

Group 4 Report on Liskeard's Future

A Summary of Heritage, Cultural and Environmental Issues.

Positive Aspects Of The Town

- Liskeard is an historic town with 'some of the finest Victorian and Edwardian streetscapes in the country.' It has two Heritage Trails with printed and illustrated guides.
- Liskeard has several public green spaces and is surrounded by beautiful and interesting countryside with public footpaths and printed guides to country walks. There are also several green fingers of natural habitat which extend virtually right into the town centre.
- The town has a good selection of places in which to eat out, or just 'pop in' for a coffee.
- Liskeard's past is closely connected to the mining industry and the World Heritage Site. It is a natural 'point of entry' to the latter but also for the Caradon Hill Project sponsored by Caradon District Council.
- The town has an excellent newly refurbished Museum.
- Liskeard has excellent road and rail links with the rest of the country and has scope for the development of business and light industry.
- Liskeard has several arts centres both in it and nearby. (Stuart House, Liskerrett Centre, Sterts, Dobwalls.)
- The town is home to the District Council, as well as the regional adult education offices, the regional newspaper, and a weekly regional cattle and sheep market.
- The Lions Club organises three excellent events which bring the town together: Carnival Week, St Mathews Fair, and the Torchlight Procession, whilst the Chamber of Commerce supplies the town with excellent Christmas Lights, and the Round Table gives us superb fireworks display on November 5th.
- Liskeard has good sports facilities with a Sports Centre, two all weather pitches, rugby, football and cricket grounds. (But overall lacks recreational pitches).
- The town has several excellent venues which could be used for concerts, theatre etc. The Public Hall and Sports Hall at Lux Park.
- Liskeard boasts one of the best One Day Agricultural Shows in the country and also has a thriving regular Country Market.
- The town's historic centre still retains a significant number of privately run shops. Several of these are of considerable character and offer attractive goods.
- Liskeard has many youth organisations, as well as adult clubs, choirs etc.
- The town is ideally placed between the tourist areas of Bodmin Moor and the South Cornish Coast.
- The flower decoration organised by both the Town Council is now of a good standard. Could it be extended?
- The town has excellent outside play facilities for young children at Castle Park.
- Liskeard's new skate ramps and basketball/football facilities at Rapson's Field are well used and at present respected by the users.
- The town has an active Heritage Group who are actively promoting both the town and its environs. They are willing to work with the Town Council towards a better Liskeard - whatever the population is to be!

Negative Aspects Of The Town

- The shape of the town and its relation to the two by-passes make traffic management and congestion serious problems. The town centre is overloaded and Castle Street and Charter Way are the only exits onto the roads to Plymouth, Callington and Launceston.
- Castle Park is cut off from the rest of the town because of poor access and increased traffic along routes to the park. Access to and from the church, schools and old peoples homes are also affected by this traffic problem and the narrowness of pavements in the Pound Street, Higher Lux Street and Castle Street areas.
- Teenagers have too few alternatives for activities in the town centre and dominate the town in the evenings and at weekends. Their access to alcohol is also too easy and thus misused.
- The town's historic centre is on steep hills, which deter shoppers and the elderly. Car parking charges are also a deterrent and so the traditional shopping areas are under pressures, which they find hard to overcome. The town lacks shortstop-parking facilities for people who just need to pop into the bank etc. Also parking in general is a problem at peak times.
- The street furniture in the town - signs, fingerposts etc are looking shabby. (except for the new Heritage Trail ones!) and signage in general is at best vague.
- The Baytree Hill and Well Lane areas are unattractive and the car is king, while pedestrians have to struggle along on narrow pavements.
- The green spaces in the town centre are underused and thus are misused by those in the 'drug and alcohol culture'.
- The extension of residential housing round the outskirts of the town mean that residents use their cars to come in or shop at stores on the outskirts.
- The car parks in the town are just large slabs of tarmac, and are unattractive and unwelcoming.
- There is no recognised footpath or cycle route to the World Heritage Site to the north of the town or to the coast and the tourist "honey pots" to the south.
- Once the population increases the town should be able to court the larger multiple chains, but at the moment has no town centre retail locations available.
- The main routes into the town are very open, and unwelcoming, the planting of avenues of trees and hard landscaping could though easily reverse this.
- Thorn Park and some of the estate parks have been heavily vandalised, and play equipment is unsatisfactory.
- There is very little industry in the town and it lacks major employers.
- The town lacks any defining activity or attraction and thus lacks an obvious 'identity' (c.f. St Ives, Padstow, Hay-on-Wye et al).
- There is a real lack of good visitor accommodation. An hotel or two are needed.
- The former South East Cornwall Guide paid for, and promoted by Caradon District Council attracted people to the town, it now though has no marketing except for its website which is woefully inadequate.
- The town has few executive style homes, if these are not provided, Liskeard will not attract money, or businessmen looking to relocate.

