



# St Helena Island

Secret of the South Atlantic



ST HELENA TOURISM  
MARKETING  
STRATEGY

2018 - 2019



Board Approved Version: 01-May 2018



Enabling Tourism and Economic Growth



St Helena  
Hospitality Up-Skilling

The 2018/19 marketing strategy has been developed to provide an improved understanding on the future of marketing for St Helena Island, and to support the Enterprise St Helena 2018-2019 Strategy to achieve the key performance indicators that have been set.

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## Vision

The vision for the marketing of St Helena, a small island developing state as a Tourism Destination, encompasses the following:

1. For St Helena to be recognised as an outstanding high quality unique and sustainable tourism destination.
2. For the destination to be recognised as having a unique suite of tourism products focused on the island’s natural and historical strengths. Together with being an undiscovered destination, new on the market to air travellers.
3. To ensure the St Helena Tourism brand “Secret of the South Atlantic” is communicated and marketed effectively by carrying out outbound marketing activities that can then be complemented by inbound marketing.
4. To undertake inbound marketing activities that provides vibrant and inspiring content to attract and entice customers, through a range of digital platforms.
5. Strive to enhance the quality of customer service to ensure we are known for our Saint hospitality, which reflects the diversity of our culture.
6. To ensure that tourism makes a greater contribution to the island’s economy and acts as a driver to help develop all sectors across the island. E.g. develop fisheries and agriculture to increase the availability of local produce.
7. To ensure the local community understand and embrace tourism as a vibrant and positive way to sustain the social, cultural and environmental values of the island for future generations.

## Target Market

The marketing of St Helena as a tourist destination currently focuses on South Africa, UK, France and Germany with the aim to expand this target market in 2018 to other markets such as the Asian Market (including China), the United States of America and other European markets.

Through the St Helena Government Statistics Office, the following visitor categories are collated, which St Helena Tourism monitors and analyse:

Category	Up to 2017	2018 onward
<b>Returning resident:</b>	[Returning resident] + [Returning from overseas employment - previously termed “Visiting Friends and Relatives”] + [Accompanying]	[Saint - resident] + [Saint - resident, dependent]
<b>Tourism or holiday:</b>	[Excursion]	[Saint - visitor] + [Saint - visitor, dependent] + [Short term entry permit - tourist]
<b>Business:</b>	[Business]	[Exempt for services to Crown] + [Exempt for services to Crown, dependent] + [Long term entry permit] + [Short term entry permit - employment] + [Government employees]
<b>Transit:</b>	[Transit - including yachts] + [Yacht race]	[Short term entry permit - yacht] + [Transit]
<b>Cruise passengers:</b>	Cruise passengers	Cruise passengers

Demographics

Data is currently being collected and collated to determine the potential age range of the leisure market to visit St Helena. The Royal Mail Ship (St Helena’s previous mode of passenger transport); demographics leaned to the 60 years +. From the sample data already collected through the Airport visitor survey it has been determined that 58% of visitors are now between the ages of 19-55 years old.

It is envisioned that the target demographics with Air Access will vary and the range will reflect a much lower age demographic than before.

Below outlines target age demographics for St Helena’s tourism products

Age Demographic (Years)	Tourism Products
<b>Families (12 +)</b>	Nature (Whale Sharks), Saint Culture (Safer Environment), Walking and Hiking, Diving, Arts and Crafts, Twin Destination with South Africa
<b>20 to 40</b>	Walking and Hiking, Diving, Nature (Whale Sharks, Whale Watching), Photography, Running, History and Heritage (Napoleon)
<b>40 to 60</b>	Nature (Whale Sharks and Wirebirds), History and Heritage (Napoleon), Stargazing, Photography, Running, Walking, Saint Culture and Diving
<b>60+</b>	Arts and Crafts, Saint Culture, Nature, History and Heritage, Photography, Stargazing and Food & Drink

St Helena Tourism will work closely with the SHG Statistics Office to analysis this data on a regular basis, and will continue to collect data through visitor surveys which will assist with further development of our target demographics, the surveys and their process will be reviewed every 3 months, to ensure effective data capture.



Geographical markets

St Helena is currently marketed in the UK, SA and throughout Europe. The majority of the marketing campaign for 2017 was generic to keep the profile of St Helena within the international travel trade, without knowing when the scheduled air service would start.

The diagrams below depict our marketing efforts and geographical reach to date:



As the island progresses with a scheduled air service, the market penetration, with continuous data analysis will be as per following:

- Continue destination marketing of St Helena to the UK.
- To introduce destination marketing of St Helena to Europe.
- To increase destination marketing of St Helena to South Africa.
- To market St Helena as an add-on package to South Africa – potentially Cape Town, Johannesburg and Namibia.
- To introduce St Helena’s profile to the Asian market, anecdotally St Helena is receiving an increase in visitors from China with a small presence in Japan.
- To engage with public relations and marketing representation in our targeted markets.



## Market Analysis

The tourism market primary analysis has been based on sea access via the RMS St Helena (cargo/passenger ship). The demographics of the visitors received during the era where visitors who had the luxury of time and were mostly retired.

