

Growing Communities through Nature: Research report



May 2020

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**A UKRI-funded Enhancing Place-Based Partnerships in Public Engagement
Action Research Project**



CONTENTS

Introduction	1
The workshops and associated research	4
The research findings.....	8
Public participation	8
How respondents use the space	11
Experiences of the workshops	14
Background demographics to the survey	22
The follow-up workshop in Helston	23
Summary	25
Learning from the project	26
Appendix A - Surveys	
Appendix B – Draft plans	
Appendix C – Ideas from workshops	
Appendix D – Photos from Helston workshop 2	
Appendix E - Socio economic data	
Appendix F - Selection of publicity	

TABLES

Table 1: Project workshops and activity	6
Table 2: Workshop attendance.....	8
Table 4: Why respondents chose to come.....	10
Table 5: How respondents use the space	12
Table 6: How often respondents use the space	13
Table 7: How long do you spend at the space when you use it?	13
Table 8: Did you enjoy the workshop?	14
Table 9: Do you plan to attend the next workshop?	14
Table 10: What did you enjoy about the workshop?.....	15
Table 11: Respondents' highlights from the workshops	17
Table 12: How close do you live to the site?	18
Table 13: Are you involved in any community groups?	18
Table 14: How many people at the workshop do you already know?	19
Table 15: Which community groups do you belong to?	20
Table 16: Are there any groups not at the workshop that should be?.....	21
Table 17: Groups not in attendance that should be here?.....	21
Table 18: Workshop respondents by age	22
Table 19: Gender.....	23
Table 20: Residential status	23

FIGURES

Figure 1: Views of the three sites: (i) a small area of Coronation Park in Helston; ii) one of the small estate spaces in Launceston; (iii) Towan Blystra road in Newquay.....	7
Figure 2: How did you find out about this event	9
Figure 3: Why respondents chose to attend.....	11
Figure 4: How respondents use this space	12
Figure 5: How often respondents use the space	13
Figure 6: How long do you spend at the space when you use it?	14
Figure 7: What did you enjoy about the workshop?	16
Figure 8: Respondents' highlights from the workshops	17
Figure 9: How close do you live to the site?	18
Figure 10: How many people at the workshop do you already know?	19
Figure 11: Which community groups do you belong to?.....	20
Figure 12: Groups not in attendance that should be?.....	21
Figure 13: Respondents by age	22
Figure 14: Residential status	23

List of Acronyms

CIC - Community Interest Company
CVSF - Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum
EPPE - Enhancing Place-Based Partnerships in Public Engagement
GCTN – Growing Communities Through Nature
MSN – Making Space for Nature
SKACIC – South Kerrier Alliance Community Interest Company
UKRI – UK Research and Innovation

With thanks to: UKRI, Cornwall Council, Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum, South Kerrier Alliance CIC, Katie Kirk, Karen Hall, Incredible Edible Helston, Cornwall Housing in particular Joanna May and Tania Horrocks, Melissa Benyon, Treehouse Newquay CIC, Treviglas Academy, Jill and Graham Willmott, Stephen Keighley, Melissa Ralph, and the workshop attendees and communities of Launceston, Newquay and Helston. The Making Space for Nature Project is part-funded by the European Union Regional Development Fund.

Please cite this report as: Wills, J., Shaw, R.F., Muir, M. (2020) Growing communities through nature: research report. University of Exeter, ISBN: 978-0-902746-44-2.

Executive summary

Growing Communities Through Nature was developed to explore three key questions: (1) how to engage with local communities to promote the role of public green spaces in nature based climate mitigation and limiting biodiversity loss; (2) how different routes to engagement might lead to different outcomes and/or impact; (3) how universities can engage with diverse communities through place-based activities.

The project ran from December 2019 to May 2020 and was a collaboration between the University of Exeter's Environment and Sustainability Institute and the Making Space for Nature team within Cornwall Council's Environment Service. The project team used different approaches to reach the community in three Cornish towns: (1) working with Cornwall Housing in Launceston; (2) working with Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum member organisations in Newquay; and (3) working with a community interest company and existing community group in Helston. In all three locations, the project team held professionally facilitated workshops and invited the public to co-design their green space. In all spaces, funds were available to make physical changes to sites, either via the Growing Communities Through Nature project (Helston) or Making Space for Nature (Launceston and Newquay). The project team ran a co-design workshop at each space (completed in all three towns) and planned a follow on workshop to facilitate monitoring of site based outcomes and future engagement (only carried out in Helston before the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a delay to the second workshops in Launceston and Newquay). To help understand the impact of the different approaches, surveys were completed by workshop attendees to explore how the green spaces were used, their participation in local social networks and their engagement in the event. The project worked with three primary partner organisations and five additional organisations, and through the four workshops, engaged 96 members of the public.

People shared their ideas with the potential for further involvement. In each case, the public were able to shape the future development of local green spaces that would benefit the community and improve biodiversity. This activity resulted in a community-designed food growing garden in Helston and two professionally designed open spaces in Newquay and Launceston. The project demonstrated that holding well-publicised and carefully-facilitated workshops provides a vehicle for reaching the public and building relationships with them. Our project also highlighted the importance of working with local partner organisations in doing this work. To fully understand answer the original questions, the second workshops were required, but initial results from Helston indicate that many attendees had not interacted with the University of Exeter before the project.

Key findings:

Participatory approaches in facilitated workshops meant that many people from divergent backgrounds and interest levels engaged with the process. Working with a diversity of local organisations helped to engage a wider range of people. Having the structure and funding to engage people in workshops and also the ability to make changes increased people's engagement and excitement about the project.

To different degrees, the action research project successfully engaged local communities in place-based climate change mitigation through making improvements in biodiversity. The process highlighted the diversity both between and within communities as well as the importance of understanding community needs and developing a bespoke approach. The project also demonstrated the role of university-community partnerships to engage the public with climate change mitigation via increasing biodiversity. To ensure the project legacy, it is important to continue this type of action research and partnership working. The key partners in this project (Cornwall Council and the University of Exeter, Penryn), have overlapping interests in climate change

mitigation, environmental growth and community engagement. The GCTN project demonstrates the potential benefits of working together to experiment and find the best ways of achieving these goals.

Introduction

Growing Communities Through Nature was developed to explore three key questions: (1) how to engage with local communities to promote the role of public green spaces in nature based climate mitigation and limiting biodiversity loss; (2) how different routes to engagement might lead to different outcomes; (3) how universities can engage with diverse communities through place-based activities.

The project was funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) as part of the Enhancing Place-based Partnerships in Public Engagement (EPPE) programme, with match funding from University of Exeter, South Kerrier Alliance Community Interest Company (SKACIC) and Cornwall's Voluntary Sector Forum. It ran from December 2019 to May 2020 and developed from an ongoing partnership between the University of Exeter's Environment and Sustainability Institute and the Environment Service at Cornwall Council. Cornwall Council delivers the Making Space for Nature (MSN) project in partnership with the University of Exeter (part funded by the European Development Fund). This team identified council-owned land in seven Cornish towns where it is possible to make improvements in the biodiversity value and social accessibility of the spaces, and worked with the GTCN project to deliver this work, with additional public engagement activity, in Launceston and Newquay.

The GTCN project was designed to explore ways to more fully engage the public in this work and it also supported a comparison community-led project in Helston. To this end, the GTCN project organised well-advertised community-based and professionally-facilitated workshops in order to engage the public in three communities in Cornwall: Launceston, Newquay and Helston.

The GTCN project sought to explore the impact of different ways of approaching public engagement. Although we organised very similar workshops in each town, led by the same professional facilitator, we organised this through different channels. In Launceston we worked through Cornwall Council's MSN team. In Newquay, we started by making contact with the broader network of organisations affiliated to Cornwall's Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF) and found a local community group that was able and willing to work with us on the project (Treehouse Newquay CIC). In Helston, we supported the ongoing activities of the local Incredible Edible group that was an initiative of Helston's Climate Action Group. They already had strong relationships with SKACIC which manages a large park in Helston. SKACIC provided space for a project led by the local Incredible Edible group.

The aim of the project was to run two workshops in each community; the first, to discuss and understand changes people wanted to see in their local spaces and to co-design such changes; the second, to talk about potential monitoring of changes in the local area and to engage communities both with their green space and research into the benefits of using nature to reduce climate change impacts and biodiversity loss. The project aimed to involve communities fully in all stages of the work, and workshop aims evolved in response to community needs. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, the second workshop was only run in Helston.

In total, we worked with three primary partner organisations and five additional organisations, and through the four workshops, we engaged 96 members of the public. This report documents what was done and lessons learned from the process. It has been written to share the research findings with a diversity of audiences including: participants; partner organisations; funders; those interested in ways to better engage the public in policy development and implementation; as well as those interested in community and place-based action research. This report provides more detail about the activity, those who engaged and their experiences. The final section of the report steps back to explore the wider implications of the project for understanding public engagement in decision making, and the value of organisational partnerships for this kind of activity.

The workshops and associated research

The workshops were held on site where possible (Helston and Newquay) or nearby where not (Launceston; the Ridgeway Estate did not have an inside community space), and were advertised widely via local media, online and leafletting (see Table 1 for more details). The workshops were professionally facilitated by Katie Kirk and designed to create a safe space where people were encouraged to attend and all views were noted and respected. Attendance was encouraged by having provision for children. Free refreshments were available and a member of the project team was always available to welcome people on arrival. An icebreaker at the beginning of each workshop was carried out to reduce tensions and to get people talking – this involved getting people up and moving around in relation to their experience of gardening or growing or where they lived in Cornwall, allowing people to talk amongst themselves and share knowledge. Assurance was given that respectful disagreement or divergence of views was allowed. Throughout the workshops, participatory techniques were used to break up into smaller groups for discussions and opening up engagement by sharing ideas using post it notes, pens, paper, interactive maps of the sites and flip-chart summaries, which allowed everyone to have their say. Participants were given several ‘voting’ techniques, for example by being able to add coloured dots to post against ideas they were keen to see implemented (green) or strongly disagreed with (red) as well as confirming the ideas at the end of each workshop.

The land manager (SKACIC), or owner (CC in Launceston and Newquay) gave their prior consent for changes to be implemented on the sites. In Helston the activity was led by the local Incredible Edible group, whose members had a variety of professional skills to facilitate the work, and they were supported by the GCTN team. In Launceston and Newquay site design was funded via the Making Space for Nature Project, and future construction will also be funded by this route.

In order to capture the extent and depth of public engagement and its impact, we conducted a questionnaire survey with those taking part in the four workshops. The questionnaires were distributed at the end of each workshop and participants were invited to self-complete or to take part in a face-to-face interview with a researcher. As indicated in Table 1, response rates varied from 92% in Launceston to 48% at the second workshop in Helston (and it is important to note that this lower rate partly reflects the fact that many participants had already responded when attending the first workshop in Helston). The surveys used in both rounds of workshops can be found in Appendix A.

These questionnaire surveys captured basic information about how people found out about the event, why they attended, their existing social networks in the town, their experience of using the green spaces in the past and their reflections on the workshop, as well as basic demographic data. This survey was adapted for use at the second workshop in Helston at which we asked participants additional questions about their potential engagement with ongoing monitoring of biodiversity and sociality at the site, their prior engagement with the University of Exeter, their willingness to participate in future research activities, and their reflections on the project. We planned to replicate this second workshop and use the associated survey in Launceston and Newquay but this was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

These second workshops would have allowed further engagement with the public about the draft plans that were formulated after the initial events. However, following the coronavirus lock-down, Helston site designs were published on Incredible Edible Helston’s Facebook site, and we sent the draft designs to workshop participants in Launceston and Newquay via email, inviting them to respond to the team. In addition, the draft plans were published along with information on how the site design was informed by people’s comments on the MSN website

(<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/spacefornature>, see also Appendix B). Further dissemination of the site designs was not felt to be appropriate but at the time of writing, but we plan to co-organise celebration events and to conduct some additional research activities when the sites are re-developed and re-opened to the public (anticipated to be during April or May 2021).

In addition to the survey responses, the workshops involved the participants articulating and documenting their ideas about the sites and their potential improvement. We have included some summaries of these in Appendix C. In Launceston and Newquay this material was used by the MSN team to draw up plans for site changes. In Helston, information from the workshop was used by Incredible Edible to inform the site design in Helston's Coronation Park (and photographs of community activity are included as Appendix D).

This report summarises the survey data and comments made in order to document the activity and its impact. We have also drawn on a range of background data from published sources to provide more information about each town (in Appendix E). Examples of press coverage of the activity are also included in Appendix F.

The survey included a mixture of closed and open questions. The answers given to the open questions were later recoded so the data could be analysed effectively. When transposing free-text responses to these codes, each response was allocated up to three codes.

