



Policy
Centre
Jersey

Annual Report 2024/25

Policy Centre Jersey

September 2025

Jersey Registered Charity
Number: 467

Chair's Introduction

A year end is always an opportunity for reflection and to ask ourselves 'how are we doing?' It will come as no surprise that, whilst we have seen significant progress on our level of influence and in being widely accepted as 'relevant' to policy development in Jersey, there is inevitably an 'however...?'

And that predominately relates to funding. In common with many other Island charities, it continues to be a challenge to raise the modest level of funding that we need to keep the 'operational wheels' turning and, just as importantly, to develop our range of services into the future. We are very grateful for the sponsorship we have received to date. Whilst these funds have been critical to our survival, they are insufficient to adequately develop our services further.

When we started back in 2023, we always knew that it was going to take time to build. Jersey has no real track record of working with Think Tanks whereas, in other jurisdictions, they are an established channel used by all sides of the political spectrum alongside Government departments and the private sector, to provide input to the development of policy. We know that our papers are being used within Government, schools and other organisations and this is a positive sign of progress.

One of our aims when we started, was to be commissioned by Government to carry out independent research. We anticipate undertaking our first such commission during 2025 and we are hopeful that this will develop into an ongoing working relationship. Not only would this be a sign of the value we can bring, but we anticipate that potential funders will see this as clear evidence of what we're all about!

Another aim was to ensure that our papers would be used in the lead up to next year's election. We will be focusing our efforts on producing a range of papers on the key issues we face as an Island. The aim being to make sure that everyone can access the research and the facts, and that prospective politicians are able to use the data to develop their manifestos. We think it should be a very interesting year ahead.

Finally, we have added new skills to the team this year and plan to bring different perspectives on to our Board in the coming months. We will always focus on doing everything we can to have great people on the team, irrespective of their views or backgrounds. It is one of the ways we can ensure that our papers and discussion sessions continue to be based on fact and research and not on personal views or political beliefs.



Alan Merry
Chair, Policy Centre Jersey

About the Policy Centre Jersey

The Policy Centre Jersey is a charity registered in Jersey, that aims to improve knowledge about and civic engagement in the Island by –

- Undertaking authoritative research on policy issues.
- Publishing briefings on key policy issues with easy access to relevant papers and research.
- Providing a forum for discussion on policy issues.
- Building a Jersey Knowledge Centre comprising brief up-to-date papers on all aspects of Jersey (history, economy, constitution, geography etc) aimed particularly at schools.

Management Committee

Alan Merry (Chair)

Phillip Callow (Treasurer)

Phil Romeril (Secretary) to March 2025

Siobhan O'Sullivan (Secretary) from January 2025

Simon Burgess (Chair of Advisory Council)

Kate Wright (Vice Chair of Advisory Council)

Becca de Freitas

Jing Jing Shi from November 2024

Director

Simon Soar

Senior Advisers

Sir Mark Boleat

Chris Clark

Advisory Council

The Centre has an Advisory Council representing a wide range of interests. The Council recommends areas for research and individual members contribute to particular research projects and generally support the work of the Centre.

The Advisory Council is chaired by Simon Burgess. Kate Wright is the Vice Chair.

Website: www.policy.je

Email: info@policy.je

Jersey Registered Charity: Number 467

Knowledge Centre

The Jersey Knowledge Centre comprises 14 papers covering all aspect of Jersey.

Jersey in brief
Jersey's economy
Jersey's constitution
Jersey's heritage
Jersey's history
Jersey's legal system
Jersey's national anthem
Jersey's natural environment
Jersey's parishes
Jersey's political system
Jersey's population
Jersey's public finances
Jersey's public services
40 people who have shaped the Island

The papers are between 3,000 and 8,000 words and provide key information supplemented by links to relevant documents and sources of further information. During the year one new paper was added, on Jersey's heritage, and all the other papers were updated with new information.

The Knowledge Centre papers are particularly relevant to –

- **Promotion of the Island's Identity.**
- **Teaching the Jersey curriculum**, which requires Jersey-specific issues to be covered in respect of history, geography and the political system. However, teachers have not had the resources to enable Jersey aspects of the curriculum to be adequately covered. The Knowledge Centre papers provide the necessary resources and their value in this respect has already been acknowledged by education officials.
- **Induction** programmes, particularly for newcomers to Jersey whose roles requires them to understand Jersey's political and legal systems. This is particularly relevant to people recruited to the civil service and arm's length organisations.

Policy Briefs

The Jersey political system is such that it is difficult to keep track of policy announcements and progress on implementing policies. The Centre's Policy Briefs are designed to fill the gap. Each Brief covers a specific policy area, setting out current policy and providing links to relevant papers and research. The Briefs are short – between three and 15 pages - and updated on a weekly basis to ensure that they are kept up-to-date. The Briefs are

intended to help policy makers, stakeholders and the public better understand the issues, so promoting more informed understanding and debate. It is understood that they are widely used within the Government machinery.

