

VIRTUAL EXPEDITION 2026



UK
ANTARCTIC
HERITAGE
TRUST

WILDESTAN ANTARCTICA



CONGRATULATIONS YOUNG ADVENTURER ON COMPLETING YOUR ONLINE 'EXPEDITION' TO WILDESTAN ANTARCTICA.



You didn't just learn about exploration, expeditions and Antarctica, you had a sneak peek behind the scenes at Port Lockroy and met the real people that call it home for the Antarctic summer.

This digital booklet is your behind-the-scenes companion to the online sessions. It's a record of what you explored, plus a few ways to keep that Antarctic mindset alive long after you step away from the screen.

Equipped with your new-found knowledge, and your sense of adventure, continue your journey with us and find out more. Warning, may include penguins!

ANTARCTICA FACTS

The Antarctic Ice Sheet contains 90% of the Earth's ice, and 70% of its fresh water.

The mean annual temperature of the interior is -57°C . Although on the coast, which is warmer, average temperatures are around -10°C . During Antarctic Summer it's more like -3 to $+2^{\circ}\text{C}$, which is comparable to the average Scottish winter.

Antarctica is also home to Mount Erebus - one of the most active volcanoes in the world.

Antarctica is the highest, driest, coldest and windiest continent on Earth.

It's the windiest place on Earth with wind speeds reaching up to 200 miles per hour.

Its also pretty cold. Your average freezer is -20°C while the coldest temperature recorded on Earth was in Antarctica, at -89.2°C .

Antarctica is actually a desert.... So while it may be covered in ice, it has taken an incredible 45 million years to grow to its current thickness.



PORT LOCKROY



THEN

- Port Lockroy sits on Goudier Island, off Wiencke Island; about 15,000km from the UK.
- It was established during the Second World War as Base A, part of a secret British mission known as Operation Tabarin.
- What began as a military base later became a scientific research station.
- The base closed in the 1960s, but the buildings, objects and traces of daily life remained, preserved by the cold.
- In the 1990s, responsibility for the site passed to the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT), which restored the huts and reopened Port Lockroy as a living museum.

Whilst it does get chilly, nothing here is frozen in time by accident.

It is actively cared for and protected for future generations.



NOW

Port Lockroy isn't just a museum.
It's an active, working site with
real-world challenges.



1. Today, a small Team from the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust lives on site for several months each year, running the museum, post office and shop, and doing conservation and wildlife monitoring.
2. Everything the Team needs – food, fuel, tools, medical supplies – has to be brought in by ship. If you forget something, you're stuck without it.
3. The site includes Bransfield House, where you'll find original bunks, tinned food, radios and tools laid out almost exactly as in the 1940s–50s.
4. Thousands of gentoo penguins nest right beside the buildings. Humans are very much the guests – and must follow strict rules; penguins always have right of way.
5. Visitor donations and postcard sales fund conservation work, protect historic buildings and support research into how humans and wildlife can safely share this extreme environment.

PORT LOCKROY



Did you know?

- Port Lockroy is home to the world's southernmost post office.
- It sits on Goudier Island, which is small enough to walk around in minutes; about the size of a football pitch.
- There is no running water or any mains power anywhere on the island.
- The Team get water from visiting ships and power the station through solar panels and a diesel generator.
- The buildings are protected monuments – you can't rearrange history.
- Bransfield House can be colder inside than outside.
- Gentoo penguins nest right beside the huts and sometimes block the paths.
- Port Lockroy shows that humans have left a footprint even in the most remote places on Earth – and that caring for that footprint matters.



PEOPLE

Port Lockroy only works because of people who can live and work well in a tiny team, far from home, with limited support and a lot of responsibility. The UKAHT Team doesn't just 'staff' the site. They conserve fragile buildings, protect wildlife, welcome visitors, record history and keep each other safe – often all in the same day. The Team comes from all sorts of backgrounds and walks of life, but one thing they all share is a sense of adventure.

Did you know?

- Port Lockroy teams are usually just four people, but sometimes they make room for a few extras; specialists like carpenters, electricians and structural engineers.
- The core Team are allocated roles, but everyone pitches in when needed, including cooking, cleaning and fixing things.
- Living closely means small habits really matter.
- Communication with home can be limited.
- Team morale affects safety as well as wellbeing.
- Small routines help people stay calm and focused.
- Humour is considered an essential survival skill.
- Leaving Port Lockroy can be harder than arriving.

PEOPLE



Offline adventure: What makes a great adventurer?

