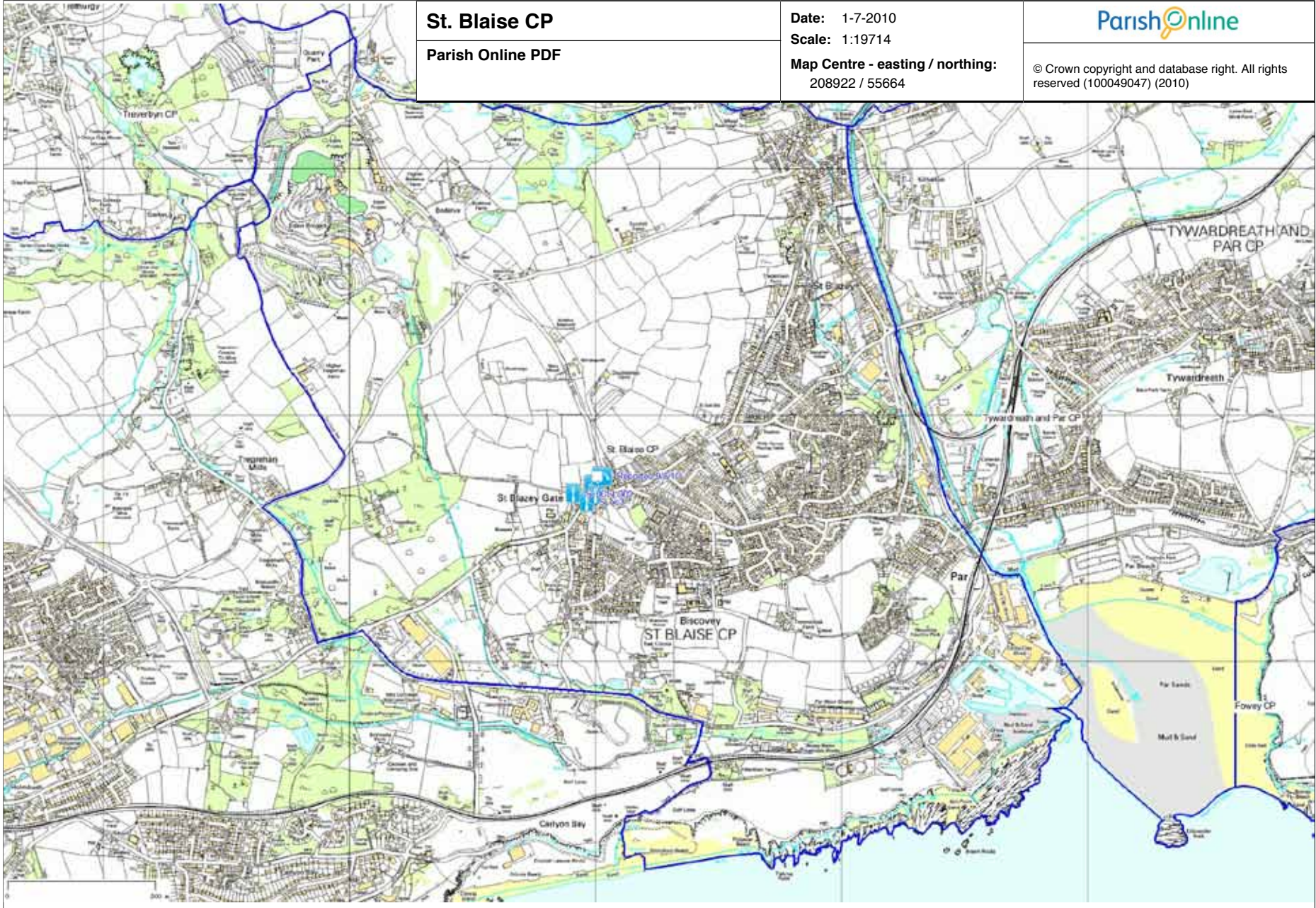


Looking Ahead St Blaise 2025

A Town Plan

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Map of Town Boundaries

Executive Summary

Foreword

Early in 2008, it became apparent that much of the attention of the then Restormel Borough Council was directed towards the revitalisation of our neighbour, St Austell. The villages of the clay country were similarly attracting attention. There was a feeling that the interests and concerns of St Blaise were thus not receiving the attention that we, its residents, believed was necessary. Our three Restormel Borough Councillors were fighting an ongoing battle to prevent St Blaise being subsumed into some greater St Austell. What was at the time the impending abolition of Restormel Borough Council, upon the formation in April 2009 of a unitary authority, and a disquiet at the removal of much of the decision-making even further away – to Truro – prompted urgent consideration of ways in which it might be possible to ensure that the aspirations of the people of St Blaise were heard.

This Town Plan is the result of those concerns, and represents wide consultation with the people of St Blaise. It was prepared by a working group comprising Cornwall and Town Councillors and citizens of St Blaise, with help from a number of organisations and individuals.

Overview and Summary

Residents of St Blaise value their local environment, their neighbours, the proximity of recreational facilities including the beach, and the availability locally of at least some shops (though they would wish for more). They find St Blaise convenient for public transport, and welcome the presence of footpaths and walks. They also attach importance to other local institutions such as their churches, the football club and the Eden Project.

But they have a number of concerns. Possibly the major one of these relates to traffic: its volume, its noise, its speed and thoughtless/illegal parking. Close behind the traffic issue come a number of law and order worries. These include general anti-social behaviour (drunken rows, congregations of youth, noise) as well as more serious crime, vandalism and graffiti, and are exacerbated in some residents' minds by what they see as a lack of police involvement and concern. There also appears to be a general view that the town is somewhat down at heel (litter, dog fouling, unkempt pavements, fly tipping etc), which might be aggravated by what some identify as an absence of community spirit.

At the same time, there are some clear indications of concern for the community and a desire to see it thrive. There are active chapels, churches, and groups such as brownies and air cadets, as well as a thriving youth club. A large number of people have pointed to the potential of large-scale tree planting not just in terms of the beautification of the town, but also for its broader environmental benefit. There is a recognition that the town will change in the coming years – but also a desire to see this happen in a way that preserves the best of local traditions and values.

The Balance Sheet

In recent years, St Blaise has suffered from the decline of the clay industry, for decades the largest employer in the area – with relatively high wages. The tourism industry, a major economic driver in many other towns and villages in Cornwall, has not historically been a significant factor in the town's economic life. With little alternative employment available, St Blaise has thus become one of the poorer parts of what is one of the country's poorest counties. Its population has faced the sort of problems and deprivation that such economic conditions always bring in their wake.

Added to this, there is, perhaps, a feeling that the views and aspirations of our own community have been subjugated to the perceived interests of others. Planning decisions allowing the construction of large numbers of houses against strong local opposition, and the projected construction of unsightly industrial units of questionable value in terms of local employment or economic regeneration, have appeared to many to be arbitrary to say the least. The influx of so many new householders has resulted in an erosion of local cohesion, which has been made even more apparent by the steady increase in the volume of traffic dissecting the town via the A390.

On the positive side, there are the active community groups referred to above, and others. There are a number of shops and restaurants, as well as pubs and clubs. Thriving football and cricket clubs can be found within our boundaries. Though tourism has not hitherto been a major element in St Blaise's life, it would be impossible to overlook the existence here of the country's major tourist attraction: the Eden Project. And mooted developments of a marina and other facilities at Par Docks, and of a holiday complex in Carlyon Bay (a substantial portion of which falls within the boundaries of St Blaise) suggest that tourism may become more important to us in the future.

The Vision

Our examination of the responses to our questionnaire, our further consultations and our daily discussions with friends and acquaintances in St Blaise, enable us to offer with some confidence a sense of what the residents of our town would like to see develop over the next decade and a half. We do so secure in the knowledge that while not everyone would support everything we set down here, our vision is nevertheless a fair picture of the sort of future St Blaise that the majority of our neighbours would feel comfortable with.

Economic regeneration and development is the sine qua non of a thriving future St Blaise. Without it, the problems identified in our research will simply continue and become more acute, leading to degeneration in all aspects of our town's life. We therefore see an urgent need for the creation of employment prospects. These may initially be linked with existing development projects. These projects are likely to bring with them opportunities for a growth in the town's involvement in tourism, and related activities relating for example to boat building and repair, as well as retail and service businesses. In the slightly longer term, we would envisage the further development of information technology and high speed broadband etc as providing rewarding and well-paid employment opportunities for our well-educated younger people.

These moves towards a more prosperous future for our town will of themselves generate other changes, in terms of new facilities (shops restaurants, clubs). In this connexion, a more attractive town is important, not just for our existing community, but also as a factor in encouraging new investment here. It would further encourage a sense of community spirit, and thus create something of a virtuous circle, which will engender confidence in the future.

An important element in a thriving, attractive town, will be some means of controlling the flow of traffic, in terms of speed, volume and nature. We recognise that this will not be easy. Nor will it be achievable in the short-term. But it is an issue that our residents have identified as important to them, and it does need to be addressed. The same is true for the broader issues of crime and anti-social behaviour, which are of no less concern to the people of this town.

Having identified above the need for early and urgent development of our town in a number of ways, it would be perverse to call for an end to future building. We do not do so. But we do observe that the major development projects for which planning permission has already been given or which are under discussion (Par Lane, Par Docks and Carlyon Bay) envisage the construction of substantial numbers of new homes of various sorts. We see a strong argument for the most careful study of likely effects on – and meaningful consultation with – the existing community before any additional major developments are considered.

