

Lostwithiel Forum Development Trust

A community company limited by guarantee Registered No 5341466

Promoting the Social, Economic and Environmental
Enhancement of Lostwithiel and Surrounding Area



the plan
ACTION

The faces behind the hands. Many thanks to the Cornishes for modelling our front cover photo. The Cornishes are fairly typical of a Lostwithiel family spanning three generations (often more) working, learning, retiring and playing locally. Each generation has its challenges just as it has its fantastic environment, community and culture. It is crucial that we remember that what we want to do with our town and surrounding area is down to us! Together we can ensure that we have a quality living place where we can enjoy our individual wellbeing .

Left to right: Eva, retired with interests in local history.
 Lee, carpenter & joiner likes indian cooking and cider making.
 Ella (age 3), likes to climb in the park.
 Sian, planning consultant, interested in geology.



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Photos

Many thanks to our contributing photographers. Mid Cornwall Photographic Club, Mat Connelley and Caroline Yates.

The structure of The Forum is designed to provide a flexibility that enables directors and members to apply resources to projects and initiatives as and when they are needed. However to ensure that all of the town's needs are attended to, a director takes responsibility for a specific section. (see diagram 1*) Each director will work with, and support, the relevant groups and individuals involved in each initiative.

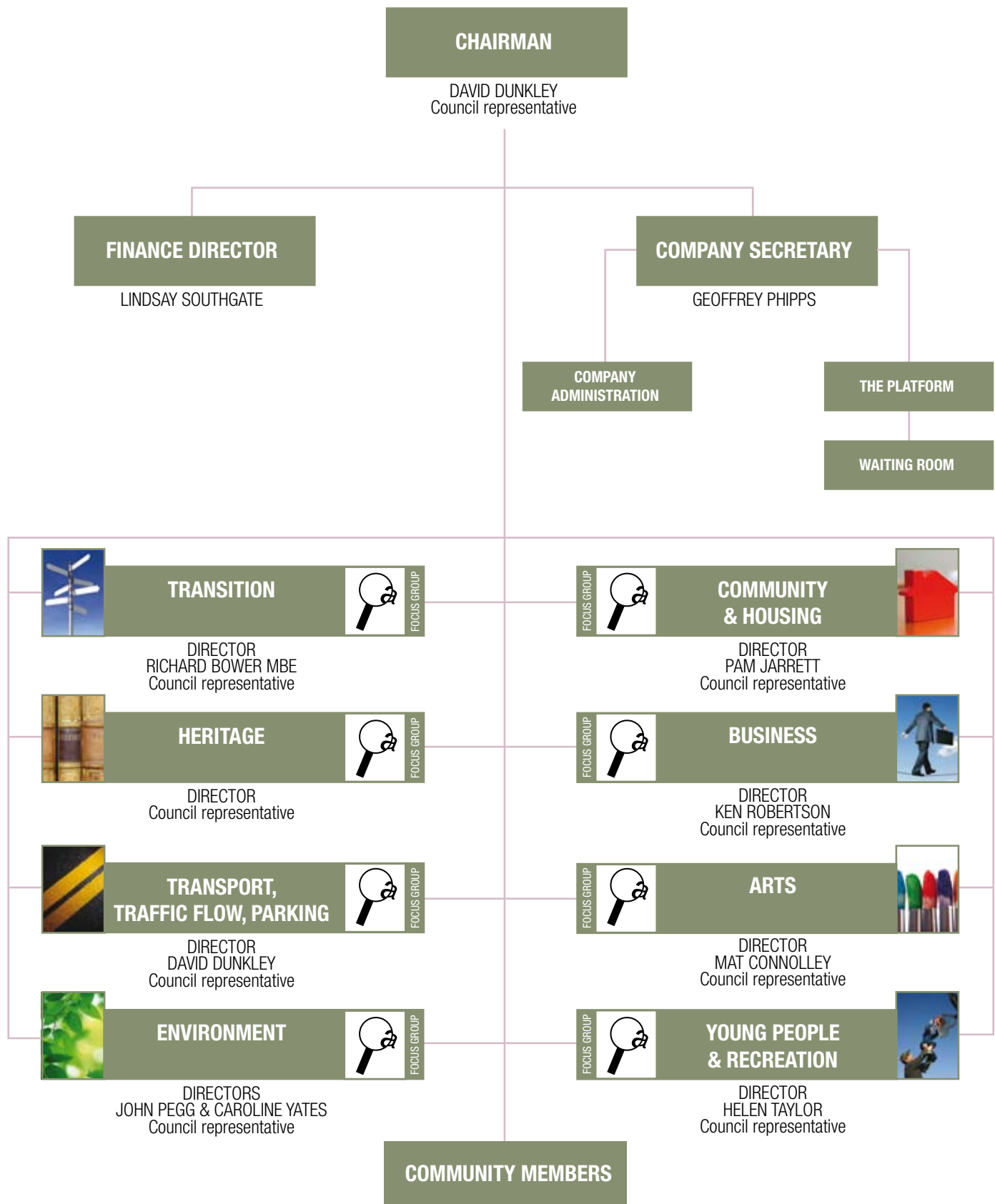


diagram 1*

Introduction



A brief background to The Forum and its agenda.

Hello. Before we get into the Action Plan I thought it would be useful to help clarify where The Forum has been, where it is now and where it wants to get to.

