

# SKILLS

# FOR LIFE

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERING  
A MODEL FOR SOCIAL PRESCRIBING



NATIONAL  
LOTTERY FUNDED



A PROJECT BY

URBAN BIODIVERSITY



*"Urban biodiversity refers to the variety and variability among living organisms found in a city and the ecological systems in which they occur. Overall, urban biodiversity responds to a combination of biogeographic and anthropogenic factors, with a strong influence of the latter" – Oliveira et al. 2014*



**Our vision:**

**"We want a society that is environmentally conscious, sustainable communities that work for each other, and to put an end to social deprivation giving a fair chance in life for all"**

**What is social prescribing?**

*Social prescribing is a way of linking patients in primary care with sources of support within the community. It provides GPs with a non-medical referral option that can operate alongside existing treatments to improve health and well-being.*



“ \*learn new skills \* meet new people \* build on confidence ”



**Community**

*noun:*

- 1. a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common.
- 2. the condition of sharing or having certain attitudes and interests in common.

**Collective**

*adjective:*

- 1. done by people acting as a group.

*noun:*

- 2. a cooperative enterprise.

**Hub**

*noun:*

- 1. the effective centre of an activity, region, or network.

**Sanctuary**

*noun:*

- 1. refuge or safety from pursuit, persecution, or other danger.
- 2. a nature reserve.

**Venue**

*noun:*

- 1. the place where something happens, especially an organised event such as a concert, conference, or sports competition.



*We like a combination of all five*

WHAT IS NEWQUAY COMMUNITY ORCHARD?

Newquay Community Orchard is a 7-acre multifunctional community space, managed by Urban Biodiversity CIC, and designed to provide environmental education, employability training, mental health therapy, community events, food security, and environmentally sustainable economic growth to one of the UK's poorest communities. Situated in the heart of Newquay, on land provided by the Duchy of Cornwall, the site will ultimately include a traditional Cornish orchard, a forest garden, a walled community growing space, wildlife habitats, a sensory garden, two amphitheatres and a community building to include a classroom and café.

*The Orchard has been described as a 'sanctuary', a place of escape from life pressures.*

*A 'constant' in people's lives. A permanent place of respite.*

*A big family, where support transcends the boundaries of the site through the friendships and relationships that are formed.*

*It is becoming a community hub, research and demonstration site and venue.*



**Key Achievements**

est. January 2015



2000 trees planted 14,250 volunteer hours 123 apple trees 512 volunteers signed up 292 programme participants 3 acres (43%) developed 2 tonnes of produce grown

# WHY DO PEOPLE COME?

**“Looking forward to working with the team. Learning new skills - woodwork, horticulture and conservation”**

“Meeting new people. Offering my services and my skills”  
 “Learn new skills, meet new people, build on confidence”



**“Grow my confidence”**

“Learn more about plants, herbs, be able to identify plants better, small scale harvesting. I eventually would like my own growing space and to make me feel comfortable enough to look after my own garden.”

## “Learning”



“Finding happiness and meeting people”



“Get involved in the community. Get out and meet some new people. Feel well and happy”

“Some new skills with wood, relaxation”

“Learn more about propagation - Continual learning”

“Learn about the land and helping others”

“An all-round learning experience”

**“Training and knowledge”**

“Build up self-esteem / confidence”



“Volunteer, learn about environmental policies and meet like minded people”

“Helping people and personal learnings”



- “Learning about organic agriculture and enjoy outdoor activities”
- “A job along the lines of horticulture or landscape gardening.”
- “To contribute, to get outside and meet lots of lovely people”
- “Using my horticultural skills. Socialising. Feeling rewarded”
- “Voluntary experience and getting qualifications and skills”
- “Learning, meeting people, community feel & happiness”

## “Self-confidence + a few extra skills”

“Lose a bit of weight, improve stamina, meet new people”

“Meet new people, learn new skills (gardening, wood work etc.) be happy!”



WHAT ARE THEIR FIRST IMPRESSIONS?



“Beautifully set up - I was impressed by the lavender and apple planting and the Cornish hedges. Great how many things you are doing.”



- “Nice community environment.”
- “Taken aback - pretty impressed.”
- “Very good impression.”
- “Open, welcoming and green.”
- “It’s cute, I like it :)”

“Great.”

“Peaceful, clear project, lots of beautiful things to do.”



“Pleasant venue, well organised, folk were happy.”



“Calm, happy place. Welcoming, friendly people.”

“Lovely space. Great working environment, looking forward to starting training.”

“Good ambitions, lot going on, well organised.”

“Nice sized site. Seems well organised and run.”



“It’s great to see a project with so much momentum. I’m really excited to get involved.”

“Great space.”

“Newquay Orchard is a slowly progressing community that seems very tight nit and close. It seems a very good place to volunteer.”



