

# Government of South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands



Annual Report 2014



## A Message from the Commissioner

South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands is often described as the jewel in the crown of the Overseas Territories. It is a privilege to be appointed Commissioner.

I see the Commissioner's main tasks as upholding British sovereignty of the Territory and surrounding waters; running an effective and high quality government with sound public finances; managing sustainably the natural and environmental resources; cherishing the human heritage; and enabling an appropriate level of access. All this requires close cooperation with our many stakeholders.



The GSGSSI team continue to work hard to ensure safe and sustainable management of the Territory and 2013/14 has seen significant progress in a number of key areas. The last year has seen the second and near final stage of the reindeer eradication project and some excellent heritage work, which has been supported by funds from the Norwegian government. The financial support of the Norwegian government is particularly welcome and has helped fund the laser surveys and restoration of the Nybrakke.

The last 12 months have seen important changes in GSGSSI personnel. First, let me thank my predecessor, Nigel Haywood, for his excellent work as Commissioner. During his tenure he oversaw the establishment of the MPA, the reindeer eradication project and the first two phases of the rat eradication, making a great contribution to the sustainable management of the Territory. We have recruited Mark Lewis as our Legal Adviser to help us review and modernise our legislation. Mark was formerly Attorney General for the Falkland Islands as well as South Georgia and brings a wealth of experience to the post. Ian Haywood has replaced Jackie Gumsley. Jo Cox, Government Officer, has accepted the post of Master of the RRS *Discovery* and will leave GSGSSI at the end of her current tour of duty. Jo has done tremendous work for South Georgia and we wish her well in her new role.



The year ahead will again be extremely busy with the completion of some projects and the launch of others. We look forward to working closely with partners as we take this forward.

**Colin Roberts C.V.O.**

## Fisheries

Sustainable fisheries remain key to the economy of SGSSI. This year has seen some important changes in licensing and management, which we anticipate will improve standards across all fisheries.

Two-year fishing licences have been introduced for the 2014 and 2015 seasons in the toothfish and icefish fisheries. This enables vessel operators to plan a season ahead and hopefully encourages investment in vessels and equipment. Increased continuity also helps the government to work with industry to develop key science and monitoring projects.

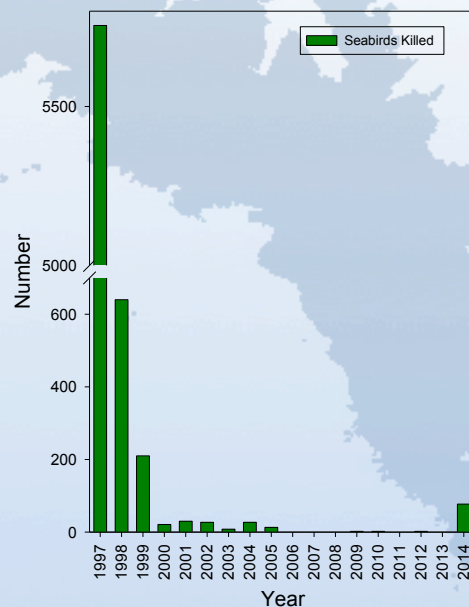
A new licensing scheme has also been introduced in the krill fishery, which encourages operators to apply early for their licence. This enables GSGSSI to identify any vessels that may require safety inspections in advance of the fishing season. GSGSSI now requires that all fishing vessels pass an inspection that ensures compliance with the provisions of the Torremolinos Protocol on fishing vessel safety.

The 2014 catch limit for toothfish in South Georgia waters was 2,200 tonnes, with six vessels licensed. Catch rates have been good throughout the season, although sperm and killer whales continue to hamper fishing by stealing fish from lines. The experimental season extensions continued and this year the season started on April 6<sup>th</sup>, however one vessel caught 74 white-chinned petrels on one line during the extension period. This was the most significant catch of birds in the fishery for 15 years. Night-setting of hooks is mandatory in the fishery and, following the incident, a new licence condition was introduced to prohibit setting of lines in the 3 hours before sunrise (until mid-May) to reduce the risk to white-chinned petrels. In accordance with the CCAMLR Conservation Measure this incident



*Toothfish longliner Antarctic Bay in Stanley for catch verification in July.*

means there will be no season extension in 2015, with the season starting on April 16<sup>th</sup>.

