



PRESS RELEASE

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GSD are too Quick to Criticise Gibraltar's Beaches

HM Government of Gibraltar regrets that a mechanical fault on a contractor's tractor meant that some walkways were not ready for disabled beach-users last weekend. Of course, this would not have happened under the GSD as they never provided any beach access for the disabled.

Indeed, the GSD have nothing to be proud of on the whole subject of beaches and yet, by complaining, they give us all the opportunity to remember just quite how bad things were in their time. For one, Sandy Bay had washed away, despite the work and expense of pumping sand from the seabed, knowing that without coastal defence work it would literally be washed back out to sea. At the same time, the silt that came with the sand meant that for several years, users of both Eastern Beach and Catalan Bay had to put up with dirty, dusty sand! Contrast that with the current quality, and in particular the way that Sandy bay has now been restored for the long term.

It is extraordinary that they should have the audacity to refer to facilities at the beaches for the disabled. It was the present Government that enhanced the walkways now in place at all the sandy beaches, as well as the Catalan Bay wooden access from the car park to the beach and the village. This Government has also expanded the assisted bathing areas for the disabled. Under the GSD this was only available at Eastern Beach, but is now provided at Catalan Bay, Camp Bay and Western Beach.

No Government has ever worked as hard in improving our beaches. It is easy to forget that before the GFSLP/Liberal Government, there was no proper access to the sea for the disabled, there were no jellyfish nets, lifeguards were provided later in the year and maintenance was nowhere near the level that it is now. Cleaning of the beaches, now more regular and more intense than ever before, and storm damage is now made good right away without waiting for the summer. Camp Bay's entire revetment was redone last year, with new sea access points and stairs, as it was in such a state of disrepair that the promenade itself was being structurally compromised.

And the improvements keep on coming. Last year the changing rooms at Catalan bay were refurbished. This year, for example, will see an additional jellyfish net at Eastern Beach, so that both the north and the south ends will be provided with one each, recycling bins and provision for



disposal of cigarette butts have been provided. Lifeguard training and supervision has been enhanced and improved and will result in safer beaches this summer. Water refills will be provided at all lifeguard posts in keeping with Government's environmental objectives.

The narrow criticism by the Opposition of one specific issue affecting our beaches is exaggerated, unfair and unreasonable in the context of everything that the Government has done to improve them over the last few years.