The Forum has evolved over the last 8 years with its sole aim to help deliver the economic and social regeneration of Lostwithiel. Part of this evolution was to achieve Development Trust status which enables The Forum to access funds, support and direction from a wider choice of providers and get it all more efficiently. Now, in 2009, The Forum still embraces its original mission

- To promote the rejuvenation and regeneration of the town for the benefit of its community and those of adjacent parishes
- To pursue the economic and social development of the town
- To seek every way of enhancing the attractiveness of the town as a centre for all

As you'll see from further reading, there is a great deal to be done and the more help we can recruit the better. So why not contact us to talk about **becoming a member** of the Forum and helping us fulfill these great ideas. [01208 871591](tel:01208871591) or info@lostwithielforum.org

In line with The Forum's vision to help create an environment where the community determines what the community wants to bring about for the town, (with ideas coming from the grass roots rather than being imposed by statutory bodies higher up the chain of Government) The Forum applied to join the Market and Coastal Town Initiative (MCTI). This was granted in 2003.

Various surveys, health checks, studies and focus groups were carried out during 2003 & 2004, the outcome of which is The Lostwithiel Area Action Plan 2004-2024.

Which brings us to this document. This is the **Action Plan Update** designed to look hard at our original ambitions, consider our achievements to date and add new energy to ideas put forward at the Action Plan public open meeting and other information gathering initiatives.

It is, I hope, a realistic plan with projects that can be achieved in both the short term and the more ambitious taking a little longer. You will see that each section of the Action Plan has an action list. This helps to illustrate the town's personality, character and overall desires. From this action list we have, in consultation with many relevant groups and townspeople, selected two projects from each section to which we will give committed support and drive. This should mean that we give ourselves a more focused and realistic action list and a greater chance of real success and delivery.

This is the community's plan made up of multiple ideas and actions. The Forum will endeavour to help fulfill all we can. In partnership with the Town Council and you, we have the skills, connections and methods in place to create a thriving community. This is, after all, the Forum's reason for existing: **to help deliver a quality living environment for all.**

David Dunkley

Chairman
The Forum

History

The ancient and beautiful town of Lostwithiel has a history and heritage that is unrivalled in Cornwall.

Lostwithiel has a rich heritage. Founded by the Norman lords who built the original Restormel Castle, it was developed to become a major port for seagoing ships, exporting tin to Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean.

The castle was rebuilt in the late 13th century by Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, who was also responsible for building the Great Hall, the bridge and the square church tower. Edmund was very proud of his beautiful, thriving little town and called it his 'Lily of the Valley' and 'Fairest of Small Cities'.



The name Lostwithiel was documented in the charter of 1189. It is believed to come from the Old Cornish 'Lostgwydeyel' meaning 'the place at the tail of the forest'. Throughout the 14th century Lostwithiel, known as 'The Port of Fawi' was the capital of Cornwall, administering affairs both Cornish and stannary (relating to tin) from the Great Hall until the Stannary Parliament was discontinued in 1752. The Great Hall became known later as the Duchy Palace.

During the 14th century the river began to silt up owing to excessive streaming for tin on the moors. It gradually became unnavigable to sea-going ships and Lostwithiel lost its shipping trade to Fowey. Tin and other goods were sent down river in boats of shallower draught. As production of tin in this area declined, miners moved further west and Lostwithiel developed alternative trade in weaving, tanning, pottery and pewter.



In 1644 Lostwithiel and the Fowey peninsula was occupied by 10,000 Parliamentary soldiers. They were followed by King Charles I and his army, who together with Royalist forces from the west and north besieged the area through the month of August. This was a disastrous month for Lostwithiel. The church was damaged, the Duchy Palace was burned and the records were destroyed, the bridge narrowly escaped being blown up. There was a great shortage of food and starvation and plague were rife amongst the population and the occupying army.

Eventually the Parliamentarians retreated to Castle Dore and surrendered to the King. It was now a Royalist victory, but the town was left badly shattered. Many of the town houses (some now shops) were built in the years following the Civil War.

In the 18th century Lostwithiel was a 'Pocket Borough' for the Pitt and then the Edgcumbe families. The latter became patrons of the town buying land and building substantial properties, including Edgcumbe House, the Guildhall with the Corn Exchange beneath, and the Old Grammar School.



In the early 19th century iron was mined north of Lostwithiel, and a thriving industry developed, resulting in rapid growth of the town. During this period Coulson Park, now a quiet riverside walk was the scene of much noisy, heavy work. Iron ore was carried down from the mines in horse drawn wagons, running on tram lines through the town to the jetty where it was transferred to barges for shipping down river. This 'boom industry' came to an end in the first decade of the 20th century. The river was used commercially into the 20th century, when limestone was barged up to the lime kilns to be made into fertilizer for agricultural use.

Brunel's railway came through the town in 1859 and the maintenance works designed by him were built here, providing work for almost a century. The 'Creamery' developed between the years 1932 -91, and as the need for railway workers diminished, it became the major employer in Lostwithiel, until it too closed down.



Today there is an interesting variety of small scale businesses in the town. Lostwithiel is once again experiencing change in its long, proud history. The people of the town are actively involved in the developments taking place and welcome the interest of visitors to this 'Fairest of Small Cities'.

Lostwithiel is proud of its heritage. The town has a reputation as a strong community, looking after its own, self-supporting in solving its needs and aspirations.

The people who live here now whether rooted in local family history or moving in as newcomers, want to preserve the richness of the past, loving the environment of the town. It is accepted though that to keep this heritage secure for future generations the area needs a sustainable economy which traditional industries no longer provide.



Inevitably our town will change over the coming years but the people of Lostwithiel would like to control those changes to protect the strong sense of community and the quality of the environment in which we live today.

Indeed it is the people of the Lostwithiel area who will determine the shape and character of our communities. We are very fortunate to benefit from a large group of volunteers who contribute their time and skills to a wide range of activities and services.

Why not join them? If you would like to help in any way please get in touch.

t 01208 871 591
e info@lostwithielforum.org





Timeline

Main landmarks 2001-2009.

