

Questions from Councillors at City Council
Chief Executive's Department



Name of Member submitting the question Councillor Watkin

Date received by Democratic Support Team

To Councillor Dann

Question

Jennycliff and Mountbatten beaches have both been closed for some months, adversely affecting the trading position of particularly coffee and tea shops as well as losing the amenity for residents and visitors and particularly children. When will they be reopened?

Answer

Mount Batten:

We understand that it is frustrating for residents and business owners in the area that the beach has not yet been reopened.

To give some context to this, we have set up a multi-agency team to help us deal with this incident which is very unusual; previous experiences of experts with asbestos on beaches have been recent and small fly-tips, but in contrast this is both historic and very large in volume.

As residents of Plymouth are only too well aware, asbestos can be harmful, and the risk assessment around the beach is complex.

Although we know that the asbestos contained within cement is relatively safe (low risk) it is also clear that there is a chance that fibres can become airborne, as the cement breaks down. Though early indications were that there were no loose fibres in the surface sand, we have a number of tests underway and until we have the full set of results, and expert interpretation of them, we

Signed:

Date: 3 July 2019

Note

- Written questions must be submitted to the Monitoring Officer via the Democratic Support Team.
- Written questions will be replied to within 10 working days.
- Written questions and answers will be published on the last Friday of each month.

cannot give a definite date for reopening. However, from the results found so far we believe that our aim of the start of the summer holidays should be attainable, at least for the majority of the beach.

Jennycliff:

The access to the beach at Jennycliff is closed because, following a land slide during Spring 2019 the integrity and stability of the stepped path has been compromised. A survey of the situation has been carried out and in addition to the local undermining and damage to the existing path, it is confirmed that;

“The coastal slope is within an area of active erosion and subject to potential larger scale failures than observed in the immediate vicinity of the footpath. Winter rainfall could result in coastal slope instability on the footpath above the investigation area and high-tide storm wave action could wash the bottom of the footpath away...”

Various areas where stabilisation work will be required have been identified, however as the slope is susceptible to failure due to water ingress at the upper levels, from scouring close to the existing path and wave action at the bottom of the slope it is recommended that further monitoring is carried out before any significant work is undertaken. If this was carried out some or all of the work completed could become insufficient to adequately support the path or be lost due to further failure of the slope.

Due to the need to carry out further monitoring and because any rectification work has not been fully planned it is not possible to confirm a date when the access to the beach will re-open.