



St Austell Town Council Annual Report 2019/20

**Your guide to St Austell Town Council,
what we have achieved and
how to get in touch**

2 Contact

St Austell Town Council

St Austell Town Council
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Website: www.staustell-tc.gov.uk



TOWN TEAM: (L-R) David Pooley (Town Clerk) Sara Gwilliams (Deputy Clerk), Kimberley Gay (Assistant) and Steve Skinner (Operations Manager)

St Austell Town Council

St Austell Town Council has the following responsibilities:

- Parks at Bethel, Chapel Fields, Chy Pons, Jubilee Meadow, Landrew Road, Linear Park, Lostwood Road, Manfield Way, Penmere Road, Polmarth Close, Poltair, Prince Charles, Sandy Bottom, The Meadows, Thornpark Road, Truro Road, Woodland Close and Woodland Road.
- St Austell Library
- Priory and Tregonissey Lane End Car

Parks

- Public conveniences, Priory Car Park
- Allotments at Alexandra Road and Landrew Road
- Maintenance of footpaths
- Weed spraying
- Grass cutting cemeteries, verges and roundabouts
- Flower beds
- Town centre CCTV
- The House Youth Centre

Cornwall Council

Cornwall Council has wide ranging responsibilities, including:

- Education
- Social Services
- Highways and Transportation
- Determining Planning Applications and Development Control.
- Collection of Council Tax
- Benefits Administration
- Housing and homelessness
- Libraries and Arts
- Fire Brigade
- Refuse collection, recycling and waste disposal
- Environmental Health
- Leisure
- Youth Services

- Crime and Disorder / Anti-social behaviour

Cornwall Council can be contacted at:

Cornwall Council	Cornwall Council
County Hall	One Stop Shop
Treyew Road	39 Penwinnick Rd
Truro	St Austell
Cornwall	Cornwall
TR1 3AY	PL25 5DR

Telephone: 0300 1234 100

E-mail: enquiries@cornwall.gov.uk

Website: www.cornwall.gov.uk

In the 2019/20 civic year Cornwall Council had five Councillors representing St Austell. These were Councillors Brown, Bull, French, Heyward and Pears.

Message from the Mayor

This past year as your Mayor and Town Council Chairman has been a huge privilege and honour where I met lots of organisations and interesting people.

The coronavirus pandemic and lockdown at the end of the year have over-shadowed some of the Council's work in 2019/20, but nevertheless it was a busy and productive year. Some of our achievements are listed below which I hope you find interesting.

We have declared a climate emergency and created a Climate and Environment Committee to take forward our climate change agenda. We have reviewed our grass cutting and wildflower planting to improve local biodiversity and planted 220 trees. Significant planting schemes with Pocket Parks Grant funding have been undertaken at Lostwood Community Garden and Thornpark Road Park and we are working closely with Cornwall Council's Making Space for Nature project to improve biodiversity in other areas.

As contracts end, electricity is being sourced from renewable energy suppliers and, where possible, re-cycled goods such as benches and waste bins are purchased.

We have supported the St Austell Bay Economic Forum (SABEF) with the development of a greening and ceramics project which has attracted Government funding and will deliver significant improvements across the Town over the next 12-18 months.



Tim Styles : Highlights the achievements and hard work by St Austell Town Council during his tenure as Mayor and Chairman of St Austell Town Council.

Already lots of wildflowers, trees and shrubs have been planted and more are to come. A number of artworks are being developed around the town and will add colour and interest to the town centre.

The bandstand in Truro Road Park has been completely refurbished and will make a fantastic centrepiece for community events in the park in the future.

We are working closely with Cornwall Council to deliver a Town Heritage Scheme and have been awarded a grant of £980,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, which should generate a total investment in the Town Centre of over £1.3 million for improvements to historic buildings.

This project started last year and will include some public realm works to improve the wall and fountain

on the edge of Holy Trinity Church.

All towns and cities are suffering from anti-social behaviour and drink and drug related issues. We recognised this last winter and lobbied Cornwall Council to reduce the number of people with complex needs housed in St Austell to achieve a fairer allocation of people across all the towns in Cornwall.

