

THE ST HELENA  Est. 2005
INDEPENDENT

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Appeal on Dungeon Cemetery Decision Deferred

The St Helena Government lodged an appeal against two of the conditions attached to the development permission given for the extension to the Dungeon Cemetery. The development application was permitted in August last year, two or three months after work started on the cemetery extension. Development permission was therefore given in retrospect. The two conditions which are the subject of the appeal focus on accessibility. When permission was given by the Land Development Control Authority they asked that a management plan showing improvements to the Cemetery, particularly for the less able visitors in the interest of safety. The LDCA also asked that the management plan be submitted within three months.

It was also pointed out that large areas to the east and south of the cemetery extension have steep gradients and some smoothing and levelling was necessary so that accessibility standards were met. Again, details of the work planned to achieve the required standard are to be submitted for approval to the Chief Planning Officer.

The appeal against both conditions started to be heard on Wednesday this week but was adjourned as the Attorney



Conversion of part of a cow field into a cemetery just across the road from the Dungeon Cemetery; the photo shows the flattest areas in the cemetery extension, the land falls further to the south and east.

General needed time to consider detailed points of law. The Appeal will be reconvened on Wednesday 3rd June.

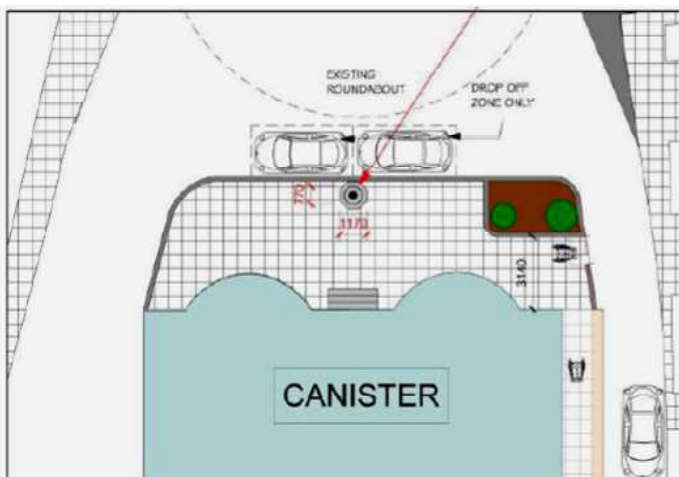
Replica Fountain still looking for a home

A development application for the replica of the Rockfall Memorial Fountain to be sited outside the Canister on the recently repaved area was refused at the recent meeting of the Land Development Control Authority (LDCA).

The Chief Planning Officer's (CPO) report to members of the Authority pointed out the replica fountain is smaller than the original and will not be connected to a water supply. As such it should be considered public art and in that context the position chosen for the replica "in front of The Canister that is a well-used public thoroughfare and also well used sitting area by visitors and shoppers would restrict width of the paved area. In view of the wider highway and pedestrian safety view point it is considered that erection of the water fountain would be compromise pedestrian safety particularly during the daylight hours when there is considerable pedestrian movement."

to provide public art feature. The proposed erection of the public art in this location would compromise pedestrian movement and the location of the feature should not be the edge of the pavement. There also two car parking spaces in front the pavement, which are most part of the day occupied by parked cars and public art feature would therefore be obscured by the parked vehicles in front and objective of the public art as landscape feature in the streetscene would be hidden. In view of this the proposed location fails to meet the objectives of the policy." The policy states, "Development in Historic Conservation Areas will be permitted only if it enhances and protects the character of the Area".

Objection to the development application suggested various other locations for the replica fountain including Castle Gardens where it may be possible to connect the replica fountain to a water supply and where use of the fountain basin as a litter bin would be less likely. The objections also included the hazard to pedestrian movement in what can be a busy area for shoppers.



The CPO's report added, "The newly extended pavement area outside The Canister is still not considered to be wide enough



The replica memorial fountain, without capony and water

Quick Bits

Airlink considers repositioning itself in South African aviation

Airlink announced recently to the rest of the aviation world they are willing to explore various options which involve forming a business alliance with other public or private aviation companies who share the common aim of forming a new South African national airline. The long-time ailing and failing national airline, South African Airways, is in the business rescue process and, if it does survive, it will be a much smaller version of its former self.

Airlink's Chief Executive, Rodger Foster, was in the news recently explaining how Covid-19 and the South African lockdown had hit Airlink hard. All Airlink employees are on unpaid leave and Airlink operations are reduced to a few charter flights each week in response to the needs of essential services. South African media reports state Airlink would consider buying the low cost airline Mango and is willing to follow up on the suggestion made by South Africa's Minister for Public Enterprises that a new national flag carrier is needed for the SA aviation industry. Rodger Foster commented, "The State aspires to have a national flag carrier, but what does this mean? We're open to any conversation that will bring about a better dispensation for the industry, as long as the State does not wish to have negotiating control over the process and as long as it is based on commercial principles and good corporate governance,"

How it is and How it could be

The chairmen of the government committees – Health, Education, Economic Development, Social and Community Development and so forth, do not have regular meetings and briefings with the Heads of the Government Directorates to talk about current and planned government business. If a government committee chairman wants to have a meeting with a government director an appointment needs to be made. There is no regular meeting or support arrangement in place for chairmen. No government committee can be expected to work satisfactorily when the gap between government officials and elected representatives is so wide there is no chance of spreading any infections, coronavirus or otherwise. The chairmen work without a proper system of support and advice and are expected to be answerable for government decisions and administrative performance.

Compare this with an explanation given by James Cleverly MP, a junior minister in the UK Government to a committee of MPs set up to scrutinise ministerial decisions, administrative performance and budgetary control. This particular junior minister was asked to give his view on the merger of DFID and FCO junior ministerial posts.

Mr Cleverly started by saying, "My private office is made up of a mixture of civil servants from both the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and DFID. The briefings that I get from officials tend to be focused either thematically or around countries. Those briefings are delivered to me by a mix of civil servants from both Departments. Very quickly, you lose track of exactly which official is coming from which Department. In terms of the information that I am gathering in, it is working

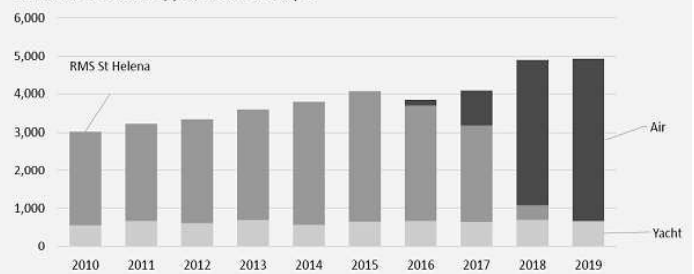
fine. Because all of the Ministers are joint Ministers, we have a shared experience, and the interministerial work seems to be working pretty well as well." Mr Cleverly clearly has constant support from a range of full-time government officials, each one of them specialising in a particular aspect of the wide range of subjects for which Mr Cleverly has responsibility. Mr Cleverly, like all other ministers, junior or senior, has his own personal support staff. He told the International Development Committee, "I have a private secretary, three assistant private secretaries, a diary manager, an office manager and a correspondence manager." Our own government committee chairmen can only dream – and weep.

And – What might have been

New tourist numbers were released recently and reported to the Economic Development Committee. In percentage terms it is possible to see 100% increases between certain years, but in numbers it still just a few hundred extra here and there because the numbers started miniscule and then developed to small. The figures show arrivals up to the end of 2019. The trouble is, the world changed after that; line graphs took a dive and column graphs developed severe cases of stunted growth.

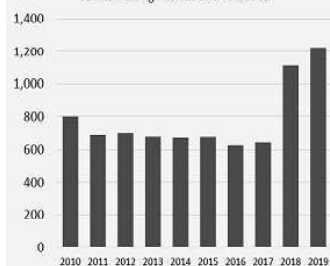
Arrivals to St Helena at record high following scheduled air service

Total arrivals to St Helena by year, all forms of transport

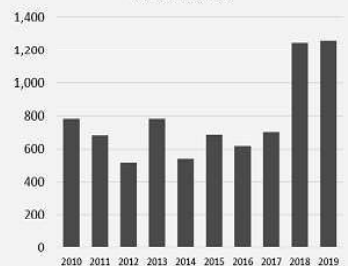


Leisure visitors have increased substantially with the scheduled air service

Saints visiting friends and relatives



Non-Saint tourists





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Editorial

The *Independent* has previously recognised the work done by SHG in conjunction with other organisations such as Public Health England, DFID and the World Health Organisation in their efforts to keep Covid-19 away from St Helena. We have also pointed out that using the testing facilities we now have only on people who show Covid-19 symptoms means people who are infected but do not show these symptoms pose a real danger to the Island community, if and when the planes start touching down once more at St Helena airport.

After too many false starts and misplaced hopes it now seems there is a reliable Covid-19 test that has been developed to check whether a person has previously been infected by the coronavirus. Several authorities state that it stands a good chance of being proven to be reliable to an acceptable standard. Developed by Roche, a Swiss drugs company, the blood test they have developed to identify the antibodies which indicate whether the person tested has previously been infected by coronavirus may have a reliability of fewer than two false results per one thousand tests.

After having their fingers burned with previous purchases of antibody blood tests the UK Government are expressing quiet and cautionary hopefulness that this time a blood test has been developed which offers "serious potential" as one source told BBC News. Official approval for Roche's antibody blood tests has already been given by authorities in the EU and the United States.

When officially adopted by the UK Government it is planned to use the tests first on NHS and social care staff. The UK Health Minister has already said the UK is in talks with the Swiss drugs company about a very large scale roll-out of coronavirus antibody testing.

Widespread testing will help give a reliable estimate on how many people have been infected by the coronavirus, how fast it can spread and how many can be infected but not show the symptoms. As well as getting a better estimate on how many people have been infected it will also be possible to get a better estimate on how deadly the infection actually is.

In St Helena we can only hope that first, the new blood test is as good as claimed and second, the very large scale roll-out of Roche's coronavirus antibody testing will include a decent supply for St Helena and our sister remote islands.

While St Helena is, quite rightly, acting in full compliance with SOLAS – Safety of Life at Sea – when yacht crew arrive seeking safe harbour, food and water, there are some major horror stories surfacing in the international media about how other countries are forcing crews to take their yachts away from their coastal waters. Instances are being reported of yachts being pulled out to sea and gun boats being brought in to persuade yacht crews to stay away. In these circum-

stances the crews face many days of sailing to the next port with food and water severely rationed.

