



POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT PLAN FOR FALMOUTH

OVERVIEW

Falmouth has established over the past ten years, an enviable reputation regionally and indeed at a national level, for its proactive, partner-led approach and 'can-do' attitude.

Now, more than ever, the town will look to draw upon that expertise, best practice methodology and wide range of established partner networks, to support its residents and business community as we adapt to a changed world due to the impact of Coronavirus COVID-19.

There is no going back to a way of life before COVID-19.

This is now the reality for all of us; as individuals, as a business community, as a society. How town centres may look and feel as the COVID-19 restrictions start to lift, how consumer trends may have been changed, possibly forever, by the weeks of lockdown and social distancing remain to be seen.

But what is key is that we, as a town, face the challenges together, by working as a team to implement a range of measures as outlined in this document, that help revitalise Falmouth.

Many of the elements contained within the presented plan have been/are being undertaken but the key message here is the **absolute need for a more concerted effort, with more partners from the business, social, volunteer and resident sectors stepping up to work alongside the Town Team** (Falmouth Town Council and Falmouth BID partnership), thereby establishing a greater resource and enhanced delivery capacity.

STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

- Present Falmouth as a top UK coastal town for living in, visiting (perhaps under certain COVID-19 restrictions), investing in and studying at
- Provide an agile framework that allows us to react quickly to the current and future social and economic changes
- Work collaboratively as a proactive network
- Ensure Falmouth remains fresh, engaging and entrepreneurial
- Utilise town resources and community involvement at every stage

OBJECTIVES

- To kickstart economic activity and growth
- To kickstart interest in, visits to and investment in Falmouth
- To further strengthen Falmouth's community
- To reinvigorate our business community
- To establish a resilient, agile and collaborative project delivery network for Falmouth

