



Falmouth Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019 - 2030



*Created by the community of Falmouth
with the support of Falmouth Town
Council*

Falmouth Neighbourhood Plan Stakeholder Group

SUMMARY LEAFLET

The Falmouth Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) is the result of four years' work by many volunteers from the community and local organisations, who want to see Falmouth develop to meet the needs and wishes of its residents, and communities from surrounding areas, in a way that is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.

This is a summary of what has happened during this period, and what is proposed in the submitted draft Plan.

What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is made under the Localism Act 2011, which gives communities the right to make a Plan on how their town develops – the way that land is used for housing, business, shops and leisure. It can also protect green spaces and heritage and influence the design of new buildings.

The Plan is written by the community, supported by the Town Council and covers the period up to 2030. Although it is mainly about land-use, ideas for other projects have emerged through the process, which could be supported financially by new developments and successful bids for grant funding.

However, we don't have a completely free hand: The Plan must comply with national policies, the Cornwall Local Plan, and the Cornwall Site Allocations Development Plan Document, and must follow a formal procedure to be adopted

How the Neighbourhood Plan was created....



In late 2014 a Stakeholder Group was set up to steer the way the Neighbourhood Plan was created.

In 2015 hundreds of local people took part in a wide-ranging community engagement period, with 'drop-in' sessions for face-to-face discussion, presentations to groups, and a large community survey delivered to every household and shared online via our website, Twitter and Facebook accounts.

The result of this work, and other detailed evidence was examined by community-based working groups on spatial strategy and housing, economy, and the environment and green spaces.

Later in 2016 the NDP Stakeholder Group used the working group's reports to write the first draft of the Falmouth NDP, which was published in December 2016 for consultation with the community of Falmouth.

The mostly positive feedback from this was used by the Stakeholder Group to prepare a revised version of the NDP for submission to Cornwall Council. This required extensive work to improve heritage and habitats evidence and policy and was completed this summer. The NDP was submitted to Cornwall Council on 5th July 2019.



Other work around the Falmouth NDP...

Alongside this work, the Stakeholder Group and Falmouth Town Council supported Cornwall Council to make an 'Article 4 Direction' that provides extra controls over the conversion of dwellings into 'Houses in Multiple Occupation'. The Neighbourhood Plan includes new policies that are vital if the Article 4 Direction is to be effective.

The Stakeholder Group also supported Falmouth Town Council in making representations to Cornwall Council on the content of the Cornwall Local Plan Site Allocations Document (the 'DPD'). It was also necessary for the draft NDP to 'track' the changes that were made in the DPD around student accommodation policy, as the NDP is required by Government regulations to be 'in conformity' with the Cornwall Local Plan.

The draft Falmouth Neighbourhood Development Plan is now complete and has been submitted to Cornwall Council. After legal checks, a further period of consultation, and independent assessment, the NDP will come before a referendum of Falmouth residents for approval.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan Vision for Falmouth

In 2030, Falmouth will be a distinctive, vibrant, resilient, inclusive and well-balanced, attractive sea-port town. It will form the sustainable social and economic heart of the wider Falmouth/Penryn Community Network, serving an important strategic role in enabling Cornwall's economy to reach its full potential, and responding effectively to climate change.

You said: on Housing....

- Create a better sense of community in development
- A balanced variety of housing needed
- Affordable housing needed
- More starter homes for young people
- More community ownership and self-build opportunities
- Lifetime homes
- Smaller homes for older people

How the NDP responds: As most of the new housing to meet Falmouth's needs will be built adjacent to but outside the Town Council area, the NDP includes Guidance Notes to show how sustainable neighbourhoods that relate well to Falmouth might be created in these areas. It also identifies some brownfield and infill sites within Falmouth that might provide appropriate locations for additional housing and regeneration, sets careful criteria for these and other brownfield sites and highlights the importance of good design. The NDP has a new policy to encourage 'co-housing' to encourage self-build and shared ownership

....and on Student Accommodation:

- The balance of community and character of some areas was being harmed by student accommodation
- An Article 4 Direction to control HMOs was needed
- No more HMOs should be allowed in the Falmouth area.
- More rental housing for local people.

How the NDP responds: As well as supporting Cornwall Council to make the Article 4 Direction requiring planning permission for all HMOs, the NDP includes a policy to rule out any more HMOs unless they are as part of an improvement scheme for an existing unsatisfactory site. The NDP also includes a policy for new purpose-built rental accommodation for local people, offering affordable private rents on secure family-friendly tenancies. The management of HMOs and community safety is also discussed.

You said: on the Town Centre...

- Improve the quality and environment of the main shopping streets
- Better access to the waterfront with more open spaces and community facilities
- Improve range of shops
- Improve parking arrangements
- Better links to and through the centre
- Greater control of traffic though the centre & Improve conditions for pedestrians

...and on Business, Employment and Tourism:

- Strong support for developing the harbour, port and docks as a centre for maritime engineering and tourism
- Greater emphasis on supporting tourism is needed in the NDP
- Keeping waterfront locations for sea-based businesses and maritime tourism
- More opportunities for small businesses
- Need for more business services, and more use of local materials, food and employment skills

How the NDP responds: By proposing a phased town centre regeneration strategy including residential developments and additional public car parking at the Quarry Car Park and the former TA Site, a high quality public realm area replacing the Church Street car park, increased time-limited pedestrianisation, further enhancement of The Moor, High Street, Church Street, Arwenack Street for pedestrian comfort, sustainable transport measures, and enhancement of the heritage environment.

