



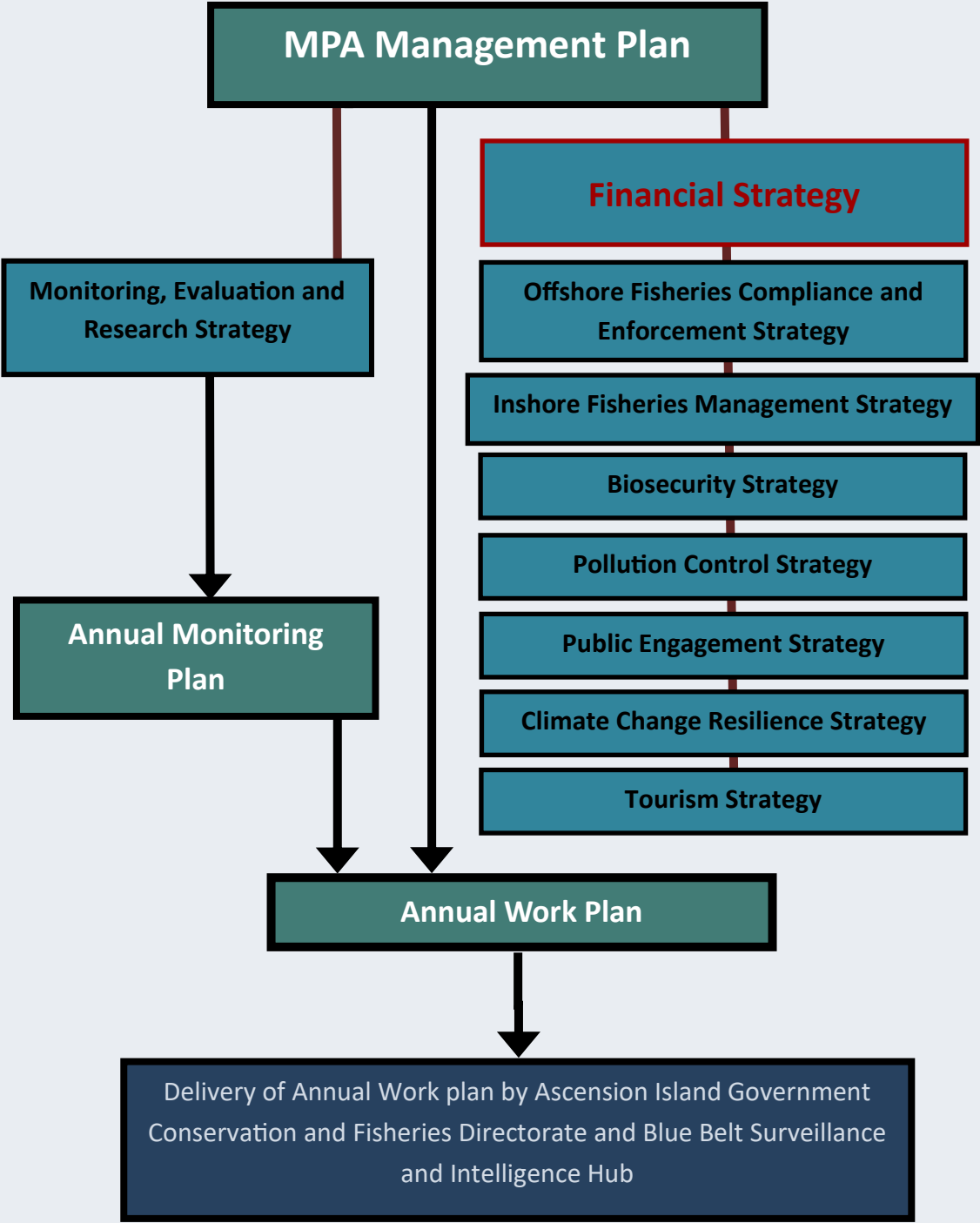
# Ascension Island Marine Protected Area

## Financial Strategy

2021-2026



This Financial Strategy is one of a number of documents created to support the management of the Ascension Island Marine Protected Area (MPA). The relationship of this Strategy to the overarching MPA Management Plan and other associated documents is shown below:



- The Ascension Island Marine Protected Area (MPA) will safeguard 445,000km<sup>2</sup> of ocean at the heart of the Atlantic Ocean.
- This strategy sets out a five year plan for the financial management of the MPA.
- Sound financial planning and governance are in themselves an objective of the MPA and will also underpin the delivery of all of the other MPA objectives.
- The Ascension Island Government (AIG) will take on the role of the management authority for the MPA. However, AIG is currently running at a deficit due to a contraction of income and management of the MPA must not impose any additional pressure on AIG budgets.
- Core management costs of the MPA are forecast to be £226,000 in 2021/22 and rise with inflation. In addition a total of £100,000 of capital investment is required over the five year duration of this strategy.
- The most significant sources of funding for MPA management are from a UK Government grant and donations from the Blue Marine Foundation. Projected income is sufficient to meet the core management and investment costs over the course of this five year strategy. However, not all of these income streams are secure and some may be restricted.
- A sustainable financing review is being undertaken to identify further options for income and reduce the reliance on the UK Government for funding.
- Project costs for discrete pieces of work that are essential for delivering the MPA objectives are described separately. These range from approximately £300,000 to £750,000 per year and external grant funding will be required for these to go ahead.
- The MPA has the potential to bring economic as well as environmental and social benefits to Ascension. The development of Ascension as an international centre for marine research and the expansion of a sustainable tourist industry could bring significant income to the island.

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# Introduction

## Purpose of the Financial Strategy

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This Financial Strategy sets out a five year plan for the Ascension Island Marine Protected Area (MPA). It provides a breakdown of core management costs, existing funding sources and potential new funding streams that could address any shortfall in income or extend the scope of management activities. Indicators have been identified that will form a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of financial management and progress against development aims. The plan will also be used to demonstrate a sound financial strategy and identify unmet need to potential funders.

In addition to securing funding for management and monitoring of the MPA, the Financial Strategy will also consider means to generate financial benefits to the island that demonstrate the socio-economic value of responsible marine stewardship.

## Introduction to the MPA

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The Ascension Island MPA was designated on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019. It covers the entirety of the Ascension Island Exclusive Economic Zone out to 200NM from the island and is managed by the Ascension Island Government.

**MPA Vision Statement:** The Ascension Island Marine Protected Area will safeguard a unique natural ecosystem at the heart of the Atlantic Ocean. It will be a beacon of marine conservation, research and sustainable management that is a source of pride for the people of Ascension and a valuable resource for future generations, both locally and globally.

An MPA Management Plan has been prepared setting out four strategic objectives and 21 underpinning operational objectives (Appendix 1) that will guide management for the next 20 years.

### Strategic Objectives:

1. To conserve Ascension Island's marine biodiversity, habitats and ecological functions for long-term ecosystem health
2. To promote and manage the sustainable development of socio-economic activities that are compatible with protection of the marine environment
3. To promote scientific research and share knowledge about Ascension Island's marine biodiversity to encourage support for marine conservation locally and globally
4. Supporting Objective: To achieve effective governance and management of the MPA that is transparent and underpinned by sustainable financial and human resources

This Financial Strategy will contribute directly to the delivery of operational objective 4d:

*'Human and financial resources are secured to deliver effective management.'*

However, all of the MPA objectives will only be achieved if there are sufficient resources to carry out management and enforcement actions and to monitor their effectiveness. These resources need to be secured for the long-term to provide continuity of management, staff retention and a platform from which to develop ambitious projects and external partnerships.

## MPA SWOT Analysis

The major strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the MPA are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. MPA SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Near-pristine marine environment with relatively few pressures on which to target management action</li> <li>• Strong political support for an MPA on Ascension and in the UK</li> <li>• High cultural value placed on the marine environment by Ascension community</li> <li>• Part of a network of MPAs connected by the Blue Belt</li> <li>• Strong global public interest in marine conservation</li> <li>• Philanthropic interest in marine conservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remote location makes logistics of management difficult</li> <li>• Constraints on access to the island via military flights</li> <li>• Precarious financial position of the Ascension Island Government</li> <li>• Reliance on funding from UK Government for MPA management</li> <li>• Lack of any vessel capable of reaching offshore environments</li> <li>• Poor infrastructure from which to develop economic activity linked to the marine environment</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoration of the South Atlantic Airbridge makes travel to and from the UK much easier</li> <li>• Promotion of Ascension as a centre for marine research and trialing MPA management techniques</li> <li>• Growth of sustainable sports fishing and ecotourism sector</li> <li>• Development of Blue Carbon Markets as a sustainable source of revenue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Future of Ascension’ discussions that could radically alter governance of Ascension and could lead to a closed military island</li> <li>• Impacts of climate change cause a severe decrease in the condition of the marine environment and require more intensive management intervention</li> <li>• Loss of research funding following Brexit</li> <li>• End of current Blue Belt grant in March 2022</li> <li>• Shift in priorities of public and policy makers away from marine conservation</li> </ul>

## Management and Staffing Structure

The role of the MPA Management Authority will be undertaken by the Ascension Island Government (AIG), principally through a dedicated team of 5.5 FTEs housed within its Conservation and Fisheries Directorate (AIGCFD). Job descriptions for these roles are provided in Appendix 2. External oversight and support will be provided by the elected Ascension Island Council, an MPA Steering Group, Youth MPA Committee and Inshore Fisheries Advisory Committee based on Ascension, the UK Government's Blue Belt Programme and an independent Scientific Advisory Committee made up of international experts (Figure 1).