The Action Plan

Access to Services

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Make people more aware of the services that are available locally and how best to access them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the “Out and about” One Stop Shop service. • Raise the profile of the Town Council website and ensure the relevance of the content. 	St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council’s Out and About service, Area Network Manager.	Short-term
Provide services under Town Council control wherever it is possible and practical to do so	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain quality status for Town Council. • Obtain further training as needed for Town Council members and employee(s). • Agree and implement service delegations from Cornwall Council 	St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council, Area Network Manager.	Medium term
Greater public involvement in town affairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and implement measures to increase public participation. 	St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors, Area Networks	Long term

Community Safety

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Active engagement of the community in Community Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners meet to plan actions Town Council to organise public meeting to encourage Neighbourhood Watch and Good Neighbour Schemes 	Community Watch Forum , Neighbourhood Police, St. Blaise Town Council	Short term
Increasing public confidence in Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support actions that would increase police presence in St. Blaise Police Station 	St. Blaise Town Council , Neighbourhood Police, Community Watch Forum.	Short term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise an open meeting with young people 	Neighbourhood Police , St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors	Short term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor traffic speeds in St. Blaise 	Neighbourhood Police ,	Short term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan to increase public confidence in policing through partnership working Partners commit to supporting police in their work with young people 	Neighbourhood Police , St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors, Neighbourhood Watch	Long term
Active Community Warden Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaign to maintain the service 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors	Short term
Decrease Dog Fouling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active monitoring of problem Ensure optimum provision of dog bins Education/Publicity campaign 	Local residents , St. Blaise Town Council	Short –Medium term
Enhanced parking enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore ways of enhancing the Civil Enforcement Officer presence 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, CC Transportation Service	Short term
Active town traffic management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet to consider future traffic management 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, CC Highway Service	Medium Term

Major Development Projects

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Active flow of information between Eco-Bos and St. Blaise Town Council around proposed Par Dock development, and CIG and St Blaise Town Council around proposed Carlyon Bay development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact both companies and discuss how to develop the relationship • Discuss how community needs and issues may be addressed 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Eco-Bos, CIG, CC Planning and Regeneration Service	Short - medium term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor project progress 		Medium- Long term

Education

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
After schools activities for all young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact local schools to establish current provision and gaps. 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council's Extended Schools Service, Local schools, Parent/Teacher Associations, Cornwall Sports Partnership, Neighbourhood Police	Short-term
Evening classes in extended Burrows Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish what facilities are available in Burrows Centre. • Define demand by survey. 	St. Blaise Town Council , Burrows Centre, Adult Education, ClayTAWC?	Medium term
Vibrant local employment opportunities for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current economic regeneration plans • Contact Cornwall Council's Economic Development Service. • Contact Eco-Bos 	St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors	Long term

Employment and Training

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Active register of vacant business premises and land suitable for business development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact CC Planning and Regeneration Service to discuss Local Development Framework and current survey work • Seek advice on attracting business to St. Blaise • Promote opportunities in St. Blazey to potential new businesses • Create business promotion pack 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors	Short term
Explore interest in an active local Business Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key lead businesses 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors	Short term
Creating an attractive place to do business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the appearance of the town 	St. Blaise Town Council , Environment Agency, CC Environment Service, Public Health and Protection, Highway Service, Localism Service, Probation Service, Planning and Regeneration Service	Medium-long term
A skilled work force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential skills shortages • Offer and promote relevant training 	Learning and Skills Council	Medium-long term
Local businesses linking to the major developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with Eco-Bos and Eden the possibilities for linkages • Consider the need for a business conference 	St. Blaise Town Council , The Sensory Trust, Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Development Company, CC Economic Development Service	Medium-long term

Historic Buildings

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
<p>All historic structures identified.</p> <p>Free exchange of information with the owner of the Roundhouse.</p> <p>Structures of historic value are protected,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with English Heritage. • Inform Roundhouse owner of views of St Blaise residents and request notice of intent to sell building or radical change of use. • Review listed buildings status. 	<p>St. Blaise Town Council, English Heritage. Owner of the Roundhouse. Cornwall Council, Cornwall Councillors.</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
<p>Town to hold a register of ownership of buildings of local interest and the uses to which they are put.</p> <p>Bring relevant structures into public ownership to provide long term protection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Land Registry for ownership of structures of interest previously identified and assess current usages. • Identify funding routes and suitable viable alternative uses. 	<p>St. Blaise Town Council, Land Registry. Councillors, Cornwall Council, English Heritage and other relevant agencies.</p>	<p>Medium / Long term</p>

Housing

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Maximum benefit achieved for local people in housing developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor applications to ensure that the affordable home element is maximised • Seek to ensure that developments contain a mix of house types • Support actions to ensure that new housing has the highest eco-category status 	Cornwall Councillors , St. Blaise Town Council, CC Planning and Regeneration Service	Short-term
A local vision for future developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with planners concerns about further large scale developments • Discuss local concerns about development in flood plains • Support developments on brown field sites • Inform planners that residents would support modest premium for eco-friendly houses 	Cornwall Councillors , St. Blaise Town Council, CC Planning and Regeneration Service	Short-term
A reduced risk of flooding to existing and new homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Community Flood Plan • Support the continuation of the flood plan partnership • Ensure that the infrastructure exists to deal with run-off from new developments • Explore the use of green spaces to help with flood relief 	St. Blaise Town Council , Environment Agency, Cornwall Councillors, CC Planning and Regeneration Service, Highways Service	Medium-long term
A Quality Status Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Blaise Town Council achieves quality status to enhance town council influence and knowledge 	St. Blaise Town Council ,	Medium-long term

Recreation, Leisure and the Environment

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
To have a clear understanding of the leisure and recreational needs of local people and the opportunities available.	• Publicise local leisure facilities	St. Blaise Town Council , Providers, Cornwall Council	Short-term
	• Ensure disabled people have access to leisure facilities		Medium-term
	• Active communication of St. Blaise Town Council news through website and other media and to publicise existing facilities		
Ensure the leisure needs of local people are met	• Conduct survey of young people and over sixties to ascertain needs	St. Blaise Town Council , Providers, Cornwall Councillors	Medium-term
	• Use to design leisure provision including Burrows centre		Long term
	• Active liaison with new developers, leisure providers and Cornwall Council to ensure no opportunities are missed.		
Environmental friendly businesses	• Work with local businesses to make them more eco-friendly.	Groundwork Trust , Eden Project, Community Energy Plus, St. Blaise Town Council, proposed Business Forum	Short term
Allotments for those who request them	• Consider how the demand for allotments could be met.	St. Blaise Town Council , Sensory Trust, CC Planning and Development Service, Eden Project	Short term
Increasing recycling percentages	• Support any further targeted campaigns from Cornwall Council • Encourage green recycling/ community composting	Cornwall Council	Medium Term

Shopping

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Enable new retail business to set up in the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform Cornwall Council of the plan outcomes. • Engage with the Economic Development specialists. 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council's Economic Development section, Federation of Small Businesses	Short-term
Make the St Blazey shopping experience more rewarding and accessible to all..	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance to avoid pitfalls for new businesses. • Town bus routes to be planned to facilitate shopping. 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council's Highways and Economic Development section.	Medium term
A vibrant local business environment that participates fully in the opportunities available in Cornwall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure St Blaise is fully informed and involved by monitoring to ensure our fair share of any available funding or promotion 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors. The local business community.	Long term

Transport

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
<p>Try to make public transport more responsive to residents needs</p> <p>Provide an effective town bus service.</p> <p>Public transport access to Eden.</p> <p>A reduction in speeding traffic and enhanced parking enforcement.</p> <p>Improvements in road maintenance.</p> <p>Measures to engineer out the traffic effects from major new developments before the developments take place.</p> <p>Enable St Blaise children to partake in after school activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask local transport providers for easy access to timetables, more appropriate bus stop locations and better publicity for off peak rail fares. • Detailed analysis of costs / fares / routes ensuring disabled access. • Work with Eden and others to find a solution. • Request the Police for increased speed monitoring and Cornwall Council for more hours from enforcement officers. • Bring defects to the attention of Cornwall Councillors. • Seek public statements of measures that will be taken to minimise these. • Discuss the issues with local schools and Cornwall Council. 	<p>St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors, Local bus companies and train operators. The Eden Project, Cornwall Council's Education Dept, Highways, and Parking enforcement Local schools, Neighbourhood Police</p>	Short-term
<p>Measures to minimise the traffic effects from major new developments as they are being constructed.</p> <p>Alleviate parking problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Cornwall Council Highways to monitor traffic changes from major new developments and seek urgent means of redress. • Work with Cornwall Council and others to better manage parking issues. 	<p>St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Council Highways and Cornwall Councillors.</p>	Medium term
<p>Controlling the long term effects on traffic from major new developments.</p> <p>The creation of new safe cycle and footpaths.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Cornwall Councillors to alleviate problems that arise. • Research the possible routes and canvass the views of residents. 	<p>St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors Developers of Par Docks, the Eden Project and others.</p>	Long term

Foreword

Early in 2008, it became apparent that much of the attention of the then Restormel Borough Council was directed towards the revitalisation of our neighbour, St Austell. The villages of the clay country were similarly attracting attention. There was a feeling that the interests and concerns of St Blaise were thus not receiving the attention that we, its residents, believed was necessary. Our three Restormel Borough Councillors were fighting an ongoing battle to prevent St Blaise being subsumed into some greater St Austell. What was at the time the impending abolition of Restormel Borough Council, upon the formation in April 2009 of a unitary authority, and a disquiet at the removal of much of the decision-making even further away – to Truro – prompted urgent consideration of ways in which it might be possible to ensure that the aspirations of the people of St Blaise were heard.

Following discussion within the Town Council, a public meeting was held. This identified sufficient interest in the production of a town plan to encourage an exploration of whether one could be prepared. A steering group, comprising Restormel (subsequently Cornwall) councillors, St Blaise Town Councillors and (the majority) members of the public was established. This group was supplemented over time by the addition/ attendance of a large number of others, who had particular expertise that they were willing to put at our disposal. The offer was made to the neighbouring, Par and Tywardreath, Parish Council, to work with us in elaborating a joint plan to cover both parishes. This offer was not fully taken up, though a member of Par and Tywardreath parish council did attend meetings of the steering group and offered some very helpful advice.

The initial task was to draw up a questionnaire for circulation to all residents of St Blaise. We were conscious that it would be necessary to strike a balance between seeking comprehensive information – of the sort that would enable us to prepare a meaningful town plan which could provide a basis for future work – and avoiding a list of questions so long and complicated that people would shrink from completing it.

From the responses to that questionnaire, we produced two separate sets of papers: one detailing what we thought the replies meant, and the other seeking to draw conclusions from them about what our respondents wanted for the future. These two sets of documents were put on display at a second consultation event, where people were asked to confirm what we had got right, tell us what we had got wrong, and make further comments as they saw fit.

As a result of these two rounds of consultation, we believe that we now understand what those who have responded to us see as the sort of future they would like for St Blaise. The following sections reflect these views: as, we firmly believe, does the action plan that we see as flowing naturally from the rest of the papers.

Which way for the clay?

We should, at the outset, draw attention to this comprehensive and impressive report, prepared by Clay Futures and covering the whole of the Clay Area. It was in preparation at the same time as our own questionnaire was out for completion. This enabled us to take advantage of some Clay Futures facilities, which greatly enhanced our own work. 'Which Way for the Clay' was published while our own report was in preparation. We should note how closely the conclusions of our own report compares with this. We do not find this surprising, since we were asking similar (though not identical) questions to similar people. But the identity of conclusions provides additional reassurance that the lessons we have drawn are reasonable ones.

Acknowledgements

We could not have achieved the publication of our town plan without significant help from a great many people. There are simply too many to mention everyone, though our gratitude to each of them is no less because of this. But there are perhaps a few who should be singled out. The then Restormel Council assisted us with a grant of funds, and with welcome expertise from a number of their officials. Similarly, Cornwall Council officials (prominent among them Martin Eddy, Community Network Manager for our area) have been generous with their time and guidance. Anna Hoyle from the East Cornwall Community Voluntary Service, Juliet Rose from Clay Futures and Camilla Baker from the Eden Project provided invaluable assistance and advice. Our genuine thanks to all of these organisations and individuals – and to everyone else who assisted in so many ways.

Adoption by St Blaise Town Council

At its meeting on 29 July 2010, St Blaise Town Council adopted this plan in the following terms:

“St Blaise Town Council has studied the St Blaise Town Plan prepared by the Town Plan Working Group. The Council recognises that this is the result of efforts to take the fullest possible account of the views of as many residents of St Blaise as possible. The Town Council formally adopts the Town Plan as an essential point of reference for work connected to the future development of St Blaise in all its aspects.