A report in the UK Guardian newspaper describes the 1,200 nautical mile extra sailing one yacht crew had to endure after being turned away from a South African port. Their new destination? St Helena. As has been demonstrated here, yacht crews can tie up to moorings over by West Rocks and pose no threat to the island community as quarantine regulations are in place which are similar to those applicable to passengers arriving by plain. Let's hope the yachties remember our hospitality when the seas are opened up to the once more.

To end with, as I write this I don't know if you will be reading it in about 12 hours time. I need to email this to Mike Olsson who will set it for print and then email the print version to Printech first thing on Friday morning. The problem, once again, is email. The POP 3 server is not working - again. Sure need to fix this but I really don't know what time they get up in the morning. As someone who worked at one time in a 24 hours 7 days a week industry I have no time for excuses about why Sure cannot have people on call 24 hours a day to fix faults. This unreliability can obviously and seriously affect peoples' businesses.



MOONSHINES

ENTERTAINMENT THIS WEEKEND

SATURDAY NIGHT: ENJOY SOME MUSIC
BY DJ KJ FROM 9pm

SUNDAY: CLOSED

Sustainable development: What's in it for me?

Harley Otto Williams



The global climate crisis has meant that the world's approach to business has changed dramatically in the last decade. Linear models for development, with short term benefits, are becoming uncommon, as the global market has shifted its focus towards a more sustainable future. It is for this reason; St. Helena must do the

same in order to help us compete in an increasingly sustainable arena.

Promoting industry partnership on island is essential, if we are to have a sustainable economy and therefore, community. Many of the challenges associated with sustainability often requires change beyond the capability of just one business. The simplest example of such a sustainable partnership might be drawn between a catering company and a local, organic farmer. By sourcing local produce, the catering company has invested in the local market, therefore stimulating economic growth in their community. In addition to this, they have also avoided the numerous environmental impacts associated with food miles. Furthermore, by using organic farming methods, the farmer has also avoided the many environmental impacts linked to intensive farming practices. This creates an overall 'greener' package for both parties, which is increasingly in demand as consumers, become more environmentally aware. It is also important to note, that the government should support these local partnerships, as much as possible. Investment sustainable, local ventures will be imperative to the future of the island.

Considering human health is always essential when creating a sustainable future. Investment in renewable energy is just one example of how sustainable development can improve the health of current and future generations. The burning of fossil fuels has been shown to have negative impacts on respiratory health, due to carbon monoxide and nitrous dioxide emissions. It is for this reason, that further investment in fossil fuels, is not the way forward for a healthy community. Investment in renewables such as solar, wind and hydro will be essential in paving the way for cleaner air, and therefore healthier communities. Accounting for human health in this way helps make settlements safer, and more resilient helping aid both physical and mental health in communities. A healthy community is a productive one, and a productive community is one with many other benefits.

Sustainable development is grounded in the conservation of the natural environment. Unsustainable practices have had harrowing effects on wildlife around the world, with thousands of species going extinct in the last two decades alone. One of the main problems with conservation in the past, has been that the environment has often been viewed as an externality to development, and therefore, has been widely ignored. However, as the sustainability movement has grown, this view has begun to change. Rather than seeing the environment as an externality to development, we should see it as the

overarching basis for development. Progress cannot happen without the natural environment, therefore, ignoring it would be extremely unwise in the long term.

The term natural capital, was first coined in the year 1973 by E.F. Schumacher. It refers to the monetary value of the natural environment, based on the services it provides. For example, a tree provides a range of ecosystem services for us including: air purification, wind breaker, ground stabiliser, aesthetic value etc. So, how much are these services worth? According to a study done by Endreny *et al*, tree populations provide over 400 million pounds worth of services in urbanised areas alone. With this modern thinking in mind, the value of nature becomes a lot more apparent, and that its destruction will cost us dearly. There is no doubt that on an island as diverse as St. Helena, there is a huge abundance of natural capital. Investment in measures to protect and use this capital sustainably will be essential in building St. Helena's repertoire, in regards to our green reputation.

The growth of sustainable development has also shifted global perspectives on waste. The idea of waste alludes to past linear models of development, in which the end product of a process e.g. domestic sewage is the final point in the development process. With growing concerns of the environmental impact that many waste products have, there has been a global effort to decrease the amount of waste we produce. However, as the population continues to grow, waste is an eventuality that must be dealt with. In order to tackle the waste issue, shifting toward a more circular economy is essential. This involves keeping resources in use for as long as possible, and extracting the maximum value from them whilst in use, and even at their end life. An example, of this can be seen in the anaerobic digestion of food waste. Food waste collected from different districts areas are fed into an industrial digester, which breaks them down, and creates biogas. This biogas is then used to make electricity which is fed into the grid. This is an example of a circular economy, because the energy made from food waste will power many households (and possibly the digester itself), and therefore be involved in food production, and the consequent food waste, creating a continuous (circular) process. Overall, we have a responsibility to the planet to develop with the future in mind. Altruism sits at the centre of sustainable development, and requires close collaboration at all levels. Many of the sustainable development goals set out by the United Nations are easier said than done. It is therefore imperative that we support each other, and that the government support ventures that encapsulate these ideals. We have already seen many impressive businesses and organisations on island develop with sustainability at the heart of their plan, and we must continue this trend. As the world's economic models change, it is in our best interest to change with it.

Twenty three year Harley Williams is nearing completion of his Master's degree in environment management with Bath Spa University, after gaining his Bachelor's degree in environmental science through an SHG scholarship, Harley sought sponsorship of the UK government to enable him to study for a Master's degree

Why Covid-19 has brought more despair to islanders on St Helena

By Lord Ashcroft

These are difficult and challenging times for many people – but spare a thought for the 4,500 islanders of St Helena, situated in the middle of the South Atlantic.

“Saints”, as the islanders are known, have encountered one problem after another over the past four years - just as they hoped their new airport would result in a huge increase in tourist numbers and, in turn, bring economic prosperity.

Now islanders have suffered another major blow: coronavirus. As yet, there are thankfully no cases of Covid-19 on St Helena but the tough measures brought in to ensure that the island remains free of the virus have once again killed off tourism for the foreseeable future.

There have been no passenger flights to or from St Helena since March 26. Furthermore, anyone arriving on the island now has to undergo 14 days of quarantine at what is known as Bradley’s Camp.

It is understandable that everyone is being cautious with the islanders’ health. It is estimated that more than half the population are in the “vulnerable” category, largely because of their age or because of underlying health conditions.

It is conceivable that hundreds of “Saints” could die if Covid-19 reaches the island and, in a worst-case scenario, up to half of the population could perish.

The annual St Helena Day celebrations on May 21 have been cancelled and morale on the island is said to be low. That’s entirely understandable: after all, how many setbacks can one small island take?

Mike Olsson is the owner of the *St Helena Independent* newspaper which, along with Saint FM radio station, I sponsor to ensure its editorial independence. He tells me: “The situation is very difficult. Tourism on the island will be non-existent for a long time, most likely until we have a vaccine.

“Other countries are starting to open up and can calculate to have some cases and some ‘losses’ but for us, who have never been exposed to such an illness and have a weak immune system due to this lack of exposure, it would be devastating if we got Covid-19.”

St Helena, about a third the size of the Isle of Wight, is a British Overseas Territory that became famous as the location where Napoleon Bonaparte, the defeated French emperor, spent the majority of his exile until his death in 1821. As a volcanic island that erupted out of the South Atlantic 15 million years ago, it is one of the most remote places on earth: some 1,200 miles from the African mainland and 1,800 miles from Brazil.

The average full-time annual wage on the island is around £8,500 and the cost of living is much higher than in Britain because of the island’s remoteness.



Today the island’s controversial airport is essentially open only for emergency medevacs, although one Titan Airways chartered flight did land on April 20 with key medical supplies, including 960 coronavirus testing kits and five ventilators.

Food and other supplies, including fuel, are brought to the island by ship but fresh produce, such as milk, dairy and fresh vegetables, are in short supply. Visitors to the island consist mainly of a handful of “yachties” who have chosen to stop off on their way across the South Atlantic.

I have chronicled St Helena’s troubles in several blogs over the past four years, including ones based on my two most recent visits: I first visited the island with my parents as toddler more than 70 years ago. More recently I visited St Helena in January 2017 [<https://www.conservativehome.com/platform/2017/01/lord-ashcroft-some-hope-for-st-helena.html>] and December 2018 [<https://www.conservativehome.com/platform/2018/12/lord-ashcroft-special-report-st-helena-the-island-of-fading-hopes-and-dreams.html>].

The £285 million airport, paid for with British taxpayers’ money, eventually opened to passenger flights in October 2017 – there were previously a series of delays, including safety concerns caused by unpredictable side-winds.

Few, if any, business leaders on the island have had to cope with more setbacks than Hazel Wilmot, who owns the Consulate Hotel in the centre of Jamestown, the island’s capital. “The mood on the island is one of despair and quiet resignation,” she told me this weekend.

In anticipation of a tourist boom, Ms Wilmot spent nearly £2 million buying and renovating both her hotel in Jamestown. Before the airport opened, official figures predicted that the tourist numbers to the island would increase from around 1,000 a year to 29,000 a year by 2042 – levels of visitors that are now considered “pie in the sky” by most islanders.

Ms Wilmot tells me that her last “proper” paying guest at her

Why Covid-19 has brought more despair to islanders on St Helena

By Lord Ashcroft

hotel left on March 16 – since then she has had just a handful of “yachties” paying a heavily-reduced rate of just £20 a night. “I think it will be six months or more before I, and others like me, see any real income again,” she said.

“We are trying to find ways not just to tread water but keep our heads above water. All my savings have long gone and the private sector has to compete with a Government-owned, funded and heavily subsidised hotel [Mantis]. But where is a Wilmot there is a way!” According to Ms Wilmot, at least two business people on the island have recently been forced to sell their homes to repay bank loans.

Those involved in tourism continue to press for a direct air link to Europe, ideally Britain – rather than, or ideally as well as, South Africa. These people include Paul O’Sullivan, a successful South African businessman and the CEO of Trade Winds Corporation Plc (formerly St Helena Corporation Plc). Mr O’Sullivan has ambitious, multi-million-pound leisure development plans for the island but St Helena’s partial “lockdown” means these are currently on hold. However, he believes that the setback is only temporary, telling me: “We just have to sit it out. I remain positive about the future of St Helena and hope that this time next year things will be back on track.”

