle gradient.

The hilly backdrop to Villa d’Este is an enchanting explore. Steps, passageways, wild vegetation and winding paths encased in thick hedges of cherry laurel lead to glades, open views and little fortresses. Swathes of hydrangeas bloom in abundance below The Temple of Telemachus and this area contains many Romantic picturesque elements of the garden.

Flowing Wisteria clammers on facades and features and columns of fragrant jasmine give elegant structure to outside seating areas.

In the garden and terrace areas which flank the Villa and lakeside, there is a sophisticated simplicity to the floral displays. These are almost exclusively vast beds of colourful impatiens and begonias in summer and daffodils and pansies in winter. *Hedera Helix* (common ivy) is also used to great effect as dense curvy hedges and for strategic green plantings.

These abundant beds add just the right measure of colour to the predominant planting, which is arboricultural rather than horticultural.

Not an arboretum but a varied diverse collection, over 20 different tree species grace the grounds of Villa d’Este. The *Platanus Orientalis*, (Oriental Plane Trees) are outstanding and have doubtless provided a refreshing canopy for contemplation of the beautiful Lago di Como for centuries.

Majestic magnolias, tulip and linden trees, pines, poplars, palms, beech and box, chestnut and cypress trees, medlars, olives, oleanders and bamboo all make their mark in compartmentalising and aggrandising the setting.

Bestowing shade, form and beauty, the trees give immense grace to the overall splendour and serenity of Villa d’Este, its magnificence and enchantment.



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The Autumn Equinox at La Hougue Bie

The Spirit of La Hougue Bie – A poem by David Levitt

The following poem was written by David Levitt last year, now amended, as part of a poetry competition to celebrate the centenary of the discovery of the entrance to the chamber of La Hougue Bie.

For RURAL magazine, it marks the start of a new regular series, of Jersey poetry, contributed by our readers.

If you have a poem that fits into RURAL's remit of heritage and countryside, please send it to the editor, Alasdair Crosby, at editorial@ruraljersey.co.uk, for possible inclusion in a future edition.



Imagine... It is a warm sunny day as summer turns into autumn.
You are standing by the entrance to the chamber at La Hougue Bie.
A Stranger approaches and starts to speak...

I am old
Older by far than all that you can see.
This hill I helped to build with people now long gone.
We came across the sea from distant lands
Before the priests in Egypt learned to write.
I was the guardian of my folk.
My cousins in the North threw thunderbolts,
I took a gentler route.
I healed the sick and helped the plants to grow.
In return, they sang my praises, gave me gifts.
Although unseen, my presence daunted them
Through dreams of their leaders, I inspired and guided them.
The more they praised and worshipped me, the stronger I became.
We found this island haven nestled in the sea
After our journey, long and perilous.
Those few living here did not welcome us but fled.

So much to do
With axes made of stone we cleared the trees to fashion houses, furniture and tools
Growing good grain for bread and ale
There was no rest.
I set them working to keep the old traditions and build new.
They revered their dead, at my behest, with great chambers made of stone
For ancestors to rest in undisturbed.

This place was special.
The largest of the sacred monuments
Its sanctity concealed beneath the hill.
They carried out the rites that I inspired
In reverence to their ancestors and to me.
So much joy and peace.

But then
The Smelters came.
A different people from far far away
They had the magic of their fire-made tools and spears.
They did not think the way we did.
Some of my people fled, some slain and many were enslaved.
Fearing my powers, the strangers sealed this hill
Leaving me within the darkness for all time.

The light came in, a little while ago
Ten tens of summers but just a blink of time since I was trapped.
But I was dumb.
Without a dreamer to relay my thoughts
And with no worshippers to give me strength
I was an empty wraith.
Helpless to watch the casual trespass through this place.

