



The service linking the Channel Islands and Normandy carried 133,000 passengers between 1 April and the end of September

Ferry's bumper season

THE ferry service between Jersey and Normandy has reported a bumper season.

A total of 133,000 passengers travelled between the Cotentin peninsula and the Channel Islands from 1 April to the end of September – a 30 per cent increase on last year. 97,000 of those passengers were French nationals.

Blighted for a number of years by

technical problems, the subsidised sea link linking Jersey to Granville and Carteret appears to have finally sailed through the storm. The French local council funding the service, the Conseil Général de la Manche, has even commissioned a new vessel.

This will be specifically designed for the Channel Island and Norman ports it will serve.

By Julien Morel

jmorel@jerseyeveningpost.com

Aurélie Leroy, who manages the Maison de la Normandie in Jersey said: 'The service is getting better and better and the Conseil want to attract even more passengers next year. The next target is to reach 140,000 by the end of the low season, which ends next March. If we reach this it will end a fantastic year for the ferry link.'

We should have the timetable for all of 2007 at the end of this month, which has been designed to cover all the major festivals in Normandy

we will have a third purpose-built boat next year which will enter service in July after a month of tests. It will allow us to offer more services on existing routes.

'This success fits in with a wider effort to improve the cultural, educational, historical and tourist links between the Island and Normandy which people on both sides are keen to develop. And the key to achieve this is transport.'

Economic Development Minister Philip Ozouf travels to Cherbourg today to talk to the president of the La Manche council about developing closer ties, including a possible freight link between the Island and

'I welcome this significant increase in passengers from Normandy,' he said. 'Our relationship with the region is no longer just discussions about friendship. We are now seeing some very positive developments, including the success of the ferry link, and more concrete results will hopefully come out of this meeting.'

Despite the increase in traffic from Normandy, the overall number of people arriving from France has fallen this year because of the demise of Emeraude. Between the beginning of January and the end of September there was a 14.6 per cent fall in passengers arriving at the Harbour from the Continent compared to the same