

# WITHIEL PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN

THE WITHIEL VILLAGE HALL ON WEDNESDAY, 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2026 AT 6.30PM

Present	Cllr. M. Davies (Chairman)	Mrs. J. Burdon (Parish Clerk)	Cllr. Mrs. W. Symons (Vice-Chair)
	Cllr. E. Piper	Cllr. R. Wilson	Cllr. J. Hancock
	Cllr. Ms. A. Hoyle	Cllr. S. Coy	2 Members of Public

Minute	AGENDA ITEMS	Action
49/25	<b>Apologies:-</b> Cornwall Councillor C. Batters.	
50/25	<p><b>Annual Report from Chair of Withiel Parish Council:-</b> Annual Report received and circulated as follows for 2026:-</p> <p>Following the 2025 local elections our Cornwall Councillor Mrs. Jenny Cruse was replaced by Mr. Chris Batters. I would like to thank Mrs. Jenny Cruse for the work she did for us during her term. Since his re-election, as many know Chris used to be our local Councillor, Cornwall Councillor Mr. Chris Batters has attended the majority of our monthly meetings and has both represented and supported us. We have also been supported by our excellent Clerk – Mrs. Julie Burdon, who can always be contacted at <a href="mailto:clerk@withielparishcouncil.org.uk">clerk@withielparishcouncil.org.uk</a></p> <p>The local elections also saw all but three of the Parish Council standing down and with no new applications the three Parish Councilors, Wendy Symons, Rob Wilson and Martin Davies were duly elected to post. We then went about seeking additional Councillors to take us back to full strength and I am pleased to say that Anna Hoyle, Dylan Cotton, Ed Piper and Jeremy Hancock stepped forward and were co-opted onto the Parish Council. Whilst the process dragged on for a while due to constitutional reasons, I feel that we have now settled into a good team and are an effective Parish Council.</p> <p>Generally, all Councillors attend all the meetings, however we would still like to see more members of the public at our meetings. I hope that we can raise our profile and encourage more parishioners to come along and engage with us.</p> <p><b>Highways</b> – The largest issue within the parish now appears to be the general poor state of the roads, with potholes and floods appearing regularly. These are being reported and occasionally repaired, but there are still concerns about the speed and quality of these repairs. We continue to work with both our local Cornwall Councillor, Chris Batters, as well as Cornwall Council to put long-term solutions in place.</p> <p>We would still urge people to report any issues they see directly to the Cornwall Council via their website. (<a href="https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/roads-highways-and-pavements/report-a-problem-with-a-road-highway-or-footway/">https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/roads-highways-and-pavements/report-a-problem-with-a-road-highway-or-footway/</a>)</p>	

Despite the traffic regulation order coming into force in 2024, which limits the access to the village of Withiel to traffic under 7.5 tons (except for access), we are still seeing occasions when unsuitable traffic tries to pass through, causing both damage and roadblocks. I hope over time, sat nav systems will update and inform road users of this change, leading to less issues, but time will tell.

**Planning** – Last year was quieter in terms of planning applications with only eight applications coming to the Parish Council, down from 12 the previous year, and two appeals. I think that as a Parish Council we still need to do more work around understanding needs and leaning on our Neighborhood Development Plan, as well as the Local Plan to inform planning decisions. That said our recommendations and comments can and are overturned or rejected by Cornwall Council who ultimately have the final say on these matters.

**Website** – The website continues to operate and is now used more widely for people wishing to access Parish Council minutes and agendas and reports. This website can be viewed at [Withiel Parish Council – Serving the local community](#)

**Finances** – In the last financial year, Withiel Parish Council spent £15,564.67 against a real income of £15,718.90, an underspend of £154.23. However, the bank balance looks better than this due to the solar funds of £31,541.49 which are being held until expenditure on suitable projects to benefit the parish.