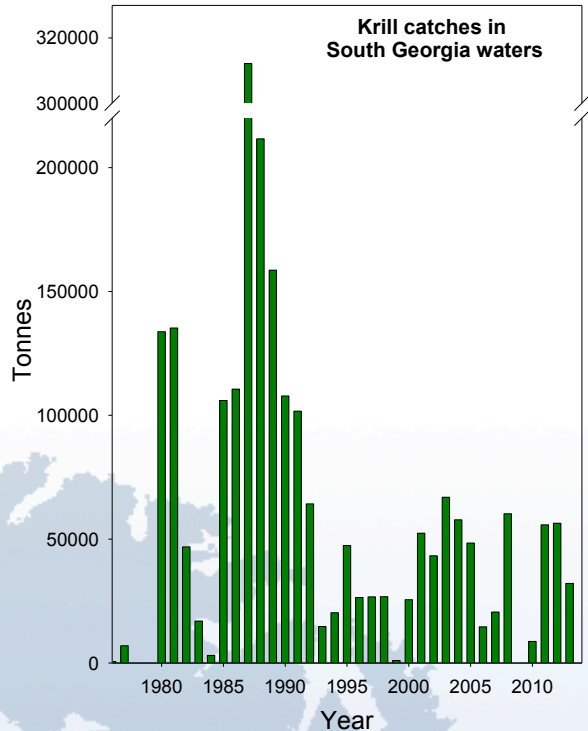


*Seabird by-catch in the Patagonian toothfish fishery in the SGSSI MZ.*

The South Georgia toothfish fishery is in the final stages of re-assessment by the Marine Stewardship Council. The final report of this, the second, re-assessment was published in August. The fishery scored extremely well against the three principles and is recommended for recertification without conditions. GSGSSI also commissioned an independent peer review of toothfish fisheries management, which rated the fishery as one of the best managed in the world.

The South Sandwich Islands fishery now has separate catch limits for Antarctic and Patagonian toothfish and two vessels have been licensed to fish in this area for the 2014 and 2015 seasons. These vessels are required to carefully spread their fishing effort to collect the data required for accurate stock assessments.

Five vessels have been licensed to catch icefish this year with a catch limit of 4,600 tonnes, however to-date only two vessels have been fishing and catches have been poor. The fishery typically operates when the Falkland Islands *Loligo* season is closed and two vessels are expected to return to the fishing grounds in September.



*Krill catches in South Georgia waters since the fishery began*

moved between all the toothfish vessels to identify best-practice and ensure consistent reporting between vessels. An observer has also been deployed in a similar role on the krill vessels.

The fishery patrol vessel, *Pharos SG*, continues to patrol the SGSSI Maritime Zone and fishery protection officers have already conducted 16 CCAMLR at-sea inspections this year.



*Krill trawler Antarctic Sea in South Georgia*

The krill fishery is now limited to the winter months to avoid the risk of competition between krill-dependent predators and the fishery. 2013 was another good year, with catches of around 30,000 tonnes caught by five vessels. Seven vessels have been licenced to fish in 2014 and catches have been excellent. By the end of August over 67,000 tonnes have been caught, making this year's catches the highest since 1991.

Across all fisheries scientific observers provide vital data for monitoring populations of target species and by-catch. This year GSGSSI also deployed a roving observer who



*Pharos SG in South Georgia*

## Heritage

It has been a very busy season with a range of large heritage projects in progress on South Georgia.

### Discovery House

The renovation of Discovery House was completed in January, just in time for the arrival of the first science team. The building was renovated to provide dedicated accommodation and living space for visiting science parties, to increase science capacity and to diversify GSGSI's income. The first science team to visit were delighted with the standard of accommodation. The completed building provides accommodation, relaxation and cooking facilities for up to eight scientists.

