



GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR

Ministry for Environment

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Gibraltar

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MEDITERRANEAN STEPS REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

A major refurbishment project for the Mediterranean Steps is being undertaken. This area has fallen into a state of disrepair over the years making some sections dangerous for visitors. The project will be fully financed by The Bonita Trust and will be project-managed by the Government of Gibraltar.

The British Military created the Mediterranean Steps and served a purpose as part of the communications system between defence posts. At the highest point of the steps are two 9.2" gun batteries and at the midpoint are gun emplacements and ancillary buildings dating back to World War II. The Steps were an important link between these positions, the batteries at the top of the Rock and Jews' Gate. There are also pre-historic and natural sites on the Steps. The Twin Caves and the raised beaches are evidence of much higher water levels in the distant past and Martins Cave contains an important bat colony. The entrance to the Steps at Jews' Gate is adjacent to the ancient Jews' Cemetery, which dates back to the early years of British Gibraltar.

Today, the steps allow visitors to Gibraltar and residents to enjoy spectacular views of the Straits and to catch unusual perspectives of the iconic Rock that is the backbone of Gibraltar. The lowest part of the Steps commences on the western slopes of Gibraltar, sweeps along the southern flank, and rise to the highest point following a route on the eastern slopes. It then finishes on the crest of the Rock, on the Western side once again.

The Chief Executive Officer of the Bonita Trust group, Moe Cohen, commented that this is one of the many significant projects that the Bonita Trust hopes to provide for the benefit of the community. The Trust was established in 2004 by the founders of the PartyGaming Group and is an independent and philanthropic organisation that assists medical, educational and sporting causes and supports other community projects. This refurbishment project will provide additional natural leisure facilities for residents and tourists alike.

Commenting on the project, the Minister for the Environment, The Hon Jaime Netto said the Government is delighted and acknowledges this significant contribution made by the Bonita Trust in favour of the people of Gibraltar. Once the works are completed, members of the public and tourists alike will be able to enjoy another important landmark of Gibraltar's heritage. It is also another example on how heritage sites and urban renewal can jointly benefit each other.

The Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society has been involved in the preparation of the project which as planned is fully consistent with the conservation of the wildlife of the site.