

### **Background**

St Helena's Sustainable Economic Development Plan (SEDP) 2018-2028 was endorsed by Executive Council in May 2018. In order to ensure that the SEDP continues to be effective, six monthly reviews of the actions were planned, alongside yearly updates of indicator data.

The speed of implementation of the SEDP largely depends upon a number of external factors including funding, private sector initiative and investor interest. Despite this, St Helena Government's Corporate Planning and Policy Unit (CPPU) have been working to an internal implementation plan which assigns responsibilities and timescales. In the first few months after the SEDP was endorsed, the Chief Government Economist delivered presentations to teams within SHG and ESH who were responsible for delivering actions for the SEDP to ensure that the actions were well understood. Thereafter, CPPU's performance manager have been monitoring progress.

The SEDP presents many actions required to achieve the SEDP goals. In order to avoid overloading the reader with information, this update only reports progress against actions pegged to be started or achieved within the 2019-20 year. The report also considers global impacts on the economy and how these have influenced the achievements of the SEDP vision.

The actions outlined in this report are important because they reduce barriers or open up opportunities to economic development and help to achieve the SEDP vision. The SEDP vision is to achieve development which is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable and this vision will be achieved by increasing standards of living and quality of life; not relying on aid payments from the UK in the longer term; whilst affording to maintain the island's infrastructure; achieve more money coming into St Helena than going out and sustain and improve St Helena's natural resources for this generation and the next. The goals, as set out in the SEDP, which will help achieve the vision are as follows:

1. Increase Exports	Selling goods made, grown or caught in St Helena to markets abroad and people from abroad increases the amound of money entering St Helena, which can help raise standards of living.
2. Substitute Imports	Buying and consuming goods and services made, grown or caught in St Helena rather than buying and consuming imported goods and services reduces the amount of money leaving St Helena.
3. Attract Visitors and Increase Tourism	Encouraging the provision of tourist infrastructure required for a variety of visitor needs from hotels, restaurants and attractions serviced by a skilled and customer focused workforce.
4. Mitigate impacts of inflation on the lowest income groups	Avoiding reduction in purchasing power by the lowest income groups by regularly reviewing the Minimum Wage and Social Protection benefits.
5. Improve Land Productivity	Making use of derelict or underused brownfield land and changing use of existing property to provide space for businesses to thrive. Supporting businesses to make the most productive use of land.
6. Sustain and improve our Natural Capital	Maintaining and enhancing St Helena's exceptional environment, landscape, heritage and cultural qualities for this generation and the next.
7. Improve Infrastructure	Using tax revenue and other funding streams for investments to improve health, education, water, electricity, transport, risk management and other infrastructure.
8. Develop, Maintain and Attract a Skilled Workforce	Ensuring that local people develop skills which will contribute to the growth of St Helena's economy. Providing the wages and incentives for St Helenians to come back to St Helena and stay on St Helena. Supporting inward migration particularly in sectors where there are skills or labour shortages.
9. Develop the Digital Economy	Open up St Helena to new economic markets by investing in broadband services and infrastructure, work towards delivering a fibre optic cable for the island.
10. Reduce Leakage of Income	Provide investment opportunities for people living on St Helena to buy into, as an alternative to investing abroad. Ensure some of the returns on overseas investment is kept within St Helena.

### **Economic Outlook**

#### St Helena: The State of the Nation in 2020 (mid-year)

Like the rest of the world, St Helena's economy has been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst St Helena has so far been COVID-19 free, the St Helena Government has not avoided the costs related to prevention, preparation, and business support. An additional £2.5m was provided by the UK Government, which has been committed to support quarantine costs, PPE, additional medical staff requirements, repatriation flight costs, and business support. A two-week quarantine exists currently, but since the policy came into place, testing resources have now been delivered to St Helena, and decisions will soon need to be made about how to continue to keep the population safe whilst enabling visitor movement. It is estimated that Tourists spend around £4m-£6m on their St Helena holidays, and as there will be only a handful of returning Saint 'tourists' during St Helena's peak season between December and February, there is a serious probable risk that the majority of revenue related to tourist season 2020-21 will be unattained. There has been continued demand for diving holidays and Napoleon History related tours linked to the bicentenary, however, since St Helena has not been willingly accepting tourists through the COVID-19 strategic policies that it has enacted the Island's main economic income for the year is being forfeited.

