

St Ives Community Orchard CIC AGM

15 November 2022

Location: Saints Boardriders Club, Porthmeor West

Time: 6.00pm

Attendees:

Phoebe Sampson (Chair) (PS), Elise Langley (EL), Rupert Manley (RM), Josh Quick (JQ), Duwayne Langley (DL), Jo Riley (JR), Sue Dodds (SD), Sue Smith (SS), Gisela Ager (GA), Lizzie Davis (LD), Lynn Archard (minutes)

Apologies: Mattie Pochee, Elise Worrall, Angela Challacombe, Gabby McVey, Pene Reynoldson, Ellie Baker

1. Welcome from the Chair to the 2022 AGM

2. Minutes of AGM 2021

The chair made an amendment to the minutes of the last AGM, held June 2021. It was clarified that over 50 new volunteers had signed up and read the risk assessment in the year prior to the last AGM. The minutes were then agreed

3. General Overview (JQ)

- Thanks were given to all the volunteers for their time and energy given to the weekly work parties and it's incredible to see how the orchard and Nature Reserve are developing
- JQ noted that personally this had been one of the greatest projects he's ever been involved in
- The project began in 2014 and a 6 year lease was granted by Cornwall Council in 2016. Following a huge amount of work by Phoebe the new lease has been granted for 30 years for the Orchard & Nature Reserve which takes us up to 2052!
- We became a Community Interest Company (CIC) in April this year to make it easier to oversee the project. We now have Articles of Association with specific aims to follow instead of a constitution and the five Directors are Elise Langley, Rupert Manley, Joshua Quick, Phoebe Sampson and Elise Worrall. We invited all members of our committee to become Directors and we would ideally like to find a new Director who has experience in finance, ideally fundraising strategies and business planning. We invite volunteers and members of the public to get in touch if they are interested in this position
- We are now inviting all volunteers to become members of the CIC. All members will have voting rights and the membership form was distributed. Hard copies of the form are kept in the Orchard shed
- The Foodshare group, which started in 2020 under the umbrella of the orchard as a 'member organisation' has now become an independent

organisation although we still collaborate closely on events. It's great to see how the orchard can provide support for new start up projects like this

4. Orchard Report (EL)

- Wonderful to see how the orchard has developed this year with the fruit trees growing well despite the driest summer we've had here
- There's been a bumper crop of apples, loads of raspberries and gooseberries and about 100 little kiwi's, 30 medlars and some Chilean guavas and Aronia berries, along with our first 2 figs
- We now have a jam maker, Ellie, who's jam has sold well at events. Jo has made chutneys with our produce and hopefully our produce has been used throughout town for apple pies and chutneys by people that came to pick here
- Our apples went to St Ives Cider for pressing and they have produced over 200 litres which will be ready for the Wassail plus 60 litres of apple juice. In comparison we produced 100 litres the year before
- We attempted to propagate some fruit bushes to share with the community which unfortunately mostly did not survive but will try again
- We are always keen for new, unusual and useful varieties of fruit, nuts and plants to add to our orchard. Some of the new plants this year were a honey berry, June berry and a bay tree
- Now have over 50 varieties of apples mostly Cornish and heritage which are not available in the supermarket. This is important as we are at the risk of losing these varieties entirely due to the huge decline of traditional orchards across the UK so we are helping to preserve these
- The beehives have produced their very first honey and our beekeeper, Duwayne, gave out tasters of the honey at Apple Day. Neil Davis has put a hive in the Nature Reserve. This year Duwayne captured 2 swarms in the apiary, one of which went back into an existing hive and the other to a hive in St Just. Last year he took one of the swarms to the hive in Steeple Woodland Nature Reserve
- A new herb garden has been created and some dead hedges constructed which benefits the wildlife whilst also acting as a practical delineator
- We have also had an electric point connected to Matthew Stevens' factory and have installed 2 x 1000 litre water tanks collecting from their site
- After a visit from the Food Hygiene Inspector the orchard was awarded 4 out of 5 stars
- The pizza oven is in need of repairs
- We now have 8 composting areas. Big thanks to Jo for donating the rotating tumbler compost bin and to Elise's parents who donated all the materials to build 2 large mesh composters and who helped build it based on the design of their bins in South Africa
- Over 30 new volunteers have signed up this year, not all who have come along to a work party, but those who have brought some wonderful new energy and ideas
- We have 4 Duke of Edinburgh volunteers doing bronze, silver and gold and this year have signed off 2 completed gold awards and 4 bronze. The DofE kids helped us so much particularly through the summer months
- There have been some great events, Wassail in January, Summer Solstice, Harvest event and Apple Day. We've also had good collaborations with the Leach Pottery and Tate

