

## **TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT 2012 - 2103**

Firstly, welcome to the new Town Council and particularly to those new councillors sitting in the chamber for the first time. I hope that you will enjoy the challenges as much as I did, and that you will continue to build on the progress made by the previous Town Council. I hope we can work together in representing our local communities and in protecting our unique environment and heritage.

Regretfully, last year saw the death of the Town Council's longest serving member: Francis Angwin sadly passed away towards the end of last year. As Mayor, 10 days before his death, I was privileged to present him with a small gift and his wife Ethel, with the Citizen of the Year Award. He had been a member of the Town Council for over 40 years and brought a great amount of local knowledge and experience to the Council, having also been a member of the former Penwith District Council – he will be sadly missed.

The Town Council's main focus during the previous year was the continuing discussions with Cornwall Council on the freehold purchase of the public car parks and conveniences in St Just and Pendeen. As part of that process the Town Council also undertook a public consultation exercise to seek the community's views and although the response was low the Town Council has taken the comments received on board as part of the continuing discussions.

I would personally like to thank Councillor Kevin McFadden and the members of the Premises Committee for their efforts over the past 12 months in trying to reach an agreement on this issue. Unfortunately, discussions did not reach a conclusion before the recent election so there will need to be continued discussions under the direction of the new Council.

However, I am pleased to report that it has been possible to extend the Memorandum of Understanding with Cornwall Council for a further 12 months which will maintain free car parking at the point of use, and this agreement has been extended to include the continued maintenance and operation of the public conveniences by Cornwall Council until March 2014, by which time the Town Council will have reached a decision on the freehold option. This is probably going to be the hardest decision that this Town Council has had to face but I am confident that whatever the outcome it will be made in the best interests of our local community.

Another important issue for the Town Council has been in trying to increase the provision of affordable housing within the parish. I am very pleased to report that following on from the initial survey carried out in partnership with Cornwall Council's Affordable Homes Team, 36 new affordable units are under construction at Gews Farm. In addition, through the efforts of the Land's End Peninsula Community Land Trust small scale affordable housing developments have been given planning consent at Lafrowda Close, St Just and Moorland Close, Pendeen.

Work started last year on repairs to the perimeter wall of the Plen-an-Gwarry. Phase 1 of the three year project has been completed, with Phase 2 due to start in the coming weeks. The project has benefitted from a £9,000 grant from English Heritage, which is being matched funded by the Town Council over the three year period. Completion of all the works is anticipated during 2014 / 15.

Other achievements over the year included repairs to the St Just Skate Park facility which was part funded by the Town Council, Cornwall Council and from former Cornwall Councillor Chris Goninan from his Community Chest fund.

July saw the annual Lafrowda Day celebrations and together with the Deputy Mayor Dave Stevens, we had the pleasure of hosting the reception for invited guests and those who work tirelessly to make the event the success that it is. Thankfully the rain kept off and the festivities were enjoyed by all.

For the second year in succession the Town Council was able to provide a grant of £2,500 to the St Just TIC to enable it to be open during the peak tourist season. The TIC provides a much needed service for tourists visiting the area and support to local businesses which are dependent on the tourist trade. I am pleased to confirm that the Town Council has again made a similar commitment in this year's budget.

The 19 allotments at Kenidjack Valley are now fully operational. The Allotment & Growers' Association are now administering the site and the Town Council has supported their work through the funding of much need equipment to get the project off the ground.

Unfortunately, due to objections from local residents the planning application to establish allotments at Bosavern Community Farm was withdrawn. However, as a result of Bosavern Community Enterprise's success in securing funding to purchase of Bosavern Farm I am hopeful that allotments may yet be delivered there.

Planning continues to be a major element of the Town Council's work as part of the statutory consultation process. With the relocation of the local planning office from St Clare to Camborne, the Clerk's office has seen an increase in members of the public visiting the office to inspect plans and with general enquiries. The Town Council has also seen an increase in prospective applicants attending Council meetings to seek the informal views of the Council on applications prior to the submission of a formal planning application. This demonstrates the importance that Cornwall Council's Planning Service places on the comments received from Town Council and the valuable role that Town Councillors play in the planning process and in protecting and sustaining our local area. During the year, the Town Council has commented on 98 planning applications.

The Town Council continues to work closely with the local policing team, in particular PCSO Andy Tonkin to address local issues, and I can confirm that a new PCSO has recently been appointed which will strengthen the police presence on the ground.

The Town Council continues to provide grant funding to support organisations / groups which help the local community, and has maintained a financial provision of £20K. A range of organisations benefitted last year, such as supporting local schoolchildren in Pendeen on an exchange visit to Huelgoat (Hwelgwot), Brittany with which St Just is twinned; the Phoenix Project which supports young local people to integrate better at school through a mentoring programme run through the Fire Brigade Service, and the St Just Sport Centre for much needed facilities.

Maintenance of the area footpaths has continued under the Local Maintenance Partnership scheme, which from this year has also been extended to include parts of the Coast Path. The Council has also increased its own budget to carry out additional works on the Silver Path network with a view to improving access to some of the more widely used paths. I would remind members of the public that they are encouraged to let the Council know of any problems with the footpath network so that the money can be spent in the areas where it is most needed.

Last year the Town Council marked the occasion of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on 4 June by presenting all the schoolchildren at the local primary schools and nurseries in St Just and Pendeen with a commemorative mug.

I held my "Mayor's Supper" in September at Cape Cornwall School. I am pleased to report that over a 100 representatives from local groups and organisations joined me, Town Councillors and the Town Clerk in acknowledging the contribution that they make to our local community.

Also in September, St Just in Bloom were again awarded with a Silver Gilt for the seventh year running. The group will be entering the competition again this year and let's all hope that this year will see all their hard work rewarded with that illusive gold.

In recognition of the town's position within the World Heritage Site, and acknowledging its links with Huelgoat (Hwelgwot), in Brittany and Bendigo, Australia, our former Cornwall Councillor obtained new signage which has been erected on the entrances to the town.

I am also extremely pleased to report that at long last, thanks to a financial contribution from Cornwall Council, and the generosity of Councillor Morley Thomas, when he was Mayor, we now have a new Town Council sign on the Council Offices. It is hoped that this new sign will raise the Council's profile within the parish and I hope that the Council will agree with me that it makes a significant improvement to the exterior of the building. For me, this is a fitting legacy from an ex-councillor who was 100% committed to this area and whose voice will be missed in the chamber.

I can report that today, the final decision of the outgoing Town Council to purchase defibrillators for the people of St Just and Pendeen came to fruition. Installation works have started today on the externally mounted units which can be accessed 24/7 – one on the property adjacent to the Commercial Hotel in the square of St Just and one at Costcutters at Boscaswell Corner, Pendeen. My thanks to Paul Woolcock and Ollie and Julie Hutchinson for agreeing to this.

I would like to thank former Cornwall Councillor Chris Goninan for his support and commitment to the local area over the last four years. He provided much needed help in delivering some of the projects mentioned. Although Chris decided not to seek re-election to Cornwall Council I am sure that he will continue to be fully involved in community projects. He was our first Councillor on the unitary and he set the bar high for me in following on. Finally, I would like to thank the Town Councillors I served alongside. We didn't always agree but without their hard work and support many of these achievements would have not been possible.