



General Election



Members of the Legislative Assembly 2017-2021.
Stacy Bragger, Roger Spink, Ian Hansen, Dr. Barry Elsby, Roger Edwards.
Leona Roberts, Mark Pollard, Teslyn Barkman.

The Election for the Legislative Assembly took place on 9th November, following the procedural dissolution of the previous Assembly on 29th September. It is the second full-time Assembly and there have been a number of changes. Two long-standing MLAs, Mike Summers OBE and Jan Cheek, have retired after over twenty years' service, whilst Phyl Rendell MBE has also retired and Michael Poole has been awarded a Chevening Scholarship to study at the LSE in London, after one term in office.

Candidates were encouraged to stand through a number of initiatives, such as open-days and information stands at public

events. This resulted in seventeen candidates standing for the eight seats, with four candidates competing for the three Camp (rural) seats and thirteen candidates for the five seats for the Stanley constituency.

During the campaign, the candidates were interviewed by local radio, television and newspaper. There was a noticeable increase in the use of social media, including a dedicated Falkland Islands General Election Facebook page to publish manifestos, convey ideas and conduct a lively debate.

The Election shows the resolve of Islanders to ensure everyone can get to vote by utilising mobile ballot boxes, transported by light aircraft and off-road four-wheel drive vehicles across the Islands.

The election turnout was higher than in 2013, with 80% of the electorate voting in Stanley and 86% in the Camp. The election has resulted in five new MLAs, half of whom are aged forty-five years, or younger, and two were born after 1982.

For the Stanley Constituency, Dr. Barry Elsby was re-elected and joined by Roger Spink, Leona Roberts, Mark Pollard and Stacy Bragger.

For the Camp Constituency, there were only twenty-one votes between all four candidates. Ian Hansen and Roger Edwards were re-elected and were joined by a new MLA, Teslyn Barkman.

The Members of the Legislative Assembly 2017-2021 are:

Teslyn Barkman, 30, past Public Relations Manager for the Falkland Islands Government and helps manage Bleaker Island farm and tourism business with her partner Nick Rendell. She said "I am humbled by the votes and grateful for the responsibility".

Stacy Bragger, 33, former Executive Secretary of the Falkland Islands Chamber of Commerce, prior to which he was a reporter for Falklands Radio. He said "It is a great privilege to be elected to the Assembly. I will give my all to achieve the best for the Islands and for everyone in the community".

Roger Edwards, 71, is re-elected as an MLA after twelve years previous experience. He is a retired Royal Marine, but had periods attached to the Navy, RAF, and the SAS (during the Falklands Conflict). He commented that it had been possibly the closest election result in Camp ever.

Dr. Barry Elsby, 62, also continues after twelve years in the role. He previously worked at the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital in Stanley, specialising in cancer research. Before his election to the Legislative Assembly he was a member of the Media Trust and on the Board of Education.

Ian Hansen, 59, another returning MLA with twelve years previous experience and lives at Hill Cove on West Falkland. With his extensive farming experience he is a founding member of the Farmers Association and ex Chair of the Rural Business Association. He said "It is always an honour and a privilege to be elected."

Mark Pollard, 38, previously a technician at Sure South Atlantic in Stanley. He was also the Chair of the local Falkland Islands Association and a member of the Sports Association. He said "I am looking forward to getting to grips with my portfolio responsibilities and working with my colleagues to create a better future".

Leona Roberts, 45, worked at the Falkland Islands Radio Station and is the former Manager of the Falkland Islands Museum. Whilst her mother's family have lived in the Falklands since 1842, she was born in Chile but has lived in the Islands since she was three years old. She said "I am looking forward to the next four years with excitement and a healthy dose of trepidation".

Roger Spink, 57, is the ex-Managing Director of the Falkland Islands Company and President of the Islands Chamber of Commerce. He is current Chair of Falklands Conservation. He said after the results were announced that he was "very proud and humbled" to have been elected.

