

**2013-2018**

**St Helena Social Policy Plan**  
*“Aiming High for St Helena”*



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***“St Helena is a special place to me because of the friendly people, relaxed life and freedom for my children” (anon)***

**Foreword by Councillor Les Baldwin**

**I am delighted to present Saint Helena’s Social Policy Plan (SPP), not least because Saints continue to provide valued help and front line support to the more vulnerable members of our society, and this plan engulfs a vision for socially moving forward.**

**Saint Helena’s SPP was compiled from a blank piece of paper, through consultation with members of the public on the issues being faced by the vulnerable and less fortunate citizens of St Helena. The report incorporates many of the recommendations from the 2013 Social Welfare Review which have been fully endorsed by the members of Legislative Council, including the implementation of Minimum Income Standards as the basis for setting benefit levels, followed by the implementation of a Child Benefit allowance. Both of these recommendations are probably the most costly elements of the policy and both are seen as helping to alleviate the hardship suffered by many of the community.**

**This important document charts our Social Policy course for the next five years, while bringing to the fore the main strategic issues in the short term. Saint Helena as a community now needs to get behind this and work together to ensure the island’s goals are achieved over this period, and that the community spirit is maintained in the period leading up to the opening of the airport and beyond.**

**I would like to thank everyone that contributed to preparing this document; I know that it took a lot of hard work and commitment. This extends to all those members of the public, private and third sectors, civil society, Elected Members and others who attended the many consultations and workshops. All of this was vital in bringing the SPP to life and developing a document that truly belongs to the people of Saint Helena.**

**I know that by working together, the people of Saint Helena will be able to make this plan a reality and put the island on a clear path to greater prosperity. We must firmly grip with both hands the new opportunities that lay ahead while taking care to preserve all that makes Saint Helena the sparkling jewel that it is. As Chairperson of the Social and Community Development Committee I will be monitoring progress with a keen eye as we move forward on the exciting journey ahead of us.**

Children and Young People are the future of the island, they were involved in the development of this plan and this is what they had to say;

"Better wages/employment for Saints so that families won't need to be separated for offshore employment"

"Accommodation for young people is important especially when people return after studying abroad. They become very independent and so there should be plans to provide small flats and bedsits for single people and young people".

"It would be good if the students at the school continued to be included in the discussions and action planning."

"When people (Saints) return to the island with qualifications they should receive better salaries and a proper career plan should be in place over a period of time to include further training in the professional area in which they have started their career. This will show them what they can aspire to and how they can do it as well as showing them they are worth it. Otherwise it will be better for them to not come back to the island or come and then go elsewhere."

"More playgrounds for us to play in"

## 1. Executive Summary

This Social Policy Plan covers the crucial period leading up to and after air access is achieved between 2013 and 2018 and was developed through consultation with the public and through departmental participation within St Helena Government. (SHG)

This plan raises a number of important issues that need to be addressed as the Island moves forwards towards economic growth, self-sufficiency and a better standard of living for all.

Through the developments that are taking place we need to make St Helena; ***a better place to live, a better place to work and a better place to raise a family.***

To make this happen we need to work together, listen to people's concerns, celebrate the many positives and make the changes that are required to improve the Island without losing what makes the Island unique.

### **This can be achieved.**

Over 300 people took part in developing the Social Policy Plan from across all sections of the community and this is around 5% of the population and would be the equivalent of 3 million people taking part in the UK.

It is clear is that people on the Island have similar concerns and similar solutions. This plan acknowledges those concerns and offers practical actions to be implemented to improve the social fabric of the Island that will be led by SHG.

The implementation of these actions will be reviewed on a regular basis with the community who helped produce this plan. We need to take the actions off the pages and make them reality.

While the plan does highlight a number of concerns and issues we must also celebrate the positives that this wonderful Island has in abundance and the Islands best resource, its people.

As a society we need to make sure that those who are vulnerable are protected, those who have no voice are heard and those who want to aspire are supported.

This actions identified in this Social Policy Plan will be driven and led by SHG.

The Social Policy Plan will;

- Set the context of the issues raised by the community
- Consider the key themes that were raised
- Translate those key themes into social objectives
- Take those social objectives and spell out actions
- Explain how these actions will be implemented and reviewed with SHG leading and driving the process

The answers to these issues do not lie solely in this plan.

**The answers lie in our community and are ours to achieve if we work together.**

## **2. Background**

In July 2010 a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between St Helena Government (SHG) and The Department for International Development (DFID) that heralded the development of the Island's airport due for completion in late 2015 / early 2016.

The conditions of the MOU and the subsequent funding for the airport development required a commitment from SHG to deliver the following for the Island and its people:

***“Sustainable and inclusive economic growth and social development, which will enable St Helena eventually to become self-sustaining”.***

This has been encapsulated in the Island's Sustainable Development Plan (SDP) as:

***“Strengthened community and family life through vibrant economic growth, a healthy environment and with opportunities for all to participate, within a framework of effective government and law.”***

*In order to achieve this, three National Goals have been set:*

***1. A vibrant economy providing opportunities for all to participate***

## ***2. Strong community and family life***

### ***3. Effective management of the environment***

While the Social Policy Plan mainly focuses on supporting National Goal 2, “strong community and family life”, there is also a clear cross over with the Sustainable Economic Development Plan and the National Environmental Management Plan to support the overall strategic direction of the Island.

The actions identified in this plan are all linked to the SDP priority areas and strategic objectives.

The document is named ***Aiming High for St Helena*** and this reflects the aspiration of Saints, while recognising that some of the issues raised during the production of this plan will take time to deliver. With the airport less than three years away, the potential for achieving the Island’s goals has never been greater. Over the coming years the Island will become a more prosperous place to live, but it is important that this is managed so it helps the Island progress in the manner it wishes.

As such, this plan is an agreed map to making life on the Island better led by SHG. Saints understand that some of the areas will take time to develop and likewise some of the actions can happen very quickly. This plan is not a magic solution; it is a community developed document which outlines how, through participation and dialogue, coupled with the support of all sections of the community, St Helena can be an even better place to live.

Within this context SHG will implement this plan to focus on key issues such as protecting vulnerable people, improving human rights, increasing aspirations and improving the standard of living on the Island.

