

**From:** [Martin Nicolle](#)  
**To:** [Stephen Swabey](#); [Lisa Walton](#); [Frances Grottick](#); ["Andy Frazer"](#); [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** ["Julian Branscombe"](#); ["Natalie Geen"](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Climate Adaptation - Bryher Sea Defences P/22/076 and Council Meeting May 30  
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**Stephen Swabey (Council/Applicant), Lisa Walton (Planning), All Councillors, Wildlife Trust, Duchy**

**Climate adaptation on Bryher – Need for a stronger partnership approach.  
P/22/076**

**We feel that the above planning application for Bryher should be withdrawn and then, without delay, a partnership established (including the community and others) to develop a strategy for the short and longer-term and come up with new proposals, interalia taking account of how much funding is available and how this can best be used.**

We, and I think our whole Bryher community, recognise the potential impact of climate change on the island, the complexity of the issues (technical, environmental, economic, heritage and social), and the difficult decisions that may need to be made (when considering both the short and long term).

We do appreciate all the work that has been done to date by the Council, but we believe that there must be a stronger stakeholder partnership approach, with the community at its heart.

Without wanting to be critical, the approach to date and represented in the above planning application has been a rather 'old-style' technical way of doing things - with very limited involvement of the community in assessing the risks, identifying the options, and agreeing a strategy for the best way forward. This has resulted in poor design decisions, based on inaccurate information and inadequate understanding of Bryher's environment, economy, heritage and culture. Examples include:

- Designing the coastal defences before detailed investigation of the risks (particularly to the water supply) and the alternative options, and before development and agreement (with all stakeholders) of a long-term strategy.
- Planning to deliver materials during the summer months, without considering the consequences for the tourism economy. This is illustrated in the Council's latest update on the climate adaptation project (for the 30<sup>th</sup> May council meeting), which states that material deliveries to Great Porth North 'would adversely affect two accommodation providers' (does this exclude the Hotel?), whereas obviously it would adversely affect the whole island and its image as a beautiful, unspoilt island retreat. Clearly, the challenge of 'no work or deliveries during the tourism season' should have been one of the most important criteria that contractors had to address at the start in their tenders.

Furthermore, the Council's proposed coastal defences do not seem to align with earlier strategic reports - most importantly the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2) - and have clearly raised significant objections from the 'statutory consultees' (Environment Agency, Natural England, and Historic England).

Indeed, the potential for damage to the environment, reputation and economy of Bryher, and the whole of Scilly, is significant.

We urge the Council to please now review its overall approach and develop a stronger partnership for Bryher (including the community, Council, Duchy, Wildlife Trust, Environment Agency, South-West Water, and others) to discuss the issues/risks, then quickly agree a new strategy for the short and long term, and finally steer and monitor progress.

As indicated in the latest project update to the 30<sup>th</sup> May council meeting, just such an assessment of options is already planned, largely dictated by what funding is left in the pot.

It appears that this now includes the suggestion, first made at the public meeting in March 2022, that, instead of hard defences, drainage should be improved to take any overtopping water quickly back into the sea. It has also been suggested that repairing and

strengthening existing defences, using existing or locally available materials would be a good short-term plan. Significant work is needed on Bryher.

The Bryher community wants to work constructively with the Council. This is, therefore, a perfect time for a review and to get together a community Climate Resilience Group to coordinate and communicate. This partnership approach will help to ensure that there is a robust strategy, including both a short-term action plan and a longer-term vision of climate change adaptation on Bryher. This will hopefully be efficient and effective, and may bring significant opportunities, e.g., for positive publicity and for securing funding.

Regards

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