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November 1-4 2026

"Accelerating Partnerships and Investment for a Prosperous Commonwealth"

chogm26.gov.ag

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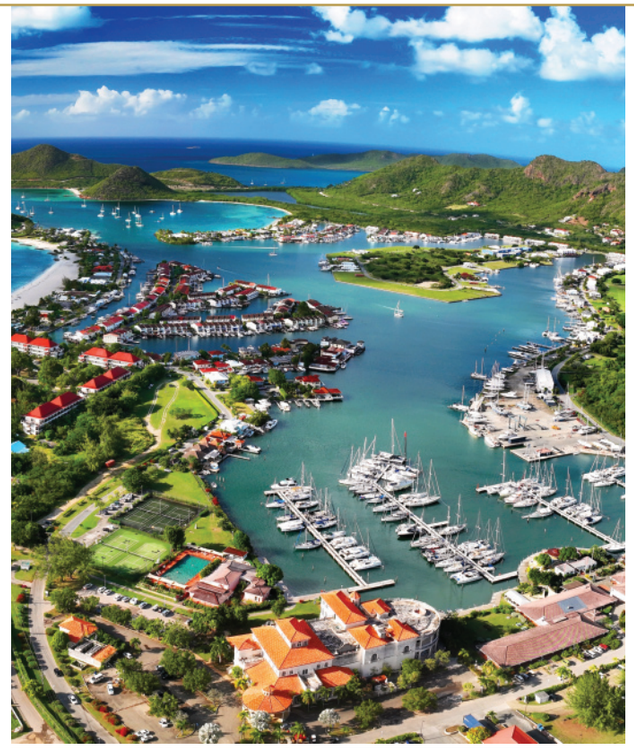





















Message from the Publishers

Dear Readers, Partners, and Changemakers,

Welcome to *The Global Investor – Antigua and Barbuda 2026*, a platform born from our shared commitment to opportunity, progress, and the transformative potential of investment. Working alongside His Excellency Honourable Prime Minister Gaston Browne, we are proud to present a special commemorative edition dedicated to those shaping Antigua and Barbuda's economic future through innovation, resilience, and vision.

Antigua and Barbuda's investment landscape is thriving. With bold leadership, a dynamic tourism sector, and a growing financial services industry, the nation offers opportunities that extend far beyond traditional narratives. At The Global Investor, our mission is to spotlight those who are driving this momentum – entrepreneurs, executives, policymakers, and partners working to realise Antigua and Barbuda's full potential.

At The Global Investor, we bring forward perspectives that matter. Through in-depth features, interviews, and analysis, we aim to provide clarity, confidence, and connection across borders and industries. This publication is more than a collection of stories – it is a platform for action, exchange, and long-term impact.

Your insights, feedback, and participation remain essential. Whether you are a returning partner or joining us for the first time, we thank you for your engagement and trust.

Together, let's invest not only in economies, but in people, in vision, and in Antigua and Barbuda's shared success.

Warm regards,
Silvia Salvetti & Frauke Landi

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PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ANTIGUA BARBUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY

GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Office of the Prime Minister

WELCOME!

The convening of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2026 in Antigua and Barbuda is a major undertaking for such a small twin-island state. Our country has shown that my government and the people of Antigua and Barbuda are capable of hosting scores of Heads of State — including His Majesty King Charles III, titular head of the Commonwealth — and heads of government, many foreign ministers and their delegations, tens of non-government organisations, and hundreds of media personnel, over a four-day period, 1st to 4th November, 2026.

The celebration of my nation's 45th Anniversary of Independence, on 1st November 2026, is intended to coincide with this historic event that marks our people's maturity as a sovereign and independent state. The management of our domestic and international affairs, over these past 45 years, or since 1st November 1981, has been boldly presented to the rest of the world as a success story.

Our nation's economy has multiplied twenty-fold since Independence, and our measurement on the United Nations Human Development Index makes Antigua and Barbuda one of the world's successes on a steady path to become an economic powerhouse. Our growth has been phenomenal and so too our human development.

The hosting of the CHOGM provides testimony of our nation's growing abilities to organise and to manage extremely complex conferences, safely and securely, with results that are welcome by all conference attendees. I wish all attendees to enjoy the beaches, the conservation efforts, the beauteous landscapes and sunsets, the crime-free atmosphere, beautiful hotels and more. On behalf of the people and the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, I welcome all attendees to our shores, thank you for the confidence placed in my country, and I applaud the CHOGM for the honour in choosing Antigua and Barbuda.

The Right Honourable Gaston Browne MP
Prime Minister
1st November 2026

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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA: SMALL STATE, LONG GAME

How one of the Commonwealth's smallest economies is widening its bets beyond tourism as it prepares to host CHOGM 2026.

From November 1 to 4, Antigua and Barbuda will become one of the smallest nations ever to host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). The country will welcome leaders from 56 member states to the 28th CHOGM. The theme of the meeting is "Accelerating Partnerships and Investment for a Prosperous Commonwealth." Between 3,000 and 5,000 delegates, participants, and media personnel are expected to descend on the islands. For a country that has spent the past decade quietly transforming its economy, it is a defining moment, and a statement of confidence.



That confidence is well earned. Antigua and Barbuda has emerged from the disruptions of recent years as one of the most stable and prosperous economies in the Eastern Caribbean. With a GDP per capita of around US$21,000, it ranks among the wealthiest nations in the region and carries the status of a high-income small island developing state (SIDS). The country's recent record demonstrates both resilience and a record for delivery: having hosted the United Nations Small Island Developing States Conference and co-hosted the ICC Men's T20 Cricket World Cup in 2024, it has repeatedly proven its ability to stage major international events and to convert global attention into lasting reputational capital. The government has reported that the economy has grown roughly by around 300 percent over the past 25 years.

A resilient, stabilising economy

The macroeconomic picture is encouraging. According to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) 2026 Article IV consultation, real GDP grew by an estimated 3 percent in 2025, supported by a pick-up in construction even as tourism activity moderated. Employment has recovered to pre-pandemic levels, and inflation fell sharply from over 6 percent in 2024 to around 1.4 percent in 2025. Perhaps most strikingly, public debt as a share of GDP has fallen dramatically, from 101 percent in 2020 to an estimated 68 percent in 2025, aided by an improved fiscal position and a 2025 primary surplus estimated at nearly 5 percent of GDP. This combination of falling debt, low inflation, and a strong primary balance is a notable achievement for any small economy, let alone one navigating a volatile global environment.

The IMF projects continued steady expansion, with growth of around 2.8 percent in 2026, anchored by a pick-up in visitor arrivals, expanded hotel and port capacity, and the boost from hosting CHOGM. The current account deficit, financed predominantly by foreign direct investment, is expected to narrow gradually, and the government has set its sights on meeting the regional debt target of 60 percent of GDP before 2035. Challenges remain, including arrears to some creditors, elevated financing needs, and the structural vulnerabilities common to all small island states, from climate exposure to dependence on imported food and energy. But the trajectory is one of consolidation and growing strength,



Country at a Glance

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA





CAPITAL

St John's

North-west coast of Antigua · seat of government



OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

English and Spanish

Government, law & commerce · Antiguan Creole widely spoken

RELIGION

Protestants	68%
Anglicans	17%
Roman Catholics	8%

CURRENCY

Eastern Caribbean Dollar

XCD · pegged to USD at EC$2.70 · ECCB issued

POPULATION

~100K

2024 estimate · one of the Eastern Caribbean's smallest states

GOVERNMENT

Constitutional Monarchy Parliamentary Democracy

Independent 1 November 1981
Head of State: King Charles III
Governor General: Sir Rodney Williams
Prime Minister: Gaston Browne

GDP (NOMINAL)

~$2.1BN

SOURCES
IMF Article IV Consultation May 2026
World Bank 2024
Hope Research Group Feb 2026
Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB)
Government of Antigua & Barbuda

and the country's leadership has confidently described the economy as "solid, stable, soaring."

Beyond the beach: a diversifying economy

Tourism remains the engine of the economy, accounting for a substantial share of GDP and employment when its direct and indirect effects are counted. The sector is performing strongly: stay-over arrivals rose 6.7 percent in the first quarter of 2026, cruise arrivals are projected to climb nearly 22 percent to almost 895,000 visitors, supported by a new US$30 million cruise terminal, and the country was recently named the Caribbean's Best Meetings and Conference Destination by the World Travel Awards. Yet the defining theme of Antigua and Barbuda's economic strategy is the deliberate effort to diversify beyond tourism and to build resilience for the long term, reducing the vulnerability that comes with dependence on a single industry.

Financial services form an increasingly important pillar. Operating within the framework of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union and overseen by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, the sector spans banking, insurance, and international financial services, and is steadily modernising. The East Caribbean Dollar's long-standing peg to the US dollar at a fixed rate provides a bedrock of monetary stability that investors value. The region's payments infrastructure is modernising too. Having piloted the DCash retail central bank digital currency, one of the world's first, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank has since redirected its efforts toward a regional Fast Payment System and the CARICOM Payments and Settlement System, alongside steady growth in electronic payments. This work supports the broader strategy of reducing reliance on any single sector and strengthening economic resilience.

The blue economy represents one of the country's most significant long-term opportunities. Although its total land area is just 440 square kilometres, Antigua and Barbuda commands an exclusive economic zone of more than 111,500 square kilometres, an ocean territory hundreds of times the size of its land. The government has made the sustainable blue economy a strategic priority, encompassing fisheries, maritime transport, marine renewable energy, aquaculture, and even marine biotechnology, sectors that the Commonwealth estimates form part of a global blue economy worth trillions of dollars. In 2024 the country became host to the Centre of Excellence for Oceanography and the Blue Economy, a collaboration with the University of the West Indies, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and the Association of Commonwealth Universities, underscoring its ambition to lead the region in ocean-based development.





Tourism remains the engine of the economy, accounting for a substantial share of GDP and employment when its direct and indirect effects are counted

Renewable energy and climate resilience complete the picture. As a small island state acutely exposed to climate change, Antigua and Barbuda has positioned sustainability at the heart of its development model, promoting renewable energy adoption, water conservation, and improved waste management through its green initiatives, while pursuing conservation flagships such as the internationally acclaimed Redonda restoration project, which has regenerated an entire island ecosystem. These efforts are central to the country's competitiveness, its tourism brand, and its long-term viability, and they position the nation as a credible voice on climate resilience among small island states.

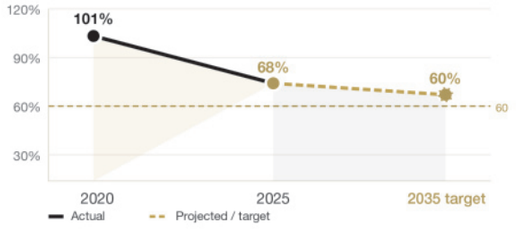
A nation ready for its moment

What emerges is a portrait of a country punching well above its weight. Antigua and Barbuda combines the stability of a high-income economy, the dynamism of a world-class tourism sector, and the ambition of a nation actively building new pillars of growth in finance, the blue economy, renewable energy, and the digital economy. Its institutions are sound, its debt is falling, its tourism numbers are at record highs, and its international profile has never been greater. Hosting CHOGM 2026, alongside a historic programme that will for the first time incorporate a concert and a cricket tournament into the official agenda, is both a culmination of years of careful stewardship and the beginning of a new chapter. For investors and partners across the Commonwealth, the case is straightforward: a stable economy, open for business and ready for its moment.

MACROECONOMIC OUTLOOK

$21K	3%	1.4%	~5%	2.8%
GDP PER CAPITA HIGH-INCOME SIDS STATUS	REAL GDP GROWTH 2025 ESTIMATE	INFLATION 2025 DOWN FROM >6% IN 2024	PRIMARY SURPLUS 2025 ESTIMATE OF GDP	GDP GROWTH PROJECTED 2026
IMF via Hope Research Group, Feb 2026	IMF Article IV, May 2026	IMF Article IV, May 2026	IMF Article IV, May 2026	IMF Article IV, May 2026

FISCAL TRAJECTORY · DEBT REDUCTION



Source: IMF Article IV Consultation, May 2026

ECONOMIC PILLARS · DIVERSIFICATION

Tourism	Leading
Stay-overs +6.7% Q1 2026 · cruise +22% projected	
Financial services	Growing
ECCU framework · EC$ peg digital payments expansion	
Blue economy	Emerging
EEZ 111,500 km² · COBE established 2024	
Renewable energy	In progress
Conservation · Redonda restoration · green tourism	
Digital economy	In progress
DCash CBDC pilot · regional fast payment system	

EEZ

253× OCEAN TERRITORY VS LAND AREA

Although Antigua & Barbuda's land area is just **440 km²**, it commands an **Exclusive Economic Zone** of more than **111,500 km²** — an ocean territory 253 times the size of its land. The government has made the sustainable blue economy a strategic priority, spanning fisheries, maritime transport, marine renewable energy and aquaculture.

SOURCES

CHOGM 2026 (1–4 Nov, St John's); theme; 56 member states; 3,000–5,000 delegates; first to include concert + cricket: Breaking Travel News / Antigua News Room, May 2026; IMF Article IV, May 2026.

GDP per capita US$21,000 (US$21,326, 2024): IMF via Hope Research Group, Feb 2026.

High-income SIDS status; nominal GDP US$2.0–2.2 billion: World Bank (2024); Fintech Times, April 2026.

Population 94,000–100,000: Hope Research Group; Commonwealth.

Real GDP growth 3% (2025 est.), 2.8% projected (2026), c.2.5% medium-term potential: IMF 2026 Article IV Consultation, 7 May 2026.

Inflation: >6% (2024) down to 1.4% (2025): IMF 2026 Article IV.

Public debt: 101% of GDP (2020) to c.68% (2025); 2025 primary surplus c.5% of GDP: IMF 2026 Article IV.

Current account deficit c.11.5% of GDP (2025), narrowing to c.10.75% (2026); FDI-financed: IMF 2026 Article IV.

Regional debt target: 60% of GDP before 2035: IMF 2026 Article IV.

"Solid, stable, soaring" / c.300% GDP growth over 25 years: Government of Antigua and Barbuda via Antigua News.

2024 events: UN SIDS Conference; ICC Men's T20 World Cup co-host: IMF June 2024 statement.

Tourism: Q1 2026 stay-over +6.7% (110,832); cruise +21.9% projected (c.895,000); US$30m cruise terminal: Breaking Travel News; Travel and Tour World, May 2026.

Caribbean's Best Meetings & Conference Destination (World Travel Awards): Breaking Travel News, May 2026.

ECCU / ECCB framework; EC$ peg to US$ at EC$2.70 = US$1.00: ECCB; Hope Research Group.

DCash CBDC; digital payments expansion: Fintech Times, April 2026.

EEZ >111,500 km² vs land area c.440 km²; blue economy sectors; COBE (est. 2024): Commonwealth; ACU, Nov 2025.

Redonda restoration project; green tourism initiatives: Travel and Tour World, May 2026; Commonwealth.

SUSTAINING GROWTH THROUGH FISCAL DISCIPLINE, DIVERSIFICATION AND GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

INTERVIEW WITH THE RIGHT HONOURABLE GASTON A. BROWNE PRIME MINISTER OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, MINISTER FOR FINANCE, CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS, CHAIRMAN OF THE OECS AUTHORITY



The year 2024 was a landmark year for Antigua and Barbuda's economic resilience, with growth estimated at over 4 percent and a notable reduction in public debt. Beyond the resurgence of tourism, what specific fiscal strategies or emerging sectors were the primary drivers of this strong economic performance in 2024, and how do you plan to sustain this momentum into 2026?

We recorded both a significant primary surplus and an overall surplus in 2024, which was historic for a country that had run perennial deficits. I am pleased to say that 2025 has been even stronger. The primary surplus rose to over a quarter of a billion dollars, the overall surplus exceeded 2024 levels, and public debt declined further to 61.4 percent, broadly in line with the international benchmark of 60 percent. This performance is particularly impressive given the vulnerabilities we inherited in 2014, when debt stood at 120 percent of GDP or more once unbooked liabilities were included. Reducing that burden reflects strong economic growth and fiscal discipline. Looking ahead to 2026, we expect growth of at least 5 percent, alongside continued primary and overall surpluses to ensure long-term debt sustainability.

Tourism has been a major driver of growth, but it has not been the only one. We have seen record stayover and cruise arrivals, alongside rising investment. The benefits are filtering through the economy. Taxi operators, for example, are earning significantly more, in some cases six-figure incomes, because arrivals have doubled over the past decade without a corresponding increase in operator numbers. Retail and merchandising have also seen gains, and cruise tourism continues to contribute.

At the same time, we are positioning ourselves as a premier overnight tourism destination. In Barbuda, PLH is delivering a multi-billion-dollar luxury development, including a Tom Fazio golf course that will rank among the world's finest. US-based investors have already committed close to one billion US dollars. Barbuda will remain low-density and exclusive, with no all-inclusive resorts. Each adult Barbudan has been allocated one acre of land to encourage high-quality residential development and preserve lifestyle and community.

We are pursuing opportunities in tourism, yachting and marina development, particularly in the mega-yacht segment, where Antigua and Barbuda is exceptionally well suited

Beyond tourism and construction, we are diversifying into education, health and technology. We are expanding medical and tertiary education, including the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, which currently has 1,500 students and is expected to grow to 5,000 following a US$200 million expansion. We are also developing a regulated stem-cell and medical wellness industry, alongside fintech, blockchain and stable-coin frameworks. These are areas where we are early movers and where we continue to attract investment.

Your government has taken a global leadership role in climate finance and the blue economy, notably hosting the SIDS4 conference in 2024. As you move to make Barbuda the first island in the region powered entirely by renewables, where can private capital play the most effective role in supporting your renewable energy and ocean resource goals?

There are opportunities in ocean wave energy, hydrogen and other emerging technologies. Where we can attract both capital and expertise, we are open to partnerships, including public–private partnerships and power purchase agreements, under which investors can earn reasonable returns over 10 to 15 years while helping to reduce electricity costs for consumers.

These technologies are highly capital intensive and often beyond the reach of the domestic private sector on its own. That is why we encourage foreign investors to partner with local firms, ensuring technology transfer and giving Antiguans an opportunity to share in the profits. Our position is clear: we want our people involved in the commanding heights of the economy wherever possible.

This approach is already being implemented. Antigua Power Company, which is privately owned by Antiguans, is currently partnering with a US firm, EGLE, to supply LNG-generated electricity (liquefied natural gas). That facility will be phased out within the next eight to ten years as we transition to renewables, but the partnership model between foreign capital and local ownership will remain central to our strategy.