- The proposed relocating of the cattle market and the offices of Caradon District Council will draw people and jobs away from the town.
- With the increase of population how will the current water, sewerage, waste disposal, health services and education system cope? These services all seem stretched at the moment.
- The town it appears, having had the carrot of a cinema and bowling alley dangled in front of it during the Argos/Focus site redevelopment, is now getting behind the campaign to make it a reality, but it should not be in an out of town site.
- The lack of Police on the street, and the current attraction to binge drinking, and drug taking by the youth of the town, make it a virtual no go area at night.
- The World Heritage Site to the north will attract visitors to the town, but apart from the Museum and Stuart House, which are bursting at the seams, we have no locations to enable research into the history of the town or its inhabitants. The nearest archive retrieval site for this type of interest is the Record Office, Family History Centre and Museum in Truro or the Local History Centre in Redruth. All of which need to be booked well in advance.
- A quick look at various Cornish Websites does not exactly attract visitors to the town - which on the whole does not rate well.
- Moorswater is an eyesore at the moment, but it contains many heritage gems - canal quays are just under the surface itching to be revealed, there are two sets of beautiful limekilns, one of which is unique, plus an old kiln type dry in the clay works.

The Proposals.

- Push hard for more access to the by-pass, especially a western end access to the east. Access roads from south of the by-pass would open up the Looe/Lamellion valley to development and ease the pressure on Station Road.
- Develop the parks and green areas and police them at all times. Westbourne Gardens should be accessed by footbridges from Westbourne Car Park as it was in the past, the banks around the current entrance could be adapted into a small amphitheatre for performances, picnic tables, and even BBQ stations should be installed, and the area of the gardens increased by moving the fence closer to the house.
- Alcohol should be banned from the streets as it is in many other Cornish towns.
- Try to encourage the Police to patrol with either Community Support or Special Constables on weekend evenings.
- The town should become the centre for Family History research especially for the Mining History families. The Guildhall should be the focus for this as an addition to the Liskeard and District Museum. This could be the focus of a large bid for Heritage Lottery money. This could be the defining activity* for the town coupled with the historic development of Stuart House as a centre for the study of the Civil War in East Cornwall.
- A safe walking/cycling route to the hinterland could easily be established by utilising lanes and footpaths between Venslooe Hill and Crows Nest via St Cleer and Trethevy Quiot, the lanes are wide and quiet, and these types of trails encourage visitors, and make travelling between the town and the villages to the north an option for non motorists, and children alike. This would dovetail nicely with the current footpath map, which is still available from the Museum, and the various parish footpath maps available as well.

This could be combined with a resurrection of the previously proposed cycleway on the Liskeard and Caradon Railway bed (at least from Looe Mills to Shorta Cross).