What do we spend your money on? We employ an excellent Clerk without whom we could not function, and her wages and expenses account for more than half of the £8,000.00 precept, the element of your Council tax we receive from Cornwall Council. We spent £4,800.00 on footpath maintenance during the year, which included an additional enhanced scheme this year, this in part is offset by a specific “footpath” grant of £4,503.13. The largest expenditure the Parish Council makes is towards Churchyard Maintenance and last year it cost £700.00 to mow the two graveyards. The final major item is the maintenance of the Parish Council Website which we are required to have by law. There are a number of smaller items including a grant to the Parish Magazine “News and Views”, a grant to operate the village defibrillator and some other minor items.

**Voltaise** – The Parish Council oversees a pot of money given to the Parish by the solar park at Inches. As a Council we have voted to gift this to projects that benefit either, or ideally both, the environment and community. During the last year we have received five applications for funding and have granted four to a total value of £3,310.40. We also decided, via a democratic process, to delegate funds to a project in the parish. This year that project was to resurface the driveway outside the front of St. Clement’s Church as it had become very uneven and was threatening injury to visitors. I am pleased to say that after a competitive tendering process we awarded the job to a local firm who completed the job two days ago.

Martin Davies

Chair, Withiel Parish Council

There were no questions from the Councillors present on this report.

51/25

**Annual Report from Cornwall Councillor:-** Report received from Cornwall Councillor C. Batters as follows:-

- Firstly, can I say what a pleasure I have found the past ten months in returning to working with yourselves at Withiel.

- It was never my intention to return to Cornwall Council but whilst working with our MP Ben Maguire throughout his 2024 election campaign, alongside Ben on the doorsteps the public of my ward made it clear that they would like to see me stand yet again and to hopefully return. Ben offered me his encouragement was keen that I did stand again, and my fires, were re-ignited, so I warmly accepted the invitation.
- As with all of my parishes I was thrilled when the support I received on the doorsteps transferred itself into a very strong victory with a large majority.
- Although some faces had change during my four-year absence, I find it a pleasure to once again work alongside the present Withiel Parish Council, together with working again with Julie Burdon your excellent Parish Clerk.
- Please remember as always, I am 24/7, and only a phone call away and I can promise you a speedy reply to any emails you might send me. I am happy to call and meet with you if that is your wish.

Cornwall Councillor Chris Batters

Lanivet, Blisland & Bodmin St. Lawrence

There were no questions from the Councillors present on this report.

52/53

**Annual Camel Valley Community Area Partnership Report:-** Councillor R. Wilson reported as follows:-

- The CAP year began after Mays Council elections with several changes to the panel. There were several new Cornwall Councillors, all Liberal Democrats, including our own Cornwall Councillor Chris Batters, returning as Councillor for Lanivet, Blisland & Bodmin St. Lawrence Ward after a 4-year absence. Change for me too, as Withiel Parish Council voted for me to become the new CAP representative, supported by Councillor Ms. A. Hoyle whose knowledge of funding, charities and community services has been invaluable. The CAP structure allows only one voting representative, but we are most definitely a team, and I thank Councillor Ms. A. Hoyle for all her help. Sarah Simms (Community Link Officer) and Elizabeth Allcorn (Community Support Officer) remained in their posts, and Councillor Robin Moorcroft (Cornwall Councillor for Wadebridge West & St. Mabyn) was re-elected as Chair.
- CAP priorities remained with the Environment and Children's Services. Active travel was held in abeyance, although Highways and community transport were integral to CAP discussions. The funding panel is chaired by Councillor James O'Keefe (Padstow) and has discussed several projects across the area. Full details can be found on the Council website.
- Projects-Good Growth Shared Prosperity Fund. This funding runs out on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2026, and there is no clear replacement planned to date. Withiel applied for one grant through a separate Community Highways Improvement Project to improve visibility at the Trevidgeowe/Lanjew crossroads, which was not supported.
- Regular Partner updates through the year came from Police Inspector Adam Stonehill (Bodmin Sector), who reiterated the 3 priorities of Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, which are theft, anti-social behaviour and drug misuse and supply. Across the CAP area, there have been small increases in each, although better than the national average, and increases are also due to better reporting. New initiatives are Hot Spot policing, where support officers are targeting known areas of trouble and Partners Against Crime, which enables retailers to share real-time information about shoplifters. Community intelligence has led to several notable arrests in the supply of drugs across the area.

