



Helston Town Council



Annual Report 2013/14



Message from the Mayor

As I come to the end of another year in office, and just before I retire, it is a good opportunity for me to reflect on the achievements of our town over the past year, and for us all to look forward to the forthcoming year with hope and anticipation, and to ask ourselves how we can all contribute to making Helston a better place to be.

Our collective achievements over the year have been significant.

Helston Town Council has taken over the running of two notable assets formerly run by Cornwall Council, with a third shortly to follow.

Firstly, the playgrounds around the town, which generations of Helston residents and visitors have enjoyed, have been transferred to the management of the Town Council, thereby hopefully securing their future for many more generations to come. Not only do we manage these assets, but we have opened two new playgrounds in the past year; one at Carey Parc which had been dormant for many years and was made possible thanks to funding by contributions from SITA Cornwall Trust, Cory Environmental, Cornwall Council including two Community Chest grants from Cllrs. Judith Haycock and Alec Robertson, Helston Town Council and the Lions Club, and another at Bulwark Road, which was spearheaded by the local residents, who had had enough of decrepit play equipment and knew that it could be so much better if only we all worked together to deliver the project. Funded by contributions from SITA Cornwall Trust, Helston Town Council, Helston Downsland Trust, Friends and Residents of Bulwark Group, Cornwall Council and the West Briton, what has been achieved there is nothing short of inspirational, and is testimony to what can happen when we all work together.



Carey Parc Play Area

Secondly, and resisting the temptation to pun my way into lavatorial humour, Helston Town Council have taken over the running of the three sets of public conveniences in the town. You may have noticed that these have all received a facelift in the past year, and again, hopefully the future of these essential facilities have been secured for the town.

The CCTV system in the town has similarly been taken over by the Town Council, again to secure its future.



Whitewash walls in Meneage Street

The system is about to undergo significant refurbishment such that the images it picks up are sharper and clearer, and will hopefully provide reassurance of personal security to all those who use and enjoy the town centre.

Last year, I personally took part in a project to repaint the whitewashed wall in the road where I lived, and I noticed that all the other walls around the town, so much part of the character of Helston, received similar treatment. The walls therefore, so shabby looking for so long, looked fresh and clean in time for Flora Day. All this work was undertaken by volunteers and their efforts and will to help deliver what was a substantial project

where public money had run out, were frankly humbling. I would like to thank everyone involved in these projects last year on behalf of everyone in the town; yet another example of what can happen when a willing community group comes together with a determination to achieve for the good of all residents and visitors to Helston.

The Helston Business Improvement Partnership has gone from strength to strength this year, and there have been a number of new businesses opening in Helston, which is really great to see. We all want to see a vibrant and active town centre, and for this to happen I have always said that the town centre needs to ensure that its retail and service offer does not seek to compete with international giants based on the edges of town. This seems now to be happening, and I am so pleased to see that there are now very few empty shops in our town centre.

The Helston Business Park on the fringes of the town has been empty for so long that it has been named Helston's most expensive dog walk. And why is this? Could it be that no one was interested in taking a unit on this site, in blessing Helston with enterprise and creating local jobs for local people? No, of course not. The issue was ridiculous levels of sustainability and green issues, written by people based in Bristol who had



probably never even visited Helston, to the extent that no one could possibly hope to comply. The result is the empty business park you see today. Fortunately, the park has been acquired from the RDA successors by a local developer who is not bound by any such green rules, who will hopefully ensure that ground is broken on the site very soon and that we will see new businesses trading from our business park without any more central government red tape and procrastination. This is good for Helston and good for its people and I look forward to seeing the site develop with interest.

On a less positive note, Helston Community College still awaits news of any funding for its new buildings to replace the dilapidated C block. Whilst Cornwall Council and central government bickered about who should pay for the sorely needed work, our young people suffered in dilapidated, decrepit and outdated buildings. Windows falling out of their frames with rot, buckets on classroom floors to collect rainwater, these continued to be every day possibilities for those attending and working at our secondary school. Those who know me personally know my views on this sort of thing and where I believe the money can and should come from, and without wishing to become political, I do wish to express my utter disgust at the prevarication and delay, only to be told at the end of it that

New path in Penrose

the school was not to receive the money needed to facilitate the rebuild. I do know that if buildings of this quality were at County Hall in Truro, or Westminster, or certainly Brussels or Strasbourg, there would be no question of their continued use. Yet the young people of Helston are expected to use them. Not right, is it?

