

PENZANCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



NEWSLETTER



Issue 60

24 April 2012

Editor's Comments.

In this edition of the newsletter you will find:

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- Update on Penzance Harbour Improvements / IOS Link
- Golowan (any more business sponsors & volunteers?).
- Portas Pilot Bid.
- Penzance Town Team.
- Penzance Discovery Map Project.
- Coinagehall Development
- Business Scams (Bogus directory subscriptions).
- Business Directory Scams.
- Health & Safety Courses – Spring/Summer 2012
- HMRC online advice 'Webinars' / Youtube advice videos
- Cornwall Council clampdown on pavement obstructions ('A Board' issue).
- Rural Community News (Govt Planning Policy and Govt Bus Subsidy Plans)

Bone Cancer Awareness Trust Concert – Mounts Bay Academy 18 May 2012

The Bone Cancer Awareness Trust was set up by friends and family of teenager Luke Bradwell who died on 3 January this year after a valiant fight against Osteosarcoma (bone cancer). The Trust seeks to promote awareness and early diagnosis - one of the most important factors for successful treatment. The South West has a higher incidence of this dangerous disease.

Further information: www.bonecancerawarenesstrust.org

John & Linda Bolton, The Dunedin Guest House, are seeking donations for raffle prizes . You can contact them on 01736 362652 or by email at dunedinhotel@aol.com.

Tickets: On sale from the 23rd April from:
Tanya's Courage Trust Shop (84 Market Jew Street, Penzance)
The Dunedin (Alexandra Road)
Mounts Bay Academy

BIH Heliport Sale Delayed

There has been a delay in Sainsbury's bringing forward detailed proposals for its new Penzance store on the Heliport site. The reason turns out to be a delay in the Government Planning Unit signing off the outline planning consent granted by Cornwall Council late last years. The Government office is being punctilious following a lot of legal mud slinging during the St Erth Heliport debacle. Until the Govt signs off on the outline consent the applicant (Sainsbury's/BIH) cannot submit detailed proposals.

Editor's Comment. I was concerned that there was a "cunning plan" being hatched that would obstruct the sale. This would have the potential for a 'clean sweep' that could see the failure of BIH, loss of the helicopter service to IOS and the passing of the Helicopter site into the control of the Matrix Private Equity LLP and the Bank of Ireland who have lent millions of pounds but secure their lending against the Heliport site and other BIH assets. A decision is expected within a month or so.

Penzance Harbour

A public exhibition of the preferred option for Penzance Harbour improvements took place in St John's Hall on 29 March. There was a lot of support for the proposals which were seen as realistic proposals with benefits for the Town, the IOS Link and Harbour users. A frequently expressed concern was whether the project would actually go ahead given past troubles with the project.

View exhibition displays here: <http://www.pzharbourfutures.org/?p=226>

View 3D representations here: <http://www.pzharbourfutures.org/?p=239>

The Town Council expects to be able to announce how the project is to be taken forward in the week or two.

The plans for St Mary's are at a more advanced stage with a public consultation on the detailed design underway.

Golowan.

Golowan brochures are to be finalized for the printers soon. Businesses advertising or sponsoring should act immediately to contact the Festival Office (golowan@hotmail.co.uk).

If unsure about committing to a standing order for 'FOG' then a cheque or bank transfer for this year will still be welcome. Download the FOG (Friends of Golowan) bank mandate for account details and for the FOG membership form at the end of the mandate. Make cheques payable to Friends of Golowan.

The Penzance & District Tourism Association has agreed to be a sponsor Golowan as have a number of Chamber and PDTA businesses including Headland Printers, Tremont Guest House, Elmsdale Guest House and Blue Seas Hotel).

Sponsorship options (individual and corporate):

Friend of Golowan (Individual): Cost: £15.

Bronze Corporate Sponsorship: Cost: £75

Silver Corporate Sponsorship: Cost: £150.

Gold Corporate Sponsorship: Cost: £500.

If you want to discuss sponsorship packages then contact F.O.G. Golowan Festival Office, The Barbican, Battery Road, Penzance, TR18 4EF. Tel: 01736 369686. golowan@hotmail.co.uk

Further details and forms: <http://www.golowan.org/wordpress/?cat=24>

Volunteers for Banner Manufacture. Golowan is seeking help from with banners (reported in the Cornishman). Anybody handy with a sewing machine should contact the Festival Office. There is a rush on to get them ready for the Olympic Torch's passage along the Promenade in 3 weeks time.

Portas Pilot Bid for Town Centre.

Chamber email update dated 28 March informed members of the creation of an embryonic Penzance Team and the submission of a Portas Pilot Bid. It was all a bit of a rush but the Portas Pilot deadline provided the impetus for business groups and other players to get together and start developing a plan of action for Penzance and its Town Centre.

