



2017 General elections & the environment

The natural environment of Falkland Islands, including our waters, underpins our principal industries and therefore all our livelihoods. Beyond that simple economic reality our natural environment and the wonderful creatures that we share our home with enrich our lives in so many other ways.

It is therefore important that the new Legislative Assembly strongly supports our environment.

So I am very pleased to be able to present the views of our Candidates for this election on a small selection of questions that Falklands Conservation believe are important for the coming term to add to the debate.

I would like to give my thanks to the Candidates for having taken the time to answer these questions during a very busy time, and wish them all the best of luck.

Esther Bertram, CEO

NB: as a charity, Falklands Conservation is strictly politically impartial and we do not have a view on which Candidates people should vote for. However, we do have an interest in what all Candidates have to say on nature and the environment, and that these issues are part of our national conversation. We urge Candidates to be as positive, imaginative and ambitious as possible on nature and the environment for the 2017-2021 Legislative Assembly.

Answers have been limited to 80 words each for brevity.

	<p>Environmental investment Current levels of investment in the environment are quite low in the Falkland Islands eg in order to restore native habitats, support waste management or eco-tourism etc. Given that most of our principal industries (tourism, fishing, farming) are based on our natural environment do you see this as an important area to invest in for the next Legislative Assembly?</p>	<p>Oil industry preparation FIG have made some good progress on getting legislation ready for the arrival of an oil industry. However, some protections for wildlife still remain unready. Would you see this as an important area to develop?</p>	<p>Biosecurity Being an island nation, with an economy based largely on natural resources, how do you see the importance of biosecurity, and what would you like to see happen?</p>	<p>Waste and climate change Do you think issues such as waste reduction and management and climate change are important, how would you like to tackle them?</p>	<p>Falklands Wildlife and you What is your favourite aspect of Falklands Wildlife? And are you more naturist or naturalist, tell us more!</p>
<p>Corina Ashbridge</p>	<p>Yes. We need to protect these habitats to help ensure their success into the future. I would be keen to look at ways to work together with those industries involved – ideally with ideas lead by them, because they have the most to gain by ensuring these habitats are not destroyed or damaged. Financial/human investment from FIG could</p>	<p>Completely. Apart from personally not wishing wildlife to be harmed or killed, the Falkland Islands prides itself on its wildlife and among other things uses it as a selling point for tourism. We need to look after this and ensure that there is adequate planning in place in terms of a response to a potential oil spill. I understand that an update to the legislation surrounding</p>	<p>Non-native invasive species are said to be the greatest threat to our biosecurity. I would support legislation to back up what the biosecurity team is already doing, to give them the powers to put policies and procedures in place for an import permit system to tackle issues at source in the exporting countries and to increase the staffing levels from the current 1.5 personnel.</p>	<p>Waste management begins with education regarding matters such as purchasing choices, littering and home recycling. Further down the line, I would be keen to see some form of recycling. Regarding the disposal of waste, I think that managed landfill sites are a good option. Climate change – the Falklands needs proper</p>	<p>I particularly love the fact that many of the creatures (mainly birds) in the more remote areas have a curiosity of humans rather than a fear of them. There have been many occasions when birds have appeared close to me for a better look. That feeling, when a wild creature is right there within touching distance, is magical. When we have time, my family and I like to visit, and</p>