New MLA portfolio responsibilities:

Portfolio	Portfolio holder	Deputy
Development and Commercial Services	Dr. Barry Elsby	Roger Spink
Education and Community	Stacy Bragger	Leona Roberts
Energy and Environment	Teslyn Barkman	Ian Hansen
Government Services	Roger Spink	Roger Edwards
Health and Social Services	Ian Hansen	Dr. Barry Elsby
International and Public Relations & Media	All MLAs	
Public Protection	Leona Roberts	Teslyn Barkman
Public Works	Roger Edwards	Mark Pollard
Trade and Industry	Mark Pollard	Stacy Bragger

The three MLAs on the Executive Council are Teslyn Barkman, Leona Roberts and Roger Spink.



FIGAS plane and ballot box.

Credit Sharon Jeffrey.

Thirty years exhibiting at Party Conferences



Sukey Cameron MBE receives a special award from the Labour Party for attending their conference for thirty years.

The Government continues to attend and exhibit at both the Conservative and Labour Party Conferences, to represent Islanders' views and to thank delegates for their continued support. This includes both the Government and Opposition politicians, along with the wider general public attending.

This year marks the thirtieth in succession the Government has exhibited at the conferences, offering a great opportunity to meet with thousands of delegates

over the years and debate wide ranging issues. Many Ministers and Shadow Ministers visited the stand to discuss current issues, along with Parliamentary friends of the Falklands, many of whom have visited the Islands.

The main topics raised this year included Brexit, trade issues and the Islanders right to self-determination.

The Representative in the UK, Sukey Cameron MBE, has attended for all of the past thirty years, whilst MLA Jan Cheek completed her twelfth year on the

stand. Sukey Cameron said "We are always very grateful for the interest and support we get from all parties. It's great to meet old friends and make new ones as well". MLA Cheek said "The Party Conferences are a great opportunity to meet and talk to a large number of people in a short time. It is always a worthwhile experience".

In recognition of the thirty years attendance, the Falkland Islands Government was presented with a special award at the Labour Conference and gifts at the Conservative Conference, by the respective event organisers.



Foreign Secretary Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson MP visits the Government stand at the Conservative Conference.

Brexit evidence session to the House of Lords

Concerns about potential tariffs on Falkland Islands exports post-Brexit, and possible political consequences were aired by the Hon. Roger Edwards MLA, as he gave evidence to a House of Lords European Union Select Committee in July.

MLA Edwards outlined three major revenue generation areas of concern regarding the Falkland Islands economy.

With limited domestic demand, wool, lamb, mutton and beef are produced for export. Currently, wool has no tariff or quota attached wherever it is sold and it is thought that even after Brexit, this is likely to continue.

The exported meat products, which are slaughtered to EU Standards, are more problematic as about 60% is sold into the UK and the remainder into Europe. Therefore, post-Brexit, tariffs could apply. However, the quantities of meat are quite small and there is a possibility that all of the Falklands produce could be absorbed into the UK market.

On fisheries, the two main markets for the catches are the Far East (for Illex Squid, and some of finfish), and Europe (which takes Loligo Squid, and the remainder of finfish). Therefore Illex sales and revenue should not be affected by Brexit.

However, Loligo sales into Europe make up about 10% of the import through the Port of Vigo in Spain, and fill a similar percentage of the market in Southern Europe. If quotas and tariffs were to be applied, MLA Edwards predicted that would reduce both the revenues and company profits, leading to a significant loss of fishery development and also investment in new vessels.

As far as outward travel for Islands residents was concerned, MLA Edwards assumed that, as the majority of people would be carrying British passports they would be treated in the same way as UK citizens residing anywhere around the globe.

However, MLA Edwards told the Committee that he did have an additional concern, post-Brexit; that was the political aspect of all

EU member states recognising and accepting that the UK Overseas Territories were a part of the UK. He explained that all the signatories of the Treaty of Rome were obliged to recognise and accept the status of UK Overseas Territories. Once the UK was no longer a Member State, nor a signatory to the Treaty of Rome, he believed the same obligations may not apply and the UK might well lose the support of the rest of Europe and some countries, such as Spain, might give greater support to Argentina over its mistaken and illegal claim to the Falkland Islands.