- The town needs to work with the Police and youth groups to look at setting up an indoor location for teenagers, an internet café would be a good start - maybe this could be included in the redevelopment of the Guildhall.
- A Park and Ride facility should be opened up at the Focus/Argos site and the buses and coaches should be centred there. This would ease both the traffic and the parking in the town centre.
- If the hospital site at Lamellion is taken up by developers, and the Passmore site used for sheltered housing, the town should look at the cattle market. At the moment this is poorly arranged, but with a relocation of the pens to the west end of the site, and loss of parking being taken up by the park and ride scheme, or decking of Sungirt and or Westbourne Car Parks this would free up a large town centre location for a retail development, which should include a cinema and bowling alley.
- The Chamber of Commerce should organise a 'free parking' scheme comparable to the Somerfield one. (i.e. money back for a given amount of money spent.)
- The traffic and access problem in Pound Street, Higher Lux Street and Castle Street should be reduced by the park and ride scheme, but speeds should be lowered by implementing a 20 mph zone, as well as the use of flat topped sleeping policeman, (as used to great effect on the Parade), or a priority system or similar traffic calming method. Lorries and buses should be weight restricted through these routes, with access for these to the town being redirected via the Callington Roundabout and Addington.
- The proposed relocation of Caradon District Council and the cattle market should be strongly opposed.
- Extend the planting and hanging basket schemes and plant avenues of trees along the entry roads to the town.
- Plant up and landscape the car parks to make them more attractive, make car spaces near to the shops available for short-term parking only - 20 mins, and make it free.
- Baytree Hill should be looked at as advised in the Atkins Report - a pedestrian only area with outdoors eating areas, and benches flowerbeds etc., this could be extended into Fore Street as well. Indeed, these streets and Well Lane should be seriously focussed upon, as they really do let the town down in terms of landscaping and pedestrian friendliness. Hidden in Well lane is a gem that is rarely visited, as few know of its existence, and if it was presented in the right way, would certainly be a useful addition to the "why go to Liskeard?" list, or even a defining activity.
- The town should look to organise a week long festival - ideally during carnival week - with a civil war, mining or mediaeval theme.
- Any proposed housing developments need to include executive as well as low cost accommodation.
- Identify more potential brown-field sites and advertise them nationally. More employment=more people=more spending power.
- Encourage motel/ hotel chains to come to the town.
- Moorswater could be rediscovered, promoting the heritage sites, along with an attractive executive business park for industry.
- **Develop the town's website and make sure the town is positively presented on ALL Cornish websites.**

- **Group 4. A Good Place to Live**

Some Thoughts:

Looking at Liskeard 'in the round'.

The environment, both built and natural, as applies to *quality of life*.

Think about it like this: 'a good place to live'.

Is it? If so, why? If not, why not?

What's good about Liskeard and what's not so good.

And if the latter, *what* can we do about it?

What is it like living here?

How would you describe our town and the area around us?

The character and fabric of the place.

How did Liskeard evolve? Its heritage and historical development.

How does that impact on our lives today.

Putting culture in context.

Visual appearance of the town.

Landscape.

Architecture.

Special features.

What to preserve, what not to preserve, what to minimise, modernise, enhance - how and why.

Looking at the streets, buildings, lay-out of the town.

The shopping centre, leisure facilities, getting around, out and about.

Taking in the wider, rural environment, the countryside and setting.

Interconnections with Liskeard's hinterland.

NB But remember: it's *how* we interact with our environment that makes the difference between mere existence and living a life that's fulfilling for all.

E.g. a town that is stuck in the 19th Century may not be able to sustain or fully provide what is needed for modern life.

So, matching the past to the present, and projecting twenty-five years into the future.

How to find the balance.

Feel-good factors.

In the day-to-day nitty-gritty of life, it's the little things that matter.

Why do people choose to live here?

What do we enjoy, rejoice about our area/life in these parts?

Green issues.

Management and maintenance of the environment.

Noise/pollution/recycling/services - impact on/from an expanding population and growth of industrial sites

Tourism - how to attract more people into the town.

Promoting our town, area and environs.

Plan of action?

Designate sites for special treatment.

Suggest strategies for improving the look, feel and experience of the town.

What about vandalism?

And crime in the town and the area?

General considerations to weave in:

How do people earn their living, spend their money, and spend their leisure hours?

What is on offer to them - and is it good value?

What facilities are on offer? Are they enough and what happens when the population grows?

The population could grow by more than 25% by 2030. How will this expansion affect our lives?

It's estimated that 30% of our residents will be retired.

What provisions will be required to accommodate their needs and enhance their lives.

Inevitably, this will mean building more houses and industrial sites.

Possible areas coming up for development:

- Cattle market redevelopment?
- Lux Park Healthy Living Initiatives.
- Moorswater redevelopment?
- Holman Road/Quimperle Way Extension?

Report 1.

