

# **St Austell Bay Annual Parish Assembly**

**16 May 2024**

## **Report from the Chairman of the Parish Council**

I wrote in last year's report that parishioners need to remember that the parish council merely gives a view on planning applications, and that it is Cornwall Council that remains the Local Planning Authority which makes the final decision. This year, amongst the 30 planning applications that have been made, are some that have been particularly controversial and where we have asked our Cornwall Councillor to call them in for decision by the Planning Committee. One of these has so far been heard and I'm pleased to report that the committee found in our favour and refused the application.

The change from the St Austell and Mevagissey Community Network to the South Cornwall Community Area Partnership has not been particularly positive. The group has become far less focussed and local and serving too large and diverse an area to facilitate helpful discussion. We were, however, pleased to welcome Sarah Scoltock as our new Community Link Officer.

We await a decision on the re-listing of Porthpean Car Park on Cornwall Council's list of Assets of Community Value.

Over the year we completed the painting of the Pattern Hall, refurbished the public toilets and have given grants to the 'Light up Charlestown' group, The Cornwall Croquet Club and to Kathy Still, who is writing a book about men from Porthpean who lost their lives in the First World War.

We have purchased a defibrillator for the Hall, and we continue to pay the revenue costs of the defibrillators across the parish. We also pay for the emptying of a number of litter bins across the parish, the cutting of local public footpaths and the SWCP and the annual contracts to remove weeds from pavements.

We have had extensive discussions with Cornwall Council on the problems of parking in the parish and report that, sadly, they remain intransigent in their refusal to back our limited scheme. Please read our Vice-Chair's report on this issue

We were pleased to welcome two new councillors this year -Richard Whitehouse and Matt Sanders - but less happily I report on the death of an ex-councillor, Nick Tamblin, who served from May 2013 – April 2017. We send our condolences to his family.

Councillors and staff have taken part in a number of training sessions and visits over the year, and I express my thanks to them. As always, we extend our thanks to our staff, Keith Carter, Roy Rodriguez and Laura Byers, for their hard work over the year.

Finally, to our clerk, Julie Larter, who keeps us all on the straight and narrow, always with a smile – we send you a huge thank you!

*Cllr Bill Leach, Chairman, St Austell Bay Parish Council*

## **Our Working Groups**

The short accounts below record the excellent work that these groups have carried out over the past year.

### **1 Regatta Working Party**

*Members: Cllrs Bill Leach, Sue Leach, Sandie Bailey; Terry Butler, Sue Facey, John Fowler (Charlestown Regatta Committee)*

Regretfully there has been no progress in resolving the flooding issue in the Regatta Playing field despite the parish council's best efforts. We were hopeful that Cormac would undertake a feasibility study but they felt that it would be prohibitively expensive and the findings may be inconclusive. We have had 2 site meetings with Cormac, the last of which was on 1 May. It is not possible to divert the water elsewhere, so Cormac's suggestion is to mitigate the situation somehow. Ideas were discussed, but nothing was resolved. We will continue to work with Cormac and Sarah Scoltock, our Cornwall Council Community Liaison Officer. Until the drainage issue is resolved, the parish council is unwilling to take on responsibility for the field.

*Julie Larter, Clerk*

### **2 Traffic Working Party**

*Members: Cllrs Jackie Bull, Nick Foster, Sandie Bailey; Lauren Holley, Helen Childs, Janice Powell*

The Traffic Working Group was formed in 2022 in response to residents' needs around parking and speeding issues within the parish, reported to the parish council over a long period. Areas such as Duporth Road, Charlestown Road, Church Road and Porthpean Beach Road were particularly highlighted.

Highway management is the remit of Cornwall Council but the parish council does all it can to help residents and the Council by acting as a consultee organization, advising and supporting.

Last year we reported upon a survey which the parish council undertook to gain knowledge of as many highway issues as possible in order to keep a running record and work towards alleviating action.