A series of events are being planned for next year to mark the 200th anniversary of the exiled Napoleon’s death on St Helena – but even these must be in some doubt given the present circumstances.

Despite not having any cases of Covid-19, many “Saints” are practising social distancing and some shops are restricting the numbers allowed in at any one time. People with coronavirus-like symptoms are being urged to self-isolate...just in case.

Last month Baroness Sugg, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for International Aid, insisted that the UK is taking its responsibilities for the British Overseas Territories “extremely seriously”. These words have been backed up by

action too: the British Government has allocated £2.5 million for coronavirus-linked aid to the island.

Lawson Henry is a member of the island’s five-strong island Executive Council (likened to a Cabinet) and also chairs the economic development committee. He told me: “There are shortages of some essential goods but retailers and importers are working with the St Helena Government to ration goods and this seems to be working.

“The Government has a number of support packages in place for business. The first to receive this support was the hospitality sector and this has been expanded to the construction sector and other businesses.

“I believe the Government is doing all it can in these challenging times but there are those who believe we should do more and others who think we have done too much.”

Dr Philip Rushbrook, the Governor of St Helena, has welcomed the arrival of emergency medical supplies and told islanders in a statement: “At times like these, it is crucial that we pull together as an island, using our good nature, compassion and resourcefulness for the greater good.”

My fondness for our 14 Overseas Territories, in general, and for St Helena, in particular, is on-going. So, too, is my concern for the well-being of “Saints” during these exacting times. I continue to believe that it is a grave mistake that so much of our international aid budget, currently running at around £14.6 billion a year and enshrined in law, is wasted by corrupt and inept foreign regimes.

It is at times like these that we should be doing more to look after those closer to home and those in real need, including residents of St Helena and other Overseas Territories.

** Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC is a businessman, philanthropist, author and pollster. For information on Lord Ashcroft’s work, visit www.lordashcroft.com. Follow him on Twitter: @LordAshcroft.*

Your Opinion Counts

Dear Editor

Turn your hand to anything

There is a saying that you have to know where you come from to know where you are, to be better able to know where you are going. The island has come a

long way now since I grew up. The medical service was basic- for many years we were without a dentist – schooling was up to 15 years of age, there was no social service, housing was poor, no electricity, kitchens had open fire grates, Families had to fend for themselves but within a supportive and caring community.

Because we had to do things for ourselves over many decades, people had to be resourceful, adaptable, “turn you hand to anything” make use of what we had, what was available. Very little was imported. We had fish, milk, vegetables and fruit (also picking what grew wild like tungis) and occasionally goat

meat. Living in town we got a regular supply of vegetables from the Youngs at the top of town, the critical factor being that they had a regular supply of water. Though filtered, all water was untreated at this time.

It would be helpful to know something of what brought about the changes and improvements to where we are today. Was it the economy? It is not an easy answer, there are so many strands. Perhaps we could take improvements in housing as housing is an indicator of the state of a country and how it functions. The population census in 1931, in Gill and Teale’s book on dates and

Continued on NEXT PAGE

Your Opinion Counts

important events in island history, showed there was a population of 3,995 with 1,504 living in not more than 2 rooms. The Record comments on the "shocking housing situation", that the island had been "reduced to extreme poverty" That was the St Helena I grew up in and was part of.

We need to go back to find out how the island had got into such a state. It was the result of the island being run by the English East India Company (EIC) since it was settled in 1659. It was run as a company island, part of the EIC's trade with the Far East, St Helena playing a key role in making the EIC the world's wealthiest and most influential global company, controlling half the world's trade. It contributed to Britain becoming a great trading nation where St Helena played an important part. But the island never paid its way costing the EIC something like £100,000 a year. When the EIC left in the 1830's and the Crown took over, it only put in a fraction of this amount. This led to a pattern of poverty and emigration that lasted up to the 1960's when SHG introduced a social service and benefits.

To address the housing problem, SHG had started building council houses (called government landlord housing here) in town, Half Tree Hollow, New Ground, Longwood, and Deadwood. As it could not keep pace with demand and as Islanders had a range of trade skills SHG engaged directly with the people to build their own homes. A plot of land was leased for 7 years and when the building had been roofed, it was sold freehold at an affordable amount, to the lease holder, the lease payments being deducted. As we know from the 2016 population census this scheme has resulted in 73% of all housing. The scheme not only met a social need, put money into the economy but also greatly enhanced the social ambience of the island for tourism.

In facing and adjusting to global chal-

lenges brought about by the Corona virus, we could look at making more use of the model that has worked for St Helena to engage more directly with the people. Government working directly in partnership with the people lifting the island from the state it was in for many years, has been hugely successful. It is an approach and a model that can be used for other areas like fishing and farming. The critical factor for farming is to have a regular supply of water at an affordable price. Developing and maximizing our resources in a sustainable way has been a government policy for a long time in the way of import substitution. Economists know that the more we produce ourselves, the more money circulates on the island and accumulates.

The critical matter that needs to be addressed is the status of the island, given to us as a Self Governing Territory, and an island population that would be a village in the UK. This status means the Island has to deliver all the services of a national government and eventually pay for them which a village in the UK would not be able to do. Not that the status should be changed, but unless long-term financing is agreed by the UK government to meet the special circumstances of St Helena, the Island will experience increasing problems. The Royal Charter of 1673 gave our ancestors full British citizenship *in perpetuity* and the island was "*to be holden as of East Greenwich in the county of Kent*" as a village. That charter still stands.

Like most islanders I had to build my family home. I employed Johnny Wallace at weekends and was his mate doing the labouring. Johnny was a creative, multi-skilled craftsman. It was through him, other Island craftsmen, and helpers who were able to turn their hand to whatever was needed, that our house got built. There is a poem about Johnny in the collection "Call of the Seagull" which ends:

*Lines in a builder's hand
like lines on a fern
that glow the flow
of crystals in our lives*

*To be more in what we are
than what we want to be*

Basil George

Dear Mr Anthony Caswell

I write to you through the Independent as I look with disgust at how our beautiful Castle Gardens has been permitted to become an absolute eye sore. Mr Caswell, what a missing your passionate and loving touch is to that place. For years you served the island dutifully, loving attention to the plant life and creating such a wonderful ambience in the gardens that could be enjoyed by all (and there were water shortages then too).

What a disgrace the garden currently is to the islanders and tourists. There was a time when I would be proud to show off Castle Gardens. Everything was neat and well trimmed by you and your former colleagues.

Where is the pride Mr Caswell that you have? Why are we selling the saints short once again for what is clearly a bad decision? I appeal to everyone to go and have a good look at the state of the Gardens and see how it compares to say ten years ago. I am not one for crying people down as it is done too often on this island and people are not given a chance, but really, I have watched for a long while now the Garden is going downhill. How far down hill it will go I really don't know. I appreciate there has been a shortage of rain but it looks nothing but untidy and grotty.

For those of you who have lived and travelled abroad I am sure you can testify to walking through the most breath taking gardens and there was a time when Castle Gardens was an absolute delight to visit.

Is this time for an island effort where we all pitch in to help to bring our beautiful garden back to its glory days or will the garden end up like the children's playground, with the message to visitors that Saints simply don't give a damn?

Thank you so much Anthony for your years of service to St Helena.

Regards,

A wilted flower.



**St Helena
Government**



THINK BEFORE STOCKING UP

ASK YOURSELF

Who is missing out and who is being impacted



- During these uncertain times and with the slight delay in the MV Helena's schedule, many households on St Helena have begun to stockpile, which has resulted in some food items being no longer available in outlets.
- Stockpiling has been known to have a more detrimental impact on some of the most vulnerable in our community, meaning that those who have lower incomes are now having to go without.
- We continue to work closely with importers and merchants to ensure that there is sufficient food on the Island to last until the next call of the MV Helena. Residents are assured that while stocks of some items might be low, the Island will not run out of food. However at this time there might be a need for people to consider using alternative items to what they would normally use.
- In the meantime, everyone is encouraged to continue to shop normally, especially when the next voyage of the MV Helena arrives. We want to ensure that as a community everyone has a chance to buy what they need and no one is left without an item that is used daily, whilst other households have stockpiled items for future use.
- We urge the Island community when buying more than they need, to ask the questions who is missing out, and who is being impacted? Those impacted are often the elderly, those with current medical conditions, young children and babies which in turn impacts family members, friends and neighbours.

We would like to thank merchants at this time for introducing measures and restrictions on certain food items to ensure that everyone has a chance to purchase.

In the meantime, AW Ship Management Ltd and local importers have indicated that goods have been received at the warehouses in Cape Town. We have received news today that the MV Helena is at her berth and has started loading cargo for the next voyage due to arrive at the Island on 21 May.

AW has updated and published the MV Helena shipping schedule for the rest of the year and this can be found online at the following address: <https://sthelenashipping.com/schedules/>

At this stage there are still no suspected cases of Covid-19 on the Island. As a community we remain connected and resilient, we are all affected during these times so please continue to look out for and help each other.

***"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members."* – Coretta Scott King**

**SHG
11 May 2020**



Has an exciting opportunity for a
**Full Time Technical Trainer -
Gardening**

Purpose of Role:

- To inspire, enthuse and train disabled and vulnerable adults in gardening techniques, providing meaningful work experience through direction and high supervision.
- To support the conservation, maintenance, development and enjoyment of the SHAPE Garden areas as a significant horticultural attraction, providing garden therapy as well as production of organic fresh produce for sale to the public with a view towards achieving a steady flow of income.

Responsible to SHAPE Manager
Hours of work – Monday to Friday
(8:00am – 4:00pm)



For a full job description and requirements of the role please contact
Mrs Marianne Young-Crowie
(SHAPE Manager) on 24690 or
email SHAPE@sainthelena.co.sh

Please submit your application form to
Miss Danielle Anthony
(Finance & Administration
Manager) via email
Finance_AdminManager.SHAPE@sainthelena.co.sh
no later than 4pm on Friday 29th
May 2020

We look forward to hearing from you!

Invitation to Tender

The Saint Helena Government wishes to invite suitably experienced contractors to submit tenders for the following contract-

Annual Grounds Maintenance of the Castle Gardens, Grand Parade and Honeymoon Chair, Jamestown

Copies of the tender document can be obtained from

**Miss Tiffany Lawrence
Procurement Officer
Essex House
Jamestown**



**Telephone No: 22270 or email
tiffany.lawrence@sainthelena.gov.sh**

A site visit to view the works will take place on Friday, 22 May 2020, at 9:30am, meeting at the Castle Gardens, Jamestown.

