

Looe Valley Trails



Creating over 50kms of trails in South East Cornwall for residents and visitors to walk, bicycle and horse ride.

“ Welcome to the first edition of Looe Valley Trails News ”

About our project

South East Cornwall is at the centre of an exciting emerging network of integrated travel and leisure opportunities, including rail, road, coastal ferries and cycling and pedestrian networks.

The Looe Valley Trails project is one of a number of schemes currently being developed by Cornwall Council in partnership with other stakeholders to support the regeneration of South East Cornwall.

The proposals involve creating a network of multi-use trails connecting Looe, Liskeard, Bodmin and Cremyll, opening up access to some of the most beautiful and distinctive landscape in Cornwall.



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by emailing us at:**

lvt@cornwall.gov.uk

Our newsletter will keep you in touch with what is happening with the development of the Looe Valley Trails project by providing the latest information about events, activities and key milestones.

“ The trails will provide safe and attractive routes for walkers of all ages and abilities, including parents with buggies, people with disabilities and wheelchair users, and horse riders, as well as cyclists, including e-bikes, and people riding scooters. ”



The project will connect into a number of existing and developing cycle hubs in the communities it links to, as well as closing gaps in the National Cycle Network along the south of England coastline. The aim of the wider scheme is to mirror the success and popularity of the North Cornwall trails, including the Camel Trail which attracts more than 500,000 visitors a year to the local area.

Other projects currently under development in the South East Cornwall area include the Looe Flood Defence and Economic Regeneration Scheme, the Forest for Cornwall and Looe Valley Heritage Project.

“ A network of multi-use trails connecting Looe, Liskeard, Bodmin and Cremyll, opening up access to some of the most beautiful and distinctive landscape in Cornwall. ”



Who is involved?

The project is being led by Cornwall Council which is working with town and parish councils, councillors, local community groups and stakeholders to identify preferred routes and develop a strong business case to secure funding.

What are we doing?

This project has been in development for some time, with a local project group previously involved in developing the scheme.

During the past months Cornwall Council has been re-evaluating the initial proposals against emerging government standards and affordability in order to secure a strong business case to identify and secure funding. This has resulted in some changes to the original proposed routes, including seeking out more off-road sections and routes with gentle gradients to be more accessible to all.

As is usual with major projects such as this, we asked the planning authority for its opinions on the emerging proposals. Seeking pre application advice at this stage provides useful information to inform the way in which the design is developed to the highest standards possible.

Discussions with landowners and stakeholders will continue to help shape the design prior to any planning application.

Once the draft proposals have been finalised by the project team, they will be subject to the normal planning application process. This will involve an extensive period of consultation where members of the public and key stakeholders will have the opportunity to give their views before a decision is made on the application.