Table 1: Project workshops and activity

	Helston 1	Launceston	Newquay	Helston 2
Date and time	Saturday 8 th February 2020, 11am – 1pm	Saturday 29 th February 2020, 11am – 1pm	Saturday 14 th March 2020, 2pm – 4pm	Saturday 7 th March 2020, 2pm – 4pm
Partners	South Kerrier Alliance CIC, Incredible Edible Helston, Helston Climate Action Group	Cornwall Council, Cornwall Housing	Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum, Treehouse Newquay CIC	South Kerrier Alliance CIC, Incredible Edible Helston, Helston Climate Action Group
Venue	Old Cattle Market, Coronation Park, Helston, TR13 0SR	St Thomas Church Hall, Riverside, Launceston, PL15 8DH	Towan Blystra Road open space, Newquay	Old Cattle Market, Coronation Park, Helston, TR13 0SR
Venue proximity to site	Hall adjacent to site	0.5 miles to site	On site in marquee	Hall adjacent to site
Publicity	Posters and leaflets Media release and coverage Through community groups: Incredible Edible Helston, Helston Climate Action Group, Old Cattle Market Emailed local councillors, town clerk and CC Community Link Officers Emailed schools and key community groups Social media through community groups and representatives Editorial in Helston Gazette Coronation park skatepark litter pick	Posters and leaflets Media release and coverage Leaflet drop to properties on Ridgemoor estate (18.2.20) Emailed local councillors, town clerk and CC Community Link Officers Emailed schools and key community groups Social media through community groups and representatives Ridgemoor estate litter pick	Media release and coverage Leaflet drop to local properties (5.3.20) Emailed local councillors, town clerk and CC Community Link Officers Emailed schools and key community groups Social media through community groups and representatives	Through community groups: Incredible Edible Helston email list Leaflets to skatepark users Emailed local councillors, town clerk and CC Community Link Officers
Attendance	Observed numbers of attendees*: 39 Numbers of attendees who completed surveys: 30 Response rate: 77%	Observed numbers of attendees*: 22 Numbers of attendees who completed surveys: 20 Response rate: 91%	Observed numbers of attendees*: 34 Numbers of attendees who completed surveys: 22 Response rate: 65%	Observed numbers of attendees*: 17 Numbers of attendees who completed surveys: 7 Response rate: 42%
Activity	Event opened by the Mayor of Helston and was combined with the launch of Incredible Edible Helston. Introductions from Incredible Edible Helston. Ice breaker. Facilitated session on design and content of the community garden. Facilitated session on next steps. Seed swap. Refreshments.	Ice breaker. Introductions from facilitator, Karen Hall (CC MSN team) and Stephen Keighley from Brockley Farm. Facilitated session on design and content of the green space. Refreshments. Limited space and materials for children to do some drawing.	Introductions from facilitator and Karen Hall (CC MSN team) Facilitated session on design and content of the green space. Refreshments and children's activities provided by Treehouse Newquay: making a seed bomb and having space and materials for drawing.	Facilitated session on next steps for the green space. Session to list items to be purchased for the space. Refreshments.

*Not all of the attendees will have been recorded as some people dropped in for short periods of time.

Figure 1: Views of the three sites: (i) a small area of Coronation Park in Helston; ii) one of the small estate spaces in Launceston; (iii) Towan Blystra road in Newquay



Source: Authors' own pictures

The research findings

Public participation

As indicated in Tables 1 and 2, attendance at the first workshops varied from 22 in Launceston to 39 people in Helston. The partners were very pleased with this level of engagement and although the second workshop in Helston had lower rates of participation, this was a more specialist event to follow up on plans for the new community garden (and full details are included towards the end of the report).

Table 2: Workshop attendance

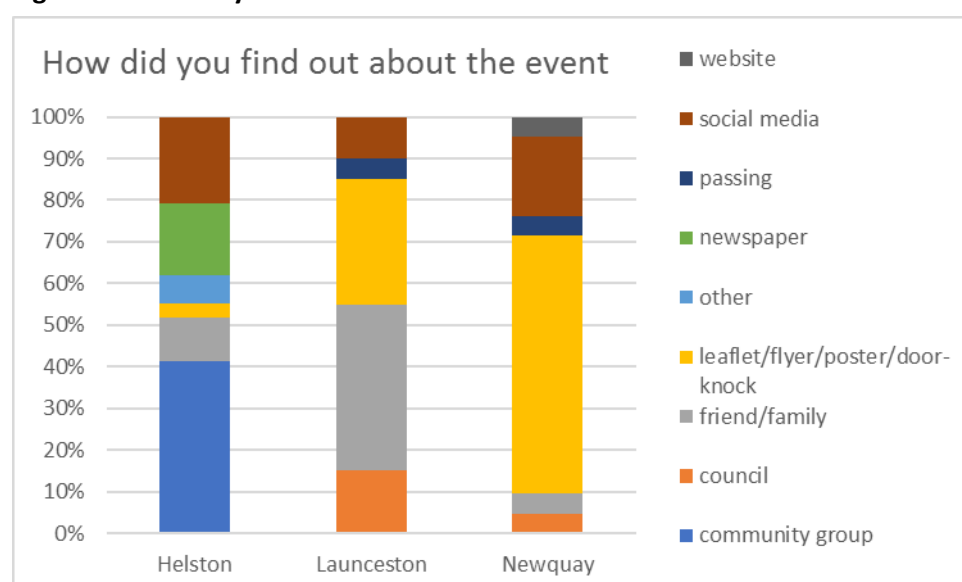
Workshop	Observed numbers of attendees	Numbers of attendees who completed surveys	Percentage of attendees who completed surveys
Helston 1	39	30	77
Launceston	22	20	91
Newquay	34	22	65
Helston 2	17	7	41
Total	112	79	68

These participants came to the workshops via a number of different means, reflecting the way in which each event was organised (see Table 3 and Figure 2). Given that the Helston workshop was organised in partnership with the local Incredible Edible Group, it is not surprising that about half the participants came after notification from the Climate Action Group and associated networks in the town. In Launceston, the project relied on making contact with the relevant social housing provider (Cornwall Housing) responsible for the estate where the sites were located, and the GCTN team co-organised a community litter-picking event and leaflet drop to build local interest. In Newquay, the open space for the project was in an area of private housing and a leaflet drop was also the main mechanism used for contacting people.

In all cases, the GCTN team also used established news and social media to inform the public about event (see Appendix F). This helped to build participation from a wider group by engaging existing social networks. In Launceston, a number of people came after seeing the information on environmentally-oriented news media, including the Facebook site of the local extinction rebellion group. In Newquay, the Treehouse CIC shared the information around its network and encouraged people to attend. The data show an obvious difference between the event in Helston that was organised via a community group and those in Launceston and Newquay where the project was starting from scratch.

Table 3: How did you find out about this event?

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Leaflet/flyer/poster/door-knock	1	3	6	30	13	62	20	29
Community group	12	41	0	0	0	0	12	17
Social media	6	21	2	10	4	19	12	17
Fiend/family	3	10	8	40	1	5	12	17
Newspaper	5	17	0	0	0	0	5	7
Council	0	0	3	15	1	5	4	6
Other	2	7	0	0	0	0	2	3
Passing	0	0	1	5	1	5	2	3
Website	0	0	0	0	1	5	1	1
Total	29	100	20	100	21	100	70	100
No answer	1		0		1		2	

Figure 2: How did you find out about this event

The data about why respondents attended the workshop also highlighted significant differences between each workshop (see Table 4 and Figure 3). As might be expected, the Helston respondents had strong links to community groups and community involvement as well as wanting to support the project. One woman who had heard about the project through Helston Climate Action Group said she had attended the workshop to “support the initiative.” Another person from Helston had a “passionate belief [that the] community can work together to enable the community to have a healthy lifestyle.”

In contrast, the two workshops organised by the GCTN in partnership with the MSN team had to start from scratch by reaching out to the potential audience in each town. The data indicate that those attending in both places wanted to find out more about the project.

In Launceston there was a mix of reasons for attendance, with a focus on interest in the project. One woman living on the Ridgeway estate stated that she chose to come to the workshop due to her, “curiosity and [hopes about] making the estate better and ... helping the community spirit.”

However, the engagement of a number of people who had pre-existing interests in the environment reinforced a focus on learning. This group were more likely to have heard about the event from community groups and personal contacts and wanted to know more about the project for its wider amenity value.

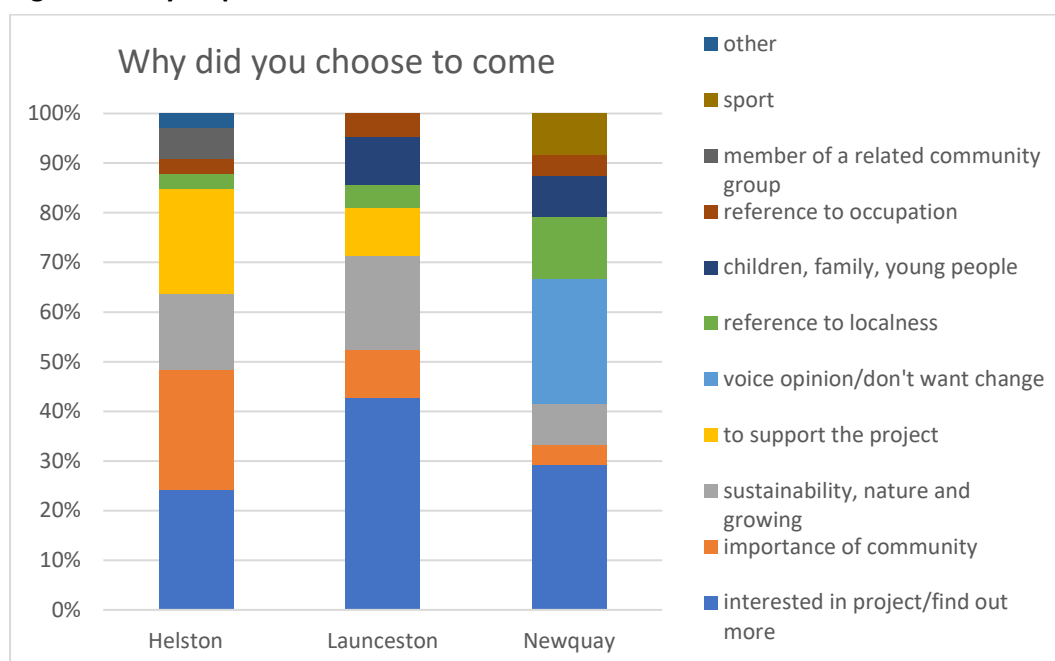
Those in Newquay were particularly keen to voice their opinion and some attended because they didn't want any change at the site. Most had a strong focus on being local to the project site. As a mother who uses the space with her children put it, "we live very close by and wanted a say" and a respondent living on Towan Blystra Road told the team that he and his family "have lived in the adjacent area for 35 years." Another parent of young children who used the space reported that the site is "on our doorstep." Being local also increased interest in emerging plans in Newquay, as one family who attended explained that they wanted "to see what's happening."

Table 4: Why respondents chose to come

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Interested in project/find out more	8	24	9	43	7	29	24	31
Importance of community	8	24	2	10	1	4	11	14
Sustainability, nature and growing	5	15	4	19	2	8	11	14
To support the project	7	21	2	10	0	0	9	12
Voice opinion/don't want change	0	0	0	0	6	25	6	8
Reference to localness	1	3	1	5	3	13	5	6
Children, family, young people	0	0	2	10	2	8	4	5
Reference to occupation	1	3	1	5	1	4	3	4
Member of a related community group	2	6	0	0	0	0	2	3
Sport	0	0	0	0	2	8	2	3
Other	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	33	100	21	100	24	100	78	100

*Each response was allocated up to three codes.

Figure 3: Why respondents chose to attend



How respondents use the space

When asked about their current use of the sites, the regularity and length of this usage, the answers again exposed sharp differences between each area (see Tables 5, 6 and 7, Figures 4, 5 and 6). The park in Helston is managed by the community and has a large, well-used building that hosts a farmers' market and a range of community events. The park also has a large skate-park, play area and cafe. It is the venue for a weekly park run and has a pond where families come to feed the ducks. You can walk through the park from Helston to Porthleven on the coast. This diversity of uses and the role of the park in the life of the community is clearly reflected in the data. Only a minority of people used the space on a daily basis, but the majority were there a few times a month. Likewise, most spent a relatively short time in the park when they were there. One older woman living in Helston explained that she used Coronation Park to "walk round for regular exercise or on route to Penrose." Another respondent told us: "I live about 20 miles away however use frequently to walk my dog and enjoy the park facilities."

In Launceston, survey respondents were asked to only answer the question if they lived in the Ridgeway estate and used the green spaces being considered by the team. The spaces were small pockets of land on the estate and they were partly inaccessible, and certainly hidden away from those not living on the estate. Those that did respond noted using the space for family, children and young people. One young respondent used the green spaces "with friends in the summer, chatting, it's more of a place to hang out for us" and a mother used it for "kids playing outside." There was one respondent who used the space every day and spent a large amount of time there. This indicates its amenity value to those who lived next to the open space but it involved small numbers of families with children. In addition, however, the workshop in Launceston announced plans for Cornwall Council to buy and develop a large field on the edge of the estate. This field would provide much-needed pedestrian and cycle access from the north to south sides of Launceston, with added opportunities to improve the quality of the space for biodiversity and sociality. As a result, a number of participants attended to share their views about this larger area, and their comments are reflected in later parts of this report.

