

St Ives Library and Friends of St Ives Library



Funded by



Adult Education Outreach Report

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Executive Summary:

This research project aims to build a profile of our community and understand how to maximise the impact of any learning activities undertaken and provides firm evidence of need and demand. This is further supported by the four approaches to evidence gathering as part of this project namely:

- Desktop research including The St Ives Town Deal Survey results
- Adult Education Provider Survey
- Community Interviews
- Community Questionnaires

It has been key to this project to hear from current providers of Adult Education and lifelong learning in the Parish and to listen to the voice of our community.

Due to the timescales involved I have attempted to contact diverse groups in the community and to get as large and representative sample of respondents as possible. Whilst a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods have been used, this has its limitations and therefore any conclusions drawn must be regarded as broad and generalisable.

The key objective of this research project has been to provide evidence of need, opportunities and gaps in Adult Education in St Ives and make recommendations about venues and delivery partners which will boost participation Adult Education

Having analysed all the data from these sources, four main recommendations have been made as a delivery plan for Phase Two. These are outlined in headline below and in more detail in the summary section.

1. Improve visibility of the Adult Education offer by creating an Adult Education Hub located in St Ives Library and online.
2. Focus on partnerships between providers to improve the offer to audiences and help to increase the participation levels
3. Develop a programme of blended learning based on gaps in the current adult learning offer around the Parish and opportunities to collaborate with partners
4. Introduce a 'Pay what you can afford' approach or pay in instalments -making the learning experience more accessible to a wider audience

Background

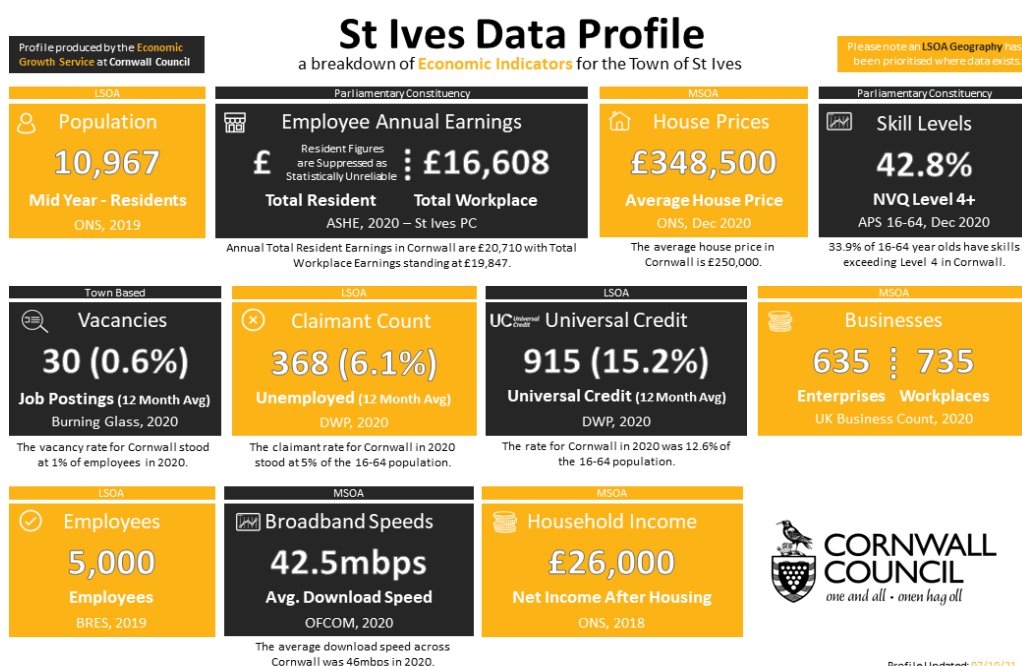
St Ives Library (SIL) and Friends of St Ives Library (FOSIL) have identified a lack of local opportunities for adults to access good quality and affordable education locally. They applied for and were awarded a grant by the National Lottery Community Fund to: **“Extend informal and formal learning opportunities”**

Following the pandemic, SIL and FOSIL were keen to commission a project to better understand the needs of the community in this current time and to further support the health and wellbeing of St Ives Parish residents.