## **3. Who are we?**

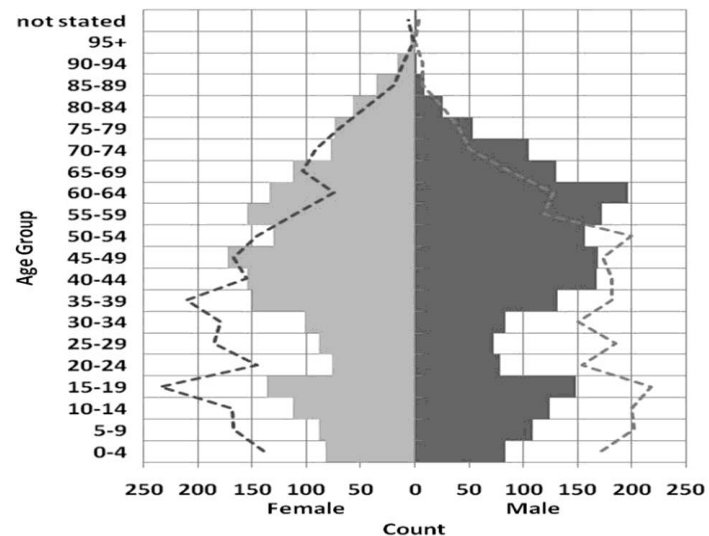
St Helena is situated in the South Atlantic Ocean and is a British Overseas Territory. The current population stands at 4,226<sup>1</sup> broken down evenly between males and females and the people are known as “Saints”.

The populations age is skewed upwards (Diagram1) and this is due in part to outward migration. This means that the Island has a reduced number of working age people and this does impact on other aspects of family life with families often separated for prolonged periods of time as people move overseas for employment.

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<sup>1</sup> March 2013- Over the past 5 years the population has generally been increasing, but is still down from 5,644 in 1987. Statistics Office, SPPU, SHG 2013.

Diagram 1. Age –Gender 2008 v 1998



St Helena Population Census: count of St Helenian resident population by 5 year age-sex group.  
 Bar = 2008 Census, total resident St Helenian population = 3,981  
 Dashed Line = 1998 Census, total resident St Helenian population = 4,913  
 Note- only residents with St Helenian status are included in the above figure. Foreign nationals, regardless of term of stay are excluded.

St Helena has a unique, rich and diverse culture and history as well as outstanding natural beauty and wildlife.

The Island is currently undergoing a momentous period in its history which will see the introduction of air access. This in turn will provide the economic conditions through tourism, fishing and other enterprise to improve the quality of life for Saints, both those on-Island and those who are looking to return from overseas.

Central to the economic developments are the Saints themselves and it is imperative that while the Island moves forward towards economic self-sufficiency that vulnerable Saints are protected, young Saints are inspired and the rich Saint culture is protected & preserved for future generations and visitors to enjoy.



By developing a Saint led economy we will be able to plan for the future and tackle the key social issues that concern people on the Island, such as local living standards and opportunities for young people to develop the skills that are not currently available.

A survey of 1,846 employees in 2012 for the development of the Islands minimum wage found that the median wage for the Island is £3.32 per hour <sup>2</sup>and as the economy develops Islanders wages should increase and living standards should improve.

In the 2010/11 Income Tax survey there were 2,208 Pay as You Earn (PAYE) employees. Of these 1,479 (67%) were earning less than the current income tax threshold of £7,000.<sup>3</sup>

The Island currently has 196 people in receipt of Income Related Benefit, (IRB) 32 people who receive benefits due to unemployment and 587 people in receipt of Basic Island Pension. (BIP)<sup>4</sup>

It is anticipated that economic development will bring a number of social changes. The Islands labour force will become more flexible, the population should increase, travel overseas will be more accessible and we will see a short term increase in the number of expatriates working on the Island.

Through economic development, environmental management and social planning we aim to empower Saints to take control of the present and the future to make the Island self-sufficient on all fronts from the development of a prosperous economy, protection of the environment as well as protecting and supporting vulnerable groups.

#### **4. Society and the Local community**

The word society is based on the Latin noun *socius*, and describes an interaction or bond among parties that are friendly.

Nowhere is this more prevalent than in St Helenian communities and this sense of society and community flows through all aspects of Saint Life and that needs to be the basis of future social cohesion on the Island.

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<sup>2</sup> Muir, Minimum Wage Consultation, St Helena Government, 2012

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Office SPPU, St Helena Government, 2011

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Office SPPU, St Helena Government, 2013

St Helena has a strong community and family spirit that is the foundation of the Island. The Island has a vibrant civil society that provides essential support and services to a wide range of vulnerable groups. Civil society is part of the fabric of the Island and as the Island moves forward civil society will have an increased role to play through delivering commissioned services and protecting the historical and social fabric of Island life. St Helena has around 70 civil society organisations and these include for example SHAPE who provides support and employment for disabled people and the Islands international cricket team who now play on the world stage.

The private sector on the Island is starting to develop and diversify in readiness for future opportunities through air access. The private sector will carry the baton for change and will present Saints with a range of opportunities to develop careers and businesses on the Island. To support the sector we need to make St Helena a place where Saints want to live, raise a family and have a successful career.

The public sector is the largest employer on the island and this is not conducive to developing a sustainable economy. To redress the balance SHG is reducing its footprint. Indeed, over the past 20 years employment in the public sector is set to have declined from around 1,600 people in 1993/94 to 750 in 2013/14.

This reduction in staff needs to be carefully managed to protect frontline services and to ensure people have access to appropriate training to reskill in new and existing sectors.

Saints are rightly proud of their identity and many young people who took part in the participation events to develop this plan would like to see the Island not only on the map for tourism and fishing, but also as a nation who are participating in international sports events to raise the profile of St Helena worldwide.

## 5. Social Cohesion

Throughout the development of this plan and following dialogue with all sections of the community it is clear that more focus needs to be put on developing social cohesion amongst all of the people who live on the Island and this is a priority for SHG.