At last, I found a dreamer
And learned to pass, through him, some of my story.
It was not easy as he knew nothing of our ways
And found it hard to understand
The things that I was putting in his mind.
My one desire was passing on
These vital words:

*This is a place of peace.
Respect these stones, they are my church.
Think kindly of my folk, long gone.
I wish you well.*

...With a sad smile, the Stranger walks away

The Jersey Arts Society: A window in to the world of art



Tucked into the cultural life of the Island, the Jersey Arts Society has long offered a window onto the world of art — not only painting and sculpture, but also architecture, design, photography, and the creative personalities who shape visual culture. By its retiring chairman, Ronald Lansdell

The Jersey Arts Society is entirely volunteer-run and open to all, the Society offers an accessible and stimulating way to explore the arts without leaving Jersey.

The Arts Society Lectures

At the heart of its work is a programme of monthly lectures, running from September through to June and held in the elegant setting of the Royal Yacht Hotel in St Helier. Meetings are normally held on the third Tuesday of each month at 6.45pm, providing a regular and much anticipated fixture in the Island's cultural calendar. However, there is one exception in the 2025–26 season – the October lecture will be held on Wednesday 22nd due to lecturer availability.

These events bring to Jersey some of the UK and Europe's most engaging and knowledgeable art historians, curators, and practitioners — speakers chosen not merely for their credentials, but for their ability to inspire, inform and delight.

The 2025–26 programme once again reflects the Society's trademark blend of range and quality, spanning centuries, continents, and artistic forms.

We begin in September with the glamour and history of Cartier, jewellers to royalty and the stars. From tiaras for the Delhi Durbar to diamonds worn by Grace Kelly and Elizabeth Taylor, the story of Cartier is entwined with monarchy, celebrity and 20th Century style.

In October, we journey to the Iberian Peninsula with a lecture on Islamic Spain and the legacy of Mudéjar architecture — a poignant reminder of how Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions once interwove to create architectural beauty, and how that heritage was both preserved and reshaped in the centuries after the Reconquista.



Mezquita, Cordoba, Spain

“ These events bring to Jersey some of the UK and Europe’s most engaging and knowledgeable art historians, curators, and practitioners — speakers chosen not merely for their credentials, but for their ability to inspire, inform and delight

In November, we travel south, far south, as an artist-in-residence at the Scott Polar Research Institute shares the experience of living and working in Antarctica. Through paintings, sketchbooks and even virtual reality, this presentation offers a rare view of how art responds to the extreme.

In the New Year, the focus turns to Nicholas Hawksmoor, one of Britain’s greatest yet least-known architects, whose bold churches and palatial designs defined the English Baroque. January’s lecture will celebrate his originality, ambition and contribution to national architecture.

February explores the provocative world of contemporary British art, focusing on the Young British Artists (YBAs) and the influence of Charles Saatchi. From the ‘Freeze’ exhibition to ‘Sensation’, the talk charts a period when Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin and others redefined the art scene and sparked debate around the globe.

March shifts to Mexico with ‘Frida Kahlo – A Life on Canvas’, a poignant account of an artist who turned personal pain into paintings of haunting beauty and political conviction. Her surreal, symbolic self-portraits continue to speak powerfully to audiences today.



Child's Bath, Mary Cassatt



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Self portrait, John Everett Millais

In April, attention turns to the Trois Grandes Dames of Impressionism — Mary Cassatt, Berthe Morisot and Marie Bracquemond — whose radical visions of modern life stood alongside their better-known male peers. This lecture reclaims their place in the Impressionist canon.

May’s talk celebrates the Victorian master John Everett Millais, tracing his journey from Pre-Raphaelite rebel to President of the Royal Academy. His richly detailed paintings and expressive portraits made him a household name and a towering figure in 19th Century British art.

The season concludes in June with ‘The Genius of René Lalique’, a captivating look at the life and work of the celebrated French glass designer and entrepreneur, whose pieces now command millions at auction and remain icons of elegance and craftsmanship.

Alongside the lectures, members enjoy curated visits to museums and galleries in the UK and Jersey, and have access to European tours through the Arts Society’s wider network. Membership is £75 per year and includes entry to all ten lectures; individual lectures can be attended for £15.