Adult Education is defined, for the purpose of this report as any learning, including formal, non-formal and informal learning rather than focused on a programme of adult educational opportunities.

The research has been conducted over six weeks in May/June 2022. The scope of the research has been the geographic area of St Ives Parish and a link to the map is here: **St Ives Town Parish interactive Map**

The population profile of the Parish is 10967 (midyear 2019 ONS) 53.2 % female and 46.8% male. With c 9000 aged over 19 years of age. Of this population 42.8% are qualified to NVQ level 4+ - the equivalent to completing the first year of a degree.



In Cornwall Council recent economic profile of the parish, [St Ives Economic Profile](#) there are several key findings. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) dataset in the report above is produced to classify the relative deprivation (essentially a proxy for poverty) of small areas across England.

IMD deciles are calculated where 1 is the most deprived 10% and 10 the least deprived 10% in England. There are three areas of St Ives in the bottom 30% of the country for deprivation:

- St Ives Town Centre and Island.
- St Ives Higher Stennack Nanjivey and St Ives Hellesvean,
- Halsetown and Penbeagle.

'Incomes in Higher Stennack area and Hellesvean, Halsetown and Penbeagle are in the lowest 20% and 30% respectively. Education levels in these two areas of the Parish are in the bottom 30 and 40 percentile.'

Desktop Research:

The benefits of Adult Education are enormous in a community and include:

- Helping people to find work and build a career
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Community based learning builds stronger communities by improving community engagement, encouraging a more tolerant society, and supporting active citizenship

The importance of Adult Education has grown with **longer life expectancy combined with a rapidly changing economy and society.**

Current Situation – the national picture:

Participation in learning has **fallen over the last decade** with **large inequalities** in access to learning by age, socioeconomic group, region and nation, and prior educational attainment. Participation in learning is a key predictor of future intentions to learn; the more recently respondents took part in learning the more likely they are to do so in the future.

A YouGov survey in 2021 shows that the biggest barrier to British adults staying in education was cost. 19% of respondents state they do not have time to study and 17% lack energy and motivation respectively.

The impact of the pandemic, according to the 2021 survey by the Learning and Work Institute: **shows that 44 per cent of adults have participated in learning** in the last year, this is the highest level of participation in recent years and the first increase since 2015. This may reflect the impact of Coronavirus as people reflect on their career paths and /or develop new interests.

The proportion of adults **learning for leisure has increased** from just a fifth in 2019 to 44 per cent this year.

This could reflect that adult have been developing new hobbies and interests as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and lockdowns

However, there are **persistent inequalities between social groups**. Younger adults, those who left full-time education later, and those in work are all significantly more likely to have taken up learning in the last three years. Adults in lower socio-economic groups (DE) are twice as likely than those in higher socio-economic groups (AB) to have not participated in learning since leaving full-time education.

St Ives Town Deal Survey

1069 residents in St Ives completed the Town Deal Survey in 2020/21 which has a number of areas relating to skills and learning and set out the following ambitious vision in : [St Ives Town Deal Investment Plan](#)

“Our vision is to both create a more diverse economy and to strengthen skills provision in the town, particularly digital skills and the skills that people need to get jobs and establish businesses in our visitor economy. This will be delivered through a major programme of linked investments in both the top of the town and town centre. In the top of the town and Penbeagle area this plan will create a new training café and learning space for food production skills in an expanded community garden and orchard, including linking small local food businesses with local hospitality businesses, shortening supply chains, and creating new jobs and business opportunities. Investment in the Leach Pottery will create major additional training and work facilities and apprenticeships.

In the town centre, the historic Palais de Danse and Barbara Hepworth’s studio will be fully restored in a unique and innovative partnership between the Tate St Ives and the community to create high quality, digitally enabled learning, and community use space. This will complement

the soon to be opened Workstation, which will create work and business space to meet current and growing demand.”

Unfortunately, at this current moment it appears that the Palais de Danse project may not go ahead as part of the Town Deal and therefore the digitally enabled learning and community space in the centre of town may no longer be available.

This makes a Library Education Hub even more critical, and it may be worth an approach to the Town Deal ‘other projects’ fund to see if there is any capacity for ongoing funding beyond the life of the National Lottery Community Funding.