New market analysis is currently being gathered against access by air. This is currently being collected via:

- Analysis of international tour operators selling St Helena and their calibre of clients.
- Survey of visitors via air to St Helena – this data collection commenced on 21 October 2017. There is a need for at least eighteen months’ worth of data collection, this includes period for developing the process to collect the data as well as reviewing survey questions and developing analysis.
- Arrivals and Departures, SHG Statistic Office.

Sample data collected from the Airport Visitor survey has provided some useful insight such as the majority percentage of visitors originate from UK and South Africa. 58% of the sample was in the 19 to 55 age range and that walking, hiking and sightseeing were the main activities equated to 50% whilst on island.

Information to-date from the Arrivals and Departures data (October 2017 – March 2018) have confirmed the following:

- 571 Tourists arriving by air (32% of passengers)
- Nationalities include:
  - 194 British (excluding Saint Helenian), (40% of tourists)
  - 168 South African, (29% of tourists)
  - 39 French, (7% of tourists)
  - 24 German, (4% of tourists)
  - 58 Other Europeans, (10% of tourists)
  - 29 Asia, Pacific, Middle East, (5% of tourists)
  - 52 North and South America, Caribbean, (9% of tourists)
- Age range (total of tourists and St Helenian holiday visits) are as follows:
  - 0-19 = 50

- 20-39 = 154
- 40-59 = 314
- 60+ = 258
- Sex currently (total of tourists and St Helenian holiday visits) are as follows:
  - Males = 461
  - Females = 314
  - Not known = 1

Other useful data analysis which supports the market analysis includes the recent St Helena Tourism website statistics that indicate that the dominant website audience originating from the USA. Social Media statistics tell us that our largest countries of reach include UK, USA and South Africa, however other popular countries at the top of the list include Italy, Germany and France.

St Helena's closest competitors in the market are other small island developing states such as Christmas Island, whose tourism product is largely the same as St Helena's featuring Nature, History and Heritage and Culture. Despite this, St Helena can largely generate interest through the claim that we are "undiscovered" or the "Secret of the South Atlantic".

The sample data demonstrates that "curiosity" so far has been the driving force for visiting St Helena.

However, combining:

- Our incredible adventure offering such as natural whale shark experiences and pods of 200 + dolphins as opposed to many of the forced experiences available in other countries;
- The natural beauty that provides a staggering contrast of lush vegetation that rolls off into sheer cliffs and multi coloured coastlines;
- St Helena's vast history connections across so many timelines and countries, from Napoleon to Astronomers to the slave trade are strong historical draws to the island.

These unique selling points puts St Helena in a competitive position in the market and will formulate our niche marketing campaigns.

### Tourism Trends

St Helena has noticeable seasonality trends. Visitors are more likely to visit when the Northern Hemisphere is in winter (St Helena in Summer), thus seeing off peak season for St Helena as being between April to October.

Marketing efforts will be required to attract visitors during the off-peak season. These efforts will include:

- Special offers/deals to Tour operators e.g. the offer on accommodation for tour operators to bring groups of ten for the price of 9
- Implement Competitions
- Offering discounts packages on various services
- Encouraging Conferences on be hosted on island – the St Helena Conference in January was a proven success
- Hosting Exhibitions on island e.g. Historical exhibitions
- Voluntourism e.g. assisting National Trust with projects
- Promotion of winter month activities that could entice visitors during this period, these would include:
  - Our History and Heritage offering e.g. local celebrations, Boer heritage
  - Humpback whale and dolphin tours
  - Eco-system tours
  - Events during the months such as the Festival of Walking and Stargazing



### [International Trends to consider](#)

The travel market now sees the trend move towards online booking.

The mixture of independent travellers and those preferring tour packages, with customised holidays being a general demand.

The increased use of social media platforms for travel information and inspiration together with influencer marketing and the increase dependence on reviews to aid decision making.

The use of website analytical software to monitor trends.

Responsible tourism; where tourists seek destinations that have flora, fauna, and cultural heritage as the primary attractions, together with the need to experience destination that have minimal impact of human beings on the environment or do not cater to mass tourism needs. (Please note can either be referred to as Ecotourism, sustainable tourism).

The power of millennial customers who according to research are a generation of frequent travellers who are seeking out new “of- the-radar” experiences and are eager to share their experiences on digital platforms.

Growth strategies and over tourism is high on World Tourism Leaders programme and striking the right balance for tourist destinations.

Further analysis on international trends will be undertake in 6 months.

## St Helena SWOT Analysis

### Our key strengths - What makes us different

There is a core desire of community to respect the intrinsic character and identity of the island and build upon this with tourism developments that are sustainable.

The following strengths indicate how St Helena offers a high quality experience for the visitor:

- Ease of access to the natural environment; Whale shark viewing and swimming. St Helena is the only place where adult male and female whale sharks can be found (seasonal), dolphin watching, eco-friendly sports fishing, endemics and diverse landscapes. There are no dangerous or poisonous animals on the island
- St Helena has a rich colonial history. There are many interesting and historical buildings that directly reflect the history and culture of the island
- The Saints are friendly and welcoming, embracing the visitor. St Helena has a relaxing atmosphere that is described by a French journalist as “comfortably slow”. St Helena has a community who are passionate about their island and what it has to offer. The island holds diverse celebrations and events showcasing the community spirit
- Low risk of natural disasters.
- Low risk of man-made disasters.
- Safe. Crime rate is low compared to other destinations.
- No jet lag for tourists from UK, Europe or Africa.
- Stopping point for yachts during world races and deliveries.