The same applies to the blue economy. Antigua and Barbuda is a small state, but a large ocean state, with a vast exclusive economic zone and significant marine assets. While we do not yet know the full scale or commercial vi-







Sun-kissed shores, turquoise waters, and a rhythm shaped by vibrant culture — Antigua & Barbuda feels like pure Caribbean freedom in motion.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE ANTIGUA BARBUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY

ability of those resources, preliminary information suggests the presence of minerals such as lithium. Further exploration will require advanced technology to assess quantities, sustainability and commercial potential.

We also see major opportunities in fisheries. Our economic zone could sustainably support the processing of between 10,000 and 15,000 tonnes of fish and fish products annually, with scope to develop export markets. However, this too requires capital investment and modern technology.

These are largely untapped areas. With the right global partners, we can develop these resources sustainably, generate taxes and royalties for the state, and allow investors to earn fair returns, while ensuring that local participation remains a central pillar of our development model.

Antigua and Barbuda will host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in 2026, which will place your nation at the centre of the global stage, welcoming leaders from 56 diverse economies. How does your administration intend to leverage this major international summit to drive tangible foreign direct investment, and what specific sectors will you be highlighting to visiting delegates and business leaders?

By hosting the meeting, we will naturally deepen our engagement with global political and business leaders. In addition, there is a dedicated business forum as part of the Commonwealth programme, which will give us direct access to investors across a range of sectors. Our intention is to engage them strategically, identify synergies and convert those opportunities into tangible investments.

Tourism will be a priority. Demand for Antigua and Barbuda remains exceptionally strong, but we simply do not have enough rooms, particularly at the luxury end of the market. Attracting additional high-end properties is central to our strategy of positioning the country as a Caribbean lifestyle destination, and the business forum provides an ideal platform to advance that objective.

Technology investment is equally important. We are expanding an ecosystem that already includes stem-cell therapies, blockchain and stable-coin frameworks, always ensuring that we work with reputable partners. Our aim is to be early movers in areas where we can export digital and technological services. For example, medical technologies such as diagnostic imaging can be provided remotely at a fraction of the cost charged in developed markets, while still offering strong incomes locally. Exporting digital services is therefore a key pillar of our broader digitalisation strategy.

That strategy depends on human capital. We are investing heavily in education to ensure that our people, particularly young people, can compete globally. Our objective is that within the next 10 to 15 years, at least 50 percent of citizens will hold a first degree or a recognised technical skill. The infrastructure is already in place through the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus, the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies, the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Continuing Education, and specialist skills centres such as the Harrison Centre.

So I see Antigua emerging firmly as the diplomatic centre of the Caribbean. We are expanding our infrastructure to support that role, including the transformation of an existing facility into a performing arts and conference centre with seating for approximately 950 people. That venue will be completed within the next seven months. Antigua and Barbuda is positioning itself as a leading conference and tourism destination, but more importantly as a hub for regional and international diplomacy.

Since taking office in 2014, your administration has effectively transformed the country into a 'lifestyle superpower,' attracting significant FDI into ultra-luxury developments and maintaining the region's premier yachting calendar. What is your next strategic move to ensure Antigua and Barbuda retains its competitive edge as a key hub for global wealth and luxury tourism?

Human resource development is the cornerstone of our strategy. On a per capita basis, I expect Antigua and Barbuda to become one of the best-qualified countries in the world, measured by the proportion of citizens with degrees or certified skills. We intend to compete on intellect and talent.

Our people have always demonstrated exceptional ability. Sir Vivian Richards, widely regarded as the greatest batsman in cricket history, came from an island of just 100,000 people and dominated a global sport for two decades. That tells you something about the depth of talent we possess. We are now encouraging our citizens to think globally and to monetise their skills across culture, creative industries and sport.

This approach aligns with our broader investment strategy. We are pursuing opportunities in tourism, yachting and marina development, particularly in the mega-yacht segment, where Antigua and Barbuda is exceptionally well suited. We are also focused on climate-related investments in both the green and blue economies, alongside continued expansion of luxury tourism and technology-led sectors.

Ultimately, Antigua and Barbuda will be known for the quality of its people and the skill of its workforce. My Cabinet and I are committed to delivering that transformation. We understand how investors think, how to assess and de-risk projects, and how to create the confidence required for capital to flow. That combination of vision, competence and speed is what is allowing a small state to achieve outsized results.

CHOGM 2026: THE COMMONWEALTH COMES TO ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

A nation of 100,000 prepares to host 56 heads of government, and to turn a diplomatic milestone into a showcase for investment

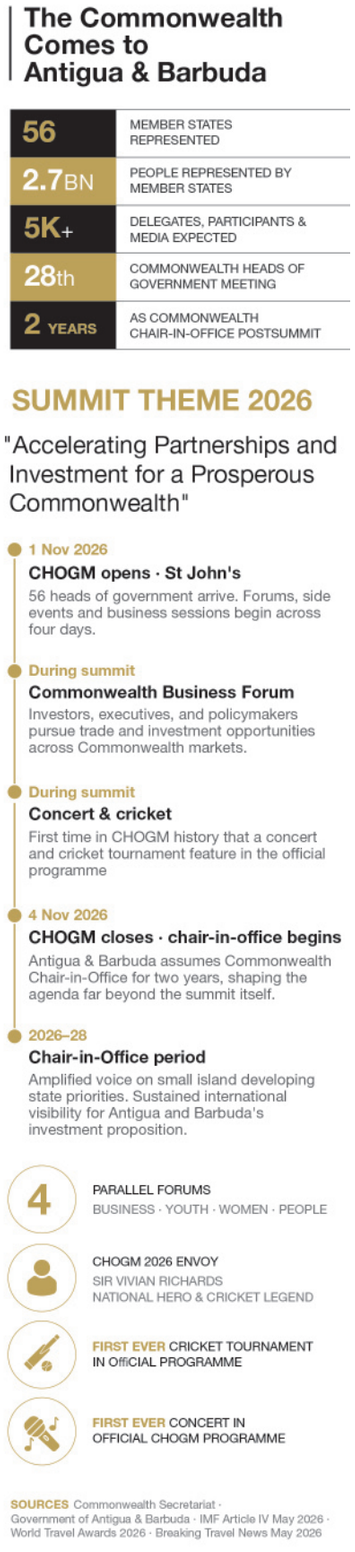


From 1 to 4 November 2026, the small twin-island nation of Antigua and Barbuda will host one of the largest diplomatic gatherings in its history. The 28th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) will bring together leaders, ministers, and delegations from 56 member states, representing some 2.7 billion people, in the capital, St John's. For a country of around 100,000, it is an extraordinary moment, the culmination of a track record of major-event delivery that has positioned Antigua and Barbuda as a confident and capable host.

The summit's theme, "Accelerating Partnerships and Investment for a Prosperous Commonwealth", was unveiled jointly by Prime Minister Gaston Browne and Commonwealth Secretary-General Shirley Botchwey. It is a theme chosen deliberately to align the Commonwealth's modern mission with Antigua and Barbuda's own development priorities, placing investment, enterprise, and partnership between governments and the private sector at the centre of the agenda. As Prime Minister Browne has framed it, the theme echoes the national motto, "Each Endeavouring, All Achieving". For the host nation, CHOGM is not only a diplomatic responsibility but a platform to showcase its investment proposition to a global audience.

More than a summit

CHOGM is far more than a single meeting of heads of government. It is a four-day ecosystem of forums and side events that together draw thousands of participants. The Commonwealth Business Forum brings together investors, executives, and policymakers to pursue trade and investment opportunities. The Commonwealth Youth Forum, held in 2026 under the theme "Investing in Youth Agency", gives young leaders a platform to shape policy; and the Women's Forum and People's Forum convene civil society from across the membership. For Antigua and Barbuda, hosting between 3,000 and 5,000 delegates, participants, and international media represents both a logistical undertaking and a rare opportunity to present the country directly to global decision-makers.



> ***As chair-in-office for the next two years, Antigua and Barbuda will help shape the Commonwealth agenda far beyond the summit itself***

The economic dividend is tangible. An event of this scale fills hotels, restaurants, and venues, showcases the destination to the world's media, and leaves a legacy of upgraded infrastructure and enhanced international profile. The government has invested in the readiness of the capital and its facilities, and the country was recently recognised as the Caribbean's Best Meetings and Conference Destination by the World Travel Awards, underscoring its credentials for high-value business and conference tourism well beyond the summit itself.

The timing carries weight. Antigua and Barbuda takes on the role of Commonwealth Chair-in-Office at a moment when the organisation is sharpening its focus on practical results, channelling shared investment, innovation, and inclusion into tangible outcomes for citizens. Hosting CHOGM places the country at the centre of those conversations for the two years of its chairmanship, amplifying its voice on the issues that small island developing states care about most, and giving it standing and visibility far beyond what its size would ordinarily command.

A distinctly Antiguan welcome

True to its character, Antigua and Barbuda intends to host a CHOGM that is unmistakably its own. For the first time the summit programme will make room for a concert and a cricket tournament, weaving the nation's cultural and sporting identity into the diplomatic agenda. The choice is fitting: cricketing legend Sir Vivian Richards, one of the country's greatest national heroes, has been appointed CHOGM 2026 Envoy, and the same spirit that defined the nation's sporting success is being channelled into its moment of global hosting. The summit will also focus minds on the issues that matter most to small island states, from climate resilience and sustainable development to trade, innovation, and equality.

For investors and partners watching from abroad, CHOGM 2026 offers a clear signal. A nation able to convene the Commonwealth, deliver a complex international summit, and do so with warmth and distinctive style is a nation that can be trusted to deliver. As the Commonwealth's leaders arrive in St John's, Antigua and Barbuda will be making its case not only as a gracious host, but as a stable, capable, and ambitious partner for the decade ahead.

SOURCES

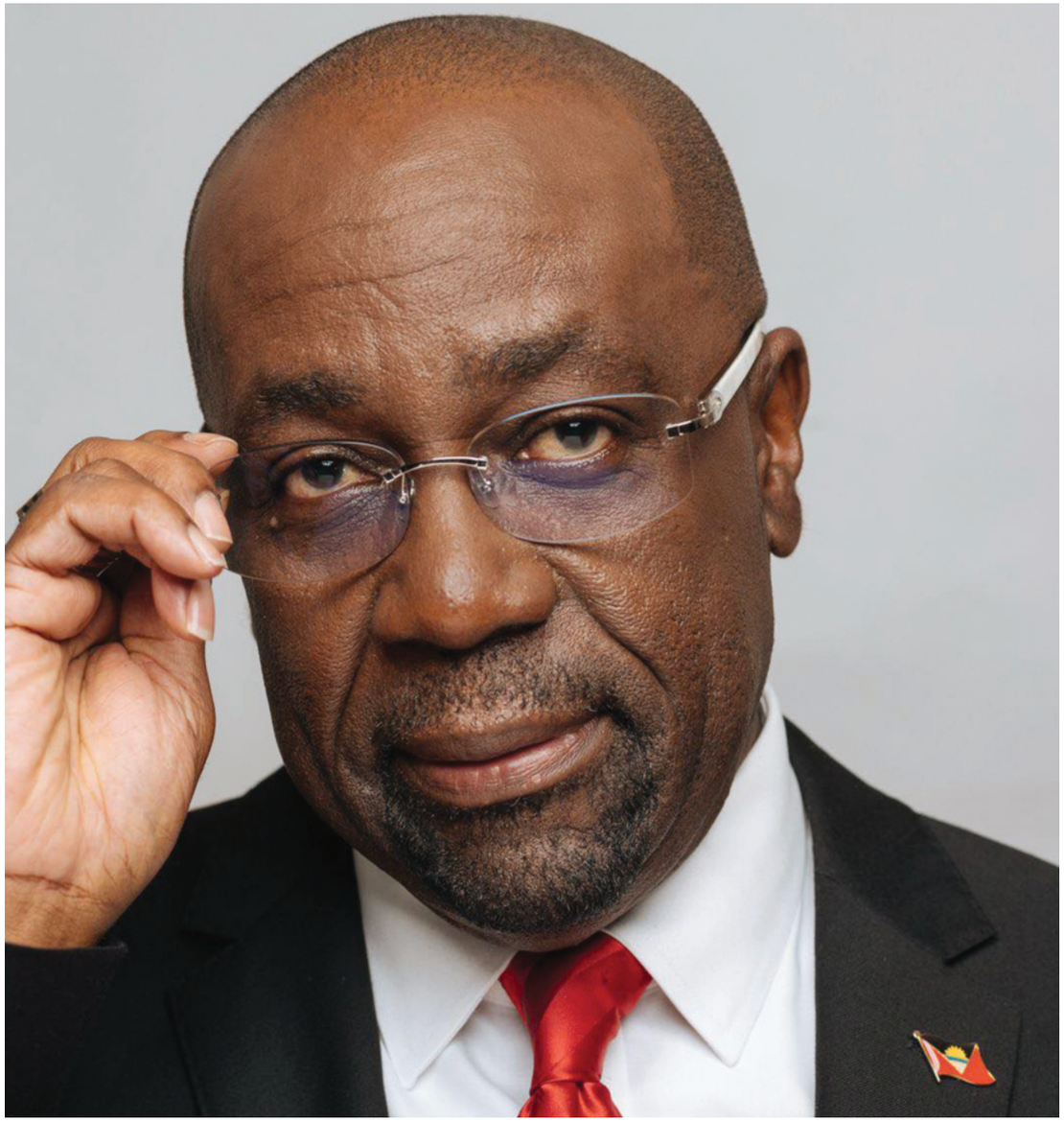
3,000–5,000 delegates/participants/media: Breaking Travel News, May 2026; IMF Article IV, May 2026.

Caribbean's Best Meetings & Conference Destination (World Travel Awards): Breaking Travel News, May 2026.

Chair-in-Office role; Commonwealth focus on climate resilience, trade, innovation, equality, sustainable development: Commonwealth Secretariat, Nov 2025.

DIPLOMACY AS A PLATFORM FOR PARTNERSHIP

INTERVIEW WITH
THE HONOURABLE E.P. CHET GREENE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TRADE AND BARBUDA AFFAIRS



How is Antigua and Barbuda using trade diplomacy to attract investment into key sectors of the economy?
Antigua and Barbuda's positioning, and the way we leverage our international relations, image and reputation for investment, is a continuous work in progress. Our overseas missions are called upon to do this every day.

Hosting CHOGM is an example of that approach: using our international reputation and relationships for the benefit of the country. The theme, "Accelerating Partnerships and Investment for a Prosperous Commonwealth", also speaks to accelerating partnerships and investments for a prosperous Antigua and Barbuda.

With 56 Commonwealth countries expected, the country will be in the eyes of the world. This attention allows us to advance issues that matter to us, including climate change, sustainable development and economic resilience.

How does CHOGM support the country's ambition to become a destination for international meetings and conferences?
After the pandemic, we took a conscious decision to diversify our economic opportunities. Meetings, incentives, conventions and conferences were identified as an area of national interest, and CHOGM fits directly within that ambition.

We have already hosted major gatherings, including the fourth SIDS conference in 2024, the OAS summit in 2025, and meetings involving EU and Caribbean parliamentarians. CHOGM is expected to be the largest meeting ever hosted by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, and we hope it will open further opportunities to strengthen the country's global profile.

Antigua and Barbuda is a small country, but we have shown that we can take global issues and provide leadership. That is part of our value: we are able to convene, to lead and to contribute meaningfully to international dialogue.

Antigua and Barbuda is able to convene, to lead and to contribute meaningfully to international dialogue

Barbuda has become an important part of the national investment story. How is the government ensuring local participation in this growth?
We have deliberately set about creating an economy in Barbuda. Before coming to office in 2014, we said that Barbuda was a diamond in the rough. Today, we are seeing that diamond being polished.

The government's vision is not for mass tourism, but for a high-end, upscale products that attracts persons of affluence and significant wealth. A smaller product can create greater impact when the value is high. We are changing the look and feel of the destination, and Barbuda is becoming an equal contributor to the national economy.

At the same time, Barbudans must be part of this growth. With the airport expansion, for example, we want retail shops, rental car operations and related businesses to be owned and operated by locals. We would have failed if local people did not feel ownership and belonging.

How are Antigua and Barbuda's overseas missions creating strategic opportunities for investors?
We are constantly assessing global developments and positioning Antigua and Barbuda to benefit from major changes in international relations and trade. Our missions in the United States, China and London anchor key relationships with America, a major global trading hub, and the Commonwealth.

Following Brexit, we recognised the need to strengthen our presence in other European capitals, which is why we established a mission in Spain. We also continue to look seriously at Africa. For us, Africa is more than a destination. It is historically a homeland. Today we seek to return with vision, purpose and partnership through trade, investment and innovation.

How will the government balance luxury development in Barbuda with environmental protection?
Our plans for Barbuda are centred on balancing luxury development with ecology, the environment and the preservation of the island's character. The approach is low-density and people-centred.

We will not compromise the Barbuda lagoon, the frigate bird sanctuary or the beauty of Barbuda. No development dollar can justify compromising that natural heritage. Every project is subject to environmental review, and we are determined to preserve Barbuda's pristine environment.

Antigua and Barbuda cannot be on the front line of the fight for climate justice internationally and then fail to be good stewards of the environment at home. We are not just speaking about sustainability; we are living it.

What message would you share with delegates and investors ahead of CHOGM?
Hosting CHOGM is a game changer. We are not welcoming the world simply for the 5,000-plus visitors gathered here today. We are hosting with a clear view to the future.

To those arriving in St John's, welcome. Our hotel rooms are ready, our people are ready, and every citizen and resident stands as an ambassador for this country.

To those already here, thank you for your confidence. You are experiencing a once-in-a-lifetime moment, and you are seeing a country ready to host the world with warmth, confidence and purpose.

CHOGM 2026: DRIVING INVESTMENT, RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

INTERVIEW WITH HER EXCELLENCY KAREN-MAE HILL OBE HIGH COMMISSIONER OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA TO THE UNITED KINGDOM



How will CHOGM 2026 attract investment, and which sectors will benefit most?
Antigua and Barbuda has challenged the Commonwealth Secretariat and member states to position CHOGM as more than a forum for diplomatic dialogue. The structure of CHOGM 2026 reflects a shared ambition to deliver tangible benefits for our people. Specially invited leaders from regional and international financial institutions, alongside a repurposed Heads Executive Session, Business Forum and streamlined side events, demonstrate a deliberate strategy to elevate the Commonwealth's relevance and value.