The Town Council invites its Chair to include a report of progress on the implementation of the Town Plan in the Chair’s report to each future annual Town Meeting.”

LOOKING AHEAD
ST BLAISE 2025

St Blaise in Context

An ancient river valley, enveloped by the hills on the south coast of Cornwall, provided the site for the settlement which became St Blazey. The parish spread around the wooded hills and followed the trackway which man developed to cross the river. Contours of the land were formed as the river met the sea and the summits of the wooded hills were adapted as early occupation sites. People of the Bronze and Iron Ages discovered and used the area for refuge and settlement. Streams have always brought life to the valleys of Cornwall, in the form of settlements from the early tin streaming days, when the dark deposits of tin, washed downstream from the highland granite areas, were noticed in the gravel shallows..

The very early settlers of the land around the St Blazey valley were near the seashore, hence the shells at Kilhallon. The sea extended into the area, with Tywardreath Bay named on ancient maps, and an 1805 map mentions St Blazey Bay. The streams and river flowing into this bay from the granite high-land around Bugle and Luxulyan deposited small amounts of tin, and some enterprising men became the first tin streamers or miners. Lodes of tin and later copper were discovered in the area and the river was developed to incorporate new industrial activity. Inland the farming community of the area utilised the tributaries of the river for power to turn mill wheels for grinding corn, and where the river from the high-land of Luxulyan tumbled to its lower levels, massive wheels were constructed to provide power for stone crushing at Pons Mill. Gradually the valley silted up and between the cliffs and rocks on either side the valley floor emerged as a land area.

The name of St Blazey originates from Bishop Blaise, born in Armenia in the third century. A Christian, he became a bishop of Sebaste but was persecuted for his condemnation of idolatry and brought to trial, tortured, imprisoned and finally beheaded. Part of Bishop Blaise's torture was having his flesh torn by an iron comb as used by wool combers, so he was chosen as patron saint of the wool combing industry. It is recorded that he was beheaded on February 3rd, 298 AD. His name was spelt in different ways: St Blayse, Blaise or Blaze.



In the late thirteenth century, the area now known as St Blazey was called Landreth – a name that survives (with the slightly different spelling of Landreath) to this day as a major residential area of the town. The name of St Blazey first appears in the early fourteenth century in official Cornish records as BLAYSE, when an early church probably on today's site was dedicated by Walter de Stapledon, Bishop of Exeter, in 1309. In the fifteenth century when the present church was built at St Blazey, the area was the centre of a local woollen industry. Mrs Dorothy Rouse writes 'the building now known as Whitehouse, near St Blazey Bridge, was formerly a woollen factory.' At some time later the business was transferred to the centre of St Blazey, when a woollen factory was set going in the Town Hall premises, next to the Pack Horse Inn, by the Blamey family who owned knitting mills at Moorswater, Liskeard. Mrs Alberta Rouse, born in 1893, recalls that the wool was processed in buildings at the back of the Cornish Arms, then slung in baskets on wire cables to the spinners along the Lawns road. The spun cloth was sent to Bath to be made into the famous West of England cloth, but this enterprise had ceased by 1905.

Thus, St Blaise has historically been involved in the mining and agricultural industries. For most of the 20th Century, the principal source of employment in the area was connected to the china clay industry, sadly now in rapid decline. This focus on industry has, in the last fifty years or so, made St Blaise rather more impervious to the development of the tourist industry than many of the surrounding parishes. This has resulted in a close-

knit community, with an identity of its own, sadly now being eroded to some extent not just by the influx of incomers being witnessed throughout the region, but also by a number of large-scale housing projects, which have inevitably diluted the local community to some extent. There nevertheless remains a good number of those descended from old established St Blaise families, proud of their traditions and keen to cooperate in efforts to bring a revival of the sense of community that has traditionally prevailed here.



Overview and Summary

"We need to shout a bit more about what we have, and use it more effectively."

"There is a lack of community spirit. Large housing estates do not promote community."

"What areas does St Blaise cover? And do you take into account that there is a very rural area as well as St Blazey town – this has to be considered as well. There are hedges, potholes and traffic calming needing attention in rural areas too!! And rural residents need to be considered if you wish them to frequent St Blazey Town."

"An element of community spirit is gradually eroding, eg St Blazey Carnival. We are losing characters and community spirit."

"The town needs an 'event'. A 'festival' to bring in outside money to create work, new shops etc. Nothing happens in St Blaise. We need a bold plan to get people excited. Think Big!"

"What about the local coach company in your area that has been in St Blaise since 1947 same family. They do local services to Plymouth, Trago, Truro. Support your local firms."

"I feel St Blazey area needs to be tidied up, so that people take a pride in where they live. Footpaths are overgrown, and in some places barely passable, and litter is strewn everywhere. It does nothing to attract tourists to stop, they want to pass through as quickly as possible."

Residents of St Blaise value their local environment, their neighbours, the proximity of recreational facilities including the beach, and the availability locally of at least some shops (though they would wish for more). They find St Blaise convenient for public transport, and welcome the presence of footpaths and walks. They also attach importance to other local institutions such as their churches, the football club and the Eden Project.



But they have a number of concerns. Possibly the major one of these relates to traffic: its volume, its noise, its speed and thoughtless/illegal parking. Close behind the traffic issue come a number of law and order worries. These include general anti-social behaviour (drunken rows, congregations of youth, noise) as well as more serious crime, vandalism and graffiti, and are exacerbated in some residents' minds by what they see as a lack of police involvement and concern. There also appears to be a general view that the town is somewhat down at heel (litter, dog fouling, unkempt pavements, fly tipping etc), which might be aggravated by what some identify as an absence of community spirit.

At the same time, there are some clear indications of concern for the community and a desire to see it thrive. There are active chapels, churches, and groups such as brownies and air cadets, as well as a thriving youth club. A large number of people have pointed to the potential of large-scale tree planting not just in terms of the beautification of the town, but also for its broader environmental benefit. There is a recognition that the town will change in the coming years – but also a desire to see this happen in a way that preserves the best of local traditions and values.

The Balance Sheet

In recent years, St Blaise has suffered from the decline of the clay industry, for decades the largest employer in the area – with relatively high wages. The tourism industry, a major economic driver in many other towns and villages in Cornwall, has not historically been a significant factor in the town's economic life. With little alternative employment available, St Blaise has thus become one of the poorer parts of what is one of the country's poorest counties. Its population has faced the sort of problems and deprivation that such economic conditions always bring in their wake.

Added to this, there is, perhaps, a feeling that the views and aspirations of our own community have been subjugated to the perceived interests of others. Planning decisions allowing the construction of large numbers of houses against strong local opposition, and the projected construction of unsightly industrial units of questionable value in terms of local employment or economic regeneration, have appeared to many to be arbitrary to say the least. The influx of so many new householders has resulted in an erosion of local cohesion, which has been made even more apparent by the steady increase in the volume of traffic dissecting the town via the A390.



On the positive side, there are the active community groups referred to above, and others. There are a number of shops and restaurants, as well as pubs and clubs. Thriving football and cricket clubs can be found within our boundaries. Though tourism has not hitherto been a major element in St Blaise's life, it would be impossible to overlook the existence here of the country's major tourist attraction: the Eden Project. And mooted developments of a marina and other facilities at Par Docks, and of a holiday complex in Carlyon Bay (a substantial portion of which falls within the boundaries of St Blaise) suggest that tourism may become more important to us in the future.

The Vision

Our examination of the responses to our questionnaire, our further consultations and our daily discussions with friends and acquaintances in St Blaise, enable us to offer with some confidence a sense of what the residents of our town would like to see develop over the next decade and a half. We do so secure in the knowledge that while not everyone would support everything we set down here, our vision is nevertheless a fair picture of the sort of future St Blaise that the majority of our neighbours would feel comfortable with.

Economic regeneration and development is the sine qua non of a thriving future St Blaise. Without it, the problems identified in our research will simply continue and become more acute, leading to degeneration in all aspects of our town's life. We therefore see an urgent need for the creation of employment prospects. These may initially be linked with existing development projects. These projects are likely to bring with them opportunities for a growth in the town's involvement in tourism, and related activities relating for example to boat building and repair, as well as retail and service businesses. In the slightly longer term, we would envisage the further development of information technology and high speed broadband etc as providing rewarding and well-paid employment opportunities for our well-educated younger people.

These moves towards a more prosperous future for our town will of themselves generate other changes, in terms of new facilities (shops restaurants, clubs). In this connexion, a more attractive town is important, not just for our existing community, but also as a factor in encouraging new investment here. It would further encourage a sense of community spirit, and thus create something of a virtuous circle, which will engender confidence in the future.

An important element in a thriving, attractive town, will be some means of controlling the flow of traffic, in terms of speed, volume and nature. We recognise that this will not be easy. Nor will it be achievable in the short-term. But it is an issue that our residents have identified as important to them, and it does need to be addressed. The same is true for the broader issues of crime and anti-social behaviour, which are of no less concern to the people of this town.

Having identified above the need for early and urgent development of our town in a number of ways, it would be perverse to call for an end to future building. We do not do so. But we do observe that the major development projects for which planning permission has already been given or which are under discussion (Par Lane, Par Docks and Carlyon Bay) envisage the construction of substantial numbers of new homes of various sorts. We see a strong argument for the most careful study of likely effects on – and meaningful consultation with – the existing community before any additional major developments are considered.

Access to Services

"I do believe we should all know what's happening locally. Landreath has always managed this.. Also we need to shout a bit more about what we have, and use it more effectively."

"I would like more information about local meetings where I can have my say about what happens in my area."

What we learned

Only half of our respondents were aware of the existence of one-stop shops in Fowey and St Austell. A similar proportion told us that they did not find it easy to travel to these two towns. 82% of people said that they would use a one-stop shop in St Blaise, should one be established there.

57% of people told us that they knew what responsibilities St Blaise Town Council had. Responses to other questions, however, lead us to wonder if this figure is too high. There appeared from the questionnaire to be significant confusion about the division of responsibility between the Town Council and Cornwall Council. Even were the 57% figure to be entirely accurate, however, it leaves a large proportion of our population who are unaware of the Town Council's responsibilities.

Very large majorities believed that the Town Council should have greater influence over the outcome of planning applications, should assume ownership of open spaces previously owned by Restormel Borough Council, and should take over the maintenance of footpaths and verges. Similarly large majorities were of the view that the Town Council should be fully compensated for the cost of any additional responsibilities that it shouldered.

Few of our respondents had ever visited the Town Council website, and barely half knew how to contact the council. The most preferred route for distribution of a town newsletter was by inclusion with local newspapers. The option of leaving copies in local shops etc was popular with one in three.

Assessment

Our questionnaire was returned before the institution of a one-stop shop mobile service in Landreath (subsequently moved to Fourways). And it was issued very early in the life of the new Cornwall Council. We think it likely that were the same question to be asked today, a significantly higher proportion of people would know what services were available from the one-stop shops.