2001 / 2002 In February 2001 about a dozen people in business in Lostwithiel gathered in the Restormel Lodge Hotel to consider how advantage might be taken of the several sources of funding apparently available then with a view to achieving the regeneration of the Town. About that time, the economy of the Town was depressed with many retail premises standing empty.

The result of that first meeting was two fold. First, the Lostwithiel Business Group was set up. It now has over 70 members and is actively supporting and generating business in the Town. Then in May 2001 the Lostwithiel Town Forum (later Area Forum) was constituted. Its aim was then, and remains today, the economic and social regeneration of Lostwithiel.

In the autumn of 2001 the Forum became aware of a new move by the government – the introduction of the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative. This was designed to provide funds for local communities to determine what it was that the communities wanted to bring about, with ideas coming from the grass roots rather than being imposed by statutory bodies higher up the chain of government. An application for MCTi status was made in the autumn of 2001 and it was granted, eventually, in the spring of 2003.

2003 In anticipation of funding, a Town Survey was carried out in early 2003 which sought opinions and ideas from every household in the Town, and from our adjacent parishes of St Veep, St Winnow, Lanlivery, Luxulyan and St Sampson. When funds became available an office was established in the Town on Quay Street and two Community Agents were appointed, one for administration and one for development. To prepare the background for a strategic plan a so-called ‘Health Check’ – an assessment of current County, Borough and Town plans and of the current situation in the town – was completed. Meanwhile, at different stages of development, plans were being devised by the adjacent parishes for their own regeneration.

2004 During the winter months of 2003 and early in 2004, focus groups involving a large number of business people and residents of Lostwithiel and its surrounding area examined ideas thrown up by the survey. In the context of the health check the groups worked under the headings of Environment, the Economy, Social Issues and Road Usage.

At the same time, funded separately and outside the MCTi programme, a study of the River Fowey within the boundaries of the Town was completed by Hyder Consulting Ltd of Plymouth. The outcome of all this work and of discussions held widely in and around the town is that the Lostwithiel Area Action Plan 2004-2024 was published.

2005 Work commenced on key projects outlined in the Plan. In particular the Heritage Project and Shirehall Moor Project were progressed in detail with the agreement of the Town Council. Applications were submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

2006 Funding of £50,000 was approved by the Heritage Lottery for the Shirehall Moor project.

2007 The Heritage Project also received £50,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Lostwithiel Area Forum merged its administration with the Lostwithiel Community Development Trust in order to maximize efficiency, and the renamed Lostwithiel Forum Development Trust continued working on projects in hand.

2008 Consultation meetings were held within Lostwithiel to update the Action Plan.

LOSTWITHIEL AREA ACTION PLAN

why?

In 2002 the Forum initiated the development of an Action Plan. The survey of all households carried out in early 2003 led to a Plan being produced which links with surrounding parishes and the wider context of the county.

The key elements of the plan are to

- 1. Develop a long term vision for the area focusing on achievable outcomes.**
- 2. Identify what developments in local services are needed and agree on an action plan.**
- 3. Ensure joint commitment to achieving targets and to monitoring progress.**
- 4. Involve local people and communities throughout.**

The Action Plan identifies the following as priorities.

- 1. Quality living environment.**
- 2. Strong communities.**
- 3. Individual well being.**

The Forum arranges to meet with key funding partners to help finance the Action Plan initiatives. This brokering process brings together those who are able to provide the Lostwithiel Area with the opportunity to move the plan forward. Forum Directors and Members are unpaid volunteers.

The brokering process will continue throughout the development of the plan. Building good relationships between the community and partners is key to successful outcomes.



To date various initiatives have been embarked upon. The following is a summary of achievements so far.

The Forum and Development Trust

From the creation of the Lostwithiel Forum, with direction from Dick Trant, Meg Breckon and The Business Group, it was agreed after much discussion, that there was a need to achieve Development Trust status in order to accelerate the route to funding and grant opportunities. A great deal of work was put into the application process which resulted in the successful creation of The Lostwithiel Community Development Trust. Directors were appointed, articles and memorandum of association were established.

Attaining Trust status is a major achievement. Lostwithiel has benefited from financial support for various initiatives which would have been out of reach beforehand.



Website

In April 2005 it was agreed by various members of the Community that an integrated website would be a great asset in the drive to promote Lostwithiel and help community communication.

The website was a great success, winning silver in the 2005-6 Restormel Websmart Awards. This ongoing work will help form the backbone of the area's communication and promotion.

Nature Reserve

Consultation with the Lostwithiel community highlighted the desire to ensure that the Shirehall Moor was not only maintained, but also secured for future generations of residents and visitors. The Nature Reserve initiative was launched in October 2005 in partnership with the Environment Group with a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. It took a team of dedicated volunteers many hours to put together the bid, and in September 2006 the money was granted. A variety of initiatives included river bank reinforcement, public access and safety, making and installing bird boxes with local schools, and scrapes (shallow pools) to encourage biodiversity. The project has ensured that this precious area of the Fowey estuary is kept safe and accessible for everyone's enjoyment. The Forum, in partnership with the Town Council will ensure at our Nature Reserve continues to be protected.



Local Food and Drink

The Forum, in conjunction with The Business Group, promoted Lostwithiel's producers and retailers of local food and drink. As a result, Lostwithiel was named as the Best Small Town in Cornwall in the 2006 Western Morning News Food Competition.

This project won the South West Markets and Coastal Towns Business and Economy Award 2006.