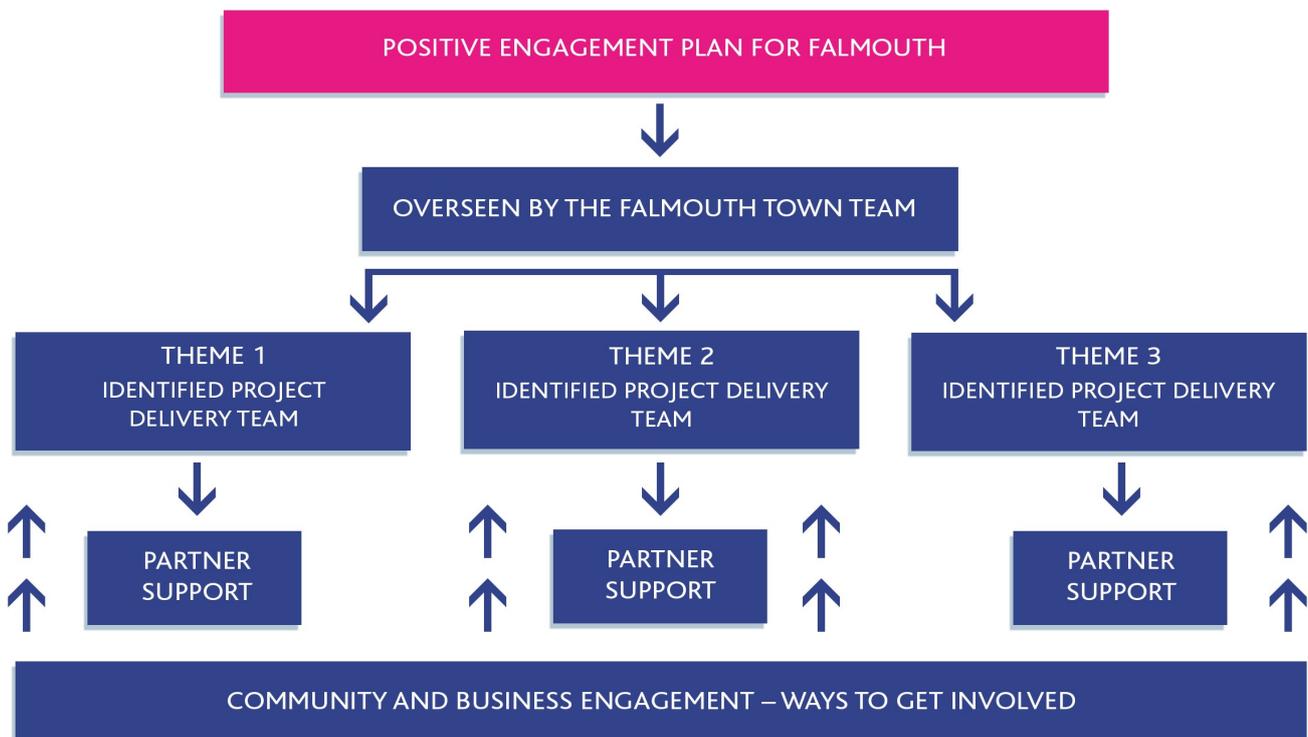
METHOD

- Gain a realistic view of the current Falmouth situation. What is our current position? What are our realistic goals? Where do we want to be?
- Research changes in the tourism industry and retail sectors and ensure that we act on them efficiently. What can we do to boost our economy and keep both large and small businesses afloat?
- Plan actions and strategies in advance of lifted lockdown measures.
- Set deadlines and key milestones to ensure we act at the right time.

DELIVERY

The plan will be overseen by the Town Team (as mentioned, the partnership between Falmouth BID and Falmouth Town Council) with **active involvement** from the wider community.

- Identified Project Delivery Teams and detailed plans for each themed project area
- Relevant partner support for each themed project area



TIMINGS

The plan of action will be split as follows:

- Immediate Actions
- Medium Term Initiatives
- Long Term Initiatives

The details are outlined later on in the document.

NOTE

- The plan is not intended to replace established actions being undertaken as part of the Falmouth BID, the emerging Neighbourhood Plan or indeed the recent work as part of the Place Shaping Group
- But rather and to re-emphasise, it is intended to be a proactive and **whole town** response to the current conditions being experienced

THE EMPHASIS OF THE ACTIVITY WILL BE CENTRED AROUND SIX THEMED FOCUS AREAS:



BRAND AND COMMS

The intention is to present current and immediate future comms, engagement activities, schemes, initiatives and events under the newly styled 'Rainbow Spirit of the Sea' logo as seen above.

- The logo is a refinement of Falmouth's brand narrative but also carries a symbol of hope and inclusivity in difficult times
- This is to be included in any PR and promotional materials including print, web and social, and articulated on a local, national and international level
- The logo and associated variations will be rolled out across Falmouth's business and community landscape
- A community-inspired digital and social campaign will also kick in
- Sitting alongside will be a refined PR plan, with Excess Energy working with Falmouth BID to create a relevant and compelling toolkit that will include consumer and trade press focussed stories, facts and pitches

Get involved

- *Utilise the 'rainbow spirit of the sea' logo within your business literature, both on and offline – e.g. websites, social media and promotional material*
- *Ensure as mentioned below, you engage with the Town Team to get involved with the exciting PR opportunities. We need to work together to celebrate Falmouth's innovation, resilience and imagination*
- *Be a brand champion. Unsure how? Then get in touch to find out more.*
- *Consider how you can become a marketing partner with the team*

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

We understand acutely the challenges facing all businesses and sectors. Thus, the intention is to put the local business community at the heart of everything we do; being flexible, dynamic and responsive to opportunities and market conditions. Consider the following ideas:

- Falmouth online business support programme. A changed world requires businesses to adapt or falter. Social distance and/or travel restrictions will present challenges even when an easing of lockdown means businesses can open their doors. So, alongside a review of physical operations, there will need to be a focus on what opportunities exist online. And so, to support business upskilling, we will work with valued partners such as Cornwall Marine Network to rollout out a comprehensive support network to cover key relevant digital and operational topics – e-commerce, digital marketing, HR, finance, resilience and business planning and funding. We will also look at peer-to-peer social media and PR support opportunities as part of the programme
- Business collaboration programme. We know and help celebrate the great work that is already undertaken in this area, but it will be even more relevant to work together

and promote all that's brilliant about Falmouth's diverse business scene. We will explore ways to further enhance that support; providing an even more effective platform to shout regionally and nationally about all that takes place in our special town