1. GENERAL HERITAGE CONTRIBUTION: Basically the town should build upon recent projects such as Henry Rice Exhibitions, the Map and Trails; the new Heritage Trail and Map; your Walks. Within the context of these projects lies the germ for considerably greater publicity for Liskeard's Heritage Assets. Stuart House is completely revising its current website and if handled correctly will be a valuable tool. It is very important that the town looks urgently at the new Cornwall Culture website as this is currently very damaging to Liskeard. There's virtually nothing in it except a few commercial mentions for attractions not immediately related to the town - at present if a visitor consults under the various index headings he will receive information along the lines that "There are no attractions/activities under this heading in Liskeard"!

Almost everyone who makes a comment after following one of the town's trails remarks along the lines that they never realised Liskeard's Architecture had so much to offer. It is arguable that the town possesses some of the finest Regency/Victorian/Edwardian streetscapes in the UK. The Chairman of the Cornish Buildings Group, following the Group's recent visit, remarked on this and wrote, in his letter of thanks for the arrangements made by Stuart House, "Henry Rice's Classic Buildings are as good as those in". So as previously stated the town does have something to build upon.

Perhaps one of the local TV companies should be persuaded to do a programme or even a series.

2. CATTLE MARKET AND WESTBOURNE. Despite recent talk to move the Market out of town there are people who would wish to express strong opposition to such a move. Whilst acknowledging that it would bring advantages in traffic movement to have an out of town site, the loss of this commercial asset to the town centre would be such as the town could hardly bear. The responsible Auctioneers, the Town Council, Caradon District Council and Cornwall County Highways should be encouraged to work together to provide the best facilities to encourage and justify retention of the present site. An investment in more attractive and efficient buildings would surely pay dividends.

At the same time I cannot support the idea, sometimes mooted, of driving a new link road through Westbourne Car Park and Gardens. That would only create new and more problems at the related junctions. Above all we cannot afford to give up Westbourne Gardens and its precious trees. Far better improve the link with Westbourne Car park (and make that more attractive) so that the Public and Visitors are aware its there for enjoyment.

(I think the best way to stop present vandalism, usage by drug addicts etc is to increase public usage of the space - perhaps have some regular "folk-style" performances -at lunch and afternoon tea times?

3. My offer to give 3 illustrated Talks on "Interpretation of Local Architecture" remains on offer although I am not sure it can be done before the Spring next year bearing in mind my health/hospitalisation at present time and I am already rather over-loaded! The subjects offered are: 1. Classification of Local Styles, Details and Examples - to cover Domestic and Public Buildings. 2. Churches and Chapels. 3. Industrial Constructions-covering Canal, Railways (incdg. bridges).

Report 2.

Liskeard: Now and the Future.

After reading the Atkins report, it seems that many angles and areas have already been covered, but not all taken up, some for reasons like funding and others reasons like availability of land, access or just bureaucracy.

One of the problems Liskeard has is its layout and topography of the landscape, not just the main town centre but also the surrounding area. Places like Castle Park are difficult to find (for visitors), hard to get to from the main town and so are under used for recreational activities. Compare this to Meadow Park at Tavistock, on any summer weekend and it is full of families either sitting having a picnic, playing in the park or just enjoy the weather.

Could one imagine actually sitting in the middle of Castle Park and having a picnic? Westbourne Gardens would be a better choice for visitors to the town to sit and enjoy, (but only after the current occupants have been cleared out). The idea of returning the footbridge from the main car park to the gardens is one that will help to encourage more use of this area, with this being the main parking facility for the town. Small open-air festivals or more community activities to bring people together.

The Town its self is fragmented and split in two. There is the Parade area that now has nice wide pedestrian areas and easy access to all the banks and post office etc, and places to sit and chat. Then there is Fore Street, again with a nice pedestrian area with a quaint feel about it, but with nowhere to sit and just enjoy. These two focal parts of the town need to be brought together as neither invites a visitor to the other.

As with the Atkins report, Bay Tree hill is crying out to be pedestrianised, either fully from Purdys to Boots, or partially to keep vehicle access to Sungirt car park. This open space would ideally suit an annual festival like the Tavistock food festival now in its third year, or even a beer festival given the number of pubs in the town, or just an occasional open market.

Going against the grain with the 30% of the elderly people theory, it is considered that families are as important and possibly would be higher spenders, as well as being the future adult population of the town.