Adult Education Provider Survey Findings:

The Adult Education provider survey was developed to build an understanding of the current state of Adult Education delivery in the Parish of St Ives highlighting gaps and opportunities for partnering with other organisations in the town.

The survey can be found in Appendix 1 and was sent out to 26 organisations across St Ives with 23 responses to date equating to a response rate of 88%

The below table shows the wide variety of learning organisations that have been contacted and in Appendix 2 there is a detailed list including contact names and details.

1. Adult Education – Cornwall Development Company	2. Porthmeor Studios	3. University of the Third age
4. Adult Education – Cornwall Council	5. St Ives School of Painting	6. St Ives BID
7. St Ives Orchard	8. Tate Learning and outreach 9. Look Groups 10. Tate Collective	11. Rural communities for change
12. Kevranna Social Club	13. Café Art	14. School of social Entrepreneurs
15. St Johns in the Field and St IA Churches	16. The Leach Pottery	17. WEA
18. Social Prescribing and Cornwall Recovery college	19. Mayes Creative	20. St Ives Library
21. Nancledra Village Hall and preschool	22. Carbis Bay Memorial Hall	23. Lelant Village Hall
24. The Surf House	25. St Ives Surf School	26. Saints Board Riders

Key Themes from the Provider Surveys:

1. Question 1: **What Adult Education programmes** and courses does your organisation provide currently?

The responses have been grouped into the following main areas:

- Pathways to employment
- Nature based Activities
- Mental Health
- Qualifications and Literacy/Numeracy
- Physical Wellbeing
- Business skills
- History
- Craft and Pottery
- Arts based courses

Question 2: How is this **delivered**?

Delivery techniques are varied from online courses to talks, workshops, conferences and symposiums, practical sessions, face to face training, instructor led classes and formal education programmes of study.

Q3/4: **Which audiences are you missing** that you would like to reach?

There was quite a lot of agreement in terms of who are the hardest to reach audiences and these are:

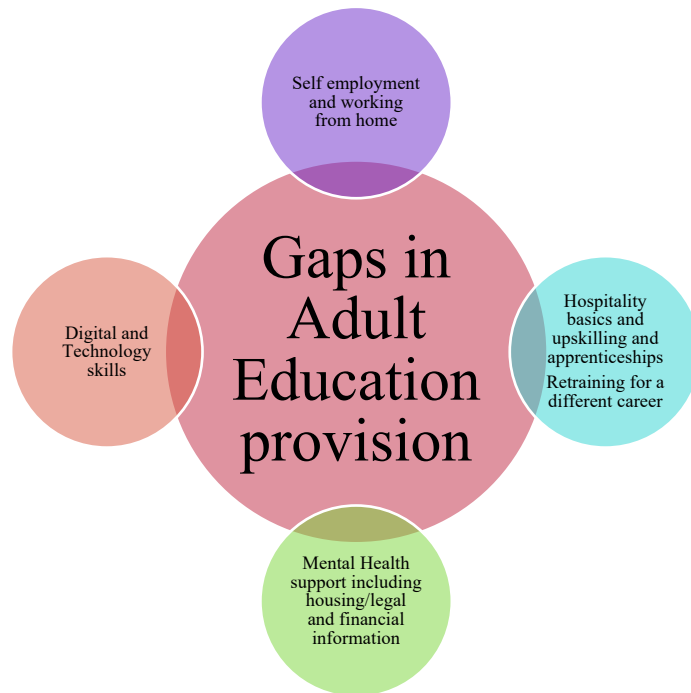
- Unemployed and economically inactive people
- Those who are looking for upskilling and retraining
- Hyperlocal audiences around Penbeagle, the Upper Stennack areas
- Socially isolated people
- A younger demographic 25 – 45 years, audiences are mainly retired or semi- retired
- A wider mix of gender identities as it is a predominantly female demographic currently
- More diversity and younger people and families

Providers were asked: What are the **barriers** to reaching those audiences?

