

SAUNDERSFOOT



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

*Saundersfoot – a special place to live and visit –
a jewel in the Pembrokeshire Coast crown...*

DRAFT

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**DRAFT
COMMUNITY**

ACTION PLAN

For Saundersfoot

Prepared in conjunction with



**(Pembrokeshire Local Action Network
for Enterprise and Development)**

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Background to the Action Plan

Saundersfoot has a long tradition of self-help with a large variety of local organisations and an active Community Council. In 1992 its first Action Plan was prepared as a result of a Community Appraisal exercise.

Projects were driven by the Saundersfoot 2000 community association, working with PLANED's predecessor, SPARC and other partners.

Completed projects include:

- Village History Leaflet
- Interpretation Panels and plaques marking historic sites
- Enhancement, including lighting and planting
- Traffic calming and road signing
- Playground improvements near the Regency Hall
- Harbour Study

The Action Plan was updated in 2000 when a Future Search weekend was held in the village, involving over 50 stakeholders representing a wide range of interests. Representatives from agencies and authorities also attended. These included Pembrokeshire County Council and the National Park Authority.

A new Action Plan was produced from the findings of this exercise. The Saundersfoot Forum evolved from Saundersfoot 2000 and worked with PLANED and Pembrokeshire County Council to achieve further projects which included:

- The Sensory Garden
- A Feasibility Study of the old Coal Office (Barbecue Building)
- Village centre enhancement
- Highways improvements
- Regency Hall Study.

It was decided to update the Action Plan and in March 2007 two Community Visioning exercises took place. Facilitated by PLANED, they helped residents of all ages and interests take a fresh look at the village's needs and aspirations. The Community Visioning Workshops consisted of the following activities:

- Something Special – special qualities of the Saundersfoot community.
- A Community Audit – listing the main features and facilities
- The Community in the Bigger Picture – considering global and local issues
- Weaknesses, Threats, Strengths and Opportunities
- The Vision for 2020– Saundersfoot in the future.
- Skills and Resources Audit – illustrating the variety of local skills
- Translating Ideas into Action – using the information to plan projects

The workshop information, along with that from a community questionnaire and other sources, including the National Park Authority's 2002 Conservation Area Statement has been drawn up into this draft Action Plan which will be circulated to the whole community, with an invitation to a Public Meeting, where any new changes can be agreed. Then the community will be assisted to develop the next round of projects.

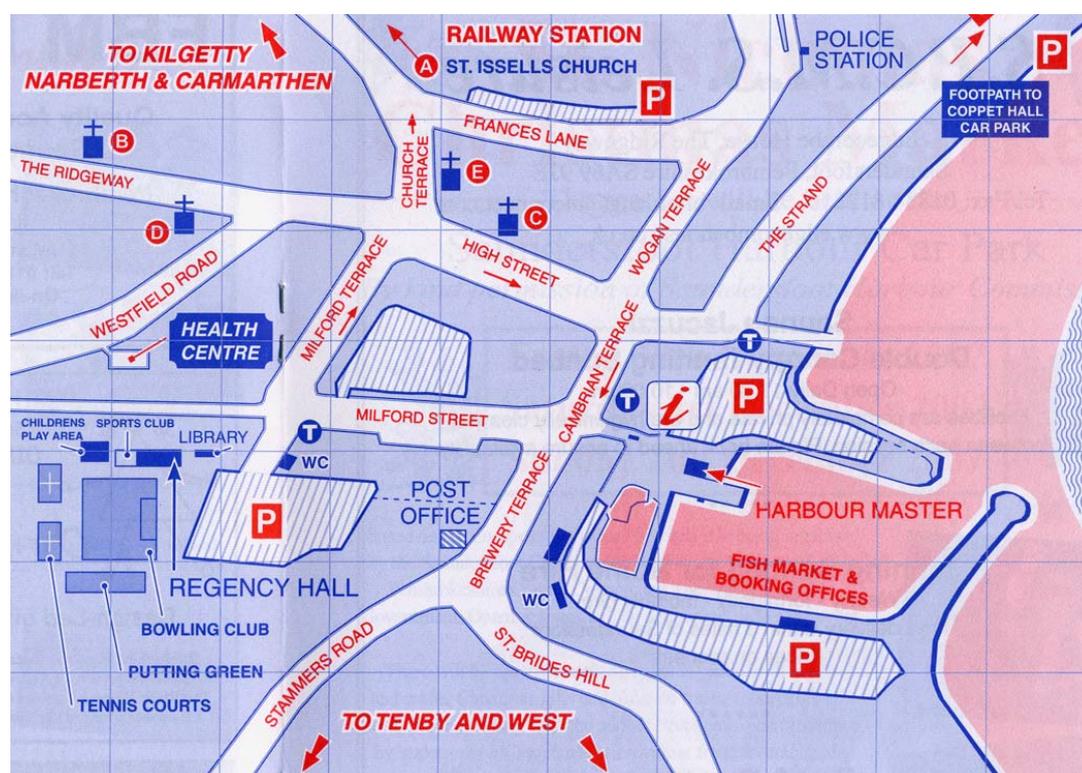
The Action Plan Area

Saundersfoot is an attractive coastal community in south Pembrokeshire, it lies two miles north of Tenby and a mile south of Wiseman's Bridge. It is within the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and the Tenby Tourism Growth area.

