

Liskeard Renewal Partnership - Session Report

Initial Facilitated Workshop – December 2025
Prepared for Liskeard Town Council by Fin Irwin

1. Purpose of the Session

This first facilitated session was designed to:

- bring together a broad mix of organisations, sectors and residents
- explore the shared priorities emerging from the Town Vision and Neighbourhood Plan
- identify potential early actions the Partnership could take
- begin shaping membership for the Partnership ahead of the January 2026 meeting, as set out in the Terms of Reference

The aim was to understand where there is appetite, where there is consensus, and where more work is needed.

2. Attendance and Representation

There were twenty five people who attended. Representation included:

- local businesses and enterprise organisations
- education
- health and community support
- youth voice
- voluntary and community organisations
- creative and cultural organisations
- members of existing networks such as the Town Council, Cornwall Council and SECTA.

This provided a broad and constructive mix of perspectives.

Some parts of the community sector were under-represented on the night, so follow-up will be needed to ensure fair and transparent membership selection.

3. What We Heard - Key Themes

Across the five tables, several themes emerged repeatedly. Some aligned strongly; others offered contrasting viewpoints. The overall picture is of a town with energy and ideas, but still forming a shared agenda.

3.1 Empty Buildings as a Central Lever

This was the most consistent theme across the room. Participants felt unused buildings represent both a visible challenge and a major opportunity. Ideas included:

- low-risk “easy-in, easy-out” leases to help new businesses try trading
- meanwhile uses and pop-up activity
- a potential food hall
- window wrapping empty buildings with graphics and information
- using empty buildings strategically to support other priorities (youth space, workspace, events, community activity)

Many noted that repurposing buildings could unlock progress across several of the Town Vision priorities simultaneously.

3.2 Young People, Safety and Belonging

Youth needs were voiced clearly by both young participants and adults. The themes included:

- better lighting and safer routes
- informal places to gather
- affordable activities
- opportunities for part-time work

There is interest in exploring early, visible actions that show responsiveness to young people's concerns.

3.3 Communication and Positive Narrative

A strong thread was the need for a more coordinated approach to communication:

- distributing responsibility for sharing positive stories
- creating a clearer sense of identity and momentum
- improving visibility of activities and opportunities
- establishing regular feedback loops to the wider community
- aligning communication with the Partnership's priority themes

Participants stressed that Liskeard does not currently "tell its own story" well, despite much activity taking place.

3.4 Business, Purpose-Led Enterprise and Networks

There was good engagement from local businesses, including Real Ideas, the Work Shed, Wildanet and others.

Themes included:

- interest in trial leasing and meanwhile uses
- appetite for a local network of purpose-led businesses and CICs
- recognising that business input is essential for workspace, the evening economy and town centre vibrancy

This group had strong energy around practical action and collaboration.

3.5 Coordination and Legitimacy

Participants recognised the potential value of a shared partnership voice, but also expressed caution:

- it must be transparent and representative
- it must demonstrate legitimacy by listening widely
- it must show how decisions are made
- it should coordinate, not duplicate work already underway
- it needs to consider a legal constitution and bank account if it were to want to lead on projects
 - The Forum was noted as a possible other mechanism for this and potential collaborator

There was interest in ensuring the Partnership becomes a credible forum with influence, rather than another layer of meeting.

4. Ideas Generated

Not all groups produced project proposals, but the following ideas recurred or gained traction:

Potential Early Projects / Quick Wins

- Testing flexible, short-term leases for the small Cornwall Council owned units around The Work Shed
- Window wrapping in empty buildings to improve appearance and share information
- A small youth project – ideally needs a structured conversation with Liskeard School regarding this
- Developing a simple, town-wide communications plan shared across organisations
- Mapping and convening the purpose-led business/CIC sector

These are not final proposals but reflect where several conversations converged.

5. Reflection Against Intended Outcomes

The Terms of Reference describe this December session as the moment to “agree the immediate priorities for the group to take forward”, which would then inform membership selection.

