

# Lesson Five: Living and Learning on the Ice

## Factsheet for teachers

### Key Question

- Do people live on Antarctica?
- What is daily life like on Antarctica?

### Working in Antarctica

The people who travel to or live in Antarctica fall into two main groups, those who live and work on scientific research stations or bases, and tourists. No-one lives in Antarctica indefinitely in the way that they do in the rest of the world. It has no permanent towns or industries.

Working in the Antarctic is not an everyday experience; you are working and living in a station on one of the most dramatic continents on earth. People are based there for anything from two to 33 months. There are some things to contend with — such as the lack of fresh food or periods of darkness or confinement. But it is far outweighed by what you can do out there, what you can see and who you meet.

Go to the British Antarctic Survey Site, for more information

[http://www.antarctica.ac.uk/employment/locations/antarctica/living\\_in\\_antarctica.php](http://www.antarctica.ac.uk/employment/locations/antarctica/living_in_antarctica.php)

### Research Stations in Antarctica

Unlike Arctic research stations, Antarctic research stations are constructed on either ice or rock that is fixed in place. There are as many as thirty research stations – from countries that are part of the Antarctic Research Treaty. The Antarctic Research Treaty, known collectively as Antarctic Treaty System (ATS) regulates international relations with respect to Antarctica. The main objective of the ATS is to ensure “*in the interests of all humankind that Antarctica shall continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and shall not become the scene or object of international discord*”.

Go to British Antarctica Survey, for more information

[http://www.antarctica.ac.uk/about\\_antarctica/geopolitical/treaty/](http://www.antarctica.ac.uk/about_antarctica/geopolitical/treaty/)

### Penguin Post Office – Port Lockroy

Port Lockroy is on Goudier Island in the Antarctica Peninsula. The buildings were renovated in 1996 by a team from the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) and in 2014 were part of a BBC documentary ‘The Penguin Post Office’.

Port Lockroy is an important natural and historic environment. The Gentoo penguins established their colony at Port Lockroy at some point in the mid-1980s. There are now an estimated 3000 penguins that return to Goudier Island each year to breed. The UK Antarctic Heritage Trust monitors and regulates the environment via long term environmental study that explores the impact of visitors to the site including the regulation of the number of visitors and ships to the area. In accordance with the Antarctica Treaty there are strict guidelines to ensure the environment is properly cared for. To date the results show no negative impact on the breeding cycle of the Gentoo penguins.