The proposed staffing structure is based on an assessment of the human resources required to deliver the actions described in the MPA Management Plan. Most core management activities will be delivered by staff based on Ascension. The exception is compliance and enforcement of offshore fisheries regulations, which will be undertaken by the Blue Belt Surveillance and Intelligence Management Hub (BBSIH) housed with the UK's Marine Management Organisation (MMO). The core management team has been kept deliberately small and extra capacity from partner organisations or consultants will be sourced as required to deliver specific work streams and projects. This model was chosen to reduce core costs and maximise flexibility, but it has some weaknesses as well as strengths (Table 2). These weaknesses will be addressed through clear objective setting in the MPA Management Plan and Monitoring and Research Strategy, professional development of core staff and robust research permit and data management systems that require collaboration and data sharing.

*Table 2. Strengths and weaknesses of the proposed MPA staffing model that will combine a small core of permanent staff with project staff and input from external partners.*

Strengths	Weaknesses
Reduced recurring operating costs compared to maintenance of a large core management team	High dependency on external funding sources could skew management priorities and reduce autonomy
Core staff retain institutional memory, build local relationships and develop local expertise compared to short-term project staff	The most exciting research and monitoring could be carried out by external organisations with core staff demoralised by their role facilitating visits and carrying out routine tasks
Flexibility to respond to changing priorities and funding opportunities	Some expertise and intellectual property will be removed from the island leading to a loss of institutional memory
Core staff able to set priorities and develop projects based on direct local knowledge	
Project working will drive innovation and partnership building through the need to secure funding and demonstrate outcomes	
Subject experts from external organisations can be used to source a range of specialist skills	

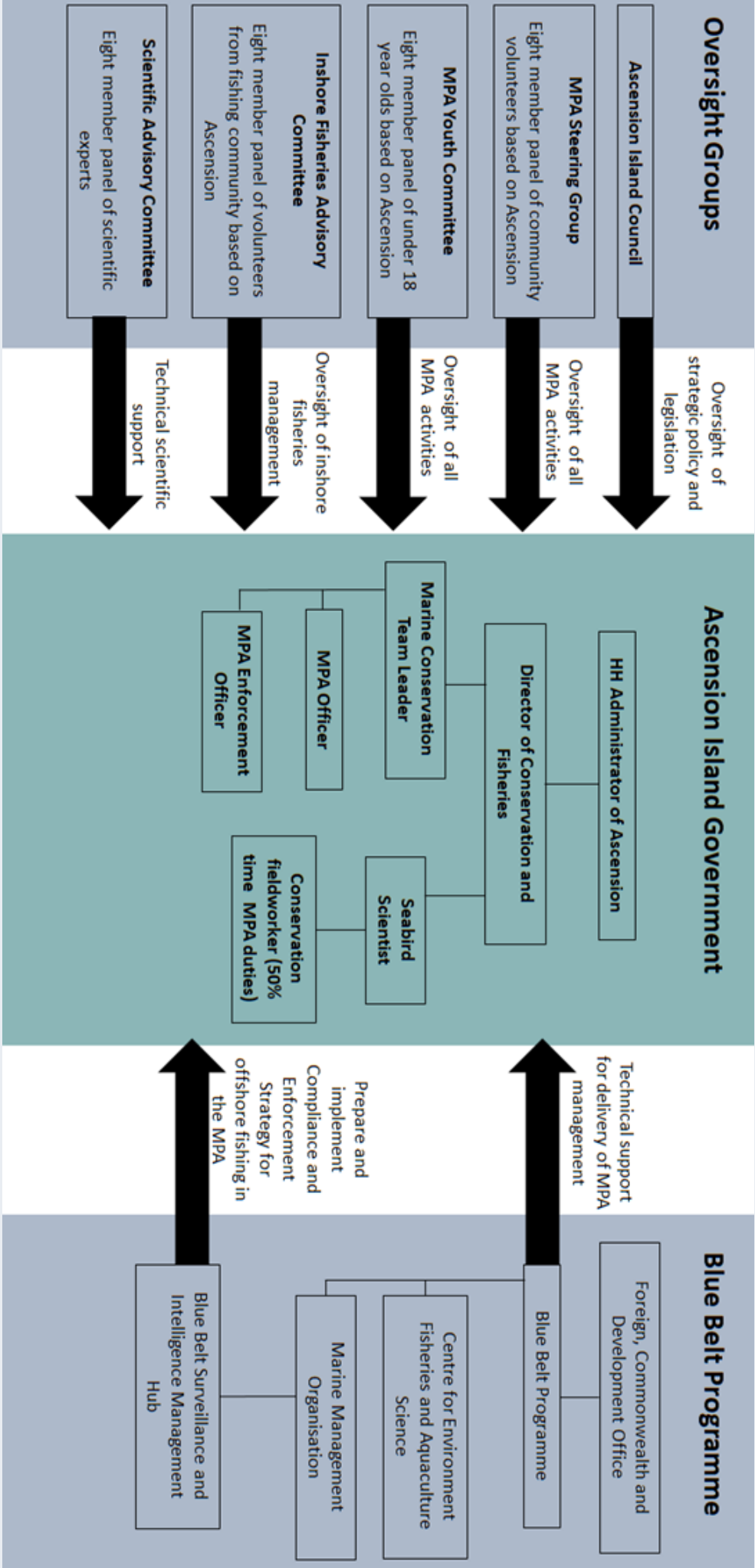
## Assets

A list of assets held by the AIGCFD marine team is shown in Appendix 3. The total asset value is estimated at £213,000 with straight line depreciation over 10 years assumed for all items. Everything on the asset register is insured against theft, loss or damage to their estimated value.

The most valuable assets are the vehicle and two inshore vessels. The cost of replacing these, and the dive equipment, has been factored into the expected expenditure in 2022/23 and 2024/25 (section 8.2). It is not anticipated that any other specific piece of equipment will need to be replaced before the end of 2024/25, but £7,400 has been allocated per annum for the maintenance and repair of scientific equipment.



Figure 1. MPA Management Structure





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# Financial Strategy

## Principles of the Strategy

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The MPA will be managed according to the following financial principles:

- The MPA will not impose an additional cost burden on AIG
- We will work towards a sustainable financing model that reduces reliance on funding from the UK Government or private donations and provides increased financial independence
- We will maximise the economic gain to the island from the MPA
- Management costs will be reduced by centralising functions across UK Overseas Territories and collaborating with partners to deliver objectives wherever possible

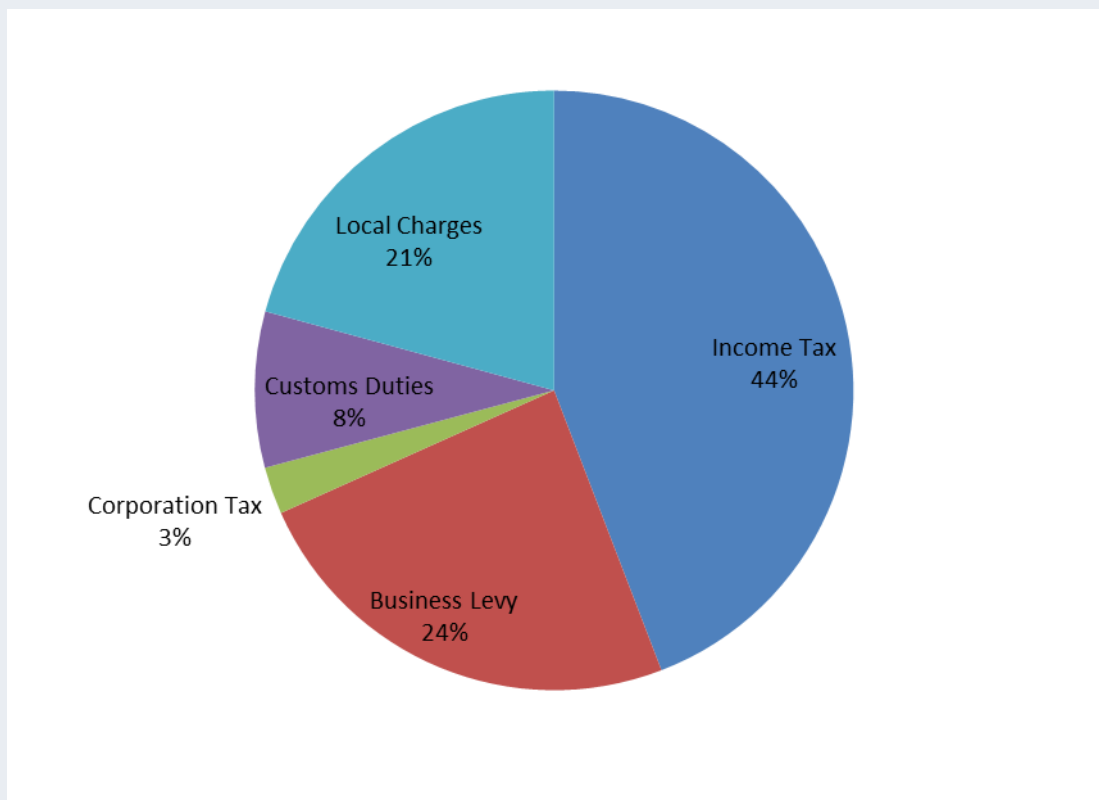
## Financial Context

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### National

Ascension Island is a UK Overseas Territory (UKOT). AIG is financially independent from the UK Government and is not eligible for Official Development Assistance (ODA), though capital projects to restore key infrastructure have been funded by the UK Government's Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) since 2018. The main sources of AIG revenue are income tax, the business levy (paid by the main employing organisations operating on the island), customs duties and charges for services provided on the island (Figure 2). The economy of the island is built upon its strategic location for the military and communications; there is little scope for exports or mass tourism.