CHOGM 2026 will bring together the private and public sectors, IFIs, civil society and impact investors to engage on financing development, repurposing frameworks and creating partnerships for investment and trade. These engagements will focus on practical outcomes in the blue, green and orange economies while strengthening economic co-operation across Commonwealth countries.

How will CHOGM 2026 create lasting economic benefits?
Delivering CHOGM requires a whole-of-government and whole-of-country approach. As the smallest country to host CHOGM, the investment is significant, but it should be viewed as part of a long-term capacity-building and infrastructure strategy. Improvements to buildings, roads, IT systems and cybersecurity will remain long after CHOGM concludes and strengthen Antigua and Barbuda's ability to host future international events.

Skills developed in security, protocol, transport management, hospitality and event administration are helping Antigua and Barbuda build a sustainable local talent pool to support our ambition to become a premier destination for conferences and events. Local businesses are also expected to expand their capabilities to support the growing meetings and conferences sector.

An event of this scale will benefit industries ranging from hotels and restaurants to taxi operators, agriculture and small businesses. Antigua and Barbuda may not be a geopolitical giant, but we can provide a trusted space for dialogue that positions small island developing states as credible convenors of global action.

How is the High Commission engaging the private sector?
Each week, the High Commission meets government officials, business leaders and stakeholders to encourage engagement in the Commonwealth Business Forum and related activities surrounding CHOGM 2026. These discussions are designed to strengthen commercial relationships, encourage investment and promote Antigua and Barbuda as a competitive destination for international business.

Eastern Caribbean countries possess characteristics conducive to economic development, including political stability, the rule of law and protection of private property

Organisations such as the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council and the Sustainable Markets Initiative have been important collaborators in creating platforms for direct engagement with investors and industry leaders. Central to these discussions is the message that the Caribbean, and small island developing states such as Antigua and Barbuda, are attractive, stable and competitive destinations for investment.

Eastern Caribbean countries possess characteristics conducive to economic development, including political stability, the rule of law and protection of private property. Greater attention is therefore being placed on scalable opportunities in the blue, green and orange economies. CHOGM 2026 and the Business Forum will help accelerate investment and industry-transition opportunities across Commonwealth countries.

How will Antigua and Barbuda use CHOGM 2026 to advance climate finance and sustainable investment?
Small island developing states (SIDS) continue to face the realities of climate change while global attention is increasingly diverted by conflict and economic pressures. These developments have contributed to reduced commitments to climate financing at a time when vulnerable states require greater support.

The solution must include strengthening infrastructure, diversifying economies through blue and green resources and attracting private-sector partners who recognise investment opportunities in SIDS. Antigua and Barbuda is advancing impact investment in sustainable tourism through models that integrate renewable energy into tourism infrastructure while addressing challenges such as ocean acidification, sargassum seaweed and coral reef degradation.

These models aim to identify scalable opportunities where government and the private sector can align to advance national priorities. Antigua and Barbuda is committed to ensuring CHOGM 2026 delivers meaningful action and practical solutions for climate resilience and sustainable development.

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA'S INVESTMENT PROPOSITION

An open, low-tax, and increasingly diversified economy makes its pitch to international capital ahead of CHOGM 2026

For a nation of around 100,000 people, Antigua and Barbuda has built an investment proposition that consistently attracts capital well beyond its size. As it prepares to host the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in November 2026 under the theme "Accelerating Partnerships and Investment for a Prosperous Commonwealth," the country is making a deliberate pitch to international investors.

The headline numbers underpin the case. According to the International Monetary Fund's 2026 Article IV consultation, the economy grew by an estimated 3 percent in 2025, inflation fell to around 1.4 percent from over 6 percent the previous year, and public debt declined to roughly 68 percent of GDP from 101 percent in 2020, supported by a primary surplus estimated at nearly 5 percent of GDP. GDP per capita stands at approximately US$21,000, among the highest in the Eastern Caribbean, and the IMF projects continued growth of around 2.8 percent in 2026. Foreign direct investment, which finances the bulk of the current account, flows principally into tourism, real estate, and construction, but the government is working actively to broaden that base.



International investors may hold 100 percent of an investment, with no foreign exchange controls and free repatriation of capital, profits, and dividends

An open and transparent regime

Antigua and Barbuda places no limits on foreign ownership: international investors may hold up to 100 percent of an investment, and there are no foreign exchange controls or restrictions on the repatriation of capital, profits, and dividends. The Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA) serves as the single point of contact for investors, facilitating licensing, permits, and regulatory compliance. The ABIA offers incentives that are calibrated to the scale of the investment and the number of jobs created, including tax holidays, duty-free concessions, and exemptions on capital items.

The government has identified priority sectors where it actively encourages investment, particularly those that create jobs and earn foreign exchange. They span tourism and hospitality, financial services, ICT and business process outsourcing, agro-processing, manufacturing, renewable energy, yachting, and the creative industries. To support more specialised activity, the country has created Special Economic Zones offering significant tax and duty concessions. A manufacturer establishing an export operation in a Special Economic Zone, for instance, can combine waivers on corporate income tax, VAT, and import and export duties with ABIA facilitation and duty-free access to capital equipment, materially lowering the cost of entry.

A competitive tax environment

The tax structure is one of the most distinctive features of the investment case. Antigua and Barbuda abolished personal income tax in 2016, a reform the government reaffirmed as a defining policy in its 2026 Budget Statement, and it levies no tax on capital gains, inheritance, or wealth. The standard corporate income tax rate is 25 percent, with a reduced rate of 10 percent applying to companies in sectors such as oil, telecommunications, and insurance, and a 22.5 percent rate for banks. Non-residents are taxed on Antigua-sourced income, with rental income from local property subject to a 12.5 percent withholding tax. Qualifying Special Economic Zone activities can be exempted from corporate and personal income tax, VAT, and capital gains.

The Citizenship by Investment Programme

Among the country's established investment routes is its Citizenship by Investment Programme, created under the Citizenship by Investment Act 2013 and administered by the Citizenship by Investment Unit (CIU), the government authority responsible for processing applications and conducting due diligence. The programme offers several routes: a contribution from US$230,000 to the National Development Fund, approved real estate investment from US$300,000 held for at least five years, a University of the West Indies Fund route aimed at larger families, and eligible business investment. It has been refined over time to keep pace with evolving international standards, with enhanced due diligence measures introduced in recent years, including mandatory interviews for applicants aged 16 and over. The programme finances infrastructure and social spending, and functions as one channel among several rather than as the economy itself.

A platform for growth

The investment case rests on stability, openness, and access. Antigua and Barbuda operates within the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union, whose dollar has been pegged to the US dollar at a fixed rate of EC$2.70 to US$1.00 since 1976, removing exchange-rate risk for dollar-based investors. It is a member of CARICOM and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, giving investors a gateway to a wider regional market, and its legal system is rooted in English common law, offering a familiar framework for contracts and the resolution of disputes. As Commonwealth leaders and global investors arrive for CHOGM 2026, Antigua and Barbuda is presenting itself as a stable, well-regulated partner for long-term growth, not simply a destination for capital.

INVESTMENT PROPOSITION

CORPORATE TAX STRUCTURE

25%	STANDARD CORPORATE INCOME TAX RATE
10%	REDUCED RATE OIL · TELECOMS · INSURANCE
22.5%	BANKING SECTOR RATE
12.5%	WITHHOLDING TAX NON-RESIDENT RENTAL INCOME
SEZ	CORPORATE TAX · VAT · IMPORT & EXPORT DUTY WAIVERS AVAILABLE

100%

International investors may hold **100 percent of an investment** in Antigua and Barbuda, with **no foreign exchange controls** and **free repatriation** of capital, profits, and dividends. The **Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA)** acts as single point of contact — licensing, permits, regulatory compliance, incentive calibration.

MACROECONOMIC ANCHOR · 2025–26

Debt reduction (2020 → 2025)
Target: 60% of GDP before 2035 · IMF Article IV May 2026 — 101% → 68% of GDP

Primary surplus 2025
Fiscal discipline underpinning investment confidence — ~5% of GDP

Inflation 2025
Down from >6% in 2024 · IMF Article IV May 2026 — 1.4%

GDP growth 2026 projected
CHOGM boost + hotel & port expansion · IMF — 2.8%

PRIORITY INVESTMENT SECTORS

- TOURISM & HOSPITALITY
- FINANCIAL SERVICES
- RENEWABLE ENERGY

SOURCES IMF Article IV Consultation May 2026 · Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority (ABIA) · Budget Statement 2026 · Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) · World Bank 2024

SOURCES

GDP growth 3% (2025 est.), 2.8% projected (2026); inflation 1.4% (2025) from >6% (2024); public debt 101% (2020) to 68% (2025); primary surplus 5% of GDP: IMF 2026 Article IV Consultation, 7 May 2026.

GDP per capita c.US$21,000: IMF via Hope Research Group, Feb 2026.

FDI finances bulk of current account; flows to tourism, real estate, construction: IMF 2026 Article IV; US State Dept 2025 Investment Climate Statement.

100% foreign ownership permitted; no FX controls; free repatriation of capital/profits/dividends: US State Dept 2025 Investment Climate Statement; North Immigration, Nov 2025.

ABIA single-window role; incentives tied to investment scale & jobs (tax holidays, duty-free concessions, capital-item exemptions): Global Citizen Solutions, April 2026; US State Dept 2025 Investment Climate Statement.

Priority sectors: US State Dept 2025 Investment Climate Statement; BizLatin Hub, Sept 2025.

Special Economic Zones (tax & duty concessions; waivers on income tax, VAT, capital gains, import/export duties): BizLatin Hub, Sept 2025; UNCTAD Investment Policy Monitor.

Personal income tax abolished 2016 (reaffirmed 2026 Budget Statement); no capital gains/inheritance/wealth tax: Passportivity, April 2026; Mirabello Consultancy, March 2026.

Corporate tax 25% standard; 10% for oil/telecoms/insurance; 22.5% for banks: Immigrant Invest 2026 Tax Guide; Golden Harbors, Feb 2025; North Immigration, Nov 2025.

Non-resident rental income withholding tax 12.5%: Passportivity, April 2026.

CIP: Citizenship by Investment Act 2013; CIU administration; NDF from US$230,000; real estate from US$300,000 (5-year hold); UWI Fund route; enhanced due diligence / mandatory interviews (16+): Antigua & Barbuda CIU; Global Residence Index, Jan 2026; Get Golden Visa, May 2026; Passportivity, April 2026.

ECCU / ECCB; EC$2.70 = US$1.00 peg since 1976; CARICOM & OECS membership; English common law: ECCB; Hope Research Group, Feb 2026.

A STRATEGIC GATEWAY FOR SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT

INTERVIEW WITH GARFIELD JOSEPH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA INVESTMENT AUTHORITY (ABIA)

What perspective do you bring to the Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority?
My background spans decades of international business experience, including work with Fortune 500 companies in the United States and across global markets. I spent more than a decade in international business, which gave me a strong understanding of cultural nuances, investor expectations and what it takes to take a business globally. That perspective is valuable because I can relate to investors in a practical way and understand what they require when considering a new market.



How will CHOGM 2026 strengthen Antigua and Barbuda's investment profile?
We are highly privileged to host such an important event as a small developing country. Antigua and Barbuda has already demonstrated its capacity to host major international events, and CHOGM gives us another opportunity to showcase the country to partners from across the Commonwealth and beyond. It allows us to present the advantages of investing, living and doing business here. Antigua and Barbuda is unique in many ways. It is easy to do business here because we do not have the level of bureaucracy that often exists in larger countries, and we offer a dynamic investment landscape across key sectors.

Which sectors are you most eager to showcase to potential investors?
Tourism and hospitality will continue to be a key driver of our economic growth. However, we are not simply looking for scale. We are focused on high-end resorts, branded hospitality and differentiated guest experiences. Alongside tourism, there are major opportunities in lifestyle-driven developments, including private homes linked to the Citizenship by Investment Programme and the luxury real estate market.

Antigua and Barbuda also has a strong value proposition in maritime services, yachting and the blue economy. We are surrounded by 365 beaches and have significant maritime space, as well as a strong sailing culture. International financial and business services are another important area, with opportunities for international business corporations to be domiciled here. We are also seeing growth in construction, infrastructure, telecommunications, digital systems and water desalination.

What distinguishes Antigua and Barbuda from other investment destinations?
It is genuinely easy to do business in Antigua and Barbuda. Because we are a relatively small country and have been attracting investment for a long time, we have perfected the art of making the process easier. ABIA, under the Ministry of Tourism and Investment, is aligned with other government



entities to create a one-stop-shop approach. Our processes are streamlined, services are available online, and we work as a connected unit to support investors entering the market.

We also offer an attractive fiscal environment. Antigua and Barbuda has no personal income tax and offers competitive corporate and investment-related tax structures. Qualifying projects may benefit from incentives, including exemptions on customs duties for certain imports. Investors also benefit from a secure operating environment, political stability, respect for the rule of law and strong quality of life, with direct air connections to Europe, Miami and Atlanta.

How does the ABIA help investors navigate the system?
One of Antigua and Barbuda's advantages is that we do not have a cumbersome bureaucracy. Ease of access is central, and our one-stop-shop approach works well because there is strong cohesion between different parts of government. As the primary interface for international investment, the authority has decades of experience working with investors. We can anticipate their needs, guide them through the process and help them identify opportunities before they arrive.

> ***We want to be a trusted partner for global investors, a Caribbean hub for innovation and capital***

Our services are available online, so investors can review opportunities, understand the application process and access guidance. We are also available to provide direct support and help investors understand how to establish businesses, acquire real estate or inject capital into existing opportunities.

How do you balance investment growth with environmental protection?
As a small island developing state, Antigua and Barbuda has taken a global leadership role in promoting sustainability. We do not only speak about sustainable development; we practise it in principle. We invite investors who share these values and who want to do good for the economy and for people while also protecting the environment. We have legislation in place to support compliance with these ideals. For us, what is good for business, good for the environment and good for people is good for the country and the world.

Looking beyond CHOGM, what message would you share with investors?
We have a bold and inclusive vision to position Antigua and Barbuda as a leading Caribbean destination for high-value, sustainable and internationally competitive investment, offering an exceptional business environment, premium lifestyle and long-term economic stability. We want to be a trusted partner for global investors, a Caribbean hub for innovation and capital, and a model for sustainable, inclusive growth. Antigua and Barbuda is a great place to work, live and do business. It is safe, friendly and easy to navigate, with a strong quality of life and a serious commitment to doing good for the economy, society and the environment.

CITIZENSHIP BY INVESTMENT UNIT
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

SECURING INVESTMENT, MOBILITY AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Citizenship by Investment Unit (CIU) is the statutory body responsible for administering Antigua and Barbuda's Citizenship by Investment Programme, one of the country's most important platforms for attracting international capital and supporting national development. Established to manage the programme with integrity, efficiency and transparency, the CIU connects qualified global investors with opportunities that contribute directly to the country's economic priorities.

The programme has become a meaningful economic driver for Antigua and Barbuda. Revenues support infrastructure, social programmes and wider development initiatives, while helping to diversify the fiscal base of a small island state with global ambitions. For the CIU, the objective is not simply to expand application numbers, but to ensure that investor interest is aligned with national value creation, responsible growth and the country's reputation as a credible investment jurisdiction.

Citizenship by investment is not only a mobility product; it is a partnership with Antigua and Barbuda's long-term development

That reputation has become increasingly important as citizenship by investment programmes face closer scrutiny from international partners and regulators. Antigua and Barbuda's alignment with the regional Memorandum of Agreement across participating OECS countries, including the move to a minimum investment threshold of US$230,000, reflects a collective commitment to higher standards, stronger cooperation and greater regulatory confidence. Harmonisation strengthens the Caribbean's voice, while allowing Antigua and Barbuda to compete on the quality of its proposition.

At the new price point, the country's appeal remains clear. Investors gain access to a stable, well-regarded jurisdiction with strong Commonwealth ties, an attractive lifestyle, strategic location, improving infrastructure and a programme designed around recognised investment routes. These include contribution to the National Development Fund, approved real estate investment, business investment and the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus Fund. Together, these options allow investors to support national priorities while selecting the route that best matches their family, mobility and wealth-planning objectives.



The real estate route continues to hold particular appeal for investors seeking a tangible connection to Antigua and Barbuda's luxury tourism and lifestyle economy. Approved developments give applicants the opportunity to participate in a destination increasingly positioned around high-value tourism, wellness, branded hospitality and residential investment. At the same time, the UWI Five Islands Campus Fund reflects a broader development vision, linking citizenship by investment to education, skills and human capital.

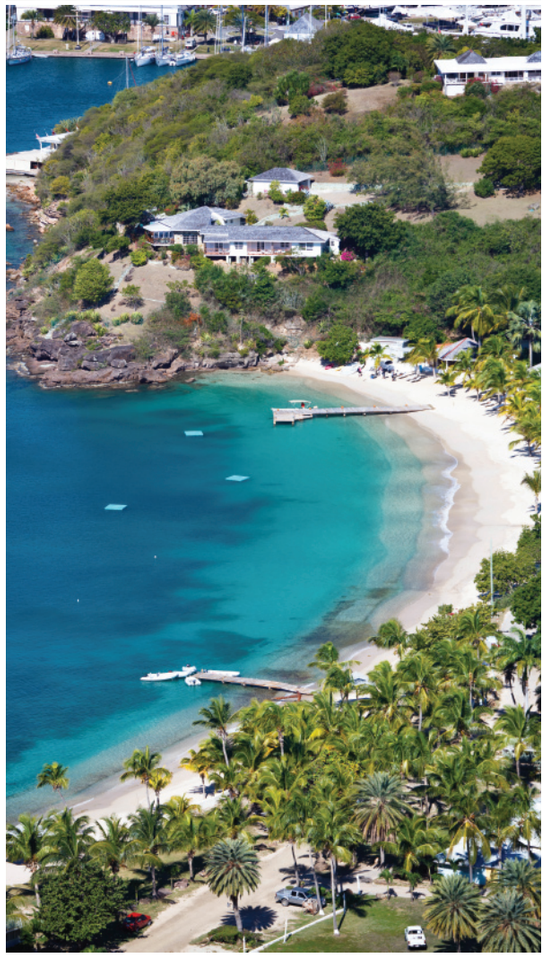
Investor preferences are also evolving. Applicants are no longer looking only for mobility; they are looking for security, optionality, lifestyle, education pathways and long-term jurisdictional stability. The CIU is responding by strengthening outreach, improving service standards and ensuring that Antigua and Barbuda is presented not merely as a passport option, but as a country with a clear development story. Emerging markets remain important, but growth must be selective and responsible. The programme's future depends on attracting high-quality applicants whose investment supports the country and whose profile protects its international standing.

