



**A-barth Onan Hag Oll! Representing One and All**

## **OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2018 TO 2019**

### **Decision Required:**

**That this report be noted and posted on Stithians Parish Website.**

### **Report:**

#### **Introduction**

2018-2019 has been an interesting and busy year for Stithians Parish Council (SPC). There have been several highlights and some interesting developments.

We currently have a full complement of 11 Councillors.

During the year we had 1 Councillor resign, and 2 members join the Council by way of co-option.

I would like to take a moment to remind everyone that all Parish Councillors are volunteers who give their time, energy, and expertise freely with the sole objective of improving the Parish for the benefit of all.

I will now look at the achievements of the year in detail and then provide a brief overview of the work you can expect to see being done by SPC in the coming year.

#### **1. Membership:**

The attendance record of all Councillors has been exemplary with 7 Councillors achieving over 85% attendance figures and 3 of those achieved 100%. Appendix 1 shows the detailed attendance records for the year.

### **2. Post Office Service:**

This year the Outreach PO service continued to flourish and the opening times were extended to 3 half days a week from the previous 2 days. This service is provided by the Postmistress, Barbara Cradock, who runs Rame Post Office. It is interesting to note that Rame Post office is open 7 days a week (including Sunday morning).

### **3. Planning Applications**

SPC has considered 51 planning applications, up 24% on last year. Each application is considered on its merits and all relevant documents and plans submitted are studied. In most cases a site visit is also involved before a report is prepared for consideration at a full SPC meeting.

Of the 51 applications SPC considered this year SPC supported 45, 6 were not. Cornwall Council (CC) approved 35, 4 were refused, 6 are still awaiting a CC decision and 4 applications were withdrawn.

SPC did not support 6 applications of which CC went on to approve 2, refuse 2, 1 was withdrawn and 1 is still awaiting a decision.

### **4. Engagement**

This year we continued to build on our efforts to engage with the community at all levels. Our 4 main methods of communications are the SPC website, the SPC Facebook page, the Facebook Group called "Stithians Noticeboard – All Things Stithians" and the traditional noticeboards for those not up to speed with the technology. The FB Group "Stithians Noticeboard – All Things Stithians" was launched in September 2017 and has gone from strength to strength and at the time of writing had 1174 members (80% increase in the last 12 months).

### **5. Shopping:**

Sadly we lost "the Mill" this year: the much loved LA Phillips & Sons closed for the last time in March 2019 after 99 years in business. We, like many others, have had to adjust in not having a builders' merchant and petrol station in the village. We would like to thank Nigel Dunstan and staff for all the friendly help and advice over the years. You will be sorely missed.

We do however have 2 excellent and well stocked shops in the village and a petrol station/shop in the Parish at Longdowns.

Both the Spar and the Costcutter are well stocked and run by friendly staff. I would like to think that everyone will support both enterprises, so they continue to thrive. Just changing your shopping habits a little can help. Think how much

time and money it costs you to travel to a supermarket especially if you are only buying a few items. Also, as we all become more aware of environmental issues, is it sensible to have a supermarket send out a van with your weekly shopping all beautifully sealed in plastic? As it arrives in one delivery, inevitably some of it could become food waste before you have chance to use it.

A case could be made to shop locally and often, reducing air pollution, reducing the need for excessive plastic, reducing food waste and saving time.

### **6. Training and Consultations:**

New Councillors have attended Code of Conduct Training. Some Members also attended Planning Workshops organised by Cornwall Council. The Clerk has had some training in the use of the new software needed to administer Meadowside Cemetery.

During the year, the Council has responded to a number of consultations from Cornwall Council, Central Government, and other bodies. We are selective in only responding to consultations which could have future implications for the Parish.

### **7. Wellness Hut**

The Wellness Hut continues to thrive and expand on services and has been a welcome addition to services offered in the community. This is particularly pleasing as the toilet refurbishment not only means we have a sparkling building instead of the previous rundown eye-sore, but we have a thriving business renting it.

### **8. Meadowside Cemetery:**

After acquiring the land in September 2016, this year we have virtually completed the ground works which included the re-routing of the public footpath, establishing 2 feature plaque mounds for the internment of ashes under remembrance plaques, a tarmacked car park, a raised patio area in front of a garden of remembrance and a link path from the existing cemetery.