Social cohesion is described as, *“The on-going process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunities.”*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Sustaining Growth, human development and social cohesion in a global world, Policy Research Unit, Government of Canada 1999

Through a number of factors over many generations the Island has arrived at a crucial period in its history with a number of social issues that need to be resolved to enable the Island to move forward both economically and socially. These include:

- We need to change a culture of “them and us” to a culture that is about “us,” and “us” moving forward.
- We need to address the situation of those who “have” and those who “have not” to a future situation where everyone has sufficient.
- We need to have a system that encourages people to come forward and make decisions and feel they are in charge of the Island’s destiny.
- We need an Island where people feel equal and where you are from is no longer an issue but it is about how you contribute to Island life that is important.

**This can be achieved.**

This can be achieved if the Island works together to underpin social cohesion with a range of initiatives that empowers and protects Saints and supports Saints to take up key professional roles on the Island.

**This will not happen overnight.**

However, striking this balance is the key to moving the Island forward and the issues highlighted by the community which are the basis of this plan will help embed social cohesion on the Island.

## **6. Participation Process**

This Social Policy Plan was developed through a number of community participation events, targeted events with Elected Members, the Business Community, Civil Society, Prince Andrew School, the Islands three primary schools, Community Care Centre (CCC), SHAPE and New Horizons, as well as through structured questionnaires that were completed by members of the public.

The participation process enabled people to comment freely on the issues that concern them about the Island and also to shape the final version of this plan.

This plan is stronger and reflects Saint life thanks to those people who participated.

The debates from those who participated show that many Saints share the same issues and concerns. This was further supported by the 109 questionnaires that were completed.

It is important to note that the Saint sense of community and fairness shone through the process. Naturally, people are concerned about their own situations; but, they were also very concerned about other people's circumstances and in particular people who are vulnerable.

The discussions, just like the Island, were unique.

The young people were concerned about the elderly; the elderly want the best for the younger generation as they take the Island forward. The affluent wanted a better deal for the poor and the non-disabled demanded more for the disabled members of our community. Others spoke about protecting vulnerable groups such as victims of domestic violence and stopping sexual abuse.

Overall the people who participated in the process want a fairer society that has improved opportunities for people as the Island moves forward, coupled with increased transparency and dialogue.

This feeling of community and a fairer society was articulated through one respondent at an event, who said;

***“We need an acceptable living standard for everyone on the Island.”***

## **7. Key Issues**

During the participation process a number of distinct themes emerged about the key social issues that the Island faces. These can be divided into three groups, namely;

1. What the Island must keep at all costs
2. Where we should improve
3. Where we need more information or questions answered

### **What the Island must keep at all costs**

Throughout the process it became clear that Saints feel very strongly about protecting the unique features of Island life to safeguard its future for locals and visitors alike. This included:

1. The Saint sense of community and family
2. Local traditions and customs
3. The Saint identity

All those who took part in the participation process ranked the sense of community/family, local traditions and the Saint identity very highly as key social issues for the Island. For example, all 109 respondents to the questionnaire said these characteristics were “What makes St Helena a special place to live.”

Some people are cautiously optimistic about the development of the Island. However, the message is clear from the community that we must protect what makes the Island unique and that the development would be more positively supported if these key areas were protected.

There is a feeling that the development of the Island will result in the Island changing forever and the communities fears need to be addressed.

### **Where we should improve**

Saints were very clear about the areas that need to be improved to make St. Helena a better and fairer place to live, these were as follows:

1. Protection and empowerment of vulnerable groups
2. More employment opportunities for Saints, especially young people
3. Improve the standard of living on the Island – this is multi layered

These issues were universally highlighted by all respondents in some shape or form. The community feels strongly about protecting vulnerable people such as disabled people and our elderly citizens. All respondents were concerned about improving the standard of living on the Island and this covered a wide range of issues from housing to medical service and other issues such as benefit levels on the Island.

Another issue that was strongly raised by the community was the job opportunities available for Saints on the Island and the increased use of Technical Cooperation (TC) officers from overseas. This issue was most strongly raised through the anonymous questionnaires and as we approach air access and a likely increase number of TC officers in the short term this issue does need to be addressed as we move forward.

#### **Where we need more information or questions answered**

The process also highlighted areas Saints felt anxious about. This is where people felt they needed more clarity and answers about the future, this included:

1. More information about the airport and the impact it will have?
2. What the transformation of the Island economy will mean for me and my family?
3. How will these developments improve the standard of living on the Island and is it sustainable?

The community raised a number of issues about the future direction of the Island and in many cases people did not feel they had enough information to form an opinion on certain developments.

For example a small percentage of people who responded to the questionnaires were very much against the development of the airport and were vehemently against it, majority of people were in limbo, unsure of the benefits of the airport and waiting to see “something happen.”

It is clear that for many Saints the connection between air access and improving the standard of living on the Island has still not been made. It is important that the community feel that the development of the Island is something that *is done with them and not done to them*.

Although the majority of the community are generally positive about air access for the Island, the connectivity with the overall vision and the benefits that an improved economy will have on all aspects of society is still not clear for many.

Many people are concerned about the “here and now” and see the airport on the horizon. To address these concerns we need to address the community’s immediate issues and re-engage them with the long term vision for the Island that will bring prosperity and an improved standard of living.

Saints also expressed a number of positives about the Island.

These included how safe the Island is; how resourceful the Islanders are, the traditions and customs of the Island as well as the strength of the local community.

In addition to this the Island has many areas to feel positive about.

Virtually no unemployment, the introduction of a minimum wage and improving education results bode well for the future. The Islands population is increasing with Saints returning from overseas, as well as the introduction of a Basic Island Pension (BIP) which has benefited many Saints. New measures to monitor and implement the various infrastructure projects are due to come into force in 2013 and finally, construction of the airport is on time.

It is important that we maintain these positives and use these foundations to build a better future for all by working together.

