



## Major step forward for St Ives Town Deal

17 June 2022

Exciting and ambitious plans to enhance and improve St Ives for the future have taken a major step forward with confirmation of the Town Deal projects which will be submitted to the government for final approval later this summer.

Last year the St Ives Town Deal Board successfully bid for a Town Deal worth £19.9 million from the Government's Town Fund Scheme. This was based on a [Town Investment Plan](#) (TIP) which identified a mix of large-scale transformation projects together with a number of smaller scale community projects aimed at delivering the [vision and aims](#) developed in consultation with the local community.

The Town Investment Plan is focused around three key themes:

- An integrated, low carbon, transport system
- New skills, businesses, jobs and supply chains
- New and transformed housing and community assets

During the past 12 months, the organisations behind the shortlisted projects in the TIP have been working on demonstrating the feasibility of their project through the development of business cases. This prerequisite to unlocking any Towns Fund investment includes setting out in detail the cost, scope and delivery mechanism of each project, as well as outlining key milestones and construction dates.

Options for the final programme were discussed at a special meeting of the Town Deal Board where members considered the viability of each project and the likelihood of securing any additional funding required, together with its potential for successfully delivering the vision and aims set out in the Town Investment Plan.

It was decided that, due to the pressures brought by the steep escalation of costs in the construction sector, and the ongoing level of risk associated with some of the match funding, nine of the projects initially listed in the Town Investment Plan were in a position to be taken forward.

The funding allocated to projects which have not been included in the final programme (Palais de Danse, Bay to Bay cycle scheme and the Vertical Farming Project) will be re-allocated to provide additional support for some of the remaining projects. These will include the Guildhall, Leach Pottery, affordable housing and low carbon transport hub projects.

The board also unanimously supported that a part of the funding remains allocated to the development of digital skills, which was a core part of one of the

projects not being progressed, to ensure that the strategic vision for the Town Investment Plan remains unchanged.

**“This is such an important step forward that brings St Ives a step closer from unlocking the government’s Towns Fund investment”** said Karen Fielding, community sector representative on the Town Deal Board. **“We would like to thank all of the project leads for providing such thorough business cases in a very limited and financially complex environment.**

**“Our original bid was designed to deliver three key objectives:**

- **Generate inclusive green growth and new enterprise, within a year-round economy**
- **Support the health, wellbeing and aspiration of all residents in life and work**
- **Create opportunities for young people which allow them to flourish**

**“Delivering these projects will enable us to deliver our vision to level up our economy, bring opportunities for everyone who lives and works here, and provide quality employment and real aspiration for all in an environmentally sustainable way.”**

The nine projects being taken forward are:

- [Low Carbon Transport](#)
- [Rugby Club / Affordable Housing](#)
- [Old Vicarage Flats](#)
- [LiveWest retrofit scheme](#)
- [Delegated Fund for Renewal](#)
- [Guildhall](#)
- [St Ives Theatre](#)
- [Leach Pottery and Digital Trail](#)
- [St Ives Community Orchard](#)

Cllr Louis Gardner, Cornwall Council's portfolio holder for economy, said: **“We fought hard to secure one of the biggest settlements in the country when the Town Deals were announced last year, and I am delighted to see that work now beginning to come to fruition.**

**“I know how much effort has been put into the Town Investment Plan, and it is gratifying to see it reflect Cornwall Council's overarching objective, to work with communities for a carbon neutral Cornwall, where everyone can start well, live well and age well.**

**“This is good news for St Ives and the surrounding area, and I look forward to seeing the plans approved and work started.”**

**“St Ives Town Deal is now at a critical stage – we have a clear set of projects to support the transformation of St Ives, based on green growth and a year-round economy”** said Derek Thomas, MP for Ives, West Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, and a member of the St Ives Town Deal Board. **“It’s been an honour to work with the Town Board to develop the programme, and I’d like to thank everyone who has devoted their time and energy to renewing the town we love. The Town Deal process has**

**helped us to identify what can be done now with this cash and how we move forward to deliver further transformation and secure further investment."**

**"The government's Towns Fund was set up to drive the sustainable economic regeneration of our towns – and the projects in this programme will grow our economy, create skilled jobs for residents and opportunities for young people, and support the town of St Ives to thrive for the future."**

The business cases for the nine projects will now be subjected to a rigorous assurance process led by Cornwall Council before the programme is sent to the government for final approval.

The government is expected to give funding confirmation this Autumn, paving the way for a detailed programme of works and timescales to be developed by early April 2023.

All the Town Deal funding must be spent by the end of March 2026.

While the smaller scale projects will be completed early in the programme, the larger scale transformation projects, which are more complex and may require additional external funding, will take longer to deliver. However, all are expected to be completed by the end of the Town Deal programme in 2026.

## **Ends**

### **Notes to editors**

Details of the projects being taken forward are:

**Low Carbon Transport** – this project includes the development of an integrated low carbon transport system for the town centre at peak times to help reduce congestion, cut carbon emissions and increase clean and active modes of travel.

**Rugby Club/ Affordable Housing** - this project involves a major repositioning and refurbishment of the Rugby Club facilities which are sited on land owned by Cornwall Council. There are currently no high quality sports facilities for the community in St Ives; this project will create a modern clubhouse facility with two full size sports pitches for use by the club and the local community and in addition will free up land to create new affordable homes for key workers and extra care housing as well as improved sports facilities.

