

Beach Liaison Group Meeting

Tuesday 14th March 2023

10am

Venue - Wembury Marine Centre

Minutes

Attendees:

Coral Smith (CS) (Chair)	Wembury Parish Council/DWT Wembury Marine Centre
Tony Everid	National Trust
Alison Rashleigh	National Trust
John Stansell (JS)	Churchwood Valley Holiday Park
Sarah Brown (SB)	Local Sea swimmers
Cllr Dan Brown (DB)	Wembury Parish Council/SHDC/Salcombe Harbour Board
Emma Ransome (ER)	National Trust
Matthew Voller (MV)	Devon Wildlife Trust
Jake Taylor-Bruce (JTB)	Devon Wildlife Trust
Jess Tatton-Brown (JTB)	National Trust
Tim Rolt (TR)	National Trust
James Hart (JH)	Bovisand Holiday Park
Rob Price (RP)	Environment Agency
Carole Steel (CS)	Wembury Beach
Peter Bromley (PB)	Wembury Sailing Club

1. Apologies:

Belinda Kemp & Carole Steele - St Werburgh Church
Jennifer and Jemma – Old Mill Cafe
Andy Brown – Wembury Sailing Club
Spencer Pearson – Wembury Surfers

2. Actions arising from last meeting:

- Mewstone Sign – NT will erect this season
- Bovisand Buoys – currently deployed and paid for by SHA/SHDC. Within Plymouth Port remit, but beach is part owned by SHDC so partly to do with it as well?
- Bovisand has been designated as a bathing area by SHDC
- DB risk assessment SHDC – explained that it is down to the landowner

- ACTION – CS to send minutes to SHDC and ask for risk assessment as to why it was closed
- CS to distribute water users guide weblink
- ACTION CS to clarify position of beach liaison group in relation to Wembury Parish Council, e.g., community information sharing group rather than sub-committee of WPC. DONE – BLG is a stakeholder group, not a sub-committee of WPC
- Discussion ensued over possible NT plans for disabled access from coach park down to the back of the beach and whether that would affect coaches parking in coach park. Discussion then moved on to the recent NT open day for New Barton Farm and any parking changes as a result of the new project. ACTION CS to ask JTB from NT for an update on both matters. DONE (see NT update below)
- South Hams DC policy states that on beaches they do not own, they will have an annual meeting with beach owners, however neither JS nor NT have been made aware of this. JS ACTION to ask Salcombe Harbour Authority to respond to this. SEE Water Safety discussion below.

3. Updates from Stakeholders:

Churchwood Valley (JS)

- Good season all round and busy already for next year
- No problems or issues arising

National Trust (JTB/ER/TR)

- Mill meadow now back in NT hands after tenant lease expired
- Phase 1 work currently going on in meadow to help create an 'access for all' path down to the back of the beach, allowing wheelchair & pushchair access and joining up with SWCP towards Wembury Point. Funded by AONB
- Planning permission to be sought to install a portable disabled toilet block adjacent to existing toilet block
- 3 disabled parking bays will be created at the entrance to the coach park, but coaches and DWT volunteers will still be able to use the area behind
- Phase 2 Path improvement/reconciliation for SWCP between car park and Wembury Barton Farm. Diversion signs will be going up for walkers.
 - After question from PB, NT confirmed cyclists should not be using the SW Coastpath
 - <https://www.southwestcoastpath.org.uk/about-coast-path/fag/cycling/#:~:text=Is%20cycling%20allowed%20on%20the,right%20to%20ride%20a%20bike>
- Phase 3 works from Farm to Rocket Cottage to widen path and create better access for all. Part funded by SWCP
- New GM Jonathan Fisher – looking at toilets on site in particular
- Additional funding this year for car park team to cover more hours in shoulder months
- 2024 – hopefully more staff in car park

- New noticeboard to be installed down the bottom of the steps on the right hand side
- Slight changes – pay and scan machines & pay by phone - mobile signal has slightly improved. Please do not tell people they can pay within 24 hours. They must be encouraged to pay whilst car is in the car park, so some point during their visit
- Messaging on machines will be improved
- Church overflow car park being used but people not donating
- LOTE (Life on the Edge) - 27th March hedge planting at the farm to help create wildlife corridors
- Wembury Primary School coming out for a few sessions
- New member of staff Volunteer Community Officer – starting May
- Found bronze age pottery on some of their sites so community dig at some point

St Werburgh Church (CS)

- Only 7 weddings booked so far this year
- Carol retiring end of March and taking on administrator role on behalf of the 6 cluster churches. Two new church wardens to take over
- TR asked if there was a significant local wedding or funeral taking place, to please let NT and WMC staff know in advance so they can manage parking

Churchwood Valley Holiday Park (JS)

- Busy season ahead
- Trying to clear out broken fencing etc. at riding stables
- Steps down to beach need repairing. JS to action
- Coastpath falling away on other side of the steps due to erosion, so may need re-stabilising. ACTION TR to speak to Lorna about that

Wembury Sailing Club (PB)

- AGM on 5th March went well – talk by Paul Naylor was amusing
- Boat park clean up is this coming Saturday – cut grass, tidy up etc.
- Season starts on 1st April
- Provision is same as previous years – membership requests have gone out
- Number of boats has dropped, so more kayaks can now go onto chains
- WSC not insured to do events
- PB observed spontaneous events do occur which may not be insured and can cause traffic/parking issues
- PB concerned about broken pallets with nails sticking out. TR responded that NT can collect from main car park.

