



PRESS RELEASE

Town Deal funding boost for transformational Leach Pottery project

20 June 2023

Exciting plans to create a community hub with a new production studio and learning space at the world-renowned Leach Pottery site have received a major boost this week with news that the project has received its first tranche of Town Deal funding.

Awarded £4.9 million from the St Ives Town Deal Fund to support its transformational project, the Leach Pottery and Digital Trail project has received a first grant payment of £530,000.

"We are delighted to see the Leach Pottery receive its first grant from the Town Deal fund, which is a recognition of its importance as a centre of excellence for ceramics and a cultural asset for St Ives," said Gareth Jones, Vice Chair of the St Ives Town Deal Board.

"The Leach Pottery is the third project to benefit from the Town Deal fund in St Ives, following the Community Orchard and the Enterprise Grants and it's fantastic to see the vision set for the town starting to become a reality. This grant will enable the Pottery to significantly improve its facility, make it more accessible and sustainable and help them widen their offer."

St Ives is among 100 towns across the country successful in its bid for funding from the Government's Town Deal. The town was awarded £19.9 million to support the regeneration plans proposed in the Town Investment Plan.

Louis Gardner, Cornwall Council cabinet member for economy, said: **"Cornwall is in a remarkable position of having secured over £89 million to revitalise four of its towns through the Government's Town Deal Fund initiative. Part of this investment will help grow the creative sector in Cornwall, which is a vital part of our cultural identity and economic diversity."**

"We are proud to support this project and ensure that the exceptional skills and craftsmanship of the Leach Pottery are preserved and passed on to future generations."

Director of the Leach Pottery Libby Buckley said: **"We are thrilled to have reached this landmark moment, moving us closer to our ambition of**

delivering a living heritage site for St Ives that matches our global reputation, and will become the gateway to St Ives.

“The scale of our transformational project means that we will need to secure additional external funding to deliver our full vision and the Town Deal funding is vital in helping us to achieve this. Thanks to the support we have received from the St Ives Town Deal Fund, the Leach Pottery will be accessible to all and able to inspire, engage and create jobs for many more people for years to come.’

The Leach Pottery and Digital Trail project comprises two strands:

- A new 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. This new production studio and learning centre will create new all year-round jobs, providing additional training, work facilities and apprenticeships.
- The creation of a digital trail which 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.

Last month planning permission was granted for the first phase of the project which involves replacing two former buildings with new pottery training and production rooms, a learning centre, offices and storage. The design team are now looking forward to RIBA stage 4 which is being developed with ongoing feedback from audiences and stakeholders through consultation events and activity programmes.

The newly built training and production centre will be constructed to be as carbon neutral as possible, with the project team working with partners to develop and implement greener operations.

Nine projects have been approved to receive Town Deal Funding in St Ives. These include plans to create a low carbon transport system, support local business and jobs, and develop new skills and supply chains, as well as provide new and transformed housing and community assets.

Part of the Government’s plan for Levelling Up the UK economy, the Town Deal Fund aims to regenerate the towns and boost the local economy across the regions.

Ends

Notes to Editor

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.](#)

Each of the 101 towns selected to work towards a Town Deal also received accelerated funding last year 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 Town Deal and Accelerated Town Fund

In June 2021, St Ives secured a Town Deal of up to £19.9 million following the successful submission of its Town Investment Plan for a range of regeneration projects.

In addition, each of the towns selected by the government to work towards a Town Deal were invited to apply for accelerated funding to invest in capital projects that would have an immediate impact and help places ‘build back better’ in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. St Ives was allocated £500,000 through the Government’s Accelerator Fund to kick start the delivery of projects in 2020.

For more information about St Ives Town Deal visit www.stivestownddeal.org.uk

Cornwall is the only area invited by the 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. As a result, the Government announced in spring 2021, that Cornwall will receive up to £88.7 million from the Town Deal Fund.

Cornwall Council is the Lead Authority for the Town Deals in Cornwall. Cornwall Council supports the governance role of the Camborne Town Deal Board and is responsible for administering the Fund on behalf of Town Deal Board. For more information visit: www.cornwall.gov.uk/business-trading-and-licences/economic-development/towns-fund