The need for such briefs was recognised in the ***Engagement and Information Improvement Report***, published by the Government of Jersey in October 2022. A recommendation in this report, accepted by the Government, was that: “All key areas of Government policy should have a dedicated page on gov.je containing relevant information, policy documents and public announcements.” This recommendation has not been implemented fully.

Currently, there are 29 Policy Centre Jersey Briefs.

- 2026 General Election
- Ageing population
- Alcohol licensing
- Arts and heritage
- Carbon Neutral Roadmap
- Dogs
- Economic policy
- Economic trends
- Education
- Energy policy
- Entertainment licensing
- Environment and planning
- External relations
- Financial services
- Government Plan
- Healthcare
- Home affairs
- Hospital
- Housing
- International development
- Population policy
- Reinstating senators
- Regulation of taxis
- Sport
- Top issues for islanders
- University level education in Jersey
- Wind farm

During the year six new Briefs were published on alcohol licensing, energy policy, entertainment licensing, the 2026 General Election, reinstating senators and top issues for islanders. All the other Briefs were updated as new information became available.

Research

The Policy Centre’s research programme has necessarily been constrained by its resources. However, using its own resources, eight substantive research papers have been published by the Centre. One new paper was published during the year.

- **Jersey’s secondary education system.** Jersey has an unusual secondary school structure; there is a high degree of selection and the absence of schools offering free education for the entire secondary school age range. The available evidence suggests that selective systems do not produce the best results and there is no rationale for

selection at 14; it is damaging to the schools who lose those students and to the students who remain. There is a stated aim “to build an education system that is comparable to, or better than, other high performing jurisdictions”. However, there are no arrangements to assess how effective Jersey is in achieving this aim. In 2023, at GCSE level Jersey’s performance was slightly above that of schools in England as a whole. At A level, performance was below the average of all English schools. Jersey’s performance is significantly below that of high performing areas in England. If there is concern about educational attainment levels and equality of opportunity in Jersey it would be appropriate to –

- Take steps to ensure that there are meaningful value added data for each secondary school so that performance of the schools can be compared with each other and with schools in comparable jurisdictions.
- Review the policy of selection at 14.
- Evaluate the option of each of the four 11-16 schools having a sixth form.

The research papers published in previous years remain relevant.

- **Election turnout in Jersey.** Election turnout in Jersey has averaged 44%, among the lowest in the world. The position largely reflects an unwillingness to vote but also to a limited extent electoral arrangements. This paper sets out and analyses the available data on turnout and reasons for the low turnout and considers what can be done to increase engagement and the level of voting.
- **Housing and social mobility in Jersey.** This paper analyses the impact of the Jersey housing market on social mobility. It notes that those who bought homes many years ago have benefitted from the significant rise in house prices and have been willing and able to use the increase in wealth to help their children with housing costs, in particular to become home owners. However, those whose parents have been tenants are less likely to have access to the “Bank of Mum and Dad” and struggle to afford housing costs.
- **University education on-Island.** This paper describes what university-level education is available in Jersey, analyses data on participation in university-level education and educational standards in the Island, discusses the case for a “University of Jersey” and considers other options for increasing university-level education on-Island. A key point is that in the UK 20% of students live at home, primarily for financial reasons. This option is not available to most Jersey students, therefore students from lower income families are less able to access higher education.

- **Social mobility in Jersey.** This paper explains the concept of social mobility, drawing on UK and international evidence, and brings together detailed research on the impact on social mobility of high housing costs and the provision of university education on-Island and extracts from relevant reports on other areas relevant to social mobility – the school system, early years provision and action that employers can take.
- **Low income in Jersey.** This paper brings together available statistics and research about the nature of low income in Jersey and policy options for addressing the issue. It notes that over time the composition of those from relatively low income households has changed from pensioners to children and working-age adults. Jersey has a benefit system, which, combined with high tax thresholds, achieves a substantial redistribution of income from better-off people to lower-income people. However, various specific initiatives also seek to tackle the issue. The paper argues that the Island would benefit from considering the issue of low income as a whole rather than in silos, with a view to developing a suite of joined-up policies in respect of taxation, income support and subsidies on specific goods and services that most effectively achieve the objective of helping those in relatively low income.
- **Problem gambling in Jersey.** This paper brings together relevant information on problem gambling in Jersey. It draws on relevant UK and Guernsey statistics and analysis to assess the extent and effect of problem gambling, describes the legislative and regulative framework and initiatives to help those with gambling problems and discusses possible policy interventions. It suggests that if the UK experience applies in Jersey, 500 people experience problem gambling, nearly 4,000 gamble at elevated risk and around 7,000 people are negatively affected by someone else's gambling. The direct annual cost to the Government of harmful gambling in Jersey is probably around £1 million and the societal value of health impacts is equivalent to between £1.5 million and £2.1 million.
- **Improving the consultation process.** Good policy-making necessarily involves taking account of the views of those most affected by what is being proposed, the wider community and those with experience and knowledge of the issue. If this is not done then the likely effects are that a policy is not effective in achieving its objectives and distrust in Government by those affected by the policy. The policy-making process in Jersey is arguably deficient in a number of respects, of which practice on consultation is just one. This paper analyses the consultation process and suggests how it can usefully be improved.

