

HEARTLANDS – NOTICE OF CLOSURE

<https://www.heartlandscornwall.com/>

Closing Statement From The Heartlands Trust And Cornwall Council

Despite the hard work and dedication over many years of the Heartlands Trust, the registered charity that runs Heartlands in Pool, and the staff there, it has become clear that Heartlands is unable to continue to cover its operating costs and facilities at the site will have to close.

Despite its popularity, recent economic conditions have meant that utility costs have considerably increased, and income from operations has decreased.

All of the funding options currently available have now been exhausted and Cornwall Council is not in a position to be able to step in and provide ongoing financial support for the current operation.

It is currently envisaged that the Café, Soft Play, and the Conference Centre and meeting rooms will close at the end of January. The Trust of course commits to refunding any deposits paid, or tickets bought, for future events that are cancelled.

The Trust is keen that the site can continue to serve the local community; an objective that is shared with Cornwall Council, who own the Heartlands site and lease it to the Trust.

The Council will maintain public access to the park and gardens, and the Registration Service and commercially let shops and offices will remain open.

The Trust are proud of all that has been achieved at Heartlands in making it the much-loved and popular free community facility that it is today.

Heartlands was a major project funded by the National Lottery and intended to improve life and opportunity for the local community by providing access to playground, green space, leisure, educational, heritage and community group meeting facilities. It was also seen as a catalyst for encouraging better standards of new housing development in the vicinity, rather than industrial warehousing.

In the twelve years since it has opened, the Heartlands Trust has been extremely successful in achieving all of those objectives. Recent market research revealed that a considerable proportion of local families use both the indoor and outdoor spaces. 360,000 visitors annually use Heartlands. Well over 10,000 attend annual Bonfire Night: over 2000 attend the annual Christmas markets: the Geekfest three day event attracts over 8,000. Heartlands hosts the largest free playground in Cornwall. Local primary schools have used Heartlands as an educational resource, for children to learn about social history and their local

heritage. There is a popular children's nursery on site. Surrounding new housing developments have been quality designed; and a local gardening group uses space to create a community allotment. The emerging Local Plan recognises the central role that Heartlands plays in binding the local community together.

Throughout its life, the priority at Heartlands has always been the community. Heartlands had never seen itself as a commercial operation: but finance has always been precarious. Budget over-runs on the original build project meant vital units intended to provide rental streams were never built: and intended developer contributions for playground maintenance were never received.

While deeply upsetting for the Trust and its staff, we all remain fully committed to the interests of our community and to a transparent approach to keeping you all informed . We will offer our full support to all the staff involved.

Heartlands, Robinson's Shaft

Dudnance Lane, Pool

Redruth, Cornwall TR15 3QY

Registered charity: 1142215