Important note: *To be completed with reference to the Reporting Guidance Notes for Project Leaders: it is expected that this report will be about 10 pages in length, excluding annexes*

Submission Deadline: 30 April

Darwin Project Information

Project Reference	18-020
Project Title	Increasing local capacity to conserve St Helena's threatened native biodiversity
Host Country/ies	Saint Helena
Contract Holder Institution	Saint Helena National Trust
Partner institutions	St Helena Government (ANRD department) Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; RSPB
Darwin Grant Value	£299,772
Start/end dates of project	October 2010 to September 2013
Reporting period (eg Apr 2013 – Mar 2014) and number (eg Annual Report 1, 2, 3)	April 2012 to March 2013 Annual Report 3
Project Leader name	Dr Chris Hillman
Project website	www.nationaltrust.org.sh
Report author(s) and date	Ross Towers 30th April 2013

1. Project Rationale

St Helena Island lies 15° 56' south and 5° 43' west. It is 1,200 miles from the nearest land mass, Angola, and 1,800 miles from Brazil. A 47 square mile island; it is one of the remotest settled islands in the world.

Some of St Helena's most biodiverse habitats, which support an abundance of endemic plant and invertebrate diversity, are deteriorating rapidly and becoming increasingly fragmented as invasive species outcompete them or predate upon them. A number of Critically Endangered plant species are under severe threat of extinction.

The principal constraint to reversing the decline of key habitats and species is a shortage of skilled personnel on-island to undertake practical habitat restoration and management, effectively and at a sufficiently large scale. In the past conservation activities have often been ad hoc and inadequate, fire-fighting immediate problems, when what is needed is a concerted, well-resourced ecosystem approach to native habitat reinstatement and invasives control. The Darwin Project (as it has become known on the Island) aims to increase local capacity through delivering a diploma to local people in Environmental Conservation whilst conserving and restoring habitats at two highly threatened target sites.

2. Project Partnerships

The National Trust of St Helena is the project leader, responsible for coordinating project delivery and management, including coordinating expert input from overseas, project reporting, and providing office space and administrative support to the project team. The project team is made up of a Project Manager, a Restoration Ecologist, a Conservation Training Officer, a Tree Nursery Officer and a Trainee Project Manager. The project has benefitted from local apprentices that work with the trust for 3/ 4 days per week, all have worked towards a level 2 Diploma in Environmental Conservation. Volunteers have also been recruited locally and from overseas to compliment the project.

The main on-island project partner is the St Helena Government (SHG), where the Agriculture & Natural Resources Directorate (ANRD) and the Environmental Management Directorate (EMD) are the lead departments. They are providing personnel and resources for practical conservation delivery and advice, and one member of staff is being trained as an NVQ assessor for the conservation based diploma, a welcome addition, initiated through the Darwin Project. The project Steering Group meets monthly and is represented by these departments and RBG Kew. At times it has been challenging for the group to agree a way forward for certain areas of work within the project due to changes in personnel and ideas. Much of the work of the project is experimental and due to this challenges have been met through compromise and trials of ideas before committing to set directions.

The St Helena Development Agency (SHDA), now rebranded to Enterprise Saint Helena (ESH), is also a local partner providing financial support for training for the NVQ apprenticeship scheme. The local Adult Vocational Education Service (AVES) provides support as the registered centre for the NVQ Diploma and provides training and advice to assessors and internal verifiers. A partnership agreement has been signed with this organisation for the entirety of the project. Unfortunately a significant challenge has arisen in the project partner delivering agreed training to a member of the project staff to increase NVQ assessor capacity provision in-island. This challenge is ongoing and is hoped to be resolved through continued open communication with senior staff.

The project has also been involved with SHG's Tourism Directorate on developing a partnership for voluntourism on the island, along with new eco tours for tourists and the development of footpaths for walkers.

The UK partners are the Royal Botanic Gardens (RBG) Kew and the RSPB. RBG Kew has been providing essential botanical and horticultural expertise and support for the critical species conservation work. This takes place via emails, telephone conservations and via Skype through the steering group committee. Kew also publicises the Project on the RBG Kew website. Colin Clubbe, the Head of Kew's Overseas Territories and Training visited the project in April 2012 to offer his advice and support. The RSPB has been providing advice on Protected Areas planning and implementation for the island's new Land Development Control Plan (LDCP) which incorporates the two target sites for the project. Good working relationships have been established with all partners through the project.

The project has been collaborating with the conservation departments on Ascension Island and Tristan-de-Cunha to provide young people with the opportunity to complete the Diploma in Environmental Conservation on St Helena. Obtaining funding and Government buy-in from these territories to facilitate this has been problematic and disappointedly to date no-one has managed to come to Saint Helena for this purpose.

The St Helena Nature Conservation Group (SNCG) a local voluntary conservation charity also has strong partnership links with the Darwin Project and has worked closely on several projects and campaigns such as the St Helena National Flower campaign to use the endemic ebony as a recognised island symbol rather than the non native arum lily. Two small endemic gardens in the town centre has also been created to give visitors their first glimpse of the endemic flora of the island and a new interpretation board will show where the plants can be seen in the wild.

3. Project Progress

3.1 Progress in carrying out project activities

Output: 1 - A training programme delivered to increase local capacity and skill base in the restoration and sustainable management of natural resources/endemic biodiversity

Indicator: 12 ANRD staff trained, 5 conservation apprentices, 10 members of the private sector trained in conservation activities

Means of verification:

a) Only 1 member of ANRD staff completed the Diploma course. This reluctance from the ANRD staff to continue or take up the course is due to the airport contractors Basil Reed taking on a number of contract workers and offering higher wages than the government offer. Discussions with the new Environmental Management Directorate (EMD) over joint experience and knowledge sharing has also failed to encourage further engagement of the Diploma.
b) Six apprentices have completed the Diploma over the past year (3 completing in June 2012, and 3 more in March 2013). External verification is awaited before final pieces of work are submitted and certificates can be processed. To date 5 of the last 6 (83%) have gone on to acquire conservation based employment, 4 on Saint Helena, and 1 on Ascension Island.
c) Training for private sector organisations in the form of team building tree planting days for local businesses and guided walks has been offered with very little uptake.

Output: 2 – The threatened habitats of Blue Point and High Peak secured under long term positive management for biodiversity

Indicator: a) threatened habitats improved, b) management plans produced and implemented, c) target sites designated as protected areas.

