

Minutes



Meeting Title: Towans Partnership

Date: Wednesday, 29th June 2011

Time: 10.00 am

Location: Passmore Edwards Institute, Hayle

Attendees:

Dick Goodere (Chair)	Gwithian Residents
John Pollard CC (JP) Vice Chair	Hayle Town/Cornwall Council
Cllr John Bennett (JB)	Hayle Town Council
Stella La Touche (SLT)	Landowner
Sally Foster (SF)	Gwithian Residents Association
Nick Burt (NB)	Gwithian Ratepayers Association
Georgina Schofield GS	Community Archive/Hayle Mill Pond Project
Ian Toy (IT)	Gwithian Ratepayers Association
Phil Drew (PD)	RNLI
Jules Webber (JW)	Natural England
Bill Makin (BM)	National Trust
James Ortis (JO)	Cornwall Council
Martin James	Cornwall Council
Kate ?	
Alison Clough (AC)	Cornwall Council
Tim Bird (TB)	Cornwall Council
Sue Nicholls (SN)	Cornwall Council
Nick Marriott (NM)	Cornwall Wildlife Trust
Cllr Michael Roberts (MR)	Gwinear-Gwithian PC
John Burlinson (JB)	Riviere Towans Management
Paul Gold (PG)	Penellen Hotel
Chris Downton (CD)	Tom's Holidays
Carol Harwood (CH) (Notes)	Cornwall Council
Apologies:	
Ray Tovey CC (RT)	Cornwall Council
John Gorst (JG)	Hockin Trust
Michael Williams (MW)	Landowner
Cllr Jean Charman (JC)	Camborne Town Council
Julian German CC (JG)	Cornwall Council
David Attwell	TWE

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1. Introductions

- DG welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their support.

2. • DG announced the names of those who have sent their apologies.

3. Notes of Last Meeting

Accuracy

- a) Nick Burt's name is spelt incorrectly – change from Bird to Burt.
- b) Rob Jewell should be recorded as present at the last meeting

Matters Arising

- c) 4d) – Gwithian Village Sewage Treatment

- SF read notes from a report by PC Cllr Brian Pocock regarding a meeting that he attended with CC Cllr Ray Tovey and the Environment Agency (EA) on 13th April 2011. This followed the flooding of the treatment works and the resulting pollution that took place last Summer. EA had previously met with SWW and a plan of action had been agreed focusing on good management of the site which was to be monitored by EA, including increased inspections. SF's main concern was the inability of a site without mains power to cope with the dramatic rise in visitors, especially to the two camp sites in Gwithian over the summer months which was possibly in excess of 1000 a week. As a result SWW could be in breach of their permit to discharge to the Gwithian stream which only allowed for a population of 250. SF was also very concerned about the failure to prosecute SWW. Cllrs Pocock and Tovey were due to meet again with EA shortly. An updated report was requested for the next Partnership meeting.
- JP suggested Alan Hampshire from Cornwall Council should be invited to the meeting if there was a failure to make satisfactory progress regarding improvements to the Sewage Treatment works in Gwithian.

BP/RT

5e) Ragwort

- AC to check ragwort on the Towans near to Gwithian village

AC

6g) Dog bins

- SN said the public have been placing waste in the dog bin adjacent to the lifeguard hut. This problem has been resolved with two new waste bins but only for this year. AC said she has cleared large amounts of rubbish and dog bags which have been left by the lifeguard hut at Peter's Point which is a favourite access point for dog users. There is no immediate answer to this problem because it is not possible to drive the van to the hut. PD said there had been complaints from visitors because of the difficulty of managing the steep steps to the beach. SN said that ING have paid for a dog bin to be placed at Hayle Estuary and at the junction to the campsite. Dog bins to be installed at the

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Sandsifter and steps down to the Red River were referred to in the previous meeting but has not been actioned. SN said there was going to be a review of dog bins but not sure when this is to be carried out.

SN

- PD asked who was responsible for picking up the rubbish on the Towans. There was a general discussion about the lack of acceptance of responsibility and co-ordination due to the different status of ownership of the different parts of the Towans. AC said she has responded to requests to clear up litter on St Gothian and Gwithian Towans when brought to her attention SF said that the Parish Council had organised a litter picking event on St Gothian in the Spring. SLT said that Haven had agreed to supply 3 men to remove rubbish on Mexico Towans.

- 6m) TB agreed to provide a more detailed departmental structure in relation to his service for the next meeting, including names of personnel and their responsibilities.

TB

Cornwall Council Reports

Progress and Work Programme

Environment Officer

SN presented her report.

- a) The Council started cleaning the beaches last week. Further issues relating to this subject to be discussed under the Beach Management Strategy.
- b) SN said events are ongoing and the updated events list is on the new Gwithian Beach Website. There continues to be a problem with funding this site from partner agencies but this is on the agenda for the next Beach Management Advisory Group meeting.
- c) DG asked why the "restricted zoning" signs had been taken down. He was concerned about the dangers posed by beach kite flyers and sand yachts which were often too close to the Sheep's Pool area where families with children paddled and explored rock pools. IT stated that he felt that the main danger area is between Sandy Acres and Strap Rocks relating to activities both on the beach and in the sea and "it was an accident waiting to happen."
- d) SN said the intention was to have the information regarding zoned areas on the website. It was agreed that there is a problem having signs without the power of enforcement. On the other hand at least there is a sign which can be pointed to. PD said even with the signs there was still a problem with "rogue" individuals who did not belong to an organisation that subscribes to these arrangements. JO said there were bye laws on some beaches regarding beach activities but again there was the problem of enforcement.

Countryside Officer's Report

AC presented her report, previously circulated to those present.

