



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

## **OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEARS 2019 TO 2021**

### **Decision Required:**

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

### **Report:**

#### **Introduction**

2019-2021 has been an extraordinary time with everyone having to adapt to the changing world due to the unprecedented Covid 19 pandemic. We were unable to hold an Annual Parish Meeting in 2020 and hence this report covers two years. Regardless of the pandemic it has been a busy time for Stithians Parish Council (SPC). There have been several highlights and some interesting developments.

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 results of the recent elections were that SPC had an uncontested election and all 11 seats on the Council were filled which means we have a full team of eager Councillors going forward all interested in improving our lovely Parish.

We have achieved virtually full membership for the last 2 years and average attendance rates for 2019/20 was 80% rising to 98% in 2020/21 which I attribute to the "Zoom" effect of virtual meetings and other activities being curtailed.

The attendance record of all Councillors has been exemplary with 3 Councillors

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achieving over 100% attendance figures in 2019/20 and 11 Councillors achieved 100% attendance figures in 2020/21. Appendix 1 shows the detailed attendance records for the year.

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

This year the Outreach PO service continued to operate in the Spar shop and the opening times are 2 half days a week. This service is provided 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 considered 58 planning applications in 2019/20, up 14% on the previous 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 58 applications SPC considered SPC supported 47, 11 were not.

SPC considered 40 planning applications in 2020/21, down 31% on the previous year no doubt due to the economic slowdown because of the pandemic. Of the 40, applications SPC considered SPC supported 34, 6 were not.

Recently we are seeing increasing numbers of application as the economy improves.

### **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" and the traditional noticeboards for those not up to speed with the technology. The FB Group "Stithians Noticeboard" was launched in September 2017 and has gone from strength to strength and at the time of writing membership has just tipped over the 3,000 mark (155% increase in the last 2 years).

### **5. Shopping:**

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

The Spar & Costcutter shops really helped the vulnerable and the wider community during the dark days of the pandemic. Nathan at the Spar & Jason at Costcutters and their wonderful staff really went the extra mile to ensure people had essential supplies and helped create a really positive community effect where neighbours were looking out for neighbours and no one was left behind.

The Spar and the Costcutter are well stocked and run by friendly staff. I would like to think that everyone will support both enterprises, if for no other reason than thanking them for being there in our time of need.

In addition to that reason a case can 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.

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:**

Meadowside Cemetery was opened in the summer of 2019 and a number of burials have now taken place. To date no-one has interred ashes with memorial tablets on the feature mounds.

We would like to thank the Stithians Gardening Club who kindly volunteered to design and plant up the Garden of Remembrance and they continue to maintain it on a regular basis.

### **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 Crellow 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 good time for our much-treasured Playing Field. Since my last report we have installed a multi-purpose climbing frame and an extremely popular zip wire, partly financed by contributions from the Trustees of the Snooker Hall.

We were also able to have the playing field car park tarmacked, which was well received by the community, again partly funded by the generosity of the Trustees of the Snooker Hall.

An anonymous member of the public suggested that a new pedestrian access be installed in the corner of the rugby field and they generously contributed £500 towards the cost. The new granite stepped access was completed this spring and is proving popular with walkers now able to avoid a tricky part of the road below the Cricket Club.

SPC is currently considering further improvements to the playing field facilities and we hope to be able to consult with the public to prioritise projects as there are insufficient funds to do everything we would wish. To assist with funding we launched a public appeal which at the time of writing stands at £5,000. SPC

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is currently arranging a Scarecrow Festival in conjunction with Stithians Show with a view to increasing the funds in this appeal fund.

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. SPC is shortly to launch a new initiative to discourage owners who do not clear up after their dogs.

### **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, Portreath and St. Day.

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

Details regarding graves and headstones for Stithians Churchyards are on the Cornwall Mining Villages Historic Churchyard 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)

### **15. Remembrance Day**

SPC is responsible for organising the annual Remembrance Day Parade in November but sadly the parade has had to be cancelled for the last 2 years. Hopefully, this can resume later this year. 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.

