



HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
Ministry for Health & Environment
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PRESS RELEASE

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UPPER ROCK - OPPOSITION FAILS TO UNDERSTAND PERFECTLY CLEAR ANSWERS

In its latest attempt at denying the past, the GSD Opposition, well known for having completely abandoned the Upper Rock during its years in office, has once again exposed itself to being found well short in its arguments.

Stating that Minister for the Environment Dr John Cortes has "abandoned" the Upper Rock is another example of the Opposition falling into the trap of assuming that just because it isn't aware of something, it isn't happening.

Government has already listed progress on the Upper Rock, and has stated very clearly that a new management plan is being carefully and painstakingly developed. In addition, work on the Upper Rock over the past year has included extending the area of firebreaks, improving the firebreak management regime, clearing of many areas of undergrowth to encourage both wildlife and public use, and the opening up after years of neglect of the Devil's Gap Footpath to Town. Anyone who visits the Upper Rock will have noticed this. And much more is planned.

Among the Opposition's claims is one that they have received 'several reports' of illegal traps on the Upper Rock, given to Jaime Netto, using this as proof of ineffective monitoring. As if they ever did any monitoring at all. They do not say how many 'several' are. And if this is so, the reports should have been immediately passed on to the Police or the Department of the Environment for investigation.

The GSD also complains about Dr Cortes consulting experts. At least these experts are being listened to, while the few that the GSD consulted were systematically ignored. It is much easier to fail to consult or to ignore advice than to take time in listening to stakeholders and coming up with improved results.

The Opposition claims that the Minister's replies in Parliament have been 'found wanting', when it is clear that it is in fact the Opposition that fails to understand perfectly clear answers.

Rather than refer the Minister to a report that Mr Netto's party chose to ignore for seven years and which is now a fundamental element in the developing plan, Mr Netto should look into his notes and his memory and recall how many times as Minister he took any action whatsoever to improve anything at all on the Upper Rock, or even asked the now Minister how the partridges were faring.