

Environmental Issues for Falmouth and Penryn Community Plan

Two meetings were called to discuss these issues with 17 attending and email input from several others.

How will global issues affect us locally in 15 years and how do we prepare locally now.

Conclusions are summarised below and collated responses attached.

These responses are divided into 1) How will global challenges affect us locally, and 2) Suggestions for local actions.

'Future Proofing' Falmouth and Penryn

The discussions identified four main themes needing attention in order to assure the future for people and conserve the environment –

- Climate Change,
- Diminishing Resources,
- Global Economics, and
- Human Behaviour.

Cornwall and especially the Falmouth area are vulnerable to the above due to its peripheral location, heavy dependence on diminishing local industry and agriculture and dependence on external economics.

The effects of Climate Change are still unpredictable and difficult to assess but global and national targets for CO2 have been established with increasing responsibility to comply locally.

In view of Cornwall's position at the end of the transport infrastructure the increasing price of oil, gas, water and economic problems will have a galvanising effect on local residents as local finances are dependent on external income - retirement pensions, tourism, benefits system and student input/grants.

The actions of local Businesses and residents are pivotal for any adaptation and mitigation actions. Currently the majority of residents are relatively unengaged, uninformed and unprepared.

The group recommended that all of the community be actively engaged **now**, in creating a vibrant, sustainable and resilient 21st century community and that Business, Education, Local Government and Town Forums help with supporting and starting local initiatives. The following are some potential initiatives to help Falmouth and Penryn become a vibrant community for the 21st century.

Futures Conservation Committee for 'future proofing' the area:

To establish a partnership between Town Councils, Conservation committees, Town Forums, Business, Education, Transition and Environmental groups to plan and monitor development and building practises, so establishing a quality local 21st century standard.

'Falmouth and Penryn (F&P): A Centre of Excellence and Innovation for the 21st century':

A Partnership, (especially including Business and Education), to develop F&P as a National demonstration community for 'preserving the future'.

Conferences/festivals and practical pilot projects... also increasing job and skilling/training opportunities.

Enterprises and improvements for Falmouth and Penryn to create a self regulating, positive, resilient community through:

- Local waste as a resource of materials and energy.
- Local integrated public transport for people, resource movement and business.
- Local renewable Energy generation.
- Local food production, marketing and distribution.
- Local sewage systems improvement and use as a resource.
- Local education, awareness raising, skilling up and piloting projects.
- Local business and local economy - start-ups and support especially relating to marine.
- Local creative and leisure activities and spaces for a healthy Community and local culture.
- Local water conservation and domestic water movement throughout the area.

Generating local renewable energy:

Falmouth and Penryn Energy Company: a local renewable energy community and privately funded business, to produce energy for local use and investment to enable the area to be independent of The Grid when necessary. A pilot project is already being developed with Community Energy Plus..

Local Community Economics:

Through:

- Establishing a local economy that supplies our basic needs locally and establishes a new business/industry that is a cutting edge model/practical example of C21st self reliance and innovation.
- New business start-up and support for established business to future fit their businesses.
- Developing a strong local economy through innovative trading strategies such as Loyalty cards, LETS, Credit Unions and Time Banks to increase and retain local wealth and increase local community capital and health.
- Assisting existing and emerging Business to use the 'triple bottom line' (Economic, Environmental and Social Auditing).
- Supporting the development of Community and Social Enterprises and Co-operatives.

Community Capital 'Skilling Up' Programme:

Humans are highly creative and flexible when motivated by need. An educated, engaged and active community was considered the most important asset for local health, wealth and resilience.

To produce this, a varied programme of educating and skilling include:

1. Community Audit: engaging people personally and creating a 'community balance sheet'- a funded project is already being developed to reach every individual at home, school and work, to assess their personal needs and create an audit of local energy and other requirements/assets. Access grants/funds to upgrade homes and buildings for energy efficiency etc.
2. Build the 'Falmouth Centre for 21st century Living' (a partnership already established and site identified for 'skilling up'- traditional and innovative skills for energy and food production and local economics).

3. Support local businesses to assess their energy and transport needs to help decrease their costs and carbon footprint.
4. Ensure that the Community Plan and Community Networks are responsive and effective to re-engage people with the civic and community processes.

Summary

The Localism Charter, The Sustainable Communities Bill and Cornwall's Community Networks are part of a shift from central government responsibility decision making to local, this means that we are challenged and entitled to establish a locally designed and locally regulated plan for the future.

Falmouth and Penryn area have in the past shown difficulty in reconciling the needs and interests of their very diverse population. This new context of the 15 year Plan and the shared vision of a vibrant resilient future created together will enable diversity to become a strengthening asset.