Proud of its 'village' status, Saundersfoot is a popular seaside destination with spectacular sandy beaches and a large harbour, looking east to Carmarthen Bay. The village is set in a valley, accessed by narrow roads from neighbouring communities of Pentlepoir, New Hedges and Sardis. The main street runs along the valley bottom, banked by steep sides. The population is around 2,700 people (2001 census).

There is a small range of shops, one main grocery store and a large number of cafes, restaurants, pubs and fast food outlets. Accommodation providers include bed and breakfast, guest houses, small hotels and a large prestigious development on St Brides Hill, which includes spa facilities and spectacular coastal views.

Local landmarks include the Ridgeway which runs south from Bonville's Court, once a busy coal mine. Hean Castle stands in woodland on a hill north of the village, set in a large estate of farms and houses built in a distinctive style. In addition to the main beach, Coppet Hall is to the north and Swallowtree, to the south, beyond the Harbour.



Map extract from 'Saundersfoot Scene'

In addition to the parish church, Saundersfoot has a Congregational Chapel, Hebron Baptist Chapel and a Wesleyan Chapel. Bethany Chapel was converted for residential use some years ago. There is also the Catholic Church of St Bride. A

primary school is situated on the north approach to the Village, near Coedrath and a Community Education Centre is based in the former British School near the Ridgeway.

Although it has retained its 'village' character, Saundersfoot has a wide range of facilities and a particularly active sports and recreation centre near the Regency Hall.

The main village centre, sea front and sandy beaches are within the National Park Authority's Conservation Area which means that it is of special historic or architectural interest and worth preserving or enhancing.

History

Saundersfoot lies in the ancient parish of St Issells which dates back to early Christian times. The beautiful parish church which dates from the 13th century, is presumed to be on the site of an original site of worship where a number of routes converged.

The name Saundersfoot is thought to have derived from a combination of 'Saunders' – the name of a locally important family and 'foot' a topographical feature. A survey of 1770 shows Sandersfoot Farm near the present sea front car park.



There is reference to coal mining in the area as early as 1324 but the pace accelerated in the late 18th century. The high quality of locally mined coal saw the village develop as an important coal harbour.

In 1829 the Saundersfoot Railway and Harbour Company was authorised by Parliament and a tram road was built to connect a number of local collieries. By 1837 five jetties were in full use loading coal and iron ore.

The Stepside Ironworks provided further employment for local men as did a fire brick works at Wisemans Bridge.

St Issells Church

The cluster of houses and miners' cottages, pubs and chapels grew to a community of over 30 buildings by the 1840's.

The 'Rosalind' engine ran along Railway Street - now 'The Strand' (*pictured right with the tram lines represented*) to Wiseman's Bridge.



Today the railway tunnels (*pictured below*) are a distinctive feature of Saundersfoot, located along a well used path on the old rail line between the villages.



Hean Castle had links to the coal industry. Originally a fortified site, it was reconstructed in red sandstone with a dressing of Forest of Dean stone in an Elizabethan style, after its purchase by Charles Vickerman in 1896. His father was the treasurer of the Saundersfoot Railway and Harbour Company and son followed father to dominate the local industrial scene. The 'Rosalind' engine was named after his daughter.

By 1939, all of the local pits had closed due to the difficulty of working the seams. The railway closed, as did the ingenious shunting system which saw coal trams moved up and down the 'Incline' by means of gravity. The export of the high quality anthracite, often claimed to be the best in the world and favoured by Queen Victoria, ceased.

Alongside the coal industry, and small scale ship-building, an early form of tourism had slowly been developing. This was helped by the construction of the Great Western Railway to Saundersfoot, Tenby and Pembroke Dock. Hotels were constructed and seaside attractions developed around the former industrial sites.

There were few holiday visitors during war time when the beaches were sectioned off with barbed wire and used for Exercise Jantzen, a troop landing rehearsal. Many service men were billeted in the village, some trained in Signals at St Brides Hotel which had been taken over by the Royal Marines. After the war, the resort developed - some servicemen returned with their families to enjoy a more peaceful visit.

Saundersfoot has expanded considerably since the 1950's with housing development on the surrounding hills and numerous caravan sites and self catering properties. Pubs, cafes, restaurants and other tourism-related businesses also developed. Powells Cottage Holidays started in Saundersfoot and is now a national company.

Based on the Saundersfoot Village Leaflet researched by the local historical society.

A Special Place

During the Community Visioning workshops residents identified the essential qualities of their community today.

They felt that an expression, 'belongingness', summed up Saundersfoot's special sense of place. Local people value their 'village by the sea' for its friendly community spirit where 'people look after each other' and everybody knows each other.' It is 'a close knit community which is also welcoming and helpful to visitors.'