Back to positive things, and I have to commend the National Trust, on the opening of the new paths across the Penrose estate. That lovely walk through the woods and up to the house can now be done in comfort, thanks to a huge amount of hard work and dedication of the good people of the National Trust. My wife and I often walk our dog through the woods on a weekend afternoon, and I have always regarded the Penrose estate as one of the abundance of very good things about living in Helston.

No annual report would be complete without a mention of Flora Day. It was my greatest pleasure to walk in front of each dance as Mayor, and at a couple of minutes to midday on 8th May 2013, as I waited on the Guildhall steps for the town clock to strike 12, BBC Radio Cornwall approached me and asked whether the mild dose of liquid sunshine we were at that moment experiencing would dampen the spirit of the midday dance. My reply was

“Oh, is it raining?”

Whether I had actually noticed the rain or not I will leave you to decide, however the point I was trying to make was that the spirit and love of Flora Day here in Helston is so great that no amount of inclement weather could possibly spoil it – Flora Day is bigger than the weather. I think most of my predecessors would agree; Flora Day is the highlight of the Mayor’s calendar always. This year, my annual message would not be complete without a mention of John Hitchens, the ex-leader of Helston Town Band, who stepped down as band leader last year after 10 years in this post. Always thoroughly professional and dignified, John is a great loss to the Town Band and Helston as a whole – thank you John, for everything you did, we all wish you well in your future endeavours.



Helston Town Band with John Hitchens leading

When I first took office as Mayor, I dedicated my term of office to the people of Helston, identifying that as lovely historically and aesthetically as our town is; it is nothing without its people. It is the people that give Helston its richness, those who continually show incredible levels of generosity of time and spirit in making great things happen around our town.

I have worried for some time as to who may succeed me when I retire and whether the things I regard as important would be maintained for the town. I need not have worried, however, as the Mayor Elect, Cllr. Mike Thomas, is in my view the safest possible hands that I could be leaving the town in, and as the Mayoress and I retire, we are delighted to be handing over to Cllr. and Mrs Thomas. It has been an incredible journey for me as Mayor and leader of the Council, and in the vast majority it has been enormously enjoyable to lead the town that I have come to love so much. It has been a wonderful experience for the Mayoress and I to serve you and whilst no one would under estimate the work still to be done to restore our town to what it once was and will be again, so much has been achieved during our term of office because of the spirit of the people of Helston, all importantly working together as a team.

To the wonderful people of this town of ours, I simply say thank you for your support, and I would ask as I retire that you support my successor in a similar way.

Thank you.

Councillor Jonathan P Radford-Gaby
Town Mayor

THE COUNCIL

Helston Town Council was formed in 1974 and has 12 elected Councillors (5 Councillors represent the North Ward, 5 Councillors represent the South Ward and 2 Councillors represent the West Ward). A list of current Councillors can be found on page 9. Elections will next be held in May 2017.

At the Annual Meeting in May 2013, the Council elected Cllr Jonathan Radford-Gaby as Mayor for a second civic year.

