



A-barth Onan Hag Oll! Representing One and All

OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2021 TO 2022

Decision Required:

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

Report:

Introduction

2021-2022 has been an interesting year as we have emerged from the Covid pandemic. 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:

A number of Councillors choose to relinquish their seats during 2021 / 2022, but these were swiftly filled, and the Council is currently at full strength. Attendance was down on last year at 76%, however, this was mainly due to Members either contacting COVID or needing to isolate having been in contact with someone with COVID. One councillor achieved 100% attendance – Cllr Will Thomas.

2. Planning Applications

As predicted the number of Planning Applications considered in 21/22 increased by 62% with 61 Applications considered, 54 were supported and 7 were not

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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.

3. 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 4200 mark (40% increase in the last year).

We also engaged in 2 consultations this year, one on the future development of the playing fields and a second on road safety issues in Longdowns.

4. Shopping:

We have great 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.

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, 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.

5. 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.

6. 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

7. Public Toilets

We undertook a refurbishment of the public toilet. This included a new door, window and the addition of a baby changing facility along with improved lighting.

8. Meadowside Cemetery:

Meadowside Cemetery was opened in the summer of 2019. To date there have been eleven burials & eleven burial plots have been reserved. There has been one set of ashes interred & one plot reserved

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. Although our concerns can take a long time to be addressed, we have achieved one or two notable successes. The first being better signage and road markings installed at Bennetts Corner which since being addressed we have had no further reports of any accidents. The second is the reinstatement of functioning speed camera in Longdowns which has had the desired effect of slowing traffic on this busy road. The third success is the fact that Cornwall Council have undertaken a feasibility study with a view to making crossing the road at Longdowns safer. To further inform the feasibility study we have consulted with the residents of Longdowns and have fed the results back to Cornwall Council.

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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, however the Government have now dropped the 2026 deadline for amendments of the Definitive Footpath. We anticipate, what was previously, a painfully slow process will get even slower because of this change.

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:

SPC undertook a public consultation during the year to establish what developments the community would like to see. The results of this exercise were not clear cut, but we considered the feedback provided which informed a later decision to proceed with the footpath around the playing fields to encourage more year-round use & access for all. We are currently defining the project scope to enable tenders for the work to be issued.

We are also investigating the feasibility and cost of refurbishing parts of the pavilion to provide facilities for local groups, storage facilities & public toilet.

To assist with funding, we launched a public appeal which at the time of writing stands at £6,315.27. SPC is currently arranging the second Scarecrow Festival in conjunction with Stithians Show with a view to increasing these funds further.

We also installed 2 noticeboards in the playing field to display useful information to users & visitors.

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.

As part of MVRG, we hosted a very successful Expo Exhibition at the Stithians Centre which showcased many of the companies & projects which are happening in our Community Network Area.

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/

14. Boundary Review

Cornwall Council undertook a boundary review. Mabe Parish Council expressed an interest in taking Longdowns into Mabe Parish. We successfully made a case against this and Longdowns remains part of Stithians Parish.

Ponsanooth Parish Council expressed an interest in acquiring Kennall Vale into Ponsanooth Parish. SPC have argued strongly against this and made several representations to this effect, including suggestions on ways that parking issues in Ponsanooth could be mitigated. We await Cornwall Councils deliberations on the matter.

15. 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

16. Remembrance Day

SPC is responsible for organising the annual Remembrance Day Parade in November. Last year's parade returned after a 2-year absence due to the pandemic. 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.

17. 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

It is very encouraging that 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 more progress will 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 NDP is and what still needs doing.

18. 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 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.*

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

Significant progress has been made in the last 3 years 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. A recent update of this popular booklet has been commissioned and will soon be available.
- 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 was completed this year including educational displays to encourage the use of these technologies especially now energy prices are escalating.
- III. Following support from both SPC & SEG, Kensa Utilities 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 can be found here <https://www.facebook.com/KensaUtilities>

19. Environmental Management Contract

SPC introduced an Environmental Management Contract from the 1st 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
- O Public Toilet Cleaning
- P Locking & Unlocking Toilets & Meadowside

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.

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.

20. New Parish Clerk

John Calvert retired as Parish Clerk, a role he has fulfilled for the last 17 years.

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 Richards joined us in April 2021 and as well as taking over from John she has studied for and obtained the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) and quickly got up to speed with all the other projects we are involved with.

21. Seven Stars

The Seven Stars now have permanent new tenants, Gail & Ed Rossitter who took over the pub in October 2021. It is great to see the pub, in the heart of our village, once again thriving. Please support this great business which was sorely missed when it was closed during the pandemic.

22. Stithians Christmas Lights

Christmas celebrations in 2020 and 2021 were 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, welcome sign & three, 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 and lifted spirits at a very difficult time for everyone..

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 in collaboration with Stithians Show Committee arranged a Scarecrow festival in the Parish on 10th & 11th July 2021 with a view to raising funds to be donated to the Playing Field Improvement Appeal and the Christmas Light Appeal (50/50). The festival was a great success with many participants & even more judges over the festival weekend despite the weather. The event was kindly sponsored by Feritech and a total of £1300 was raised for the good causes. Plans are underway to run a second festival this year.

25. What next for Stithians

Next year we hope that Stithians will see:

- Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations on 5th June 2022
- Further implementation of our Climate Emergency plan
- Further improvements to the playing field facilities, path & pavilion
- 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
- Local shops & pub 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, Jane Richards, for all her hard work throughout the year. We could not have achieved what we have without her great support, advice, and wisdom.

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.

27. Conclusion

This has been a very successful and busy year for Stithians Parish Council and the people we represent despite the disruption caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. 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
25th April 2022

Appendix 1 – Attendance Records

Members Attendance Record 2021 / 2022

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Member	April	AGM	May	APM	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	0	13	11	85%
A Bunclark	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	13	11	85%
H Downing	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	13	12	92%
J Goddard	0	0	0	0										4	0	0%
N Hayden	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	13	10	77%
R lles	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	13	8	62%
H Jones						0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	9	5	56%
S Maskeyne	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						8	1	13%
C Sylvester	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	12	92%
J Thomas	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	13	12	92%
W Thomas	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13	13	100%
M Whitbread-Jordan																
S Watt	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	13	10	77%
	0													1	0	0%
K. Turton												1	1	2	2	100%