Very recently we have created 4 rows of concrete beams which are under the ground but will enable local stonemasons to fix headstones in an orderly and tidy way. A local stonemason has been charged with engraving a large lump of Cornish granite with the words "MEADOWSIDE CEMETERY". We remain on track to open Meadowside Cemetery early in the summer.

We would like to thank the Stithians Women's Institute for the kind donation of the splendid granite seat now positioned on the patio overlooking the Garden of Remembrance and the splendid views of the Parish beyond.

We would also like to thank the Stithians Gardening Club who have kindly volunteered to design and plant up the Garden of Remembrance.

### **9. Allowances:**

It is the Parish Council's policy that no attendance allowances are paid to Members. Provision was made in the 2004/2005 financial year and has been included in the budget ever since, for travelling and subsistence expenses for Members. For several years and certainly during the period of my report, there have been no claims, Members meeting these expenses personally.

### **10. Footpaths, Highways and Environment:**

We continue to liaise with Mr Adrian Drake, Cormac's Area Manager, which is useful to SPC in addressing highway issues of concern.

The Parish Council continues to carry out the maintenance of the Closed Churchyard and the maintenance of Public Rights of Way on behalf of Cornwall Council. It also maintains the cemetery on behalf of the PCC and the amenity area in Crelow Fields.

Stithians Parish is blessed with over 50 Rights of Way which take you through our lovely countryside. These offer pleasant exercise and many panoramic views, free of charge. There are a number of Rights of Way (RoW) anomalies on the definitive RoW map. SPC are working towards getting these rectified by Cornwall Council before the 2026 deadline when opportunities to amend the Definitive Footpath map will be lost.

SPC is continually engaged in trying to raise awareness and reduce littering, dog fouling and fly-tipping in the Parish and surrounding areas. These are all antisocial activities conducted by inconsiderate individuals and should be reported when appropriate. The SPC website has a "problem" page which makes it easier for everyone to report any problem to the relevant authority.

### **11. Playing Field:**

This has been a great year for our much-treasured Playing Field. An anonymous donor paid for the excellent youth goal posts and these were kindly erected by Cllr Will Thomas. They are proving so popular that the kids were kicking balls through them before Will had finished putting them up. Please note there are football nets available if anyone is organising a formal game.

We also proceeded with the design, purchase and installation of a new Toddlers' play area, which was officially opened on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2019. This has been a great

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hit with children and parents alike. Unfortunately, we were only successful with one of the 3 grants that we applied for and so we launched a public appeal for funding which at the time of writing stands at £1017 but we are aware of several fund-raising efforts being organised which will increase this figure significantly. We would particularly like to thank Raisons Opticians whose business is based in Helston for a very generous donation of £500. I know the owners live in our parish and have supported this and other good causes in our parish on a number of occasions.

The next improvement we wish to make to the playing field is the installation of a zip wire which we hope to have up and running later this year.

Regrettably, some irresponsible dog owners are not observing the Rules of the Playing Fields. Dogs are not allowed in any part of the old playing field except on the footpath alongside the tennis court and here they should be on leads.

Although they are permitted in the new playing field to use the public footpath, they should be on leads here as well. This is to protect the users of the skateboard park where a loose dog could cause a serious accident. Further, it prevents dogs fouling the rugby pitch. SPC will be erecting more signage to reinforce this message soon.

Regardless of where dogs are, it is antisocial and inconsiderate not to clear up after your dog and can be an offence punishable by a fine of up to £1,000. We have had several recent incidents where people have picked up after their dog and then just abandoned the bag on a fence or in a phone box or on the floor. Please, if anyone is seen doing this please report them to SPC and we will endeavour to get them to stop this mindless practice.

### **12. Mining Villages Regeneration Group:**

The Council continues to be an active member of this group which meets bi-monthly. It is a useful forum to compare ideas and experiences. It also carries more weight when a group of Parish Councils make representations to Cornwall Council. Parishes included in the group are Stithians, Carharrack, Chacewater, Gwennap, Lanner and St. Day.

### **13. Historic Churchyards Project:**

Details regarding graves and headstones for Stithians Church Yards are on the Cornwall Mining Villages Historic Church Yard website and can be viewed at [www.cornwallminingvillagechurchyards.net/](http://www.cornwallminingvillagechurchyards.net/)

### **14. Neighbourhood Watch:**

Neighbourhood Watch in the Parish continues under the guidance of Vyv Toms, Lead Co-ordinator. The focus is mainly on keeping people aware of incidents or threats which they may encounter. Unfortunately, more of these threats are occurring on-line and Vyv does a great job keeping people up to date using Social Media, and a Website. This information can include police requests for information regarding local incidents or even suspicious traders operating in the area.