	come in the form of increasing personnel for the Environmental Planning Department.	this issue is important. I would support this.		planning for the impacts of a less favourable climate. Consult with other countries whose situation shares similarities with our own. Plan early and have options in place.	appreciate the beauty of remote places in camp.
Teslyn Barkman	Environmental investment can hold benefits for many sectors; habitat restoration for example prevents erosion to save agricultural land and grazing. External investment from industry should be encouraged where appropriate, and benefits to the Falklands highlighted concurrently.	I believe FIG were right to put an emphasis on protecting our unique environment, and to gather information about our marine ecosystems in particular. Not to consider the impact would be both environmentally and economically irresponsible. FIG needs to create the underlying legislation to enshrine our habitat for future generations. MLAs will need to balance any environmental legislation with landowner's wishes and not impede existing culture and business.	Biosecurity is a subject close to my heart with Bleaker set to start its rat eradication soon. If elected I would support current work to reduce animal, insect and plant invasives, as well as strategy preventing further invasions. The work is developing and I would hope to contribute in a positive way to rebalance and protect our ecosystems.	Investigating and trialling policies to recycle waste and reduce plastic waste should benefit the Islands and reduce pollution. MLAs should continue to promote the lifestyle and cost benefits of solar and wind energy displacement, and strive to develop the renewable energy scheme further. Efforts in the Falklands may be small in the grand scheme but will set an example to the world and to next generations.	I was hugely fascinated by nature as a child and still am today. My personal affinity is for the mysterious cetaceans. Whales and dolphins have been top since I could talk but are closely followed by small birds and native plants.
John Birmingham	We are a small set of Islands and have limited resources but need to do our bit to clean up the areas under our control.	The FIG should continue with plans to make sure all legal measures are in place to ensure responsible development.	Very important and needs to be treated with more urgency.	FIG has to accept responsibility for the poor waste disposal and literally clean up its act at Eliza Cove Landfill.	The Skua, a fine flyer and very underrated (because, I suspect, of its not so pretty plumage).
Stacy Bragger	Preserving our environment must always be a key focus for the	It is important that FIG does all it can to prepare itself for future oil development and	As the question states, being an Island nation means that biosecurity is obviously an	Yes, I do believe that climate change and waste management are important.	FC and the community at large will be relieved to read that I am not a naturist so I

	Government. Our economy is based on the exploitation of our natural resources and this must be done in a sustainable manner. There has been quite a considerable amount of discussion on environmental issues during the hustings and I do feel it is important that the next Legislative Assembly looks at this area and decides what the appropriate level of resources should be to achieve what is required.	protecting our wildlife is obviously a vitally important factor that must be considered. If elected, then it would be something I would need to learn more about but I would certainly wish to see consultation from organisations such as Falklands Conservation on whether all the necessary safeguards are in place.	area that we need to get right. The introduction of unwelcome visitors could be massively detrimental to our environment and economy so biosecurity measures must always be reviewed to ensure that they are appropriate. If tighter measures need to be introduced, then I would certainly be open to that as long as it was done in a common-sense way that wasn't overly restrictive.	Being a small community we do have the potential to lead on certain areas to reduce our CO2 emissions such as using more renewable energy and finding innovative ways to help the environment. Waste management is currently poor and is certainly an area which I feel needs attention. I would hope that progress will be made quickly to improve the situation by the next Legislative Assembly.	will choose naturalist! The best thing about Falkland's wildlife is how accessible it is. We are very lucky to see such an abundance of wildlife so close to where we live. We must do all we can to preserve it for future generations. Thank you for your interest in the views of candidates on these important issues that you have raised.
Lynda Buckland					
Marvin Clarke					
Ben Cockwell	Yes, while we do look after the fisheries the government's stance on other aspects of the environment needs addressing; Stanley Common, waste management, invasives, all need resources dedicated to them, 'no cost management' will not do.	I would, we can't be too careful about potential issues with oil. My view is that when production starts we need not only to have comprehensive legislation and regulation in place but also to be ready to address any spills or other issues immediately. If that means we need to make investment in mitigation measures ourselves then we should do so.	Biosecurity is very important and I would like to see additional effort from FIG to police it at a national level but also assist with measures for Islands that are pest free in order to keep them that way. The management/eradication of invasive plants is an area where we could do more as well, more funding for control of Dock, Mouse eared hawkweed, Calafate and so on would be a good	The obvious issue to tackle right away is Eliza Cove tip, more effective containment there is a priority. Next would be overhauling how waste is managed, in the past there was a private sector proposal to manage and recycle rubbish so revisiting that would be good. In the long term I would like to see an island wide system of waste management.	The small birds, my own favourite is the ground tyrant but I do like them all, in Fox Bay we get the occasional Tussac bird visiting us and I particularly like to see them.

