

SOUTH KERRIER INTEGRATED AREA PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

The Plan covers the rural parishes in the south of Kerrier District: Breage, Constantine, Crowan, Cury, Germoe, Grade Ruan, Gunwalloe, Gweek, Helston, Landewednack, Manaccan, Mawgan in Meneage, Mawnan, Mullion, Porthleven, Sithney, St. Anthony, St. Keverne, St. Martin and Wendron.

At present, the Plan is comprised of two Community Support Frameworks (CSFs).

The CSF for Helston and the Lizard Peninsula, covering a population of 17,680, is based upon detailed consultations over the past two years, culminating in the adoption of the “Integrated Rural Strategy for Helston & the Lizard Peninsula” published April 2000.

The Central Kerrier CSF, comprised of parishes predominantly to the north and west of Helston, is at a much earlier stage of development. In the main, these communities, with a population of 15,350, have not received the same levels of professional assistance during recent years. In consequence there is a significant amount of work required to enable the evolution of a comprehensive regeneration strategy and programme in this part of the Plan area

Objective One is perceived as a once in a lifetime opportunity to kick-start the process of developing a new economic future for the area.

2. SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

The key socio-economic characteristics are:

Rurality – With the exception of Helston (population c. 8000), Porthleven (population c. 3000) and Mullion (population c. 2000), all the parishes have dispersed populations. Agriculture remains a very significant employment sector, e.g. providing 25% of employment in Sithney parish, compared to 5.4% in Kerrier District and 6.0% in Cornwall. The social, economic and environmental implications of a restructuring of the area’s economy are profound. It is recognised that there are no simple, quick fix solutions.

Dominance of micro-businesses – the largest employer by far is RNAS Culdrose (c.700 jobs). Roughly 80% of businesses employ less than 5 people. Much of the recent activity in Cornwall aimed at developing SME’s has been targeted at the larger businesses, which provide the majority of jobs. In the rural parts of the area, our priority will be to develop employment opportunities that flow from the micro-business sector, as well as strengthening the capacity of the few larger businesses to add to their existing employment base.

High unemployment levels – With the exception of Crowan, Mawnan and Constantine, all parishes fall within the Helston Travel To Work Area (TTWA), which has consistently high levels of unemployment (above the averages for elsewhere in Kerrier District, Cornwall, the South West and Britain).

Significant pockets of deprivation – Research into social exclusion in Cornwall, published in July 1999, proposed combining six key indicators of economic and social well being.

Out of a total of 138 Wards in Cornwall, three in South Kerrier IAP feature in the top forty most disadvantaged: Grade Ruan & Landewednack (22nd), Breage & Germoe (24th) and St. Keverne (38th). As an example of the levels of deprivation, Breage & Germoe Ward has:

- 18.9% of households living on the poverty breadline
- 21.6% youth unemployment – 11th highest Ward in Cornwall
- 15.2% lone parent households
- 17.5% children living in households with no earner – 26th highest Ward in Cornwall

Economic Structure

As in the rest of rural Cornwall, the local economy has been based upon the traditional industries: farming, fishing and mining/quarrying. These sectors are in decline, although retain an important role, especially in sustaining community identity. Throughout the past century, defence, communications and tourism have all provided significant employment and continue to do so.

Significant features include the relative weakness of manufacturing, together with the relative importance of agriculture and “other services”, notably health care.

RNAS Culdrose is by far the largest single employer in the area. Its main economic impact arises from the domestic expenditure of service and civilian personnel on housing, food, entertainment etc (£58.8 million in 1995/96). Due to MOD central purchasing policies there are limited opportunities for local supply chains for the base to be established. Although the base’s future is secure for the medium term, if a contraction took place under a future review of defence spending, the impact on the local economy could be catastrophic. This vulnerability adds to the challenge facing the area in restructuring its economy.

3. SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis has evolved during the past two years from community workshops together with meetings of sectoral, focus and advisory groups.

The key **strengths** relate to people and place. The quality of community life and the environment locally are rapidly diminishing “commodities” within Britain. They are widely seen to be the foundation for re-establishing a cohesive and prosperous life for the area’s communities.

- Climate and air quality – potential for innovative crops etc
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coast – high quality landscape, especially around the coast.
- Lizard Peninsula has a recognised identity and sense of place, locally and nationally
- Unique geology and habitats on the Lizard Peninsula
- Underdeveloped creative industry sector
- Strategic location - communications & defence
- Starting from scratch
- Education - good schools, etc.
- Labour flexibility with untapped skills potential
- Existing tourism market and potential for developing new markets

The **weaknesses** flow from structural changes that have inexorably undermined the area’s economy and the effectiveness of the traditional socio-economic, cultural and political mechanisms that have provided stability in the past.

