



Botus Fleming Parish Council

BOTUS FLEMING PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2020

It is my pleasure to present Botus Fleming Parish Council Chairman's report for 2020.

Cllr Mervyn Ellis stood down as Chair in November 2019 for personal reasons, and I would like to thank him for performing that role since September 2018. This then resulted in my election as Chair and David Willey as Vice-Chairman.

We have faced and dealt with a number of situations and I thank my fellow councillors for their unwavering help and support. I believe that we are a proactive, dynamic and sympathetic Parish Council, with the single aim of striving to improve the quality of life and community well-being across the villages of Botus Fleming and Hatt.

We shouldn't forget that your councillors are all volunteers, who give up much of their spare time in an attempt to make things better for everyone. Just as important are those people who are not members of the council, who volunteer for a wide variety of roles, from running the Hatt Chat & Botus Banter Facebook group, the Events Committee, Community Action Team and more recently, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the many willing volunteers that are now looking after the "at risk" members of our community.

I would like to highlight the work of one of your councillors, Malcolm Fletcher. Malcolm is our Environment and Biodiversity Champion. He is knowledgeable, tireless and passionate about the subject, and I for one have and continue to learn a lot from him. He was instrumental in us declaring a Climate Emergency, supported the setting up of BOTHER - (Botus Fleming and Hatt Environmental Response) Group and a number of other projects. Malcolm also recently coordinated the 105 tree-planting project. I believe that we have made some real environmental improvements and under his wise and informed counsel will continue to do so.

I would like to thank our Parish Clerk, Chris Cook, for everything that he does for the Parish Council and our community. He consistently goes above and beyond his paid hours, is always available and is an integral part of the Parish Council team.

I would also like to thank Nick Brown our contracted grass maintenance provider. He maintains his commitment to our community, again above and beyond his contracted hours, is always available for advice and is an invaluable part of our team.

A substantial piece of work has gone into the negotiations surrounding the purchase of the Recreation Field in Hatt. The parish does not own any green spaces for sport or leisure activities. This is almost unique in Cornwall. In 2018 Cornwall Council's Sustainability Appraisal declared that the parish did not meet the standards for sustainability. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirmed that the parish did not meet the conditions as a sustainable community in the areas of economic, social or environment. The parish has very little in the way of infrastructure or services for the existing residents.

It is our contention that Cornwall Council (in its previous manifestation) allowed a substantial housing development to be built in Hatt, without any planned infrastructure or facilities for the proposed residents. This mistake has subsequently cost this community dearly and resulted in this current situation. In addition to no public green space, we are once again uniquely disadvantaged in not having a publicly owned community centre or hall. The purchase of the Recreation Field is in our view, our opportunity to engender more vitality and community spirit into our parish.

We carried out a survey and 68.46% of the electorate contributed their views. It was gratifying that 92.23% were in favour of purchasing the Recreation Field and 92% supported the Parish Council's proposal of borrowing the money to purchase the field.

The Parish Council then immediately applied to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for a loan. We await their response and hopefully we will be given permission to borrow the money to complete the purchase and acquisition of the Recreation Field.

We continue to support the dog bins service in both villages and have a collection agreement in place with Biffa. We purchased a container unit last year that is used to store items of equipment that have been collected along the way, made or purchased for events in our community. This has led to the creation of a budget for equipment and allowed us to purchase a marquee. The marquee is available to residents for a nominal fee for their own events. Any cash raised will be reinvested into community projects. We also continue to raise money for the installation of decent playground equipment in the Recreation Field.

Due to the current situation, the Catt in the Hatt celebration of the 75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day had to be cancelled this year. This was after months of planning and hard work by the Events Committee, and I thank them for this and for their pragmatic decision and positive approach to future events.

You will be acutely aware of the current situation regarding Coronavirus and the national and local efforts to contain it. What is clear is that as a community we need to help and protect those who are most vulnerable to this virus. The Parish Council takes this extremely seriously and will continue to try to coordinate and lead a practical response.

I hope that you and your families remain safe and healthy. As we face the difficult challenge of responding to the COVID – 19 pandemic, our thoughts go out to the people affected by this event and we send heartfelt thanks to the NHS healthcare workers, and other key workers, local communities and governments around the world working to contain this unprecedented situation.

Many thanks.

David James Edwards

Chairman

Botus Fleming Parish Council

STAY HOME - STAY SAFE - PROTECT THE NHS - SAVE LIVES