### Our weaknesses - what can we do better

Tourist destinations are widely acknowledged to be one of the most difficult to manage and market due to the numerous products, stakeholders, organisational bodies, various government directorates and individuals that are needed to work effectively and efficiently together.

St Helena is still in its infancy stage of development. There is a lack of air service data at this stage to make evidence based decisions. This will take at least eighteen months to acquire.

Other weaknesses of St Helena are:

- The geographical isolation of the destination
- The accommodation mixed capacity
- The high cost of flights and lack of flight flexibility
- A lack of amenities
- The visual streetscape and a perceived lack of pride in the island as demonstrated by the condition and visual appearance of some buildings and storage sites
- The poor condition of the island’s infrastructure
- More directional signage and interpretation is required
- There is a lack of interpretation and improvement of cultural sites
- Majority of businesses do not have longer operating days and times that caters for visitors
- Car hire standards can be improved
- The fledgling taxi service is inconsistent
- The public transport around the island is still very basic and caters only to local needs
- Mobile phone coverage is unreliable in some areas of the island
- The island WIFI is limited and expensive
- Lack of internationally ready market product. By this we mean that the tourism services are fully computerised and have a live online booking system
- There is a lack of willingness by businesses to offer commission to international tour operators selling the product
- Currently St Helena is an expensive destination compared to most other long haul destinations. Whilst high-yield tourism is targeted, they are also looking for value for money and this is currently lacking on the island.

### Key threats to St Helena as a tourist destination

- Reliability of weather to air schedule
- Air political issues are to be resolved to ensure St Helena has access to the most suitable gateways.
- Fluctuating global economies and variable exchange rates will continue to influence travel demand.
- Price sensitivity will increase.
- There is an increased risk of disease pandemics
- There are growing concerns for safety and security
- Worldwide natural and man-made disasters will have a negative impact on travel behaviour, this includes climate change
- Technology will continue to develop at a rapid pace and impacts the tourism industry, with an increased use of new media technology as information, booking and sales channels, St Helena is unable to keep up.
- Combined with the growth of new destinations, competition amongst countries will be more intense.
- Visitors will take more frequent and shorter holidays
- Greater demand for customised holidays

### Opportunities

The opportunities for St Helena are many and have been documented many times over the years in numerous reports and plans.

- The increase of air travel will influence travel demand
- St Helena has great ecotourism potential.
- St Helena could capitalise on the being a safe environment for holiday makers (no terrorism)
- By embracing the changing technology St Helena is now able to compete with other developed destinations and increase our marketing and tourism base.
- St Helena as a new destination is prominent in the international travel trade industry and consumers.
- St Helena as a unique destination with rich history and heritage, natural beauty and adventure will attract a range of visitors.
- St Helena will be able to offer different types of tourism such as MICE and Education.
- St Helena can develop on partnering with international stories such as the Liberated Africans and slave trade stories.
- St Helena has the opportunity to learn from other small island developing states to ensure tourism is developed sustainably.
- St Helena as twin destination package with Cape Town.
- St Helena has the opportunity to maintain the friendly welcome and translate to high customer service across the island.
- St Helena has the opportunity to increase the yachting community
- Worldwide natural and man-made disasters will provide an opportunity for St Helena with potential change of travel behaviour, this includes climate change

## International Tourism Strategy

The marketing campaign methods will consist of:

- Advertisements in print and digital format
- Travel stories in media including social influencer marketing
- Presence at Shows/Exhibitions
- Promotion/sale through tour operators
- Digital marketing; film and photography

### Niche marketing

Niche marketing will be based around the 3 core product experiences adventure, natural beauty and heritage and culture, with emphasis on specific products as they are established.

Marketing campaigns have been established for existing products i.e. Diving, Walking and Hiking and Running. These campaigns will regularly be reviewed, revised and updated.

See [Appendix A](#) for marketing campaigns/calendar for marketing these products

There are campaigns being developed for other niche products which are not dependent on seasonality but can be enjoyed all year around by visitors. These includes;

- Astronomy (weather dependent) and International Dark Sky Accreditation
- History
  - 2018 Sir Hudson Low exhibition
  - Slavery
  - Boer connection
  - Chinese
  - Zulu
- Napoleon
- Photography
- Yachting
- Arts and Crafts – local products
- Saint Culture – parades and celebrations, food and drink
- Air Travel
- Sustainability – Where it all began (including ecosystems, wirebirds)
- Positive Isolation – using St Helena's remote location as an advantage. This will include wellness tourism.

## Domestic tourism strategy

### Community

- To encourage residents to experience staycations.
- Hold activities which encourage exploration and awareness of what St Helena has to offer.
- Participate and experience events and exhibitions that showcase St Helena.
- Maximise the use of heritage for events.

