

Minutes of Porthcurno Residents' Association Ordinary Meeting

on 15 June 2023 at 7.30-9pm
Clare Learning Centre, PK Porthcurno

Chair: Tiffany Coates (PKRA Chair)

1. Welcome and introductions

TC welcomed everyone and everyone introduced themselves. TC said it was good to see so many people and welcomes Simon Hocking (SH), Area Ranger from the National Trust, Zoe Curnow (ZC) (Executive Director) from the Minack and Julia Twomlow (JT), PK Porthcurno Director.

2. Apologies for absence and confirmation of quorate

About a dozen apologies had been/were received and it was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

3. Agreement of [minutes from Feb 2023](#) - these were agreed.

4. Matters arising

- 4.1 Bus services - TC is still in contact with Cornwall Buses about the service but had nothing new to report. There is still some disparity in whether drivers stop when asked under the "Hail and Ride" scheme.

5. Committee updates and reports

- a) Treasurer's update – John Wheeler (JW) reported that our current bank balance stood at £448. It had gone down due to expenditure on Valley Voices, which cost approx. £90 each due to hire charge for the Clare Building and refreshments. The donations on the night helped and he urged members if they could to keep this coming, and if they could to pay the suggested voluntary membership fee of £5 per person (see [here](#) for PKRA bank details and how to donate online).
- b) Current planning applications – TC reported that there was nothing to report about any outstanding applications or had no new ones of significance to relay to members, including either Porthcylla or the proposal for a car park in the field adjacent to the layby towards the top of the Valley.
- c) Highways and byways

Maunsells' Hill – concerns were raised by some members about the overhanging vegetation on the left-hand side (going up) at the bottom of Maunsells's Hill. It was noted that the owners of the land have argued that the vegetation slows traffic down, but some of those present did not agree. **Action: the Committee** would ask the owners for their views before deciding whether to report the overhang as a hazard to the PC or Cornwall Council.

20mph speed limit – it was noted that elsewhere in the Valley, some 20mph speed limit signs were obscured by foliage at present so this is not helpful. **Action:** PKRA Committee to report to Cornwall Council.

Reporting – it was agreed that residents should always report highways problems via the Cornwall reporting tool (as well as escalating to the Parish Council or District Councillor if necessary). Several people had had a good response from Cormac to dealing with whatever they had reported. The link is:

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/report-something/>

Footpaths - Thanks were given to Simon Hocking for taking care of the NT footpaths. PKRA Committee agreed to email the PC to report an overgrown footpath from Raftra to the church. Overgrown footpaths are not only inconvenient but a risk to health with ticks and adders being present. Again, people were asked to use the reporting tool as above. SH asked if others had noticed the increase in human excrement on the footpaths, and some agreed they had seen this and in other public spaces too. This again was something that should be reported via to Cornwall Council on their website tool.

6. Social activities and events

- a) Valley Voices – TC reported on the three successful talks organised by Lucy. These were much enjoyed, and Lucy Coyne will be organising another series in the autumn/winter. TC thanked all those who had given talks.
- b) Coronation Picnic – this had been an enjoyable afternoon, made extra special by the fantastic cake made by Angela Thorp, PKRA member.
- c) Future events – It was still hoped to arrange a volunteer session for people to help the Museum with garden maintenance.
- d) If anyone had any ideas for social events, they should let Tiffany or Lucy know.

7. Updates from external organisations and partners

- a) Brian Clemens (District Councillor) - apologies received.
- b) PK Porthcurno
 - JT reported that this first full year of both car parks being run by PK Porthcurno had not been “without its challenges”. Several residents agreed that the parking signs about paying were confusing and visitors were often observed talking about this or getting caught out. JT said she would look at this again with the company who provided the signs. PK Porthcurno was not making a large amount of profit due to the running and lease costs. However the new horsebox coffee venue is doing well.
 - There had been some staffing changes recently at the Museum so if people were unsure who to ask about anything to contact her.
 - JT said she was planning to give free entry to those who live in PK, not imminently, but will let us know when. She needs to agree how to evidence residency, but the arrangements would likely include residents being able to bring a couple of guests

with them. A resident reminded people that local residents can also get free parking at Lands End if they register their car at the Lands End information office. This only needs to be done once.

