



# Botus Fleming Parish Council

## **BOTUS FLEMING PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2023/2024**

It is my pleasure to present Botus Fleming Parish Council Chairman's report for 2023/2024.

As a result of residents' observations regarding the control of dog-fouling on the Recreation Field and elsewhere within the parish, we decided to consult Cornwall Council regarding a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for dog fouling and dog exclusion areas.

Cornwall Council introduced a Dog Fouling Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) that covers **ALL** of Cornwall. If your dog fouls in any public area you are required to clean up, and properly dispose of it. This covers **ALL** land (except for Forestry Commission Land) in the open air to which the public are entitled access (by payment or not). Failing to clean up after your dog has fouled may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) of £100 being issued. Failure to pay and discharge your liability for the offence will result in prosecution, if found guilty, you would face a maximum fine of £1,000 plus costs.

The Parish Council as landowners are entitled to have an Enforcement Plan and as a result of our application, on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2023 an order came into force for the playground area on the Recreation Field (for a period of 3 years) under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime & Policing Act 2014 and Cornwall Council Public Space Protection (Dog Exclusion) Order 2023.

This order means that any person in charge of a dog will be guilty of an offence if, during any time, they take a dog onto, or permit the dog to enter or to remain on the playground area. A person found guilty of such an offence would be liable on summary conviction to a fine of up to £1,000. A Police Officer, Police Community Support Officer or authorised person from the Council may issue a fixed penalty notice in the sum of £100, to a person believed to have committed such an offence.

We believed the installation of fencing around the playground equipment was necessary to keep the playground area safe for children and other users and would assist enforcing a no-dog presence in and around the play equipment. Various quotes were obtained and eventually it was decided to purchase the

fencing from Zaun (a well-established fencing producer) and have the fencing installed by a local contractor. (This was also the most economical way to fence the area which required some 90 metres of ROSPA approved fencing).

The total amount for the fencing and installation amounted to £10,132. The purchase of the fencing was made utilising funds from the Parish Council and the Hatt Recreation Field Fund. The Hatt Recreation Field Fund is derived from various fund raisers held in the parish and donations from members of the public and grants received. The Hatt Recreation Field Fund managed by our resident Sarah Edwards, contributed £4,000 to the cost of the fencing.

Our resident Steve Malcolm also secured £2,500 through the Annual Award scheme by (AVIVA) Mid Cornwall Brokers. The bid had been successful and was ranked nationally as number 30 out of 116. The money has been added to the fund for the installation of fencing around the playground. Our thanks to Steve for his successful bid for funding.

Most of the protracted arrangements for the installation of the fencing were done by Sarah Edwards. We thank her for her commitment and all her hard work.

Our local contractors Steve Holman aided by Ed Norris commenced the installation on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024. Their task was hindered by the atrocious weather, but despite the quagmire conditions they did an excellent job of installing the fencing. We would like to thank and commend them both for their resilience and professionalism.

The Parish Council applied to Cornwall Council's Community Capacity Fund Grant – This fund is to support community organisations to develop projects or project ideas. Community Capacity Fund is a revenue only programme. Examples of projects that could benefit from Community Capacity funding include:

- Feasibility studies
- Business plans
- Architects' drawings
- Concept plans
- Other professional support to determine the concept of your project
- Community engagement programmes leading to the development of wider projects.

Our submission was successful, and the Parish Council were awarded £18,646. This sum has been used to fund a full feasibility study (including architect plans, concept plans for utilities etc) for the building of a Community Centre/ Village Hall on the Recreation Field.

The feasibility study is being carried out by the Parish Council's Project Managers (South West Community Builds).

Paul Bearman (SW Community Builds) our project manager, provided an open public presentation regarding feasibility studies in Cornwall, and consulted with Parishioners prior to the Public Meeting. The consultation process provided residents with the opportunity to give their views regarding building a community hall. Paul introduced the nature of the scheme, details of possible design work and working with grant funders. Paul would project lead all these aspects including the Planning Application to Cornwall Council, contractor appointments and the tender process.

Once the consultation is complete, we will make further applications to fund the construction of the Community Centre/ Village Hall. We believe that it will add a new dimension for our community. The opportunities it will offer residents are huge and allow us to increase community engagement. One example is last year's Big Event had to be cancelled due to bad weather. A Community Centre/ Village Hall would prevent this happening again!

The Parish Council continue to support Botus Fleming and Hatt Emergency Response (BOTHER) Group. An important part of their work is the project to establish a walk/cycle path from Hatt alongside the A388 and then on to Carkeel. This would then allow our residents to travel via the Treledan development and Carkeel and onto Saltash without using motor vehicles. Our thanks to Margaret Matthews and the BOTHER group for their very important work.

The Parish Council continues to support the Climate Emergency mainly through the work of our stalwart councillor, Malcolm Fletcher. As a result of his work, we now have a total of 153 trees on the verge northeast of Hatt roundabout. They are of varying size and maturity, some over 2 metres in height, others barely 60cm. Those at the southern end of the verge seem to have thrived better than those at the northern end. The reasons are complex, but will probably include depth and quality of soil, as well as drainage. As last year, the rowans are quite badly affected by fire blight. This is a bacterial disease caused by *Erwinia amylovora* and is highly contagious. Malcolm believes that it is probably best if we remove the rowans and replace with other species that are not members of the Rosacea family, e.g. birch, hazel, alder, oak.

The species we have are:

- Horse Chestnut
- Hornbeam
- Alder
- Wild Cherry
- Hawthorne
- Dogwood
- Goat Willow
- Hazel
- Downy Birch
- Silver Birch

- Rowan
- Beech
- Oak

In October last year, Councillor Fletcher was also instrumental in having a second defibrillator for the parish, installed on the exterior of St. Mary's Church Hall. He also arranged for some more of our residents to be trained in its' use. Thanks to Darren Doney for arranging the fitting of the defibrillator and Eric Distin for agreeing it to be installed.

In October 2023 Marc Solomon resigned from the Parish Council citing difficulty with the demands on his work/life balance. We understood the difficulties of his commitments and raising a young family and thank him for his work with our team.

In November 2023 we agreed and signed a Licence Agreement between the Parish Council and Saltash United Junior Football Club (SUJFC) and their football games played on the Recreation Field.

Sadly, Julian Oakes resigned from the Parish Council in January. Julian had changed jobs in 2023 and this had led to a big increase in his work commitments. We thank him for his work and support over the years. He was an integral part of the team and with great humour and integrity contributed to our successes during his tenure.

This meant that we started 2024 with only 6 councillors instead of 8. Vacancies were advertised inviting individuals to apply for co-option onto the Parish Council. We are very pleased that after a successful process, Brian Venables and Martin Smith were invited to join the Parish Council. Congratulations to them both and they are a welcome addition to our team.

Councillor Martin Smith has already volunteered to lead the project to introduce a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) into the parish. The NDP project stalled some years ago and has been dormant ever since. We know that this will require some commitment from Martin and thank him for taking it on.

I would like to offer my thanks to all my fellow councillors and our Parish Clerk, Christopher Cook, for their hard work, commitment and support.

We should never forget that all parish councillors are volunteers. They give up much of their spare time to make things better for everyone in our community.

Finally, I send my best wishes and hope that all our residents remain safe and healthy.

Thank you.

David James Edwards  
Chair  
Botus Fleming Parish Council

April 2024