What was achieved

- Clear themes emerged, particularly around empty buildings, youth needs and communication
- Strong appetite from the business sector to take up Partnership roles
- Clear recognition that health and education must have places at the table
- Useful early ideas for practical projects
- A realistic sense of the Partnership’s potential and its limits
- A foundation for transparent and balanced membership selection

What did not yet happen

- The group did not converge on a definitive set of three priority areas
- Community representation needs further engagement before Partnership membership can be finalised
- Some themes remain broad and need refining into actionable steps

This is not surprising for a first session, and the discussions provide a solid platform for January’s formal Partnership meeting.

6. Recommendations

Based on the discussions, the following recommendations are offered to Liskeard Town Council and the emerging Partnership:

6.1 Finalise Membership with Balance and Legitimacy

- Ensure representation across public, private and community sectors as set out in the ToRs
- Conduct targeted follow-up with under-represented community organisations
- Confirm seats for health and education given their importance in the discussions
- Use a clear, open nomination process to maintain trust

6.2 Establish One or Two Early, Achievable Actions

These should be visible, collaborative and grounded in the themes from the session.
Suggested candidates:

- an empty-building pilot (flexible leasing, meanwhile use, or window-wrapping)
- a simple shared comms plan showing joint working from day one
- giving voice and support to projects in progress, such as the bollards on Fore Street and the Roundbury project

6.3 Build the Partnership's Credibility Early

- Communicate openly about how decisions are being made
- Show early evidence of listening to the wider community
- Set out how feedback loops (newsletter, website, open meetings) will work
- Clarify the role of the Partnership in areas like tourism, events, and town centre infrastructure (workspace, buildings, street changes etc) coordination

6.4 Begin Developing a Strategic Approach to Empty Buildings

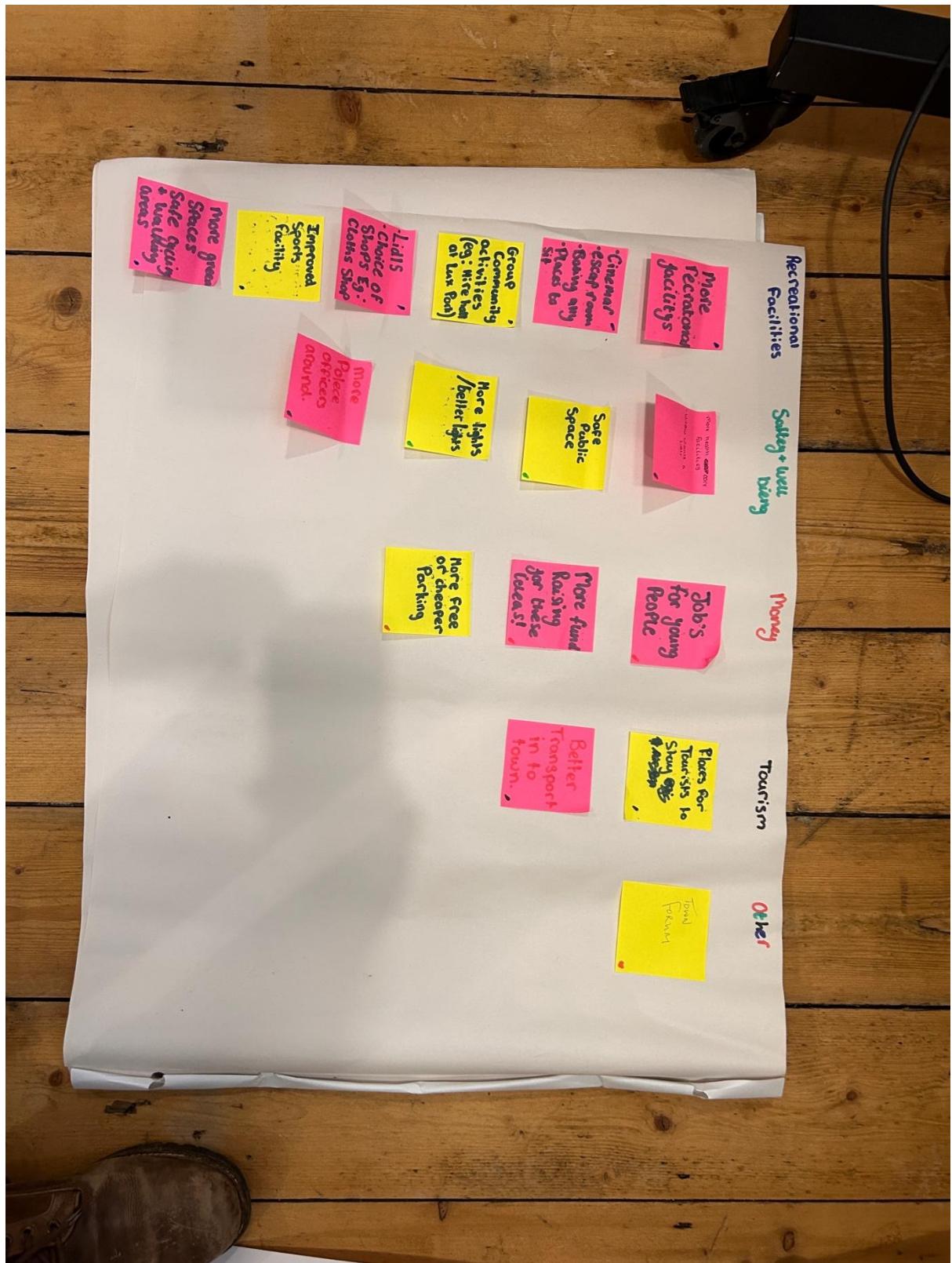
- Map priority sites
- Engage with Cornwall Council and private landlords on flexible leasing
- Explore meanwhile uses, High St Rental Auctions and cross-cutting benefits (youth, workspace, events, identity)
- Link the empty-building theme directly to the Town Vision objectives

