

Liskeard Renewal Partnership - Session Report

Second Facilitated Workshop – February 2026

Prepared for Liskeard Town Council by Fin Irwin

Attendees: Julie-Anne Sunderland (Wildanet), Sue Jewell (SECTA), Dan Sturrock (The Workshed), Sam Jackman (Boost Innovations), Vicky Reece-Romain (Liskeard Cultural Collective), Kate Reed (Real Ideas), Dr Chris Gilbert (Oak Tree Surgery), Dan Wendon (Liskeard School & Community College), Pauline Wagon (Young People Cornwall), Nick Craker & Rachel Brooks (Liskeard Town Councillors), Kevin Grey & Jane Pascoe (Cornwall Councillors), Steve Vinson & Yvette Hayward (Liskeard Town Council)

1. Purpose of the Session

This facilitated session was designed to:

- review the themes and momentum emerging from the initial December workshop
- test and refine priority areas for the Partnership's next phase
- explore where the Partnership can add most value, and where work is already underway elsewhere
- begin shaping practical next steps, including potential working groups and early actions
- consider how the Partnership should operate in practice before formalising governance

The session intentionally balanced strategic thinking with practical discussion.

2. Attendance and Representation

Attendance reflected a strong cross-section of sectors and interests, including:

- local business and enterprise
- youth and education
- community and voluntary organisations
- culture, arts and heritage
- town and county council representation
- tourism and place-based networks

There was good continuity from the December session, supporting trust and depth of discussion, alongside fresh perspectives.

3. What We Heard – Key Themes

Discussion moved beyond identifying issues and focused more clearly on where the Partnership can realistically intervene.

3.1 Confidence, Pride and Narrative

A recurring theme was the gap between Liskeard's assets and how the town sees and presents itself.

Participants noted:

- a tendency locally to undervalue progress and potential
- the need to actively tell Liskeard's story rather than allowing a deficit narrative to dominate

There was agreement that activity, visibility and confidence reinforce each other, and that the Partnership can play a role in coordinating this.

3.2 Community Activity, Events and the Evening / Weekend Economy

There was broad agreement that community activity and the evening economy are closely linked and should be treated together.

Key points included:

- Liskeard already hosts many events, but these are not always visible or coordinated
- lack of consistency limits confidence for businesses to open later or invest
- footfall spikes exist, but are not yet predictable or sustained

Participants stressed the importance of:

- coordination rather than duplication
- making existing activity work harder for the town
- being less risk-averse and testing small, achievable actions

This strand was seen as an area where early, visible progress is possible.

3.3 Young People as a Distinct Priority

There was strong consensus that young people should remain a standalone priority, rather than being absorbed into other themes.

Discussion focused on:

- safety, belonging and boredom
- lack of informal, accessible spaces for young people to gather
- weak habits of coming into town, particularly among families on newer estates

Participants emphasised:

- the importance of youth voice and co-design
- links between youth provision, family presence and town centre vitality
- the long-term civic importance of engaging young people now

There was interest in exploring both short-term actions and a longer-term vision for youth-focused space and coordination.

3.4 Doing Business in Liskeard: Empty Buildings, Workspaces and Investment

This theme built directly on December's discussion of empty buildings, but with a clearer emphasis on business confidence and investment.

Key points included:

- Liskeard is not yet visible as a place to locate or grow a business, despite clear advantages
- empty buildings, workspace and employment are interlinked and best treated as one theme
- demand exists for flexible and light industrial space, but capital and information barriers persist

Participants expressed interest in:

- presenting Liskeard more clearly to investors and growing businesses
- being proactive rather than waiting for opportunities to arrive
- developing a shared understanding of sites, assets and plans

This was framed as making Liskeard an "easy place to do business".

3.5 Green Spaces and Public Realm

While green spaces and recreation were recognised as important, the group agreed that:

- substantial work is already being led by the Town Council
- the Partnership's role is likely to be supportive rather than leading delivery

Public realm issues (such as wayfinding and movement around the town) were seen as relevant where they directly support activity, events and visitor experience.

4. Priority Areas Emerging

By the end of the session, the group broadly aligned around three priority themes for the next phase:

1. **Activity, Events and the Evening / Weekend Economy**
2. **Young People**
3. **Doing Business in Liskeard** (including empty buildings and places to work)

Visitor economy, communication and town profile were recognised as cross-cutting considerations across all three.

5. Ways of Working

There was strong interest in keeping the Partnership active, open and flexible.

Key points included:

- working groups aligned to priorities, meeting as needed

- continued whole-group sessions to maintain shared ownership and cross-pollination
- avoiding over-formalising governance too early
- recognising that projects will move at different speeds

The idea of a light skills audit or skills-sharing exercise was welcomed, to better use expertise already around the table.