Due diligence remains central to that approach. In 2024, the CIU formalised virtual interviews for all applicants aged 16 and over, reinforcing the integrity of the vetting process and adding a direct human layer to the assessment of applicants. This digital transformation supports greater security, consistency and efficiency, while allowing the Unit to manage applications in line with international expectations. Further technological improvements are expected to focus on streamlining the applicant journey, strengthening internal processing and enhancing the transparency and security of the programme.

For Antigua and Barbuda, citizenship by investment is ultimately about partnership. The country offers more than mobility. It offers a relationship with a nation that is using international investment to strengthen infrastructure, education, tourism, resilience and opportunity for its people. For investors, the promise is future security, meaningful mobility and a lifestyle rooted in one of the Caribbean's most distinctive destinations.

As global families reassess where they want to live, invest, educate their children and protect their future, Antigua and Barbuda's proposition is increasingly relevant. The CIU's role is to ensure that this promise is delivered with discipline, credibility and a long-term view of national development.





FINANCE: A STABLE PLATFORM FOR CARIBBEAN CAPITAL

Fiscal discipline, banking resilience and investment reform are strengthening Antigua and Barbuda's role as a modern financial hub



Antigua and Barbuda's financial story is changing. For many years, the country's investment appeal was closely associated with tourism, real estate and citizenship by investment. Today, its financial proposition is increasingly linked to stability, reform and the ability to support a more diversified economy. As the country hosts CHOGM 2026, finance is becoming central to how Antigua and Barbuda presents itself to international investors.

The macroeconomic picture provides the foundation. According to the IMF's 2026 Article IV consultation, real GDP grew by an estimated 3 percent in 2025, while inflation fell to around 1.4 percent from more than 6 percent in 2024. Public debt declined from 101 percent of GDP in 2020 to an estimated 68 percent in 2025, supported by an improved fiscal position and a primary surplus estimated at nearly 5 percent of GDP. For investors, these indicators speak to fiscal credibility, even as arrears and elevated financing needs remain challenges.[1]

Antigua and Barbuda operates within the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union, supported by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank and the long-standing peg of the Eastern Caribbean dollar to the US dollar. The EC dollar has been fixed at EC$2.70 to US$1.00 since 1976, providing monetary stability in a small, open economy. The IMF describes the overall financial system as stable and liquid, with bank non-performing loan ratios below the 5 percent prudential threshold by the end of 2024.[2]

The next challenge is putting more capital to work domestically. Banks remain highly liquid, yet private-sector credit has declined substantially as a share of GDP since the global financial crisis. The IMF estimates bank assets at around 110 percent of GDP, while bank credit to the private sector stood at roughly 38 percent of GDP in 2022–24. Businesses continue to identify access to finance as a constraint, while banks cite a limited pipeline of bankable projects. Stronger project preparation, credit information and risk-sharing can help convert liquidity into productive lending.[3]

Regional reforms are moving in that direction. The ECCU credit bureau has been launched in Antigua and Barbuda for banks and two credit unions, with wider coverage planned. Better borrower information can strengthen

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lending decisions and broaden access to credit. The ECCB is also advancing Basel II/III standards and work towards a regional deposit insurance scheme. These measures strengthen the institutional architecture behind the market.[4]

The investment environment is structured to attract international capital

Antigua and Barbuda's financial hub ambitions therefore depend on more than regulation. They require banks, legal and accounting firms, technology providers, insurers and public institutions able to structure and service increasingly sophisticated transactions. They also create opportunities in fintech, cybersecurity, compliance, digital payments, credit analytics and project finance. Finance can create higher-value skilled employment while supporting tourism, construction, real estate, aviation, logistics, renewable energy and the blue economy.

The investment environment is structured to attract international capital. The US Department of State has noted that there are no limits on foreign control and ownership of investment in Antigua and Barbuda, and that registered companies may repatriate capital, royalties, dividends and profits. The Antigua and Barbuda Investment Authority identifies financial services alongside ICT, renewable energy, yachting, health and wellness and the blue economy as priority growth sectors.[5]

CHOGM 2026 gives this proposition a practical stage. The Commonwealth Business Forum is bringing governments, investors, entrepreneurs and development partners together, while the CBF Power Pitch is inviting investment-ready local ventures to present directly to potential financiers. Projects are being assessed on commercial viability, financial sustainability, scalability, market opportunity and development impact. Attracting capital is one side of the equation; building credible projects capable of absorbing it is the other.[6]

For Antigua and Barbuda, the opportunity is to turn financial stability into deeper intermediation and investment. A well-regulated banking system and stronger credit infrastructure can help finance the next phase of growth. In a small economy, the financial sector's value is ultimately measured by how effectively it connects capital with productive opportunities and helps credible businesses and new industries move from ambition to execution.

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2024
ECCU credit bureau launched
Launched in Antigua & Barbuda for banks and two credit unions · wider coverage planned · better borrower information strengthens lending decisions and broadens access to credit

In progress
Basel II/III implementation
ECCB advancing regional capital adequacy and risk management standards · strengthening the institutional framework across the ECCU

In progress
Regional deposit insurance
ECCB working towards a regional scheme · deepening depositor protection · completing the institutional architecture of the financial system

Nov 2026
CHOGM Business Forum · Power Pitch
Investment-ready local ventures presenting directly to international financiers

FINANCE SECTOR OPPORTUNITIES

Fintech & Digital Payments	DCash CBDC · fast payment systems · ECCU digital infrastructure	Growing
Project Finance	Hotel pipeline · port · renewable energy · blue economy projects	Emerging
Compliance & Cybersecurity	Regulatory alignment · AML/CFT · data protection frameworks	Expanding
Credit analytics	Credit bureau expansion · risk modelling · SME lending pipeline	Early stage

SOURCES
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FISCAL DISCIPLINE FOR RESILIENT GROWTH

INTERVIEW WITH
RASONA DAVIS-CRUMP
FINANCIAL SECRETARY

As Financial Secretary, you sit at the centre of Antigua and Barbuda's fiscal strategy. How would you characterise the country's economic position today, and what are the priorities for maintaining stability and growth?
Antigua and Barbuda is in a position of meaningful recovery, steady expansion and renewed confidence. The economy has continued to build on the rebound from the pandemic, supported by construction, the continued strengthening of tourism and improving confidence across the wider economy.

At the same time, we remain clear-eyed about the environment in which we operate. As a small island developing state, our size, openness and location mean we will always face vulnerabilities, including climate events, external price shocks and disruptions to tourism, trade, revenues and livelihoods.

That is why the Ministry of Finance approaches fiscal management with discipline and purpose: to support services, infrastructure, social programmes and private-sector opportunities in a sustainable way.

Inflation has moderated, employment has largely recovered and public debt has declined significantly from the pandemic peak. We continue to manage legacy arrears, financing needs and the rebuilding of fiscal buffers. Our priorities are fiscal discipline, debt sustainability, growth-enhancing expenditure, infrastructure, productivity and resilience.



Investor confidence rests heavily on sound public financial management. What reforms are you focused on to strengthen transparency, fiscal discipline and the country's attractiveness to investors?
Sound public financial management is central to investor confidence. Investors want to see a serious, credible and disciplined country, with transparent resource management, predictable fiscal policy and stronger public finance institutions.

We have already seen tangible improvements. The country moved from persistent deficits during a difficult period to improved fiscal balances and strong primary surpluses. This reflects stronger revenue performance, more careful expenditure management and better controls.

Our reform priorities are centred on modernising revenue administration, strengthening fiscal institutions and improving expenditure management. That means greater automation, better use of technology, stronger revenue assurance and easier compliance for taxpayers,.

We are also improving oversight of statutory corporations and public sector entities, strengthening legal and policy frameworks, and continuing the work of the Fiscal Resilience Oversight Committee. These reforms are essential to the credibility investors look for.

Small island economies face particular challenges around debt sustainability and external shocks. How is the ministry approaching debt management and resilience?
Debt management for a country like Antigua and Barbuda has to be practical and forward-looking. We have reduced public debt from over 100 percent of GDP six years ago to less than 65 percent in 2025, placing us well to attain the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union target of 60 percent before the agreed date of 2035.

However, debt sustainability is about more than the ratio. It is also about the cost of debt, maturity profile, rollover risk, arrears, financing needs and the capacity to respond when shocks occur. We remain exposed to hurricanes, climate events, commodity price shocks, tourism disruptions and international financial conditions over which we have little control.

The ministry is therefore building resilience into both the debt portfolio and the wider public financial management system. We are advancing a liability management operation to refinance high-cost domestic debt, extend maturities, lower gross financing needs, address domestic arrears and support climate and sustainable development projects.

We are also working to resolve external arrears through engagement with creditors. The objective is to strengthen the country's credit standing and secure access to international financial markets, supporting investment, confidence and financing on better terms.

How do partnerships with international financial institutions and regional bodies support Antigua and Barbuda's development agenda?
Partnerships are critical. As a small island developing state (SIDS), we cannot achieve our growth and resilience objectives in isolation. We need strong domestic institutions, but also a global and regional environment that recognises the special vulnerabilities of SIDS and provides access to financing and technical support on terms that reflect those realities.

A major challenge is that the global financial system does not always account adequately for vulnerability. A country may be classified as middle- or high-income while still being highly exposed to climate shocks, external volatility and the high cost of rebuilding after disasters. SIDS need more predictable resources for climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience building.

Our relationships with the IMF, Caribbean Development Bank, Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, CARICOM, the World Bank, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the European Union and other partners support work in tax policy, debt management, public financial management, statistics, financial sector resilience and institutional capacity.

There is also an opportunity to deepen blended finance and private capital mobilisation. Public resources alone will not meet the infrastructure, climate and development needs of SIDS. We need government, development finance institutions, regional bodies and private investors around bankable projects that deliver real results.

As Antigua and Barbuda welcomes Commonwealth leaders and investors for CHOGM 2026, what message would you share about the country's economic fundamentals and investment proposition?
CHOGM 2026 is an extraordinary opportunity. Its theme, "Accelerating Partnerships and Investment for a Prosperous Commonwealth", speaks directly to the moment. Prosperity will require stronger partnerships, greater investment and a shared commitment to practical outcomes.

For Antigua and Barbuda, hosting CHOGM is both a diplomatic milestone and an economic opportunity. It gives us a platform to present the country's progress, ambition and investment proposition to leaders and investors from across the Commonwealth and beyond.

Antigua and Barbuda is stable, open, reform-oriented and ready for serious investment

The message is that Antigua and Barbuda is stable, open, reform-oriented and ready for serious investment. We have improving fiscal balances, a declining debt trajectory, a stable currency framework through the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union, and a clear commitment to governance, transparency and public financial management.

Tourism remains a dynamic pillar of the economy, but there are also opportunities in infrastructure, renewable energy, climate resilience, logistics, digital transformation, housing, financial services, agriculture and the blue economy.

The Ministry of Finance is supporting the Commonwealth Business Forum as a platform for serious engagement between government, investors and the private sector. We want impactful projects to emerge: projects that create jobs, build resilience, expand opportunity and contribute to long-term development.

In a small economy, investment must be purposeful. We want partnerships that align with national development priorities, strengthen local capacity and bring benefits that are felt by the people of Antigua and Barbuda.

FINANCING A MODERN CARIBBEAN FINANCIAL HUB

INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL SPENCER CEO OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN AMALGAMATED BANK LIMITED (ECAB)



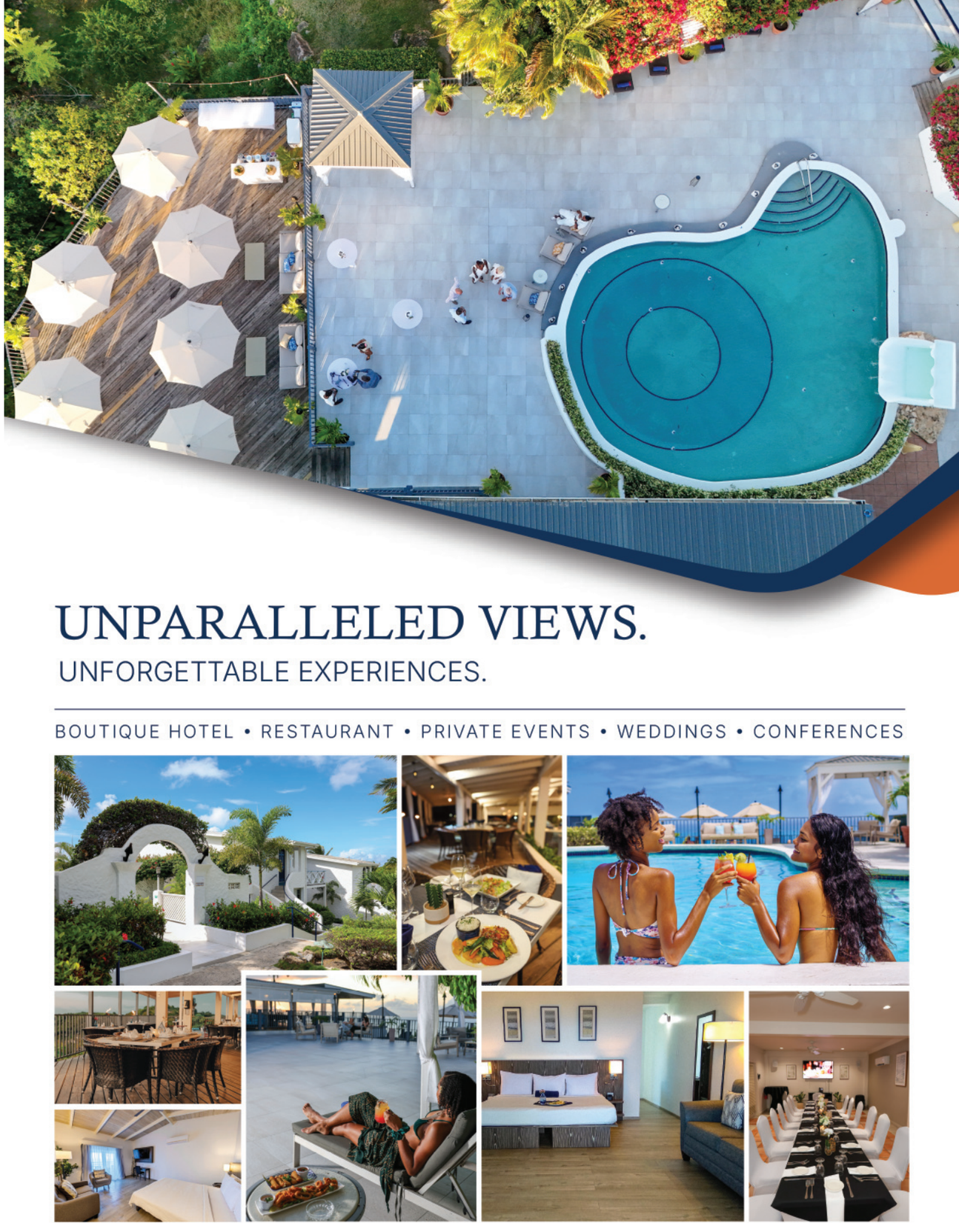
How can ECAB support Antigua and Barbuda's financial hub ambitions?
The government's vision of positioning Antigua and Barbuda as a modern financial centre is commendable. This is an important step in diversifying beyond tourism and creating skilled employment in banking, legal, accounting and advisory services. A credible hub depends on regulation, AML/CFT standards, transparency, cybersecurity and technology. As one of the country's largest indigenous banks, ECAB can provide stability, digital infrastructure and investor confidence.

How has ECAB's growth positioned the bank to support the economy?
ECAB was formed from the Bank of Antigua and later acquired the assets of ABI Bank and Scotiabank's operations in Antigua and Barbuda. Those acquisitions strengthened our capital base, customer reach and service capabilities. Because credit and strategic decisions are made here, we understand the local market while operating to international standards. Our stronger balance sheet allows us to support businesses, homeowners and larger projects.

How is digital transformation reshaping ECAB's products and services?
Digital transformation is central to our strategy. We offer online and mobile banking, electronic funds transfers, wire transfers, smart ATMs, card services and merchant solutions. We are also expanding payment instruments, including wireless terminals, e-commerce and tap-to-pay solutions. The objective is to make banking easier and safer, while protecting trust through cybersecurity and fraud prevention.

How do you balance local banking with international standards?
We do not see indigenous banking and international standards as competing priorities. They are complementary. ECAB is committed to governance, transparency, prudent risk management and strict compliance with AML/CFT, KYC and FATF-related requirements. These standards protect the system, preserve correspondent banking relationships and strengthen investor confidence. Local ownership gives us a deeper understanding of regional needs, while best practice ensures credibility and resilience.

What is your message to international investors?
Our vision is for ECAB to be a leading regional financial institution supporting sustainable growth and innovation. We want to be a financial anchor at the heart of Antigua and Barbuda's evolution into a credible regional hub. The country offers political stability, regulatory credibility, infrastructure and a progressive business environment. ECAB brings local knowledge, regional relevance, proven experience and international standards. We stand ready to be a trusted partner for investors and businesses seeking a credible platform for growth.





TOURISM: A CARIBBEAN POWERHOUSE

Record arrivals, a surging cruise sector, and a luxury pipeline anchor a high-value strategy in the most tourism-dependent economy in the Caribbean

Tourism is not one sector of the Antiguan and Barbudan economy among several. It is the economy. Estimates of its total contribution vary by methodology, from roughly 60 percent of GDP in some assessments to well above 80 percent in others, but every serious measure points the same way: no state in the Caribbean has built more of its prosperity on visitors. With 365 beaches, one for every day of the year, a storied sailing heritage, and two distinct islands offering everything from luxury resorts to the near-untouched pink sands of Barbuda, the twin-island nation has long ranked among the region's most desirable destinations. What is striking now is the pace of growth, and the deliberate strategy behind it.

The first quarter of 2026 set the tone. Antigua and Barbuda recorded 110,832 stay-over arrivals between January and March, a 6.7 percent increase on the 103,843 registered in the same period of 2025, with momentum building through the quarter: arrivals rose 5 percent in January, 6 percent in February, and 8 percent in March. The United States remained the single largest source market at 46 percent of arrivals, followed by Europe at 34 percent and Canada at 12 percent, with the United Kingdom the standout performer, up 14 percent year on year. This built on an exceptional 2025, itself the product of expanded airlift, coordinated destination marketing, and sustained investment in airport infrastructure. Growth of this shape, led by the highest-spending segment, is the kind that compounds.

