

ISLAND REPORT 2025

Derek Green – Managing Director, the Lundy Company

Lundy had a varied season in 2025 with long periods of hot weather, a high number of cancelled sailings and a remarkable shortage of rainfall, which led to rationing and water having to be imported by the 'Oldenburg'.

Poor weather in August reduced day trip numbers for the second year in a row and while property occupancy remained strong at 88%, it was down slightly on 2024. It's noticeable that pressure on finances has led to a reduction in secondary spend from visitors due to the increased cost of living on the mainland.

The Oldenburg had a challenging summer season, with 25 sailings from 100 affected by weather or mechanical problems. We normally lose around 10 sailings per year, but persistent strong winds and storms in August and September have now curtailed sailings for the last two years. The ship suffered mechanical problems which affected three sailings until we were able to rectify the problem.

Oldenburg

The ship had a prolonged visit to the dry dock in winter 24/25 when we had to replace most of the foredeck due to wear and tear. The foredeck takes the worst of the weather and it was expected that some areas of steel would need to be replaced. However, following survey, we took the decision to replace the entire deck while we had the opportunity, and while resource was available. This led to a slight delay at the beginning of the season.

Over the winter we also took the opportunity to have the SLEP report (Ship's Life Expectancy Report) reviewed which provides details and recommendations for future work and the expected life cycle of the ship. It was pleasing to note that with continued investment, the Oldenburg has several years' service left in her yet.

On that basis, plans were drawn up for this winter's dry docking which have focused on the condition of the hull below the waterline. Completing this project is expected to take three or four years as we replace areas of steel as necessary. Additionally, the cargo crane has had a major overhaul, and internally, we're refurbishing the seating in the forward salon.

▼ MS Oldenburg bound for Lundy (photo: Derek Green)

The
Landmark
Trust



Hartland Heliport

Work to Hartland heliport continued over the summer with a new AVGAS fuel pump installed by Castle Air and the buildings getting a fresh coat of paint courtesy of Mike Weston and the crew, between sailing days. A new safety video has been produced and plans are underway to entertain visitors waiting on foggy days, with some lovely Lundy images and videos being put together using material provided by Richard Breese and LFS members.

Shore Offices

Plans have been drawn up to move over to digital lines with BT to improve communications. Online ticketing for day trippers continues to be successful, with the majority of tickets now purchased this way. However, the cost of putting period returns online was unfortunately prohibitive, so we've had to postpone that phase of the project.

The team flew the Lundy flag at the Royal Cornwall show in June and attended several other regional shows spreading the word.



▲ Lyndsey and Tracey at the Royal Cornwall Show
(photo: Derek Green)

Passenger Numbers

Day trip passenger numbers over the summer remained steady until the end of August when poor weather impacted some sailings and reduced numbers. Letting properties remained busy through the summer but noticeably, May is now our busiest month with the highest occupancy and increasing day trip numbers.

Passenger Number comparison

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD
2025	53	293	383	1445	2488	2526	3103	2797	1097	839	306	282	15612
2024	63 ^a	287	476	1007 ^b	2230	2890	2725	2810	1372	920	348	287	15191
2023	87	395	456	678 ^b	728 ^b	2487	2394	3183	1713	1033	295	295	10408
2022	111	393	469	1783	2273	2463	3482	3608	1795	1172	368	307	18244
2021	0	0	0	607 ^c	1302 ^c	1910 ^c	2075 ^c	3192	2395	1112	478	323	13692 ^c

^a Extended shutdown ^b Sailing season delayed ^c COVID

Property occupancy remained high, with Old Light Cottage the most popular Landmark, amazingly booking for 100% of all available days last year. Castle Cottage (98.5%), The Radio Room (98.1%) and Tibbetts (94%) are also extremely popular and it's pleasing to see that the Vestry is now the sixth most booked property on the island, booking 92% of the year.

