

As Chair of the Portreath Parish Council, I am pleased to introduce the Council's interim annual report for the year 2024/25. It is the last annual report of the current council due to the council elections taking place on May 1st 2025. The full annual report will be produced after the elections and membership of what will be a new Council is determined. If you have an interest in becoming a parish councillor, please contact the Parish Clerk who will advise on the process and provide the paperwork required.

You will see from this interim report, largely produced by the Clerk to the Council and the Assistant to the Clerk, that once again it has been an incredibly busy year for the council. I will highlight some of the key developments and issues in this introduction.

At the time of the annual report last year, the planning application for 22 affordable homes on the former WAAF site had not been determined. It remained an issue with strong views for and against the proposal within and beyond the Parish. In July 2024 the application was refused largely based on the site's lack of proximity to local amenities. This was disappointing to some Parishioners, who saw the opportunity for affordable housing in the Parish, but a positive outcome for Parishioners who felt strongly that the site should remain a haven for wildlife and was not the right location for affordable housing. Now the dust has settled on what has at times been a difficult issue, the Parish has recently established a working group with Parishioners to identify future options for the WAAF site for the Parish Council to consider after the council elections in May.

Early last year the Council established a working group to consider the option for the Parish to take on a 2.2 hectare site known as Lighthouse Hill Car Park & Amenity Space. Members of the working group consulted widely within the Parish including knocking on most doors, to determine if Parishioners believed the council should take the site on, and if so, what the site should be used for.

The outcome of the consultation was positive in supporting the parish council taking on the site and that it should be largely left to nature with the possibility of picnic tables. The consultation also identified one important caveat, there should be no or little cost of transferring the site to the parish council. Through the process, discussions took place with Cornwall Council with repeated indications that the transfer would likely be at minimum cost. Unfortunately, in January this year Cornwall Council formalised the position advising their intent to sell or lease the site. Unless this position changes, given feedback from Parishioners that the site transfer should be at no cost, this project is now in effect mothballed until if and when the nil cost transfer is available. This is incredibly disappointing given the hard work, time and cost working up options and consulting with Parishioners on this project.

On a much more positive note, the Parish Office and Community Hub is now open and already thriving. Under the leadership of the Previous Chairman, Ian Stewart, the Parish made a successful bid against the levelling up fund for a project to knock down the old toilet block and build the new Office and Community Hub. The building was completed both on time and within budget. The Parish received £200k from the levelling up fund, over 97% of the total project costs. The Parish received great support from the Cornwall Council team administering the fund and also benefitted from great suppliers with Mitchell Son and Daughter being the main supplier. I also must give special mention to Ian Stewart for his huge effort over the lifetime of the project. It is down to Ian's fastidiousness in all aspects of the project, that ensured the project was delivered to budget. I must also give a huge thankyou to Lucy Jose, Parish Clerk

who has managed what has been a complex administrative process to meet the requirements of receiving the funding. Brilliant job Lucy and Ian.

In this introduction, it would be wrong to not thank all councillors who as well as preparing for and attending the monthly council meetings, get stuck into so many community projects. From community speed watch, to making cakes, to assembling Ikea flat packed furniture, to cleaning, to moving the speed awareness camera to different locations, to attending meetings beyond our parish and many other unpaid activities across the Parish and more widely. Again, brilliant job councillors, thank you.

On a linked issue the residents of Portreath are fortunate to have so many other groups in this Parish including:

- the surf life saving club helping to develop life-saving skills, fitness and keeping our beaches safe with a little fun and socialisation thrown in;
- love Portreath, focusing on the environment, monthly village clean and helping move Portreath to plastic free status;
- the Portreath Improvement Committee who use the funds collected from the car park to support so many initiatives including the multiuse pitch and play area, providing Portreath pre-school with free to use facilities, halls and greenspaces around the village. Having recently purchased the freehold of the shop to ensure its long-term viability, the collapse of the ceiling in the hall has severely stretched its finances but still the PIC finds ways to support so much that is good in our village.

My final highlight of the year is the Remembrance Day event that was as ever well organised, well attended and extremely moving in these days of increased conflict. It was a true honour to represent the Parish at our own and other remembrance events held in neighbouring localities as well as the Battle of Briton service that took place in Illogan Church and RRH Portreath.

Looking ahead to the year about to start with what will be a new council, there are a few hopes I have. First is that I hope we better integrate climate action into our day-to-day activities as a council. It will be brilliant if a parishioner with a passion for climate change issues put themselves forward to be a councillor at the elections in May. If not, we must work closely with love Portreath going forward. Second, the community hub is already being well used and I hope to see its use increasing over the year. Third I look forward to hearing the detailed plans from South West Water to prevent the frequent activation of the Portreath storm overflow. Finally, I look forward to hearing regular updates from the Environment Agency on developing their full business case to increase the capacity of the Portreath stream. This will enable the stream to cope with what they describe as a one in 20 year rain event that without being put in place will likely see many lower lying areas of the Parish flooded.

Simon Goodwin

Chairman