

# **GWELL**

## **The community prosperity and wellbeing plan for the Bude area**

### **Part 1 The Evidence Base**

**October 2021**



## Foreword

In some respects this plan is a landmark document, developed through partnership working and collaboration.

Firstly, it's a **three-tier plan** – from macro to micro - covering the *Bude Area Community Network* (extending from Morwenstow in the north, to St Gennys and North Tamerton to the south); the area of *Bude-Stratton* including Poughill; and a focus on the vitality of *Bude Town Centre*.

The idea emerged from a review meeting of the Bude-Stratton Strategic Programme, the schedule to the collaboration agreement signed by Cornwall Council, Bude-Stratton Town Council, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership, and Bude Coastal Community Team.

Secondly the plan was commissioned by Bude-Stratton Town Council and compiled by Bude Coastal Community Team – with extensive consultation with many local organisations and community groups.

This plan is different in that it isn't dated. It may have a publication date, but it's intended to be a living, dynamic, rolling plan which will be reviewed regularly and updated as time passes, and circumstances change.

The format is different too:

- Initially it's in two parts – the first being the **Evidence base** using demographic and other data to form the foundation on which to build. The second part provides the focus – the **Action Plan** – setting out 'What we can achieve together'.
- It is envisaged that updates will become part three – 'supplements' that reflect progress and incorporate revised demographic data.

### Acknowledgements

Compiling this plan would not have been possible without the many valuable contributions submitted during consultation from too many sources to list. This has helped develop a more cohesive approach than hitherto - a plan that seeks to improve the lives of local people and those who visit the area.

### The value of collaboration

This plan is for everybody who cares about Bude and the surrounding area. If the plan doesn't embrace what you feel needs to be done to improve the prosperity and wellbeing of the local community, please contact your local councillor – parish, town, or Cornwall – with your views.

**This Plan is 'work in progress' – being monitored, updated, and improved by each iteration. Contributions are always welcome.**

Amanda Tame, Mayor, Bude-Stratton Town Council

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## **Executive summary**

### **The local area**

- Bude and the surrounding parishes sit on a thin strip of land between the Atlantic Ocean and the Cornish border with Devon. At the sharpest edge of the impacts of climate change, we are more affected by peripherality than anywhere in mainland Britain.
- The area is amongst the most isolated in Cornwall being more than forty-five miles from the large urban centres of Truro, Exeter and Plymouth. The area's isolation and lack of connectivity to centres of employment, healthcare provision and Further Education continue to put us at a disadvantage.
- Climate change, the consequent frequency and intensity of storms, and rising sea levels will further test the resilience of our communities.
- Agriculture is the largest sector in the Bude area, accounting for more than a quarter of all businesses. The hotel and catering sector, and retail sector (which relies heavily on summer trade) employ two fifths of the workforce.

### **Community needs**

- Nearly two thirds of the Bude area population are classed amongst the 20% most deprived in the country with regard to access to housing and the availability of key services.
- 2021 has seen a marked increase in house and rental prices, and the eviction of tenants from rented property by those seeking to convert their housing into holiday accommodation. Without exaggeration it is fair to say we are facing a housing emergency.
- In 2019, the Office for National Statistics ranked Bude as one of the six most deprived towns in Cornwall. More than one third of all children in North Cornwall are living in poverty after housing costs are taken into consideration. Weekly earnings are £100 lower than the England average.
- One quarter of the working-age population have no qualifications, there are fewer people educated to degree level and fewer professionals than the England average.

### **Community strengths**

- Our Cornish heritage, language and identity give the area its distinctiveness, bind our communities and provide a unique selling point for tourism, culture and businesses.
- Levels of satisfaction and feelings of belonging are consistently reported as higher in the Bude area than on average across England, and people here are also considerably more engaged and more likely to actively participate in community life. Evidence of this can be found in the progressive community environmentalism for which the Bude area now has an enviable reputation.

- A number of national, and indeed international, environmental movements have begun life in Bude.
- The area has a rich and diverse cultural and creative sector including designers, artists, photographers, musicians and BAFTA nominated computer games developers. This sector is ripe for further support to help grow the area's economy.
- Bude has a strong and growing tourism sector – the quality of Bude's tourism offer has been recognised through national awards. Bude has a 'can do' attitude, with almost twice the number of self-employed people than the average across England.

### **What we want**

- In consultation undertaken with residents of the Bude area over the past ten years the following issues have been raised most commonly: *housing affordability, access to services, public transport, provision for young people, improvements to infrastructure, better communication, gaining to skills and qualifications, sustainability and environmental action.*

### **What others want**

- The following themes most commonly emerge from the strategies, policies and programmes of national and local government: *education/skills/qualifications, enhancing cultural assets, public transport connectivity, public realm improvements, housing, zero carbon.*

### **What is happening now**

- A range of strategies and project are already in place in the Bude area which seek to deliver social, economic and environmental improvements. These include (but are not limited to): *The Bude-Stratton Neighbourhood Development Plan, Bude-Stratton Strategic Programme, Bude-Stratton Climate Action Plan, Bude Town Team, Bude Climate Partnership Project, Pearl Exchange.*

### **What we can achieve together**

- There is a wide range of projects which could be developed to improve the wellbeing, living standards and environment of people in the Bude area. These projects align with the strategies of national and local government. It is for the wider Bude community to prioritise these projects and to allocate the resources needed to fund and deliver them.

## *Gwell* means ‘better’ in the Cornish language.

### Why is this document called ‘Better’?

Well, not least because *the community prosperity and wellbeing plan for the Bude area* is quite a mouthful! But more importantly, it’s called ‘**Better**’ because ultimately that is what it aims to deliver.

- It revises a previous Economic Plan for Bude - it aims to be **better** than that one.
- It acknowledges that we need to be **better** prepared to face coming environmental challenges.
- It aims to ensure that we are **better** able to seize economic opportunities.
- It sets a path for us to get **better** from the mental, physical, and economic impacts of Coronavirus.
- It acknowledges that we need to **better** reflect the diversity of our communities.
- It aims to deliver what we all want for our children and coming generations – a **better** future.

## Introduction

*Better – it's what we all want isn't it? Better services, better paying jobs, better public transport, better healthcare, better futures for our children.*

- *How do we achieve that?*
- *What can the wider Bude area do to bring about these longed-for improvements?*
- *Who should take the lead in seeking them?*
- *Who sets the priorities?*

The purpose of this Plan is to provide some answers to those questions.

We've got a long, hard road ahead of us. Even before the pandemic, too many local families were relying on our food banks; too many people could only dream of owning a home; too many people lacked the skills and opportunities to progress their careers; too many people were compelled to travel miles for basic services. Then added to these struggles came a global health emergency which, in the Bude area, has likely caused as much damage to the economy as it has to health. And just up the road is a challenge greater still – a changing climate with all the difficulties that brings.

So, what do we do? Do we sit and wait for others to help us – for others to raise our living standards - to provide genuinely affordable housing - to deliver the training, create the jobs and provide the services we need? We've waited long enough and mostly in vain. So, it's up to us to muster that same spirit which carried us through the pandemic, the spirit which established the Bude and Surrounding Areas Quarantine Support Group and donated to the Bude-Stratton Social Action Fund; the spirit which has seen the area take the lead in community environmentalism, and has kindled a renewed engagement in local democracy.

It's up to us to listen to the business community, seek its involvement and strive for better interaction and collaboration between those who can influence the future of the local economy. We must harness our self-reliance, tenacity, independence, and community strength to set a path for a better future, casting-off our reputation as a forgotten, neglected, overlooked area of Cornwall.

This Plan sets out the challenges and strengths of the wider Bude area and reviews the things that our communities have said they want to see. It looks, too, at the priorities of national and local government, and at the strategies and projects currently in place or in development in the Bude area. Finally, based on all that information, it sets out a series of actions we can take to address the social, economic, and environmental challenges that lie ahead. If we, as a community, can achieve just some of these actions, we can begin to make this area what we all so desperately want – *better*.

## Who's who and what's what?

**This Plan mentions different organisations such as local authorities and community groups. It also refers to documents which those organisations have produced. The following explains the most commonly mentioned organisations and documents.**

### Who

#### **Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership**

is a private and public sector partnership, driving economic strategy for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The LEP determines local priorities and undertakes activities to drive growth and the creation of local jobs.

#### **Cornwall Council**

is the principal local authority in Cornwall. It is responsible for things such as waste and recycling, highways and transport, planning, housing, and social care. Following local elections in May 2021, Cornwall Council will have 87 Councillors, three of whom will represent our area - a Councillor for Bude, a Councillor for Poundstock, and a Councillor for Stratton, Kilkhampton and Morwenstow.

#### **Bude Area Community Network**

Cornwall Council has created 19 Community Networks across Cornwall. Community Networks identify, agree, and drive forward local priorities for their area, and work together to promote wellbeing. They are comprised of our local Cornwall Councillors and Town and Parish Councillors. The Bude Area Community Network covers our part of Cornwall and includes the parishes of *Bude-Stratton (including Poughill)*, *Jacobstow*, *Kilkhampton*, *Launcells*, *Marhamchurch*, *Morwenstow*, *North Tamerton*, *Poundstock*, *St Gennys*, *Week St Mary* and *Whitstone*. This Plan covers the entire Bude Community Network area. For ease, we will use the term 'Bude area' to refer to the Bude Community Network area throughout this Plan.

#### **Bude-Stratton Town Council**

is the local authority for the towns of Bude and Stratton and the village of Poughill. It is responsible for things like the Castle and Bude Heritage Centre, the Parkhouse Centre and its carpark, Bude Library, and some parks, play areas and public spaces.

Following local elections in May 2021, Bude-Stratton Town Council will have up to 18 Councillors representing Bude, Stratton and Hele.

**Parish Councils** – there are ten Parish Councils in the Bude Area Community Network (see above). Parish Councils might be responsible for such things as village halls, play areas, bus stops, public toilets, and war memorials.

**Bude Coastal Community Team** is volunteer-led, not-for-profit Community Interest Company which works to maximise economic, social and environmental benefits for the local area via community partnership and collaboration. The Coastal Community Team secures funding for community projects and supports the Bude area business sector.

## What

The Local Enterprise Partnership has a document called **10 Opportunities – Towards a Local Industrial Strategy** which it describes as its '21<sup>st</sup> century pitch to Government'. The document identifies the 10 key sectors that play a critical role in growing the economy of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly now and in the future.

Cornwall Council has a range of documents which can help to inform this Plan. Those most relevant include:

**Gyllyn Warbarth – Together We Can – The Cornwall Plan 2020-2050** – this presents the results of a listening exercise undertaken by Cornwall Council which asked over 150,000 residents of all ages about the Cornwall they wanted. Overwhelmingly, the response was *a fairer, more inclusive Cornwall and a cleaner, greener Cornwall*. The Cornwall Plan sets out a *shared vision for our future, to guide recovery and renewal*.

**Gyllyn Warbarth – Together We Can – Localism in Cornwall – The Power of Community** – this document, produced in January 2021, outlines Cornwall Council's approach to 'localism', that is the idea that power should sit as close to the community as possible. It sets out how Cornwall Council has pledged to:

Share more control over assets and services by devolving these to local communities

- Involve communities more in decision making
- Work with communities to improve residents' lives
- Support communities to be more self-sufficient and resilient.