You can sign up for free updates or message Vyv with information here: [https://www.facebook.com/StithiansNHW/posts/1370078506396270?comment\\_id=1370520549685399](https://www.facebook.com/StithiansNHW/posts/1370078506396270?comment_id=1370520549685399)

Vyv continues to work in co-operation with our PCSO, Andy Huddleston and the Parish Council.

### **15. The 100 Years "Thank You" and Remembrance Day**

2018 saw the commemoration of 100 years since the end of the First World War. Stithians did these commemorations proud.

A small committee was established, including 2 parish councillors and members of the Royal British Legion (RBL) and they organised 2 fund raising events, a picnic in the park and a sit-down meal in the Stithians Centre. There were raffles with quality prizes at both events donated by our very generous residents and businesses. Together the events raised over £1,200 and the results enabled us to purchase the beautiful remembrance bench which has been installed opposite the War Memorial. We have also ordered a bronze plaque which will be installed by the bench once it is delivered.

SPC is responsible for organising the annual Remembrance Day Parade in November. The detailed organisation has been kindly undertaken by a former Councillor, Roger Nichols, for many years. Roger was ably assisted by several volunteers who helped with traffic control on the day.

This year we have investigated a refurbishment of the Stithians War Memorial including adding several names of people who were never included. The proposal is to list WW1 and WW2 names separately plus a new dedication plaque. This work is ongoing.

### **16. Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)**

The Parish Council applied to Cornwall Council for permission to create a Neighbourhood Development Plan, encouraging local people to have their say in what they want in their community and to take more control of the planning process to ensure their collective vision becomes a reality. A Neighbourhood Plan will set out how development should occur in the parish over the coming

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20 years. Plans like these are used to inform planning decisions on applications and can set out land-usage for aspects such as facilities and infrastructure, as well as housing and employment spaces. You can find out more and view the latest information here [www.stithiansparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.stithiansparishcouncil.org.uk)

It is very encouraging that so many of the community have got involved in this project. We feel it is important that the NDP is a community-led project. It is also heartening to see so many younger people involved to help shape the parish for future generations. However, the process has struggled to get traction (which is not unusual given the magnitude of the task) with several meetings being postponed and some soul searching in relation to the balance between "cost (time & effort) & benefits" of an NDP.

If you could help with this task, please contact Ben Laing Smith who will be able to give you an appraisal of where the NPD is and what still needs doing.

### **Stithians Energy Group (SEG)**

SEG had a very successful Stithians Show this year raising awareness about climate change and providing a cycling demonstration about how much power can be saved simply by using low energy light bulbs (about 90%). There were also demonstrations of the Geothermal Power Project which has dominated the skyline of United Downs for many months. In addition to developing relationships with other groups, SEG are producing a helpful booklet so that more people understand the issues involved and exactly what each of us can do to help save the planet. SEG will also have a stand at Stithians Show and Stithians Fayre Day this year.

SPC continues to support SEG initiative by having an SPC representative on the SEG committee. We have further supported SEG by hosting a web page which enables SEG to explain its objectives and invites people to register an interest and be kept informed of future developments.

SPC is working with SEG to identify land (large or small areas) where the owners would like to plant trees. If you know of any areas where trees could be planted please contact Cllr Joy Thomas.

You can see much more information on SEG and its objectives here: <http://www.stithiansparishcouncil.org.uk/stithians-energy-group>

## **17. Climate Emergency**

SPC was one of the first Parish Councils in Cornwall to declare a Climate Emergency at the January 2019 meeting. This is a very real & serious threat to

us, our children and future generations. I therefore reproduce the commitment that SPC made in January in full here.

*Stithians Parish Council Agrees to:*

- 1. Declare a 'climate emergency';*
- 2. Pledge to make Stithians Parish carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions;*
- 3. Call on Westminster and Cornwall Council to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible;*
- 4. Work with government to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than 1.5°C;*
- 5. Continue to work with partners across the parish of Stithians to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies and plans;*
- 6. Prepare a report within 6 months with the actions Stithians Parish Council will take to address this emergency.*

This is everyone's problem, and everyone must do what they can to address it.