In the meantime, SHG has provided business support with the aim of avoiding job losses, and to help businesses pay their utility bills. The infographic below outlines the costs between March and September. Costs of hardship support has been around £40,000 per month between June and September. Due to funding constraints, the business support will continue until the end of December for owners of companies and sole proprietorships for whom more than half of their annual income is earned from tourist accommodation and tours but no longer including eateries who are currently benefitting from some local demand. The revised support is £250.00 for the first director and £162.50 for each employee and additional director.

## **COVID-19 Small Business Support**



#### ESH Sector Support Scheme (April - June)

Contribution towards essential costs for tourism, hospitality and retail sector businesses for utilities, internet costs for business premises, or business insurance.

£12,489.10



#### ESH Adjustment Scheme (April - June)

To support the supplies or services i.e. answering machines, paper towel dispensers, food packaging, personal protective equipment, hand sanitisers, seeds / saplings and plants or treatments.

£5,095,38



#### SHG Enforced Self-Isolation Support (April - June)

To support individuals businesses or sole proprietors with a one-time payment of £325 for employees required to self-isolate for a period of 14 days.

£17,152.10



#### SHG Business Closure Support (April - June)

To support the creches that were forced to close due to the influenza outbreak and subsequent school closures.

£7,150.00



#### ESH Essential Cost Assistance Support (July - September)

Contribution towards essential costs for tourism and hospitality sector businesses for utilities, internet costs for business premises, or business insurance.

£7,954.05



#### SHG Hardship Support (March - September)

To support privately-owned tourism related businesses i.e. accommodation providers, tour operators, eateries, other related tourism businesses (e.g. taxis, souvenir shops, producers who supplied the accommodation places on a regular basis) and bars and clubs who were affected by low visitor numbers.

£289,450.00





In October, updates to the Coronavirus Policy were announced. The Strategic Objectives ratified by Executive Council, are as follows in priority order:

- To be prepared to respond in a practical way to minimise the risk of COVID-19 reaching the general populous of St Helena
- To maintain clear communication with the organisations and people who provide key public services, those who use them and the wider general society
- To minimise the effects of COVID-19 on the Island economy, assess long-term effects, sustainability of resources available and plan for future
- To minimise the risk of exposure and transmission of the virus to key workers and the wider community
- To minimise the risk of serious illness or death caused by COVID-19.

A change in the Command Structure<sup>1</sup> has included a Silver Command for 'Future and Economy', to focus on minimising the effects of COVID-19 on the Island economy, assess long-term effects, sustainability of resources available and plan for future. Any change in Policy must be agreed by the Incident Executive Group, who are made up of Executive Council members; it is the responsibility of the Public Service in this case to present evidence, statistics and options analysis for decision. It is believed, by looking across at our peers in other Overseas Territories, that safe tourism can be encouraged at the same time as protecting the vulnerable from potential serious impacts of the virus, particularly as there is wider use of the vaccine.

In the meantime, we have continued to develop the policy and legal frameworks for a modern future for St Helena. We have seen progress with the Equiano project, which is on track to deliver a fibre optic cable to the Island in 2022. We have developed a draft Communications Networks and Services Policy which we have consulted upon, which sets the framework for the public telecommunications licence review in time for 31 December 2022 when the existing licence expires. After endorsing our new Earth Station Licencing Policy earlier this year, SHG's registrar has already licenced two earth station providers.

We have also developed and consulted upon a new Company Registry Policy. St Helena already administers a Company Registry but we are in the process of modernising the registry, bringing it in line with international obligations.

The Economic Development Investment Programme continues. The focus in the first part of this year has been on redevelopment of the port in Rupert's Valley. This will allow the waterfront to be cleared and refurbished. Public consultation, design works and planning permission has been in process.

In the fish processing sector, large reform is ongoing. An exploratory fishing licence for Bigeye tuna shall enable a new science programme at the sea mounts which will provide useful marine data.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://www.sainthelena.gov.sh/2020/news/new-command-structure-and-st-helena-coronavirus-strategy/

Another round of Minimum Wage reviews are due towards the end of this financial year to be put in place in the 2021-22 financial year. Equally, the income related benefit policy is being reviewed along with the Minimum Income Standard Policy. These reviews ensure the risk of St Helenians living below the poverty line.

