

## **Report Looe Town Council February 2016**

### **Gwel an Porth**

Work is progressing well with the piling operation, all the vertical piles are installed, and the rakers are now well under way, so we will be shortly excavating for the edge beam. Unfortunately they have, on occasion had to prevent pedestrian access for short periods, this is regrettable, but necessary for public safety. Street-works department were consulted when they applied for the closure, and explained that we would try and maintain pedestrian access, but couldn't guarantee it. With the raking pile operation, they are using a longer machine, which has meant at times they have needed to completely close off access, for example when shunting it around, and whilst drilling some of the rakers.

I visited the site on Thursday and spoke to the foreman who was very helpful. He said if someone wanted access they would try to accommodate them by moving back the Heras fencing.

### **East and West Looe Valley Trails**

I am pleased to be able to let you know that, following a very constructive meeting with Vicky Fraser from Cornwall Council this morning, the LAG expression of interest for the East Looe Valley Trail has been submitted,

After lobbying from myself Cornwall Council have agreed to fund both the engineering work and Sustrans' involvement as well as providing additional officer advice (eg legal, locality team, economic development), leaving the rest to be funded through pro-bono contributions, match funding and LAG.

We are hoping we will be able to proceed with the named team, but we may run into procurement issues particularly with the CEC element. If so, Looe Development Trust as the accountable body will have to seek three quotes for this work.

Finally, Sue Brownlow who is leading the East project has included a small amount of additional resource in the proposal to finalise the concept of the West Looe to Lanhydrock route as well. This will include looking at Heritage assets along the way and any deal breakers as far as land ownership or physical barriers. Making the connection to the National Cycle Network is such a prize that I think it's a no-brainer to get this moving at the same time.

Cllr Toms and myself have walked various sections of the proposed West Looe trail with local residents and have established land ownership. We have met with the Forestry Commission and Forest Holidays who were very supportive.

The meeting to consider the funding application to LAG is in early March and will let you know as soon as we hear anything.

### **Drainage West Looe Hill**

I have been working with the head of Highways Drainage Andy Stevenson to try and improve the drainage on West Looe Hill. At times the amount of water running is unacceptable, lifts drains and causes damage to the carriageway. There is also a weep hole on a section of new retaining wall that is constantly flowing. Andy visited the site on 2 weeks ago and the issue with the cover blowing off was very clear to him. What was also clear to him was the very steep gradient, the amount of surface water runoff, and the amount of water issuing from the weepholes in a number of retaining walls adjacent to the highway. He agreed that we need to understand the condition and capacity of the existing infrastructure and he has asked the Highways Manager Adrian Drake to undertake a survey of drain capacity as soon as practicable, when the amount of water reduces.

He also took a look at the private road to the north of West Looe Hill, Downs Rd and although it was dry at the time, there is clearly some significant runoff from the fields. He is actively exploring options with legal around enforcement.

### **Library Sustainability and business plan workshop**

Cllr Toms, myself with the Clerk and representatives of interested groups like the Children's Centre and Age UK met with the Real Ideas Organisation to discuss issues around the future sustainability of the Library and creation of a business plan should the Town Council take on the facility.

It was a very positive session, with some useful, tangible outcomes as part of the Councils due diligence supporting its resolution to explore taking on the library.

The following actions were agreed.

TRIALS AND PILOTS (to discover what works and what doesn't)

- Get a Carn to Cove performance to come to Looe (Sarah)
- Set up a books and soft play session at the Children's Centre (Helen)
- Set up a gaming evening (Jamie)
- Set up a Book Club or Wine tasting event (Belle)
- Set up a business focused event (Lindsey)

BUSINESS PLANNING – once Social Enterprise Engine Room 2 is established it can offer business start up support to the new company.

BRANDING AND IDENTITY – it was agreed that this was the most crucial next step to change people's perceptions and gain buy-in to new ideas and ways of working. It was agreed that Jamie from Talent Match Cornwall would convene a group of young people to work with the Looe community and a graphic designer to develop a new name and brand for the library. I have identified £400 from my community chest fund to match with Talent Matches' investment. This piece of work will start immediately.

### **One public sector hub? - Police Station**

Negotiation around consolidating the various public sector assets in the town started as long ago as 2009 when Cllr Toms and myself met with representatives of the Police and Cornwall Fire and Rescue. These negotiations stalled, however they have reopened with the first UK Devolution Deal for Cornwall. One aspect is that any assets that are planned to be disposed of in Cornwall, the monies raised must be spent in Cornwall. Cllr Toms and myself are meeting with the Police and Cornwall Fire and Rescue to restart these negotiations. There could be an opportunity for a 'one public sector' hub in Looe sharing costs and improving access to services for residents.