- a) SF asked why there were now charges for Events and where the money was going to. TB stated that because of cutbacks, staff time had to be accounted for and costed.
- b) JP said there were real problems regarding access to the beaches, particularly at the Hayle end of the Towans. He said that Hayle Town Council is preparing a bid for a share of the £400,000 funding from the Seaside Towns' Initiative in Cornwall, particularly in relation to access problems highlighted in AC's report and the possibility of employing a Community Pride Officer.

5. Updates from other Organisations

National Trust. BM stated that they are very busy in the car parks and have been inundated with events from surfing to beach games eg. volleyball.

Gwithian Residents Association.

- a) SF thanked DG for the work undertaken on the Management of Gwithian Green. Invaluable voluntary work had been undertaken by Duchy College and the Green Club from BTCV. Local residents had worked on clearing the Gwithian stream and all the planks of the bridge had been renewed with financial support from the Parish Council.
- b) Litter including bottles, take away food and toilet paper was found on right hand side of the verge near the two bridges across the Red River after a major event at Sandsifter. SF thanked AC for clearing it up.
- b) SF said that Ken Taylor who had regularly attended Partnership meetings in the past and had been secretary of The Residents Association for 20 years had recently died. He had been the driving force behind many successful # campaigns to save the village from large scale unwanted planning applications. His most recent success was saving the high dunes and obtaining the commitment of the landowners (Hockin Trust) to preserve the area now known as St Gothian Sands as a wildlife sanctuary when the mining activity ceased and the land purchased by Cornwall Council.
- d) SF said that a large solar park had recently been installed on land belonging to a local farmer and was due to come on stream at the end of July. MR confirmed that £25,000 should become available each year as a result of this development, to be used for environmental work. Details of the Trust which has to be set up, the involvement of the PC and how the money is to be distributed has yet to be worked out. DG said he would be in favour of the Parish Council appointing a Warden who could work on Gwithian

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Green and on the Towans.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust (CWT)

NM said scrub had been removed from a large area around the Chimney at the entrance to Upton Towans. However, the lightning conductor has been stolen from the chimney stack. CWT were let down by their contractor last winter but CWT were intending to undertake further management work which would include removal of the invasive sea buckthorn and improved information for the public by a specific fund raising initiative. NB said that he now had the help of an Ass Warden. DG said that Upton was an excellent habitat for wildflowers and butterflies. He undertook a weekly transect walk and last week saw over 700 silver studied blue butterflies on this particular route.

Natural England

JW said that she had now taken over Andrew McDouall 's areas of responsibility. Andrew is now NE's Lead Manager for Land Use in Cornwall and she read out a letter from him. JW outlined the organisational changes in Cornwall and the key points from the recently published Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP) "The Natural Choice". She said she had recently met with representatives from Cornwall Council to discuss Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) applications. JW said that Gwithian Green's Stewardship which finishes in 2012 is in the HLS "pipeline" but there are very tight financial budgets at the present time. JW agreed to circulate the above documents to members.

JW

SF expressed concern about the Sea Buckthorn along sections of the road from Upton Towans to Gwithian Towans and suggested that monies arising from the Solar Park could be considered for this work. JB said that contractors had removed Sea Buckthorn from parts of Mexico Towans. This raised issues about the need to coordinate the overall management of the Towans and the importance of the Local Authority, private landowners, voluntary agencies and groups, local community and commercial organisations working together.

Hayle Mill Pond Project

GS reported that scrub has been cleared from the inner pond and that otters have been seen.

Riviere Chalet Camp.

JB said that 400 tonnes of granite has been used at Riviera Chalet Camp for improving the path to the beach. He said there was a time when 40 cars had been illegally parked on the beach access road entrance to the bridleway.

6. **Beach Management Strategy** – Presentation by James Ortis and Paul Martin
 - a) JO said the strategy recognised the significant economic and environmental importance of the beaches and the need therefore to develop a consistent approach to the

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management of Council owned beaches taking into account the reduction in overall budgets.

- b) There are 300 beaches in Cornwall. The Council owns, manages or leases 40 of these beaches and, at the present time, provides some degree of management on a total of 86 beaches. The main aspect of beach management is cleaning and the key recommendation of the strategy is that non council owned beaches are no longer cleaned by the Council. The budget for 2011/12 is £269,000 and is due to be decreased by £50,000 over the next three years. As a comparison, JO said North Cornwall's budget alone was £315,000 prior to the Council becoming a Unitary Authority.
- c) The aim of the strategy is to set standards and provide Specific beach management plans.

Key additional points:-

- Working with partners such as the PCT on promoting health and well being.
- Providing information on water quality and sources of pollution.
- Ensuring there are beach risk safety assessments and working with the RNLI who provide a lifeguarding role.
- Developing partnerships, particularly with local communities, private landowners and other Departments of the Council

In response to the above, the following points were raised:-

- JP felt it was short sighted of the Strategy not to include the beaches whether public or private since clean and safe beaches are a valuable resource for Cornwall's economy.
- PD said that Cornwall Council provides £800,000 out of budget of £5 million annually for the lifeguard service. They provided a service for both public and private beaches.
- SF suggested that there could be a role for the landowners of private beaches to make a contribution to beach management.
- The meeting agreed that more detailed consideration should be given to the strategy at the next meeting. JO confirmed that the Strategy could be found on Cornwall Council's website. He would provide details of where it is located.

- d) JO said the report would be signed off by Julian German CC

7. Management of Towans

To be discussed at next meeting

**JO/All
Members**

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8. Sand Extraction

To be discussed at next meeting

9 Any Other Business

- DG said that Cornwall Butterfly Conservation were organising a a Butterfly Walk on Saturday, 2nd July. Meet at the chimney stack, Upton Towans at 11 am.

6. Next Meeting

- 28th September 2011 at 10.00am at Passmore Edwards Institute.

DRAFT