The inflation estimations have also been reworked in light of global events. The 2019 annual rate of inflation was 2.9%, lower than the previously forecasted rate of 4.2% and inflation in the first half of 2020 has been lower than previously projected. We have revised the forecast for future year inflation to reflect the continuation of this trend and the relative changes in forecasts in the UK and South Africa due to lower than expected inflation in the near term and increased inflation in future years.

Year	Inflation expectation
2020/21	1.70%
2021/22	3.10%
2022/23	3.30%
2023/24	3.40%

'Brexit' has been another important event for St Helena. The Trade and Co-Operation Agreement released in December 2020 provides some of the detail to fully understand its impact on St Helena.

EU freedom of movement will cease at the end of the Transition Period. SHG has been advised that British Citizen (BC) passport holders resident in the OTs and in the UK will be subject to the same guidelines. Visa-free entry to most EU countries will continue for tourists (90 days in any rolling 180-day period) and for short term business visitors/investors. There will be changes to the rights of British Citizens living and working in the EU, for example, visas and work permits will be required.

The British Overseas Territories (BOTs) could still be eligible for a number of funding programmes but only if the United Kingdom participates in them. More will be clearer once 'Protocol I' is agreed, listing the Union funds to which the United Kingdom will participate. However, it is not currently expected that the United Kingdom will participate in the Regional Development Fund, which is the fund that St Helena has drawn most benefit from.

The BOTs will remain outside of the Single Market and be subject to EU regulatory procedures. As the Overseas Association Decision (OAD) will no longer apply, OT-originating goods exported to the EU will be subject to the EU's Common External Tariff. Information on the tariffs that individual goods will face can be found <a href="https://example.com/here">here</a>.

Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) made between the EU and other countries have not applied to the Overseas Territories. Now that the UK is no longer a part of the EU, and that the BOTs are not included within the UK and The Union's Trade and Cooperation Agreement as referred to in Article FINPROV.1(2), the BOTs will need to negotiate their own Trade Agreement with Europe, should one be sought.

The UK Government is negotiating new Free Trade Agreements, as it takes control of its Trade Policy. Text negotiated for in new Free Trade Agreements will allow for all or part of new agreements to be extended to any OT who expresses an interest in the agreement and is able to comply with the necessary obligations of having the agreement extended to them. The UK Government tell SHG that they are committed to working with those OTs who express an interest.

Trade with the UK will continue on a non-reciprocal tariff-free and quota-free basis, provided for through the 'Arrangement for import duty on trade in goods from certain British Overseas Territories'. The legislation needed for this arrangement to be implemented was laid on the 16 December 2020.

2020 has been a turbulent year, with low tourist numbers from mid-March, and the 'missing' of the 2020-21 peak season. St Helena has seen lower fish exports as reform in the industry is in progress. Both has meant that there has been less progress than necessary to achieve the SEDP. It is absolutely crucial for improving the Island's wealth, retaining working age people, and morale for the tourism sector to get back on track for 2021-22 and the digital sector to succeed from whence the cable lands.

For a longer review of the statistics, including poverty levels, income levels, and inflation, please see the End of Year progress reviews. The next review is due after April 2021.

Nicole Shamier
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St Helena Government

### **SEDP Progress Summary**

#### **Progress to date: October 2020**

The progress within the six months of April 2020 – September are as follows:

