Traffic and transport: issues and objectives

‘Our goal is to resolve the conflict between traffic, pedestrians, and community living through the introduction of initiatives designed to manage car-parking, access by delivery vehicles and goods distribution more effectively’.

Setting the context

The unique qualities of Penzance, Newlyn, Mousehole, and the surrounding villages are based on the built and waterfront environment. The buildings, harbours, promenade, quaint narrow streets, picturesque cottages fronting onto the roads, are all inherited from an earlier age, when the prime industries were fishing, farming, and related trades, before the advent of tourism, and holiday home ownership.

Over time, we see the decline of the former prime industries, and the reliance on the motor car for personal transport, and heavy goods vehicle for moving commercial products. However, the honeymoon period with the internal combustion engine is over, and radical solutions need to be found. This is widely recognised, but rarely practiced: few are willing to give up their motor car for environmental reasons; yet many protest at cars, vans and lorries filling narrow streets, many of which have no pavements. There are now a number of sites in the area where in high season, the air quality is of real concern, due to traffic pollution. Please refer to Community health and well-being objective 9.

Our priorities now are not priorities that are sustainable, and any proposals must be long-term in terms of sustainability and not short-term solutions to local ‘pinch-points’.

A local transport plan

Any responsible traffic and transport plan needs to address the following issues, many of which are in conflict:

- Accessibility to homes, businesses, and recreation: the rights of the individual
- Accessibility to services: making sure the public can get to essential services, and that emergency services can reach all parts of the area swiftly
- The impact on the environment in terms of continued high levels of traffic and associated pollution
- The impact on the built environment in terms of providing places for increasing volumes of traffic to circulate and to park
- Government priorities for providing traffic solutions for the M4/M5 area that will facilitate even greater access to Penwith; and a consequent lack of interest in local impact
The relationship between transport access and opportunities for economic regeneration
An understanding of the changes to community and commercial life already brought about by current traffic levels
The contribution of any local transport plan to the wider picture of life in the area in 20 years time and beyond

Car parking

To manage our environment more effectively, we must acknowledge that too much space in Penzance is given over to car parks: space that would be invaluable in terms of housing, workshop and training units, or green spaces. At the same time we must recognise the needs and rights of those who live in Penzance, to park their car in the town. Business users and those commuting into the town to work should be encouraged to use public transport wherever possible. Holidaymakers should not expect, in the future, to park in the town: there are many examples of towns and cities where the expectation is to use a Park and Ride scheme, and these schemes, such as the Lelant - St Ives scheme, actually offer commuters, holidaymakers and visitors a unique and convenient experience.

We also need to recognise that as we turn over more and more prime space to car parks in order to facilitate ever-increasing numbers of visitors, we are changing the very nature of the place that attracted those visitors, and at the same time, particularly in the holiday period, fundamentally disadvantaging those that live there, and the essential road users that are part of the local economy.

In order for a Park and Ride scheme, or traffic control scheme, to be effective, we need an integrated public transport system that is affordable, attractive, reliable, and meets the needs of all users. To encourage our visitors and commuters to leave their vehicles outside the immediate town, we need to offer them an attractive alternative for moving easily and economically about Penzance, Newlyn and Moushole.

Traffic and transport: objective 1

A Park and Ride scheme for Penzance and a congestion charging scheme to significantly reduce the impact of commuter and visitor traffic

Considerations will include:
- The possible location of one or more Park and Ride venues to serve Penzance, Newlyn and Mousehole
- Better links with the rail network and bus / coach companies to promote the idea of using public transport for visiting the area
- The need for a swift and efficient transfer transport system to take commuters and visitors to all parts of the town with ease, including the transport of wheelchairs, prams, pushchairs, and other items: please refer to Traffic and transport objective 3
- The need for any such Park and Ride scheme to be financially attractive to target users
- The need for any such scheme to minimise detrimental impact to the environment
An integrated and affordable public transport system

The objectives described above should effectively remove holiday and visitor traffic from Penzance and Newlyn. We need to reduce the reliance on the motor-car, by residents, by business users, by those commuting elsewhere to work, by shoppers, and by visitors.