If you are unable to attend the site visit during this time, please contact the Procurement Officer to arrange another date & time.

Should you require any further details, please contact the Maintenance Officer, Mr Dalton George, on telephone number 24724 or email dalton.george@sainthelena.gov.sh.

Completed tenders should be placed in the Tender Box at Essex House by 12noon on Friday, 05 June 2020.

Interested parties should note that this opportunity is **not** being advertised overseas.



END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS AND INSURANCE RENEWALS - REMINDERS

End of Year Accounts

Bank of St Helena Ltd would like to remind all Commercial Lending Clients who have not yet done so, that you are required to submit a copy of your End of Year Accounts for the financial year 2019-2020, by no later than 30 June 2020. This should include a minimum of:

- ⇒ Income and Expenditure Accounts / Trading, Profit and Loss Accounts
- ⇒ Balance Sheet
- ⇒ Depreciation Schedule

Insurance Renewals

Commercial and Personal Lending Clients who have loans secured on assets such as property, vehicles, plant or machinery are reminded to submit a copy of your updated insurance receipts.

Please submit all necessary documentation to the Lending Section, Bank of St Helena Ltd, Market Street, Jamestown. For further assistance or information, contact the Lending Section on (+290) 22390 or email commerciallending@sainthelenabank.com or personallending@sainthelenabank.com.

Head Office: Market Street · Jamestown · St Helena Island · STHL 1ZZ
T. +290 22390 · F. +290 22553 · email. info@sainthelenabank.com · web www.sainthelenabank.com



Established and regulated under the Financial Services Ordinance, 2008, the Financial Services Regulations, 2017 and the Company Ordinance, 2004



DROP YOUR BANKING FORMS IN THE DESIGNATED BOXES

Bank of St Helena Ltd strongly advises customers to use the **Drop-in Boxes** located to the left of the entrance in the main Bank, at the Wharf Kiosk and Remote Banking sites.

Tellers will continue to process **Cash Withdrawals** and **Pay-in Requests** at the counters for all banking sites, but it is recommended that other banking requests be completed using the drop-in system.

Paperwork that can be dropped includes: Account Transfers, Bill Payments and Remittance Forms. Customers requesting Online Banking and Local Debit Cards can also drop application forms and will be contacted for verification.

Bank of St Helena would like to thank customers for their co-operation at this time.

Head Office: Market Street · Jamestown · St Helena Island · STHL 1ZZ
T. +290 22390 · F. +290 22553 · email: info@sainthelenabank.com · web www.sainthelenabank.com



Bank of St. Helena Ltd.

Established and regulated under the Financial Services Ordinance, 2008, the Financial Services Regulations, 2017 and the Company Ordinance, 2004



VACANCY DISABILITIES & DAY CARE OFFICER (THREE MONTH FIXED-TERM CONTRACT)

The Children & Adult Social Care Directorate is seeking to recruit Disabilities & Day Care Officer's for a fixed-term period of three months.

As a community based role, the Disabilities & Day Care Officers plays a key part of the Adult Social Care team function. The role is to support vulnerable adults aged 18 – 65years to be included in society, to have choice and control in their own lives and develop their full potential.

Essential qualifications and experience required for this role is:

- GCSE in English at Grade C or above or equivalent (applicants without this qualification may still apply and can undertake a functional skills assessment as part of the recruitment process);
- Driver's License Class A;
- Completion of accredited lifting and handling training or equivalent
- Completion of NQF level 3 qualification on Social Care
- Experience of working with challenging behaviour

Salary for this post is Grade D commencing at £11,034 per annum pro rata.

For further information about the duties of the post and a copy of the job profile, interested persons should contact Nicolene Adams, on telephone number 25327 or e-mail: nicolene.adams@sainthelena.gov.sh.

Application forms can be obtained from Corporate Human Resources and the Children & Adult Social Care Directorate and should be submitted through Directors, where applicable, to Sharina Williams, Human Resources Officer, Corporate Human Resources, The Castle or e-mail recruitment@sainthelena.gov.sh by no later than 4pm on Monday, 18 May 2020.

All appointments are subject to the successful candidate providing satisfactory clearances, including a medical check and vetting/DBS clearance. SHG reserves the right to have information provided on the application form independently verified.



PRIVATE SECTOR GENERAL MANAGER WANTED

We are looking for an outgoing, hardworking, hands-on Manager to join our small and dynamic team.

Must have excellent people and good computer skills.

Hours of work may vary and Salary is Negotiable.

Split Shifts & Weekend work is compulsory.

Please email your CV to bluelantern@helanta.co.sh

For further information contact Keith or Craig at the Blue Lantern on telephone 25555 during working hours.

We look forward to hearing from you



VACANCY FOR ANALYST

Salary range £10,550 to £13,793 per annum
Permanent Appointment

Audit St Helena is seeking to recruit an Analyst to join their performance audit team.

The analyst will undertake performance audits under supervision across the public sector.

Prospective candidates are required to have good GCSE's in English and Mathematics with further studies in a quantitative discipline (Economics/ Business Management/ Accounting/ Finance or similar) to diploma/introductory certificate level or academic equivalent.

Key skills for this position include good oral and written communication, an aptitude for figures and an analytical and enquiring mind. IT skills in Excel, Word and Outlook are also essential.

The job profile and application forms are available by calling 22111 or e-mailing Brendon.Hunt@sainthelena.gov.sh Applications should be submitted by hand or by e-mail to the Audit St Helena, First Floor, New Porteous House, Jamestown no later than 4pm on Friday 22nd May 2020



St Helena
Government

SEA RESCUE TEAM TO CARRY OUT TRAINING EXERCISE WEDNESDAY, 20 MAY 2020

The St Helena Sea Rescue Service will be conducting a pyrotechnic training exercise on Wednesday, 20 May 2020, and will be activating a number of handheld and rocket distress flares.

Deployment of Maritime Distress Flares will start at **6.30pm** from a vessel approximately one nautical mile north of James Bay. A VHF safety message will be sent out prior to deployment of the first flare.

The public is asked not to report any distress flares from this location during this time.

The flares will be deployed in the following order:

- 3 orange distress smokes
- 12 white illuminating rocket flares (This is a Search and Rescue flare which is used to illuminate an area, not used for distress)
- 12 hand-held red distress flares
- 12 red rocket distress flares.

This will be an opportunity for the public to view what a maritime distress flare looks like. Please take note of the characteristics of the red flares as these are the ones used by vessels in distress.

Anyone with any questions regarding this training should contact the Sea Rescue Manager, Simon Wade, on tel: 25052 or via email: simonwade@helanta.co.sh

VACANCIES SEA RESCUE SERVICE

The Sea Rescue Services of the St Helena Police Directorate has an opportunity for motivated and enthusiastic individual to join their team as Auxiliary Crew Member. (This is not Full time post)

The purpose of the post is to protect and save life at Sea, Some of the key tasks and responsibilities are:

1. Carry out directions from the Officer in Charge when at sea rescue incidents ensuring work is carried out within the standard operating procedures.
2. Make safety critical decisions during sea rescue operations and other deployments, ensuring the safety of the public, other agencies and the sea rescue crews.
3. Ensuring that standards are maintained and that the service is in line with the Police Directorate's Values and Code of Ethics.
4. Must be able to attend Sea Rescue weekly training sessions.
5. Must be able to work some weekends to support flight operations.
6. Must be available for emergencies and will be required to participate in on call rota inclusive of some weekends.
7. Respond immediately and safely to all Sea Search and Rescue emergency incidents in an efficient and professional manner.

Prospective candidates should have:

- GCSE Math and English at Grade C or above or equivalent. If applicants do not have these qualifications they will be required to successfully pass a Functional Skills assessment in English and Maths as part of the selection process.
- Valid and clean driving licence in Class A.
- Must be 18 years of age or over a competent swimmer with the ability to pass a swimming physical fitness test

Experience in Maritime field and First Aid Qualification is desirable

Rate of pay for the post is £4.11 per hour for hours worked, plus a payment of £70 a month retainer.

For further details regarding the full role and a copy of the job profile, interested persons can contact Mr Simon Wade, Sea Rescue Manager on telephone number 25052 or e-mail simonwade@helanta.co.sh or Mr Leeroy Caswell or Craig Scipio, Deputy Sea Rescue Managers Tel 25215, email: leeroy.caswell@helanta.co.sh craigscipio@helanta.co.sh

Applications should be completed and submitted, through Directors, where applicable, to Anya Richards, Human Resources Officer at Policing Directorate, Coleman House (or email anya.richards@sainthelena.gov.sh) by no later than 4pm on Friday 22nd May 2020 GMT.

All appointments are subject to the successful candidate providing satisfactory clearances, including a medical check and vetting/DBS clearance. SHG reserves the right to have information provided on the application form independently verified.

SHG positively accepts applications from all members of the community regardless of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and will consider all applications on the basis of merit, in accordance with the person specification. All disabled applicants meeting the minimum criteria listed in the job profile will be guaranteed an interview.



VACANCIES SEA RESCUE SERVICE

The Sea Rescue Services of the St Helena Police Directorate has an opportunity for a motivated and enthusiastic individuals to join their team as **Sea Rescue Crew (Helmsman)**. The post of Sea Rescue Helmsmen is a full time contract.

The purpose of the post is to protect and save life at Sea, Some of the key tasks and responsibilities are:

1. Carry out directions from the Officer in Charge when at sea rescue incidents ensuring work is carried out within the standard operating procedures.
2. Support the wider Police Directorate through deployment when required within limitation of training given, as a Special Police Constable.
3. Under the direction of the Sea Rescue Service Deputy Manager, responsible for ensuring the maintenance and proper use of all Sea Rescue facilities, boats and equipment ensuring it is in a state of readiness at all times.
4. Make safety critical decisions during sea rescue operations and other deployments, ensuring the safety of the public, other agencies and the sea rescue crews.

Prospective candidates should have:

- GCSE Math and English at Grade C or above or equivalent. If applicants do not have these qualifications they will be required to successfully pass a Functional Skills assessment in English and Maths as part of the selection process.
- Valid and clean driving licence in Class A.
- Must be 18 years of age or over a competent swimmer with the ability to pass a swimming physical fitness test

Experience in Maritime field and First Aid Qualification is desirable

Hours of work will be 35 per week and the successful applicant will be required to be on-call for emergencies and will be required some weekends as per an on-call and Aircraft cover rota.