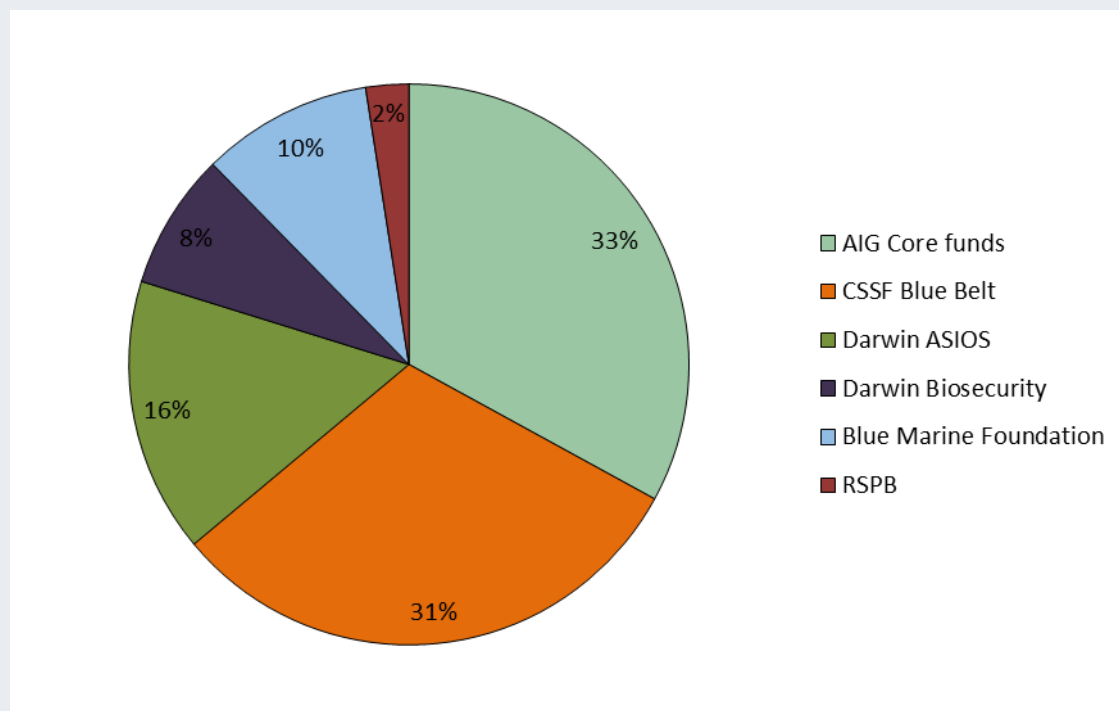
Figure 2. Sources of AIG income in 2018/19



AIG is currently running a deficit due to a contraction of income following the temporary suspension of the South Atlantic Airbridge. Efficiency measures have reduced expenditure in real terms since 2015 but income has declined at a greater rate over that period requiring a draw down on cash reserves. The proposed AIG financial strategy aims to rebalance the government's financial position over the next 3 years through a combination of further cost reductions and an increase in revenue from income streams.

In 2019/20 AIG allocated £159,658 to AIGCFD, which has responsibility for both terrestrial and marine conservation on the island. A variety of other external funding sources contributed approximately double this amount to give an overall budget of £484, 373 (Figure 3). For the past four years AIGCFD's marine conservation work has been funded by the CSSF through the UK Government's Blue Belt Programme, which aims to enhance marine management in the UKOTs. Prior to this arrangement, all marine work on the island had been funded through discrete, externally-funded projects.

Figure 3. Sources of AIG Conservation Directorate's income in 2019/20



## International

In a White Paper published in 2012 the UK Government set out its priority to build financial resilience in the Overseas Territories and to assist those in receipt of budgetary aid to achieve sustainable growth and economic independence from the UK. Ascension is not eligible for ODA but is in a much more financially precarious position than other OTs judged to be self-sufficient. This is due to the very limited income streams available and the high per capita cost of providing key services to a small population.

The UK Overseas Territory Biodiversity Strategy recognises the UK Government's role in providing financial support to OTs to deliver the priorities of the strategy. This has largely been done through the Darwin Plus Initiative, a competitive funding mechanism providing time-limited project funding. In 2016 funding from the CSSF was secured to deliver a number of biodiversity related projects in the OTs including the Blue Belt Programme to protect over 4 million km<sup>2</sup> of ocean. OTs have previously been able to access funding to support biodiversity objectives through the EU BEST programme, but this fund will no longer be accessible when the UK leaves the EU. In 2019 the UK Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office launched a joint Call for Evidence as part of a review into how conservation in the UKOTs is funded. The results and recommendations should be published in 2020 and may bring about fundamental reforms to the funding model.

Marine conservation is a high profile issue and charitable donations to this cause totaled \$1.9billion between 2010 and 2015, though most of this was given and spent in the USA (Packard Foundation, 2017). Governments such as AIG are ineligible to apply for certain grant schemes, but some private individuals and foundations are willing to support governments and Ascension has received £643,350 from the Blue Marine Foundation for conservation and community projects since 2015.

## Costs of Managing the MPA

### Long-term core managements costs

Core management costs are defined as the minimum required to operate an effective MPA. They are ongoing, recurring costs that will need to be met each year. Total annual core costs are estimated at £226,000 in financial year 2021/22 and will increase with inflation. A breakdown of these costs is shown in Figure 4 and the categories defined in Table 3.

