**Mevagissey Parish Ward Member report June 2020**

It has been another long month in lockdown.

My continued thanks to the Parish Council and volunteer group for all the work you are doing in managing the crisis locally, as well as what has been accomplished in terms of getting the village ready to ‘re-open’ to a certain degree including with the re-opening of the public toilets.

I have spent a huge amount of my time helping local people and businesses with queries surrounding the council’s schemes as well as wider benefit schemes.

I have also been working with Cormac now they are back up to strength to ensure green spaces and verges that need cutting around the parish get a cut.

Cornwall Council are also introducing a new verge-cutting policy in our towns and villages, which aims to encourage wildflowers and pollinators to thrive and allow more natural growth without compromising road safety.

Their Environment Service is responsible for the management of a massive 75 hectares of ‘urban verges’ across Cornwall - these are the verges you see within 30mph zones. Typically, these sites would be mown around eight times a year to a consistent countywide standard, starting in spring.

Of course, the pandemic meant that grounds maintenance operations on urban verges were held back, resulting in a flush of native wild flora, drawing in insects and other wildlife.

So, in keeping with the aim to create a greener Cornwall, they have drawn up new plans which will see changes to the way we manage our verges from this point on.

These changes are:

Annual cuts will be more than halved from eight times to only two or three.

Cutting will be done after the flowers have finished and seeds are set.

Environmental Growth means creating the space and conditions for more abundant, productive and healthier habitats, species and natural systems. These, in turn, improve the lives of people.

The Pollinator Action plan manages the Councils assets and operations to make sure they are more pollinator friendly.

These are measures I supported in the campaign for a Bee Friendly Council back in 2016 so are actions I welcome as long as the safety of verges at junctions etc is still prioritised.

Cormac have also carried out planned repairs to the steps at Polstreath, involving replacing approx. 40 metal treads and reinforcing the supports. They have also replaced the timber steps before the staircase at the same time.

Cormac also provided an update on the works at Chapel Point as follows:

*'I understand there is some confusion surrounding Chapel Point by the public, which I hope to clarify.*

*A developer working on the last plot along Chapel Point Lane applied to Cornwall Council for a temporary closure of part of Mevagissey FP 6 (closure notice attached). The Public Right of Way (PRoW) is not apparent on the ground, but they have done the right thing by closing a PRoW that legally exists. The walked route along Chapel Point Lane, which is also part of the SWCP trail, is not affected, and the route continues up to the waymark post and turns left onto National Trust land, and onto Chapel Point.*

*Notices were correctly installed at either end of the closed definitive route, with the eastern end being at the same location where the SWCP leaves Chapel Point Lane onto NT land. I can understand why this could be confusing so the notices have been removed. I have annotated a map below to explain the above.*

*From [26 May], Cormac will be onsite at Chapel Point, realigning a section of the SWCP that runs above Colona Beach by approx. 10m inland from the cliff edge, due to the rapid rate of cliff erosion. Cormac will be able to operate safely with the public still using the path, therefore no closure is required. Clear signs will be put up on site to guide walkers on a safe route past the operatives whilst works are in progress. This would not have happened without the cooperation and support from the landowners who wish to see a safe coast path route for walkers as much as we do.'*

Following the landslide around last weekend Cornwall Council's contractor has been out and made the area around the de-stabilised wall on West Wharf safe. I await further updates on the future responsibility for this site.

I have been working with Ocean Housing and residents to resolve anti-social behaviour area around Meadow Street and Wesley Court. This has been exacerbated by the lockdown restrictions but has now resolved.

Works to replace the existing sub-standard trash screen and headwall in the stream to the north of Valley Road Park are scheduled to commence on site from 22nd June 2020.

**Addendum 18 June:**

I have been pleased to work with the parish council and volunteer group on a successful bid for £2401 to the Parish Council from Cornwall Council from the Reopening Highstreets Safely Fund, which was granted on 18 June

This application aims to re-open Mevagissey safely by prioritising pedestrians and reducing traffic flow to essential journeys only. Signage to manage pedestrians and shop queues is proposed.

Whilst shops can limit numbers of people in their premises, much of the congestion is likely to be on the highway, in narrow streets with no or narrow pavements. These measures, if followed, will reduce traffic flows and direct queuing to reduce conflicts.

The application represents a clear and considered approach, based on appropriate local knowledge and dialogue led by the Mevagissey Parish Council in partnership with Mevagissey support group.

**Addendum 18 June:**

Content of my email to businesses and parish council of 18 June that was read out as part of the additional agenda item that was added on bins immediately after my report:

*‘As you know I have been in touch with Cornwall Council, Parish Council, various businesses and the volunteer group about the potential bin situation over the past few weeks.*

*My thoughts on this are as follows:*

*(I) Like it or not, the Harbour Trust is responsible for the area around the harbour. Myself or Cornwall Council have no authority to ask them to put bins anywhere on their property.*

*(II) I have already approached Cornwall Council about more emptying of bins for the area. They have said that the 'Route A' that sweeper Mark patrols through the centre of the village will have increased emptying of bins as and when needed.*

*(III) I have also spoken to Helen Nicholson, who is the Local Resilience Officer for Cornwall Council for the area and suggested additional bins be put and maintained in the following places:*

*(i) Cornwall Council maintained cobbles by Fisherman's Chippy*

*(ii) Cornwall Council maintained cobbles by Corner Shop*

*(iii) Cornwall Council maintained cobbles at end of path by the Hoss.*

*(iv) Church Street Car Park*

*I have suggested that if, as in the past, Cornwall Council won't allow new bins, that they relocate bins from under-utilised sites in the wider village.*

*I await a reply from Helen on this.*

*(IV) I would also support a communal skip in Kiers Carpark as mentioned by Cllr Facey as long as an agreement could be reached to regularly empty it.*

*As you say, it would not practicable to put bins outside businesses in the village because of access problems and potential obstructions to Highways and Footways.*

*I think these are the only places in the centre of the village where additional bins could be placed on Council land without obstructing the highway.*

*In terms of the toilets, these are the responsibility of the Parish Council, so I wouldn't want to speak on their behalf. Perhaps the Parish Council could approach Cornwall Council about putting maintained bins in the toilets as a temporary measure. But that would really be a matter for the Parish Council and their contractor to decide on.*

*As you say, Cornwall Council have in the past been reluctant to put in additional bins or move bins around if they are seen to be there exclusively to serve waste from businesses, because businesses are rightly supposed to have commercial waste agreements to dispose of the waste that they generate.*

*I hope that they may review this position given the extraordinary times we are in, even temporarily.*

*But one thing that may help is if an approach to Cornwall Council like this was made, that it was led by the Parish Council rather than the business community, so it could be reasonably seem as one on behalf of the community rather than just the businesses.*

*You may wish to attend the Parish Council meeting this evening and ask them about this.’*