The Portas Pilot application form required a synopsis of the problems facing the Town Centre and vision for its future as well as proposals for funding. You can view the final Portas Bid at this link: www.penzancechamber.org.uk/PPBid_26March2012.pdf

The Portas Bid document is very much a first stab at analysing the challenges facing Penzance and developing a response. What was reassuring about the embryonic Town Team was the degree of consensus over the problems and the necessary response. Much more work needs to be done to flesh out the rather thin existing documents.

Truro and Penwith College provided valuable support for the bid which student Tom Collins created a short video to accompany the bid.

Penzance Town Team.

The Portas Review makes a strong recommendation that Towns should:

Put in place a "Town Team": a visionary, strategic and strong operational management team for high streets

Business stakeholders felt that it was important that the Town Team should be tightly focused. The result so far is a Town Team with 9 members all of whom are significant economic stakeholders or have statutory or civic responsibilities for the Town Centre. The Town Team has two influential partners and can expect to acquire more.

Town Team Members

Penzance Chamber of Commerce
Penzance and District Tourism Association
The Wharfside Shopping Centre
Future Penzance
Penzance Civic Society
Truro and Penwith College
Penzance Town Council
Causewayhead Traders Association
The Farmers Market

Town Team Partners

National Trust (West Cornwall)
The Cornishman

Penzance Discovery Map.

Cornwall Council's Sustainability Team have promoted the creation of 'discovery maps' for Newquay, St Austell and Hayle. These maps are created through community involvement and are intended to encourage enjoyment and appreciation of the local environment in an environmental friendly manner.

Creation of a Penzance Discovery Map was one element of our Portas Bid because it responded to the problem that visitors (and local people) stumble upon Penzance's many treasures more by accident than design. In a Town where visitors are a key part of the economy we should be promoting appreciation of the Town's treasures so that more people visit and for longer.

Veryan Jones, Cornwall Council (Sustainability Team) has offered to visit the brief the Town Team and discuss alternative fundings sources that might allow the map project to go ahead without depending upon an uncertain Portas award and/or Sainsbury's Section 106 monies. A meeting is earmarked for 2 May and is awaiting confirmation of venue.

Previous map projects have funded maps for every local household and well providing an online version. You view the Newquay and Hayle maps at the link below:

http://www.staustellmap.co.uk/map_town.php

http://www.newquaymap.co.uk/map_town.htm

http://www.haylemap.org/wiki/index.php/Sponsors_of_Discover_Hayle

Coinagehall Street Development.

Cornwall Council is running a competition to develop the Coinagehall site.

The programme for selecting the winning bid is as follows:

- Closing date for Expressions of Interest – 23 March 2012
- Mid Point Clarification Meeting – 16 April 2012
- Submission Closing Date – 4 May 2012
- Clarification Period – May 2012

- Shortlisting and Best and Final Offer (if applicable) – Early June 2012
- Reporting – July 2012
- Selection of Preferred Bidder - July 2012

The invitation to developers states the following planning context:

The site offers a rare opportunity to create an attractive new destination on the seafront and establish a pedestrian route linking the town centre and harbour. Although the site benefits from an historic permission for residential development the Council now wishes to promote it as a mixed-use opportunity which creates activity and a recognisable destination. Key to this will be establishing active and attractive street frontages by introducing small scale commercial, leisure and retail premises on the ground floor together with residential (and/or hotel and employment uses) on the upper floors. There are no listed buildings within the site area but the site is known to contain physical and archaeological remains of some of the earliest buildings in Penzance which will need to be considered and addressed within a scheme design. With its prime skyline location within the Penzance Conservation Area, it is clear the site will need a well considered and high quality design response.

It is hard to quibble over Cornwall Council's aspirations for the site. Lets hope the winning bid reflects the aspirations.

You can view part of the invitation to bidders here:

www.penzancechamber.org.uk/Coinagehall_Street_Particulars.pdf

Business Directory Scams

Scams selling bogus entries in various business directories are the most common frauds experienced by businesses today. Several guest houses in Alexandra Road have been plagued by people selling "Business Internet Directory", "No1 Business Directory" or various permutations of those words or similar. They sometimes just cold call and claim that you owe them money.

If you ever get to see and sign a contract there is somewhere in the small print a commitment to spend several hundred of pounds (or Euros), sometimes closer to £1000, which is not disclosed in the hard sell. The OFT provide an example here (you need to scroll through their example contract because there is a large blank space at the top of the page which makes page look empty):

<http://www.of.gov.uk/business-advice/protect-your-business-from-scams/types/business>

Editor's Comment:

Having dealt with scams as a small business debt advisor in the past I can offer the following additional guidance:

- Do not engage with cold callers over subscriptions (contracts) – invite them to email you their proposals so you can examine them at your leisure.
- Search Google using the callers business name and the word 'complaint' or 'scam' – it is amazing what can turn up!

