

**Minutes of the Porthcurno Residents' Association
Ordinary Meeting on Tuesday 8 October 2019 at 7.30pm
at
The Clore Learning Space, Telegraph Museum, Porthcurno
Chair: Sue Wear (PKRA Chair)**

1. **Welcome and introductions** – all introduced themselves, and new attendees were welcomed.
2. **Apologies for absence and confirmation of quorate** - 10 apologies had been received from members. Simon Hocking, National Trust, had sent his apologies and an update for members. The meeting was quorate.
3. **Agreement of minutes from May 2019 meeting** - Draft previously circulated (see [here](#)) and were agreed.
4. **Matters arising**
 - 4.1 **Committee** - Louise Court (LC), PKRA Secretary, reported that despite our pleas for new Committee members, only one person, John Wheeler, had offered to be co-opted. This offer was much appreciated, and the meeting agreed this, subject to a formal vote at the AGM.
5. **Cosatal Community Team (CCT)**
 - 5.1 Sue Wear (SW) gave a short update on the Coastal Community Team, and reminded all who was on the team (see [here](#) for more info). She said the Minack was continuing to press for new brown signs to direct traffic to the Minack via Sennen, and Zoe Curnow (ZC), Minack Director, said good progress was now being made on this. ZC also reported that staff were now, or had been, trained and licensed to direct highways traffic, and was expecting this to be in place when needed next season.
 - 5.2 It was agreed that the new yellow lines were an improvement, however all agreed that, as had been foreseen might happen, traffic was now much faster in the valley without the parked cars to act as natural speed restrictors. LC read out to the meeting two unconnected and unsolicited emails from two residents on this matter, both citing worrying incidents of speeding and access issues for those driving in and out of properties on the bends near the School House. Other residents at the meeting concurred, and identified local traffic as often being the key offenders, including the local taxi company.
 - 5.3 There was discussion about pedestrian safety and options for traffic calming, including the viability of speed bumps/cushions, signage, speed limits, and cameras. SW introduced Jon Pearson (JP), Transport & Highway Consultant, who reviewed the traffic calming options that had been discussed, and their pros and cons. He said that speed bumps, rumble strips etc were unlikely to be approved and would not recommend

them, mainly on environmental grounds (increased noise, pollution) and they also can cause damage, restrict emergency access, etc. He said warning signs generally were ignored, and average speed cameras were more effective than just one camera.

- 5.4 His view was the most effective measures were ones that effectively disorientated or hindered/contained drivers. He cited examples of where buildouts created chicanes in the road and slowed drivers down, especially those where there was no priority way, forcing both directions to slow, like Sheffield and Paul.
- 5.5 He said he would recommend:
- build-outs in the road as above
 - speed cameras (ideally average)
 - pushing for a 20 mph speed limit
- 5.6 JP then went on to talk about his Park and Ride feasibility report and take questions from attendees. Overall, he did not think a park and ride would solve our problems. Disregarding the practical arrangements of finding and setting up a field, and arranging appropriate transport, he said it was unlikely to be used to the extent needed to make it sustainable. People would still try and park near the beach (e.g. because they often have a lot of stuff to carry), and it would add time, a precious commodity to people, to their visit. If the option was to be pursued, simply having an overflow car park might be a better option and be better received. He gave examples of several other park and ride schemes that, whilst he acknowledged were different to Porthcurno in some ways, had not been successful.
- 5.7 Residents' views were divided, some concurred with JP's views, others felt that the option was viable and had not been sufficiently explored. There was some support for just an overflow car park, but all agreed that this was not viable without a safe path down the valley or over the fields. A query was raised about why a path alongside the wall by the stream in the valley had never been pursued as a serious option as this seemed a good solution.
- 5.8 Another resident said that they were concerned that JP had not mentioned Maunsells' Hill and the increasing traffic there and wondered whether traffic lights at the bottom and top of the hill was the answer. It was noted that Minack visitors have increased 37% in last 6-7 years, and this must have generated a proportionate increase in traffic up the hill, which some residents felt was still at risk of a land slip. JP said that he understood the concerns but did not think signalisation was the answer as this would create new problems and increase the risk to pedestrians on the hill. He said to some extent it might be something we have to live with. He said he had been asked by the Minack to investigate the feasibility of a new road but found that the cost would be prohibitive and the environmental impact considerable.
- 5.9 A resident suggested that gathering some up to date evidence and data, e.g. on traffic speeds, etc., might help us, as we had done in the past. For example, could we ask for County Highways survey? This would highlight points of public safety. JP questioned

whether data gathering was the answer, as the problem was already well known, and he was not sure how more statistics would help.

5.10 Several people voiced the view that it would take a fatality before Porthcurno's issue was taken seriously and we got what we wanted. JP said that sadly, that was often the case. However he supported one resident's comment that the safety and wellbeing of residents and visitors were seriously at risk in the event of an incident blocking entry or exit to the valley or up the hill, and said this should be a key argument for us in making any case for improvements.