Salary for the post is at Grade B, Entry Level commencing at £ 7,394 per annum.

For further details regarding the full role and a copy of the job profile, interested persons can contact Mr Simon Wade, Sea Rescue Manager on telephone number 25052 or e-mail simonwade@helanta.co.sh or Mr Leeroy Caswell or Craig Scipio, Deputy Sea Rescue Managers Tel 25215, email: leeroy.caswell@helanta.co.sh craigscipio@helanta.co.sh

Applications should be completed and submitted, through Directors, where applicable, to Anya Richards, Human Resources Officer at Policing Directorate, Coleman House (or email anya.richards@sainthelena.gov.sh) by no later than 4pm on Friday 22nd May 2020 GMT.

All appointments are subject to the successful candidate providing satisfactory clearances, including a medical check and vetting/DBS clearance. SHG reserves the right to have information provided on the application form independently verified.

SHG positively accepts applications from all members of the community regardless of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and will consider all applications on the basis of merit, in accordance with the person specification. All disabled applicants meeting the minimum criteria listed in the job profile will be guaranteed an interview.



St Helena
Government

RUPERT'S BEACH CLOSURE

The following is a Public Announcement from the Infrastructure & Transport Directorate:

The public is advised that Rupert's Beach and BBQ shelters will be closed from tomorrow, Tuesday 12 May 2020, for approximately four weeks.

This closure is to allow the laying of ducting for St Helena's fibre optic cable.

Access to the Beach will be available on St Helena's Day (21 May) via the vehicle ramp.

The date for the reopening of Rupert's Beach and BBQ Shelters will be announced via local media in due course.

The public is thanked in advance for their understanding and cooperation.



St Helena
Government

RUPERT'S WHARF TEMPORARY OPENING

Port Control would like to advise the public that Rupert's Wharf will be temporarily open to members of the public between Wednesday, 13 May, and Thursday, 21 May 2020 (inclusive).

A temporary protective road surface is in place, however, no vehicular access will be permitted to the Jetty area.

The Wharf will be closed to the public on arrival of the MV Helena.

Following the departure of the MV Helena, access restrictions will be reinstated to allow completion of CAN France rockfall protection works.



JAMESTOWN WHARF ACCESS RESTRICTIONS

Port Control would like to advise that a section of Jamestown Wharf will be restricted to members of the public from Wednesday, 13 May 2020, for approximately eight weeks, between the hours of 7am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

These access restrictions are to allow CAN France to carry out rockfall protection measures on the wall along Sisters Walk.

These restrictions apply from the first barrier, near the footbridge, to the end steps.

No parking will be permitted at any time from the first barrier to the end steps at Jamestown Wharf unless authorised by Port Control.

Pedestrian access from the first barrier to the end steps will be on the seaward side of the Wharf Access Road.

Traffic marshalls will be in place to direct Wharf users to the walking routes.

There are no changes to the ferry boat timetable or landing point.

Unrestricted access will be available all day on St Helena's Day (21 May).

The public is thanked in advance for their understanding and cooperation.

PHILIP JOHN'S SHOP

in St. Paul's will be opened all day from:

9am to 5pm

on

**St Helena's Day -
Thursday 21st May.**

For those of you who are unable to visit us during our normal opening hours, here's your chance to come along and see what we have to offer.



VACANCY CLAIMS OFFICER

Corporate Finance is seeking to recruit a Claims Officer within the Social Security Office.

The Claims Officer will be responsible to the Claims Manager for carrying out the duties of Adjudication Officer in accordance with the Social Security Ordinance.

Applicants should have the following qualifications and experience:

- GCSE Maths and English at Grade C or above, or an equivalent qualification, (applicants without a Level 2 qualification in Maths and English may still apply and can undertake a Functional Skills assessment as part of the recruitment process)
- Demonstrate excellent customer service and communication skills (including interviewing and negotiating) with the ability to deal with the public on a regular basis
- Good Microsoft IT Skills
- A valid Class A Driver's Licence (applications will be considered from persons who do not possess a drivers licence but are willing to work towards gaining the license during the probationary period)

Salary for this post is Grade D commencing at £11,034 per annum.

For further details about the post, interested persons should contact Mr Anthony Hopkins, Claims Manager on telephone number 22605 or e-mail: anthony.hopkins@sainthelena.gov.sh

Application forms are available from Corporate Human Resources and on the SHG website at: www.sainthelena.gov.sh/vacancies and should be submitted through Directors, where applicable, to Dianne Venning, Human Resources Officer, The Castle or e-mail recruitment@sainthelena.gov.sh by no later than 4pm on Tuesday, 19 May 2020.

All appointments are subject to the successful candidate providing satisfactory clearances, including a medical check and vetting/DBS clearance. SHG reserves the right to have information provided on the application form independently verified.

Cricket Results and Fixtures

Saturday 9th May St Pauls made 193 for 6 from 20 overs

Gareth Johnson 74
Dax Richards 29
Sea-Lee Thomas 2/36 (4), Rhez Crowie 1/20 (3)

Longwood 157 for 5 from 20 overs

Darrel Leo 61
Sean-Lee Thomas 30
Gareth Johnson 2/24 (4), Jordie Henry 1/21 (4)

Gareth Johnson 3pts, Darrel Leo 2pts, Dax Richards 1pt

Sunday 10th May HTH 252 for 4 from 20 overs

Chris Owen 82
David Young 80
Gavin George 2/42 (4), Jason Thomas 1/30 (3)

Jamestown made 137 all out in 20 overs

Scott Crowie 59
Damien O'bey 46
Andrew Yon 3/15 (4), David Young 2/25 (3)

David Young 3pts, Andrew Yon 2pts, Chris Owen 1pt

Levelwood 220 for 6 from 20 overs

Shavon Leo 89*
Greg Coleman 29
Martin Cranfield 2/44 (4), Darren Isaac 2/46 (4)

Sandy Bay 179 for 6 from 20 overs

Rhys Francis 64
Brett Isaac 30
Jerry Thomas 1/20 (3), Clayton Leo 1/23 (3)

Shavon Leo 3pts, Rhys Francis 2pts, Greg Coleman 1pt

District Table:

Team	Games Played	Won	Lost	Points	Net run rate
HTH	5	4	1	12	3.707749
Levelwood	5	4	1	12	2.897126
St. Pauls	5	4	1	12	1.397802
Jamestown	5	2	4	6	-2.03082
Longwood	5	1	4	3	-2.82677
Sandy Bay	5	0	5	0	-2.77857

Fixtures For This Weekend

Sat 16.5.209

1:30 -

Jamestown Heat vs Levelwood Allstars - Umpires - Challengers

Sun 17.5.20

9:30 - Challengers Vs Woodpeckers - Umpires - Sandy Bay Pirates

1:30 - Mustangs vs Lions - Umpires - Allstars

Golf Report for Sunday 10th May 2020

At 10am on Sunday 10th May 2020 37 golfers in nine groups on the first nine tee boxes teed off for the Texas Scramble stableford competition. The golfers signed up in pairs and 3/8 of the combined handicap was used. There was a tie in the top three scores of 45 points each. The top prize winners and runners up were determined through a count back. The winners were as follows;

1 st Prize	Eric Constantine and Arthur Young
2 nd Prize	Lawson Henry and Ron De Reuck
Longest drive ladies	Christine Scipio 13th
Nearest to pin ladies	Helena Stevens 16th
Longest drive gents	Brian Joshua 17th
Nearest to pin gents	Larry Legg 11th
Two ball pool winners	Nicky Stevens/Jeff Ellick as well as Lawson Henry/Ron De Reuck both on 7th

The prizes were sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Colclough and presented to the winners by Anne Colclough. John and Anne were impressed by the good turn out and they thanked the members for taking part in the competition and also for the warm reception and kind treatment they have received since they arrived on the island. Congratulations to all the winners.

Sunday 17th May 2020 the club will be hosting a Par 3 Strokeplay competition. Tee off 10:00am. 3/8 of the full handicap will be used. Registration is ongoing through the usual channels.

The AGM that was previously postponed as a precaution against the threat of Covid19 took place immediately after presentation of prizes. A new committee of management was elected. The new committee is as follows;

Club President	Ron De Reuck
Captain	Bramwell Lumukwana
Vice-Captain	John Colclough
Ladies Captain	Helena Stevens
Honorary treasurer	Blessing Gurure
Honorary Secretary	Christine Scipio
Games manager	Jeffrey Stevens
Handicaps Member	Tony Duncan
Entertainment manager	Keith Benjamin

The club also awarded an honorary membership to Mr. and Mrs. John Joshua for the many years of support they have given to the club. This was a well-deserved award. Congratulations...!

***For more pictures and information like our Facebook page @shgc.org.sh
We wish you all a great weekend...!***



Armchair Supporters View by Nick Stevens

After Prime Minister Johnson's address on Sunday when he stated that elite sport could return on the 1st of June; we the Football fans were full of hope that we will get to see the conclusion of the Premier League season.

Tackling will be banned, pitches disinfected and players restricted to groups of five when the Premier League starts a first phase of team training.

Official protocols sent to players and managers on Tuesday and obtained by the BBC reveal that social distancing must be "strictly observed".

Corner-flags, balls, cones, goalposts and even playing surfaces will be disinfected after each session.

League bosses hope training can begin on Monday, restricted to 75 minutes.

Apparently the PFA has heard from a number of players, especially those who have underlying health conditions like asthma or who are from black and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, that they have real concerns about returning to playing.

Black men and women are nearly twice as likely to die with coronavirus as white people in England and Wales, according to the Office for National Statistics.

What has happen and what is about to happen

- . Wednesday, 13 May: Professional Footballers' Association/League Managers' Association consult members on medical protocols

- . Thursday, 14 May: Meetings between Premier League and PFA/LMA about medical protocols

- . Thursday, 14 May: Meeting between Culture Secretary and football authorities

- . Monday, 18 May: Next Premier League meeting

- . Monday, 18 May: Premier League players may return to initial group training under socially distancing protocols

- . 25 May: Uefa deadline for leagues to have finalised plan for restarting seasons

- . 1 June: Government date for possible return of elite sport behind closed doors in England

- . 12 June: Premier League aiming to return with first fixture

"fearful" of crowds turning up at football stadiums if the Premier League season restarts.