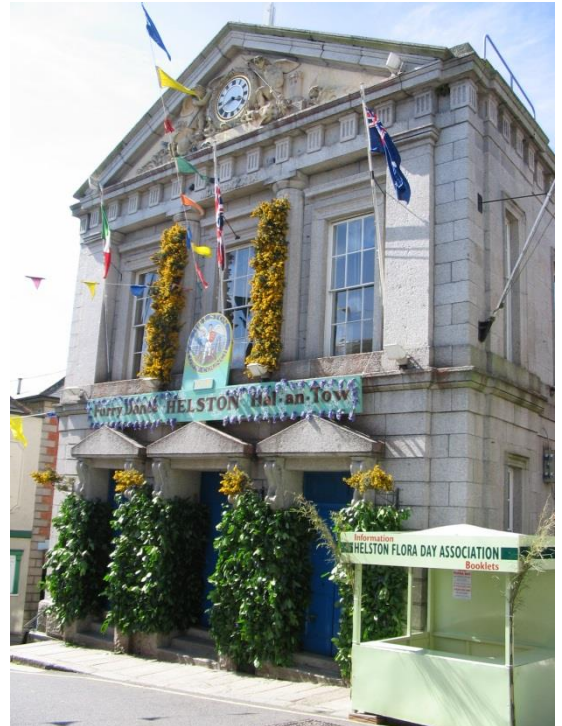
Meetings of the Full Council are held at the Guildhall, Helston on the third Thursday of every month (no meeting in August from 2014). In addition to the Full Council meetings, the Council has four committees to facilitate the effective management of its business:

Amenities

Play & Young People

Planning

Policy, Finance & Resources



There is public participation at the monthly Full Council meeting to enable members of the public to make comments or raise local issues. There is also public participation during committee meetings during which comments can be made regarding items on the agenda. A calendar of Meetings for the 2014/15 civic year can be found on the Council's website www.helstontc.com. Agendas and Minutes are also published on the website and Facebook.

Councillors do not receive payment or any allowance for attending meetings or for carrying out Council business. A record of meetings attended during 2013/14 is included in this report on pages 7 and 8.

A representative of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary is usually present at Full Council meetings to report on crime statistics and to discuss issues as they arise. There is also an agenda item for the Cornwall Council Local Members and the Community Network Manager to give reports and they attend when possible.

The Council employs five full-time and two part-time officers based at The Guildhall:

Mr Chris Dawson – Town Clerk

Miss Pamela Lavelle – Assistant to the Town Clerk

Mrs Shelly Price – Mayor's Secretary and Administrative Assistant (Part-time)

Mrs Julia Chambers – Administrative Assistant (Part-time)

Mr Craig Bowcutt – Town Warden

Mr Martin Searle – Town Centre Regeneration Officer

Mrs Amanda Boxer – Town Centre Management Project Assistant

AMENITIES COMMITTEE

The Committee was Chaired by Cllr Miss Justine Hornsby and met on six occasions during the 2013/14 civic year. This Committee is responsible for the Council's property such as the Guildhall and Public Conveniences as well as bus shelters, public seats and litter bins.

The Town Warden regularly reports to this Committee and an excellent working relationship has been developed with the National Trust at the Penrose Estate.

PLAY & YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE

The Play & Young People Committee, which consisted of six Town Councillors and up to six members of the public, was Chaired by Cllr Mike Thomas and met on seven occasions. The Committee's remit includes the maintenance of the Town Council-owned play areas at Hellis Wartha and Cades Parc plus three others leased from Cornwall Council. The Committee also promotes youth engagement and has organised several visits of young people to meet the Mayor and Councillors at the Guildhall.



King George V play area

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Planning Committee, consisting of six Members meets on the first and third Thursday of every month and has delegated authority to consider all planning applications and to make recommendations to Cornwall Council – the Planning Authority. All Applications are categorised into those that are non-contentious (Category I) and those that require more in-depth consideration (Category II). Each Category II application is allocated to a Committee member who visits the site and contacts neighbours to establish a balanced view and to make a presentation and recommendation at the Planning Committee meeting. If a near neighbour of the application site cannot be contacted a letter is left giving the application details and how to contact the Committee member. The public are welcome to attend the meeting and again have the opportunity to express their opinions to the Members.

From June 2013 to May 2014, 24 Category I planning applications were considered and 70 Category II.

POLICY, FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Policy, Finance and Resources Committee, consisting of six Members, Chaired by Councillor Radford-Gaby, met on twelve occasions during the year. The Committee meetings were held on the second Tuesday of every month and its functions include the consideration of new policies, monitoring of the budget and auditing of the Council's accounts and internal controls.