Property Occupancy %

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	YTD Booked
2025	77.4	66.6	80.1	97	99.2	96.7	96.6	95.6	93	91.8	80	66.5	88
2024	70	63.5	83.7	97.7	98.8	96.7	98.5	97.4	92.3	92.5	79	69.1	88.2
2023	75.5	90	90	98	99.2	97	97.4	98	98.5	89.3	77.8	69	90.1
2022	84.3	82.1	95.3	97	96	99.6	96.5	98.3	96.5	94.1	82.7	68.8	91.6
2021	0 ^a	0 ^a	0 ^a	95.9 ^a	96.1 ^a	99	98	99.5	99.1	96	95	83.5	95.5

^a Denotes part month COVID closure or reduced passenger numbers due to extended docking.

Island

Maintenance

It was a busy year on the island, with a new micro grid at Tibbetts installed, allowing us to replace the old cantankerous water boiler. A new solar array, 8kW battery bank, 240v inverter and new central heating system have been sympathetically installed along with LED lighting using the existing iconic gas light fittings. The system is currently working successfully.

A new air source heat pump has been installed in Stoneycroft along with double glazed windows to conserve heat. The new system reduces load from the generator and keeps Stoneycroft cosy and warm. The shower room was also refurbished as part of the project. Old Light Upper and Lower have had both shower rooms refurbished, with new sanitary ware and shower cubicles installed. Many properties have had new double glazed windows installed, including Hammers, Big and Little St Johns, The Barn, Brambles and Quarters.

Millcombe has had an external and internal makeover during the winter, bringing the island's finest property back up to a high standard. The Castle complex was re-roofed in December during a period of light winds and it's pleasing that several persistent small leaks have since been eliminated.

Fifteen of the islands multifuel stoves were replaced over the summer by our HETAS registered contractor. Many had new flue liners and pots replaced to bring them up to standard.

Work to 'Brambles bank' concluded in January 2026 thanks to Roger and his team of volunteers; stabilisation works will soon vegetate and blend into the landscape.

One of the largest projects last year was the repair and encapsulation of the vehicle workshop roof, which has been sealed to prevent leaks. At over £100,000, it's an 'unseen' cost, but one which is vital to protecting our sensitive control room and generators.

Water

The island's water supply was severely reduced with a lack of rainfall during the main summer months leading to rationing. However, the dry weather helped identify a persistent leak in the campsite which was found and repaired. The island generally uses 16 tonnes of water per day.



▲ The Dexters get used to their new GPS collars
(photo: Kathy Weston)

Internet

Following the end of the free two-year trial of BT's 'One Web' satellite broadband, we've installed Starlink to provide reliable internet connection to the island (for business use only). The two One Web domes are due to be removed shortly.

Power

Work continues to monitor and fine tune the new Programmable Logic Controller and controls remotely. The island main generator sets have been running reliably with no major issues since work was completed in the winter of 2024/25.

Farm

We've reduced domestic sheep numbers significantly over the past year and the island has now recovered from over grazing and the abundance of sheep from



▲ Farmer Tom Carr cutting winter silage with the new mower (photo: Derek Green)

2024. We've introduced three new Dexter cows in line with our aspiration to have more controlled grazing using GPS controlled collars.

Feral stock numbers have also been reduced, with over 100 Sika Deer and a similar number of Soay culled since the last feral stock count.

We continue to work with the NT land management team to draft a new Higher Tier Stewardship scheme. There is no update on when we might be invited to apply for a new scheme, but the team remain focused on having an application ready to submit in partnership with the NT.

Vehicles

With help from our Royal Marine friends at Instow, we've replaced the farm tractor and mower. We've also replaced the mainland crew Minibus after a series of mechanical problems and advice from our garage.

Events

The island's annual fly-in for light aircraft was cancelled due to bad weather, but the annual trail run took place in July, with several of the islanders successfully completing the gruelling 14-mile course around the island.

Several film crews have been filming in and around the island, notably for 'Our Tiny Islands' on C4 and 'Sailing the Shipping Forecast', also on C4 with the Rev Richard Coles, and a programme focusing on our Soay sheep from St Kilda for BBC Alba.