7. Conclusion

The session demonstrated clear appetite for the Liskeard Renewal Partnership and a shared belief that collaboration across sectors is essential for the town's future. While a definitive shortlist of priorities did not emerge, the themes discussed were rich, consistent and actionable.

Empty buildings, youth safety and belonging, communication, and cross-sector collaboration now stand out as central threads. With the right early actions and a transparent approach to membership, the Partnership has a strong foundation on which to build momentum.





New businesses taking up leases
Short term, low risk.

Partner Voice - strength to upcoming
Projects

Safety Youth Space

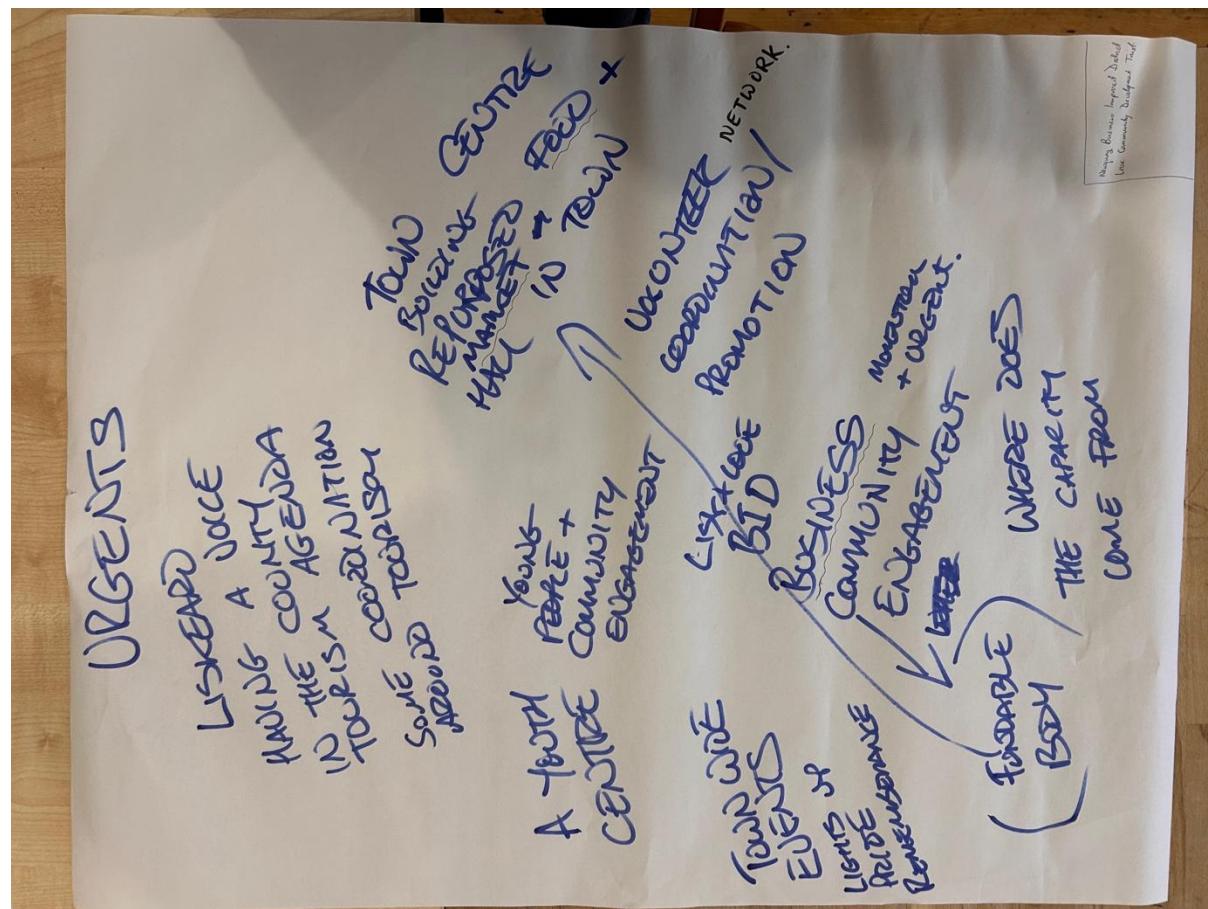
Hope Savvy Comms

Positive news - IMPACT
Distribution MEASUREMENT

Social Ent/Purpose led Network

Empty buildings could cover more
or the priority Wrapping &
Strategy - user? Youth cent Consultation

Youth momentum + Community & colab
Food hall & meanwhile



PLACES TO LIVE - WHILST VITAL, NOT AN ISSUE THIS PARTNERSHIP CAN CHANGE (AS POLICY DRIVEN)

EMPTY BUILDINGS - REPURPOSE FOR BUSINESSES WOULD BE WELCOME
- DOES THIS INCLUDE RESIDENTIAL TOO?

ACTIVE TRAVEL - ADVANCED WORK UNDERWAY - THIS GROUP COULD ENDORSE / SUPPORT (SO NOT A PRIORITY?)

CONSIDER SEPARATING STREETSCAPE - POTENTIAL FOR QUICK WINS?
E.G. BOLLARDS ON FORE STREET

② COULD THE PARTNERSHIP HAVE A ROLE / VOICE / INFLUENCE DECISIONS RE: CAR PARKS?