Cycle route

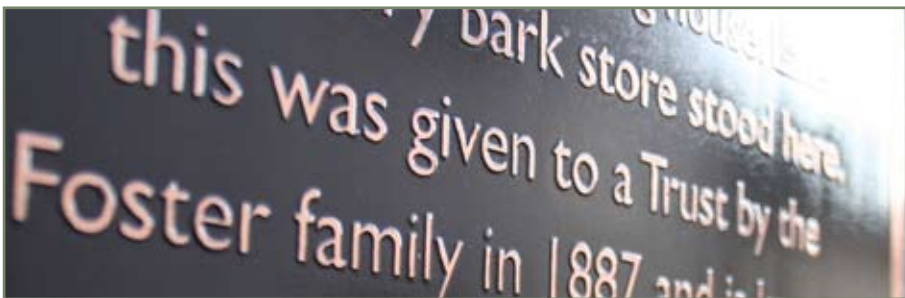
After consultations with Sustrans the Forum agreed to explore a cycle route bringing cyclists from Bodmin into Lostwithiel through the land close to Restormel Castle. Various concerns emerged from landowners and the Town Council.

The Forum will be working again with Sustrans to explore alternative routes which will benefit all residents and attract more visitors.



Community Transport

This has been a continual challenge which many rural communities face. From town workshops the Forum assessed the needs for rural transport solutions and through questionnaires highlighted specific needs which are still in need of a solution. There are new Lerryn Bus Timetables and group outings. In addition, The Forum and other Cornish rail user groups successfully lobbied First Great Western to increase the number of stopping trains in Lostwithiel.



Plaques

Discrete interpretation plaques have been erected on 15 important historic buildings to explain to visitors, and indeed townspeople, their significance. A larger plaque giving details of the Grade I listed buildings; St Bartholomew's Church, the Duchy Palace and the medieval bridge over the River Fowey, is mounted on a large piece of granite and situated in The Parade. A brochure has been produced where these plaques are in town and outlining a 'plaque trail' which can easily be followed.



Traffic Flow

Due to its medieval bridge and its narrow streets, Lostwithiel has a complex traffic flow challenge, typical of small Cornish towns. Finding a balance between traffic and pedestrians is no easy task. Meetings have been held with the County Council but no progress has been made to date. With the launch of the Action Plan update the Forum will re-energise this initiative and in partnership with the Town Council and Cornwall Council, pursue further consultations with experts to ensure that the potential increased traffic brought about by tourism and local developments, is handled as effectively as possible.

Youth

The Forum helps where possible to support youth related activities such as after school club and holiday schemes. From the recent dialogue with the community, Youth is considered the most pressing area to address and the Forum will prioritise this area going forward.



Services for the elderly

Much time and effort by volunteers was put into a multi event 'Big Day'. Unfortunately this was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances, but we continue to investigate opportunities and options.



Community Centre

The Community Centre is gathering opinions on how it can be improved. The findings from this research will form the starting point for a potential facilities upgrade. Again the Forum will help in any way possible.

Footpath Survey 2004

An inventory of local footpaths was completed in 2004 by a Forum Member. This been used to inform various local projects and continues to be a resource available to the community.



Railway Station

In April 2007 the Forum negotiated a great deal to save the station building from deterioration by refurbishing, by December 2007, the offices into a community meeting room (The Platform) which doubles up as the Forum's base. The waiting room is also now functioning for the benefit of the community and visitors.

Parade

The Parade is Lostwithiel's potential jewel. Many towns would cry out for a riverside public space such as this. The Parade now accommodates a commemorative stone and plaque, plus new railings connecting the granite columns. The Town and River study has highlighted the potential to utilise and access the Parade as a focal point where people can gather to socialise and enjoy events.





Heritage

A Characterisation Study of the Town has been undertaken by the Historic Environment Service at Cornwall Council. The research was undertaken over many months; public meetings were held informing residents of the progress, and the Report was published in December 2008. This is the most **complete study of the Town** ever undertaken and contains not only a wealth of historic information but also discusses the issues and opportunities facing the Town. In addition, a **Touch Screen Display Unit** has been designed and built. This audio visual display can be used as a teaching aid in schools or to inform visitors and residents of the facilities and history of the Town. It will be moved between the schools, the Museum and the Tourist Information Centre to enable access for all. Throughout the Heritage Project, the **Museum** and its knowledgeable staff provided valuable assistance in many areas. **New leaflets** have been designed, printed and distributed within a 30 mile radius to attract visitors to the area. **Heritage brochures** have been designed and printed to guide the visitors around town, giving details of the history of the Town and information on some of the historic buildings.



Heritage walks now take place twice weekly during the Summer and groups are also catered for by special arrangement. River trips from Fowey are met and passengers are given a tour of the Town. These guided tours are led by members of the Museum Association who have **recruited and trained additional guides**. Interpretation **plaques** have been erected on 15 important historic buildings to explain to their significance. **A larger plaque** giving details of the Grade I listed buildings; St Bartholomew's Church, the Duchy Palace and the medieval bridge over the River Fowey, is mounted on a large piece of granite and situated in The Parade. **A brochure** is available detailing the position of these plaques in town and outlining a plaque trail which can easily be followed.



Transition



How can our community respond to the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Lostwithiel was the 16th town to adopt the Transition Model in a steadily growing list which is nearing 200. The movement started life in Kinsale, Ireland in 2005. Its purpose is to address the question: how can our community respond to the challenges, and opportunities, of Peak Oil and Climate Change?

The initial and ongoing task is to raise awareness about how these challenges will affect us all, but that with creativity, ingenuity and adaptability we as a community can come up with feasible and fun alternatives. You can read more on www.transitionlostwithiel.org

Transition was not an element of the first stage of the Action Plan but needs to be a major part of the next stage as it touches virtually every element of our strategy as we endeavour to create a vibrant and sustainable community for everyone.

Various ideas and initiatives have been created by Transition Lostwithiel to date which focus on sustainability, including a film season, plastic bag free campaign, energy workshops and battery recycling in Londis.