- The main finding here was echoed by many of the respondents **that lack of effective communication, publicity, and marketing** especially to reach out to the hyperlocal communities and it was noted that there are no umbrella organisations to channel marketing through that serve these communities. This leads to a difficulty in filling courses from the local population.
- Given the cost of living crisis, providers are very aware of the **affordability** of courses for local people particularly as St Ives suffers from seasonal low paid employment and a below average annual income level, see [St Ives Economic Profile](#)
- **Time** is pointed to universally as an issue for working families and additionally lack of childcare, that prohibit people being able to attend courses that they can't bring their children along to.
- Finding **suitable venues** is cited as an ongoing issue. Venues are difficult to source that overcome the infrastructure issues of lack of parking, few fully accessible venues, St Ives being perceived as overcrowded and to be avoided at times when visitor numbers are at their peak. Village halls appear to be in demand and Carbis Bay Memorial Hall has very little capacity because of its popularity as an out-of-town location.
- Finally, **the digital connectivity and poor reception** in many venues in town and in many homes across the Parish is seen as a barrier to delivering technology led adult education.

Providers found that practical courses like cooking, crafting, painting, drawing, pottery throwing were popular as are free learning events, evening talks and taster courses in digital and smartphone technology.

Providers were asked to identify any gaps in provision across the parish currently and these are the grouped responses:



All **organisations were positive about considering partnering** and through conversations with providers, there are some clear areas where partnerships could be mutually valuable to increase the audiences and provide an extra dimension to the learning. These include but are not limited to:

- Adult Education and Parents via the schools or through connecting with Kevranna Club
- Social prescribing to adult education
- Faith groups and the St Ives Community Foodshare
- Tate Look Group and St Ives Library book groups
- Café Art and St Ives Library offering storytime sessions and speech and language
- School of Painting linking their practical art sessions with Tate St Ives programme.
- Cornwall Recovery College and St Ives Community Orchard

This is not a finite list and there will be many more connections that can be made through networking and cross pollinating between these groups and organisations.

Community Questionnaire and Interviews

To better understand the needs of the residents of the parish of St Ives a questionnaire click [here: St Ives Library Adult Education Questionnaire](#) has been developed and circulated in the community, using posters with QR codes for mobile access as well as online forms. The questionnaire has been promoted on the St Ives library and St Ives Town Council websites and via local school to parents in the school newsletters.

This has been supplemented by over 20 interviews on a one-to-one basis at various key locations in the community.

Overall, there have been 48 respondents of which 45 % were via a one-to-one interview. Interviews were carried out with members at St Ives Orchard; Kevranna Social Club; St Ives Farmers Market, the Stennack surgery, St Ives Library, and the Pride Event on Ayr Field.

Government guidance now focuses on qualitative surveys as a better evidence base than quantitative. The approach concentrates on focus groups of 8, 16 or 32 people to ascertain attitudes, behaviours, and opinions as a basis for formulating nationwide government policy. It is therefore pleasing to see that respondents to this survey represents the upper ranges of government methodology.

Highlights from the community survey:

The community respondents were asked the following questions:

Question 1:

What (if any) adult education or learning experiences have you been involved in locally?

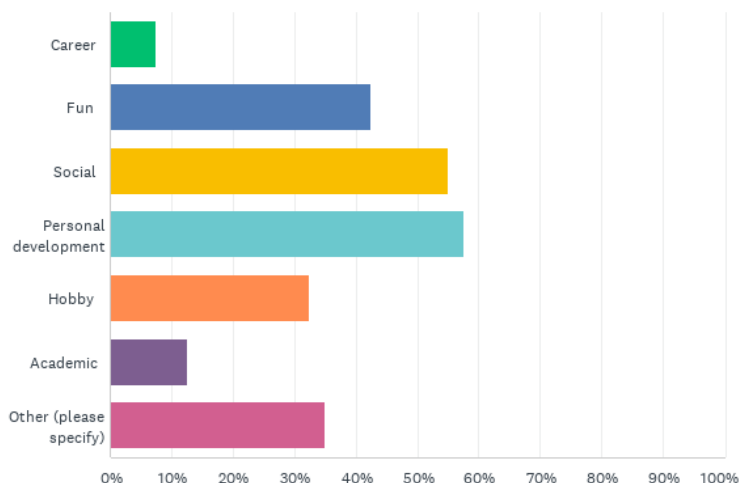
Most popular courses were:

- Craft with WEA
- Printmaking
- Orchard Workshops (basket making, tie-dying, wood carving, making zines, Leach)
- Computer skills
- Leach pottery courses

Other popular courses included: St Ives School of Painting courses and Barnoon workshops drawing and art courses, book and reading groups in the Library, Tate talks, Pilates and Yoga, History talks via the archive, First Aid training via the Rugby Club etc.