**Old Vicarage Flats** - run and operated by the St Ives Community Land Trust, this project will see the renovation of the Old Vicarage building to provide 6 high quality and affordable flats for local residents in the heart of the town

**LiveWest retrofit scheme** - this project involves carrying out an energy-efficient retrofitting programme to 200 of the worst performing social housing properties in the town. The work, which will be led by LiveWest, will improve the thermal efficiency of the buildings, and reduce drafts, heat loss, and the reliance on carbon based heating systems, creating greener homes which are cheaper and warmer for people to live in. The project will also work with residents in the town to integrate sustainable transport and waste & recycling improvements into

estates in the town and help to develop local green skills and employment opportunities.

**Delegated Fund for Renewal** – this project will provide grants to micro, small and medium sized businesses within the St Ives Town Deal area, including start up and scale up businesses. The Fund will support capital investments that help local businesses to grow and develop and that help to diversify the local economy and generate quality local employment opportunities and stronger local supply chains. Grants will range in size from £2,500 to £150,000 and will need to be matched with funds from applicants (between 25-45% guide match).

**Guildhall** – a much-loved building in St Ives, the Guildhall is in need of extensive restoration and improvement. The aim of this project is to develop the building into a thriving cultural venue together with a café and bar space. As well as safeguarding the future of an important heritage building, the project will provide a high-quality year-round programme for all potential audiences in St Ives and West Cornwall, develop the town's role as a national centre of heritage, arts and culture and provide opportunities for careers in creative arts.

**St Ives Theatre** –this project includes reconfiguring and upgrading the existing theatre, the home of [Kidz R Us](#), who have been working with young people in St Ives and the surrounding areas for almost 30 years, to provide an extended auditorium and new café/bar and reception area. As well as saving a historic building, the project will help to develop the existing theatre into a leading tourist attraction for the town, lengthening the season with more performances, daytime workshops and outreach programmes for schools and providing a facility for touring theatrical companies; improving the visitor experience and supporting further expansion of theatre opportunities for local children and young people. This will help to provide more permanent jobs and support the charity in its aims of introducing young performers and young audiences to the performing arts.

**Leach Pottery and Digital Trail** - investment in the Leach Pottery will create a community hub where local people and visitors can come together to train, develop their creativity, improve their wellbeing, support each other and bring clay to life. A new production studio and learning space on this world-class site will create new all year-round jobs, providing additional training, work facilities and apprenticeships. The creation of a St Ives Digital trail will highlight opportunities for locals and visitors to explore St Ives away from congested high traffic areas. This will bring economic benefits to organisations on the trail and to the wider town as people explore previously "hidden" areas. This is a large scale transformational project which will require additional external funding.

**St Ives Community Orchard** - based at the St Ives Community Orchard and Wildlife Reserve, 30 acres of beautiful green space overlooking the town, this project will provide a vibrant community asset, delivering environmental education, mental and health therapy, community events and nature based training to individuals, local groups and schools. A new environmentally sustainable building will provide daily workshops and training all year round on subjects such as permaculture, beekeeping, willow weaving, herbal remedies and cosmetics, natural dyes, brewing and grafting: all using materials grown and produced on site in an expanded community garden and orchard. The project will also create new jobs and provide opportunities for local self-employed trainers to share their knowledge and skills as well as a community space for meetings and a repair cafe.

## **Government Towns Fund – Town Deals**

On 27 July 2019, the Prime Minister announced that the Towns Fund would support an initial 101 places across England to develop Town Deal proposals to drive economic regeneration and deliver long-term economic and productivity growth. See further details of the [announcement](#).

A Town Deal is an agreement in principle between government, the Lead Council and the Town Deal Board. It will set out a vision and strategy for the town, and what each party agrees to do to achieve this vision. [See the 101 places being supported to develop Town Deals](#).

## **St Ives Town Deal and Accelerated Towns Fund**

Cornwall is the only area in England invited by Government to submit proposals for four of its towns: Camborne, Penzance, St Ives and Truro. After conducting extensive public consultations each town deal board submitted their Town Investment Plan in collaboration with Cornwall Council in Jan 2021. As a result of this work, in Spring 2021 the government announced that Cornwall will receive up to £88.7 million as part of the Towns Fund.

Each of the 101 towns selected to work towards a Town Deal also received accelerated funding for investment in capital projects that would have an immediate impact and help places “build back better” in the wake of Covid-19. View a list of [accelerated funding by place](#) (PDF, 266 KB, 11 pages).

St Ives was allocated £500,000 through the Government’s Accelerator funding. This is in addition to the £19.9 million Towns Fund Deal announced by Government in July 2021 following the St Ives Town Investment Plan submission. For more information about St Ives Town Deal visit: <https://www.stivestowndeal.org.uk>

Cornwall Council is the accountable Body for the Towns Fund programme in Cornwall. Cornwall Council supports the governance role of the Board and is responsible for managing and administering funds on behalf of the four Town Deal Boards. For more information visit: [www.cornwall.gov.uk/business-trading-and-licences/economic-development/towns-fund](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/business-trading-and-licences/economic-development/towns-fund)

A St Ives Town Team Board, containing a mix of representatives from the private, public and community sectors, was set up to lead the development of the Town Investment Plan. This includes councillors from Cornwall Council and St Ives Town Council, local businesses, community stakeholders and the area’s MP.

On 9 May 2021 the Board successfully bid for a Town Deal worth £19.9 million. The bid is designed to deliver three key objectives:

- Generate inclusive green growth and new enterprise, within a year-round economy
- Support the health, wellbeing and aspiration of all residents in life and work
- Create opportunities for young people which allow them to flourish

All project ideas, suggestions and contributions for inclusion in the Town Investment Plan had to be tested against the government's criteria and guidelines for Regeneration, Skills provision and Connectivity. They were then assessed to ensure that they were viable and sustainable. The Board worked closely with the community to develop an initial long list of 40 projects. These were then assessed using a robust project selection and management process to produce the short-list of projects set out in the Town Investment Plan.