Last weekend we had eight teenagers staying over and Sunday was a wash out, what can we do, was the question? Nothing around Liskeard catered for a wet Sunday afternoon, so it meant a trip either to Plymouth or St Austell, cinema, bowling and a pizza. What ever the on going talk and rumours about a complex of this type in Liskeard, whether it be on the Bubble site or closer in the town, it would only be an asset to Liskeard, bringing people into the town that would not normally visit.

Last year whilst camping in Bude, we were rained off, again on a Sunday, but right opposite the supermarket was an indoor activity centre. Bowling, indoor go-karts (on the second floor), take away and a fully licensed bar, as well as a soft play area for toddlers, we spent four hours in there and enjoyed it. Lamellion, Passmore Edwards, the Cattle Market or even Luxstowe House would make an ideal

site close to the town centre for an indoor complex and still encourage people to walk into the town.

Pound Street, Pipe well and even Market Place would benefit from being pedestrianised, making the experience of walking up and down Pound Street seem less daunting with places to stop and sit without tackling the narrow pavements. Pipe Well, being the reason why Liskeard exists would be brought into the picture and more widely used and Market Place would make a nice area of alfresco dining from a nice café etc. Good examples of Pedestrianisation are St Austell, Wadebridge and even parts of Bodmin.

World Heritage status for mining can only be a benefit to this historical Stannary town of Liskeard, but only if it takes advantage of it. This has to be a major part of the “Big Idea” and exploited. It is understood that World Heritage Status doesn’t actually result in any funding of any form, but just sets it above other areas and interest.

Increased advertising around the country and around the world would bring in more visitors to the area, and as Liskeard sits nicely at the gateway to Cornwall and with 1.2 million people visiting the Eden project each year, these potential customers need to be enticed into the town.

Cycle routes or walks around the Mining area with a guided plan can start from Liskeard, or tour guided excursions from Liskeard by bus to the Mines. Signage on both sides of the town advertising World Heritage status is a must as well as literature advertising on the Mining area and the links it has with Liskeard.

Accommodation is very short on the ground and a good hotel or travel lodge either in the town or on the outskirts would encourage people to break up their journey at a suitable location as well as helping the employment in the area.

Employment in the town and the immediate area needs an injection of new employers to help bring people into Liskeard and not just retail. A recent study in the Western Morning News by PowerWaterhouseCoopers looked at the top 150 companies in Devon and Cornwall by employee numbers. The closest to Liskeard was Tiflex at Dobwalls with 170 employees at No.133. Trago Mills came in at No.18 (spread over three sites). Bodmin had Fitzgerald Lighting at No.44 with 490 employees and Callington has Samworth Brothers (Ginsters) at No.4 with 1961 employees.

An interesting point was raised, for a county high in tourism and agriculture; manufacturing was the greatest employee sector with 19% of the share. Liskeard needs to generate and entice more of these types of businesses into the area. Any form of employment would benefit the town but manufacturing has a wide supply chain, usually from local suppliers, again increasing employment security. Whilst the majority of employees usually live close to their place of work, many do travel from further afield and this would help with people travelling in or through the town.

Report 3

Liskeard and District Plan

On the 14th July 2006 Liskeard, and other Cornwall and West Devon Mining Areas, became a World Heritage Site (WHS), recognised as having cultural importance on a global level (see attached WHS announcement and other papers together with details of the proposed Caradon Hill Area Heritage Project).

Liskeard needs to be committed to playing a central role in developing these heritage projects and also to bringing in all the surrounding mining areas and activities. Yes, Caradon (including Liskeard) is officially part of the WHS, but, for example, Herodsfoot, where lead was mined, is not. Mineral samples from Herodsfoot mines are already globally famous. The surrounding area of Liskeard has seen a wide diversity of mining activities for many differing minerals. Miners, their families and their support services left the area in their 1000's because they had been head hunted, or hoped to find employment in new mining projects in many foreign lands.

Family history research (Genealogy) is already a multi-million pound, world-wide activity. No longer is it suffice to just know dates of births, marriages and deaths, researchers expect to re-trace their ancestors' steps, to find out what they did, where and how they lived, why they travelled, etc.