Having carried out the work to identify the list of issues, this year the Traffic Working Group has not needed to formally meet. There has been a period of time, instead, for the parish council to work with Cornwall Council to request implementation of improvements on identified areas where there are both possible and affordable solutions. Currently, the parish council has identified a solution to alleviate parking problems, speed and danger at the bottom of Duporth Road and is urging Cornwall Council to approve and implement a commonsense scheme. The issue has necessitated several meetings and has the support of our Cornwall Councillor, but unfortunately the parish council has found Cornwall Council, to date, unhelpful in approach. The parish council are continuing their work to address the issue.

In good news however highway schemes implemented within the parish this year include additional double yellow lining in Porthpean Beach Road and resurfacing the road between Lobbs Shop and Trenarren and purchasing a salt bin for use by residents of Trenarren.

The Traffic Working Group will meet again in due course, when the current identified solutions have been resolved.

*Cllr Jackie Bull, Chair, Traffic Working Party*

### **3 Environment and Climate Crisis Working Party**

*Members: Cllr Trudy Reynolds; Pat Smith and Nigel Chatterjee*

The group held 4 face to face meetings during the year with on-going communications by phone or email.

In the spring of 2023 we were due to review the Carbon Footprint Report for the parish which is based on data provided by the University of Exeter and the Centre for Sustainable Energy based in Bristol but it had not been updated since the information produced in 2022. The data will be reviewed again in 2024.

All planning applications are considered with energy efficiency and carbon reduction prioritised using our Neighbourhood Plan, the Climate Crisis Action Plan and the Planning Checklist. The Action Plan and Planning Checklist were updated in February 2024 and, as required, a Biodiversity Policy was prepared by the working party and accepted by the council.

In July I attended a training session on the Cornwall Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Suppliers are checked for their environmental credentials and in July 2023 a new energy contract was taken out by the parish council with the supplier providing 100% renewable electricity.

The group has produced posters for the parish noticeboards, the parish website and other local social media channels to highlight relevant topics such as the problems of fast fashion, water and energy saving measures, food initiatives and ecofriendly cleaning products.

The Diggers and Doers group has continued work to improve the environment of the parish. We have an on-going project at Carrickowel Point working with the Countryside Team and the Cornwall Wildlife Trust. I have had a session with the National Trust at Black Head. We have a small core of volunteers who I would like to sincerely thank for their efforts. New members are more than welcome.

*Cllr Trudy Reynolds*

## **4. Tree Warden's Report**

### **Tree Warden- Annual Review 2023-24**

Saplings have been planted this year along the inner edge of the Regatta Field which we hope will alleviate some of the drainage issues.

The three trees planted for the Platinum Jubilee in 2022 are all doing well, unlike the tree planted near the Pattern Hall for King Charles' Coronation which was vandalised. This has now been replaced and the vandalised tree replanted in the Regatta Field in the hope it will recover.

We continue to regularly monitor the saplings near Holmbush Arch, towards the Battery and in the Regatta Field. The apple trees at the top of the field are establishing despite deer and footballs.

Ash dieback continues to cause concern with many planning applications requesting felling of affected trees. In all applications we try to ensure that suitable replanting is a planning condition even if the affected tree is not covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

The Duporth CIC continues to monitor the health of trees on the Duporth Estate and the recent purchase of an area of woodland by a private resident will ensure vital tree restoration work will be undertaken.

If anyone is planting trees on their land I will collate the information to submit to Cornwall Council to contribute towards their Forest for Cornwall initiative.

At this time of year trees are just coming into leaf and the mature beeches are looking particularly good. All our mature trees need to be looked after and safeguarded as their environmental benefits cannot be easily replaced.

*Cllr Trudy Reynolds*

## **5 History Working Party**

*Members: Cllrs Trudy Reynolds and Nick Foster; Andy Trudgian and Sue Facey (Charlestown History Group)*

Both the Charlestown History Group and the Parish Council continue to promote the appreciation of and information on historic features in the parish for both residents and visitors. Community archive material is available for viewing at the Pattern Hall, Charlestown at certain times and an increasing amount of material can be found digitally on the Charlestown History Group's website; [www.charlestownhistorygroup.com](http://www.charlestownhistorygroup.com).