Figure 4. Forecast of annual core MPA expenditure 2021/22

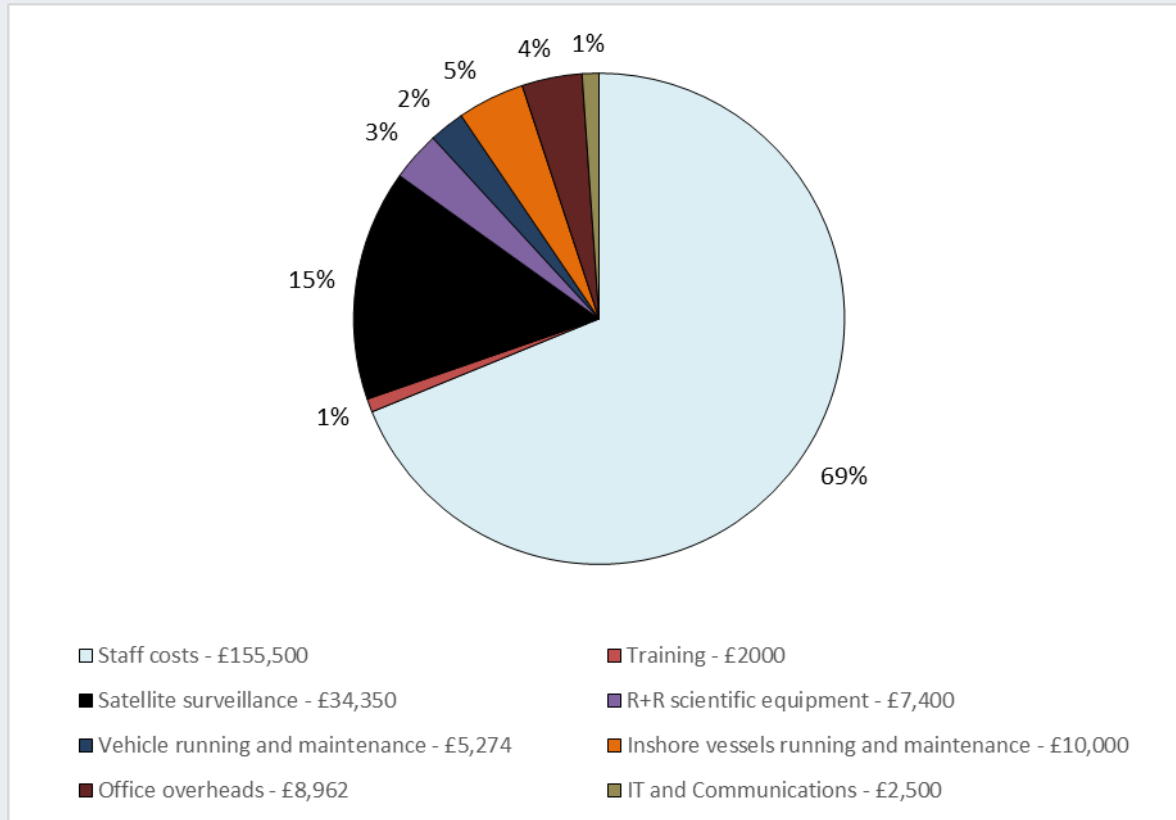


Table 3. Definition of expenditure categories

Expenditure	Description
Staff costs	Salary and allowances for 5.5 FTEs working across the marine and seabird teams in AIGCFD
Training	Provision of direct and remote staff training to develop and maintain required skill complement within the MPA team
Satellite surveillance	Cost of purchasing AIS and SAR data from a commercial supplier
Routine repair and renewal of scientific equipment	Replacement and repair of items of equipment as required. Replacement of consumables (e.g. scalpels, reagents), batteries, saw blades.
Vehicle operation and maintenance	Fuel and oil. Repair and biannual maintenance checks by AIG mechanics.
Inshore vessels operation and maintenance	Fuel, oil and water (for washing down). Repair and biannual maintenance checks by AIG marine mechanics. Replacement of life jacket canisters
Office overheads	Insurance, office utilities, cleaning, maintenance and printing costs
IT and communications	Telephone, internet and web-hosting costs. Public engagement materials.

The cost of advice and support to Ascension provided by the Blue Belt delivery partners MMO and the Centre for Ecology, Hydrology and Aquaculture Science has not been included here. The MMO staff resource required to operate the BBSIH is likely to be the only major such cost post March 2021.



## Significant mid-term investment

Four areas of major investment will be required over the next five years to allow existing core activities to continue (Table 4). This is distinct from investment required to deliver projects or expand core work into new areas.

Table 4. Major mid-term investment anticipated for the MPA

Description	Expected Timeframe	Estimated Cost
Development of Visitor Centre	1 year	£20, 000
Replacement of vehicle	2 years	£35,000 (including shipping)
Replacement of dive equipment	2 years	£5,000 (including shipping)
Replacement of inshore boat	5 years	£40,000 (including shipping)

## Project Work

Discrete pieces of work will be required to deliver the objectives of the MPA and provide the foundations of the monitoring and research strategy. These will normally be developed as projects in collaboration with external partners and supported by additional, specific funding from grants or donations. They should not be seen as optional extras since they are equally essential to the achievement of the MPA objectives as the core management functions, but there is greater flexibility in their timing and delivery method.

There is a high degree of uncertainty about if and when these projects can be delivered due to the requirement to secure partners and funding, but Table 5 presents a proposed plan that reflects MPA priorities and could be deliverable with current island infrastructure and the support of the existing on-island staff capacity. The indicative costs are estimates and could change considerably depending on the degree of in-kind contribution from partners.

Beyond 2023 it becomes increasingly difficult to identify and schedule specific projects. For example, trialing new ways of using remote technology to identify and penalise illegal fishing will be a high priority, but this technology is evolving rapidly and so defining a project far in advance would be impossible. The repeating rhythm of biennial offshore surveys should, however, provide some structure to project work throughout the 5 year length of this business plan.

## Total projected expenditure 2021-2026

Figure 5 provides a summary of the total projected expenditure for the MPA including core, investment and project costs.

Figure 5. Projected MPA expenditure 2021-2026

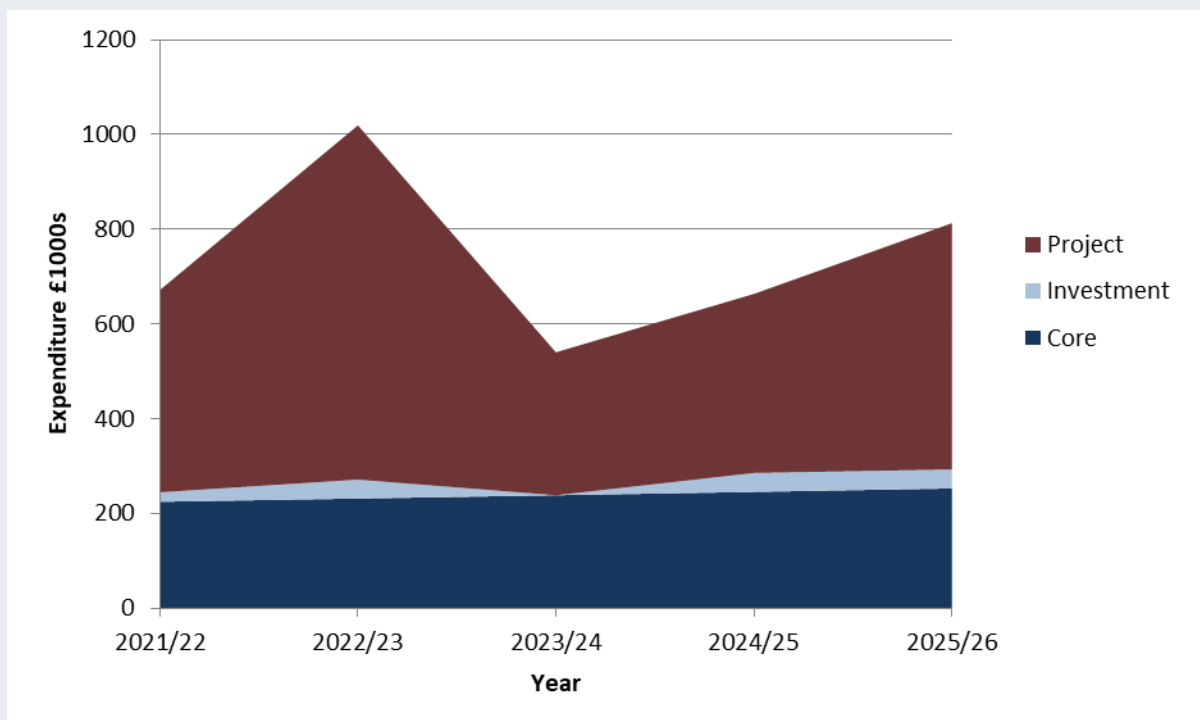


Table 5. Proposed MPA project work in the period 2021-2026

Year	Project description		MPA objective	Indicative cost
2021/22	Immersive display in visitor centre		3c	£20,000
	Analysis of tuna fleet activity around Ascension		1b	£2,000
	Isotope analysis to create inshore ecosystem model		1c, 2c, 4b	£12,000
	Multibeam survey of inshore habitat		1g, 2b, 2f	£180,000
	Beach profile mapping and climate change impact modelling		1g	£30,800
	Passive acoustic monitoring of inshore habitats		1c, 1d	£140,000
	Develop eDNA biosecurity and monitoring capability		1a, 1c, 1d	£30,000
	Acoustic tracking of inshore species		1c, 2b	£7,200
	Satellite tracking of land crabs		1c, 1d	£5,000
	<b>Total</b>			<b>£427,000</b>
2022/23	Offshore research cruise	Offshore BRUVs	1a, 1b, 3a	Cruise costs - £300,000 Additional costs: Tuna genetics £7,000 Isoscape £2,500 Seamount acoustics £40,000 Carbon sequestration £2,500 Seamount eDNA £6,000
		Tuna genetics	1a, 1e, 3a	
		South Atlantic isoscape	1a, 3a	
		Seamount acoustics	1a, 1b	
		Pelagic carbon sequestration	3a	
		Seamount eDNA	1a	
	Multibeam survey of inshore habitat		1g, 2b, 2f	£35,000
	Passive acoustic monitoring of inshore habitats		1c, 1d	£100,000
	Acoustic tracking of inshore species		1c, 2b	£7,200
	Inshore current mapping		1g	£80,000
	Climate change physiology experiments		1c, 1d	£64,000
	Island-wide turtle census		1a, 1c	£20,400
	Island-wide seabird census		1a	£18,000
	Use of infra-red technology to monitor turtle breeding		1a, 1c	£50,000
	Business development support for on-island companies		2d, 2e	£15,000
	<b>Total</b>			<b>£747,600</b>
2023/24	Update laboratory facilities and create field study centre		3a, 3d	£200,000
	Trial latest methods of remote surveillance of IUU fishing		1a, 1b	£30,000
	Acoustic tracking of inshore species		1c, 2b	£7,200
	Business development support for on-island companies		2d, 2e	£15,000
	Create Ascension-themed exhibition at UK visitor attraction		3a, 3d	£50,000
	<b>Total</b>			<b>£302,200</b>
2024/25	Offshore research cruise	Offshore BRUVs	1a, 1b, 3a	Cruise costs - £320,000 Additional costs: Tuna genetics £7,000 Isoscape £2,500 Seamount acoustics £40,000 Carbon sequestration £2,500 Seamount eDNA £6,000
		Tuna genetics	1a, 1e, 3a	
		South Atlantic isoscape	1a, 3a	
		Seamount acoustics	1a, 1b	
		Pelagic carbon sequestration	3a	
		Seamount eDNA	1a	
	<b>Total</b>			<b>£378,000</b>
2025/26	Hydrothermal vent exploration		1a,1f	£500,000
	Fifth Anniversary celebration event		3c, 3d	£20,000
	<b>Total</b>			<b>£520,000</b>

## Offshore capability

There is no vessel based on Ascension that is capable of going more than 3 miles from the island. This presents management challenges since over 99% of the area covered by the MPA is offshore. The management functions that need to be carried out in these areas are:

1. Surveillance of threats
2. Enforcement of regulations
3. Monitoring of MPA effectiveness

Of these, surveillance is probably most effectively carried out by remote sensing. Even if patrol vessels were available they could provide limited coverage of the whole MPA. Enforcement action based solely on remote surveillance is rare, but likely to increase in frequency and acceptance as technology develops. A patrol vessel would enhance the enforcement capability, but is not vital to it, and coordination with the Royal Navy would provide a more effective deterrent and enforcement mechanism.

