



Meeting 1

JNCC-NGO Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies Group

8th January 2014

To find more about JNCC's OT and CD programme visit:
<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=4079>

The South Georgia Heritage Trust (SGHT) is a UK-registered charity established in 2005. The Trust's mission is twofold:

- to conserve and protect those species of indigenous fauna and flora that breed and grow on South Georgia or in the surrounding seas, and to raise awareness of South Georgia's threatened species;
- to preserve the historical heritage of South Georgia, including selected historical sites of importance, and increase international awareness of the human history of the island through the South Georgia Museum, which SGHT manages.

SGHT has initiated, funded, staffed and managed the South Georgia Habitat Restoration Project to eradicate rodents from South Georgia. This is by far the largest rodent eradication programme ever attempted anywhere in the world, and is of global significance. The project has been carried out in consultation with the Government of South Georgia, which has provided in-kind assistance and has undertaken monitoring work.

The first phase of Habitat Restoration fieldwork (covering 12,500 hectares of the island) was completed in March 2011 at a cost of £1.5 million. To date no rodent sign has been detected in the areas cleared in 2011, which are now considered to be rat-free. The second phase in early 2013 treated 57,500 hectares and cost £3 million. The third (and what is hoped to be) the final phase of work is planned for early 2015. The entire project is expected to cost between £7-8 million. It has received some funding from DEFRA and the Darwin Initiative (to a total of about £500,000), the rest of the funds having been raised by SGHT from private individuals and foundations. A further £2.5 to £3 million has still to be raised to fund the final phase of work in 2015 and monitoring thereafter.

SGHT has also funded research into the biodiversity of South Georgia's flora and benthic and marine environments, as well as undertaking a range of smaller projects in the cultural heritage field.

Alison Neil
Chief Executive SGHT
6 January 2014