

## **Cornwall Councillor Report – St Austell Bay Parish – November 2022**

Last week it was an honour, as always, to join Remembrance events across the Division for Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday.

Thank you to all those who serve or who have served in the forces to keep our country safe.

There are two really good pieces of news for St Austell Bay Parish this month, on matter where I have been working hard for sometime to secure a positive outcome.

Firstly the Charlestown to Porthpean coast path has now reopened!

Cormac completed their works to realign and reopen this stretch of coastpath ahead of schedule.

The South West Coast Path is a major visitor attraction, as well as being incredibly popular with local people. It was unacceptable that it was closed for so long, with a long diversion away from the coast, in place.

After it had previously stalled for many months, this is something I have worked hard with Cormac, Cornwall Council and the landowners to unlock and finish following my election to this area last year.

It has now been finished to an excellent standard and I walked the whole section as part of my leg rehab over the half term, it really is good and I would encourage anyone who hasn't already done so to go and have a wander up there.

Thanks as ever to the Cormac team who delivered it on the ground, those who worked with me behind the scenes to make it happen, and to the landowners for your patience throughout.

Secondly, on news that only broke yesterday, I am pleased to confirm there is a new tenant appointed to run the Porthpean Outdoor Education Centre and related concession stand and toilets on the beach.

I am delighted to see Cornish company First Wave Adventures take over management of Porthpean Outdoor Education Centre.

Porthpean Outdoor Education Centre is an amazing asset, which has been enjoyed by generations of Cornish children, and should remain a key facility for Cornwall.

Since my election to the area, and as Chair of the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee for children and families in 2021, I have been clear that this site has so much potential and I am pleased that the council has now concluded this process and put in place a company that will be able to realise this.

First Wave Adventure's values align with what the committee I chair recommended to Cornwall Council as part of this process, that activities on site should remain affordable and accessible to Cornish school children.

Having met with the operator I am looking forward seeing their exciting plans for this site for the future and look forward to continuing to work with them to ensure Porthpean Outdoor Education Centre is the very best it can be.

I would also encourage representatives from the Parish Council to meet with the new operators and will be happy to facilitate this should you need me to.

Cormac have now produced the preliminary plans for the community network highway scheme waiting restrictions in and around Charlestown, Duporth and on Porthpean Beach Road. As the Parish Council has been leading on these, I have asked Cormac to send them to the Parish Council for comments before further steps are taken.

Following the recent heavy rainfall, I have asked Cormac to look at systemic flooding issues on Porthpean Road just past Duporth crossroads, as whatever drainage system is there is not coping and this regularly leads to the road and pavement being flooded.

In planning matters I have had verbal agreement from Cornwall Council that they will be changing their way of working to publish comments from other officers such as the Conservation Officer when considering planning applications, instead of just saying that they have received them but not saying what they are! I have asked for this in writing!

On wider matters, I have supported the position of the St Austell and Mevagissey Community Network Panel in opposing changes to the community networks as set out by Cornwall Council.

While I recognise that the current model is not working as it should, I believe that the proposals, which would see network panels made even bigger and given more responsibilities, would not work, for the same reason but amplified, as the reason they currently are not working.

I would rather support them being reformed and used purely as multi-organisational project-based groups, which is something I have previously enjoyed success with for my local communities outside of the CNP structure

Finally I have a winter beach clean scheduled for Porthpean Beach at 1430 on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November. All equipment provided courtesy of Biffa and Clean Cornwall. Please come along if you fancy helping out.