This leaves monitoring the effectiveness of the MPA, a large part of which requires biological studies in offshore areas. Some of this can be done remotely (such as satellite detection of chlorophyll levels and tracking of large species), however, a vessel will be required to undertake most work. Various models of offshore vessel provision have been considered including the purchase of a dedicated vessel based on Ascension, a vessel shared between Ascension, St Helena and Tristan da Cunha and options for chartering a vessel (Appendix 4). Based on this assessment and the frequency at which biological monitoring needs to be carried out, the charter of a specialised research vessel to survey the MPAs of Ascension and St Helena and the Marine Management Area of Tristan da Cunha every two years was the optimal model and forms the basis for project planning in this strategy. In addition, 'citizen science' methods are proposed to increase data collection through the recruitment of yachtsmen and cruise operators that travel between the three islands.

Factors external to the MPA, such as the military activities on Ascension and the need for a maritime search and rescue capability, may also affect decisions about vessel requirements on the island and alter the assumptions made in the above assessment. Therefore, options for the best way to monitor offshore regions of Ascension's MPA should be kept under review.

## Measures to reduce expenditure

Resources to manage the MPA will always be finite and so efficiency measures have been incorporated into management and business planning. Many of these are discussed elsewhere in this plan, but are also summarised below:

- Flexible staff structure that minimises core requirement and uses external partners, consultants and fixed term contracts to deliver discrete projects.
- Use of volunteers to deliver management actions and monitoring. These can be drawn from the on-island community, international volunteers travelling to Ascension or through data analysis and other support conducted in their home country.
- Equipment procurement will focus on longevity and low maintenance and servicing needs given the high cost of shipping to Ascension
- Staff based on Ascension will be trained to conduct maintenance checks and repairs of equipment where possible

## Sources of Funding for MPA Management

### Existing funding sources

Figure 6 shows the projected income until 2025/26 and further details of the funding sources are provided in Table 6. The funding sources listed are those already secured or with a strong likelihood of being secured. There is a high reliance of funds from the UK Government that account for an average 66% of the current projected income between 2021/22 and 2025/26.

Inflationary increases of 2% per annum in income from AIG and the UK Government have been built into the projections. Other income sources will remain fixed across the five year period or (in the case of the Ascension Island Conservation Trust Fund and permit fees) will vary in a less predictable manner. Permit fees are predicted to rise from £0 in 2020/21 to £15,000 in 2024/25 once a licensing system for visiting sports fishermen and companies is established. The £15,000 figure is calculated on a permit fee of £50 levied on 300 anglers.

Figure 6. Projected income and expenditure between 2021/22 and 2025/26.

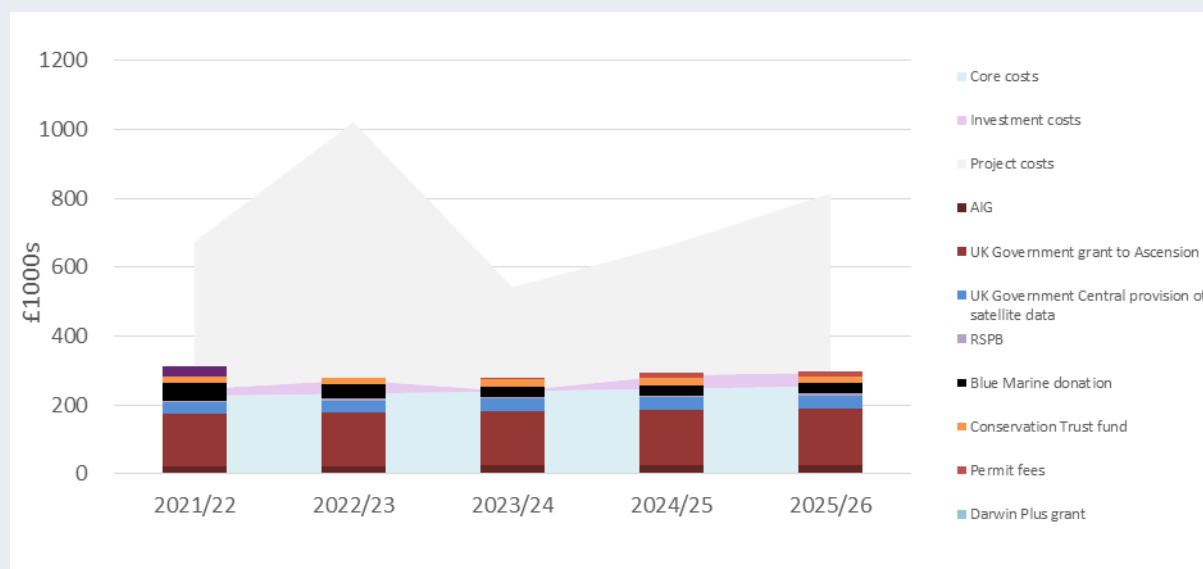


Table 6. MPA funding sources

Funding Source	Amount 2021/22	Secured	Restrictions on use
AIG	£22,500	Staff contracts have a 2 year duration but posts are likely to continue until 2025/26	Restricted to staff costs of Sea-bird Scientist and 50% of Conservation Fieldworker
UK Government grant	£150,000	Secured until 2021/22	Restricted to activities agreed with FCDO
UK Government central provision of satellite data	£34,350	Secured until 2020/21	Restricted to purchase of satellite data
Blue Marine Foundation donation	£49,000	Secured until 2021/2022, will reduce to £40,000 per year from 2022/23	Restricted to activities that will develop the MPA and its economic benefits
Ascension Island Conservation Trust Fund	£20,000	Fund secured in perpetuity, but grant income will vary and the amount awarded to Conservation work will be decided by Fund Board. £20,000 is an estimate.	Eligible activities will be determined by Fund Board and could be restricted to project work in specific areas
RSPB	£6,000	Secured on an annual basis following discussion with RSPB	Restricted to contribution to salary cost of Seabird Scientist post
Permit fees	£0	No permit system currently in place, but charge for visiting sports anglers and businesses predicted to generate up to £15,000 by 2024/25	Unrestricted
Darwin Plus Grant	£30,800	Secured as part of wider climate change grant awarded 2020. Further grant applications made for project work in 2021-2023	Restricted to delivering project activities of mapping beach profiles and climate change impacts.

## **Funding gap**

The projected income between 2021/22 and 2025/26 is sufficient to meet the core and investment costs over this period, assuming there is sufficient flexibility in how the funds can be allocated.

The identified need for project funding cannot be met from existing funding sources. There is a little headroom for smaller projects to be funded through the Blue Marine Foundation donation (for projects focused on MPA development) or the Ascension Island Conservation Trust Fund, but larger projects will require additional fundraising. Applications have already been made to Darwin Plus and the Pew Charitable Trusts to fund project work in 2021-2023. Securing support for biennial offshore cruises is particularly crucial given the high importance placed on this activity in the MPA Management Plan and the Monitoring and Research Strategy.

In addition to the expenditure listed above, further investment would be required to realise the full socio-economic benefit of the MPA to the wider island. This is dealt with separately in the 'Realising the Economic Potential of the MPA' section below since it will not necessarily be generated or spent by the MPA management authority, though it is still essential to the success of the MPA.

## **Potential additional funding sources**

The Ascension Island MPA will need to find new sources of core management funding if it is to reduce the reliance on the UK Government and gain greater autonomy to pursue its own objectives. Sustainable income sources with no spending restrictions will be the most valuable for meeting core management costs.

Project costs will need to be funded separately from core costs and will likely require the combination of more than one funding stream. Some of these funding sources are likely to be through applications to competitive grant schemes and there is a high degree of risk that the core staff time required to identify relevant schemes and complete applications is lost if they are not successful. Finding multiple funding sources with aligned priorities and timeframes will also be challenging. However, there has never been more interest in marine research and conservation as we enter the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. AIGCFD has successfully secured project funding for research in the lead up to designation of the MPA and can further draw on its partners' extensive experience of fundraising and grant writing to continue this into MPA implementation.