### Businesses

- Work with the local private sector to aim to implement 'Inclusive Growth' whereby locals are given an opportunity to participate in and have a fair share in the tourism market.
- Advising businesses where there are gaps in the market for expansion of services (or new business creation).

- Training needs including development and implementation of best practices.
- Capitalise on the saint friendliness and maintain a high level of customer service across the island.
- Supporting local marketing efforts to visitors on island.
- Provide advice to businesses around the benefits of digital platforms such as airbnb, tripadvisor, websites and social media

By the local community engaging in the above strategy will allow them the appreciation of their island's tourism products. Assuring international target pricing does not affect the community. Campaigns identified:

- Proud of St Helena/St Helena's choice 2018.
- Tidy district competitions.
- Information bulletin about what is happening in tourism and international tourism trade.
- Multiplatform promotional material this includes informing the local community on how St Helena is marketed internationally.

## Format of marketing

### Distribution Network

Currently St Helena is engaged in the traditional distribution channels of the tourism product. The consumer relies heavily on the local Tourist Office and local service providers to complete their main travel arrangements particularly in the excursion section. This is done mainly via email.

Due to the unique location, the high cost of travel and destination issues, it appears that it would be difficult moving the traditional distribution channels. The growth of internet bookings for local service providers will be limited during this period due to the low standard of internet connectivity, limited capacity and the way that St Helena operates and has been operating.

Moving forward it is envisioned that a holistic marketing approach will be undertaken. This ensures that a range of different marketing tools and platforms are implemented to ensure that St Helena achieves as great a reach as possible.

Appendix A provides a Marketing Calendar outlining all the marketing campaigns for our niche products as well as local events. Providing an overview of the holistic approach.

To ensure this holistic approach the methods will be implemented:

### International Travel Publications

Publications are chosen for advertising based on the following criteria:

- Circulation, readership and digital reach
- Geographical market
- Niche marketing
- Advertising packages on offer – publications offer packages that often encompasses print adverts or advertorials, features in email and online newsletters, social media promotion, digital banners and micro sites.

See [Appendix B](#) for the planned publications for 2018/19.

### Print adverts

Key messages such as our niche markets location and brand are showcased through our advertising campaigns.

## Advertorials

Advertorials are often used to advertise St Helena through vivid descriptions of the islands and its product offerings accompanied with relevant imagery.

## International Media

Encouraging high profile and influential journalists to write articles or produce videos that can inspire interest in St Helena. Supporting such journalists that have a minimum of two commissions, to visit the island to get a feel for the product further ensures this.

Engage with photographers and videographers that can produce simulating and inviting promotional material for the island.

## Digital platforms

### Website

St Helena Tourism is continuously updating, enhancing and developing the website to ensure it provides the most current information on St Helena and upcoming events.

Links to the organisations social media platforms and websites selling St Helena packages is also essential as it ensures combined promotional activities and ease of access to information.

As digital booking platforms are developed and tourism businesses increase their online presence, it is paramount that they can be accessed via the Tourism Website.

### Social Media

St Helena Tourism currently operates social media pages that actively promote St Helena on a daily basis. Despite limited internet, St Helena Tourism recognised that social networks are one of the fastest growing industries in the world, with more destinations using this medium to build and grow the visibility of brands, build relationships and communicate with potential visitors.

The Facebook page currently has over 21,000 followers and efforts are continuing to increase this number and to achieve this quantity of following across all of our social media platforms.

Enterprise St Helena has a Social Media and Digital Marketing Action Plan that provides guidance around the use of digital platforms, including St Helena specific Hashtags that should be used.

St Helena Tourism will endeavour to keep abreast of negative social media topics and showcase St Helena in a positive light where possible.

The current social media platforms used:

#### *Facebook*

Facebook was the original social media tool used by St Helena Tourism. The platform has the organisations largest following which is seeing a steady monthly increase and an average monthly reach of 55,000.

Facebook analytics revealed that it has a global reach with the top ten countries reached including the UK, USA, many European countries and Canada.

This platform is also often used as a means for visitors engage with St Helena Tourism, particularly around how to visit and the different niche products.

Platform content includes, but is not restricted to:

- Promote niche products
- Provide updated information on St Helena

- Promote local events
- Promote international events
- Promote Tourism Blog
- Sharing of stakeholders promotions that support St Helena – Tour Operators, local businesses
- Promotional Videos

This is also the best social media platform to reach the local community and the island's diaspora.

### *Twitter*

Twitter is known as the “in the moment” platform and it allows St Helena Tourism to reach out quickly and “in that moment” when experiencing celebrating events, a simple walk or a memorable moment.

The twitter page is continually being developed and has over 2000 followers, however it has an average monthly reach of 104,000.

The geographic reach reflects that of facebook.

Platform content includes, but is not restricted to:

- Live feed – what's happening on St Helena
- Live feed – St Helena at international events
- Promotion of niche products
- Promote local events
- Promote international events
- Retweeting of St Helena in the international media – journalists and publications
- Promotional Videos

### *Instagram*

As our newest platform, launched in 2018. It is intended that Instagram is used as a visual platform to promote inspirational photography and video's that will simulate interest in St Helena. As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words.