Means of verification:

a) Improved conditions for biodiversity: More than 5000 endemic plants, including species such as Diana's Peak Grass, Dwarf Jellico, She Cabbage, Black-scale Fern, St Helena Ebony, St Helena Rosemary, Hair Grass, Small Bellflower, and Plantain, have been planted on the two project sites. Surveying is ongoing but initial signs suggest extremely high success rates >80%; invasive species, including ginger, arum lily, kikuyi grass, and fucsia have been reduced in targeted zones at High Peak – approx 0.25ha; invasive species, including New Zealand Flax, juniper, and gorse, have been reduced in targeted zones at Blue Point – approx 1ha; rodent control measures have been put into place at both sites to reduce predation on endemic seeds and de-barking of plants; the consolidation of the tree nursery at the Millennium Forest to supply an increased number of plants; rabbit surveying and trapping programme; seed collecting of endemic species; plant surveys of Blue point and High Peak are ongoing; habitat piles created; successful transplanting of Blackscale and Brownscale fern; control plots erected at Blue Point, individual plants caged to protect against predation, and larger caged plots erected to create protected endemic islands allowing natural seed dispersal; last remaining wild she cabbages continue to be protected and maintained.

b) The restoration management plan has been reviewed and revised and agreed on by the steering group for the project (see appendices in previous year's report).

c) Target sites have been designated as protected areas as part of a new National Conservation Area Network. The National Trust has been intimately involved in the National Conservation Areas (NCAs) planning process. Our target sites are a part of two different NCAs, High Peak is part of the Peaks National Park and Blue Point, Sandy Bay National Park. The target sites are guided by restoration management plans, and we are contributing to the development of Conservation Management Plans which guide development in the National Parks led by the Environmental Management Division of St Helena Government.

Output: 3 – A programme to increase education, awareness and engagement in the conservation of St Helena's natural resources

Indicator: a) all 3,800 islanders exposed to information about the natural resources, b) increase the number of local people engaged in the natural environment, c) 700 school children on the island provided with conservation based educational opportunities.

Means of verification:

a) Several public events attended and stalls manned, such as Easter Fair, cruise ship days, ANRD Open Day, school holiday programmes, Saint Helena Day, and local fetes. Quarterly newspaper articles, provision of interpretation on sites, and promotional material distributed.

b) Volunteer opportunities exist 5 days a week and a team of between 3 and 8 head out into the field on any given day. The project's volunteer handbook produced by the project team features on the RMS, in all the hotels, and tourist office. It has been modified to provide additional information for overseas, long term, volunteers. Twice weekly donkey walks attract volunteers young and old to get involved with the project – the walks go past the project's demonstration area so people are informed about the project and the work we do. The project has also worked with the youth centre New Horizons and the local scout and girl guides groups.

c) The project team have almost completed an Education Pack incorporating lesson plans that link to the island's flora and fauna rather than that of the UK. The lesson plans have so far involved all three of the local primary schools and the island's only secondary school. All 700 of the island's school children have been exposed to the project either through direct classroom sessions within their schools, or "in the field" at the Millennium Forest or on project sites. Teacher training is envisaged to take place in the next three months.

Output: 4 – Information on the importance and potential socio-economic value of St Helena's Natural Resources

Indicator: a) Baseline data on current biodiversity-related tourism activities compiled in Yr 1 b) Information on ecosystem services provided to economic evaluation process in Yr2 c) New Destination Management Strategy developed for St Helena, incorporating the island's key natural attractions (Yr 2) d) Local tourism sector provided with promotional materials for eco-tourism in Yr 3 e) new eco tour set up

Means of verification:

a) Tourism survey results conducted by the St Helena Tourism Department do not include any natural environment related data, the project is working with this department during a change in staff personnel to incorporate changes to their surveys. The National Conservation Areas work included information on the socio-economic benefits of the natural environment.
b) Information on ecosystem services previously provided to economic evaluation process, RSPB leading on how to progress.
c) SHNT fed into the new St Helena Tourism Strategy, which included a destination management strategy. As part of this strategy the project team have worked with the tourism department to initiate funding a voluntourism initiative providing free accommodation to Voluntourists, who come and work for the Darwin project but also other NGO's on the island. Over the past year, six international volunteer tourists have availed of the opportunity. The average stay has been 3 months equating to 75 work days per volunteer. The endemic garden in the main town (Jamestown) has an interpretation board showing where endemic species and natural attractions can be found around the island.
d) Eco tours available from SHNT including visits to both natural and built heritage locations around the island are available and promotional leaflets and posters have been provided to the local tourism sector. TCV (previously BTCV) international holidays and INTO (International National Trusts Organisation) have been sent a proposal to run a conservation holiday on the island, it is envisaged that this will be progressed in 2014.
e) As above. Also SHNT work in partnership with tour operators in South Africa and have recently assisted in the provision of an ornithologists holiday (tour group of six individuals) incorporating information on the island's flora with a tour of some of the project's work sites.

3.2 Progress towards project outputs

Output: 1.

- The envisaged target of 12 ANRD staff being trained in a diploma in conservation skills will not be met due to lack of interest. Only 1 staff member will achieve this qualification by the completion of the project.
- The envisaged target of 5 apprentices being trained in a diploma in conservation skills has already been met and surpassed. Eight individuals have been trained to date and should achieve the qualification by the end of the project.
- The envisaged target of 10 private sector workers being trained in practical conservation skills will be achieved by the end of the project through planned activities in the coming months. This will however be unaccredited training.

Output: 2.

- The target of habitat assessment surveys is a work in progress and will be completed by the end of the project.
- The target of approved management plans for the project sites has been achieved and completed.
- The target of prioritising High Peak and Blue Point for designation as protected areas has been achieved and work is ongoing to feed into SHG's environmental management plans for the areas.

Output: 3.

- The target of exposing all islanders to information about the natural resources of Saint Helena has been achieved through media outlets (radio, newspaper, and internet), attendance of local fairs (Easter fete, Saint Helena Day), public meetings and presentations (SHNT annual general meeting, Nature Conservation Group meetings, museum presentation), conservation days, leaflets (at SHNT offices, tourist outlets, hoteliers, RMS Saint Helena). This will continue through the last few months of the project.
- A significant shift in islander's outlook towards conservation has taken place through the life of the project which has contributed to the target of increasing the number of local people and visitors engaged in the natural environment. Traditionally the conservation sector has been looked upon as an area of work that people can fall back on if they have been unsuccessful at school or other areas of work. Over the past two and a half years, the number of people not only interested in conservation work, but also the number of people actively engaging in the work of the Saint Helena National Trust has increased exponentially. For example, the first round of NVQ Apprentices were selected from a "taster day" which just 3 people attended. The third round of apprentices were selected from a "taster day" attended by 12 people.
- The target of all 700 school children on island to be provided with conservation based educational activities has been achieved and surpassed. The education pack being designed has almost been completed and will be distributed to all four schools by the end of the project. All

school-aged children have been provided with both classroom and outdoor conservation based educational opportunities, both in school time and during weekends and holidays.

