

Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan

**COMMUNITY FEEDBACK**  
**WORKSHOP**

9<sup>th</sup> October 2015

A report by Simon Swale

# Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan

## Community Feedback Workshop Report

### Introduction

The Community Feedback Workshop, held in the Falmouth Town Council Chamber on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2015, was arranged to present the results of the survey carried out as part of the community engagement process for the Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan.

The intended output was to

- a. Define a draft 'shared vision' for Falmouth's future
- b. Define a broad set of aims, objectives and outline strategy for achieving sustainable development in Falmouth
- c. Agree on the topics around which 'theme teams' will form and the main elements of a work-brief for each team.

Candy Atherton, Chair of the Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, introduced the proceedings stating that much community-led planning work has been done in recent years and the survey that has had 1300 responses gives a steer to those involved in developing the Neighbourhood Plan to move forward, keeping Falmouth a diverse and vibrant town into the future.

It came to light during the workshop that there is some confusion over terminology. Clarification was agreed on the following:

The Steering Group (not the Stakeholder Group)

The Working Groups (not Theme Teams or Theme Groups)

Work Programmes (not Working Briefs)

### Outline of Neighbourhood Plan Process

Steve Besford-Foster provided an introduction to the Neighbourhood Plan process (a pdf document entitled FNP Initial Presentation is available as a separate attachment). He emphasised the point that neighbourhood planning was all about delivering sustainable development through a local perspective.

Steve noted the importance of involving the local community and the survey that has been carried out is an example of that, as is the referendum that will be carried

out by Cornwall Council when the plan has been completed. He went on to say that Duchy is hotbed of Neighbourhood Plan production when compared with the rest of the country; a number of plans have been through referendum but as yet none have been “made” in Cornwall.

## **Results and Early Analysis of Community Survey**

Steve presented the results of the community survey that took place in April and May 2015 (a pdf document entitled FNP Survey Presentation is available as a separate attachment). The workshop participants were then invited to comment – initially considering what they found surprising about the results.

The presentation was followed by questions and comments from the participants who were encouraged to say what surprised or pleased them about the results. Here are the comments that were made:

Two of the “blanket” questions, Q12 referring to the Article 4 Direction and Q14 referring to dredging the harbour for a deep-water access to the harbour, did not have sufficient context for respondents to understand the full implications and therefore there will be a need for the relevant Neighbourhood Plan Working Groups to delve deeper. However, in discussion it was noted by those involved in distributing the survey that residents have a high level of knowledge, particularly about the Article 4 Direction.

There was surprise that public toilets were regarded as “missing or inadequate” by 25% of respondents.

Surprise was also expressed that a lack of restaurants/cafés was cited fourth on the list under the leisure heading as there are 124 currently in operation. It was suggested that concern may be to do with existing restaurants/cafes catering to the youth market and that there is a lack of ethnic food available.

In discussion it was noted that no distinction between licensed and unlicensed Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) was made in the survey for a number of reasons, including the public perception being that control of HMOs by licensing and planning control is all the same thing and that separating out types of HMO in a broad community survey is too complex. It was also noted that many of the issues can be tackled by involving HMO owners in the Responsible Landlords Scheme and that the Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan Housing Working Group will be able to address the issues in more detail.

Delight was expressed that so many respondents recognised the marine aspects of Falmouth as essential (ref Q1 over 50% want to see Falmouth described as a sea port in future; Q13 90% want further development of docks; Q14 over 75% want dredging of the harbour and Q15 almost 75% want waterfront locations to be used for sea-based, maritime business).

Workshop participants discussed the concern that some responses to survey questions seemed to be uninformed or inaccurate. Examples cited were that some respondents felt that good schools are missing or inadequate, whilst others felt that there are not enough places of worship (when existing places are on the point of closure) and two respondents stated that they go to Telford for goods and services that are not available locally. In discussion it was pointed out that all survey get what is known as “outliers” and such responses will be moderated as the survey is analysed in more detail.