- #ShopLocal. There's much more that can be done to enhance in Falmouth, the national #ShopLocal and Independent Business initiatives. So, we will look at circular economy, recycling and local loyalty card schemes, #golocal days, establishing small business champions and an indie business group for the town.

This builds on the 'Best Places to Live' narrative, as well as the 'community coming together' message and again, will be vital to the town as we move through this present and any future challenges.

Get involved

- *Review your business setup/model*
- *How can I improve my digital output? Am I doing everything possible to operate online? Do I/my team possess sufficient digital skills for a changed marketplace? If not, then engage with the online support programme when it is available*
- *Am I sharing business stories with the Town Team? If not, then consider doing so to take advantage of marketing and PR opportunities*
- *Consider getting involved with a Falmouth Indie group or help champion the small business scene in Falmouth*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Falmouth has a strong community spirit and this has been particularly evident during the Coronavirus crisis. We've seen brilliant examples of community projects being undertaken, charitable work, creative output and more. Many have got involved in volunteering schemes and the intention is to ensure this continues via Falmouth's volunteer platform. Such an enhanced resource can then help elevate project ideas such as:

- Big Sunshine Clean Project. As seen during the Spring Festival delivered by the Town Team, we will coordinate our volunteer community when restrictions allow, to partake in green space regeneration, town site makeovers, urban clean-ups, gardening, litter picks and beach cleans. A real pride of place, feel-good series of initiatives, involving many and for the common aim - revitalising Falmouth
- Education and outreach projects. We will look to work alongside our local primary and secondary schools, social foundations as well as further education establishments. Such activity will straddle several areas – creative, community support, events, green space regeneration, social engagement, health and wellbeing
- The Falmouth Community Rainbow Award. A competition to showcase, celebrate and reward the innovative social endeavours undertaken by Falmouth groups and residents
- Falmouth garden party. An online series of events and ideas celebrating Falmouth's community. This could include virtual gardening tutorials delivered by some of

Falmouth's experienced gardeners, cooking on the BBQ led by local chefs, games and fitness in the garden orchestrated by local leisure providers or online floral display workshops. Lots of small, fun ideas that engage and connect with people across our community and beyond.

Get involved

- *Sign up to Falmouth's volunteering portal at <https://lovefalmouthvolunteers.volunteermakers.org>*
- *If you are a business, large or small then sign up you and your team to local volunteering opportunities as highlighted above*
- *Get engaged with the range of planned activities highlighted above*
- *Act as a community ambassador and help support the initiatives by sharing and posting information, coming forward with ideas and helping coordinate. Remember, this is a whole town recovery plan involving **all of us** and not a select few!*

PUBLIC REALM

We are witnessing a dramatic economic shift as a result of COVID-19 which will undoubtedly be reflected in rapid and enforced changes in respect of the makeup of our high streets, town centres and the businesses that occupy them. Falmouth will not be immune to these changes and so it the intention of the Town Team to implement more creative and forward-thinking ideas with our partners, that aim to profile a fresh, tidy and welcoming town. Again, as mentioned earlier, a strong pride in place that reflects a connected and caring community:

- Urban makeovers – to consider further visual enhancements to the main thoroughfares. This could include:
 - Enhanced imagery and creative decorations to vacant premises
 - Collaborative empty space pop ups
 - Urban space revitalisation utilising greenery – investment in planters, floral displays, green pop-ups and more
 - Public and collaborative large-scale artwork designs on buildings, opeways and walls
 - 3D art to brighten up forgotten corners
 - An investment in ambient/low light illuminations
 - Increased and more effective branded street visuals – flags, bunting, banners and other street placements
- Creative use of space – to ensure more imaginative use is made of public areas such as The Moor, Prince of Wales Pier, Church Street Car Park and Events Square. Consider the following:
 - Re-imagine as digital/collaborative spaces
 - Temporary and permanent visual structures/murals/artworks