The local environment, with its beautiful views, blue flag beaches, flat walks, pretty scenery, busy harbour and interesting wildlife, is another source of pride, as is the local history, especially the unique industrial heritage of Saundersfoot. Good light and climate conditions provide a source of inspiration to artists. A low crime rate gives a sense of security and makes it a 'pleasant area to live in.'

'Thriving' was the description used several times for the mix of groups and organisations, which encourage everyone to get involved in community life and to raise funds for all sorts of charities. If Saundersfoot wants to do something, it just gets planning – whether its Fireworks, the Christmas Market or the New Years Swim.

Residents are also proud of the 'compact village amenities' – including sports facilities, a 'good post office', 'very good bus service', good school' and 'excellent medical facilities.' Cafes, eating places and parking facilities were also praised.

A Vision for the Future – the Saundersfoot Experience

Local residents have a Vision for the future. It is a unique combination of an unspoilt natural environment, top grade accommodation, quality shopping and leisure opportunities, with a year round calendar of events. It is felt essential to retain the integrity of a traditional working seaside village, offering opportunities for all ages, including the chance for young people to live and work in their community.

Vital features:

- In 2020 Saundersfoot will be a strong, safe and thriving community, with a smart, well maintained village centre and a range of quality shops.
- Hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, pubs and cafes will offer visitors the chance to be pampered and to de-stress in a beautiful natural environment, with a range of activities – whatever the weather.
- The busy working harbour is a particular feature and its appeal will be enhanced through additional facilities.
- The Regency Hall will be a busy community centre with a packed programme offering a wide range of activities and classes for all ages.
- There will be a flourishing Heritage Centre, celebrating the whole history of Saundersfoot through innovative interpretation and displays.
- The nearby gardens will be a registered Village Green, providing open-air performance space.
- Saundersfoot will rightly be seen as a special place to live and visit – a jewel in the Pembrokeshire Coast crown.

These features combine to create the 'Saundersfoot Experience' which should be projected in all publicity. The Chamber for Tourism is already working hard to present a co-ordinated image and a strong brand would reinforce the message.

Getting Action Underway

Saundersfoot has a tradition of making things happen. Working with a range of partners, Saundersfoot 2000 and the Saundersfoot Forum have achieved many of the proposals in previous Action Plans and will no doubt rise to a new challenge.

This new Action Plan will be circulated to the whole community – still in a draft form – and everyone will be invited to a Public Meeting to agree the final version. This will provide a fresh opportunity to get involved and provide the Forum with a new lease of life. Funding agencies require evidence of community participation - an Action Plan promoted by an active Community Forum is a very useful starting point.

Implementation of the Action Plan will be assisted by PLANED and partners. Together they can offer specialist help and funding for projects, including town centre enhancement, environmental conservation and local history interpretation. Through its LEADER initiative PLANED can offer help to strengthen the economy on an area basis. It also links to other agencies which can assist strategic development.

Issues raised in the workshops have been grouped into broad themes in this draft Action Plan. Where appropriate they relate to named sites, with specific proposals.

Community Facilities, Activities & Communication

Commentary:



Saundersfoot has a large mix of groups, clubs and organisations which use a variety of venues but the Regency Hall is recognised as the main community meeting place.

There are over 50 Local groups including the Community Council; Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism; The Festivities Committee; the Sports Club; Sailing Club; Regency Hall Committee; Guides, Brownies and Rainbows, Playgroup, Inner Wheel, The Rotary Club, The Friends of Saundersfoot; Saundersfoot WI; St Issells

WI; Country Market; United Churches of Saundersfoot; Carers Group; Oasis Lunch Fellowship; Saundersfoot in Bloom; Historical Society; the RAOB and Mothers Union; Flower Club, Soroptomists, Probus, Saundersfoot Footlights and more. There are also local branches of U3A, RNLI, Cancer Research, Alzheimers Society, NSPCC, Barnardos, Guide Dogs for the Blind and political parties.

In addition to the Regency Hall (pictured), meetings take place in the Sailing Club, the Bowls Club, Church



school room and in the churches and chapels themselves. The Harbour Commissioners meet in the Harbour Office.

Education classes take place in the Community Centre - but it is in poor condition and is due to close. It is hoped that classes will take place in the Regency Hall when refurbished. Meanwhile, activities will take place in alternative venues. The Centre once ran a Youth Club but this closed and the nearest club is in Tenby but some sort of youth facility is definitely needed in the village.

Year round tea dances, bingo, choirs and Footlights productions take place at the Regency Hall. The beach is a venue for fishing competitions and regattas and is also used for swimming and walking.

Suggestions for additional activities include a sketching or art group, dancing and aerobics. Local people are health conscious and would like to participate in keep fit classes, line dancing, badminton, Pilates and yoga. There was also interest in gym facilities and enthusiasm for swimming and lessons for adults.

There is a need for more modern meeting facilities. During the visioning workshops, suggestions included 'refurbish the Regency Hall', 'more facilities for parents and families', a 'loop system for hard of hearing in community buildings' and using the hall for 'lectures and cultural activities.' Providing smaller meeting spaces was suggested.

The Regency Hall Committee of Trustees is committed to updating the facility and has been fund raising for many years. Architects have been appointed and plans have been drawn up for a storage annexe, playgroup facility, extra toilet facilities and a dedicated computer room which will provide the facilities suggested.