Themes around activities and events happening on St Helena as well as niche products will be used to drive content as with other platforms. However, research has indicated that although a highly influential tool, we should ensure that we post images that are an accurate representation of the island.

It is also envisioned that through this platform St Helena can join forces with the influential instagrammers that are effecting the travel industry today.

### *Youtube*

Video marketing can help to connect and engage customers. It is the second biggest search engine online. This platform is being used to St Helena Tourism to help gain attention and will also provide help and value to the customer. St Helena Tourism's platform showcases inspirational videos of St Helena and visitors travel journals on how they found the island.

St Helena Tourism will ensure there are new promotional videos developed annually and will continually work with others to ensure the key messages are vocalised through film.

### **St Helena Tourism Blog**

The Tourism blog is written and posted on a weekly basis. It is posted to the Tourism website and the Tourism facebook page. The blog is intended to inform and inspire in a light hearted way, adding a weekly update on the website and

facebook page. It helps drive traffic to the other social media platforms of St Helena Tourism or private sector business.

Blog stories cover:

- Tourism products
- Tourism events
- Tourism businesses
- Contributions from visitors or media

### Travel Shows and Exhibitions

Travel shows are a very powerful marketing medium. They bring together thousands of international buyers and sellers in one place in a short space of time. Whilst there are many ways of looking for sellers, a travel show brings the significant people together at the same time, for the same purpose.

In addition to being able to sell St Helena's product to the international travel trade, travel shows also provides:

- Up-to-date innovations, trends and overviews;
- New markets and opportunities;
- New ideas for St Helena;
- Compare the different products, prices and conditions and evaluate competitors;
- **Networking**
  - One to one meetings with the travel trade to sell/promote St Helena. This will also build relationships, much of this is done during travel shows and business trips outside of St Helena.

Exhibitions/Shows are chosen based on the following criteria:

- Type of show
- Consumer market
- Type and number of attendee
- Recommendations by Public Relations Agency, Tour Operators and Association Members e.g. LATA and ATTA.

See [Appendix C](#) for the list of shows St Helena will be exhibiting at annually. This list is likely to change as tourism progress on island.

### Tour Operators

St Helena Tourism has developed contacts with a wide range of tour operators that actively sell packages to St Helena and promote the island, this includes supporting them with familiarisation visits to the island which allows them to gain a better understand of the product they are selling.

### Public Relations (PR) Agency

A public relations agency is contracted by Enterprise St Helena to provide support on the above mentioned activities and provide market expertise and advise and hold key contacts within the desired markets to ensure St Helena is promoted – effectively and excitingly! The agency will analyse and interpret public opinion, new trends with appropriate forward programmes being established.

### International Press Releases

The PR agency also ensure that as specific product/events are developed, they obtain the appropriate international media coverage this is effectively disseminated to the international media via press release.



### Media

The PR agency will provide links and knowledge on journalists and publications and meet with these bodies on St Helena Tourism behalf. They will headhunt influential people that can help validate St Helena’s tourism products.

### Trade Associations

Trade Associations are useful where they have the ability to enhance credibility in the eyes of the consumer. Trade Associations can provide enhanced exposure to consumers, discounts on shows and other services, technical advice and support, networking opportunities, events and conferences etc.

As present St Helena Tourism has membership with the African Tourism and Travel Association (ATTA) and Latin American Travel Association (LATA) This provides a worldwide coverage for St Helena by having the advantage of sitting between the African and South American continents.

Other Trade Associations will be reviewed to determine their usefulness and value to St Helena as a destination i.e. Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA).

### Newsletters

Through membership of the African Tourism and Travel Association and Latin American Travel Association, messages can be sent and promoted through their newsletter network.

These associations also provide support by allowing St Helena to be represented under their banners at travel shows, including the international promotion of this and providing discounts for these stands.

Provide networking events for members to assist and strengthen business to business relationships.

Trade association memberships also have the potential to assist in or host seminars to promote St Helena.

## Key Strategic Priorities

1. Research, data and information

With the change of access to St Helena, new data collection is required.

Customer insights, focus group studies, international market study (renew of journey’s work), visitor behaviour, destination visitor surveys, seasonality. A feedback forum will also be established to communicate to the community and visitors that their feedback was helpful.

2. Communication and brand management

St Helena Tourism carried out a workshop with local stakeholders including elected members to produce the following St Helena experience/branding framework:

