

ST JUST IN ROSELAND PPARISH - THE WAY FORWARD INITIATIVE

LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE REPORT

This report draws together the responses to a request for inputs. This report is written for the benefit of anyone considering something similar (it may be useful to other Parishes in Roseland or wider Cornwall). No attempt is made to comment on the observations: even if they are 'mistaken', these were the perceptions of the observers!

What went well:

1. A speedy process - 9 months from first meeting to action.
2. Clear, defined, documented governance structure from the outset.
3. Realistic outcomes produced
4. Very well formulated initial survey questions
5. The very idea of the Way Forward process was great and could prove to be very beneficial to the community.
6. Wide diversity of items investigated. It was not concentrated on one or two issues.
7. The analysis and presentation back to the community was very quick, prioritized and understandable.
8. Having a Vision statement for each topic helps concentrate thinking on a common goal.
9. It helped focus thinking on the need for low-cost housing across the community, and I think has helped energize initiatives to provide this.
10. It was insightful that there is recognition that the parish is dependent on tourism and, although there are some negatives to this, there was also acknowledgement of the inevitability of it - and possible benefits as well.
11. The structure of working groups and coordinating group meant that the whole process was able to consider a wide range of issues in a relatively short time frame
12. The initial response from the public was heartening.
13. The Housing WG has done great work; there may have been some intent to get things moving but the Way Forward seems to have been the midwife of the project.
14. The Coordinating Group worked better than could have been expected.
15. Those 'not ordinarily resident' have played a very strong part.
16. The scope of peoples' imagination is very encouraging.
17. The framework made it possible for people to feel comfortable in their role.
18. The consultation process was a positive experience. It brought together a range of individuals, with differing priorities, and allowed a greater awareness of others' views.
19. There were differences of opinion over the best way to achieve desired outcomes but all who engaged with the process clearly wished to see the parish and its facilities flourish.
20. A well-run project which has brought forward ideas and initiatives for the future.

What went not so well:

21. Communications: the loss of the communications lead near the beginning (and inability to replace him) was a serious blow. Worryingly few people seemed willing to get involved – or even know about it.
22. Timing of the first survey was after many second homeowners had left the village at end of summer, so they were not able to engage in the process
23. The outcomes are good for short-term objectives; however the process has been less

focused on a long-term vision for the community

24. I felt the working groups were convened too hastily and people who had expressed interest in joining a group were unable to attend at short notice: valuable engagement lost
25. At the start, it was unclear what the subgroups needed to do. This wasted a lot of time.
26. More time could have been spent initially to consider the primary needs of the community. How elderly care could not have been included from the start is surprising. Therefore, it did not gain the traction that it deserved and care in the community was not really addressed. Help with this would be a huge benefit to St Mawes and St Just.
27. I hope that communication is at the forefront of the Way Forward's ultimate suggestions.
28. Engagement with the aged 20 - 45 demographic. This is such a vital part of the community as these are people with (possibly) employment and housing issues, and children growing up in St Mawes, looking to their future. They have a lot at stake but were underrepresented in questionnaire responses, Stage 2 feedback and working groups.
29. Although Stage 1 responses were in the expected range, Stage 2 feedback was rather low.
30. Overall, the whole thing was too complex for most people. We had considerable interest at the start, but it gradually ebbed away as the process evolved.
31. Several people felt intimidated by the first survey in terms of its level of detail and its 'accessibility'. It felt as if the better your level of education, the more likely you were to respond, which is clearly not ideal.
32. Some uncertainty about the best ways and means to interact with Parish Council, Cornwall Council and the MP (past and present).

What to do differently next time:

33. Timing of surveys and advertising should be carefully managed to ensure engagement of second homeowners, who form a large proportion of the population.
34. Aim to ensure greater engagement from the population in the working groups and greater ownership of the issues by the working groups.
35. Create clear terms of reference and governance for the working groups.
36. A much higher response rate should be an aim. The response rate was at about the minimum that was useful.
37. Explore at outset how best to engage with key demographics. Website? More public meetings? One to one interviews?
38. Attempt to simplify things, but that is perhaps not compatible with good coordination of the whole effort.