- Poorly developed transport infrastructure
- Fragmented “political” voice - no tradition of working together
- Poverty - lack of jobs, seasonality of employment, low wages
- Dependency on defence expenditure (RNAS Culdrose)
- Designations and structure plan *perceived* as preventing development potential within the AONB
- Lack of opportunities for youth and an ageing population
- Lack of accessible business development grants and small, cheap workshops
- High level of second home and holiday cottage ownership

- Profits leaking out of local economy
- Remoteness, even within Cornwall, and isolation of communities especially within Lizard Peninsula

The **opportunities** are seen to be based around developing collective action to create and promote new, market orientated ways of capitalising on the area's undoubted strengths.

- Potential for joint initiatives and co-operation
- IT/creativity marriage
- Culture/heritage potential
- Multi-sectoral promotion & marketing based upon environmental quality and heritage
- Adding value to existing products through niche markets
- Environmental quality
- Flexible labour force
- Promotion and adaptation of traditional skills
- To break down barriers between organisations and encourage partnership approach to re-defined objectives
- Availability of grants
- Derelict land in Breage & Germoe – matched funding

The **threats** are very real. The effectiveness of local efforts in establishing renewed prosperity will to a large degree depend upon the impact of decisions taken far away from local influence. The one threat that is very much within the control of local people would be a failure to engage positively and constructively with the changes that are demanded to revitalise the economy.

- Emigration of young people
- Reduced SSA's, e.g. impact on schools, public transport etc
- Resistance to change and nimbyism
- Lack of understanding of why the area is like it is
- Agriculture and fishing policy changes
- Increased peripherality and isolation from decision making
- Future Defence Review could reduce service levels at RNAS Culdrose

4 MISSION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

MISSION: To sustain, nurture and enhance the area's business, community, cultural and environmental strengths as the springboard for improving

- People's quality of life
- opportunities and access to employment, goods and services

OBJECTIVE A: To encourage, support and promote the active involvement and participation of individuals, groups and communities in managing change and shaping the area's future.

OBJECTIVE B: To safeguard and improve existing employment, as well as develop opportunities for new employment.

OBJECTIVE C: To improve access and opportunity to employment goods and services, especially for those currently disadvantaged, e.g. by age, gender, education, poverty or health.

OBJECTIVE D: To sustain and enhance, and where appropriate improve access to, features of the built, cultural, historic and natural environment that contribute to local distinctiveness.

OBJECTIVE E: To encourage better and more effective use of natural resources, reduce waste, clean up and control pollution.

5 THE STRATEGY: TRANSLATING VISION INTO REALITY

There are no simple, quick fix solutions. The process of regenerating the area will take time. Objective One can assist with funding support during the next eight years. Given the long lead times involved in fully formulating projects, attracting funding, implementation and bedding in of significant benefits, the full impact of the IAP's activity will not be felt until later in the life of the Programme.

The core activities that will be supported through the IAP are:

- developing a strong local brand based on distinctiveness
- fully involving local people in decision making and activity pursued through the IAP
- getting the area on-line, so that ICT becomes embedded in all aspects of life
- improving and developing skills, particularly amongst the most disadvantaged
- improving and integrating transport links and infrastructure within the area
- investing in local distinctiveness, both for its intrinsic worth, but also as the springboard for developing new, and adding value to existing, goods, services and markets
- investing in the public product to bring it up to a standard that matches the overall quality of the area's environment
- providing appropriately scaled and located workspace, facilities and support for businesses, especially start up and micro-businesses
- providing or improving community facilities so that they are capable of meeting today's needs
- to actively promote quality as the watchword for the area's products and services

6. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

The Environment

Sustainability forms the bedrock of the IAP's Vision. Local people are passionate about the quality of community life and the environment. An underpinning aspiration is to sustain these qualities as the basis for regenerating the local economy.

Equal Opportunities

An overt objective of the IAP is to tackle social exclusion. Clearly, promoting equal opportunities is a cornerstone of this objective and will be pursued vigorously. sharing

Information and Communications Technologies

ICT offers real potential for the sustainable development of the area. Traditional employment sectors are being transformed by ICT's impact. The use of ICT will increasingly be regarded as a basic skill alongside literacy and numeracy in the developing new economy. Our area recognises this fact and proposes to ensure that the skills are made available to all who wish to acquire them.

Targeted use of ICT to develop markets and new business opportunities, through Web based marketing and e-commerce, offers real potential to counteract the "remote rurality" of the area in sustainable ways.

7 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

An IAP Board will be established to ensure local accountability in the management of the Plan and assessment of project proposals. The Board will be comprised of a maximum of 16 Members drawn from the following:

Cornwall County Council	1
Kerrier District Council	1
Town & Parish Councils	6

Business & Voluntary sector 8

A Local Development Group for the area, **South Kerrier One**, will provide direction and assess project proposals prior to their consideration by the Board. All meetings will be open to the public.

8 INDICATIVE FINANCIAL VALUE OF THE PLAN

The Plan envisages promoting projects within the area for funding with an indicative total value of c. £3,000,000 per annum.

9 DELIVERY AND MANAGEMENT

For the main part, the Plan will be delivered on behalf of South Kerrier One, through a Partnership of the three tiers of local government. Programme management for the Plan will be delivered by Rural Economic Partnership Ltd., the company established to deliver the West Cornwall LEADER programmes.