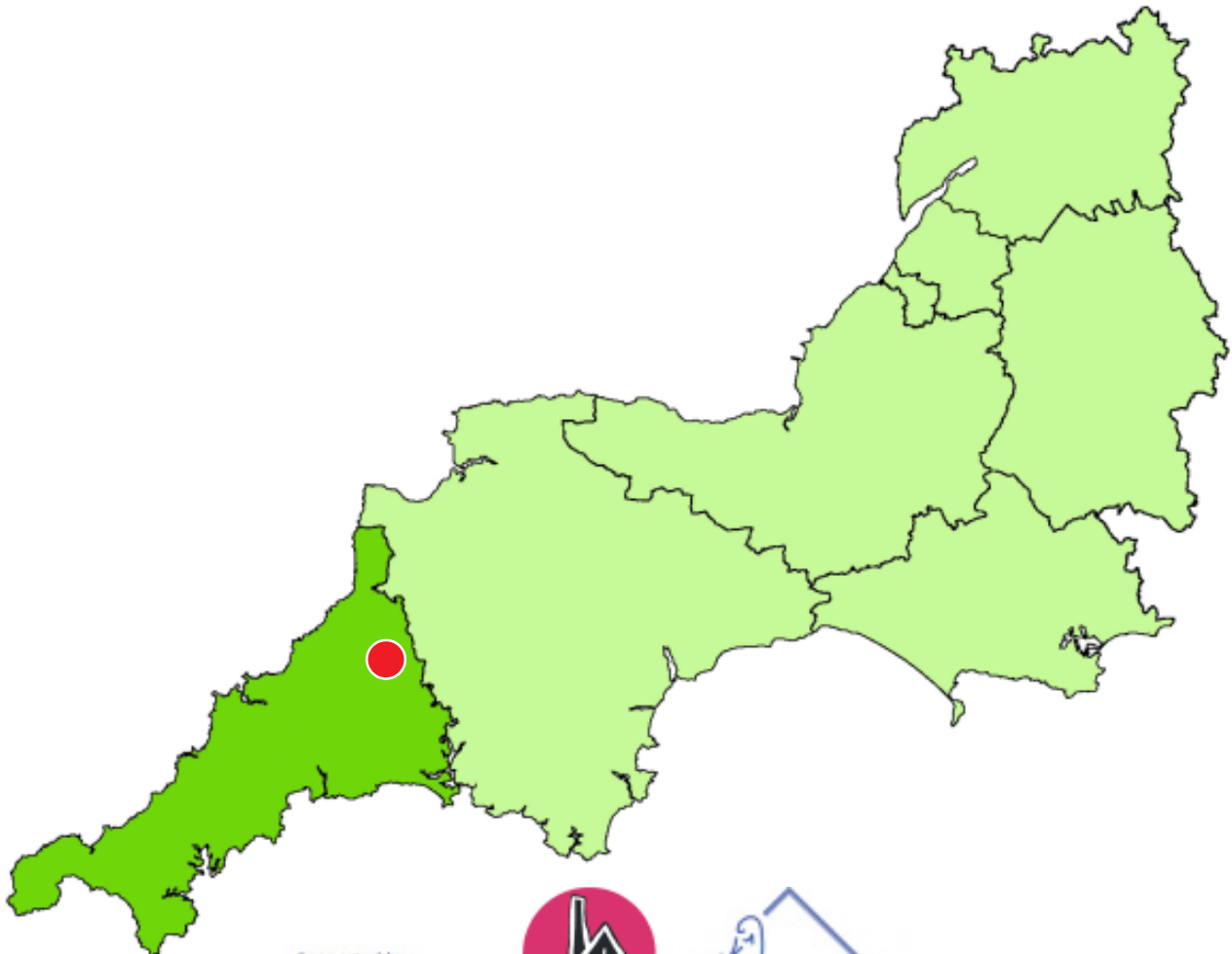


South Petherwin Community Plan

Completion Date: 2005



Compiled by Cornwall Rural Community Council
In partnership with the South West Acre Network (SWAN)

South Petherwin Parish Plan Case Study

Interviewees

*Parish Council Chairman
(and steering group member);
volunteer for parish magazine.*

Background

South Petherwin Parish is made up of 390 households (pop. 936 - 2001 Census) in the North Cornwall district of Cornwall, and lies about one mile from the town of Launceston (pop. 7135 - 2001 Census). The parish covers an area of 2054 hectares, the majority of this being agricultural. The parish is divided by the main A30 and consists of the main village of South Petherwin and smaller villages of Daws House, Kennards House and Trescrogo.

South Petherwin has some key services: shop, post office, a pub and restaurant, a thriving primary school, playgroup, and a daily bus service. Other core services, secondary school, banks, chemist, library etc., are available at Launceston, although services like A&E are much further afield.

What is a Community-Led Plan

A Community Plan is a vision for a parish, or defined area, setting out aspirations and aims. It covers a wide range of issues that affect residents (social, environment and economic) and identifies actions to take these forward.

Creating a plan gives residents the opportunity to have a say in how they want to see their area develop; recording what is good as well as what is not. It should provide a strategy for improvement and a tool for change – to be used with funding bids, lobbying and projects.

Plans need to be realistic and need to link with existing strategies and inform partner organisations. It should also provide a mandate for the Parish/Town Council or other accountable body. However the actions within a Plan are not just for statutory organisations, it is about local people/groups also taking responsibility for projects and/or working with partners to move these on.

The initial consultation (surveys, events etc.) is crucial to creating the plan. The more thorough and comprehensive the consultation, the increased opportunity to produce a robust and informative Plan.

The Process

The South Petherwin Parish Plan began in late 2003. Initially the Parish Council sought advice and information and throughout the following few months discussions took place within the parish, with residents and interested partners. A steering group of volunteers was convened and shortly after this an application for funding was made to the Countryside Agency (the funder at that time). The grant application was successful.