Question 2 asked:

Q2 Why did you want to participate in a learning experience?



Sixty percent of respondents engaged in learning for sociability and personal development and for fun (forty eight percent) or to pursue their hobby (thirty eight percent) This reinforces the move towards interest and hobby based adult learning and as a way of connecting with people through lockdown and beyond as already highlighted in the Learning and Work Institute Annual Survey 2021.

When asked

Q3 What did you find of most value from the learning?

Good health Learning new skill others Meeting skills
people Great Learning interest social

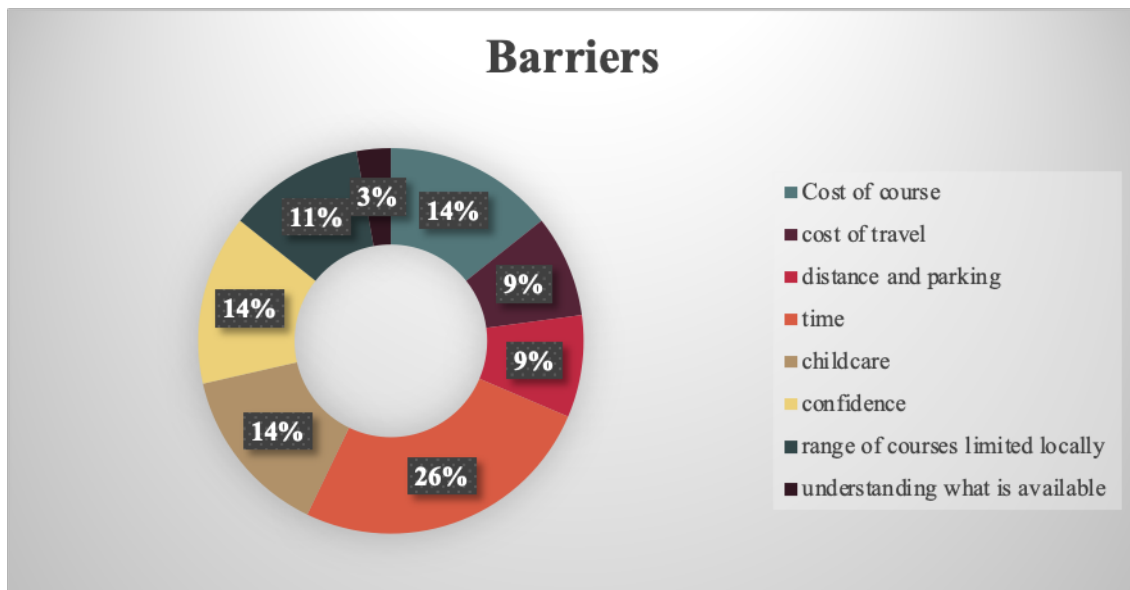
Some of the most repeated reasons in interviews included: meeting people, learning a new skill or craft, sharing knowledge, and being inspired by others, community, being outdoors in the natural environment, health, wellbeing, and physical wellness.

The insight here is that community and sociability, friendships and networking are as important to people as the actual learning. It is the experience of learning that resonates: the environment, meeting other course participants, feeling part of a community, feeling purposeful as much as the course content.

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Question 4 addresses the critical area of barriers:

If you have not attended any learning activities, what are the barriers or challenges that are stopping you from taking part?



