

**Towans Partnership
Draft Notes of Meeting on 17 March 2010
Passmore Edwards Institute, Hayle**

Present:		Supporting	
Ian Toy (IT)	Gwithian Towans Ratepayers	Dave Clarke (DC)	Cornwall Council
Cllr Brian Pocock (BP)	Gwithian Gwinear PC	Sue Nicholls (SN)	Cornwall Council
Derek Goodere (DG)	Gwithian Residents Association		
Sally Foster (SF)	Gwithian Residents Association	Terri Winchester (TW)	Cornwall Council
Georgina Schofield (GS)	Community Archive/ Hayle Mill Pond Project	(Notes)	
Michael Williams (MW)	Owner of Lethlean Towans		
Cllr Jean Charman (JC)	Camborne Town Council		
Rachael Selley (RS)	Cornwall Council		
Ray Tovey CC (RT)	Cornwall Council		
Andrew McDouall (AM)	Natural England		

1 Introductions

2 Apologies

Julian German CC (JG)	Cornwall Council
John Pollard CC (JP)	Hayle Town / Cornwall Council
Cllr John Bennett (JB)	Hayle Town Council, Deputy Mayor
Mr B Makin (BM)	National Trust
Steve Crummay	Cornwall Council
Alison Clough (AC)	Cornwall Council

3 Notes of Meeting 16 December 2009

Amendments

- a) South West Water representative was Robin Lloyd
 - b) 5b) The Mill Pond has received a neighbourhood award and not 'Green Flag' status
 - c) 6a) Should read FEPA licence not PEPA
- The notes were amended and agreed as an accurate record of the meeting

Matters Arising

- d) 6a) Sand Extraction – IT has written to Tom Flanagan, Cornwall Council
- e) 9) Gwithian Towans Planning - Concern also raised by Camborne Town Council. BP advised that all applications need to be scrutinised against Planning Policy TM-8, RT agreed and added that everyone needs to take an active role but DG feels that to do this you need to be familiar with the process. SF stated that not all near by residents were notified

4 Progress of Work Programme Reports

Cornwall Council

Countryside Officer report was circulated (Appendix 1)

DC provided further information on:

- a) Natural England have not been as willing to provide ponies as they have been in previous years
- b) St Gothian sands – an overflow pipe has been installed to control the water level in the main lagoon.
- c) Gwithian Towans Car Park signage for cliff edge – comments included:

Actions

- It is not clear where the cliff edge is
- Parked vehicles can restrict view of signs
- Fencing would be a safest precaution

The group agreed that they are happy with the temporary solution of signage

- d) RNLI portable station at Gwithian – SF concerned about lifeguards use of 4 wheel drive vehicles on St Gothian Sands LNR – DC has told the lifeguards that they should only use one route across the site and this was agreed at a site meeting with Phil Drew of the RNLI.

DC

Cornwall Council Work Programming

- e) Gwithian Towans access road – RT has emailed Nigel Blackler, Transportation, Cornwall Council to request that it is done under capital works for this year

- f) St Gothian Sands Motorcycles - fencing will be improved. DG observed that the police are good at responding and that incidents must be reported to get a crime number. DC added that Leeds police successfully addressed similar problems by employing skilled motorbike riders but police could only justify this because of the large number of reports logged

- g) JC raised concern about ragwort – DC responded that they try to clear it before grazing ponies; JC suggested using volunteers to clear the area. MW added that CC had done a good job of clearing ragwort from Lethlean Towans

- h) Dog bins – SN is undertaking a review of where bins are sited and the way that the emptying round is done. The operative has a new more reliable vehicle and there has already been a drop in the number of complaints, seasonal beach cleaners will also assist. SF said that there are 2 dog bins in close proximity at St Gothians; SN will look into locations. Discussion ensued and suggestions to deal with problem included:

SN

- Revenue from car parks should fund a Warden for enforcement
- Additional bins
- Higher penalties and prosecutions
- Restrict where dog are allowed to go