- To date, we have successfully kept the Island COVID 19 free. New coronavirus testing services were developed, supplies were received and the quarantine, isolation and medical facilities have been servicing approximately 50 persons per flight.
- Standard and Poor's (S&P) awarded St Helena an investment grade credit rating of BBB- stable this year.
- St Helena has access to the UK Government economic development capital investment programme of £30 million over 6 years. St Helena's Economic Development Investment Programme (EDIP) is currently being spent on the micro-projects budget and expansion of the Courthouse, with plans to develop the port at Rupert's Valley towards the latter part of the year.
- SHG received the second tranche of EDF 11 funding from the EU amounting to €3.5 million which will be used to fund the St Helena branch on the Equiano cable project. The Cable Landing Station is being constructed.
- The New Earth Station licensing policy was agreed, laying the groundwork for a new revenue stream made possible through the fibre optic cable. We see two earth station antennas at the Met Office, these are contributing to global monitoring of climate and sea level rise. A further company has purchased earth station licences with the aim to operate after the fibre optic cable is landed.
- The Investment Prospectus has been updated in October 2020. This includes information on starting up and expanding business. http://www.investinsthelena.com/project-details/investment/.
- A preferred bidder for fish processing on St Helena was announced in January 2020. The proposal is to set up a Co-Operative amongst local fishers and operate the processing facility without operating subsidy.
- Air freight charges for St Helena fresh produce travelling to Ascension were waivered for business-to-business sales for a six month trial period beginning in February 2020. However this ceased for the time being as air access has been irregular.

This progress is on top of the progress outlined in the first End of Year progress report, published in June 2019, and the second End of Year progress report, published in July 2020.

The following section outlines the actions relevant to 2020-21 and specific progress.

# **SEDP Sector**

Mitigation actions	Progress Comments	Progress status
Common Issues		
Non-residents need access to banking in St Helena to facilitate consumer spending and investment	Bank of St Helena now offer a debit card which is available for use in most outlets on the Island. Gibraltar International Bank now provide international bank accounts to St Helena residents. SHG is also looking into a way to provide terminals to businesses in St Helena which accept international card payments.	done Final stages of project
Sufficient SHG resources are required to respond to investment related requests, namely Planning, Immigration, Agriculture, GIS and Environmental Management.	Additional bids in these areas are prioritised for elected members to make decisions. Crown Counsel Commercial capacity has improved, as has Crown Lands capacity, although more work is needed. Planning capacity still falls short. New resources needed for Chief Digital Officer (permanent), Telecoms Regulator and new Company Registry resource. The SHG Fit for the Future Review should pick these issues up.	in progress
Tourism		
Market in targeted magazines, and via journalists and tour operators. Ensure experiences, tours and accommodation are marketed and easily bookable online.	Brighter Group have been commissioned by the Tourist Office and are making progress in marketing St Helena as a destination. However the pandemic has stalled progress.	in progress
Continue to train managers, chefs, and hospitality staff. Offer Customer Care training.	Hospitality courses have ceased and the ESH chef trainer has not been replaced after his contract ended. The provision of vocational skilled training has now largely switched to the St Helena Community College, and ESH no longer resources a bespoke Hospitality Training Manager. SHCC has started	

	exploring options for delivery, as they have approx. six individuals interested in NVQ related training, across a number of different Hospitality related subjects. However, the barrier to this is that City & Guilds require a minimum of ten candidates per individual course to allow these to be accredited through SHCC. St Helena is filling the majority of its chef vacancies through immigrant labour and there is on the job training.	in progress
Show business why it is important to use disclaimers and insure.	Ongoing however due to the current climate because of the pandemic, business are not willing to renew or invest in any new insurances. There is, however, a new provider of Insurance meaning there is now competition in the Insurance offering.	Not started
Ensure more attractions are open, particularly on Sunday. Ensure entry fees or donation boxes are located at tourist sites, and use funds to improve sites.	The Tourist Office opens on Sundays. The Yacht Club opens on Sunday afternoons, as well as the White Horse and The Standard, Rosie's Mantis and other businesses on an occasional basis. The Museum, Longwood House, Plantation House, Napoleon's Tomb still do not open on a Sunday.	in progress
Ensure litter picking parties address litter at tourist attractions and post box walks.  Undertake annual litter awareness campaigns and introduce fines for littering.  Ensure public toilets are refurbished and cleaned.  Demonstrate a local pride in Environment.	Waste Management Services (WMS) developed a waste prevention campaign (marine pollution) with EMD Marine, SHNT Marine and SHAPE for December 2019.  Targeted tidy-ups have continued such as; Plantation Forest, Redhill to White Gate and Merrimans Forest. Roadside litter picks by RCV crews have continued.  Post Box Walks are managed by Tourism which currently do not include litter picking. Anecdotally the Contractor picks up litter if he sees it. But this is not formal contract clause.  There has been a refurbishment of the Duke of Edinburgh Playground toilets and toilets opposite the museum. WMS clean public toilets regularly (daily in Jamestown).	in progress
Fisheries		

