

BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Sark is spectacular in both its scenery and its simplicity; the tranquil beauty by day is unmarred by cars and tarmac roads, whilst the exceptional blackness of the night skies makes for spectacular stargazing and recently made Sark the world's first dark sky island.

The island is 3 miles long by 1.5 miles wide with approximately 400 residents, which increases during the summer months when visitors arrive to spend their holidays and enjoy the beauty, safety, peace and tranquillity.

Sark is situated about 9 miles east of Guernsey and 12 miles north of Jersey with access only permissible by boat. There are regular ferries to Guernsey and Jersey where there are international airports. Fast charter boats accommodating up to 12 passengers are also available for those arriving or departing via Guernsey, Jersey or France. The flight time from Guernsey to London Gatwick is about 50 minutes by plane.

Sark governs its own affairs through 'Chief Pleas' – the island's parliament- setting its own taxes and local legislation. Transport on Sark is restricted to the horse and carriage and the bicycle. Tractors are, however, permitted by licence for general farm and building work, carting of goods from the harbour, and personal transport of goods by arrangement. Everyday shopping facilities are available on Sark and there is a choice of restaurants, cafes, public houses and tourist accommodation types to suit all tastes and budgets, ranging from hotels to camping facilities.

Sark was historically divided into 40 'tenements' by the original settlers from Jersey in 1565; these are still intact today as they have played a vital role in the island's constitution. As the 40 tenements are still indivisible the majority of Sark's property is purchased by way of secure leasehold, with individual leases varying in length from 1 year to 150 years. Potential Sark residents have the right to purchase or rent an 'open' market property but 'local' market rental properties are restricted by specific criteria including a residency of Sark for 15 years or more. This is why the post of Head of School comes with accommodation as part of the salary package.

English speaking and sterling based, Sark offers residents a safe, high quality of life. Sark does not come under the UK tax and benefit system and as such, does not levy any income tax, inheritance tax, capital gains tax or value added tax on its residents. Unfortunately, this also means that residents do not benefit from access to the National Health Service, so private health insurance is required for both visits and residency.

Sark is welcoming, friendly and relaxed and if you are successful at the first stage of the interview process, when you visit you will discover the unique charm and character of this island for yourself. We will provide accommodation during your visit and arrange your travel to the island.

Further information and many pictures of the island are available on the Sark tourism website at www.sark.co.uk and there are some pictures and an informative video produced by the children on the school website at www.sarkschool.co.uk.