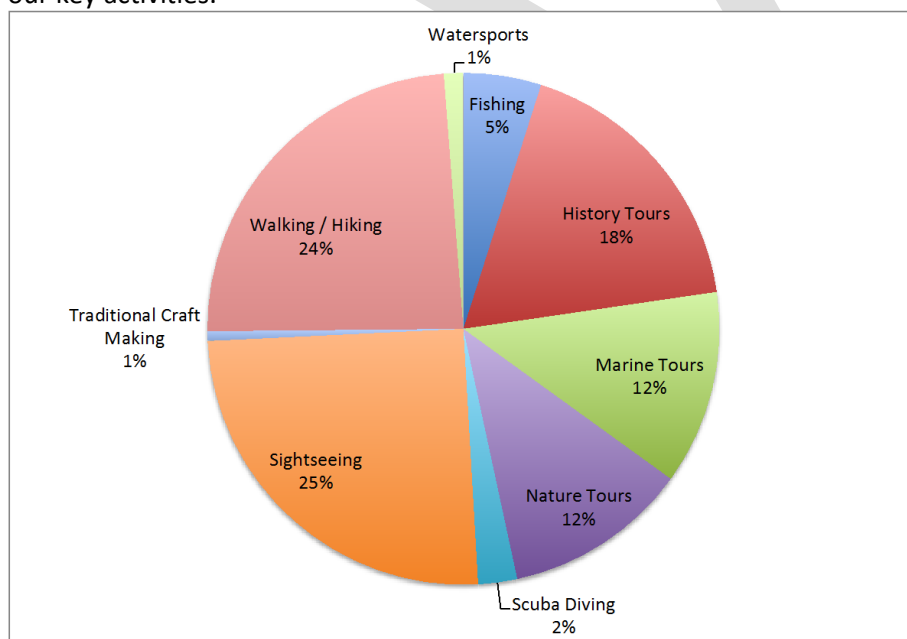
ADVENTURE		
Water sports	Fishing	Scuba diving
Hiking/walking/climbing	Cycling	Shooting
Running	Golf	Sailing
HERITAGE AND CULTURE		
Napoleon	Fortifications	East India Company

Boer War Prisoners	Zulu's	Liberating Africans/Slavery
Darwin	Edmund Halley/Nevil Maskelyne	Traditional crafts and skills
Architecture	Jonathan the Tortoise	Jacob's Ladder
Wirebird	St Helena Ebony	Martime
Food and Drink	One by One Fishery	Honey
<b>NATURAL BEAUTY</b>		
Birdwatching	Dolphin/Whale watching	Marine Life
Endemics (plants, invertebrates, bird)	Photography	Walking
Geology	Dark Skies	Diverse Landscapes

General messages that are associated with the St Helena brand the "Secret of the South Atlantic":

- Newest tourism destination in the world accessible by air
- Unspoiled beauty
- Safe environment – low crime rate, clean air and clear waters
- Warm climate

The results of the sample survey as depicted in the pie chart below provides evidence that the above should remain our key activities.



### 3. Product development and capacity building

The process of building a stronger capacity to underpin tourism development on St Helena is multi-layered and it should take into account that the tourism industry and the community are not separated.

The following 5 'A' factors represent the essential requirements for successful tourism in any destination:

Developing a suitable combination of these factors is at the heart of tourism planning

- Attractions

A tourist attraction is a place of interest that tourists visit, typically for its cultural value, historical significance, natural or built beauty or entertainment potential. Tourist attractions are also created to capitalise on events, i.e. ghost sightings also make tourist attractions.

- Access

Transport is needed to physically move tourists from where they live to where they are living. This includes international transport and inter island movement.

*Demand of international access needs constant review at this early stage of air access to St Helena, particularly the demands placed against the weekly flights, with potential moving to bi-weekly and seasonality factors.*

- Accommodation

All destinations need accommodation. This seems basic but successful accommodation development depends on building the right type of facility to suit the needs of a profitable segment of the market.

*The need to continue to enable reinvestment and refurbishment of existing properties throughout the island to allow the properties to compete with each other for guests. The need for additional accommodation on island that is suited to a broader market range including corporate, family and budget conscious markets i.e home hosting.*

- Activities

A range of activities often supports attractions. For example; diving showcases the marine environment and trails shows the surrounding landscape.

*Develop more family friendly activities, or greater promotion of existing activities. Working with retail and hospitality operators to address the lack of certainty in opening hours, particular food venues.*

*Develop more opportunities to showcase the local cuisine, including improving the range of food and visitor experiences.*

- Amenities

Amenities are the services that are required to meet the needs of tourists whilst they are away from home. They include public toilets, signage, restaurants and cafes, telecommunications and emergency services. Because many of the amenities are government services, a high degree of cooperation is needed, particularly where tourist services may be seen to be competing with the needs of the local residents.

St Helena as a destination is still striving to achieve the right balance of the 5 'A's.

#### 4. Destination marketing

In a rush to develop St Helena's tourism potential and to receive an increase of visitors, the long lead-time and nature of the international tourism industry are often underestimated and misunderstood. The impact of location of "gateways", sudden change in the South African rand can require a dramatic change in the marketing strategy and budget. Time lapse must be given for potential tourists to plan their holiday, for cruise ships to change their schedules, for international tour operators to plan, advertise and organise group trips.

The purpose of this strategy is to present a guideline for optimal planning and marketing of St Helena as a destination, along with enabling external stakeholders to assist with the development of the industry.