The league hopes to return on 12 June with games played behind closed doors.

But GMP chief constable Ian Hopkins believes some "tricky fixtures" could pose a problem for policing.

"Liverpool coming to Manchester City I have no doubt would attract crowds whether they're allowed in the ground or not," he said.

"It needs very, very careful thinking through." League leaders Liverpool were 25 points clear of reigning champions City when the Premier League was suspended because of the coronavirus pandemic on 13 March.



England and Tottenham defender Danny Rose has criticised the Premier League's plans to restart the season amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Club officials met on Monday to continue talks on "Project Restart", with the English top flight aiming to resume fixtures on 12 June.

As of 11 May, 32,065 people had died in the UK with coronavirus.

Rose who is currently on loan at Newcastle stated: "Football shouldn't even be spoken about until the numbers have dropped massively,"

"People's lives are at risk."

Football Flashback



Man City due to host Liverpool on 12th June



Wirebirds 1970s'

The chief of Greater Manchester Police says his force are

Armchair Supporters View by Nick Stevens

What's happening at New Horizons?

New Horizons will now be open to all members on the following days:

Wednesdays

3pm-5pm

Thursdays

4.30-6.30 (indoor games only)

Fridays

5.30pm-8.30pm

Mondays' we currently have football training on Francis Plain for years 2 to year 7 from 3.30 to 4.45pm.

As of Wednesday the 13th May the New Horizons Gym at Half Tree Hollow return to normal. As is available to members 24/7

To obtain the code contact New Horizons 22034 or 61545 New Horizons staff will continue to be at the Gym 7-9am and 4-6pm most afternoons to ensure the Gym is clean.

St Helena's' Day 2020

Just to clarify we (New Horizons) was advised not hold the St

Helena Day Celebrations this year due to the uncertainty of Covid 19 and the Councillors didn't think it was a good idea to encourage large groups of people to congregate in a small area like the Grand Parade.

Although we fully support the decision made by elected members and fully understand the risks involve. We however as an organisation, is extremely disappointed not to be able to organise our national day.

Since we resurrect St Helena's in 2007 we have brought much needed funds to not only New Horizons but to all the charities; food vendors and pubs and clubs in Jamestown over the past 13 years.

Maybe we should have organised something on a smaller scale but unless you sell limited amount of tickets for entrée we wouldn't have no way of keeping the crowds small enough Our plan was to organised a fun day later in the year but as celebrations is going to take place nonetheless this year we will have to wait until 21 May 2021.

New Horizons will like to take this opportunity to wish everyone on St Helena and Saints and friends of St Helena around the world, a happy St Helena's Day.



St Helena Day 2009

States pay respect to former politician who died this week

13th May 2020



Ben Fox, when he won election by just one vote in 2008

A MINUTE'S silence was held in the States Chamber yesterday in memory of former Deputy Ben Fox, who died on Monday.

Bottom of Form

The politician served St Helier No 3 district between 1999 and 2011, having previously been an officer with the States police.

He became known for making passionate speeches during sittings, often referring to his 'previous life' or 'previous career' as a police officer, which always drew laughs and good-humoured groans from fellow Members.

While serving as a Deputy he worked on Planning, Education and Overseas Aid committees, and was appointed vice-chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee in 2008.

He was also an Assistant Education Minister and was given special responsibility for the Youth Service.

Mr Fox won his seat for his final term in 2008 by the narrowest of margins, beating Suzette Hase by a single vote.

Before the minute's silence, the Bailiff, Timothy Le Cocq, said: 'Ben was a vocal campaigner for the return of police motorbikes, which was achieved under the new chief officer of the States of Jersey Police Mike Bowron in 2011.'

'A keen supporter of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Ben attended a number of visits most notably to the Falklands in 2004, where he forged strong friendships with delegates from that Island and St Helena, with whom he remained in regular contact for the remainder of his life. Ben was extremely fond of the Falklands.'

'Ben was renowned for referring to his "previous career" in speeches, which became his catchphrase. He retired in 2011 and enjoyed his retirement with his dear wife, Lizzie, until his recent illness.'

Welcome To 'Stargazing For Mindfulness.' How Looking Up In Lockdown Can Help You Find Your Place



Jamie Carter, Senior Contributor, Forbes

I write about science and nature, stargazing and eclipses.

Can opening your eyes to the dark let some light in? There's been an uptick in the popularity of my posts about stargazing since the beginning of the pandemic. Although I'm sure some amateur astronomers have used an increase in free time in the evenings to dust-down their telescopes and get out into the backyard, there's likely to be just as many who have found the time to do something they've never done before—look at the stars.

After all, it's been a great six weeks in that respect, with the planet Venus a bright beacon in the west in twilight, a couple of supermoons, and many hundreds of SpaceX's Starlink Satellites piquing everyone's interest in the night sky.

"If people are stuck at home on furlough then there's ample time and energy for other hobbies, like stargazing, to come into focus because people might be able to stay up later into the dark nights if they don't have to get up for work so early in the morning," said Mark Westmoquette, an astronomer-turned-Zen yoga teacher whose book *"Mindful Thoughts for Stargazers: Find your inner universe"* outlines how thinking about the wonders of science—"from the tiniest quark to the vastness of space"—can be an inspiration to live with more awareness.

It's well-timed advice, with stress associated with the pandemic potentially on the rise. "Whilst some people's lives have become quieter during lockdown, others have become busier and out of balance, but at either ends of the busy-ness spectrum there's a great deal of stress and fear," said Westmoquette. "If you find yourself lying awake at night, the familiar constellations and the slow wheeling of the heavens can be a reassuring source of comfort."

Looking up at the stars, said Westmoquette, can become a silent retreat into wonder and awe. "When we concentrate on the here and now, on the act of looking up at the majesty and

Welcome To 'Stargazing For Mindfulness.' How Looking Up In Lockdown Can Help You Find Your Place

grandeur of the starry sky, then our worries simply disappear—even if just momentarily,” said Westmoquette. “I find that considering the enormity of space and time and the existence of our tiny planet within that, always helps put my personal worries into perspective.”

So what is “stargazing for mindfulness?” “Mindfulness is about bringing awareness to the present moment, however that is and whatever is happening,” explains Westmoquette. “Looking up at a beautiful star-filled sky, you almost can’t help but be mindful—your vision filled with darkness punctuated by twinkling stars, the gentle breeze on your skin and the sounds of the night entering your ears.”



“Mindful Thoughts for Stargazers: Find your inner universe” by Mark Westmoquette

A much mis-used term in popular culture, mindfulness is largely about concentrating on the present moment. “As you’re looking up, if you get distracted by thoughts about other things—like what you’re going to do tomorrow, or how you really need to mow the lawn—as soon as you notice these thoughts, guide your attention back to what you’re seeing above you,” said Westmoquette.

Westmoquette knows what he’s talking about. A scientist researching astronomy at the European Southern Observatory in Munich and at UCL in London, Westmoquette used to go on ‘observing runs’ to various mountain-top observatories. “I’ve seen some of the most spectacular night skies on mountains like Mauna Kea in Hawaii and Paranal in Chile, but sadly, as a professional astronomer, most of the night is spent in the control room at the computer, guiding the telescope and watching as the data arrives on the screen,” he said. However, he would always nip out and steal a look at the night sky with his own eyes.

Westmoquette got disillusioned with professional astronomy. “I found myself increasingly isolated in my job, communicating with colleagues and collaborators only over Skype, spending a lot of time in front of my computer, and being caught in the ‘publish-or-die’ mentality,” he said. “I didn’t fall out of love with astronomy, just with my academic career.”

He currently lives on St. Helena, a remote volcanic outpost in the South Atlantic Ocean. “The skies here are tremendous,” said Westmoquette. “The Large Magellanic Cloud is getting lower now, but Carina, the Southern Cross and Centaurus are rising, and the band of the Milky Way is spectacular!”

Not surprisingly, there’s a lot of astronomy in *“Mindful Thoughts for Stargazers: Find your inner universe”*, but in a way that induces wonder. Westmoquette references Joseph von Fraunhofer, Frank Drake and William Herschel as much as it does the Buddha as he takes the reader on a journey of a photon, into the nebula of the Small Magellanic Cloud, and the discovery of the first exoplanet. Does modern astronomy sometimes overlook the wonder it reveals? “Yes and no—in astronomy it’s easy to get overwhelmed by the enormity and otherworldliness of things very quickly,” said Westmoquette. “If we, as astronomers, stopped to really think about what we were studying, our minds would be blown on a daily basis!”

Westmoquette used to study galaxies in the “nearby Universe”, which in astronomer-speak are around 3-10 Mpc (mega-parsecs) away. That’s easy to conceive of; 3-10 are on human scales. “Astronomers have a habit of making up new units so that the numbers they’re dealing with end up on these human scales and they don’t get overwhelmed,” said Westmoquette. “In more familiar units, these galaxies were 2×10^{20} kilometres away—that’s 2 with 20 zeros after it!” That’s far enough that the light takes around 20 million years to reach us.

Of course, the clouds are always a threat to successful stargazing. Or perhaps not. “It doesn’t even have to be clear for you to practice mindful stargazing,” said Westmoquette. “If it’s partially cloudy, then your view of the stars might be more like fleeting glimpses through the gaps. If it’s totally cloudy, try observing the clouds themselves—how they’re moving, how they’re lit up by the moon or by lights from below.”

That’s a laudable attitude, but stargazers starting out do seem to experience frequent bouts of anger and disappointment over clouds and anything that doesn’t go their way—like comets fizzling out. It cuts-short stargazing careers forever. “Mostly people just get frustrated and annoyed again and again (and) for some, this puts them off stargazing all together,” said Westmoquette. The cure is to cultivate a calm, forgiving attitude that recognises that, no, the Universe doesn’t care one iota about you or what you can see/not see.

Westmoquette takes this further by outlining the “three poisons” of how the Buddha described the forces of want (for example, wanting the clouds to clear), of aversion (hating clouds or the cold) and of delusion (running 10 minutes on the treadmill waiting for the clouds to clear, and so feeling we deserve clear skies). They are our sources of suffering. “We get stuck when we start wanting or wishing things to be different from what they actually are, right here and now—the further our wish is away from reality, the more we suffer,” said Westmoquette. “So when it’s cloudy, the only thing we can do is accept it’s cloudy.”