What is unlikely to have changed, however, is the substantial number of people who find it difficult to travel to Fowey or St Austell. The mobile service may have helped provide a service to some of them, but its transfer to Fourways has probably made it less accessible to a significant number of residents. And there will therefore remain a number for whom gaining access is still problematic. We hope that Cornwall Council will continue to look for ways to assist. And we recommend that the extension of the Burrows Centre should include provision for space that could be used on a part-time basis as a further outreach.

That so many residents of St Blaise have little or no knowledge of the Town Council's responsibilities and activities suggests that information is simply not getting through. The website appears to be little used. This could be because its existence is not well enough known, or it could be because it does not contain what people are looking for. There could be room for further investigation here. At the same time, there appears to be an appetite for some form of town newsletter. Whether this should be restricted solely to council news, or whether it could perform the role of a community newsletter remains for discussion.

We note that the strong preference would be for something that was circulated with local newspapers. But we are also aware that this is an expensive way of distributing this sort of publication. The alternatives of leaving

supplies with local shops (as is done with Fowey News) and/or posting it on the council website could also be explored. And we acknowledge that there could also be other suitable means of distribution.

The enthusiasm for seeing the Town Council assume additional responsibilities may reflect a feeling that services should be provided at the nearest practical level to those receiving them. No one is likely to dispute this principle. In practice, there are two obvious potential obstacles to the assumption of new responsibilities: the capacity of the Town Council, and the extent of existing contracts between Cornwall Council and commercial service providers.

We are aware that the Town Council is working towards 'quality council' status, and applaud this fact. Quality status could broaden the scope of additional responsibilities that the town could assume, though there would likely be a need for additional expertise on top of this in some instances. The acquisition of expertise is itself not without cost, and it will be important to ensure before any firm undertakings are made that adequate arrangements are in place. We recall that when the unitary authority was formed, assurances were given that extra training related to the assumption of additional responsibilities by local councils would be funded by the county.

97% of respondents took the view that the cost of assuming any additional responsibilities should be fully funded by Cornwall Council. We are aware that calculating costs of this nature can be complicated, not solely because of the difficulty of separating out the cost of service to one geographical area for a contract covering a number of areas, but also because of difficulty in calculating associated expenses (such as the cost of oversight by Cornwall Council). But since we envisage the transfer of responsibilities as a gradual process, these difficulties ought to be surmountable, given a fair wind.

There was throughout this part of the questionnaire a sense of a degree of apathy. A number of respondents were unclear about what was being or could be done on their behalf. A number of others appeared to see little likelihood of their own concerns being addressed, even if they took the trouble to express them. This ought to give rise to some concern, since there is a risk here of a vicious circle: as fewer people become involved in the affairs of their town, there is a risk that what is done in their name appears less relevant. The pessimism of those who do not expect their concerns to be addressed thereby risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Action

Short-term

Cornwall Council to consider, in conjunction with St Blaise Town Council, ways of further publicising the whereabouts of One-Stop shops, and the services available from them.

St Blaise Town Council to advertise more widely the existence of its website, and ensure that what is published there is what people wish to see.

Medium-term

St Blaise Town Council to explore with Cornwall Council the possibility of their using part of an extended Burrow Centre as a part-time One-Stop shop, and to ensure that the plans for the extension take account of this. St Blaise Town Council to ensure that any Town Bus Service includes services to the Burrows Centre during One-Stop shop opening hours.

Town Council to consider publishing a newsletter, to keep residents informed of council activities, and to consider whether this should be expanded to include community news etc. Town Council to bear in mind the preference of residents for a newsletter delivered with local press.

Medium/Long-term

St Blaise Town Council to proceed to quality status as soon as possible. After this is achieved, Council should consult Cornwall Council about the assumption of appropriate additional responsibilities/authority, drawing attention to firm indication from residents that they would welcome this.

Identify other ways (such as training) of enhancing the capacity of the Town Council and its members to assume from Cornwall Council additional responsibilities. In doing so, to remind Cornwall Council of the undertakings given concerning the cost of such training.

Long-term

Town Council, in consultation with Cornwall Council and others, to identify and introduce measures to encourage residents more actively to involve themselves in the affairs of the town, including of the town council. Contested elections/by-elections for the Town Council would be a reflexion of a more active and engaged town population.

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Make people more aware of the services that are available locally and how best to access them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the “Out and about” One Stop Shop service. • Raise the profile of the Town Council website and ensure the relevance of the content. 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council’s Out and About service, Area Network Manager.	Short-term
Provide services under Town Council control wherever it is possible and practical to do so	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain quality status for Town Council. • Obtain further training as needed for Town Council members and employee(s). • Agree and implement service delegations from Cornwall Council 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council, Area Network Manager.	Medium term
Greater public involvement in town affairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and implement measures to increase public participation. 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Area Networks	Long term

Community Safety

"Things have greatly improved since the introduction of the wardens. Good to see them around."

"I am concerned Warden Scheme funding will cease. It seems to be working so well."

"We need more policing."

What we learned

Only one respondent in four believed that St Blaise enjoyed adequate police cover. There was substantial demand for more visible police cover, a greater degree of involvement with the community and more crime prevention advice. Respondents felt that there ought to be more police on the beat, and a more robust attitude to known offenders.

Vandalism and drugs and alcohol related incidents were seen as being particular problems in St Blaise. One in seven of the young people who responded to our separate 'young peoples' questionnaire identified drugs as a particular issue of concern to them: more than two in seven were worried about gangs, graffiti and generally anti-social behaviour.

A number of respondents drew attention to the value and importance of the role played by the Community Warden scheme. This view was reinforced at the second round of community consultation on 20 March 2010, with concern being expressed about the future of funding for the scheme.

Two-thirds of those who completed the questionnaire told us that they believed that more speed checks were called for. One half saw a requirement for an increase in attention from parking enforcement officers. Although there was no general agreement on where speed checks should be, the two most popular sites were Station Road and Par Lane. Station Road was also the most popular site by far where respondents saw a need for greater efforts to enforce parking regulations.

One in five people told us they would be willing to help set up neighbourhood watch schemes, and 30% were willing to help with a Good Neighbour scheme.

Nearly two thirds of people saw dog fouling as a significant problem.

Assessment

The Police inform us that their coverage of St Blaise, response times to urgent calls etc are all well within the policy laid down for them. They add that they are well aware of concerns about vandalism, drugs and alcohol, which are all priorities for them. It is reassuring (though unsurprising) that the police are aware of local anxieties regarding these issues.

There is nevertheless, at the very least, a widespread perception in St Blaise that our town has particular difficulties in these areas. This is particularly striking, given the welcome presence in the town of a police station (and a clearly stated wish that its hours of opening should be extended). We therefore see a need to ensure that efforts are made either to provide the additional police support residents believe is necessary, or to provide reassurance that their concerns are being addressed in other ways.

We are aware from the level of attendance that the Community Watch meetings have a low profile, except when there are major issues of general public concern. It seems to us that there could be scope to enhance the role of this forum, to which members of the public are invited, as a forum for a more active dialogue between residents, the police and others.

We take this opportunity to applaud local police efforts to work with our community. This is done partly through PACT (Partnership and Community Together), and partly by other means: such as football training days, boxing club for young people etc – all of which have been organised by our local police and PCSOs. We hope that further efforts may be forthcoming; and that encouragement (financial and other) will come from Cornwall and Town Councils.

We also note that the police have indicated their willingness further to cooperate with the local community in establishing/developing Neighbourhood Watch and Good Neighbour schemes. We welcome this. Though it would have been surprising, given the realities of life, if a majority of people had indicated an appetite for becoming involved in these, the number of residents who said they would be interested may be sufficient to justify further exploration of the possibilities.

We further note the value placed on the Community Warden scheme, and concerns for its future funding. This scheme appears to us to be a very cost-effective way of managing low-level anti-social behaviour, and of generating a measure of community pride. We would much regret its passing because of lack of (very modest) funds.



Speeding vehicles and parking problems are of particular concern to our respondents. We have already considered these to some extent in the Transport section, where we focused largely on the principal routes into St Blaise. But there are roads within the town itself where speeding and parking are of real concern. Some would like to see additional traffic calming measures and more attention from parking enforcement officers. It seems to us that further work is called for to identify precisely the scale of the problem, and how best to address it. As we observed in the Transport section, a definitive solution to the problem of illegal parking is unlikely fully to be found without the provision of additional parking facilities – and it is difficult to identify exactly where these could be found. This is, however, another area where the provision of a Town Bus service might contribute to an alleviation of the problem.

Dog fouling arouses strong feelings, not just in St Blaise or Cornwall, but throughout the country. We note that St Blaise Town Council has, in recent years, installed a number of additional bins for the disposal of waste from dogs. These appear to be well used. The reality is that this problem will not disappear until all dog owners recognise their responsibility to clear up after their pets. This is most likely to be achieved through pressure from friends, family, neighbours and the wider community. But if this is a long-term goal, then discussion with Cornwall Council and others might provide ideas on further measures that could be taken in the meantime.

Action

Short-term

Chair of Community Watch forum, police and Town Council to consider how to advertise the Community Watch meetings more broadly, and to encourage greater participation from throughout the community.

Police to consider what additionally they can do to publicise how they are addressing and managing criminal activity in St Blaise. Police to see whether resources could be found to allow for longer opening hours and increased manning of St Blaise Police Station.

Police, Town and Cornwall Council to arrange an open meeting with young people to listen to concerns over drugs and gangs and discuss what might be done.

Town Council to ensure that all concerned are aware of the importance that local residents attach to the Community Warden scheme, and seek assurances over its future funding.

Town Council and police to arrange a public meeting at which the creation of Neighbourhood Watch and Good Neighbour Schemes can be discussed (and volunteers sought).

Police more closely to monitor speeding in the town, particularly (but not exclusively) on Station Road and Par Lane.

Cornwall Council to provide greater coverage by those responsible for the policing of dog fouling. St Blaise Town Council to consider whether further additional bins are called for and, if so, to consider means of securing funding.

Cornwall Council to provide greater coverage by parking enforcement officers.

Medium-term

Cornwall Council, St Blaise Town Council and other appropriate bodies to consider what additional measures can be taken to manage the parking problems in the town – in particular bearing in mind potential increased traffic resulting from the redevelopment of Par Docks, and any extension of shopping facilities in the town (discussed elsewhere).

Cornwall Council, St Blaise Town Council and other appropriate bodies to consider what educational/publicity campaigns might have an effect in encouraging dog owners to accept their responsibility for themselves dealing with fouling caused by their dogs.

Long-term

Police and Town Council to monitor public perceptions of the safety of St Blaise (including issues such as anti-social behaviour and drugs). If necessary seek increased police activity – even if this entails lobbying for local exceptions to national or county standards.

Police and Town Council to monitor public concerns about traffic and dog fouling, and ensure that further action is taken as necessary and possible.