During discussions at the community workshops, it was agreed that there should be a new push to achieve the Regency Hall improvements. A publicity strategy should aim at involving more local people in planning the building's future and asking for their help in fund raising. Press articles highlighting the value of the facility and the vision for its future would help.

The proposed extension would be built on sustainable principles – interest was expressed in bio energy and the refurbishment should include a general review of energy efficiency, accessibility and general user comfort.

This project would link to other proposals including tourism and interpretation of the community's history – sculptures or murals could help to depict the mining history. This general sense of upgrading the village and generating a real sense of pride would aim to ensure the best possible experience for visitors and locals.

The impressive sports complex in the King George Playing Fields, next to the Regency Hall, includes facilities for tennis, bowling, cricket, crazy golf and ball games. There is also a Sport and Social Club on the same site, adjoining the Regency Hall.

Nearby children's play facilities are also good with new seating areas for parents to enjoy leisure time but an all weather surface is needed. The only facility required for children seemed to be mother and toddler facility with showers near to the beach.

However, there is a lack of facilities for teenagers. During a consultation exercise with young people the need for extending sports facilities was raised. A dedicated area for skate boarding was a recurring theme. This has been a long standing issue and experiments to provide an amenity have not been successful. Comments from young people included offers of voluntary time to achieve such a project. The Princes Trust is currently working with local organisations, the Police, Community Council and the National Park Authority to improve opportunities for young people.

Local communication seems very effective. Notice boards are full of colourful posters which are changed regularly. In addition to official sites in the village centre and at the Regency Hall, many shops advertise events.

The Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism publishes 'Saundersfoot Scene' a comprehensive information booklet for visitors and residents, which includes a calendar of local events. Its website, www.visitsaundersfoot.com is also very informative. The Tourist Information Centre in the Harbour car park is open daily during the summer season and operates a bed booking service.

Proposals:

- Use the Action Plan process to reinvigorate the Saundersfoot Forum and raise the village's profile and its Vision for the future.
- The Forum should continue to support the Regency Hall Committee in its refurbishment plans and help to promote it.
- Raising sufficient funds for the proposed improvements is the main priority and various sources are being researched. Other help might include:
 - Encouraging the community to develop further activities and interests which would bring in more revenue to support the Regency Hall.
 - Visits to other facilities built on energy efficient principles such as the National Park Authority's headquarters at Llanion Park, Pembroke Dock.
 - Requesting help from the West Wales Eco Centre and the Energysavers Scheme to undertake energy audits.
 - Involving the Pembrokeshire Access Group regarding access issues.
- Explore opportunities for extending sport provision to include basketball or multi use games area (MUGA) for all ages to have a larger range of options.
- Explore opportunities for young people e.g. a 'drop in' Youth Centre was proposed. Involve them in discussions about sport/recreation provision.
- Take a fresh look at provision of a skate board park. Discuss options for a community project with the Princes Trust which supervises youth projects.
- Provide an all weather surface for play area.

Enhancement, Environment & Recycling

Commentary:

Maintaining the quality of the natural environment and of the village centre, was a major feature in the vision for the future of Saundersfoot.



Pride expressed in the beautiful

beaches, clean seas and local countryside was balanced by concerns about cleanliness, litter, dog mess and the 'shabby' appearance of some shops and buildings, despite the Conservation Area grant scheme which provides assistance to businesses and home owners who wish to renovate buildings in traditional style.

Young people identified a litter problem and a large percentage said that they would help with an environmental project that might include litter picking. 'Diss the Dirt' was suggested as a catchphrase for raising awareness of litter issues.

Within the village there are attractive planting schemes and paved areas. Litter bins, seating and lamp standards are co-ordinated in an attractive blue and gold livery. This was part of an enhancement scheme carried out over the past decade in response to past Action Plan proposals. It is popular and residents feel it should be maintained to a high standard and would like other areas improved too. A shelter for wet and windy days was suggested. The Sensory Garden (*pictured below*) is a real asset in the middle of the village and is appreciated by locals and visitors.

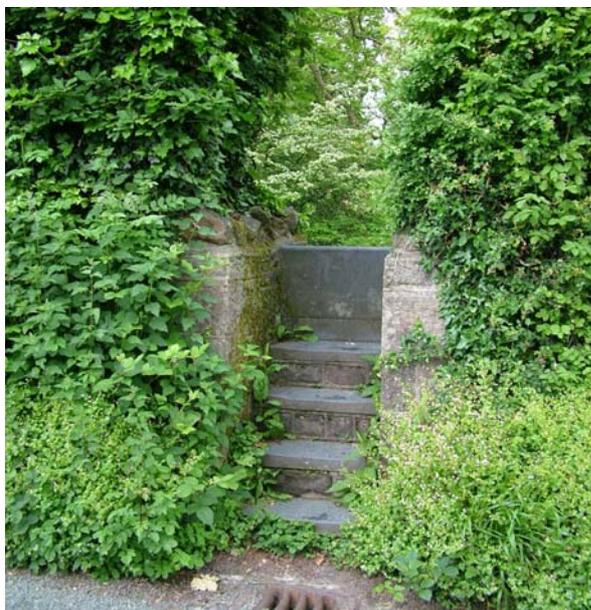


The Harbour is a really important feature (*see Business & Tourism section*). A previous Study looked at various options. Debate about water levels is ongoing for example. It would be useful to re-visit the study and update it. There was a call for public ownership of beaches i.e for the Local Authority to own the portion above the mean high water mark as it is currently in private ownership.