On the events side, Seedy Saturday and Plant Swaps have become regular fixtures while Nuts about Fruit was a hugely successful event, leading to the Community Orchard project being established.

Action list

- 1 Community Orchard
- 2 Projects
- 3 Allotments
- 4 Fowey rail link

The Action Plan will endeavour to support all Transition initiatives wherever and whenever it can. The Plan's Action List highlights some ideas that are currently being investigated, but because this is a permanently evolving process, priorities and content may change.

Throughout this evolution the Forum will endeavour to deliver support for Transition Lostwithiel projects at all times.



1. Community Orchards



Community Orchards bring the community together to plant, nurture and sustain a community resource. Meetings have already been held and many ideas are being explored, for example land use, tree care and pruning of Cornish traditional apple species & celebratory events.

Cornwall has had a widespread cover of orchards over the years. The Fowey valley had orchards along the river banks and slopes and Golant was covered in orchards in the early 1900s.

This was a tourist attraction at blossom time in the early 20th century and people would row up the river from Fowey to see the spectacle.

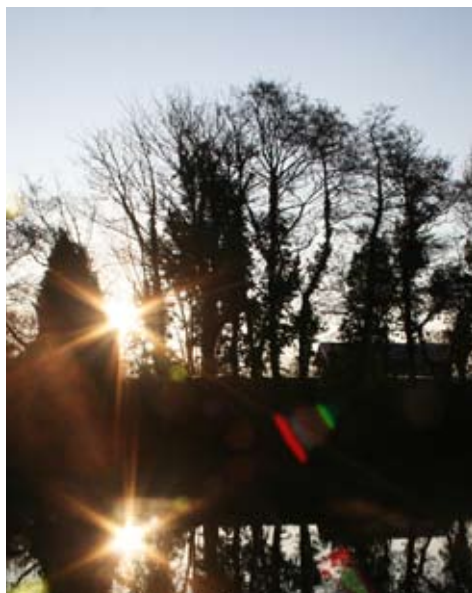
The community orchard concept opens up many other opportunities, for example planting within the town and along the river bank to provide a productive landscape. Others could include an ecotourism trail from Lostwithiel linking up orchards for either walkers or cyclists, plus training sessions for orchard activities and care.

The Forum will offer whatever it can to help this initiative gather momentum.

Transition



2. Transition Projects



These are a few of the Transition projects currently under way. There are a lot more ideas, which the Forum will help to support and encourage.

Lostwithiel In Bloom

Transition Lostwithiel has taken up co-ordination of the Lostwithiel In Bloom scheme to promote and encourage gardening in Lostwithiel.

Plant & Seed Swap

The annual Seedy Saturday in Spring and weekly Plant & Seed swaps throughout the Summer are a great way for keen growers to meet and novices to get started.

Compost Cup

Following a suggestion from Transition Lostwithiel, Lostwithiel Garden Society's annual show has two new classes in 2009 for the best home-made compost. Julia Pollard from WRAP is judging the classes.

Battery recycling tube

Thanks to the generosity of the people of Lostwithiel and the kind co-operation of Julie Manwaring, Transition Lostwithiel were able to install a battery recycling tube at Londis which recycles an average of 15kg of batteries every month.



Arts



Exploiting the creative talents and skills within our community to help enhance the town's culture and development.

Lostwithiel boasts a sizeable arts scene for a town its size, with an impressive array of festivals, numerous creative groups, a well-established and popular town band and a new film club, Lost in Film.

Since it opened, Lost In Film's monthly screenings have regularly sold out. There are plans to purchase projection equipment which will be used to promote film and film-making, and be made available to other community groups.

Festivals include the popular Arts and Crafts Festival LostFest in May, the Dickensian evening, the Christmas pageant and New Year's Eve Giants, and the well-attended Carnival in July. These will be developed in coming years with plans to increase attractions for children and young people and improve traffic and parking.

The Lostwithiel area is home to a number of creative groups who regularly meet, hold workshops and exhibit their work. They include rugmakers, artists, photographers, and flower arrangers to name but a few. There are discussions for new gallery space for exhibitions and shows.

The town band has recently acquired a new temporary home in the Duchy Palace. The Band, along with choirs, musicians, performers and bands, are an important feature of town events and are planned to be promoted with an events calendar.

Action list

- 1 The film club
- 2 Festivals and events
- 3 Creative workshops and groups
- 4 The town band and other music groups



1. Lost In Film



Lost In Film was founded in May 2008 as a non-profit community project. Screenings are held monthly in the Church Rooms, with films ranging from popular blockbusters and family matinees to animation and foreign language. It screens the best of contemporary films, focusing on those released in the last two years.

As of May 2009 Lost In Film has attracted 790 attendances over nine screenings. Surveys show that the audience come from a wide cross-section of Lostwithiel residents, as well as many neighbouring towns and villages. Lost in Film screenings are attended by the disabled and nearly housebound who would not otherwise travel to a cinema in another town.

Plans for the future include special interest films, themed film seasons, local films, matinees and Saturday morning screenings for children. If funding applications are successful, Lost in Film will buy its own projection equipment which will allow more frequent and varied screenings, and use by other community groups.

The Forum will assist in sourcing funding to enable the film club to continue and expand.



The Arts and Crafts Festival LostFest is now firmly established in the Lostwithiel calendar and grows more successful each year. Exhibitions, stalls, street entertainers and 170 musicians took part in the day-long event in May 2009, raising money for the nominated charity, FLEET. There are plans to consult with the small group of volunteers who organise the event to ensure its future success.

LostFest, The Dickensian evening, Christmas pageant, New Year's Eve Giants and Carnival week are popular and well established events which will benefit from support and assistance, with plans to increase attractions for children and young people, and improve traffic and parking.