Critical issues coming out of the survey for consideration in the Neighbourhood Plan include:

- Protection of green spaces. There is a perception that there is insufficient green space at present and what there is could be under threat of development
- The need for better jobs is reflected in Q2 but more needs to be done to define the implications for land-use
- Affordable housing and student accommodation on the one hand and the needs of older people are quite well defined but there is not much in between
- The need for clear policies dealing with the spread of HMOs and their potential impacts on character and community balance.
- The concerns expressed under the heading of Access: “missing or inadequate” should be cross-referenced with Q16 and Q19 with pedestrianisation of the town centre, shifting the emphasis away from traffic and finding ways to make the waterfront more visible – “a seaport that can be seen” as it was described
- Building a better sense of community is something that has had a lot of hard work done in recent years with some remarkable results. However the survey appears to identify that there is more to do in certain parts of the town, perhaps linked to the HMO issue, and there is enough data to able to plot where the concerns are strongest.

## Can Our Neighbourhood Plan Achieve Sustainable Development?

Mike Jenks gave a presentation (a pdf document entitled FNP Sustainability Presentation M Jenks is available as a separate attachment). Mike examined the issues associated with sustainable development and described how the Neighbourhood Plan could help deliver it, leading participants into the topic of vision, aims and objectives. Mike emphasised the importance of understanding and using the story of the town as it has developed over time, to give us the building blocks, the foundations, on which to build the future.

It was agreed that Mike's explanation and illustration of a "narrative of place" for Falmouth (Refer to slides 8 and 9 of Mike's presentation) expressed as...

- statements linking the social, economic and environmental aspects
- a narrative that captures the essential distinctiveness of Falmouth
- local design, traditional routes, cherished views and settings, variations in neighbourhood and community character, popular gathering places
- its culture, heritage, the role of the river and sea
- link the historic to the continuing evolution of the town

... provides the basis for a vision statement and is a validation of the outline way forward discussed by the Steering Group at its June 2015 meeting.

## Aims, Objectives and Outline Strategy

Participants agreed that it would be futile to attempt to capture a concise statement in the workshop but, with the above points in mind, the Steering Group will agree on a vision statement with the maritime reference providing the focus and the town's wider role as the centre for the surrounding parishes, encouraging them to turn towards Falmouth, to be taken into account.

It was also noted that there is a lot of material that can be gleaned from the still-current Falmouth & Penryn Community Plan, that the steering group should avoid re-inventing the wheel and make use of what has already been agreed upon and take the best forward.

It was agreed that the Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan will take forward the Objectives in the Falmouth & Penryn Community Plan with particular reference to integration/diversification of groups within the town to avoid isolation in future.

It was also agreed that issues from the Falmouth & Penryn Community Plan that are relevant to each Working Groups will be referred to in their Work Programmes and taken forward.

So, with a narrative of place agreed, aims and objectives will be to build on Falmouth's strengths, including the university, the river & beaches and industry (particularly high quality marine) and leisure.

There are a number of issues to add into the narrative of place, including:

- High value employment
- Tackling deprivation
- Raising/delivering aspirations
- Include the harbour within the boundary of the plan
- Ensuring services are adequate for Falmouth and the surrounding area

There are known challenges that include:

- more housing will come
- the type of housing (size/scale/sprawl)
- protection of green spaces is essential, particularly the coastline/footpaths

## Working Group Topics

The Work Programmes of all four Working Groups will take the broader picture into account by including a requirement to cooperate with surrounding parishes as they take on Neighbourhood Plans so that the Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan will work in harmony with surrounding parishes.

Participants listed the Working Groups:

- Economy (lead by Candy Atherton)
- Environment & Open Spaces (lead by David Yelland)]
- Housing & Sustainability (lead by Grenville Chappel)
- Spatial Strategy, Integration & Design Guidance (lead by Mike Jenks)

Cross-cutting issues were identified as Culture, Leisure, Transport/Accessibility and Education. It was agreed that it will be important for these to be picked up by the most relevant Working Group (Leisure goes to the Environment & Open Spaces group, the other three to go to SSI&DG) and also to be considered at regular joint meetings of the Working Groups and/or the four Leads. It was also agreed that each working group will describe its relationship to the harbour in the Work Programmes.

Reference was again made to the Falmouth & Penryn Community Plan: The structure and format of that plan is still good and, in acknowledgement of the Golden Thread referred to by Mike Jenks in his presentation on sustainability, should be adhered to as much as possible in the development of the Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan.

## **Working Groups' Programmes**

David Yelland introduced the Work Programme that he has developed for the Environment & Open Spaces Working Group. It was agreed that this, with modifications noted above, would be used as a template and the Leaders of all four Working Groups should produce a Work Programme to present to the next Steering Group meeting.

