

PORTREATH REPORT DECEMBER 2024

Welcome to the last report of 2024 and I do not know where the last twelve months have gone, apart from too quickly.

The work on Tregea Hill is scheduled for January, however I am assured that it won't require a full weeks road closure and it should be one day maximum, when hopefully nobody will leave their vehicle within the work area. Confirmation of the date should be received by the end of this month.

The new crossing point on Beach Road will be completed by the end of March as it has to be done in this financial year and at this stage we do not know how the Local Highways Scheme will function after 1 May 2025 where Cornwall Councillors can decide on pedestrian safety schemes that will benefit the Community.

Unfortunately I am still awaiting the full reports for the traffic surveys that were carried out between the 25th September and 2nd October, however the mean speeds were 40.8mph in one direction near Elm Farm and 35.2mph in the other direction whilst Chapel Hill was 37.4 mph and 36.4mph.

On the 14th November the Cornwall Council Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the Flooding and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Annual Report from July 2023 to June 2024.

The presentation was supplied by Mark Worsfold the Director of Asset Management and Alan Burrows, Head of Local Government on behalf of South West Water and Frank Newell on behalf the Environment Agency.

We all know that rainfall is an issue and indeed from July 2023 when we had 232% of average rainfall, every month was well above until January of this year when we had 82% followed by February at 245%, the highest since records began with above average until June when we had 49% of average rainfall. The October to June period was the second wettest since records began in 1871.

From a Portreath prospective, the community relies upon the Portreath Tunnel to convey the river flows out to sea. If this tunnel were to have its

capacity exceeded the current flood flow route is along the main road through the village. The ground level near the coast is higher than that of this road, which can lead to the ponding of flood water, which in turn could flood up to 104 properties.

The tunnel has two key issues – it's capacity surcharging during a flood of a 1 in 10 year frequency and the accumulation of debris on the screen at the tunnel entrance. The screen has now got alarms fitted that should give operatives one hour to attend to clear any debris build up.

The Portreath Flood Resilience Project is aiming to create a new formal flood water flow route through the community using the leat channel that is routed through the village. The aim is to increase the capacity of this tunnel and make it suitably robust for this purpose. This is a complex task which is currently being worked through. The EA are also looking to utilise property flood resilience measures to provide additional protection to at risk properties.

Funding the project remains a key issue and the EA for working with Defra to access funding sources additional to Flood Defence Grant in Aid, which is not sufficient to cover the expected costs.

Bathing Water Quality was another item covered and Cornwall has 89 designated bathing waters and the bathing water controller has a statutory responsibility to provide a bathing water profile and bathing water classification on each designated bathing water they are responsible for.

The EA provides Pollution Risk Forecasts and SWW provide Combined Sewage Overflow notifications for a number of sites but the water controller does not have a statutory to provide notifications when these events happen but in some areas works with the RNLI and other groups to provide posters to warn the public. The challenge for SWW is stopping the discharges and this may take five years to deal with all the bathing water sites. As well as the amount of rainfall, the increase in properties does cause extra strain on the sewage system.

The problem is the combined sewer system, which will cost trillions of pounds to separate and even estates built in the 70's and 80's would have a

separate surface water run off but would eventually run into an old combined sewer.

Tomorrow evening is the Community Area Partnership Meeting, which this time is online only to save going out on a cold December evening, where all Councillors and residents can join in. One of the items on the agenda relates to the proposed new diagnostic centre on land within the Camborne Redruth Hospital Grounds.