Short, medium and long term

Cornwall Council, St Blaise Town Council and others to ensure that they give strong and enduring support, including by providing resources where possible, to the local police for the invaluable work they do with the young people in our community.

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Active engagement of the community in Community Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners meet to plan actions Town Council to organise public meeting to encourage Neighbourhood Watch and Good Neighbour 	Community Watch Forum , Neighbourhood Police, St. Blaise Town Council	Short term
Increasing public confidence in Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support actions that would increase police presence in St. Blaise Police Station 	St. Blaise Town Council , Neighbourhood Police, Community Watch Forum.	Short term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organise an open meeting with young people 	Neighbourhood Police , St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors	Short term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor traffic speeds in St. Blaise 	Neighbourhood Police ,	Short term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan to increase public confidence in policing through partnership working Partners commit to supporting police in their work with young people 	Neighbourhood Police , St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors, Neighbourhood Watch	Long term
Active Community Warden Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaign to maintain the service 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors	Short term
Decrease Dog Fouling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active monitoring of problem Ensure optimum provision of dog bins Education/Publicity campaign 	Local residents , St. Blaise Town Council	Short –Medium term
Enhanced parking enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore ways of enhancing the Civil Enforcement Officer presence 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, CC Transportation Service	Short term
Active town traffic management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet to consider future traffic management 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, CC Highway Service	Medium Term

Major Development Projects

“I think if Par Docks could be redeveloped tastefully, it would improve the whole area.”

“Par Docks should remain as a working harbour with a manufacturing base.”

“Par Docks redevelopment offers a wonderful opportunity to revitalise the town and make Par beach more attractive as a tourist attraction.”

What we learned

We sought the views of residents of St Blaise about the proposals for the creation of an eco-town, and specifically the part of it envisaged for Par Docks (Par Docks is the only part of the proposed eco-town that falls within the boundaries of St Blaise).

We first asked whether a redevelopment of Par Docks would find local support, provided that it offered improved access to the harbour area. 97% of respondents said that they would support a project under these conditions. In contrast, in response to another question, fully 80% of respondents told us that they would oppose a redevelopment that sought to exclude the local community.



We then sought to identify what sort of development would be popular with the existing community of St Blaise. In reply to our questions, we were told that the large majority of residents would support a redevelopment where at least 40% of the housing built was affordable and designated for local people (further details can be found in the housing section), and which provided for new local jobs and new community facilities.

On additional community facilities, we made some suggestions ourselves. These drew support as follows: restaurants (86% support), community centre (78%), social club (64%), bar (58%), doctors' surgery (51%), internet facilities (41%) and library (2%).

We also invited respondents to make additional suggestions. The most popular of these were: gym/leisure centre, swimming pool and access to the sea (eg moorings, slipway, sailing club).

Although it was not directly covered by our questionnaire, we should note that part of the proposed development at Carlyon Bay also falls within the boundaries of St Blaise. Since we have not specifically asked the electors of St Blaise, we cannot say categorically that their attitudes to the development of Carlyon Bay would be identical to those concerning the Par Docks redevelopment. But we have no reason to believe that their interest in improved community facilities and access to the sea would be any less keen in respect of the former.

Elsewhere, and not directly linked to the eco-town proposals, respondents to our questionnaire told us of their concerns about road traffic, and in particular the volume and speed of vehicles and the congestion caused by improperly parked vehicles. These concerns will need to be borne in mind, not just during the construction phase, but also insofar as existing difficulties will also be exacerbated by the completed projects.

Assessment

We recognise that the proposed developments at Carlyon Bay and Par Docks are commercial projects. Commercial considerations will, therefore, by definition, influence what might be possible in terms of new community facilities for the current local community.

We nevertheless believe that Cornwall Council and those involved in the proposed developments should be made aware of the views above. There is an opportunity to elaborate projects that can not only provide exciting new opportunities in St Blaise, but that can do so with the strong support of the local community.

We strongly believe that St Blaise Town Council should be closely involved at all stages in discussions concerning their plans. We hope that Cornwall Council – and in particular those responsible for planning and redevelopment matters – will ensure that the views of St Blaise Town Council are not only canvassed, but also given the most careful consideration, when planning decisions concerning the projects are under consideration. (In this connexion, we note that elsewhere in our questionnaire, St Blaise electors expressed in very strong terms their view that St Blaise Town Council should have a significantly greater influence over planning matters in general).

Furthermore, we believe that consultation between the two developers might help identify means in which pooled efforts could enable both to help meet the aspirations of the people of St Blaise.

We further believe that, if developments are to be truly successful, they will need the wholehearted support of the existing residents of our town. This suggests that the developers, and the appropriate officials of Cornwall Council should fully involve the people of St Blaise in the elaboration of the various plans. This should include at public meetings in the town itself, so that those who have difficulty travelling can attend and have their views heard.

Action

Short-term

Cornwall Council and Cornwall Councillors to ensure that St Blaise Town Council are represented at all discussions with developers where plans for Par Docks are under consideration.

St Blaise Town Council to establish a small committee to undertake this representation. This committee's terms of reference should include the monitoring of plans against the views expressed by St Blaise residents as recorded in responses to the questionnaire and any future consultations.

All concerned to identify ways in which the traffic concerns of residents can be addressed both during the construction phase and afterwards.

Short/medium-term

St Blaise Town Council and developers to identify additional opportunities for dialogue with residents of St Blaise. These should include public meetings directly between the developers of the respective projects and residents of St Blaise, as well as additional public meetings/consultations under the auspices of St Blaise Town Council should these be deemed useful.

Medium/long-term

Continued monitoring by St Blaise Town Council and Cornwall Councillors of progress in the elaboration and completion of the projects against the background of the views expressed by residents.

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Active flow of information between Eco-Bos and St. Blaise Town Council around proposed Par Dock development, and CIG and St Blaise Town Council around proposed Carlyon Bay development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact both companies and discuss how to develop the relationship • Discuss how community needs and issues may be addressed 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Eco-Bos, CIG, CC Planning and Regeneration Service	Short - medium term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor project progress 		Medium- Long term

Education

What we learned

Three out of four respondents were content with the quality of education provided for the young people of St Blaise. The large majority of young people who replied to the questionnaire anticipate going on to college or university after leaving secondary school.

The most popular after school activity among young people was sport. But we were told that lack of transport home, and expense were impediments to their being able to pursue activities after school. Of particular concern to a number of people was the apparent lack of assistance for those with special needs.

We saw a relatively low uptake at present of opportunities for evening classes. But there was a stated appetite, should they become available locally, for computer, foreign language, photography, art and music classes.

Assessment

It is encouraging that there is such a high approval rating for our local educational facilities, and our young people are to be commended for their ambition in terms of higher education.

It is disappointing that some of our young people appear constrained in their ability to pursue after school activities. It is not immediately apparent what short term remedies may be available for the cost of these. But there does appear to be scope for exploring whether the difficulties relating to transport might be addressed.

We are particularly concerned to learn of the problems associated with providing after school activities for those with special needs. We see an urgent need to explore how these can be resolved.

There is, of course, a significant number of evening classes for adults available at St Austell. We have noted elsewhere, however, that a significant number of people have indicated that they do not find it easy to travel there. We hope that those concerned will explore the scope for offering a range of evening classes in St Blaise itself. This is another area in which the envisaged extension to the Burrows Centre might be able to make a real contribution to the community.

Action

Short-term

St Blaise Town Council, in conjunction with Cornwall Councillors, to consult local schools, education authority and others about means of ensuring that after school activities are available to the maximum possible number of children – including, and perhaps especially, those with special needs. Identify impediments to this, so that further work on the issue can be done as appropriate.

Medium-term

St Blaise Town Council to establish what facilities might be made available for evening classes in an extended Burrows Centre, and then to arrange further research to identify more clearly the extent of demand and how far this can be met.

Long-term

St Blaise Town Council, in cooperation with Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council, local communities and other relevant bodies, to seek to attract new business ventures of a high quality to St Blaise, so that our young people can look forward to securing fulfilling and rewarding local jobs.

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
After schools activities for all young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact local schools to establish current provision and gaps. 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council's Extended Schools Service, Local schools, Parent/Teacher Associations, Cornwall Sports Partnership, Neighbourhood Police	Short-term
Evening classes in extended Burrows Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish what facilities are available in Burrows Centre. • Define demand by survey. 	St. Blaise Town Council , Burrows Centre, Adult Education, Clay TAWC?	Medium term
Vibrant local employment opportunities for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current economic regeneration plans • Contact Cornwall Council's Economic Development Service. • Contact Eco-Bos 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors	Long term

Employment and Training

“Redevelopment of Par Docks is key. It would bring employment to the area and improve it. Despite the proximity of Eden, this area is still down at heel and scruffy.”

“More jobs will motivate more interest in the community.”

“Poverty and the shedding of jobs are the real problems. These must be addressed if St Blazey is to be resurrected.”

“Liaise with Eden to provide locally-based training in horticultural skills so that more people can grow their own food for the future – and have a skill that will prove invaluable.”

“I feel St Blazey area needs to be tidied up, so that people take a pride in where they live. Footpaths are overgrown, and in some places barely passable, and litter is strewn everywhere. It does nothing to attract tourists to stop; they want to pass through as quickly as possible. If we want to attract the holiday trade, we need something worth stopping for, at the moment there is very little.”

What we learned

According to the responses to our questionnaire, nearly one household in ten in St Blaise includes at least one person either not working, or looking for work. Most of those in employment were involved either in manual work or secretarial/clerical work. Roughly half of those employed worked in the public (including health) sector, and one quarter in retail. More than 6 in ten people work within a round trip of ten miles from home.

Two thirds of those seeking work would be willing to undergo retraining. Only a small number would consider becoming self-employed. Most small businesses in St Blaise employ three people or fewer. There was support for the proposition that vacancies might be advertised on the town council noticeboard (though the number of people responding to this question was small).

There was very strong support for the suggestion that St Blaise Town Council should work with others to increase employment opportunities in the area.



A substantial number of respondents believed that there were unexploited business opportunities linked to the Eden Project, though not everyone saw these as being necessarily tourist related.

Assessment

We need, at the outset, to accept that the issue of unemployment in St Blaise is not one that can be solved wholly or even mainly from within our own resources. The problem is a national one.

One of the keys to helping address the current problem at a local level will be to make St Blaise as attractive a place as possible for potential employers to establish businesses. They will be looking for suitable premises at a realistic cost, a well-qualified and motivated potential workforce and good communications.

St Blaise may not be overburdened with potential business premises or new land on which to build them (though nor is it entirely bereft), but there is no shortage of eg office accommodation in nearby towns. The willingness of our respondents to undergo re-training – taken with the fact that the overwhelming proportion of those who completed the young people’s questionnaire expect to attend college or university – suggests a good pool of potentially enthusiastic and well-qualified employees.

The reality of geography, and thus our position quite distant from many of the principal population centres of the UK cannot be changed. But there are excellent sea, air and land links both to other UK regions and further afield. And broadband internet access has also made a significant difference to ease of communication.