			thing.		
Roger Edwards	I believe we are actually spending quite a lot on environmental issues pertaining to our main industries. Certainly our Fisheries and our Agricultural sectors have huge scientific input primarily to ensure sustainability into the future. We have stewardship of our environment and must pass it on to future generations in an as good or better condition. I believe we should spend more to preserve our historic 'built' environment.	I believe we are well on the road to having the correct legislation in place for the Oil Industry whenever it arrives; indeed we have quite severe requirements for Environmental Impact Assessments. We could perhaps do more in the way of legislation for our terrestrial wildlife. We could certainly do more about the pollution and contamination of our seas with plastics	With the arrival of 'earwigs' and live frogs it is obvious that much has to be done to protect our Islands. Several papers have been presented to Exco that suggest possible ways forward but all have fallen short of the ideal solution. We must find a way of stopping infestations before arrival in the Islands – once here we have the problem for ever.	Of course climate change is important, whatever your beliefs in the cause, there is no doubt that the climate is changing. How much we can do I am not sure but it would be interesting to know how much CO2 is released into the atmosphere because peat is drying out? On waste we can do a lot to reduce waste but how much we can recycle is difficult to say, certainly shipping 'stuff' out of the Islands is not quite as easy as many believe.	I am not a naturalist – it is too cold! I would like to think I am a naturalist and I love all aspects of the Falkland's wildlife
Barry Elsby	I do see the absolute need to protect our environment; it is the cornerstone of our tourism industry. Our biggest industry is the sustainable fishing we allow in our waters and any sea temperature change can have dramatic effects on our economy. Climate change is a global problem	Clearly, as a country which promotes itself as a place where nature is still in charge, the regulation of an oil industry must be to the highest possible standards. Much work has been carried out by all departments of our Government to ensure we are ready for oil development if it goes ahead. I have no doubt the next Assembly will	Biosecurity is hugely important to the Falkland Islands. Guam, an island in the Pacific, has experienced the horrific effects of the invasive tree snake, accidentally introduced in WW2. Our last Assembly approved significant amounts of money to help farms on the East try and contain Calafate. Many of us will have	Climate change, especially warming of the oceans, could destroy our fishing industry. We have already taken significant steps to reduce pollution by introducing wind turbines. However, as a country that may soon be exporting oil we need to do more. I believe within 12 months we will start waste recycling in conjunction with	I think it's too cold to be a naturalist in the Falklands! I am not a great naturalist but have had the privilege of always having an office with a window overlooking the harbour since we arrived in 1990. It is an ever changing view and a great stress reliever.

	and although we are a small country we should nevertheless work towards effective waste management – something we have been slow to address.	want to ensure that all protections are in place before any consent to exploit the Sea Lion field is given.	passed through Chilean airports and seen their aggressive policy towards imports. We need such an attitude if we are to stop invasives.	MPA but I also believe the new Assembly must look at “quick wins” such as controlling the importation of water from the UK in single use bottles.	
Louise Ellis	Our natural environment is a unique asset and a priority facing the new Assembly will be the completion and implementation of a robust and forward thinking Waste Management Strategy for the Islands. We must invest in this area and in educating our community regarding the benefits of waste reduction. The EDS Action Plan also highlights the need for sector extension in Tourism including niche products such as eco-tourism, where we will need to defer to expertise to develop the market.	We need to press on and finalise the legislation regarding the environmental impact of oil and ensure that the necessary policies and protections are in place. If and when the green light for oil development happens, we need to be prepared and have all of the legislation in place as things will progress rapidly. We cannot be in a position where we are trying to work backwards with our legislation to address issues that may already be occurring.	We have seen the implications of negligent bio-security in the Islands in previous years. The thistle, calafate, earwig and rodent eradication programmes are prime examples of when we have had to step up to the mark and address these lapses head on. It is important that we continue to educate the community regarding bio-security issues and ensure that we have the resources and systems in place to prevent the introduction of non-native species or devastating infectious diseases to our livestock.	Climate change is a massive issue, and although we can't make a massive difference on a global scale, we should aim towards being a cleaner, greener country by investing in energy efficiency initiatives, renewable energy sources and encouraging businesses to offset their carbon footprints. As for reducing waste, I would like to reduce single use plastics including straws, bottles and food packaging and options for exporting recyclable waste in the Waste Management Strategy with an education programme regarding recycling.	For me it is the small birds. My favourite bird is the dark faced ground tyrant, who not only has a fantastic name, but is so full of character and charm. Other favourites include snipe, thrushes, wrens and pipits. I love being outdoors as long as it isn't raining sideways, which is often an issue here! I have a particular affection for the North Coast, especially around Cape Dolphin and Elephant Beach, it is a stunning and diverse area.
Ian Hansen					
Jason Lewis	Yes, but that is easy to say. What the new MLAs need to do is back this with commitment and policy	If work has already started then it makes sense that we should be moving forward and finishing the work. With	We can always do more on biosecurity and we need to review what we do on a regular basis to ensure we	FIG expect the oil industry and the fishing industry to follow some very strict waste management programs but	Oh I'm very much the lover of Falkland's wildlife, though I have studied little bits as a tour guide. I still struggle