This is already happening and it is predictable that many more people will be visiting the area for family and house history research. WHS status gives added publicity and healthier/wealthier economies make it possible for more people to undertake research of their ancestors and where better to do this activity than returning to the area their ancestors left in the 18th/19th centuries.

Official, controlled records must presently be stored at Cornwall Records Office, but to tell the whole story, many other records need to be kept safely in the area of origin.

Liskeard is surrounded by village local history groups, some of whom are expressing concern that they are finding it difficult to store their carefully research records. An excellent local archive is currently held in Stuart House and cared for by Liskeard Old Cornwall Society who are concerned that they may not be able to afford to keep these in ideal conditions. Increasingly, the Museum is being asked to take care of local records. The Drama group lost its storage space.

The Infant school is about to close and the unofficial pictorial and information records need a home. We already hold records of several organisations including Liskeard Football Association. The Mothers Union ceased to function a few years ago; the Museum holds its records.

Research on the Internet may be fine and quick for facts, but many-times transcribed records can become unsafe.

So there is a need for good quality, well-indexed, environmentally stored and easily accessible social records for local world-wide researchers, who, in turn, will require sufficient, quality accommodation, transport networks, cultural and other entertainment activities for themselves and their families.

Liskeard and District must be made a pleasant and safe place for local people and for visitors to stay with opportunities to research accurate, quality records, visit local heritage sites and take advantage of a good variety of leisure activities.

Report 4

Liskeard IS a good place to live, it has a number of assets: geographical and environmental, historical and architectural and not forgetting the good people of the town.

Geographically it is positioned almost equidistant from the wonderful south Cornish coastline, and from the beautiful, and historic Bodmin Moor giving it an unrivalled location to attract those who look for activity/outdoor pursuits across the widest possible range and environment.

Environmentally the closeness to both of the above, the prevailing south westerly winds and the distance away from the nearest built-up areas give the town a "healthy air".

Historical and Architectural the excellent refurbishment, and relocation of the Town Museum, The Henry Rice and the Heritage Trails have been instrumental in informing both local and visitor alike, of the unique heritage of the town and its environs. But the town and its people must not rest on their laurels; just six miles to the north of the town there is an area, which is now on a heritage par with the Great Pyramids of Giza, Stonehenge, and the Great Wall of China. Liskeard was a key player in the Victorian mining industry - it was called the Liskeard and Caradon Mining District after all! The town must ensure that it gets a piece of the pie - The Tamar Valley, and the Mineral Trails centred on Redruth/Camborne have organisations in place to ensure that they get a good bite, what can Liskeard do?

It should also be noted that there are no historical study centres this side of Truro, the interest in genealogy and local history is now huge, but with every archive in the county either in Truro or at the Local History centre in Redruth, Liskeard, as usual, finds itself at the wrong end of the county!

Culturally the town is well catered for with active centres at both Stuart House and Liskerrett, but perhaps more effort should be made to include the youth a little more, getting schools and organisations to visit these sites, as well as the Museum, running competitions etc. The proposed Civil War Exhibition/Centre plans for Stuart House will raise the cultural profile even more, and with the correct backing and promotion it could become a major reason for visiting the town.

Perhaps we could include as a partner project a historic resource/archive centre - The Liskeard Old Cornwall Society, the Town Library and Museum have archives, could these be relocated to a central location, with internet access and reading areas etc?

The Guildhall I feel is underused and undervalued within the town, could this be used? The location is excellent, and it is a beautiful and historic building. Could this site and its equipment be made available for the youth of the town to use in the evenings? Many do not have computers at home, and free online access would be a real boon, on-line gaming is now a worldwide phenomenon, and it is good clean fun, some are also very educational.

Maybe a café area could be included, giving the youngsters a meeting place? We as the rest of Britain are suffering from an increasing number of drinking/drug related incidents and crime, the council should, look into banning drinking from the

streets, and also liaise closely with the Police to try and provide the youngsters with wet weather entertainment to compliment the excellent skate park etc. in Rapsons Field. Also to provide community wardens or the suchlike to fill in for the lack of Police on the beat - the town I am afraid to say is almost a no go area during the evenings, especially on Friday and Saturday nights.