Help and support for the marine environment is available from the Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum and partners. As part of the Waterway Recreation Plan, there is a zoning system in place to promote safe and sensitive use. Certain areas are set aside for specific activities such as water skiing.

Saundersfoot has a good public path network and a cycle trail along the old railway line. There are also links to rural public rights of way and the Sustrans cycle way.

The paths have historic significance, as many led to mines and industrial sites. Some of the stiles are historic items in their own right, made from stone and slate and could feature in a local Heritage Trail.



Lighting in the 'tunnels' was also suggested to assist walkers. A previous scheme was vandalised, so special measures would need to be taken to avoid this – underfoot lighting has been suggested but a bat survey would be needed. It was felt that a bigger feature could be made of the stream known as Beddoes Lake which runs through the centre of the village to the harbour. Fry's Brook at Coppet Hall was also mentioned as a local feature which should be enhanced.

Recycling facilities are an important part of environmental protection and Saundersfoot residents are keen recyclers. The County Council's 'orange bag' scheme is now operating but facilities are needed for plastic cartons etc.

During the workshops, residents considered how they could make their daily lives more sustainable. Their discussions highlighted global issues such as environmental changes and the potential for local impact. The cost of waste was discussed and simple measures that could be taken at a local level, such as recycling and household energy saving. Loss of local services and shops was also a concern.

PLANED's Valuing the Environment officer works with local environment groups, providing training and support for a variety of activities including habitat and species audits. Partners will give advice eg the County Council provides support for rights of way issues. A variety of funds is available for community environment projects.

Proposals:

- Support Community Council to commission a new Village Enhancement scheme with appropriate maintenance schedule.
- A Harbour Study is also needed.
- Encourage businesses and householders to participate in the National Park Authority's Conservation Area grant scheme.

- Encourage the council to enforce litter and dog fouling byelaws – dog mess can be put in ordinary bins. This would be part of the Diss the Dirt campaign.
- Explore potential for vandal proof lighting in the ‘tunnels’ – possibly set in to the ground but a bat survey would be needed.
- Make a feature of Beddoes Lake and Fry’s Brook.
- Organise a ‘walk about’ to identify areas for planting, seating, wildlife gardens etc. Volunteers may help – see Environment Group proposal below.
- Form an Environment Group to provide activities relating to a range of topics including local enhancement, biodiversity, public rights of way and recycling.
 - Walking enthusiasts could survey paths and undertake improvements – in liaison with the local authority and landowners. Circular routes could be way marked to encourage locals and visitors to explore the locality and enjoy its history as part of a Heritage Trail. This would keep paths in good condition and provide health benefits too.
 - Review energy efficiency on a personal and community level and take steps to raise awareness and save energy in every way possible.
 - Review Recycling practice to include plastic cartons as well as bottles.

Heritage & History

Commentary:

Heritage and history are an important part of Saundersfoot’s identity, particularly the industrial heritage. Many residents are active in the local Historical Society which compiled the village history leaflet and runs a programme of speakers, walks and visits. Interpretation panels and blue plaques mark historical features in the village.



There is interest in developing the village’s history and heritage into part of the Saundersfoot experience which is all about quality and making the most of local opportunities. It should be as interesting to local people as to visitors.

A Heritage Trail could be designed around the town, starting at the Tourist Information Centre, and featuring historical sites such as the Winding House, along the way. The mining

history is a story in its own right and the Miner’s Walk is already a popular long distance route.

Older people still remember the ‘Rosalind’ making her way along Railway Street. Oral history is a great way to bring the past alive, especially as Saundersfoot’s fortunes changed so radically from industry to sunny holidays.

Many people believe that the former Coal Office/Barbecue Building (current TIC) would make a good museum and heritage centre as it occupies a central position with nearby car parking. The gardens around the building have been utilised for outdoor

performances and more are planned for the future. The Community Council is working to achieve village green status in this area.

Sculptures depicting the town's history could be sited here, perhaps as part of the heritage trail. Trails could be themed to include a church and chapel walk tracing religious history or tell the story of the fishing and boat building industries.

This would encourage visitors to explore local history whilst enjoying refreshments and shopping opportunities – as part of the overall Saundersfoot Experience.

Proposals:

- Agree a site for and support development of a Heritage and Exhibition Centre.
- Support the existing Historical Society to further interpret the village's heritage and seek help and advice from the National Park authority.
- Develop a Heritage Trail with a leaflet to combine environment and heritage interests and offer further options to visitors and residents.
- Organise a local 'Sense of Place' exhibition to promote interest and encourage people of all ages to get involved - in whatever capacity. Those that are not historians may be able to help with IT skills – photo scanning etc.
- Obtain a list of local historical features from Cambria Archaeology which keeps a record of Ancient Sites and Monuments.
- Seek advice, training and support from various agencies, including the County Museums and Cultural Services Department, the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority and PLANED's Sense of Place programme.

