



A-barth Onan Hag Oll! Representing One and All

OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2022 TO 2023

Decision Required:

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

Report:

Introduction

2022-2023 has been an interesting and busy year 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:

During the year we sadly lost Cllr Mark Whitbread Jordan. Mark was a great and passionate Councillor and was very active and made significant contributions to many of the projects detailed below. Mark will be missed by us all.

Three Councillors choose to relinquish their seats during 2022 / 2023, but these were swiftly filled, and the Council is currently at full strength.

I am also very proud that the average age of councillors is much lower than in previous years which means we are much more representative of the community we serve.

Overall attendance was 73% with two members achieving 100% attendance.

2. Planning Applications

We considered 40 Planning Applications in 22/23, 36 were supported and 3 were not and one was withdrawn.

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 5800 mark (38% increase in the last year).

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

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. Public Toilets

After last year's refurbishment of the public toilet including a new door, window and the addition of a baby changing facility the building continues to see extensive use by locals and visitors to the village.

7. Meadowside Cemetery:

Meadowside Cemetery was opened in the summer of 2019. To date there have been seventeen burials & 13 burial plots have been reserved. There has been one set of ashes interred & two 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.

8. 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.

9. Footpaths, Highways and Environment:

We have had some significant success this year in improving our footpaths largely as a result of the great work started by Mark Whitbread Jordan. The footpath from the bridge at Foundry had become extremely muddy and almost unusable in the winter month. We managed to get the Countryside Access Team at Cornwall Council to improve the drainage and cover the path in granite chipping to make it accessible all year round.

We also applied for and got an additional grant from Cornwall Council for improvements to footpaths. There were many minor improvements, some of which are still being undertaken, like improved signage and improved stile access. The biggest project undertaken was the refurbishment of the footpath from Foundry to Kennall Farm.

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 a number notable successes. The first being better signage and road markings installed at Bennetts Corner which since being addressed we have had no further reports

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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 consulted with the residents of Longdowns and have fed the results back to Cornwall Council. We continue to press both our local Cornwall Councillor and Cornwall Council to provide a safe crossing at Longdowns.

Recently we have achieved getting the road markings replaced at both Crane Garage and Gribbas Corner.

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, 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.

10. Playing Field:

SPC undertook a public consultation during the previous year to establish what developments the community would like to see. The results of this exercise informed a later decision to proceed with the footpath around the playing fields to encourage more year round use & access for all. This year we implemented that decision and the new path has been universally welcomed by the community. It is lovely to see people with prams, children learning to ride bikes, people on mobility scooters and loads of people just walking. The footpath was officially opened on the 6th May 2023 and dedicated to the late Queen in memory of her Platinum Jubilee year of 2022.

Once again our generous community supported the project and I would like to give special thanks to the following :-

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- Lower Brothers who generously donated all the materials that form the path
- The Trustee's of the Snooker Hall who contributed a significant sum to the cost of the path as well as two lovely multi-coloured picnic benches
- Denis Nightingale who donated a bench in memory of his wife Victoria
- The Evergreens Club who donated two benches, one in the playing field and one at the bus stop opposite the Spar shop.
- Lesley Saunders and family who donated the circular bench in memory of Peggy and Rex Pascoe who were very active in many organisations in the Parish including the Parish Council.
- Cllr Will Thomas who donated the commemorative stone which SPC had engraved as was used to dedicate the footpath to the Queen in the year of her Platinum Jubilee Year.

We continue 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 of improvements to the playing field, we launched a public appeal which at the time of writing stands at £7,240.27.

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

11. 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.

12. 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/

13. 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 are pleased to report we were successful and Kennall Vale remains in the Parish of Stithians.

14. Neighbourhood Watch:

Vyv Toms has retired as Lead Co-ordinator after many years in the role. We thank Vyv for his years of service in this role.

If anyone would like to pick up the reins and act as Lead Co-ordinator they can find a lot of background information and support here <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/>

15. Remembrance Day

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.

16. Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

The Parish Council decide not to proceed with a NDP as the community lead project has failed to maintain traction and it is felt the benefit of having an NDP is disproportionate to the work, time and energy needed to produce and have an NDP adopted.

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 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;*

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- 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 4 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 to be spent in Stithians demonstrating Ground Source Heat Pumps as a utility with approximately 85 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. It is a little disappointing that the original intention of retro fitting 170 houses has had to be scaled back due to rigid timescale and several planning delays. More information can be found here <https://www.facebook.com/KensaUtilities>

Brian Piper, head of Stithians Energy Group has been organising numerous visits for people interested in all the great projects listed above in addition to a visit to Brian's house which he has retro fitted with virtually all the technologies you can use to reduce your carbon footprint. These tours have proven very popular with people coming from as far as Scotland to see what we are up to in Stithians.

We nominated Brian for the Community Champion Coronation Awards and I am proud to advise you Brian was selected and he and his wife Connie are attending Buckingham Palace Garden Party today to receive the recognition his hard work deserves.

18. 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.

19. 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.

20. Stithians Christmas Lights

Christmas celebrations in 2020, 2021 and 2022 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.

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

21. 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>

22. Scarecrow Collaboration

SPC in collaboration with Stithians Show Committee arranged a Scarecrow festival in the Parish with a view to raising funds to be donated to the Preschool & Christmas Lights. The festival was a great success with many participants & even more judges over the festival weekend. The event was kindly sponsored by Feritech and a total of £1000 was raised for the good causes. Plans are underway to run a third festival this year with proceeds to be split between the school and the scout group.

23. Community Events

This year saw two major Royal Celebrations that SPC in conjunction with The Stithians Centre Management Committee and other local groups put on memorable community events. The first was Queen's Platinum Jubilee

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Celebrations on 5th June 2022 and the second was the King's Coronation on the 6th & 7th May 2023.

Both events involved a lot of organising and setting up however both were blessed with good weather and were well attended and great fun was had by all.

Nicola Whitbread Jordan and her family kindly donated a beautiful Copper Beech tree planted in Memory of Mark and to Celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III together with memorial plaque.

The tree was planted by Janet Gluyas who, as a child, planted another Copper Beech tree for the Queen's Coronation in 1953. This time Janet was assisted by Lamorna & James Green.

24. 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, including new play equipment
- Identify more areas for tree planting
- Continue public appeal for funds to improve playing field facilities
- Continuing the Scarecrow Festival to help raise funds
- 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

25. 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 and Vyv Toms, NHW Lead Co-ordinator, who have both recently retired from their roles which they have filled for many years. I would also like to thank John Thomas our Cornwall Council representative for his efforts in 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.

26. 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
9th May 2023**

Appendix 1 – Attendance Records

Members Attendance Record 2022 / 2023

See separate report



MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS 2022 - 23

Decision Required:

This report is for noting.

Report:

Reproduced in tabular form below is an indication of Members' attendance at meetings throughout the previous year.

There were 12 regular meetings and an Annual Parish Meeting during the year. As the AGM occurred on the same day as a regular meeting and members who attended, attended both, they have been counted as one meeting.

<u>Name</u>	<u>No of Possible Meetings to Attend</u>	<u>No of Meetings Attended</u>	<u>Attendance Record</u>
Cllr P Blease	13	13	100%
Cllr A Bunclark	13	10	77%
Cllr H Downing	13	12	92%
Cllr N Hayden	13	8	62%
Cllr R Iles	13	6	46%
Cllr H Jones	13	9	69%
Cllr C Sylvester	13	10	77%
Cllr J Thomas	13	11	85%
Cllr W Thomas	13	9	69%
Cllr W Oakley-Moore	4	3	75%

J E Richards
Clerk / RFO