“ For anyone on the Island looking to be both grounded and inspired, the Society offers a standing invitation – come along, and let the arts work their quiet magic



West Towers, Westminster Abbey, designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor

More than a lecture series, the Jersey Arts Society is a community — welcoming, curious and united by a shared enjoyment of the arts. Each event is a chance not just to learn, but to connect — over a coffee, a question, or a new way of seeing.

For anyone on the Island looking to be both grounded and inspired, the Society offers a standing invitation — come along, and let the arts work their quiet magic.

For further enquiries about membership, contact Julie Cameron at julie1sameron@live.com



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Quiet Light

Jersey artist Rosemary Blackmore spoke to Alasdair Crosby ahead of her exhibition in October, titled 'Quiet Light', which will benefit Jersey Hospice Care

Rosemary Blackmore's depictions of Jersey cows are well-known and are, perhaps, most visible to the casual passer-by on the large-scale mural of cows that adorns the walls of the taxi waiting area at Jersey Airport.

The Jersey artist is often asked: 'How long does it take to produce a painting?' She is tempted to reply ... '60 years and still counting!'

Instead, she said... 'The joy of a career as an artist is that the learning never stops. It is an exciting journey of discovery and development which I feel privileged to have been able to pursue.' Rosemary's career painting cows is important, although these days she tends to work more on paintings inspired by our coast and sea.

Her latest exhibition, titled 'Quiet Light', is in support of Jersey Hospice Care, and will be held at the Atlantic Hotel in October. The subjects are varied, ranging from sea and landscapes, Jersey cows and still life paintings; it is the effect of light falling across them that connects each painting.

Last year, she also held an exhibition in support of the Jersey branch of the RNLI, as 2024 was its 200th anniversary. So, a huge year for that charity, with many fundraising events held throughout the year.

“ I invite the viewer to stop, breathe and connect to the wonder in the world around us and to feel an emotional response to the paintings in this collection

'I had no idea how it would go,' she said, 'and, unfortunately, I wasn't able to find a sponsor, so had to cover the considerable costs myself. But I am proud that it was a great success, and I was able to donate almost £3,000 to the Lifeboat, which was 25% of profits from sales.

'I decided that this is something I would like to do annually, choosing a different local charity each year to support, and I feel driven to continue this exciting journey for as long as I can. Being able to help others through my painting is such a gift and a privilege.'

She is already planning another exhibition next year in aid of Dementia Jersey.

Rosemary continued: 'I chose the Atlantic Hotel last year as I wanted an out-of-town venue, within sight of the sea, with easy access and plenty of parking, and ideally in the west – we all know west is best! Last year I showed paintings and ceramics, this year I am showing only paintings but, being able to devote more time, I will have somewhere in the region of 40 artworks. The owner and staff of the Atlantic Hotel were so helpful and welcoming, making the experience of last year's exhibition truly memorable, and I am looking forward to exhibiting there again this year.'

Rosemary's inspiration has always been the natural world of Jersey, including the surrounding sea.

“ The subjects are varied, ranging from sea and landscapes, Jersey cows and still life paintings; it is the effect of light falling across them that connects each painting

After a lifetime working as a professional artist, she feels she has only just scratched the surface of possibilities to inspire her. She is passionate about the Island's natural beauty and her aim is to demonstrate that passion in her paintings, through the use of colour, texture and light.

‘I invite the viewer to stop, breathe and connect to the wonder in the world around us and to feel an emotional response to the paintings in this collection.’ she said.

‘I decided to call the exhibition “Quiet Light” as I felt it was appropriate when supporting the wonderful work of Jersey Hospice Care.’

After graduating with a BA Hons degree in Fine Art from Bath Academy of Art in 1963, Rosemary worked continuously in art, in one form or another, as a painter and ceramicist and she still enjoys both in equal measure.