Committee membership (2013/14)

Amenities Committee

Cllr R Williams**
Cllr Mrs F N E Boase
Cllr Miss J A Hornsby – *Chair*
Cllr M Upton
Cllr Mrs G A Geer
Cllr M Knight – *Vice Chair*
Cllr L C W Harris*

Play & Young People Committee

Cllr J P Radford-Gaby (Town Mayor)^
Cllr R J L Boase
Cllr M H Thomas – *Chair*
Cllr Miss J A Hornsby – *Vice Chair*
Cllr M Upton***
Cllr L C W Harris*
Cllr N Roberts
Cllr A Harrison^^

Planning Committee

Cllr R J L Boase
Cllr J P Radford-Gaby – *Chair to 3.10.13*
Cllr M H Thomas – *Chair from 3.10.13*
Cllr J Martin – *Vice Chair from 3.10.13*
Cllr M Upton
Cllr G A Geer^^^
Cllr L C W Harris*

Policy, Finance & Resources Committee

Cllr M H Thomas – *Vice Chair*
Cllr J P Radford-Gaby (Town Mayor) – *Chair*
Cllr Miss J A Hornsby
Cllr J Martin
Cllr M Upton
Cllr Mrs N Roberts

* Cllr L C W Harris resigned from the Council on 3rd December 2013.

** Cllr R Williams was appointed to the Amenities Committee on 19th December 2013.

*** Cllr M Upton was appointed to the Play & Young People Committee on 19th December 2013.

^ Cllr J P Radford-Gaby resigned from the Committee in February 2014.

^^ Cllr A R Harrison was appointed to the Play & Young People Committee on 20th February 2014.

^^^ Cllr Mrs G A Geer was appointed to the Planning Committee on 19th December 2013

Current Town Council Representatives on Other Bodies from May 2014

Bulwark Group	Cllr Mrs F N E Boase
West Cornwall CCTV Group	Cllr M H Thomas
Cornwall Association of Local Councils	Cllr M Knight (Cllr J Martin)
Helston Community College	Cllrs M H Thomas & J Martin
Helston Framework Steering Group	Cllrs J Martin & M Knight
Helston Business Improvement Partnership	Cllrs Miss J A Hornsby & J Martin
Helston Welfare Trust: Nominated Trustees	Cllrs R Williams, Mrs G A Geer & M Knight
Local Council Planning Forum	Cllr M H Thomas (Cllr J Martin)
Loe Pool Management Forum	Cllr R Williams
The Furry Youth Café Steering Committee	Cllr M H Thomas
Victim Support West Cornwall Advisory Group	Cllr Mrs G A Geer

Attendance at meetings May 2013 – May 2014

	Full Council	
		Absent and no apology received
<i>Number of Meetings</i>	<i>17</i>	
Cllr J P Radford-Gaby (Town Mayor)	15	
Cllr R Williams	14	2
Cllr R J L Boase	15	
Cllr Mrs F N E Boase	16	
Cllr M H Thomas	17	
Cllr Miss J A Hornsby	15	
Cllr J Martin	17	
Cllr M Upton	16	
Cllr Mrs G A Geer	14	
Cllr L C W Harris	7/8	
Cllr M Knight	17	
Cllr N Roberts	16	
Cllr A R Harrison	5/6	

Committee	Amenities	Planning	Play & Young People	Policy, Finance & Resources	Licensing Consultative Group
<i>Number of Meetings</i>	6	23	7	12	1
Cllr J P Radford-Gaby (Town Mayor)		19	2/5	11	
Cllr R Williams	2/2				
Cllr R J L Boase		21	5		1
Cllr Mrs F N E Boase	5				
Cllr M H Thomas		23	6	12	1
Cllr Miss J A Hornsby	6		7	10	
Cllr J Martin		21		11	0
Cllr M Upton	5	22	2/2	12	1
Cllr Mrs G A Geer	5	9/10			0
Cllr L C W Harris*	3/4	7/9	3/4		
Cllr M Knight	5				1
Cllr N Roberts			6	11	
Cllr A R Harrison**			2/2		

* Cllr Harris resigned from the Council on 3rd December 2013

** Cllr Harrison was elected to the Council on 17th February 2014

FINANCE

Set out below is a summary of the Council's accounting statements for the financial year 2012/13.