The Centre also commissioned an opinion survey on key issues that matter most to islanders. The results, based on data collected in January 2025, provide crucial insights into public opinion and highlight the areas that policy-makers should prioritise. The survey, conducted by market research company 4Insight, built on a similar study commissioned by the Government in 2024. Key Findings:

- Cost of living remains the most important concern, with 29% of respondents identifying it as their top issue and 64% citing it as a major concern when prompted.
- Housing remains a significant worry, especially among those under 35, with 59% identifying it as a major issue.
- Faith in government continues to be a concern for many, cited by 45% of respondents.
- Healthcare and hospital services have gained importance, with 51% highlighting them as a key concern.

Discussion Meetings

The Centre has continued to hold a series of discussion meetings. These typically follow the publication of a policy brief or research paper. The papers take the form of a brief presentation of the results of the research by Mark Boleat, the Centre's Senior Adviser, comments from two relevant people and then an open discussion. A summary of the discussion is published on the Centre's website.

The discussion meetings have been widely attended by members of the Centre's Advisory Council, members of the States of Jersey Assembly, Government of Jersey officials, businesses, charities and individuals. Seven discussion meetings were held in the last financial year, and 14 meetings to date.

- 26 July 2024 –Taxi regulation
- 26 September 2024 – Energy policy
- 15 November 2024 – Technology
- 10 February 2025 – Trust in government
- 18 February 2025 – Secondary education
- 26 February 2025 – Top issues for islanders
- 20 June 2025 - Voter turnout

On 26 March 2025 we also held an event focused on engaging with schools. 'An introduction to Think Tanks' – we had excellent participation and quality of debate with pupils from Victoria College and Jersey College for Girls. We plan to extend this work in the coming year.

Think Pieces

The Centre publishes 'think pieces' - short papers by named authors that are evidence-based, with links to relevant papers, and relevant to public policy in Jersey. Five new think pieces were published during the year:

- Improving education outcomes in Jersey – Rachael Williams
- Restoring trust in politics – Sir Mark Boleat
- Is political apathy threatening democracy? – Christopher Pinch
- New approaches needed for taxis and tourism – James Lewis
- Let's invent a Channel Islands way – Kevin Keen

Academic Centre

The Academic Centre includes details of books and journals on Island studies and university and other academic organisations that specialise in Island studies, including Jersey's own Jersey International Centre of Advanced Studies (JICAS) which offers a degree in Island biodiversity and conservation in conjunction with University of Exeter. The Centre includes a database of academic studies relevant to Jersey. The database currently comprises of 60 papers.

Communications

The Centre's website is the primary method of communication. It is well-designed, easy to navigate and is kept fully up-to-date. All of the papers are available in HTML and PDF formats.

The Centre publishes news through LinkedIn, where it has rapidly built up a network of 2,140 followers.

Resources

The Centre's activities are constrained by its incoming resources primarily from donations, sponsorships and research commissions.

Think tanks in the UK receive substantial support from businesses, charitable foundations and individuals keen to support high quality research. Jersey has not had that tradition and it is a goal of the Centre change this by demonstrating its value to islanders.

The Centre would like to be able to employ research staff and to work with think tanks in the UK, Guernsey and other jurisdictions.

To date, the Policy Centre has largely been run on a pro bono basis. The members of the Management Committee and of the Advisory Council are unpaid. The Centre's research work, Knowledge Centre papers and Policy

Briefs have been the responsibility of Sir Mark Boleat who works on a pro bono basis.

In December 2023 Simon Soar was appointed a part-time Director.

During the year, the Centre received £20,000 being tranche two of three from Ocorian Trustees.

The following table shows income and expenditure for the year ended 30 June 2025 and for comparison the figures for the previous year.

	2025	2024
	£	£
Sponsorship, Grants and Donation Income	25,000	31,000
Research Income	-	10,000
Interest	156	50
Total Incoming Resources	25,156	41,050
Website	(8,156)	(8,276)
Marketing and Communications	(46)	(3,526)
Administration	(29,234)	(16,970)
Other	(914)	(5,564)
Total Expenses	(38,350)	(34,336)
Net Income/(Expenditure) for Year	(13,194)	6,714

Note: The 2024 figures have been restated to reflect non-material adjustments in accounting treatment.

Further donation and research income is anticipated to be received during 2025 sufficient to absorb the net expenditure and to cover expenses in 2025/26.

Administrative Details

Contact

Director: director@policy.je

Website Address: www.policy.je

Supporters

We are very grateful to our supporters for their donations, sponsorship and time.