What drives people to explore extremes or chose to work in challenging conditions?

- Create your own Antarctic adventurer (name, age and backstory).
- Describe why they went to Antarctica and what they are trying to do there.
- List their key skills and qualities, plus what they are struggling with or thriving at.

Bonus: *Draw them and label their kit, including one ‘must-have’ tool.*

Next steps

- Make a mini ‘Antarctica CV’: five skills you already have that would help a small team. Add two skills you want to build next, and try to find smalls ways to practise each one.

CAMP LIFE

Camp life at Port Lockroy may look cool – it is temperature wise – but it's not all great views and cute penguins, although they're a feature! It's hard work and requires systems, routines and respect for limited resources, in a place that doesn't care about your comfort. Despite this, it can be a wonderful and life-changing experience. Good camp life is at the heart of how people in challenging environments stay safe, sane and useful.

Did you know?

- There is no running water on base.
- Staff can go up to two weeks without a shower.
- There is no flushing toilet; it is emptied daily by the Team.
- Laundry (and people!) are washed and dried on visiting ships, not on the island.
- The whole Team share bunkroom accommodation; with a polar pod for 1 outdoors when extra space is needed.
- Power is limited; during the Summer the base often runs on solar power around 90% of the time, with a diesel generator as a back-up.
- Bransfield House has no insulation or heating and can be colder than outside.
- The sun never sets in summer, so blackout curtains are essential for sleep.
- Shared meals are a big social anchor for the small Team.
- This season the Team's food is vegetarian as part of sustainability efforts.
- Everything arrives by ship, so planning and rationing matters.
- All waste is removed from Antarctica under a strict 'Leave No Trace' approach.

CAMP LIFE



Offline adventure: Camp life: find your perfect campsite

Try applying what you know about what to look for in a campsite in the real world. Step outside your front door and start exploring in your local area.

- Find a safe local spot that would work as a (theoretical) campsite for a week.
- Take photos and note the advantages and disadvantages of the site.
- Plan where water would come from and what you would eat.

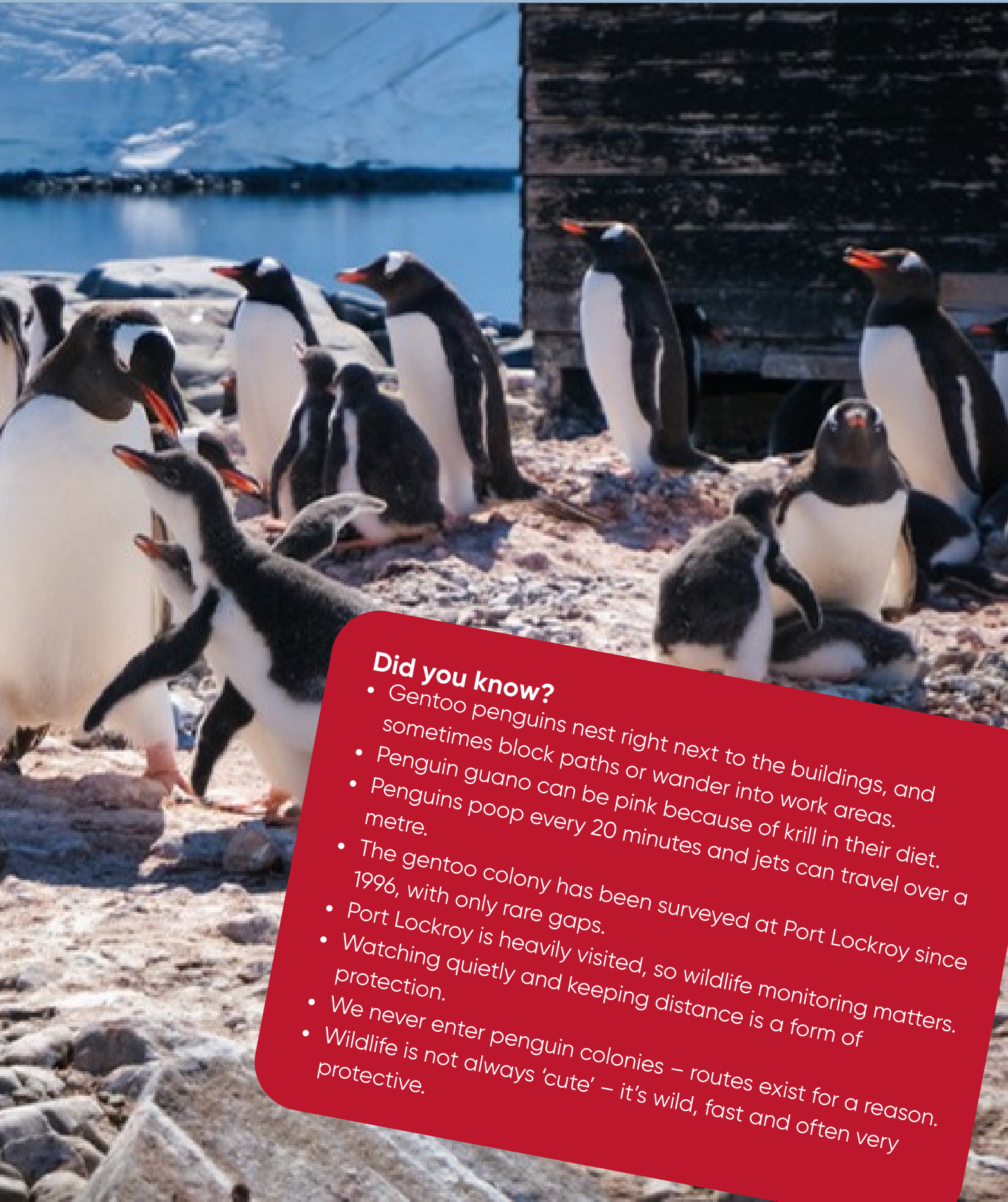
Bonus: List the kit you would need and what you would build to make your site liveable.