SHDC/SHA (Cllr DB)

- Traffic situation – unsure how to manage
- Cllr Brown shall be standing down in May. Thanked WMC for all it does.

Sea swimming group (SB)

- Felt water quality was good over winter, though currently very cloudy

Bovisand Holiday Park (JH)

- Concern over Fort Bovisand. JH would like to encourage consideration of Fort Bovisand in terms of planning for high pressure sewer main which will pump to Down Thomas and then transferred to sewage treatment works. Approx another 80 properties worth of sewage on a station which is already at max capacity
- SWW - road closures and footpath closures still ongoing to get works completed. Logistics need joined up scrutiny
- **ACTION CS** to try to seek a response and invite someone from SWW at next meeting
- **ACTION DB** to contact planning officer re: Fort Bovisand/SWW works.

Devon Wildlife Trust/Wembury Marine Centre (CS):

- Two seasonal marine engagement assistants now appointed by DWT. Matt Voller will be returning as FT assistant and Jake Taylor-Bruce has been appointed as PT assistant for the season and will cover 2 days/week over the 6 month season
- WMC will open on April 1st and Close 30th September and opening days will be Tuesday-Sunday, plus most BH Mondays. Staff of three will rotate cover over those 6 days
- Successful volunteer induction day in Feb, with a good turn out and around 10 new volunteers recruited for coming season
- 62 public engagement events planned and all online and bookable via Eventbrite: [Devon Wildlife Trust/Wembury Marine Centre Events | Eventbrite](#)
 - Usual 'special' events for TWT National Marine Week (#GenSea) and other national events.
 - Assistants to organise and run their own events
 - Free 'Shoresearch' citizen science surveys ramping up and working really nicely so far, upskilling local people, as well as contributing to national marine database (also lots of fun for staff and regular vols!) [Shoresearch | The Wildlife Trusts](#)
 - A number of events planned in partnership with Plymouth University, including plankton day with Electron Microscopy group and evening talks for the local community
- Centre hire also going well -
 - Winter birthday parties
 - DEFRA group and SWWTs Living Seas events in March
- School bookings flooding in – fully booked now

- CS will be on parental leave for ~4 weeks at the start of the season and during this time WMC assistants will be supported by DWT Wilder Learning colleagues
- In April, WMC will be hosting the Marine Protection Zone Officer from Tristan de Cunha Government for a week, to learn about the work of the Centre and Marine Conservation Area and share best practice.

Old Mill Café (JP/JP)

- Sent apologies for meeting but are due to open for 7-day season on April 1st

4. Water Quality Update from Environment Agency (RP)

- Bathing waters at Wembury are excellent for 3rd year running
- Whole suite of Tamar catchment beaches is all excellent
- But we still need to keep an eye on things in light of climate related storm events, increasing the surface run-off and mobilisation of pollutants
- Point source pollution from SWW, along with agricultural run-off
- Wembury and the Yealm changed from high priority to low in terms of catchment sensitive farming. New officer is really proactive and has submitted 64 applications to countryside stewardship for improvement projects
- National EP – OFWAT review of water industry assets are currently being assessed and cases for change are now being finalised. Significant improvement has taken place within last two decades, including 'Clean Sweep,' but more difficult things to fix now. £1 billion investment in SW assets
- Another tool also now available – the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan. Available on SWW website. **ACTION CS to add to minutes**. Funding could be available to help agricultural run-off
- PB raised concern over continual discharge of surface water. IUDS – Integrated Urban Drainage Systems have been quite successful in Plymouth, e.g., Millbay. But are they being monitored in terms of inputs and outputs? **ACTION RP** to ask and feed back to groups
- Successful prosecution of International Paints for TBT pollution in Yealm and options for mitigation ongoing and to be agreed
- EA has secured with WRT 3Cs funding from DEFRA looking at developing a citizen science platform for estuary and coastal water quality management. Work starting this year and continuing next year
- New working group on the Yealm, working with multiple stakeholders to share information and intelligence across the groups. Would be good to have a representative from Wembury
- DEFRA and EA have launched state of coastal environment report. **ACTION RP** to send link to report
- SWW have appointed Carolyn Cadman as Director of their natural resources and they have a stakeholder engagement team to attend meeting such as these. **ACTION CS** to contact Carolyn
- River basin management plans finalised and now driving overall strategic ambition for the Tamar, of which Yealm is a part. **ACTION RP** to send link

- Still in a drought period and so the behaviour practices of all of us is really important to promote. Roadford reservoir is only at 59% and it should be at 90%.
- Please report pollution incidents or concerns to 0800 80 70 60
- Please promote bathing water explorer – EA website
 - Drainage and wastewater management plans can be found here [sww-draft-dwmp-l2-yealm-erme-v1.0.pdf \(southwestwater.co.uk\)](https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/l2-yealm-erme-v1.0.pdf)
 - Long term water quality trends for rivers [State of the water environment: long-term trends in river quality in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/state-of-the-water-environment-long-term-trends-in-river-quality-in-england) and coast [State of the environment: the coastal and marine environment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/state-of-the-environment-the-coastal-and-marine-environment).
 - Bathing profile Wembury [Bathing water profile \(data.gov.uk\)](https://data.gov.uk/bathing-water-profile)
 - Catchment Pages [Tamar Catchment Partnership \(72\) | Catchment Data Explorer](#)

5. AOB

- Review of signage over code of conduct, spearfishing etc.
- AR concerned about horses on the beach -

6. Date of next meeting

- Nov 2023 – ACTION CS to send date to members.