Other events include plays, musical evenings and quiz nights at venues such as the Community Centre, Church Rooms, St Bartholomews and Restormel Castle. With the purchase of the Duchy Palace by the Prince's Trust, there are discussions to negotiate use of the space as a gallery for exhibitions, shows and performances.

The Prince's Regeneration Trust are studying the potential sustainable use of the Duchy Palace, which could include exhibitions.

Lostwithiel and the surrounding area has many practising artists working in small groups and individually. The Forum will work with all of these artists to explore opportunities to improve facilities, enhance communication where needed, and help promote their work and talent. The recent photography competition, organised by the Environment group, is an excellent example of the talent we have within our community. Let's enjoy more of it!



Youth & Recreation



Identifying and helping to fill the gaps within the town's facilities and leadership for young and old.

The consultation undertaken for the town survey highlighted the improvement of youth opportunities to be the greatest need over any other sector.

Youth organisations have, over the past 5 years operated with varying success. It is evident that a Town Youth Leader with a clear mandate could assist all organisations to a mutual benefit. Currently there are many youth organisations offering the young people of Lostwithiel and surrounding areas much diverse activity. These organisations do a fantastic job and are predominantly staffed by volunteers.

Our challenge is to build on these successes and explore additional activities and opportunities to create a vibrant environment for our youth that not only expands their experiences but also helps them engage with other age groups within the community. From primary schools, Cubs and Brownies, cadets, youth band, playgroups, Church youth groups, ballet, football, martial arts, skate ramp, basketball, squash and the eclectic mix of the Oasis youth centre there are many choices available to our youth. We need to help energise these groups by supporting them.

We need to find out how we can help. If you are involved in a youth related initiative and would like to talk please get in touch.

Action list

- 1 Establish Youth forum
- 2 Resource for youth play & participation
- 3 Transport to facilities
- 4 After school activities/infrastructure
- 5 Sport facilities
- 6 Use of facilities and parks

Youth & Recreation



1. Establish a Town Youth Forum.



Let's ask Lostwithiel's young people what would help create a vibrant town for them. We aim to launch and develop a Town Youth Forum so that young people get what they want and need.

Lostwithiel is a great community to bring up children but as with all small towns the transition from childhood to youth can be challenging. The first step will be for young people to create a steering group to develop the Town Youth Forum. The Forum will support the Youth Forum and any other youth related initiatives.



2. The resources for youth play & participation



One of the opportunities within the town for young people is the Town Band, which has a 25 strong youth band. Assisted by the Forum, the band has achieved a new temporary tenancy in the Duchy Palace, giving much needed rehearsal space.

Whilst the Band's tenancy in the Duchy Palace is temporary it is hoped that it will be renewed after the extensive renovation of the building in a couple of years. Our long term vision is that this building will be a combined community/commercial centre for music, arts, performance and education which will benefit all ages.

The Forum is currently in discussion with various bodies including the Carnegie Trust who have expressed an interest in becoming involved. With their 'Place Based Learning' for young people, their dynamic vision could link well with what we want to achieve for not only our young people but the entire community.



Community & Housing



Bringing together people, groups and agencies to endeavour to deliver a healthy and happy lifestyle for all townspeople.

Bringing together people, groups and agencies to endeavour to deliver a healthy and happy lifestyle for all townspeople.

This is a very broad area embracing all elements that contribute to the Lostwithiel area's culture and lifestyle. The Public meeting held in 2008 put forward a wide selection of potential projects to consider. From further consultations a refined action list has been agreed. All of these actions are important to our community but we have to be realistic about what we can achieve and what resources we have to support the town's needs. Affordable housing and education for the older members of the area are initiatives that the town would like to explore. These will be the Forum's top two actions.

Volunteers are very important to Lostwithiel, as they help to provide our community with wide ranging services, facilities and entertainment. There is an opportunity to build a more structured environment for existing volunteers and potential recruits in order to help initiatives run even more smoothly. With the creation of a more dynamic and comprehensive Lostwithiel website we can include a volunteer area where groups and individuals can share information and needs.

Action list

- 1 Real affordable survey
- 2 U3A/Education
- 3 Advice shop
- 4 Volunteers
- 5 Empty properties
- 6 Infill land properties

Another question that arose from the public meeting and discussions is what is being done about empty properties in the town. The Forum will look into this area and work with the Town Council to see if there are opportunities to utilise empty properties for community activities and business.



1. Affordable housing



The process of identifying affordable housing schemes in Lostwithiel is now under way. The Forum will offer support to the Town Council as they develop their plans.

Affordable housing schemes provide a route into home ownership and the Forum will work with all relevant agencies to help our community in this area.



The Lostwithiel area, like much of Cornwall, has a higher than average percentage of older people. Amenities and services for this sector of the community have improved over the years due mainly to the efforts of many volunteers. However there is definitely an opportunity to improve this area further. The Forum are currently discussing the feasibility of creating a Lostwithiel Area University of the Third Age (U3A) group. Currently the nearest group is in Liskeard.

U3A are autonomous organisations run by the voluntary efforts of their members. It is for people no longer in full time employment providing educational, creative and leisure opportunities in a friendly environment. Here are some of their aims:

- 1 To encourage and enable older people no longer in full time employment to help each other to share their knowledge, skills, interests and experience.
- 2 To demonstrate the benefits and enjoyment to be gained and the new horizons to be discovered in learning throughout life.
- 3 To celebrate the capabilities and potential of older people and their value to society.

The Forum plan to create a working group of interested people to help with the initial steps to launch the Lostwithiel U3A and work together to help facilitate any new activity or service. If you are interested in joining the U3A please contact the Forum.



Business



Working in partnership to seek out and embrace commercial initiatives to help create a vibrant and sustainable town.