Output: 4.

- Work is ongoing in partnership with SHG's Tourism Directorate to collate and analyse biodiversity related tourism activities, and to redesign tourist questionnaires. Awaiting feedback and direction from project partners.
- Information on ecosystem services is with project partners, awaiting feedback and direction (as above).
- A new St Helena Tourism Strategy has been achieved and this target completed.
- All tourism sector outlets and hoteliers have been provided with promotional materials for ecotourism. Awaiting delivery of further promotional materials before distribution. This target will be completed in the next few months.
- SHNT now provide a series of eco-tours available to visiting tourists and locals alike, covering many topics such as the Wirebird, the Millennium Forest, endemic flora, endemic invertebrates, and built heritage.

3.3 Progress towards the project Purpose/Outcome

Progress towards the project purpose: 'to halt biodiversity loss in the species rich High Peak and Blue Point areas on St Helena through increasing local capacity to deliver practical habitat restoration and management' has been made with 8 young apprentices completing the Diploma in Environmental Conservation. The Diploma incorporates practical habitat restoration through a series of units and learning outcomes that are carried out on the target restoration sites. The original assumptions made still hold true, however more independent local trainees have been trained as opposed to local government trainees. The Restoration Management Plan contains indicators adequate for measuring outcomes over the lifespan of the project and beyond.

The project is likely to achieve the Purpose/Outcome by the end of the funding with a greater emphasis on younger generations and independent local trainees as opposed to government employees. The positive greatly outweighs the negative here. Although it was aspirational to train government workers in the field of conservation, the project could not compete with the employment opportunities within the airport development where some government employees have moved to, or the lack of take up of training opportunities from those still employed by government. During the final period of the project a greater emphasis will be made to educate and train private sector employees to increase environmental awareness across the island and to deliver habitat restoration.

3.4 Goal/ Impact: achievement of positive impact on biodiversity and poverty alleviation

The project originally sought to address the chronic lack of capacity on St Helena to tackle existing conservation threats. A team of skilled conservation practitioners has been built to deliver largescale habitat restoration and invasive species control through the accredited training of 8 local individuals,

A more sustainable ecosystem approach to conservation has been adopted as a result of this project, improving efficiency of current resources. This coordinated approach is beginning to reverse the decline of a number of Critically Endangered species.

The threatened habitats of High Peak complex and Blue Point are being secured under long-term positive management, with stronger populations of endemics and sustainable control of invasive threats. The results of implementing and monitoring habitat restoration in these areas are informing future conservation work and SHGs National Conservation Areas and environmental management plans.

The project highlights the socio-economic importance of nature conservation, and supports the development of new eco-tourism activities. This is providing greater justification for increased conservation resources.

St Helena is the UKOT with the highest level of endemism across several taxa, with new discoveries still being made (St Helena Neglected Sedge in 2008). Over 40% of endemic higher plant species are categorised as Critically Endangered or Extinct in the Wild (IUCN, 2009 Red List). The St Helena Olive became extinct in November 2003. There is currently one St Helena Boxwood and nine False Gumwood remaining in the wild; only one Bastard Gumwood survives in cultivation.

There is currently little or no regeneration of endemic plant species in the wild on St Helena. There is overwhelming competition from invasive species. Native habitats only exist in small remnant pockets isolated from one another, with endemic species represented in very low numbers. This has resulted in the degradation of self-regenerating functional native habitats. This project is giving St Helena the capacity to halt and start to reverse the loss of biodiversity.

4. Project support to the Conventions (CBD, CMS and/or CITES)

The project has been contributing significantly to the CBD (please see Restoration Plan for the full extent of how proposed conservation activities will achieve positive biodiversity changes and targets) in particular under Articles:

8 'In-situ Conservation' (specifically: a & b (establishment and management of Protected Areas through the new Establishing Conservation Areas plan); c (creation of habitat stepping stones through ongoing studies and development of target sites within the main project areas); d (protection of ecosystems through expansion of small fragmented endemic habitats); f (restoration of ecosystems); h (invasive species control)

9 'Ex-situ Conservation' (specifically: c (best practice on species reintroduction through close consideration with local partners and RBG Kew); e (build on previous conservation work – previous plans and works have been studied to obtain outcomes for the restoration plans).

10 'Sustainable Use of Components of Biological Diversity' (specifically: d (engage local populations – the apprenticeship scheme has attracted lots of local support and new volunteers have been engaged on the project); e (facilitate stakeholder cooperation in conservation action – councillors have been invited to the project sites to see the work that has been achieved)

12 'Research and Training' (specifically: a (education and training); b (research contributing to conservation delivery – Kew continue to assist with research on endemic plants specifically with possible hybrid species on target sites, the project has also successfully sought further funding to look into the Large Bellflower and Spiky Yellow Woodlouse habitat)

13 'Public Education and Awareness' (a (promotion of conservation – regular newspaper articles and radio interviews keep the public informed along with site interpretation); b (education & awareness – the schools programme has been highly praised by school teachers)

16 'Access To and Transfer of Technology', 17 'Exchange of Information' and 18 'Technical and Scientific Cooperation' (through new best practice, website, and training).

5. Monitoring, evaluation and lessons

The project steering group reviews progress against the project's objectives and meets monthly out on site or round the table.

Invasives control, improvements in site management and habitat restoration are monitored and evaluated by the Restoration Ecologist with support from ANRD, using standardised habitat assessment techniques. The results continue to be fed into the Restoration Management Plan and reported back to the steering group for discussion.

Verbal feedback is given by the apprentices on the training on the Diploma scheme along with written feedback on written assignments. Additional feedback from external courses attended (such as First Aid, EIA training) is usually sought.

The project has been plagued by staffing issues from the outset and this has unfortunately continued over the past year, both from resignations and health concerns. The second Restoration Ecologist resigned in November 2012, the Tree Nursery Officer moved into the Restoration Ecologist role, the Trainee Project Manager resigned for maternity reasons, the Project Manager has taken maternity leave, the new Tree Nursery Officer in training has had to leave the island for medical treatment, and the acting Project Manager/Training Officer has torn ankle ligaments resulting in enforced time off. That said, the current staff are as enthusiastic and committed as ever and are a strong team. They will ensure the last few months of the project raise further successes. The uncompromising strong minded views of the previous Restoration Ecologists have resulted in differing work priorities and split efforts. The result has been haphazard record keeping and thinly stretched sub-projects. This combined with a frustrating loss of a project PC due to equipment failure, those records which were kept are currently attempting to be retrieved by an IT company in South Africa, means that exact figures for the past year are not possible.