Since my last report, the refurbishment of the Stithians War Memorial, including adding several names of people who were never included has been completed. Three new plaques were fitted to the war memorial. Sadly, neither the service planned for Friday 8th May 2020 nor the Drum Head Service and Family Day planned for Sunday 10th May took place due to pandemic restrictions. We will, however, find ways to dedicate the refurbishment of our beautiful War Memorial and for the community to celebrate once life returns to some sort of normality, hopefully later in 2021.

### **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 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. The pandemic has further delayed matters although, as restrictions lift, hopefully progress can be made.

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

### **17. Climate Emergency and Stithians Energy Group.**

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.

Significant progress has been made in the last 2 year primarily driven by Stithians Energy Group (SEG), led by Brian Piper and supported by SPC.

Three initiatives are worthy of highlighting as they are excellent examples of how Stithians is making significant contributions in the fight against climate change and why other energy groups in Cornwall and beyond are following our lead.

- I. SEG produced a physical booklet explaining the issues and how people can make a difference. A copy was delivered to every household in the Parish and supplied to other energy groups & Cornwall Councillors. The first run of 7000 were all distributed and numerous requests fulfilled with electronic versions including several countries around the world.
- II. SEG on behalf of The Stithians Centre (TSC) applied for and was awarded a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) grant for £42,395 from Cornwall Council to install Solar PV panels & Tesla Battery backup system at TSC. SPC supported the application, and the work is scheduled to start in the first week of June 2021.
- III. Established in 1999, privately-owned, and headquartered in Bissoe, Cornwall, the Kensa Group is a fast-growing collection of award-winning businesses involved in the manufacture and installation of ground source heat pumps and the ownership of associated underground infrastructure.

Following support from both SPC & SEG, Kensa have secured a European grant which will see £5 million spent in Stithians over the next 2 years providing Ground Source Heat Pumps to approximately 170 dwellings in the village. This ground-breaking technology will be provided at little or no cost to homeowners and will make Stithians one of the greenest villages in the country. More information will become available over the coming months.

### **18. Environmental Management Contract**

SPC introduced an Environmental Management Contract from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 which effectively consolidates 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

The contract continues to run smoothly and the expected savings that were anticipated by this approach has been realised. In addition, we can all see that there are demonstrable improvements in the service provided including more regular grass cutting and much quicker response times when problems are reported. From 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021, toilet cleaning and locking and unlocking, litter picking and the locking and unlocking of Meadowside Cemetery will also be added to the contract.

The Parish Environmental Management Contractor is Tyrone Martin who you will see around the Parish 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. We are, however, having difficulty in getting the "powers that be" to approve the suggested locations and provide the equipment and support



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needed. This situation has not changed since my last report and the pandemic has not helped.

We have therefore looked at alternatives and have obtained a number of posters and bumper/window stickers which say "20 is plenty". Joy Thomas has distributed a number of these around the Parish. If you have a suitable location for such a poster, please contact Cllr Joy Thomas.

In addition, we have purchased a Speed Monitoring Display which will be moved around the parish at different locations agreed with Cormac. This device flashes 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.

We are also working with John Thomas our local Cornwall Councillor on what additional measures we can take.

### **20. New Parish Clerk**

Our clerk, John Calvert, has decided to step back from the role of Parish Clerk, a role he has fulfilled for the last 17 years. He will continue in the role of Finance Officer but all other Clerk duties will be undertaken by our new Clerk, Jane Richards.

During John's 17 years he has worked with 5 different Chairmen and 50 different Councillors. He has made significant contributions to all the projects that SPC has achieved during his tenure. These included the extension of the Stithians Centre, the establishment of the Skateboard Park & Rugby field, repurposing of the toilets, the new toddler play area and the installation of the zip wire, and of course the establishment of Meadowside Cemetery to name but six.

I personally would like to thank John for all his hard work and dedication in keeping me and my fellow Councilors on the straight & narrow and his contributions to the success of all the projects that have been completed during his tenure.

Jane joined us in April this year and is currently in a period of handover from John which finishes next month. I welcome Jane to the team and look forward to working with Jane on current and future projects over the coming years.