The visual appearance of the town is at the moment excellent, the historic fabric has been retained unlike many other Cornish towns, and a lot of buildings have been redecorated since Webbs rose from the ashes, the only blight is a number of empty shops. The areas outside of town centre though, are in need of attention. This has been noticed in both the Atkins and the HES reports, and recommendations have been made in both.

Road improvements and house clearances have left wide-open spaces, which have received little in the way of landscaping. Areas which spring to mind are the approaches to the town between the Callington Roundabout through Luxstowe down to Greenbank, from the cross opposite Culverland Park to Luxcross, from Morrisons into Castle Street, and New Road, these are the gateways to the town, which would be greatly improved even with the bare minimum of avenues of trees being planted, and a few benches dotted about. The town of St Austell has recently erected large colourful flags at entry points to the town - could we include the youth of the town and design some? They really add colour and a sense of fun.

These gateways to the town also need serious attention regarding traffic flow, at the moment traffic from the east is flowed through the very narrow route of Castle Street and Pound Street, these are major pedestrian routes used by parents and children, and students on route to the schools, the elderly from the three residential homes in the area, church users as well as users of the restaurants and public houses along the route. There is also along this route a major crossing point between the town, and Castle Park, which is used by the residents of Park View and Lake Lane.

This area of the town is one of the most historic, and the park one of the most beautiful but access to it from the town centre is neither easy nor safe. It is also part of the Town Heritage Trail. The HES report also has recommended that this route receives attention. Flat topped sleeping policemen, and a crossing point would slow traffic, and make pedestrian access much safer.

Liskeard's setting within its landscape is stunning, and from view points at Castle Park one can see that the town is surrounded by glorious countryside as well as beautiful villages and hamlets. BUT without a detailed knowledge of the back lanes and byways, the only safe way to get out into this hinterland is to get into the car and add to the congestion. A "green link" is needed to guide visitors and locals alike from the town centre out into this glorious hinterland. An ideal route could be: up to Barras Cross, down Venslooe Hill, up and down to Woodhill Manor - from there we walkers cyclists and horse riders could be directed to Moorswater, Dobwalls etc or guided on up to St Cleer, the World Heritage Mining Sites, The Hurlers etc. and Golitha Falls. This can all be done using the lanes and footpaths in place - the lanes are unusually wide, as this used to be the main route taken by the farmers, and miners between the town and St Cleer and the parishes to the north.

The landscaping of the town though needs serious attention. As mentioned previously the gateways to the town are stark, this also goes for the car parks - massive slabs of tarmac. Perhaps we can take an example out of Caradon's

Luxstowe House car park, which has a much friendlier feel. The so called green fingers - Sungirt Valley, Lamellion Valley etc. could with a little promotion, they are underused resources at the moment perhaps they could be included within the Green Route idea?

Another site which really is the jewel in Liskeard's Crown, but no visitor would ever find it even though they may be parked next door to it is Westbourne Gardens. The HES report recommends reinstating the foot bridges over Westbourne Lane, this would be a double edged sword - giving instant access via this means might bring flocks of people into the gardens, which in return would push out the undesirables who frequent them out.

The town could maximise the gardens by relocating the fence much nearer to Westbourne House, and then picnic and even BBQ areas could be installed, perhaps even a small amphitheatre could be included in the southern end on the landscaped slope, encouraging concerts, plays and other events to be performed. This should be a grown-up space though with no playing equipment for children, who with the excellent facilities at Castle Park are now well catered for. BUT play equipment, and space to play should be provided in any planning applications relating to the building of housing.

Parking is a real problem in the town, and a short visit to the town, can be costly. The number of spaces available could be maximised by decking both Westbourne and Sungirt Car parks, but how about a park and ride scheme? This works well in Plymouth, Bath etc -both workers and visitors can park for free on the outskirts of the town and take a bus ride into the centre - this will then free up short term parking within the town car parks.

Perhaps the site allocated for the travel lodge at Maudlin could be used? With easy access to and from the A38, and cars coming in from Callington it would really resolve the town's traffic problems, and also encourage visitors to the Maudlin retail sites into the town itself. The HES report also recommends on-street parking in Dean Street, this if kept just for 30 minute stops would be a great asset to those who only need to pop into the bank, post office etc. This though should be carefully thought-out and appropriately landscaped.

