



Inside

- Tamara Landscape Partnership
- Have your say in enhancing natural beauty
- Seed Bank connects people and plants
- Full Events Listings
- Staying warm and well this winter
- Helping out hedgehogs
- Calstock and Kit Hill excavations
- Help for growing businesses

Welcome

Dear friend and supporter,

Looking at the extremes of weather from all over the world, we must feel truly blessed with the perpetual temperate climate we enjoy. But, that doesn't mean we can rest on our laurels. We need to nurture those few inches of the crust of the earth that provide us with sustenance, beauty, healthy living, medicine and general wellbeing.

The Tamar Valley AONB team is delighted to be one of 12 AONBs chosen to facilitate one of Defra's Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS). The Test and Trial project will use modern technology to gain a deeper understanding of the soil, gather knowledge, and ascertain best practice for agriculture support beyond the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). 10 farmers have already offered up fields for this practical application in alleviating further climate change.

With international concern over the climate, our ambitious National Lottery Heritage Fund project, Tamara Landscape Partnership, ticks many climate change concerns. These include sustainable farming, river school and clean waterways, the lungs of our woodlands and trees, heritage and wellbeing, helping us understand how reliant we all are on the countryside and the precious ground we walk on.

The project's 10 chosen areas are very much topical to today's debate and represent an inspirational foresight by the AONB team. Preparation work will be completed in the next few months for a bid to NLHF for the delivery phase. The Tamara team has its work cut out, ably supported by stoic partners, all specialists in their own fields.

Work has commenced on the £2.2m Calstock flood alleviation scheme to prevent overtopping due to the combination of spring tides and heavy rain. After much negotiation, the permissive path and walkway with a bridge has been guaranteed for the foreseeable future.

Lots to read as you scroll down, with much good work continuing as we look forward to our 25th anniversary.

As ever,



Cllr. Neil Burden
Chair, Tamar Valley
AONB Partnership



TamarValley
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Contents

- | | | | |
|-------|--|----|--|
| 3 | Tamara Landscape Partnership | 19 | Kit Hill excavation reveals identity of unrecorded structure |
| 4 | Test and Trial Project shapes farm funding | 20 | Tamar Valley Line scoops national rail award |
| 4 | Maintaining Devon's hedgerow heritage | 21 | The most wonderful time of the year |
| 4 | Hogweed control in the Tamar Valley | 21 | Victorian Christmas at Cotehele |
| 5 | Have your say in enhancing natural beauty | 22 | From little acorns - Tamar Valley Vibe |
| 6 | Flood defence and wetland creation in Calstock | 22 | Dig for Devonport Community Explorers |
| 6 | Helping Gunnislake's rare bats | 23 | Help for growing businesses |
| 7 | Celebrating beloved landscapes | 24 | Social prescribing to improve wellbeing |
| 7 | Tamar TLC needs you | | |
| 7 | Help celebrate Newbridge's Big 500 | | |
| 8 | Seed Bank connects people and plants | | |
| 9 | Heralds of Spring update | | |
| 9 | Protecting the South West's plantlife | | |
| 10 | Immerse yourself in forest bathing | | |
| 11 | Do your bit at the Tamar Valley Centre | | |
| 12-15 | EVENTS LISTINGS | | |
| 16 | Staying warm and well this winter | | |
| 17 | Helping out hedgehogs | | |
| 18 | Calstock's community dig unearths Roman past | | |

Front cover image courtesy of National Trust/Cotehele

More from us...

Sign up to receive monthly ebulletins from the Tamar Valley AONB - a great way to keep up-to-date with progress on projects and calls for volunteers in between issues of The Valley newsletter. Please visit: www.tamarvalley.org.uk and click on 'News' to sign up. Or call Charlotte on 01822 835030.

Follow us:



TVAONB



@TVAONB

Horsebridge © TON Drone Services/Tobi O'Neill



Tamara
Landscape Partnership



TamarValley
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



HERITAGE
FUND



L-r: Gary Lewis (Development Officer), Chris Harris (Finance & Monitoring Officer), James Luxton (Development Manager)

Tamara Landscape Partnership

The development phase of the Tamara Landscape Partnership continues at pace, working towards a bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund for the delivery phase.

The project aims to work with communities, farmers and landowners to provide a brighter future for the Tamar Valley, protecting and enhancing this unique place for wildlife and people.

Tamara update

Working in collaboration with over 50 local organisations and volunteers, the 10 diverse projects are really taking shape. Projects include working with farmers to improve soil quality, for biodiversity and climate change mitigation and increasing natural flood management; working with community volunteers to repair and safeguard local heritage from postboxes to ancient quays, to running activity groups that help improve people's health and wellbeing. We have until Christmas to finalise the project ideas. From January the hard work begins, working out the exact details of how we will run these 5-year projects to ensure that everyone can participate and benefit from them.

Questionnaire

Tell us about your relationship with the Tamar Valley and you could win £100 of Amazon vouchers! We want to find out more about who is visiting the Tamar Valley and what the barriers are, that are stopping other people from enjoying this amazing place. Whether you live, work and play here daily or have never visited before, your answers will help us shape the projects to make sure they work for everyone.

To thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire, you have the chance to win £100 of Amazon vouchers. Please click here to take part in the survey - <https://tinyurl.com/yyk2xk28>

We are also keen to hear from businesses within the Tamar Valley, to find out more about their experiences with visitors to the area. Please click on the link to take the survey <https://survey.sogosurvey.com/r/9wCoxJ>. Closing date for both surveys is 31st December 2019.

Consultancy

To support our small team in completing all the projects, we have brought in some local experts to help. They will be involved in a wide range of activities from creating a cross county walking route to developing local produce networks and business opportunities to reinvigorate the traditional practice of market gardening in the Tamar Valley. They will also help us with updating the brand and website of the Tamar Valley AONB and Tamara Landscape Partnership, giving us a fresh, up-to-date look and an easy to use way to share all the information about the exciting projects and events, and opportunities to get involved.

Thanks to everyone who has been involved and supported us in getting this far and thanks to all the National Lottery players, without you the Tamara Landscape Partnership and our projects to fund our diverse heritage would not be possible.

To contact the Tamara team please call **01822 835030** or email: tamara@tamarvalley.org.uk

The Tamar Valley AONB, together with the National Association for AONBs (NAAONB), has been successful in securing funding to conduct tests and trials that could help shape the development of agricultural policy and payments to farmers.

Test and Trial project helps shape future farm funding

This comes in light of the announcement earlier this year that the Basic Farm Payment and agri-environment schemes will be replaced in the future with a new Environment Land Management scheme (ELMS).

The Test and Trial project is focused on Soil Organic Carbon (SOC). Soil Carbon is a good indicator of soil health, biological activity within the soil, and reflects biodiversity above ground. From an agricultural and business perspective, healthy soils with increasing soil organic matter levels can also be related to consistent sustainable agricultural productivity.

The project is therefore looking to road test new to market soil scanners. If the technology is reliable,



Photo © Precision Decision, Craig Patrick



accurate and consistent in measuring the level and amount of soil carbon, it could open up new revenue payment mechanisms for farmers.

This project is being delivered in partnership with Duchy College, the Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group and the National Association for AONBs and is funded by Defra.

Maintaining Devon's rich hedgerow heritage

The Devon Hedge Group is made up of organisations, landowners and individuals who have a keen interest in conserving and maintaining the county's rich heritage of hedgerows.

For many years, the Group has organised an annual competition to promote various aspects of good hedge management.

This year, judges were looking for the best hedge laid over the 2018 to 2019 winter season. After inspecting many sites, a hedge at Lower Sheepridge

Farm, Morwellham near Tavistock was awarded first prize.

Located on high ground, with stunning views down the River Tamar and across the valley, the hedge is owned by farmer Mary Ann Furze and was laid by Chris Bond and Don Gaskins, both members of Devon Rural Skills Trust.