- Council Leadership Team representative Rachael Rothero has given regular updates about decision-making at Cornwall Council, with the new Liberal/Independent coalition aiming to be more transparent and has introduced online cabinet updates every Thursday. Questions across the year concerned housing, budget, changes in planning and this winter the impact of Storm Gorette.
  - Barry Cornelius (Lanivet) has worked tirelessly on getting the Camel Connect minibus service up and running, and while this is a 3-year project, big steps have been made this year. Town and parish councils have been asked to contribute to the cost of a Transport Co-ordinator to make the whole project work smoothly, and to liaise with other services such as Age UK and the hospital car scheme to maximise efficiency. Contributions are based on the tax take of each parish, and Withiel Parish Council have supported this with a very modest annual subscription. The scheme has grown from the hospital/care sector but is available for all journeys and provides an at-cost service to residents without transport for whatever reason.
  - Throughout the year, there have been several stakeholder presentations on a wide range of subjects, including Family hubs, the WREN wind farm, the environment, climate resilience, fostering, and more. Cornwall councillors have also given quarterly reports, some with specific briefs such as transport, planning and water quality. It has been a very positive year and a good working environment. Challenges for the next few years will be budget constraints with no clear idea of revenue streams, given the government reorganisation of Councils and funding. I have been proud to serve Withiel Parish in this role and am always available for questions and advice.
- Councillor Rob Wilson, Camel Valley CAP Representative.  
There were no questions from the Councillors present on this report.

53/25

**Annual Report from The Parish Church of St. Clement, Withiel:-** Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council for the calendar year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025:-

**Administrative Information** – St. Clement’s Church is situated in Churchtown in the very rural parish of Withiel (population 351). It was part of the United Benefice of Roche and Withiel until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2011, but on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011, it formed, with St Wenn, the new United Benefice of St Wenn and Withiel in the Diocese of Truro within the Church of England.

The presentation of the new United Benefice was last suspended on January 4<sup>th</sup> 2022. The Patrons are the Bishop and the Truro Diocesan Board of Patronage.

The correspondence address is Withiel PCC Secretary, Dipper Bridge, Ruthern Bridge, BODMIN, PL30 5LU. (withielchurch@gmail.com)

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. PCC members who served from 1 May 2025 to date are:

Priest-in-Charge: Post vacant (The Rev’d Christopher Harrigan has been appointed as Rector of the Benefice of St Wenn and Withiel with “Oversight responsibilities”. He will also be the Vicar of the three parishes that make up Towan Blystra. He will be licensed on 30 March 2026 and take up his duties from that date). Wardens – Simon Coy – First Elected 4<sup>th</sup> April 2005; Betty Jarrett – First Elected 4<sup>th</sup> April 2005.

Representatives on the Deanery Synod – Simon Coy. Elected members of the PCC at the APCM 2025:

- Tessa Cubitt
- Alison Davey
- Claire Davies
- Jenny Hoskin
- Hilary Mann
- Joyce Rundle
- Janet Shearer

**Structure, Governance and Management** - The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

**Objectives and Activities** - St. Clement's PCC had the responsibility of cooperating with the future incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC has maintenance responsibilities for the Church. It rents the Church Room (formerly a Priory Stable) from the current owner of the 1523 Priory.

**The Benefice of St Wenn and Withiel, Deanery of Pydar** - A Pastoral Measure was put in place on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011 to form the United Benefice of St Wenn and Withiel. The “On the Way” process has concluded.

### **Achievements and Performance**

**Church Attendance** - There were 41 Services held in the church in 2025. The average attendance on a “normal” Sunday was 11 (10 in 2024). However the Church was full on Christmas Eve for the Carol Service, and the Easter Service was well attended: 46. There were 17 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll in 2024.

