

Organisation: PK Porthcurno

Title of the Object: 1868 Telegraphy Cable showing Gutta Percha



Description of the object and story: The story of Gutta Percha is especially pertinent given the Climate emergency that is occurring. It is a story of Victorian ecological disaster and clearly shows the links between the industrial revolution and the stripping of natural resources in the name of innovation.

It is an important story to tell as it shows the history of the climate emergency, demonstrating the longevity of the problem which has been growing for the last 150 years.

The story of environmental issues is particularly of interest to PK Porthcurno as we run the 'Planet PK' project, an ongoing environmental program which seeks to support and protect the natural environment of the Porthcurno Valley.



Gutta Percha is also a multifaceted item as it also speaks to the colonial nature of telegraphy and of the PK collections. By re-examining the artefacts and contextualising our objects within the sphere of decolonisation we feel it's important to shine a light on the little-known story of Gutta Percha, not only for its ecological impact, but also how it links so strongly to colonialism.