Controlling Giant Hogweed in the Tamar Valley

A partnership between the Tamar Valley AONB, the Environment Agency and Natural England is working to control the spread of Giant Hogweed in the Tamar Valley.

This invasive plant poses a serious health risk as exposure to its sap can result in blisters, long-lasting scars and, if it comes into contact with eyes, blindness. The plant looks like an enormous cow parsley and when fully grown can reach a height of up to 5m. If you do find Giant Hogweed you should seek specialist help

from organisations such as the Tamar Valley AONB, the Royal Horticultural Society and The Woodland Trust.

To read more in-depth information about the project, please visit the Tamar Valley AONB website:

<http://www.tamarvalley.org.uk>





© TON Drone Services/Tobi O'Neill

A new project by the University of Plymouth is seeking to find out what people who live, work and play on the Tamar value most about their river.



Have your say in Enhancing Natural Beauty

Nearly 25% of England has been designated for the protection and enhancement of 'Natural Beauty'. But this is not just the natural and physical environment, it's also about the people who live in, and care for, it and includes their local heritage, communities and everyday working lives.

Although for much of the 20th century government agencies and local authorities concentrated on protecting Natural Beauty, this has not halted environmental decline. So, in the 21st century, strategy has moved to repairing some of the damage done. Increasingly, we are asked to take a more active role in planning, managing and monitoring local environmental and heritage improvements and action. The University of Plymouth project is just one way of doing this.

Led by Adam Guy, the project is focusing on the Tamar estuary due to its high environmental quality, and significant aesthetic, cultural and economic importance to both those who live nearby, and those who visit.

The project team is looking for local people who have a strong connection to the Tamar to find out what

'Enhancing Natural Beauty' means in their area and what changes inspire or worry them? They are also looking for '**Future Stories**' of enhancement for local places.

Interested in taking part?

You will be asked to take part in one or more interviews, sometimes set in a location that you know and value. You will take part in discussions either alone or in groups and the interviews will be recorded.

Who: Anyone actively involved with the River Tamar

What: Interviews of at least an hour

Where: At a place of your choice, some partly outdoors

When: Over the next few months

If you have strong feelings about the future of your local Natural Beauty, please email Adam Guy adam.guy@plymouth.ac.uk

Work began in autumn on the much-needed flood defence scheme and creation of a wetland area to encourage wildlife in Calstock.

Work begins on flood defence and wetland creation in Calstock

The £2.2million project is a partnership between the Environment Agency, the Tamar Community Trust, Tamar Valley AONB, Calstock Parish Council and other local organisations.

Julian Brooke-Houghton from the Environment Agency says, "The existing defence for Calstock is reaching the end of its life, increasing the risk of flooding from high tides and river flows; this project will renew the protection to the centre of the village and create a new area of valuable inter-tidal habitat."

The River Tamar Walkway and Wetland Project will also retain the permissive path. It is hoped that the walkway will be built mostly from reclaimed greenheart timber, donated by the Environment Agency.

Work has stopped now for the winter due to the persistent wet weather and the subsequent water logged ground conditions, but it is anticipated that

work will recommence in May 2020.

The Tamar Community Trust will be seeking volunteers next year to help with construction and maintenance. To register your interest, please contact Jane Kiely (01822 834964, janekielyintamarvalley@uwclub.net).



Get involved in helping Gunnislake's rare bats

Now in its final year, the Devon Greater Horseshoe Bat Project is working with Gunnislake Community Matters (GCM) to secure a future for the Tamar Valley's greater horseshoe bats.

With numbers falling by 90% over recent decades, the bats desperately need our help! Gunnislake is a vital location for these special bats as there is a breeding roost nearby.

The bottom of the King George V playing field was sown with a mix of grasses and wildflowers to turn the area into a meadow. The insects that colonise the meadow will be a food source for the seven bat species known to live in the Valley. There are also 14 bat boxes around the meadow area and the river bank.

In the spring, 750 packets of "bat friendly" wildflower seeds were given out for villagers to plant in their gardens to encourage insects, whilst making a lovely colourful display of flowers.

To see the benefits of the bat habitat improvements, GCM organised seven bat walks near the river in Gunnislake. The walks have proved to be extremely popular, with more planned to start in May 2020. If you're interested in coming along, remember to book early!

For more information:

www.facebook.com/groups/GunnislakeCommunityMatters

www.devonbatproject.org

(a project with 18 partners, including the Tamar Valley AONB, led by Devon Wildlife Trust)



Devon
Wildlife Trust



Heartfelt moment celebrates beloved landscapes



In a unique show of affection, people from across the country's 46 AONBs formed huge hearts to show how much their landscape means to them.

From Cornwall to Kent and up to the North Pennines, staff, volunteers, residents and visitors formed hearts, either using their own bodies at mass gatherings or using objects in the landscape at the national event in September. All the hearts were captured on film and shared with others. The event was held to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the 1949 National Parks and Access to Countryside Act, which paved the way for the legislation to create our AONBs.



The heart shape was chosen as it represents not only the love for these areas, but also that AONBs and National Parks were originally thought of as the 'Natural Health Service'.

The Tamar Valley AONB team used two trailer loads of local apples from National Trust Cotehele to form a huge heart, that was later pressed into juice.

Howard Davies, Chief Executive of the National

Association for AONBs said, "This national moment kicked off the Landscapes for Life Week, so-called because we're committed to our iconic national landscapes forever. They are a place of tranquillity, rootedness and wellbeing, treasured by generations of people seeking peace, exercise and leisure; truly our Natural Health Service."

Tamar TLC needs you!

Tamar TLC, the charity that raises, manages and distributes funds for the benefit of the Tamar Valley AONB area is seeking support, volunteers and Trustees.

The charity is looking for help in organising and attending events, and to support their network of businesses around the Valley.

Tamar TLC would like to strengthen its board of Trustees and would like to find people who have working knowledge of the following areas:

- website management experience
- event management
- volunteer recruitment and management
- fundraising
- administration
- local knowledge
- links into local businesses



If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact info@tamartlc.org or call **01822 835030** for a Trustee pack and to discuss the opportunities available.

Help celebrate Newbridge's Big 500

Next year Gunnislake Newbridge will be 500 years old and plans for events and celebrations to mark the occasion are well under way.

If anyone has any information, personal memories, anecdotes or stories about the bridge over the last 500 years, Gunnislake Community Matters (GCM) would like to hear from you.

In the new year, GCM will set up a Facebook page dedicated to the bridge anniversary. There will also be a box placed in Gunnislake Post Office for people to share their memories.

Please contact Ross Hanley at Gunnislake Community Matters with any information you may have - tel: **01822 834773**, email: ross.hanley@live.co.uk

Seed Bank connects people and plants

A new piece of participatory art that seeks to represent the importance of plants in people's lives and the connections we have to them is currently being created.

The brainchild of Mandy Biscoe, who is studying for an MA in Ceramics at Plymouth College of Art, 'The People's Seed Bank' aims to highlight and share our collective knowledge about plants through audio recordings.

The recordings are short one to three-minute stories. Some examples include a mother and daughter talking about blackberry picking together, the use of oak galls to make black ink for drawing, and making daisy chains as a child. Tamar Valley AONB Project Officer, Lesley Strong, tells the story of the diversity of heritage daffodil varieties growing in the hedgerows of the Tamar Valley and how they link to the history of the daffodil industry and the families that grew them.

Speaking about the project, Mandy said, "The Seed Bank is interactive and open for anyone to explore when it is on display. The project continues to expand, and I am so glad that the daffodils are part of it."

Each plant story is linked to a small porcelain pot with hot glass blown into it. Inside the glass is some material or seeds from the plant. Each pot has a gold lustre base that is highly conductive and the pot sits on its own square of wood with a laser etched drawing of the chosen plant on it. Woven into the etching are bits of copper, and the audio recordings are activated when the pots sit on the copper and complete a circuit.