Bird Observatory

Following three years in probation, I'm delighted that Lundy has been re-admitted to the Bird Observatory Council following their AGM in February 2026. Many thanks to everyone who made this happen, in particular, Chris Dee, Dean Jones, Joe Parker and Tim Jones (for patiently convincing me outside Bartons that we should do it!)



▲ Landing Bay from the air (photo: Derek Green)

Staffing:

There were a number of permanent staff movements in 2025, notably:

- Erin Waller (General Assistant and Deputy Housekeeper) left in July to take up a position with HM Coastguard on the mainland.
- Pete Hayes (Senior General Assistant) left in December to take a position with the Lakes trust, with ex-Lundy Ranger, Nick Herbert.
- Joe Parker (Warden) left in December to take up a position with the Birds of Poole Harbour charity.
- Zdena Best (Temporary Assistant Ranger) left in December after spending a few months assisting Roger, the island Ranger. I don't normally mention temporary staff, but Zdena was exceptional and I'd like to acknowledge her contribution to the island.

Joining us over the last 12 months were:

- Simon Parker (Warden), who joined us in January 2026, taking over from Joe Parker (no relation). Simon has previously been the warden on Flat Holm Island, further up the Bristol Channel.
- Aaron Cann and his partner Tallulah Robinson (General Assistants) joined us in January 2026. Aaron has been visiting the island from a young age to stay with his grandparents Kevin and Julie Welsh.
- Thomas Weston and Eleanor Harris (Bird Warden and General Assistants) also joined us in January 2026. Thomas is a qualified bird ringer and will share his time between island departments and looking after visiting bird ringers, as part of our commitment to the Bird Observatory.
- Steve Young (Cargo Co-Ordinator) joined us in March 2025. Steve has been working on Lundy on and off as a maintenance contractor for a number of years and brings a wide range of useful building skills to the island.
- Andy Hall joined us on the bridge of the Oldenburg as First Officer (Mate). There were no significant changes in the Shore Office or within the crew.

Renewable Energy Project (R.E.P.)

Internal restructuring within the National Trust has caused delays to the planned Renewable Energy Programme, but work over the year has continued to support our planning application, and a pre-application has been submitted to Torridge District Council.

The REP programme is as follows:

Phase 1 (November 2024 – July 2025) (already funded by the National Trust)

- Efficiency works – Complete
- Control upgrades – Complete
- Heating upgrades/pilots – Heating upgrade to Big St Johns – Complete; Pilot air source heat pump installation to Stonecroft – Complete
- Monitoring (remote access / enhanced visibility) – Complete
- Pre consultation and planning application on new energy system for Lundy – In progress

Phase 2 (August 2025 – October 2026)

- Tender new energy system works (TBC)
- Approval of funding and new energy system by the National Trust (now expected March 2026)
- Commencement of energy system installation (TBC)
- Commissioning of new energy system (TBC)

The full scheme consists of:

Wind – 100 kW Turbine – Similar turbine shown at right.

Solar – 400 kW - approximately 1 hectare

Battery store – 1 MWh

Diesel Generation – Existing (15%)

In summary, 2025 was another challenging but busy year all round with the changing weather patterns dictating most things. However, there have been many improvements across the island, ship and on shore and the island and ship are in good shape.



▲ Wind turbine similar to that proposed for Lundy

We have some significant changes ahead with the pending retirement of Rob and Sue Waterfield, who are due to fly off into the sunset after 11 years at the helm of the island. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank them for their dedicated service – it's been a real pleasure having you both on the island and we all wish you a long, happy and well-deserved retirement.

I'd like to also take the opportunity to thank the Lundy team for their ongoing commitment and support to the operation. On Lundy, the Oldenburg, the Shore Office teams, and the Ground Crew at Hartland all help to keep Lundy the special place that it is. A special mention to my wife and dedicated PA Lyndsey Green, who quietly and efficiently keeps the show running behind the scenes.

Finally, I'd like to thank the Lundy Field Society for your ongoing support over the last 12 months and wish you a successful anniversary year in 2026. We look forward to welcoming you to Discover Lundy 2026!