5.11 More generally, he suggested that we should also find a way to tell people that Porthcurno is full, like the Eden project does, in peak season. Residents made the point to him and others, that the traffic problems are not just 6 weeks of the year, as some people think or talk about, but extend for several months.

5.12 The PKRA would prioritise the following:

1. Continue to press, as planned, for the extension of the yellow lines to the T-junction with Trethewey
2. The introduction of traffic calming measures (looking at the measures in 5.5 above as a starting point)
3. Investigating the feasibility of a pedestrian path down the valley

5.13 SW thanked JP for his time, and very helpful and informative advice.

6. Updates from external organisations and partners

Minack Theatre

6.1 ZC reported that the field car park had been used for 61 days this year, with an average of 212 cars using it per day. Approx. £17.5k had been taken on the gate in parking fees (£5 a car) from users who were not parking there for the theatre, although residents will note the accounts show a net lower figure after costs and refunds from people then visiting the theatre. A resident said they had not ever seen anyone asking people if they were coming for the theatre or taking money. Zoe said that sometimes there were insufficient staff or insufficient trained staff available, but this was not usual. The resident said they had kept their own records of opening and they were concerned that the conditions of the permission had not been followed. For example, the permission was for "overspill" and yet the car park had been open on occasions at 9am, and, they believed the limit on the number of days the field could be used had been exceeded. ZC said she could not remember the exact wording of the permission but would look at this. She said that Trustees were considering whether to apply for permanent planning permission as the 2-year temporary period ends soon, but a decision had not been made.

6.2 She felt that having the car park had alleviated some of the traffic problems, but a continuing frustration for her and the staff was that people still ignored all the FULL

and SOLD OUT signs that Minack put out in the Valley and Trethewey T-junction. SW said that she had originally been against the car park, but now thought that it had helped traffic flow up the hill. She said this was just her own view however.

- 6.3 Day visitor numbers were up after last year's drop which was good, although the Minack refunded more than 4,000 tickets this year due to weather cancellations. Education activities continue to increase and have had a great impact. ZC said she was pleased that the Minack employed 74 people this year, mainly from the three local parishes. The Minack is now planning the programme for April-Oct 2020.

Telegraph Museum

- 6.4 Julia Twomlow (JT) said the museum still hoping to take on both car parks and negotiations with Cornwall Council continuing. Ideally this will happen next year, with two car parks running side by side, moving to one car park the following year. Her aim was to have Wi-fi in the car parks, with potential to extend this to the beach. Last year's parking problems had not recurred and indeed this year there had been no complaints from visitors about this.
- 6.5 In response to a question, she said she will chase First Buses re. the promised improvements to the bus turning point and putting in the much-needed bus shelter that residents had been requesting for several years.
- 6.6 JT ran through some of the exciting events planned for the 150th anniversary of the cable landing next year, including a re-enactment of the landing on 10 June 2020. This would include a re-branding of the Museum to "PK Porthcurno". She also gave more details on the "Planet PK" initiative to care for environment in the valley and said if anyone was interested in getting involved on a voluntary basis with the wildflower project relating to this to let her know.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 6.7 Helen Hawkins (HH), District Councillor, repeated her plea from the last few meetings that residents try and get involved in helping with formulating the plan, even if they could only spare a small amount of time. She reiterated how important the plan was and the implications for planning decisions if we did not have one. The next meeting was 7 November at 7pm and people could just come along without any commitment.
- 6.8 She also reminded residents of the West Cornwall Dark Skies initiative and the stargazing event at the Minack on 12 October.

Parish Council

- 6.9 LC reminded everyone that there was still a vacancy on the Parish Council for anyone interested.

National Trust

6.10 LC read out the main points of the update from Simon Hocking:

- New beach safety signage has been installed at every entrance to the beach on oak posts.
 - The Countryside Stewardship application has been submitted and should be finalised soon. This includes land in the valley and above the Telegraph museum as well as Rospletha cliff, Mayon Cliff and Tregiffian (around Tater-Du lighthouse). This will provide some additional funding for management that will benefit the conservation work on these sites. Pony grazing will be used at various times to help with the management; this will be done in partnership with Shires Holt Pony Sanctuary. Anyone who is interested in knowing more about these plans can contact Simon directly to find out more. He is also on the lookout for volunteers who would be willing to help the NT and Shires Holt with pony checking when these schemes are started. Training and support will be provided.
 - Cormac have started work this week clearing their sections of the bridleway to the required standard width and height.
 - A successful season for the beach steps this year with no closures required and no injuries of note (this was well received by residents).
 - More clearance of Invasive species and scrub planned this winter in the valley.
7. **Any other business** – SW said that there was a pot for donations to the PKRA at the door, and anyone who had not donated the agreed £5 voluntary subscription was encouraged to do so, either tonight or online before the AGM.
8. **Date of next meeting – 27 November 2019 AGM.**

Meeting ended at 2130hrs