Image © Mandy Biscoe

If you have your own story about a plant that is special to you, please contact Mandy, mandybiscoe@hotmail.com or 07789 430871. The People's Seed Bank was on show at Plymouth College of Arts in November.

Heralds of Spring update

16 volunteers took part in surveying local daffodils earlier this year as part of the Heralds of Spring daffodil project, recording 61 varieties, with many being classed as historical. Recording was made much more efficient this year, with the introduction of a mobile phone app, helping to link photos with grid references more quickly.

Volunteers also had the opportunity to visit Weir Quay Gardens and Andrew Spry's vast collection of daffodils, to learn how to use the mobile app in a 'real' outdoor environment.



After the daffodils had finished blooming, Heralds of Spring activities continued with bulb plantings by pupils at Harrowbarrow and St. Dominic schools and a bulb market at Cotehele in October.

Plans are underway for the 2020 Heralds of Spring project. To get involved and to keep up-to-date with news and events, please contact cdancer@tamarvalley.org.uk

Protecting the South West's diverse plantlife

As Christmas approaches, we deck our homes with festive favourites such as holly and ivy. But what do we know about the complex roles these and other plants play in their natural habitat?

In the temperate rainforest habitat of the south west, holly is an important part of the woodland ecosystem. Its bark can support rare species of lichens, while its berries sustain woodland creatures throughout the winter. Ivy is also hugely important for invertebrates, birds and bats.

However, in some south-west woodlands, excessive growth of holly and ivy is an issue. Where they grow uncontrolled, they reduce light levels and inhibit the growth of important lichens and other plants.

The Building Resilience in South West Woodlands project, with funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, is carrying out vital woodland conservation work to protect rare and threatened plants and to increase plant diversity in our woodlands. This includes carrying out emergency management in seven woodlands on Dartmoor and Exmoor. Although targeted at improving conditions for these rare lichens, the work has been sensitively planned with the biodiversity of the whole woodland in mind.

A team of volunteers has been carrying out regular monitoring to assess the impact of this work.

For further information on the Building Resilience in South West Woodlands project visit: <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/our-work/conservation-projects/woodland/building-resilience-in-south-west-woodlands>. The project is led by Plantlife in partnership with Natural England, The Woodland Trust, Dartmoor National Park, Tamar Valley AONB and other conservation organisations.

Rachel Jones, Project Manager, Building Resilience in South West Woodlands, Plantlife



Rare and light-loving lichen © Plantlife

Immerse yourself in forest bathing

Images © Plantlife

In the Tamar Valley, we are really fortunate to have so many beautiful woodlands to enjoy. However, we often walk through them, chatting with friends, walking the dog or with our mind on other things.

Now, there is a different way to experience life among the trees, a slower, more peaceful way and an opportunity to immerse yourself in a whole new world. Welcome to the wonderful practice of Shinrin-Yoku, or forest bathing.

Forest bathing is a woodland stroll for wellbeing and relaxation and an opportunity to connect with nature. The practice originated in Japan and research shows that people who take part in these forest therapy sessions feel a range of benefits for both health and wellbeing. It is a profound and relaxed experience, allowing you to slow down and absorb the sounds, sights and smells around you that we often miss in our busy lives. The experience is constantly evolving, with every session bringing something different.

Thanks to the Building Resilience in South West Woodlands programme, Lesley Strong, Tamar Valley AONB Project Officer, is now a qualified forest bathing practitioner. She explains her involvement and how she has benefited from the sessions.

"My role is about facilitating the session, using a series of activities to help you switch off your busy mind and connect to what is around you. It's a forest therapy session and the aim is to emerge from the woodland with a calm and relaxed state of mind. It certainly works for me!"

"Forest therapy is a great way for anyone to explore

these wonderful woodlands that are such an important part of the Valley's natural heritage both now and in the future".

The Tamar Valley AONB will be holding a number of FREE forest bathing sessions in the coming months, so it's a great opportunity to come and try it for yourself. All will be held in woodland on the Cotehele Estate from 10am - 12 noon on the following dates:

Buds & Blossom - Friday 27 March 2020
The Green Canopy - Friday 26 June 2020
Autumn Leaves & Fallen Seeds - Friday 25 Sept. 2020
Bare Branches & Berries - Friday 11 Dec. 2020

To book your place, or for further details, please call the AONB team on **01822 835030** or email **bookings@tamarvalley.org.uk**



Do your bit at the Tamar Valley Centre

There are many ways in which you can help the environment by paying a visit to the Tamar Valley Centre, Drakewalls, just a 5-minute walk from Gunnislake Station.

Recycle for charity

The Centre is a recycling hub for South Hill Association for Renewable Energy (SHARE), with TerraCycle reusing and recycling waste, while raising funds for Kicks Count charity. For a full list of what you can bring into the Centre for recycling, visit: <https://south-hill.co.uk/charity-recycling/>.

Ecover Refill Station

While you're at the Centre, bring your empty bottles and fill up with Ecover products:

- handwash (90p/100ml), standard handwash bottle - £2.25
- washing up liquid (31p/100ml), 450ml - £1.40, 950 ml - £2.95
- non-bio laundry liquid (£4.66/litre), 1.5l bottle - £7

Donations Café

Coffee Conversations – a donations café, with proceeds going to Tamar TLC - is held every Thursday from 10am to 1pm. Plans are also underway for a Repair Café to be held – keep an eye on our Facebook page (TVAONB) for more details coming soon.

2-minute Litter Pick

The grounds of the Tamar Valley Centre are a popular dog walking area and stop-off point for cyclists, and are enjoyed by many. It is hoped that those who use the grassed area will spend just two minutes during their walk or rest stop to help keep the historic mine site clean and tidy. #2MinuteLitterPick

See www.tamarvalley.org.uk for details of exhibitions and other events taking place at the Centre, and how you can book the space for your own exhibition, event or meeting.



25 Years of the Tamar Valley AONB

Be sure to make a note in your diary of these important events coming up next year.

2020 marks 25 years since the Tamar Valley was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Plans are underway for events and celebrations throughout the year, including:

- **Taste the Tamar - Saturday 13 June**
Celebrating local food and drink, with local producers, talks, and the launch of commemorative beer from Bere Brewery and gin/gin liqueur from Monarch Liqueurs.
- **Wildlife Day - Sunday 14 June**
Back by popular demand following the Wildlife Weekend in summer 2019.

Both events will be held at the Tamar Valley Centre. More details coming soon.

We are also looking to produce an A5 picture with line drawings and information of iconic Tamar Valley places, structures and wildlife, courtesy of local artist Terry Townson. We would like to make sure all areas of the Tamar Valley are represented. Please send your ideas for consideration, from Greystone Bridge to Tamerton Foliot and everywhere in between, to Charlotte Dancer cdancer@tamarvalley.org.uk, 01822 835030 by early January. Proceeds from sales of the picture will go to Tamar TLC.

Finally, look out for the March issue of Country Living magazine... you may see some familiar faces amongst the daffodils! Please also see the events pages (12-15) for details of Drawn to the Valley's Spring Exhibition in March/April, celebrating the Valley's stunning spring flora and fauna, including its historic daffodils.



events

Encouraging you to explore & discover your AONB

Here's a selection of guided walks and events for you to enjoy throughout the Tamar Valley. New events and guided walks are added regularly to our online Events Calendar. Visit www.tamarvalley.org.uk and follow the link for your up-to-date guide.

Next year, we celebrate 25 years since the Tamar Valley was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We'd love to hear your ideas for events to mark the occasion...

DECEMBER 2019

Until Tuesday 24th

Morwellham Christmas Special

Ride the mine train and visit Santa in his underground grotto. Make a festive chocolate lolly, paint a Christmas tree decoration and enjoy mince pies and mulled wine.