Discovery House will be hosting several large science parties in the forthcoming field season. After so many years, during which Discovery House has only been used for storage, it is a great pleasure to see such an iconic heritage building back in use for its original purpose; the pursuit of scientific knowledge.



*Discovery House kitchen and dining room*

### Renovation of Nybrakke

Nybrakke, or the New Barracks, was one of the last buildings constructed at Grytviken whaling station in the 1960s. It was used to accommodate many of the whalers but has remained derelict since whaling finished in 1966. With funding provided by the UK and Norwegian Governments the first stage of a

major renovation of this large building has been completed. The initial aim has been to ensure the building is watertight, to prevent further deterioration and to sympathetically renovate the exterior of the building.



*The newly painted Nybrakke*

Over the course of several months Nybrakke was re-roofed, exterior woodwork and windows were repaired, the windows were re-glazed and the building repainted. Work was also carried out to remedy flooding of the basement, something that has been a major on-going issue.

### Engineers' Workshop and Main Store

These steel and wooden framed, tin clad buildings are utilised by GSGSI for the storage of building materials, machinery and as workshops.

During the 2003/04 Grytviken clean-up works, the windows of these buildings were covered with tin to protect the building interiors as many of the windows were broken. This season all the windows in these two buildings were repaired and re-glazed.

The effect of the renovation work on Nybrakke, the Engineers' Workshop and Main Store has transformed Grytviken. Many visitors have commented that this work has really brought the whaling station back to life.

### **Stromness Whaling Station Manager's Villa**

A further project funded by Norwegian Government money this season was the stabilisation of the Manager's Villa at Stromness. The Stromness Villa is of significant heritage interest as it was where Sir Ernest Shackleton and party were accommodated after their heroic crossing of South Georgia in 1916. The building is of traditional Norwegian construction but due to the ravages of time is in very poor condition. The work carried out this summer stabilised the structure of the villa while a decision is taken regarding what, if any, renovation of the building could be carried out. Any renovation work of the villa would be greatly complicated by high levels of asbestos contamination in the surrounding area and many other unstable buildings.



*The Stromness Villa during repairs*

### **Visit by Øyas Venner**

GSGSSI were delighted to be involved in the Øyas Venner (Norwegian Friends of the Island) visit to South Georgia over Christmas on the cruise ship *Fram*. The visit, which was timed to coincide with centenary of the Grytviken Church, included many ex-whalers and whalers' families. GSGSSI's Martin Collins accompanied Øyas Venner members, on the first leg of the trip and the then Commissioner, Nigel Haywood, hosted a reception at Government House before the party left for South Georgia.

GSGSSI allowed *Oyas Venner* members to visit some of the whaling station cemeteries that are usually closed to the public, to visit graves of friends and family. Susan Barr, the Head of the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage, also accompanied the visit. Susan has been instrumental in supporting many heritage projects on South Georgia with Norwegian Government funding.

### **Britain's Whale Hunters: The Untold Story**

KEO Films' two part series examining the little known history of UK whaling was broadcast on BBC4 in May. Much of these programs was filmed on South Georgia with the film crews given unprecedented access to the whaling station. Contemporary footage was used alongside interviews with ex-whalers and historic footage to provide a fascinating glimpse into a period of which many people in the UK have little knowledge.

### **Geometria laser surveys**

The Geometria team returned to South Georgia to complete their laser surveys of the whaling stations at Leith. A full laser survey record now exists for all the main whaling stations. The data is currently being processed and discussions are on-going regarding how to make this fascinating information available to the public and researchers. This project was jointly funded by GSGSSI and the Norwegian Government.

