

INAUGURATION SPEECH BY NEW GOVERNOR, LISA PHILLIPS

Thank you so much for your warm welcome. And I would like to pay tribute to Sean Burns who has been so ably performing the Acting Governor role while I have been on my way.

I am so pleased to be here. I found out I had been successful for this job last summer and have been itching to get here ever since. I have to say it is such an Honour to assume this responsibility and swear the Oath of Allegiance to Her Majesty the Queen as Her Governor of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha.

I also count myself very lucky indeed to have visited Tristan da Cunha on my way to St Helena. Such a remarkable place with remarkable people. I think Tristan will hold a special place in my heart from now on and I want to thank the community there for such a fantastic welcome and for the terrific staff of the RMS for getting me there, against all the odds. Even though I am based on St Helena, I am committed to performing my Governor role well in each Territory, including Tristan and Ascension.

The Island Council on Tristan da Cunha and the Ascension Island Government have a difficult job, trying to build revenues in order to provide more and better public services. I want to support them to do that.

Since I found out I was coming here, anyone I met told me there are three things they knew about St Helena. First, your famous previous resident, Napoleon, Second, your famous current resident, Jonathan. And third the new Airport. In a way, they are perhaps indicative of the past present and future of the Island. I am tremendously excited about the Airport. Having spent more years than I care to mention in DFID I am acutely aware of the history of the Airport from the inside, with all its twists and turns. Never did I imagine I would be the first Governor to fly in and out of the Island. I am proud to have that privilege in store for me....and talking of firsts I am also very proud to be your first female Governor.

As you would expect, I did some research before coming here...the Internet is a wonderful thing. I was particularly curious to know what mark each Governor had left during their tenure. One apparently received Captain Bligh...another named Jonathan...another used Jacob's Ladder regularly. Even though I have just arrived, it made me think about what my legacy would be and how I would like to be remembered. Now I'm certainly not in any hurry to leave, but I think my aspirations fall into four areas.

First, I want to continue with the good standard of governance that all three of the Islands currently enjoy. For me this means a well-functioning and efficient civil service, sound legal practices, transparency, accountability, an enabling environment for investments, and safety and security for everyone. I do though want to put more personal effort into bringing government closer to its people. I want you to feel that myself and my government colleagues work for you, and that there is trust between us. I would like people to feel that government is listening and that we are making your lives better. And I want the relationship between us to be a modern one...with joint responsibility and joint commitment. I hope you will help me to achieve that.

The second thing I would like to be known for is improving the lives of children and young people. This is not just about the Wass inquiry, but also I would like to focus my effort on the next generation. A lot has been done on safeguarding and I would like to acknowledge the incredible effort of all of those who have helped to make that

happen. I will work tirelessly to carry that effort through. But in addition I want the children and young people to have dreams and be able achieve them. We all want this as parents don't we? I certainly did for my son, Charlie. This might mean further education overseas or vocational opportunities at home. You will see me out and about talking to children and young people about what they want, and I plan to be a regular visitor to SHAPE and New Horizons. Amongst other things, I would like more Saints to take up the jobs currently being filled by people abroad and this means investing in the next generation with this as a definite goal.

But I think that what will probably define my term is increased tourism. The airport is one element of that and I'm committed to making that work, but I am specifically committed to making tourism work for the benefit of all Saints. Tourism is everyone's business and it's in everyone's interest. I want to see a higher standard of living and increased wages as a result of tourism. It's quite simple. I want the money those tourists bring in to end up in the pockets of Saints. Now I know we will have to open up sensibly so as to protect St Helena's special beauty. But I believe I have a duty and responsibility to show the British public that the significant investment in the Airport that they have made, has been the right thing to do. I hope you feel the same.

And finally, I would like to be known as a visible Governor. I hope to see a lot of you. And I hope you will come to know me as someone who listens, is willing to take action if she thinks it's right thing to do, and who will help to explain the decisions taken. I'm starting off by visiting the older generation at the CCC on Wednesday to get their thoughts...their hopes...their fears. I did the same on Tristan da Cunha and had a fascinating conversation with the older people there. I also look forward to welcoming you to Plantation House and feel very privileged to live in such a beautiful house.

In summing up, I feel the future looks bright. I promise I will do my very best in this role. I am aware that, for you, I am just another name in a long list of Governors. But for me this is a unique opportunity to make a positive difference and I plan to seize it with both hands.

Thank you.

Governor Lisa Phillips
25 April 2016