The Charlestown History Group has held several events to mark the bicentennial of Charles Rashleigh's death. One highlight, in September, was a promenade play based on his life which took place around the harbour and the Battery.

A book by a local author on the lives of the Porthpean men who were killed in the World Wars will be in print shortly and the parish council was pleased to make a grant towards the cost of the book's publication.

The main feature of this year's work has been the completion and installation of the Charlestown Story Information Boards and village trail. Ten QR boards give the visitors more information on key features such as the cask banks, ore floors and clay dry as well as the harbour itself. Initial feedback on the project has been positive with the Charlestown History Group seeing a 25% increase in their website traffic and on average about 15 visits each day to the trail information.

Work has finished on a booklet of walking routes around the parish to encourage visitors and residents to explore Duporth, Porthpean and Trenarren as well as Charlestown. Relevant historic features are highlighted. This will be available, free of charge, shortly.

Anyone with an interest in the history of the parish would be welcome to get involved and join the group.

*Cllr Trudy Reynolds*

## **6. Communication**

In July 2023 the parish council passed a resolution to set up a Facebook page to enhance communication with residents and the wider population. The parish council recognizes that not everyone reads noticeboards! I volunteered to set up and run the site, which initially was on a 3 month trial. Setting up a site on Facebook is not straightforward for parish councils but I persevered, and the page went live in October. The page was set up as an 'electronic noticeboard' and quickly gathered a good number of 'followers'. The trial proved successful, and it is now a permanent fixture. We share information about the parish council and some of the initiatives it is involved in, as well as wider public information notices such as the importance of measles vaccinations. Interestingly one of the most viewed posts was about the location of defibrillators in the parish. Watch this space as I will soon be posting details of a session the parish council is organizing offering free training on how to use a public access defibrillator.

*Cllr Nick Foster*

## 7. Parish Council Finances

	2022/23	2023/24
<b>Income</b>		
Precept	£47,703.54	£50,097.40
Pattern Hall	£5,372.00	£8,811.50
Public conveniences	£5,843.66	£4,375.09
VAT refund	£3,295.18	£5,196.31
Bank interest	£1,021.73	£3,180.77
CIL	£27,732.36	0.00
Other income <sup>1</sup>	£1,487.73	£5,854.06
	<b>£92,456.20</b>	<b>£77,515.13</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Staff Costs	£33,958.18	£35,237.23
Training (Councillors and staff)	£544.00	£960.60
Administration <sup>1</sup>	£6,361.28	£6,867.33
Chairman's Allowance/Councillor Allowance	£0.00	£0.00
Parish maintenance	£1,836.47	£4,320.65
Grants	£1,000.00	£891.49
Projects	£13,067.34	£3,052.93
Public conveniences <sup>2</sup>	£6,426.99	£18,433.68
Pattern Hall	£3,781.65	£5,994.03
Regatta Playing Field	£0.00	£0.00
Election costs	£0.00	£0.00
CIL	-	£750.00
	<b>£66,975.91</b>	<b>£76,507.94</b>

*Julie Larter*  
*Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer*

<sup>1</sup> This covers such things as maintaining the office function – equipment, postage etc; insurance; subscriptions; our website; internal and external audits; expenses connected with meetings.

<sup>2</sup> The public conveniences have been totally refurbished this year.

## Report from Devon and Cornwall Police

The Neighbourhood Team is headed by Inspector Matt Trevivian and consists of 2 Sergeants, 8 Police Constables, 5 Police Community Support Officers and 3 Tri-serve Safety Officers. The team covers a large area from Portholland to Fowey and up to the clays. The team is currently fully staffed, and has a proactive Policing policy. They work closely with Cornwall Council's Anti-Social Behaviour team.

There have been 72 recorded crimes in the parish over the last 12 months, but there are no particular crime trends and no recordings of anti-social behaviour.