Another important element could be to ensure that those of our residents who are considering setting up business for themselves are fully aware of the assistance available to them. There appears to be scope for a closer examination, together with the Eden Project, the developers of Par Docks and perhaps those involved in other potential large-scale developments, of the scope for linked business opportunities which could provide mutual advantage.

Action

Short-term

St Blaise Town Council, with the assistance of Cornwall Council, to create a register of vacant business premises and land suitable for business development.

Cornwall Council and relevant agencies to advise St Blaise Town Council on means of attracting further business development to St Blaise.

St Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council to identify which local, regional or national agencies etc might be able to help those in St Blaise considering establishing their own businesses, and ensure that contact details of the former are freely available to the latter.

Identify interest in re-establishing/creating St Blaise business forum.

Medium/long-term

St Blaise Town Council, with Cornwall Council, the Environment Agency and other relevant agencies to put in hand work to enhance the appearance of St Blaise, so that it is as attractive as possible for those considering setting up in business here, or those who would move here as a result of new business creation.

St Blaise Town Council to seek, with the help of Cornwall Council and others such as the Regional Development Agency, to identify likely skills shortages associated with potential new business ventures, and publicise these widely to the residents of St Blaise (together with information on possible re-training opportunities).

With the cooperation of developers, St Blaise Town Council to ensure that residents, or those considering setting up businesses in the town, are aware of proposed plans for small industrial units, retail and office space at the re-developed Par Docks and elsewhere

St Blaise Town Council to consult Eden Project (and possibly others, such as the developers of Par Docks) about what business ventures, such as a marina and related activity, they might see as potentially relevant to their own development. Explore possibility of some form of conference (or conferences), where the Eden Project, the Par Docks developers, and potential smaller-scale business interests in St Blaise might jointly consider how the links between the two might best be exploited to mutual advantage.

St Blaise Town Council, with Cornwall Councillors, Regional Development Agency, and local businesses, to consider preparing a 'Why you should set up your business in St Blaise' presentation, for circulation to potential inward investors.

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Active register of vacant business premises and land suitable for business development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact CC Planning and Regeneration Service to discuss Local Development Framework and current survey work • Seek advice on attracting business to St. Blaise • Promote opportunities in St. Blazey to potential new businesses • Create business promotion pack 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors	Short term
Explore interest in an active local Business Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key lead businesses 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors	Short term
Creating an attractive place to do business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the appearance of the town 	St. Blaise Town Council , Environment Agency, CC Environment Service, Public Health and Protection, Highway Service, Localism Service, Probation Service, Planning and Regeneration Service	Medium-long term
A skilled work force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential skills shortages • Offer and promote relevant training 	Learning and Skills Council	Medium-long term
Local businesses linking to the major developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with Eco-Bos and Eden the possibilities for linkages • Consider the need for a business conference 	St. Blaise Town Council , The Sensory Trust, Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Development Company, CC Economic Development Service	Medium-long term

Historic Buildings

“Our historic buildings represent our past”

“With the retreat of the clay industry, there is now no reason for not extending the World Heritage Site to include the canal, railway works and Par Harbour. The area around St Blazey bridge level crossing is an eyesore and needs a new policy. It could become an extension of the Luxulyan Valley with a new park & ride station. Whatever is done on the railway land must not prevent its future reversion to railway use. At present it is designated ‘light industrial’ – call that planning?”

“We should have a public transport museum here... with steam railway.”

What we learned

Three in four people told us that they believed the Roundhouse, as a grade 2* listed building, could be put to better use.



Assessment

In retrospect, we regret that our questionnaire asked only for views about the Roundhouse. It is undoubtedly historically important as one of only two semi-circular roundhouses left in Britain – and the only one with a working turntable. On reflexion, however, we believe that we should have expanded our questionnaire to cover other buildings in St Blaise of historical interest.



We believe, therefore, that there could be a place for a more structured approach. This might involve an assessment of what other buildings in our town – whether listed or not – might be of significance to us and to others. Consideration might then be given to ways in which these might suitably be protected and exploited for the future.

So far as the specific case of the Roundhouse is concerned, we note that it is a privately owned building. We have absolutely no reason to suppose that the current owner is using it in any way contrary to the planning and other conditions that may have been laid down. Nor, since we have not enquired, do we have any reason to suppose that the current owners wish either to sell the building or to change its use. This situation could, of course, change during the time period of this plan.

Action

Short-term

St Blaise Town Council, perhaps with assistance from English Heritage, to conduct a survey to establish what other buildings in St Blaise might be considered to be historic, and of particular relevance to the historic life of the town.

St Blaise Town Council to inform current owners of Roundhouse about the views of St Blaise residents, and seek advance notice of any intention to dispose of it or radically change its use.

Following the survey described above, St Blaise Town Council to seek advice from English Heritage, Cornwall Council and others about whether any buildings ought to be listed, or have their current listings revised.

Medium/long-term

St Blaise Town Council to compile register of buildings of particular interest to the town, and their current owners, and then identify more clearly what (if any) alternative uses these properties would suit (including where appropriate a reversion to the purpose for which they were originally built).

St Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council, English Heritage and other relevant agencies to identify means of acquiring such buildings in due course, together with funding necessary to finance transformation to alternative uses.

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
<p>All historic structures identified.</p> <p>Free exchange of information with the owner of the Roundhouse.</p> <p>Structures of historic value are protected,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with English Heritage. • Inform Roundhouse owner of views of St Blaise residents and request notice of intent to sell building or radical change of use. • Review listed buildings status. 	<p>St. Blaise Town Council, English Heritage. Owner of the Roundhouse. Cornwall Council, Cornwall Councillors.</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
<p>Town to hold a register of ownership of buildings of local interest and the uses to which they are put.</p> <p>Bring relevant structures into public ownership to provide long term protection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Land Registry for ownership of structures of interest previously identified and assess current usages. • Identify funding routes and suitable viable alternative uses. 	<p>St. Blaise Town Council, Land Registry. Councillors, Cornwall Council, English Heritage and other relevant agencies.</p>	<p>Medium / Long term</p>

Housing

“There is a lack of community spirit. Large housing estates do not promote community.”

“If more housing is to be built for homes for our young people, we need adequate infrastructure, eg schools, doctors, dentists, not just houses.”

“I sincerely hope the houses in Par Lane will not be built as during heavy rainfall Par Lane is already a river.”

What we learned

78% of those who responded to our questionnaire either own or are buying their own home.

Approximately two-thirds of people support the building of new homes (of all types, from four-bedroom properties to sheltered housing) in St Blaise. But there was an overwhelming view that the majority of new homes should be affordable and for local people, and that a good proportion should be available for rent.

There was no consensus about where in St Blaise new homes should be built (though Par Harbour was mentioned by a number of people). But there was a clear sense that brownfield sites would be preferable to green field, and that building on flood plains should be avoided. There was a clear view that moderately higher (5 – 10%) building costs would be acceptable if the resulting eco-friendly homes cost less to run.

There was near unanimous support for efforts to ensure that serious attention was paid to the flood risk in parts of St Blaise. There were calls for more tree planting and the creation of new green spaces that would help combat the effects of heavy rain. The vast majority of respondents were aware of how to contact the flood warning service.

Assessment

It is a reasonable assumption that the appetite for the building of new homes reflects concern for where today's young people might live. It is to the credit of the people of St Blaise that they are alive to the problem.

The absence of broad agreement on where new homes should be built is a reflexion of the fact that St Blaise is already relatively built-up, and of concern about the problems of building on a flood plain. The preference for pressing brownfield sites into use is understandable in these circumstances.

The anticipated building of 150 homes on Par Lane and rather more than that on a redeveloped Par Docks (the developers have assured us that 40% of these would be affordable) would be likely to meet the demand for housing for local people for the foreseeable future. To meet the aspirations of local people these 'affordable' properties would need to be genuinely affordable, and to offer a full range of housing from larger family homes to one-bedroomed properties – and to include social housing as well as privately-owned. The builders on both sites will need to bear in mind the preference for eco-friendly homes even at a slightly higher cost.

Thanks to the Highways Agency, Cornwall Council, our Cornwall Councillors, the Environment Agency, the Town Council and others, much urgent work has already been done to alleviate existing flooding problems. But the situation will need to be monitored carefully, and further work will doubtless be required in the foreseeable future. Moreover, care will need to be taken to ensure that the building of new homes does not exacerbate the problems – indeed that all of the relevant infrastructural issues are satisfactorily resolved before any new homes are constructed.

Action

Short-term

Cornwall Council to confirm that envisaged housing construction in Par Lane and Par Docks will meet the foreseeable needs for St Blaise residents in terms of genuinely affordable homes for local people, and that they will enforce the strictest possible conditions in terms of genuinely affordable homes on the developers of these and any other projects.

St Blaise Town Council and Cornwall Councillors to seek confirmation from Cornwall Council and developers that anticipated construction will cover all forms of housing from larger family homes through to flats and sheltered accommodation and social housing.

Cornwall Council to confirm that no further large or medium scale housing will be approved in St Blaise for the immediate future (short of 'one-off' construction), and that the views of St Blaise Council will be given full weight in the light of any new planning applications.

St Blaise Town Council and Cornwall Councillors to ensure that Cornwall Council Planners are aware of the concerns of St Blaise residents about construction of homes on flood plains, and their view that where possible new homes should be built on brownfield rather than greenfield sites.

St Blaise Town Council to inform Cornwall Council and developers of the views of residents that modest additional costs (in the region of 5 – 10%) would be an acceptable price to pay for eco-friendly, energy efficient homes.

Medium/long-term

St Blaise Town Council, with assistance from Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council, the Environment Agency and others to monitor situation with regard to flood risk, particularly as new homes on Par Lane come into occupation. Cornwall Council to ensure that no new housing in Par Lane is occupied until all necessary remedial and capacity-building drainage and associated work is completed fully.

St Blaise Town Council and Cornwall Councillors to seek to ensure that partnership established between Environment Agency, Highways Agency, Cornwall Council, St Blaise Town Council and others over recent flood problems becomes institutionalised and able rapidly to respond to any future problems. Explore opportunities for the creation of new green spaces and tree-planting programmes.

St Blaise Town Council to ensure that in parallel with its achievement of Quality Status, it also secures any additional capacity building necessary to enable it to demand an enhanced voice in planning issues.

Given the stated concern of our respondents for more eco-friendly, energy efficient homes, St Blaise Town Council to establish whether there are ways – in addition to ensuring high eco standards for new build properties – in which the Town Council and others can contribute towards the achievement of this goal.