The first stage was then to create a questionnaire and this was done via a series of meetings and discussions and went through a number of drafts.

The main objectives were to:

1. To find out what residents considered to be the important issues.
2. To provide a voice for the residents.
3. To work with local authorities and others to take forward the identified needs and
4. To establish a vision for the future.

The questionnaire was then finalised and delivered by hand to all parishioners. Two weeks later the forms were collected and analysed. 239 of the 390 household surveys were returned, equating to a 61% response rate.

A Parish Day was held in Spring 2005 to display results to community and to keep all informed and involved.

Plan completed May 2005.

What are your achievements as a community to date, as a result of the Community-Led Plan?

- **Communication** Developing and promotion of parish website. Expansion of parish magazine. Review of condition and siting of notice boards.
- **Community Events** Plan has brought together a group of people that are at the core of parish events and a number of events for the summer are being worked on. The parish magazine has been invaluable in advertising events/activities. Parish Magazine, Parish Council and School, in conjunction with Paul Tyler, planning a community event (encompassing youth activities –skate; local history and a range of interests – to promote multi theme days and joint working.

- **Community Safety** Currently working on action with close links to community liaison officer and police officers. Meeting held at the end of February 2008 to encourage a Community (traffic) Speed Watch scheme and Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Also commented on County Council street light consultation (community safety and environmental implications).
 - **Environment** Identification/maintenance of footpaths in progress. County Council gave parish 'gold status' and fund the footpath maintenance. Old village sign replaced with new to improve appearance of village. New dog bins installed throughout parish.
 - **Health** Two new disabled toilets (parish toilet and chapel toilet facilities) completed. Also, the Chapel now provide a lunch club.
 - **Housing** New affordable housing site (14 single dwellings) approved.
 - **Services** Parish magazine about to run another call to the parish to support their post office –although parish council feel that this it is up to the government to stop cuts. Parish hall and Chapel hall members starting to work together. Working with school in progress: use of their new computer suite for parish council meetings.
 - **Traffic** Working group making progress to explore traffic management issues/solutions. Did two further consultations on speeding traffic in 2006 and 2007 at Agricultural Show and a Parish Day – involving parishioners and school. New traffic road signage (including flashing signs) and traffic calming installed, and currently working with school on 'safe routes' project and cycle trial pilot.
 - **Youth** Skateboard mobile park implemented. Issue of play area not resolved, however the Parish Council is trying to build a play strategy involving a quarterly skate park/youth event: community liaison officer agreed to provide football coaching; NCDC Recreation Officer and Play Ranger involved as well as church youth workers. Also working with Launceston Forum (MCTi area) to share expertise.
- As mentioned, in traffic section, there are plans to work with neighbouring parishes and schools to pilot a cycle trail project to enable children to have safe, fun recreational activities overseen/supervised by parents.

How has the South Petherwin Community Plan helped you to engage with your local authority about services your community needs?

Organisations were made aware of the work on the parish plan and copies were sent out. County and District Councils were sent copies and a request was received from the County Council for further copy. This interest has enabled some work to take place – such as improvements for young people – district council provision of mobile skateboard park. Also worked with CCC on aggregate levy fund, which has financed several of the projects within the plan. Traffic concerns within the plan and resulting follow-up consultation has reinforced parish views and thus enabled better working with CCC. There has been some progress in working/co-operation with external partners (district, county, police etc.) and a better understanding of roles. Information from the Plan has also been entered in a county-wide database by CRCC and the local authorities have been keen to receive this data and to feed it into their work on the Sustainable Communities Strategy. Also, individual departments have shown an interest in using the data to help with work plans.

What other projects have you got planned for the future?

- Provision of benches throughout the parish.
- Would like to follow up with district council increasing opportunities for recycling and forge closer links with Community Energy Plus (CEP).
- Cross parish working on projects (including proposed cycle trail project).
- Community events – youth activities.

Have the actions from the Plan brought any funding into the community e.g. lottery grants, trusts, Village of the Year etc.?

Yes, primarily funding through the Cornwall County Council aggregate fund.

How are you keeping the process alive and advising progress to the community?

Parish Council taking responsibility for the implementation of the plan, with help of local groups. There is regular monitoring and review, and feedback to the community through the parish magazine.

How has this benefited the community?

Producing the plan has benefited the parish and community. It has brought people/groups together and joint mixed events have been particularly successful e.g. the joint skateboard event was alongside the relaunch of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and a fun apple pressing event. All ages encouraged to take part. The plan has been used to instigate projects as well as being used to obtain funding. Additionally, new councillors have been encouraged on to the Parish Council. However, there is always a difficulty in getting more volunteers within the community as many people are already committed to various activities or have family/other commitments that take precedence.

What lessons have you learned?

- Hardest projects to take forward those where planning issues slow the project.
- Not all agencies are necessarily involved in the process e.g. PCT not engaged.
- Plan process is on-going, must be reviewed and embedded, so that action plan is continually monitored etc.

How does the Action Plan link into the Parish Council's future business planning?

The work on the play strategy, traffic calming and other projects has come out of the plan. The plan actions have fed into Parish Council discussions and provide a framework. However, there is a need to revisit the plan in more detail in the near future - to see what is still needed and how these actions can be taken forward e.g. precept, joint working with other parishes etc.

One piece of advice for others?

Try to make the process (particularly consultation) interesting, informal and fun (although it still needs to be effective). Tie in with parish events so not so formal and people are at ease and can be encouraged to give their views more openly.

Quote

on the Community-Led Planning Process

"It has been good to be part of it and we are proud to have such a document that we can use and which reflects the community's views."

Phil Parsons
Parish Council
Chairman.