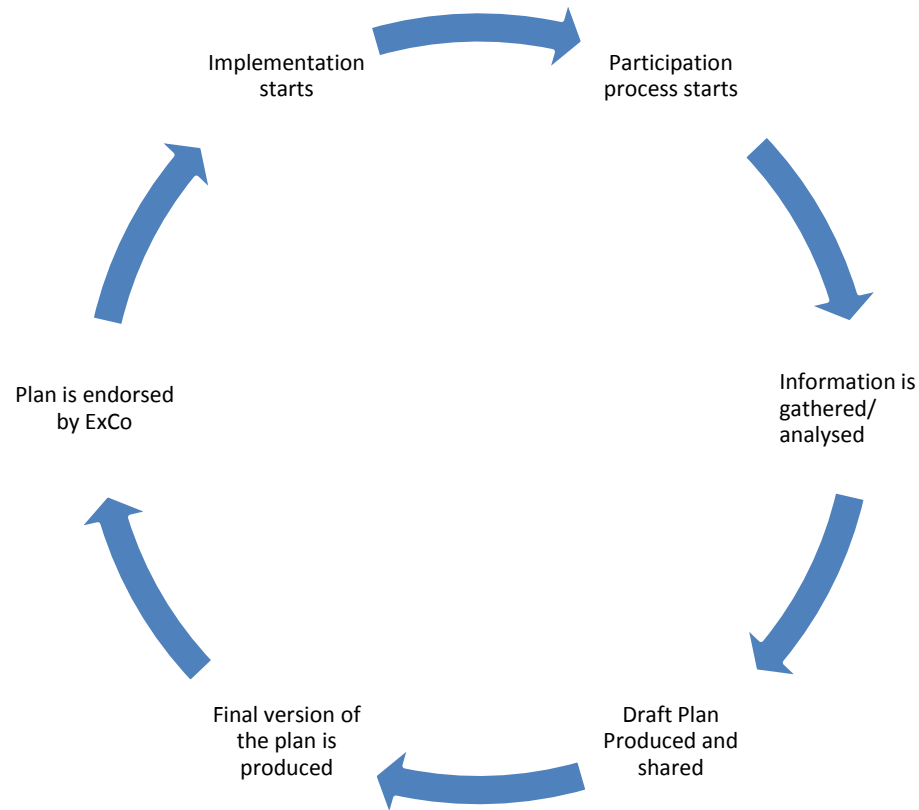
## **8. Social Objectives**

Developing these key headline themes further enables us to set a number of key social objectives for the Island that will then become the drivers for change. The 10 social objectives for the Island are as follows:

1. Less relative poverty, increased incomes and a better standard of living.
2. Protect, promote & celebrate Saint identify, customs and communities.
3. Employment for all those who need and are able to work with support for those who need additional help to enable them to find work.
4. An inclusive and caring society which supports communities, families and individuals.
5. An active and engaged citizenship.
6. Greater equality, social inclusion and social justice.
7. Better housing availability, quality and affordability.
8. A healthy society with safeguards for vulnerable people including children and young people.
9. A more inclusive political system that is representative of the St Helenian population.
10. Increased opportunities for Saints pre and post completion of the airport with a better standard of living.

Through the communities feedback we were able to develop these 10 social objectives further and develop a number of actions to make a positive difference. Diagram 2 outlines the process from the participation process to implementation.

**Diagram 2. The Process for Developing the Social Policy Plan**





## 9. Social Objectives and Actions

To achieve the social objectives a number of actions need to take place so that the community see and feel positive changes. Some of the actions required will cut across a number of the social objectives and this highlighted that there are a gaps on the Island that needs to be addressed.

We shall now concentrate on each social objective and the actions required to take it forward with timescales and identified leads within SHG and how these actions link to the Islands Sustainable Development Plan. (SDP)

### 1. Less relative poverty, increased incomes and a better standard of living.

Low wages and income are a major issue for Saints and this does have a negative impact on lifestyle choices and the standard of living on the Island. As the Island develops further it is imperative that those members of the community who have low incomes are protected and supported. In addition to this, the need to aim for a living wage for the Island and an incremental increase in the minimum wage based on economic conditions is of paramount importance to ensure work is incentivised.

Context	Action	Benefit	Responsible individual/body	Timescale	Link to Sustainable Development Plan
Throughout the process the issues of benefits was raised by majority of those who took part. It was generally thought that the current levels of Income Related Benefit and Basic Island Pension were not sufficient to live	To introduce a benefit system based on the Minimum Income Standard required for living on the Island while making sure those who are able to work do so.	Reduce poverty, improve health, reduce preventable diseases, reduce longer term spend on health/welfare.	Corporate Planning and Policy Unit. (CPPU)	This process will take time to implement and may need to be done incrementally during the duration of this plan.	Priority area 2, Strategic Objective, 2.3

a socially acceptable life.					
Although the introduction of the minimum wage is seen as a positive move by many, it was highlighted that this minimum should be reviewed regularly and should take an upwards trajectory.	To review the minimum wage on an annual basis with a view to an eventual living wage.	To protect working families/individuals on lower wages and to incentivise employment. Increased wages and an eventual living wage will help reduce emigration and support family life.	Employee Rights Committee, CPPU/Finance.	Jun 2014	Priority area 1, 2 & 3  Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 3.2, 5.4, 6.1, 7.3, 8.1
Many Saints felt uneasy about divestment and this was due to in part to the divestment of utilities and the impact on the poor and vulnerable.	To continue the divestment programme, but with a more targeted range of subsidies for low income individuals and families.	To protect families/individuals from price increases and to use subsidies more efficiently and effectively.	SHG	On-going	Priority area 3  Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 5.1, 5.3, 7.3

## 2. Protect, promote & celebrate Saint identity, customs and communities.

Saints are rightly proud of their Island, its customs, culture and community. As the Island moves forward these key aspects of the Island's social fabric need to be protected and promoted. In addition to involving the community in all key decisions and undertaking the appropriate social, environmental and economic assessments related to change, the following measures will be undertaken to support the fabric of the community while making the Island attractive to visitors and investors alike.