- JT said there would be a new exhibition on the history of the mobile phone opening in the autumn.
- Bee colonies have been exceptional so there will be increased honey in the shop for sale.
- PK Porthcurno had recently won Bronze in a national award scheme under best Small Attraction.
- She was still waiting for the results for funding to develop the pub and site generally.
- There was no news from Cornerstone on the planned phone mast.
- She confirmed that coaches were actively discouraged and would be banned in July and August.

TC thanked JT

c) Minack Theatre

- ZC recapped on the current programme and announced that Mon and Tues would be the closed days in the winter. They were still controlling visitors numbers and turning people away when fully booked. There was a need to continue to push this message heavily so that people understood that when the sign said Fully Booked, it was fully booked!
- The Field on the right of Minack Lane has been developed and landscaped to remove fencing, and improve pedestrian safety as well
- The Visitor centre and café is being renovated now so that it is ready for the autumn. A resident asked if the café will be open to non Minack visitors. Zoe said that this is under discussion; operationally she would like this to happen.
- There will be fireworks in the evening performances of the Proms only this year, not the afternoon ones. The use of fireworks generally will be reviewed.
- New Trustees' recruitment will be happening soon; there will be a pack for anyone interested.
- Education work is increasing and very busy
- She was looking at the feasibility of re-instating a lifebuoy (which used to be at the intersection of the path up from beach to coast path at the bottom of Minack cliffs) toward the fishing rocks/point.

TC thanked ZC. A resident commented that the gardens are looking magnificent, and others agreed. ZC was asked if there were any plans to start hiring out cushions again. ZC said probably not given the time and cost in doing this and looking after them, but she may look at something for people to buy. She would love to have something made locally so if anyone knew of anyone who would be able to do this to let her know. She said that the new more spacious seating arrangements on the terrace have helped as most people now had a backrest to lean on.#

c) National Trust

- Life-saving buoy/equipment – SH said that if they were able to put one in they would need weekly inspection, so he asked if anyone was interested in volunteering to do this, to please let him know.
- Ponies on the cliffs (Treen and Rospletha) – he said that they plan to reduce the number of ponies over the winter but have them for a longer period. Again, if anyone can help with keeping an eye on them to let him know.
- A set of keys had been found on the Treen/Porthcurno cliff path - SH will send a photo for the Committee to publicise. Members suggested he contact the Logan Rock pub and also the campsite to see if anyone had reported them missing. **Action: SH**
- Ash dieback and Dutch Elm diseases are still an issue and there will be more felling. The field owned by the NT between the turnoffs to Treen and Penberth has been planted with a variety of blossom trees that he hopes will be an attractive view in the spring, as well as supporting wildlife. The “Bog garden” opposite the Wearhouse by the footpath will be developed as planned a few years ago, with Gunnera growth being limited. The latter was necessary under invasive plants legislation. He agreed with a comment from residents that it would help to make the area more welcoming, and that better signage was needed as people did not use or know about that area.
- Wild camping – SH urged people to please report this to him on 01736 785903 or 07483926697 at any time day or night.
- He said the new re-routed coast path was proving popular. Members who were using it agreed. A new memorial seat may be installed there after someone had requested this. The condition of the existing memorial seat halfway up the footpath that runs up the cliff behind the Telegraph hut was discussed and SH he was trying to establish who is responsible for this. If anyone knows anything let him know.
TC thanked SH.

8. Any other business

A member asked about the lifebuoy above Porthchapel beach which is no longer on the footpath since this was re-routed some years ago. LC said she had emailed St Aubyn’s Estate twice on the email address shown on their website but has received no reply. SH said he would email her with contact details of someone. **Action: SH**

9. Date of next meeting - tbc