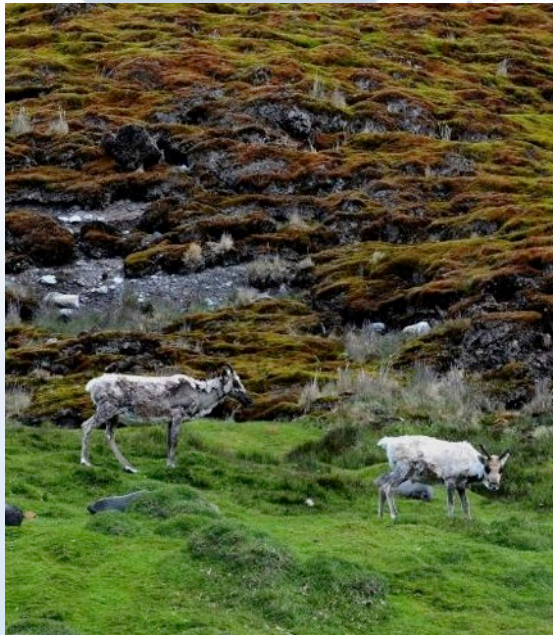


*Laser survey image of the plan and meat loft at Leith*

## Environment

### Reindeer

Reindeer were introduced to South Georgia in the early 1900s by Norwegian whalers. Since their introduction reindeer numbers increased dramatically and these voracious grazers had a devastating impact on the island's vegetation, with knock on effects on native burrowing seabird communities.



*Damage caused by reindeer*

Following consultation with experts and stakeholders, GSGSSI began work to remove these non-native animals from the island and, in January 2013, a combination of herding and ground shooting was used to eradicate more than 1,900 reindeer from the Busen area. In addition the marksmen reduced the population on the Barff Peninsula by 1,555 animals

In early 2014 six of the Norwegian Nature Inspectorate (SNO) marksmen returned to South Georgia to complete the operation on the Barff Peninsula. The rugged terrain and lack of suitable anchorages on the Barff Peninsula meant that herding was not a viable option, so ground shooting was used as a stand-alone method. Despite

challenging terrain and some of the worst summer weather in recent years, the marksmen completed systematic searches of all areas with reindeer and shot 3,140 animals in a six-week period.



*Looking for reindeer over St Andrew Bay*

A small number of animals are known to remain, and a small team will return to the island in early 2015 to complete a final sweep through the area.

### Rats

Following the baiting of the western part of the island in early 2013, the 2013/14 season saw a break in the South Georgia Heritage Trust's (SGHT) baiting programme for the rodent eradication project.

As a follow-up to the baiting in 2013, the SGHT organised a monitoring trip on the *Pelagic Australis* to see if any rodents survived. GSGSSI biologist, Andy Black, took part in the trip and advised the team on where best to place the monitoring devices and how to interpret any markings that were found. Although it is too early to be certain of success in the Phase II area, the fact that no evidence of rodents was found is reassuring given the challenging conditions experienced in the previous season's bait drop.

Whilst it is too early to be sure of the outcome of the 2013 bait drop, it is now three years since the Thatcher and Greene peninsulas were baited. GSGSSI has a network of monitoring devices in this area that are checked annually to detect the presence of rodents. Checks undertaken in February 2014 found no evidence of any rats. This is excellent news, and indicates that the methodology is working.

### **Long-term monitoring**

Long-term monitoring sites were established prior to the reindeer and rat eradication projects and show encouraging signs that biodiversity is recovering.

On the Barff, Thatcher and Busen peninsulas, twelve plots were selected from three representative habitat types tussac/*Poa annua* complex, dry grassland and fellfield/scree. To allow comparison with historic data, it was decided to follow a similar methodology used for the reindeer enclosure experiments of the 1970s and so each plot covered an area of 10 m x 10 m and was subdivided into one hundred 1 m<sup>2</sup> sections. In each plot the species composition and coverage were recorded as well as a point survey to record the vegetation height.

On each peninsula, sites were also established to monitor the recovery of burrowing birds such as white-chinned petrels, prions and diving petrels. Burrow density over a given area was recorded and occupancy confirmed by playing a recording of the bird call, which elicits a response in occupied burrows.