The Town Council works closely with a multi-agency group called Safer St Austell which co-ordinates anti-social behaviour meetings with the key agencies and volunteer groups around the town to help address some of the issues that are experienced.

We have lobbied for more police and support services and have addressed issues in parks through our grounds maintenance team clearing areas that have been used

4 Message from the Mayor

historically for drug taking. We have increased patrols and inspections linked to our public conveniences, upgraded our CCTV cameras and increased the monitoring and maintenance budgets for CCTV.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my year as Mayor and have undertaken many community and civic events and enjoyed a whole range of birthdays, wedding anniversaries and community

events.

During these celebrations, it has been a real privilege to meet residents and to listen to and share life stories and experiences.

I hope that members of the public will recognise how much work has gone into the last year and how far the Town Council has grown while maintaining a below average council tax and a very lean staffing team.

I would like to thank all of our partners and the people of St Austell for their help and support during this busy year and record a special thank you to my deputy, Councillor Richard Pears, and the Council staff that supported me throughout my period in office.

**Councillor Tim Styles
Mayor of St Austell**



Tim Styles becomes Mayor

Mayor Tim Styles with his consort, wife Sue (Left) and Mayor Styles deputy for the year, Councillor Richard Pears, inside the civic chamber for the official Mayor making ceremony inside Cornwall Council's offices.

The ceremony sees the formal installation of the incoming Mayor and recognises the achievements of his or her predecessor who passes over the chain of office and robes midway through the ceremony.

Councillor Styles replaced outgoing Mayor Gary King in 2019.

St Austell Town Council

St Austell Town Council has 20 elected Councillors (four Councillors representing the Gover Ward, four Councillors representing Poltair Ward, two Councillors representing St Austell Bay Ward, five representing Bethel Ward and five representing Mount Charles Ward). Town Council elections were held on the 4th May 2017.

A list of current Councillors is included later in this report.

Each year, the Council elects one councillor to be the Mayor who then acts as the civic leader and chairs Council meetings. The Council has adopted a code of conduct and is committed to proper standards and sound corporate governance arrangements.

Meetings are currently being held online but are usually held in Cornwall Council's St Austell Information Centre or at the

Town Council's offices at The Stable Block, Pondhu House, Penwinnick Road, St Austell. The full Council meets approximately every six weeks. In addition to the full Council meetings, the Council has three standing committees to ensure the effective management of its business, Finance and General Purposes Committee, Planning & Regeneration Committee and Community Committee

There is a public participation session at each of the Council's official meetings to allow members of the public to make comments or raise issues about items on the agenda.

From time to time, working groups are formed to address particular issues. A calendar of Council meetings for the forthcoming year can be found on the Council's website at www.staustell-tc.gov.uk. Agendas and minutes are published

on the website.

The Council employs eleven full-time and eight part-time members of staff who are based either at the Stable Block or St Austell Library. Key contacts are:

- David Pooley – Town Clerk
- Sara Gwilliams – Deputy Town Clerk
- Steve Skinner – Operations Manager
- Kimberley Gay – Mayor's Secretary / Administrative Assistant (Part-time)
- Terry Shaw – Senior Library and Information Assistant

The Town Council serves the town of St Austell which has a population of approximately 22,000.

Services and facilities provided within the town of St Austell are also enjoyed by people living in the surrounding villages and by the many tourists who visit the town each year.

The Town Council is very

keen to improve local pride in St Austell and to ensure that however the town changes in the future the process is managed and that appropriate infrastructure accompanies it.

An important role of the Council is to represent and champion local residents and businesses to ensure that their views are taken into account by the larger organisations operating and investing in the area.

The Town Council is consulted on all planning and some licensing applications in its area and in relation to many of the other services provided by Cornwall Council.

The Town Council seeks to work in partnership with Cornwall Council and other agencies in order to ensure delivery of the highest quality services and facilities to local residents.



St Austell Town Council is responsible for a population of approximately 22,000 residents, making it one of the largest in Cornwall

2019/20 Activities

Service devolution



Truro Road Park in 2019, one of the many green spaces that the council maintains

The Town Council is a strong advocate for service devolution and in recent years has taken a broad range of services and assets from Cornwall Council including toilets, allotments, parks and open spaces, maintenance of highways grassed areas, car parks, the library and The House Youth Centre.

