

MEETING No.1338

**Minutes of the meeting of Feock Parish Council's Access & Amenities Committee held on
Thursday 21st March 2024 at 7pm
at the Parish Council Office, Market Street, Devoran TR3 6QA**

Members present: Cllr Keith Hambly-Staite, Feock Ward, Chair
Cllr Rick Bowers, Feock Ward
Cllr Beverly Johnson, Feock Ward
Cllr Richard Brickell, Feock Downs Ward
Cllr Anne Allen, Devoran Ward
Cllr Phil Allen, Carnon Downs Ward
Cllr Jan Allen, Carnon Downs Ward
Cllr Mark Griffiths, Carnon Downs Ward

In attendance: Debbie Searle, Assistant Parish Clerk

Public present: Laura Snell, Cornwall Wildlife Trust
Edwin Lanyon, Feock Eco Group
Sue Cooper, Feock Eco Group
Dee Reeves, Restronguet Creek Society
Martin Morse, Devoran Quay Preservation Society
3 members of the public

1. INTRODUCTION BY CHAIRMAN

The Chair reminded everyone present of the Council's commitment to the Civility & Respect Pledge which applies to Councillors, staff, and members of the public. He welcomed those present and particularly Laura Snell from the Wildlife Trust and Edwin Lanyon representing the Feock Eco Group who had provided reports.

2. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLUTION: Cllr Brickell proposed the minutes of the Access & Amenities Committee meeting held on 27th February 2024 as a true record of the meeting. This was seconded by Cllr A Allen and carried by the meeting. The Chair highlighted for information item no.12 from the minutes.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr P Allen declared an interested in agenda item no. 11 stating that he owned the field adjoining the site to be discussed.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION &

6. TO RECEIVE THE CORNWALL WILDLIFE TRUST AND FEOCK ECO REPORTS ON THE TRAM ROAD AND MAKE APPROPRIATE RECOMMENDATIONS TO FULL COUNCIL

The Chair proposed, seconded by Cllr Bowers and carried by the meeting that **standing orders be suspended to allow an extended (initially to 30 minutes) public participation session.**

The Chair introduced Laura Snell (LS) from the Cornwall Wildlife Trust. Her role is advisory only and gives a supportive role to people managing a county wildlife site. Describing the Tramway she observed that we have pockets of salt marsh which is quite a rare habitat in Cornwall, banks with trees along the side of the creek, which

are good commuting corridors for bats, and intertidal salt marsh which is good for birds and some pockets of grassland which are quite intensively used. There are things that can be done, as stated in her report, which can uplift interest. She expressed that she can come up with an extensive list of suggestions but what can be done has to be manageable and subject to funding.

During questions Cllr A Allen observed that the report had indicated that the Creekside and habitat was hospitable for Otters and questioned if there were any Otters there. LS stated that Otters have large territories and potentially would be coming down to forage but not to breed in that area. A member of the public confirmed that they had seen Otters in the area.

The question of walking with dogs were raised. Cllr J Allen stated that having just returned from Australia she noted that dogs are kept on leads there and the difference in wildlife is stunning.

Dee Reeves (DR) of the Restronguet Creek Society stated that she agreed on the dog issue and had spoken to people walking with dogs off lead in an area where hundreds of Curlew and Redshank could be seen but it was a difficult call. LS agreed that it was tricky subject to broach with people.

The Chair indicated that he hoped there would be the opportunity for further discussion about the value of reports and surveys, such as the one presented, and how they can be used to our benefit in other parts of the parish.