Business & Tourism

Commentary:

An ability to 'welcome and encourage one and all' is regarded as a key strength of Saundersfoot. The village must maintain 'a balance between the needs of locals and visitors' in terms of local facilities and services. This is crucial if Saundersfoot is to be a sustainable, 'strong and thriving community' in the future.



This warmth of welcome combined with the beautiful natural environment, 'gorgeous harbour', clean, safe, sandy beaches, are regarded as prime attractions. Good eating places and plenty of events and activities are other advantages. Together they offer a 'laid back', relaxed atmosphere for visitors to 'de-stress.'

These, plus the relaxed qualities which make the village a retreat as well as a resort, are crucial to its future success. The coast and its attractions combine with access to the attractive countryside are essential to the 'Saundersfoot Experience'. These must be maintained to a high standard and supported by best quality accommodation, entertainment and catering.

It was felt that the Harbour is a key asset and much more could be made of the whole area in order to help the local economy. The community want it to remain a working harbour and not simply a marina. It was suggested that the Harbour needed considerable enhancement which would include modern toilet and shower facilities. Lighting and signage improvements were also suggested. This would be in line with the Welsh Assembly Government's proposal for a 'necklace' of 'safe havens.' Health and safety issues were discussed – the local tradition of jumping off the harbour wall into the water on summer evenings has come to an end. Risk of injury is too high.

Hours of volunteer time are contributed to providing local events, festivals and other activities. The work of the Saundersfoot Chamber for Tourism and the efforts of voluntary groups and individuals produce a unique experience for locals and visitors. The Chamber promotes them in a bi-annual publication – the Saundersfoot Scene. Colourful banners would be another way of welcoming visitors and promoting events.

There has been a sustained effort to extend the holiday season in Saundersfoot, which appears to be reaping benefits, as there is a constantly busy feel to the resort. During December the St Nicholas Christmas Market creates warmth and jollity (whatever the weather); the New Year's fireworks are popular and St David's Day celebrations bring the village alive in spring. In summer there is a wide variety of events including Fish Week, Saundersfoot in Bloom and sailing regattas.

It seems that Saundersfoot is buzzing but local business people and tourist providers are very aware of competition from other attractions such as the Bluestone project and the need to maximise the elements that make Saundersfoot special.

There is no room for complacency and the business community takes the village's inclusion in the local Tourism Growth Area very seriously and the Chamber for Tourism wishes to make the most of the opportunity.

National strategies like the Wales Spatial Plan recognise the importance of a quality environment as a major attraction for visitors whilst ensuring that tourism development is sustainable and communities remain strong.

Sustainable tourism development takes careful planning and the dependence of the community on a thriving tourist trade is recognised. Young people recognise this too – their comments in the youth consultation showed their awareness, coupled with concern about their futures and whether they would be able to live and work locally.

There are however, few wet weather facilities in Saundersfoot and this was identified as a disadvantage for local youngsters as well as visitors. Re-development of the Regency Hall and a new programme of events and activities would help to address this. The development of the Coal Office/Barbecue Building into a museum and heritage centre would be another asset, and there is interest in the Model Village.

Shopping opportunities were also felt to need 'upgrading' but there is little room for expansion, as space is limited. There are few unused facilities apart from privately owned sites such as the area behind the Cambrian. Examples of quality shops and premises in Narberth and Llandeilo were mentioned as examples of good practice.

Business people are concerned about the high commercial rates on shop spaces and the short term nature of some shops means that the overall effect of shop front decoration is un-coordinated. This leads to descriptions of them looking 'scruffy' and 'shabby.' This deters quality outlets so there is circular knock effect which is seen as a challenge to further retail development.

Some feel there are too many cafes, although there is no facility at the far end of the harbour. Evening opening, with outdoor seating facilities, was also suggested.

Responses to the community questionnaire suggested that some members of the commercial sector would like to see less 'red tape' and would take advantage of free business advice. They also feel that there should be more training available locally to improve skills and encourage a sense of commitment to local work opportunities.

Traffic issues, distance to the Railway Station and lack of public transport after 6pm was identified as another disadvantage for visitors (*see Highways and Transport section*)

Proposals:

- Saundersfoot Forum will continue to support the Chamber for Tourism to promote the village and its special qualities - 'The Saundersfoot Experience.'
- Continue to support work of the Tourism Growth Area group and keep the local community informed of possible developments.
- Commission a study of potential Wet Weather Facilities.
- Support a Harbour Study and a Village Enhancement Study.
- Organise visits to towns that have successful annual festival programmes such as Kinsale, Padstow and Ludlow. Explore twinning potential.
- Launch a Shop Window Competition to encourage community pride.
- Undertake a Shop Front Study.
- Work with the County Council to attract quality shops by offering incentives such as low commercial rates.
- Encourage PBI and other enterprise organisations to deliver more advice and training locally.
- Work with PLANED's Area Enterprise Group to look at economic aspects of community life and measures that can be taken to build capacity.