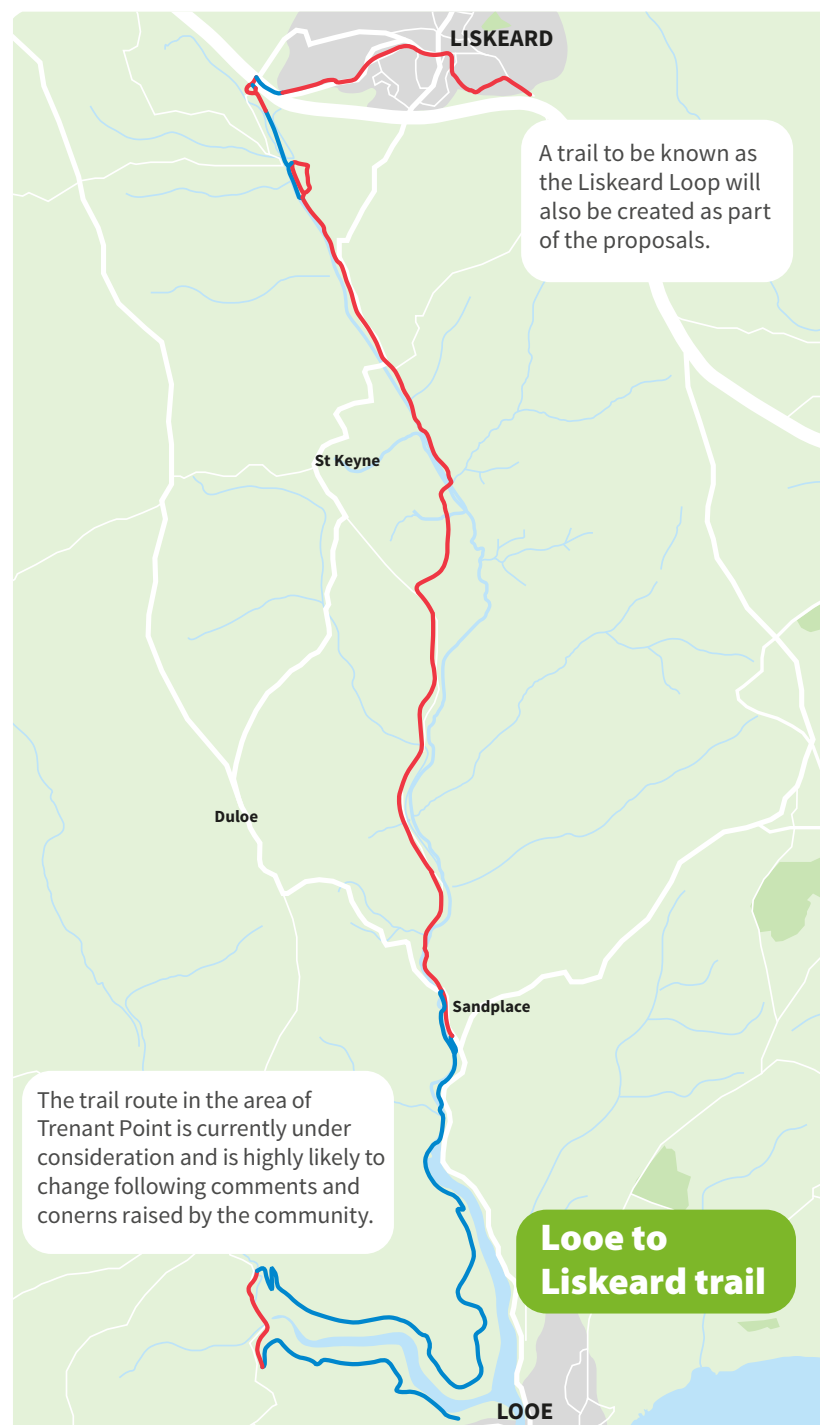


What is being proposed?

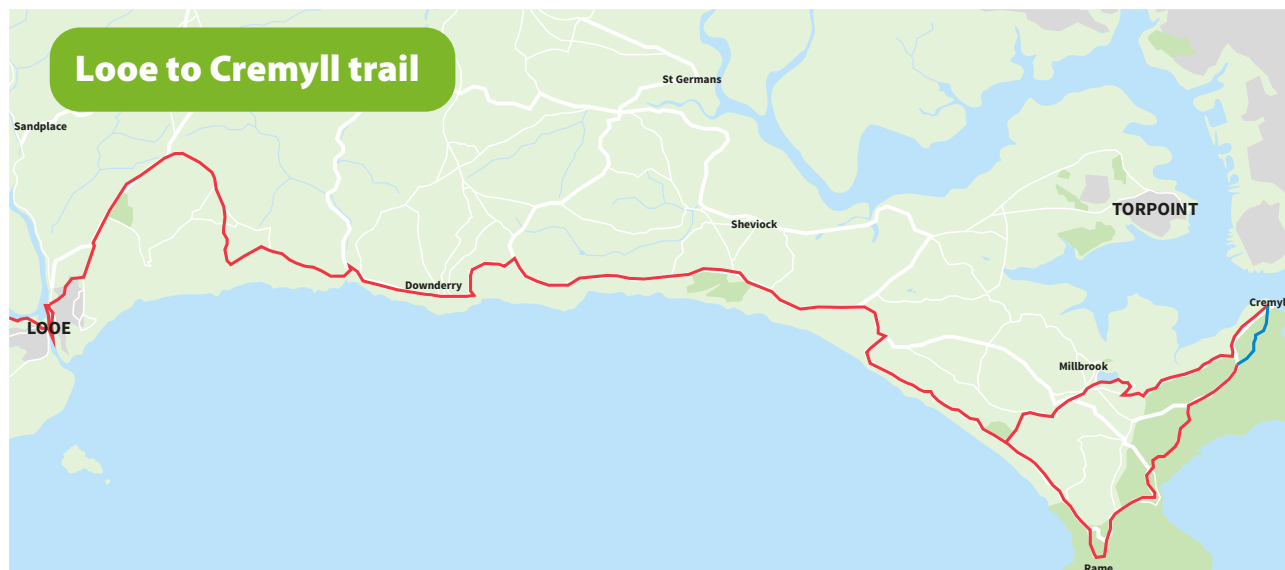
The current proposals are based around three long distance routes in South East Cornwall.