Continue to engage with and sell to international customers who desire a high quality, sustainable product.	Weekly export of fresh tuna by air began in January 2018. But then the industry ceased exporting during 2019 due to financial failure of the SHFC. A new venture is being developed in 2020.	in progress
Ensure a site is available for the relocation of the Fish Processing Plant, for a newer more efficient plant to be built.	The phase 1 plans for Rupert's confirm that the fish processing unit can be repurposed on the existing site.	done
Scientific work should be undertaken to determine sustainable catches.	New marine based posts have been funded in 2018-2020 to collect data and improve science. Outcomes are expected in 2021. Further work on bigeye as part of a science programme linked to an exploratory licence is required.	in progress
SHFC utilises renewable energy	Renewable energy has been explored, but as a result of the size and strength of roof, renewable energy fitted on the current factory is not feasible at this time.	Not started
The quality and sustainability of St Helena's fish should be proven by gaining internationally recognised standards.  Consistent branding should be established.	Progress could be made after the new venture is in situ.	Not started
Agriculture		
Encourage more suppliers to submit planting data and harvest data.	Recommendation has been raised as part of the Review Of the SHG Agricultural Estate for all SHG agricultural land tenures to require production data to be provided as part of the tenure agreement and for this to be included in legislation. Agriculture Improvement Ordinance proposed for reform in 2020 by ENRP and to have this included.	Not started

Continue to encourage a move towards using a single cooperative for vegetable planning and wholesale to help reduce wastage and to absorb risk.	ANRD are in the process of working to develop cooperative farming for potato farming.	in progress
Community College to ensure that agricultural studies are available.	Education with support from ESH has contracted a service provider to work on Agriculture Upskilling and Training. This contract includes the development of appropriate Agriculture/Land Based courses, the upgrade of Harpers as an Agriculture Centre, affiliation with relevant overseas organisations and training of staff to support the delivery of the Agriculture Programme in PAS and through SHCC.	done & ongoing
Work with retailers and suppliers to continue to encourage the purchase of (ideally solar powered) chilled units to ensure vegetables last longer.	ESH grants available 2020	in progress
Provide financial support to producers who are trialling growth of new agricultural products which could substitute imports or be exported.	Harpers has been refurbished and a new cohort of students are being trained. It is in the position to be used as a location for trialling new agricultural products	in progress
Continue to support farmers to collect and store rain water.	The rainwater storage tanks import duty were reduced to 5% in 2017, and agricultural users of water are subsidised, but there has been no further work on this.	in progress
Ensure that land leases are distributed to those who productively contribute to import substitution and maintain lease terms.	Land review is starting 2020	in progress
Support the importation and growth of disease free species for sale to local farmers. Ensure facilities are in place to transport small animals by plane.	Day old chicks were imported to increase supply of eggs. 1000 'day old' chicks were flown into St Helena, via the SA Airlink flight, on Saturday, 29 September 2018. The second consignment of 'day old' chickens (chicks) were successfully flown into St Helena on Saturday, 12 January 2019. A third consignment came	in progress

	on 9 March 2019. Plans for other small animals to travel by air are in progress.	
Support the development of infrastructure to collect and convert organic waste to compost.	Composting has now ceased. This needs to be redeveloped	Not started
Coffee		
Offer crown land to experienced coffee producers where they identify land as a requirement for expansion.	The Land Development Control Plan update is in progress.	in progress
Negotiate incentives for exporters which makes exporting more attractive	Tax Incentives became available from 1 April 2019. Reduction on income tax of 10% (corporations) or 5% (self-employed).	done
Satellite Ground Stations		
Continue to communicate with those expressing an interest in developing a ground station on St Helena and develop associated Memorandum of Understanding when the time is right.	Ground Satellite Station companies have been engaged to express interest. Work is being undertaken to achieve planning permission for a 'space park'. Two licences for operating earth stations have now been awarded.	in progress
Strategically allocate potential plots of land for the satellite ground station well in advance.	Initial plot options have been identified with Lands & Estates, based upon their suitability to track satellites (with a north/south view to the horizon). The Bradley's Camp Option was agreed in principle by the Estates Strategy Panel as the principle location of the 'space park'. But since Bradley's Camp is now being used as a quarantine, the alternative sites of Horse Point and	done
	White Hill are being considered.	& ongoing