Housing & Services

Commentary:

Local people feel that the future development of housing in Saundersfoot should be geared towards encouraging local young people to remain in the area so that they can use their skills and education to boost the local economy. There is an interest in sustainable building techniques and energy efficiency in new homes. A growing dislike of holiday homes, which stand empty for part of the year, is apparent.

The community will be encouraged to participate in the Local Development Plan consultation – it will provide opportunities to identify potential sites for affordable housing. The process is currently being publicised through a booklet call ‘LDP Wales – Planning your Community: a guide to Local Development Plans’, issued by the Welsh Assembly Government. It stressed the importance of community involvement.

Local people are generally happy with services in Saundersfoot, except for policing which they feel is inadequate. Security and safety issues were voiced by a number of participants in the Visioning exercise. Many would like to see more ‘bobbies on the beat’ - the arrival of a new community policeman is welcomed. Better integration of age groups and involvement in shared community projects may also help. The Princes Trust representative has met with the community policeman to discuss the potential for more youth involvement. Efforts are needed to help older people too.

Despite the County Council's recent expenditure on upgrading public toilets there are still issues around cleanliness, condition and opening hours. Toilets on the Harbour, in the Regency Hall Car Park and at Coppet Hall are regarded as being neither modern or inviting. During the winter they close early or are not open at all and there is little chance of nappy changing facilities. One workshop participant said ‘they frequently fall short of being pleasant.’ There was general agreement that public conveniences should be upgraded and open all year round.

Proposals:

- Encourage the community to participate in the Local Development Plan consultation.
- Encourage the Community Council to:
 - Meet with the Rural Housing Enabler and undertake a local needs survey to assess demand for homes for first time buyers.
 - Identify sites for housing for local people.
 - Research potential for developing more facilities for local senior citizens.
 - Discuss security concerns with local police.
 - Pursue further improvement of public conveniences, including mother and toddler toilets and shower facilities near the beach or in the Harbour

Traffic, Transport & Highways



Commentary:

Saundersfoot residents have quite a number of traffic and transport concerns. People ignore double yellow lines and park on the Strand, without incurring any penalties. The need for a Traffic Warden has been suggested.

During the summer roads become blocked, delays occur and there is insufficient parking space. The tight bend between High Street and Cambrian Terrace (*pictured*) causes problems for lorries if cars park on double yellow lines.

There is interest in reducing traffic in the village centre to the extent that a pedestrianisation scheme was suggested for The Strand. This could be on a part time basis to allow access for residents and only during the summer months.

Respondents to the community questionnaire said that they would prefer to use public transport when possible but bus timetables need extending. Saundersfoot has a good daytime bus service but needs an evening timetable, especially in the summer when visitors cannot really choose to holiday without a car if they wish to go elsewhere for an evening.

Saundersfoot is lucky enough to have retained a railway station but it is over a mile from the village centre, accessed by a narrow country road with no pavements or lighting. This discourages its use by families and anyone but the most ardent public transport enthusiast. It is also a very unattractive place and the entrance onto the road is dangerous.

An integrated transport study is needed. Co-ordinated timetables and a shuttle bus could see visitors arriving by coach and rail as well as by road and sea. This would reduce the number of cars in the town, reducing the carbon footprint. It would also help Saundersfoot to gain a reputation for sustainable living to add to its blue flag beaches and enthusiasm for recycling and keeping the town looking good.

Neyland is looking at the potential for water taxis, why not Saundersfoot? People visit Saundersfoot, Wiseman's Bridge and Amroth, enjoying their individual charms and contributing to the local economy. Instead of cluttering the narrow country lanes with cars, they could enjoy a boat ride and gain a totally different perspective of Saundersfoot - from the sea.

Saundersfoot is on the Sustrans cycle route which runs to Wiseman's Bridge, climbing steeply onto the coast path with rewarding views of Carmarthen Bay as it drops into Amroth. There was interest in developing more local cycle routes. This is another low impact way for visitors to enjoy the local environment, the heritage and contribute to the economy.



Local people are health and environment conscious and replies to the community questionnaire suggested that they enjoy gardening and walking on the beach. Many said that they would walk more if pavements and paths were in better condition. Poor access for less mobile people was also mentioned.

Many interesting ideas were put forward by workshop participants, including lighting the tunnels; a land train; park and ride to include Coppett Hall; a multi storey car park and sleeping policemen to slow traffic.

Proposals:

Work with the Community Council and Pembrokeshire County Council to:

- Undertake a Traffic Management Study in consultation with the community.
- Review car parking arrangements, better signage might help e.g indicating the close proximity of Coppet Hall car park to the village through the tunnel.
- Enforce local traffic parking restrictions.
- Investigate potential for sharing a Traffic Warden with neighbouring towns.
- Review streetscape as part of village study – lighting, dropped kerbs, widening pavements on Wogan Terrace and renaming streets with their original names etc
- Contact Pembrokeshire County Council’s Transport Co-ordinator to pursue an integrated transport policy – maybe through a Study - taking into account bus routes and usage of cycle track. Include bus shelters and carriage of bicycles on public transport and improvement of the Railway Station.
- Explore opportunities for developing water related transport, including water taxis and pleasure boat trips.