Cost: £13.50 per person (includes entry, Santa train and activities)

Venue & Organiser: Morwellham Working Village, Mine & Craft Centre, Morwellham Quay, Tavistock, PL19 8JL

Booking: Advance booking essential - www.morwellham-quay.co.uk

Until Sunday 5th January, 10.30am-4pm (except Christmas Day and Boxing Day)

Christmas Garland at Cotehele

The traditional 60ft flower garland will be in new colours and there will be a new exhibition in the Breakfast Room showing how it was created and what it has looked like over the years since this tradition began in the 1950s. Choirs sing under the garland most days in December (see website for dates and times).

Cost: Reduced winter admission applies, NT members free

Venue: National Trust Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr Saltash, PL12 6TA

Information: call 01579 351346 for details or visit; www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele

Until Sunday 5th January, 10am-4pm (except Christmas Day and Boxing Day)

Merry and Bright

The festive exhibition at Cotehele Gallery features the work of West Country artists and craft makers. You'll find beautiful pieces for your home or for that extra-special Christmas gift.

Cost: Reduced winter admission applies, NT members free

Venue: National Trust Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr Saltash, PL12 6TA

Information: call 01579 351346 for details or visit; www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele

Until Sunday 5th January, 10am-4pm (except Christmas Day and Boxing Day)

Festive family trails

Wrap up warm and bring the family to Cotehele to follow three fun festive trails through the garden, along Morden stream to the Mill and in the grounds of Cotehele Mill.

Cost: The trail is free but reduced winter admission applies, NT members free

Venue: National Trust Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr Saltash, PL12 6TA

Information: call 01579 351346 for details or visit; www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele

19th - 23rd, 27th - 30th

Wonder Nights at Mount Edgcumbe

Amazing light shows, themed Wonderlands, mulled wine and a surprise appearance from Father

Christmas. Enchanted grove adorned with 25,000 fairy lights. All-new show 'Finding Wonderland'. Supporting St Lukes Hospice Plymouth.

Cost & Booking: Save up to 30% on tickets and guarantee admission when you book direct at wondernights.co.uk

Venue & Organiser: Mount Edgcumbe House & Country Park, Cremyll, Torpoint, PL10 1HZ

Saturday 21st, 11.30am-12noon

Let's Wassail

Come and join us at our annual Wassail as we scare away the evil spirits from the orchard to ensure a bumper crop for 2020. Fancy dress encouraged!

Venue & Organiser: National Trust Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr Saltash, PL12 6TA

Information: Call 01579 351346 for details or visit; www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele

JANUARY 2020

2nd - 5th

Wonder Nights at Mount Edgcumbe

See December 19 for details.

Monday 6th

Valley Volunteers - Working Party Tamar Trails

Refreshments, lunch and all tools provided. Wear strong boots and dress for the weather.

Organiser: Tamar Community Trust

Information: Call 07410 411440 or email: dreadman@tamarvalley.org.uk

Wednesday 8th, 10am - 12:30pm
Grant Funding for Rural Businesses - Training Session

Free event, aimed at rural businesses. Find out more about the Rural Development Programme for England grant scheme and funding available through Community Led Cornwall.

Venue: Tamar Valley Centre, Drakewalls, PL18 9FE

Booking: Essential enquiries@tamarvalley.org.uk, 01822 835030

Friday 10th, 7:30pm
Friends of the Tamar Valley Talk

Cornwall Air Ambulance (tbc)

Cost: members free, non-members are welcome for a small charge.

Venue: Tamar Valley Centre, Drakewalls, PL18 9FE

Organiser: Friends of the Tamar Valley
Information: 01822 834964, janekielyintamarvalley@uwclub.net (Jane Kiely)

Saturday 11th
Valley Volunteers - Working Party
Okel Tor

Refreshments, lunch and all tools provided. Wear strong boots and dress for the weather.

Organiser: Tamar Community Trust

Information: Call 07410 411440 or email dreadman@tamarvalley.org.uk

Saturday 11th
Hedgelaying Course

Learn the art of traditional hedgelaying. No experience required.

Notes: Course takes place outside so please dress for the weather, bring a strong pair of thorn-proof gloves.

Cost: £40

Organiser: Family Foraging Kitchen

Booking: 01752 823424, kitchen@familyforagingkitchen.co.uk

Saturday 11th, 9:30am - 4pm
Introduction to Coppicing

Hands-on course based within a coppice on the outskirts of Callington.

Notes: all tools, equipment, tea, coffee and biscuits provided.

Cost: £65

Organiser: Greenwood Music

Booking: 07971 768147, greenwood.music.plus@gmail.com (Phil Harwin)

Wednesday 15th, 11am-3pm
Volunteer open day at Cotehele

Join an inspiring team and discover many volunteering opportunities here.

Venue: National Trust Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr Saltash, PL12 6TA

Information: call 01579 351346 for details or visit: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele

Wednesday 15th
Valley Volunteers – Working Party
Tamar Trails

See 6th January for details

Friday 17th, 10am – 12:30pm
Creative Watercolours with Gill Cairns

Explore wet in wet and wash with experimental techniques including using credit cards, sticks, cling film and inks. First of 5 Sessions: 17 January, 21 February, 20 March, 24 April, 15 May.

Cost: £65 for the course

Venue: Tamar Valley Centre, Drakewalls, PL18 9FE

Organiser: West Devon Art Workshops

Booking: essential - westdevonartworkshops@gmail.com, 01822 258351

Monday 20th
Valley Volunteers – Working Party
Discovery Trail

See 6th January for details

Friday 24th, 8pm
Geoff Lakeman and Rob Murch

Self-written and Westcountry songs, rattling folk tunes. Doors and bar 7pm, start time 8pm.

Cost: £10 advance, £11 door, £1 reduction for Friends of Calstock Arts, £5 under 18s

Venue & Organiser: Calstock Arts, The Old Chapel, Calstock, PL18 9QX
Tickets: www.calstockarts.org, 01726 879500

Saturday 25th
Valley Volunteers – Working Party
Tamar Trails

See 6th January for details

Saturday 25th, 9:30am - 4pm
Introduction to Coppicing

See Saturday 11th January for details

Saturday 25th
Coppicing Course

Learn more about practical coppicing, coppice products, habitats & conservation and health & safety.

Cost: £40 (includes a light lunch and refreshments)

Organiser: Family Foraging Kitchen

Booking: 01752 823424, kitchen@familyforagingkitchen.co.uk

Tuesday 28th, 10am-3pm
Volunteer Day - South Kit Hill Mine

Clearing gorse from reservoir, building remains and annual buddles trim.

Notes: tools supplied. Please wear old clothes and strong boots. Bring lunch but hot drinks and biscuits supplied.

Meet: Kit Hill Summit car park, SX 375 713

Organiser: Cormac Solutions Ltd

Information: please let Jenny know if you are planning to attend – 07973 813843, jheskett@cormacltd.co.uk

Wednesday 29th
Valley Volunteers – Working Party
Okel Tor

See 6th January for details

FEBRUARY 2020

Sunday 2nd, 2-5pm
Sneaky Peek at Pentillie

Your opportunity to have a nosey around the inside of the Castle!

Venue & Organiser: Pentillie Castle & Estate, St Mellion, PL12 6QD

Information: contact@pentillie.co.uk, 01579 350044

Monday 3rd
Valley Volunteers – Training Day - Hedgelaying

Refreshments, lunch and all tools provided. Wear strong boots and dress for the weather.

