

Cornwall Councillor Report – St Austell Bay Parish – September 2026

I hope everyone had a good summer.

August tends to be a quieter month at Cornwall Council, with few formal meetings and a lot of people (including me!) taking leave. Therefore this report isn't as detailed as it normally would be.

On 22 August I walked the entire stretch of coastpath that covers St Austell Bay Parish as well as several other maintained footpaths as part of my beating the boundary walk series. As part of this I picked up several defects and passed these to Cormac for action.

I recently met with South West Water at their Menagwins Waste Water Treatment works that I requested a couple of months ago.

The Menagwins site is an incredibly important one and handles sewage treatment for not only the Mevagissey and St Austell Bay area that I represent, but also the whole of wider St Austell area, a colossal undertaking.

I used to be the Cornwall Councillor for the area that included Menagwins, from 2014-2021, and when I was councillor for the area, I worked with then-MP Steve Double to establish a liaison group for Menagwins, along with local residents.

Sadly this ceased around the time of the COVID-19 outbreak and never restarted.

While I am no longer the councillor for the area that Menagwins covers, apart from it serving all the properties in my area, it also feeds directly into the White River, and from there into the sea at Pentewan, which is still in my area.

Sewage spills from the site and from other South West Water assets down the river are a huge issue for us all, and I am pleased that South West Water responded to my request and met me on site, along with representatives of Pentewan Valley Parish Council, the White River Project Group, and our current MP Noah Law.

Following the meeting we have been promised updates on a number of issues – in particular on the work being done by South West Water to eliminate discharges, what they can do to practicably work with solution-focused groups like Three Bays Wildlife and the White River Project Group on green solutions, and with the parish council on matters where they are involved in planning consultations.

The latter point is of particular interest for the Menagwins site, because as well as the very obvious issues around sewage discharges, the Government's changes to planning legislation mean that the vast majority of the rural land on the St Austell side of Tregorrick Road, just to the east of the Menagwins site, has been identified as having the potential for development for housing in the future. The 325 houses at the top of Tregorrick Road that are currently being proposed is just the thin end of the wedge, and all of these houses will feed into Menagwins, increasing the demand on their infrastructure and the likelihood of future spills.

As ever, the proof will be in the pudding, and I await to see South West Water's actions and if they will align with what they say they are going to do, with interest.

And for those of you who have been paying attention to my work in this area, due to the ongoing legal case around the chemical spillage at Menagwins last year, we weren't allowed to discuss this!

At a meeting of Cornwall Council's Community Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 September, I asked the Cabinet Member for the Environment whether, given the issues with wildfires we have seen over the summer, that we as a council could consider bringing in a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) to ban the use of single use BBQs on beaches and open spaces.

As a councillor with several beaches in my coastal division, I have always been keenly aware of the issues caused by the careless misuse and disposal of single use bbqs, not just as the cause of wildfires, as we have recently seen over the summer, but also on different occasions where bbqs have been buried and caused injuries by making the sand dangerously hot.

In previous years I have explored ways by which a ban of these bbqs could be introduced on Cornwall Council beaches and open spaces, but was told that the enforcement would be an issue, despite it being broadly supported within the organisation.

Given the national moves around temporarily restricting the sale and use of single use bbqs over the summer due to the wildfires that have been caused, I think that now is the time for Cornwall Council to look at this again, and was pleased to see an acknowledgement of this from the Cabinet Member and council officers, that this is being closely considered as a future option.

I look forward to seeing the outcome of this and would certainly support any moves to restrict the use of single bbqs within the areas that Cornwall Council can do so.

I have been asked to publicise that Cornwall College St Austell is working with AFC St Austell and other local sports clubs to help progress plans for a new 3G pitch at Poltair Park.

The proposed facility could open up new opportunities for students, young people, local teams and the wider community to get involved in sport throughout the year.

Community Engagement sessions will be taking place on Tuesday 22 and Wednesday 23 September, 5pm–7.30pm at Poltair Park. No booking needed.

If you can't make the sessions you can still have your say by completing a short community survey that you can access [here](#)

As ever, should anyone need assistance from me, please get in touch at 07885 277670 or via cllr.james.mustoe@cornwall.gov.uk and I will do my best to help.