- We've had some new people take on roles in the orchard. Sue Smith is now recording all volunteer hours and submitting them for Time Credits. Pene has adopted the roles of Health & Safety and Safeguarding. There are now 5 qualified first aiders but are keen for more volunteers to do the course this year. EL attended both a Food Safety course and Managing & Motivating volunteer's course. Jo Riley is our veggie growing co-ordinator and Lizzie Davis is in the role of Publicity Officer. It's been wonderful having both our Sues doing the tea duty – makes all the difference to have a chat with tea at the end of each work party

5. Nature Reserve Report (RM)

- 532 trees were planted last winter on the nature reserve, at least 38 of these came from the orchard tree nursery and 144 were grown at home. The remainder were supplied through Eforests. Species planted were: sessile and pedunculate oaks, downy birch, hazel, hawthorn, rowan, common alder, elder, holly, juniper, elm, crab apple, goat willow and grey willow
- With the dry spring and heat and drought of summer we possibly lost a few trees but the vast majority have survived
- Although we marked almost all the planted trees with bamboo canes, they were still smothered by bracken causing poor growth and some deaths. We need to prioritise tree care in future as this will save time if they grow unhindered as it will shorten the number of years they need clearing
- Some of the young oak trees were also attacked by caterpillars with the buff tip moth the likely culprit. This is a good sign as the trees are allowing ecosystems to develop. Oak trees in particular support a rich web of life, with 284 insect species and 324 lichen species associated with them. In contrast, sycamore supports 15 insect species, though lichens fare better with 183 species
- Now that the lease has been finalised, we can press ahead with the statutory designation of the nature reserve as a Local Nature Reserve which will afford it protection and formalise its status as an area set aside for the benefit of nature and the community
- Non-native invasive species still need controlling including winter heliotrope, montbretia and cotoneaster. There are a few rhododendron bushes that should be removed
- Just last Sunday a start was made to enhance an area at the top of the hill which has the potential to be a great wild flower meadow. It will need scything a couple of times a year initially and then an annual late summer cut. Traditionally managed hay meadows are another increasingly rare and valuable wildlife and plant habitat as modern intensive farming practices usually result in a loss of biodiversity
- It has been good to have the younger generation involved in the work parties, mostly through the Duke of Edinburgh scheme and nice to see that some have come along of their own volition
- In the coming year we will plant a few more trees (in total we have now planted at least a couple of thousand) but will focus on tree care, keeping the paths open and expanding the meadow area at the top of the hill. It would be great to have more helpers for the work parties, especially in the summer. All are welcome!

6. Community Learning Centre (PS)

- Along with the lease being extended by 30 years it now includes the extra triangle of land adjacent to Penbeagle Lane where the new [Community Learning Centre](#) will go. Just last week we were granted licence to alter the land so we now have permission for building on the new area and also a raised platform near the pizza oven area
- Planning has been approved for the Learning Centre and the funding has recently been increased to £345k. PS is busy looking for revenue funding (i.e., running costs – staffing, bills etc) and an extensive business case was written last winter
- We are currently seeking a builder or project manager to deliver the project and are considering both in-house or main contractor dependant on cost
- A number of [consultations](#) have been carried out and we are in the process of meeting with builders. We have applied for a dropped curb off Penbeagle Lane