Organiser: Tamar Community Trust
Information: for further details, and to let Dave know that you're coming, please call 07410 411440 or email dreadman@tamarvalley.org.uk

Friday 7th, 7:30pm
Friends of the Tamar Valley Talk
Clive Charlton - The Tamar: A Very Useful River

Cost: members free, non-members are welcome although a small charge is levied

Venue: Tamar Valley Centre, Drakewalls, PL18 9FE

Organiser: Friends of the Tamar Valley
Information: 01822 834964, janekielyintamarvalley@uwclub.net (Jane Kiely)

Saturday 8th, 9:30am - 4pm
Introduction to Coppicing

See Saturday 11th January for details

Monday 10th
Valley Volunteers - Training Day - Hedgelaying

Refreshments, lunch and all tools provided. Wear strong boots and dress for the weather.

Organiser: Tamar Community Trust

Information: Call 07410 411440 or email dreadman@tamarvalley.org.uk

Wednesday 12th
Valley Volunteers – Working Party
Tamar Trails

See 6th January for details

Saturday 15th
Traditional Cornish Hedging Course

Learn basic stone handling and Cornish hedging techniques.

Cost: £50

Organiser: Family Foraging Kitchen

Booking: 01752 823424, kitchen@familyforagingkitchen.co.uk

Saturday 15th - Sunday 16th, 11am-4pm

Apple grafting weekend at Cotehele

We'll show you how to graft your own apple tree with more than 20 local varieties to choose from. Just drop in and take home a grafted tree.

Cost: £5 per grafted tree, admission applies

Venue & Organiser: National Trust Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr Saltash, PL12 6TA

Information: call 01579 351346 for details or visit; www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele

Sunday 16th

Foraging & Feasting - Wild Foods & Medicines Walk

Gentle-paced walk learning about wild plants that can be used for food and medicines. Each walk includes a cookery class or medicines workshop

Cost: adults £25, children go free.

Venue: Maker Heights, south east Cornwall

Organiser: Family Foraging Kitchen
Booking: 01752 823424, kitchen@familyforagingkitchen.co.uk

Monday 17th

Valley Volunteers - Working Party Okel Tor

See 6th January for details

Friday 21st, 10am - 12:30pm

Creative Watercolours with Gill Cairns

See Friday 17th January for details

Saturday 22nd, 9:30am - 4pm

Introduction to Coppicing

See Saturday 11th January for details

Saturday 22nd

Birch Bark Crafts Course

Learn the ancient and skilled craft of making practical and beautiful birch bark boxes and containers.

Cost: £75

Venue: Maker Heights, south east Cornwall

Organiser: Family Foraging Kitchen
Booking: 01752 823424, kitchen@familyforagingkitchen.co.uk

Sunday 23rd

Valley Volunteers - Working Party Wacker Quay

See 6th January for details

Tuesday 25th, 10am-3pm

Volunteer Day - Kit Hill

Clearing gorse regrowth from the Neolithic barrow, bank feature and pits nearby. Pruning apple trees at Bush cottages in the afternoon.

Notes: tools supplied. Please wear old clothes and strong boots. Bring food

and drink. Hot drink and biscuits supplied.

Meet: Bush cottage layby on A390/Kit Hill junction SX 380 705

Organiser: Cormac Solutions Ltd

Information: Call 07973 813843, jheskett@cormactld.co.uk

Wednesday 26th

Valley Volunteers - Working Party Tree planting

See 6th January for details

Saturday 29th, 8pm

Kathryn Roberts and Sean Lakeman - On Reflection

Doors and bar 7pm, start time 8pm.

Cost: £15 advance, £16 door, £1 reduction for Friends of Calstock Arts, £8 under 18s

Venue & Organiser: Calstock Arts, The Old Chapel, Calstock, PL18 9QX

Tickets: www.calstockarts.org, 01726 879500

MARCH 2020

Sunday 1st

Foraging & Feasting - Wild Foods & Medicines - Hedges, Edges & Woodland

See Sunday 16th February for details

Sunday 1st, 8pm

Kathryn Roberts and Sean Lakeman - On Reflection

See Saturday 29th February for details

Monday 2nd

Valley Volunteers - Working Party Tamar Trails

See 6th January for details

Friday 6th, 7:30pm

Friends of the Tamar Valley Talk

Paul Rendell - Winter on Dartmoor

Cost: members free, non-members welcome for a small, levied charge

Venue: Tamar Valley Centre, Drakewalls, PL18 9FE

Organiser: Friends of the Tamar Valley
Information: 01822 834964, janekiely@tamarvalley@uwclub.net (Jane Kiely)

Saturday 7th

Valley Volunteers - Working Party Okel Tor

See 6th January for details

Saturday 7th, 9:30am - 4pm

Introduction to Coppicing

See Saturday 11th January for details

7th - 25th October, 10am-5pm

Tide and time at Cotehele

For the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower voyage we highlight objects connected to trans-Atlantic trade

to gain insight into the lives of the Edgumbes and the influence of the Americas on their time.

Cost: normal admission applies

Venue: National Trust Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr Saltash, PL12 6TA

Information: call 01579 351346 for details or visit; www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele

Sunday 8th, 10am - 2:30pm

Wild Flower Meadow Creation Workshop

Help create acres of wildflower meadows for the benefit of bees from the apiary & local wildlife. Learn about meadow creation and habitat.

Cost: £40 (includes refreshments)

Venue: Maker Heights, south east Cornwall

Organiser: Family Foraging Kitchen

Booking: 01752 823424, kitchen@familyforagingkitchen.co.uk

Monday 9th, 11am - 1pm

Guided walks in the countryside

Explore the Cotehele Estate with volunteer Jane, who will tell you all about the area and natural habitat. Walks - every second Monday of each month.

Notes: approx 4 miles, some uneven terrain, dogs welcome.

Meet: Info Point, Cotehele Quay.

Organiser: National Trust Cotehele

Information: 01579 351346

Wednesday 11th

Valley Volunteers - Working Party Tree planting

See 6th January for details

Saturday 14th - Sunday 22nd March, 11am-4pm

Daffodil festival at Cotehele

See the wonderful collection of daffodils and sculptures grown on Cotehele Estate. Displays of historic and new varieties plus a guided tour.

Cost: Normal admission charge applies, NT members free

Venue & Organiser: National Trust Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr Saltash, PL12 6TA

Information: Call 01579 351346 for details or visit; www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele

Sunday 15th

Wild Well Being Course with Two Girls Go Gathering

Discover how to reconnect ourselves using wild foods and herbs. Find wild edibles and make medicinal wild infusions and herbal vinegars.

Cost: £25

Venue: Maker Heights, S E Cornwall

Organiser: Family Foraging Kitchen
Booking: 01752 823424, kitchen@familyforagingkitchen.co.uk

Monday 16th

Valley Volunteers - Working Party Tree planting

See 6th January for details

Tuesday 17th

Tamar Valley AONB Annual Conference

Venue: Tamar Valley Centre, Drakewalls, PL18 9FE

Information: full details nearer the time - www.tamarvalley.org.uk/events or 01822 835030

Tuesday 17th, 10am-3pm

Volunteer Day - Drakewalls Mine

Dogwoods prune, tree pruning, meadow cut and site tidy.

Notes: tools supplied. Please wear old clothes and strong boots. Bring food and drink. Hot drink and biscuits supplied.

Meet: Tamar Valley Centre, PL18 9FE

Organiser: Cormac Solutions Ltd

Information: Call Jenny on 07973 813843, jheskett@cormacltd.co.uk

Friday 20th, 10am - 12:30pm

Creative Watercolours with Gill Cairns

See Friday 17th January for details

Saturday 21st

Valley Volunteers - Working Party Tamar Trails

See 6th January for details

Friday, 27th, 10am - 12noon

Woodland Stroll for Wellbeing & Relaxation - Buds & Blossom

Join us for the first of four walks this year. Walk through woodland using all your senses to experience nature close up. Reduce stress and experience a general sense of wellbeing.