**Manifesto Awenek Kernow – Cornwall's Creative Manifesto – 2021-2025** – this sets out how Cornwall Council will work with the cultural and creative sector to maintain Cornwall's position as the UK's leading rural creative region. It is a mix of information, ideas and actions setting out a plan for the next 5 years, showing how the Culture and Creative Economy team at Cornwall Council will help the sector.

Bude-Stratton Town Council together with the Local Enterprise Partnership, Cornwall Council and Bude Coastal Community Team have developed a document called the **Bude-Stratton Strategic Programme**. This is a list of projects which these four organisations have committed to delivering in the Bude area.

Bude-Stratton Town Council has produced a document called the **Neighbourhood Development Plan**. This is primarily concerned with how land is used and developed in the area covered by Bude-Stratton Town Council. However, the document also has an Action Chapter which sets out priorities for other sectors such as education and employment, town centre and retailing, and heritage and conservation. In 2020, it was proposed to revise the

Neighbourhood Plan to enhance its policies and fill gaps that have been identified through its use since adoption. For example, since publication of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Town Council has adopted the 'Bude Green 5' development requirements<sup>1</sup>, and is eager to include these within a revised Plan. In 2020, the Town Council also produced a **Corporate Narrative and set out its Visions and Priorities**.

Bude-Stratton Town Council declared a Climate Emergency on 5th September 2019 and consequently has developed a **Climate Action Plan** which outlines steps that will be taken to address climate change. It has also commissioned a Carbon Audit as part of its Climate Action Plan commitment towards reaching carbon neutrality by 2030.

Bude Town Team is a group comprising local Town and Cornwall Councillors, representatives from the Bude's businesses and voluntary organisations, and North Cornwall's Member of Parliament. The Town Team is creating a **Bude Town Plan**, which will identify and support a small number of strategic projects that will bring economic prosperity to the town.

In 2018, Bude Coastal Community Team produced an **Economic Plan for Bude 2018-2023**. This examined the Bude area's strengths and weaknesses and detailed how different projects could drive economic development. Quite a lot has happened since the Economic Plan was first written, not least the Coronavirus pandemic. It was felt that the Economic Plan should be revised in light of these changes. This Plan is that revision.

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<sup>1</sup> Rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling; use of local sustainable building materials; photovoltaics for power generation and heating water; preference for permeable hard-standing materials; installation of renewable heat sources

## **Where we are**

### **The local area**

#### **Environment**

Bude and the surrounding parishes sit on a thin strip of land between the Atlantic Ocean and the Cornish border with Devon. At the sharpest edge of the impacts of climate change, we are more affected by peripherality than anywhere in mainland Britain.

Farmland predominates, containing tributaries of the river Neet which empties into the sea at Bude. The area has been identified as one of the least altered, anciently enclosed landscapes in Cornwall. The largest concentrations of population are Bude, Kilkhampton, Marhamchurch, Poughill, Stratton, Week St Mary and Widemouth.

Extreme weather is already a regular occurrence for our community. Our coastline is crumbling because of above average rainfall and winds. There is a pressing need to mitigate the impacts of increasingly fierce storm events.

The area is amongst the most isolated in Cornwall being more than forty-five miles from the large urban centres of Truro, Exeter and Plymouth. The nearest mainline train station is Bodmin Parkway (33 miles) and the nearest airport is Newquay (43 miles). The nearest large hospital and Further Education provision is in Barnstaple (36 miles). These destinations are at least an hour's car journey from Bude, and by no means are all of them served by direct public transport.

Our relative isolation is both a blessing and a curse. A blessing, as it is a key component in attracting visitors to the town, thereby maintaining the tourism industry - a curse as it puts the population a long way from major centres of employment, further education, training and retail. It also means, that with limited public transport provision, the vast majority of the area's estimated 500,000 annual visitors arrive by car. If we are to meet carbon reduction targets, this cannot continue.

#### **History**

*"Stratton was a market town when Bude was but a furzy down".*

Stratton takes its name from the Cornish 'Strasnedh' meaning the flat valley (stras) of the river Neet (Nedh). The earliest written record of Stratton dates to 880AD. A market town formed around the church and Stratton grew in importance, giving its name to a 'hundred', an administrative division of land which, together with Boyton and Bridgerule, included all the parishes of the modern day *Bude Community Network Area* with the exception of Poundstock and St Gennys.

The Blanchminster Trust, possibly Britain's oldest, extant grant giving charity, was formally founded in 1421, but may have yet earlier origins. Sir Ralph de Blanchminster of Binhamy, between Stratton and Bude, died in 1348 and it is possible that he left a sum of money to establish the charity. The parishes of the Bude area have produced other individuals and families that left their mark on history – for example, the Grenvilles of Kilkhampton who led

the Cornish in the seventeenth century Civil Wars; Thomasine Bonaventure who endowed Week St Mary with a grammar school; the ancient family of Penfound which still haunt Poundstock, and Morwenstow's Reverend Hawker who instigated the national revival of the Harvest Festival.

At some point in time, the parishes (or rather the parishioners) of the Bude area all gained nicknames. The origin of some is obvious – others less so!

Bude – <i>Mules</i>	Jacobstow – <i>Gentlemen</i>	Kilkhampton – <i>Rooks</i>
Launcells – <i>Geese</i>	Marhamchurch – <i>Bulldogs</i>	Morwenstow – <i>Men</i>
North Tamerton – <i>Minnows</i>	Poughill – <i>Cuckoos</i>	St Gennys – <i>Wreckers</i>
Stratton – <i>Mice</i>	Poundstock – <i>Stragglers</i>	Week St Mary – <i>Beggars</i>
Whitstone – <i>Owls</i>		

Until the beginning of the nineteenth century, Bude was but a small collection of cottages and fish cellars within the parish of Stratton. The growth of the town corresponded with visits from the well-heeled seeking an alternative destination to Revolutionary France, and with the building of the Bude canal and harbour, which was completed in 1825.

These two industries – tourism and shipping – grew side by side throughout the nineteenth century, with an expanding Bude eventually eclipsing its mother town of Stratton as the largest settlement in the area. The coming of the railway to Bude in 1898 put paid to the canal and shipping declined considerably during the early twentieth century. Yet, trains continued to bring cargo to Bude in the form of visitors. The railway was the catalyst for Bude's further growth as a fashionable seaside resort and for the social and environmental improvements which followed, such as the provision of fresh water, a new sewage scheme and the establishment of gas and electricity companies. The railway brought investment, employment, improved living conditions and, crucially, connectivity.

Bude gained a reputation as a high-class resort with amenities to cater for all tastes. However, the Second World War saw American troops billeted in the town's hotels, and the austerity of the post-war years meant Bude never fully regained the splendour of her Edwardian heyday. Bude lost her railway to the Beeching cuts in 1966, depriving the town of an important connection to destinations in the south west and to London. Increasingly, visitors arrived by car, but Bude maintained her reputation as a family seaside resort. A steady pattern of bustling summers and quieter winters developed.

### **Today**

As it has done for centuries, agriculture still predominates in most of our parishes. Indeed, it is the largest sector in the Bude area, accounting for more than a quarter of all businesses. Of course, tourism is also a vital component of the economy, with the hotel and catering sector, and retail sector (which relies heavily on summer trade) employing two fifths of the

workforce. Bude and its Tourist Information Centre (the most visited in Cornwall) have repeatedly won tourism industry awards, and until now, the area has escaped the second-home blight of Padstow and the exuberance of Newquay:

	<b>Second homes (2001)</b>	<b>Vacant dwellings (2001)</b>
Bude Community Network Area	395 (5.3%)	1,191 (14%)
Padstow & Wadebridge CNA	1,819 (16.5%)	3,735 (30%)
England average	0.6%	4%

	<b>Anti-social behaviour incidents (Dec 19 – Nov 20)</b>
Bude CNA	285 – 15.6 incidents per 1,000 people
Newquay CNA	923 – 30.6 incidents per 1,000 people
England average	27.6 incidents per 1,000 people

Today, the Bude area’s isolation and lack of connectivity to centres of employment, healthcare provision and Further Education continue to put us at a disadvantage – a disadvantage now exacerbated by the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic. Climate change, the consequent frequency and intensity of storms, and rising sea levels will further test the resilience of our communities.

Yet, if Coronavirus showed us anything, it demonstrated what the area is capable of when faced with an emergency. The tremendous work mobilised by the Facebook based Bude and Surrounding Areas Quarantine Support Group and its 3,300 members was a prime example of the resilience, tenacity, self-reliance and community spirit of the area. We found the strength that was needed to address the pandemic, we must now find that same strength to build a better future for one and all.

## **Facts & Figures**

### **Important**

The majority of the facts and figures presented below were drawn from the OCSI/Cornwall Council Local Insight Profile for the Bude Community Network Area generated on 1 February 2021. That Profile collates statistics generated over the past decade, with many drawn from the 2011 Census of England and Wales. Necessarily, some of the information presented may no longer fully reflect the current situation. Additionally, whilst some of the statistics report the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic, many of them were generated prior to the pandemic and, again, may not fully reflect the current situation. It would not be unreasonable to assume that in the case of *health and social care, deprivation and employment*, the current situation is somewhat worse than that presented here.

## People - headlines

 <p><b>Population</b></p> <p>The population of the Bude Community Network Area is 18,225.</p>	 <p><b>Health &amp; Social Care</b></p> <p>More than a quarter of all adults in the Bude area are classed as obese.</p>	 <p><b>Housing</b></p> <p>One fifth of all the houses in the Bude area have been built since 2000</p>
 <p><b>Transport</b></p> <p>People in the Bude area are amongst the furthest from rail services in the entire country.</p>	 <p><b>Crime</b></p> <p>The level of violent crime in the Bude area is half that of the average across England.</p>	 <p><b>Deprivation</b></p> <p>Even before COVID-19, Bude Food Bank provided help to over 1,200 families annually.</p>

## Population

The population of the Bude Community Network Area in 2019 was estimated as **18,225**.

Age	Population 2016	Population 2019	Increase (%)
0 - 15	2,920	3,126	7%
16 – 65	10,050	10,055	0.04%
Over 65	4,720	5,044	7%

There are 0.8 people per hectare in the Bude area compared to an average in England of 4.3. Over the past ten years, 818 houses have been built in the Bude area, and there is permission in place for a further 1,033. The Bude area has a disproportionately higher level of people aged 65+ (28%) compared to England. There are twice as many people aged 65-69 (16%) in the Bude area as there are those aged 20-24 (8%).

Bude suffers a net loss of people between the ages of 15 and 24. This is indicative of people leaving to undertake Further and Higher Education or to seek employment. It is not possible to gauge how many of these people eventually return to the Bude area, but the haemorrhaging of this age group is likely to be detrimental for Bude's growth and overall economy. Of those people aged 16 – 25 remaining in Bude, a higher percentage receive workless benefits than the average across England.

Repeatedly, studies demonstrate that people in the Bude area feel that local social relationships are strong. Likewise, surveys have shown that there is a stronger sense of belonging and a greater level of satisfaction among people in the Bude compared to the south west and England.