A cruise sector breaking records

Cruise arrivals are projected to reach 894,469 in 2026, a 21.9 percent increase on 2025 and comfortably above the pre-pandemic peak of 733,526 recorded in 2019. Underpinning that growth is a new US$30 million cruise terminal, opened on 24 January 2026 as part of the broader Upland Development Project, designed to modernise the arrival experience and expand berthing capacity, with full completion expected by July 2026. Berth capacity, not demand, has been the binding constraint on cruise growth across the Eastern Caribbean, and the terminal is a direct answer to it. The two visitor streams do different work. Cruise passengers deliver volume, footfall, and shoreside spend; the overnight guest, who spends many times more per head, underwrites hotel returns. Antigua and Barbuda is investing in both, and courting the second.

Stay-over arrivals rose 6.7 percent in the first quarter of 2026, while cruise passengers are projected to climb 21.9 percent to nearly 895,000

Connectivity continues to widen, and it is widening in directions that matter. The destination added a series of new air routes through 2026, including Sunrise Airways service to the Dominican Republic from 1 May, LIAT flights to Guadeloupe from 8 May, and an Antigua to Lagos service via Barbados operated by Air Peace from 25 May, opening a direct link to West Africa. The logic is commercial rather than symbolic. With close to half of stay-over arrivals originating in a single market, every new corridor into Latin America and Africa broadens the demand base and smooths the cycle. Alongside V.C. Bird International Airport and the rebuilt Barbuda Codrington Airport, this expanding network reinforces the country's positioning as a regional hub and shortens the connection times that determine whether a long-haul visitor chooses these islands over a competing one.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ANTIGUA BARBUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY







A luxury pipeline and a sustainable strategy

Perhaps the clearest signal of investor confidence is the hotel pipeline. A series of major luxury developments are under way or planned, including the Moon Gate Hotel and Spa opening in 2026, the Nobu Beach Inn on Barbuda targeting late 2026, the Rosewood Hotel Barbuda scheduled for 2028, and the Nikki Beach Resort and Spa targeting 2029, alongside Marriott and One&Only projects. This concentration of internationally recognised brands underscores the country's positioning at the high-value end of the market, a strategy that prioritises higher-spending visitors and quality of experience over sheer volume, and one that places capital at risk on a multi-year view rather than a seasonal one. Yachting deepens the same story: Nelson's Dockyard, the only continuously working Georgian dockyard in the world and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, anchors a marine economy that draws repeat high-net-worth visitors well outside the winter peak.

That premium positioning sits alongside a growing emphasis on sustainability and resilience. Barbuda's pink-sand beaches and natural landscapes are increasingly promoted to travellers seeking quieter, nature-focused experiences, and the two islands are marketed as complementary rather than competing propositions. Barbuda also demonstrates what the country has learned to do. When Hurricane Irma crossed the island in September 2017, it forced a full evacuation and destroyed almost every structure. The Barbuda that international brands are now building on is being rebuilt to a different standard, with resilience engineered into the assets rather than retrofitted after the fact, which is precisely why capital is prepared to commit there on a 2028 and 2029 horizon. Scarcity is being managed rather than sold off: the development footprint on Barbuda remains deliberately narrow, which protects both the ecology and the pricing power of everything built on it.

For investors, that combination is the point. Antigua and Barbuda is a small, high-income market with a per-capita GDP of roughly US$21,000, a currency pegged to the US dollar since 1976, a legal system rooted in English common law, and a government that has spent a decade rebuilding fiscal credibility. Recognition as the Caribbean's Best Meetings and Conference Destination by the World Travel Awards, and the global attention that will follow CHOGM 2026 in November, arrive at a moment when the supply pipeline, the airlift, and the port capacity are all expanding together. Demand is demonstrated, the strategy is explicit, and the infrastructure is being built to meet both. In hospitality, real estate, and the wider visitor economy, few markets in the region offer a proposition this well supported.

Record Arrivals, Luxury Pipeline, Sustainable Strategy

110,832 Q1 2026 · +6.7% YEAR ON YEAR
ABTA 2026

895K PROJECTED 2026 · +21.9%
ABTA 2026

$30M NEW CRUISE TERMINAL OPENED 24 JAN 2026
Upland Development Project

46% US SHARE OF STAY-OVER ARRIVALS
ABTA Q1 2026

+14% UK ARRIVALS GROWTH Q1 2026 · STANDOUT PERFORMER
ABTA Q1 2026

+21.9%

Cruise arrivals projected to reach **894,469 in 2026** ; above the pre-COVID peak of 733,526 in 2019. Underpinned by a **new US$30M cruise terminal** opened January 2026, with full completion expected July 2026. Antigua and Barbuda is now positioned to capture a larger share of the fast-growing Caribbean cruise market.

SOURCE MARKET MIX · Q1 2026

United States — **46% of arrivals**
Largest single market · consistent growth

Europe — **34% of arrivals**
UK standout at +14% · broad European base

Canada — **12% of arrivals**

United Kingdom — **+14% YoY**
Standout performer in Q1 2026

NEW AIR ROUTES

Dominican Republic
Sunrise Airways

Guadeloupe
LIAT

Lagos via Barbados
Air Peace

New Lagos route opens direct link to West Africa · active strategy to diversify beyond North American and European markets into Latin America and Africa

SOURCES Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority · Q1 2026 Statistics Release · Upland Development Project · World Travel Awards 2026 · IMF Article IV May 2026 · Breaking Travel News · Travel and Tour World

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Q1 2026 stay-over arrivals 110,832 (+6.7% vs 103,843 in Q1 2025); Jan 36,052 (+5%), Feb 36,133 (+6%), Mar 38,097 (+8%): Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority; NY Carib News / eTurboNews, May 2026.

Cruise arrivals projected +21.9% to 894,469 in 2026 (vs 733,526 in 2019): eTurboNews; Travel and Tour World, May 2026.

US$30m cruise terminal opened 24 Jan 2026 (Upland Development Project; full completion July 2026): NY Carib News, May 2026.

New air routes: Sunrise Airways-Dominican Republic (1 May), LIAT-Guadeloupe (8 May), Air Peace Antigua-Lagos via Barbados (25 May): NY Carib News, May 2026.

Hotel pipeline: Moon Gate Hotel & Spa (2026), Nobu Beach Inn Barbuda (late 2026), Rosewood Barbuda (2028), Nikki Beach (2029), Marriott, One&Only: Travel and Tour World; TravelMole, 2026.

Tourism share of GDP (range across methodologies, c.60% to c.90%+): Moody's Analytics country profile; WTTC / Oxford Economics via Statista.

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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA'S HIGH-END INVESTMENT STRATEGY

INTERVIEW WITH THE HONOURABLE HENRY CHARLES FERNANDEZ MINISTER OF TOURISM, CIVIL AVIATION, TRANSPORTATION AND INVESTMENT



Beyond traditional resort development, what are the government's priority areas for investment in supporting and sustaining this niche and what incentives are available to investors in these high-value segments?

Following Covid, we found that traveller trends had changed. What became clear was that high-end properties performed significantly better. That is because, whenever there is a downturn or an economic shock, the people least affected tend to be those at the higher end of the market.

These are therefore the properties that continue to be more resilient to the kinds of shocks we are seeing. In response, the government has tried, as much as possible, to steer investment towards more high-end or well-established branded products. Tourism is the number one driver of our economy, so it is understandable that most investment is related to, or connected with, the tourism sector.

In terms of incentives, the government offers a package that is linked to the level of investment. So yes, there are incentives in place, and yes, the government is actively pursuing this strategy.

What specific opportunities does the government see for foreign investors in private aviation services, aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul, or in securing the required Category 1 status to fully capitalise on the airport's potential as a regional hub?

The FBO (Fixed-Base Operator) type of operation goes hand in hand with the high-end traveller, so it is important for us to have that capacity in place. At the moment, we have Signature operating, we have another operator coming in, and we also have CalvinAir as an FBO. These other two are expected to be built out, and we believe that competition will ultimately be beneficial for everyone.

In addition, the opening of the Barbuda International Airport adds another airport to the overall offering for high-end visitors arriving in their private aircraft. Again, those travelling to high-end properties tend, invariably, to arrive on their own private aircraft. This aligns directly with our plan and our broader vision for catering to the high-end traveller.

With major road rehabilitation projects under way, a global shift towards transport electrification, and the LNG (liquefied natural gas) plant already in operation, how is the government positioning investment opportunities in the transportation sector to drive greater sustainability and operational efficiency?

There is a major road programme under way. The scale of the network and the level of investment required mean that the Public Works Department, which is responsible for road repairs and maintenance, is not large enough on its own to address all the work that needs to be done. As a result, the government is pushing ahead with a very aggressive programme to bring all roads up to standard, as this aligns with the high-end investment strategy and the broader development vision. In practice, this has meant that the government has partnered, in some cases, with private entities to deliver road projects.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ANTIGUA BARBUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY

What are the most compelling, specific investment openings for international capital in developing new marine-related services that support the entire lifecycle of a luxury yacht in Antigua and Barbuda?

We have around three marinas in operation, and a major company is preparing to invest in the development of another marina

At present, we have around three marinas in operation, and a major company is preparing to invest in the development of another marina. The objective is to move beyond simply providing berthing for vessels. We want to reach a level where yachts can access high-end repairs, reprovisioning and related services in one location. This will allow us to accommodate high-end cruise vessels and superyachts. We are already seeing an increase in the number of very high-end yachts, and we want to ensure that we are fully equipped to handle them.

You are hosting the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, with about 5,000 guests expected, including heads of state and government. How is the government preparing to receive such a large and high-level delegation?

We hosted the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Organisation meeting in 2025, which brought in around 2,000 delegates, so while this will be larger, it is not unfamiliar territory for us.

We have already begun moving in a very aggressive way into the MICE market. One of the key elements we have to ensure is fully in place is the overall workflow system, which is absolutely central to successful delivery. That is one of the reasons we are pushing so hard on preparations. We need better roads so that people can move around more easily, and we are working closely with hotels to secure room allocations as early as possible, including special rates. We are also factoring in our short-term rental stock.

At present, we have approximately 2,000 rooms available through short-term rentals, alongside around 3,500 rooms in the hotel sector. On that basis, we are quite capable of accommodating up to 5,000 visitors. In addition, new short-term rental properties are coming on stream every week. By the end of next year, we also expect at least one or two new hotels to open. The Marriott should be coming on stream around that time, as well as Nikki Beach.

POSITIONING ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA FOR EXPERIENCE-LED TOURISM GROWTH

INTERVIEW WITH COLIN JAMES CEO OF ANTIGUA & BARBUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY (ABTA)



What is Antigua and Barbuda's tourism positioning for 2026, and how does it leverage pillars such as romance, yachting, heritage and wellness?

For Antigua and Barbuda, the priority is to build on a strong foundation. We have positioned the destination around pillars where we are already renowned and where we have a competitive advantage: romance, yachting, heritage and wellness.

On the romance side, June is Romance Month, encouraging couples to get married here and honeymoon. Weddings and honeymoons are substantial business for us. Antigua and Barbuda is unique because there is no residency requirement for marriage: you can arrive, complete the process and be married the same day, with resorts, transport and airport services built around that experience.

Yachting is another defining pillar. Antigua is known as the Mecca of Caribbean yachting, and Nelson's Dockyard, a working Georgian naval dockyard and UNESCO World Heritage site, is central to that identity. Our sailing conditions, regattas, yacht services and skilled workers keep Antigua and Barbuda at the centre of the regional yachting industry.

Heritage and culture are equally important. Culinary Month celebrates our food, Art Week celebrates our creative sector, and Carnival is an emancipation celebration that brings together music, pageantry and culture. Wellness also fits naturally with the destination: our beaches, environment, pace of life and growing health and wellness infrastructure all support Antigua and Barbuda as a place for rest, recovery and reconnection.

How is the Tourism Authority approaching airlift development and airline partnerships?

Aviation is one of the core mandates of the Tourism Authority. We live on an island, so air access is fundamental. Our work is to ensure airlift grows in line with demand and room stock. Too much airlift can hurt airline profitability; too little can limit growth. The balance has to be managed carefully.

We work closely with airline partners, presenting the industry's growth, new hotel product, investment pipeline and market demand. We attend international airline conferences and show why larger aircraft or additional flights to Antigua and Barbuda make good business sense.

The United States remains our largest market, with strong service through key gateways. The UK is also strong, while Condor's Frankfurt service supports connections from continental Europe.

Restoring direct service from Italy is a key focus, and we are also paying close attention to Latin America, one of the fastest-growing markets into the Caribbean by percentage growth. Direct connectivity will be important, and we are positioning the destination for that opportunity.

How important are cruise tourism, homeporting and regional sea access?

Sea access is extremely important. Antigua and Barbuda is a major cruise port, and the new cruise terminal and landside infrastructure strengthen our ability to welcome passengers and encourage them to spend more in the destination. For us, it is not only about numbers; it is about value.





PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE ANTIGUA BARBUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY

Homeporting is a major opportunity. With improved cruise infrastructure and strong airlift, Antigua and Barbuda can serve not only as a stop on an itinerary, but as the place where a cruise begins and ends. That creates opportunities for pre- and post-cruise stays.

Regional ferry services also matter, particularly with Guadeloupe and the French West Indies. Greater movement between the islands supports regional tourism, business and culture.

How do events and partnerships help convert interest into travel?

People increasingly travel for experiences. They want to come for food, art, music, sailing, wellness or culture. Events give them a reason to choose a destination and a reason to spend. Our role is to make sure the product delivers at a high standard once they arrive.

Culinary Month is a good example. The culinary passport encourages people to visit restaurants, collect stamps and enjoy the island through food. We also include local roadside eateries, because food tells the story of a country and gives visitors a real cultural experience.

Collaboration is also critical. The Tourism Authority, Ministry of Tourism, Hotels and Tourism Association, Airport Authority, airlines, hotels and other partners all share information and align their plans. We have marketing offices in London, New York, and Toronto, and when we go on roadshows or meet travel agents and tour operators, we include hotel partners so they can present their products directly to the trade. The goal is not simply volume; it is to attract quality visitors and grow tourism value for the country.

Looking ahead, what will define Antigua and Barbuda's tourism growth, and what message would you share with CHOGM delegates?

Tourism has to keep evolving. Digital marketing, social media and influencer campaigns now reach enormous audiences, and we have to meet customers where they are. With younger travellers becoming more important, we have to speak to millennials, Gen Z and the next generation through highly shareable experiences.

Another major growth area is MICE - meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions. Group business helps fill the shoulder months, when leisure travel is slower. CHOGM 2026 will be the largest conference we have hosted and will place Antigua and Barbuda on the global stage.

There is also a growing trend called bleisure, where people travel for business but also make time for leisure. I would encourage everyone coming to Antigua and Barbuda for CHOGM to attend their meetings, do the work they came to do, but also take time to enjoy two of the most beautiful islands in the world.

We have unsurpassed beaches and unique tours, from swimming with stingrays and ziplining through the rainforest to walking along Princess Diana Beach in Barbuda. For nature, culture, food, music, history or wellness, Antigua and Barbuda offers something memorable.

What makes the destination truly special is our people. Visitors may not remember everything you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel. When guests leave Antigua and Barbuda, whether after a conference, an event or a vacation, I want them to leave with the best possible feeling – the vibes of Antigua and Barbuda.

What makes the destination truly special is our people. Visitors may not remember everything you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel

A DESTINATION READY FOR THE WORLD STAGE

INTERVIEW WITH BRIAN MURPHY CHAIRMAN OF THE ANTIGUA & BARBUDA HOTELS AND TOURISM ASSOCIATION (ABHTA)



You step into the role of Chairman after serving as Vice Chairman. What priorities are you bringing to this new chapter?

Having served as Vice Chairman for the past three years, supporting Craig Marshall as former Chairman, I understand the association's vision very clearly. My priorities are to continue elevating the industry on the world stage, while strengthening the relationships we have built with government, the unions and our tourism partners. I have been in Antigua for about eight years, so I am familiar with how the Association works, how the industry operates and how we engage with our main feeder markets, particularly the United States, the United Kingdom and Europe. It is essential that we continue to connect those markets to Antigua and Barbuda, maximise airlift and support strong occupancy across the sector.

Tourism performance has shown strong momentum. What is driving this growth?

Several factors are contributing. A number of properties have gone through major refurbishments, including Hermitage Bay, Carlisle Bay, Blue Waters and Hammock Cove, among others. When the destination has refreshed products to present, it gives us something exciting to show the world. Competition across the Caribbean is intense, so Antigua and Barbuda must stand out and give travellers a reason to choose us. Antigua is also a safe destination, with one of the lowest crime rates in the Caribbean. Visitors can enjoy the beaches, dine in St John's, experience English Harbour at night and move around with confidence. Global uncertainty has also encouraged travellers who may have gone to other regions to look again at the Caribbean, and Antigua and Barbuda is well positioned to benefit.

ABHTA's current theme is "Investing in People, Powering the Future". Why is workforce development so important?

The youth of Antigua and Barbuda are the future of the tourism industry, so investing in their development is essential. We work with partners such as the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, The Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Transportation and Investment and training institutions to create opportunities across the sector. Our annual job fair, held around World Tourism Day, gives young people the chance to meet hoteliers and resorts directly and learn about careers in housekeeping, food and beverage, beach operations and guest services. We also support initiatives such as Junior Chef, which identifies young local talent and provides mentorship from respected chefs within the resorts. Through these programmes, Antiguan and Barbudan talent can gain exposure, develop new techniques and compete on regional platforms such as Taste of the Caribbean.

What does hosting CHOGM 2026 mean for the country's hotels and tourism businesses?

CHOGM is an exciting undertaking for Antigua and Barbuda and for the tourism industry. It places the destination on the world stage and gives us an opportunity to showcase our local talent and the genuine hospitality we deliver every day. It also supports the growth of the meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions business. Antigua and Barbuda has already hosted major events, including the SIDS conference, Caribbean Travel Marketplace and the OAS meeting, and CHOGM builds on that experience. Resorts understand the importance of this moment and are preparing accordingly. ABHTA is playing an integral role in helping ensure that delegations are housed properly and that, where support is needed, the sector can respond.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE ANTIGUA BARBUDA TOURISM AUTHORITY











From Carlisle Bay's turquoise calm to beach adventures, cultural rhythms, crafted flavours and live performances, Antigua & Barbuda's people and landscapes create unforgettable moments for every visitor.

How do you see the balance between tourism growth and sustainability?