Honey and Honey Bees		
Negotiate incentives for exporters which makes exporting more attractive	Tax Incentives became available from 1 April 2019. Reduction on income tax of 10% (corporations) or 5% (self-employed).	done
Liquor, Wine and Beer		
Negotiate incentives for exporters which makes exporting more attractive	Tax Incentives became available from 1 April 2019. Reduction on income tax of 10% (corporations) or 5% (self-employed).	done
Encourage suppliers to use online market places. Assist producers, where necessary, in making links with niche buyers abroad.	ESH has facilitated the correspondence between international liquor companies and St Helena Distillery for marketing and distribution opportunities abroad.	in progress
Academia, Research and Conferences		
Ensure there are suitable venues available to host conferences and provide conferencing infrastructure.	The Engage 2020 conference occurred and a Digital Conference was planned for 2020 and postponed due to COVID-19.  ESH has worked with SHCC and SHRI regarding involvement in virtual conferences during the current pandemic, for example the Virtual Island	in progress
Ensure all open data (e.g. GIS) is downloadable online and process for obtaining other data is clear.	Summit in September 2020.  No progress has been made in this area.	Not started

Ensure that there are enough staff resources to swiftly process environmental permits for researchers.	The processing and issuing of environmental research licences now falls under the remit of the St Helena Research Institute (SHRI). The SHRI provides the focal point for all research on and about St Helena. Under the Environmental Protection Ordinance, the Chief Environmental Officer issues licences for research that will impact on protected species and or their habitats, but this will be based on a recommendation from the Research Council.	done
Ship Registry and Sailing Qualifications		
Strategically allocate land to facilitate vessel surveying.  Provide storage and safe access for boats.	The LDCP drafting is in progress. The water front plan also needs a refresh.	Not started
Ensure SHG communicates new services and markets services overseas. Target specialist publications.	Marketing for the change in policy for yachts is required.	Not started
Work from home		
Ensure that funding is in place for the sub-marine cable for a source of cheaper, faster internet.	Cable due to be landed and live in 2022.	in progress
Ensure that there is a focus on I.T. in schools and training programmes. Expose young people to, and make available studies in programming, computer-aided design (CAD), Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and code writing.	A programme of IT courses were made available with enrolment from September 2018. These courses ranged from introductory courses to advanced courses, in programming for example.	done

Bottled Water		
Encourage development within the private sector sphere.	ESH is aware of 1 historic exploration and made an initial approach. However this was not fruitful. Another investor is considering the potential of small scale production. The opportunity is listed in the Investment Prospectus.	in progress
Timber		
Update the inventory. Thin forests to encourage tree thickness. Research and document commercial uses of species. Plan growth of valuable species.	This activity was not completed during the period 2019/20. It is anticipated that it will be completed by the end of Q3 2020/21	in progress
Community College to ensure that a carpentry apprenticeship/courses are available.	City and Guilds Level 1 Building Construction offered which includes a Unit on carpentry. Also offered Level 2 Diploma in Bench Joinery. This is currently offered at PAS as part of the Apprenticeship Programme.	in progress
Forestry department should periodically advertise timber directly to carpenters as well as the sawmill.	Available timber from planned forestry activities has not been advertised to local carpenters, as there has been no removal of timber grade logs of any species from planned areas of forestry work during this current financial year.	Not started
Encourage carpenters in St Helena to learn best practice from those who have successfully used local wood in construction or furniture making.	Not started.	

Film Location		
	Cable due to be landed and live in 2022.	
Ensure that funding is in place for the sub-marine cable for a source of cheaper, faster internet.		in progress
Develop and market incentives for sector growth. An on island studio would also be attractive.	Not started. Policy required.	
Traditional Products		
Ensure that traditional craftwork is taught in school or as part of out of school clubs.	Not started.	

This report was developed by St Helena Government's Performance Manager, Chief Economist and Statistics Office

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