How the NDP responds: The NDP includes policies for harbour, port and dock development supporting marine engineering and its supply chain. For tourism it includes boosting the development of new facilities and holiday accommodation, protection of existing accommodation, improved access and facilities to serve small boat moorings, the revival of the Prince of Wales Pier, enhancement of the Moor as a local attraction, and support for festival infrastructure are included. The NDP also supports development of small workshops, an innovation hub, improvement of existing job sites, as well as home-based enterprise, especially where they build on opportunities flowing from the Universities.

You said on Environment and Open Space...

- Identify and take into account important national landscapes and habitats present in the local area
- Protect local green spaces
- More green spaces and trees
- More recreation (allotments, playing fields and leisure facilities)
- Protection from climate change impacts

How the NDP responds: The NDP evidence base was enhanced to assess the potential impacts of its policies on habitat and its policies adjusted to ensure that no unacceptable harm would result. Policies were included to protect the most important green and open spaces. Improvement plans for Pendennis Point and Falmouth's Seafront are included, along with proposals for a Green Corridor and Gardens Walk for local people in the more developed parts of the town. These also will provide habitats for native species and the

opportunity to support greater biodiversity. Projects are also suggested for sports development, green space management, and the provision of more allotments and cemetery space. These proposals also provide essential material for grant applications to the Coastal Community Fund and other sources of support.

You said: on Culture, Leisure, Health and Well-being...

- A better sense of community
- More leisure facilities
- Facilities and services for young people
- More facilities for people with disabilities
- Sites for higher quality medical and care facilities

How the NDP responds: Policies are included that encourage the development of new and existing cultural facilities, protect existing venues from harm and support the input of cultural expertise to help design major projects. The NDP also supports the retention of the town's Community Hospital through regeneration of the site to include better and wider medical and healthcare facilities. Policies in the Environment and Open Space section protect existing leisure facilities, and a recreation facilities strategy is proposed for the improvement and enhancement of sports facilities, children's play areas and teenage facilities.

You said: on Transport and Connectivity:

- Provide safer cycle and pedestrian routes
- Better public transport is needed
- Improved car parking arrangements in town centre
- Protection from climate change impacts
- Improved connectivity with local facilities and the countryside

...and on Design:

- Need for high standards of design that respects Falmouth's heritage setting and its important heritage assets
- Ensure new development respects street patterns, the scale of surrounding buildings, and uses local materials
- Retain existing trees and hedging
- Improve open spaces and public Redevelopments to match scale and character of the town
- Protect the classic Falmouth views across the Conservation area to the AONB and along the coast.

How the NDP responds: Good transport and cycle/footpath links help neighbourhoods to thrive so the NDP includes policies that strengthen links between bus, cycle and pedestrian routes, local facilities and the town centre. This policy calls for street design which emphasises pedestrian, cyclist and public transport over cars. Also includes a proposal for a sustainable transport scheme for the town centre to make it more useable and attractive. Policy supports improvement of pedestrian and cycle access

How the NDP responds: The NDP ensures that new development takes into account national and county level design guide policy, and identifies the locally distinctive characteristics of 11 areas of the town that design should reflect. The NDP says that harm to the town's historic environment and the specific features protected by Falmouth's Conservation Area should be avoided. It requires that new shop fronts follow traditional designs and that garish illuminated signs be avoided. Kimberley Park, Fox-Rosehill and Gyllingdune Gardens and several notable buildings are 'local listed' to protect them. The Plan calls for trees and tree-like shrubs in conservation area should be integrated into developments rather than felled. There is also a policy setting criteria to protect the classic views and vistas of Falmouth.

FALMOUTH NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND TODAY'S BIG ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

How does the Neighbourhood Development Plan help to tackle the climate crisis, environmental damage, plastic pollution, and species extinction?

By its nature as a document that deals with sustainable development the policies of the Falmouth NDP help to tackle the causes and effects of these major concerns.

For example:

- the sustainable neighbourhood proposals encourages the use of travel alternatives such as walking, cycling and public transport, so helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- the urban capacity policies help to avoid the use of more distant green sites so reducing the need to travel and preserving soils;
- the NDP's development policies include criteria ensuring there is no adverse impact on the habitat and species of the Fal and Helford rivers from sewage and surface water drainage or increased recreational use;
- the Church Street policy requires that existing pollution risks from the former gas works are resolved;
- tourism policy seeks to create new habitat, encourage waste recycling, the use of renewable energy and sourcing of produce and materials locally, thus supporting biodiversity and helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- open space policies including those for the Green Corridor and Gardens Walk protect spaces which support the green infrastructure which hosts habitat and species;
- the design policies encourage the use of traditional materials and building methods, reducing the use of plastics;





What happens next?

Now that the Falmouth Neighbourhood Development Plan has been formally submitted to Cornwall Council the process is largely out of local hands until it goes to local referendum. The next steps are that:

- Cornwall Council will check the NDP to ensure that it meets the relevant legal requirements and complies with national and local planning rules.
- A six-week formal consultation period will then be opened, when residents and other interested stakeholders such as property owners and developers can support, comment on, or object to its contents. **We encourage all residents to join in with this consultation process to support the NDP and its proposals.**
- An Independent Assessor will then check the NDP to ensure that the Plan meets the basic conditions for neighbourhood planning laid down in the legal regulations.
- Subject to the Assessors report, Cornwall Council will then set up a local referendum. All of those of who have registered to vote in national and local elections will be able to take part in the referendum.

We fully appreciate that aspects of the Plan may not meet with everyone's approval, but believe the positive parts far outweigh any negative effects. Without the Plan, the negatives will probably still happen, but we would also lose the opportunity to control the spread of HMOs, to regenerate the town centre, protect the town's unique character and heritage, ensure new development is well designed, protect green spaces and meet community needs.

For more information see our website: www.planforfalmouth.info

Or see a copy at The Library and Town Council Offices
on The Moor, Falmouth.