These are:

- **Looe to Liskeard**: this will be a combination of largely traffic free sections with a linking section that will be on quiet country lanes.
- It is our intention to establish two high quality loops which provide a circular route of around 4 to 5 miles in length. This will be an accessible route to be used by everyone, offering opportunities for health, engaging with the environment and enjoying what south east Cornwall has to offer. The loops will be at the centre of the new cycle hubs which are being developed by others at Looe and Liskeard



- **Looe to Cremyll:** a long distance, largely on-road waymarked route for more experienced and confident cyclists, linked to the promoted National Cycle Network from Plymouth. There will be a shorter five mile waymarked route on-road connecting the settlements in the Rame area.
- As well as the Cremyll Ferry, the start and finish of this route is the lovely Mount Edgcumbe Country Park with its Camellia collections and waymarked walking and cycling routes.



- **Looe to Bodmin :** this route will include Bodmin Parkway Station and will connect to the existing National Cycle Network to Bodmin. This will be a combination of on and off road sections and will include a number of existing trails in the area.

The preferred route options are currently being explored to ensure attractiveness and best value for money is achieved for the route. We will be consulting on this shortly.



“ While draft proposals have been developed for the three trails, no decision has been made on the final routes. ”



We want local communities to help shape this important scheme and are very clear that no plans will go ahead without the support of local people and businesses.

How will the project benefit local communities?

The key aim of the project is to support the regeneration of South East Cornwall by

- Encouraging active lifestyles and improving the health and wellbeing of the local community
- Providing safe and attractive routes for walkers of all ages and abilities, wheelchair users, horse riders and cyclists, joining up Liskeard, Looe, Bodmin and the Rame Peninsula
- Encouraging the development of new businesses, including cycle hire operators and cafes, to help boost the local economy, secure existing jobs and create new ones
- Encouraging more local people and tourists to visit the area all year round, increasing spending in shops and businesses
- Protecting, enhancing and interpreting the natural and historic environment

The creation of the trails will help to reduce the number of car journeys made, reducing carbon emissions, and providing health benefits to communities by getting people out of their cars.

But we also need to ensure that we protect and enhance the natural environment by minimising, wherever possible, any negative effect on residents and the environment.

We are committed to increase the biodiversity along the route and providing additional trees. We are also committed to finding the right balance between protecting the environment, encouraging people to get into their local, natural environments and improve their health and wellbeing, and supporting economic regeneration.



Getting involved

This is an exciting and ambitious project which will have a significant impact on this part of South East Cornwall.

We would normally have held public exhibitions and carried out other face to face engagement at this stage to give local people and stakeholders the opportunity to give their views on the draft proposals. Unfortunately the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions mean that this has not been possible using more conventional engagement channels.

We will be staging an extensive programme of face to face engagement with partners, stakeholders and local communities as soon as it is permitted. In the meantime we have set up the Let's Talk Looe Valley Trails site letstalk.cornwall.gov.uk/looe-valley-trails to keep people up to date with all the latest information, as well as offering a space for them to have their say on the proposals.

The site includes details of the three proposed routes, together with background information about the scheme and a FAQ section.

There is also an email address: lvt@cornwall.gov.uk for people to ask questions and make comments about the proposals.

We are creating a Looe Valley Trails page on the Cornwall Council website which will be launched within the next few weeks and are planning to stage live presentations with Q & A sessions at key milestones throughout the project.

Once the Covid 19 restrictions have been lifted we will be staging exhibitions and events, and giving presentations to local communities.

We are currently establishing our Design Panel which provide the representatives of the local communities with a direct say on how the design of the project is developed.

We are looking for enthusiastic people that can represent their community in helping to shape the design of the project. No experience is necessary, but may be advantageous – the main thing is to be interested in helping to support the successful delivery of the project. We want the Panel to be inclusive and provide a positive representation of the communities the project will serve, so are actively seeking a diverse set of people.

Details of the application process will be on the Let's Talk site from this week, with the deadline for applications in mid April.

As well as this newsletter, regular updates and information about the progress of the project will be provided on the Let's Talk platform and the website.

What happens next?

The design team will be using the feedback from local communities and stakeholders to work towards finalising the proposed routes.

Once the proposed routes have been identified a series of surveys, including ecology, topography, drainage and ground investigation, will be carried out. These will include surveys of trees; hedgerows; nesting birds; overwintering birds, endangered species; invasive plant species; dormice; bats; badgers; otters; invertebrates; water voles etc.

The designs and alignments recommended by the project team will need to be approved by Cornwall Council and then to go through the statutory planning process. This could result in further changes to the routes.

We are also continuing work on developing the business case to help inform funding opportunities.

You can find out more about the Looe Valley Trails project on the Let's Talk site **letstalk.cornwall.gov.uk/looe-valley-trails**

You can also email us at **lvt@cornwall.gov.uk**