The Community Needs Index identifies areas with poor community or civic infrastructure, isolation, and low levels of participation in community life. In terms of 'connectedness' (connectivity to key services such as health, public transport, digital infrastructure, isolation and strength of the jobs market) the Bude area was more than three times worse-off than the south west and England. However, with regard to 'active and engaged communities' (civic and community activity, people engaged in broader civic life in the community) the Bude area was twelve times better-off than the south west and 24 times better off than England.

In the 2011 Census of England and Wales, 8.3% of the Bude area population recorded their national identity either as Cornish or Cornish and another identity (e.g., British). This was despite not having 'Cornish' as tick box option and having to tick 'other' and write-in 'Cornish'. In Cornwall as a whole, 14% of the population recorded their national identity as Cornish or Cornish and another identity in 2011. The absence of a Cornish 'tick box' within the Census is likely to under-represent the number of people who self-identify as Cornish. For example, in Cornwall the *Pupil Level Annual School Census* (PLASC) includes Cornish as an ethnic identity option. The percentage of those in Cornwall self-identifying as Cornish in the PLASC stands at over 50% today.

## **Health and Social Care**

The Bude area's distance from general hospitals (more than one hour's travel to Barnstaple, Exeter or Plymouth) is a significant concern, particularly given the area's growing and aging population. This puts us at a distinct disadvantage and exacerbates our carbon footprint. The provision of a new general hospital to serve communities in the Bude and Launceston area of Cornwall should be given serious consideration by policy makers, both to improve healthcare provision and reduce the frequency of car journeys.

The sustainability of the Minor Injuries Unit in Stratton is also major concern for residents. The ability to attract and retain staff for the Unit is made worse by the high price of housing/rent locally. In the recent past, Consultants from North Devon District Hospital would make day-visits to Stratton to see patients, but more recently this service has lapsed.

Statutory mental health and wellbeing services in the area are limited, often with long waiting times. Whilst there are a number of non-statutory mental health and wellbeing support groups in the Bude area, knowledge of them amongst the population at large is not high. More should be done to promote such groups through improved community communication.

Increased social prescribing could help to address both physical and mental health. Partnering with the burgeoning environmental sector in the area could be beneficial – for

example, there are significant health benefits to be gained from community food growing schemes, litter and plastic collecting endeavours and other environment focussed activity.

Bude has a higher percentage of Reception Year children classified as obese than both the south west and England. By Year 6 (11- and 12-year-olds), that percentage has fallen below that of both the south west and England. Yet, by adulthood, the Bude area's population once again has higher levels of obesity than the south west and England. Indeed, more than a quarter of the Bude area's adult population is classed as obese.

Does the higher level of obesity in under-5s point to a lack of opportunity for pre-school children to exercise safely? Nearly half of the Bude area's population is amongst the 20% most deprived in the country for living environments. Few rented properties in Bude and Stratton have gardens.

While as a percentage of the population, the Bude area has fewer binge drinkers and smokers than the average across England, it still has problems with alcoholism and drug use, and has a higher percentage of children aged 15 who smoke. Access to health services for people in the Bude area is significantly poorer than for those in England.

## **Housing**

Reflecting recent significant growth, one fifth of all the houses in the Bude area have been built since 2000. Yet, there is an unacceptably high level of deprivation in the Bude area with regard to access to housing and the availability of key services. Nearly two thirds of the Bude area population are classed amongst the 20% most deprived in the country in this respect.

This evidence suggests that despite a significant growth in house building, a majority of the Bude area's population cannot afford the houses being built. Further evidence supporting this can be found in the 'affordability gap' - the difference between house prices and the amount people can borrow. In the Bude area this gap for the average house was £113,474 compared to £42,272 in England. In the year from December 2019 to November 2020, the average house price (all types of housing) in the Bude area was 5% higher than in England.

Nearly half of the population of the Bude area (48%) are among the 20% most deprived in the country with regards to the quality of their housing, air quality and frequency of traffic accidents. On average in England, that figure is just 21% of the population. There are 6% of homes in the Bude area without central heating compared to an average of 3% across England.

2021 has seen a marked increase in house and rental prices, and the eviction of tenants from rented property by those seeking to convert their housing into holiday accommodation. These factors have exacerbated the housing situation in the Bude area, in Cornwall and across much of the UK. Without exaggeration it is fair to say we are facing a housing emergency. Homelessness has also increased, much of it hidden by those 'sofa surfing' at friends or relatives.

## Transport

People living in the Bude area amongst the furthest from the National Rail Network in the whole of the UK. Residents face a 4.5 hour, 100-mile round trip when travelling to Exeter by bus. Reliance upon car ownership in the Bude area is demonstrated by the fact that 85% of households own a car compared to 74% of households across England. Of pensioners in the Bude area, 83% have a car compared to an average of 59% of pensioners across England. In 2013, the average age of cars in Cornwall was 10 years, suggesting cars owned in the Bude area are likely to generate a greater level of CO2.

## Crime

Crime remains significantly lower in the Bude area than across England with 43 incidents per 1,000 people between December 2019 and November 2020 compared to an England average of 101 incidents per 1,000 people during the same period. In particular, incidents of violent crime and criminal damage were less than half that of the average across England, and burglaries four times less common. That said, Bude has not escaped the blight of 'County Lines' – the targeting of predominately young, local people by inner city criminals to take or distribute drugs.

## Deprivation

In 2019, the Office for National Statistics ranked Bude as one of the six most deprived towns in Cornwall. More than one third of all children in North Cornwall are living in poverty after housing costs are taken into consideration.

41% of children in the Bude area are classed among the 20% most deprived in the country with regard to their environment – that is to say those aspects of their environment that affect their physical wellbeing. The Bude area has a higher percentage of children living in low-income families than the average across both the south-west and England. Pre-COVID, the Bude Food Bank was assisting around 23 families per week or 1,200 per year. In 2018, the Bude area had a higher percentage of households living in fuel poverty than in England.

## Access to digital services

	<b>Bude area</b>	<b>England average</b>
Premises with Broadband speeds below the Universal Service Obligation	9%	2%
Average broadband download speed (Mbit/second)	22	45
Average broadband upload speed (Mbit/second)	4	6

## Economy - headlines

		
<b>Employment</b>	<b>Tourism</b>	<b>Skills &amp; Qualifications</b>
The Bude area has nearly twice the number of self-employed people as the average across England.	The Bude area receives an estimated 500,000 visitors a year.	The Bude area has a higher percentage of working age people with 5 GCSEs than England.

### Employment

In 2018, the median gross weekly pay in North Cornwall was £470, compared to a UK median of £570. In 2017/18, the annual net household income in the Bude area (before housing costs) was estimated as £26,765 compared to £31,905 in England.

Of the people living in the Bude area who are aged 16-74, 26% are in full-time employment compared to 39% of people across England. This points to the limited full-time employment opportunities in the Bude area, compounded by poor connectivity. Lack of connectivity – the ability to easily reach centres of employment - also probably accounts for the fact that the rate of self-employment in the Bude area (18% of the workforce) is nearly twice that of the England average (10%).

Between June 2018 and October 2020, the percentage of working age people in the Bude area claiming unemployment benefit jumped from around 1.5% to 8% as a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic. Likewise, the first lockdown saw Cornwall lose an estimated 27% of its total employment placing a yet greater strain on the economy. In April 2020, non-grocery sales in Bude were down by 67% compared with April 2019. Lending debt per head for small and medium sized enterprises in the Bude area even before the Coronavirus pandemic was £4,264 compared to an England average of £1,387 (March 2020).

### Largest employment sectors in the Bude area

Sector	
Retail	1,280 employees (17% of workforce)
Construction	861 employees (12% of workforce)
Education	759 employees (10% of workforce)

### Largest business sectors in the Bude area (eligible for VAT)

Sector	
Agriculture	26% of all businesses
Construction	11% of all businesses
Hotels and catering	11% of all businesses

The seasonality of employment in the Bude area is demonstrated by the difference in the number of vacancies notified to the Job Centre in July 2011 (178) and February 2012 (10). This seasonal discrepancy, a reflection of the importance of tourism to the local economy, is a perennial phenomenon. In May 2020, 13% of working aged people in the Bude area were claiming benefits for worklessness compared to 9% in the south west and 11% in England.

## **Tourism**

Whilst it is difficult to accurately determine, it is thought that the Bude area receives in the region of 500,000 visitors annually. The hotel and catering sector, and the retail sector, employ two fifths of the entire workforce in the Bude area. Extending the tourism season to take pressure off the summer months, and to provide year-round employment for sector workers, is seen as a priority. The Bude Jazz Festival provides a model for events which could attract visitors in low season such as surfing/food/arts/literary festivals.

Concern has been expressed in Bude regarding the proliferation of unregulated holiday accommodation. Equally, there is concern regarding a lack of skills within the tourism workforce locally. Suggestions have been made for a training centre for local tourism industry staff, ideally sponsored by local tourism businesses. This could provide qualifications helping to further professionalise the sector.

Tourism providers in the wider Bude area directly support many local businesses in the supply chain, including those in the food, digital, arts and electronic goods sectors.

A well-established surfing culture and economy, and a growing reputation for sustainability and environmentalism are two areas which could be further supported and marketed as part of the area's tourism offer - likewise, our Cornish heritage, culture, language and natural environment. It will become increasingly important to ensure that tourism benefits both the visitor and the sector worker equally. Regenerative, sustainable, authentic, balanced, measured tourism, available to all, is the goal.

## **Skills and qualifications**

One quarter of all working-age people in the Bude area have no qualifications. The percentage of people in the Bude area with a degree (23%) is slightly lower than that across England (27%), however, the percentage with 5 'O' Levels or GCSEs (19%) is higher than that across England (15%). This points to the disadvantage faced by people in the Bude area who have the ability but not the means to pursue further and higher education. Indeed, of those young people in the Bude area who turned 18 between 2010/11 and 2014/15, a smaller percentage (33%) entered higher education than the same cohort in the south west (35%) and England (38%).

In 2013/14, the average Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2-point score for pupils in the Bude area was slightly lower than that for the same cohorts in the south west and England. Yet, the Key Stage 4-point score was higher for pupils in the Bude area than it was for those in the south-west and England.

## **Community needs**

### **Collectively, what picture do these facts and figures paint of the Bude area?**

#### **Connectivity**

The Bude area suffers a net loss of people aged 15-24 and has a disproportionately high number of older people. This net loss must impact on the growth and economy of the area, as the most able leave to find better paying work elsewhere – a situation exacerbated by the area’s poor connectivity to centres of employment. Poor connectivity also impacts on healthcare provision, further education, and digital infrastructure, with significantly lower than average broadband speeds. It also necessitates a higher-than-average ownership of cars, which tend to be older than average and likely generate a greater level of CO2.

#### **Health**

The Bude area’s distance from healthcare services, and the sustainability of services in the community are significant issues. Provision of mental health services is limited and there are often significant waiting times between referral and treatment. Pre-school and adult obesity is compounded by poor living environments and poor access to green space. Maintaining a healthy weight remains an issue for a quarter of all adults in the Bude area.

