

Penwith Landscape Partnership

*Kynsa ha Diwettha –
Agan Tirwedh Bewa ha Gonis'*

**First and Last –
Our Living Working Landscape**



June 2017

Pennwydh yn termyn eus passys

Ancient Penwith

Did you know that Penwith has one of the greatest concentrations of ancient sites in the UK? Penwith is built on a prehistoric landscape of national importance.

This month we are focusing on Ancient Penwith, an important project within the Penwith Landscape Partnership programme. The project aims are to protect, to educate and to create better access to a significant number of the treasure trove of ancient sites that remain in our area.

The lead organisation for this project is the Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network, a Registered Trust which has been working for over 15 years to keep a dozen or so of Penwith's important ancient sites accessible and in good order. CASPN is made up entirely of volunteers which means it fits well into the community led ethos of the Heritage Lottery Fund.

What are the threats faced by our ancient sites?

Those who know Penwith well understand that the increasing dominance of plants such as furze, bracken, brambles and Japanese knotweed is a problem, causing difficulty accessing sites, disturbing archaeology and concentrating footfall into narrow paths, resulting in soil erosion. In dry weather, fire risk poses the likelihood of damage to sites.



The growing financial pressure suffered by the farming community brings a significant risk of loss of knowledge of management skills and methods distinctive to Penwith.

Increasing numbers of visitors to just a few well known sites often result in unintentional damage as well as problems of litter and erosion.

Organisations such as Cornwall Wildlife Trust, National Trust, Historic Environment, Historic England and CASPN have all been doing their best to protect this precious environment, but the opportunity afforded by the Heritage Lottery Fund through the Penwith

Landscape Partnership will be the first time that these efforts can be coordinated and expanded.

For CASPN, via the Ancient Penwith project, this will mean that many of our long held aims should be fulfilled.

Working on the Ancient Penwith project

To progress the plans for Ancient Penwith, a working party was formed comprising members from CASPN, Cornwall Archaeological Society (CAS), Historic England, Cornwall Council Historic Environment Service, Save Penwith Moors and the National Trust.

Ancient Penwith continued...



Using the local knowledge and expertise within this group, a list of significant sites was drawn up, together with report forms which were then used to survey each site as to condition, risk, historic importance and ongoing work needed.

Cornwall Archaeological Unit was commissioned to report on our 'top 50' sites and the working party surveyed the remaining 150. This was a tremendous effort by everyone involved, taking many hours over the summer of 2016. The result has been the creation of an invaluable resource on the current state of our most important sites, together with costed plans for their preservation and maintenance. The sites have now been prioritised based on the work needed and their geographical locations.

An Ancient Penwith Project Officer will be employed whose responsibility, under CASPN management, will be to bring our plans to fruition over the five year period of the scheme.

What else is in our Ancient Penwith Plan?

With the help of Heritage Lottery funding to create a Volunteer Programme, we intend to build a team of volunteers who will be provided with training needed for this sensitive work.

We also want to increase awareness of our precious landscape with young generations by way of an outreach project, to involve them in helping care for the sites as well as engendering a sense of pride in the special place where they live.

To avoid the need for information boards littering the landscape we intend to use new technology so that visitors can download guides and information, as well as producing a series of booklets available from local centres. Better information on more sites will relieve the pressure on the popular places.

Hopefully, we can look forward to a much improved Ancient Penwith landscape which will have great benefits for local residents, visitors, landowners and farmers for many years to come.



For more information about CASPN and how you can get involved please visit

www.cornishancientsites.com



Who is on the Partnership...

Members of the Penwith Landscape Partnership Board are:

Cornwall Councillors representing four Penwith wards
Zennor and Towednack Parish Council
Farming representatives
A Penwith based micro-business
Cornwall Archaeological Society
Cornwall Ancient Sites Protection Network (CASPN)
National Trust
St Aubyn Estates
Farm Cornwall

Bolitho Estates
Penwith Access and Rights of Way (PAROW)
Penwith Community Development Trust
Save Penwith Moors
Cornwall Wildlife Trust
Cornwall AONB
Chaired by Cllr Jim McKenna

Advisors to the Shadow Board include:

Natural England, Cornwall Council Historic Environment Section and Cornwall Rural Community Charity

If you want to keep in touch with the Landscape Partnership's progress, please contact your local Parish or Cornwall Councillor to find out what is going on in your area or contact us to sign up to this newsletter.

Penwith Landscape Partnership

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