



**About Jersey**

An introduction to the island  
January 2023

## Jersey's Constitution and Political System

The Bailiwick of Jersey is a self-governing Parliamentary Democracy. Jersey is autonomous in all domestic matters and has its own government, led by the Chief Minister, and its own legislature – the States Assembly. Jersey has its own independent legal, administrative and fiscal systems. The King is the Head of State and the Lieutenant-Governor acts as His Majesty's personal representative in Jersey. The relationship between Jersey and the Crown is one that derives from the British sovereign's capacity as heir to the Dukes of Normandy. By long-standing convention, the Crown, now represented by the UK Government, is generally responsible for Jersey's defence and representing its international interests. However, treaties may only extend to Jersey where the Government has given its express consent to be bound by any international commitments.

### The nature of the British Crown Dependencies

Crown Dependencies are entirely self-governing in respect of their internal affairs, so they are free to have their own laws, education, health, policing, tax and other systems. The Ministry of Justice is responsible in the UK Government for managing the relationship with the Crown Dependencies and works closely with the Government of Jersey.

### Legislature and Government

General elections are held every four years.

Current voting constituencies are as follows. Each Parish votes for its own Connétable.

Constituency	Number of deputies
St Helier South	4 deputies
St Helier Central	5 deputies
St Helier North	4 deputies
St Saviour	5 deputies
St Clement	4 deputies
St Brelade	4 deputies
St Mary, St Ouen & St Peter	4 deputies
St John, St Lawrence & Trinity	4 deputies
Grouville & St Martin	3 deputies

Connétables and Deputies make up the Members of the States Assembly. The Lieutenant Governor, Bailiff, Attorney General, Solicitor General and Dean of Jersey are technically members of the States Assembly with a right to speak but not vote. In practice, the Bailiff speaks only as presiding officer and the Lieutenant Governor speaks only at the beginning and end of their term.

You can find out your constituency here: <https://www.vote.je/voting-in-jersey/district-finder/>

Following a General Election, Members elect a Chief Minister who in turn nominates other Ministers who have to be approved by the States. The Ministers comprise the Council of Ministers, who make up the [Government of Jersey](#).



## **The Parishes**

Jersey's 12 Parishes are a key feature of the political structure of the Island, having existed in their current form for around 1000 years with only minimal boundary changes. Parishes form the basis of constituencies for Deputies.

The Parishes each have the same structure headed by the Connétable (Constable), who also is a member of States Assembly. The Connétable is supported by two "Procureurs du Bien Public" who have responsibility for ensuring that the finances of the Parish are soundly managed. The Parishes are divided into Vingtaines (or Cueillettes in St Ouen), each with two Vingteniers, two roads inspectors and three constable's officers. The Connétable heads the Honorary Police comprising also Centeniers, Vingteniers and Constable's officers. All ratepayers and electors are entitled to attend Parish assemblies which elect the various officers.

Further information on the different Parishes, including origins, Parish crests, the Visite de Branchage and Visite Royale can be found on <https://islandidentity.je/report/about-jersey/communities-2>

## **Lieutenant Governor**

The Crown's representative in Jersey is the Lieutenant Governor, appointed by the Sovereign for a five-year term, to be his personal representative and impartial adviser. The Lieutenant-Governor's responsibilities include: representing the King on ceremonial occasions; hosting royal, ambassadorial and VIP visits and occasions in conjunction with the Island's authorities and the UK government; promoting and playing an active part in the social and charitable affairs of the Island; all matters relating to British citizenship; and making recommendations for the award of honours to Jersey residents.

## **Bailiff and Law Officers**

The Bailiff is appointed by the Crown although on the advice of the Jersey Government. They will invariably have held other law officer positions. The Bailiff is the civic head of the Island, as distinct from the political head, and has some formal responsibilities in respect of communications between the Jersey and UK Governments. They carry out a number of civic responsibilities and engagements. They are the Presiding Officer of the States Assembly, akin to a speaker in the UK Parliament. The Bailiff also has another important role in Jersey. They are President of the Royal Court and presides over cases. The Bailiff is supported by a Deputy Bailiff or Chief Justice. The Attorney General and Solicitor General provide legal advice to the Government and provide an independent public prosecution service. These three officers are appointed by the Crown on the advice of the Jersey Government.

More detailed information can be found here:

[www.islandidentity.je](http://www.islandidentity.je)

<https://www.gov.je/LifeEvents/MovingToJersey/>

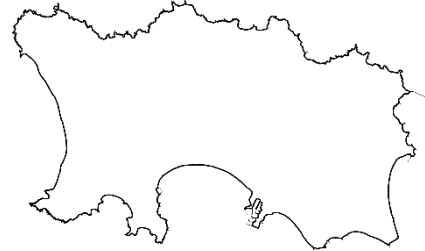
<https://www.gov.je/>



## Physical location and size

Jersey is the largest of the Channel Islands, 22 kilometres from the Normandy coast, 56 kilometres from Saint Malo and 160 kilometres from the South Coast of England.

Jersey has a land area of 120 square kilometres. Jersey's location means that it is subject to a substantial tidal variation with the high tide being as much as 12 metres higher than the low tide.



Jersey has long stretches of sand on the west coast (St Ouen's Bay), the south coast (St Aubin's bay) and the east coast (Grouville Bay) while the north coast is more characterised by cliffs and smaller bays, some of which offer small natural harbours. On the west coast sand dunes stretch some way inland.

## Public services and utilities

Jersey has its own education, health, police, taxation, social security and other public services.

There are 33 [primary schools](#) and 10 secondary schools which cover the 11-16 age group, and 5 for the 16-18 age group

[Highlands College](#) provides **further education** including a number of degree courses, and several specialist bodies including offer degree courses in conjunction with UK universities.

Jersey has its own **health system**. The full range of health services is provided on-Island, including a general hospital, a maternity hospital, GP practices, chemists and specialist services. Some services are free but others, including GP visits, have to be paid for.

The [States of Jersey Police](#) employs all the procedures, methods, technology, training and modes of operation of police elsewhere in the British Isles and co-operates with police forces in the UK and other countries.

In addition to the **States of Jersey Police**, each Parish has an **Honorary Police force** which deals with minor issues, and which can bring cases before the courts.

There are comprehensive [Fire and Rescue services](#), which like the police service work closely with their English counterparts.

Jersey has a [public bus service](#) operating throughout the Island and a **regulated taxi service**.

[Ports of Jersey](#) is responsible for managing **the airport, harbours, marinas** and the **Jersey Coastguard**. Jersey is part of a [Common Travel Area](#) together with the United Kingdom, Guernsey, the Isle of Man and the Irish Republic. This means that there are no customs or immigration controls for people travelling within the area. For security reasons travellers to or from Jersey by sea or by air will be required to produce photographic proof of identity.



**Postal services** are provided by [Jersey Post](#), who operates a network of 21 post offices across the island.

There is a single provider of **electricity**, [Jersey Electricity](#). **Water** is provided by [Jersey Water](#) and **gas** is provided by [Island Energy](#).

Further information and resources about Jersey, including its **communities, international outlook, environment, economy, history, heritage** and **culture** can be found at [www.islandidentity.je](http://www.islandidentity.je).