Sue Cooper stated that, having been on the Council's planning committee, she was aware of the lack of formal protection for these sites and wished to enthuse the local population people about wildlife to the extent that they don't apply to cut down trees and want to learn the value of wildlife corridors. She hoped to get a lot of local people involved to undertake small achievable jobs such as cutting the gorse, also scalloping on the edges and blending margins which are important for wildlife. She would value the Parish Council's input into informing people and helping to put up informative signage and holding discussion groups. She asked Laura Snell what achievable little goals, like micromanaging the gorse or micromanaging the margins, can be done to improve wildlife without harming public access. To improve public quality of access rather than quantity of access. She further questioned LS about the Japanese Knotweed stating that in the report on the species list she notes that it is a woodland plant however it is not in woodland but in the wetlands. Laura Snell stated that she had seen a sprig in behind the quay. Sue Cooper further questioned whether it was something that they should be worried about or is it something to just be monitored. LS stated that there was a responsibility as a landowner to not cause it to spread and you are probably best off getting a specialist in and must weigh up the balance between excavating and herbicide which is what an expert can advise on

Edwin Lanyon (EL) supported Sue Cooper to get people involved and needed them to agree and be onboard. He had been working on a field recently donated to the Parish Council which has been planted up as a community area. He circulated a plan of the planting which included information to try and help people appreciate the project and take ownership of it so that it becomes a meaningful thing.

Johan and Edwin Lanyon were the authors of the field planting plan and the committee thanked them for their time and expertise in delivering an exciting project for the council. They carefully considered which trees to plant and where to plant them, to maximise the benefit of the wildlife for the setting, he gave information on each species stating that they would create interest throughout the year and provide good habitat for wildlife.

The Chair asked EL if he would like to add to the notes he had previously provided regarding the Tram Road. EL replied that he had walked along the Tram with LS when she had carried out the survey. He had also carried out a couple of other walks with the Feock Eco Group and they had discussed how it could be managed. The key take aways were that it needs to be managed in a way to still allow easy access for vehicles and people and does that

without having any unnecessary impacts on the wildlife, for example allowing edges to grow but without impacting the road and to minimise herbicide use along the sides of the road.

The Chairman referred to SC's previous comments regarding the involvement of the County Wildlife Trust in the future and questioned LS as to what she could see her role being with the Parish Council, its community and the Trust. LS advised that her role was to give advice, they also have a new community engagement officer and there maybe links that can be made there subject to available resources/

EL commented that the new field would be a nice amenity area for people out on walks, the location being ideal for a stopover on a walk. The management strategy would be to mow the central area to create a meadow. After mowing it is important to rake up the grass clippings so that the nutrients don't go back into the ground. It will also be helpful to mulch the trees with the clippings in the first couple of years.

Cllr P Allen stated that the Parish Council had been working for many years to improve the County Wildlife Site at Carnon Valley and may be looking to the Cornwall Wildlife Trust for advice with this. LS stated that she would be keen to help with this.

Cllr J Allen asked if it was worth putting in more species to attract insects. EL stated that they wished to keep to mostly native species, but the Gelder Rose and flowering Cherries planted would be good for insects. He is also hoping to obtain seeds and plant some daffodils and violets too, and these would be a nod to the market gardening history along the Tram Road. LS stated that a lot of insects rely on leaves to eat and native is always preferable.

Martin Morse (MM), the Chair of the Devoran Quay Preservation Society, stated that he welcomed the report provided by LS and the Society are keen to follow up some of the recommendations within it. Regarding the knotweed mentioned the Society were not aware of this and would be delighted to liaise with the Parish Council on recommendations of any contractors they may have for guidance on the best way to manage it. The second issue is the right of way down to Carnon Mine, clearly there is an issue with the stepping stones and there are divided opinions about them within the society, he believes the problem is that unless the level of the existing stones is raised considerably that at each high-water springs they will be re-silted up. Therefore, whilst in principle it is a good idea to make it walker friendly there are concerns that in the long term it may not be the best thing to do.

Cllr A Allen advised that knotweed had also been seen at Greenbank Road and by the Norway Inn therefore it appears to be spreading by water. MM stated that the small amount they have is inland and not by the creek. LS stated that she had some more information regarding this which she would forward to Cllr Bowers.

Dee Reeves (Restronguet Creek Society) spoke to state that she understood that the County Wildlife Site is the creek itself and wondered if the Parish Council would share the report with Mylor Parish Council and Perranarworthal Parish Council to indicate to them that they may also wish to look at what is going on. She advised that on the south side of the creek there is a Heronry with Herons and Egrets present in great numbers. There is activity there, a large boat has been moored there on private fundus and it is likely there will be further moorings installed in the near future which may disturb the Heronry. She believes the Creekside and fundus are all privately owned. The trees on the southern edge do have a TPO on them and she would appreciate the Parish Council spreading the word with dialogue with other Parish Councils. She advised that there is a new society 'The Friends of Mylor Creek' who are very keen and already active.

