

Pitcairn Islands

Repopulation Plan

2014 - 2019



Pitcairn Island – a great place to live.

Prepared by:

The Pitcairn Islands Council.

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Executive Summary

The population of Pitcairn Island over the years has gradually reduced from a peak level of over 200 people in the 1930's to a level of 46 permanent residents. Today, the population is an aging one. Therefore the labour force is dwindling.. Pitcairn is a seafaring territory, dependent on physical work such as unloading supply ships using longboats, maintaining roads, operating machinery, and producing crops from gardens. Tourism is one of the main opportunities for potential growth, as is the development of private enterprise businesses offering a variety of products. Immigration has therefore been identified as a means to allow people who can bring skills & investment capital to come to Pitcairn to develop these opportunities and so contribute to economic development.

This Repopulation Plan aims to attract and retain migrants to Pitcairn and address a number of key areas including housing, education and health to ensure the Plan is successful. It is a project that has been developed by the Island Council, Her Majesty's Government and the community.

This plan also identifies a number of risks and opportunities involved in the project and will assist in shining a light on Pitcairn and its community by showing the creativity and innovation that can be produced.

This Repopulation Plan is a working document which aims to address key areas of the Plan and the importance that is placed on the consideration of all potential outcomes. As a working document, the Repopulation Plan is expected to evolve and be updated as the project develops.

The Pitcairn Islands are made up of four islands comprising Pitcairn, Ducie, Henderson (World Heritage Site) and Oeno and are located in the South Pacific Ocean and are midway between New Zealand and South America. Pitcairn is the peak of a dead volcano rising to a height of 347metres. The climate is Sub tropical with volcanic soil and rich vegetation with an average annual rainfall of 1629mm. It has an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 886,000 km².



The above diagram shows Pitcairns location in the Pacific.

Historical Background

The first known settlers to Pitcairn were Polynesians. Archaeological evidence points to their occupying much of the island where any reasonably flat land was found (Weisler, 1995). Resources at their disposal would have included timber, fruit and planted crops, seabirds, fish and, perhaps most tellingly, suitable hard basalt for making adzes (woodworking tools). Indeed, Weisler (1995) states, "Despite its small size, Pitcairn had the best stone-tool resources in the region and was a source of cultivated foods and probably very large trees for canoe making." It is believed that Pitcairn and Henderson were first colonized by Polynesians in about AD 900 and that the occupation of both islands lasted until about 1450 - possibly up to 200 years later in the case of Henderson (Weisler, 1995).

Early European exploration of the Pacific led the Portuguese explorer Pedro Fernández de Quirós to encounter both Ducie and Henderson in 1606 (though no mention is made in his journal of the presence of Polynesians at Henderson) - the anglicised names of the islands came later. He did not come across Pitcairn. The first European encounter with Pitcairn had to wait for a further 161 years when Capt. Philip Carteret aboard HMS Swallow chanced upon it in 1767 and named it Pitcairn's Island after the man on board who had first sighted it. Its position was marked as 133° 30' W which is actually 188.4 nautical miles west of its true location. It was also noted that the island was uninhabited and difficult to land at, two key facts which were of great relevance some 22 years later when the mutineers from HMS Bounty were seeking a safe refuge. It is the appearance of Fletcher Christian and his fellow eight mutineers which initiates the modern history of the island. Together with the six Polynesian men and twelve Polynesian women they brought with them from Tahiti, they discovered Pitcairn on 15 January 1790 after a journey of four months searching for a suitable home. Their island was not to remain a paradise for long. Within 3½ years, all but four mutineers and ten women (and their children) remained - the others murdered mostly the result of ill treatment or jealousy. By 1800, there was just one survivor of the original mutiny, John Adams. The island was to remain undiscovered for a further eight years when an American whaling ship happened past, but it wasn't until 1814 that two British ships arrived at the island and the full story of the mutineers' hideaway became public knowledge.

In 1838, Pitcairn Island became a British dependency. By 1856 the population had grown to 193 and was increasing rapidly. It was feared that the island's resources would not be able to support this number for much longer and a compulsory evacuation of all islanders took place to Norfolk Island, east of Australia. However by 1859, 16 had decided to return to Pitcairn and to start afresh, followed by a further 27 in 1864. In 1902, Oeno, Henderson and Ducie were annexed by Great Britain and were included in the dependency in 1938 (Carter, 1981).

Pitcairn Today

Pitcairn is British Overseas Territory.

Pitcairn remains geographically remote and isolated, though the installation of a satellite link on the island in 2006 has allowed internet and phone access for better communications.

The only access to Pitcairn is via sea. The island's passenger and supply ship, Claymore II, visits the island every three months with supplies and this is followed by passenger rotations from Pitcairn to Mangareva, French Polynesia. The rotations between Pitcairn and Mangareva make it possible for you to return in a 14 day period. Further information on the vessel visit www.visitpitcairn.pn

Pitcairn Island's lifestyle has many benefits to offer immigrants. It is rich in natural resources with its rugged beauty, a comfortable climate, fertile soil, clean air, abundant marine life. Within this natural unspoilt island lies the Pitcairn lifestyle which allows access

to free leasehold land for building and gardens, prolific fishing opportunities, access to a Doctor, a free education system up to age 16, while all the time allowing immigrants to assimilate into life within a small isolated community. At present Pitcairn Island relies upon budgetary aid from the United Kingdom Government to meet the actual and reasonable needs of the community.