The Town Council's visionary devolution project has been praised by the former Secretary for State, James Brokenshire MP, and by Cornwall Council and others as an example of good practice.

The benefits of the local management of services are already clearly being demonstrated through better maintenance of parks, the library, public conveniences and play areas and improved floral displays, tree planting and grass cutting.

The Town Council aims to gradually improve the properties it manages including play areas after several years of under-investment.

The Town Council co-ordinates an anti-social behaviour group including representatives of a very broad range of agencies and organisations to deal primarily with anti-social behaviour issues. This group has been instrumental in contributing towards the reduction in crime in and around the town centre and other parts of St Austell and has been highlighted as a model of good practice.

Climate Change

In November 2019, the Town Council held a consultation at St Austell Library on what the Town Council should be doing to address climate change. The three most popular suggestions were; Plant more trees, lobby central government to change taxation and funding to support climate change initiatives and lobby Cornwall Council to improve public transport in St Austell. An Action Plan has been developed and initiatives undertaken within the constraints of Covid19.



Climate consultation at St Austell Library attracts hundreds of residents in November 2019

Town Heritage Scheme

The Town Council is working with Cornwall Council and the Market House to implement a Townscape Heritage (TH) scheme for St Austell. The Heritage Lottery Fund has approved a grant of £980,000 which should generate an overall investment of over £1.3 million in St Austell town centre over the next four years.

Townscape Heritage schemes fund quality traditional repairs to targeted historic buildings in Conservation Areas. It will boost the local economy and make the Town a better place to live, work and visit.

St Austell Business Improvement District (BID)

The Business Improvement District (BID) for St Austell became operational in April 2013. It will boost the local economy and make the town a better place to live, work and visit.

It is funded by local business ratepayers in the town centre to enhance and promote the BID area.

The Town Council is pleased to support the BID which is making significant progress and has organised a number of events and environmental and security initiatives in the town centre.

CCTV

Since April 2015 the CCTV system in St Austell has been owned and maintained by the Town Council with monitoring arrangements shared with Newquay Town Council. The Town Council has upgraded the system and added cameras in 2019/20 to help address anti-social behaviour.

Youth Services

The Town Council has provided annual funding of £20,000 to secure the future of The House youth project.

A lease has been finalised during 2019/20 and Young People Cornwall have re-located their headquarters to the building.

This has secured over 40 jobs in St Austell and created a centre of excellence for youth services in the town.

LIBRARY

The Town Council has refurbished the St Austell Library, installed a coffee machine, arranged events and computer classes and increased footfall by over 12%. St Austell library



Works to improve and renovate the Market House continue with the installation of glass doors

is one of the busiest libraries in Cornwall.

Due to Covid19 the library is currently operating on a click and collect service but will become fully operational once again when it is safe to do so.

The Council aims to make the Library a community hub which provides benefits way beyond the traditional functions of a library.



St Austell Sorooptimists gift the library with £308 to buy new equipment (Centre) and St Austell Town Council take over the library in 2017 (Above)

8 2019/20 Activities

Environmental Initiatives

The Town Council undertakes a number of environmental projects each year. In 2019/20 we:

- Planted over 220 trees which were donated to the Town Council;
- Worked closely with St Austell Bay Economic Forum to help create wildflower areas at Daniels Lane and Trenowah Road;
- Installed a new door and ramp to allow access to the library garden;
- Refurbished the Bandstand at Truro Road Park and installed a new accessible swing;
- Improved several of the local parks including major schemes at Thornpark Road Park, Lostwood Community Garden, Cemetery Park and Poltair Park;
- Created a new bridge at Poltair Park to improve accessibility in a poorly draining area and undertaken landscaping adjacent to the café which is nearing completion;
- Achieved a 4-star award for The Meadows Park in the South West in Bloom Pride in Parks Scheme.