Potential future funding sources are considered in Table 7. The production of a sustainable finance strategy will be completed by an external consultant by March 2021 and will provide a more in-depth assessment of these potential funding streams.



Table 7. Potential future funding sources for the MPA

Potential funding sources	Core/ project	Type of project	Time-scale	Potential scale	Future trends	Comments
Darwin Grants (UK Government funding scheme)	Project	Applied research and management	1-3 years	£50,000 to £300,000	Total fund increased substantially in 2020. Scheme expected to be reformed following review of UK Government funding for conservation in the OTs	Low limit on funding capital costs
Research grants	Project	Research	1-5 years	£20,000 to £1million	Likely to decrease if UK exits the EU	Need academic partner to lead application
Research permit fees/bench fees	Core	Unrestricted	Ongoing	£5,000	Should increase if Ascension gains reputation as a centre of ocean research, but capacity to accommodate scientists is limited	Charging fees has the potential to deter research that could benefit the MPA
Private donations	Project	High impact research, Tangible management outputs for charismatic species, public engagement	1-2 years	£1,000 to £100,000	Overall philanthropy increasing but unevenly distributed and difficult to access	Need to gain global prominence and a reputation for delivering results amongst potential donors. Blue Marine Foundation could be a crucial intermediary.
Crowdfunding/ sponsorship	Project	Tangible management outputs for charismatic species	1 year	£1,000 to £50,000	Increasing, but market becoming saturated	Requires large and sustained social media effort that probably can't be solely justified by funding return
Charging for tours/events	Core	Unrestricted	Ongoing	£2,500	Will increase following restoration of Air-bridge, but future growth will be constrained by military control of access to the island	Unreliable. Will only generate funds once runway is repaired
Blue carbon	Core	Unrestricted	Ongoing	To be determined	Potential for growth, but may not become established	Will require new carbon markets and research on impact of management on carbon sequestration and storage rates
Fines	Core	Unrestricted	Ongoing	£0	Unlikely to increase unless enforcement strategy changes	Unreliable and potentially incentivises poor enforcement decisions

# Financial Governance and Evaluation

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## Budget Management

The AIG Director of Conservation and Fisheries will act as the accounting officer for all funding and expenditure linked to the MPA. Individual budgets will be established for the different funding streams and projects grants to allow them to be tracked and reported independently. All payments will be administered through AIG's bank account by the AIG Finance Department and subject to annual external audit. As a minimum, all Ascension financial regulations and AIG financial policies (on issues such as procurement and tendering) will be followed. Additional requirement will be agreed as necessary between AIG and funding providers.

Management and budget years will follow UK financial years and so run from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March. Annual workplans will be derived from the MPA Management Plan and used to produce annual budgets. Drafts of both will be presented to the MPA Steering Group in January of each year and approved by the end of February. Quarterly budget updates will be provided to the Director of Conservation by the AIG Finance Department and any significant deviations addressed immediately, with major alterations to the workplan or budget taken back to the Steering Group for approval.

## Reporting

An annual report pulling together all MPA budgets will be prepared and published by AIG showing the total income and expenditure on MPA management and monitoring. Individual project reporting requirements will also be met and published.

## Evaluation of Financial Strategy

The effectiveness of the MPA Financial Strategy will be measured as part of the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) completed annually for the MPA. This will evaluate whether the supporting objective of the MPA is being achieved.

**MPA Supporting Objective: To achieve effective governance and management of the MPA that is transparent and underpinned by sustainable financial and human resources**

This Financial Strategy is specifically concerned with delivering operational objective 4d: Human and financial resources are secured to deliver effective management. The assessment of this will be based on scores from the section of the METT shown in Appendix 5.



# Realising the Economic Benefits of the MPA

## Realising the Economic Benefits of the MPA

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This strategy has so far only considered the resources required to manage the MPA. A key objective of the MPA is also to stimulate economic activity in the wider island linked to the responsible stewardship and sustainable use of marine resources.

**MPA Strategic Objective 2:** To promote and manage the sustainable development of socio-economic activities that are compatible with protection of the marine environment

The development of such ‘blue economies’ and the valuation of marine ecosystem services have received great prominence in recent years and attracted governments, international organisations and NGOs. In 2017 a review of *Sustainable Funding for the Marine Protected Area* was carried out by Pippa Gravestock for the Blue Marine Foundation. The conclusions were that many of the commonly-cited areas of blue economic growth will not apply to Ascension since export routes are infrequent and expensive, and the number of visitors to the island is limited by military constraints on access.

However, there could still be potential to develop niche sectors or new models of funding that could still make a significant contribution to a small economy such as Ascension’s. Three potential sectors that could be enhanced or created by the MPA are discussed below. The option to grow a small tourism sector would not be compatible with a closed military island and so is particularly sensitive to the outcome of the ‘Future of Ascension’ discussions. The same may apply to developing Ascension as a research hub, though there are examples of research being undertaken at military sites and the two could coexist.

Realising the potential of these opportunities will require significant capital investment. Such finance cannot be sourced on island and the estimated returns may not be sufficient to attract investment on purely commercial terms. Donations or soft loans will be required to initiate these proposals. In addition, business support will be needed on Ascension to help local people develop their business ideas, market their products and meet the expectations of international tourists.

## 1. Tourism linked to sports fishing and wildlife watching

Sports fishermen have long been attracted to Ascension because of the abundance of large pelagic fish and the potential for record-breaking catches. Prior to the suspension of the South Atlantic Airbridge flights from the UK, an estimated 200-300 sports fishermen visited Ascension each year generating £200,000 to £300,000 and supporting two foreign-owned businesses on the island. Sports fishing is always likely to be the primary reason for people to visit Ascension and should be central to any efforts to rebuild a tourism sector when the Airbridge resumes (Millington 2019). However, improvements in regulation will be required to ensure that fishing companies operate in an environmentally responsible manner and that the people of Ascension receive an equitable share of the income from exploiting this resource. Ideally this would be through the establishment of locally-owned businesses to cater for this market, but as a minimum, foreign-owned companies should pay a fair fee to operate within the MPA.

Wildlife watching may provide a secondary draw for visitors to Ascension, but the high cost of accessing the island means it will struggle to compete with more developed ecotourism destinations. This sector may be better focused on providing short duration tours and experiences for people visiting the island for other purposes such as sports fishing or Falkland stopovers.

**Table 8. Sources of revenue from tourism**

Description	Beneficiary	Estimated amount per annum	Assumptions
Flight booking fee of visitors	AIG central budget	£30,000	300 visitors a year paying £100 per return flight
Entry visa fees	AIG central budget	£6,000	300 visitors a year paying £20 per person
Fishing permit fees	MPA management	£15,000	300 visitors a year paying £50 each
Accommodation and subsistence costs of visitors	Private accommodation and food suppliers	£210,000	300 visitors staying average 7 nights at £100 per night
Fishing tour fees	Private businesses either locally or foreign-owned	£300,000	300 visitors paying £200 per day for 5 days
Wildlife tour fees	AIG Conservation, Private businesses	£21,000	200 visitors per year £30 each for island-based tours. 100 visitors per year £150 boat tours
Car hire	Private businesses	£21,000	100 hires a year for 7 days at £30 per day
Souvenir sales	Private businesses	£6,000	300 visitors spending £20 per person
<b>Total</b>		<b>£609,000</b>	

### Investment requirements

Dedicated tourism officer within AIG

Marketing through centralised website and targeted campaigns

Business development support on island

Increased private accommodation and dining capacity

Improved health and safety standards on private inshore vessels available for hire

### Other considerations

Insurance requirements for private businesses

Develop robust licensing system for fishing and ecotourism companies including guidance and accreditation scheme

### Constraints

Limited number of civilian seats on military aircraft puts low ceiling on maximum visitor numbers

Risk of last-minute flight cancellation deters tourists

Low maximum visitor number limits infrastructure investment

Little spare workforce capacity to provide impetus for new business development



## 2. Creation of an ocean science hub

Vision: Ascension would capitalise on its location in the middle of the ocean with (once the South Atlantic Airbridge is restored) direct flights to the UK to act as a world class field site for researchers studying all aspects of marine science.