The space in Newquay was more straight-forward, comprising one area of green in the middle of an area of privately-owned housing. This space had amenity value to the people living nearby and they were already using it for a range of recreational purposes. Several of the respondents reported using the space when they had young children or grandchildren visiting. Indeed, one family had come to the workshop while their four boys played football on the site. As a result, there were a significant number of respondents (42%) who used the space at least once a week and 33% spent more than an hour in the space when they used it. This utility helps to explain their interest in the workshop and any plans for the future of the site. As examples of their comments about using the site, one man who lived opposite used the space for “walking and exercising the dog” and a woman in her forties told us that the “children run around, and we walk the dog.”

Table 5: How respondents use the space

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
children, families and young people/playing	6	13	3	38	7	29	16	21
walking	12	26	1	13	2	8	15	19
dog walking/exercise	2	4	0	0	9	38	11	14
sports	4	9	0	0	6	25	10	13
café/farmer's market	8	17	0	0	0	0	8	10
thoroughfare/car parks	7	15	1	13	0	0	8	10
wildlife	3	7	0	0	0	0	3	4
meeting people	2	4	1	13	0	0	3	4
other	2	4	0	0	0	0	2	3
public events	0	0	1	13	0	0	1	1
horticulture	0	0	1	13	0	0	1	1
Total	46	100	8	100	24	100	78	100
No answer	1		14		3		18	

*Each response was allocated up to three codes representing key themes and topics.

Figure 4: How respondents use this space

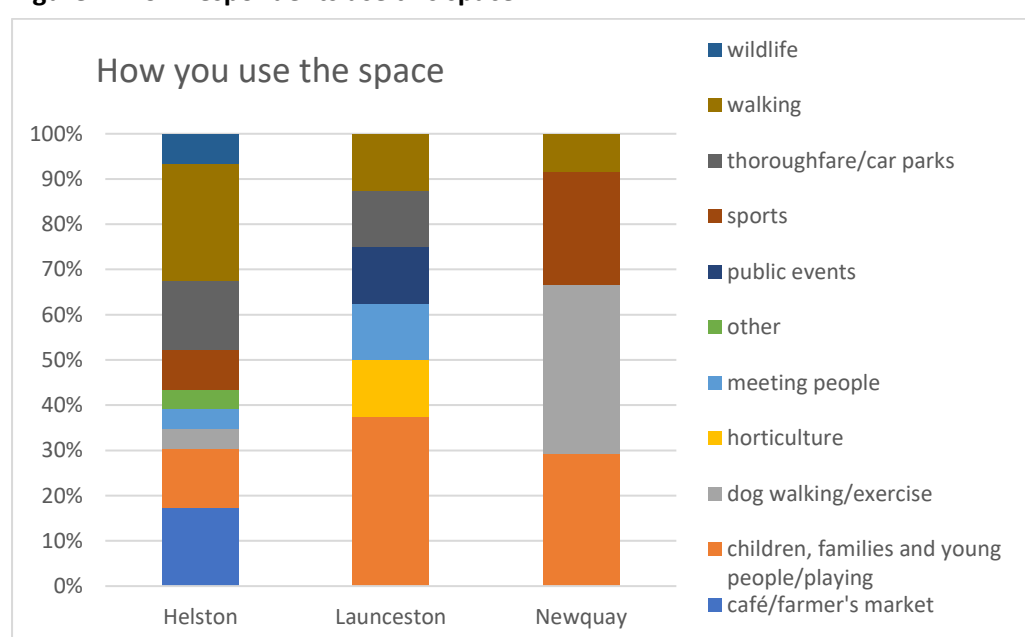
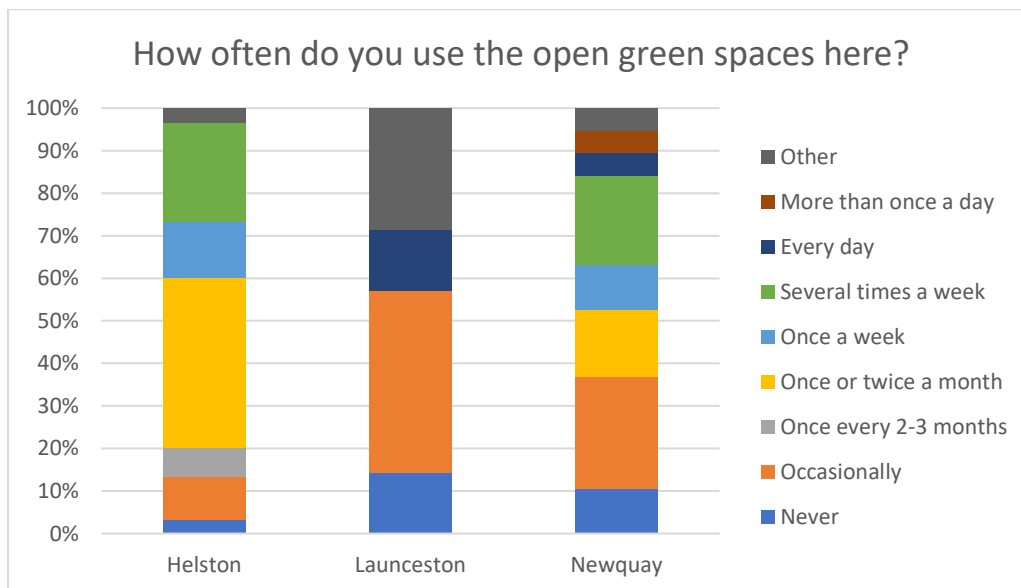


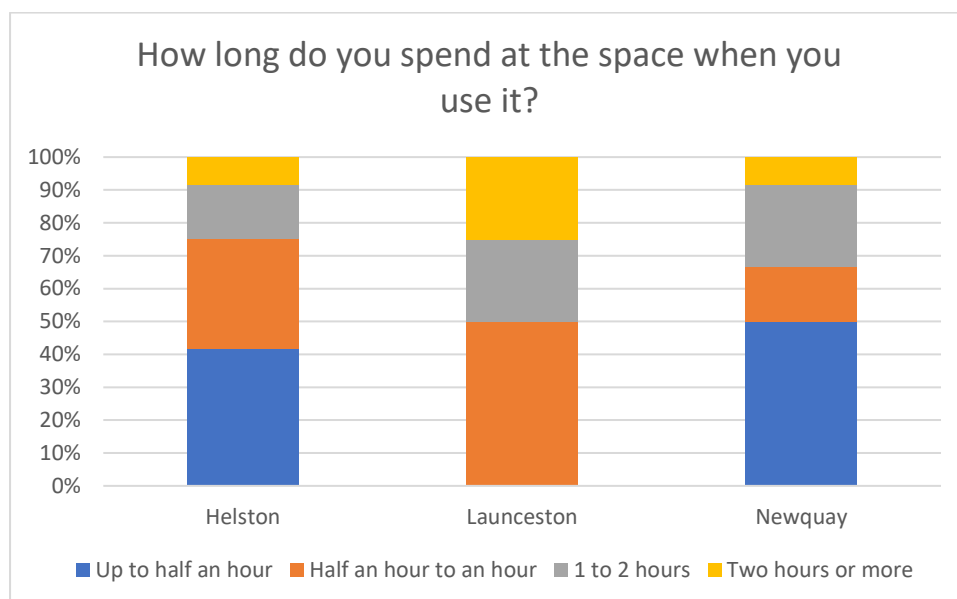
Table 6: How often respondents use the space

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Never	1	3	1	14	2	11	4	7
Occasionally	3	10	3	43	5	26	11	20
Once every 2-3 months	2	7	0	0	0	0	2	4
Once or twice a month	12	40	0	0	3	16	15	27
Once a week	4	13	0	0	2	11	6	11
Several times a week	7	23	0	0	4	21	11	20
Every day	0	0	1	14	1	5	2	4
More than once a day	0	0	0	0	1	5	1	2
Other	1	3	2	29	1	5	4	7
Total	30	100	7	100	19	100	56	100
No answer	0		13		3		16	

Figure 5: How often respondents use the space**Table 7: How long do you spend at the space when you use it?**

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Up to half an hour	10	42	0	0	6	50	16	40
Half an hour to an hour	8	33	2	50	2	17	12	30
1 to 2 hours	4	17	1	25	3	25	8	20
Two hours or more	2	8	1	25	1	8	4	10
Total	24	100	4	100	12	100	40	100
No answer	5		16		10		31	

Figure 6: How long do you spend at the space when you use it?



Experiences of the workshops

The vast majority of the respondents reported enjoying the workshops (Table 8). In addition, most said they would come to the planned second event (although these subsequently had to be postponed in Launceston and Newquay) (Table 9).

Table 8: Did you enjoy the workshop?

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	25	83	19	100	20	100	64	96
Mixed	2	7	0	0	0	0	2	3
Don't know	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	28	100	19	100	20	100	67	100
No answer	2		1		2		5	

Table 9: Do you plan to attend the next workshop?

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	25	83	16	80	16	73	57	83
Possibly	4	13	3	15	4	18	11	16
No	0	0	0	0	1	5	1	1
Total	29	100	19	100	21	100	69	100
No Answer	1		1		1		3	

When respondents elaborated on what they enjoyed about the workshop, they provided a wide range of responses (Table 10 and Figure 7). In all cases, the strongest response concerned garnering information about the project. This was particularly true for the workshops in Launceston and Newquay where local people were engaged from scratch. These respondents had a clear interest in the open spaces near to where they lived, particularly if they used the sites, or had done in the past. A woman living close to the site in Newquay who was initially sceptical about the project

commented that it was “Great, the lady facilitating and the lady from the council were very helpful and informative.”

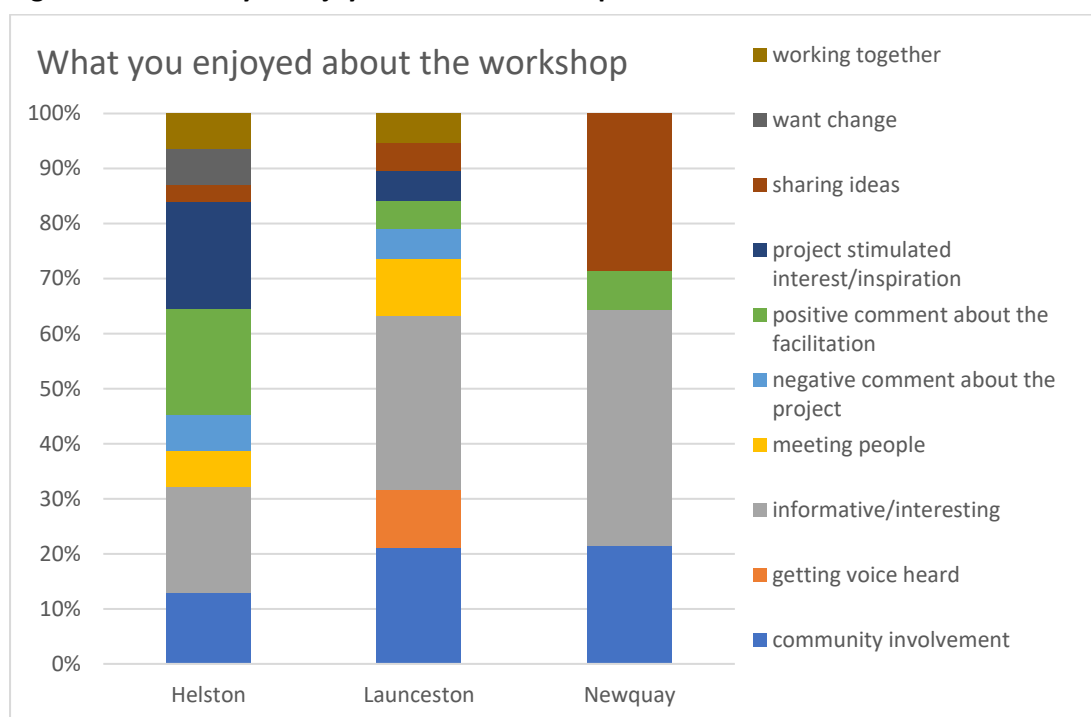
This interest in finding out more was often associated with support for the local community. As a woman in Newquay told us, the workshop was “interesting to hear ideas and comments as well as seeing neighbours!” Similarly, in Launceston, one resident reported that the workshop was “interesting and it was nice to meet other people.” A number of environmentally-minded people attended this workshop and they particularly appreciated finding out about the purchase of the field and its potential impact on the town. As one woman in her fifties told us: “it's so positive to get together to look to the future and find out how to involve other people with nature. It's their future it's everyone's future.”

Helston respondents again had the most diverse range of responses and in addition to the desire for more information and community, a significant number praised the workshop facilitation and commented that the project stimulated their interests, gave them inspiration and fostered new ideas.

Table 10: What did you enjoy about the workshop?