Lifestyle.

Life on Pitcairn Island is what you make it! Some people think that people who live on Pitcairn just lie under palm trees and drink coconuts. We wish!

Government Services such as the Store, Warehouse, Library and Health Centre are open on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Before work or other chores, folks sometimes gather outside for an hour chatting about what each other will do for the day. If it is a nice day, some may go fishing, some may do road work, some may tend their garden,

Pitcairn celebrates the traditional public holidays and has its own public holidays such as Bounty Day and Pitcairn Day. The community celebrates these by way of Public Events and dinners. A child's birthday is usually celebrated with a community gathering where everyone is invited.

Gardening.

The soil on Pitcairn is fertile and great for gardening. Several locals grow vegetables around their homes.

If locals have excess vegetables they will sell to each other or a local produce market maybe held in the town square, where baked goods, fish, meals, vegetables can be purchased.

Fishing and Diving.

Pitcairn is a great place to fish, in a boat or on the rocks or around the coast. Fish are plentiful around Pitcairn, and most residents love their fishing.

Occasionally, community fishing trips are arranged where the longboats are used and everyone is welcome to join in. In some favourite spots, fish are abundant and baskets can be filled easily.

Dive or snorkel in Pitcairn's pristine waters and explore the spectacular marine life of tropical fish and coral.

Cruise ships.

Pitcairn's Cruise ship season usually starts from Oct/Nov to April, ranging from smaller expedition cruises ships to the large and luxurious.

Cruise ships are an asset to life on Pitcairn. This is an opportunity for residents to earn additional income and to meet people from around the world.

Residents prepare for these ships by heading out to their workshops. They will turn out carvings from local wood such as Tau, Burau (Hibiscus or Pulua tree) or Miro. Some weave baskets, fans or, hats out of pandanus or thatch. T-shirts, hats and postcards emblazoned with

Pitcairn designs are also available. These are all then carefully packaged to sell on-board the cruise ships or at stalls onshore to the visiting passengers.

Transport on island.

On Pitcairn Island there is no public transport. Quad bikes is the main mode of transport. Pitcairn is a small island with a lot of hills.

Religion

There is a Seven Day Adventist Church on island: other denominations are welcomed.

Temporary Housing Options

Temporary housing options are listed below and are available until you are eligible for a home loan.

1. There are two, private detached unoccupied houses, available for short and long-term rent.
2. There are two Semi-Private rental units that can be rented.
3. The Culture Centre Accommodation Block.
4. Home stay accommodation with a local family can be arranged.

Details can be found at www.visitpitcairn.pn

Children

We the Pitcairn Island Council and Her Majesty's Government believe that all children on Pitcairn Island are entitled to live in a safe and nurturing environment. All residents of and visitors to Pitcairn must respect the rights of children. Anyone not abiding by the rules below (and the Children's Charter, see below) should expect to be challenged.

- we will not tolerate any form of physical, mental or sexual abuse of children
- we will work to support a safe and healthy environment for children, residents and visitors

The Pitcairn Island Council and HMG have developed protocols to ensure that child safety remains a priority and that measures are in place to manage child matters.

These measures are:

1. The Child Crisis Group
2. Social Services
3. Children's Officer

All immigrants will be required to attend the Child Matters child safety program. Any immigrants with child/children must comply with all current and future child safety measures.

Links to the [Child Safety policy](#) and the [Pitcairn Island Child Wellbeing Charter](#).

Child Allowance

Parents with child/children will receive a child allowance per child. This is available to permanent residents after a 6 month period on island.

Education

Children are required to attend school from age 5 to 16. Education is provided on island at a modern school with a contracted teacher from New Zealand. There is an alternative possibility for children aged 13 to 16 of attending a boarding school in New Zealand.

Health

Health care is provided in a modern clinic with an external contracted Doctor and local nurse. It should be noted that if a serious illness occurs medical evacuation to a hospital in Tahiti or New Zealand would be required. Ref: Health Policy.

How To Apply

The Pitcairn Islands Council acknowledges the issues around acceptance of outsiders in the past.

The Pitcairn Islands Council recognises the paramount importance of encouraging new migrants to Pitcairn for settlement or work. Every enquiry will be dealt with promptly by a designated member of the community who will be responsible for dealing with your application. If your application is successful this member of the community will become your 'buddy' to facilitate with your smooth integration into the community.

Immigration

Those interested in seeking residency should make further enquiries and complete a settlement application form. To view the Immigration FAQs please [click here](#).

The process is as follows:

Permanent Residence

Immigrants seeking residency are required to complete a Settlement Application form. For a Settlement Application form [click here](#).

Work

Pitcairn is developing its infrastructure and tourism industry with the assistance of European Union funding. Pitcairn has secured funding for the next 5 years on various projects and there is work available.

Conclusion

We acknowledge the importance of having new migrants and that they should have the ability to contribute to the way of life on Pitcairn without any barriers. Without migrants we have no future.

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