“Very impressed at the work being done here to help people.”

“Happy, a nice place to be. A great professional team.”

“Much bigger then I first thought it would be. very welcoming.”



“Welcoming, natural.”

- “Very well organised, exciting place to be.”
- “Happy, a nice place to be. A great professional team.”
- “Looks like a nice place, nice volunteers.”
- “Pleasant venue, well organised, folk were happy.”

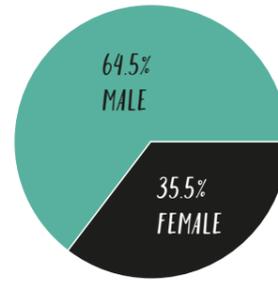


# DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

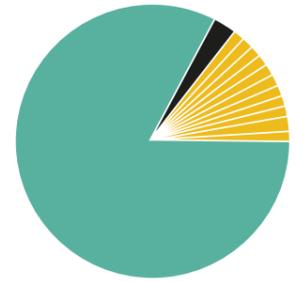
## AGE



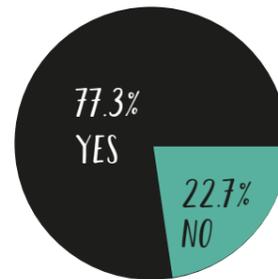
## GENDER



## ETHNIC ORIGIN



## EMPLOYED?

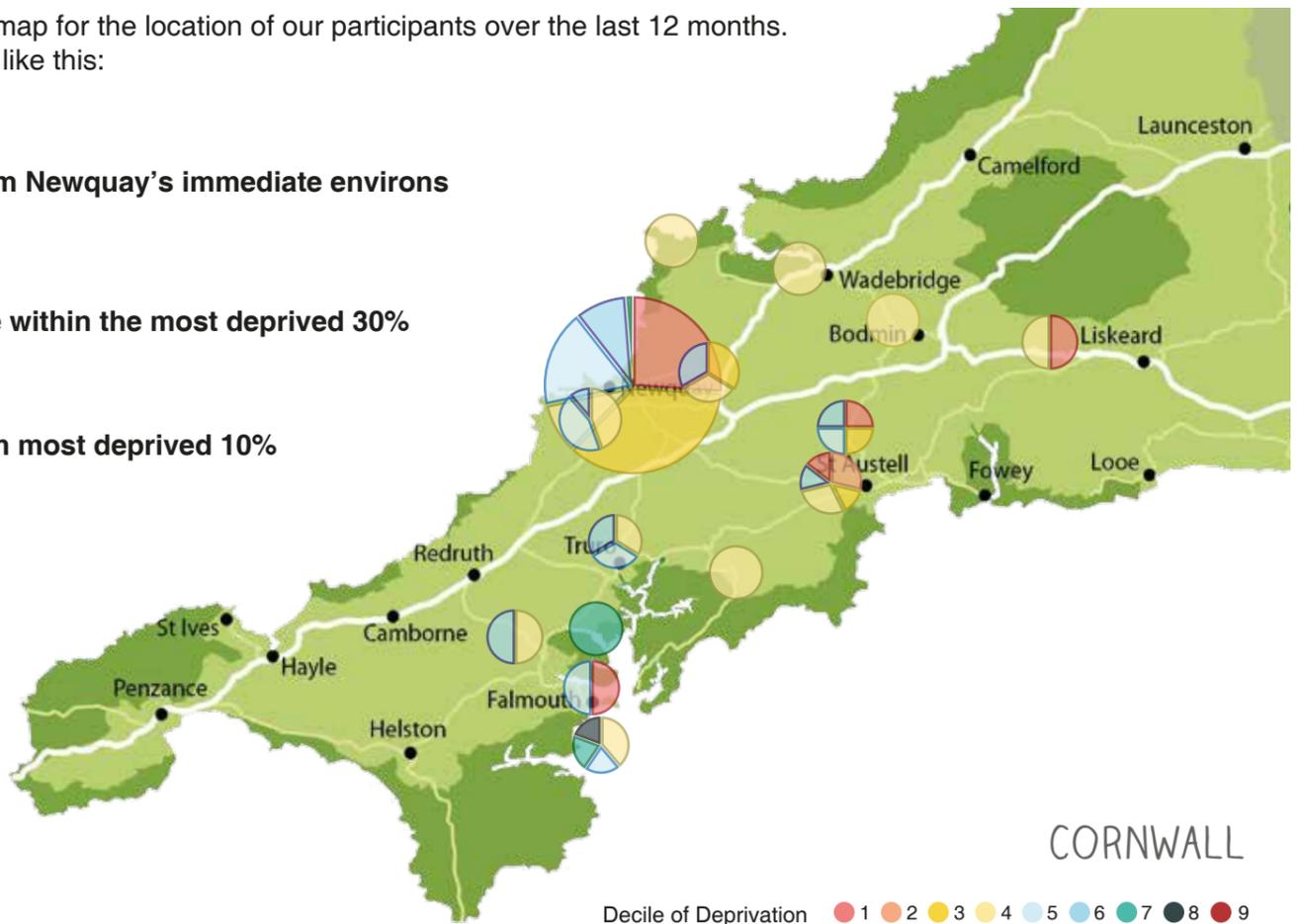


■ White British  
■ Cornish  
■ MIXED OTHER

## WHERE ARE PEOPLE COMING FROM?

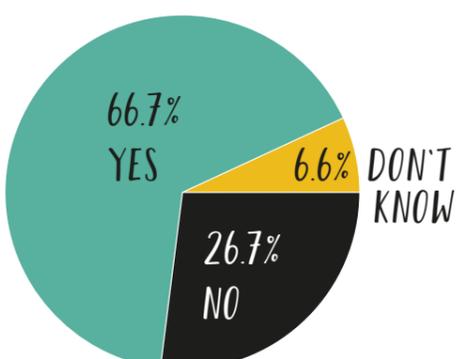
We have created a heat map for the location of our participants over the last 12 months. The relevant figures look like this:

- 73%** → from Newquay's immediate environs
- 41%** → live within the most deprived 30%
- 18%** → from most deprived 10%



Although the LSOAs aren't completely representative of each individual's circumstances, it has highlighted that we need to increase our engagement within the category 1 postcode area.