Flexibility is required to ensure success of destination marketing St Helena. This includes:

- Allowing for external environmental factors which can impact on the flow of inbound tourism to the island
- Immigration requirements

- Local and international policies
- Demands from the local community
- The building of further accommodation on the island and other necessary infrastructure

## Key Messages

Key messages to be communicated via the strategies in this plan includes (aligned with ESH Communication Strategy):

### Visitors

- We are the Secret of the South Atlantic
- Visit St Helena for:
  - Adventure
  - Heritage and Culture
  - Natural Beauty
- St Helena is a developing responsible destination
- St Helena is a unique eco, aqua and history destination
- St Helena has a unique culture and community
- St Helena is one of the friendliest places on earth

### On-Island

- Proud of St Helena. The island has so much to offer the local community as well as visitors.
- ESH is your partner in tourism
- Tourism is and will remain an essential industry for St Helena long-term. In its development stage it must be nurtured and strategically developed.
- All stakeholders must work together and understand what is required from each other.
- All stakeholders must understand and actively work together on the product development/capacity building (see above) in order for St Helena to have a successful and profitable tourism industry.

Key terms to be used when communicating messages about St Helena to the international travel trade, visitors and external stakeholders:

- Underwater paradise
- Exciting
- Pristine environment
- Plenty to see and do
- Friendly warm and welcoming community
- Surreal landscape
- Natural lovers' paradise
- Fishing wonderland

## Assumptions

- St Helena is a unique destination that offers:

Adventure: The island's natural diversity and abundance makes it an ideal destination for active discovery and exploration. Its ease of access to the natural environment lends itself to walking and hiking, diving, whale and dolphin watching etc.

**Heritage and Culture:** St Helena's fascinating history touches many aspects of world history and the island has, over the centuries, played host to many famous personalities. The cultural identity of St Helena is influenced by a number of different nationalities that makes up the saint community.

**Natural Beauty:** This is a place of contrasting landscapes and spectacular scenery, brimming with natural riches and beauty.

- High quality/low volume remains the focus and the island is not likely to become open to mass development or mass tourism
- The St Helena Government and Department for International Development continue to fund St Helena Tourism at the same financial level
- The St Helena Government and Enterprise St Helena takes steps to unify the development and maintenance of essential infrastructure.
- Responsible tourism is at the heart of all policy making.

### Changing visitor expectations

- Significant changes have been occurring within the expectations of many tourists throughout the world. The achievement of new and diverse experiences has become a significant motivator for many tourists who are interested in gaining immersion in the character of the destination. Tourists are constantly seeking destinations that are not driven by mass tourism.
- There are also growing expectations that facilities will be provided to assist such experiences. From visitor feedback, there is a strong interest in quality interpretation, increased services and unique experiences.

### Quality accommodation

- Due to the current price range of St Helena's accommodation, the market has expectation to purchase rooms of superior quality. However, they often are looking for lower prices.

### Adequately priced

- Due to St Helena being a long haul destination, the price of airfares, accommodation and other amenities such as local transportation, food and drink, tours needs to be appropriately priced to ensure the market continues to see St Helena as an attractive destination.

## **Other Marketing Opportunities**

As we continue to develop the St Helena product other marketing opportunities have been identified as detailed below, it is envisioned that these will be developed further as we progress through 2018/19.

There are opportunities to attract visitors to St Helena through the different categories of tourism that the island could develop. These are summarised below:

### Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing, Exhibitions (MICE)

Meetings, incentives, conferencing, exhibitions (MICE) is a type of tourism in which large groups, usually planned well in advance are brought together for a particular purpose.

MICE events are usually centred on a theme or a topic and are aimed at professional, academic and trade groups. It has a purpose beyond tourism and are often leaned towards business visitors.

Many destinations develop MICE because of the benefits it brings to the place.

- A business visitor may spend more than the average tourist, as they prefer high end hotels and often host business clients in fine dining establishments.

- Demand period could occur on low seasons. With the business visitor travelling to the destination with the main purpose of attending a MICE event, the event does not have to be scheduled during the peak season when most tourists tend to travel. In this cast the business visitor can help by taking up some of the empty hotel rooms during the slow season.
- Large scale, most events have a large number of attendees.

### Education Tourism

The term education tourism or edu-tourism refers to any program in which participants travel to a location as a group with a primary purpose of engaging in a learning experience directly related to the location<sup>1</sup>.

St Helena currently does not have groups of students coming to the island and the potential for this sector is still to be realised, but planned carefully along with the appropriate accommodation needs.

To date there are adhoc masters' students that are interested in carrying out research projects in the overseas territories and in particular St Helena. Research and planning needs to be carried out to capitalise on this interest.

The education tourism sector is important to the tourism industry, in particular regards to research, innovation and training.

St Helena has an abundant tourism resources that could serve as the basis for education tourism. These resources may be categorised as follows:

- Cultural
- Historical
- Ecotourism and nature based tourism
- Culinary tourism

### Voluntourism

Voluntary tourism is a new way of travelling, where people volunteer whilst they travel. It is similar to eco-tourism, but is aimed at helping other people rather than the environment and focuses on particular projects.

St Helena has participated in voluntourism, but on a small scale, with the last volunteers being on island a few years ago. Voluntourism has the opportunity for people to travel to St Helena and assist outside of the educational system which Education Tourism provides.

### Wellness Tourism

Wellness tourism is travel for the purpose of promoting health and well-being through physical or spiritual activities. Wellness Tourism can be correlated with medical tourism where health interests motivate the travellers and are proactive in seeking to maintain their health and quality of life.