Context	Action	Benefit	Responsible body/persons	Timescale	Link to Sustainable Development Plan
The protection of Saint identity and Saint culture is an issue that concerns many Saints especially in light of air access. This issue was raised by many who took part in the process.	Formation of a Cultural Committee comprising of representatives of all sections of the community to develop and deliver a programme of events that promote Saint culture, traditions, music, civil society, spiritual and religious traditions and feed into the social, economic and environmental impact assessments of any potential policy decision.	Protect Saint culture for future generations and for visitors. Ensure linkage between Saints and expatriates through community development. Support the decision making process of the Island to ensure proper consideration is given to cultural and local issues.	Led by Community Development Organisation (CDO), with support from all sectors as this has clear socioeconomic benefits for the Island.  Lead to be confirmed	Cultural committee to be in place by October 2014 with a rolling programme of events to commence in April 15.	Priority areas 1  Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 6.4, 7.4
The Island is facing a health time bomb and needs to act quickly. We also know via feedback from the across the Island that people	An Island sports and play strategy will be developed and implemented to encourage local sports, fitness and eventual elite sporting participation. This strategy will include a separate section addressing play and play	This will improve the Island's fitness and international identity by aiming to compete on the highest international stage as our cricket team did in 2012. The play element of	Mixed approach across all sectors, civil, private and public, maximising links with organisations such as the	Strategy to be developed by Dec 2014 and implemented thereafter.	Priority area 2  Strategic Objectives, 2.2, 2.3

want more activities to access and more spaces that can be utilised by families.	spaces such as parks, open spaces, family activities as well as healthy activities for young people away from sport. This strategy should also consider access to keep fit activities across the Island in key locations to reduce the impact of preventable diseases and activities for disabled people.	the strategy will support children, young people and families to access local facilities and will aim to support community cohesion by encouraging more people to get active and to take part in positive activities.	Commonwealth Games		
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### 3. Employment for all those who need and are able to work with support for those who need additional help to enable them to find work.

Saints have a very strong affinity with work, coupled with a range of skills and an increasing sense of entrepreneurship. As the Island moves forward we must ensure that Saints are central to the economic activity on the Island and move to a position with increased wages, eventually moving to a living wage for the Island. We must also empower the vulnerable to gain employment and reward those employers who employ people with additional needs through a range of incentives.

Context	Action	Benefit	Responsible body/persons	Timescales	Link to Sustainable Development Plan
One of the concerns voiced through the participation process was around how is the air access and economic	Economic development is the key driver to delivering employment. Socioeconomic impact assessments will be undertaken on all major projects to ensure Saints are benefiting from all economic activity where	Developing a Saint owned and Saint led economy on the Island that will increase local wages, living standards and increase taxable income to be directed into frontline	ESH- CPPU Procurement Manager	On-going.	Priority area 1  Strategic Objectives, 1.1 and 1.2

development on the Island going to benefit the man/women in the street.	appropriate and competitive.  All procurement opportunities will be advertised on Island.	services such as education and health.			
The Island does not have robust Disability Legislation that protects and empowers disabled people and people with special educational needs.	Disability Legislation needs to be developed with disabled people, their parents and carers and other civil society groups involved from the outset. As part of this legislation we will ensure that all new public and commercial buildings are disabled friendly to support access and employment opportunities. A key component to this legislation will be employment and training rights for disabled people.	The benefit of Disability Legislation and subsequent Special Education Needs and Disability (SEN/D) Policy will not only protect SEN/D members of the community but it will also empower them. When we refer to 'disabled' people and using the 'social model' we mean: "how society disables people by the way that it treats and excludes people whatever their impairment/ill health/ long term condition. By developing robust legislation and policies we will start to further improve equality on the Island.	All aspects of the community – Legislation to be produced by the Attorney General's Office with the H&SW directorate, the Social Policy Planner and Civil Society.  Following the implementation of the legislation the relevant policies will be developed including transition arrangements for vulnerable groups.	Legislation to be drafted by April 2015  Policies to be developed following the Ordinance.	Priority area 1 and 3  Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 2.1, 3.1,8.1
We have a number	Incentivise employing vulnerable	By providing employers	Employee Rights	Financial	Priority area 1, 3

of employers on the Island who currently employ disabled and vulnerable people. They welcome the minimum wage; however feel that without financial support they may not be able to continue to employ such a high level of vulnerable people.	groups through tax breaks and other financial incentives for employers and linking this to transition planning and pathways for vulnerable groups such as those with a disability or mental health concerns.	with a financial incentive to employ vulnerable people such as those with a disability will empower this group to seek and gain employment, while not potentially penalising those organisations that are willing to meet the needs of the wider community.	Committee with the private and civil sectors to provide a deliverable scheme that incentivises employment.	incentives to be considered within the next budgeting cycle.	Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 7.1, 8.1
Where we have opportunities to use social clauses in our procurement process we should to open opportunities up to vulnerable people.	Targeted procurement will be used to increase the opportunities of vulnerable groups as SHG procures services from both civil society and the private sector.	By insisting that wherever is practicable social procurement clauses are considered when SHG purchase goods or a service, will increase the opportunities that are available for vulnerable groups either through protected employment places or encourage that the contractor purchases goods locally where it is commercially	Procurement Manager and all Directors.	Process to commence April 2014 in-line with the budget cycle.	Priority area 1, 3 Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 8.1

		advantageous.			
One of the overwhelming messages received from the participation process was around empowering Saints to hold key professional positions in our community.	To encourage more Saints to take up professional positions we need to collectively increase the number of pathways that are available for young Saints to move through education, gain the right level of experience and then provide key services on the Island. This includes incentives to remain in education, access to well established universities and using the links with Her Majesty's Government departments/international commerce to gain the relevant experience necessary to practice on the Island. This action is linked to the action below. We also need to improve wages to attract and retain Saints on the island.	This would see a move towards a more self-sufficient economy and reduce some of the animosity that exists towards expatriates while providing Saints with professional careers.	ALL	On-going over a period of time.	Priority areas 1,2,3 Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.2, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 7.3,
It is clear that some Saints feel animosity towards Technical Cooperation (TC) Officers from	To support Saints to take key roles in Government and to increase the links between expatriates and Saints we need to review the way in which we utilise Technical Cooperation.	Increase the local skills base, reduce in the longer term post air access the dependence on expatriates and to link with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office	SHG.	Post air access where possible based on local skills available and local needs.	Priority areas 1,2,3 Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 3.2, 7.1, 7.3,

overseas and some TC Officers have not endeared themselves with Saints. In the run up to air access it is anticipated that we will have more TC officers. To address this we need to look at how we up skill Saints, reduce the TC headcount where possible overtime and utilise TC officers more effectively.		white papers key focus areas.			
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#### 4. An inclusive and caring society which supports communities, families and individuals.

Throughout the participation process Saints valued their communities and families very highly as an area that must be protected at all costs. To support communities and families we need to empower people to make a difference where they live and also explore how we can support families.