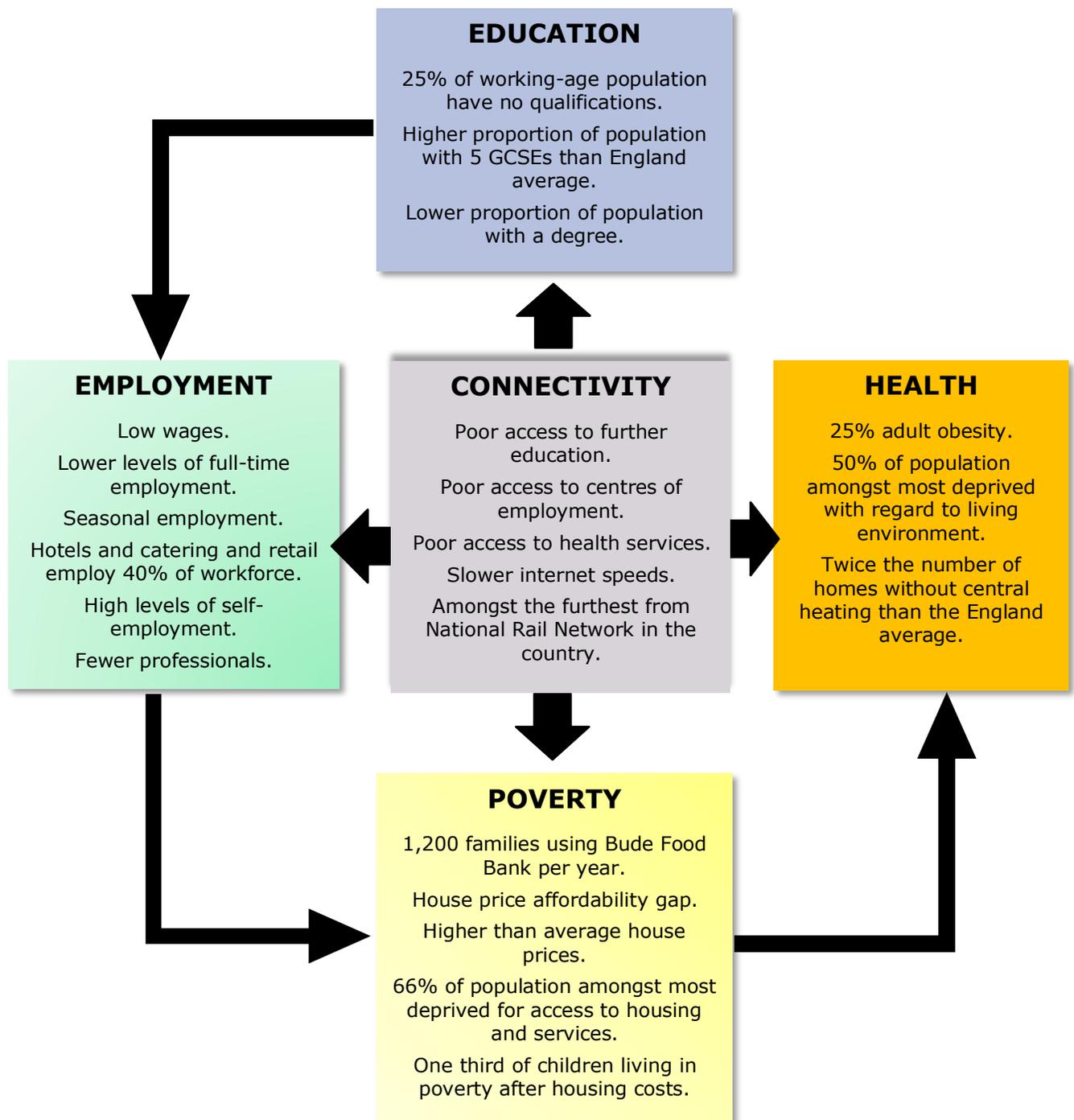
#### **Housing and deprivation**

Whilst a significant number of houses have been built since 2000 (one fifth of the total stock), two thirds of the area’s population are classed amongst the 20% most deprived in terms of access to housing and services, posing the question, for whom have we been building new houses? This situation is made worse by a considerably higher affordability gap in Bude, by higher-than-average house prices and by significantly lower weekly earnings. Housing remains a serious issue for many in the area. Deprivation generally continues to limit the lives of too many people. One third of children live in poverty after housing costs are taken into consideration, and over the year of the Coronavirus pandemic, Bude Food Bank has distributed approximately 150-180 food parcels per month – a 40% increase in demand.

#### **Employment, skills, and qualifications**

Lower levels of full-time employment, with weekly earnings £100 lower than the England average and significant employment seasonality contribute to the area’s deprivation. One quarter of the working-age population have no qualifications, there are fewer people educated to degree level and fewer professionals than the England average. Agriculture, construction, retail, and hotel/catering still dominate the business and employment sectors. The impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic have hit hard, with significantly higher levels of people claiming support for unemployment, and consumer spending greatly reduced. All sales in Bude for the week ending 14 April 2020 were down 46% on the same week in 2019.

The interrelation of needs in the Bude area.



## **Community strengths**

**Despite the disadvantages and problems faced by communities in the Bude area, which have been compounded by the Coronavirus pandemic, there are also tremendous strengths upon which we must build as we seek to recover and create a fairer, brighter future for all.**

From Goldsworthy Gurney, the Storm Tower, and Stratton Battlefield, to Bleujen Florists and An Mor Hotel, our Cornish heritage, language and identity give our area its distinctiveness, bind our communities and provide a unique selling point for tourism, culture and businesses.

Not only are levels of satisfaction and feelings of belonging consistently reported as higher in the Bude area than on average across England, but people here are also considerably more engaged and more likely to actively participate in community life. Evidence of this can be found in the progressive community environmentalism for which the Bude area now has an enviable reputation. A number of national, and indeed international, environmental movements have begun life in Bude.

The area has a rich and diverse cultural and creative sector including designers, artists, photographers, musicians, and BAFTA nominated computer games developers. This sector is ripe for further support to help grow the area's economy.

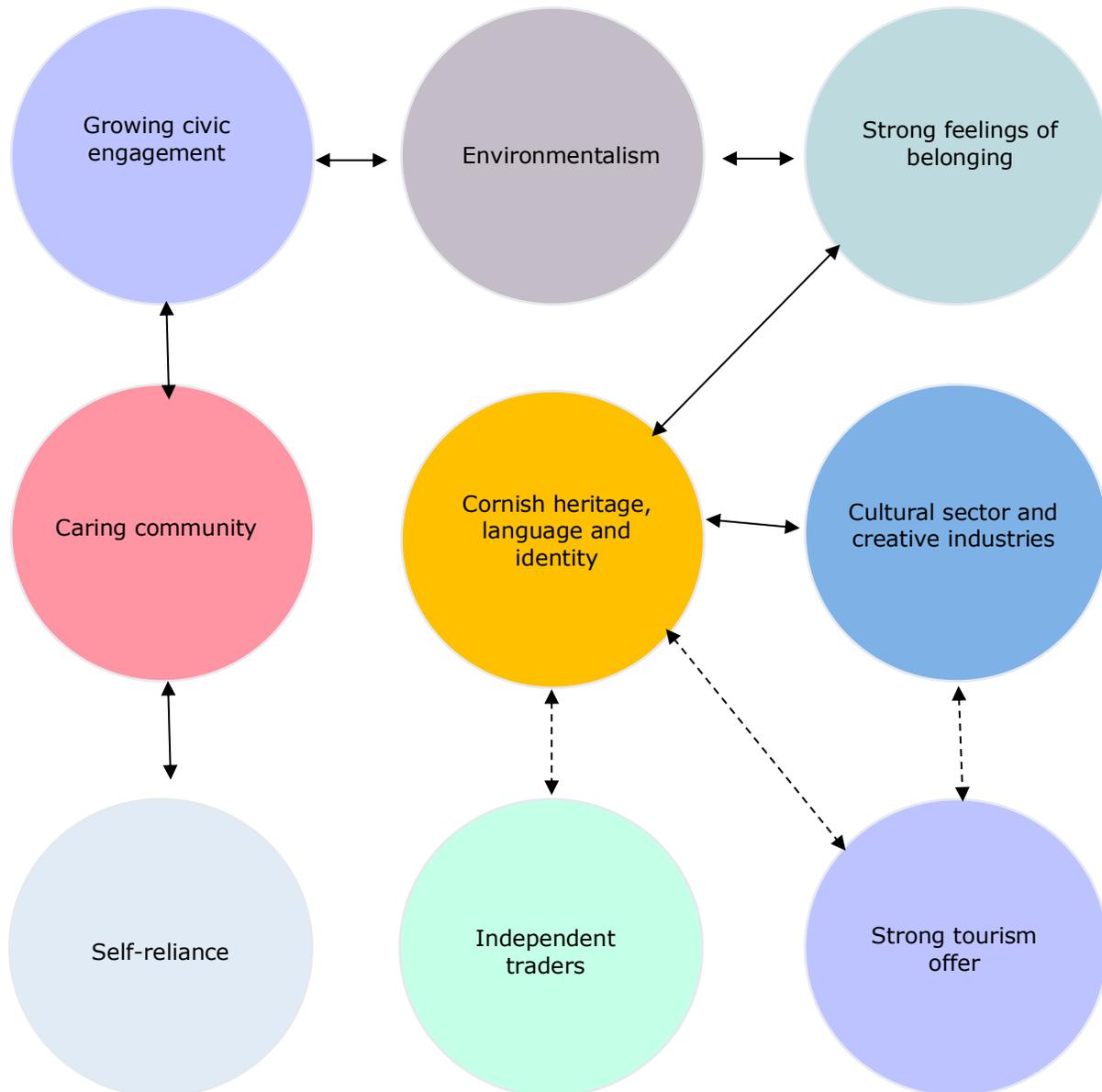
Bude has a strong and growing tourism sector – the quality of Bude's tourism offer has been recognised through national awards rating it Britain's 'Best Coastal Resort'. Bude now offers some of the highest quality accommodation and food. Managing visitor growth sustainably and ensuring that it equally benefits those who visit and those who work in the industry will be crucial challenges.

The Bude area has a largely independent, self-sufficient population. Our distance from Truro and other large towns has meant that its people have had to rely upon themselves. This 'can do' attitude has manifested in the community management of Bude Sea Pool and the setting-up of beach and town cleaning groups, amongst other things. The area has almost twice the number of self-employed people than the average across England, and Bude town has a good number of independent traders which add to our tourism offer.

A prime example of our community participation and engagement has been the tremendous work mobilised by the Facebook based *Bude and Surrounding Areas Quarantine Support Group* with its 3,300 members. The Group, on a purely voluntary basis, coordinated support to the isolated, vulnerable, sick, housebound, and needy throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, demonstrating to the full that old Cornish adage of 'One and All'. Likewise, a Social Action Fund, established to raise funds for groups helping people in the Bude area indirectly affected by the Coronavirus pandemic, raised over £9,000 from local people and Councillors in a little over three months.

It is these actions, and a thousand other acts of selflessness and caring, which have carried us through the darkest days of the pandemic. And it is this spirit, this self-reliance, this community strength which we must harness to rebuild after the pandemic. There must be no 'going back to normal' for our communities - they deserve so much better than that.

### The interrelation of community strengths in the Bude area.



Dotted line = connections that could be strengthened.