Whilst St Helena does not have the top range of health centres or the diversified medical centres; the simple relaxation, stress free St Helenian lifestyle and the open and clean air country sides for meditation, yoga and physical fitness, can provide the perfect enticement for potential visitors.

### Popular Culture

The widespread of pop culture has the power of turning audiences into fans of destinations which results into potential tourists.

Inviting celebrities of different niche markets are now more viable (timeliness) with the open skies policy of St Helena's airport.

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<sup>1</sup> Source – Rodger 1998

Using St Helena as a film/video location - If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a video is worth?

### [Fly and Cruise Holidays](#)

Fly cruise holidays are good for cruises that covers a long distance, especially transatlantic cruise. Instead of spending five or six days aboard without a stop, visitors are able to the next destination by air. With the scheduled air service this is now an option for St Helena to take advantage off.

### [Other St Helena Industries](#)

Tourism is a complex and multifaceted industry that often relies on other industries to give it boost (or vise versa). Capitalising on St Helena being an island:

- With one by one fishery.
- Bees free from parasites and diseases and therefore some of the purest honey in the world.
- Exclusive coffee.
- World's remotest distillery.
- Agritourism

### Key Performance indicators

This strategy was developed to support Enterprise St Helena achieve its key performance indicators (KPI's) as set out in the ESH Strategy 2017/22 through marketing St Helena as a Tourism Destination.

The strategy contributes to the St Helena's Sustainable Economic Development Plan 2018-2028 and will implement actions from this plan.

ESH OBJECTIVE	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	BASELINE	TARGET	TARGET
			YEAR 1	YEAR 2
<b>Protect St Helena’s future whilst acknowledging the important aspects of its past, through inclusive and sustainable ethical economic development.</b>	Number of tourists arriving at St Helena by (i) International Airport (units) and (ii) by sea;	0/5,520 (2015/16)	680/4,768	2,300/6,934
	Room nights sold on island to visitors (compared with visitor arrivals) (units), Note: This Outcome Indicator will commence from 2018/19	2,500 est. Based on RMS figures	N/A	8,000 (55%)
<b>Encourage private sector, social enterprise and community development and growth, including through innovation and the sustainable economic use and re-use of island resources.</b>	Increase in number of tourism businesses on island, specifying those supported by ESH; gender disaggregated.	34	3	6
	Number of Tourism businesses supported which are still operating after 3 years, and have expanded in size and offering, demonstrating; consolidation and diversification; gender disaggregated.	34/0	34/18	34/15
	Tourism product initiatives supported	TBD	2	2
	Increase in the number of Tourism Businesses marketing themselves or accepting bookings online through their own website off platforms such as AirBnB.	2	10	30
<b>Make and market St Helena as a desirable, value-driven destination, through targeting niche visitors, tour operators and new markets.</b>	Number of tour operators actively marketing and selling St Helena as a destination.	5	10	20

SEDP 2018-2019

Export Sector	Action	Targets to be developed
<b>Academia, Research and Conferences</b>	Continue to work with Research Institutes to develop well marketed conferences and research opportunities.	At least 1 conference per annum
<b>Coffee</b>	Coffee should be available on St Helena to purchase by visitors interested in supporting St Helena coffee, which helps to increase international demand going forward.	TBC
<b>Film Location</b>	Develop and market incentives for sector growth. An on island studio would also be attractive.	Incentives agreed as per investment strategy.
	Develop and market an online brochure outlining potential film locations alongside infrastructure information (road capacity, electricity, conservation, restrictions and requirements)	TBC
	Focus marketing on smaller crews (£1m-£5m budgets) who have less equipment to transport	TBC



<b>Honey and Honey Bees</b>	Encourage producers to use online market places or distributors to sell honey abroad.	Export of honey increase to at least 10,000 x 25ml jars per year.
<b>Tourism</b>	Ensure that some packages combine St Helena and African destinations to enhance the offering. Offer additional flights when passenger demand grows.	
	Ensure little picking parties address litter at tourist attractions and undertake annual litter awareness campaigns. Demonstrate a local pride in the environment.	
	Ensure more attractions are open, particularly on Sunday.	TBC
	Ensure entry fees or donation boxes are located at tourist sites and use funds to improve sites.	
	Continue to train managers, chefs and hospitality staff. Offer customer care training.	Courses related to customer care and hospitality are available.
	Market in target magazines and via journalists and tour operators. Ensure experiences, tours and accommodation are marketed and easily bookable.	TBC
	Encourage entrepreneurs to develop activity based holidays e.g. wellness retreats, walking holidays, educational trips, bird watching trips.	
Support enterprising people to provide low price, no frills food, laundry, wifi and accommodation particularly to visiting yachts.		
Tourist office to survey visitors and tour operators and record and address issues systematically. Encourage providers to use TripAdvisor		
<b>Traditional Products</b>	Ensure that goods are marketable for modern tastes.	

### Strategy Stakeholders

- Legislative Council
- St Helena Government
- Non-government Organisations
- Charities
- Local Media
- PR Agency

### Strategy Review

The world of tourism is changing rapidly. With air service being very new to St Helena it is strongly emphasised here that this is a working document that will be reviewed every 6 months or as significant developments occur and adjusted accordingly.