Cllr P Allen stated that he is working with the Special Area of Conservation stakeholder group to come forward with a comprehensive plan to manage the pacific oysters which are going to have a devastating impact on the ecology and character of the creek in terms of its foreshore and mud. And the Chair said that through Active

Feock he believed that we are awakening to the need for debate between different parts of the community with their varied and specific interests.

The Chair commented that as a trustee of the Wildlife Trust had been a strong advocate of partnerships between the Trust and Parish Councils. There are currently a number of things going on in Feock, we have the Feock Eco Group who together with the Parish Council organised the walk on the Tram which was led by SC. We have the report provided by LJ, the comment from EL and a funded (a feasibility study to determine what the priorities are) project called Active Feock which is about the local wellbeing of our residents through improving the condition of our footpaths, cycle paths and pavements and clothing those environments with/and enhancing nature. These things will be discussed in the focus groups with the environment focus group having input from LS. He asked LS what the value of ecological surveys of this kind were and what steps can be taken to enhance the natural environment. LS responded that in terms of her role they (CWT) needed to know about the condition of the environment and the County Wildlife Sites in Cornwall. County Wildlife Sites are the backbone of nature in Cornwall, and though they aren't statutorily protected, they are the hub for a lot of wildlife species. They (CWT) can help inform and support funding applications and provide an evidence base, on which to build on, of our local environment.

Professor Richard French-Constant (RFC) spoke to inform that in terms of partnerships he (University of Exeter) have had students working on Pacific oysters, and also students working on silver-studded blue butterfly populations in the Carnon Valley. It is clear that these reports are useful and should be used. LS commented that they can provide information on legal implications if there are protected species.

Cllr Rick Bowers questioned LS that if there is encroachment onto common land can they provide advice on how to deal with it sensitively. LS stated that cumulative impact of encroachment on County Wildlife Sites is a problem, people will throw garden waste, and this is a key way that invasive species get into the environment. It is a problem but one for enforcement regulators to deal with.

Cllr Mark Griffiths thanked LS for the report, he felt that a lot of the suggested recommendations were for minimal disturbance and to be sympathetic when cutting back hedges. He felt it was interesting that the Trust now had a liaison officer. He asked if Highways were on the same page and were sympathetic to when they should and shouldn't carry out cutting. LS answered that she believed that they were but there were also Health & Safety issues which needed to be abided by. She believes Cornwall Council/Cormac have public statements out stating that they are sympathetic to this issue.

The Chair stated that Cllr P Allen had highlighted to the parish council that the Tram is in multiple ownership (the Quay Preservation Society, individual landowners, the Parish Council and Highways) the problems have been enormous, and this highlights that there needs to be a working group with a modus operandi on how to proceed with this issue for Active Feock.

The Chair put forward at the end of the discussion two resolutions were required.

RESOLUTION: Cllr Hambly-Staite proposed the following motion be taken to the full Parish Council meeting. **It is recommended that Council in support of its Climate, Biodiversity and Well Being policies, commissions wherever practical, ecological surveys and management plans for areas such as footpath environments and public spaces which are being developed through Active Feock and other projects to help make these areas attractive, safe and inviting to encourage public use.**

This was seconded by Cllr Griffiths and carried by the meeting.

Cllr Bowers wished to thank LJ for the report and discussion followed in which Cllr A Allen stated it was an excellent report and now the Council needed to review it and walk the Tram to see the recommendations. Cllr P

Allen commented that it had previously been agreed that a group would be set up to walk through the plan and the two reports and make recommendations accordingly.

RESOLUTION: Cllr Bowers proposed the following. **The Parish Council thank Laura and Edwin, and the Feock Eco Group for their report. Accept their report and consider their recommendations.** This was seconded by Cllr Johnson and carried by the meeting.