## What we want

### Consultation

**We have seen the issues with which our communities struggle and the collective strengths which they possess. What then are the aspirations of our communities – what do they need to address their concerns and to build on their strengths? Over several years local organisations have sought the views of our communities, and the collected results of that consultation are presented below.**

The results below are based upon the findings of the following consultation:

**Parish Plans of Marhamchurch (2008), Launcells (2009) and Jacobstow (2010).**

These documents set out the priorities and aspirations of parishioners based upon consultation. Whilst the Parish Plans are now at least ten years old, they can still offer an insight into the issues and aspirations of communities in our area. Some Parishes in the Bude area have now begun the process of developing Neighbourhood Development Plans which will supersede Parish Plans and have a stronger focus on land use and development.

**Bude-Stratton Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016 – 2030.** A public referendum held on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017, overwhelmingly approved the adoption of Bude-Stratton Town Council's Neighbourhood Development Plan. The process of drawing the Plan together involved extensive consultation with the community, which provided an opportunity for local people and organisations to develop their own ideas about the area, and for these ideas to be formally adopted in the Cornwall Local Plan.

**Shaping My Community Event – February 2019.** A very well-attended consultation event was held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 'The Venue', Bude under the title *Shaping My Community*. Organised through Bude Coastal Community Team, Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum and Neetside Community Centre, the event led to the establishment of two working groups – one looking at education, training and skills, which later evolved into Transition Bude, and another exploring community communication which developed the idea for a database and calendar of local events and activities. In July 2021, a funding application to establish such a database/calendar was submitted to the National Lottery Community Fund's *Places Called Home* grant programme which is being delivered in partnership with Ikea.

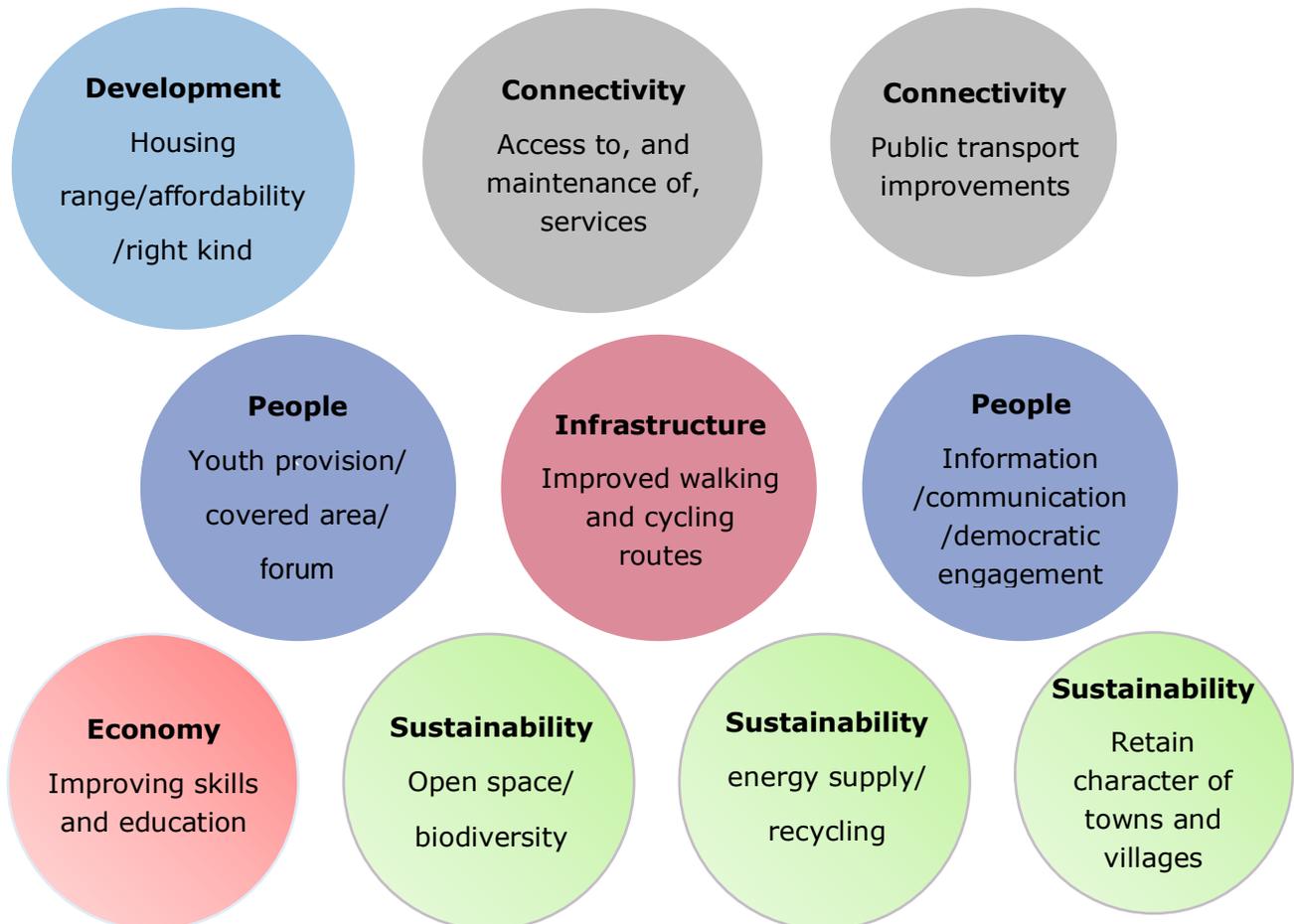
**Creative Conversation.** In August 2020, Bude Coastal Community Team hosted a socially distanced 'Creative Conversation', which saw a small number of local people with an interest in culture and the creative industries give their views on Cornwall Council's *Creative Manifesto*. Leading on from this, Bude Coastal Community Team reached out to, and surveyed, a wider selection of individuals and businesses in the sector through a *Bude Creatives* Facebook group. Specifically, the membership of the Bude Creatives group was asked its views on the prospect of establishing a 'creative hub' for the Bude area.

**Reimagining Bude Vision Survey.** In October 2020, Transition Bude published the results of a consultation exercise it undertook online throughout the previous month. They asked people living in the Bude area how they felt about returning to 'normal', or forging a new future, as the pandemic eased. More than 225 survey responses were received from people of all ages. Necessarily, the survey had a particular interest in sustainability and many of the questions interrogated attitudes around that topic. Two online events were also held as part of the consultation exercise. Reflecting the area's demographics, the greatest number of responses came from those aged over 60 (47%). Whilst some of the responses were received from people living outside the Bude area, the majority (71%) were from those within it.

**Bude-Stratton Strategic Programme.** In November 2020, Bude-Stratton Town Council undertook a consultation exercise to gauge the public's views on, and to help prioritise, the Bude-Stratton Strategic Programme. The consultation asked 26 questions covering all aspects of the Strategic Programme. A total of 247 responses were received.

### Common themes

The following themes were raised most commonly through the consultation outlined above. *The larger the circle, the more commonly the issue was raised:*



**Let's look at these themes in more detail. Necessarily, there is an element of overlap in the things that people said they wanted to see when consulted, however, we can loosely group responses under the following headings:**

## People

- Overwhelmingly, there were calls for greater provision for our young people – be that specific things such as a skate park, or generally the greater involvement of younger people in decisions affecting the Bude area. Improved play areas and covered areas in which young people of all ages could congregate were also called for.
- A desire for greater democratic awareness, involvement and engagement was expressed more than once when our communities were consulted, as was the need for information about activities, events, and volunteering opportunities. Improving communication generally across the Bude area was a common theme. Maintaining local services such as Post Offices, banks and libraries was also raised by those consulted, as was the need to address mental health.

## Economy

- There have been repeated calls for programmes to increase the skills and qualifications of local people, to widen educational opportunities, bring Higher and Further Education closer to our communities and to provide workplace training. Likewise, consultation showed that people wanted greater employment opportunities which were not solely dependent upon tourism.
- The concept of a cultural hub – a place or places bringing together those working in the cultural and creative sector – has proved popular. Such a model, like that at [Krowji](#) in Redruth, could help to diversify and strengthen our economy. Indeed, the provision of office space generally has been raised through consultation, as has assistance for people wishing to work from home.
- Enhancements to Bude town centre, including the provision of a Town Centre Manager, market stall space for traders and potential pedestrianisation were issues raised through consultation.

## Connectivity

- The issue of public transport and how it could be improved has been raised repeatedly in consultation. Improved connectivity between locations and between different forms of public transport has been called for. There is strong support also for the reinstatement of rail transport closer to the Bude area, if not to Bude itself.
- Repeatedly, the issues of pedestrian safety, maintaining footpaths and creating new walking and cycle routes has been raised in consultation. Providing alternative means of connecting places within the Bude area seems a popular idea. Improved access to healthcare services is a recurring topic in consultation. Roundtrip journeys of four or more hours to Plymouth or Exeter for healthcare provision are not uncommon for

residents of the Bude area. Better provision of in-person or remote, 'virtual' healthcare services have been requested.

- People have said that they wanted a broader range of community activities and better communication of existing activities and events. Equally, they have asked for more information about funding opportunities for community groups.

## **Infrastructure**

- Consultation showed that there was wide-spread concern that the scale of housing development was not being matched by the provision of infrastructure – healthcare, roads, school capacity, sewage treatment etc. Maintaining a viable community has been a genuine concern for people in the Bude area.
- There were calls for new recreational space to be provided in the parishes of the Bude area, and there was agreement that open space, Conservation Areas, coast, footpaths, and historic buildings should all be protected. Improvements to the public realm of Bude town centre were also suggested.