- Co-ordinate shared space food and drink arrangements to support our food and drink sector
- More frequent, smaller-scale events – films, animations, exhibitions, theatre shows, markets, open air art exhibitions and more

Get involved

- *Review your own business/social space. Are there ways I can engage with the idea, improve my visual offer? Window planters, shop front design, lighting, signage – can I lift any/all of these?*
- *Liaise with your landlord if relevant. Can improvements be made to the visual aspect of my premises/property? If so, how can I activate?*
- *Can I get involved in any collaborative projects? Pop-ups/events/murals/public space makeovers?*

CREATIVE SPIRIT

Falmouth has been a hub of creative thinking and innovation for generations. We will utilise the skills of residents, students and businesses to consider the following:

- Cultural services. To adapt to social distancing measures, enhanced virtual alternatives are to be made across the cultural services department. This includes Falmouth Art Gallery, Education Services and Heritage.
- Public Gallery Project. From award-winning photographers and established artists, to Falmouth University students, let's make the most of our collective creativity and showcase art outside and around the streets of Falmouth
- We Wish You Were Here Project. We will be engaging with our partners to bring Falmouth to your living room. Virtual sailing in Falmouth bay/paddleboarding along quiet creeks/360° views from iconic locations/e-experience an exhilarating cliff top walk, will all be looked into

Get involved

- *Bring your creativity to the table. Get involved with artistic projects large and small.*
- *If you're a business, think how you can help showcase Falmouth and all it has to offer. How can I improve my physical and digital presence? Can I play my part in highlighting our beautiful town by enhancing or simply creating an online gallery via social media platforms? If I feel I don't possess the necessary skills, then sign up to the online support programme when that is launched, as highlighted above. How creative can I be within my business premises? Is it as enticing as it could be?*
- *If you're a creative business or enterprise, then we would love to hear from you. Your skills and talents will be invaluable to helping the town's creative efforts. Remember as mentioned previously, this isn't an exclusive plan, **everyone** needs to be involved to help revitalise Falmouth.*

ONLINE

Falmouth.co.uk, funded and managed by the Falmouth BID, is the town's official web platform and receives over 750,000 unique visits a year, the largest such site for the area. We will continue to invest in this excellent platform so that it profiles BID businesses in the best and most innovative ways.

We will be looking to activate with partners, the following:

- Falmouth.co.uk as the online business hub. The platform will grow in influence through this period, acting as a focal point for all local information related to the Coronavirus. We'll continue to develop interactive social content, e-magazines and downloadable guides to encourage dwell time and reach an even larger audience. We will continue to push out relevant content on the Falmouth UK social media channels and through PR.
- VirtuFal. We will look to develop a platform as part of the above that showcases all activity that people are undertaking presently - music, sports, crafts, talks, home baking, learning or new skills.
- HelpFAL TV. Furthermore, we will explore ways to safely create film content; mini-stories about business innovation or community initiatives taking place across Falmouth. Helpful, engaging and original community content
- Celebrate Falmouth. Again, tying into all of the above, we will look to facilitate an e-platform that assists Falmouth's suppliers and companies who can provide for 'stayathome' family moments. That may be seafood feasts, bespoke takeaways or cakes, bottles of special wine or artistic gifts from the most gorgeous Falmouth shops.