Just one year on from the removal of reindeer from the Busen area, the signs of vegetation recovery are encouraging with an increase in the occurrence of highly grazed species such as burnet. Populations of burrowing birds are likely to take longer to recover, with no significant change seen

from the pre-eradication levels so far.



*Greater burnet: likely to recover rapidly after reindeer eradication*

Monitoring was also established in the reindeer holding area and corrals to make sure that the high grazing pressure during the eradication did not permanently damage the vegetation. Although immediately after the eradication, tussac in the corral was severely damaged, just one year on, it has fully recovered.

### **Weed management**

GSGSSI were successful in bidding for £92,000 of Darwin Plus funding for a project entitled 'Strategic management of invasive alien plants on South Georgia'. As part of the project surveys will be undertaken in areas of past and current human settlement and the weed management strategy will be finalised.

Herbicide control of high priority species is a key output of the project and it is hoped that, at the end of the two years of funding, populations of some species will be at undetectable levels. The project team will also work to further improve biosecurity responses and develop procedures to deal with new incursions.

All project resources will be made available online and it is hoped that these will be useful to other Overseas Territories facing similar problems.



## Tourism

The 2013/2014 tourism season saw a return to 2009 visitor numbers with over 12,000 people visiting South Georgia. This included 7,024 passengers, 667 staff, 4,080 crew from cruise ships and 214 people on yachts. Other visits over the period included Royal Navy ships on patrol, science project teams and staff working on the fishery patrol and research ships.

### Cruise ships

Twenty three different cruise ships made 55 visits to South Georgia with 7,024 passengers during the 2013/2014 season. This was an increase of 1,232 tourist passengers from last year bringing the cruise ship passenger visitor numbers back to 2009 levels. *Seabourn Quest* made its maiden voyage to South Georgia in late 2014, bringing with it 413 passengers and making it the largest single visit of the year.



*Seabourn Quest in Cumberland Bay*

Passengers from 59 countries visited the island on cruise ships this season. The largest number of passengers came from the United States (approximately 25 %), followed by Germany (16%), United Kingdom (11%), Australia (11%), Switzerland (5%), and France (5%). The number of Chinese visitors also increased by 50% compared to the 2012/13 season.

Forty-two different sites were visited by cruise ships during the 2013/14 tourist

season. The most popular activity was boat landings, with every cruise ship using the opportunity to land passengers at Grytviken. Other popular sites were Salisbury Plain, Stromness and Gold Harbour with each receiving more than 30 visits. The least popular sites were Ocean Harbour, Jason Harbour, Anchorage Bay and Cooper Bay, each receiving less than 10 visits throughout the course of the season.



*The Fram landing passengers in Fortuna Bay*

Many visitors also carried out extended walks when visiting South Georgia. The most popular was the 'Shackleton Walk' between Fortuna and Stromness with 29 separate visits and a total of 1,196 passengers undertaking the walk. Another walk that proved to be particularly popular this year was Maiviken, that was undertaken by 647 visitors, up from 250 in the 2012/13 season.

The number of passengers taking part in short kayaking trips increased by 50% compared to the previous season and maintains an upward trend. Gold Harbour, Ocean Harbour and Grytviken are the most popular sites to undertake this activity.

### **Yachts**

There was an increase in the number of yacht visits compared to the previous season with 18 visits by 15 different yachts, amounting to a total of 214 people. The yacht *Kamiro*s remained around South Georgia for five months. Forty-one different sites were visited by private and charter yachts.

### **Expeditions**

An expedition is an activity that involves a night ashore other than at Grytviken. In 2013/2014 four carefully planned expeditions took place, having been approved by the expedition advisory panel.

Three of the expeditions attempted to complete the Shackleton crossing, from King Haakon Bay to Stromness, but only one completed the journey. This attempt was supported by the vessel *Le Sourire* and the eight members had to battle through 100 km/h wind during the traverse. The other crossings had to be aborted due to heavy snow and stormy conditions.