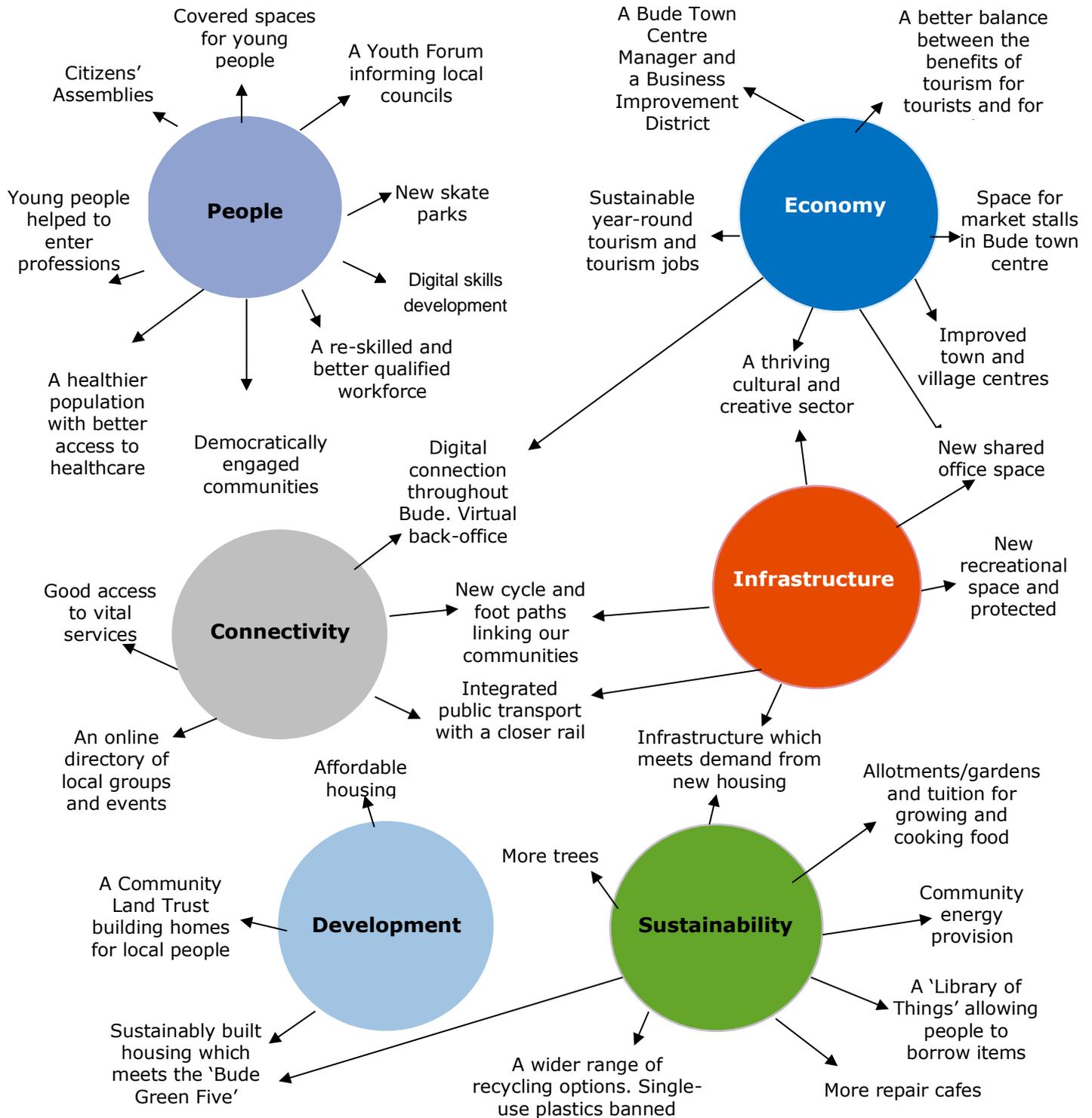
## **Development**

- The issue of housing, the right kind, built in the right place, at the right price and for those most needing it locally has been the most commonly raised issue in consultation over the past decade. Despite high levels of house building, a majority of residents of the Bude area remain amongst the 20% most deprived nationally in terms of access to housing and services.
- Protecting green-field sites and seeking to build with the least impact on the environment - implementing the 'Bude Green Five' principals adopted by Bude-Stratton Town Council – was seen as important. These are rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling; use of local sustainable building materials; photovoltaics for power generation and heating water; preference for permeable hard-standing materials; installation of renewable heat sources.

## **Sustainability**

- Not surprisingly, for an area which has set the bar for community environmental action, issues of sustainability have featured strongly in response to consultation. Requests for improved recycling opportunities have been made. As have suggestions for group buying of food and energy provision.
- Sustainable means of travelling to work have been requested, as have grants to help households convert to more sustainable forms of energy. Providing education on growing and cooking food, planting more trees and generally improving the biodiversity of the area were issues raised.

**Bude in 2031-** Imagine we were able to address the concerns of our communities and meet the needs they expressed through consultation – what could the Bude area look like ten years from now?



## What others want

**We've explored the priorities of the people of the Bude area – the things they said they wanted. What, then, are priorities for national and regional government? What are the strategies and funding programmes for recovery, renewal, and growth?**

### Central Government

The House of Lords Select Committee on the Regeneration of Seaside Towns and Communities published its report on **The Future of Seaside Towns** in April 2019. There are striking similarities between the recommendations in the Future of Seaside Towns report (*italicised below*) and the issues raised by communities in the Bude area during consultation. For example:

**People** - *"Limited access to education, in particular to FE and HE institutions, is severely curtailing opportunities and denting aspirations for young people in some coastal areas...scope for flexible access both to further and higher education, such as online, part-time and distance learning, must therefore be part of the solution".*

**Economy** - *"The creative industries have a clear role in supporting seaside towns to diversify their economies and enhance their local cultural assets. Capital investment must be made in the context of its impact on the place generally and be monitored and evaluated accordingly".*

**Connectivity** - *"Inadequate transport connectivity is holding back many coastal communities and hindering the realisation of their economic potential. Emphasis should be accorded to isolated coastal communities which are at 'the end of the line'".*

**Infrastructure** - *"We consider that the restoration and enhancement of the public realm and of cultural heritage assets through capital investment is of paramount importance in supporting the wider economy in seaside towns and recommend that the Government takes this into account as part of their ongoing review of local authority resources".*

**Development** - *"We recommend that the Government pilots the introduction of Housing Action Zones...to support housing regeneration in coastal areas".*

**Sustainability** - *"A wide range of benefits may be provided by investment in coastal protection, and we highlight the positive impact that such schemes can have upon the public realm and the visitor economy".*

**Build Back Better** (March 2021) is the UK Government's published proposal to support economic growth through investment in infrastructure, skills, and innovation. It seeks to tackle long-term problems and deliver growth that creates high-quality jobs across the UK.

It focuses upon three core pillars of growth – infrastructure, skills, and innovation, and is guided by the requirements to:

- Level up the whole UK
- Support transition to Net Zero
- Support the vision for Global Britain, which includes the UK's 2021 presidency of the G7, with its Leaders' Summit to be held in Cornwall.

Supporting the aspirations outlined in the Build Back Better plan are a range of funding programmes. These include:

**The UK Community Renewal Fund** – This £220 million programme is designed to prepare communities for the ending of European Union Structural and Investment Funding – in essence it is a pilot version of the forthcoming **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** which launches in 2022. The Community Renewal Fund will focus on revenue (activities) rather than capital (infrastructure) and will support skills improvement and employment chances. It has four specific priorities:

- Investment in skills – for example, work-based training
- Investment in local businesses – for example, encouraging businesses to be more innovative
- Investment in communities and place – for example, promoting rural connectivity
- Supporting people into employment – for example, by helping people to gain basic skills

The Shared Prosperity Fund will likely have very similar priorities to the Community Renewal Fund and will have a budget of around £1.5 billion per year. Of the Community Renewal Fund, the Government says: *"We are interested in bids that build on local insight and knowledge, and project proposals that align with long-term strategic plans for local growth, target people most in need and support community renewal"*.

**The Levelling Up Fund** – This place-based fund will make £4.8 billion available up to 2024 for infrastructural projects which improve everyday life for people. This could be investments in transport improvements, high street and town centre regeneration or culture and heritage projects. The Fund will be delivered through local authorities as 'gate keepers', with all applications requiring the backing of the local Member of Parliament. Of the Levelling Up Fund, the Government states: *"Investing in infrastructure has the potential to improve lives by giving people pride in their local communities; bringing more places across the UK closer to opportunity"*.

**The Community Ownership Fund** – This is a new £150 million funding opportunity which aims to ensure that local communities can support and continue to benefit from facilities and amenities. The Fund has operated from June 2021, allowing community groups to bid for up to £250,000 matched funding to help them purchase or take over the operation of facilities at risk of being lost. The Government says: *"The Community Ownership Fund will help*

*ensure that important parts of the social fabric, such as pubs, sports clubs, theatres and post office buildings, can continue to play a central role in towns and villages across the UK”.*

## **Local Enterprise Partnership**

The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership has developed a (draft) **Local Industrial Strategy**, which is awaiting sign-off by the UK Government. The Local Industrial Strategy has a vision that *“In 2030, the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly creative and carbon-neutral economy will be realising opportunities for its people, communities and businesses to thrive, benefiting the environment and providing an outstanding quality of life for all”.*

To achieve this vision, the Local Industrial Strategy seeks to deliver: Inclusive growth: Enabling as many people as possible to contribute to, and benefit from, economic growth – and – Environmental growth: Reversing environmental degradation, restoring nature, and seeking to protect businesses and communities from the impact of climate change.

And this will be delivered through leveraging the: Creative economy: Using our cultural distinctiveness, innovation, and creativity to improve productivity through our innovation, ideas and creative expression – and – Clean and circular economy: Using our unique opportunities to transition to a circular and regenerative economy and identify natural solutions and innovations to meet the challenge of climate change.

The Local Industrial Strategy does not replace the other plans and strategies which the Local Enterprise Partnership has developed, for example the **Vision 2030** which focuses on three areas:

- - Business – innovation, creativity and productivity led growth
- - People – inclusive growth and building great careers
- - Place – vibrant communities and global presence

These three areas are further sub-divided and have the following specific aims which are pertinent to this Economic Plan. For example:

- **Innovation and creativity** - STEAM based skills (science, technology, engineering, arts, and maths).
- **Productivity Led Growth**- Suitable workspace
- **Inclusive Growth** - Support the unemployed or on low pay to gain skills and training.
- **Building Great Careers** - Ensure that young people living in all parts of Cornwall and Isles of Scilly can access further and higher education
- **Vibrant communities** - Promoting our world-class cultural environment
- **Global presence** - Equip Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to attract new investment

In 2017, the Local Enterprise Partnership also published its **10 Opportunities** prospectus focusing on ten key sectors that can play a critical role in growing the economy of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly now and in the future. It is sensible to draw attention to these ten opportunities in this Economic Plan, as the Bude area could be well placed to take advantage of several of them. They are: *Creative, Space, Energy, Digital, Agri-food, Tourism, Marine, Mining, Aerospace, eHealth.*

## **Cornwall Council**

In the autumn of 2020, Cornwall Council published a document called **Gyllyn Warbarth – Together We Can – The Cornwall Plan 2020-2050**. This presents the results of a listening exercise undertaken by Cornwall Council which asked over 150,000 residents of all ages (more than a quarter of the population) about the Cornwall they wanted.

Overwhelmingly, the response was *a fairer, more inclusive Cornwall and a cleaner, greener Cornwall*. One of the most common calls for action from those surveyed was “A Cornwall less reliant on tourism”.

The Cornwall Plan sets out a *shared vision for our future, to guide recovery and renewal*, and has the following aspirations for 2050:

- A creative, carbon zero economy
- Sustainable food, land, and seas
- Thriving places with decent houses
- Education, equality, and entrepreneurship
- Healthy, safe, and resilient communities
- A digital revolution for sustainable living

In November 2020, Cornwall Council released its **Manifesto Awenek Kernow – Cornwall’s Creative Manifesto – 2021-2025** – setting out how it will work with the cultural and creative sector to maintain Cornwall’s position as the UK’s leading rural creative region. The document has 10 key actions and commitments which include:

- Cornish nationality - establishing measures of support, and an investment programme, for Cornish language and culture
- Creating hubs – supporting the development of creative hubs across Cornwall
- Sector-led networking - supporting the establishment of new sector networks promoting Cornwall’s creative businesses and community organisations

In January 2021, Cornwall Council published **Gyllyn Warbarth – Together We Can – Localism in Cornwall – The Power of Community**. This document outlines Cornwall Council’s approach to ‘localism’, that is the idea that power should sit as close to the community as possible.