The indicators of achievements over the past year consist of:

- Local people being trained in conservation activities
- Local awareness and understanding of the Darwin Initiative and its project on the Island
- More than 120 children worked with over more than 25 educational sessions (both in and out of the classroom)
- Over 3000 endemic plants planted in numerous compartments within the 2 main target sites
- Removal of invasive weeds and trials on mulching and weed control
- Shade netting wind break established to project the delicate "Dell" area on High Peak

- Tens of new volunteers engaged on the project, including families and young people through conservation volunteer days and donkey walking
- Strengthened partnerships with other local organisations and NGO's
- Seeds collected from several island wide sites and over 3000 plants propagated for the project by staff, apprentices, and ANRD
- An extensive rodent control survey carried out to ensure appropriate control measures are deployed on target sites
- Habitat and plant surveys ongoing
- Establishment of rain catching devices to assist with plant aftercare in remote locations
- Establishment of fenced areas to prevent predation of planted restoration areas
- Abseil to the Blue Point rosemary to increase genetic variance of propagated stocks
- Four international volunteers recruited each for a minimum of three months to work specifically on the project

Lessons have been learnt by the project staff through open communication with local partners and on island experts about conservation works and discussing procedures rather than implementing overseas ideals.

Due to issues with staffing, some planned areas of work such as public monthly weekend conservation days and training courses like the "Endemics in your Garden" and "Chainsaw health and safety" have not taken place.

6. Actions taken in response to previous reviews (if applicable)

N/A

7. Other comments on progress not covered elsewhere

As discussed in section 5 above, the most significant issue faced by the project has been staffing. To counteract this several roles have been adapted to enable clearer roles and targets within the project, unfortunately issues still occurred. With the recruitment of the second Trainee Project Manager, the third Restoration Ecologist, and the second Tree Nursery Officer, the Project Team has gelled extremely well and significant progress is being made. The project continues to make progress and it is envisaged that over the remainder of the time left the successes will be consolidated upon and the goals of the project met or surpassed.

The project will not achieve its targets on training government employees in the NVQ Diploma. Other than that, all other targets will be achieved and or surpassed.

8. Sustainability

The project has gained good island wide recognition and support through regular newspaper and radio updates and participation in local events and activities. The new SHNT website which is due to go live in the coming weeks will contain extensive information on the project and quarterly updates will feature in the SHNT newsletter.

The donkeys that have been associated with the project have been an excellent hook for local people who are perhaps less interested in the natural environment but inadvertently learn about the endemic plants by partaking on donkey walks alongside one of the project sites.

Temporary signage of works taking place have also been put up on the site to explain to local people the reasons for site works – these will become permanent signs in the final period of the project.

The Demonstration Site – known as the "Ginger Patch" – in a prominent position by the roadside, has been used by local school children and as an educational tool for all age ranges.

The sustainability strategy of the project has been to acquire funding to ensure the work can continue. The forthcoming secured "Community Forests" project will enable the restoration sites to be managed for a further three years. As part of this project, sustainable long term funding streams will be levered through carbon sequestration and offsetting, tree sponsorship, and social enterprises providing an exit strategy from project funding avenues. Government departments will continue to have a responsibility for the long term protection and enhancement of the sites and the wider environment.

9. Darwin Identity

All press releases are sent out with reference to the Darwin Initiative and with the Darwin Initiative logo. The logo is not always used by the printed press, depending on available page space. All radio interviews also mention the Darwin Initiative as funders.

The two project vehicles bare the Darwin Initiative logos on them and people have stopped and asked the project team to find out more about what the Darwin Initiative is.

The project no longer has any promotional materials left, such as the Darwin pens and pins, as they have all been given out at fair stands and presentations. These items, especially the pens and less so the pins, were extremely popular and assisted in raising the profile of the project and the Darwin Initiative on island.

Through press activities, public events, and training programmes, islanders are familiar with the "Darwin Project" to restore habitats on island. Since Saint Helena has been fortunate enough to gain two further Darwin Funded Projects – Marine Survey and Invertebrate Awareness Raising, there has been some confusion over who is carrying out what work and with what focus. All three projects internally have been referred to as the "Darwin Project" however this has just meant that individual project names have to be used to ensure clarity. The Darwin Initiative is well recognised on island.

10. Project Expenditure

Table 1 project expenditure <u>during the reporting period</u> (1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014)

Project spend since last annual report	2013/14 Grant (£)	2013/14 Total actual Darwin Costs (£)	Variance %	Comments (please explain significant variances)
Staff costs (see below) • Project Manager • Restoration Ecologist (#2) • Conservation Training Officer • Tree Nursery Officer /Restoration Ecolgist (#3) • Trainee Project Manager • Trainee Project Manager (#2) • Tree Nursery Officer (#2) • Executive Officer • Director • Volunteers & Apprentices • SHNT Heritage Team • RBG Kew			+ <0.5%	
Consultancy costs				
Overhead Costs			- 7%	
Travel and subsistence			- 12%	Underspend counteracts Capital Items overspend
Operating Costs			- 4%	
Capital items (see below) Digital camera Jeep Abseil equipment Hand tools			+18%	Agreed purchase of project vehicle, approved by Darwin
Others (see below) Children's wellington boots Advertising educational activities Educational materials (books etc)			- 88%	£2,000 approved by Darwin to transfer into Year 3
TOTAL				

See 2012-13 Actual Claim Form for further detail in Annex 4.

