



COUNCIL OF THE ISLES OF SCILLY

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The Householder

IMPORTANT – this is not a circular!

5 January 2015

Dear Islanders,

We need your help. From 19th to 22nd January 2015, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) will be visiting the Isles of Scilly as part of a consultation on the impact of applying UK and European water legislation to the islands' drinking water supplies and sewerage disposal.

The implications for islanders and businesses are profound. To meet current standards for public health and the environment will require a substantial investment to rebuild our water and sewerage infrastructure across all inhabited islands. The cost is likely to be tens of millions of pounds. Central government has no current plans to make such an investment. Self-funding through increases in Council water and sewerage charges and the various private water suppliers would be prohibitively expensive for all.

Non-compliance is not an option. Aside from the heavy fines that the regulatory bodies may impose, individual businesses on the islands also run the risk of incurring penalties and violating the terms of their insurance policies. The islands' reputation as a tourist destination would also suffer immense harm if we were found to be non-compliant.

We ask our residents and businesses to respond to this potential threat to the viability of our islands. It is vitally important that you each respond to the DEFRA consultation. There will be an opportunity to do this during the DEFRA visit. In order to ensure that everybody is fully aware of the details, Councillors are organising meetings on each of the inhabited islands the week before the DEFRA visit to provide an opportunity to find out more about the implications of the regulatory changes and also to ask questions directly to Members and Officers of the Council of the Isles of Scilly. The dates, times and locations are as follows:

Monday, 12th January, 10am – 1pm: St Agnes Island Hall (**please note updated venue**)

Tuesday, 13th January, 10am – 1pm: Bryher Community Centre

Wednesday, 14 January, 10am – 1pm: Tresco Community Centre (Social Room)

Thursday 15 January, 10am – 1pm: St Mary's Town Hall

Friday 16 January, 10am – 1pm: St Martin's Community Centre (Reading Room)

We welcome the legislation insofar as it provides benefits to public health and the environment; however, the DEFRA consultation documentation minimises some of the key implications for the islands' residents and business. Please help us to get this message across.

Yours faithfully,

Cllrs. Amanda Martin, Gareth O'Neill and Steve Sims

...working for a strong, sustainable and dynamic island community