	2012/13	2013/14
	£	£
Balances brought forward	625,617	643,416
Annual Precept	224,940	212,240
Total other receipts	218,808	393,285
Staff costs	170,253	182,237
Loan interest / capital repayments	0	0
All other payments	255,696	296,990
Balances carried forward	643,416	769,714
Total cash & short-term investments	640,510	745,766
Total fixed assets & long-term assets	1,650,170	1,811,035
Total borrowings	0	0

During the year the Town Council gave financial support to the following organisations:-

Active Plus	Helston Cricket Club
Cornubian Arts & Science Trust	One and All Judo Club
Epworth Hall	Sithney Cornish Wrestling Club
Gweek Visually Impaired Club	South Kerrier Heritage Trust (Museum)
Helston & District Carers Group	St Michaels Church Bell Ringers Group
Helston Christmas Lights Committee	Swallows of Helston
Helston Community Memory Cafe	Trengrouse Way Residents Association

COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

During the past twelve months the Council has seen significant advancement in the devolution of assets and services from Cornwall Council. From 1st April 2013, the Town Council took over responsibility for the public conveniences at the Guildhall and adjacent to the Grylls Monument. Then During 2013/14 the Council agreed to lease the public conveniences in Trengrouse Way along with the adjacent green spaces and sheltered seat. The former disabled toilet has been refurbished and is now a unisex/disabled facility. The remainder of the building will be used for storage but can be opened as extra toilets during major town events such as Flora Day.

Management Agreements were also signed during the past year to take over responsibility for the following three play areas: King George V, Wellmoor (Cades Parc) and Bulwark Estate. The Bulwark Estate play area has seen the project to re-instate some much need play equipment come to fruition. The Town Council has also replaced equipment removed by the former district council at the Carey Parc play area. Some play areas have benefitted from the addition of picnic tables and bins.

Bus shelters in Coinagehall Street have been discussed for many years, but in May 2014 the Council agreed to purchase two shelters in keeping with the Conservation Area. They will be financed from S106 funding obtained from Tesco and Sainsburys for improvements to the town centre.



Continuing the S106 town centre theme, the Town Council received £251,352 for improvements to the town centre public realm. A Public Realm Board has been established including Town Councillors, a Cornwall Councillor, members of the Helston Business Improvement Partnership and other town organisations. A public launch and consultation was held in October 2013 and details of a second public consultation will be released in the near future.

In December 2013 the Council received the resignation of Cllr Lloyd Harris for personal reasons. In March 2014 following an uncontested by-election, the Council welcomed Cllr Aidan Harrison.

Mr Chris Dawson, MAAT, MILCM
Town Clerk

The Town Clerk can be contacted by writing to: The Guildhall, Helston, Cornwall, TR13 8ST

Telephone: 01326 572063

Email: townclerk@helstontc.com

YOUR TOWN COUNCILLORS

Helston North Ward	Home Telephone	E-mail
R J L Boase	01326 573200	boase@helstontc.com
A R Harrison	07983 441177	harrison@helstontc.com
J P Radford-Gaby	01326 560210	radford-gaby@helstontc.com
Mrs N Roberts	07889 191514	roberts@helstontc.com
M H Thomas (Town Mayor)	01326 562947	thomas@helstontc.com

Helston South Ward

Mrs G A Geer	07974 817520	geer@helstontc.com
M Knight	01326 564710	martinecouncil@gmx.co.uk
J Martin	01736 763814	martin@helstontc.com
M Upton	01326 561636	mark.upton@helstontc.com
R Williams	01326 572179	

Helston East Ward

Mrs F N E Boase	01326 573200	n.boase@helstontc.com
Miss J A Hornsby	01326 374498	hornsby@helstontc.com

The Council can be contacted on **(01326) 572063** or e-mail **townclerk@helstontc.com**

Or write to:- The Town Clerk, Helston Town Council, The Guildhall, HELSTON, Cornwall, TR13 8ST

For more information regarding meetings and the latest news visit our web site **www.helstontc.com** or Facebook page **www.facebook.com/helstontc**