Venue: Cotehele Woods

Organiser: Tamar Valley AONB/Plantlife

Booking: 01822 835030, enquiries@tamarvalley.org.uk

Saturday 28th - Sunday 5th April, 10am - 4pm (to 2pm Sunday)

Drawn to the Valley Spring Exhibition - Heralds of Spring

The Valley's stunning exhibition features the 'Heralds of Spring' project. Free entry, artists will be in residence.

Venue: Tamar Valley Centre, Drakewalls, PL18 9FE

Organiser: Drawn to the Valley

Information: www.drawntothevalley.co.uk

Sat 28th - Sun 13th April, 10am-4pm

Cadbury Easter egg hunt at Cotehele

Help Bunny find friends around Cotehele to make music in Nature's Band and

collect a Cadbury chocolate treat.

Cost: £3 per trail, admission charges also apply, NT members free

Venue & Organiser: National Trust Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr Saltash, PL12 6TA

Information: call 01579 351346 for details or visit; www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele

Sunday 29th

Coppicing Course

See Saturday 25th January for details

Monday 30th

Valley Volunteers - Working Party Discovery Trail

See 6th January for details

APRIL 2020

Wednesday 1st

Tamar Valley Tourism Conference

Exciting line up of guest speakers from different sectors of tourism plus trade stands with offers and information on what's to come in 2020. To book a stand please email: tavata.member.ship@gmail.com. Visit us at <https://www.welovethetamarvalley.co.uk/>

Venue: The Bedford Hotel, Tavistock

Friday 3rd, 7pm

Friends of the Tamar Valley Talk/AGM

Laura Martin - The Story of Ferguson's Gang: Strong Women Before their Time.

Cost: members free, non-members welcome for a small, levied charge

Venue: Tamar Valley Centre, Drakewalls, PL18 9FE

Organiser: Friends of the Tamar Valley

Information: 01822 834964, janekiely@tamarvalley@uwclub.net (Jane Kiely)

Sunday 12th

Dry Stone Walling Course

Learn the traditional method of dry stone walling using a hand tools.

Notes: please bring steel toe capped footwear and dress for the weather.

Cost: £55

Venue: Maker Heights, S E Cornwall

Organiser: Family Foraging Kitchen

Booking: 01752 823424, kitchen@familyforagingkitchen.co.uk

Sunday 19th

Pentillie Garden Open Day

Explore Pentillie's 55 acres of gardens as they burst into colour.

Venue & Organiser: Pentillie Castle & Estate, St Mellion, PL12 6QD

Information: contact@pentillie.co.uk, 01579 350044

Sunday 26th

Hazel Hurdle Making

Course covers introduction to tools and materials, woodland management, preparing zales (uprights), base weave and an introduction to different methods of splitting hazel.

Cost: £50

Venue: Maker Heights, S E Cornwall

Organiser: Family Foraging Kitchen

Booking: 01752 823424, kitchen@familyforagingkitchen.co.uk

Various dates in April and May

Nancy Belle boat trips from Cotehele quay

Take a two-hour trip up the river Tamar past riverside woodlands, Calstock and towards Morwellham Quay.

Cost: £15

Venue & Organiser: National Trust Cotehele, St Dominick, Nr Saltash, PL12 6TA

Booking: essential on 01579 351346

Weekly walking groups continue throughout the year. All are free.

You're welcome to come along as often or as little as you'd like.

Monday - Saltash Walk & Talk

Tuesday - Bere Alston

Wednesday - Tamar Valley Walk & Talk

Thursday - Tamar Valley Walking for Health

Programmes can be viewed here

<http://www.tamarvalley.org.uk/explore/walking/>

Local Train Times

Tamar Valley Line - Gunnislake to Plymouth

For timetable information please call National Rail

Enquiries on 03457 48 49 50 or visit

<http://greatscenicrailways.co.uk/lines/tamar-valley-line/>



Local Bus Times

For bus times, please call Traveline on 0871 200 22 33, visit

traveline.info or <https://www.plymouthbus.co.uk/timetables/>

As the cold weather seizes us in its icy grip, there are a number of practical measures we can all take to make sure we stay warm and well through the winter. From managing energy bills to servicing boilers, here are some useful tips on being energy savvy.

Staying warm and well this winter



Tracking your energy use and understanding how much you're using through the year helps you manage your finances and be kinder to the planet. Making sure you're on a good deal is important and switching gas and electricity providers has never been easier.

If you're of pensionable age, are registered disabled or suffer from ill health, we recommend that you sign up to your energy provider's Priority Services Register.



Above: Tavistock Eco Fair

- Don't be in the dark - LED lights can help reduce your bills and using a slow cooker and a microwave can also cut the cost of cooking.
- Deal with damp - Damp air takes longer to heat and increases costs. Mould is dangerous for your health. Always ventilate well and seek advice if you have structural or plumbing problems causing damp.
- Stop heat escaping - draught busting such as door and window strips, thermal blinds etc. can make a big difference. Check that you have enough insulation in the loft, cavity walls are filled, pipes are lagged and radiators on external walls have reflectors. Underfloor and solid wall insulation could also be options. You may be eligible for help with insulation.
- Service boilers - at least once every two years to ensure an efficient heating system. Check if you may be eligible for help with first time or inefficient heating systems.
- Harness the sun - if your home is suitable, solar panels on the roof can also help reduce electricity bills.

If you'd like to talk through any of the above points, get in touch with Tamar Energy Community (TEC). TEC's Warm and Well service is available across west Devon and south east Cornwall. To find out more or to book an

appointment for a free home visit to look at all aspects of energy in your home, please call 0800 233 5414, email hello@tamarenergycommunity.com or check out tamarenergycommunity.com/energy-advice.

Energy Club helps you do your bit for the environment

With growing attention on climate change, you may be asking 'What can I do to make a difference?' Getting to grips with your household energy usage could be a good place to start and it could also benefit your pocket.

Building on lessons learned from its innovation project 'The Power in Your Hands', Tamar Energy Community (TEC) has kicked off an Energy Club. This is a fun way of tracking and trying to reduce the amount of energy you use in and around the home.

If you'd like to get involved or find out more, check out tamarenergycommunity.com/energyclub or call 0800 233 5414.

Facebook (@tamarenergycommunity)
Twitter (@tamarenergycomm)



Helping out hedgehogs

As the temperatures plummet at this time of year, spare a thought for our woodland creatures. Here are a few interesting facts and tips from the Hedgehog Health Service, Saltash, on how to help our spiny friend, the hedgehog.

Rarely seen in the daylight, hedgehogs can travel up to two miles a night in search of food. Although their eyesight is poor, these nocturnal creatures have an exceptional sense of smell that helps them detect danger and search out their favourite foods – beetles, worms and slugs. Hedgehogs are solitary animals, but they're not territorial and not aggressive towards each other.

Their spines are sharp and hollow, designed not only to protect them from attack but to insulate them from cold and heat. Their body temperature is similar to a human's other than during hibernation, when it cools by several degrees. Hibernation starts when the weather drops below 8 degrees, although some may toughen it out until it gets closer to zero. However they may well re-emerge temporarily (when it's warm enough) to top up their depleting body reserves. Unfortunately they are unlikely to find beetles etc at this time of year, so this is where we humans can help by putting out food if the weather is mild.

Remember that hedgehogs are nocturnal. If we see a hedgehog out during the day, there's probably something wrong. Ideally, weigh it, and if it's less than 600 grams, put it in a box with shredded paper and a warm hot-water bottle and contact the RSPCA or a Hedgehog Rescue Centre (for example, the Hedgehog Health Service in Saltash).



Food

- Dry cat biscuits (under something that's big enough for a hedgie but not a cat!)
- Chicken in jelly cat/dog food
- Put this down at dusk throughout the winter if a mild night is forecast.
- NEVER give milk or dairy foods as this can kill hedgehogs

Shelter

- Leave piles of leaves, twigs and small branches in a quiet area of the garden
- Make a small hedgie house - see the British Hedgehog Preservation Society's website for designs or come to one of the AONB's Wildlife Days (14th June 2020)

Visit www.tamarvalley.org.uk to find out how local girl, Elena, got on when she decided to foster an underweight hedgehog.