Context	Action	Benefit	Responsible body/persons	Timescales	Link to Sustainable Development Plan
Civil society is ideally placed to deliver	To work in the heart of communities and to support	Civil society are well trusted and respected on	Cross SHG approach to commissioning	On-going as part of the Islands	Priority area 1,2, 3



some SHG services and need to be supported to do so. This will support local groups and reduce SHG's footprint. As the Island develops the private sector will also have a role to play in delivering services.	families and individuals SHG will outsource a number of services and projects to civil society while providing support to civil society to increase capacity.	the Island and with continuing support from SHG local organisations will be able to deliver a range of services including services traditionally delivered by SHG to support communities, families and individuals.	services.	Divestment Strategy.	Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2 2.3, 3.2, 4.2,5.3, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 7.1, 7.2,7.3, 7.4, 8.1
Many elderly residents who live in the CCC feel that they do not have enough contact with the community.	We need to develop a volunteering scheme to encourage people to visit the CCC residents for either some conversation or to help with activities.  The CCC monthly outings that were valued by so many residents should be re-introduced on a monthly basis.	Improved the lives of our elderly residents who live in the CCC.	CPPU, H&SW, Civil Society.	To start immediately.	Priority area 2,3  Strategic Objectives, 2.1, 8.1
Outside of established civil society groups we need to support communities to	Small capital and revenue grants to be available for community led projects such as revamping play facilities, community allotments and projects that support	By empowering communities to devise and develop projects will support the needs of local	It is proposed that this scheme is run through the CDO.	To commence April 2014 following an agreed amount of	Priority area 3  Strategic Objectives, 6.4, 8.1

make changes for themselves on issues that concern them.	community cohesion.	people.		funding.	
Supporting families to remain or return to the Island and to have a work/life balance is very important to the future of the Island.	To support families and individuals we need to consider a number of family friendly policies such as child benefit, maternity, paternity leave, compassionate leave, dying with dignity and part-time/flexible working options. Consideration should be given to financial and practical support for Saints who wish to return to the Island full-time.	This will encourage and support Saints to have families on-Island and for overseas Saints to return.	A task and finish group will review current issues and present options and costs to SHG for consideration.  Employee Rights Committee.	To commence June 2014 report back by October 2014 with full proposals to be considered during the budget process of 2015/16.	Priority areas 1,2,3  Strategic Objectives,  1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.3, 3.1,  5.4, 6.1, 7.3, 8.1, 8.3,  8.4
Many Islanders value and respect the animals that they have and cherish dearly. However, unfortunately some animals are neglected and this not only causes misery to them but also puts humans at risk through diseases such as	Many Saint households and communities are enriched by the presence of animals both domestic and wild. We need to protect the welfare of animals for a number of reasons including in many cases public health and also how the outsider world views our society. We need to raise the profile of animal welfare and this includes education and looking further into the correlation between animal abuse, and	We will create an environment where animal welfare is a key priority on the Island.  We will aim to reduce the number of stray animals on the Island and the incidents of abuse.  We will aim to improve the health of animals on the Island and demonstrate the	SHG Chief Vet, Police and Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.	Throughout the duration of the plan.	Priority areas 1, 2, 3  Strategic Objectives,  1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 8.3, 8.4

toxoplasmosis. In addition the Island needs to address the issue of stray animals in the run up to tourism.	abuse/violence towards humans. We need to raise awareness of issues such as toxoplasmosis and the impact that has on human health.	kind nature of our society.			
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### 5. An active and engaged citizenship.

Saints expressed their concern at how they do not feel engaged in the developments that are taking place. As the Island moves forward it requires all sections of the community to feel empowered, informed and involved. To make this happen SHG has a clear role to play in developing and maintaining a two way dialogue with the community.

Context	Action	Benefit	Responsible body/persons	Timescales	Link to Sustainable Development Plan
To promote transparency and engage the community in the developments that are taking place the community should have access to all relevant information	Undertake a review into how Freedom of Information would work on the Island and recommend a way to progress.	Transparency and accountability	Attorney General	Within 6 months	Priority areas 1,2,& 3
We need to properly engage children and	This needs to be a transparent process and departments across	The transparent involvement of Children and Young People	CPPU to lead- Work to be	First membership agreed in 12	Priority area 1,2& 3

young people in the decisions that will impact upon them.	SHG will aim for Investing In Children Membership <sup>6</sup> which will independently evaluate how departments involve Children and Young People in the decision making process.	in all decision making will help the policy process and engage Children and Young People into the political process. The Youth Parliament will play a key role in this as will other groups such as New Horizons.	undertaken by Investing in Children.	months, then all directorates by April 2016.	Strategic Objectives, 1.2, 2.3, 3.1, 4.1, 6.1, 6.4, 7.4, 8.1, 8.4
One of the issues raised repeatedly by participants was around the interface between SHG and the community.	We shall undertake a review of the interface between SHG and the community to increase confidence, trust and transparency. Following this review, with full public engagement a number of measures will be agreed to create an information/consultation charter. Consideration should be given to all forms of media from sandwich boards to social media.	As the Island moves forward it is important that the community feel empowered, informed and involved. Central to this is the information they receive, how they receive and how their views and opinions are sought. By developing an Island information charter will set clear principles and operational guidance.	SHG- Lead Communication.	To commence December 2013 and report back with the information charter within 6 months.	Priority areas 1,2,& 3 Strategic Objectives- all.

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<sup>6</sup> Investing in Children is an International Human Rights Organisation concerned with empowering Children and Young People in the decision making process.  
<http://www.iic-uk.org/>

## 6. Greater equality, social inclusion and social justice.

Saints feel strongly about equality, inclusion and social justice. To make a positive impact on these areas requires a cross society approach and some of the actions have already been outlined in other sections such as legislation to protect and empower disabled people. In addition to this, however, we need to;