11. OPTIONAL: Outstanding achievements of your project during the reporting period (300-400 words maximum). This section may be used for publicity purposes

I agree for the Darwin Secretariat to publish the content of this section (please leave this line in to indicate your agreement to use any material you provide here)

It has long since been a goal of conservationists on Saint Helena to gain access to one of the last wild remnant specimens of the island's critically endangered endemic Saint Helena Rosemary (Phylica polifolia). There are just three known locations supporting the world's wild population and the island's propagated population stems, until now, from just two of these sites. The final Rosemary frontier is at Blue Point on the southern windswept side of the island. It is here where just one wild plant has been known about for the past couple of decades, since conservationists clambered down the crumbling volcanic cliff faces to salvage the believed to be extinct Saint Helena Ebony. Unfortunately the Rosemary specimen is approximately 100metres (350ft) below the top of the sheer 500metre (1600+ft) cliffs and would require one of the longest abseils ever to take place on the island. Thanks to the Saint Helena National Trust's Darwin Initiative funded Habitat Restoration Project, over the past year the necessary personnel, training, and equipment is now on island to make this highly dangerous task possible. Over the course of several weeks metal anchors were put in place at the top of the cliff faces to attach ropes to, health and safety aspects were assessed, and support from the island's marine emergency radio station, the fire and rescue department, the police department, and Saint Helena Government's (SHG) environmental directorate was sought. Over the course of a 10hr day, during which a member of the Darwin team spent 6hrs on the abseil ropes, the Saint Helena Rosemary at Blue Point met its first ever human. Several cuttings were taken from the plant before the return journey back up the ropes, as the further 400metre drop below meant a continued descent impossible. The cuttings were taken to SHG's tree nursery to be propagated. It is hoped that these remnants of wild rosemary will be successfully grown into new plants over the coming months in nursery conditions and add to the genetic pool in which to repopulate areas of the island.

(See attached press cuttings in Annex 4 for further detail)

Annex 1: Report of progress and achievements against Logical Framework for Financial Year 2013-2014

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2013 - March 2014	Actions required/planned for next period
Goal/Impact *To draw on expertise relevant to biodiversity from within the United Kingdom to work with local partners in countries rich in biodiversity but constrained in resources to achieve* ⇒ The conservation of biological diversity, ⇒ The sustainable use of its components, and ⇒ The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources		Sites of endemic plantings appear to have high survival rates to date, increasing biodiversity in project areas Significant positive shift in local population's outlook on conservation as a career option through education of both children and adults in and out of school	[redacted]
Purpose/Outcome To halt biodiversity loss in the species-rich High Peak complex and Blue Point areas on St Helena through increasing local capacity to deliver practical habitat restoration and management	Target threatened habitats in improving condition for biodiversity, with increased abundance of key endemic species, and reduction in number of invasives Management plans for High Peak complex and Blue Point written, adopted and implemented by project partnership IUCN Red List status of threatened species stabilised and progress made towards down-listing Critically Endangered species	Habitats identified within the project target areas and endemic plants increased and invasives reduced Species mapping ongoing (although has been challenging due to the further resignation of the restoration ecologist in November) Areas of invasives removed Restoration Plan reviewed by the project team. Over 3000 endemic plants planted Rodent control programme in place	Habitat and species mapping a key focus for the final phase of the project Surveying of previous plantings to assess success rates Mapping and removal of key invasive species – fucsia – from High Peak slopes Further planting of endemic species on project sites
Output 1. A training programme delivered to increase local capacity and skill base in the restoration and sustainable management of natural resources/endemic biodiversity	12 ANRD staff trained in practical conservation techniques, including sustainable habitat restoration and management, invasives control 5 conservation apprentices provided with 2-3 years practical training 10 members of the private sector and general public trained in practical conservation activities	See section 3.1 & 3.2 above 1 ANRD staff completed the course, no other uptake 8 apprentices have completed the course and will gain a diploma in Environmental Conservation – work is ongoing to ensure last pieces of work are completed by apprentices to enable certification Private sector individuals trained through conservation volunteer days, tree planting initiatives, and informal conservation sessions	
Activity 1.1 Run training programme for conservation apprentices		Completed – next period will require one on one ad hoc sessions to enable each apprentice to comply with internal and external verifier requirements	

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2013 - March 2014	Actions required/planned for next period
Activity 1.2, Run training workshops for private sector/general public		Conservation training sessions to be provided for private sector over the next period	
Output 2. The threatened habitats of High Peak complex and Blue Point secured and under long-term positive management for biodiversity	Threatened habitats in High Peak complex and Blue Point in improving condition for biodiversity, with a reduction in the level of threats Draft management plans incorporating best practice for High Peak complex and Blue Point adopted by project partners and implemented by ANRD High Peak complex and Blue Point prioritised for designation as Protected Areas	See Section 3.1 & 3.2 above Invasive species have been removed and native plants planted in accordance with the projects Restoration Plan. Survey and monitoring data is ongoing and will be reported on by September 2013. Restoration Plan followed and updated and revised by project team when required. Saint Helena Government (SHG) is in the process of creating National Conservation Area (NCA) environmental management plans, of which High Peak and Blue Point are found within the first two NCAs being prioritised. The project is working in partnership with SHG to feed into these plans.	
Activity 2.1. Steering Group meetings		The Steering Group meets at least quarterly and at times monthly to discuss and plan the long term positive management of the project sites for biodiversity. This will continue to the end of the project in September.	
Activity 2.2 Control invasives		In line with the Restoration Plan and rodent control research, invasive species continue to be controlled and restricted within project areas via flora removal, poisoning, trapping, and physical barriers	
Activity 2.3 Plant out endemics		In line with the Restoration Plan endemics have been planted on the target sites and where necessary protected from predation	
Activity 2.4 Monitor habitat quality		Weed and endemic plant mapping was not completed by the former two Restoration Ecologists and is a priority for the Ecologist over the coming period. Survival rates of planted sites will also be surveyed and reported on.	
Activity 2.5 Develop site management plans		Restoration Plan has been reviewed and will be updated prior to the completion of the project.	
Activity 2.6 Implement site management plan		The Restoration Plan's targets are being implemented	
Activity 2.7 Produce evidence base to support designation of Protected Areas		The National Trust was involved in the production of the evidence base for all potential protected areas on St Helena –this included the two Darwin project sites. This work is ongoing as SHG produce management plans for wider areas.	
Output 3. A programme to increase education, awareness and engagement in the conservation of St Helena's natural resources	All 3,800 islanders exposed to information about the natural resources Increase in the number of local people and visitors engaged in the natural	See Section 3.1 & 3.2 above Education of the now 4000+ islanders is a real success of the project. A thorough educational programme has been undertaken both in the classroom and outdoors providing sessions in school time and at weekends, after school, and during	