② IS THIS A PARTNERSHIP FOR THE WHOLE TOWN OR THE TOWN CENTRE (AS A FOCAL POINT)

PRIORITIES

- PLACES TO WORK
- SUPPORTING COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES
-

ACTION

- MAKE IT EASIER FOR POTENTIAL TENANTS TO TAKE ON UNITS / BUILDINGS
 - * - E.G. EASY IN / EASY OUT AGREEMENTS - PARTNERSHIP TO DRIVE ISSUE FORWARD)

Roundbury Spend
critical! £600k. in 12 months.
↳ How does it link
to yr needs in town?

Bringing UC's
together - purposeful
business

Community conversation
with ourselves -
celebrations of progress

↓
Network?

Regular feedback about & link the
progress. Comms to
themselves.

Bigger focus
on positive news.

Savvy
Comms

(political will)

- understand the future investment opportunity + make the case for linked infrastructure

- empty buildings \Leftrightarrow cross-sector partnership

'marketing'

strategy

- There is momentum within the existing commits offer
 - fragility within this

This building would make
a great ...
communicate what is

- Wayfinding / building wrap that highlights local businesses.
highlighting local businesses.
"No a ^{as} _{comes to} activity"
- Food hall - as an incubation space too.

- Light industrial - more sites needed. (political will)
we have the evidence.

- Climbing centre, bowling alley (\rightarrow empty building)

gymnastic

- Expand events / evening activities
how to bring people in.