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Informative/interesting	6	21	6	33	6	43	18	30
Community involvement	4	14	4	22	3	21	11	18
Positive comment about the facilitation	6	21	1	6	1	7	8	13
Project stimulated interest/inspiration	6	21	1	6	0	0	7	11
Sharing ideas	1	3	1	6	4	29	6	10
Meeting people	2	7	2	11	0	0	4	7
Working together	2	7	1	6	0	0	3	5
Want change	2	6	0	0	0	0	2	4
Getting voice heard	0	0	2	11	0	0	2	3
Totals	29	100	18	100	14	100	61	100

Figure 7: What did you enjoy about the workshop?



*Each response was allocated up to three codes representing key themes and topics.

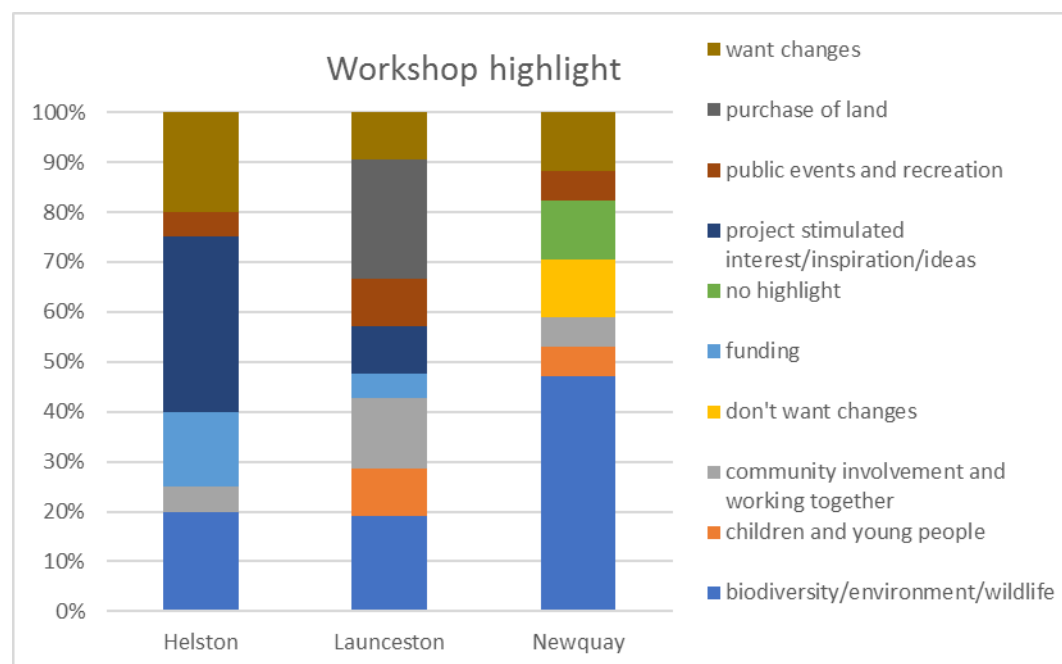
These findings were further illuminated by respondents' highlights from the workshops (Table 11 and Figure 8). Launceston's highlights were very varied but reflected Cornwall Council's purchase of the field opposite the Ridgeway estate. One female respondent who heard about the project through the Eco-Launceston network commented that "the [Council's] acquisition of a field to develop green space for the community and improve our environmental concerns" was a highlight. There was obvious excitement about questions of biodiversity and the environment that were raised in the workshop. Indeed, in making her final comments to the survey, one respondent said: "please make this the START of a change for improving our environment, reducing the toxic air and ever increasing traffic pollution."

In Newquay highlights again focused on the environment and people were positive about seeing improvements to the range of plants and potential wildlife in the space. One respondent told us that were excited to have "trees planted and wildflower areas." However, this workshop was the only one where a number of participants had very strong concerns about changes being made to the site. A number told us that they wanted the area to stay the same, and in many cases, this reflected their current or previous use of the space for recreation and ball games. One respondent provided additional comments asking us to: "keep the sports area and the grass for sport." Other respondents in Newquay raised concerns about the maintenance of the space in the past, and they anticipated problems in future. Indeed, one participant told us their highlight was hearing "that it is going to be looked after better" in future.

Several of Helston's respondents commented that the project had stimulated interest, inspiration and ideas. One parent's highlight was that the workshop created "room for big creative ideas." A number of the participants were excited about the number of people who attended and the ambition of the ideas including plans to cover a walkway in planting. This call to "take the bridge!" was repeated in a number of the reflections made by respondents.

Table 11: Respondents' highlights from the workshops

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Biodiversity/environment/wildlife	4	20	4	19	8	47	16	28
Project stimulated interest/inspiration/ideas	7	35	2	10	0	0	9	16
Want changes	4	20	2	10	2	12	8	14
Purchase of land	0	0	5	24	0	0	5	9
Community involvement and working together	1	5	3	14	1	6	5	9
Public events and recreation	1	5	2	10	1	6	4	7
Funding	3	15	1	5	0	0	4	7
Children and young people	0	0	2	10	1	6	3	5
No highlight	0	0	0	0	2	12	2	3
Don't want changes	0	0	0	0	2	12	2	3
Grand Total	20	100	21	100	17	100	58	100
No answer	11		4		5		20	

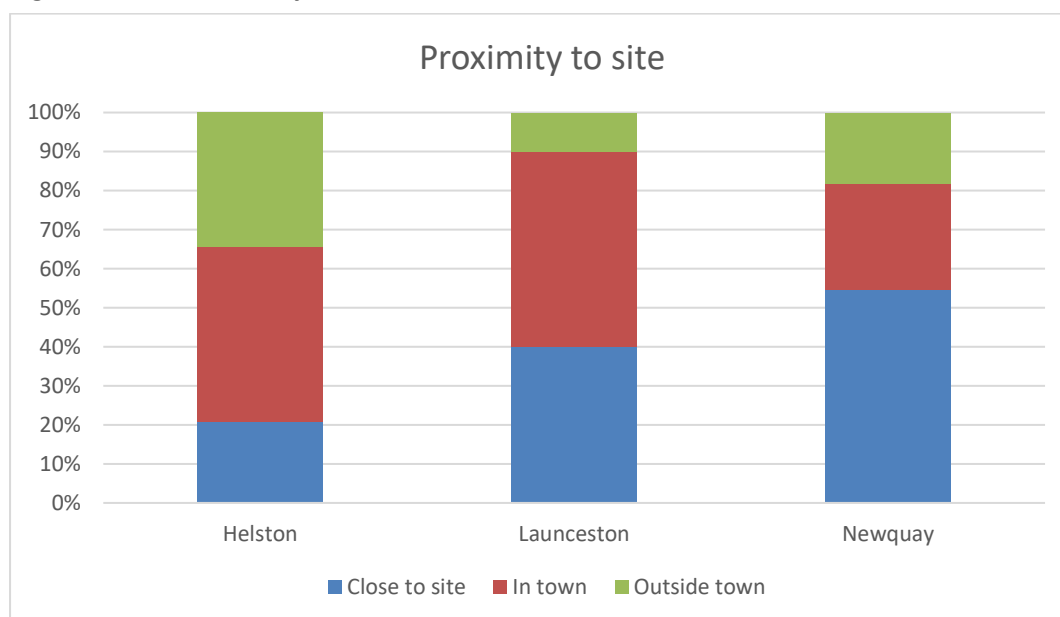
Figure 8: Respondents' highlights from the workshops

*Each response was allocated up to three codes representing key themes and topics.

The diversity of comments reported in each town reflected motivations and experiences of the individuals who attended and the extent to which they were interested in 'local' rather than 'wider' concerns. This was most obvious in Newquay where more than half of the participants lived very close to the space being considered, to a lesser extent in Launceston where 40% lived adjacent to the sites, and Helston where a good number lived outside the town altogether (Table 12 and Figure 9).

Table 12: How close do you live to the site?

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
In town	13	45	10	50	6	27	29	41
Close to site	6	21	8	40	12	55	26	37
Outside town	10	34	2	10	4	18	16	23
Total	29	100	20	100	22	100	71	100

Figure 9: How close do you live to the site?

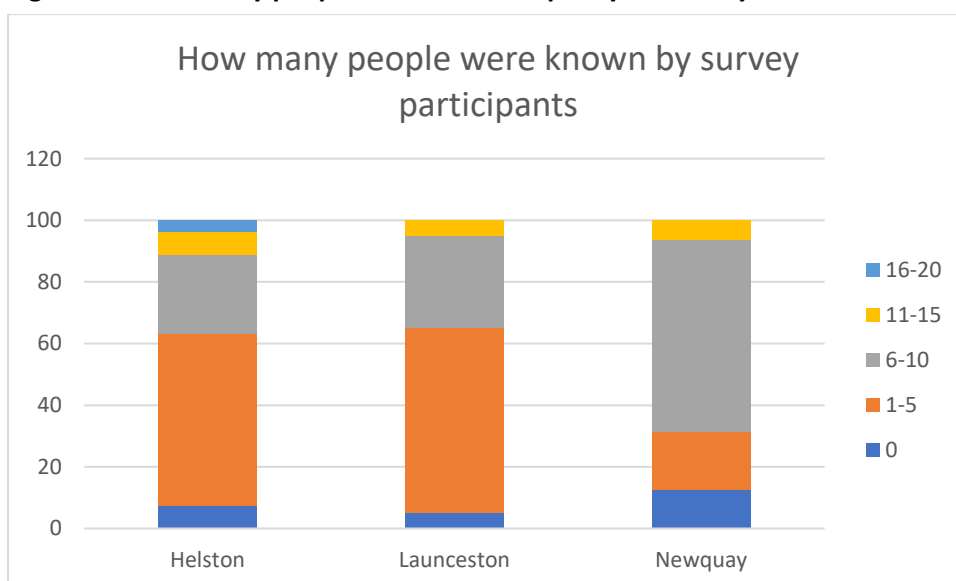
These differences were also evident when looking at the extent to which participants belonged to community groups in each town (Table 13). The Helston workshop was led by a local community group and it was focusing on land in a community-managed public park. People had come along after being invited by a number of existing environmentally-oriented social organisations and networks and not surprisingly, this was reflected in the data. In contrast, the workshops in Launceston and Newquay attracted people who were less embedded in organised community groups but in contrast to Helston, they already knew a good number of the participants as neighbours (Table 14 and Figure 10). As many as 69% of respondents in Newquay already knew between 6 and 15 other participants, reflecting the fact that it was largely local people who turned out. The other workshops attracted participants who knew a few other people, through a mixture of neighbours or, if applicable, members of more formal organisations. It is significant that there were three people at the Helston workshop who knew almost all the other participants, and these were the leaders of the climate action group in town.

Table 13: Are you involved in any community groups?

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No	11	37	12	60	17	77	40	56
Yes	19	63	8	40	5	23	32	44
Total	30	100	20	100	22	100	72	100

Table 14: How many people at the workshop do you already know?

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0	2	7	1	5	2	13	5	8
1-5	15	56	12	60	3	19	30	48
6-10	7	26	6	30	10	63	23	37
11-15	2	7	1	5	1	6	4	6
16-20	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	2
Total	27	100	20	100	16	100	63	100
No answer	0		0		1		1	

Figure 10: How many people at the workshop do you already know?

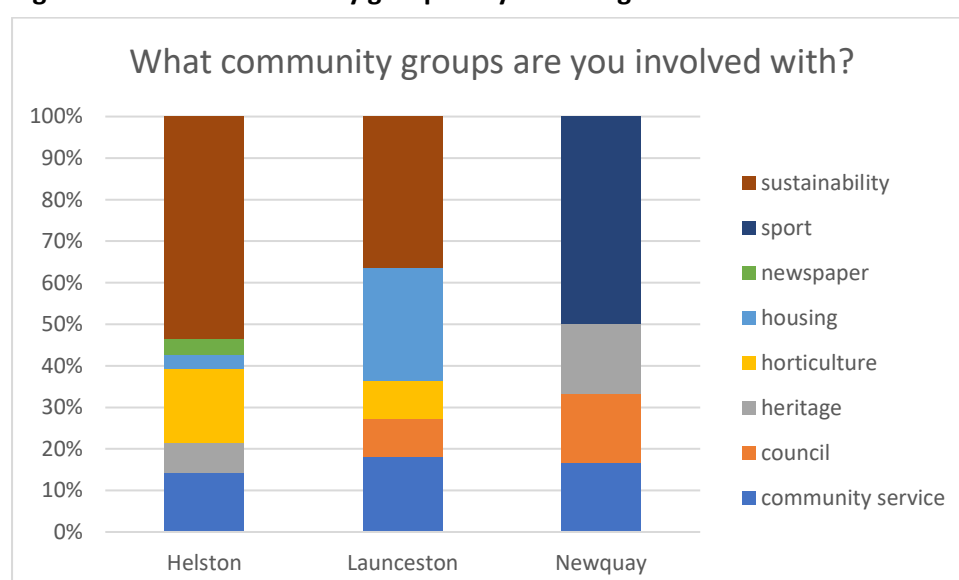
As indicated above, there was a marked difference in the extent to which participants were involved in formal organisations and community groups. When asked which groups they belong to, respondents gave a diverse range of responses, although they varied strongly across the towns (Table 15 and Figure 11). In Newquay, sports activities were the standout affiliation. Two children who were visiting a grandparent close to the Towan Blystra Road site mentioned “cricket and football clubs” and a resident had been involved with “gig rowing” in the past.