The Chair asked RFS to inform the meeting of his expertise on this subject. RFS advised that he worked for the University of Exeter based in Penryn and is an Ecologist. He loves the report and in terms of scope and ambition it should be extended to the whole of Restronguet creek if not the Fal. He stated that there is a huge lack of information particularly about that which is underwater. There are lots of people undertaking lots of projects however it is all disconnected this provides a unique opportunity use Restronguet Creek as the way forward.

The Chair thanked LS and EL for their reports and the members of the public present for their participation. He expressed that the meeting had highlighted the use of the Parish Council as a facilitator and things can be better if the voice of the community is behind us.

Standing orders were resumed.

7. MYFEOCK WELLBEING REPORT FROM INFORMATION & WELLBEING ADVISER

The Chair highlighted that Cathy Whitmore, Health & Wellbeing Advisor, had provided a report where she raised a number of points, including the value of the Repair Café to communicate issues around the parish.

8. CLERKS REPORT ON ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Clerks report which had been previously circulated was:

- Clerk has contacted Cornwall Area Partnership and requested the issue re transport to wellbeing hubs is put on a future agenda. Wellbeing is on the April agenda so this may be able to raise under this item.
- Full Council has approved local groups funding with a maximum of £200 per grant except in exceptional circumstances and applications will be brought to Access & Amenities Committee for approval each month until the funding is exhausted.
- A39 has been temporarily patched with resurfacing planned for the 29th of April.
- Clerk to set up a meeting with contractor and Councillors regarding Enhanced LMP project and ascertain how much funding remains.
- Awaiting response from Insurance company regarding volunteers helping with any drainage works at Pengelly Meadows, Full Council have approved funding from reserves for this work.
- Notice provided to Cllr Brickell for display on Pengelly Meadows recreation area when gates need to be kept clear for grass cutting access.
- Community funding applied for from SWW for benches for the Tram Road field.
- Details of Focus Groups for Active Feock circulated to Councillors.
- Speedwatch Co-ordinator advised of Committees comments and has provided an article for a future issue of Connect.

9. HIGHWAYS UPDATES INCLUDING ANY URGENT ISSUES THAT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL NEXT MEETING

Cllr A Allen stated that small Elm seedlings had grown up on the verge at the bottom of Trolver Hill (opposite the chapel) which needed to be cutback.

ACTIONS: Contractor to be contacted and instructed to cutback.

10. PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY ISSUES INCLUDING URGENT ISSUES THAT CANNOT WAIT UNTIL NEXT MEETING

The Chairman allowed a member of the public to speak who expressed concern that footpath no.46 (which leads out of Harcourt, along a muddy lane and over the stile to Trolver Croft) is being used by cars who are

speeding down there due to satnav directions. It is a sunken lane and they are driving along the bridleway onto the footpath and becoming stuck and he and neighbours are having to pull them out. They are driving over the footpath part and over the primroses and wildflowers which is illegal. They are getting stuck on the footpath and creating an obstruction. He believed the issue was caused by satnav directions and the fact that the footpath had been cutback. He gave details of incidents when the Police had had to be called.

He stated the if the cutting back of the brambles stopped then it should resolve the issue. Cllr A Allen asked if a gate would help. He stated that this would not help as people would not shut the gate. He believed that trying to change google maps or sat nav sites would not solve the problem either due to the number of websites and stated that people had already tried this. The Chair agreed that the Parish Council would talk to our contractor on site to establish if he had been trimming these hedges but had not given any new instructions to do so. Cllr P Allen stated that the landowner is responsible for cutting their hedges that grow over footpaths and not the Parish Council.

Cllr Bowers stated that he wished to thank him for rescuing people who had been trapped. Cllr Bowers further stated that he had been advised that there had been disagreement in Harcourt about signage and that he believed people felt the car issue should be dealt with via google.

ACTION: Cllr A Allen recommended that the Parish Council should look at the signage, who is cutting back the hedges and carry out a site visit.

