**Volunteer Information 2023**

Located amidst spectacular scenery half a mile off the southern tip of the Isle of Man, the Calf of Man is a small island extending to approximately 616 acres. In the ownership of the Manx National Heritage (MNH), its primary purpose is as a Bird Observatory and Nature Reserve, with Wardens being resident on the Island from mid-March to mid-November.

This island is an ideal place to study many aspects of bird life with around 33 species breeding annually and it is located on one of western Britain's major migration routes. Breeding seabirds include Manx Shearwater, Fulmar, Razorbill, Shag and the three larger gull species. Other notable species normally observed daily on the island include Peregrine, Hen Harrier, Chough and Raven.

**Accommodation on the Calf**

Accommodation will be provided in the traditional style 1870's farmhouse which incorporates the Observatory. It is the only habitable property on the Island and you will be sharing the living space with the Wardens, other volunteers and guests. Bedrooms are dormitory style with bunk beds and it is possible that you will be sharing with other volunteers of the same sex.

Electrical power to the Observatory is supplied by battery bank charged by generator; this is normally run once a day and allows electrical appliances to be operated / charged. There are “essential” power sockets which allow power to be drawn when the generator is not running but besides maintaining the fire alarm system, emergency lighting and fridges, the essential sockets should be used sparingly to avoid running down the battery bank and necessitating increased generator running. Heating is provided by a wood burning stove in the dining and common room.

Water supplies are derived from a combination of rainwater harvesting and ground water sources which pass through a filtration process. The water supply to the WC uses unfiltered hill well water. The water supply can become limited, and those staying at the Observatory are requested to use the water sparingly and to avoid leaving taps running etc. Showers are normally limited to one per week and there is a washing machine for clothes washing, which is available for volunteers to use providing that you are staying beyond two weeks.

There are three kitchen facilities each one containing cutlery, pans, microwave, fridge/freezer (limited space) and a gas cooker. The microwave is only useable when the generator is running.

The Observatory has a mobile phone for use by the wardens and for emergencies, although incoming calls can be accommodated if arranged. Mobile phone reception is patchy across the island, and you should check with your supplier if roaming charges are applicable. The

Isle of Man has its own mobile network which is different from the UK. There is a Wi-Fi connection at the Observatory and access to this can be arranged.

It is your responsibility to keep your room clean and tidy. **Upon leaving the Calf, ensure that any bedding you may have borrowed is placed in the washing machine and that your room has been cleaned, including sweeping the floor (and mopping, if needed).** Cleaning of the Observatory is communal, and you will be expected to chip in.

**Getting on and off the Calf**

Transport on and off the Calf is usually with the supply boat Scraayl, run by Stephen Clague, out of Port St Mary. Weather permitting the boat will leave Port St Mary at or around high tide on a Tuesday each week. There are on occasions additional boat trips but please try and arrange your travel on and off the Calf on a Tuesday. If you are making your own way to the harbour, then please contact the boatman (Tel: 07624 490615) by 8.30am on the morning of departure to confirm if the boat is sailing and what time he will be leaving the harbour. Please ensure you are at the harbour at least 15 minutes before the time of departure to assist with loading the boat.

**Getting on and off the Isle of Man**

If you are travelling from outside the Isle of Man, you will need to arrange either a ferry crossing from Liverpool or Heysham or arrive by plane from various UK airports.

If you intend travelling by ferry then you will need to book a crossing with the Isle of Man Steam Packet Co. <https://www.steam-packet.com/> There are normally two sailings each day which dock at Douglas Harbour. Unless you wish to travel on the overnight boat (ETA @ 6.15am) you will need to arrive on the Isle of Man the day before (Monday) you intend travelling to the Calf. Single ‘footloose’ fares start at around £22.00 one way.

Alternatively, you can travel to the Island by plane from various UK airports which arrive at Ronaldsway Airport. Flight providers include EasyJet, Flybe and Aer Lingus.

**Getting from your hotel/ferry terminal/airport to Port St Mary**

Generally, you will have to make your own way to Port St Mary, via bus or taxi. There are no trains on the Isle of Man. It may be possible to arrange for someone to collect you from your hotel/ferry terminal/airport and transfer you to the supply boat on the Tuesday morning, however you should be prepared to travel by bus from Douglas to Port St Mary (**1, 1H, 2, 2A, 11, 12, 12A, & N1)** if necessary.

<https://www.gov.im/categories/travel-traffic-and-motoring/bus-and-rail/bus-vannin/bus-timetables/>

Please be aware that the departure of the supply boat is entirely weather dependant and therefore you should be prepared to extend your overnight accommodation on the Isle of Man if necessary.