Other Initiatives

- Operated a small grants scheme for

local community and charitable groups. The Council gave 22 grants totalling £7,502 in 2019/20;

- Achieved the Foundation Quality Status award
- Provided a number of larger grants including grants to St Austell Arts Centre (£5,000), Torchlight Carnival (£2,500), St Austell BID (£5,276), Town Heritage Initiative (£8263.75) and Safer Cornwall Youth Project (£1,500);
- Declared a climate emergency and created a Climate and Environment Committee to oversee environmental issues. The Council has reduced its paper usage, reviewed grass cutting policies, started a shift towards green energy and planted more pollinators;
- Undertaken pre-planning consultation with developers, arranged large-scale public meetings to give residents the opportunity to raise concerns or suggest improvements to major planning proposals and responded to 164 planning application consultations;
- Provided Poltair School with the materials to create a mural on the old toilet block in Poltair Park.



The installation of a new pedestrian bridge in Poltair Park (Above) to improve accessibility in a poorly draining area and to allow the widest possible cross section of users safe and easy access



St Austell staying in bloom



Standing committees 2019/20

Planning Committee

Peter Bishop
Jackie Bull
John Colwill
Tim Jones
Gary King
Andrea Lanxon
Robin Leonard
Nicky Oxenham
Brian Palmer
Crystal Pearce
Tim Styles (Mayor)
Mike Thompson
Graham Walker

Community Committee

Malcolm Brown
Jackie Bull
Anita Cohen
John Colwill
Jamie Hanlon
Sandra Heyward
Tim Jones
Gary King
Robin Leonard
Crystal Pearce
Richard Pears
Mike Rees
Tim Styles (Mayor)
Mike Thompson

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Malcolm Brown
Peter Bishop
Anita Cohen
Tom French
Tim Jones
Gary King
Andrea Lanxon
Nicky Oxenham
Brian Palmer
Mike Rees
Tim Styles (Mayor)
Graham Walker

Mayor making June 2019





Annual accounts 2019/20

The Council's Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. The Council's Accounts are audited annually by an independent internal auditor and forwarded to PKF Littlejohn LLP, an external auditor, for final appraisal.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2020

2018/19 £		2019/20 £
	Income	
591,500.00	Precept payments	672,800.00
309,973.72	Car Park income	305,920.38
29,781.59	Council Tax Grant	32,422.89
10,715.08	Library Income	11,641.65
17,637.76	Other income	89,063.04
4,096.11	Public Convenience charges	3,612.04
11,761.58	Transfers from Reserves	35,690.27
975,465.84	Total Income	1,151,150.27
	Less Operating Expenses	
440,084.30	Total Employee Expenses	471,363.31
174,950.96	Total Premises Expenses	196,710.79
309,319.25	Total Supplies and Services	281,582.36
26,400.85	Total Transport Related Expenses	76,205.83
40,160.44	Transfers to Reserves	78,479.00
990,915.80	Total Operating Expenses	1,104,341.29
-15,449.96	Net Surplus (+)/ Defecit (-)	46,808.98

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2020

31 March 2019 £		31 March 2020 £
	Assets	
	Current Assets	
14,975.92	Debtors and Prepayments	20,237.12
186,669.64	Bank and Cash	48,395.06
312,435.97	Short Term Investments	465,946.66
514,081.53	Total Current Assets	534,578.84
311,941.83	Fixed Assets	390,499.19
826,023.36	Total Assets	925,078.03



12 *Annual Accounts*

Balance sheet as at March 31, 2020 (continued)

	Current Liabilities	
86,027.03	Creditors and accruals	16,926.63
86,027.03	Total Current Liabilities	16,926.63
 739,996.33	 Net Assets	 908,151.40
	Equity	
96,892.00	Asset Revaluation Reserve	96,892.00
215,049.83	Capital Financing Reserve	293,607.19
206,560.04	Earmarked Reserves	249,348.77
221,494.46	General Reserve	268,303.44
739,996.33	Total Equity	908,151.40



ST AUSTELL: This spectacular aerial picture looking west shows how much St Austell continues to develop and grow year on year



**Highlights of Mayor Tim Styles
and his guests at a civic dinner
hosted before the first Covid-19
Lockdown in March 2020**



St Austell Town Council



Councillors



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Website: www.staustelltowncouncil.com



HANDS



FACE



SPACE

Please observe social distancing rules at all times when in Town