Safety: Agree a radius with a parent / guardian, dress for the weather and take water.

Can't get outdoors? Try using something like Google Maps to search for your perfect site.

WILDLIFE

The Port Lockroy Team share their home with a resident colony of Gentoo penguins and a wide range of more transient visitors to the island and its waters. The wildlife that surrounds Port Lockroy is a reminder of this, and is part of what makes it so extraordinary, and so sensitive.



Did you know?

- Gentoo penguins nest right next to the buildings, and sometimes block paths or wander into work areas.
- Penguin guano can be pink because of krill in their diet.
- Penguins poop every 20 minutes and jets can travel over a metre.
- The gentoo colony has been surveyed at Port Lockroy since 1996, with only rare gaps.
- Port Lockroy is heavily visited, so wildlife monitoring matters.
- Watching quietly and keeping distance is a form of protection.
- We never enter penguin colonies – routes exist for a reason.
- Wildlife is not always 'cute' – it's wild, fast and often very protective.



Offline adventure: Wildlife scavenger hunt

It's time to see what wildlife you share YOUR local area with.

- Choose a local green space, park, garden or nature reserve and do a 'scavenger hunt', looking out for wildlife that shares your environment.
- Keep a simple journal: what you saw, where, when and what it was doing.
- You can use the [iNaturalist](#) or [Seek](#) apps to help identify species.

Bonus: Do a slow 'signs' walk locally. Look for tracks, feathers, scat, feeding signs and sounds, and record what you see and some ideas about what it means

Be respectful: Observe without disturbing animals or habitats.

Safety: Tell someone where you are going, avoid risks near water and don't touch unknown plants.

Check out our socials for inspiration: www.instagram.com/ukantarcticheritagetrust/

SCIENCE AND WEATHER

The British are renowned for being obsessed with the weather, and here on Goudier island is no exception! Weather at Port Lockroy is not just 'a bit chilly – it shapes everything: safety, movement, wildlife, buildings, equipment and daily decisions. Weather forecasting has been an important aspect of life at Port Lockroy since the base's inception, and important science was conducted here including the first measurements of the ionosphere.



Did you know?

- Port Lockroy's logbooks – kept since the 1940s – helped build long-term climate records.
- The Antarctic Peninsula is one of the fastest-warming regions on Earth.
- Weather can change quickly and decides what is safe to do.
- In Antarctica, wind chill can matter more than temperature.
- In the early years, weather measurements were taken every three hours.
- The original anemometer tower is still standing and some historic instruments in the museum still work today.
- The ionosonde was nicknamed 'The Beastie'; it had a habit of causing problems – including catching fire and interfering with BBC radio reception.

SCIENCE AND WEATHER



Offline adventure: Whatever the weather

Keeping an eye on the weather and planning accordingly is an essential part of any successful adventure. Try journaling by keeping a five-day weather journal. Be as creative as you like and use colour, drawings, symbols and photos to help build a picture of the weather over time.