RT introduced RS who is a Strategy Integration Officer with Cornwall Council looking at council business in rural areas. BP said that Transport Group identified a lack of resources and we need an evidence base to get a willingness to fund; Gwithian Gwinear PC proposes that car park revenue is used to fund study. RT added that we need to demonstrate the need for a Towans Warden as part of the Management Plan. DC asked SN if Towans would have use of Dog Warden as part of same authority. SN advised that there are only 3 Dog Wardens: DC/SN to discuss. AM is thankful for a way forward. The meeting consensus was to support Management Plan for Car Parks and Towans. IT to draft a letter of endorsement to Gwithian Gwinear PC for their plan to use car park revenue. DC and AM to look at stewardship schemes as part of an over arching ecological plan, SF stressed that long term conservation should be the priority. RT recently showed Tom Flanagan around Towans and he is optimistic that Tom is supportive of the wider management plan

DC/SN

IT

DC/AM

- i) DG congratulated AC on the plan for the forward work programme and the way that she has focused on the infrastructure, he asked if AC could get James's to put signs on their post directing to Sandy Lane and Church Lane Farm – DC advised that there are legal implications of signing as a PROW, but he will look at Code of Conduct signage for the

DC

dunes

Cornwall Council - update from SN

- i) SN is now on Bathing Water Working Group together with representatives from South West Water (SWW), Environment Agency, Environmental Health and other health protection bodies. A sub group identified 3 beaches for a pilot project this year, one of which is Godrevy, user information can be gathered at the Car Park, together with information from RNLi and another sub group is looking at protocols. Environment Agency is on the National Working Group that aims to have permanent solutions in place by 2012. SN is working with SWW looking at key information of what works, CSO goes off in emergency situation and they monitor public use of beaches. A report has gone to Cornwall Council Scrutiny Committee to ensure that we are responding to public fears. SN will provide feed back at next meeting. RT feels that it is essential that Mike East keeps the Environment Cabinet Member informed – SN to take message to Mike East. SF concerned that pools and steams are being contaminated from sewage works which get overloaded in peak holiday season – SN responded that SWW test weekly but all concerns should be addressed to Environment Agency; SN agreed to raise at next 'Bathing Water' meeting

SN

SN

SN

5 Updates form Other Organisations

Hayle Millpond Project – GS reported

- a) It has been a good winter for wild foul and there is a 2009 yearling swan on the Mill Pond for the first time in 2 years
- b) Outfall pipe repairs appear not to have been done and the pipe has been bypassed. Environment Agency (EA) refuse to top up the water levels, the pond will become stagnant and we can expect worse problems in the summer, including mosquitoes. EA have known about the leak for over 6 months but have not been honest with us, the problems have been since National Rivers Authority incorporated with E A and the area was down graded; 20year review of the scheme is due this year. Hayle Millpond Project have asked Hayle Town Council as the owners of the area, for support
- c) Copper House Pool is polluted with toxic mining waste from Wilsons Pool and we have lost 4 swans this year

JC left the meeting

Gwithian Green Residents Association – DG and SF reported

- d) Butterfly and bird event 21 March lead by Martin Rule and Cathy Turtle
- e) Interpretation Board – Parish contributed 20% of costs
- f) DG requested a picture of a 'Sedge Warbler' without copyright
- g) Planning application for Sand Sifter Surfing Academy - will it be a 3 story building and will transport issues of access to a commercial venture be considered in a conservation area? DC commented that it has only recently emerged that the development proposals are on common land and that this will mean that permissions are required from a higher authority (probably Secretary of State) before permission can be given for the development to go ahead, IT added that Church Farm toilets are also on common land. RT informed that the application for an extension to the nursing home was approved in 1989; all it needs is change of use permissions. AM suggested looking into a provision in planning legislation for unimplemented permissions which could be revoked
- h) Butterfly walks on Upton Towans 3 July and Gwithian Green 15 August - SF invited Towans Partnership Members