We must also recognise that for many visitors, exploring the countryside and the coastline by car is their purpose in being in Penwith.

Public transport around West Penwith
that the economy is dependent on the income from tourism; that our public transport system does not meet their needs; and that it is not realistic to introduce a public transport system that frequently visits every possible visitor destination in the area.

Therefore we need clearer data about key visitor destinations, a realistic appraisal of the public transport provision that exists to take visitors to those destinations, and the car-parking provision at those destinations, in order to make recommendations that will persuade visitors to leave their car behind as they explore the area; even better, to choose not to use their private car to visit Cornwall in the first place.

We also need to better understand where the people of Penzance, Newlyn, and the villages go to work; and for those inward commuters, where they come from, and the barriers to using public transport.

Traffic and transport: objective 3

An affordable and effective integrated public transport system serving Penzance, Newlyn, Mousehole, and the communities of West Penwith

Considerations will include:
- A detailed survey into the destinations of visitors to the area, and the car-parking provision that exists at those locations
- An assessment of the impact of visitor car parking at those destinations
- Extending the survey to establish the needs of those that commute into Penzance and Newlyn and from where they travel, and the work destinations of those that commute out of the area
- An evaluation of the existing public transport provision matched to the data gathered from the points above
- Opportunities to provide free or subsidised transport for those using the Park and Ride scheme, particularly between the Park and Ride venue and Penzance, Newlyn and Mousehole
- Opportunities to further extend any subsidies to other destinations in the area
- Consulting with businesses in the area about possible transport subsidies

Potential partners:
- Bus and coach service operators
- Penwith District Council
- Town and Parish Councils
- Representatives of commercial transport organisations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Newlyn Fish Industry Forum
- Devon and Cornwall Police

Managing commercial traffic

To support the economy, and to support economic regeneration, businesses need more trade, and more footfall. This means that we cannot seek to control the number of delivery vehicles coming into the town: but we can introduce measures that control the size of the vehicles, and the times that those vehicles can access the town.
We should also try to ensure that deliveries and the collection of goods can be made easily, without penalty or obstruction: and at the same time, address the conflict between commercial vehicles and pedestrians. Many of the streets in Penzance, and in Newlyn, have become dedicated to the convenience of vehicles, offer no incentive to pedestrians to shop, walk or cycle around the area; and at the same time offer a real risk to the safety of the public. Other parts of Penzance present opportunities for pedestrianisation, yet there will continue to be a need to facilitate deliveries to retailers in the vicinity. This suggests that there may be sense in identifying times when we should prioritise delivery traffic as essential users, and at other times, prioritise the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

Traffic and transport: objective 4

To more effectively manage the delivery of goods to town centre retailers, and the collection of goods from producers and suppliers

Considerations will include:

- Identifying those parts of Penzance, Newlyn and Mousehole where there is regular conflict between the needs of commercial delivery vehicles, and the needs of residents and pedestrians: ‘key delivery zones’
- Imposing strict times for delivery vehicles to access ‘key delivery zones’ and ensuring that at those times delivery vehicles have priority over other road users other than emergency services
- The importance of working with organisations such as the Newlyn Fish Industry Forum to ensure that we are aware of and can support the needs of key industries
- Opportunities presented by road management systems such as hydraulic bollards

Potential partners:

- Bus and coach service operators
- Penwith District Council*
- Town and Parish Councils
- Representatives of commercial transport organisations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Newlyn Fish Industry Forum
- Devon and Cornwall Police

Longer-term, we need to develop a second part of this strategy in order to offer a viable long-term alternative to managing the distribution, delivery and collection of goods to and from Penzance and Newlyn. We need to work more closely with the rail network, as a far more sustainable alternative to road transport, and explore the potential of shipping goods in and out by sea.

We must remove as far as possible the heavy goods vehicles from the roads that run through and between Penzance and Newlyn specifically, and around the area generally, but only if we can offer businesses and transport companies an economically-viable alternative. Part of this process will be about working with those users to understand their needs, the dependency of their businesses on viable transport costs,
and also the longer-term costs to the sustainability and environmental welfare of our community if we do nothing.

