

St Sampson Parish Council

Annual Report 2020/21 as at May 25th 2021

This report effectively covers the period from the beginning of the “lock down ” period, when last year’s Annual Meeting was cancelled because of the COVID restrictions. Despite that (and with the help of ZOOM) your Council has continued to meet on a monthly basis and deal with the regular business at hand.

At the start of the Pandemic, we needed to establish a process for managing our village in “lock down” and we were fortunate to be able to rely on Maurie Parsons who volunteered to become our Covid Coordinator. Through Maurie, we managed to direct our team of helpful volunteers to wherever they were required, and to ensure that our own population was provided with the assistance necessary for things like shopping and collecting medical supplies. This continues today, but as we come out of tight regulations, this requirement will naturally diminish.

Ordinarily, we receive any number of Planning Applications to review, and this last 24 months has been no exception. Whilst not expert in the planning sense, we are able to take a view on any application that is put in front of us, and our starting point is in aiming to be supportive where we can. But it is also our responsibility to identify issues that the Cornwall Planning experts can take further if required.

Of course, the single biggest issue for us has been the start of the Cormorant site development and we have witnessed the huge amount of work necessary to bring the site to a level that will allow the builder to start work. But already one of the first properties is underway and we hear that all nine have already been sold. Our strategy has been to maintain a healthy and close dialogue with the developer and builder and to deal with issues as and when they occur. And so far, this seems to have paid off, with any number of minor issues being handled with sensitivity and goodwill.

We have also followed the progress of two fine examples of successful businesses starting up in the village with the building and opening of The Sanctuary and the purchase and development of the Kayak busines combining with Stand up Paddle Boarding. (Paddle Cornwall SUP) Of course these successes have also generated the need to look at our general parking arrangements, which over the peak months have seen the village occasionally overwhelmed with vehicles. So, your Council is working on the thorny issue of parking, and we aim to gradually bring about a sense of control and fairness to parking generally. But we are a small village with too little space to manage the number of vehicles that might arrive here at peak times. So not an easy issue at all.

Financially, we are in a fairly strong position at the moment, (which is why we have not increased the precept again this year) with reserves being held for specific projects that are in the pipeline: As an example, when we upgrade the parking machine to recognise credit and debit cards, the upgrade cost will be nearly £3000. And then of course, we will have to provide a Broadband signal (via the Boathut) to enable it to operate effectively. Equally, when we take over the toilet block, we will incur legal expenses as well as design and build

costs to be able to convert it into something more useful for the village. Our biggest potential future cost is likely to be the plan to upgrade the playground, which is nearing the end of its useful life. We are talking with a number of suppliers at the moment, but already, we get the feeling that costs will be high and almost certainly we will need to rely on finding additional funding from a third party.

As has been mentioned in previous years, we await the devolvement of both the main carpark and the toilet block. We took the decision early on that we should maintain at least one toilet going forward, which has proven to be well received and we look forward to the day when we can re-model the toilet block to provide something worthwhile for the village, like a kayak store for example? Under the heading of developments, We have also been pleased to support the building of a new shed in the lower graveyard for the church and in assisting Golant Boatwatch in their developments of the Boathut! And we have also re-surfaced the road into the village green parking area.

Quietly and behind the scenes, Councillor Siobhan Harper has been taking our Neighbourhood Development Plan ever nearer to completion (it is such a long process!) But we are very close now, to the point where we can share the draft document with you, which will enable you to vote it into becoming a complete and approved, fully legal and compliant document.

As ever, you are encouraged to follow the arrangements of your Council, by attending meetings that are held every month, by looking at the Agenda which is posted on the village hall notice board, or by looking at the meeting minutes which are posted onto the web site: stsampsonparishcouncil.org.uk

David Jenkinson
Chairman St Sampson Parish Council