The objectives of businesses in the Lostwithiel Area were mentioned throughout the original Action Plan. For this update it has been highlighted that Lostwithiel rises and falls on the various businesses that provide employment for the locality and attract tourists to the town. With this in mind this section of the Action Plan looks at commercial opportunities which will enhance the lifestyles of all Lostwithiel residents.

Not all businesses in the Lostwithiel area are focused on retail and tourism but it is the major sector. Other employment in the town is largely confined to Duchy Timber, Duchy of Cornwall Nursery and Restormel Industrial Estate. Opportunities to attract sustainable employment initiatives should be actively explored. Attracting businesses to Lostwithiel will need a cohesive, integrated plan that crosses over the various potential market sectors that are looking to grow.

To help bring this together the Forum, Town Council and Business Group will work together to explore avenues to help develop Lostwithiel into a vibrant tourist and commercial destination.

There are many initiatives and ideas that can be explored. The action list includes input from our various consultations and meetings with the business group and has been prioritised in an order that achieves short term impact and gains, then long term practices that become the backbone of Lostwithiel's commercial sustainability.

Action list

- 1 Joined up Lostwithiel
- 2 We are here!
- 3 Town centre focus
- 4 Creative Base



1. Joined up Lostwithiel



Lostwithiel has a plethora of businesses, groups, clubs, societies, associations and individuals all working hard to supply a wide choice for our community and visitors. Described as Cornwall's Hidden Treasure, there is always the danger of slipping off the tourist and employer maps if our target audiences are not able to see the total picture. To help build a higher profile of Lostwithiel, a business marketing plan will be created. This will be a short and long term strategy with a mix of conventional and innovative activities that captures the eclectic mix of modern, traditional and historic experiences that makes up the Lostwithiel area.

A crucial tool in this strategy will be building on the success of the existing website and integrating the other websites which relate to the town and surrounding area. Each has its strength and its personality. However a focused Lostwithiel website will help attract visitors and serve the community and businesses. It will link through to other related sites e.g. LostFest, TIC, Town Council etc.

There are events going on daily within Lostwithiel, consequently a managed calendar of events will be a most important element of the integrated site. In order to move this forward a more thorough audit of existing websites will be carried out and a working team within the Business Group will present a concise brief for its creation and maintenance.

Business



2. We are here!



One of the reasons Lostwithiel is a Hidden Treasure is that the A390 bypasses the old centre of the town. Many visitors to the town and river have commented that they stumbled across Lostwithiel by accident. If you consider that a number of visitors to Cornwall destinations do so by 'driving around', it becomes very important to ensure that tourists are aware of what is of interest. Arriving into Lostwithiel by road and rail gives no real indication of what lies in the town and along the river banks.

A potential solution is the design of more creative signage and branding. This signage will not only describe the many attractions in the town but also communicate that Lostwithiel is indeed a hidden treasure.

By accessing the local creative talent, a pictorial montage style signage will not only illustrate the artistic level of the town but also communicate the 'secret' elements of Lostwithiel.

Other opportunities to carry this creative approach through the town can be investigated. For example a 'Fowey style' bus shelter as featured in the national press could be an arresting icon on the A390. The Forum will work with the Business Group and the Town Council to explore these opportunities.



Transport & Parking



Exploring alternative solutions to the less than adequate public transport service and shortage of parking facilities.

This section of the Action Plan embraces multiple aspects of Lostwithiel's infrastructure and behaviour. There are many other opportunities to improve Lostwithiel's parking and transport services (See action list). The Forum will put every effort behind this action list but will focus on traffic flow and cycle routes. However we will continue to work on all initiatives, including parking and traffic calming. We also need to maintain publication of rail and bus timetables and increase publicity. Use it or lose it!

We will explore better access to and potential use of the river as a means of attracting visitors to the town and offering alternative transport to Fowey, whilst bearing in mind the potential environmental impact. We will consider methods to enhance the impression to those arriving on the A390.

As this section touches so many of the Lostwithiel population, please contact the Forum with your suggestions.

Action list

- 1 Traffic Flow
- 2 Fowey Railway Line
- 3 River Transport
- 4 Cycle Routes
- 5 Parking
- 6 Town entrances enhancement



1. Traffic Calming, Fowey Railway Line & River Transport



Traffic Flow

The 2008 Characterisation Study remarked on the uninteresting entrances to our town along the A390. These could be made more appealing, especially to visitors, as a fast route through town does little to promote the advantages we have to offer. Traffic calming measures could also be incorporated within such proposals.

Within the town we need to look hard at traffic's effect on residents and visitors. In consultation with the Town Council the Forum will revisit previous ideas and look at new potential schemes.

Fowey Railway Line

The station buildings at Fowey were demolished many years ago and the line only serves the jetties half a mile up river from the town of Fowey. It is a very scenic route and passes through the village of Golant. Potentially tourist trains could be re-instated on this route.

If the China Clay industry were to shrink further it might be a consideration to research the possibility of converting the rail bed into a cycle track. This could do for Lostwithiel what the Camel Trail link to Padstow has done for Wadebridge.

River Transport

The Hyder report (Town and River Study) looked at enhancing the use of the river. There are limitations because of the tide and it can be difficult for passengers to alight safely on the quay. Whilst being mindful of the environmental impact, we will continue to investigate the possibilities for improving access and amenities for small craft visiting Lostwithiel thus benefiting the local economy.