Hon. Roger Edwards MLA.

Change of Governor

After almost four years, the Falklands have said farewell to His Excellency Colin Roberts CVO and welcomed his successor, His Excellency Nigel Phillips CBE, as 36th Governor.

The new Governor was sworn in on 13th September. He previously worked at the UK Permanent Representation to the EU in Brussels, prior to which he held several defence attaché posts at UK embassies. HE Nigel Phillips told Islanders that his role is to work with "the democratically elected representatives of the people," and that it is "entirely proper that you decide how you wish to be governed, now and in the future." He is accompanied by his wife Emma, who has already become immersed in the local community.



His Excellency Nigel Phillips CBE

Major South American trade show

The Chamber of Commerce and Falkland Islands Government oversaw a wide-ranging delegation of representatives from the agriculture, fishing, tourism, hospitality, transport and shipping sectors, who exhibited at the prestigious PRADO trade event in Montevideo, Uruguay, in September. The Islanders were able to promote the opportunities and benefits of trade, visiting and improving links to the Falkland Islands, to the estimated 400,000 visitors over twelve days.

SAERI goes independent

by Dr. Paul Brickle, Director.

www.south-atlantic-research.org

The South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI) was established in March 2012, born out of the Falkland Islands Government (FIG) Economic Development Strategy, which seeks to promote the development of new industries in the Islands. The SAERI concept offered an opportunity to increase the level of scientific research undertaken in the Falkland Islands, and the wider South Atlantic region, through the development of the Falkland Islands as an international research platform – with spin-off economic benefits.

SAERI has grown from strength to strength since its formation and, as was hoped, has filled an important role not only in the Falkland Islands but across the South Atlantic and beyond. Whether undertaking important scientific research in the region, or advising industry and governments on environmental issues, SAERI has found an important niche. With annual turnover in excess of £1m, and with significant room for growth in the future, 2012 – 2017 have been exciting years for the Institute, with a firm foundation having been built for the future.

In 2017 the range of SAERI's work has extended beyond the South Atlantic to implementing 'Territory to Territory' partnerships in the Caribbean. SAERI now has eight PhD students and is building its research profile through continuing publications in high profile journals. The Institute



Credit: Dr Judith Brown

Sea lions

continues to provide a base for visiting researchers and has received visitors from across the globe working in collaboration with the Institute based Stanley.

It was always FIG's intention to expand SAERI as an independent institute as it provides greater opportunities for funding internationally. SAERI's separation from FIG officially occurred on 30th June to coincide with the start of FIG's new financial year. The SAERI /

FIG MoU was signed, as was a Transfer Agreement and a Deed of Goodwill, marking an exciting new chapter in the development of SAERI. The Institute is now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered in the UK and the Falkland Islands. Marking the occasion FIG Chief Executive, Mr Barry Rowland, said "The institution is a great success and enhances the prestige and reputation of the Falkland Islands. The Government will continue to have a special partnership with SAERI".

MLA Michael Poole, who held the responsibility for the environment portfolio at the time, remarked "I am delighted that SAERI has made this significant step in its development and this is down to the hard work and focus of Dr Brickle and his entire team. Separation from FIG brings its own challenges but I am confident the organisation can face them and continue to grow and serve the Falkland Islands and the region in the future."

This is an exciting time for SAERI

and it is now the Institutes' job to ensure the governance and human resource levels are appropriate and well-structured to enable SAERI to grow at a swift but sustainable rate.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved in the separation.



Credit: Neil Golding / SAERI

Signing SAERI independence



Credit: SMSGRI

Macrocystis pyrfera kelp

Support for Caribbean Islands affected by Hurricane Irma

The Government has made £200,000 available to assist sister UK Overseas Territories and Commonwealth countries in the Caribbean so terribly affected by Hurricane Irma. With a population of just 3,200 in the Falkland Islands, this is equivalent to £63 per person.