	with the appropriate financial support. The Islands rely on our environment to succeed and we need to work as a community to ensure we don't destroy it.	a high turnover of staff within the Islands if we delay completing the work we risk adding delays and misunderstandings. It is better to be ready and prepared rather than have to rush the job and risk getting it wrong.	are up to date with the latest threats and practices. However the bigger challenge is to turn around the image of biosecurity, in certain people's eyes it's a negative, stopping the import of certain things, where it should be seen as a positive and a protection for our futures.	when it comes to themselves, it's a do as I say not as I do attitude. This has to stop and FIG need to start to lead by example and improve the islands waste management. I would be interested to see how other small and remote islands around the world handle this situation and see what lessons we can learn from them.	with, and am amazed sometimes at how close wildlife will come to you if you just sit down and watch it.
David Peck					
Mark Pollard	Yes, we need to ensure we invest in protecting our environment. Whether it is ensuring we have the people, finances, policies or infrastructure. I would like to see an Environmental Strategy that commits to supporting our environment as well as an Economic Development Strategy that states how we will support the environment. If we fail in this, then our major industries will all struggle at some point in the not too distant future.	I will support the hydrocarbon industry in the Falklands, but not at any cost to the environment. We must ensure our other industries remain strong and for that to happen we need to look after the environment. Companies so far have had to issue Environmental Impact Statements and I commend this work. We cannot use this as a box ticking exercise though and must ensure that our environment is protected throughout any future development.	Biosecurity is essential for the future of the Falkland Islands. We need to remove some species here such as Calafate which impacts on the Farming industry or earwigs that threaten horticulture, rats and mice as well. But it is also essential that we keep other species out, we have done well so far but remain vigilant. Small changes may only be required such as ensuring that we have proper vehicle cleaning facilities at Mare Harbour for incoming vehicles.	I would like to see a Waste Management Policy implemented that sees us reduce waste, reuse waste, recycle and then dispose responsibly of what is left. I would like to see a reduction in single use plastics where possible. To combat climate change I would like to see education on saving fuel and electricity and potential savings people can make as well as continued programs to improve insulation in buildings and investment in renewable energy amongst others.	It is difficult to pick a single of aspect of Falklands wildlife. I have spent a lot of time around elephant seals, sea lions, penguins and a vast array of bird life. Some of the most memorable experiences have involved tall Tussac Grass and large seals as well as spotting whales. I must say that my interests lay more in fauna than flora, but diddle dee, tea berries, wild strawberries and scurvy grass have been known to peak my enthusiasm.
Leona Roberts	Our unique and fragile environment underpins	I believe that the area where hydrocarbons are most likely	The earwig infestation brought this to the general	We can't keep looking away from these problems - I	For the benefit of both population and wildlife I have

