

The Editor's thoughts

Lisa Watson



IF you're relatively new to the Falkland Islands the recently finished large extra care facility at east Stanley, Tussac House, might come as something of a surprise. It does appear big from the outside for the size of the population and some might also judge there are other pressing matters, a new power station for example, if we're talking vital capital projects (that is happening incidentally before anyone's head drops off from nodding.)

The history of the need for a care facility or an 'old people's home' as it was first viewed is a long one though, and was a hot issue in public meetings at least 15 years ago. (MLA Birmingham confirmed he recalls a meeting in 2010 where there was much discussion about a site) but there was a fair amount of lobbying prior to that. And it wasn't a case of a just a few people throwing tantrums it had broad support across the community.

To put the requirement into context there wasn't a great deal of social care for the elderly outside of /near to, the hospital, thus enormous pressure on nursing staff to provide that care at the time.

Over time further sheltered accommodation was put in place, standards of care for the elderly were developed and only recently formalised, and alongside that a plan for an extra care facility was planned and designed and then ultimately built.

Even now though many persons with one-to-one needs must reside at Hillside where they receive excellent care in a pleasant atmosphere; but with the best will in the world the location is far from ideal for both carers and carees.

Tussac House will deal with all of those practical problems, not to mention others including offices for the CST, a hub for community activities (they've already started I spotted) and a kitchen for the hospital, meals on wheels and prison meals, but it also offers something extra – dignity. And I feel a little emotional writing this because I have a vested interest, but then as a community do we not all?

Specifically though I have family member (who doesn't mind me mentioning this) who will enter Tussac House shortly; and while she currently has superbly dedicated carers, the addition of the wrap around care that this facility will provide will mean increased peace of mind and thus a better quality of life. Freedom to take a stroll in a bright, cheery safe environment may sound like a small thing to you and I but it means the world to her.

It may sound odd to say it but small details like decently built handrails around well-lit corridors to comfortable seating areas, along with suitably wide pathways can be invaluable in changing the lives of generations in the Falklands.

No doubt there will be a few settling in problems here and there – it's probably obligatory with such a large project – but hopefully nothing too tricky. In the longer term it will be fabulous to see the place grow its character with greenery and the residents' individual touches in the little courtyards.

Perhaps the one thing that would be good to see added is a hand-rail around the outside path so that residents can cruise it safely.

Don't miss out on the open day which takes place on Friday - January 17 starting at 10am with tours on the hour every hour until 2pm.



Above: Green spider - FC

Help protect our buglife

BUGS might not be everyone's cup of tea but the Falklands has some interesting little ones and they're home to nearly 70 endemic invertebrates – those found nowhere else in the world.

Some examples of special species are:

Weddell Island Money spider (Falklandoglenes weddelli)

Madeline's Falklands Moth (Acrolepiopsis madeleineae)

Falklands Ground Beetle (Trechisibius falklandicus)

Falkland Camel Cricket (Parudenus falklandicus)

However knowledge of the Falklands' invertebrates is very limited and many are likely to be threatened by habitat fragmentation, climate change and non-native invasive species.

As such it is important to know what species are found in the islands and where they live in order to take steps to secure their future. In order to do so the three year 'Supporting Atlantic Territories Invertebrate Conservation' is gathering valuable information and undertaking surveys to help understand more about Falklands invertebrates.

This is part of a Darwin Plus funded project working with local governments and organisations in Anguilla, Ascension Island, Bermuda and the Falkland Islands.

Senior Conservation Officer Danni Sherwood at Buglife who is managing the project, said: "We're delighted to be working with so many partners across the four territories on this project. On the Falklands, we benefit from the valuable local knowledge of dedicated staff in Falklands Conservation and the Falkland Islands Government, and are looking forward to working together to try and best advocate for the protection of its unique local invertebrates."

How can you help?

You can photograph invertebrates, everything from beetles and spiders to flies in order to build a better picture of Falklands wildlife. Photos can be shared through the dedicated iNaturalist project page ready to be reviewed by invertebrate experts: bit.ly/TheFalklandsBugs

Enquiries Project Manager Danni Sherwood at danniella.sherwood@buglife.org.uk

Below: Weevil and Falkland Camel Cricket - A Wilson



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