These funds are being spread between Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and Turks & Caicos Islands; £50,000 has also been

donated to Antigua & Barbuda, which also suffered severe damage.

The idea is that, as re-building efforts get underway, these funds will play a small role in helping to restore medical and educational facilities to these beautiful islands.

It is expected that this donation will be added to over time by the Falkland Islands community as fundraising efforts to support

those affected continue. Falkland Islanders have a proud history charity fundraising.

Deputy Chair of the Falkland Islands Legislative Assembly at the time, MLA Jan Cheek, said "We have watched the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma and wanted to show solidarity to fellow island populations by offering a donation to help with rebuilding projects for some of those worst hit".

Online digitised Statute law database

After two years of intensive work, the laws of the Falkland Islands can now be freely accessed online at www.legislation.gov.fk. This important development achieves the Government's Islands Plan objective to improve availability of the law, and reflects a vital commitment to uphold the rule of law in the Falkland Islands. The online resource will ensure that the fundamental rights and freedoms protected by the Constitution, are supplemented by accessibility of law which compares favourably with the highest international standards.

The website also provides the basis for a range of strategic and economic benefits to the Falkland Islands, a more effective Legislature, easier access to justice, a fairer government and a more efficient economy.

Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay

The Islands proudly hosted the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay on 12th and 13th August. The Baton is travelling a record-breaking 230,000km, to seventy Commonwealth nations and territories, over 388 days in the run up to the Commonwealth

Games hosted by the Gold Coast region of Australia in April 2018.

On arrival from the Americas leg of the tour, the Baton was met by school children at Mount Pleasant Airport, before being flown by a British International helicopter to HMS Clyde and then taken by launch to the Public Jetty in Stanley.

During the visit the Baton was carried by past and present representatives of the Islands' sports clubs, including hockey-players, motorcyclists, horse-riders and swimmers. Receptions were held at Government House and the Dockyard Museum, along with a sports open day. The Baton then headed north to the UK for the next leg of the global journey.

The seventy nations from across the Commonwealth will be taking part in eighteen different sports; the Falkland Islands will be sending a twenty-seven strong team, taking part in badminton and shooting.



Scouts carry the Baton in Stanley



Gerald Cheek, who took part in the 1982 Commonwealth Games, with his granddaughter

The Prime Minister supports self-determination

In response to a letter sent by the Legislative Assembly after her re-election, Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP replied reiterating the UK Government's strong and wholehearted support for the right to self-determination. She also stressed her Government's commitment to consult with and involve the Overseas Territories throughout the Brexit process.

In addition, and in response to points raised in the letter of congratulation, the Prime Minister reaffirmed the UK

Government's commitment to working with the Falkland Islands Government on issues such as public diplomacy, access to banking services and future hydrocarbons development.

Finally the letter noted that the UK Government is seeking a more productive relationship with the Government of Argentina. However, the Prime Minister stated that the UK-Argentina relationship will not fulfil its full potential until the Government of Argentina meets the public commitments it made in September 2016.

New face at Falkland House in London

Michael Betts commenced his role as Assistant Representative for the Falkland Islands Government in London in September, replacing James Marsh who completed ten years at Falkland House, and has moved abroad for family commitments. Michael is a Falkland Islander who studied Business Studies at Nottingham

Trent University and was most recently Business Relations Manager for the Falkland Islands Development Corporation in Stanley. Michael is a keen footballer, who was selected for the national team to represent the Islands at the 2017 Island Games in Sweden and also four previous international competitions.

Students' improved examination results

It has been a record-breaking year for Falkland Islands students, with the Community School reporting 62% of students gaining five or more GCSEs at Grade C or above. This represents a 12% increase on the previous year and is significantly

higher than the previous five year average of 50%.

Ten students took twenty Advanced Level subjects in the UK and achieved A* - C grades in all twenty examinations, with over a third of the results at grade A or A*.

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