Calstock community dig unearths Roman past

In June 2019, people from across the region were given a rare chance to join archaeologists in uncovering parts of the site of a large Roman fort that once dominated the skyline above Calstock.



Above: Some of the dig team volunteers

The Calstock Community Excavation was the first of three month-long digs as part of the University of Exeter's 'Understanding Landscapes' project.

Discovered by the University's archaeologists in 2007, the fort - built of earth and timber - would have housed a permanent garrison of 500 auxiliary soldiers between AD50 and 80. This can be hard to believe given the relative peace and tranquility of the area today.

Thirty-six volunteers worked alongside the team to excavate and record many archaeological remains. The excavation targeted an area just outside the fort's main gateway and uncovered remains of timber buildings, rubbish and cesspits, and the full width of the Roman road along which cavalry and infantry were dispatched to the west.

A series of enigmatic holes at first puzzled the team, who went on to realise that they had uncovered a line of unmapped and undated mineral prospecting pits. In addition to the regular volunteer diggers, the excavation's open day attracted over 200 visitors, and workshops were held for children from Calstock, Stoke Climsland, Delaware and Gunnislake schools.

By working in partnership with the Calstock Outreach Group and Plymouth-based Students and Refugees Together, the dig team were also pleased to welcome volunteers and visitors from the refugee and asylum-seeking community in Plymouth.

Chris Smart, who led the dig, said, "It has been wonderful to work alongside such a diverse range of people from the community to better understand the site's Roman and medieval past, and the possible mine workings proved to be an unexpected bonus."



Roman pottery and glass found in the roadside ditch

One local volunteer, Ian Richards, was bitten by the 'archaeology bug'. "As a passionate amateur historian, the opportunity of volunteering on the archaeological dig was one not to be missed," he admitted. Working alongside the professional archaeologists, undergraduate students as well as other volunteers was an amazing experience. "There were so many wonderful memories, but for me the best has to be leading a Heritage Walk with members of the Plymouth refugee community."

With such positive feedback being received, it is clear that the Valley's heritage can bring enjoyment to all - whether a life-long resident or a new arrival from a distant land.

The next Community Excavation will be in summer 2020. Look out for volunteering opportunities, which will be advertised in February - www.ex.ac.uk/understandinglandscapes.



UNIVERSITY OF
EXETER



A two-day excavation at the site of the former Kit Hill Great Consols mine has uncovered evidence of an early water tower, previously unrecorded in the history of the mining complex.

Kit Hill excavation reveals identity of unrecorded structure

During the working life of the tin mine on the summit of Kit Hill, impurities were removed from the extracted tin ore by roasting the ore in an oven called a calciner. Toxic fumes from the calciner billowed into the atmosphere through the central chimney stack, which was connected to the calciner via a granite flue.

Due to subsidence in the underground section of the flue, stabilisation work was needed to eliminate the potential health and safety hazard to park visitors. Commissioned by Cornwall Council, the work was carried out by volunteers and supervised by Cormac park ranger, Jenny Heskett and local archaeologist, Dave Williams.

During this work, a previously unrecorded structure was revealed that appeared to lie directly in the line of the flue and also showed features that suggested the structure incorporated a water drainage system.

Following this discovery, an excavation was carried out in August 2019 to investigate the relationship between the structure and the calciner flue.

It was found that the flue did abut the structure but did not pass through or under it, suggesting that it had a vertical component that had been demolished along with the above ground element of the structure.

Following the excavation, research revealed that the environmental damage caused by venting toxic arsenic fumes into the atmosphere was greatly reduced by filtering the fumes through a shower of water directed through the flue in a purpose built water tower. Although there is no known record of this, it is reasonable to assume that the structure was the foundation of a water tower.

All images courtesy of Dave Williams

Top image: Full length of excavation (showing flue capstones and south-west of structure)

Middle image: The uncovered structure

Bottom image: Some of the team



Prehistoric find on Kit Hill

An unbroken chert barb and tang arrowhead dating from the early Bronze Age (2,800-4,500 years ago) was discovered completely by chance during a walk on Kit Hill by Linda Payne. Local archaeologist, Dave Williams who was with Linda at the time said, "As far as I am aware, this is only the second confirmed and complete prehistoric portable artefact found in the parish of Calstock."

Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership

Gunnislake Tile Project

Tamar Valley Line project scoops national rail award



**Devon & Cornwall
RAIL PARTNERSHIP**

GWR

Great
Western
Railway

Above: From l to r: Jools Townsend (Chief Executive, Association of Community Rail Partnerships) Rebecca Catterall (Development Officer, Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership) Rosie Fierek Jan Chaudhry-van der Velde (Managing Director, West Midlands Trains)

A Tamar Valley Line project has been recognised in national rail awards. The Gunnislake station Tile project came second in the 'Community Art schemes- Permanent and Larger projects' category at the national Community Rail Awards.

This project, completed in June 2019, saw decorative tiles made and installed at the station by local potter Rosie Fierek following community drop-in sessions and workshops at Delaware and Gunnislake Primary schools. Over 200 children and adults were involved in creating the tiles. Rebecca Catterall from the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership (DCRP) worked with Rosie on the workshops, at the station and liaised with the rail industry.

In front of an audience of more than 400 rail industry, community and government representatives in Telford, Shropshire, the DCRP also picked up awards in the 'Best Marketing Campaign' and 'Best Community Engagement' categories.

Rosie Fierek said, "I had a great time in Telford at the national Community Rail Awards and I think it's lovely that our Gunnislake 'Fruitful' project was acknowledged for what it has achieved. It was a delight, as ever, to work with Delaware and Gunnislake Schools and the local community.

"I am very grateful to the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership for commissioning me to design and install the ceramics at the station and hope folk will enjoy the art work for years to come."

Richard Burningham, Manager of the DCRP, said, "I am delighted that the lovely Gunnislake station tile project came second in its category on what was a very successful night for community rail projects in Devon and Cornwall."

The Community Rail Awards, now in its 15th year, is organised by ACoRP, the Association of Community Rail Partnerships.

The Devon & Cornwall Rail Partnership is a non-profit partnership between local authorities, the rail industry and the University of Plymouth. It works to promote use of the region's local lines and seeks improvements to service and facilities to boost the local economy and to link the community and the railway.

The projects were made possible by funding from GWR's Customer and Communities Improvement Fund and the Designated Community Rail Development Fund, a joint initiative of the Department for Transport and ACoRP.

Here's an update from just two of the National Trust properties in the Tamar Valley AONB. Check out how you can enjoy that festive feeling in these stunning locations.

The most wonderful time of the year...

Preparing for winter at Buckland Abbey

Autumn arrived at Buckland Abbey with a bang, due to prolonged spells of high winds and heavy rain. Staff and volunteers have been keeping their fingers crossed for some dry and frosty days as they get stuck into their winter tasks.

Winter tasks

- Trees are being felled as part of ongoing woodland management, with the long-term aim of reverting the woodlands back to mixed broadleaved species.
- Several successful charcoal burns have taken place, with BBQ and drawing charcoal available to purchase in the shop.
- Volunteers from the South Devon National Trust spent time working in the woodlands, cutting back stands of hazel (coppicing).
- As part of the preparations for Christmas, the first task was to fell the estate Christmas tree to erect in the great barn. Our programme of festive events

on the property is now well underway.

Members of a local Bat Recording Group visited the estate on a number of occasions over the autumn, helping to increase knowledge of different species. Over two evenings, a good mix and number of species was recorded, including Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), Brown Long eared (*Plecotus auratus*) and Greater Horseshoe (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*).

