



The Government of Sark

**PRESS STATEMENT FROM
POLICY & PERFORMANCE & FINANCE & RESOURCES
COMMITTEES, GOVERNMENT OF SARK**

4p.m. Friday, 20th November 2015

Sark, like every other democratic jurisdiction, faces challenges which the Government of Sark continues to address.

Universal suffrage on Sark, with one Conseiller for every fifteen residents and an enviable turnout of around 80% at elections, demonstrates Sark's commitment to democracy. An Independent Observer reported on the last election and all his recommendations are now part of a Public Consultation.

There is no budget deficit and the Government holds a reasonable level of reserves, there is no overall increase in taxation for the coming year (and a reduction for some Islanders). Sark's Government is engaging with all businesses on the Island. Tourism visitor numbers are up on the last two years, Isle of Sark Shipping, fully owned by the Island, is under new management and is expected to be debt free next year and is currently trading in profit.

Education on Sark is provided in a modern, well-equipped building catering for pupils up to and including GCSE level. The school consumes 16% of the Government's budget providing a teacher to pupil ratio of 1:9, and is the envy of many other jurisdictions. The school regularly invites independent external inspections.

The Island employs a full-time doctor providing 24 hour, 7 day cover with no waiting times. The surgery provides pharmacy facilities with subsidised prescription charges. There is a service for home care. 11% of Government income is spent on caring and supporting those in need.

As a community Sark's Emergency Services are run by fully trained volunteers. Support is also provided by the Flying Christine to give fast access to hospital in Guernsey when required.

The Government of Sark welcomes all of the twenty two signatories of the Open Letter, published in the media on Friday, 20th November 2015, to visit Sark and to see all of Sark for themselves.

Policy & Performance Committee: Conseillers Charles Maitland (Chairman), Hazel Fry, Jane Norwich, Arthur Rolfe, Stephen Taylor

Finance & Resources Committee: Conseillers Robert Cottle (Chairman), William Raymond, Paul Burgess, Antony Dunks, Nicolas Maloney

POSTED 20.11.15

EDITORS NOTES

This press statement is in response to an open letter published on 20.11.15 headed 'Open letter to the Guernsey Evening Press and Jersey Post' dated 13.11.15

Please see http://www.gov.sark.gg/agendas_minutes.html Michaelmas Chief Pleas 2015 items covering budget and taxation, Securing Sark's Future Policy, Isle of Sark Shipping and Sark School.

No further comment until Monday 23.11.15, please contact the Committee Office on 01481 832118 after 9am.

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