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2013 - March 2014	Actions required/planned for next period
	environment 700 schoolchildren on island provided with conservation-based educational opportunities	holidays. Stands have been established at fairs and open days throughout the year as well as during visiting cruise ships.	
Activity 3.1 Promote project to local population	The project has been well received by the local population with a constant drip feed of press articles, radio interviews and activities involving local people	During the final stages of the project further press releases and radio interviews will take place informing the public on the successes of the project.	
Activity 3.2 Practical conservation activities and talks held in island schools	Provide programme of school sessions	All school-aged children have been exposed to conservation based educational activities both in the classroom and outdoors. The success of the programme has meant the project has been invited to provide further sessions for the island's schools and the project's educational pack is almost completed. In the final stages of the project this will be distributed to schools and feedback sought by teachers.	
Activity 3.3 Research and produce new schools education pack	How the education pack will link to the local curriculum is currently being explored through lessons with the local schools. Activities with the school children in the coming year will help to dictate what is required for the education pack	See Activity 3.2 above	
4. Information on the importance and potential socio-economic value of St Helena's natural resources produced and disseminated	Baseline data on current biodiversity-related tourism activities compiled in Yr 1 Information on ecosystem services provided to economic evaluation process in Yr2 New Destination Management Strategy developed for St Helena, incorporating the island's key natural attractions (Yr 2) Local tourism sector provided with promotional materials for eco-tourism in Yr 3 New eco-tour set up (Yr 3)	See Section 3.1 & 3.2 above The project is working closely with the Tourism Department to ensure biodiversity related tourism activities are on offer, compiled, and evaluated. SHNT has fed into the Tourism Strategy for the island and itself now offers four eco-tours covering flora and fauna. Promotional materials have been developed, by the NVQ apprentices, and have been distributed to the tourism sector.	

Project summary	Measurable Indicators	Progress and Achievements April 2013 - March 2014	Actions required/planned for next period
Activity 4.1 Design Tourism Survey	Working in partnership with Tourism Department to integrate into their work.	SHNT have completed their own in-house surveys, however this should be integrated within the existing, more extensive, Tourism Department work. Partnership meetings will continue to develop this.	
Activity 4.2 Analyse Tourism Survey to inform Destination Management Plan	Data not available – ongoing work with Tourism Department.	As Activity 4.1 above	
Activity 4.3 Produce Destination Management Plan for natural areas	The island's new Tourism Strategy includes details on natural destination management. A new endemic garden in the main town has been created in partnership with another local NGO (The St Helena Nature Conservation Group) will have interpretation on where natural attractions can be found around the island	Interpretation panels for the two endemic gardens within Jamestown are to be replaced within the next period of the project	
Activity 4.4 Provide information to environmental economic evaluation process	The ongoing protected areas project will compile information on the socio-economic importance of the natural environment. The new tourism surveys and data held by the National Trust on current sales of tours and adoption schemes such as Wirebirds, donkeys and tree planting will provide information to evaluate environmental economics on the island	As Activity 4.1 above	
Activity 4.5 Create new promotional materials for eco-tourism	The project is currently working with the tourism department on new promotional materials and eco tourism initiatives	The prospect of creating self guided tours with the use of audio MP3 players is being looked into in partnership with the Tourism Department. New promotional materials are in the final stages of production and should arrive on island within the next few months.	
Activity 4.6 Set up demonstration site with public access and interpretation	Demonstration site has been established – known as 'The Ginger Patch' One of the restoration sites that has been cleared of invasives and planted with endemics	This site is hugely successful and the endemic plants within it are producing very positive results. This area will be extended in the next period of the project and assessed as part of the Restoration Ecologist's survey work.	
Activity 4.7 Set up new 'eco-tour'	Eco-tours established	SHNT now offer four eco-tours on island with promotional materials to go with them. They are on offer as and when bookings are sufficient. Further meetings with the Tourism Department over the next period will seek to consolidate these.	

Annex 2 Project's full current logframe

	Activity	Months	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1.1	Promote training opportunities to key target groups													
1.2	Run training workshops for ANRD staff													
1.3	Set up NVQ													
1.4	Run training programme for conservation apprentices													
1.5	Run training workshops for private sector/general public													
1.6	Produce training materials													
2.1	Set up site management steering committee													
2.2	Control invasives													
2.3	Plant out endemics													
2.4	Monitor habitat quality													
2.5	Develop site management plans													
2.6	Implement site management plans													
2.7	Produce evidence base to support designation of Protected Areas													
2.8	Presentation to legislative council to support designation													
2.9	Carry out species status evaluation to update IUCN Red List													
3.1	Promote project to local population													
3.2	Set up conservation volunteer programme													
3.3	Practical conservation activities and talks held in island schools													
3.4	Research and produce new schools education pack													
4.1	Cary out Tourism Survey													
4.2	Analyse Tourism Survey to inform Destination Management Plan													
4.3	Produce Destination Management Plan for natural areas													
4.4	Provide information to environmental economic evaluation process													
4.5	Create new promotional materials for eco-tourism													
4.6	Set up demonstration site with public access and interpretation													
4.7	Set up new 'eco-tour'													
5.1	Project steering group set up													

5.2	Recruit project staff													
5.3	Steering group meetings													
5.4	Monitoring and evaluation visit by overseas partners													
5.5	Dissemination of project results													

Annex 3 Standard Measures

Table 1 Project Standard Output Measures

Code No.	Description	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Y4 Total	Total to date	Number planned for reporting period	Total planned during project
Established codes								
3	**Number of people to attain other qualifications:** 8 local people have completed training in a Diploma in Work-based Environmental Conservation. The planned ANRD staff have not joined the course due to moving to airport construction jobs. There will be no further diplomas obtained and therefore this target will not be met by the project.	2	3	3		8	6	17
4C and 4D replaces 4A	**Number of training weeks to be provided**: Kew previously provided a one week training course for the Restoration Ecologist. The Saint Helena Fire & Rescue Department this year provided a one week training course on abseiling and rope work for 2 local people and 3 project team members.	1	1	1		3	1	5
6A	Number of people to receive training	5	3					10
6B	Number of training weeks provided	1	2					5
7	**Number of training materials produced –** endemic plant guide produced for students and available island wide. Education pack to be produced year 2 which will contain a teacher training element. Training materials in relation to the Diploma produced: pesticide training course; plant reproduction pack; manual handling course pack.	1	2					3
8	Number of weeks spent by UK project staff on project work in the host country. Visit by RBG Kew took place April 2012	0	0	3		3	3	3
9	**Number of species/habitat management plans (or action plans) to be produced** – restoration plan produced and updates/revisions added. At the end of the project the plan will be turned into a management plan until 2020.	1	0	2		2	2	2

