

Darwin Initiative Main/Post/D+ Project Half Year Report (due 31st October 2017)

Project reference	DPLUS048
Project title	South Georgia Habitat Restoration Project: Post-Baiting Phase
Country(ies)/territory(ies)	South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
Lead organisation	South Georgia Heritage Trust (SGHT)
Partner(s)	n/a
Project leader	Richard Hall
Report date and number (e.g., HYR3)	HYR2
Project website/blog/social media etc.	www.sght.org www.facebook.com/pages/South-Georgia-Heritage-Trust/107047869335869 https://twitter.com/SGHTcharitysite

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

NB: the second element of our original proposal, the conference, was not funded under this grant. We were advised by LTS that is no requirement to report against the conference component but we have included a brief summary for background interest.

Post-baiting survey for any surviving rodents

In the past six months excellent progress has been made towards deployment readiness in October 2017. As of end September 2017 all plans, people and materials were booked or in place for the start of the Phase 4 season. The timeline for the season has been maintained and we are in a position to start initial deployment work of rodent detection devices by mid-October. The season proper will begin with the arrival of the main team on South Georgia in early November.

In the past six months:

- The Operational Plan and associated working documents have been finalised and agreed by the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (GSGSSI)
- The season detail has been planned out, workloads allocated to teams and contingency put in place to compensate for unforeseen issues or weather delays
- The team of 13 people has been recruited for part or all of the six month field season
- Travel, accommodation and training have been arranged for the team
- Logistics for the use of vessels *Wanderer III*, *FPV Pharos SG* and *MY Hans Hansson* have been finalised and implemented
- Sourcing, purchasing and shipment of all materials required for Phase 4 have taken place. All materials are now in the Falklands ready to be collected by the Phase 4 team en-route to South Georgia. This includes all camping, communications, emergency, medical, food, and fuel supplies.

Conference

We are delighted to report that our international conference entitled “*Island Invasives 2017: Scaling up to Meet the Challenge*” (I17), held in partnership with the University of Dundee in July 2017, was well-attended and received very positive feedback from participants.

The purpose of the conference was to share the knowledge from eradications from around the world and to inspire the next generation of conservationists planning to remove alien invasive species from islands and other isolated patches of habitat.

I17 was the first such meeting for seven years and the first to be held in the Northern Hemisphere, meaning that it attracted new participants from Europe and America.

In total, 275 delegates attended the conference which was formally opened by the SGHT Patron, HRH the Princess Royal, and featured an opening lecture by Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity, Lord Gardiner. Over the week there were 19 different sessions, 96 talks and several workshops. In addition SGHT organised an ice breaker at Discovery Point, poster sessions, a choice of excursion and a popular Gala dinner at Glamis Castle.

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

Early estimates of the costs involved in transporting the rodent-surveillance dogs from New Zealand to the Falklands were significantly underestimated which has resulted in a greater expenditure in this area than had originally been budgeted. Fortunately we have secured additional funding to cover this. For bespoke activities such as those being undertaken by SGHT in this project it is challenging to accurately know all the costs involved ahead of time and in this one instance the estimates proved to be inaccurate.

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

Discussed with LTS:	Yes/No
Formal change request submitted: (with this report, concerning other minor budget amendments)	Yes/No
Received confirmation of change acceptance	Yes/No

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

Yes No Estimated underspend: £

3b. If yes, then you need to consider your project budget needs carefully. Please remember that any funds agreed for this financial year are only available to the project in this financial year.

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

No.

If you were asked to provide a response to this year's annual report review with your next half year report, please attach your response to this document. Additionally, if you were funded under R23 and asked to provide further information by your first half year report, please attach your response as a separate document. N/a

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

Please send your **completed report by email** to Eilidh Young at Darwin-Projects@ltsi.co.uk . The report should be between 2-3 pages maximum. **Please state your project reference number in the header of your email message e.g. Subject: 22-035 Darwin Half Year Report**