

Media Release

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Rock towers to be monitored and removed if necessary to minimise risk

In the spirit of Guernsey Together, there have been many creative ways in which Islanders have spread joy, hope and togetherness. One such way is through the building of rock towers, which can be seen along vast areas of the coastline. However, Islanders are encouraged to be aware of the risks some structures pose on other members of the public, wildlife and the environment.

Agriculture, Countryside & Land Management Services (ACLMS) has been made aware of a number of large structures being built in high places, such as on top of bunkers and coastal walls, where rocks may topple and injure people sitting or walking underneath.

If rocks fall from their positions onto roads, they can cause damage to vehicles and place an extra workload on road clearance. On footpaths and grassland these rocks can disrupt the machinery used when carrying out coastal grass maintenance and become a danger to passers-by or vehicles if stones are flicked out during the process.

More recently, building material has been used to make structures taller and more permanent. An example of this is a structure at Vazon, which has been constructed using a cement-like material. Higher structures like this also pose a public health risk, as well as the risk of damaging sea defences if they become dislodged.

In light of these risks, ACLMS will be monitoring rock towers and unfortunately will have to remove any that are in a dangerous position and pose a risk.

Other important things to consider is that too much material removed from the beach can also affect the ecology of the area and the collection of rocks may disturb seabirds which will be breeding on these shingle banks at this time of year.

Some rock towers have also been painted in line with the hugely successful and positive “Share The Rainbow” campaign. But what must be considered is that, eventually, any painted rocks will be returned to the beach, which will disturb natural vistas. The same consideration should be given to the painting of naturalised boulders which will stand in the landscape for many years.

While positive community initiatives which benefit the overall wellbeing of Islanders during these difficult times are welcome, consideration for the safety of others, coastal wildlife and the future of our natural environment is encouraged before creating your own rock tower.

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