As someone who’s traveled across the globe to see a solar eclipse only to be faced with cloud, I know the frustration

Continued on NEXT PAGE

Performance Audit for St Helena Hotel Development Ltd

A report by Audit St Helena; SHG's external auditor, was published last Friday. The purpose of the report is to investigate the value for money of SHG's investment in the hotel development at 1,2 and 3 Main Street through its state owned entity St Helena Hotel Development Ltd (SHHDL)

The report concludes that SHG was "obliged under the terms of the air access agreement to ensure there were appropriate accommodation facilities on-island for mid to high-end tourist and business visitors". The report also states that while SHG approached its investment with the aim of maximising value for money, predictions available at the time for visitor numbers were over optimistic and the financial performance of the hotel suffered as a consequence.

The audit report points out, "**SHHDL's business plan has proven over optimistic.** In June 2014, SHHDL developed its own financial model based on the redesign which underpinned its own business plan for the hotel. The document was updated in July 2016 and April 2017. The business plan and financial model contained a number of key assumptions on annual occupancy rates and revenue forecasts that have proven overoptimistic. Annual occupancy rates for financial year 1 (the six months from October 2017 to March 2018 for reporting purposes) were half what was predicted, and the total loss for the six months was over five times larger than expected. For financial year 2 (April 2018 to March 2019) expected total comprehensive loss was £193,750. SHHDL's financial statements report a loss for this period of £747,429, almost 4 times larger than expected. According to the plan, the hotel was expected to break even in the third year of operation; however SHHDL is currently forecasting a loss for years 3 and 4, reducing to break-even or better in year 5."

The over-optimistic business was based, at least in part on what has proved to be over-optimistic projections of tourist numbers. The audit report states, "The business plan forecasts were based on the 'moderate' visitor growth projections outlined in The Journey Tourism Consulting & Management report, *Visitor Demand Assessment after the Completion of St Helena Airport* (September 2013). These assumptions also were used for DFID's original airport business case and the Ernst and Young CBA. Average annual occupancy rates were forecast to increase year on year based on increased non-St Helenian business and leisure visitors. It is now clear that the modest growth scenario modelled by

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that weather can bring to stargazing and amateur astronomy. I also know that accepting it as something that cannot be controlled is actually pretty easy—you get good at it ... or you just take up cloud-spotting, too.

"When we look up into the night sky it may seem like everything is remote, distant and far removed from our daily life, but it is the contrary—we and all the stars inter-are," said Westmoquette. "We could not exist without them, and they could not exist without us. They contain you, me, love, warm summer days, chocolate ice cream, a clogged drain, crumbling monuments and everything that has ever been."

"That is what makes stargazing so amazing."

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jamiecartereurope/2020/05/10/what-is-stargazing-for-mindfulness-how-looking-up-in-lockdown-can-help-you-find-your-place/#4f8e84ce2c5c>

Journey has proven optimistic.

For example, from November 2017 through October 2018, 2,191 non-St Helenians arrived for holiday and business compared to the 2,800 forecast by Journey. In the following 12 months, November 2018 through October 2019, fewer than half of the 4,300 forecasted non-St Helenian leisure and business travellers arrived, and the combined total actually fell by 122 from the previous year, to 2,069"

The report's conclusions also find that the hotel investment remains financially risky. SHG has invested a total of £2.45 million in the hotel while Enterprise St Helena has converted a loan of £184,000 into shares. The Bank of St Helena has advanced loans of £2.8 million with only £1.3 million secured against the property. £1 million has been formally guaranteed by SHG and a further £500,000 was backed by a letter of intent from the Governor. It is this last £500,000 loan that was recently repaid by SHG in exchange for additional shares. In total, almost £5.5 million in capital finance remains at risk.

In addition, a £400,000 annual subsidy for 2019-20 and a further £200,000 is expected to be paid for 2020-21.

Further descriptions of the financial position of SHHDL in the audit report include. "At the time of obtaining the loans, SHG and SHHDL had little option but to seek the credit though Executive Council initially resisted this move. While the plan was to have all loans paid off within 10 years, SHHDL soon realised it needed to lower the amount of debt. In the August 2018 Special Meeting of the Board of Directors, it discussed a forward strategy that included SHG maintaining a majority shareholding while raising sufficient capital to keep the company running and paying off the two largest loans. Options discussed included offering community shares and an outright sale. A report by consultants BDO states that £2 million in capital would be needed to cover the loans."

It is also stated, "At the time of receiving the loans, interest payments were granted a holiday period of 18 months until June 2019. However, this period has expired for the first loan and the SHHDL board have sought an extension for cash flow purposes. The bank approved this extension to 1 April 2020." There has been no public indication so far that interest payments on the first loan were repaid by Wednesday of this week.

The report summaries; "SHG is carrying significant financial risk on the back of the investment owing to the debt financing structure, and the hotel will continue to exert pressure on SHG's recurrent budget as Government continues to be responsible for subsidising the hotel's losses. **The hotel may provide value for money in the future** however this would depend on a continued high level of service in line with the island's needs, as well as a careful and deliberate approach to the divestment"

The hotel and the service offered do meet expectations. The audit report states, "Despite the financial issues, the building and quality of service provided by the hotel are consistent with what SHG desired at the outset. Now that SHG has decided to sell the hotel business along with its associated land and buildings, the report recommends that SHG develop a detailed strategy outlining its divestment goals and then pursue them actively."

It appears the so-called exit strategy which is now claimed to exist requires further development and more work to make it happen. The audit report comments, "While the board has been successful in constructing and opening the hotel, it did not have a strategic vision from the outset as to its aims for the hotel's future, nor did it achieve some of its above objectives, such as the occupancy rates. No exit strategy was designed at the outset, nor has one been fully developed to date."

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Governance Commission meets to weigh up the work ahead



The Governance Commission, formed to make recommendations on how the Sarkin Report might be implemented, met this week to discuss a range of issues concerning how government works now and how it could be improved in the future. Called *The Political Governance Review* and written by Professor Jeremy Sarkin after two visits to St Helena, the Sarkin Report suggests ways that St Helena's elected representatives can be made more responsible for the decisions made, more accountable for their decisions and more open about how and why they have arrived at decisions.

There are basically two options. Either try to improve the present committee system or adopt a different governance structure based on a Chief Minister who leads the government and is responsible for the achievements and failures of that government. Assisting him would be a small number of ministers each of whom leads one of the government directorates. Both options were discussed with views expressed about the strong and weak points in both these systems of government. Suggestions were also made on how some of the weak points identified could be avoided.

The scope of work the Governance Commission has been asked to address over the next six weeks covers every aspect of government apart from the Judiciary:-

1. To determine for each suggested alternative governance system (i.e. Committee or Ministerial) what would be realistic for St Helena, examine perceived weaknesses and strengths and suggest adjustments that may be relevant to incorporate.
2. To consider the appropriate solutions to related governance issues e.g. constituencies and their form of representation; voter registration (noting related work is underway in Social and Community Development Committee); voter age; need for and selection of a Chief Minister; number and role of non-Minister scrutiny committees; constituency roles for non-Ministers; future structure of a St Helena public service to replace SHG and direct alignment with ministerial or committee portfolios

3. To advise on the number of councillors, ministers and portfolios (drawing on the findings of the Sarkin reports), as well as training options necessary for these roles.
4. To set out the role, status and responsibilities of 'Directorate Heads/Permanent Secretaries' in a reformed public administration.
5. To comment upon the present distribution of roles between the Governor and a future governance arrangement.
6. To frame an understandable and straightforward question to be put to the public if a referendum or other consultation process is decided.
7. To work with the Attorney General's Office to draft an example amendment, for consideration in St Helena and the UK, to the governance provisions in the 2009 Constitution.

The recommendations from the Governance Commission, expected by the end June, is the first step in a tight schedule aimed at resolving the issue on how we are governed before the next general election is due. Part of the process will be to get the general view about our future governance from the Island's population on the main question of committees or ministers. There might be a public vote, if that method is chosen in preference to a public consultation. Whichever way public feeling is measured, it is realised a substantial information and awareness campaign will need to be organised in advance.

The final decision does not lie with Legco or Exco or the Governor. Some of the proposed changes will require amendments to the Constitution and these have to be agreed by the UK Government through the Privy Council. It is known Privy Council decisions can take some months so it is desirable the changes required are limited to a few, simple alterations if the whole process is to be completed in time for the next general election.

The Governance Commission has decided that its second meeting will be an all-day session to ensure its members keep on track with the tight schedule. The Commission will meet at least once a week for the next five or six weeks. The number and length of meetings will depend on the workload.



Your Opinion Counts

Dear Editor

For the benefit of those who haven't been following the St Helena fisheries calamity, today we will start by providing an overview of how we reached this current situation.

In October 2019, SHG launched their Alternative Business Model which was created to implement a fish processing and sales operation. The basic concept being to continue operation of the Cold Store facility at Ruperts to ensure that the local market demand and need for fresh fish was available for sale, and that export of premium fish by air continued as it would add value to sales. Following strained negotiations in early December however, we were advised by SHG that this plan was being taken off the table and was being deemed an unviable option.

Soon after this announcement, SHG also formally advised the St Helena Fisheries Corporation (SHFC) that they would cease to exist in its current form as of 31st January 2020 as SHG simply couldn't continue to offer the financial support required.

On the 20th January, the SHFC advised commercial fishers that in order to assist with the orderly closure, the last day for accepting fuel and ice requirements would be the 24th January and accepting fish from inshore fishers would terminate on the 25th January. This marked the end of a 40 year old relationship.

Upon the closure of the SHFC on the 31st January 2020, it became very apparent that the interim measures that had been promised by SHG were not ready for implementation. Fishers were unable to return to fishing as they awaited further instructions from SHG on how they would be permitted to legally operate their businesses, primarily in terms of access to fuel, ice and processing requirements. On the 07th

February, after some two weeks of not being able to fish, information was provided that gave fishers access to essential requirements needed to return to fishing, although under restrictive conditions.

The interim measures currently in place enable fishers to fish to fulfill the domestic demand only. The fish processing facility, now referred to as the "SHG Fisheries Section" provides ice, processing and packaging services only. Fuel is bought directly from Solomon & Company at a discounted rate, which is similar to that previously provided by the SHFC. The greatest changes to 'normal process' however is that fishers are now required to pay for services rendered by the Fisheries Section as they are now responsible for the sale of their individual catches. Previously SHFC would purchase the fish of the fishers and be responsible for all sales to include local and international. This has been and continues to be challenging as the domestic market is simply not big enough to cater for all commercial fishing businesses lucratively. This has resulted in some vessels remaining on their moorings and those who are operating are doing so at a maximum of 2 to 3 days per week, catching as little as 8 fish per day to honour their customers' orders.