7. Veggie Garden Report (JR)

- During the Tuesday work parties we have been concentrating on veg growing in 2 sites – in the apiary section and by the composting area. We've also added a herb garden. We've grown a wide variety of vegetables including potatoes, onions, carrots, beetroot, peas runner beans, brussels, tomatoes, artichokes, lettuce and rhubarb
- This year has been about seeing what grows well and understanding the site so that we have a better idea about how to improve for next year. We are trying to make veg growing simpler so that we can do other things
- 3 core aims for next year – 1, no dig (use cardboard to minimise weeding) 2, make more use of plug plants from orchard friends; 3, decide which crops to focus on, which have been the easiest to grow and hopefully aim for every other week to be veg focused
- Composting in the community. JR collects lots of food waste from local businesses in St Ives and 2 local collection points. We now have a tumbler in the orchard which makes faster compost. The dream is to have a community electric bike and a better food processor. Need to recruit more volunteers
- The aim is to create more compost than we need and give back to the community. Next year we will have just enough compost for us with the long term aim of excess compost
- JR's talk on Apple Day was well attended by approximately 16 people

8. Treasurer Report

- EL presented in EW's absence. The income and expenditure statement for the 6th April 2021 - 5th April 2022. The opening balance on 6th April was £37,389. It was noted that this was mostly due to Foodshare as they received a large grant in the previous year and their balances were included until the formal separation in May 2022
- Orchard income was £14,873 and expenditure was £13,313. This was largely from Town Deal Project Development Cashflow Funding for site surveys, lease, lawyer fees, planning permission.

- Foodshare income was £4,463, and expenditure was £26,589
- Event taking was £3332 and event expenditure was £2324
- Apple Day generated approximately £2,000 in income, before expenses
- This winter PB would like to get funding for the running of the orchard, i.e., writing the policies & procedures etc
- It was agreed that we would like funding for tools and plants but all other ideas for what to fund are welcome
- JQ suggested a dedicated tree nursery and propagating area would be a powerful addition and an area with a fence would be easier to look after

9. Election of Officers (Directors)

- PS reported that EW would like to hand in her role as Treasurer
- MP has also resigned as Chair
- There was a discussion with regards to the role of Chair and how this might differ in relation to a CIC. SS advised clarity needed with regards to which group is making decisions as the organisation grows. PB is liaising with Cornwall Rural Community Charity for advice around making the CIC and its' documents robust during this period whilst we define the structure
- EL proposed PS as Chair and this was unanimously seconded; JR proposed LA to continue as Clerk and SD seconded
- Thanks were expressed to EL for her role as Treasurer and she has agreed to remain in position until an alternative is appointed
- SD expressed thanks to MP in her role as chair and this was agreed by the all

Note added: Sue Smith offered to be Treasurer shortly after the meeting and this was agreed by committee by email.

10. Discussion / adoption of policy documents

- A huge number of policies and procedures have been written and are available on the [website](#) and also available in printed form in a folder in the orchard shed. A synopsis of all the policies that new joiners are given was presented to the meeting
- It was suggested that certain policies should have a review date
- SS offered to help with the Membership Secretary role as has similar project experience

11. CIC membership

- Covered in earlier discussions

12. Winter work programme

- RM reported that there are a few more trees in the nursery to plant. We have an endless source of bamboo (which JR offered to help cut). The tree guards should be assessed and any that are no longer required recycled
- EL suggested the patch near the skatepark needs work on. We should clear around the trees and add some Splattenriden compost as this is quite high in woody material. Jake Corin suggested this type of mulch would be beneficial in his recent soil report

- There was a discussion about scything in the meadow at the top and also assistance with strimming the paths in the summer