It is an ambitious and forward-thinking document that sets out how Cornwall Council will empower Town and Parish Councils, local groups, and organisations. Amongst its key recommendations are the following:

- Continue to give more powers and control over local assets and services to the communities that use them
- Provide more opportunities to encourage / support / facilitate environment focussed volunteering
- Enable and empower local people, local councils, and the voluntary and community organisations to play an active role in making decisions and delivering what their community needs

Cornwall Council declared a climate emergency in January 2019 and committed to preparing a report outlining the action needed to meet carbon neutrality by 2030. In preparing the report, Cornwall Council consulted thousands of Cornish residents. The final **Climate Change Action Plan** was formerly adopted in July 2019 and sets out measures to support a just transition to carbon neutrality. Some of the actions within the Climate Change Action Plan align with the aspirations that people in the Bude area have expressed through consultation. For example:

- *Accessing nature and active travel – we will establish how we can increase the use of the Public rights of Way Network for active travel and increase the connection and understanding residents have with nature through their ability to access natural spaces in urban, rural and coastal areas*
- *Coastal management – we will identify and support where there are opportunities for carbon sequestration in coastal areas and where management of natural processes can aid flood defence and reduce coastal erosion*
- *Delivery of a Cornwall-wide walking and cycling trails network including town-wide cycling networks*
- *We will support residents, landlords, and community buildings to reduce emissions in our homes through exploring opportunities for encouraging solar panels installations on suitable roofs in combination with energy storage solutions*

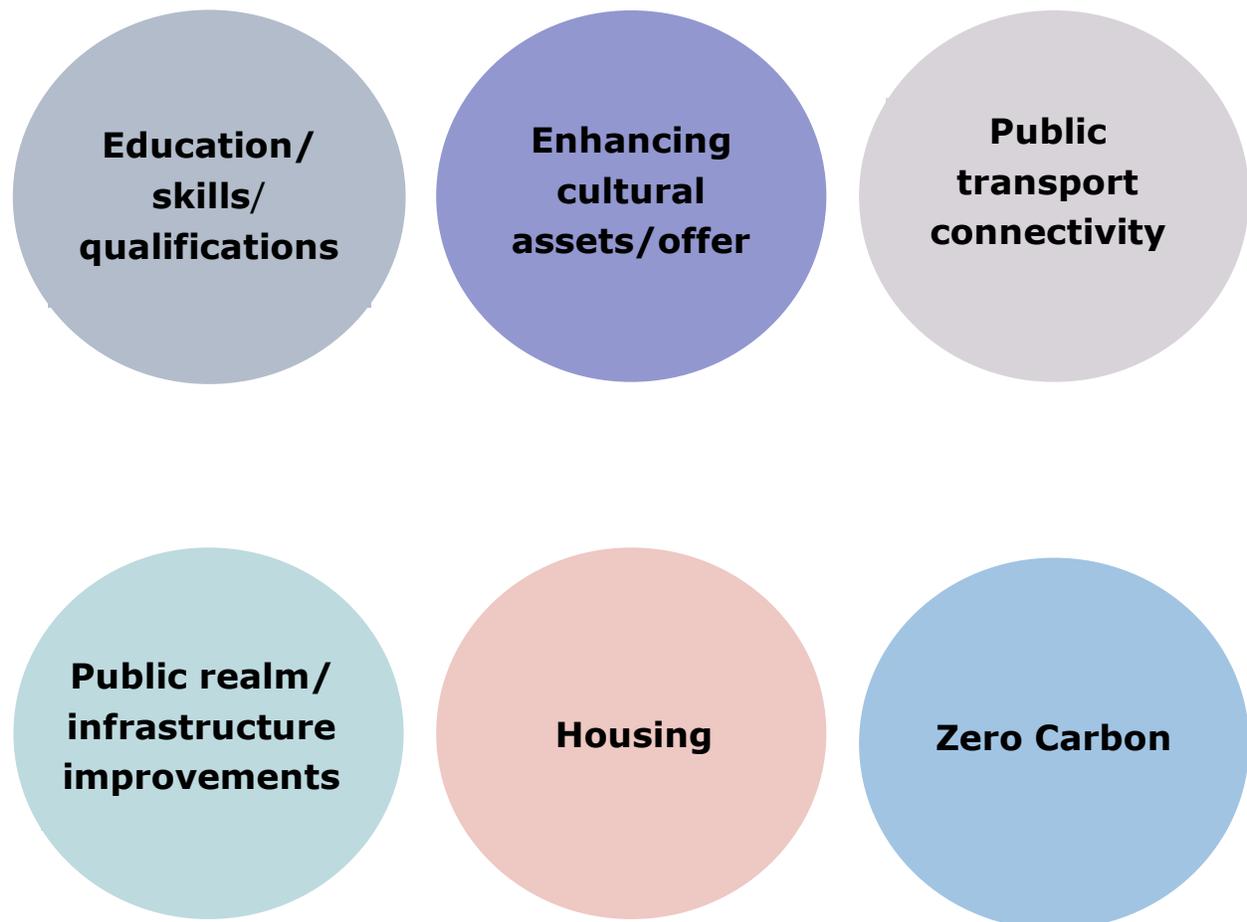
Cornwall Council's **Environmental Growth Strategy 2015-2065** offers a ground-breaking approach to the way in which Cornwall's environment will be regarded and cared for in the future. Its vision is that 'In 2065, Cornwall's environment will be naturally diverse, beautiful and healthy, supporting a thriving society, prosperous economy and abundance of wildlife.' Some of the targets outlined in the Strategy, and the means to meet them, correspond with what people in the Bude area said they wanted to see, for example:

- People are connected with Cornwall's nature and culture
- Effective collaboration between arts, culture, heritage, and the natural environment sectors to communicate the importance of Cornwall's environment
- An overall increase in the provision of goods and services from natural systems
- Good quality housing that is carefully located, planned, designed, and constructed

- Opportunities, ability, and access to outdoor spaces for education, exercise, and recreation
- Activities to create environmental growth which enhance health and wellbeing outcomes
- The development of circular, low carbon economy which maximises resource efficiency

## **Common themes**

**Which common themes emerge from the strategies, policies, and funding programmes of national and regional government?**



## What is happening now

We've looked at the current social and economic situation of the Bude area and established our needs and our strengths. We've reviewed the things that local people have said they wanted to see, and we've explored the latest government strategies and funding opportunities. Let's now look at what is already happening in the Bude area – the strategies in place and some of the projects being delivered and developed.

### Strategies and plans

#### Neighbourhood Development Plans

Bude-Stratton Town Council adopted a **Neighbourhood Development Plan** covering the parishes of Bude, Poughill and Stratton in February 2016. In addition to its specific policies in areas such as housing, education and transport, the Plan has an Action Chapter which highlights *activities that can be taken forward in other ways by organisations and institutions that have the appropriate mandate in the Bude-Stratton area*. These include (but are not limited to):

#### Housing

- Conversion of existing buildings/refurbishment of old, unused buildings
- Set up a Community Land Trust for delivery of community-led housing

#### Education and economy

- Make buildings more energy efficient
- Set-up renewable energy projects that provide local employment (including community owned renewable energy projects)
- Identify specific opportunities for new community food growing spaces
- Encourage and promote green tourism

#### Services and facilities

- Improve bus services locally to other centres and to railway stations
- New GP medical centre for Bude and Stratton

#### Town centre and retailing

- Improve and enhance the Triangle area (Blanchminster Square)
- Bude-Stratton Town Council and Cornwall Council to support investment in public transport, including railway re-instatement

#### Heritage and conservation

- Improve Public Rights of Way – foot/cycle paths
- Landscape and plant trees on road verges

In 2020, it was proposed to revise the Bude-Stratton Neighbourhood Development Plan to enhance its policies and fill gaps that have been identified since its adoption. For example, since publication, the Town Council has adopted the 'Bude Green 5' development requirements and is eager to include these within a revised Plan. However, revision of the Plan has been postponed until there is further clarity about proposed Government changes to planning legislation.

As of April 2021, the parishes Jacobstow, Launcells, Marhamchurch, Poundstock, St Gennys and Week St Mary have been approved as designated *Neighbourhood Development Areas* – meaning they can now proceed with producing Neighbourhood Development Plans. Understandably, the outbreak of Coronavirus has delayed this as, again, has the uncertainty over planning legislation changes.

### **Bude-Stratton Strategic Programme**

Bude-Stratton Town Council together with the Local Enterprise Partnership, Cornwall Council and Bude Coastal Community Team have developed a document called the **Bude-Stratton Strategic Programme**. This is a list of projects which these four organisations have committed to delivering in the Bude area. Projects within the Programme include (but are not limited to):

- Delivery of local cycle network
- Crooklets 'wheeled sports facility' (skate park)
- Relocation of the Storm Tower at Compass Point
- Public realm improvements at Bude Triangle (Blanchminster Square)
- Bude Creative Economy – supporting and strengthening Bude cultural/creative economy
- Skills and education – improving the skills of local workforce

### **Bude-Stratton Town Council Visions and Priorities**

In 2020, the Bude-Stratton Town Council produced a *Corporate Narrative* which set out its **Visions and Priorities**. One of the priorities identified includes nurturing *the economic wellbeing and viability of the area through collaborations with Cornwall Council, local businesses, and community groups*. Tasks identified within the Visions and Priorities document include (but are not limited to):

- Investigate the potential to pedestrianise Queen Street in Bude
- Transfer existing skate park to Bude-Stratton Town Council to improve the facility
- Develop and enhance the Triangle area in Bude
- Progress plans for a cycle path at Summerleaze Downs, Bude
- Maximise opportunities to hold cultural events and celebrate local social history

## **Bude-Stratton Climate Action Plan**

In March 2020, Bude-Stratton Town Council published its Bude-Stratton Climate Action Plan which has a three-stranded approach to achieving carbon neutrality in Bude by 2030:

- Bude-Stratton Town Council investigates its own carbon footprint and decides how to go about achieving carbon neutrality
- The Town Council leads and facilitates community environmental and associated organisations in investigating and devising the community's response to our Climate Emergency Declaration, with the aim of also achieving carbon neutrality
- The Town Council and community environmental and associated organisations cooperate in assisting our fellow residents, families, businesses, and other organisations to address the climate crisis and move towards carbon neutrality

(See Bude Climate Partnership below).

## **Projects and initiatives**

### **Community Renewal Fund application**

In May 2021, an application to the UK Government's aforementioned Community Renewal Fund (see page 27) was submitted through Bude Coastal Community Team on behalf of the wider Bude community. The application entitled *Building Back Better – towards a better connected, sustainable, year-round economy* – brought together a partnership of local organisations including Bude-Stratton Town Council, Bude Area Tourist Board and Bude Climate Partnership, among others. The bid included ten discrete projects under four areas:

1. Responding to the coastal community challenges of climate change – two projects, one with the community and another with businesses, testing pioneering approaches to respond to climate change
2. A digital infrastructure to support connection and inclusion – two projects, one to improve digital connection in the Bude economic area and another to improve digital skills
3. Improving rural skills and diversity of opportunity – three projects seeking to improve access to Higher Education, raise skill levels in the hospitality sector and increase opportunities micro/organic farmers
4. Distinctive Bude – a great place to live, a great place to visit – all year – three projects seeking to extend Bude's tourist season, add value to the visitor experience and investigate the feasibility of establishing a culture/creative hub

Unfortunately, the bid was not selected by Cornwall Council to be submitted to the UK Government. However, the considerable work undertaken in putting the bid together has not been wasted. It brought together a strong local partnership and formulated a range of projects which could still be pursued.