Context	Action	Benefits	Responsible individual/body	Timescale	Link to Sustainable Development Plan
St Helena has a number of dedicated members of the public and organisations who epitomise the spirit of the Island by providing exceptional benefit to the people of St Helena.	Promote and celebrate The Certificate and Badge of Honour and Acts of Bravery Awards. This award was introduced in 2010 and up to six awards can be made annually culminating in an awards presentation at Plantation.	To promote the diversity of the population and create a culture where success is celebrated and excellence is rewarded while inspiring Saints to achieve.	Governor's Office  Lead to be confirmed	Annually to be awarded in June	Priority areas 1,2,3  Strategic Objectives, 1.2, 2.3, 3.1, 6.2, 6.4, 7.3, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4
Member of the community have commented that support services are not easily available/accessible. By not addressing issues such as domestic violence and substance	Review current services that are available for victims of crime including domestic violence and sexual offences as well as services for people whom have lost loved ones, or need advice and develop a commissioning plan for the future delivery of services by civil society and SHG. This review should also consider	To support people when they are vulnerable due to actions of others or through natural/unplanned events will support individuals and the community to tackle difficult issues.	SHG with Civil Society to deliver.	Review to commence January 2014 with recommendations presented by March 2014.	Priority areas 2,3  Strategic Objectives, 2.1, 2.3, 3.1, 6.1, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4

misuse we will not tackle key social issues that people have raised.	the support available for citizens who have other issues and problems and this should include alcohol and drug dependency.				
As the Island moves forward we need to recognise the vital role carers play in our society and our economy.	We need to support carers through respite and short breaks to allow them time to recharge and have time for other family members and importantly themselves. Working with carers we will develop a framework of support that may include carers breaks a carers discount scheme in partnership with new tourist developments when they have spare capacity.	Carers provide a vital service on the island and without the dedication of carers many vulnerable people would be reliant on SHG services. We need to celebrate and support carers as they play an integral role in our community. Carers provide untold social and economic benefits to the Island.	SHG, CDO	Cost options presented for budget process September 14.	Priority areas 1,2 & 3  Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 6.1, 8.1, 8.3

## 7. Better housing availability, quality and affordability.

Housing is a central issue for Saints and improving the current housing stock is a priority for SHG. In addition to this, the creation of a mixed sector housing market is desirable. The sale of Crown Estate Land is also advantageous, as this stimulates the building sector, as well as the subsequent income for SHG.

Context	Action	Benefit	Responsible individual/ body	Timescale	Link to Sustainable Development Plan
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Housing issues and concerns were raised by many of the participants and this covered a wide range of issues from supported accommodation to accommodation for young people and vulnerable groups.	The implementation of the Island's Housing Strategy which will consider all aspects of the housing spectrum including support for first time buyers, accommodation for young people, emergency accommodation(refuge/substance dependency) and supported accommodation for elderly and disabled people.	Improved housing stock on the Island, the development of a private market place and opportunities for Saints to have access to quality housing options.  Improve independence for elderly and disabled people.  Provide a safe environment for those who are victims of abuse and those who need specialist support in regard to substance dependency.	Housing exec, SHG with support from private sector and civil society.	30 new homes estimated for December 2016  A total of 350 new affordable houses by 2022  On-going improvements to the private rental sector and repairs to Government Landlord housing.	Priority areas 1,2 & 3  Strategic Objectives,  1.1, 1.2, 3.2, 6.1, 6.2.  6.3. 6.4, 7.3,
Many Saints have expressed a desire to purchase land to build houses/businesses.	Expedite and promote the sale of Crown Estate Land for Saints and others to purchase for residential and commercial use and promote access to finance for people locally.	Saints are able to purchase land for houses, businesses to take ownership of the island. The construction sector will feel the subsequent benefit due to an increase in demand and additional revenue from the sale of land will be made available to SHG.	SHG.	ASAP.	Priority areas 1,2 & 3  Strategic Objectives,  1.1, 1.2, 3.2, 6.1, 6.2.  6.3. 6.4, 7.3,

## 8. A healthy society with safeguards for vulnerable people including children and young people.

Protecting vulnerable groups is a key priority for the community and SHG. All sections of the population have a role to play. We must ***all be working together to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults*** from abuse in all forms. We need as a community to tackle the issues that cause misery and suffering. In addition to this, we need to address the preventable diseases, such as diabetes and obesity that blight our communities.

Context	Action	Benefit	Responsible individual/body	Timescale	Link to Sustainable Development Plan
We need to protect the most vulnerable members of our community. Children and young people need to be protected and nurtured as they are the future of our Island.	<p>Develop a Children and Young Peoples Plan for the Island that will incorporate safeguarding and provide training and awareness for members of the public around neglect and all forms of abuse.</p> <p>We will work together to take a tougher stance on adults who purchase alcohol and other substances for children and educate families about inappropriate relationships and raise awareness to create a zero tolerance approach to sexual offences/offenders throughout the community.</p>	<p>Protection of the most vulnerable members of our community.</p> <p>In addition to this we have an obligation to provide Children and Young People the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life as is outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. (UNCRC). By developing a cross cutting Children and Young Peoples plan and with the support of the Children's Commissioner we will be able to support</p>	H&SW.	April 2014.	<p>Priority areas 1,2 &amp; 3</p> <p>Strategic Objectives,</p> <p>1.2, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2,</p> <p>5.4, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 7.3,</p> <p>7.4, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4</p>



		Children and Young People across the Island.			
It is not only the young people on the Island who need protection. We must protect all vulnerable groups.	We will develop a vulnerable Adult's plan that will support those adults who are on the margins of society and those who need support for their voice to be heard.	We need to protect not only vulnerable Children and Young People, but also the number of vulnerable adults in our community.	H&SW.	April 2014.	Priority areas 1,2 & 3 Strategic Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 6.1, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3
Some concerns have been raised about the regulations and guidance that is used in residential units and other care services.	We need to develop a transparent system that enables the community to understand what standards are acceptable and where they can raise concerns confidentially to an independent body when appropriate.	Having clarity and a system where people can raise concerns will support vulnerable groups.	H&SW.	To commence immediately.	Priority areas 1,2 & 3 Strategic Objectives, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 8.1, 8.4
We have seen a rise in the number of successful prosecutions of a number of sex offenders on the Island. Members of the community have	To reduce reoffending we need to address how we rehabilitate offenders back into the community to reduce the risk of further wrongs especially in regard to sexual offences and domestic violence. Through specialist offender managers	To protect vulnerable groups from violent and sexual offences.	Director of Police.	On-going.	Priority areas 1,2 & 3 Strategic Objectives, 1.2, 2.2, 3.1, 6.1, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4