## DISABILITY?



## WELL BEING

**95%**  
stated improved  
mental wellbeing.

**100%**  
engaged in new  
social activities  
as a result of  
volunteering

**98%**  
say it has increased  
their physical activity  
and their physical health

**19%**  
say they have  
reduced their  
medication

**33%**  
stated a reduced  
use of GP surgeries  
(67% stating no change in use)

**61%**  
say it has improved  
their diets and  
understanding of food

## ON AVERAGE THERE HAS BEEN:

**16% ↓**  
reduction in GP  
visits per participant

**28% ↑**  
increase in  
social activity  
per participant

**12% ↑**  
increase in mental  
wellbeing per  
participant

**14% ↑**  
increase in fitness  
per participant

**19% ↑**  
increase in sport  
participation per  
participant

## PROGRESSION

**41%**  
accessing further  
support services

**73%**  
have entered  
further education

**23%**  
have gone onto to  
new volunteering  
opportunities

**32%**  
have gone  
onto to find  
employment

**76%**  
are still engaging  
and volunteering  
with the project

## FEEDBACK

**100%**  
would recommend

**91%**  
overall  
experience  
rating

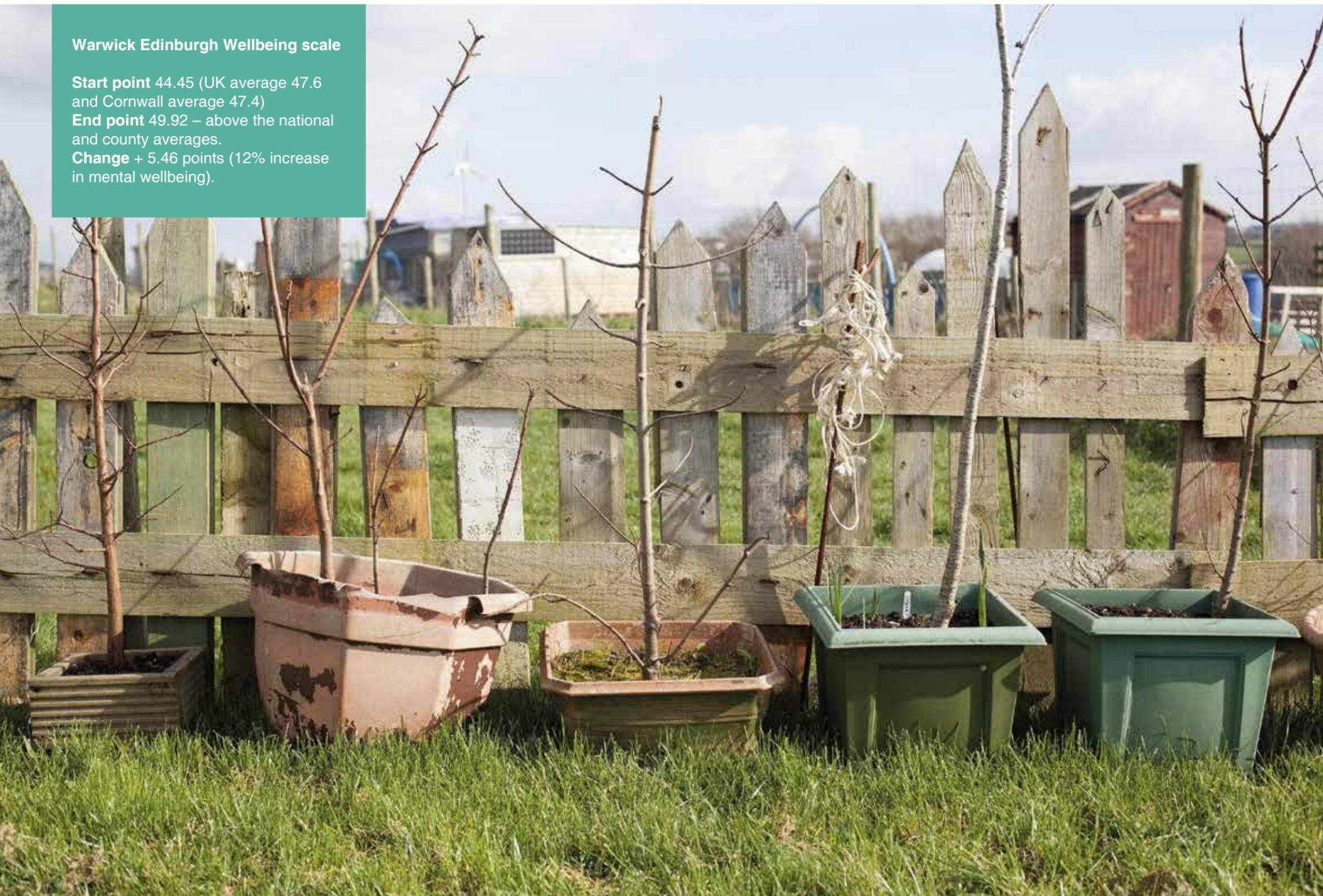
The biggest impacts are clearly on physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing and social connection.

