

Liv Rickman

From: Mary Lowth [REDACTED]
Sent: 26 March 2023 19:23
To: Robert Francis
Subject: Letter to Scilly Council, regarding planned Bryher Sea Defences.

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Dear Mr Francis, Members of the Council of the Isles of Scilly, and Scilly planning department,

My sincere apologies – I am resending this email with a proper subject line!

We are writing to add our voices to the concerns of other Bryher residents about the planned timing of the proposed Sea Defence works for Bryher. My husband and I share Bank Cottage, Bryher, with my sister, Alex, and we run the Moorings holiday cottage which sits just below us, on the edge of Great Par beach, Bryher.

We are of course appreciative that Bryher's Sea Defences are being addressed, but we are very concerned that this work should not take place in the summer season, as seems to be currently planned. The FAQ section of the Climate Adaption Scilly web pages suggests an original intention for the work to take place between September 2022 and May 2023, but as this didn't happen we assumed that it would be planned for autumn 2023. However, we learned on March 24th that the work is expected to commence in April/May 2023 and continue through the tourist season, possibly till September. We also see from the Council website that *'as a result of delays to getting licences in place, we are now seeking views on the possibility of deliveries and works taking place over the summer season.'* This email is to add our voices, as people directly impacted by the decision, to those views. Like others, we are concerned that Bryher resident views have not been listened to.

We understand that the work will involve 3-6 barges unloading cargoes of rock at high tide in Great Par each week, and that 30 tonne trucks will then distribute some of this material to other beaches along the narrow pedestrian-heavy road between them. This will clearly devastate Bryher's appeal to tourists this summer, which relies on its status as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. A series of disappointed visitors putting photographs/videos of the work and negative reviews of spoiled holidays on social media websites could impact Bryher's reputation (and possibly that of all of Scilly) not only this year but for long afterwards.

Carrying out such work over the summer will also be economically devastating to Bryher, not only to those with rental properties directly affected, but for everyone whose businesses rely on tourism. Our own rental property, the Moorings is only a few feet from Great Par and any visitors are likely to find their holiday dominated by the sight and sound of the work. Like most Bryher rental properties, it has been fully booked for the whole season since late last year. We will have to inform our guests of what is planned, given its clear and significant impact on their holidays, and we expect most will cancel. They will expect full refund of holiday costs (and potentially, too, of non-recoverable associated costs such as travel and boat hire).

We are therefore writing to respectfully urge the Council to:

1. Take account of the strong concerns of, and impact on, Bryher residents, of carrying out this work through the summer and postpone it to the autumn. This would minimise or even removing the impact on the holiday season.
2. Consider how the Council will compensate Bryher businesses for holiday cancellations if any part of the work takes place in the tourist season. We believe that the Council will be legally, as well as morally, responsible for the cost of cancellations made by visitors as a direct result of the decision to do this work at this time, a decision communicated to us (and therefore to visitors) well after they had booked and committed to their stay.

Like everyone who has contacted from Bryher we sincerely hope you will examine this matter again, and would hugely appreciate it being given your urgent attention.

Best wishes

Mary Lowth

Dr Mary Lowth

Bank Cottage, Bryher, Isles of Scilly TR23 0PR