In contrast, participants in Helston were most likely to belong to a sustainability group, reflecting the links between Helston Climate Action Group, Incredible Edible Helston and the GCTN project. Launceston respondents were mostly involved with either sustainability activity or housing-related community groups. The latter reflected the extent to which some participants from the Ridgeway estate had been involved with a residents’ association in the past, with plans to restart it in future. In parallel, several had heard about the event through Launceston’s sustainability groups and networks. A local horticulture charity had sent information about the event out on their Facebook network and a woman told us that she was a member of “eco-Launceston.”

Table 15: Which community groups do you belong to?

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Sustainability	15	54	4	36	0	0	19	42
Community service	4	14	2	18	1	17	7	16
Horticulture	5	18	1	9	0	0	6	13
Housing	1	4	3	27	0	0	4	9
Heritage	2	7	0	0	1	17	3	7
Sport	0	0	0	0	3	50	3	7
Council	0	0	1	9	1	17	2	4
Newspaper	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	2
Total	28	100	11	100	6	100	45	100

Figure 11: Which community groups do you belong to?



The survey asked respondents about perceived absences at the workshops, partly as a way to consider improving attendance in future. While the project team had tried to widen the reach of the workshops by posting news articles, using social networks and making links to councillors, the project inevitably had a patchy appeal. A minority of respondents were able to identify missing groups of people (Tables 16 and 17 and Figure 12). In Helston, the absence of “schools” and “students” were mentioned by respondents living in the town. All local schools were contacted about all the events but none attended in a formal way.

One Newquay teacher did attend (on a Saturday) and had the space been nearer his secondary school, he would have been better able to get the students involved. In Newquay, a number of the respondents felt that a local street should have been leafleted as part of the project, telling us that “Clemens Close wasn't leafleted.” In addition, an older resident who was sceptical about the project commented that the “town councillor responsible for footpaths” wasn't in attendance.

A number of respondents in Launceston also felt that there should have been more representation from local councillors, although two did attend and might not have been recognised. The sparsity of

residents from the Ridgemoor estate was also mentioned, with one participant asking about “all the people who live at Ridgemoor.”

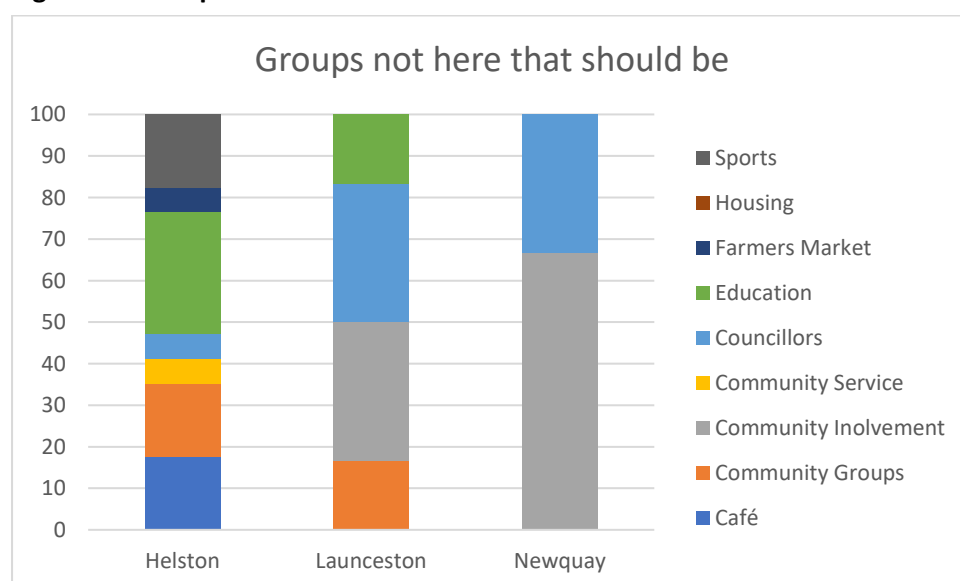
Table 16: Are there any groups not at the workshop that should be?

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	13	87	7	70	5	56	25	74
No	1	7	1	10	3	33	5	15
Don't know	1	7	2	20	1	11	4	12
Total	15	100	10	100	9	100	34	100
No answer	15		10		13		38	

Table 17: Groups not in attendance that should be here?

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Café	3	18	0	0	0	0	3	12
Community Groups	3	18	1	17	0	0	4	15
Community Involvement	0	0	2	33	2	67	4	15
Community Service	1	6	0	0	0	0	1	4
Councillors	1	6	2	33	1	33	4	15
Education	5	29	1	17	0	0	6	23
Farmers Market	1	6	0	0	0	0	1	4
Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sports	3	18	0	0	0	0	3	12
Total	17	100	6	100	3	100	26	100

Figure 12: Groups not in attendance that should be?



*Each response was allocated up to three codes representing key themes and topics.

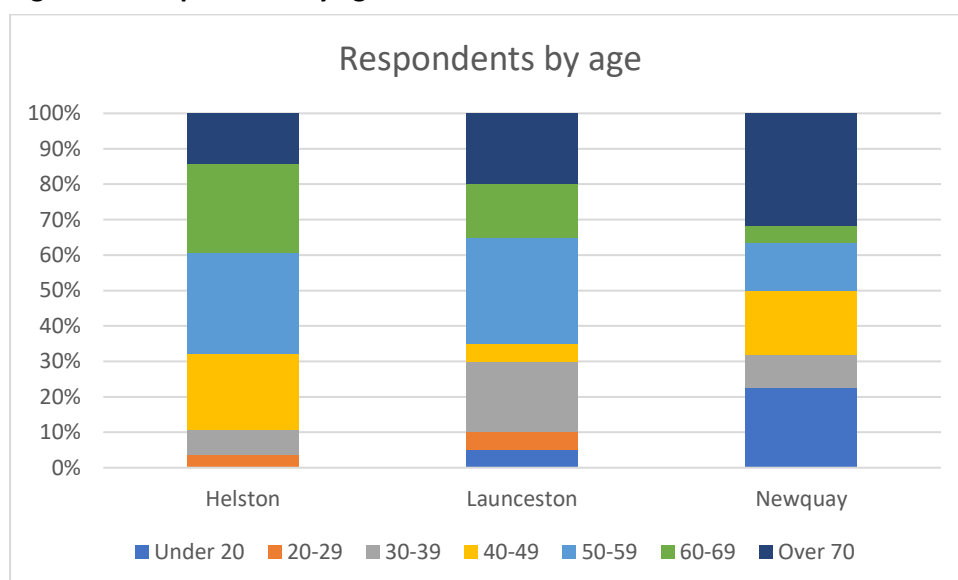
Background demographics to the survey

There were noticeable differences between the age profiles of workshop attendees across the towns. Newquay had both the greatest number of oldest and youngest attendees (Table 18 and Figure 13) which may have been due to the fact that the partner organisation, Treehouse CIC, has a particular focus on families with children and that they were advertising the event as being a family-friendly event.

Table 18: Workshop respondents by age

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total N %	
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Under 20	0	0	1	5	5	23	6	9
20-29	1	4	1	5	0	0	2	3
30-39	2	7	4	20	2	9	8	11
40-49	6	21	1	5	4	18	11	16
50-59	8	29	6	30	3	14	17	24
60-69	7	25	3	15	1	5	11	16
Over 70	4	14	4	20	7	32	15	21
Total	28	100	20	100	22	100	70	100

Figure 13: Respondents by age



Although a number didn't answer the question, most of the respondents were women. A greater number of men attended the more locally-oriented workshops in Launceston and Newquay than were present in Helston (Table 19).

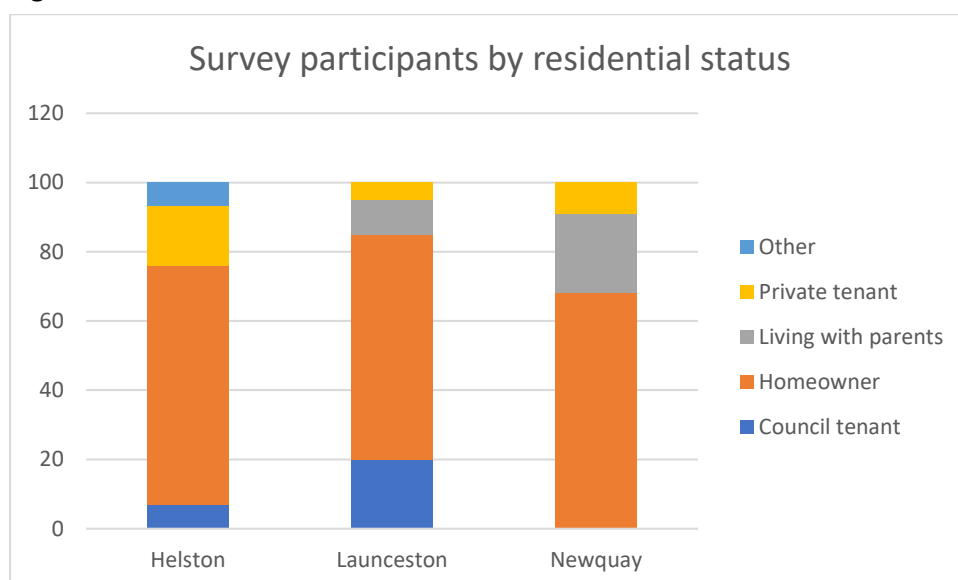
Table 19: Gender

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	9	82	11	58	11	61	31	70
Male	2	18	8	42	7	39	17	39
Total	11	100	19	100	18	100	44	100

The majority of respondents in all three towns were homeowners but a number of Helston attendees were private tenants. 1 in 5 of the Launceston respondents were council or social housing tenants, reflecting the partnership with Cornwall Housing, and nearly a quarter of Newquay respondents (including some children) lived with parents (Table 20 and Figure 14).

Table 20: Residential status

	Helston		Launceston		Newquay		Totals	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Homeowner	20	69	13	65	15	68	48	68
Private tenant	5	17	1	5	2	9	8	11
Living with parents	0	0	2	10	5	23	7	10
Council tenant	2	7	4	20	0	0	6	8
Other	2	7	0	0	0	0	2	3
Total	29	100	20	100	22	100	71	100

Figure 14: Residential status

The follow-up workshop in Helston

The second workshop in Helston was held on Saturday 2 March 2020, following a community gardening activity to clear the area of the park for the Incredible Edible project (see pictures in Appendix D). More people attended the first part of the event, working together in the space, than

subsequently stayed for the follow up workshop. This second workshop was focused on the practicalities of getting materials ordered, organising the work to be done, and sustaining the organisation of the group. By its nature, it attracted the most committed group members and only one new person attended (and she was an organiser who had been on holiday at the time of the first workshop). Having this small but committed group allowed us to ask more focused questions about their ideas for monitoring the site, nature-based climate change mitigation and the idea of engaging with the University.

Only 7 people completed our survey and the data is obviously very limited in scale. However, the event was universally seen as a positive activity and it helped to build community amongst the emergent Incredible Edible group. As one respondent told us, the day was very “productive, lots of lovely people working well together with a common goal.” Another woman who already worked as a gardener told us it was “very inspiring - seeing people cooperate and work together.” People were particularly pleased that the project was moving on at speed; one older woman telling us that the day had “resulted in a lot of useful decisions and we made progress in prioritising the things we need.”

When asked about the anticipated benefits of the site for the community and biodiversity, respondents provided sophisticated answers indicating their deep commitment to this kind of activity. Respondents mentioned “pollinators and wildlife corridors” and “bringing people and nature together.” Two people provided long and very considered answers to this question:

“Sharing skills growing food; forming enduring networks in the community through food and gardening; spreading the word about sustainability and how to grow food locally.”

“Connecting community through sharing skills, knowledge and learning to rely on each other again for common purpose. Increase biodiversity, green space volume, decrease food miles, increase food resilience - including raising awareness of eating local food in season. Reducing carbon footprint.”

As indicated, this group were highly committed to the project and its potential impact. As a result, they were also interested in the ways in which it would be possible to monitor the impact of the site on the community and biodiversity, highlighting the scope to measure and record use of the space by people and animals. However, respondents also recognised the limited scale of the project, one saying: “I think benefits are probably tiny! Soil carbon will probably be worse. It would be interesting to measure the food production and assume that it offsets shop bought [equivalents].” A project of this scale is inevitably limited but a number of participants mentioned ‘demonstrator effects’ on the wider community. One older woman saw this project as a first step to a wider transformation in the town.

If the project had maximum impact there would be: “Evidence that more people want to expand the network of edible gardens around Helston and are harvesting the food. [There would be] community events linked to the gardens and more people growing food at home. Links [would be] established with other groups in the community. [There would be] an increase in general awareness of the need to protect nature through appropriate planting - workshops, courses and other events for people of all ages taking place.” This answer reflects the ambitions of Incredible Edible Helston to use the Coronation Park site as a first step to transform the local community and its practices.