ALL

ALL

7 Sand Extraction

- a) Hayle Town Council supported by St Ives Town Council opposed ING's application. IT read out letter that he wrote to Cornwall Council and the reply from Simon Mansell, which did not address issue. RT observed that there is no clear definition for what quantity of sand removal is sustainable and he suggested one year monitoring – AM informed that the original permissions for 53K tonnes was based on the capacity of the dredging machinery rather than a sustainability study, if granted, the licence should have conditions attached that are linked to long term dredging protocol. BP suggested using sale of sand to fund a study to determine if sluicing is a long term answer. Historic and future use of the channel was discussed but all suggestions have high maintenance costs and high risk for boat navigation. RT observed that the real issue is that Hayle is not getting help to fund a study to determine what is needed, industry has almost gone and there is no incentive to keep the harbour open, all interested parties need to work together. The cost of FEPA licence is £8K but if sand was just moved rather than removed, licence would not be required. IT to continue correspondence with Simon Mansell

IT

8 Any Other Business

- a) Access to Nature Project – it has been decided to pull out of the Access to Nature project due to it being unlikely that the team leading on the project could deliver a good stage 2 application before the May 4th deadline. It was suggested that projects that were to be funded from Access to Nature are put on hold until alternative funding is identified.

9 Date of Next Meeting

Provisional date 6th July 2010
Passmore Edwards Institute, Hayle

Appendix 1

Towans Partnership Meeting
Report from West Cornwall's Countryside Officer
Wednesday 17th March 2010

Progress Report

- 6 ponies arrived on Lethlean Towans in early December. They were then moved to Gwithian & Mexico Towans. Currently they are grazing Phillack & Mexico Towans until Easter.
- 8 Slate waymarkers installed on South West Coast Path at Gwithian & Mexico Towans; special capital improvement works funded by Natural England.
- 2 short stretches of fencing have been constructed to re-align a badly eroded stretch of the South West Coast Path at the Car Park at Phillack Towans.
- An adjustable overflow pipe has been installed to maintain a consistent water level in the lagoon on St Gothian Sands. This will help to create a boggy habitat around the margins of the lagoon that will encourage visiting wading birds to feed.
- 2 signs have been installed at Gwithian Towans Car Park warning people that there is an unfenced cliff edge nearby. Recently there have been several incidents where dogs have fallen a considerable distance over the cliffs onto the beach below.
- The RNLI have approached Cornwall Council with a proposal to locate a new seasonal portable lifeguard station on the beach at St Gothian Sands. Following a meeting with the RNLI the Council has given its consent for this building to be on site between April & September.
- A resident at Upton Towans raised concerns about vehicles accessing the parking area at Upton Towans getting too close to his front door. Cornwall Council has agreed to install a bollard outside his property to keep vehicles at a safe distance from his entrance.
- BTCV have started clearing invasive scrub on the areas identified on the condition assessment carried out by Natural England.
- We have recently received queries from the public about the stopping up of gaps in the hedge leading onto the Towans adjacent to St Ives Bay Holiday Park. We have confirmed that these hedges belong to a private landowner who we assume has carried out this work.
- Due to the growing problem of dog owners leaving bagged up dog mess under the sign on the beach at St Gothian Sands at the mouth of the Red River, we have received an enquiry about the provision of additional dog bins in this area. Unfortunately we are unable to provide bins at his location as it is inaccessible to the waste collection vehicle.
- We have received several reports of motorcycles accessing St Gothian Sands. We are currently reviewing measures in place to make it more difficult for them to access this site.

Work Programme

- Property Services are planning to repair the surface of the access road across Gwithian Towans. If funds are available work will start in the new financial year.
- 2 guided walks are planned to take place in the summer at St Gothian Sands. We are hoping to organise more events later in the year.
- Extension to post & rail fence & 'no motorcycling' sign to be installed at roadside at St Gothian Sands as part of measures to stop motorbikes accessing site.
- Small area of scrub clearance planned close to the top car parks at Gwithian Towans. It is hoped that having a grassy area immediately next to the car park & dog bin will attract dogs 'to do their business' there & encourage owners to remove it in a responsible way. The problems caused by fouling & nutrient enrichment of the soil will be eased.

- The public footpath from Gwithian Towans top car parks, parallel to the road to the beach will be trimmed out & an additional waymark installed to encourage walkers off the road.

DRAFT