raised this as key social issue.	and pro-active monitoring of offenders post custody including a possible sex offender's register, we shall reduce the opportunities and likelihood of further offending.				
The Island faces a health time bomb with growing levels of diabetes, obesity, hypertension and a relatively low life expectancy. We need to act now.	SHG alone will not address these issues and we need to develop a holistic approach to these issues. This should include; education, social prescribing, exercise and eating/drinking (soft drinks) habits as well as the Island use of tobacco and alcohol.	Improved life expectancy and quality of live. Improved productivity and an eventual reduction of burden of medical services.	To be led by the Chief Medical Officer.	To commence immediately.	Priority areas 1,2 & 3 Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 8.1
The issue of the high cost of imported food, the poor diet of many and the lack of self-sufficiency on the Island are issues that have been raised on numerous occasions across the Island.	To support local food production, bio security, reduce the need for costly imports, improve health and preserve our heritage we need to raise the profile of self-sufficiency. The National Agricultural Strategy, " <i>Growing Forward</i> " has been developed to support local producers/individuals to reignite food production on the Island.	Improved quality and security of food on the Island, improved health for the Island and reduce the food costs for households.  Improved economic conditions for local producers.	SHG.	Currently under consultation.	Priority areas 1,2 & 3 Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 2.3, 3.2, 4.1, 5.3, 6.2, 6.4, 7.3,

## 9. A more inclusive political system that is representative of the St. Helena population.

Through the participation process the voice of young people, disabled people and women was strongly heard. Their views have made this plan more inclusive, considered and are its strength. The young people on the Island are particularly proud of the Island and want to be involved as the Island changes. We need to capture this diversity and passion as it will benefit the democratic process.

Context	Action	Benefit	Responsible individual/body	Timescale	Link to Sustainable Development Plan
The Island's political landscape needs to be more reflective of the wider community demographics to engage people to take part in the process.	We need to mentor and support minority groups to enter and engage in the political process. Working with organisations such as SHAPE and other civil society organisations as well as directorates such as education a system will be developed to engage, encourage and train members of the community to become interested/involved in the political process. On-going training should also be provided for Elected Members to support them and the political process. The Youth Parliament has a	A wider and more democratic system of politics on the Island and more engagement in elections for example.	SHG, VDO, Civil Society.	To commence immediately with Youth Parliament linking with Elected Members.	Priority areas 1,2 & 3 Strategic Objectives, 1.1, 1.2, 3.1, 6.3, 6.4, 7.4,

	significant role to play in linking young people to the islands political process.				
The Island does not have good participation in the voting process and this was evidenced recently in the Constitutional Change Referendum. This lack of involvement is worrying and does not help the democratic process.	We need to work with the public to understand why people do not vote and address the issues for future elections/referendums.	A more democratic process with the community driving change.	SHG, Civil Society.	To commence immediately.	Priority area 1,2 & 3  Strategic Objectives  All through improved democracy.

- **Increased opportunities for Saints pre and post completion of the airport with a better standard of living**

Throughout the participation process a **“golden thread”** ran through all of the discussions and feedback. Saints want a fairer, better and more prosperous Island leading up to and after the completion of the airport. To achieve this requires everyone to push in the same direction and requires a clear dialogue between all sections of the community and SHG Directorates with the aim to **“make things better.”**

These are some of the areas that will require cross community thinking and solutions as the Island moves forward and this plan alone cannot deliver these changes.

However, this plan and this process will be part of the solution and will support SHG Directorates to deliver their strategic plans as these issues impact on all aspects of life on the Island:

- Improved medical facilities and care.
- Improved education and opportunities for Saints through internationally recognised qualification leading to more professional employment opportunities on the Island.
- Better quality of the services we use every day such as water and electricity.
- Ensure that Saints Human Rights are protected
- A better road network for the Island.
- Protecting the heritage and environment of the Island.
- Involve the community from the start of any process that will impact on the Island.
- An increasing local population.
- More involvement with the political process including revisiting the reduction of the voting age in line with some other Overseas Territories
- More lifelong learning opportunities on the Island including apprenticeships.
- Ensure that the local private sector benefits from inward and local investment where possible.
- More self-sufficiency.

## **10. Implementation and Next steps**

The Social Policy Plan captures the views of many Saints who have participated in developing this document. The plan has a number of actions that will improve the social fabric of the Island while maintaining the balance between progression and protecting the community, the Island's traditions and its uniqueness.

This plan is ambitious and for it to be delivered successfully requires us all to work together with SHG leading and driving the process.

This can only happen through transparency and having an honest dialogue with each another to take this plan off the pages and put these words into action to benefit the community and future generations.

To allow this to happen and to ensure progress is monitored a short implementation plan will be developed and reviewed on a regular basis. To measure the success of the plan a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be included in the implementation plan linking to the SDP.

## 11. Review and Refresh

It is important that those members of the community who took the time to participate and take part in the process see the actions delivered.

To monitor and review the plan the following will take place:

- A review of progress will be held every 12 months to review the KPI's and progress against the actions outlined in the plan
- We will be able to refresh the plan every 12 months to ensure it reflects current issues and links to relevant plans

It is entirely correct that this plan is flexible to meet the needs of the community during such a momentous period of change and the social policy plan will be a living document over its initial five year lifespan.

## 12. Conclusion

St Helena is at a crucial crossroads in its history with the development of the airport and the momentous changes that are taking place.

Through considerate economic development, effective environmental management and proactive social planning the Island can move forward to improve the quality of life for Saints.

However, this needs cross sector engagement, effective dialogue and transparency from everyone.

Through the participation process it became clear that **all** sections of the community want the same things.

**All** section of the community wanted a better standard of living and a fairer and just society for vulnerable groups.

**All** sections of the community wanted to protect the Island's rich culture and history.

**All** sections of the community want a prosperous future for young people and an enjoyable retirement for those who have worked hard to make the Island what it is today.

**All** sections of the community want to see an end to domestic and sexual violence and

**All** sections of the community want a better St Helena.

**This is achievable.**

However, it is achievable only if people work together, people's fears for the future are properly addressed and the community are involved in these changes.

To conclude, St Helena is a unique island, with unique people and issues. The Island has undoubted potential to become self-sufficient, but a balance needs to be struck.

Striking this balance is the key to success for the Island and the implementation of this social policy plan is a part of that solution.