Sustainability is extremely important, both for government and the private sector. Travellers increasingly choose destinations based on what they are doing to protect the environment and promote eco-tourism. The natural beauty of Antigua and Barbuda is one of the main reasons people come here, so it must be protected. Many resorts are taking practical steps, including reverse osmosis plants to support water supply and initiatives to reduce single-use plastic through reusable water bottles and refill stations. There are also major environmental initiatives, including the restoration work on Redonda, the National Parks system around Nelson's Dockyard and reef-related projects such as the work at Cades Bay. These efforts show visitors and investors that the destination is serious about protecting the assets that make it special.

CHOGM gives Antigua and Barbuda an opportunity to showcase the genuine hospitality we deliver every day

What message would you share with investors looking at Antigua and Barbuda's hospitality sector?

Antigua and Barbuda is a spectacular destination with strong potential for continued growth, from luxury resorts to private homes. It is safe, community-driven, rich in culture and blessed with natural beauty. For investors, the opportunity lies in developing projects that respect the destination, strengthen the tourism product and contribute to the wider economy. The future of the industry depends on investment that supports people, protects the environment and raises the standard of what Antigua and Barbuda can offer the world.

A BENCHMARK FOR CONSCIOUS LUXURY

INTERVIEW WITH
RACHEL BROWNE
GENERAL MANAGER OF HERMITAGE BAY HOTEL

You have led Hermitage Bay through two important chapters. How has your leadership philosophy developed, and what does Antiguan excellence mean to you in 2026?
Leading Hermitage Bay for nearly two decades has taught me that leadership is never static. It evolves with the people, guests and vision of the property. In the early years, my focus was operational: building consistency, setting standards and creating trust. As the resort matured, my philosophy shifted from directing to empowering. Today, my role is to create an environment where excellence can thrive through the team. Guests remember how we made them feel more than anything else, and that has shaped my belief that emotional intelligence, authenticity and attention to detail are as important as commercial performance. Antiguan excellence means presenting the best of who we are through our own culture: warmth, respect for natural beauty and world-class experiences with genuine Caribbean soul.

Hermitage Bay has undergone a US$30 million transformation guided by the philosophy "I am because you are". How does this people-centric approach translate into a competitive advantage?
The transformation was never just about elevating the physical product. It was about strengthening the emotional and human experience behind it. Ubuntu places people at the centre of everything: our team, guests, community and ownership vision. In luxury hospitality, advantage is no longer built only on architecture or amenities, because those can be replicated. What cannot be replicated is culture. Ubuntu creates a culture where staff feel valued and empowered, and that translates into service that feels intuitive, personal and authentic. For investors, this builds stronger guest loyalty, higher retention and a more consistent brand reputation. It positions Hermitage Bay not only as a luxury resort, but as a meaningful luxury experience.

The future of luxury is no longer just about opulence. It is about connection, sustainability and authenticity

With Green Globe certification and a deep commitment to environmental stewardship, how critical is sustainable development to Antigua and Barbuda's tourism product?
Sustainable development is no longer optional for Antigua and Barbuda's tourism sector. It is fundamental to its long-term viability. As a twin-island nation, our greatest assets are our coastlines, marine ecosystems, biodiversity, landscapes and beaches. Protecting those assets means protecting our tourism economy. At Hermitage Bay, Green Globe certification demonstrates that luxury and sustainability are not mutually exclusive. Today's high-value traveller wants exceptional experiences, but also wants to know those experiences are responsible, from energy efficiency and waste reduction to local sourcing and community engagement. For the destination, sustainability means climate resilience, water conservation, reef protection and responsible land use. It also means creating opportunities for local talent and ensuring tourism growth benefits communities.

As Antigua and Barbuda prepares to welcome world leaders and high-net-worth delegations for CHOGM 2026, how is Hermitage Bay preparing for the privacy, security and bespoke service expected by high-profile guests?
Events such as CHOGM allow Antigua and Barbuda, and premium properties such as Hermitage Bay, to demonstrate capability on the global stage. Readiness begins long before arrivals. It is about preparation, precision and discretion. Hermitage Bay is well positioned because privacy has always been embedded in our DNA. Our intimate scale, villa-style accommodation and secluded beachfront setting naturally lend themselves to the exclusivity expected by world leaders and high-net-worth guests. Beyond the physical product, we are strengthening operational readiness through enhanced security protocols, close coordination with national authorities and scenario planning. Bespoke service is where we differentiate: personalised itineraries, wellness and dining experiences, confidential handling of preferences, and service that is intuitive without being intrusive. Hosting during a summit of this magnitude is about trust: confidentiality, consistency and an environment where guests can focus on diplomacy, business or rest.





Rachel Browne,
General Manager of
Hermitage Bay Hotel



As a leader and mentor in the hotel and tourism sector, how are you ensuring the local workforce is equipped for a rapidly evolving global luxury market?
Human capital is the most important investment we can make in Antigua and Barbuda's tourism industry. Guest expectations continue to rise globally, and our ability to compete depends on the strength, adaptability and professionalism of our people. Through my work with the Antigua and Barbuda Hotels and Tourism Association, and nearly 20 years at Hermitage Bay, my focus has been on building technical excellence and leadership capacity. That means training in service standards, cultural intelligence, digital literacy, sustainable practices and wellness-driven hospitality. Mentorship is also critical. Young professionals need to understand revenue strategy, guest psychology, brand positioning and world-class service. Antiguan hospitality has its own advantage: warmth, authenticity and emotional connection. If we combine local character with world-class capability, Antigua and Barbuda can become a benchmark for luxury hospitality.

Looking beyond CHOGM, how do you see the synergy between private luxury development and the prime minister's vision for a vibrant and resilient Antigua and Barbuda?
The synergy between private luxury development and the government's vision is stronger than ever. Luxury tourism has always been one of the country's most powerful economic engines, but its role today goes beyond occupancy and room revenue. It can drive national transformation. Private developments such as Hermitage Bay and other high-end projects contribute through direct investment, employment, supply-chain partnerships, infrastructure enhancement and international brand visibility. When aligned with national priorities, these investments can accelerate economic diversification, strengthen community livelihoods and build resilience against global shocks. For the private sector, the prime minister's vision means developing responsibly, protecting environmental assets, investing in people and ensuring tourism growth has a multiplier effect across agriculture, fisheries, transportation, wellness and the creative industries. Antigua and Barbuda can lead in conscious luxury, where exclusivity and sustainability coexist and the guest experience is connected to local culture. With a clear public vision and long-term private investment, the result is resilience, shared prosperity and a globally competitive tourism product.

WORLD-CLASS LUXURY WITH AN ANTIGUAN SOUL

INTERVIEW WITH
MRS POONAM AGARWALLA
PARTNER OF TAMARIND HILLS RESORT & VILLAS



How has Tamarind Hills' vision grown alongside Antigua and Barbuda's transformation into a premier destination for the global elite?

When our development of Tamarind Hills began, our ambition was never simply to build beautiful villas. We wanted to create a lasting destination that captured Antigua's coastline, climate, warmth and ability to make visitors feel at home. The vision has grown from a residential development into a fully operating boutique resort offering studios, suites, beach houses and private villas, supported by hospitality, dining, wellness, leisure and property-management services. We have broadened the experience while preserving the privacy and personal character that first attracted owners and guests. Our responsibility is to match the island's progress with international standards while remaining recognisably Antiguan.

How does membership of Small Luxury Hotels (SLH) of the World elevate your standards and attract the discerning investor-traveller?

Membership of Small Luxury Hotels of the World combines international credibility with the independence that makes a boutique property distinctive. Guests want character, a strong sense of place and highly personal service. SLH also creates discipline, requiring us to look continuously at every part of the guest journey, from enquiry and arrival to housekeeping, dining, sustainability and special requests. For the investor-traveller, this provides reassurance: they are engaging with a completed, operating resort measured against recognised international standards, with management supporting ownership and rentals.

How do you balance the privacy high-net-worth guests demand with the warm hospitality that defines Antigua and Barbuda?

Privacy and hospitality are not opposites. The key is to give each guest control over how they experience the resort. Our residences offer generous indoor and outdoor living space, sea views and, in many categories, private pools. Guests can retreat completely, spend time with family and friends, or ask us to arrange a private chef, butler service or personalised island experience. At the same time, they are never isolated from service. Our team is available when needed, but trained to recognise when discretion is more valuable than attention. Antigua and Barbuda is naturally welcoming. We refine that warmth with training, consistency and discretion.

How are you preparing for CHOGM 2026 service, security and discretion?

CHOGM 2026 is a major national moment. Tamarind Hills sees its role as part of a wider effort to show that a small island state can host an event of global importance with confidence, warmth and precision. Our preparations are centred on security, operational resilience, personalised service and discretion. We are coordinating with national authorities and reviewing access, emergency procedures, transport, communications, utilities, dietary requirements and clear lines of authority. Our teams are receiving refresher training in protocol, cultural awareness, confidentiality and special requests. The objective is clear: delegates should experience Antigua, not simply a secure room.



How is Tamarind Hills approaching environmental stewardship and responsible luxury?

For a small island state, sustainability cannot be a fashionable label; it has to be part of day-to-day decision-making. Our beaches, coastline and marine environment are central to both quality of life and tourism, so protecting them is a business strategy as well as an environmental responsibility. We are reducing single-use plastics, introducing refillable premium bathroom amenities, using accessories made from recycled and bamboo materials, and improving how we monitor water, energy and waste. Responsible luxury also has a social and economic dimension: local employment, training, career progression, local suppliers and the celebration of Caribbean ingredients and culture.

Our responsibility is to match the island's progress with international standards while remaining recognisably Antiguan

What is your vision for the next chapter of Tamarind Hills as an investment and lifestyle destination?

The next chapter is about thoughtful expansion rather than expansion for its own sake. We see an opportunity to add distinctive accommodation and deepen the wellness, dining and experiential sides of Tamarind Hills while protecting the intimacy that defines the resort. The resort offers completed residences, rental and property management, outright and fractional ownership, and approved Citizenship by Investment options. For international purchasers, the attraction is a tangible home, an operating hospitality business, a remarkable lifestyle and professional care. Legacy is measured in local careers created, businesses supported, owners who remain confident, guests who return and a natural setting preserved for the future.

ELEVATED LIVING IN ANTIGUA

INTERVIEW WITH
PATRICK DELOWSKY
DIRECTOR OF SUGAR RIDGE HOMES/MONGOOSE DEVELOPMENTS LTD



Sugar Ridge has long been one of Antigua and Barbuda's most distinctive addresses. How has the property evolved, and what does this next chapter mean?
Sugar Ridge has always occupied a very special place within Antigua, but what we are creating today goes far beyond its original identity. The property sits across approximately 43 acres of elevated hillside on the island's southwest coast, with magnificent views across the Caribbean Sea toward Montserrat, Redonda, St Kitts and Nevis. It is now evolving into a prestigious gated residential and lifestyle community, with 46 hillside residential plots, 28 luxury condominiums and a new collection of residences planned for the signature land at the top of the ridge.

With its hillside setting and views across Jolly Harbour Marina, how does Sugar Ridge attract discerning residents and investors?
I like to describe it as Beyond the Beach - the Ridge Advantage. Antigua is famous for its beaches, but Sugar Ridge offers something more. You are elevated above the coastline, enjoying privacy, space, security and uninterrupted views while remaining only minutes from Turners Beach, Darkwood Beach, Big Ffryes Beach, Little Ffryes Beach, Valley Church Beach and Jolly Beach.

How does the location beside Jolly Harbour strengthen the lifestyle proposition?
Jolly Harbour Marina is immediately across from us, making Sugar Ridge especially attractive to boat owners and yachting enthusiasts. Directly below Sugar Ridge is one of Antigua's most established communities, with a commercial centre, full-service marina, golf course, supermarket, restaurants, shops, professional services and recreational facilities. Residents do not have to choose between privacy and convenience - they can have both.

How is Sugar Ridge positioned for international investors and the Citizenship by Investment Programme?
Sugar Ridge is a government-approved Citizenship by Investment project. Qualifying purchasers may combine property ownership at Sugar Ridge with an application under Antigua and Barbuda's Citizenship by Investment Programme, subject to current requirements, government due diligence and final approval. They can acquire a home in a prestigious gated community, enjoy the property personally, potentially generate rental income when they are not using it and use an eligible purchase as the real estate component of a citizenship application.

How do Mongoose Developments and Sugar Ridge deliver homes to international standards?
Mongoose Developments brings together local knowledge, construction experience and a clear understanding of what international purchasers expect from a luxury Caribbean home. We create homes that respond properly to the island's climate, hillside topography and views while meeting the standards expected by buyers from the UK, Europe, Canada, the US and other international markets. Not every material performs well here. Humidity, salt air, heat and storms all have to be considered. The structure, waterproofing, roof finishes, windows, doors and building envelope







are areas where we do not compromise. Hurricane rating and durability are fundamental.

How do Rokuni and ROCA contribute to the overall Sugar Ridge experience?
Rokuni is one of Antigua's leading Asian-inspired restaurants and forms part of the award-winning Rocks Group, combining inventive sushi with bold dishes influenced by Asian, Japanese and Caribbean flavours. ROCA is a modern high-end pantry, deli, butcher, bakery and wine cellar. Having Rokuni and ROCA within the gates means exceptional dining, premium provisions and carefully curated wines are all available inside the Sugar Ridge community.

Sugar Ridge provides the peace and privacy of an elevated gated community without leaving residents isolated from the conveniences and experiences they value

With CHOGM 2026 approaching, how is Sugar Ridge preparing for guests who expect privacy, service and Caribbean hospitality?
For guests at this level, the first consideration must be security. Security, security, security - that is where the conversation begins. Sugar Ridge is already a private, gated community, and our preparations begin with controlled access, careful coordination and the ability to provide a secure and discreet environment. Security is followed very closely by privacy. The layout, elevated hillside setting and separation between individual residences create a natural degree of discretion that is difficult to reproduce in a conventional beachfront resort. Our aim is not simply to provide luxury. It is to offer security, privacy, discretion, calm and service beyond luxury, all delivered with genuine Caribbean hospitality.

When the delegations depart, what lasting impact do you hope CHOGM 2026 will have?
CHOGM provides Antigua and Barbuda with an extraordinary opportunity to demonstrate that a small island nation can welcome and accommodate world leaders at the very highest international standard. The summit itself will last only a few days, but its influence can continue for many years. For Sugar Ridge, the lasting legacy should be international recognition as one of the Caribbean's premier communities for secure, private and sophisticated island living. We want every guest to leave understanding that Sugar Ridge is much more than a destination. It is a lifestyle.

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME IN THE HEART OF ANTIGUA

INTERVIEW WITH WITH CHRISTA JOHN GENERAL MANAGER OF DICKENSON BAY COTTAGES

How did your journey in hospitality begin?
I came to Antigua in August of 2006 after Hurricane Ivan devastated Grenada in 2004. To help with the rebuilding process, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda offered scholarships to the Grenada Government for hospitality training at the Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute at Dutchman's Bay, which brought me here to study. Then the 2008 recession happened, and people were losing jobs all over the world. My mother encouraged me to stay where I was, because I was already job-training at a beautiful boutique hotel, knowing there was a full-time position available if needed, rather than return home without knowing what I would find. Almost 20 years later, Antigua has become my home that I love dearly, and hospitality remains the work I am passionate about.

I have been working in the hospitality industry for over 17 years. My main job titles have been receptionist, waitress, night auditor, junior shift leader, and front desk lead within the same hotel. I have also received basic training in most departments, including security, housekeeping, kitchen, maintenance, etc. I joined the team at Dickenson Bay Cottages in February of 2022 as Operations Manager; now, fast forward to 2026 as Hotel Manager.

How is Dickenson Bay Cottages preparing for CHOGM 2026?
We are preparing practically. The property is well established, but after the high season, we will use the quieter months to complete maintenance and renovations, review the rooms, and make sure everything is ready. For an event like CHOGM, guests need comfort, reliable Wi-Fi, and a place where they can feel settled.

We have cameras around the property, along with security personnel; in some instances, specialised groups often make their own security and transport arrangements before arriving. We have already hosted guests connected to major meetings in Antigua and Barbuda, and the feedback has been very positive.

For the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). The property has already secured a full booking for the 2026 summit period. From 20 October to 5 November, by a team, so it is a confirmed and exciting opportunity for us.

What kind of guest experience do you offer?
Dickenson Bay Cottages has been operating since the early 1990s. It suits business visitors, holidaymakers, long-stay guests, and returning guests. What people like most is that it feels like a home away from home. By focusing on self-catering, high-comfort accommodations, and ensuring a peaceful, quiet environment, guests can cook, relax, work, go to the beach, and enjoy the island at their own pace.

We have the most beautiful guests. They are relaxed, respectful and appreciative

We have 14 units in total: ten one-bedroom cottages and two two-bedroom cottages. The one-bedroom cottages are loft-style, with the bedroom and bathroom upstairs and the kitchen and living space downstairs. Every unit has its own patio/balcony, and some offer partial sea views.

Our priority is always to make sure guests are happy and comfortable. We help arrange taxis, rental cars, island excursions and other services when needed. For taxis, we work with reliable local drivers whom guests feel comfortable with, and for rental cars we often recommend Chase Rental Car because we have had excellent service from them, especially their representative Sheryl, because of her customer service the first time using their company.

Although we do not have a spa, we can arrange massages, manicures and pedicures with Rosie the massage therapist who comes directly to the cottages. We also have a barbecue grill by the pool deck, which our guests use often. Some long-stay visitors make the space their own, shopping



locally, cooking, grilling and enjoying the property as if it were their private Caribbean home.

Why is the Dickenson Bay area such an attractive location?
The area is very central while still being peaceful. The beach is only about five minutes downhill, and Dickenson Bay is one of the most beautiful beaches in Antigua. Guests also have restaurants within walking distance, including an Italian restaurant, Bella Vita next door for dinner, or Salt Plage on the beach and Bayhouse on the hill for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or sunset drinks. There are supermarkets nearby, including First Choice and Epicurean, which is very useful for self-catering guests.

We are also close to St John's, the museum, the cathedral, Fort James, Runaway Beach and other attractions. The airport is about 15 to 20 minutes away via transportation, so guests can move around easily. At the same time, the property itself remains pretty quiet. They can be close to everything without feeling caught in a large resort.

How has Antigua and Barbuda's stronger tourism profile affected the property?
We have definitely benefited from the country's growing visibility and the number of events being hosted here. Last year was quieter after the winter season ended, but once the new season started, we could tell it was going to be a little busy. We have recurring groups that book yearly, including a girls' basketball team from Canada that reserves the whole property around Easter; we also have two wedding parties already booked for the summer.

We do marketing; however, it's not on a large scale, but I must say that word of mouth is the best form of marketing you can ever get and our guests do it beautifully through reviews. We receive very, very good feedback and we are forever grateful.