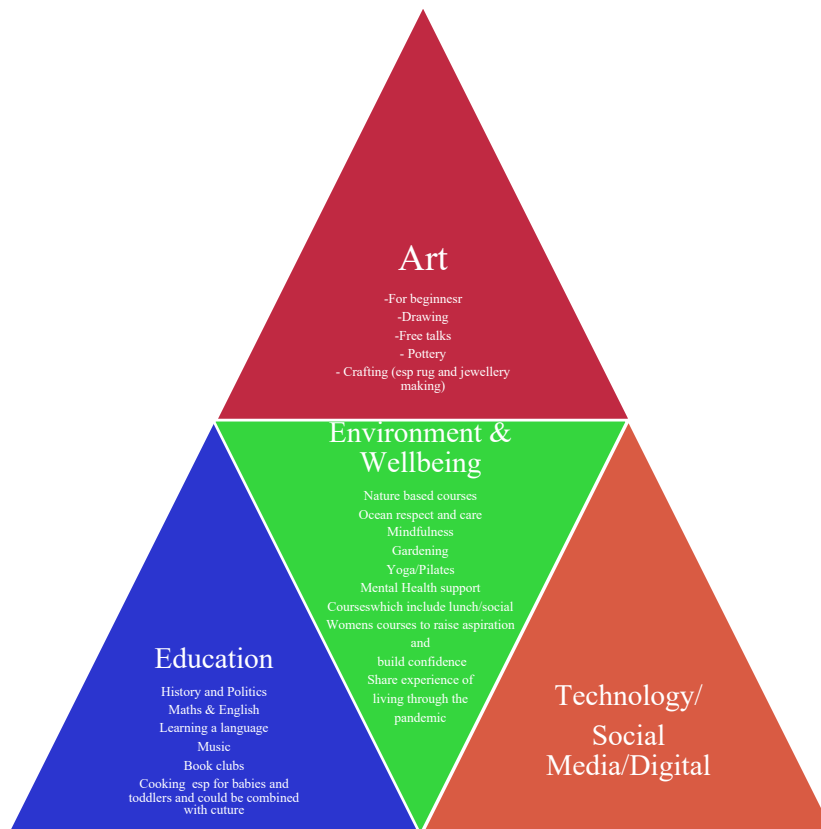
The biggest barrier to participation at 26% is lack of time and that is borne out by the responses from learning providers who find it difficult to reach working people, families and 25 – 45-year age group especially males. Childcare and affordability are also key issues which will need to be considered in building any future programme.

Encouragingly, 92% of respondents wanted to find out more about how to be involved in adult education and learning local

Question 6 addressed the question of where the gaps and opportunities are:

What types of topics and learning experiences would you like to see available to St Ives residents?

local Nature based cooking clubs learn crafts Art cultures
courses languages skills drawing history back work talks
local history



When asked: **How do you think this should be delivered?**

The results show a fatigue with online despite the flexibility of access and *a desire to attend workshops and talks and discussions*. There was even a suggestion of singles groups which with a national move away from dating apps to clubs as a way of meeting people is an interesting comment.

Overall, it was felt that blended learning is the way forward mixing online with face-to-face activities.

When meeting face to face, place-based talks were popular with St Ives Community Orchard, the Leach Pottery and St Ives Library coming through as preferred choices. People liked the idea of learning venues being within walking distance. **There is a perception that there are a lot of activities that happen in Carbis Bay**, and this is borne out by discussions with the Carbis Bay Memorial Hall who are at full capacity in terms of their schedule of events and activities.

Verbatim responses in the freetext section teased out some interesting views and recommendations.

This ranged from finding out more about **climate emergency responses to more local based apprenticeships and upskilling including in hospitality and health and social care** and being certified for training to help in finding a job.

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A large number of comments were about **marketing and promoting learning opportunities** much better. People often mentioned in the interviews that they were unsure what was happening and when. There were some great suggestions including connecting all the community activities, producing a map, better advertising and promotion, a central web page or library update and dedicated resource to keep these updated.

Other comments were:

Use the library as a hub and cater for locals

A TR26 parking pass for locals coming from outside the town centre

We need great tutors who help develop the person

We like the charging arrangements and free courses with WEA

Offer affordable courses at the Leach, Tate, and School of Painting

Venues:

Considering the feedback from the community survey that **venues should be accessible, ideally with parking or a parking pass**, within walking distance of the main areas of habitation i.e Upper Stennack, Carbis Bay.