Over the past year, the team has taken part in a number of operations within their policing area including:

- Off Limits Drink and Drugs Driving operation in December (this is an annual initiative)
- Operation Scorpion which related to County Lines and connected safeguarding concerns in relation to drugs operations
- A focus on knife crime

There have been incidents in surrounding parishes of a person trying car doors – it is important that incidents such as this are reported to the Police as they do not monitor Facebook posts. There was also a case recently where a horse was ritualistically slaughtered so it is important for people to be vigilant and report matters to the Police.

### Useful contacts:

Emergency calls 999

Non-urgent calls: 101

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 (reports are completely anonymous – the Police have no knowledge of who made the report)

For crime figures by area/postcode <https://www.police.uk/your-area/devon-and-cornwall-police/st-austell-town/?yourlocalpolicingteam=your-team&tab=crimemap>

To report anti-social behaviour [www.safercornwall.co.uk/anti-social-behaviour](http://www.safercornwall.co.uk/anti-social-behaviour). A webchat is also available on this site

The Police station in St Austell is open to the public between 0800 and 1800 Monday – Saturday.

*Acting Police Sergeant Will Chesterfield*



## **Cornwall Councillor James Mustoe's Report**

I am pleased to now be in my fourth year as Cornwall Councillor for St Austell Bay Parish, and overall tenth year as a Cornwall Councillor and would like to thank the Parish Council, and residents and businesses in general for your continued support.

I continue to work on a variety of local issues, and in all areas like to work closely with my parish councils to achieve real positive change and help address longstanding issues.

A few highlights include:

Getting the road to and in Trenarren resurfaced after it had previously not had any work done on it for 30+ years

Working with the NHS and Cornwall Council to ensure the planning application for the new Elective Surgical Hub at St Austell Community Hospital went through quickly and smoothly. Work on this vital new facility has now started and it is hoped it will be open for the summer.

Working with Cornwall Council and Porthpean Outdoor Education to ensure repairs were swiftly done and the site able to fully reopen after a devastating fire prevented it from doing so last year. The site is now due to fully reopen this month.

Getting the Parish Council's request for waiting restrictions on Porthpean Beach Road implemented.

I was pleased to call in a contentious planning application at the Trenarren/Lobb's Shop crossroads and get this refused, with support from the local community and parish council, at central planning.

And I have continued to work with the excellent and pro-active volunteer directors of the Duporth Development Community Interest Company to resolve longstanding management and adoption issues on the estate, with big strides towards this being taken in the last twelve months.

I like to be mostly positive in my reports, but must say that I remain very disappointed at Cornwall Council's continued poor handling of the work around waiting restrictions and residents parking at Charlestown and Duporth. I continue to work to try to resolve this and bring it to a positive conclusion.

I also continue to include the Parish in my regular ongoing litter pick and beach clean schedule. For 2024 this has included growing my St Austell Tidy Up Team, along with Charlestown resident Pat Smith, to expand this to a group of volunteers which does litter picks in places that need them on a regular basis – we have picked up over 100 sacks of rubbish so far this year and really made a difference in some of these areas.

I have also in my day to day work, continued to get out and about, meeting local residents, organisations, and businesses and always try my best to represent your issues and interests at County Hall.

There are always loads of local casework issues ongoing, particularly regarding potholes and verge trimming – I do my best to get a speedy and positive response once I get involved.

On a Cornwall-wide note, at Cornwall Council over the past year, I have been pleased to have led on a motion for the council to recognise young people with care experience as a

protected characteristic, as well as supporting a motion calling on the ensure the council considers the impact on the sea around Cornwall when it makes decisions.

With regards to my Community Chest, I have awarded grants over the past year to the Charlestown Regatta Committee and St Austell Amateur Operatic Society.

Finally, I love getting involved in the various community events in the parish and in particular last year, it was great to do shifts on the bar in the Charlestown Regatta tent on two busy nights. I think I have a second career as a barman, should I ever need one!

I would like to congratulate the Parish Council on their excellent work and positive approach and attitude. You are a pleasure to work with and I always look forward to coming to the monthly meetings.

# ST AUSTELL BAY | PARISH COUNCIL

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY, PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE  
SERVYA AGAN KEMENETH, GWITHA AGAN ERTACH