**18. Environmental Management Contract**

SPC have introduced a Environmental Management Contract starting on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 which will effectively consolidate the following contracts:-

- A Footpath Maintenance
- B Verge Maintenance
- C Playing Field Caretaker
- D Playing Field Grass Cutting
- E Playing Field Hedge Trimming
- F Closed Churchyard Maintenance
- G Lower Churchyard Maintenance
- H Haverigg Cemetery Maintenance
- I Meadowside Cemetery Maintenance
- J Crelow Fields Grass Cutting
- K Crelow Fields Hedge Trimming
- L Crelow Fields Caretaking
- M Weed Treatment
- N Cleaning Longdowns Bus Shelters

We have demonstrated that this has effectively produced savings of the order of 12% based on the last previously tendered prices for each contract. There will be additional savings in reduced work involved in dealing with numerous contractors, regular tendering for individual contracts and overall simplifying of processing and payment of invoices.

The Parish Environmental Contractor is Tyrone Martin who you will see around the Parish more helping to keep the Parish facilities up to the standards we all wish to see.

### **19. Sensible driving in the Parish**

SPC has recruited several volunteers who have been trained to undertake Speed Watch operations. We also had a meeting to identify locations to undertake the work however we are having difficulty in getting the "powers that be" to approve the suggested locations and provide the equipment and support needed.

We have therefore looked at alternatives and have obtained a number of posters and bumper/window stickers which say "20 is plenty". Joy Thomas is currently mounting these, and you will see a number going up around the Parish in the coming weeks. If you have a suitable location for such a poster, please contact Cllr. Joy Thomas.

In addition to this we are in the latter stages of purchasing a Speed Monitoring Display which will be moved around the parish at different locations which we are currently agreeing with Cormac. These will flash up actual speeds which will remind drivers that they are in a 30mph zone. Unfortunately, these devices can only be used in 30 mph areas. As well as hopefully reducing speed around the parish, the devices will provide data relating to all traffic so if an area proves that a lot of people are exceeding the limit we can look at taking additional action.

### **20. What next for Stithians**

Next year we hope that Stithians will see:

- Meadowside Cemetery opened and running
- Produce and implement a Climate Emergency plan
- Installation of a zip wire in playing field
- Identify more areas for tree planting project
- Continue with public appeal for funds to improve playing field facilities
- NDP progressing and a vision of future Stithians evolving
- Continue to rectify RoW anomalies of definitive map
- That people drive more sensibly at appropriate speeds in the Parish
- Local shops continuing to thrive and hopefully extensions to PO services
- Continued development of communications keeping everyone informed
- A full complement of Councillors on SPC
- More people volunteering to assist with Parish Council Projects

### **21. Thanks:**

I would like to thank all Councillors (past and present) who have served on SPC during the last year. We have a great team of people from very diverse backgrounds who have all made significant contributions to the smooth running of SPC.

Special thanks go to our Clerk, John Calvert, for all his hard work throughout the year. We could not have achieved what we have without his great support, advice, and wisdom which he has accumulated over many years of experience.

I would also like to thank Rod Davis our Transport Representative, Andy Huddlestone our PCSO, Vyv Toms our Neighbourhood Watch leader and John Thomas our Cornwall Council representative for their efforts and the time they spend keeping us informed.

Thanks also goes to our Parish Environmental Contractor, Tyrone Martin for current and future work to keep the Parish looking its best.

### **22. Conclusion**

This has been a very successful and busy year for Stithians Parish Council and the people we represent. There is a growing interest in the work of SPC and we are seeing more people coming forward to help as Councillors and simply as volunteers on the numerous projects in which we are involved.

These trends are very encouraging and bode well for the future success and progressive development for the Parish of Stithians and all who live and work here.

**Phil Blease**  
**Chairman of Stithians Parish Council**  
**23rd April 2019**

**Appendix 1 – Attendance Records**

## AGENDA ITEM 2

<b>2018 - 2019</b>																
Member	April	APM	May	AGM	June	July	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Possible	Actual	Percentage
P Blease	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	13	12	92%
J Burley	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	13	7	54%
R Iles	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	13	11	85%
H Jones	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	13	8	62%
V Kavanagh	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	13	100%
T Lucioni	1	0												2	1	50%
C Sylvester	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	13	11	85%
J Thomas	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	13	100%
W Thomas	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	13	12	92%
R Wood	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	13	11	85%
M Whitbread-J						1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	8	6	75%
A Bunclark							1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	7	100%
															0	
															0	