Regarding retail development within the town, it would be a mistake to move the cattle market from the town, as this is really what Liskeard is all about - being a market town from before Doomsday in 1086. If the southern end of the existing cattle market was moved into the area above Fairpark Road, a huge area could then be freed up for a shopping centre development - according to reports the town cannot attract the likes of the large multiples as it cannot offer a large enough retail space.

This could include the proposed cinema and bowling alley complex, and would mean that no buildings of historic value would be lost, and the farmers and their families would still come into the centre of town. On the downside it would mean that all current parking on the site would be lost, but this could be resolved if a park and ride scheme was introduced or by decking either of the car parks mentioned earlier. Gilberts and ATS could be relocated giving a large area for delivery and cattle lorries to load/unload. This space could be used on non-cattle market days, and after delivery times for a pannier market.

The town website needs to be revamped, and constantly updated. This is very much a window from which visitors from all over the world will get their first impressions of the town. If it does not look good, or lacks vital information- they will not even come. Links should be created both ways to other websites to encourage visitors in.

Report 5.

If Liskeard really wants to thrive and increase its GDP it must welcome as much new housing as possible and hope to grow to a size which will encourage the larger stores to move into the area. The current mish mash of charity shops estate agents and fast food is unlikely to provide any real growth and the town is not attractive to look at. There is very little short term on street parking and if one only wants to pop into the bank or buy a single item the cost of parking is prohibitive.

There is only room for one major shopping town, if any, at this end of Cornwall and even this could be unlikely if the internet takes over.

It is cheaper to buy over the net from places like M&S and pay less for delivery than the cost of driving to Plymouth and parking and if stores with the reliability of M&S or Comet are that easy to access do we need a town at all?

You can no longer buy a TV licence at the Post Office- what other services are likely to go? and Addington is far more customer friendly than the main one.

It does not offer a lot of hope for the future does it.

Although if they decide not to try and grow Liskeard area will be a much nicer place.

Report 6.

Reflections

1. The town is a long, thin development stretching over two miles one way and just over a half another. There is a southern by-pass but it is difficult to access at the west end for eastbound traffic, and has an excessively complicated junction with the eastern by-pass. This means that the town centre is much heavier with traffic than it ought to be. (Castle Street is too narrow for this.)
2. The largest and most recent residential estates are now some distance from the shops in the centre. This, combined with the steep hills and the development of more convenient shopping on the outskirts, has caused a loss of trade and confidence in the old shopping centre.
3. There are green areas in or close to the town centre and attractive rural walks close to the outskirts. Good road and rail links, fairly near the coast, good sporting facilities, many adult clubs and groups. All these make it an attractive place to live.
4. There are too few activities for teenagers and, together with the alcohol culture; this makes for problems in the town centre.
5. Liskeard has a 1000-year heritage and is particularly strong on the 19th century. This could be developed and exploited to stimulate interest and increase trading in the old centre. (Cf Totnes, here it could be a 19th century weekly market.)
6. It is a reasonably attractive place to live but could be made more so with a few well-thought out developments. (Congratulations to the Chamber of Commerce and Town Council on the flower displays this summer.)

Proposals.

First, the expensive ones.

- A proper full junction at the west end of the by-pass.
- A second bridge over the bypass to encourage westbound traffic to avoid the town centre and to remove some of the roundabouts. (You should be able to go from West Cornwall to Tavistock, or the reverse, easily.)
- Better access to the Lamellion valley so that housing could develop there, if needed. (Links to Moorswater and to Island Shop.)
- A second deck on the lower Sungirt car park. (Possible on Westbourne too.)

Less expensive but equally unlikely!

- Encourage more adults to organise and run activity groups for teenagers.
- Get more Special Constables out and about in the evenings.
- Persuade the traders to co-operate together and develop new initiatives. E.g. free car-park tickets, period market day, French market visits, more unique shops.

There is a need to think up a single, unique attraction for the town centre, which will be as appealing as the Tate at St Ives or Rick Stein's at Padstow. (Congratulations to Webbs for their recent accolade.) Ideally it needs to be a wet-weather attraction for tourists as well as an all year attraction locally.