PENZANCE COUNCIL



Penzance is a coastal town with a colourful history that goes way beyond its popular notoriety through comic opera. With a setting on Mounts Bay the parish includes the distinctive communities of Gulval, Eastern Green, Heamoor, Mousehole and, of course, Newlyn – which remains one of the largest fishing ports in the UK.

Located at the end of the railway line Penzance is the gateway to West Penwith – the most south-westerly part of Britain. The Lands End peninsula is like a different country with its atmospheric moorlands, granite cliffs, sub-tropical plants, stone circles, ancient field patterns, undersea cables and microwave dishes!

But despite being at the end of everything Penzance is far from backward looking. It is one of five “Earth Protector Towns” in the country and all kinds of futures – from offshore wind energy to regenerative agriculture – now beckon. The arts of all kinds are also particularly strong – both analogue and digital – and a newly developed Cultural Strategy aims to connect up and cross-promote this local offering to both locals and visitors.

Tourism remains important to the area but it is increasingly “experiential” in nature and visitors now tend to be very different from the bucket’n’spade tourists of the past. The New York Times ranked Penzance as 14th in its “52 Places to Go in 2017”!

The 2020 Academy of Urbanism awards proclaimed Penzance “Great Town” for that year. This was partly in recognition of its quirky architecture and townscape but also of the way in which various partnerships had been created to regenerate the town in a sustainable way.

Penzance has pioneered the philosophy of “place-shaping” within Cornwall and one result of this commitment has been the award of a substantial amount of money from both the Towns Fund and the Future High Streets Fund. As a result of this a number of exciting projects are currently at the developmental stage.

The parish of Penzance only has a population of 22,000 but there is so much going on here that some people say that it feels like a “little city”!