- If threatened with action over an (imaginary) unpaid invoice ask for a copy of the agreement you entered into and an invoice. You need to establish a paper trail. If need be send a recorded delivery letter asking for this information – it unnerves a scammer.
- Getting paperwork out of scammers is important because it contains information about the identity of the scammer (sometimes bogus) and is evidence if you need to pursue a complaint.
- If the caller says they are a company ask for their registered number so you can look them up online at Companies House.
- Some scammers are in league with debt collectors or pretend to be debt collectors. Under the Consumer Credit Act debt collection is an activity which requires an Office of Fair Trade licence. Always ask for the Consumer Credit Act licence number and also the callers full name and the business address. You can check this information against the OFT's online register of licence holders.
- Do not be cowed by the casual threat of court action. Any potential claimant will be only too happy to provide you with all of their evidence of your debt if it is genuine if only avoid the 'aggravation' of pursuing a court claim. It will soon be clear to you whether you owe the money.
- Scammers generally get 'cold feet' if they detect their prey acting like a predator. The collection of documentation, names addresses, licence numbers and traceable communications all spells trouble if you are a scammer operating at the margin of the law of out side the law.

There are Chamber members who can provide professional legal advice if you are unlucky enough to need more help.

Please copy details of attempted scams to the Chamber Chairman so other members can be forewarned.

Volunteer Cornwall – Health & Safety Courses Spring/Summer 2012

There Level 2 CIEH courses in Emergency First Aid at Work, Risk Assessment, Manual Handling and Health & Safety over the next 3 months.

For schedule: www.penzancechamber.org.uk/VC-Course-Schedule-Spring-Summer-2012.pdf

For booking form: www.penzancechamber.org.uk/VC-Booking-Form.doc

Return completed booking forms to Alex Emons at alexe@volunteercornwall.org.uk

If you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact the Training Team on 01872 266985.

HMRC online advice 'Webinars'

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) has made its online tax-help presentations, or webinars, available round the clock at: www.hmrc.gov.uk/webinars/pre-recorded.htm

Webinars last around 30 minutes.

The webinars cover many different topics, including:

- Business expenses and capital allowances
- First steps as an employer
- The Construction Industry Scheme
- Limited companies, an overview
- How VAT works

HMRC Youtube Videos

Useful guidance on use of HMRC toolkits and other matter available from

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJkYJpeEBKY>

And from the top shelf (so to speak) there are titles like “HMRC Powers -1” and “HMRC Powers – 2”

Rural Community Network News Highlights (www.rsnonline.org.uk)

Government Planning Framework Published 27 Mar 2012

THE government has unveiled the long-awaited final version of its National Planning Policy Framework. The 50-page document, which replaces over 1,300 pages of policy in 44 separate documents, was published on Tuesday (27 March).

<http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/politics/planning-framework-unveiled-at-last>

Plans to reform bus subsidies published by Government 26 March 2012

PLANS to reform the local bus subsidy system have been welcomed by Britain's biggest bus operator. The government proposals aim to attract more people on to buses while giving local transport authorities more influence over local bus networks. They also aim to provide more value for taxpayers' money.

A document outlining the planned reforms was published by the Department of Transport on Monday (26 March). The full document can be downloaded [here](#).

<http://www.rsnonline.org.uk/services/plans-to-reform-local-bus-subsidy>

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Our experts are trusted throughout Cornwall and Devon and we have recently streamlined our services. This means that we can provide you with a more efficient service. We understand that when you are running a business, time is money. When you become a Business Privilege Member, you will have a dedicated client relationship manager. This person will be your first port of call and will be able to coordinate all of the different matters that we may deal with for you.

There is not much we have not encountered. We have experts who advise on company formation, funding, acquisitions, disposals and reorganisations. We have others who specialise in ironing out complex issues surrounding employment law contracts, pensions or tricky civil disputes.

If you are unsure whether you need us, we are offering our clients a **FREE legal health check**.

To request our free legal health check either visit our website: coodles.co.uk/businesshealthcheck and leave your details or send an email to: christian.wilson@coodles.co.uk

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Membership. If not already a member then consider joining. Membership costs £25/year.

Download the invitation letter at <http://tinyurl.com/cqhkvsx>

Membership form at <http://tinyurl.com/bp7owu5>

Bank mandate form at <http://tinyurl.com/czn7zbd>