Get involved

- *Share your stories with us. Let us know about your innovative business delivery services and we will help promote these regionally and nationally*
- *Share your social content with us. If you're creative and have produced great little videos for your social channels, again let us know and we can assist in telling the world about your business and product*
- *If you live in Falmouth and have the skills, then get involved and help shape some of the online ideas highlighted above. The more collaborators, the better the platform*

TIMINGS

Immediate Actions – the next four weeks

We need to as a town leadership team, do all we can to get the town up and running again as quickly as possible and to show it is a safe place to visit and dwell in. We will need to agree ASAP sufficient budget, staff resource and commitment to work on this. Some thoughts for Immediate Actions:

- Hand sanitiser stations at key town centre locations with clear, associated signage and messaging
- A real emphasis on street cleaning, public space maintenance, deep cleans and rubbish removal. We will work with our partners eg Cormac, Biffa, Highways and Cornwall Council on its delivery. **That said, relying on existing contractual cleaning arrangements will not be enough – people having confidence that our town is a safe, clean and hygienic place to visit, will depend upon our additional, proactive actions and resolve now**
- Production of useful literature/directives to the business community – useful tips, H&S measures they will need to implement, health and hygiene, social distancing in the business, contactless payment arrangements and so on
- Pride of Place initiative – The Town Team can manage the public arenas as highlighted, but it is key that the business community engage with their own deep cleaning and painting of shop fronts and interiors. It is vital that the town appears welcoming, clean and sanitised. Visitors from the locality or further afield to the town will expect it and this is backed up clearly in current national surveys being undertaken.
- Public Signage – The Town Team will facilitate the rollout of public space signage and messaging advising on behaviour e.g. social distancing, number of people permitted in shops and buildings, general government advice and so on
- Comms – The Town Team will utilise its substantial social platforms and local media partners to ensure we give out timely, relevant messages to our wider communities. This forms part of the strategic PR planning mentioned earlier
- Community Champions - our Councillors, BID Board members and key partners acting as community champions; assisting in messaging, support, signposting and advice as effectively as possible and within safety guidelines etc etc
- We will continue our dialogue and engagement with Cornwall Council on a number of matters including incentivised parking provision.

Medium Term Initiatives – the next six months

From here, we then need to move to the medium term, as we all come to terms with extended social distancing rules, new ways of working and travelling perhaps, how behavioural changes in society play out and people interact with our town, its businesses and public areas. So, running concurrently with the immediate actions, the Town Team will focus on many of the ideas contained within the themed focus areas detailed above, and also consider the following:

- Plan our public spaces, highways and walkways to accommodate social distancing behaviour and new ways of accessing and engaging with town centres
- Engage with local authorities, landlords and other stakeholders to relax regulations and restrictions to make it easy for businesses to adapt; for example; extend shops onto the street, restrict traffic movements further, allow alternative uses, landlords to engage in profit sharing for rental payments
- Co-ordinate a town delivery service for as many businesses as possible to engage with, perhaps with a 'buy and collect' point in a central location for shops to drop off to. Could we enable customers could collect from The Moor, Grove Place or somewhere suitable?
- Market data. Obtain feedback from our businesses and visitors, and further direction relating to the changing nature of the town centre and those living within it. This will be vital and inform future place-shaping schemes, project activity and initiatives

Longer Term Initiatives – six to twelve months and beyond

- Shaping of future place regeneration schemes and public spaces based on evidence gathered over the year
- New events, initiatives and support measures can be rolled out; these a direct result of evidenced change in consumer behaviour, demand, movement and travel – subsidised public transport, cycle networks and community health and wellbeing schemes
- Partner-led rollout of all the ideas and schemes highlighted within this document

SUMMARY

- **How we act now will define us as a community and Falmouth's future as a vibrant, 'must-visit', 'must-do-business-in' town**
- The themes and ideas highlighted in this document are intended to provide a framework for activity over the next twelve months and beyond. Further details on partners, project leads and how to get involved will follow
- **The Coronavirus COVID-19 situation will frame how we work, live and operate moving forward. There is no going back. It is incumbent upon all of us to consider our actions, how we interact with each other and how we must work as a team to help Falmouth**
- This plan and ideas contained therein, will be overseen by the Falmouth Town Team but how successfully it's rolled out will depend entirely on community and business engagement. It is inclusive and everyone must play their part for the greater good of the town.

Prepared by:



Falmouth
Town Council