	<p>every element of the Falklands and it is right that we proceed with care. I believe a joined-up approach is necessary – across government and individual departments, trade and industry, environmental agencies etc – all co-operating to find acceptable compromises which allow development and growth while protecting the natural environment. A ‘legacy fund’ could help to offset impacts from industry and contribute to education programmes, management of sites, habitat restoration and so on.</p>	<p>to be extracted is not actually covered by the current environmental legislation yet. If exploitation goes ahead it is imperative that this regulation is in place, that it is both comprehensive and workable, and has been fully consulted on with environmental agencies and industry. It’s not something that we should be trying to rush through at the last minute.</p>	<p>public’s attention, but the problem of invasive species has been around for years – calafate, ‘blue buzzers’ etc. We have seen how easily and quickly invasives can spread. Awareness-raising and education should continue and I would like to understand why DoA proposals have been rejected. Long-term, let’s explore the need for a secure facility where cargo etc can be properly checked without risk of contamination and look at introducing penalties for violations.</p>	<p>mentioned single-use plastics in my manifesto as just one example of an area where we might make a start. Public education campaigns and buy-in from retailers are vital – we need to use imagination and have an ambitious and positive long-term vision. Renewable energy, recycling, import substitution and increased sustainability must all be goals, with work starting now.</p>	<p>contained any naturistic inclinations! Actually, I’m not especially ‘into’ wildlife, although I do appreciate others’ joy in it. My heart is more with our glorious open skies, clean air and the wind, stone-runs and Pale Maidens, and the deceptive ‘emptiness’ of Camp – but most of all I love our coastlines and the ocean. Our environment is an integral part of our cultural identity and we really must care for it.</p>
<p>Gavin Short</p>	<p>As a Government we invest a fair chunk of income in science and the environment ranging from Fisheries through to Falkland Conservation. Could we do more? Probably we could but whatever is suggested has to be pragmatic and in tune with the way we wish to develop the Falklands</p>	<p>Work is continuing and I am comfortable that it is headed in the right direction</p>	<p>This is an area that is really just starting to move forward and I am sure it will evolve to what is required as time goes by and of course must be common sense.</p>	<p>Waste is an interesting one. The tip as an almighty mess. There is money in this year’s budget to kick start things but again whatever is done has to be practical, common sense and affordable. The people of the Falklands appreciate what is around them and general will let you know if something isn’t being done correctly. We can do more</p>	<p>As I have grown older I have found myself appreciating more what is around me (I sort of took it for granted when I was younger) and to be honest I love it all (I have a special weakness for the old clocker beetles though).</p>

	and they will of course have to take their place and compete against other budgetary requests. A great deal of the changes that will happen will be driven through education.			practical things to lessen our use of energy and schemes exists for the incorporation of solar in houses.	
Roger Spink	Sustainable development, conservation and the protection of the environment for future generations are central considerations to future development of the Falkland Islands, and this commitment is laid out in The Islands Plan. The Environment is a vital area for us to invest in we need to strengthen and invest greater amounts in Government's environmental planning and support initiatives in this area.	Maintaining the unique natural heritage and unspoilt environment of the Falklands remains a key Government priority in approving any exploration or production. It is therefore vital that these protections are put in place. We have already seen breaches of due process on non-Oil issues when environmental safeguards have been put in place and we cannot allow institutions to ride roughshod over such things.	Biosecurity is a critical part of the government's efforts to prevent, respond to and recover from pests and diseases that threaten the economy and environment. We need to be vigilant at our borders and put effort and money into the eradication of harmful invasive species.	Waste reduction is a long term aim we should have and discussions with stakeholders should be commenced on how best to achieve this. I support the joint waste management strategy talks with our neighbours at Mount Pleasant Complex to implement recycling and to explore long term solutions for waste that cannot be reduced, reused or recycled. Government capital projects should include consideration of environmentally sustainable solutions.	I was originally drawn to the Falklands by the fantastic wildlife particularly the waterfowl and I still marvel at the sight of skeins of geese flying around Stanley Harbour. The ability to get out amongst the wildlife and let it come up to you with little fear of people is also great to see. We are lucky enough to have a jewel of an island in Kidney close to Stanley.