The **use of schools** in particular in the evenings and at weekends which are geographically spread across the parish and have space and facilities and parking in combination with the village halls and community centres are good alternative venues to the town centre and may be able to accommodate children more easily.

A list of venues has been compiled that have been indicated as available and meet some or all of the criteria and have capacity to take bookings. The list with costings and contact details is included in the Appendix 3.

Exciting developments include the venues which will come onstream over the next 3 – 18 months

- **Bayspace, St Ives**: funded by the Coastal Communities Fund, as well as workspace and facilities for business, Bayspace will also offer business support, project development, workshops, training opportunities and networking events for community groups, students, partners, and members.
- **A training café** and garden, adjacent to the recently funded St Ives skatepark
- **St Ives Community Orchard Education Centre**: an eco-centre for the community, focusing on providing nature-based learning activities.

Summary and Recommendations:

Having completed the desktop research and analysed the data from the education providers and the voice of community, I have drawn some main conclusions and recommendations for Phase Two.

Recommendation 1: **Improve the visibility of the Adult Education offer by creating an Adult Education Hub located in St Ives Library and online.**

Whilst there are some clear gaps in the current local offer, St Ives is quite well served for learning and educational opportunities currently and this will increase over the next 18 months with the Town Investment Plan delivery.

The first recommendation is to create an Adult Education Hub located in the library and online that addresses the issue of lack of communication and publicity about what learning is happening across the Parish.

The hub will have three main objectives:

1. To improve the visibility of learning opportunities and when and where they are taking place.
2. To promote the value of lifelong learning especially the mental health and wellbeing benefits.
3. To increase learner participation by designing ‘locally relevant’ campaigns and collaborating with key partners to run promotions.

Phase 2 to include:

<p>A project to design and deliver a physical education hub in the library – co-located with technology and linking to the ‘future proofing the library’ project</p>	<p>This will include: learning resources, a poster/ map graphically displaying all the learning venues in St Ives Parish, advice guidance and information, access to digital platforms A welcoming learning space for study and self-learning.</p>
<p>The development of a virtual education hub to complement the physical hub</p>	<p>The online platform should embrace community suggestions about an interactive</p>

	and frequently updated map, maildrops and inclusion in local press, newsletters etc.
Increasing self-esteem, confidence building and positive mindset	Most interesting in the interviews were the number of interviewees who cited shyness, lack of confidence and a perception that you had to have prior knowledge or have a talent for something before you could engage in learning. It appears that any marketing of courses needs to address this misconception and there may be a place for self-esteem, confidence building and positive mindset as part of the programme.
Marketing and promotion strategies for adult education and keeping the online information refreshed should be a key focus for the Marketing and Communication and Digital team	Work on Phase 2 with Marketing officer and Digital team to get their input and creative approached and update role profiles working with individuals to ensure that the education hub is a feature of their roles going forward

Recommendation 2: Focus on partnerships between providers to improve the offer to audiences and help to increase the attendance

One of the key learning from the community and provider research is that there are many learning opportunities however these are not joined up or presented holistically to residents. This can lead to duplication and confusion about what is available and competition locally for the same audiences.

Developing partnerships between providers to improve the offer to audiences and help to increase the attendance. 92% of providers stated a willingness to partner with other organisations as appropriate and therefore this is a great basis to build on.

Phase 2 of the project should focus on:

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Setting up one or a series of 'Partnership Forums'	Organise a forum inviting all of the education providers together hosted in St Ives Library and with a dual aim of increasing networking between organisations and ideally having a speaker or a social element to motivate providers to take part.
Explore and develop more partnering opportunities for St Ives Library, building on success with: WEA, Link into Learning and SSE, designing a collaborative programme	To include working with but not limited to: Social Prescribing, community groups, a West Cornwall Adult Education, the St Ives BID, Tate Look Groups, Story telling and speech and language therapy
Partnership working should be a key feature going forward of the St Ives Library Information and Events team.	Design a partnership forum with the team and work with Partnership and Events officer to build this aspect of the role into their role profile

Wider partnerships as described previously would make sense to **promote audience sharing** and knowledge sharing.

