

# Plans for state of the art media centre in Penwith

A STATE of the art media centre part funded by Objective One cash looks set to be established in Penwith - with the Abbey Warehouse being touted as a potential home.

Tim Beattie, co-director of the Media Centre For Cornwall project, told *The Cornishman* the centre - which will eventually offer small to medium sized media companies access to cutting edge facilities - is almost certain to be based in Penwith.

"Penwith already has a significant cluster of small media related companies and enterprises. We currently have our office in Knights Court in Penzance - and there are three production companies based in the same building as us. This is one of the reasons we need a media centre," said Mr Beattie.

"Basically, the centre will provide facilities for small to medium enterprises and provide accommodation. This will include start up office space for companies.

"The right venue will also include a public space for film screenings, a gallery and perhaps a coffee bar.

"There will also be specific media related facilities such as editing suites. We are particularly interested in creating an online post production facility.

"This sort of digital editing suite will enable people to do a finished edit - and would be the only facility of its kind this side of Bristol. It is very cutting edge and would mean the building would have to be wired for digital communication via fibre optic cables. This will give the centre broadband width access, which

will allow video to be sent via the internet.

"We have been working closely with the Digital Peninsula Network as we have members in common. They support us and we support them.

"Abbey Warehouse has been identified as a possible site, but we are also interested in some others," revealed Mr Beattie.

The Media Centre for Cornwall steering group was formed with support from Cornwall County Council, Falmouth College of Arts, Cornwall College, Truro College, South West Arts and the South West Film Council.

The initial plans for the centre will need funding to tune of around \$750,000 and a bid for Objective One cash - which fits in with Pen-

with's Integrated Area Plan - is currently being constructed.

Mr Beattie said it was hoped that the centre would be able to start offering some services by the middle of 2002, with the actual centre being completed sometime in 2003.

"It is a very exciting time," added Mr Beattie, "and we have had a lot of support and interest from Penwith District Council, which is trying to encourage media companies into the area."

The Media Centre for Cornwall steering group will be holding its first Annual Meeting on September 25 and is inviting anyone interested in membership to subscribe at the cost of \$10.

For more information call 333866.

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NEWS

## ■ More businesses set up in Penzance for ease of IT access

# Centre of digital community

by Max Channon

Staff reporter

THE Digital Peninsula Network is continuing to act as the hive from which local businesses can access the IT honeypot.

Hot on the heels of firms like Evergreen and Microcomms, more businesses are setting up shop in Penzance, to be close to the DPN's network centre in Bread Street.

Among the latest is Content Team Online, a local business which makes training materials - which can be delivered over the internet from its website at [www.contentteamonline.com](http://www.contentteamonline.com).

Cathy Lake, who started the business at her West Cornwall home,

told *The Cornishman* that Content Team Online provides vocational training, tuition in E-commerce and teaching materials for formal qualifications like AS levels and NVQs.

The business is now beginning to take off, so much so she believes Content Team On Line will become one of the most respected training providers in the UK.

Cathy says that DPN has played a major part in this success.

"Through DPN I got to know an awful lot of people with various talents - which enabled me to work on bigger projects," said Mrs Lake.

"It has really taken off since Christmas and I've seen a huge increase in turn over.

"I've got about seven freelancers working for me and one full time employee.

"I was originally working from home but it had got to the stage where I needed an office.

"I started 'hot desking' at the DPN centre. That means you don't have your own desk but just log on to whatever computer is free.

"I have found the centre a really useful place for holding big meetings and meeting people in general. People just drop in and I have made many contacts there that I could work with immediately.

"Also, if you come across a small technical query there is usually somebody around who can answer it. There is a real sense of being in the thick of things and there are so many people in DPN with so many different skills. You learn a lot and it really is an excellent place to be starting a business from.

"I've been involved with the DPN

since it began and always felt confident it would take off.

"Last autumn I realised it was time to make my move and I'm delighted it has gone so well so quickly," added Cathy.

DPN chairman Tim Dwelly was keen to pass some of the credit for Penzance's emergence as Cornwall's IT capital to Penwith Council.

"Only two years ago there were just 12 of us who met once a month for informal meetings - now we have over 175 business members.

"It is no longer wishful thinking to say that Penzance is the centre of Cornwall's digital community - it is a reality.

"One of the important factors in this has been the support of Penwith District Council and its excellent IT strategy," he added.