For Christmas opening times and events, visit nationaltrust.org.uk/bucklandabbey



Above: Making Buckland charcoal © Anthea Hagger

A Victorian Christmas at Cotehele

There's a real buzz of excitement at Cotehele right now because for the first time ever, the mill is opening at Christmas.

It will be decorated in traditional Victorian style and you'll be able to discover how families like the Langsords, who lived here, celebrated Christmas in those times.

Most of our festive traditions were invented by the Victorians. Christmas trees, cards, crackers, figgy pudding and presents on Christmas day all date from that period and are celebrated in the Victorian mill as they would have been enjoyed by families at that time.

There'll be lots of activities for children to enjoy, including trails, festive crafts and dressing up in Victorian Sunday best. There'll also be a pop-up café in the Mill Bakery, serving hot drinks and snacks.

'A Victorian family Christmas' runs on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through December and daily 21 December to 5 January from 11am to 3pm (except Christmas Day and Boxing Day).

At Cotehele House

The famous Cotehele Garland is on display, with choirs performing underneath most days in December, while an exhibition in the Breakfast Room tells the story of the garland's creation and includes images of garlands from the past. There's a new festive menu in the Barn and Edgcumbe eateries and the Christmas exhibition, Merry and Bright is available to view in the Gallery.



Image © Anthea Hagger

Around 40 years ago, my father and I used an old lemonade bottle to propagate an acorn I had sown. The acorn germinated and became a thriving sapling before being planted in our local woods. A fondly remembered childhood event, which greatly influenced my choice of career as a conservationist.

From little acorns...

John Frazer, Tamar Valley Vibe

There are many ways we can all do our bit for the environment, but for me there is still something magical about collecting acorns and growing them. This is also a brilliant way to get children interested and active in caring for the environment.

There are many different species of oak in the Tamar Valley. However, if you take the time to locate English oak acorns, you will be growing one of our most important native trees.

In autumn and early winter, the acorns can be found scattered on the ground around the trees and they have a rich chocolate brown colour. If you're lucky you

might even find acorns starting to germinate, don't be afraid to pick these up and plant them. After all, that way you know for certain you are starting with a viable seed.

The tree you grow could shape the landscape for centuries to come, so why not have a go yourself? To find out more, visit <https://tamarvalleyvibe.uk/>



Dig for Devonport Community Explorers

Reconnecting people to the seasons and the Tamar Valley is the focus of Food Plymouth's Dig for Devonport Community Explorers initiative.

Made possible by Great Western Railway's community improvement fund, the project has allowed a wide range of people from Plymouth to explore the valley and discover some of its 'hidden' places.

Community Explorers offers seasonal events to explore the valley and its culinary treasures by train. Another aim is to highlight the distinctive Tamar Valley cherry varieties and to find places to plant trees in Plymouth.

Events in 2019 included a blossom walk from Calstock to Cotehele, a visit to a cherry orchard, foraging walks, a harvesting event and a wassail at Cotehele.

Community Explorers co-ordinator Tess Wilmot commented, "I am really excited at the potential of this project. It will help Plymouth residents to discover how accessible the Tamar Valley is by train and connect them with the seasonal produce there."

The legacy of the project includes purchasing 15 Tamar Valley cherry trees during a visit and tour of Endsleigh Garden Nursery. These trees are now growing in community green spaces in Plymouth.



Above: Picnic in the orchard at Cotehele

DIG FOR
DEVONPORT
CREATING EDIBLE LANDSCAPES

FOOD
Plymouth

GWR



Help for growing businesses

Mill Lane Acres is Tamar Grow Local's farm start project for new entrants into horticulture. The project currently has six tenants running their own start-up growing businesses, including a vineyard, orchard and traditional fruit and vegetable market gardens.

We caught up with Matt White and Rachel Riley from Hoe Made Acre to find out about their new business and what's planned for 2020.

Name of business?

Hoe Made Acre

What led to you setting up a horticultural business?

Hoe Made Acre has been 10 years in the making. After living on a family run smallholding for 4 years, we knew we wanted to set up a small-scale commercial growing business of our own. Matt then spent 6 years running horticulture focused community development projects. After a short-lived move to the south of France we decided it was finally time. We returned to the south west in June 2019 and were delighted to find Tamar Grow Local's farm start project, which offered a quick, affordable and supported step into the world of small-scale commercial growing.

What are the main aims, objectives and values of your business?

We believe that good food should not only be accessible to those who can afford it. We aim to work closely with Tamar Grow Local, to explore ways to get our produce and products onto the kitchen tables of all within the Tamar Valley. Hoe Made Acre will be a vibrant market garden, combining and experimenting with principles from no-dig, organic agriculture, permaculture and good old fashioned horticulture.

We will grow colourful and nourishing produce for the local community, businesses and experimental chefs

and we will produce food in a way that nurtures and replenishes the land on which it is grown.

What have been the highlights and hurdles in your first few months of setting up your new business?

Hurdles

- endless dock pulling

Highlights

- building a pile of docks that can be seen from space
- sowing hardy annual flowers for a wedding in Plymouth next Spring

What's planned for next year?

We will start food production on half an acre from the beginning of 2020. So, we have an exciting and wet winter ahead setting up fencing, rain water harvesting, composting and bed design.

Please keep up-to-date with our progress and growing news by following Hoe Made Acre on Facebook and Instagram.

What are your long-term plans on-site?

Once the Hoe Made Acre site is more established, we will offer a calendar of workshops, events, yoga and courses focused on wellbeing and education to the community.

Tamar Grow Local has further vacant plots available for new tenants looking for a stepping-stone for their own horticultural businesses. For further details, please contact info@tamargrowlocal.org



About Us

The Tamar Valley AONB Partnership helps to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, by offering advice and assistance to community groups, landowners, farmers, residents and visitors.

There are 38 AONBs in England and Wales. The Tamar Valley itself covers an area of 75 square miles (195 sq km) and is the youngest of all AONBs, designated in 1995.

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Help us keep the AONB special

We hope you enjoy exploring the Tamar Valley. Please follow the Countryside Code when you're out and about, to keep this living, working landscape special.

Your Valley, Your News

If you have a story that you would like to be considered for the next issue of The Valley (Summer 2020), or would like to discuss advertising opportunities, please contact Charlotte Dancer, Information & Communications Officer for the Tamar Valley AONB – cdancer@tamarvalley.org.uk, 01822 835030.

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While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy within this newsletter, no responsibility will be accepted for any omissions.

Social prescribing is a way of linking patients with support in the community, providing GPs with a referral option that works alongside existing treatments to improve health and wellbeing.

Social prescribing to improve health and wellbeing

You can book a one-to-one appointment to see a health and wellbeing coach at the following GP Practices:

- Callington Health Centre
- Port View Surgery
- Saltash Health Centre
- Penntorr Health at Torpoint

Your health and wellbeing coach will work with you to identify your needs, set goals and signpost you to support within the community, such as:

- Finance, housing or benefits assistance
- Art and creative activities
- Exercise and dance classes
- Outdoor activities - walks, fishing and gardening clubs
- Supported learning, training and employment
- Volunteering and time banks
- Counselling or therapy groups
- Book groups or cooking classes

There are hundreds of groups and activities within your communities that can help you on your journey to better health and wellbeing.

If you would like to find out more, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Stevens on 07341 004929 or visit:

www.pluss.org.uk/services/being-healthy-and-well-social-prescribing-services

Positive People is funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund.



Sustainable Development Fund

The Sustainable Development Fund was created for AONBs to encourage individuals, community groups and businesses to work together to develop practical and sustainable ways of managing their activities.

Thirteen projects applied for funding from the Tamar Valley AONB and Tamar TLC in 2019. For a full list of projects that received funding, please visit <http://www.tamarvalley.org.uk/care/sdf/>

This issue has been possible thanks to the support of Tamar TLC and Tamara Landscape Partnership.