I always say we have the most beautiful guests ever. They are relaxed, respectful and appreciative, and we try to make them feel comfortable from the moment they arrive to the time they depart.

What role does your team play in delivering that experience?
The team is everything. Without them, the property would not be what it is. We are a small team of eight, but everyone knows what needs to be done and often goes beyond what is expected. Because we are a small property, the service is personal. Guests are not just room numbers. We try to check on them, make sure they have what they need, and let them enjoy their stay without pressure.

For many guests, Dickenson Bay Cottages becomes their vacation home. That is the feeling we want to protect: simple, peaceful, comfortable and genuinely welcoming.

INFRASTRUCTURE: HOW ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA CONNECTS TO THE WORLD

Airports, ports, roads, energy and digital systems are turning a small island state into a more competitive regional gateway

For Antigua and Barbuda, infrastructure is the architecture of connection. As a twin-island state with global tourism ambitions, a growing meetings and conference sector and an expanding investment agenda, the country's ability to move people, goods, data and energy efficiently is central to its competitiveness.

Antigua is connecting to the world while building growth.

Air connectivity sits at the centre of that story. V.C. Bird International Airport is the country's principal gateway, and upgrades to aviation infrastructure are closely linked to tourism, business travel, private aviation and CHOGM 2026 readiness. The IMF has identified stronger air connectivity, new cruise port terminal facilities and major events such as CHOGM as factors supporting growth in 2026.

The destination has also announced expanded airlift, including increased nonstop options from Canada and new routes connecting Antigua to the wider Caribbean, Latin America and West Africa.2

Port infrastructure is equally important. Cruise arrivals are forecast to reach 894,469 in 2026, up 21.9 percent from 2019 levels, supported by a new US$30 million cruise terminal opened in January 2026 as part of the broader Upland Development Project. This investment is not only about passenger volume. It is about improving the visitor experience, increasing shoreside spend, supporting local businesses and strengthening Antigua and Barbuda's



position in the regional cruise economy.

Roads, water and public utilities form the less visible but essential layer of the same investment proposition. Government has advanced road rehabilitation programmes in Antigua and Barbuda, including works in Barbuda linked to wider infrastructure development. These systems matter because high-value tourism, conference hosting and foreign investment depend on service reliability as much as scenery.

Digital infrastructure is becoming just as strategic. Cabinet has referenced work on a subsea cable project designed to improve redundancy, resilience and scalability in Antigua and Barbuda's communications infrastructure. For hotels, banks, government agencies, medical institutions, professional firms and international visitors, connectivity is no longer optional. It is part of the operating environment investors evaluate.

Energy infrastructure completes the picture. As an island economy exposed to global fuel prices and climate risk, Antigua and Barbuda must balance energy security today with a gradual shift towards cleaner systems. Renewable energy, LNG transition projects, grid resilience and more efficient public infrastructure all form part of the country's long-term competitiveness.

For the CHOGM 2026, these investments send a clear message. Antigua and Barbuda is not relying only on its natural appeal. It is building the hard and soft infrastructure that allows a small state to host the world, support business, move visitors efficiently and compete as a connected Caribbean gateway.

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A GATEWAY BUILT FOR GROWTH

INTERVIEW WITH PHILMORE ANDREW CEO OF THE ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA AIRPORT AUTHORITY (ABAA)



With Antigua and Barbuda preparing to host CHOGM 2026, the airport will be the first point of entry for heads of government, delegates and visitors. How has the airport authority prepared the international airport to serve as the first impression of a modern, efficient and welcoming nation?
Our priority is to execute a seamless arrival and departure programme for heads of government, delegations and visitors. The airport is often the first impression of the country, so the experience must reflect efficiency, order, hospitality and confidence from the moment people arrive.

We have built valuable experience by supporting major international events, including the Small Island Developing States conference, and that gives us a strong foundation for CHOGM. The teams, systems and operational disciplines required for an event of this nature are familiar to us, and we are very prepared to accommodate heads of government and their delegations.

The country has announced significant investment in airfield rehabilitation and the strategic expansion of runway capacity. How will these upgrades strengthen Antigua and Barbuda's position as a secure and accessible destination for high-net-worth travellers and larger aircraft?
Antigua and Barbuda already has a reputation as one of the major aviation centres in the Caribbean. The work now under way is about upgrading that position and taking the airport to the next level. Airfield rehabilitation and runway improvements allow us to offer a higher standard of service and accommodate a wider range of aircraft.

The ability to handle larger aircraft, including aircraft such as the 777, strengthens our competitiveness and our appeal to international travellers, private aviation and high-value tourism. It also supports the national strategy of positioning Antigua and Barbuda as accessible, secure and capable of serving both commercial and private aviation.

The new Barbuda International Airport is expected to be a game changer, especially with major luxury developments under way. How will increased capacity for direct international and regional flights transform Barbuda's economic and luxury tourism landscape?
We look at Antigua and Barbuda as one total package. Barbuda adds a distinct dimension because it represents a more authentic, natural and unspoiled aspect of the destination. It appeals to a particular type of visitor, including private individuals and travellers seeking exclusivity, privacy and a different Caribbean experience.

The development of Barbuda's airport is therefore not only about aviation capacity. It is about enabling the island to support tourism and investment that fit its character. With improved access, Barbuda can attract higher-value visitors while preserving the qualities that make it special.

Tourism volumes continue to grow, and Antigua and Barbuda welcomes many times its population in visitors each year. Can you walk us through the current master plan and how the upcoming terminal expansions will ensure that Antigua stays ahead of the curve in regional aviation leadership?
We are looking at an overall renewal of the airport product. The objective is to reposition the airport strategically so that it remains competitive, efficient and aligned with the country's growth ambitions. That means upgrading facilities, improving service areas and planning expansion in a structured and organised way.

The master plan allows us to identify the infrastructure that must be improved now and the areas to prepare for future growth. Passenger movement, terminal capacity, operational efficiency and the quality of the airport experience are all part of that plan. We are also looking at new features and revenue-generating opportunities, including cargo and MRO (Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul).

Beyond passenger travel, there is a major focus on cargo and aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul. What are the key opportunities for international investors to partner with the airport authority in developing these specialised logistics and aviation services?
There are clear opportunities in cargo, logistics and aircraft maintenance, and both the airport authority and the government are receptive to serious investor interest in these areas. We have already received interest and are doing the necessary work to prepare the airport for more comprehensive development.

There are clear opportunities in cargo, logistics and aircraft maintenance, and both the airport authority and the government are receptive to serious investor interest in these areas

In cargo, we have identified areas for relocation and expansion so that we can move towards a more structured cargo development programme. In the interim, we are catering to existing interest to the extent that our current facilities allow, while planning for larger infrastructure. MRO is also a natural opportunity because Antigua already has a strong aviation platform, a strategic location and growing traffic.

Antigua and Barbuda is also positioning itself as a regional leader in green energy. How are you integrating sustainable technologies, including solar initiatives and electric mobility, into the airport's long-term infrastructure plans?
We support the net-zero agenda and the wider policy direction towards more sustainable infrastructure. This is a work in progress, but the direction is clear. The airport must reduce its environmental footprint while meeting the expectations of modern global travel.

Some practical steps already being explored include electric buses to transport staff and improvements to mobility on the ground. We have installed chargers to support and partner with taxi operators and other stakeholders moving towards electric vehicles. We are also looking at placing solar panels in different areas of the airport, not only to reduce electricity costs, but also to reduce our footprint.

What message would you like to share with CHOGM delegates, visitors and potential investors who will experience Antigua and Barbuda through the airport and may be considering returning for leisure, business or investment?
The message is simple: come to Antigua and Barbuda and experience something unique. Our people are friendly, our culture is dynamic and lively, and the country offers strong facilities, quality hotels and a welcoming environment for business and relaxation.

For CHOGM, we also want delegates and visitors to know that we take safety and security seriously. We have been reviewing our security and safety processes, including tabletop exercises, so that our response systems become seamless and second nature. Beyond the summit, Antigua and Barbuda is a destination worth returning to, and the airport is part of that national welcome.

RECONNECTING THE CARIBBEAN

INTERVIEW WITH HAFSAH ABDULSALAM CEO OF LIAT AIR



Liat Air launched commercial flights in August 2024. How would you assess the airline's first phase of operations?

That first flight was a major milestone because many people did not believe the airline would return. Seeing passengers on board again was deeply rewarding and showed what the team had delivered in a very short time.

LIAT (2020) LIMITED (Liat Air) had been registered earlier in the year 2020, but we restarted the project in January 2024, secured our Air Operator Certificate in June and operated our first commercial flight to Saint Lucia in August. By December 2024, within five months of launch, we were serving 13 destinations, from Jamaica in the north to Guyana in the south.

Another milestone was securing our own maintenance capability. We began with outsourced line maintenance, but by May 2025 we were carrying out line and heavy maintenance checks on our own aircraft. We also brought jet operations under the Antiguan registry and completed the rebrand of our trade name from LIAT20 to Liat Air. The first phase of our operations was about restoring trust. The brand carries real nostalgia, but nostalgia alone is not enough. We had to rebuild confidence through performance, reliability and service.

The first phase has been about restoring trust. Nostalgia alone is not enough

Liat operates under a public-private ownership structure. How does this model support sustainable growth?

The structure creates a useful balance. The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has a stake in the airline because regional connectivity is of national and regional importance. At the same time, private ownership and management bring agility, capital and operational discipline.

The private investor brought cash, assets and additional support when required. The government's participation gives the airline standing, particularly in regional discussions, route access, and regulatory engagement. For Antigua and Barbuda, there are immediate economic benefits. The airline is based here, passengers pay taxes here, and more than 90 percent of our staff are local.

Regional connectivity is often described as the lifeblood of the Caribbean economy. How is Liat strengthening inter-regional air links?

Connectivity is exactly why Liat Air exists. When we launched, our immediate goal was to restore the island-hopping network associated with the brand. We now serve all the destinations across the OECS, Sint Maarten, British Virgin Islands, Trinidad, Guadeloupe, as well as Santo Domingo, Punta Cana, Montego Bay, Kingston and both airports in Guyana.

The next stage is to address the territories that remain underserved. We are considering opportunities such as Belize, The Bahamas and greater access into Latin America, including Cartagena in Colombia. We are also open to markets such as Margarita, but every new route must be driven by data and sustainable demand.

The aim is to be the connective tissue of the Caribbean, supporting tourism, trade, business travel, family connections and the movement of people across the region.

As a new airline building on a historic brand, how are you approaching fleet, technology, customer experience and reliability?

We are building from the ground up. The legacy we inherited is the brand, but we have created the operating systems, processes, and infrastructure afresh. Our fleet includes ATR aircraft and Embraer ERJ 145 jets, giving us flexibility across routes and demand profiles.

Technology has been central to the build. We have invested in systems for reservations, check-in, operational performance tracking, safety, compliance and quality assurance. These tools allow us to see where something is not working and act on it

Customer experience sits at the centre of the business. Every team member understands their duty of care and how their role affects the final service delivered to the passenger. When something does not go right, our responsibility is to protect the customer through clear communication, reprotection, reaccommodation where it is needed and practical support.

Reliability is the foundation of trust. We set ourselves a demanding high on-time performance benchmark of 85 percent. In our first year (2024), we averaged about 86 percent; in 2025, we came just under target at around 84 percent; and year-to-date in 2026, we are averaging approximately 87 percent. Connectivity only works if the schedule is dependable.

With Antigua and Barbuda hosting CHOGM 2026, what role can Liat play for delegates and partners visiting the region?

CHOGM gives Antigua and Barbuda an important opportunity to welcome the world, and Liat Air can help delegates experience more of the Caribbean while they are here. We are looking at services that would let visitors explore Antigua's twin island of Barbuda, one of the country's best-kept secrets.

We also offer bespoke charter services across the region. Delegates, investors or organisers who want a curated island-hopping experience, or who simply need flexible travel between Caribbean destinations, can work with us directly. Our aircraft size allows us to provide a personal and practical service.

Our message is simple: Liat Air is here to connect the Caribbean. Whether the need is tourism, trade, investment, business travel or regional mobility, we are the airline that makes movement across the islands easier, more reliable and more meaningful.

SAFEGUARDING ENERGY SECURITY IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

INTERVIEW WITH GREGORY GEORGES CEO OF WEST INDIES OIL COMPANY (WIOC)



How is the West Indies Oil Company (WIOC) positioning itself as the cornerstone of Antigua and Barbuda's energy security, particularly as global supply chains face increasing volatility and price pressures?

For more than 65 years, WIOC has been the cornerstone of Antigua and Barbuda's energy security, maintaining an uninterrupted supply of fuel without a single product outage. It has successfully done so by securing long-term supply agreements with global suppliers. Despite global fuel price volatility and increasing operating costs, WIOC continues to deliver reliable fuel supplies under the country's regulated pricing mechanism, balancing commercial sustainability and national responsibility. This unmatched reliability is built on robust, long-term supply contracts and trusted global partnerships.

With dozens of Heads of State, global delegations, and thousands of visitors arriving for CHOGM 2026, what steps is WIOC taking to guarantee uninterrupted fuel supply across aviation, transportation, and power generation during this historic summit?

WIOC has undertaken comprehensive planning to ensure an uninterrupted fuel supply throughout the CHOGM summit. Our preparations began well in advance, with demand forecasts based on seasonal consumption patterns enhanced through collaboration with government agencies, hotels, aviation partners and other key stakeholders to estimate the expected influx of delegates and visitors. This enables us to accurately forecast fuel across aviation, transportation, and power generation.

In addition, WIOC maintains a two-week buffer stock of all petroleum products, supported by long-term supply agreements and approximately 1.7 million barrels of storage capacity. We also have nominated product deliveries well ahead of the summit to ensure optimal inventory levels. These measures provide resilience against unexpected demand increases or potential supply chain disruptions, ensuring reliable supply during this historic event.

WIOC has invested over EC$220 million in expanding storage capacity and modernizing operations. How does this capital programme align with the government's ambition to position Antigua and Barbuda as a competitive hub for international business and investment?

This initial investment serves as the literal foundation for national energy security, providing the stable environment required to attract foreign direct investment. To sustain this growth, WIOC is planning significant capital investments to expand its pipeline infrastructure.

It is also important to note that success relies heavily on domestic synergy, therefore, it is imperative that local partners collaborate closely with WIOC to maximize the impact of these infrastructure upgrades.

From bunkering for cruise ships to lab attestation services and the Rubis joint venture at V.C. Bird International Airport, WIOC has diversified well beyond traditional fuel retail. What new opportunities are you exploring to future-proof the company?



Diversification is central to the company's future: Aviation is now playing a more important role as part of our diversification process and therefore The Rubis joint venture at V.C. Bird International Airport has been a major success. WIOC aims to build on this through "inter-planning" and therefore capturing more commercial business and expanding services at the airport.

Revitalizing Bunkering Services: While bunkering services were temporarily halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic, WIOC is currently finalizing a partnership with a new global ally to fully relaunch and expand these operations.

Additionally through Technological Transformation, WIOC is actively integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) to automate business operations, streamline supply chains to improve customer experience and satisfaction.

As global energy markets shift towards sustainability, what role does WIOC see itself playing in Antigua and Barbuda's transition to cleaner energy, and how are you balancing today's fuel demands with tomorrow's low-carbon reality?

WIOC recognizes that the transition is a delicate balance. While traditional fossil fuels power today's economy, the company must proactively position itself for tomorrow. As consumer demand for electric vehicles (EVs) and general grid electrification grows, WIOC is transforming its infrastructure to remain the primary energy provider for the next generation.

The company is actively exploring diversification through partnerships into renewable energy sectors, specifically targeting solar power projects. In addition, the company has already installed charging stations at one location, with opportunities to expand to all service stations on the island.

> ***The company is actively exploring diversification through partnerships into renewable energy sectors, specifically targeting solar power projects***

Under your leadership, WIOC has expanded beyond Antigua and Barbuda into Dominica and the broader Eastern Caribbean. What is your long-term vision for transforming WIOC into a truly regional energy leader?

The long-term vision centers on transforming WIOC from a domestic provider into a dominant Eastern Caribbean energy leader. The company is actively pursuing regional expansion through strategic acquisitions and lucrative cross-border commercial contracts to scale its footprint.

CONSTRUCTION: BUILDING ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA'S NEXT GROWTH CYCLE

A surge in hotels, private homes and public works is turning construction into one of the country's strongest investment signals



Construction has become one of Antigua and Barbuda's clearest measures of investor confidence. In a small island economy long defined by tourism, the sector is now shaping the next phase of growth: expanding hotel capacity, upgrading national infrastructure, supporting high-end real estate and creating opportunities for local contractors, engineers, suppliers and skilled workers.

The momentum is visible across both islands. Government has identified construction as one of the most dynamic areas of activity, supported by strategic public infrastructure investment and private development. The 2026 Budget Statement points to a pipeline that includes the US$10 million renovation of the 350-room Jolly Beach Resort, US$55 million in upgrades to V.C. Bird International Airport and a US$40 million waterfront upland development by Global Ports. Together with other projects, the Government described these initiatives as part of an investment pipeline worth around US$1.5 billion over 24 to 36 months.1

This cycle is closely tied to the country's premium tourism strategy. The IMF's 2026 Article IV consultation noted that economic expansion in 2025 was supported by stronger construction activity, while tourism and major events are expected to remain important drivers of growth. New and planned hospitality assets, cruise infrastructure and private residential developments are expanding the product base and reinforcing Antigua and Barbuda's move towards higher-value visitors.

The opportunity extends beyond hotels. Luxury residential development, branded villas, marina-linked real estate, private homes, mixed-use waterfront projects and short-term rental properties are increasingly important parts of the market. These projects require international-standard design, resilient engineering, reliable procurement and specialist finishes, but they also create space for local participation. The strongest developers are those able to combine overseas capital and technical expertise with local knowledge, regulatory understanding and practical delivery capacity.

CHOGM 2026 adds another layer of urgency. Roads, venues, public spaces, technology systems and tourism infrastructure are being upgraded to host leaders, delegates and media from across the Commonwealth. Cabinet updates have referred to national road rehabilitation and broader infrastructure works, including priority roads in Barbuda. While the summit is temporary, the assets it has accelerated can support the country's long-term competitiveness as a meetings, investment and lifestyle destination.

The investment case is practical. Antigua and Barbuda needs construction capacity that can deliver quality, climate resilience, energy efficiency and speed without compromising standards. The market is small, but the projects are increasingly sophisticated. For developers, contractors and suppliers, the opportunity lies in building for a country that is no longer only selling natural beauty, but investing in the physical platform required to support a higher-value economy.