Implementation/Working Groups

In order that the Action Plan can be progressed effectively it is proposed to work through the Community Forum. Working Groups would progress the proposals – reporting back to the whole Community Forum – and in consultation with the relevant providers, for example the Highway Authority.

The Working Groups could be centred on:

- Community - facilities, activities and communications.
- Environment - including rights of way, energy & waste
- Heritage, Culture and History.
- Business and Tourism
- Work with the Community Council on:
 - Housing & Services.
 - Transport, Traffic & Highways

It is important that the Groups would:

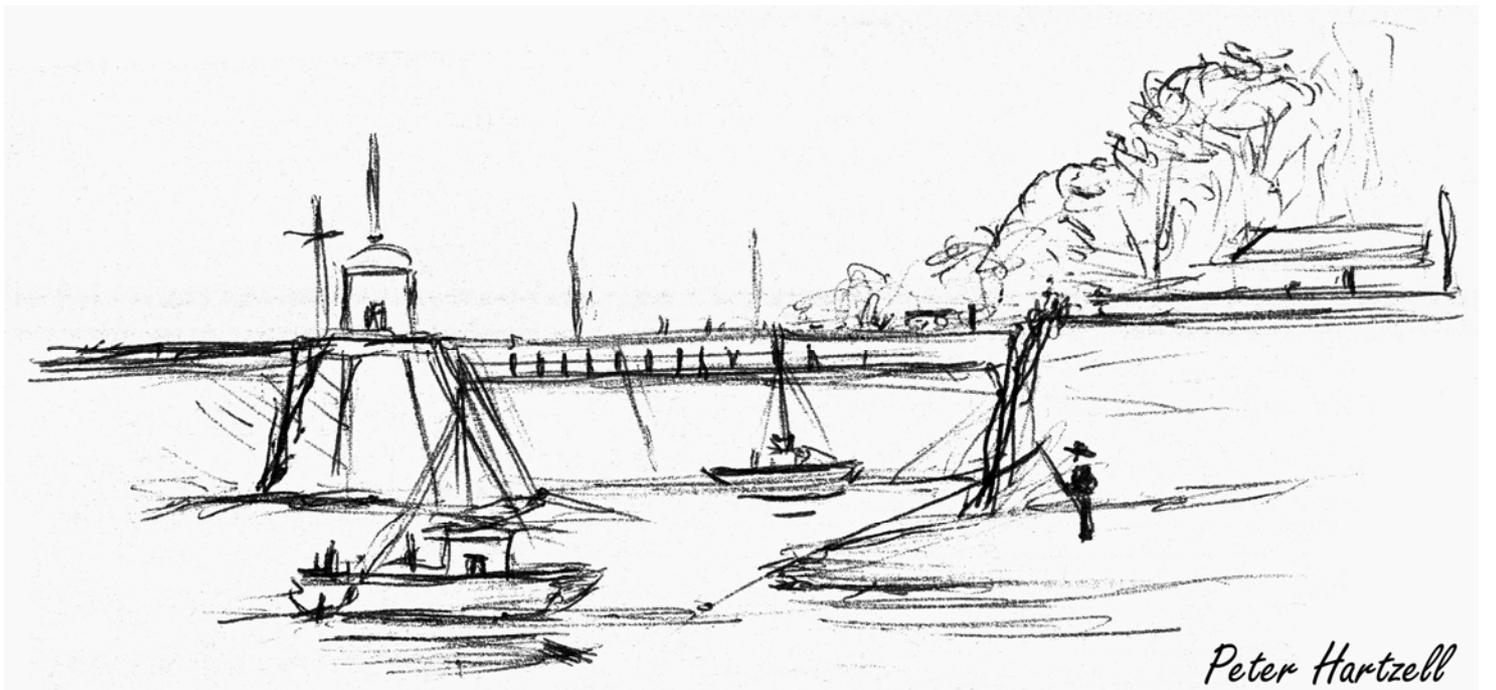
- Work within the agreed Action Plan and report to the main Forum –
- Work with existing groups and organisations, including the Community Council and other local authorities.
- Meet on a regular basis – at least four times a year.
- Keep the broader community informed of progress.

Support, advice and funding would be offered by PLANED and partner organisations to help progress the Action Plan proposals. In certain instances, local proposals might feed into wider area strategies which would be supported by Area Enterprise Groups.

The Bigger Picture

A quick look at the Welsh Assembly Government website provides reams of reading material relating to the future development of Wales. The Wales Spatial Plan is the keystone and it sits alongside 'Wales a Better Country'; the 'Sustainable Development Scheme' and 'Wales: A Vibrant Economy.'

Within the Spatial Plan, Wales is divided into regional areas, with their own individual visions, strategy and action areas with one dedicated to 'Pembrokeshire and The Havens' area. The vision is for 'strong communities supported by a sustainable economy, based on the area's unique environment, maritime access and tourism opportunities.'



Peter Hartzell