Code No.	Description	Year 1 Total	Year 2 Total	Year 3 Total	Y4 Total	Total to date	Number planned for reporting period	Total planned during project
14A	**Number of conferences/seminars/workshops to be organised to present/disseminate findings** Talk held in the museum	0	1	0		1	0	2
14B	**Number of conferences/seminars/workshops attended at which findings from the Darwin Project work will be presented/disseminated** Kew representative hosted a seminar at Aberystwyth University	0	1	0		1	0	2
15A	**Number of national press releases in host country(ies)**	6	52	8		66	Non specific	Non-specific
16A	**Number of newsletters to be produced**: Articles within the National Trust Newsletter and St Helena Darwin Newsletter produced	2	4	0		6	2	8
16B	**Circulation**	0	100 hard copies	0		100	0	300
16C	**Circulation in UK** via email via Friends of St Helena							Non specific
19A	Number of national radio interviews/features in host county(ies)	4	4	2		10	Non-specific	Non specific
19C	Number of local radio interviews/features in host country(ies) B and D have been removed from the measures as it is unlikely there will be interviews in the UK. However project teams will try and get interviews when they are on leave back to the UK.	4	4	2		10	Non-specific	Non-specific
20	Estimated value (£'s) of physical assets to be handed over to host country(ies) – vehicle, computer equipment , reference material. Added as a standard measure	£15,500	£7000	£3,500 (vehicle, camera, etc)		£26,000		£17,000
22	Number of permanent field plots to be established during the project and continued after Darwin funding has ceased – a number of plots will be created at the two target sites: High Peak and Blue Point	4	2	15		21	4	10

Table 2 Publications

Type (eg journals, manual, CDs)	**Detail** (title, author, year)	**Publishers** (name, city)	**Available from** (eg contact address, website)	**Cost £**
None				

Annex 4 Onwards – supplementary material (optional but encouraged as evidence of project achievement)

Appendix 1: Samples of press cuttings and press releases:

Appendix 2: Sample of international volunteer feedback

Appendix 3: Photograph samples

Appendix 1: Samples of press cuttings and releases

Saint Helena National Trust Reach Out To Safeguard Endemics

Last Friday, 22nd March, the Saint Helena National Trust successfully completed one of the longest abseils ever to take place on the island to reach one of the last remaining critically endangered wild Saint Helena rosemary trees.

Saint Helena rosemary (*Phylica polifolia*) is an endemic tree (occurring naturally nowhere else in the world other than Saint Helena) which can grow 3-4 metres tall and was once a useful timber source. It gets its name from the similarity of its leaves to the rosemary herb used in cooking, although the two plants are not related. After hundreds of years of human mismanagement through the felling of mature trees, the predation of young trees by introduced rabbits and goats, and habitat loss, it has become extremely rare and is classified as critically endangered by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List.

There are just three known locations of wild trees left on the island: High Hill; Lot; and Blue Point. Today, through a better understanding of human impacts on nature and the environment we depend on, the National Trust in partnership with the Saint Helena Government are attempting to safeguard the Saint Helena rosemary's future. It is at Blue Point where the Saint Helena National Trust spent several hours abseiling down the cliff faces to reach just one individual plant last Friday. This plant has been known about for several years, it was spotted below the rediscovered Saint Helena ebony location found by Georgie Benjamin back in the 1970s. However its location is some 100metres/360ft down the crumbling cliffs at Blue Point, beyond Thompsons Wood. It is only within the last year that the National Trust, in partnership with the Saint Helena Fire & Rescue Department has gathered the necessary training, and through the Darwin Initiative's funding the specialist equipment, to carry out this highly dangerous piece of work. It required weeks of preparation and planning, carrying heavy equipment over a mile from the nearest track accessible by vehicle to set anchor points in advance, and then more than 10hrs on site to complete the task on the day. The target plant was so far away though, that once Ross Towers of the Saint Helena National Trust had climbed down the length of the first rope, he had to set up new anchors and more ropes to climb down again. Ross explains:

"We had to perform a multi-pitch abseil due to the distance involved. It meant that I had to carry with me down the cliff face three additional ropes on my back, plus a lot of metal gear such as karabiners and other climbing equipment so I could set up more ropes halfway down."

Each rope weighs approximately 4.5kgs, and with the other climbing equipment and the tools necessary to take cuttings from the rosemary and bring it back safely, Ross carried in excess of 20kgs/44pounds down the cliff with him. To give you an idea of what that's like, the baggage allowance limit for most airlines is 23kgs. Ross adds:

"It was fairly uncomfortable taking all of that equipment down with me, but it was nothing compared to when I had got the cuttings and had to climb all the way back up again. I had no choice but to come back the way I came because below the rosemary was a further 1000ft+ drop. I was on the ropes for

about 6hrs in total and it's safe to say I was thoroughly exhausted at the end of it."

Currently all of the Saint Helena rosemary trees in cultivation on island originate from the wild plants at High Hill and Lot, for this reason it is important to collect seeds or cuttings from the plant at Blue Point to increase the genetic pool. Mikko Paajanen of the Saint Helena National Trust explains:

"With approximately just 100 wild plants left on the island, it is important for the plant's future that we collect seed or cuttings from all the known locations of wild rosemary. Plants in each location may have different characteristics (strengths and weaknesses) which will help the rosemary to survive."

Twelve cuttings of approximately 15cms each were taken from the Blue Point plant and have been taken to Saint Helena Government's Scotland Tree Nursery for propagation. The cuttings have been potted up in bags of compost and will be cared for over the next few months. Hopefully at least some of them will survive, and these plants will be grown to maturity, seed collected from them, and new generations of Saint Helena rosemary will be produced from them over the coming years. These plants will then be planted back out at Blue Point and other locations around the island ensuring the future of Saint Helena's endemic natural heritage. You can see young Saint Helena rosemary trees in the endemic garden by the coffee shop in Jamestown.

Ross concludes:
"I would just like to say a big thank you to everyone involved, it was truly a team effort. It could not have happened without the presence, skills, and enthusiasm of Mikko Paajanen, Kathryn Jackson, and Rory Foster on the day, and with the support of the Fire and Rescue Department, Saint Helena Radio, and the Police Department who were on stand-by in the case of an emergency. Thank you to everyone, there are too many to name. By working together like this we will hopefully safeguard Saint Helena's endemics for generations to come."

SAINT HELENA NATIONAL TRUST

The St Helena Independent Volume VIII, Issue 16, Friday 28th March 2013

ST HELENA SNIPPETS

ABSEILING TO SAVE THE ST HELENA ROSEMARY

A team from the St Helena National Trust (SHNT) have been collecting cuttings of the endangered St Helena Rosemary. On Friday last week, members of the team successfully completed one of the longest abseils to take place on the island. Abseiling some one hundred metres down a cliff face at Blue Point (Thompson's Wood), the team retrieved clippings of a Rosemary plant that was unreachable until now. However, this is not the first time a person has climbed this particular cliff. "The St Helena Ebony was rediscovered three or four decades ago, in the same location," Ross Towers of the National Trust told the Sentinel. "Because of this, people have been climbing in that area to collect seeds and clippings from the ebony. Being in this area people spot this Rosemary plant some fifty metres or so down the cliff face."