The fourth expedition, which was supported by the yacht *Santa Maria Australis*, originally planned to cross the island on the Shackleton route however the loss of the expedition luggage in transit necessitated a change of plan. Without tents and sleeping bags it was not possible to start the Shackleton route. The alternative plan was to conduct daily ski trips with the support vessel used as base. During the ten days bad weather and strong wind meant that only three trips with skis were completed.



*Passengers starting the "Shackleton Walk" from Worsley Beach in Fortuna Bay.*

### **Visitor Activity Review**

In January 2012 a fatal accident occurred on the Shackleton Walk after a passenger slipped and fell whilst descending towards the Shackleton Valley. During the subsequent inquest the Coroner recommended that GSGSSI review the safety of all the extended walks offered to the tourist industry.

In February 2014, Keiron Fraser (GSGSSI Operations Manager), Catrin Thomas (Mountain Safety Consultant) and Alex Cowan (IAATO) visited the island and surveyed all the approved extended walk routes. The team assessed the safety of each walk, collected GPS waypoints and notes to produce updated Site Visitor Management Plans (SVMPs) for visiting expedition staff. The idea of the updated SVMPs is to ensure all expedition staff are aware of the safest route and have the information they require to choose suitable routes for their passengers.

The opportunity was also taken to gather information on several walks that are currently not approved routes. The aim being to open these routes as other enjoyable, safe walks for visiting tourists. A range of updated SVMPs will be produced in time for the start of the forthcoming tourism season.

## Legislative Review

As part of its good governance arrangements, GSGSSI aspires to have legislation that is fit for purpose for the circumstances of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. To this end it has embarked on a review of legislation in key areas including criminal law and policing, administration of justice generally, immigration and tax. Once the policy proposals have been worked up there will be an opportunity for stakeholders to comment

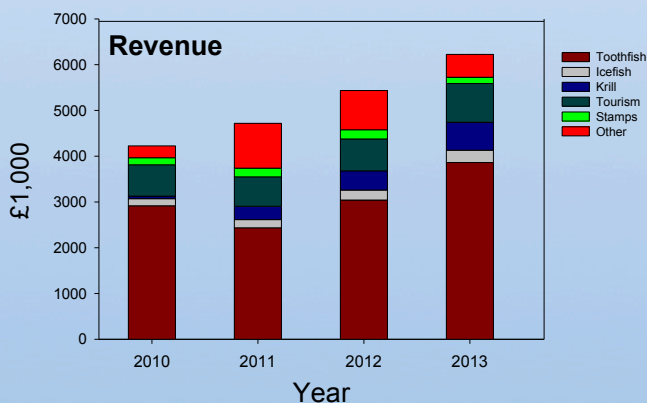
on them before legislation is drafted. The opportunity will also be taken to repeal legislation that is out of date and no longer serves a useful purpose. In addition as part of the review it is planned to improve the legislation page on the website by including links to all local legislation that applies to South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands to form as far as possible a complete library of GSGSSI law.

## Finance

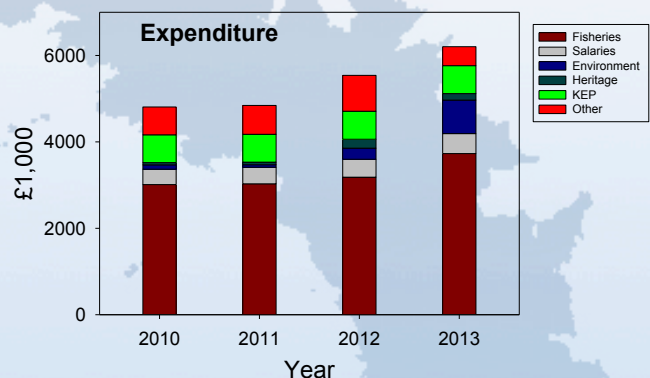
The GSGSSI annual accounts are produced on a resource accounting basis and are published on the GSGSSI website following approval by auditors. The 2012 accounts are on the GSGSSI website and the 2013 accounts will be posted shortly.

The audited accounts for 2012 showed a deficit of £93,000, but £127,000 was spent on the reindeer eradication. As usual, the toothfish fishery was the main source of income.