### **21. Seven Stars**

Sadly, the pandemic saw the tenants of the only pub in our Parish return the keys to the Seven Stars to the owners St Austell Brewery. Since then, St Austell Brewery have been looking for someone to take on the tenancy. As a precaution SPC applied to have the pub listed as an Asset of Community Value which, after much work, was finally granted by Cornwall Council. This status means that if the owners were unable to find a tenant and decided to sell the pub the community would be given 6 months to raise the funds to purchase it.

The latest information we have is that there are two interested parties in the tenancy, a local couple who are working on a business plan and another party who currently lives abroad. Recently, the Brewery have sent a team of cleaners into the pub, so we are very hopeful of some positive news in due course.

### **22. Stithians Christmas Lights**

Christmas 2020 was memorable as a group of volunteers formed a Christmas Lights Committee and set about organising what was an astounding display which helped lift the spirits of everyone who saw them. Amazing light panels & two, eight-foot-tall angels were the centre pieces.

This was a great example of people identifying a need and then setting about addressing the need, rather than leaving it to others to organise. Well done to all the organisers and the people who donated their time, money & even Christmas Trees. It really made a difference.

SPC was happy to support this brilliant initiative and we hope it inspires others to undertake worthy projects.

### **23. Stithians Wombles**

Another brilliant example of people using their initiative to address an issue and make life better for everyone was the establishment of Wombling Stithians Facebook Group. This is a collection of people who take it upon themselves to collect litter & educate others. Small acts of kindness can make a big difference and it is great to see the enthusiasm of youngsters to keep our countryside tidy. You can see the exploits of the Stithians' Wombles here:- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/221072869803268>

### **24. Scarecrow Collaboration**

SPC has recently agreed to a joint collaboration with Stithians Show Committee to arrange a Scarecrow festival in the Parish on 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> July with a view to raising funds to be donated to the Playing Field Improvement Appeal and the Christmas Light Appeal (50/50).

### **25. What next for Stithians**

Next year we hope that Stithians will see:

- Further implementation of our Climate Emergency plan
- Further improvements to the playing field facilities
- Identify more areas for tree planting
- Continue public appeal for funds to improve playing field facilities
- Continuing the Scarecrow Festival to help raise funds
- 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
- Continued development of communications keeping everyone informed
- A full complement of Councillors on SPC
- More people volunteering to assist with Parish Council and other projects

### **26. 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, 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.

I also wish to thank Michael White, who has been cleaning the toilets and litter picking in the village for many years. His contribution over the years is greatly appreciated by the Council.

### **27. Conclusion**

This has been a very successful and busy two years for Stithians Parish Council and the people we represent in spite of the disruption caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. There is a growing interest in the work of SPC and we are seeing

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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**  
**16<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

### Appendix 1 – Attendance Records

<u>2019 - 2020</u>																	
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	0	1	1	1	1	1	13	12	92%	
J Burley	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0					9	1	11%	
R Iles	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	13	8	62%	
H Jones	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	9	69%	
V Kavanagh	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	13	11	85%	
C Sylvester	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	13	100%	
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	0	1	1	1	1	1	13	12	92%	
M Whitbread-J	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	13	11	85%	
R Wood	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	13	8	62%	
A Bunclark	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	12	92%	
S Watt												1	1	2	2	100%	
<u>2020 - 2021</u>																	
Member	April	APM	May	AGM	June	July	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb(S)	Feb	March	Possible	Actual	Percentage
P Blease	1	N	1	N	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	12	100%
A Bunclark	1	O	1	O	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	12	100%
R Iles	1		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	12	11	92%
H Jones	1	M	1	M	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11	11	100%
V Kavanagh	1	E	1	E	1	1									4	4	100%
C Sylvester	1	E	1	E	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	12	100%
J Thomas	1	T	1	T	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	12	100%
W Thomas	1	I	1	I	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	12	100%
S Watt	1	N	1	N	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	12	10	83%
M Whitbread-J	1	G	1	G	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12	12	100%
R Wood	1		1		1	1									4	4	100%
S Maskelyne								1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	7	100%
H Downing								1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	7	100%