There was discussion about the schedule for the Work Programmes to be completed. The initial suggestion was that it would be six months and then fed back to an Options Workshop. Concern was expressed that this was too long a time period and work should be completed much sooner than that. It was recognised that some Working Groups had much more to do than others so not all would finish at the same time. Steve Besford-Foster referred to the current Falmouth Phases document (see appendix 3) and a date of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016 was agreed.

It was noted that the Economy Working Group could benefit from a relationship with the Coastal Communities Team.

The final issue raised was that of continuing community engagement. There will be an opportunity for the public and other stakeholders to consider the draft plan before it is submitted to Cornwall Council for inspection and referendum, but it has been almost six months since the survey was carried out and it is important to keep feeding back as the plan develops. It was agreed that the Steering Group will do this through the following mechanisms:

- Press releases through the Town Clerk's office
- Reports on the FNP website
- Narrative and graphic press release of the survey results
- Feature in the next (2015 Winter) edition of the Town Council's resident's newsletter

Candy Atherton brought the meeting to a close at 5pm with thanks to all involved.

## Appendix 1: Attendees

<b>NAME</b>	<b>REPRESENTING</b>	<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b>
Candy Atherton	Falmouth Town Council	<a href="mailto:candyatherton@btinternet.com">candyatherton@btinternet.com</a>
Simon Penna	Falmouth Town Council	<a href="mailto:simonpenna@falmouthtowncouncil.com">simonpenna@falmouthtowncouncil.com</a>
Mark Williams	Falmouth Town Council	<a href="mailto:mark@falmouthtowncouncil.com">mark@falmouthtowncouncil.com</a>
S. Rollison	Lambs Lane and Ashfield Members Association	<a href="mailto:srollison@talktalk.com">srollison@talktalk.com</a>
Mike Jenks	Falmouth Civic Society	<a href="mailto:mjenks06@hotmail.com">mjenks06@hotmail.com</a>
Rosemary Hobbs	Falmouth District Hotels Association /BIDS	<a href="mailto:fdhasec@gmail.com">fdhasec@gmail.com</a>
Michelle Brunton	Universities Falmouth Exeter Plus	<a href="mailto:michelle.brunton@fxplus.ac.uk">michelle.brunton@fxplus.ac.uk</a>
Grenville Chappel	Beacon Regeneration	<a href="mailto:beacon@hotmail.com">beacon@hotmail.com</a>
Richard May	Dracaena Centre	<a href="mailto:Richard@dracaenacentre.org">Richard@dracaenacentre.org</a>
Richard Woods	Postgraduate student/ Landlord	<a href="mailto:richarddavidwoods@hotmail.co.uk">richarddavidwoods@hotmail.co.uk</a>
Katie Shanks	Postgraduate student	<a href="mailto:kmas201@exeter.ac.uk">kmas201@exeter.ac.uk</a>
Leon DeBell	Postgraduate student	<a href="mailto:ld384@exeter.ac.uk">ld384@exeter.ac.uk</a>
David Yelland	Falmouth Bay Residents' Association	<a href="mailto:dryeland@aol.com">dryeland@aol.com</a>
Angela Beale	Falmouth Conservation / Falmouth Civic Society	<a href="mailto:falmouthcivicsociety@gmail.com">falmouthcivicsociety@gmail.com</a>
Kieran Highman	Cornwall Council	<a href="mailto:khighman@cornwall.gov.uk">khighman@cornwall.gov.uk</a>
Mark Samson	Falmouth Harbour Commissioners	<a href="mailto:hm@falmouthport.co.uk">hm@falmouthport.co.uk</a>
Tim Brooksbank	Universities Falmouth Exeter Plus	<a href="mailto:Tim.brooksbank@explus.ac.uk">Tim.brooksbank@explus.ac.uk</a>
Steve Besford-Foster	FNP Project Manager	<a href="mailto:sblfoster@gmail.com">sblfoster@gmail.com</a>
Simon Swale	Workshop Facilitator	<a href="mailto:loft@phonecoop.coop">loft@phonecoop.coop</a>

## Appendix 2: Community Feedback Workshop agenda

Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan  
Community Feedback Workshop  
1.30pm, Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October 2015

Outputs will include:

Draft of a 'shared vision',  
Defined aims, objectives and outline strategy for achieving sustainable development  
Agreed topics for Working Groups to address  
Work-briefs drawn up for Working Groups