The 2013 accounts show a surplus of £130,000, largely due to better than anticipated revenue from the krill fishery. Krill fishery revenue is very difficult to predict, as vessels pay for access on a monthly basis and only remain in the fishery when catches are good.



*GSGSSI Revenue 2010-2013*



*GSGSSI Expenditure 2010-2013*

Expenditure is dominated by fisheries patrol vessel and fishery management costs. It is worth noting that some of the funds spent on restoring buildings (heritage) do not appear on the accounts as they become capitalised in the resource accounting system.

GSGSSI should make a small surplus in 2014, once again a consequence of an excellent krill season. In the long-term we are seeking to maintain at least one year's operational costs in reserve and this year's surplus should take us close to that. Once a stable reserve is established, GSGSSI can start to consider spending any surplus on major projects, such as removing waste oil from the whaling stations.

## Other activities in 2013/14

### Mapping

A new map of the Busen Area was published by BAS on behalf of GSGSSI towards the end of 2013. The map includes details of the last section of the Shackleton Walk. A map of the Barff Peninsula is also being developed.

### Meetings Attended by GSGSSI staff

Martin Collins and Katherine Ross attended the CCAMLR meetings in Hobart in October 2013 as part of the UK delegation. Katherine attended the Working Group on Fish Stock Assessment, whilst Martin attended Scientific Committee and Commission.

Richard McKee and Keiron Fraser attended

the IAATO meeting in Providence in May and provided members with a briefing on next season.

Jennifer Lee attended the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) meeting in NZ in August and gave a presentation on invasive species.

### GSGSSI Biosecurity Area in Stanley

In order to improve biosecurity of cargo heading for South Georgia, GSGSSI have developed a cargo handling area near FIPASS. The area is concreted to keep containers clear of vegetation and will allow thorough pre-departure checking of cargo.

## Plans for 2014 / 15 Season

### Reindeer

Following the eradication project on the Barff Peninsula in 2013/14 a small number of reindeer remain. Next season, we hope to use two expert marksmen to locate and shoot the remaining animals.

### Rat Eradication

The final phase is due to take place in Feb-May 2015 and will cover the area to the south of Cumberland Bay- the final 1/3 of the total area. Whilst most of the funds have been raised, additional money is still needed, so please visit [www.sght.org](http://www.sght.org) to make a donation.

### Heritage Projects

The Norwegian Government has agreed to fund further work on heritage projects on South Georgia and this funding will be

matched by GSGSSI. Projects include the removal of asbestos from Nybrakke, replacing the flooring on the first and second floors of Nybrakke, restoring the Slop Chest, work on developing the outputs from the laser survey and some further work on the Main Store and Garage.



*The Slop Chest will be restored in the 2014/15 season.*

## Photo Credits

The photographs in this report were provided by: Andy Black, Simon Browning, Martin Collins, Samantha Crimmin, Jo Cox, Keiron Fraser, Jennifer Lee, Dave Peck (cover photo) and Tore Solstad.

## GSGSSI Staff

### **Dr Martin Collins – Chief Executive and Director of Fisheries**

Martin has been in the post of Chief Executive and Director of Fisheries since May 2009. Following a degree in zoology Martin worked as a fisheries observer in the Falklands for a year, prior to studying for a PhD at University College Cork (1991-94). He then worked as a lecturer at Aberdeen University (1997-2002) and in 2002 joined the British Antarctic Survey as a Marine Ecologist where he worked on and around South Georgia.



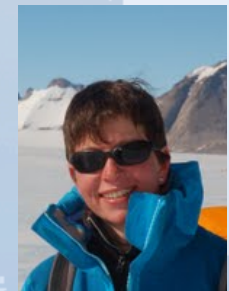
### **Richard McKee – Executive Officer (Part-time)**

Richard has been employed by GSGSSI since 2001, initially spending two winters at King Edward Point as Government Officer. He then returned to Stanley to work in the Stanley office as Assistant Operations Manager, Operations Manager and now Executive Officer. Richard is currently working from Edinburgh for approximately 2 years. Before working for GSGSSI, Richard spent 3 years working as a Fishery Protection Officer in the Falkland Islands and South Georgia maritime zones.