Recommendation 3: **Develop a programme of blended learning based on the gaps and opportunities in the current adult learning offer around the Parish and opportunities to collaborate with new partners**

The third recommendation is around gaps in the current adult learning offer around the Parish and opportunities identified through feedback. A prioritisation exercise has been completed looking at what adult learning is most in demand and the suitability of provision available, using the following criteria and attributing a rating of 0-3

- Community request/willingness to attend
- Learning Provision already in place
- Funded/affordable
- Venue available
- Accessible - Parking
- Flexible – Childcare or evening classes
- Blended- face to face and online

The priority areas are identified as: **Mental Health and Wellbeing, Digital Skills, Technology and Retraining and upskilling opportunities, extension of an interest in a social setting (arts, crafts, cooking)**

Phase 2 Delivery Plans

<p>An Adult education programme should be developed based on the areas recommended above.</p>	<p>Further research about where these courses are currently available and if providers can bring them to venues in St Ives Parish. Identify key partnerships to build over the long term as opposed to one off courses.</p>
<p>Funding and ongoing resources</p>	<p>Many of these programmes will bring funding with them or may open new areas to bid for funding to employ someone in a programming role i.e., mental health support to alleviate the pressures on the surgery, digital skills and retraining to support economic diversification and upskilling. There should be contact with the ST Ives BID and St Ives Town Deal to ascertain if they are in a position to fund courses that support digital and business skills development</p>
<p>Launch the programme of courses via the Adult Education Hub</p>	<p>The Education Hub could launch with a programme of learning opportunities based on community and provider feedback. We listened to your feedback, and these are the outcomes... The programme should take a blended learning approach (online and face to face) to provide flexibility for those with work or childcare commitments and if at all possible, evening classes should be offered.</p>
<p>Contact new venue providers (Bay space, Training café and St Ives Orchard and education centre)</p>	<p>Understand more about facilities and timelines and how this can be a joined-up approach across the map of St Ives Parish</p>

Recommendation 4: **Introduce a 'Pay what you can' (PWYC) approach or make payments in instalments -making the learning experience more accessible to a wider audience who might find it cost prohibitive.**

The final recommendation is around affordability and accessibility which is a key as the You Gov survey 2021 points out the biggest barrier to adults continuing in education is cost. With St Ives having below average household incomes and some parts of St Ives being described as populated by 'low-income families' and a higher-than-average rate of benefit and disability claimants, this is a key issue for our town.

What appears to work well for lower income areas is:

- Concessions and discounts
- Paying in instalments and spreading the cost
- Pay what you can - this approach removes the set fee structure and learners can pay a suggested amount within a range. Or a multiple pricing structure for people to choose from and a recommended price showing the typical course fee. This works well also if you can afford the fee or are even able to subsidise someone else.

In this way it makes the learning experience more accessible to a wider audience. There are some great models of this in practice especially places like Battersea Arts centre, in addition, research shows that people value training and are therefore more likely to attend when they have contributed to the cost, and it is not completely free of charge

Research Sources:

FE News: Triggers to participation in Adult Learning 2018

<https://learningandwork.org.uk/what-we-do/lifelong-learning/>

YouGov 2021 Learning Survey

Cornwall Council IMD 2015 and 2019

Cornwall Council Economic Profile

St Ives Town Deal Town Investment Plan

Bac.org.uk

Arts Council England /Fair Pay and Project Grant

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Appendix 1



**COMMUNITY
FUND**

Adult Education Outreach Survey

Courses of learning Informal/Experiential

What Further education programmes and courses does your organisation provide currently?

How is this delivered?

Who is your audience and what is the demographic?

**Which audiences are you missing that you would like to reach?
What are the barriers to reaching those audiences?**

Which are the most popular/well attended programmes/courses/events?

Can you identify any gaps or complementary adult education provision?

Would your organisation consider working with other providers in St Ives/

**Does your organisation have a learning venue?
Can it be hired? Is it accessible?
Please can you provide costings?**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses will be used as the basis of a report to St Ives Library and FOSIL outlining the level of provision currently and identifying gaps, potential partners, and venues for the future.

We would very much like to open a dialogue between local adult education providers and would welcome a further conversation if appropriate.