



Darwin Initiative Main Project Half Year Report (due 31 October 2015)

Project Ref No	20-005
Project Title	Creating Community Forests to Enhance Biodiversity and Provide Educational Activities (Community Forests Project)
Country(ies)	St Helena
Lead Organisation	St Helena National Trust (SHNT)
Collaborator(s)	Environmental Management Division (EMD); Education Directorate; Enterprise St Helena (ESH); Tourism Directorate; New Horizons; Civil Society Support; Royal Botanic Gardens Kew (RBGK); Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Project Leader	Jeremy Harris
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	April 2015 – Sept 2015 (HYR2)
Project website/Twitter/Blog /Instagram etc	http://www.nationaltrust.org.sh/shnt-conservation-programmes/natural-heritage/community-forests-project/
Funder (DFID/Defra)	DFID

1. Outline progress over the last 6 months (April – Sept) against the agreed baseline timetable for the project (if your project has started less than 6 months ago, please report on the period since start up to end September).

Output 1: MRes on the carbon sequestration potential of St Helena endemic tree species

Shayla Ellick has successfully completed her Masters, which has been published online at: <http://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/9337/>

Meetings held between CFP, Shayla and SHG Tourism to progress the establishment of a local carbon offsetting scheme, looking at airlines and tour operators.

Output 2: Setting up a Forest School (FS) Programme on St Helena

Martina Peters and Sheena Isaac have submitted all of their Forest Schools Leadership training units and await the results.

Martina and Sheena continue to deliver 4 FS sessions weekly at the Blue Hill Field Centre (BHFC). There have also been 4 children's activity days held by Martina at Millennium Forest.

The refurbishment of BHFC continues, now with improved disabled access.

Output 3 – NVQ Level 2 work-based Diploma in Environmental Conservation

Jason Curtis completed the majority of his NVQ assessor training.

Two apprentices have now completed assessment for 2 and 3 Units respectively of their NVQ. One of them gained employment in March 2015 within the conservation sector, but continues to be assessed as part of the project.

Cynthia has been recruiting for the next intake of apprentices, including presentations at the secondary school, newspaper adverts, evening presentations. Interest has unfortunately been minimal.

Output 4 – Three Community Forests actively and sustainably managed: Millennium Forest, High Peak and Blue Point; training at RBG Kew for CFP Nursery Officer

Millennium Forest (MF) planted: 1,517; High Peak (HP) planted: 280; Blue Point (BP) planted: 174. Further clearance of invasive plants at MF and HP. 199 planted at community and school sites.

Total planted for the period: **2,170**.

New seed orchard for critically endangered Boxwood established at Gateway area of MF and original site (WSR) now replanted. These are the only two seed orchards for this species in the world, and plants are now flowering in both.

Collaboration with EMD to grow Peak species for High Peak and Brianna Yon visiting EMD nursery once a week for nursery training.

Nursery Officer Brianna Yon now in UK for 5 week training at Kew, UK National Trust and Eden Project.

Revised and updated management plans for all three project sites now completed and distributed.

New vegetation monitoring protocol devised with the help of Mike Jervois, Terrestrial Conservation Officer from EMD, and being implemented.

First section of permanent rabbit fence erected at MF Gateway site. First rabbit and feral sheep-proof fence erected at one of planting sites at BP.

Restoration guides for all the sites being prepared.

Output 5 – Establishing sustainable social enterprise and supporting social enterprises through developing sustainable forest products

'Community Volunteer Days' still a regular event on the first Saturday of each month.

Mini-forests at all three primary schools enhanced and maintained with monthly visits for 'Kid's Tree Club'.

Plans for a garden centre at MF progressing.

'Conservation Enrichment Studies' is still hosted monthly by CFP for the secondary school.

We continue to offer a place for a young man with learning disabilities as a volunteer one day a week.

The project now has three long-term volunteers. They continue to bring a huge amount of energy, expertise and enthusiasm to the work.

2a. Give details of any notable problems or unexpected developments/lessons learnt that the project has encountered over the last 6 months. Explain what impact these could have on the project and whether the changes will affect the budget and timetable of project activities.

Jason resigned as Project Manager. Rebecca Cairns-Wicks appointed as PM.
 Change request No 9 was refused. It has been re-submitted by Rebecca Cairn-Wicks.
 The St Helena Government has still not finalised the sale of endemics policy, meaning that one of the main social enterprise activities of selling plants from MF cannot yet proceed.

2b. Have any of these issues been discussed with LTS International and if so, have changes been made to the original agreement?

Discussed with LTS:	Yes
Formal change request submitted:	Yes
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes – not accepted.

3a. Do you currently expect to have any significant (e.g., more than £5,000) underspend in your budget for this year?

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully as it is unlikely that any requests to carry forward funds will be approved this year. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

If you anticipate a significant underspend because of justifiable changes within the project and would like to talk to someone about the options available this year, please indicate below when you think you might be in a position to do this and what the reasons might be:

4. Are there any other issues you wish to raise relating to the project or to Darwin’s management, monitoring, or financial procedures?

If you were asked to provide a response to this year’s annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document. (no response requested for half-year)

Please note: Any **planned** modifications to your project schedule/workplan can be discussed in this report but **should also** be raised with LTS International through a Change Request.

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk . The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g., Subject: 20-035 Darwin Half Year Report**