### **Dr Jennifer Lee – Environment Officer**

Jennifer joined GSGSSI in March 2012, having previously been at the Centre of Excellence for Invasion Biology at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Here she conducted research on a range of topics including species distribution modeling, invertebrate physiology and molecular ecology. Jen has been working in sub-Antarctic and Antarctic terrestrial systems since 2006 and is enjoying using her scientific background to inform management decisions.



### **Dr Katherine (Frin) Ross – Marine Fisheries Officer**

Frin studied benthos and scallop aquaculture at Port Erin Marine Laboratory (Isle of Man). She subsequently spent two years as a Fisheries Scientist at King Edward Point. Before joining GSGSSI Frin worked on Marine Protected Area policy for the Joint Nature Conservation Committee in Aberdeen and on fish and shellfish stock assessment and habitat restoration in the Outer Hebrides. She joined GSGSSI in November 2012 and is enjoying the variety of work her job entails.



### **Mark Lewis – Legal Adviser**

Mark has been in the newly created post of legal advisor since June 2014 to provide general legal advice and assist with the review of legislation. Previously Mark was the Attorney General for the Falkland Islands and the South Sandwich Islands and before that worked as Audit Solicitor to the Audit Commission following a career in local government.



## GSGSSI Staff

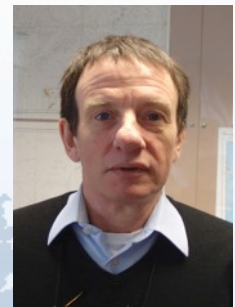
### **Dr Keiron Fraser – Operations Manager**

Keiron joined GSGSSI in 2009 as a Government Officer based at King Edward Point. In October 2013 he became the Stanley based Operations Manager with responsibility for logistics and operations. Before working for GSGSSI Keiron worked at the BAS for 10 years as a Marine Biologist, diver and Base Commander.



### **Ian Haywood – Administrative and Logistics Assistant**

Ian joined GSGSSI in July 2014. He is currently on unpaid leave from HM Diplomatic Service, accompanying his wife who is Head of the Governor's Office. Over a 35 year career, he has specialised in administration, accounting and logistics and has served in many diplomatic posts overseas ranging from Bridgetown to Baghdad.



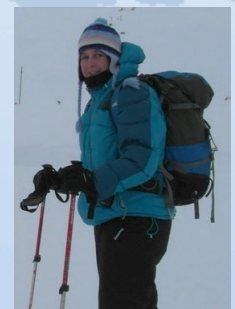
### **Pat Lurcock – Government Officer**

Pat graduated in Electrical and Electronic Engineering in 1985. After a two-year stint in the Antarctic doing geospace physics, followed by three years in the Falklands running the IT for the government Fisheries Department, Pat has spent the last twenty years working on South Georgia, supported by his wife Sarah.



### **Joanna Cox – Government Officer**

Jo joined the GSGSSI team in 2012 as a Government Officer based on South Georgia. She is a seafarer by trade and spent the 10 years prior to joining GSGSSI working for BAS on the research vessels RRS James Clark Ross and RRS Ernest Shackleton. Jo attained her Master Mariners certificate in 2011 and brings a wealth of seafaring knowledge to the South Georgia team. Following 3 years with GSGSSI, Jo will sadly be leaving the team to take up a new and exciting challenge as Master of the RRS *Discovery*.



### **Simon Browning – Government Officer**

Simon has a degree in Environmental Biology from Swansea University. After spending a season working as marine biologist at Sherkin Island Marine Research Station he attended the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and joined the Army as a Logistics Officer where he gained 24 years experience. Within the Army he saw deployments around the globe; his last being the Falkland Islands. He is a BSAC dive leader, yacht sailor and qualified RHIB handler. Simon is married to Sarah.