13. Volunteer recruitment / Community Participation

- JR will commit to visiting the local schools to hopefully recruit some volunteers. It was suggested the school could advertise the orchard as part of its DofE programme
- EL confirmed that approximately 60 people had so far signed up as volunteers and receive the email updates from the orchard
- PS has been building a relationship with the library so there will be collaboration with the library next year in learning events
- SD suggested a flyer could be put in the Number 1 bus route that circulates around town in order to raise local awareness
- It was suggested that a slot could be made at the next Apple Day to take the opportunity to speak to the event saying a little bit about the orchard and ask for volunteers
- SD suggested we could make the most of the winter months to increase awareness of the orchard perhaps by having a talk at the library. EL reported to the meeting that she is soon doing a talk at the allotment AGM. A talk by a panel of orchard folk could be presented to the schools
- DL suggested liaising with Coastline Housing Association who have properties on Joannie's Walk as they are good at interacting with the local community
- There will be a visit to Growing Links garden in Gulval next week where volunteers will help with a session followed by lunch. This type of session is an idea for the orchard to consider adopting – could potentially be a means to recruit more volunteers and provide a different session for the volunteers with more chance to interact than is normally possible at the work parties
- It was noted that the Learning Centre will have a kitchen so could facilitate delivering this
- EL reported that Foodshare have recently received funding for a lunch with kid's activities and there was an opportunity to collaborate with this

14. Tree planting on other council owned sites

- RM gave a brief overview of this as previously reported at the last meeting. It may be worth leafleting the immediate neighbourhoods to these sites to raise awareness and hopefully gain help
- The plot of land adjacent to the Trenwith car park (The Burrows) was discussed with regards to liability. This area along with the other parcels of land around town are an opportunity to plant some trees but need to check if that would make us responsible for cutting grass etc on some of them before taking over the lease. It was suggested that it would be helpful to get a group of people to help with each place. Penderleath group could be approached to help
- RM confirmed that native trees will be planted on the Burrows area but we could plant fruit trees on the other areas.

15. AOB

- RM recently found a funding scheme for grants for developing a community gardening grant and will share the details with JR as we could possibly get funding for the raised beds and tree nursery etc
 - Action point (RM)
- There was a discussion around training
- JR suggested it would be may be a good idea to use Instagram to post up about recent things we have done. She has a lead to follow up to assist us with this
 - Action point (JR)
- LD has written a couple of articles about the orchard in her role as Publicity Officer and will send on to EL for review. The main focus of articles needs to be how to recruit more volunteers
 - Action point (LD)
- SD reported to the committee about her involvement in a gardening group in Norway Square and suggested there was an opportunity at collaboration by providing them with our compost as they supply us with food waste
- There are now household collection points for food waste on Windsor and Ayr Terraces
- Both Mine Brewery and St Ives Brewery bring their spent grains to the orchard
- EL reported that Origin Coffee have given us 150 hessian sacks and have agreed to supply us on a regular basis, along with a cubic tonne of coffee grounds
- SS reported that the volunteering hours between April and October this year have been just under 800 which is the equivalent of a full time person for 5 months. In reality the figure is far higher than this as many volunteer hours (for example, someone at home preparing policies) goes unrecorded and asked that these kinds of efforts please be reported to her to assist with accurate recording of volunteer hours. SS will provide figures for any funding applications
 - Action point (All)
- There was a discussion about Tempo Time credits and how the organisations offering entry or goods in exchange for them can limit the number of credits exchanged if they wish to
- SD praised the Directors for the amount of time and effort they put in to create such an amazing group and for everything that they have achieved. Well done guys!
- EL asked if LD could help with the newsletters which go out by email to about 120 people. 2 have gone out this year and the aim is to send one every couple of months
 - Action point (LD)

Date of next quarterly meeting: Tuesday 7th February, Surf Club

Date of next AGM: Tuesday 14th November 2023, Surf Club

Meeting ended 20.10

Action points:

All	to report on additional volunteer hours to SS that are done at home or not within work party time	
JR	contact someone who may be able to help with social media posts	
RM	share gardening grant with JR to apply	
JM	Apply for gardening grant	
EL	Tree planting on other council sites – need to start conversation about this, create leaflets for neighbours, post on social media to create awareness	
JR	Arrange a talk at schools to promote orchard – invite a few orchard members to speak	
DL	Speak to Coastline Housing Association to promote orchard	
LD	Continue to send on articles to EL / PS to be approved before sending to newspaper. Help Elise with sending out newsletters	