Despite this being the closest project to the University campus, only one participant had attended an event at the University. Most of the participants had not worked with the University of Exeter (Penryn) before but all of them reported that it had been a positive process in this case, particularly with regard to providing the facilitation for events, the coordination to get the project underway and

some funding to buy basic materials for the garden. As two respondents put it, the university provided:

“Additional impetus behind the planning process for the workshops through involvement of external facilitator, support from the research team in the investigation of some elements for preparation, tonnes of help in the acquisition of materials.”

“The University’s involvement has enabled us to move much faster than we would otherwise have done. It provided focus and funding, which allowed us to plan a much more ambitious project, and one that will have a much greater chance of enduring for a long time.”

These answers indicate that using practical assistance to the community, helping to get things done, and building relationships through action as much as words can lead to successful university-led public engagement. While we were working with a group already committed to nurturing the local environment and biodiversity, the additional support provided by the university and this research project provided momentum to get Incredible Edible Helston up and running. In this case, supporting an existing group was a relatively inexpensive way to make a positive impact. In Launceston and Newquay, the projects were started from scratch and based on the service provided by the MSN team in Cornwall Council. Our project provided an extra layer of community consultation and in some regards, this is a poor substitute for community-led activity. However, the potential for changes in a very local area, in this case via Cornwall Council’s MSN project, encouraged attendance and engagement by people who generally don’t belong to community groups and are not already committed to the cause of environmentalism. The impact of our approach in using facilitated workshops allowed a deeper engagement with the process of designing the sites and there may be further benefits of this in relation to long-term engagement.

Summary

Variations in the approach that the project team took in each community, coupled with the local dynamics and differing socio-economic profiles of area impacted on the results in each locality. However, in every case, the workshops were a success. People attended, shared their with the potential for further involvement. In each case, the public were able to shape the future development of local green spaces that would benefit the community and improve biodiversity. The project demonstrated that holding well-publicised and carefully-facilitated workshops provides a vehicle for reaching the public and building relationships with them. The project also highlighted the importance of working with local partner organisations for doing this work.

Helston

There was a real diversity of respondents and responses from Helston. Due to the partnership with Incredible Edible Helston, many respondents came to the project from community groups, particularly sustainability groups, and a number of respondents and attendees worked in highly related industries (as professional gardeners, growers, land managers and landscape architects). As a result, they had a focus on supporting the project and fostering community organisation. Helston’s respondents often cited a desire for change, and to create that change themselves. The community in this town had already come together with the skills to create and carry out their own plans to support biodiversity.

Launceston

Launceston's respondents fell into two clear groups: council tenants and homeowners. The location of the site within and adjacent to the Ridgegrove estate; the partnership with Cornwall Housing; and the engagement efforts and leafleting made on the Ridgegrove estate meant that around half of respondents were made up of Ridgegrove residents, while the other half of respondents heard about the event through Eco-Launceston and related social networks. The promotion of the event and wider project through Eco-Launceston also attracted two professionals who offered to partner on the project – a forester and the director of a community gardening charity.

As a result, many of Launceston's respondents had smaller networks than those in the other towns, and they were involved with either sustainability or housing groups. Launceston respondents had a focus on learning and finding the project interesting. There was also a distinct interest in family, children and young people. This was apparent in respondent's use of the space and concerns that schools weren't present at the workshop. Due to a lack of venues close to the Ridgegrove estate, the Launceston workshop was held in a church hall less than half a mile from Ridgegrove estate which may have impacted on attendance. The second workshop was planned to take place on the Ridgegrove estate, using a marque for a community-focused event, but it had to be postponed.

Newquay

Newquay's respondents were older and more male than the other communities. The nature of the site – being a green space on a residential road of private houses - led to most attendees living very close to the site. Due to the close proximity of respondents, there was a greater uniformity of responses across the survey compared to the other two sites. The nature of the site and its limited impact meant that there were no professional growers at the event.

Newquay's respondents tended to be less involved with community groups than those in Helston and Launceston, but where they were involved in community groups, these were often sports-related. Rather than being made up of lots of small networks as was the case in Helston, the Newquay respondents were made up of one larger social network based on living close to the site. Many of the respondents from Newquay used the space for exercising their dogs.

There were several references to 'localness' in the free-text responses from Newquay; this reflected the proximity of respondents living to the site, but it also indicated a desire to get their voice heard. There was an initial resistance to change, as well as concerns about councillors not being in attendance, reinforced by previous experiences of poor maintenance of green spaces as well as anti-social behaviour.

However, through careful facilitation, and a better understanding of the project, many of the Newquay respondents found the event informative and they provided positive comments about the experience. A large proportion of the Newquay respondents thought that the most exciting idea to come out of the workshop was the planting of screening trees and flowers around the edges of the site.

Learning from the project

The approach: Using place to engage communities worked well across the three towns despite differences in context, social life and organisational partnerships. The approaches were designed in such a way as to suit the local dynamics of particular places and these differences continued to emerge throughout the project. The participatory techniques used in the workshops, the emphasis on respect for all views and space for disagreement, as well as icebreakers led to the majority of

attendees finding workshops interesting or enjoyable in some way. The provision of resources to make changes contributed to the excitement about and engagement with the project.

The outcomes: Engaging local communities to promote the role of plants in public open spaces in nature-based climate change mitigation and improving urban biodiversity proved successful. The second workshop and questionnaire were really required to fully understand the project's impact on people's views about nature-based climate mitigation and their willingness to be involved in the future as well as their potential engagement with the University. However, the attendance of people in both Newquay, and to a lesser extent Launceston, who weren't already engaged with community groups relating to sustainability and the environment indicates that using local sites as a catalyst may encourage uptake of such co-designed activity.

Learning for the future: The engagement across different communities and local contexts indicates that the facilitated workshops, allowing a diverse range of views to be heard, could be successfully deployed in relation to other issues and concerns. To be fully community led (as in Helston) requires a baseline level of interest in community groups and actions, and often, the expertise to lead such activity. There were no similar community groups as fully invested in the issues highlighted by this project in the other towns. Helston also had the additional advantage of the support available from SKACIC, their community-managed park and meeting space.

The GCTN project may help to sow the seeds of such groups developing in Launceston and Newquay. There were community groups involved in both towns; Treehouse CIC via Cornwall Volunteer Forum in Newquay and Brockley Farm project in Launceston. However, without the information that we planned to collect in the second survey, we do not know how the project might have impacted on people's engagement with this kind of activity in future. The second survey in Helston indicated that, even in a highly engaged and knowledgeable cohort close to the Penryn campus, most people had not engaged with the university before. The project thus evidences the need for further integration between the university and local communities and it has helped to develop networks, partnerships and expertise to enable the university to further develop this integration in future.

On a practical note, while local councillors did engage with the project and were present at workshops, they were sometimes not recognised as being there so introducing them to the attendees may have been helpful. There was also scope to do additional engagement with schools.

What shaped effectivity: Factors that shaped the effectiveness of the projects included choice of partners, the nature of the site, the proximity of the workshop to the site, the availability and advertisement of family-friendly activities, promotion of the workshop, local demographics and socio-economic profile, and local dynamics. The wide range of advertising used, including the litter pick and leafleting local areas, as well as local media, in addition to contacting local community groups and councillors ensured engagement.

Although schools were contacted, the under 18's were difficult to engage in this context as running workshops which worked for both adults and children was a challenge. In Newquay, the partnership with Treehouse CIC (a play and arts focused company), and more emphasis on family friendly activities in both the advertising and activities on the day contributed to the age diversity at this event. Engaging with a wide range of community organisations appears to be a good route into harder to reach areas of the community and could have been used further in Helston by engaging the skateboarders and the disability group sharing the SKACIC building at Coronation Park.

Opportunities and challenges of the work: In addition to the intended outcomes of the project, the work also created positive partnerships and relationships, and saw communities come together. One

respondent was “hoping to meet people and learn” and another enjoyed the workshop as there were “lots of lovely people working well together with a common goal.” Other unexpected outcomes were the impact of the project on mental health. A woman attending a pre-workshop litter pick told a researcher that she found that community event helped her mental health, saying that the event was the first time she was able “to tell someone about her [mental health] breakdown.”

The challenges of the work were primarily around the tight timescale of the project. Despite promoting the workshops widely, the majority of local people did not engage.

Legacy of the project: The long-term impact of the different starting points remains to be seen and has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the project was successful: communities were engaged with nature and place-based climate change mitigation and partnerships were created. The process highlighted the diversity both between and within communities and the importance of understanding community needs and developing a bespoke approach. The project bolstered university-community partnerships for public engagement with climate change mitigation via biodiversity, and could be replicated in other communities. To ensure the project legacy, it is essential to maintain university support for ongoing engagement with local communities and partner organisations to ensure the planned changes to these open spaces are made. More broadly, we hope this project can act as a demonstrator for the wider MSN project and related work done by Cornwall Council.

GCTN also demonstrates the benefits of closer working between the key partners, both of which have strong interests in climate change mitigation, environmental growth and community engagement, and understanding the best way to achieve these shared goals.

Appendix A - Surveys

The survey used in the first workshop in Helston (as an example for all 3 preliminary workshops) and the survey used for the follow-up event in Helston.

Helston Coronation Park Green Space Transformation Workshop

Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire. It will take less than 10 minutes to fill in. We will use the results to look at how people are engaging with their local public spaces and the community. Your anonymity is guaranteed.

1. Where do you live (postcode)?

2. Are you involved in any community groups in the town

☐ yes ☐ no

3 If yes, which ones?

4. How did you find out about this event?

5. Why have you chosen to come today?

6. How many other people here do you already know?

7. Are there any people or groups from the community who aren't here today but who should be involved?

8. How often do you visit Coronation Park?

☐ More than once a day

☐ Once or twice a month

☐ Every day

☐ Once every 2-3 months

☐ Several times a week

☐ Occasionally

☐ Once a week

☐ Never

☐ Other

a. If you selected Other, please specify:

9. How long do you spend at the park when you use it? (Please say in minutes)

10. What do you use the park for?

11. Did you enjoy today's workshop? Please explain your answer

12. What was the most exciting idea you heard at the workshop today?

13. Age

☐ Under 18

☐ 40-49 years

☐ 18-19 years

☐ 50-59 years

☐ 20 - 29 years

☐ 60-69 years

☐ 30-39 years

☐ Over 70

14. Gender

15. What is your residential status

☐ Homeowner

☐ Living with Parents

☐ Private Tenant

☐ Other

☐ Council Tenant

a. If you selected Other, please specify:

16. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the park/green space or the event today?

17. We hope to organise a follow up workshop to explore how to look after the site in the future.

Would you be keen to attend?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Possibly

Helston, Coronation Park Green Space Transformation Workshop 2

Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire. It will take less than 10 minutes to fill in. Your anonymity is guaranteed.

1. Is this the first or second workshop in this series you have attended?
1st ☐ 2nd ☐

2. What is your postcode?

3. Why have you chosen to come today?

4. Do you have any experience of growing plants, now or in the past?
Yes ☐ No ☐

Other, please specify

5. Would you like to get more experience of growing plants?
Yes ☐ No ☐

Other, please specify

The University of Exeter is conducting research to see how communities can improve and then better engage with their public open spaces. We are wondering about how best to measure the benefits for both community and the environment.

6. When you think about this community project at Coronation Park, what do you think the main benefits will be for the environment and for the community?
7. How do you think you could measure benefits for the community?
8. How do you think you could measure benefits for the environment?
9. What, if any, monitoring of the new space at Coronation Park would you be willing to do?
10. What help would you need to record changes at Coronation Park?
11. Do you think being involved with monitoring the changes will make people more likely to look after and use the space?
12. Have you attended any events run by the University of Exeter (Penryn) before these workshops (for example outreach events, professional events, talks)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Other, please specify

13. If you have, which events have you attended, and what did you think about them?

14. Do you think having the University of Exeter (Penryn) involved in this project has made a positive difference to the activity/outcomes?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know ☐

Please explain your answer:

15. When you think about the way that supporting nature can help to mitigate climate change, what comes to mind?
16. What aspects of nature-based climate mitigation would you like to hear more about?
17. Did you enjoy today's workshop? Please explain your answer.
18. What was the most exciting idea you heard at the workshop today?
19. What is your age?

Under 18 ☐ 18-19 years ☐ 20 - 29 years ☐ 30-39 years ☐
40-49 years ☐ 50-59 years ☐ 60-69 years ☐ Over 70 ☐

20. Gender? M F

21. What is your residential status? Homeowner ☐ Private Tenant ☐ Council Tenant ☐
☐ Living with Parents ☐ Other ☐

a. If you selected Other, please specify:

22. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the space, the research or the event today?