### Warwick Edinburgh Wellbeing scale

**Start point** 44.45 (UK average 47.6  
and Cornwall average 47.4)

**End point** 49.92 – above the national  
and county averages.

**Change** + 5.46 points (12% increase  
in mental wellbeing).



# WHAT DO PEOPLE ENJOY MOST?



“Discovery of a completely new skill base - permaculture. Exciting and stimulating likeminded spirits who make me feel so welcome. Appreciating nature.”

“Getting out and doing a wide range of stuff. Its really beneficial for my health and gets me out of the house.”

“Feel like you’re active and getting involved with something positive. Get a sense of doing something good”

“I enjoyed being part of something again, I liked the interaction with other people and particularly the staff. Newquay Orchard helped me back on my feet when I needed it the most.”

“I have volunteered for a few years now and seeing others come out of their shell and the impact we as volunteers have on the development of site is a real pleasure.”

“Everything. Meeting new friends and learning new skills. I am feeling more confident and social and I'm enjoying my new volunteer role.”

“Feels as though we are achieving something, and you can see the progress in both site and the people involved.”

“Learning new bits and meeting people from different walks of life, Constant learning.”

“Working in a team, seeing site progress and your work mean something.”

“I enjoy working here it is very therapeutic and keeps me out of the pub.”

“Being out in the fresh air, having something physical to do, company.”

“Talking and getting to know other people. Learning a lot as well.”

“Community feel of it. Everyone is so friendly and welcome.”

“Carrying out a variety of work and meeting new people.”

“Planting stuff, helping stuff grow, think NCO is brilliant.”

“Socialising and meeting new people, not being bored.”

“Coming up here, having something to do with my day.”

“Community feel, relaxed atmosphere, variety of jobs.”

“Feeling like I'm using my body, doing physical work.”

“Being outdoors and doing something constructive.”

“Meeting new people and learning new skills.”

“Meeting others from different walks of life.”

“Working with people - diversity of people.”

“Socialising and getting out the house.”

“People and working in the workshop.”

“Physical work and being outdoors.”

“Seeing all my friends”

*“All of it.”*

Overall people feel they are part of something much bigger, a collective



*John*

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John started volunteering with Newquay Community Orchard early in May 2017. All his life John has struggled with his reading and writing, and he recently had a major operation due to poor health. Prior to volunteering, John had been unemployed for 3 years.

At the Orchard John took part in horticulture, wood work and wellbeing sessions and achieved a Level One Practical Outdoor Skills and Employability Qualification.

John has now been promoted to the role of Lead Horticultural Volunteer leading small groups in the day to day running of site. In August 2018, John was nominated and won the Green Flag Volunteer of the Year for the whole of the UK.

In October 2018, John found part-time employment with a local cleaning company. John remains an integral and popular part of the volunteer team and we are all immensely proud of his achievements.

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# SKILLS FOR LIFE

Community Volunteering - A Model for Social Prescribing

**The site address:**

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