### **Bude Town Team**

Cornwall Council established a *Town Centre Revitalisation Fund* in February 2020 to address the conclusions of its Vitality of High Streets Inquiry, which “*heard evidence on the economic challenges faced by Cornwall’s high streets*”. The Town Centre Revitalisation Fund has a strand of funding called the *Towns Vitality Fund* which will support town partnerships to develop plans to improve their own town centres. To take such plans forward, communities must establish a *Town Team*.

In the autumn of 2020, a Bude Town Team was brought together comprising Town and Cornwall Councillors, Bude business representatives, voluntary organisations, and North Cornwall’s Member of Parliament. The Town Team is creating a Bude Town Plan, which will identify and support a small number of strategic projects aimed at bringing economic prosperity to the town. Following a scoring exercise undertaken by the Bude Town Team membership, the following proposals will be put forward for funding under the Towns Vitality Fund:

- Improvements to Bude Triangle (Blanchminster Square)
- A Bude resort promotion project
- Public realm improvements to Queen Street and Belle Vue Lane

### **Bude Business Voice**

Bude Business Voice is a ten-month business support initiative for the Bude area, building a voice for business in the community. It is funded through the European Union supported Community Led Local Development programme and delivered by Bude Coastal Community Fund. The initiative works with local businesses to increase awareness of support that is available and to investigate opportunities for working together, securing funding and developing skills and recruitment.

Throughout ‘lockdown’ Bude Business Voice has provided an invaluable service by hosting online Business Focus Group meetings. These events brought businesses together in difficult times and heard from a wide range of guest speakers, including local businesses, representatives of Business Improvement Districts, environmental groups, and business support organisations. Bude Business Voice will run from September 2020 until June 2021.

### **Bude Creatives**

Supported by the Bude Business Voice initiative, Bude Creatives is a Facebook-based public group with over 100 members drawn from the cultural and creative sector in the Bude area. A series of Facebook ‘Live’ events have been held for the membership featuring local creatives, and business and funding representatives. It is the intention of the initiative to:

- Facilitate cooperation and collaboration among businesses within the sector
- Provide a localised ‘one-stop shop’ offering a wide range of creative services and talent

- Demonstrate the strength of community cohesiveness to attract investment and funding support, which in turn will lead to economic growth and the development of expertise in this sector

The collective activity of environmental organisations in the Bude area has shown the way – and it is the objective of Bude Creatives to replicate this approach with the cultural and creative sector.

### **Youth provision**

**Neetside Bude Youth Project** - In November 2019, Neetside Community Centre was awarded a grant of £8,300 from the Awards for All funding programme to investigate opportunities, activities, and provision for young people in the Bude area. The work culminated in the production of a Feasibility Study which was informed by consultation with young people. The ultimate intention of producing the Plan is to bring together local authorities, community, groups, and charities to provide a positive future for young people.

**Pearl Exchange** - The Pearl Exchange is a Community Interest Company founded in 2020 which aims to improve the lives of 18–30-year-olds in the Bude area through creative practices and cultural experiences. It provides counselling and advice to strengthen young people's wellbeing and connections. During 'lockdown', activities have been delivered both online in person, and during spring 2021, a pilot project of workshops, talks and courses is being delivered which includes cooking, book clubs and sea swimming.

**Blend Youth Collective C.I.C.** provides safe spaces for 11-16-year-olds from Bude and surrounding areas to meet, socialise, be active, do good and belong. Many 'Blenders' come from low-income families. Great emphasis is placed on serving each other and the wider community through voluntary actions such as gardening for the elderly, redecorating community spaces, beach cleans and fundraising events. Although the focus is fun, the priorities are offline time, real time socialising, outdoor physical activities and acts of kindness that instil knowledge, independence, resilience, self-worth, community spirit and wellbeing.

### **Environmental action**

#### **Bude Climate Partnership**

In August 2020, a partnership of local environmental organisations successfully secured a grant of £200,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund's *Climate Action Fund* programme. The grant will be used to pay for a range of studies and initiatives investigating the Bude area's carbon footprint and suggesting ways that this can be reduced. The project, in its first stage of funding, will run from January 2021 to June 2022. It is intended that the studies and initiatives will help to inform and develop projects which can be funded through another round of the Climate Action Fund. Amongst the twelve studies and initiatives taking place are:

A **Community Carbon Audit** that will provide a full assessment of local energy use, which by necessity is going to have to be considerably reduced in the next decade, as well as transitioned from gas and oil to electricity from renewables.

This project's next stage of funding will provide support for enacting a strategy to help local residents and businesses reduce their energy consumption, switch to renewable power sources, and keep their homes warmer for less expenditure. In the process, it will create a significant number of green jobs. Bude is tasked by the Lottery and expected by Cornwall Council to become an exemplar community for other coastal and peripheral communities in their climate responses, so the area could also become a centre for training and knowledge sharing in this area.

A **Transport Study** incorporates data analysis, additional research and three transport surveys (residents, school students and tourists). It leads to a sustainable transport strategy that is likely to have lasting impacts on transport options for locals, impacting positively on economic development, the visitor economy, health and employment trends. The three transport surveys provide more information on local transport habits and aspirations than any work of which Cornwall Council officers are aware since 2011. The residents' survey's findings are already being used to support lobbying of Cornwall Council for an express bus service and additional buses to Okehampton railway station.

BCP's work initiated and its funding supported an application in collaboration with Connect Bude and BCCT to the Department for Transport's Reopening Your Railway fund that could bring up to £66,666 of additional funding to Bude for a feasibility study to investigate an extension of the railway from Okehampton, which would have profound effects on our local and visitor economies. Although it's unrealistic to expect a railway to Bude before 2035–2040, if it went ahead, it would bring economic benefits to the town and community long before the line was opened.

The delivery of a raft of other transport projects in the Bude CNA that will improve the quality of life and wellbeing of local residents, as well as making the Bude CNA a more attractive destination for sustainable tourism. It is also likely to lead to the creation of permanent employment positions.

A **Tourism Study** includes surveys of visitors and local businesses, leading to a sustainable tourism strategy for which we are finding very wide support among businesses in and around the visitor economy. Again, this will have a considerable impact on economic development, as well as place-shaping for Bude and the CNA. In the absence of funding for any other current tourism research, this work provides the only insight into the future direction of the visitor economy in the wider Bude area.

A **Physical Hub** study incorporates a local food strategy for growers, producers, retailers and consumers, which will not only help to reduce our dependence on shipped-in food but also provide economic support for local growers, retailers and a circular economy.

A **Library of Things** study not only generates a feasibility study for the Library itself but also looks at the establishment of a Skills Exchange that will provide support and finance to

train locals in skills that can be cascaded within communities in areas such as DIY insulation, thereby helping residents heat their homes more affordably and comfortably.

Additionally, other studies and engagement projects will influence behaviour change among residents and businesses in all aspects of consumption and the ways in which they want their community, town and environment to develop in the next decade.

The single largest long-term influence on economic development in the area is likely to be community's engagement through a **Citizens Climate Assembly**.

Collectively, these projects represent a larger investigation and exploration of Bude area's economic development, backed by a larger financial investment, than anything else currently happening in the town. If successful, the next stage of funding will bring up to £2.5 million to the Bude area that will impact positively and sustainably not only on its economic development but also on its social, environmental, cultural and – vitally – its climate-resilience prospects on which its economy and all aspects of its future depend.

Bude Climate Partnership very much intends to deliver the next stages of these projects in partnership with Bude Stratton Town Council in order to ensure that they take account of all our community's needs and aspirations. This applies not only to economic development but to all aspects of the doughnut economics model (as applied widely, including by Cornwall Council), thereby incorporating fully the health, social, cultural, educational and environmental impacts and needs of our community.

## **2 Minute Foundation**

The 2 Minute Foundation is a leading Bude-based environmental charity. In 2020, the Foundation successfully secured funding from Cornwall Council's Community Infrastructure Levy Fund towards its project to transform the former beach office building at Crooklets, Bude, into a base for its beach school initiative, an information centre, and a community resource. The work to convert the building will champion retrofit green technology. It is intended that the site will also make provision for electric car and bike charging.

Through spring and summer 2021, the Foundation will run its free beach school initiative which provides opportunities for children to learn about the Bude coast, its geography, wildlife, and the impacts of pollution. The Foundation also recruits 'Guardian Angels' to look after its 2 Minute Beach Cleaning stations – effectively an 'A'-board with litter pickers which encourage visitors to the coast to undertake two-minute beach cleans.

The Foundation intends to train volunteers to deliver beach schools at locations across Britain and Ireland. A 2 Minute Forest project to grow more trees both locally and nationally is planned. The Foundation employs eleven people and it has plans to recruit more including apprentices.

## SWOT analysis

### **STRENGTHS**

Growing civic engagement.  
Environmentalism.  
Strong feelings of belonging.  
Caring community.  
Cornish heritage and identity.  
Self-reliance.  
Independent traders.  
Strong tourism offer.  
Community Network Panel.

### **WEAKNESSES**

Low skilled/low waged workforce.  
Poverty/seasonal employment.  
Few professional jobs.  
Net loss of most talented youth.  
Poor youth provision.  
Distant from centres of employment, education, healthcare.  
Poor inter-community connectivity.  
Housing supply/affordability.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

Cultural and creative sector.  
Sustainable/regenerative tourism.  
Central Government funding.  
Expand youth provision.  
Community-led environmentalism.  
A Community Land Trust.  
Community growing spaces/allotments.  
Bude Town Plan.  
Skilled, time-rich retirees.

### **THREATS**

Climate change/flooding.  
Insufficient infrastructure to meet growth.  
Competition for Government funding.  
Unmanaged growth of tourism.  
Prolonged economic impact of Coronavirus.  
Increasing unaffordability of housing.

## Looking ahead

As set out in the Foreword, this Plan:

- is a living, dynamic, rolling plan which will be reviewed regularly and updated as time passes, and circumstances change.
- is initially in two parts – Part 1 the **Evidence base** and Part 2 an **Action Plan**
- envisages the publication of 'supplements' that reflect progress and changes to demographic data.

### **Factors already identified that the first supplement will need to address:**

- Much of the demographic data in Part I is taken from the 2011 Census. Data from the 2021 National Census should be available in 2022.
- Some of the projects within the Bude Stratton Strategic Programme are scheduled for implementation in the coming months.
- The programme of projects under the management of Bude Climate Partnership and funded by a development grant from the National Lottery Climate Action Fund are scheduled for completion in mid-2022. It is expected that an application for further funding support will be submitted.
- The Bude Town Team is working on the application to access capacity funding from Cornwall Council's Towns Vitality Fund.
- At the time of publication of this Plan, Bude Stratton Town Council is undertaking a thorough review of workload, resources, reserves and priorities, the outcome of which will determine how the Action Plan might advance.
- It is expected that H M Government will announce further information about their levelling-up programme, including the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (to replace the previous ERDF support), the Shared Outcomes Fund, and similar partnership working initiatives.
- The expectation that some of the Parishes in the Bude Area Community Network will submit ideas or proposals.
- We need to be responsive to future grant funding opportunities that may be announced, whether from central government, Cornwall Council (eg the possibility of another round of CIL funding), National Lottery, or other sources.

### **Gwell – pursuing community prosperity and wellbeing for the Bude area**