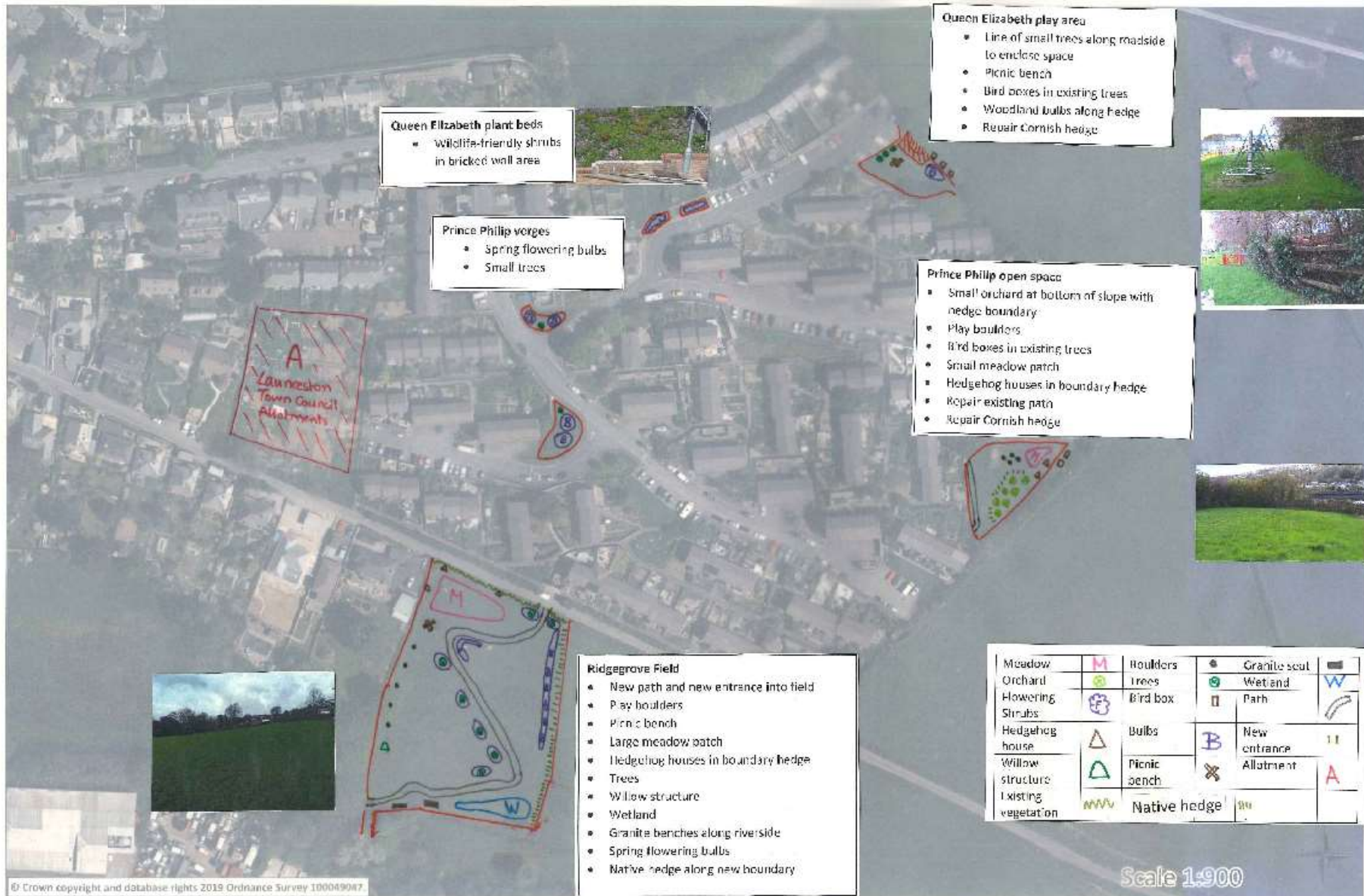
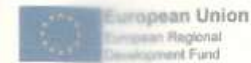
23. If you are interested in taking part in a longer interview with a University of Exeter researcher, about the barriers and challenges to being part of research to support nature-based climate change mitigation and community activity, please provide your name and email address.

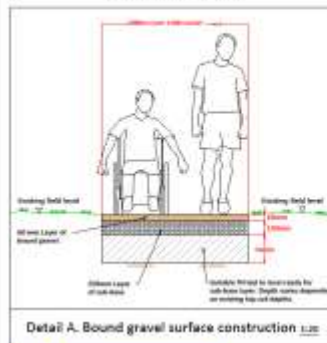
Appendix B – Draft plans



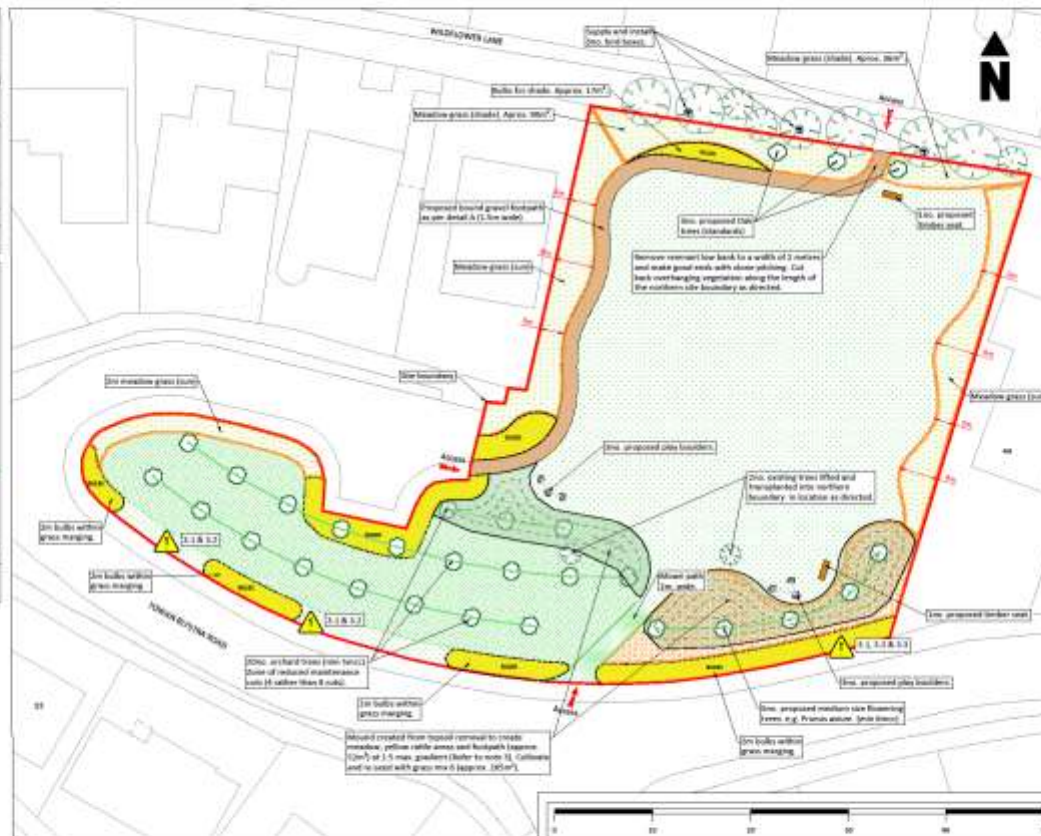
0 15 30 60 90 120
Meters

Launceston - Ridgegrove





- 1. The drawing that is used to compare with the Fire Code and other codes and any existing building and facility (city) production
- 2. Is preparation of the technical studies and estimates (costs) must be done by the City or persons of its institutions that may be affected by construction
- 3. The contractor shall have to submit a contract before drawing and identify location of existing structures, and the project location, and the proposed work
- 4.
 - 1.1. Survey plan in the LPTC (technical study)
 - 1.2. LPTC approved in the PL, LPTC Division file
 - 1.3. Survey / estimates on file 80 to 120 g page
- 5. Refer to the design's initial response and the work information for the details of the construction
- 6. The work is done by the work. Survey numbers (city) and the work information for the details of the construction



Appendix C – Ideas from workshops

Helston

Incredible Edible - Coronation Park project – workshop 1

The workshop explored ideas for using the space, planting, constructing infrastructure and sustaining the group.

Measures of success - by 2022

These ideas were proposed by the people who came along to the Launch of Incredible Edible on 8th February 2020.

They were asked how best the success of the project could be measured in two years' time.

The answers they gave, summarised below, paint a vision for the future both at the site and beyond it.

A. People

Regular volunteer groups established, caring for the garden.

People of all ages regularly using the garden for relaxation, using the benches.

Links with and regular visits from local community groups especially vulnerable groups.

Evidence that people are harvesting the produce.

Children sitting in the sun, snacking on strawberries, runner beans, apples or pears!

B. Plants and wildlife

An increase in wildlife near the site, e.g. butterflies and other insects pollinating plants and feeding on nectar, birds, worms.

Plantings that include as many of the following as possible: fast-growing edible plants (because the site is small), perennials, fruit trees, colourful flowers, all-year-round displays, plants to delight all the senses.

C. Infrastructure

A robust structure that will endure in the long term.

A large, secure shed near the site for storing tools, soil testing kits, plans for planting, crop rotation and other information, safe storage of lime and other materials if needed.

Paths in place that allow disabled access and a route for wheelchairs.

Educational displays at the site about edible plants, water, permaculture, composting, propagation, wildlife and other relevant information.

Vertical structures (including the bridge if possible) incorporated in the design to give a walled-garden/green walls feel.

The rock that is already on site made a focal point, perhaps a water feature.

Composting on site, encouraging worms.

Child-friendly features e.g. insect houses

D. Influence beyond the site

The project has inspired the creation of other similar sites in Helston.

A community meal, cooked from the produce grown on site.

18. People inspired to grow food at home.

19. An active online forum used by individuals and groups.

20. Connection to Helston's cultural history - pictures and stories documenting the project (e.g. display in Helston Museum).

Launceston Workshop 1

Ideas for the new field and areas in and around the estate

Field

- Pollution – air quality not good
- Somewhere to kick a ball
- Need better play area for whole of North Launceston (only little one north of the river)
- Need pedestrian access from Ridgewood Estate across the river without Newport bridge
- Willow garden
- Wild areas shelter belt trees scrubs
- Path
- Seating
- Beautiful spot to sit if you could by the river
- Grazed
- Community maintenance care group
- Prefer gate not to be opposite existing entrance because people will gather. But problem with no pavement etc.
- Treehouse
- Otters are in the river
- Otters, kingfishers, herons, trout
- Grazed heavily over years
- No accessibility to walk by the river, not public land
- Places to walk, path
- Some wheelchair access
- Pollution levels from Newport
- Natural surfaced paths
- Bird boxes
- Easy access to all once barbed wire comes down
- Wild flower area
- Access to river
- Manage grass with scythes not strimming – low impact, zero emissions, appropriate tech
- If fruit trees do not use dwarfing roots
- Be patient, slow growing, long lasting
- Growing trees
- Sloping
- No natural seedbed
- Water meadow
- Muddy puddles/rough ground
- Wet
- Seating/picnic area
- School involvement in planting trees, making bird boxes, bat boxes, insect houses
- Nature/forest school for Ridgewood and other children
- Willow for willow weaving
- Get children outdoors
- For children to grow both themselves through nature and plants/pollinators/trees
- Dog walking areas
- Fruit trees
- Not accessible
- River access

Prince Philip Road

Challenges:

- Take consideration of what people will see from their gardens.
- Skateboards
- Vast variety of birds and many hedgehogs – need to keep them safe
- Bike
- Ball
- Dog poo
- Skater
- Teach children to appreciate, not destroy the surrounding area
- I don't like the dog poo
- Not very useable
- Paths not maintained – de-grassed
- Need to get teenagers involved then lower litter/vandalism
- Area not maintained
- Brambles
- The other green space is cut
- Allotments underused
- Allotments should stay but for the community
- Residents being involved to improve their gardens: unite each other. Feel proud of their community.

Ideas:

- To put the park back with some planting done by the children
- Something to swing on
- I like the jumpy bridge
- Would like to see boulders surrounded by planting – wild flowers
- I like the bridge
- Get more teens involved in projects
- Things to climb and make dens
- It could be called the cool park
- Should be an allotment or a park

Queen Elizabeth Road Play Area

- Balls roll down into the gardens.
- Children skateboarding on road – dangerous.
- Trees to stop the children running onto the road.
- Who is going to do the maintenance?
- Leave a space for play equipment/MUGA at top.
- Flower garden
- Older children set hedge alight.
- I don't want the view to obscure the children in the park.

Newquay – workshop 1

How could this space be improved for wildlife? What would it look like in two years' time?