**Table 9. Sources of revenue**

Description	Beneficiary	Estimated amount per	Assumptions
Flight booking fee of visiting researchers	AIG central budget	£5,000	50 researchers a year paying £100 per return
Entry visa fees	AIG central budget	£1,000	50 researchers a year
Accommodation and subsistence costs of vis-	Private accommodation and food suppliers	£70,000	50 researchers staying average 14 nights at
Hire of local services	Private suppliers	£25,000	
Bench fees	AIG	£50,000	50 researchers paying £100 per day for 10 days
Research permit fees	AIG	£500	Research permits issued
<b>Total</b>		<b>£151,500</b>	

### Investment requirements

Expansion and improvement of laboratory facilities

Increased private accommodation and dining capacity

Improved health and safety standards on private inshore vessels available for hire

Provision of offshore boat

### Other considerations

Additional insurance required for third parties using AIG facilities

AIG need to ensure health and safety and ethical requirements of visiting organisations can be met

Develop routes to send samples back to UK, Europe and US

Access to reasonable internet connection

Develop robust permitting system to ensure research is conducted ethically and sustainably

### Constraints

Limited number of seats on each military plane means large groups such as undergraduate field courses cannot be catered for

## 3. Payment for global ecosystem services

In the long-term, all large scale MPAs would benefit from a shift in market forces that currently incentivise overexploitation of natural resources to mechanisms that recognise and reward good stewardship. Philanthropy is leading the way by providing community benefits where people have taken the decision to forego short-term profit in order to safeguard resources, but this should be seen as a stepping stone to more formal market structures that provide certainty, purpose and dignity for communities adopting this path. Blue carbon markets are the closest to being realised, but still require significant research to link marine management approaches to quantified rates of carbon sequestration and storage in open ocean settings. Other means of 'packaging' marine conservation as a service that can be sold are at a much earlier stage of development, but could provide the best hope of secure long-term funding for remote MPAs. Given the high interest in marine conservation issues and the number of companies looking to invest their Corporate Social Responsibility budgets in well-evidenced, impactful conservation initiatives, there is great potential to grow this revenue stream.



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# Appendices

## **Appendix 1. Strategic and Operational objectives of the MPA**

### **1. To conserve Ascension Island's marine biodiversity, habitats and ecological functions for long-term ecosystem health**

#### **Operational Objectives**

- 1a. No loss of species and no reduction in species abundance or ecosystem complexity in offshore areas
- 1b. Proxy objective: Surveillance, compliance and enforcement regime effectively detects all known threats to off-shore ecosystems
- 1c. No loss of species and no reduction of species abundance or ecosystem complexity in inshore areas
- 1d Proxy objective: Monitoring, regulation and management regime effectively tackles all known threats to inshore ecosystems
- 1e. Maintain the size distribution and age at maturity of species in inshore areas
- 1f. No loss of genetically distinct sub-populations from inshore or offshore areas
- 1g. No reduction in the extent or condition of key habitats

### **2. To promote the sustainable development of social and economic activities in the MPA that are compatible with protection of the marine environment**

#### **Operational objectives**

- 2a. People living on Ascension have access to recreational and fishing opportunities in the MPA that are equitably shared and enjoyed by the community
- 2b. As a minimum, no harvested fish stocks in inshore areas fall below maximum sustainable yield
- 2c. Ecological relationships between harvested, dependent and related species are maintained in inshore areas
- 2d. Ascension is recognised as one of the world's best destinations to enjoy responsible sports fishing and ecotourism activities that have no negative impact on the behaviour or health of protected species
- 2e. A significant proportion of revenue from sports fishing, ecotourism and other economic activities in the MPA is retained on the island
- 2f. Future developments are assessed and designed to be compatible with the conservation objectives of the MPA

### **3. To promote scientific research and share knowledge about Ascension Island's marine biodiversity in order to encourage support for marine conservation locally and internationally**

#### **Operational objectives**

- 3a. The Ascension Island MPA becomes a world-renowned site for the scientific study of marine ecosystems
- 3b. Ascension becomes an active and influential member of international networks of MPA managers, and initiates and participates in collaborative projects
- 3c. Every person on Ascension is aware of the MPA and its purpose
- 3d. The Ascension MPA and the conservation and scientific work being undertaken reaches a global audience leading to increased political and financial support

### **Supporting Objective: 4. To achieve effective governance and management of the MPA that is transparent and underpinned by sustainable financial and human resources**

#### **Operational objectives**

- 4a. The Legal and operational framework for the MPA (Primary and secondary legislation, regulations, management plan) is fit-for-purpose and enforcement action is effective
- 4b. Management actions are designed to deliver the MPA objectives, based on the best available information and subject to regular monitoring and review
- 4c. The Ascension Island community is effectively engaged in MPA governance structures and benefits equitably from management decisions
- 4d. Human and financial resources are secured to deliver effective management

## **Appendix 2. Job descriptions of Ascension Island Government roles directly involved in MPA management**

**Job Title:** Director of Conservation and Fisheries  
**Role:** MPA management  
**Person in post:** Dee Baum

### **Main Duties**

- Overall management responsibility for the MPA
- Develop new policy and legislation as required
- Prepare and review MPA Management Plan
- Oversee implementation of management plan and delivery of performance targets
- Prepare annual evaluation reports
- Oversee production and review of MPA Research and Monitoring, Compliance and Enforcement, Biosecurity, Pollution Control and Public Engagement strategies
- Prepare MPA Business Plan
- Manage MPA Budget
- Fundraising and grant applications
- Convene MPA Steering Group and Scientific Advisory Committee meetings
- Liaise with Ascension Island Council, other branches of AIG, HMG and Employing organisations on Ascension
- Management of MPA staff
- Develop and manage collaborations with external partners

**Job Title:** Marine Conservation Team Leader  
**Role:** Enforcement and Compliance – 0.5FTE  
Monitoring and research coordinator – 0.5FTE  
**Person in post:** Tiffany Simpson

### **Main Duties**

- Assist in the preparation of the MPA Management Plan
- Prepare annual MPA workplans
- Coordinate and contribute to the delivery of the MPA workplans
- Prepare Compliance and Enforcement strategy and lead on delivery in collaboration with MMO
- Prepare annual compliance and enforcement evaluation report and review
- Prepare MPA Research and Monitoring strategy
- Develop project proposals and funding applications
- Produce project reports for external funders
- Coordinate data management, analysis and storage
- Line management of the MPA officers

**Job Title:** Marine biologist  
**Role:** MPA officer – biological monitoring and inshore fisheries management  
**Person in post:** Daniel Sadd

**Main Duties**

- Deliver MPA workplan
- Manage data collection from inshore fisheries
- Conduct biological monitoring of inshore marine habitat
- Analysis of inshore data and development of stock assessment tools
- Support Inshore Fisheries Advisory Committee to make management recommendations
- Monitor compliance and effectiveness of inshore fisheries management measures
- Monitor compliance with Pollution Control and Biosecurity strategies
- Support project development and delivery with external collaborators
- Prepare and deliver MPA Public Engagement Strategy

**Job Title:** Marine biologist  
**Role:** MPA enforcement officer – biological monitoring and inshore fisheries management  
**Person in post:** Darcy Philpott

**Main Duties**

- Deliver MPA workplan
- Manage data collection from inshore fisheries
- Conduct biological monitoring of inshore marine habitat
- Analysis of inshore data and development of stock assessment tools
- Support Inshore Fisheries Advisory Committee to make management recommendations
- Monitor compliance and effectiveness of inshore fisheries management measures
- Monitor compliance with Pollution Control and Biosecurity strategies
- Support project development and delivery with external collaborators
- Prepare and deliver MPA Public Engagement Strategy

**Job Title:** Seabird Scientist  
**Role:** Seabird monitoring and conservation  
**Person in post:** Laura Shearer

**Main Duties**

- Coordinate and deliver seabird monitoring programme, including population monitoring and threat assessments
- Assist with the development of new collaborative research projects and funding proposals
- Coordinate and conduct seabird research projects
- Design and supervise practical seabird conservation measures such as the control of introduced rodents and invasive weeds around nesting colonies
- Deliver MPA Public Engagement Strategy
- Produce reports for funders and project partners



**Job Title:** Conservation Fieldworker

**Role:** Seabird monitoring and non-native species control

**Person in post:** Sophie Tuppen

**Main Duties**

- Deliver seabird monitoring programme
- Input seabird monitoring data into database
- Assist in the delivery of seabird research projects
- Assist in the delivery of non-native predator monitoring and control work
- Plan and implement non-native plant species control in protected areas including supervision of volunteer work parties
- Monitor effectiveness of non-native species control work

### Appendix 3. Ascension Island Government Conservation and Fisheries Directorate Marine Team Asset Inventory

Item	Quantity	Date purchased	Total Price £
<b>Vehicles and vessels</b>			
RIB Humber Destroyer	1	Mar-14	22,999.00
Kosi-cat fibreglass vessel 'infinity'	1	Mar-20	8,500.00
Toyota Hilux	1	Mar-14	15,500.00
<b>Cameras and housing</b>			
Ikelite 6801.7 underwater housing and camera unit	2	Feb-14	2,613.18
Ikelite DS160 Underwater substrobe with battery pack and charger	2	Feb-14	1,163.02
D7000 Nikon camera	1	Feb-14	
D7000 Nikon camera	1	Feb-14	
Tokina 10-17mm fisheye lens for Nikon SLR	1	Feb-14	348.31
Tokina 10-17mm fisheye lens for Nikon SLR	1	Feb-14	348.31
Tokina 100mm Macro for Nikon Digital SLR	1	Feb-14	250.37
NIKKOR 40mm Macro lens	1	Feb-14	
Ikelite 8" dome port with shade cover	1	Feb-14	244.25
Go Pro Hero 3	1	May-14	236.82
Go Pro Hero 4	26	May-14	236.82
Drop-down camera	1	Jun-14	2,832.00
Drone Cameras & Batteries (4 batteries, 2 cameras, 1 tablet)	7	Feb-19	5,432.00
Thermal Camera for Drone Zenmuse XT2	1	Feb-19	10,450.00
Underwater Macro Camera	1	Oct-19	246.0738
<b>Diving equipment</b>			
Bauer Junior II compressor, single phase Electric, 225bar	1	Feb-14	2,900.00
Dive Regs Apeks ATX40s	1	Oct-19	275.00
Simply Scuba Dive Equipment (1 BCD MARES, 2 Cressi Pressure Gauges, 2 Compasses (Aqualung), 2 Dive Slates, 1 Dive Mask, 1 Fin Set, 4 Mouth Piece Replacements)	13	Aug-19	888.26
Mike's Dive Shop (4 MARES BCDs; 1sml, 2med, 1lrge, 3 Pressure Gauges, 2 Bungee Compasses, 8 Mouth-piece Replacements)	17	Aug-19	1,523.32
6x 12 Litre Faber Dive Cylinder, STEEL	6	Mar-18	825.00