**Overnight Accommodation on Isle of Man**

There may be the need to arrive the night before the Tuesday boat depending on departure times. There are many small hotels in Douglas that can be booked online. The “Sugarland” (01624 663456) is close to the ferry terminal and has been used by several previous volunteers. If you arrive by plane, then you will need to get a taxi or a bus to either Port St Mary or Port Erin, where again there are several small hotels, you can pre-book. Discover Diving is based in PSM and has been used previously – 01624 833008.

**Kit list**

Sleeping Bag - you will need to bring your own or a duvet. Pillows, pillow cases and sheets are supplied

Torch – preferably a head torch and spare batteries

Toiletries – water can be limited on the island, so just one shower per week is normal

Towel(s) and flannel

Hot water bottle – there is no heating in the bedrooms

Water-proof outdoor clothing

Walking boots (preferably) and/or Wellington boots

Suitable clothing – for both warm and cold conditions

Binoculars and telescope (and for ringers, a neck hook)

Camera

Mobile Phone & Charger – there is very limited reception on the Calf but it is possible to make and receive calls and texts. We also operate a Calf ‘What’s App’ group that you will be invited to join and can be used to keep in touch with other members on the island.

Sun cream – it can be sunny some days!

Thermos flask - can come in handy

Indoor shoes – the stone floors can be cold

**Food shopping**

When you first arrive, you will need to bring sufficient food stocks out to the Calf that will last you between 7-10 days; then subsequent weeks’ food can be pre-ordered from Shoprite in Port Erin. Prior to arriving on the Calf, you will need to supply a food order list, at least one week before your arrival. This should be emailed to assistantcalfwarden@mwt.im

Please also remember that fridge and freezer space is limited on the Calf, so we suggest it is best to buy mostly tinned, fresh or dried foods.

It is essential that you provide sufficient detail about your order – this will help to ensure that you get the items you want. Please provide your order in the following layout – this will assist the persons making up your order:

* Bakery
* Fridgeables
* Bread
* Fruit and vegetables
* Meat
* Ready meals
* Milk and fresh juice, smoothies
* Tins
* Herbs and spices
* Pasta, rice, sauces and condiments
* Biscuits
* Sugar
* Alcohol
* Squash and cans
* Crisps, snacks, nuts
* Cereal
* Toiletries
* Eggs and baking ingredients
* Jam, tinned fruit stuff, chocolate
* Freezer

Example lists:

Poor List Good List

Bread Loaf of White Bread - medium cut

Cheese Large pack Cheddar Cheese – mild or medium strength

Orange juice Orange cordial – prefer 1ltr bottle

Pizza Frozen pizza – pepperoni or cheese

Chocolate Multi pack of Chocolate bars – any promotional offer

Milk 2 pints semi-skimmed Milk

Bananas 5-6 Bananas – small or medium size preferred

Tomatoes 3-4 Salad Tomatoes

Pasta Medium bag of dried pasta shapes – prefer Wholemeal

Pasta Sauce 2 medium-sized Jars Pasta sauce - any tomato-based

sauce

It is also worth listing an alternative, if you are wanting a particular product but not worried about brand e.g. Digestive biscuits or other ‘plain’ biscuit variety.

Your food order will be collected from Shoprite each week by the boatman and brought over to the Calf, normally on a Tuesday.

**Food order repayments**

Initial payment for the shopping will be arranged by Manx Wildlife Trust (MWT) and you will be notified of the cost of each weekly shop by receipt sent with your shopping. You will be required to reimburse MWT each week for the cost of your shopping. It is therefore essential that you bring a means of internet banking with you to the Calf. The observatory has Wi-Fi and there are computers that can be used that will allow you to log in to your account and make payment.

Repayments should be made, on the same day as your food supplies are delivered, to:

Acc no: 11540079

Sort code: 559100

Please include your name as a reference on the transfer, so that the money can be easily identified and allocated correctly. This will allow time for MWT to receive the funds and ensure that there is sufficient credit on the pre-paid card for the following weeks’ orders.

You should also confirm with the wardens the amount that you have paid. It will then be emailed to MWT to confirm amounts that have been sent and by whom.

**Roles and responsibilities**

Please see the separate roles and responsibilities note to ensure you understand MWT responsibilities towards you as our volunteers and you understand what is expected of you as volunteers. Please note we have the right to remove you from the Calf should we see fit.

**Emergency contacts**

Please ensure you complete the emergency contact information and supply this at least one week before you arrive.

Reviewed: 12th March 2023.