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Maximum benefit achieved for local people in housing developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor applications to ensure that the affordable home element is maximised and genuinely affordable • Seek to ensure that developments contain a mix of house types • Support actions to ensure that new housing has the highest eco-category status 	Cornwall Councillors , St. Blaise Town Council, CC Planning and Regeneration Service, Ocean Housing	Short-term
A local vision for future developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with planners concerns about further large scale developments • Discuss local concerns about development in flood plains • Support developments on brown field sites • Inform planners that residents would support modest premium for eco-friendly houses 	Cornwall Councillors , St. Blaise Town Council, CC Planning and Regeneration Service	Short-term
A reduced risk of flooding to existing and new homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Community Flood Plan • Support the continuation of the flood plan partnership • Ensure that the infrastructure exists to deal with run-off from new developments • Explore the use of green spaces to help with flood relief 	St. Blaise Town Council , Environment Agency, Cornwall Councillors, CC Planning and Regeneration Service, Highways Service	Medium-long term
A Quality Status Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Blaise Town Council achieves quality status to enhance town council influence and knowledge 	St. Blaise Town Council ,	Medium-long term

Recreation, Leisure and the Environment

“Trailblazer Park is an excellent facility.”

“I feel St Blazey area needs to be tidied up, so that people take a pride in where they live. Footpaths are overgrown, and in some places barely passable, and litter is strewn everywhere.”

“Open Fourways every night of the week.”

“Many people are still not recycling the basics – this must be addressed if we are to avoid the siting of things like incinerators to deal with our waste.”

What we learned

Some 62% of those who completed our questionnaire felt that there were insufficient facilities for young people in St Blaise. They felt that there was a call for youth clubs, parks and playing areas, a skateboard park and swimming pool.

Interestingly, a slightly smaller percentage (56%) of the young people who completed the young peoples’ questionnaire were dissatisfied with the available facilities. Their shopping list was similar to that of the older respondents – except that the young people were less concerned with the provision of youth clubs.

Two thirds of those who replied expressed themselves satisfied with facilities for older people. Among those who were not satisfied, the most frequently mentioned additional facilities that would be useful were a day centre, community events and transport for the disabled.

More generally, a leisure centre and swimming pool were seen as desirable additional facilities for those of all ages.

95% of people told us that they used the kerbside recycling scheme, but the household waste recycling centre, charity shops and bottle/paper banks in car parks were also used. 40% of respondents said they would support and use a green waste-recycling scheme. 93% of people told us that they used low-energy light bulbs.

In a different section of the questionnaire (housing) we were told that respondents were willing to consider additional building costs in the region of 5 – 10% if this resulted in more eco-friendly housing which cost less to run.

27% of people told us that they would wish to rent an allotment, were land available.

Assessment

Given the number of responses, the slight difference in percentages between young people and others who believe that facilities for young people are insufficient is probably not statistically significant.

The greater emphasis placed by adults on the provision of youth clubs could reflect parental feelings that such facilities, being supervised, may be safer and more suitable for their children. But it could equally reflect the wider knowledge among young people



that youth club facilities of a high standard already exist in St Blaise. Whatever the reality, there appears to be a case both for seeking to ensure the widest possible awareness of existing facilities and for examining whether there is a real demand for additional youth club resources in our town: and, if so, how these may be provided.

Although the majority seem satisfied with facilities for those over 60, there is a sizeable minority who are not. Here, too, the logical starting point appears to be ensuring that there is a wide awareness of existing facilities. Thereafter, further research might be called for to elaborate more precisely what new facilities might be most appropriate, and how to fund them.

More generally, we note that St Blaise Town Council are elaborating plans for an extension to the Burrows Centre. We trust that this extension will include provision for additional community facilities. It is not, perhaps, for us to seek to specify these at present, but we hope that in looking at plans for the extension, the information provided by this Town Plan will be taken fully into account.

We note that respondents of all ages would like to see a leisure centre and swimming pool in St Blaise. We are aware that the nearest municipal facilities, in Polkyth, have recently undergone significant refurbishment. It appears to us unlikely, therefore, that new municipal facilities are likely to be funded in St Blaise for the foreseeable future. That is no reason, however, not to ensure that Cornwall Council are fully aware of the demand. Given the timescale of this Town Plan, we ought not at this stage to rule out the possibility of new facilities in the longer term. In the meantime there may be a prospect of publicly accessible leisure and swimming facilities becoming available as part of major developments such as those currently under discussion for Par Docks and Carlyon Bay. Certainly the developers should be made aware of this ambition.

The scale of use by our respondents of the various available recycling facilities is most encouraging – the official figures indicate that the overall level of recycling in St Blaise is rather lower. Nevertheless, it provides an encouraging base on which to develop further. We note that since the responses to our questionnaire were returned Cornwall Council has mounted an educational campaign in our area. We trust that this will have been effective, and that recycling rates will go even higher. We hope that Cornwall Council and the Town Council will work together towards this end. We further note that there is a clear and strong appetite here for a green waste recycling scheme. We trust that Cornwall and St Blaise Town Councils will between them work towards providing this service.

We mention above, but deal separately (in the housing section) with the views on the acceptability of additional building costs in return for more eco-friendly cheaper to run housing. Our questionnaire did not deal anywhere with the issue of the eco-friendliness of commercial property. This question was, however, raised at our second public consultation on 20 March 2010 – in particular in connexion with Cornish Market World. It seems to us self-evident that commercial properties should be made eco-friendly too, within the bounds of the realistically possible.

We note that a sizeable minority of respondents indicated that they would like to rent allotments, should these be available. We are aware that the available land in St Blaise is very limited (though it might not be necessary to restrict the provision of allotments for St Blaise residents to land within the borders of the town). There is legislation regarding the responsibilities of town and parish councils over the provision of allotments. We will provide the results of our questionnaire on this issue to the Town Council.

Action

Short-term

In cooperation with organisers, St Blaise Town Council to ensure that existing leisure facilities for people of all ages in St Blaise and nearby are publicised as widely as possible.

St Blaise Town Council and Cornwall Councillors to ensure that Cornwall Council and those planning major developments in St Blaise are aware of the public appetite for additional leisure facilities.

St Blaise Town Council, with Cornwall Council, Environment Agency and other to identify measures that will encourage owners of commercial property in St Blaise to consider whether they could make themselves more eco-friendly at acceptable cost.

St Blaise Town Council to consider how to respond to residents who would like the opportunity to rent allotments

Medium-term

St Blaise Town Council to consider how best transport to recreational facilities for disabled residents could be provided, including whether this might be covered in any Town Bus service.

St Blaise Town Council to consider how best, in developing their website and proposed newsletter, existing facilities in the town and further afield might be drawn to residents' attention. Other potential outlets (local radio, etc?) to be considered as well.

St Blaise Town Council, with assistance from Cornwall Council and those who provide existing facilities, to undertake further research with both young people and the over sixties to establish whether their unfulfilled ambitions result from a lack of information on what is currently available, or because of a gap in current facilities. If the latter, to identify precisely what would be most highly appreciated. Bring results of this research to attention of those who might be able to assist in the provision.

Cornwall Council to undertake further monitoring of recycling habits to ensure that the level of recycling is maximised in St Blaise. Identify means of introducing a green waste collection scheme: and who might most suitably assume responsibility for this.

St Blaise Town Council to include in its plans for the extension of the Burrows Centre sufficient space to meet reasonable demands for additional or expanded recreational/community activities.

St Blaise Town Council to maintain liaison with Cornwall Council and major developers, to ensure that no opportunity to secure new facilities is overlooked.

Long-term

Cornwall Council, with St Blaise Town Council and those currently providing facilities, to establish durable mechanisms for monitoring use of/demand for the various recreational activities, so as to be able to respond in a timely fashion to changes in demand.

St Blaise Town Council and Cornwall Councillors to monitor Cornwall Council plans in the field of recreational and leisure activities, lest there should be opportunities to secure new publicly-funded facilities for St Blaise.

St Blaise Town Council and Cornwall Councillors to maintain liaison with Cornwall Council and major developers, to ensure that no opportunity to secure new privately-funded facilities is overlooked.

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
To have a clear understanding of the leisure and recreational needs of local people and the opportunities available.	• Publicise local leisure facilities	St. Blaise Town Council , Providers, Cornwall Council	Short-term
	• Ensure disabled people have access to leisure facilities		Medium-term
	• Active communication of St. Blaise Town Council news through website and other media and to publicise existing facilities		
Ensure the leisure needs of local people are met	• Conduct survey of young people and over sixties to ascertain needs	St. Blaise Town Council , Providers, Cornwall Councillors	Medium-term
	• Use to design leisure provision including Burrows centre		
	• Active liaison with new developers, leisure providers and Cornwall Council to ensure no opportunities are missed.		Long term
Environmental friendly businesses	• Work with local businesses to make them more eco-friendly.	Groundwork Trust , Eden Project, Community Energy Plus, St. Blaise Town Council, proposed Business Forum	Short term
Allotments for those who request them	• Consider how the demand for allotments could be met.	St. Blaise Town Council , Sensory Trust, CC Planning and Development Service, Eden Project	Short term
Increasing recycling percentages	• Support any further targeted campaigns from Cornwall Council • Encourage green recycling/ community composting	Cornwall Council	Medium Term

Shopping

"We used to have a bakery, but it has closed."

"I am worried about shops closing."

"We need more shops in High St."

"It would be good if we had a DIY shop here."

What we learned

Nine out of ten respondents told us that they would shop in St Blaise more often if there were more shops here, offering a wider range of goods. Responses to the questionnaire provided a substantial list of additions to the current shopping facilities that people would like to see. Most popular among these were clothes and shoes, butchery, bakery, hardware/diy and greengrocery. The view was expressed that St Blazey had grown significantly and could sustain its own shops. Some told us that they did not enjoy having to journey into St Austell to shop, especially during the summer months.

We asked specifically for views about the opening arrangements for the Cornish Market World. Slightly fewer than one in three thought that the current arrangements (effectively weekends only, with an additional day during summer months) were the most satisfactory. Some 40% felt that the market should be allowed to open on Wednesdays throughout the year, while more than a quarter were in favour of its being open seven days a week. One respondent called for it to be closed altogether. At our second public consultation on 20 March 2010, a link was drawn between extended opening hours and the need to ensure that the market made itself as eco-friendly as possible. We deal with this in slightly more detail in the leisure and the environment section.

Elsewhere in our consultations a number of respondents commented on what they described as a rather down-at-heel, tatty look to parts of St Blaise. They also drew attention to what they saw as problems over parking even in existing circumstances.



Assessment

The appetite for additional shopping facilities in St Blaise is gratifying, and could offer potential new business and employment opportunities for our residents. We do note, however, that over the years a number of local retail businesses have closed. We have no way of knowing the precise reasons for these closures, nor are we in a position to judge the extent to which trading prospects in our town may have improved. That is a matter on which those considering investing will doubtless wish to form their own judgements.

It is perhaps too early to say to what extent proposed new major developments at Par Lane, Par Docks and Carlyon Bay might affect local consumer demand, though it is appropriate here to draw attention to this additional potential. At the same time, it is relevant to note that customers are more likely to be attracted to an area that is inviting, clean and tidy. There may therefore be a case for identifying ways to enhance the environment for shoppers as well as residents.

The possible introduction of a Town Bus service (considered in the Transport section) could also have a bearing on the potential viability of new shopping ventures. It might help ease some of the parking problems previously identified, though it is unlikely of itself completely to solve these.