- Pick a time to check the weather every day for five consecutive days.
- Use a combination of weather sites (we like to use [windy.com](https://www.windy.com)) and your own observations.
- You can see/download some weather templates for free here: weatherbriefing.com/observing-forms
- Record temperature, wind, cloud, humidity, air pressure, UV and sunrise/sunset time.
- Add one photo or sketch each day.

Bonus: Compare your chosen outdoor spot's weather to Port Lockroy's and think what it means for the Team.

How does this compare to the weather at the same location five and ten years ago?

You can see this by selecting Yesterday/Past Weather here:

www.timeanddate.com/weather

Next steps

- Find a citizen science project connected to weather, wildlife or climate that you can join from home. We love [Penguin Watch](https://penguinwatch.org) and [Happywhale](https://happywhale.org) but there are many more to choose from; see what you can find.
- Start to develop a tiny data habit; track something for two weeks and see what it tells you.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND STEWARDSHIP

A man in a blue jacket is holding a digital scale in his right hand, which displays the number 2265. He is also holding a large black trash bag in his left hand. The background is dark and out of focus.

Antarctica is one of the world's most remote and untouched places; unique, wild, beautiful and full of incredible life. It's crucial for the health of our entire planet, helping regulate global temperatures and keeping our global climate balanced. It's also super fragile, which is why we take environmental protection and stewardship **VERY** seriously. Antarctica is protected by international agreements, but rules only matter if people follow them. At Port Lockroy, environmental protection is practical; clean gear, careful routes, respectful distances and good systems – all day, every day.

Did you know?

- Leave No Trace is not a slogan – it's daily practice.
- Antarctica is internationally protected and rules matter; protecting Antarctica starts with respect and consistency.
- All waste is photographed, weighed, sorted and removed from Antarctica; approx 1,000 kg of waste can be generated in a season.
- Waste is separated and stored in the boat hut ready for removal on ships.
- Most litter found at Port Lockroy relates to activity on the island.
- Biosecurity measures includes hoovering Velcro and checking kit for seeds and soil.
- Visitor routes help protect wildlife and fragile ground.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND STEWARDSHIP

Offline adventure: Looking for lichens

Once you start looking for lichens you might see them everywhere, even in the unlikeliest of places. But did you know that they tell you something about local air quality?

- Use the [iNaturalist](#) or [Seek](#) apps (or your eyes and a notebook) to spot and ID lichens.
- Record what you find, where it is growing and what the surrounding area is like.
- Think about what the lichens (or lack of them!) might suggest about air quality.
- You can use the [Plume Labs](#) air quality app for real-time, local pollution information - does this data correspond with the lichen you're seeing?

Bonus: *It's no easy task for plant life to thrive in Antarctic conditions. Try growing cress seed on a rock and/or in a fridge/freezer and record your efforts!*

Next steps

- Pick one environmental protection behaviour you can adopt.
- Choose a local action that links to global impact (surveys, litter picks, campaigning).



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Connecting young people to adventure, knowledge, opportunity and challenge.

A partnership between the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT) and the British Exploring Society, Wildestan Antarctica provides a unique stepping stone for young people to develop their skills and their confidence for valuable future learning and experiences. Linking live to the UKAHT team at Port Lockroy and with a range of British Exploring Society experts on board, our Teams share their personal experience of life in Antarctica. expedition life and their expertise in a range of expedition-essential skills.

About the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust

The UK Antarctic Heritage Trust (UKAHT) is a charity working to help current and future generations discover, understand and protect Antarctica. They care for six designated Historic Sites and Monuments on the Antarctic Peninsula representing the birth of British climate science on the continent. These 20th century heritage sites hold extraordinary stories of human survival and discovery and are completely unique in the world. Their flagship site is the world's most southerly public Post Office and museum, Port Lockroy, where this season's Wildestan Experts are based.

About the British Exploring Society

British Exploring Society is a world class youth development charity with a unique heritage, founded on the belief that challenging experiences can transform lives, empowering and equipping young people with the courage, skills, resilience and determination to make the most of their future.



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SOCIETY**

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Stay connected!

- **Exclusive** Wildestan videos are waiting for you **HERE**

- You can also.....
- Sign up to the **UKAHT mailing list** for our monthly newsletter packed full of blog posts, podcasts, news, events and job vacancies.
- Watch **UKAHT Webinars** on all sorts of topics.
- Sign up to attend a real-world British Exploring Society Adventure in as part of their **Wild Pathways**.