

## **National Trust Press Release**

Issued 16 April 2024

### **Tamar Valley celebrates the Festival of Blossom with events taking place at National Trust Cotehele and along the train line between Plymouth and Gunnislake**

The National Trust team at Cotehele near Saltash have joined forces with the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership, Food Plymouth, Plymouth City Council, University of Plymouth and Tamar Grow Local to coordinate the region's Festival of Blossom and create a trail of blossom events accessible from the scenic Tamar Valley train line.

Between the 26-29 April visitors to Cotehele can take in the spectacle of the orchards brimming with blossom, whilst enjoying lawn games and a picnic, enjoy music in the orchard or book onto a calming yoga session beneath the blooms.

Visitors to Cotehele on Saturday 27 April can join us for the first Gwel an Bleujenn (View of the flowers,) where we will process through the blossom, enjoy music by Rosie Fierek, poetry read by Rob Forshaw and dance by Moondance Studios as we give thanks to the flowers and the promise of the fruit that will follow.

Those coming on Sunday 28 April can help wildlife experts from the University of Plymouth record the species of animals that can be found in the Mother Orchard by joining the Blossom Bioblitz event taking place that day. The data recorded with the help of visitors will create a snapshot of this wonderful habitat and the wildlife that calls it home.

Laura Jarman, Senior Visitor Experience Officer at Cotehele, comments 'The Mother Orchard at Cotehele is home to more than 300 trees and 125 different varieties of local and heritage apples, some dating back to 1960. The blossom they produce is a beautiful sign of spring and a mark of how special our traditional orchards are.'

'Not only do these trees provide us with delicious food and drink, but they are also habitats that provide a home for many different species of wildlife. We look forward to sharing this true spectacle of nature with visitors this blossom season'.

Among the other events taking place are Blossomise in Plymouth (20 April), a live music and poetry performance by Poet Laureate Simon Armitage, and two guided blossom walks in Devonport (24 April 4.30pm) and St Budeaux (2 May at 10am), led by Tess Wilmot of Food Plymouth, giving people an opportunity to discover urban, community orchards on their doorstep.

Elsewhere, you can enjoy walks on the Bere Peninsula with orchards holding open days for visitors including Kingston (27-28 April) and South Hooe (4 May.)

Dave Bouch, Head Gardener at Cotehele, reflects on the importance of orchards in the Tamar Valley; 'Cotehele's orchards are a reminder of the valley's market gardening past, where thousands of cherries and apples were picked for sale at market but are also a vital habitat which need protecting and celebrating. The

Festival of Blossom is a great way to invite people to see how special traditional orchards really are.'


The Festival of Blossom runs throughout April, with special events between 26 – 29 April. To find out more, including the dates and times of specific events, visit [Cotehele festival of blossom | National Trust](https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele) or look out for the leaflets available at Cotehele and various community centres, cafes and wellbeing hubs in Plymouth and the Tamar Valley.

For more information visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele](https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele).

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### **Notes for Editors**

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**Images:** Images can be downloaded here  [Festival of Blossom at Cotehele 2024](#). Only to be used in conjunction with this press release. Credit and caption as per file name.

### **About Cotehele**

Cotehele is located in St Dominick, Cornwall, near Saltash, PL12 6TA. The estate and quay are open every day dawn-dusk; the garden, Edgcumbe tea-room, Barn Restaurant, shop and gallery from 10am-5pm. the house is open daily from 11am-4pm, the mill from 11am-4.30pm. For more details about Cotehele, please visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele](https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/cotehele) or facebook.com/cotehele or Twitter: @cotehelent or contact Cotehele on 01579 351346.

### **About the National Trust**

The National Trust is an independent conservation charity founded in 1895 by three people: Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter and Hardwicke Rawnsley, who saw the importance of the nation's heritage and open spaces and wanted to preserve them for everyone to enjoy. Today, across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, we continue to look after places so people and nature can thrive.

We care for more than 250,000 hectares of countryside, 780 miles of coastline, 1 million collection items and 500 historic properties, gardens and nature reserves. In 2022/23 we received 24 million visitors to our pay for entry sites. The National Trust is for everyone - we were founded for the benefit of the whole nation, and our 5.7 million members, funders and donors, and tens of thousands of volunteers support our work to care for nature, beauty, history for everyone, for ever.

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