Though there is no consensus on the question of the opening arrangements for Cornish Market World, there is a two-thirds majority in favour of an increase of some sort over the current position. We recall that previous applications for increased opening from the owners of Cornish Market World were refused by the then Restormel Borough Council (it is said, because of concern not to damage the prospects for St Austell's White River Place). We have no wish to propose actions that could have a negative impact on other facilities. Nor, however, do we see any obvious or convincing reason why the residents of St Blaise should suffer for the benefit of those living elsewhere.

There is little doubt that Cornish Market World brings visitors – and their money – to St Blaise. And we see an argument that extended opening could bring in more of both. Furthermore, many of those living in St Blaise make use of the Cornish Market World for their own shopping. Extended opening hours might thus be of direct benefit to our residents – and could also go some way toward satisfying the demand for additional facilities discussed above. Here, too, the scope for inclusion of Cornish Market World on any future Town Bus route might be worth exploring.

Action

Short-term

St Blaise Town Council to inform Cornwall Council (Planners) and Cornish Market World of the results of this part of the questionnaire.

St Blaise Town Council to ask Cornwall Council to assist with identifying sources of advice for those who might consider opening new shops in St Blaise. In particular, seek contact with the private sector (eg Federation of Small Businesses) about what concerns might be most important to potential owners of new local retail businesses. Identify ways to ensure that all of this information, including that about the envisaged new developments, is readily available to potential investors.

Medium-term

St Blaise Town Council to ensure that feasibility studies for Town Bus include routes that would link residential areas with the shopping areas (including Cornish Market World).

St Blaise Town Council to seek assistance and support from Cornwall Council and other relevant bodies to make St Blaise a rewarding site for those considering opening new retail ventures.

St Blaise Town Council to seek assistance from Cornwall Council and others to identify ways and resources to enhance the shopping environment in St Blaise. In particular, to seek advice and help in addressing parking and other traffic problems (for more on this see the 'transport' section).

Ensure that new retail opportunities are appropriately advertised.

Long-term

St Blaise Town Council and Cornwall Councillors to monitor the attitudes of Cornwall Council and others towards the development of retail facilities in St Blaise, ensuring that no undue preference is given to other towns or parishes.

Cornwall Councillors to ensure that the commercial opportunities in St Blaise are fully reflected in any county- or region-wide campaigns undertaken by Cornwall Council or other agencies of local or national government.

St Blaise Town Council to consider ‘buy St Blaise’ and other campaigns to encourage residents fully to utilise, and thus support, the shopping facilities available to them in St Blaise.

St Blaise Town Council to maintain close links with the St Blaise retail business community and, to the extent possible, work with them to make the town as retail friendly as possible.

St Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors to exert pressure on those responsible to ensure that improvements in the shopping environment are maintained and, where possible, further enhanced.

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
Enable new retail business to set up in the town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform Cornwall Council of the plan outcomes. • Engage with the Economic Development specialists. 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council’s Economic Development section, Federation of Small Businesses	Short-term
Make the St Blazey shopping experience more rewarding and accessible to all...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance to avoid pitfalls for new businesses. •Town bus routes to be planned to facilitate shopping 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors, Cornwall Council’s Highways and Economic Development section.	Medium term
A vibrant local business environment that participates fully in the opportunities available in Cornwall.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure St Blaise is fully informed and involved by monitoring to ensure our fair share of any available funding or promotion. 	St. Blaise Town Council , Cornwall Councillors. The local business community.	Long term

Transport

“The Eden project is not linked to the local area. We need cycle/footpaths to improve access for locals, and to make St Blazey more readily a tourist resource for visitors to Eden.”

“What about the local coach company in your area that has been in St Blaise since 1947 same family. They do local services to Plymouth, Trago, Truro. Support your local firms.”

“We need a supported bus service for our area, which is reliable and accessible to the elderly, young mums and pushchairs, etc.”

What we learned

The vast majority of people (80%) told us that their main means of transport was the car. 16% rely mainly on bus services. 86% of those who work use their cars to get there. Notwithstanding this reliance on motor vehicles, 70% of respondents expressed concern about traffic, with heavy or speeding traffic and inconsiderate or illegal parking prominent among these. Dissatisfaction was also expressed about the state of the roads. The issues of speeding and parking are considered further in the community safety section.

So far as public transport is concerned, 89% of users considered the First Group services good or fair, and 95% of those who used Western Greyhound expressed similar views. Most people found the timetables convenient, and easy to read. The majority of users of both services said that they had not found the timetable easily available, and there were sizeable minorities who found the bus stops inconveniently situated.

Of those who use the train services from Par station, 93% found the services good or fair. However less than a third (29%) had noticed recent improvements in the services, and even fewer (16%) felt that they had enough information about off-peak fare reductions.

A small number of respondents told us that their children were unable fully to take advantage of the after-school activities available because of a lack of transport home afterwards.

A number of people pointed to the absence of any direct public transport link between St Blaise and the Eden Project.

Notwithstanding the general reliance on private motor vehicles, about half of our respondents told us that they would use a Town Bus service, were one to be introduced: mainly for shopping, visiting friends and relatives or visits to the doctor.

Assessment

The heavy reliance on motor vehicles is perhaps unsurprising given the nature and geographical situation of St Blaise, and the relatively large distances between schools, homes, places of work and other facilities.

Concerns about parking may reflect a lack of consideration by some motorists; but this in itself may be explained in large measure by a lack of adequate and convenient parking. Furthermore, identifying how to provide additional parking facilities in the right places is not easy in a built up area.

The problem of heavy and speeding traffic is complex. The A390 road, which is the principal route between Plymouth and Truro, splits St Blaise in two, bringing with it a large volume of traffic (including tourist traffic during the season and heavy lorries etc throughout the year). Other than the A390, roads tend to be narrow, which means that any build up in volume can cause congestion. The work done in recent years to Skew Bridge, on the A3082 Par Moor Road has eased the congestion previously caused by heavy vehicles travelling down Station Road in St Blazey and off into Par – but has resulted in a significant increase in heavy traffic on Par

Moor Road between the Britannia Inn roundabout and Par Docks. This situation risks being exacerbated should work go ahead to redevelop Par Docks and/or Carlyon Bay.

Speeding traffic is not, of course, only a concern on the A390 and A3082: St Blaise has its fair share of boy (and older) racers, whose disregard for the speed limits in residential and built up areas is a potential hazard.

The questions of speeding and of parking are considered further in the community safety section.

Responses on public transport were on the whole encouraging. St Blaise is better served by public transport than many other towns and parishes. This doubtless reflects in part the extent of demand, and thus the revenues received by the providers. Nevertheless the providers should be made aware of where our respondents see room for some improvement. There is also a need for the monitoring of work in these areas.

Despite the general satisfaction with public transport, there is significant potential support as well for a Town Bus Service. If this is to be a success, careful consideration will need to be given to routes, timetables, etc. There would seem prima facie to be a case for a Town Bus service including the Eden Project on its route. If this is so, then it might be worth considering whether the Town Bus service should be extended to cover areas outside St Blaise – eg Par Railway Station.

We did not seek, in our questionnaire, views on facilities such as cycle paths or more footpaths, though the issue was raised with us in our second consultation. Given the nature of the roads in the area, and the possible difficulty in finding suitable land, such provision may be problematic (though not necessarily impossible in all cases). Given the potential (as with a Town Bus Service) for reducing the use of motor vehicles on shorter journeys, however, the possibilities should be explored.

Action

Short-term

St Blaise Town Council to inform the public transport companies of our findings, and invite them to suggest how best the concerns over the availability of timetables and the convenience of bus stops might be addressed. Rail companies to be asked more clearly and effectively to publicise their off-peak fares.

St Blaise Town Council, with Cornwall Councillors and others as appropriate, to initiate urgent research into the viability of a Town Bus service, including possible routes, costs of operation and likely fare base and means of ensuring facilities for the disabled.

St Blaise Town Council to work with Eden Project and others to establish how best public transport links between the project and St Blaise can be established.

Devon & Cornwall Constabulary more closely to monitor speeding in the town.

Cornwall Council to provide greater coverage in St Blaise from parking enforcement officers.

Cornwall Councillors to bring public concern about the state of some of the roads to the attention of Cornwall Council, and seek confirmation that due attention is being paid to the need for remedial work.

St Blaise Town Council, with support from Cornwall Councillors to draw the attention of those responsible to the risk of existing problems with heavy and speeding traffic in parts of the town being exacerbated by major developments such as the Par Lane housing project, Par Docks and Carlyon Bay developments. Seek public statements of measures that will be taken to minimise these.

St Blaise Town Council to explore with local schools and Cornwall council what additional facilities might be provided to enable children resident in St Blaise fully to take advantage of the after-school activities available to them.

Medium-term

St Blaise Town Council, with assistance from Cornwall Council Highways Department, to monitor traffic problems related to major development projects, as these get underway and seek urgent corrective action such as traffic calming measures as appropriate.

Cornwall Council, St Blaise Town Council and other appropriate bodies to consider what additional measures can be taken to manage the parking problems in the town.

Long-term

St Blaise Town Council and Cornwall Councillors to consider how best to manage the long-term monitoring of traffic problems related to major development projects, and seek solutions for these as necessary.

St Blaise Town Council, with Cornwall Council, the Eden Project, the developers of Par Docks and others to conduct further research into the possibility of creating safe cycle paths and new footpaths. Canvass the views of the public about where these could best be established.

Vision	Action	Partners	Timescale
<p>Try to make public transport more responsive to residents needs</p> <p>Provide an effective town bus service.</p> <p>Public transport access to Eden.</p> <p>A reduction in speeding traffic and enhanced parking enforcement.</p> <p>Improvements in road maintenance.</p> <p>Measures to engineer out the traffic effects from major new developments before the developments take place.</p> <p>Enable St Blaise children to partake in after school activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask local transport providers for easy access to timetables, more appropriate bus stop locations and better publicity for off peak rail fares. • Detailed analysis of costs / fares / routes ensuring disabled access. • Work with Eden and others to find a solution. • Request the Police for increased speed monitoring and Cornwall Council for more hours from enforcement officers. • Bring defects to the attention of Cornwall Councillors. • Seek public statements of measures that will be taken to minimise these. • Discuss the issues with local schools and Cornwall Council. 	<p>St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors, Local bus companies and train operators. The Eden Project, . Cornwall Council's Education Dept, Highways, and Parking enforcement Local schools, Neighbourhood Police</p>	Short-term
<p>Measures to minimise the traffic effects from major new developments as they are being constructed.</p> <p>Alleviate parking problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Cornwall Council Highways to monitor traffic changes from major new developments and seek urgent means of redress. • Work with Cornwall Council and others to better manage parking issues. 	<p>St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Council Highways and Cornwall Councillors.</p>	Medium term
<p>Controlling the long term effects on traffic from major new developments.</p> <p>The creation of new safe cycle and footpaths.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Cornwall Councillors to alleviate problems that arise. • Research the possible routes and canvass the views of residents. 	<p>St. Blaise Town Council, Cornwall Councillors Developers of Par Docks, the Eden Project and others.</p>	Long term