- More trees, flowers and planting
- Wild flowers

- Not mowed, looks good
- Not a fan of managed beds
- Log pile
- Keep the centre clear
- Swings
- Slide with bird box
- Trees around the edge
- Concerned about furniture (fences, seating etc) – becomes a target for vandalism [red dot]
- More wildflowers – poppies are beautiful
- Natural flowers
- Back to nature
- Great ideas but must be maintained
- Must be low maintenance
- I like the proposal for trees, plants, flowers etc. but very concerned about lack of maintenance on adjacent paths, sites
- Keep it useful for dog walkers and games
- Barrier to stop balls going into road, also to help children running into road
- Keep centre clear for games/air ambulance
- Perimeter demarcation – low planting
- Probably not benches – vandalism, would encourage loitering and anti-social behaviour
- Partnership project to get community service to maintain Wildflower Lane
- Trees and hedging next to Wildflower Lane would be good with a clear entrance way
- Keep the 'neck' low for traffic visibility
- If there was seating, an exposed roadside site would be best

Appendix D – Photos from Helston workshop 2

Information Classification: CONTROLLED

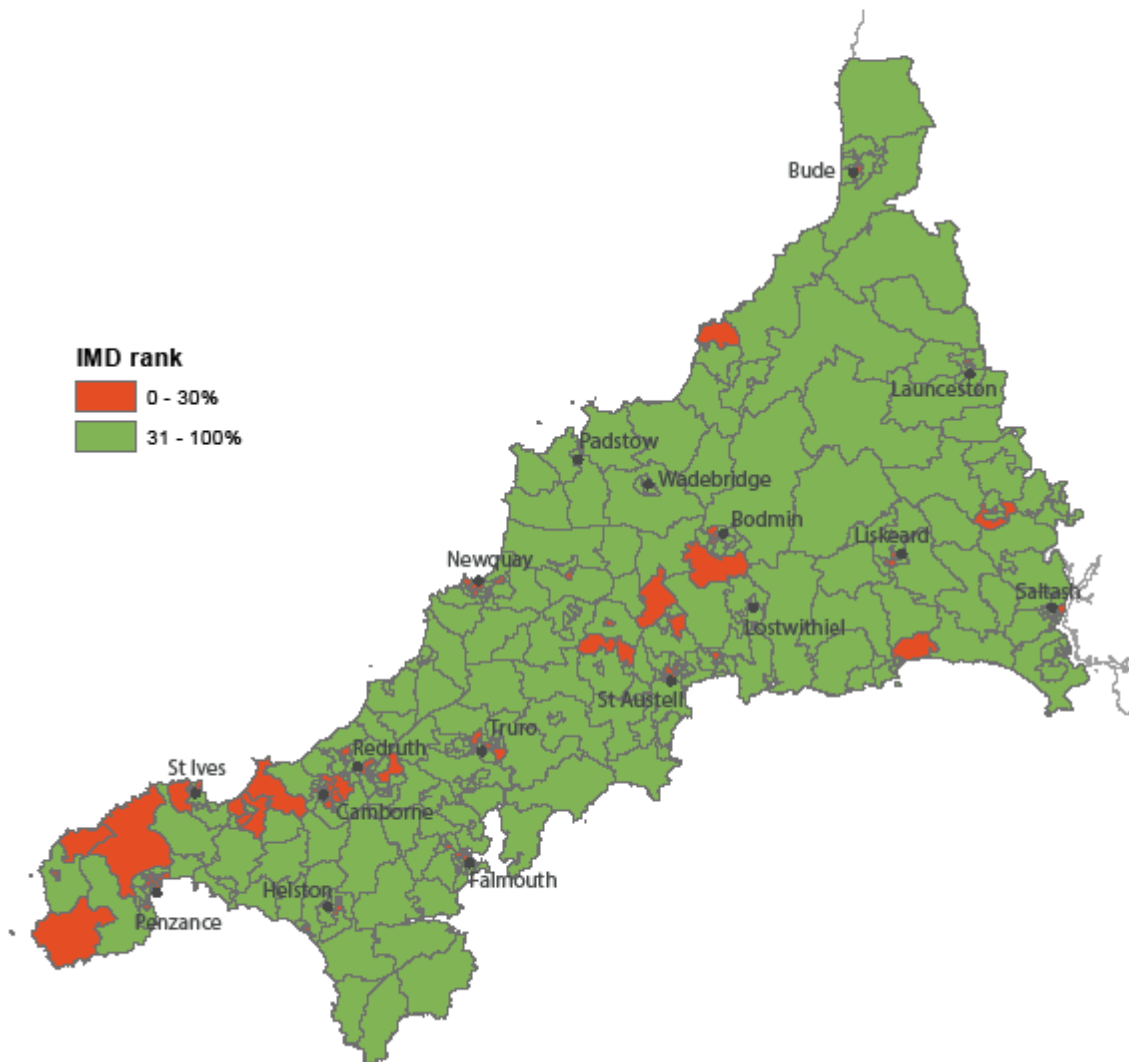
Incredible Edible Helston - Coronation Park 7th March 2020. First work session

<p>Feb 2020... BEFORE</p>	
<p>7th March 2020 1pm Work starts</p>	
<p>2.30pm Tarmac cleared!</p>	

Appendix E - Socio economic data

Cornwall

Map showing Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) (neighbourhood) level data



The towns were selected in part due to being in areas of relative deprivation. The project used Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2019)¹ to assess the socio-economic profile of the locations:

Coronation Park boating lake area, Helston:

The majority of the area to the south of the Coronation boating lake falls within the 20-40% most deprived categories of deprivation within England. It also scores education, skills and training, employment and income. Crime and disorder, health deprivation and disability and living environment are mid-range at 40-60%. Barriers to housing fall in the least deprived 20-40% category.

Deprivation category	Deprivation Rank	Deprivation in England
Indices of multiple deprivation	12829	Between 20-40% most deprived
Education, skills and training	8702	Between 20-40% most deprived
Income	9647	Between 20-40% most deprived
Employment	10585	Between 20-40% most deprived
Crime and disorder	13300	Between 40-60% mid range
Health deprivation and disability	16370	Between 40-60% mid range
Living in Environment	16241	Between 40-60% mid range
Barriers to housing and services	25826	Between 20-40% least deprived

Ridgegrove estate, Launceston:

The majority of the Ridgegrove Estate falls within the most deprived 20% categories of deprivation within England apart from the indicators for crime, disorder and environment (20-40% least deprived and living environment which is mid-range between 40-60%). A strip towards the southern end of the estate along Ridgegrove Lane and Prince Charles Close within the estate itself enjoy significantly improved rankings in comparison to the rest of the area.

Deprivation category	Deprivation Rank	Deprivation in England
Indices of multiple deprivation	4776	Most deprived 20%
Barriers to housing and services	5048	Most deprived 20%
Education, skills and training	4541	Most deprived 20%
Employment	4180	Most deprived 20%
Health deprivation and disability	6264	Most deprived 20%
Income	3533	Most deprived 20%

¹ Gov.UK, English indices of deprivation 2019, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019> [accessed 10th January 2020].

Living in Environment	13875	Between 40-60% mid range
Crime and disorder	25220	Between 20-40% least deprived

Towan Blystra Road, Newquay:

Towan Blystra Road falls within mid-range for most of the categories of deprivation (40-60%) including indices of multiple deprivation, education, skills and training, health, deprivation and disability and living environment. It falls within the 20-40% most deprived categories for employment and income and the 20-40% least deprived categories for barriers to housing and crime and disorder.

Deprivation category	Deprivation Rank	Deprivation in England
Income	12612	Between 20-40% most deprived
Employment	10362	Between 20-40% most deprived
Living in Environment	14235	Between 40-60% mid range
Indices of multiple deprivation	15736	Between 40-60% mid range
Education, skills and training	17141	Between 40-60% mid range
Health deprivation and disability	13279	Between 40-60% mid range
Barriers to housing and services	24844	Between 20-40% least deprived
Crime and disorder	23578	Between 20-40% least deprived

Appendix F - Selection of publicity

Falmouth Packet - 8th February 2020

Helston Coronation Park chosen for wildlife experiment



The project aims to create new hubs of biodiversity for people to enjoy, such as this one.

Helston is one of just three sites in Cornwall chosen to be part of a new wildlife project. Coronation Park, along with two other small sites in Newquay and Launceston, will become thriving hubs for biodiversity and for local people to visit and enjoy.

The project – called Growing Communities Through Nature – is co-ordinated by the University of Exeter and aims to test different ways of getting the public involved in improving open spaces. A £38,000 grant for the project is coming from UK Research and Innovation’s “Enhancing Place-Based Partnerships in Public Engagement” programme to fund it.

Melissa Muir, of the University of Exeter, said: “Two small grassy spaces will be transformed by local people, boosting both biodiversity and community engagement “The third is working with an existing community group and established park to work on an under-used corner.

“Although the general aim is to improve biodiversity and create spaces for local people to use, the design of these new spaces is very much up to those local people themselves.

“We want to encourage researchers, local government and local community organisations to work together to engage residents in the design of their local green spaces, highlighting what we can do in our local area to help mitigate climate change.”

Growing Communities Through Nature is a partnership between the University of Exeter, Cornwall Council, South Kerrier Alliance Community Interest Company and Cornwall’s Voluntary Sector Forum.

The project will test if working with established voluntary organisations and self-organised community groups leads to different levels of interest in the sites.

Professor Jane Wills, from the project, said: “We want people to engage more with local green spaces, and to understand how well different approaches work.

“If people are closely involved in the creation of sites, we hope they will also be more likely to use them in the future.

“Our results could help inform future improvements in Cornwall and further afield.”

The project is one of 53 across the UK to win a share of £1.4 million from UK Research and Innovation.

Cornwall Council and the University of Exeter are already working together on an ambitious project called Making Space for Nature, which turns neglected open spaces into places for people and wildlife.

Growing Communities through Nature will complement the work being done within this project.

Cornish and Devon Post – 26th February 2020
Help shape plans for Launceston’s green spaces.



There was a strong turn out to the Ridgegrove litter pick.

RESIDENTS of Ridgegrove in Launceston took to the estate for a litter pick on Tuesday, February 18, as part of the community engagement of the ‘Making Space for Nature’ project.

The green spaces within Ridgegrove have been selected, as part of a group of Cornwall Council owned land in and around Launceston, for the next stream of funding for improvement.

Liberal Democrat Cornwall Councillor for Launceston Central, Gemma Massey, who took part in the litter pick with her daughter, Evie, said: "It is great to see residents come out and make a difference to their local community again today. The weather hasn't been on our side, but we still collected over eight bags of rubbish."

A special workshop has been organised to give members of the public the opportunity to help transform community green spaces in a distinct site in Launceston. Experts from the University of Exeter's Penryn campus are hosting the public workshop, to collate inspiration and ideas from local residents for revamping the green spaces around the Ridgegrove housing estate. Local residents are invited to give their thoughts and help shape these plans at the workshop this Saturday, February 29, from 11am to 1pm at St Thomas Church Hall, where refreshments will be provided.

Cllr Massey said: "I hope many residents are able to attend the up-coming workshop and make their voices heard as to how this investment into our green spaces can be best used."

The project, which is part of the 'Growing Communities Through Nature' scheme, will also include the creation of a new green space on Ridgegrove Lane.

The workshop will give local community members the opportunity to participate in discussions around how to build, grow and maintain the new spaces.

Professor Jane Wills, project lead from the University of Exeter, said: "We hope to get as many people from Launceston and surrounding areas to come along to the workshop and share their ideas on what they would like their green spaces to look like. For example, people might want to grow edible plants, create wildlife habitats, plant orchards or build accessible seating."

Growing Communities Through Nature is a partnership between the University of Exeter, Cornwall Council, South Kerrier Alliance Community Interest Company and Cornwall's Voluntary Sector Forum.

The project will test if working with established voluntary organisations and self-organised community groups leads to different levels of interest in the sites.

As well as Launceston, the project will also focus on sites in Coronation Park in Helston and a space in Newquay.

The schemes are intended to 'enable members of the public to actively contribute to research and innovation projects that affect their lives'.

Cornwall Council and the University of Exeter are already working together on the ambitious Making Space for Nature project, which turns neglected open spaces into places for people and wildlife.

Growing Communities through Nature will complement the work being done on community engagement within this project. This work has revealed an opportunity for co-creating and co-monitoring the activity with the local community.

Pro Landscaper – 28th February 2020

Plans to improve biodiversity and community use of Ridgegrove's green spaces



A special workshop has been organised to give members of the public the opportunity to help transform community green spaces in a district site in Launceston.

Experts from the University of Exeter's Penryn Campus are hosting the public workshop this weekend, aiming to collate inspiration and ideas from local residents for revamping the green spaces around the Ridgeway housing estate.

The project, part of the Growing Communities Through Nature scheme, will also include the creation of a new green space on Ridgeway Lane. The workshop will give local community members the opportunity to discuss how to build, grow and maintain the new spaces.

The event takes place on Saturday 29 February at St Thomas Church Hall, Riverside, Launceston from 11am to 1pm.

Professor Jane Wills, project lead from the University of Exeter, said:

"We hope to get as many people from Launceston and surrounding areas to come along to the workshop. Sharing their ideas on what they would like their green spaces to look like."

Growing Communities Through Nature is a partnership between the University of Exeter, Cornwall Council, South Kerrier Alliance Community Interest Company and Cornwall's Voluntary Sector Forum. As well as Launceston, the project will also focus on sites in Coronation Park in Helston and a space in Newquay.

The schemes are intended to "enable members of the public to actively contribute to research and innovation projects that affect their lives".

Cornwall Council and the University of Exeter are already working together on an ambitious project called Making Space for Nature. A project which turns neglected open spaces into places for people and wildlife.