

GILES CHICHESTER MEP

for the South West and Gibraltar

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PRESS RELEASE

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MEP CHICHESTER OFFERS SUPPORT FOR THE ST. IVES PORTHMEOR STUDIOS RENOVATION PROJECT

During a recent visit to Porthmeor Studios and Cellars in St. Ives, the South West Conservative MEP, Giles Chichester, expressed considerable dismay at the fragile and dilapidated condition of this Listed Building which plays a vital role in the fishing and art industries of Cornwall.

Chris Hibbert, the Manager of the Borlase John Wells Trust which owns the property, informed MEP Chichester of their plans to renovate the building and detailed efforts to acquire the £3.7m necessary to cover the estimated cost of the project. To date, the Trust has been allocated £1.2m from the Arts Council Capital Building Programme and is now negotiating a major contribution towards the renovation project from the European Regional Development Fund (Convergence and Fisheries).

MEP Chichester warmly congratulated the Trust on its efforts to protect and restore this important heritage site for the people of Cornwall. He promised to give all possible advice, help and support to secure EU funding for the Porthmeor Studios renovation project.

The Porthmeor Studios and Cellars building was erected in the 19th Century to be used as a packing and processing centre for the local pilchard industry. In 1948, it was acquired by a Memorial Trust set up in honour of Borlase Smart, a leading St Ives landscape painter, to foster local artists and support local fishermen. Today it provides work space for the St. Ives School of Painting as well as storage facilities for local fishermen. It is of significant social, cultural and economic importance to Cornwall County and, in particular, to the St. Ives community.

ENDS

Photos:

1. (L to R) Chris Hibbert, Giles Chichester and artist John Emanuel in the Studios
2. (L to R) Lady Carroll Holland, Giles Chichester, Marc Osterfield and Chris Hibbert in the Studios with view of St Ives Bay
3. (L to R) Artists Anita Plume and Maureen Bennett in the Studios

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Conservatives in the European Parliament