### **Review of the Year**

**PCC Meetings** - There were five PCC meetings during the year. The Vestry Meeting and the Annual Parochial Church Meetings were held on 28<sup>th</sup> April .

**Charitable Giving** - We made a charitable donation to: The Royal British Legion; Christian Aid; Wadebridge Food Bank; Cornwall Historic Churches Trust.

**Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals** - There was one Baptism on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2025 of Humphrey Matthew Cooke by Rev'd Andrew Turner. There were three Funerals: Philip Peel Cardew on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2025; Peter Francis on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2025 and Nick Warren on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2025

**Fundraising and Social Activities** - The Fete and Dog Show, Cricket Match, and Harvest were well supported. This year, the Harvest concentrated on Food Banks with a talk from Jacqui White MBE, Project manager Wadebridge Food Bank.

**The Fabric of the Church and the Church Room** - There was a Quinquennial Inspection (QI) in 2021. The major recommendation was that the Baptismal Boards be surveyed with a view to their restoration. This was done (at a cost of £1,572).

The Boards went away on 4<sup>th</sup> October to be restored by Laura Karoniemi (Web site <https://finnishingtouch.co.uk/about/>) at her workshop in Truro. The boards were returned in March 2025. The Cost was £22,020 (les VAT): This was provided by the generous grants from Withiel Parish Council and St. Breock Wind Farm. We reclaimed the VAT paid from Listed Places of Worship. We provided £3,547.75 from Withiel PCC Funds. The Heating system failed in September 2024. A leak revealed that the main Victorian pipes buried in the Vestry had rusted and needed to be replaced. The Diocesan Advisory Committee were consulted, and agreed that modern copper pipes could replace the Victorian pipes. The work was underway at the end of 2024 and was completed before Easter 2025 at a cost of £2,900. Outstanding work includes the Bell frame and the Rainwater Goods.

**Pilgrims** - Our Church is on the Junction of the Celtic Way and the Saints Way. Through the enthusiasm of Rev'd Cannon Nigel Marne and his book on the subject, we get Pilgrims (who have to be holders of the Celtic Way passport) sleeping in the Church as they make the pilgrimage.

**Annual Financial Report 2025** – A total of £5,550.97 (2024: £6,519.18) was spent to provide the Christian ministry from St. Clement's Church. General Fund Receipts were £4,903.12. The general fund deficit was -£647.87. Under these circumstances, we did not pay our MMF. The Project account was busy coping with the demands of the Baptismal Board Project and the repairs to the heating system. Both these projects extended into 2025. There was no Flower Festival in 2024 The Church holds four bank accounts, and their start and finish balances in 2025 are set out below

Account Name	Withiel PCC	01-Jan-25	£6,922.87
Sort Code	55-70-45	31-Dec-25	£3,354.86
Account Number	11016868	Gain/Loss	-£3,568.01
Account Name	Withiel PCC – St. Clement's Project	01-Jan-25	£9,804.67
Sort Code	55-70-45	31-Dec-25	£3,544.67
Account Number	82506434	Gain/Loss	-£6,260.00
Account Name	St. Clements Flower Festival	01-Jan-25	£8,248.16
Sort Code	55-70-45	31-Dec-25	£4,298.16
Account Number	82522502	Gain/Loss	£3,950.00
Account Name	Withiel PCC Business Reserve	01-Jan-25	£264.80
Sort Code	55-70-45	31-Dec-25	£267.45
Account Number	11067756	Gain/Loss	£2.65
Total Financial Assets		01-Jan-25	£25,240.50
		31-Dec-25	£11,465.14
		Gain/Loss	-£13,775.36

