



Official opening of new St Ives Community Orchard and Wildlife Reserve community learning centre

22 April 2024

The official opening of The CORE, the new learning centre at St Ives Community Orchard and Wildlife Reserve, took place on the afternoon of Friday, 19 April.

The Community Orchard team received £345,538 from the Town Deal Fund to construct the environmentally sustainable facility on Penbeagle Hill. The building is the first of the nine St Ives Town Deal funded projects to be opened to the public, marking a very exciting milestone in the Town Deal programme.

Among those attending the opening event was Libby Buckley, Vice chair of St Ives Town Deal Board, who said **“The Community Orchard was the first St Ives project to be given a grant from the Town Deal in 2023 and it is fantastic to be able to attend the official opening event and see what has been achieved.”**

Based in the beautiful 30-acre site overlooking the town, the building will provide a vibrant community asset, delivering environmental education, workshops, skills training, nature-based training and community events to individuals, local groups and schools.

Louis Gardner, Cornwall Council cabinet portfolio holder for economy, said: **“THE CORE is a fantastic addition to the Community Orchard and the local community. The team’s work to support residents to learn new skills; boost the local economy by creating jobs and improve health and wellbeing is a great example of what the Town Deal funding is designed to achieve.”**

The Community Orchard is led by Directors Phoebe Sampson, Elise Langley, Rupert Manley, Josh Quick, and Elise Worrall. Although there is still a small amount of work to be completed, the Directors wanted to provide an opportunity for the local community to come together to enjoy the beautiful architecture and skilled craftsmanship that has brought this new community building to life.

“This has been an amazing project and we would like to thank everyone who has worked with us to turn our vision into reality ” they said. **“We would particularly like to thank the Orchard volunteers, who carried out lots of work on the building, including carpentry, decorating and gardening, to get it finished for the opening ”.**

St Ives Mayor Johnnie Wells cut the ribbon to mark the official opening of the new building.

Among those involved in the project are local architect / sculptor / rammed earth builder Paul Connell, who drew up the original design; Carbis Bay company Post & Beam Cornwall, Penzance timber frame specialists Norsk Carpentry and Building Ltd, and Truro based company Marnick Roofing who were all involved in the construction of the inspiring dodecahedral timber framed building and St Ives electrician Dean Mackay.

As well as the opportunity to look around the incredible new community facility, guests enjoyed live music from Global Jamming, with DJ Richie Rich, with refreshments, including cider and apple juice made by the Community Orchard, and a keg of CORE ale, named after the new building, produced by Mine Brewery, one of the Orchard's neighbours.

Once the final works have been completed, activities at The CORE will include daily workshops and training all year round on subjects such as gardening, beekeeping, willow weaving, herbal remedies , 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 space for meetings, community activities and a repair cafe.

Connecting people with nature and their community to restore mental health and well-being and reduce isolation and loneliness.

You can find out more about the plans for The CORE at www.stivesorchard.co.uk.

St Ives is among 100 towns across the country successful in its bid for funding from the Government's Town Deal Fund. Following the review of the Town Investment Plan, the town was awarded £19.9 million to support the proposed regeneration plans. These include creating a low carbon transport system, supporting local business and jobs, and developing new skills and supply chains, as well as providing new and transformed housing and community assets.

Part of the Levelling Up initiative, the Government's Town Deal aims to support the towns regeneration and boost the economy in the regions. As the local Lead for the programme, Cornwall Council administrates the Fund and support the governance of the Board.

Find out more about St Ives Town Deal at www.stivestowndeaal.org.uk

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Notes to Editors

About the UK Government Town Deals programme

Part of the government's plan for Levelling Up the UK economy and the wider Towns Fund, the Town Deals programme aims to regenerate towns and deliver long-term economic and productivity growth. This is through investments in urban regeneration, digital and physical connectivity, skills, heritage and

enterprise infrastructure. As of July 2021, DLUHC have offered Town Deals to all 101 places that submitted proposals, committing over £2.35bn of investment across c.700 projects nationwide. [See the press releases associated with Town Deals on gov.uk.](#)

About the St Ives Town Deal

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. For more information about St Ives Town Deal visit www.stivestowndeal.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 Deals programme.

Cornwall Council is the Lead Authority for the Town Deals in Cornwall. Cornwall Council supports the governance role of St Ives Town Deal Board and is responsible for administering the Fund on behalf of the Board.

For more information visit: www.cornwall.gov.uk/business-trading-and-licences/economic-development/towns-fund