Lucy Faithfull Foundation statement in response to media coverage of ongoing work to protect children in St Helena

(July 18, 2014) The child protection charity The Lucy Faithfull Foundation is urging more responsible reporting of child sexual abuse issues and the efforts to address such abuse following the sensationalist approach taken this week by media outlets regarding St Helena. The Foundation condemns such sensationalist editorial lines, given the potential negative effect that such coverage is likely to have on efforts to tackle and prevent abuse.

The challenges faced by St Helena are not exclusive to the Island. Child sexual abuse is an international problem, and while its precise manifestation is influenced by local factors, it should be a concern, and a priority, for all nations around the world.

Child sexual abuse is a complex problem, as we know only too well in the UK. A community working to address it, and not simply talk about it, is not assisted by sensationalist media reporting which is only likely to increase people's reluctance to come forward, talk about the problems and deal with the issues. Child sexual abuse can only be effectively tackled through state and voluntary agencies working together and with the whole community with respect, sensitivity, trust and confidentiality.

The Foundation prepared a confidential report for the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in May last year. It was subsequently shared with the St Helena Government. The Foundation did not share the report with the media. An action plan is currently in place in St Helena which workers from the Foundation are helping to implement.

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1. **About The Lucy Faithfull Foundation**

The Lucy Faithfull Foundation celebrated 20 years of protecting children from sexual harm in 2012. Named after its founder, Baroness Lucy Faithfull of Wolvercote, The Lucy Faithfull Foundation is the only UK-wide child protection charity dedicated solely to reducing the risk of children being sexually abused. It works with entire families that have been affected by abuse including: adult male and female sexual abusers; young people with inappropriate sexual behaviours; victims of abuse and other family members. Drawing on expert knowledge about child sexual abuse the charity offers a broad range of services for professionals and members of the public. These include: assessments, intervention and treatment of known offenders, case specific advice and support, training and development courses and workshops, educational programmes for internet offenders and their families, circles of support and accountability, internet safety seminars for schools (teachers, parents and children) and Parents Protect! training for professionals, parents, carers and other adults. www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk. It also runs the Stop it Now! Campaign and Helpline (0808 1000 900) www.stopitnow.org.uk and www.parentsprotect.co.uk

2. **About Stop it Now!**

Stop it Now! UK and Ireland is a national campaign and Freephone confidential Helpline run by child protection charity, The Lucy Faithfull Foundatio. It aims to prevent child sexual abuse by increasing public awareness and empowering people to act responsibly to protect children. Stop it Now! believes that it is the responsibility of all adults to take positive action to prevent the sexual abuse of children. Stop it Now! is an alliance of leading children's charities including the NSPCC, Action for Children, Barnardo's, The National Association of People Abused in Childhood and Children England working with the government and child protection agencies, to promote public education and prevent child sexual abuse. The Stop it Now! helpline has been operating since 2002 and aims to prevent child abuse by encouraging abusers and potential abusers to seek help and by giving adults the information they need to protect children safely. The helpline is funded by the Ministry of Justice and The Lucy Faithfull Foundation. www.stopitnow.org.uk