7. Next Steps

Agreed next steps include:

- continuing momentum through another collaborative session in early March
- using the next session to deepen ideas, identify early actions and refine focus
- returning to governance and formal Terms of Reference once activity is underway

Appendix 1

Working Group notes

Community Activity, Events and the Evening / Weekend Economy

Why / Concern

- Lack of consistency
- Lack of coherent visibility
- Missed opportunities to capitalise on events which do happen
- Waiting too long for big things to happen – sporting infrastructure
- Under used buildings – lack of events
- People not using what is here
- Lack of choice in evening economy; including outside spaces, safety concerns? events infrastructure

Purpose / Do this in order to ...

- Increase pride of place
- Raise profile
- Increase spend in town
- More fun!
- Have Insta opportunities

What

Gap in the year for another event or building events up

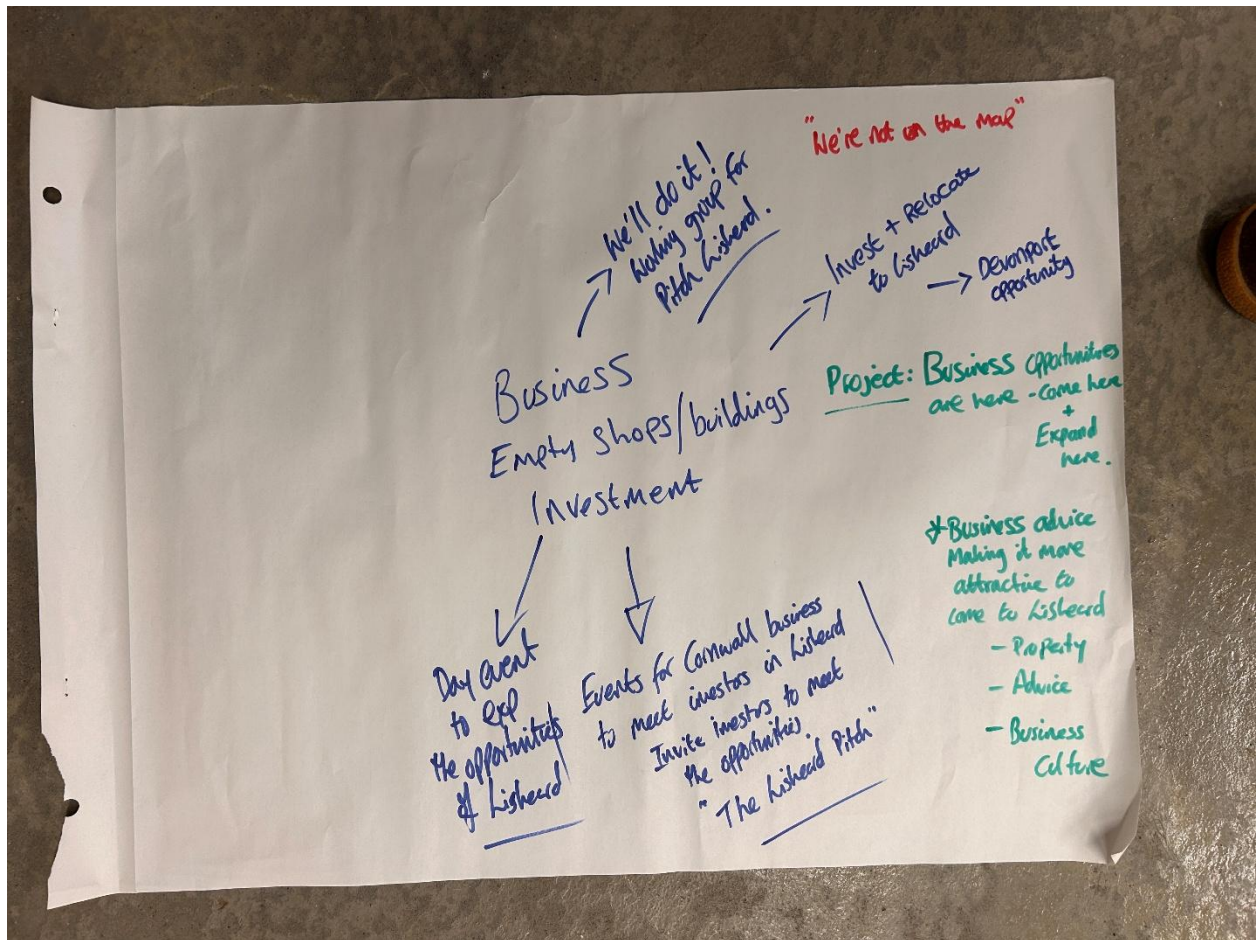
Calendar of events which bring people together (including sports)

Stock take of event venues and possibilities

Co-ordinating events between different organisations

Mechanism for alerting local businesses to events so they can coordinate – pledges

Doing Business in Liskeard: Empty Buildings, Workspaces and Investment



Young People as a Distinct Priority