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BUILDING SUPER-PRIME CARIBBEAN HOMES WITH GLOBAL STANDARDS

INTERVIEW WITH CRAIG NOBLETT MANAGING DIRECTOR OF EMCS CARIBBEAN LTD

You founded EMCS and built its reputation across the BVI and Antigua. How has the company's journey shaped the way you approach super-prime projects in Antigua and Barbuda?

I founded EMCS around 12 years ago in the BVI, after seeing an opportunity to raise the quality of delivery for clients who were asking for a much higher level of construction, finish and service. From the beginning, the aim was to build homes that could meet international expectations while responding to the realities of remote Caribbean locations.

That experience has shaped everything we do in Antigua and Barbuda. We have worked on highly complex coastal projects, including major residences on Mosquito Island and Jumby Bay, where clients have very clear expectations. Those projects taught us that quality, planning, logistics and trust must be built into the process from the first conversation.



EMCS has built a reputation for luxury home construction. What sets the company apart in the high-end Caribbean market?

I started EMCS in the BVI with the view that the market needed a contractor capable of matching the expectations of modern super-prime clients. Over the past 12 years, we have built that reputation in some of the most challenging locations in the Caribbean, from cliff edges to beachfront plots, where the technical and logistical demands are significant.

Antigua came about through that reputation. We were invited to build a client's home here, and the project was only going ahead if EMCS could deliver it. That became our first project in Antigua and part of the company's wider growth beyond the BVI.

What sets us apart is control. We self-perform around 90 percent of project packages and directly employ our workforce. That gives us control over sequencing, quality, standards and delivery. We are not simply managing a chain of subcontractors; we have our own trades, our own in-house capability and a clear understanding of what must be achieved.

How do you deliver bespoke, international-standard homes in a market where materials, logistics and specialist skills can be challenging?

In many ways, we are as much a logistics company as a construction company. Our clients source materials and finishes from across the world, from marble and specialist millwork to advanced audio-visual, lighting, air-conditioning, pool and smart-home systems. We become involved early, often at pre-construction stage, to guide the design team and client towards products that work in a Caribbean climate.

Not every material performs well here. Humidity, salt air, heat and storms all have to be considered. The structure, waterproofing, roof finishes, windows, doors and building envelope are areas where we do not compromise. Hurricane rating and durability are fundamental. Modern clients also want multiple pools, cinemas, hidden services, staff accommodation and layouts spread across several buildings.

To deliver that, we combine local labour with overseas specialists. We hire locally wherever possible, but some skills must be brought in because the projects are highly technical. The important thing is to blend those teams so the local workforce benefits from exposure and training. We invest in our people and try to move them from one project to the next. That continuity protects quality and grows the island's skill base.





Antigua is experiencing a visible construction and luxury tourism boom. How is EMCS positioned within that transformation?

Antigua has enormous potential. Compared with the BVI, it feels more accessible and more varied. There is a clear boom underway, but it still feels organic. You can see it through resort regeneration, new developments, marina projects and private homes. The luxury end is strong, but buyers can also enter the market at different levels, from second homes to super-prime residences.

Our portfolio reflects that range. We have three projects on Jumby Bay, work on the mainland, and strong relationships with local developers. We worked on Sugar Ridge phase one and are building 17 homes on the next phase. We are also involved in the Jolly Marina regeneration, with two five-storey apartment blocks and commercial space, which will help transform that area. Alongside this, we remain active in bespoke private homes at Pearns Point, Reeds Point and Jumby Bay.

We have also moved into commercial and hospitality-related work. The Hut was a different project, with a fixed opening date linked to tourism demand, and showed that our skills transfer beyond private homes. We now operate across bespoke residences, commercial projects, developer-led housing and marina regeneration.

With CHOGM bringing global attention to Antigua and Barbuda, what message would you share with investors and buyers considering the island?

For someone looking to build here, the most important thing is confidence. Many of our clients live overseas, mainly in Europe and the United States, and cannot always be present on island. EMCS gives them confidence that their project will be built to the standard, specification and timeframe they expect, without monitoring every step in person.

We provide full control over schedule, quality and finish from start to completion. We have in-house logistics, procurement, design support and MEP capability across mechanical, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, pools and services. We issue regular commercial and progress reporting, communicate transparently when issues arise, and work closely with the client's wider design and advisory team.

That reliability is important for international buyers. They may be investing in Antigua for the first time, and they need to know their home can be delivered properly. Repeat business and returning client representatives are strong proof of that trust.

Reliability is important for international buyers. They may be investing in Antigua for the first time, and they need to know their home can be delivered properly

Looking ahead, how do you see EMCS Caribbean Ltd developing across Antigua and Barbuda?

In Antigua, we have become increasingly diverse. We arrived with a strong base in super-prime homes, and that remains central to who we are, but we have also expanded into commercial, marina, resort and developer-led projects. That reflects Antigua itself: private homes, hospitality, restaurants, residential schemes and tourism infrastructure are all moving forward.

We are also now moving into Barbuda which brings new logistical and operational challenges, but it is an exciting next step for the company and the market.

Ultimately, EMCS is built on trust, quality and delivery. We understand global clients and the realities of building in the Caribbean. Bringing those two worlds together is where we add value.

DELIVERING HIGH-END DEVELOPMENTS IN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA'S EMERGING MARKET

INTERVIEW WITH PAUL SMITH FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR OF CG CONSTRUCTION & CONSULTANCY LTD

CG Construction has been involved in high-profile hospitality and lifestyle projects, including enabling works linked to Nikki Beach. What does that work say about how Antigua and Barbuda's development market is evolving?
It shows that the market is maturing and attracting more complex, brand-driven developments. On projects like Nikki Beach, the model often involves enabling works and early-stage preparation being delivered locally, followed by larger packages that are tendered to international main contractors. That approach can be positive for Antigua and Barbuda because it raises standards, increases the flow of expertise, and creates opportunities for local firms to participate in meaningful scopes when they are well prepared.



Paul Smith, Managing Director (centre), with Tony Cantwell, Director of Company Operations (left), and Claudia Johnson-Smith, Director (right).

How do you see the balance between local capability and international contractors developing over the next few years?
The balance should be complementary. International contractors bring scale and specialist capability, but local companies bring speed, context and practical knowledge of how to get things done. The opportunity is to structure projects so local partners are involved early, and then build transfer of skills and systems. If that happens, the local market becomes stronger and more competitive over time. The best outcomes come when roles are defined early.

What has changed in client expectations when international brands and investors are involved, and how do you ensure quality stays consistent?
International investors expect documentation, programme discipline and clear accountability. Quality is not only the finish; it is the process, the inspections and the handover standards. We focus on supervision, defined scopes, and alignment with the wider project team so that the local works integrate properly with the main contractor's delivery model.

Luxury hospitality and real estate depend on more than construction; they depend on timing, planning rules and investor confidence. What are the key factors developers should understand before entering the market?
Developers need clarity on the fundamentals: land and permitting, access to infrastructure, realistic build costs, and a credible delivery plan. They also need to understand how the market absorbs inventory, including when buyers can purchase directly and what the resale dynamics look like. In Antigua and Barbuda, the strongest projects will be those that align product with real demand, manage execution risk, and build partnerships that keep quality consistent through every phase. That is why early packages and enabling works are valuable; they allow a project to start moving while the larger contracting structure is finalised.

From your experience, what are the biggest execution risks in construction and development in Antigua and Barbuda, and how do you mitigate them?
Execution risk often comes from logistics, supply timing, and coordination across trades. It is not unusual for schedules to slip when materials, approvals or labour availability do not align. Mitigation starts with planning and realistic sequencing, followed by strong procurement discipline and clear responsibility on site. Developers who treat project controls seriously, and who choose contractors with systems, reduce surprises and protect timelines.

The market is maturing and attracting more complex, brand-driven developments that raise standards across the sector

Looking at the current landscape, what advice would you give to international developers considering projects in Antigua and Barbuda right now?
Enter with patience and a structured plan. Antigua and Barbuda offers opportunity, but it is not a market where you can improvise at scale. Build a clear business case, align with local expertise, and confirm the infrastructure and logistics assumptions early. If you do that, you can move faster, avoid costly rework and deliver a product that meets international expectations. We also advise developers to stress-test their schedules against shipping lead times and build procurement contingency, because late materials can quickly become critical path.

Where do you see the next hotspots for luxury and lifestyle development over the next three to five years?
The next hotspots will follow infrastructure and accessibility, alongside areas that can support premium experiences consistently, Locations connected to improved transport links, quality services and strong destination positioning will attract capital first today. Developers should watch where hospitality demand is building, where supporting amenities are improving, and where projects can create a complete experience, not only a single asset. Transparent reporting and a disciplined change-control process also help, because most projects fail through small scope changes that are not managed properly.









EDUCATION: ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA'S HUMAN CAPITAL INVESTMENT STORY

Building the skills, campuses and medical-training ecosystem that can turn a small island state into a regional knowledge hub



As Antigua and Barbuda prepares to host CHOGM 2026, education is emerging as one of the country's most strategic growth stories. The sector should not be viewed only as a public-service priority. It is increasingly part of the diversification agenda: a way to build local skills, attract foreign exchange, support healthcare and research, and create demand around the student economy.

The clearest signal is the rapid rise of The University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus. Established in 2019 as The UWI's fifth campus, it was created to serve Antigua and Barbuda and the wider OECS sub-region, where tertiary participation has historically lagged behind the rest of the Caribbean. Its growth has been striking. Government figures show enrolment rising from 173 students in 2019 to 1,403 in 2025, while the 2026 Budget Statement outlines a US$200 million expansion plan including classrooms, laboratories, a multipurpose auditorium, sports facilities and student housing.

That matters because tertiary education creates more than graduates. It creates an economic ecosystem. A larger campus population requires accommodation, broadband, food services, mobility, healthcare, maintenance, security, student finance and professional training. For a small island economy, that multiplier effect is significant, while education strengthens the labour base investors need across tourism, finance, aviation, healthcare, digital services and public administration.

The policy direction is clear. Cabinet notes from June 2026 describe an ambitious expansion of the tertiary education sector, including support for UWI Five Islands and the institutions that make up the Antigua and Barbuda College of Advanced Studies, while exploring financing mechanisms to support facilities, programmes and student opportunities. In investment terms, education is being treated as infrastructure for national competitiveness.

Medical education gives Antigua and Barbuda an additional advantage. The American University of Antigua College of Medicine is an accredited international medical school located in Coolidge and part of the Manipal Education and Medical Group. AUA states that it is accredited by CAAM-HP and has recognition or approval linked to clinical training and licensure pathways in key US jurisdictions, including New York, California and Florida. This places the island within a global medical-education pipeline, connecting Antigua and Barbuda to students, faculty, clinical partners and healthcare systems beyond the Caribbean.

The investment proposition is therefore broader than one institution. It includes student housing, education technology, healthcare training, research partnerships, continuing professional development, conference facilities and wellness-linked services. AUA's Conference and Learning Center also shows how education infrastructure can support national ambitions beyond the classroom. With capacity for academic, community and international events, the campus is part of Antigua and Barbuda's meetings infrastructure as CHOGM puts the country under global attention.

Education also connects directly to healthcare resilience. Small island states face high costs when specialised medical care, training or equipment must be imported. Strengthening medical education, clinical partnerships, research and public-health capacity can help reduce that dependency. For investors, this opens opportunities in

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diagnostics, telemedicine, simulation labs, student services, medical conferences and practical healthcare delivery.

The social case is equally important. The Government has committed to widening access to post-secondary and university education through scholarships and public support, while AUA's new Commonwealth Grant, developed in recognition of Antigua and Barbuda's hosting of CHOGM 2026, is designed to expand access to medical education for qualified students from Commonwealth nations. These initiatives frame education not only as a private opportunity, but as a national development tool supporting mobility, inclusion and a more skilled workforce.

Antigua and Barbuda has the advantage of political visibility, English-language education, Commonwealth links, air access, lifestyle appeal and an expanding tertiary and medical-training base. Its challenge will be to scale without losing quality, and to ensure that education investment strengthens local capacity rather than simply importing a temporary student economy.

If tourism brings the world to Antigua and Barbuda, education can help keep the country connected to the world through talent, research and long-term human development. In the decade ahead, the most valuable investment may not only be in rooms, marinas or resorts, but in the people and institutions that allow the country to compete beyond its size.

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A GLOBAL CAMPUS FOR MEDICAL EDUCATION

INTERVIEW WITH
DR PETER BELL
PRESIDENT OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ANTIGUA (AUA)



expand access to medical education for qualified students from Commonwealth nations. The initiative will provide financial support toward the cost of an AUA medical education and reflects the university's longstanding commitment to creating opportunities for aspiring physicians from diverse backgrounds and preparing graduates to contribute to healthcare needs in their communities and around the world.

What role do higher education and medical training play in Antigua and Barbuda's long-term economic and social development?
Higher education is key. The more educated a population is, the better equipped it is to make choices, respond to challenges and build prosperity. There is a strong link between health, education and economic development.

Size does not limit contribution. A small country such as Antigua and Barbuda has a great deal to offer

AUA has been selected as a primary venue for CHOGM 2026, hosting the Commonwealth Women's Forum and the Commonwealth People's Forum. What does it mean to welcome the world to your campus?
American University of Antigua is an international university, but it is also part of Antigua and Barbuda. Our students and faculty represent more than 50 countries, so international engagement is part of our culture.

We are pleased to work with the government as a host for CHOGM 2026. Our Conference and Learning Center was built to support our educational mission, but it is also a flexible national asset for academic, political and community events.

How does hosting CHOGM position AUA and Antigua and Barbuda as a centre for international education?
CHOGM gives the university and the country greater visibility. AUA is known in the region for medical education and community contribution, but this gives us an opportunity to be seen beyond the Caribbean.

In recognition of Antigua and Barbuda's hosting of CHOGM 2026, the American University of Antigua College of Medicine has developed a new Commonwealth Grant to

As a medical university, our role is to train physicians and help educate the wider public. AUA developed a global health track around 15 years ago, long before Covid made the connection between local and global health obvious. Our programme attracts physicians, scientists, civil servants and UN staff who contribute to the education of our students.

The Women's Forum and People's Forum will place inclusive development at the centre of CHOGM. How is AUA showcasing Caribbean perspectives on health, gender and opportunity?
At AUA, inclusion is visible in practice. More than half of our medical students are women, and the same is true across many areas of faculty and academic leadership. On our Antigua campus, many senior academic leaders are Antiguan women. That shows students, by example, that leadership is open to them.



Capacity building in healthcare is essential for the Caribbean, and AUA supports that through scholarships and the new Commonwealth Grant.

How does the university embody the Commonwealth spirit of shared prosperity and cross-border collaboration?
Because of our accreditation status and international recognition, our graduates can practise in the United States, Canada, Antigua and Barbuda, the wider region and other Commonwealth countries. That creates real cross-border impact.

Research is another important area. AUA is one of the leading research institutions in the Caribbean by citation impact in medical journals outside the University of the West Indies. We collaborate with McMaster University, UWI Mona Campus, UK universities and the Manipal Education and Medical Group, and are contributing to a climate change and health handbook with Caribbean and Pacific partners for CHOGM.

What role does the Conference and Learning Center play in the university's mission and in Antigua and Barbuda's wider event infrastructure?
The Conference and Learning Center supports our academic mission by bringing students together for major learning events, graduation, white coat ceremonies, research days and other university functions.

It has also become an important national venue. With around 1,100 seats, it is the largest venue in Antigua and has hosted international conferences, business events, community gatherings, research events and performances by the Antigua and Barbuda Youth Symphony Orchestra. Later this year, we will host a health fair, with screenings, education and follow-up guidance for the public.

What legacy do you hope CHOGM will leave for AUA and for Antigua and Barbuda?
I hope CHOGM helps the world understand that a small country such as Antigua and Barbuda has a great deal to offer. Size does not limit contribution. In our field, AUA can contribute to health, healthcare education and the global physician shortage.

For the university, the legacy should be greater recognition of our role as an international medical institution based in Antigua and Barbuda. For the country, it should be a stronger reputation as a destination for education, investment, health collaboration and global partnership.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ANTIGUA COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

The American University of Antigua (AUA), a member of the Manipal Education and Medical Group, is a fully accredited international university medical school located in Coolidge, Antigua, that prepares students for careers in medicine through a rigorous curriculum and clinical training. For more information, visit www.auamed.org

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How will the Global Summit for Eye Health 2026 showcase the hospital's modernisation?
Eye health is central to quality of life, and Antigua and Barbuda has made it a national priority. Through regional collaboration, the hospital moved from around 27 cataract surgeries in 2019 to approximately 1,400 eye surgeries to date, mostly cataract procedures. Retinal surgery has also been introduced in the public hospital for the first time. The ambition is to become a centre of excellence for the OECS.

How has your Harvard training shaped your leadership approach?
Harvard reinforced that every voice must be heard. Healthcare leadership cannot only be top-down; it must include people at every level of the institution. My Caribbean experience of hurricanes, climate change and disaster management also showed that small islands bring practical knowledge to global health discussions. That informs my focus on accountability, partnership and stronger systems.

How do specialised services position Antigua and Barbuda for medical tourism?
As tourism grows, healthcare must grow with it. The new renal centre will expand dialysis capacity from 27 stations to up to 40, allowing visitors with kidney disease to receive care locally. The hospital has completed 13 renal transplants, supported decompression cases, gained World Stroke Organization certification as a stroke centre, and signed agreements with China to establish a chest pain centre. These services will enhance global access, at affordable rates, whilst enabling patients to enjoy scenic views.

What is your vision for prevention, mental health and neurodiverse care?
The hospital is WHO-certified as baby-friendly, and the first 1,000 days of life remain central to prevention. Mental health is also a priority, especially in a climate-vulnerable country where hurricanes and displacement affect wellbeing. Antigua and Barbuda can become a resilient mental health hub. This must include offering support and creating inclusive environments for neurodiverse children and adults. The autism centre once completed will help to actualise this goal.

For investors, what are the key partnership opportunities?
Investment should support equipment, systems and training that can be sustained. Maintenance, and staff training matter as much as the initial donation. Partnerships should include observerships, internships, specialist exchanges and knowledge transfer, so local teams build capacity rather than dependency.

When the summit concludes, what do you hope delegates remember?
I want delegates to remember Antigua and Barbuda as a visionary small island developing state with the potential to become a regional centre of excellence. Over the next decade, I want to see international accreditation, stronger digital systems, AI-supported interpretation, telehealth, robotics and personalised medicine informed by our own population.

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