	<p><b>Reserves Policy</b> - It is PCC policy to adopt best practice and maintain a balance on unrestricted funds, which equates to approximately six months' unrestricted payments (£2,853.19), to cover unforeseen eventualities and provide a working balance and cash flow. Our net assets of £3,354.86 in the General Fund at the end of 2025, meet this target just.</p> <p>Simon Coy, PCC Secretary, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026 for approval at the 2025 APCM to be held on Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> May.</p> <p>There were no questions from the Councillors present on this report.</p>	
54/25	<p><b>Annual Report from Withiel Playing Field Association:-</b> Report received from Stephen Horrocks:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Withiel Village Hall had another successful year, with several improvements to the Hall, a number of Fund-Raising Events and Finances maintained at comfortable levels.</li> <li>• <b>Capital Expenditure Improvements</b> - Upgrade to the Hall Loft insulation to current standards. New Large Larder Fridge and Convection Double Oven for the kitchen. Replacement large tables for the main hall.</li> <li>• <b>Fund Raising Events</b> - Quiz, Craft Fayres, Bingo Evenings organised by the Withiel Village Hall Social Group. Annual Garden Show run by Bridget Rundle and Charlotte Matthews. Representative Groups – Hall fund raising events and donations.</li> <li>• <b>Grants</b> - We obtained a £10k grant from St Breock Wind Farm towards Hall improvements.</li> </ul> <p>Stephen Horrocks for the Withiel Playing Fields Association</p>	
55/25	<p><b>Annual Report from Women's Institute:- Annual Report 2025:-</b> Report received from Judy Lobb as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Firstly, I would like to say how proud I am to be President of our wonderful W.I. Our membership has increased in the past year, and we have been participating in many county events. Last year, one of our members entered and won a prize at the Royal Cornwall Show as an individual entry; this year, several members will be entering for Withiel, and work is underway. We gained a 3rd at the Wadebridge Fatstock show, so we are holding our own in the county. Last week, a team went to Laddock for a quiz, and we were placed 8th out of about 23teams.</li> <li>• During the past year, I attended the county AGM at the Hall for Cornwall, which sounds boring, but to hear the hall full of ladies' voices singing Jerusalem was quite moving. Our guest speaker was Pam Eyres, who recited several of her poems, and yes, she read a national favourite in "I wish I had looked after my teeth". Recently, I again represented Withiel at a literary lunch; on entering, there was our name on the board of those present. We have had some good outings, one in particular was to The Water Gardens at Lanreath, complete with a cream tea. These gardens are worth visiting and supporting, and we hope to go again. Our Christmas meal was at Carlyon Bay Hotel, which was a lovely get-together at this special time of the year.</li> <li>• Our evening speakers have covered many topics, including education, history, beekeeping, and crafts. Some of our meetings are open to all, but you need to check. Mostly our meetings are on the first Friday of each month, but we occasionally have to move to the 2nd Friday so please check if you wish to join us. Check us out in the W.I.Tent at this year's Royal Cornwall to see how we get along.</li> </ul>	

	Judy Lobb There were no questions from the Councillors present on this report.																																		
<b>56/25</b>	<p><b>Annual Report from Police:-</b> PC Thomas Cornwell sent a report as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of the crimes for February 2024/2025 and 2025/2026:-</li> <li>• He was unable to break down the individual crimes. The increase in crime is very small.</li> </ul> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>February 2025/2026</th> <th>February 2024/2025</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Burglary – Business and Community</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Criminal Damage</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other Theft</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Public Order Offences</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rape</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stalking and Harassment</td> <td>5</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vehicle Offences</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Violence with injury</td> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Violence without injury</td> <td>1</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>16</td> <td>14</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>There were no questions from the Councillors present on this report.</p>	Category	February 2025/2026	February 2024/2025	Burglary – Business and Community	1	0	Criminal Damage	1	1	Other Theft	4	4	Public Order Offences	1	1	Rape	0	1	Stalking and Harassment	5	4	Vehicle Offences	3	1	Violence with injury	0	1	Violence without injury	1	1	TOTAL	16	14	
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<b>57/25</b>	<b>Any Other Reports:-</b> None.																																		
<b>58/25</b>	<b>Date of next Annual Parish Meeting:-</b> Next Annual Parish Meeting to be held in May 2026 at 6.30pm in the Withiel Village Hall Committee Meeting Room. There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 6.56pm																																		

Signature: .....

Chair

Date: 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026