<b>Microscopes and accessories</b>			
Zeiss Primo Star HAL,LED,Full-Kohl,SF20,r, Phot	1	Mar-14	2,469.00
Zeiss Stemi DV4 Stereomicroscope	1	Mar-14	868.60
Objective for primo x20	1	Nov-14	441.10
Objective for primo x40	1	Feb-14	
Objective for primo x10	1	Feb-14	
Objective for primo x2	1	May-14	267.66
Photonics 2000 100w double fibre optic cold light source as per quotation 5071	1	Mar-14	412.50
Olympus BX43 Microscope	1	Nov-16	7,767.00
Olympus SZX10 microscope stand (SZX2-ILLT) & Focus unit (SZX2-FOF)	1	Nov-16	7,815.00
Olympus DP27 Microscope camera	1	Nov-16	5,522.00
<b>Laboratory equipment</b>			
Microtome Shandon Finesse 325 Microtome	1	Apr-14	5,426.20
Hotplate	1	May-14	257.40
18L digital water bath	1	Apr-15	489.50
Digital water bath	1		
Precision balance PGW 4502e capacity 4500g	1	May-14	621.50
Bench weighing scales CBK 32 capacity 32Kg	1	May-14	258.50
Fumehood	1	Apr-14	3,228.00
Drying Oven		Aug-17	1870.83
Buehler Meta Serv 250 Grinder and Polisher	1	Dec-15	3,826.00
<b>Field equipment</b>			
CTD UNIT as per quotation 7107	1	Mar-14	9,159.20
Dive Torches (Tovatec Fusion 530)	3	Feb-19	280.50
HOB0 loggers (3 Salinity, 3 Dissolved O <sub>2</sub> , 3 pH and Temp, 2 Base Stations	11	Apr-19	6,377.45
ROV	1	Mar-19	13,955.23
Swell Buoys (MIDAS Wave Recorders)	2	Mar-19	15,390.00
Drone	1	Feb-19	3,500.00
Log Books	1000	Aug-19	2,718.00
Valeport MiniCTD	1	Mar-18	8,628.00
Valeport Current Meter	1	Mar-18	
VEMCO VR2AR receivers	8	Jan-17	26,880
VEMCO VRW receivers	14	Nov-16	17,500
VEMCO VR100 reciver	1	Jan-17	5,060
Vemco tansponding hydrophone	1	Jan-17	1,860
<b>Total Value</b>			<b>213,161</b>

**Appendix 4. Assessment of options for provision of an offshore vessel. Chartering a vessel was assessed as the best option because of the lower liability costs. However, all options will present significant challenges.**

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages	Indicative cost
<b>No vessel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No cost or liabilities.</li> <li>• Satellite monitoring, control and surveillance recommended by MMO in vent of 100% MPA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No capacity for patrols or research</li> <li>• No search and rescue capacity</li> <li>• No passenger capacity</li> <li>• No ability to generate income from rescues, passengers or research cruise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low - satellite MCS £45k per year</li> </ul>
<b>Charter vessel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No liabilities.</li> <li>• No year round costs of maintaining boat, crew, insurance, qualifications.</li> <li>• Allows planned patrols and research trips within narrow time period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited number of suitable vessels available, which may cause difficulties with availability.</li> <li>• Only able to conduct patrols in limited time window that may be known to illegal fishing vessels</li> <li>• No search and rescue or passenger capacity outside patrol time</li> <li>• Research activities have to coincide with patrol times.</li> <li>• No ability to generate income from res-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium to High - approximately £130k per year if St Helena vessel available, potentially £400k+ per year if vessel required from other location</li> </ul>
<b>Shared vessel with St Helena and Tristan da Cunha</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs and liabilities shared between islands</li> <li>• Cross OT project may be more attractive to funders</li> <li>• Gives some flexibility in time available for Ascension work</li> <li>• Some influence over type of vessel, crew, maintenance standards, equipment etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High cost liabilities</li> <li>• Full time crew needed</li> <li>• Cost of fuel and time to travel between OTs</li> <li>• Need to compromise with other OTs about when vessel in Ascension</li> <li>• Need to compromise about type of vessel and equipment</li> <li>• Search and rescue, passenger transport and patrol times limited to when vessel in Ascension waters</li> <li>• Limited ability to generate income from</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium to High estimated at £500,000 per year per island plus costs of any major repairs</li> </ul>
<b>Ascension vessel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year round search and rescue capability</li> <li>• Year round passenger transport capability</li> <li>• Flexibility in timing of patrols makes them more effective</li> <li>• Vessel specification and equipment designed to suit Ascension's needs</li> <li>• Ability to generate income from rescues, passengers or research cruises.</li> <li>• Crew could be employed part-time and drawn from other AIG departments, though unlikely trained crew would undertake other work at lower wage or status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ascension bares all costs and liabilities</li> <li>• Patrol vessel would be underused for large part of the year</li> <li>• Currently no suitably trained people within AIG and large cost and time resource needed to complete training</li> <li>• Ongoing requirement to maintain and retain pool of trained staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High – estimated at £750,000 per year plus costs of any major repairs</li> </ul>

## Appendix 5. Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool criteria used to assess performance of the Financial Strategy

Issue	Criteria	Score
<b>13. Staff numbers</b>  Are there enough people employed to manage the protected area?	There are no staff	0
	Staff numbers are inadequate for critical management activities	1
	Staff numbers are below optimum for critical management activities	2
	Staff numbers are adequate for the needs of the protected area	3
<b>Staff training</b>  Are staff adequately trained to fulfil management objectives	Staff lack the skills needed for protected areas management	0
	Staff training and skills are low relative to the needs of the protected area	1
	Staff training and skills are adequate, but could be improved to achieve fully the objectives of management	2
	Staff training and skills are aligned with the management needs of the protected area	3
<b>Current budget</b>  Is the current budget sufficient	There is no budget for the management of the protected area	0
	The available budget is inadequate for basic management needs and presents a serious constraint to the capacity to manage	1
	The available budget is acceptable but could be further improved to achieve fully effective management	2
	The available budget is sufficient and meets the full management needs of the protected area	3
<b>Security of the budget</b>  Is the budget secure	There is no secure budget for the protected area and management is wholly reliant on outside or variable funding	0
	There is very little secure budget and the protected area could not function adequately without outside funding	1
	There is a reasonably secure core budget for regular operation of the protected area but many innovations and initiatives are reliant on outside funding	2
	There is a secure budget for the protected area and its management needs	3

<b>Management of budget</b>	Budget management is very poor and significantly undermines effectiveness	0
Is the budget management to meet critical management needs	Budget management is poor and constrains effectiveness	1
	Budget management is adequate but could be improved	2
	Budget management is excellent and meets management needs	3
<b>Equipment</b>	There is little or no equipment and facilities for management needs	0
Is equipment sufficient for management needs	There are some equipment and facilities but these are inadequate for most management needs	1
	There are equipment and facilities, but still some gaps that constrain management	2
	There are adequate equipment and facilities	3
<b>Maintenance of equipment</b>	There is little or no maintenance of equipment or facilities	0
Is equipment adequately maintained	There is some ad hoc maintenance of equipment and facilities	1
	There is basic maintenance of equipment and facilities	2
	Equipment and facilities are well maintained	3
<b>Economic benefit</b>	The protected area does not deliver any economic benefits to local communities	0
Is the protected area providing economic benefits to local communities e.g. income, employment, payment for ecosystem services	Potential economic benefits are recognised and plans to realise these are being developed	1
	There is some flow of economic benefits to local communities	2
	There is a major flow of economic benefits to local communities from activities associated with the protected area	3
<b>Fees</b>	Although fees are theoretically applied, they are not collected	0
If fees (i.e. entry fees or fines) are applied, do they help protected area management	Fees are collected, but make no contribution to the protected area or its environs	1
	Fees are collected, and make some contribution to the protected area or its environs	2
	Fees are collected, and make a substantial contribution to the protected area or its environs	3