11. LAND & PLAYING FIELDS UPDATE

The Chair at the Tram field site in the afternoon there is a need to know if there are any funds required for further works to the site. Cllr Brickell and Cllr A Allen confirmed that on inspection they found that the gate can be kept, also the hinged gate post however new hinges were needed as those in situ were beginning to rust out. A new post is needed for the latch end and this needs to be moved further in towards the field by a couple of metres which would give a wider space between the Tram road and the new post to put in a pedestrian gate. The Parish Council will need to purchase two new posts, new hinges and a new pedestrian gate. Cllr Brickell confirmed that the posts and hinges can be supplied from stock but a pedestrian gate will need to be purchased. There will need to be a little scraping carried out on the underneath to ensure the gate operates smoothly. Cllr A Allen also stated that is a need for a sign to state no parking and access needed at all times. The Chair stated that he believed there should be a removable post sited to stop people parking there, he wished to ensure that access was maintained for disabled people/mobility scooters. Following discussion, it was agreed that the situation could be monitored to establish if the removable post was needed. The Chair confirmed that the planting had been carried out, however the required sign still had to be discussed. There was a review of work being undertaken at the Tramway field. The chair thanked Richard Brickell for his work on the entrance gate.

ACTION: The Chair will undertake to discuss the sign required and the benches with the Assistant Clerk.

RESOLUTION: It was agreed that a sum of £200 would be allowed for a pedestrian gate and £100 for a sign. This was proposed by Cllr Brickell, seconded by Cllr A Allen and carried by the meeting.

Cllr Brickell reported that he had cut the grass at Pengelly Meadows.

12. RISK ASSESSMENTS

Cllr Bowers stated that he and Cllr P Allen had visited the Carnon Yard site. He was in receipt of the risk assessment from 2017 and had done an amendment which he tabled. He stated that if the footpath leading down to the site at Carnon Yard is going to be part of Active Feock then there is work that needs to be done on it. Cllr A Allen stated that she had walked the path and had made a suggestion that it is for the more able bodied. Cllr P Allen stated that a principle was that they should not discriminate between able bodied and non-able bodied, and was reluctant to give away that principle but understood that there are some circumstances where

this cannot happen. The Chairman stated that he felt a small discreet sign advising people of an alternative route would be an acceptable solution.

ACTION: Sign advising an alternative route be produced.

Cllr Bowers stated that his second issue would be the mine shaft, it was very difficult to get to because of the overgrowth and brambles. Cllr P Allen stated that we have been assured by inspection that the shaft is filled. Cllr Bowers confirmed that it is fenced in and currently it isn't possible to access it to inspect it.

ACTIONS: Cllr P Allen and Cllr Bowers to attempt to access the mineshaft to carry out inspection ensuring that it could not be accessed by others and the Assistant Clerk to check with Cornwall Council if there are any specific regulations relating to mine shafts. David Woolcock to be asked to treat the benches with preservative.

It was discussed that an issue relating to clearance and a boat left there would be looked at during a meeting on common land. Cllr Bowers felt this was an issue that needed looking at sooner rather than later and that it may be part of the signage discussion.

ACTION: To place common land on a future full Parish Council meeting agenda.

Cllr Bowers raised a further issue over responsibility for persons swimming off the land and questioned if signage was needed. He further raised the possibility of beach fires.

ACTION: These issues to be discussed at a future signage meeting.

Cllr Bowers was also concerned that the boat park needed to be tidied.

ACTION: This issue to be referred to a working group to be activated in April.

Cllr Griffiths questioned liability for dog attacks.

13. ACTIVE FEOCK PROJECT UPDATE

The Chair advised that a meeting had been held setting rules of engagement. Data is being gathered and we should have a good evidence base. The PCN is helping with this. All Councillors have been invited to the focus groups and further valuable contributors have also been invited.

14. VOLUNTEER DRIVE SCHEME AND ISSUES WITH CAPACITY

Further volunteers are needed and the Chair felt that more should be done on the social side to bring volunteers together and it would be a good use of the Chairman's Allowance budget. There are issues arising from Imagine If and people are asking for transport out of the parish.

ACTION: Cathy Whitmore to report to the next A & A meeting.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.17pm.