**Traffic and transport: objective 5**

*Establish a distribution / transfer centre on the outskirts of Penzance supported by an environmentally-friendly local delivery service, in order to minimise the impact of delivery vehicles in Penzance and Newlyn*

Considerations will include:
- Identifying an appropriate location on the outskirts of Penzance where large goods vehicles can deliver, transfer, and collect goods without the need to enter Penzance or Newlyn
- Establishing a local delivery system that meets the needs of the businesses in the area, and minimises conflict between pedestrians and vehicles
- Consulting with key users to ensure their operations are supported by the initiative
- Opportunities to use energy-efficient, clean-air vehicles for local delivery: such as electric vehicles powered by locally-produced systems
- The potential to work more effectively with the rail network to create an integrated rail / road system
- Explore the potential for links with an enhanced service of transporting goods by sea

*Potential partners:*
- Transport operators
- Local business representative
- Representatives of commercial vehicle operators
- Chamber of Commerce
- Penwith District Council*
- Newlyn Fish Industry Forum
- County Highways

**Supporting a car-sharing scheme**

We will not rid ourselves of the motor-car, nor should we realistically expect to do so. We can minimise the impact on our towns and communities through the ways described above, but we also need to reduce the number of cars on the road making journeys to work, where the majority of those cars have a single occupant.

Devon County Council successfully introduced a car-share scheme, *Carshare Devon*, four years ago; by 2006 more than 2,500 people are on the database; a similar scheme, *Carshare Dorset*, has 1,100 after two years. Other schemes are in operation in Somerset and throughout the UK. The National Liftshare Day held in June 2007 added over 8,500 more lift-sharers to their national scheme.

‘The first car-share lane on a British motorway has been given the green light, but the concept of car sharing to save money, time and fuel has been accepted by motorists overseas for years as well as by people using specific schemes. The new £2.5m lane on a busy route between Bradford and Leeds...”
will aim to give faster rush hour journeys to cars with more than one occupant. It opens in 2007, followed by a second car-share lane on the M1 a year later - work on which has already started. The government announced plans for a pilot High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane in December, 2004, as part of its moves to tackle congestion and encourage car-sharing - which a National Audit Office pointed out was already successful overseas. (BBC News UK).

Reducing the number of cars commuting to work in this way will offer substantial economic benefits to participants, and will contribute to the reduction of emissions. It also offers benefits to employers as more car occupants mean fewer employees faced with the stress of driving, and a reduced demand on business parking spaces.

Traffic and transport: objective 6

To organise and promote a car-sharing scheme for those commuting into and out of the Penzance area

Considerations will include:
- Ways in which to engage employers in the promotion and organisation of such an initiative
- Incentives such as free or reduced-cost parking for multiple-occupancy cars
- Opportunities to extend the scheme beyond individual employer initiatives to include collective schemes such as that operated by The Mall at Cribbs Causeway, Bristol
- The development of a web-site specifically for those wishing to car-share into and out of Penzance

Potential partners:
- Targeted employers
- Employer and business organisations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Town and Parish Councils
- Penwith District Council
- County Council
- West Cornwall and IOS Rural Transport Partnership

Encouraging a return to cycling

There is a lot of enthusiasm for a return to cycling as we, finally, become a more health-conscious and environmentally-aware society. Schemes that enable participants to pick up a cycle from a variety of town locations, and leave the cycle at the nearest convenient point, would do much to support residents and visitors get about the town and the area, and to reduce reliance on the motor-car.

However, free ‘white bike’ schemes like that in Amsterdam are prone to theft, so free bicycle schemes now tend to require a deposit and bikes are kept locked at destinations. OYBike in London lets you hire a bike for free for 30 minutes, after paying an initial £10 registration fee. Using your mobile you phone the OYBike call centre to get the code to unlock the bike at locations such as Hammersmith, Fulham and West Kensington. VeloV in Lyon, France’s second-largest city, has 1,500 bikes.
available for use by 15,000 registered users. But unlike the ill-fated Cambridge scheme, there are deterrents to stop people stealing the velos. Users must register in advance and are then given a swipe card.

At the same time we need to provide cyclists with traffic-free lanes through the town, and a network of cycle-paths through the town and countryside to attract users; and to work with public transport providers to ensure they have the facilities to carry cycles.