‘I am usually working on two or three paintings at a time. This is because of allowing layers of oil paint to dry before adding more. By introducing a medium called “cold wax” to the paint, I am able to work texture into the surface, sometimes blotting with tissue paper to expose previous layers of paint, or scraping over the surface, before adding more layers.

‘Although there is always a starting point when I am painting, I like to allow my instinct to dictate what happens on the canvas, which can be obvious, but also can produce many failed attempts and subsequent layers, before I feel I have achieved what I am looking for. There is nothing to compare with the feeling that it is “right”!’



Rosemary with 'Beneath the surface'

Rosemary is grateful to the exhibition's sponsor, LGT Wealth Management, for enabling her to exhibit again this year at the Atlantic Hotel.

One of this year's Jersey Hospice's Christmas card designs will be available to buy at the exhibition together with the original painting, *Wintersun, St Ouen*.

She will be donating 20% of profits from sales to Jersey Hospice Care.

‘I hope the paintings will bring a sense of calm and contemplation as well as hope and joy.’

The exhibition will be open on Thursday 16 October to Sunday 19 October, from 10am until 5pm on each day. There will be a special preview evening on Wednesday 15 October.



Design of this year's Christmas card for Hospice

Food, health and relocalisation

Taylor Smythe of HYPHA Consulting has the last word



I spoke with a third generation dairy farmer and he asked me with such sincerity: *‘Where is the next generation of farmers going to come from?’*

After the Second World War, there were 1,000 farms in Jersey. Now, we are down to just 12 registered milk producers. It’s hard to comprehend the rate of decline.

‘It’s terrifying so we have to work together,’ he said. ‘If one of the big farms decided to pack up milk production, the void that would be left in local supply would be massive. It would force us to import milk, spiralling into a race to the bottom and leaving us with less market sovereignty over our Island’s food production.’

But he also pointed out that, unlike in the UK, we have a direct line to the government. We have a £10 million Agricultural Loans Fund.

We have the Rural Support Scheme, which funnels public money to support the farmers who bravely grow our food, despite pushing uphill year-on-year.

The Rural Support Scheme isn’t about simply giving farmers money. In fact, it’s not about giving at all. It’s about paying for, or investing in, goods and services delivered by the rural community for the long-term benefit of the Island. It’s about investing in our food system and our health outcomes, because we all eat food. It’s about building that energetic link between the people of the Island, the land, its produce, and their food.

Every single one of us has a vested interest in finding food for ourselves and our families that is healthy, and that will sustain the web of life all around us. I genuinely believe there is a great deal of hope and progress in the innovative policies that are linking food, health, and relocalisation.

We’re seeing a shift with more investment in small businesses and all scales of farming, and a growing recognition of how our health is tied to the food we produce. As Evelyn Partners’ Matt Falla expressed: ‘Any of these small businesses in a hyperconnected world can become a big business.’

This year, there’s a buzz of events and initiatives aimed at engaging the wider community including the Delicious Local Food Festival, the Regen Gathering, the Jersey Farming Conference, Genuine Jersey’s local producer markets and Cultivate’s monthly socials, as well as new agricultural and horticultural apprenticeship schemes.

These gatherings are creating spaces where Islanders can engage directly with local producers, learn more about sustainable food systems, and participate in rural Jersey in a meaningful way.

‘Where is the next generation of farmers going to come from?’

The question requires us to reflect on how much of the Island’s prosperity and identity has been rooted in its landscape and the deep relationship the community had with the natural world. It was also tied to the community’s ability to adapt and the enormous advantage that comes with our size. Immense wealth was built on relationships within the community and their willingness to deliver public goods and services, with people giving back to the Island.

Now it is up to us, as citizens of this Island, to support rural businesses. With more unifying us than dividing us – stress about expensive grocery bills, overwhelm on nutrition know-how in parenting, the desire to do more without understanding or access and frustration directed at the powers that be – we need to support our farmers.

We must see rural business as key to the Island’s future by making it clear that now is the time to step forward, whether by supporting local or starting something new. No doubt, the future will require all of us to work together to find common ground for common good.

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