It has now been three months since the initiation of the SHG interim measure. We have been in constant communication with SHG and Councillors to advise them that this situation cannot be allowed to continue in its current state. The capital made during the seasonal months provides security for fishers businesses during the off-season and allows them to continue to provide for their families. Given the current situation, there is no telling what struggles lie ahead for

the fishers of St Helena later this year, when the water turns green and pelagics move away from the island.

To date, however these communications have not been productive nor have they resulted in any improved measures being implemented to safeguard the livelihoods of our local fishers. This is a very distressing time and yet SHG seem strangely composed through it all. What exactly is being done to secure a future for our local fishers and their investments? How are they being rewarded for their dedication and commitment over the years?

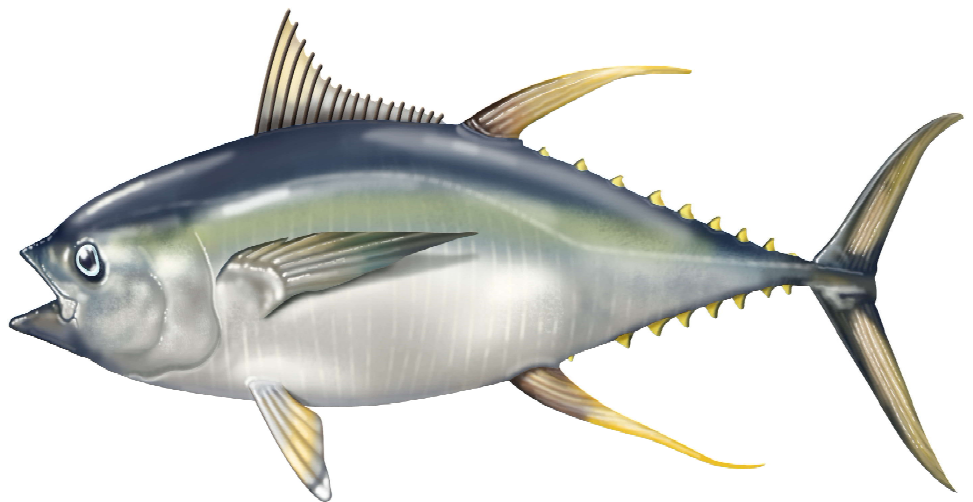
SHG's 10 Year Plan focused on five main headings and National Goals:

- Altogether Safer
- Altogether Healthier
- Altogether Better for Children and Young People
- Altogether Greener
- Altogether Wealthier

These recent turn of events and decisions taken by our government places doubt on all of the above. Commercial fishers are not in a safer place, nor will this island become healthier if we do not have a regular supply of fish, young people will be discouraged from becoming involved in one of the island's key sectors due to the uncertainties surrounding the fishery and we will most certainly not become more wealthier when the industry is being confined to unreasonable measures.

Sincerely

St Helena Commercial Fishermen's Association



ONE YEAR ON

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE TO ST HELENA, ASCENSION AND TRISTAN DA CUNHA

Monday, 11 May 2020, marks the completion of my first year as the Governor of our three unique islands in the South Atlantic. This time last year my wife and I remember the wonderful inauguration and reception given to us by the community on St Helena and the warm wishes of welcome from Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. Our many engagements and meetings with people from each island during the year have been a truly satisfying and unique experience.

Last year in Jamestown, I mentioned areas I intended the Governor's Office to pursue with councillors and administrations. The important roles of any government are to create a stable set of laws, services and infrastructure. These let people live in a society that encourages innovation and opens up opportunities for commerce to thrive and diversify, all reinforced with reliable international connections. Let us reflect on some of what we have achieved together over the last 12 months.

On St Helena, the digital cable is coming and will open up the opportunity to develop a digital economy. An important project is well underway to protect the rock face above Jamestown and at Rupert's where it should lead to full operation of the jetty to handle freight containers. Preparations for the next capital projects supported by DFID on a container park, roads, water security, sanitation and the Comprehensive Development Areas are in the pipeline. Hopefully too, we may sometime soon have a new prison facility at Bottom Woods and a modern police custody suite at Coleman House. A swathe of updated legislation is in place including the decriminalisation of minor offences, introducing simpler fixed penalties and fairer disclosure arrangements for various jobs.

Throughout this year I have enjoyed attending services in fellowship with nearly all the religious and faith groups, meeting with business groups, farmers, hoteliers, retailers and many others to consider new opportunities. The Pitch@Plantation event demonstrated the Island's innovative potential and it has been very satisfying to host at Plantation House the many Islanders who have achieved academic, professional and vocational qualifications. Building professional and personal skills are crucial to creating a strong local economy and continuing personal development.

St Helena has been very successful in raising its international profile and getting an international credit rating. Over the past year we have seen a positive rise in visitor numbers and investor interest and the administrative steps to rationalise and diversify the economy for a digital age are being developed. There have been numerous published articles by reporters and travel writers across the world and visits by well-known television presenters like historian Dan Snow and Peter Greenberg from CBS in the USA. There have been visits by the head of the Foreign Office, Sir Simon MacDonald, the Belgian Consul General to St Helena, and the European Union Development Directorate-General as well as various potential inward investors. An international debit card option is now available for Saints when they travel in the future and the next major banking development on the Island is to get



point-of-sale terminals in our shops for international card transactions.

There is still much to do. In the coming weeks St Helena will finalise a forward-looking Immigration Policy and the expected report on St Helena's first independent Police Review will inform the future development of the Police Service. Other issues need a collective effort to be delivered, such as stabilising the future for a privately-led fishing sector, an issue that generates different opinions, and the rebuilding of our agricultural potential. Securing the elusive wind farm project should benefit the Island by reducing its dependence on fossil fuels, whilst new approaches are coming to managing our marine environment and maritime opportunities. More fundamentally, my short-term Governance Commission begins this week. It will set out clearly the two reform options for a public decision soon on the way St Helena governs itself. I will assist in bringing these opportunities to fruition as swiftly as possible.

On Ascension, I welcomed the newly elected Island council and the pioneering creation of the 100% Marine Protected Area. I am pleased to have honoured my promise to visit the Island approximately every six months. Sadly, this may be more challenging in the current international climate.

While on-Island, I was pleased to meet a wide range of people who work on Ascension and heard about their experiences. Steve Chandler, the outgoing Administrator, laid a firm foundation of collaboration with the civilian and military organisations and took necessary decisions over the business levy and fire service. I wish Sean Burns the very best in his first year as Administrator on the Island. With contracts signed, Ascension should look forward to the commencement in the coming months of the Runway Resurfacing Project. Completing this monumental task is essential to secure the return of the Falklands flight and opportunities it brings. Similarly, the time is right to tackle the backlog of capital repairs, often in the quiet, un-flamboyant areas of infrastructure that we all take for granted, e.g. water, sewage, roads. The Administrator and I

Continued on NEXT PAGE

ONE YEAR ON

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE TO ST HELENA, ASCENSION AND TRISTAN DA CUNHA

Foundation. Updating the employment ordinance I know is important to Councillors. It is time to replace legislation dating from 1926 with one that includes the common expectations of modern times.

On Tristan da Cunha, we were thwarted in my plans to visit last September by the storm damage. My wife and I are looking forward immensely to coming to the Island. I can only hope we will not be prevented again this year by the various travel and quarantine restrictions now in place. Following the departure of Sean Burns to his next post in January, I was privileged to welcome Fiona Kilpatrick and Stephen Townsend on behalf of the FCO as the first ever job-share Administrators. The year also saw the return of Wave Dancer. Its major refit was recognition of the importance of the lobster industry to the Island. Alas though, two storms defined the year but not the spirit of the Island. I am aware the extreme weather led to the considerable damage, the repairs from which are only now approaching the end with the reroofing of the school building. I am pleased the recent repairs and strengthening of the harbour were finished before the winter arrives. The collective effort and determination of all on the Island to carry on with their lives has been an inspiration to Tristan da Cunha's wide international following, for example, I thoroughly enjoyed the interviews on Piers Morgan's 'Good Morning Britain' television programme (or should I say, 'Good Morning Tristan da Cunha' as it appeared on screen). Most recently, congratulations on the promotion of the northern rockhopper penguin's success on Twitter as the world seabird champion!

If you had asked me to describe the future one year past, it would certainly have not looked like the scenes we see today. I can sincerely sympathise with the many Islanders who have loved ones locked down or stranded far away. The very flights that brought me to St Helena are grounded, so unexpectedly my wife too is unable to return.

The gains of our past year are at risk. The recent events of the global Covid-19 health emergency have been seismic in their impact on the world. Understandably this has led to much uncertainty about the future. As three of the few places without any positive cases, our Islands' isolation and firm action

have protected us so far from the virus. As with the storms in Tristan, I have been struck again by the way people from all quarters have come together in this time of adversity and achieved remarkable outcomes. Be that, constructing the Bradleys facility in St Helena, or taking a pragmatic approach to protecting Ascension, or introducing early restrictions on landings on Tristan da Cunha. We must continue to protect ourselves in the coming months.

Covid-19 has without a doubt impacted on the economic trajectories for our Islands, as it has with other overseas territories and far larger countries across the world. Nevertheless, the measures currently imposed: quarantines, restriction on activities, closed borders, increased medical aid and ad-hoc UK financial support are – and will only ever be – a temporary fix. Soon each Island must act to protect their fragile economies, reduce public spending to what is affordable, find innovative opportunities amongst the current challenges and endeavour to secure a sustainable future.

I would like us to recognise that one day in the months ahead we will need to re-engage our travel connections with the outside world and reconnect with friends, families, travellers and investors visiting our Islands. Much of the past normality of the way we lead our lives and the necessity of hassle-free travel will have to restart as it will in the UK and across the rest of the world. Coming to an acceptance across our communities on how our Islands can reopen for business is something we will all have to confront during this year. Although it will be challenging, it is also an opportunity for each Island to find innovative solutions.

If there is anything I have learnt over the past year, it is that the community spirit and looking out for one another is a precious character of Island life. More than ever in the potentially difficult times ahead we need that sense of community. It is needed to help elected councillors and administrations decide on how to keep our Islands safe, not just from a virus but from its long term economic impacts too. Thank you for a rewarding first year and I look forward to working as your Governor in the coming year.