**Traffic and transport: objective 7**

Promote a return to cycling through the provision of a cycle loan scheme, cycle lanes on busy roads and in the town, and a network of cyclepaths in the area

Considerations will include:
- The need to establish the level of enthusiasm for the initiative
- A proper appraisal of the costs, and the benefits to the community
- The viability of a cycle loan system whereby users could register with the organising body which would issue them with a 'smart card' containing an electronic chip: the card would be used to release security locks protecting the bicycles, ensuring that only registered users could use a bicycle, in order to guard against theft or vandalism
- A survey of existing cyclepaths and the opportunities presented by the footpaths and bridleways to create more cyclepaths linking the town and villages and key destinations in the countryside
- Links to National Cycle Route 3 and Regional Routes

**Potential partners:**
- Pedal Back The Years project
- Sustrans National Cycle Project
- Town and Parish Councils
- Penwith District Council
- County Council
- Penwith Tourism Action Group

**Feedback from the Youth Consultation**

The Youth Consultation report identifies a number of issues of concern to young people: they would like to see cheaper and more efficient public transport services, with more customer-friendly times, particularly on Sundays. They would like to see special concessions or free transport for young people, as access to friends, leisure facilities and school / college proves expensive if reliant on public transport, particularly if living in the more rural areas. Some reported that they were unable to get to school or college on time because of the timing of the services and length of the routes.

Other feedback in the report shows that young people consider public transport often to be dirty and full of rubbish; they were positive about services giving access to the beaches but needed to be able to carry surfboards or cycles.
The young people felt that an improved public transport system would encourage people away from use of the motor-car, and cut down therefore on traffic and pollution problems. A car-share scheme was proposed, and some felt that trams would be a popular innovation.

**Traffic and transport: objective 8**

*Provide all school pupils and students attending sixth-form or further education with public transport fare concessions*

Considerations will include:
- Sources of funding for such an initiative
- The nature of the concession or subsidy
- The idea of an ‘Oyster card’ for young people that covers all forms of public transport
- Ways of monitoring the effectiveness of the scheme
- The needs of young people and public transport: e.g. transporting cycles, surfboards

**Potential partners:**
- Bus and coach service operators
- Penwith District Council
- Town and Parish Councils
- Penwith College
- Humphry Davy School
- Mounts Bay School

**Better access to and from the A30**

The argument for a relief road behind Newlyn linking the communities in West Penwith more easily to the A30, is supported by a number of issues. First, the need to provide an area for new development as Penwith responds to the Regional Spatial Strategy’s requirement for new housing development and the associated infrastructure. We know at this point that we need to plan for at least 1,000 new dwellings in and around Penzance over the next twenty years. We also know that part of this figure can be met by conversion of existing buildings, and by developing brown-field sites. But we must acknowledge that in reality we will be introducing, effectively, another community to the area, and the people that will live and hopefully work there, and the infrastructure that will support them, will add to the already substantial traffic problems unless we look longer-term.

Secondly, the need to bring relief to Penzance Promenade, Ross Bridge, and the water-frontage through to Newlyn, from heavy goods vehicles and private transport; projects described above in this section seek to manage problems of vehicles parking in the town, and those of delivery vehicles, but there remains the issue of managing through-traffic, and of providing communities and businesses beyond Penzance and Newlyn with good access to the A30.

Thirdly, a link road would provide the opportunity not only to open up water-frontage for economic development purposes, but also create an area in which to locate new economic regeneration initiatives.
Traffic and transport: objective 9

To investigate options for a new link / relief road for Penzance / Newlyn, and opportunities to combine housing development and economic regeneration initiatives within the same scheme

Considerations will include:
- Options for routing the proposed link road
- The need to minimise use of green-field sites
- Opportunities to redefine the area surrounding a link road for housing development and the siting of other initiatives concerned with economic regeneration
- Consulting with all key user groups and authorities

Potential partners:
- Cornwall County Council Highways
- Penwith District Council*
- Town and Parish Councils
- Housing developers
- Penwith Housing Association
- Newlyn Fish Industry Forum
- Representatives of local businesses including transport operators