1.00 pm	Participants arrive and sign in. Finger buffet and refreshments.
1:30pm	Welcome and introductions by Candy Atherton, Chair of Stakeholder Group.
1:45pm	Outline of the Neighbourhood Plan process – Steve Besford-Foster (using extracts from slides 12-19 of the 'Our Town - Your Plan' presentation by Mike Jenks)
2:00pm	Results and early analysis of community survey (presentation by Steve Besford-Foster)
2:25pm	Questions and comments
2:35pm	List critical issues from survey results
2:45pm	Achieving sustainable Development through the Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan  (slides 7-12 Town Forum Talk by Mike Jenks, amended to take into account key points from the Way Forward document)
3:00pm	Discuss, define and agree aims, objectives and outline strategy for achieving sustainable development
3:30pm	Discuss options and agree on wording of a shared vision
3:45pm	Break
4:15pm	Discuss and agree Theme Team topics (introduction by Simon Swale)
4:45pm	Introduction to work briefs/programmes for Working Groups (introduced by David Yelland using his E&OS document as a model)
4:50pm	Theme Team group work to develop work briefs
5:20pm	Wrap up
5:00pm	Close

## Appendix 3

Phases	Stages	Actions	Timetable (Note Months are inclusive)
<b>Laying the foundations</b>	<b>Stage 1: Starting up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting started: Town Council Authority</li> <li>• Defining the Neighbourhood</li> <li>• Submission of letter &amp; map to Cornwall Council</li> <li>• Cornwall Council approve designation.</li> </ul>	<b>September 2014</b>  <b>November 2014</b> <b>January 2015</b>
	<b>Stage 2: Ensuring community support for the neighbourhood planning process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Awareness Raising</li> </ul>	<b>August 2014 to March 2015</b>
	<b>Stage 3: Organisation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group</li> <li>• Develop and keep under review Project Plan</li> <li>• Assess and keep under review the budget requirement</li> <li>• Secure funding</li> <li>• Identify sources of support</li> </ul>	<b>September 2014</b>
<b>From capacity to action</b>	<b>Stage 4: Develop communication and engagement strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand nature of area, demographics, key stakeholders, accessibility needs etc.</li> </ul>	<b>January 2015</b>
	<b>Stage 5: Community engagement and scoping events</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial scoping</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Identification and Engagement</li> <li>• NP Community Engagement Activity</li> <li>• <b>A4D Community Engagement Activity</b></li> </ul>	<b>January to June 2015</b>  <b>In questionnaire</b>
	<b>Stage 6: Information gathering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building the Evidence Base</li> <li>• <b>A4D researched</b></li> </ul>	<b>January to sept 2015</b> <b>April to Oct 2015</b>
	<b>Stage 7: Pulling community engagement results and evidence together, Working Groups engage community and stakeholders on site and policy options.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define scope strategic vision and aims, outline content, thematic objectives and options;</li> <li>• In-depth community and stakeholder involvement</li> <li>• Prepare 'Strategic Narrative'</li> <li>• <b>A4D drafting process</b></li> <li>• <b>A4D processed and approvals given (if necessary)</b></li> <li>• <b>A4D Made and Notices Published</b></li> </ul>	<b>August 2015 to February 2016</b>  <b>April to Sept 2015</b> <b>July/Sept 2015</b> <b>October 2015</b>
<b>Producing the Draft Plan</b>	<b>Stage 8: Narrowing down the options and technical writing of draft plan.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical writing of NP</li> <li>• 'Sign off' of NP by Town Council.</li> </ul>	<b>March/April 2016</b> <b>April 2016</b>
<b>Refining and 'Making' the Plan</b>	<b>Stage 9: Testing and approving the Neighbourhood Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-submission Consultation/ Finalise Plan</li> <li>• Submission of Plan for approval Examination</li> </ul>	<b>May/June 2016</b> <b>June 2016</b> <b>August 2016</b>
	<b>Stage 10: Making of the Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Referendum</li> <li>• Formal 'Making' as part of the planning policy framework.</li> <li>• <b>A4D Confirmed</b></li> </ul>	<b>September/October 2016</b> <b>By end October 2016</b> <b>By end Oct 2016</b>
<b>Into action...</b>	<b>Stage 11: Delivering and monitoring the plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of plan provisions....</li> </ul>	<b>Thereafter....</b>