A press release from the SHNT gave the following description of the plant, "Saint Helena Rosemary (Phylica polifolia) is an endemic tree (occurring naturally nowhere else in the world other than Saint Helena) which can grow 3-4 metres tall and was once a useful timber source. It gets its name from the similarity of its leaves to the Rosemary herb used in cooking, although the two plants are not related."

Climbers undertook weeks of preparation including training and safety precautions with the added safety of the fire service to assist the team in their dangerous task. "I won't recommend anyone repeat what I've done," Ross emphasised, "it wasn't too enjoyable, shall I say. With the crumbliness of the rock, you stand on something and it falls away."

The Blue Point cliff is one of three locations where the plant is known to grow. The new cuttings have been taken to the plant nursery at ANRD for replanting where it is hoped that the Rosemary plant, endemic to the island, can be re-established. Ross said that with access to this location he felt that the task of re-establishing the endangered plant was stronger.

Working with the St Helena National Trust as a Darwin Apprenticeship, this has been the best career move I have made so far. I love the great outdoors and it's great that the work I am doing is making a difference for the island.

My apprenticeships started in September this year and I have enjoyed every minute of it .There are two other apprentices working with me: Liza Fowler and David Joshua.

So far I have learnt about endemic plants, such as the right way of planting them and what are the right conditions for them to grow. At the millennium forest nursery we have been seed collecting, potting, seed sowing and preparing cuttings for planting. Blue point and High Peak are the main two sites that we are working and for the past few months we have been doing a rat survey using two methods, one is rat snap traps and the other is rat poison. I would have to say that both methods did work and from the records that we made each week we can see that the number of rats being caught has gone down, which hopefully means the population has decreased and they won't cause a nuisance eating our endemic plants and seeds.

We have done health and safety training, risk assessments, first aid course and a pesticides course, but we still have lots more to do and hopefully in march next year I will have a diploma in environmental conservation level 2!

Conservation can be very hard work, braving all weather conditions, and involves a lot of walking. But the team that we work with are hardworking and dedicated, we all hope that the hard work we put in pays off. But the best part of all is the spectacular views around the island.

I have only worked in conservation for three months now but it really has been enjoyable and I hope to be doing this for many years to come!

Darwin Restoration Project New Arrivals!

Last month three new faces, including one that some may recognise, joined the Saint Helena National Trust to consolidate the Darwin Habitat Restoration Project Team. The project seeks to restore two vital habitats at Blue Point and High Peak, whilst safeguarding endangered endemic species.

Ross Towers (left) & Dr Phil Lambdon planting She Cabbage trees at Osbournes

Rory Foster ready to abseil in search of endemic plants

Dr Phil Lambdon is a familiar face to some on Saint Helena, having lived and worked here between 2008-2011. Phil, originally from England, re-joins the conservation efforts on the island as Restoration Ecologist for the Darwin Project. Phil brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience specific to Saint Helena – just don't ask him about the book he's writing on the island's flora! He also has extensive botany and ecology experience gleaned from working in many parts of the world in addition to Saint Helena, including Ascension Island, Greece, and with the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew in the UK. Since arriving at the end of April, Phil and the rest of the team have spent a week completing an abseiling course with the Saint Helena Fire Department, providing them with the necessary skills to go in search of remnant populations of endemic plants on the island.

"We are looking forward to hopefully finding new sites of endemic plants which we can collect seed from and grow in partnership with ANRD. These plants will then be used to restore habitats at our target sites."

Phil was last on Saint Helena in January 2011 and is looking forward to living and working here once more.

"It's great to be back on the island during a new chapter in Saint Helena's history".

Ross Towers joins the team from England as Conservation Training Officer. Originally from London, Ross has over 10 years conservation experience gained from working and volunteering in the UK and further afield, such as Turkey, Costa Rica, the USA, and New Zealand. Ross spent 6 years managing nature reserves for the Ulster Wildlife Trust in Northern Ireland covering many habitat types such as small uninhabited woodland islands to upland pasture. Ross is looking forward to making a positive difference to the restoration sites, with the help of NVQ Apprentices, of Blue Point and High Peak as part of the Darwin Initiative Project over the next year and a half.

"Saint Helena is a beautiful island with many amazing and unique plants and insects. I planted my first tree this week, an endemic She Cabbage tree, at Osbournes, where ANRD and the National Trust are working in partnership to save the last remaining wild She Cabbage population on the island."

Outside of work, Ross is a keen scuba diver and has a particular fascination with sea turtles, having studied and worked with them in the past.

"I have joined the St Helena Diving Club and can't wait to get into the water, and although they are fairly rare visitors here, I am keeping my fingers crossed for a sighting of a turtle, one of the ocean's most majestic animals."

Rory Foster joins the Darwin Team from Fife in Scotland, just north of Edinburgh, as a valuable volunteer. Rory completed a BSc degree in Sustainable Environmental Management last year and is seeking to gain experience in practical conservation skills and habitat restoration. He brings with him experience in footpath creation, tree planting and invasive species control gained in Scotland with the Scottish Wildlife Trust and the Fife Coast & Countryside Trust. You may have already seen him in his traditional Scottish kilt!

“I’m thrilled to be on the island and love the friendly and warm welcome we have all received. I’m looking forward to assisting in achieving the goals of the Darwin Project and gaining valuable experience in the field.”

The team will be spending most of their time out “in the field” collecting seeds, growing trees, controlling invasive non-native species, and of course, planting out endemic trees and plants. If you would like to help out with the work of the National Trust or have any queries for the team, they can be contacted at the Saint Helena National Trust offices in Jamestown – 2224, or the main office - 2190.

Appendix 2: Sample of International Volunteer Feedback

Appendix 3: Photographs of examples of work

Children learning about carbon footprints

Bug hunts on the Nature Trail

Planting endemic species

Rootballing endemic gumwoods

Creating a windbreak and shade structure for threatened endemic habitat

Checklist for submission

	Check
Is the report less than 10MB? If so, please email to Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk putting the project number in the Subject line.	
Is your report more than 10MB? If so, please discuss with Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk about the best way to deliver the report, putting the project number in the Subject line.	
Have you included means of verification? You need not submit every project document, but the main outputs and a selection of the others would strengthen the report.	
Do you have hard copies of material you want to submit with the report? If so, please make this clear in the covering email and ensure all material is marked with the project number.	
Have you involved your partners in preparation of the report and named the main contributors	
Have you completed the Project Expenditure table fully?	
Do not include claim forms or other communications with this report.	