2. Cycle Routes



In the 1990s Sustrans and Cornwall County Council attempted to designate a route linking Lanhydrock to Lostwithiel along the river valley as part of the National Cycle Network, thus connecting with other transport links and trails around the Bodmin Parkway Station area, part of the Bodmin Sustainable Tourism Initiative. This was opposed by affected landowners and shelved. By 2001 the National Trust at Lanhydrock had changed their position and the Duchy of Cornwall were also more receptive to the idea. Consultations between them and Sustrans, Cornwall County Council, Restormel Borough Council, Lostwithiel Town Council and the Forum agreed with the view that the project might meet their objective of an expanded network in 2005. Some road sections of the proposed river valley trail were narrow in parts and safety would need to be considered. A further Sustrans proposal was to continue the Lostwithiel link through to Boconnoc and on towards the Torpoint ferry.

An outline idea to provide a cycle trail from Lostwithiel to Fowey along the railway line was not seen as possible due to the track taking up the full width of the track bed in places although the line was only used on a limited commercial basis. If this ceased it was felt that this would be an amazing opportunity to develop a wonderful recreational trail.

The Forum will continue to pursue any opportunities to improve cycle routes.



Environment



Identifying and protecting both our built and natural environment and exploring opportunities to improve it.

The Lostwithiel environment is a multifaceted mix of natural beauty with the river dominating as it meanders to the sea. The riverside areas are home to a wealth of flora and fauna. Within the town there are many historic buildings and structures.

From the extensive Hyder report we have suggestions to make a number of enhancements along the river from Shirehall Moor to Second Island.

We have taken the findings and intend to pursue several small projects to gradually enhance the riverside environment from the medieval bridge to the entrance to Coulson Park. This will include the Parade.

In consultation with the Town Council, the Forum will commence meetings with relevant potential advisers to launch this exciting rejuvenation.



The Hyder Report (Town and River Study) in 2004 encompassed a comprehensive survey of the Town and environs, analysing and highlighting opportunities for regeneration and rejuvenation.

Improvements to the Parade, Parade Square and riverside area

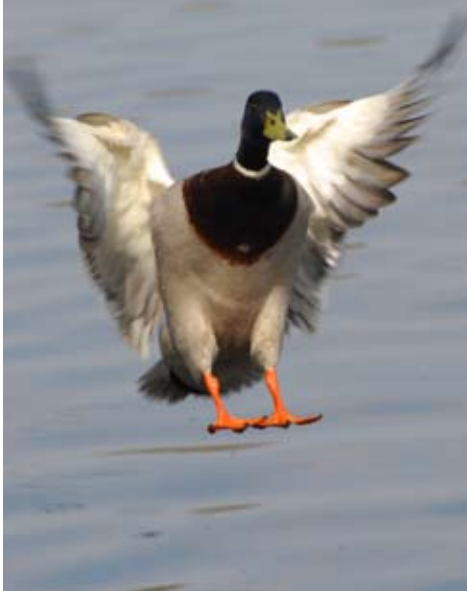
A SQUARE IN WAITING...
(Lostwithiel Historical Characterisation page 101)

Here we have a potential gem that is currently wasting away. The Hyder Report and Characterisation Study suggest small changes to enhance the square will dramatically improve many aspects of Lostwithiel's character.

Improve the Quayside area along Quay Street

The journey from the Duchy Palace to Coulson Park can be made more enjoyable and attractive. By removing the grass along the river bank to expose original quay stone flagging will create historical interest. There is also the opportunity to extend this to permit a pedestrian walkway on the river side of the flood wall the length of Quay Street. The area by the slipway is currently unsightly and can be tidied. There is also an opportunity to assess the parking along Quay Street with a view to increasing capacity and make it more attractive with planting schemes and landscaping.

Environment



Improvements to entrance to Coulson Park

There is scope for improving the entrance to Coulson Park. There are also suggestions for a footbridge which could be integrated into the rail bridge. This would improve accessibility to both banks for residents and visitors alike.

Coulson Park

Within Coulson Park are further opportunities to enhance the visitor and community experience. The river bank requires stabilisation where there is significant erosion. Network Railway has recently removed a number of the oldest trees which were part for the park's character. The Forum will liaise with the Town Council to resolve these issues.



Heritage



Studying and researching our heritage to ensure that Lostwithiel's culture and personality are retained and built upon.

With the successful completion of the Heritage Project in January 2009 most, if not all, of the immediate Action Plan has been achieved. Indeed, it is noted that, at a public meeting held recently to update the 20 year Action Plan, no heritage points were raised.

The leaflets designed to draw visitors to the town were distributed over a wide area for a period of two years, the cost being covered by the Heritage Lottery Fund funding. This has now expired but consideration should be given to seeking new funding for a reprint to be distributed locally to nearby Tourist Information Centres and the Museum.

Similarly the Heritage Brochure and the Plaque Town Trail Brochure should be updated and reprinted for local distribution. New funding will be needed to achieve this.

The Characterisation Study is a vital document in itself, but for many other projects it can be regarded as a starting point for the future development of the town; it will also carry much weight when funding bids for other projects are made. The siting of the Touch Screen Display Unit should continue to be monitored to ensure it has maximum effect where most needed.

Outline Of Action

- 1** Obtain new funding and update and reprint the leaflets and brochures and distribute as and when required.
- 2** Actively use the Characterisation Study to review and influence future projects.
- 3** Ensure the Touch Screen Display Unit is used to best advantage.
- 4** Work with all agencies to ensure the future of the Duchy Palace, key to the wider heritage legacy.
- 5** Continue to monitor the Drill Hall and maintain dialogue with the MOD about the future of the structure.

The Duchy Palace, newly acquired by the Prince's Regeneration Trust with a first stage bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund in hand through the Cornwall Buildings Preservation Trust for funds to renovate and restore the building, aims to find a sustainable long term use for it. This Grade I listed building is the most important secular building in Cornwall and this restoration could bring many visitors to the town.

The Drill Hall is in a prominent position in the town and generates mixed feelings within the community. It is owned by the Ministry of Defence and opportunities for collaboration will be explored.

