WELL, THAT ESCALATED QUICKLY...

SOFTWARE CORNWALL
IMPACT REPORT 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Software Cornwall team is ambitious. Under the visionary leadership of Holly Patton and Niki Davies, it is our dream that we elevate Cornwall's status as a prime hub for tech business, both within the county and nationally. And now with support from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, our goal is to spotlight Cornwall's thriving tech industry, inspire individuals to explore tech-centric career pathways and bolster our local economy in the long term.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Cornwall Festival of Tech
This upcoming two-week celebration, to commence in February 2024 onwards, epitomises our vision. It's a platform to showcase Cornwall's tech capabilities, inspire new talent, and foster economic growth.

New Initiatives
Startup Cornwall Powered By Slush'D was a UK first and marked a new milestone in supporting regional tech startups.

Community and Skills Development
Our outreach programs and digital training initiatives have expanded, enhancing skills and job prospects in our community.

Looking ahead
As we step into the next year, we're excited to build on this momentum, furthering our commitment to tech innovation and community empowerment. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our members and partners for their unwavering support and collaboration. Together, we're not just envisioning a tech-forward Cornwall; we're actively creating it.

INTRODUCTION

Who We Are
Software Cornwall Ltd represents the heart and soul of Cornwall's burgeoning tech sector. Established as a not-for-profit organisation, our mission is to nurture and accelerate the growth of the tech community in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. We serve as a collaborative hub, connecting businesses, educators and individuals passionate about technology and innovation.

Our Vision
Our Vision is to position Cornwall as a globally recognised centre for technology and innovation. We believe in the immense potential of our region to be a leading player in the tech industry, not just within the UK, but on an international stage. Our efforts are focused on fostering a vibrant, skilled and connected tech community that drives economic growth and creates opportunities for all.

Our Mission
To drive positive social change by empowering Cornwall's tech community.

Conclusion
As we present this impact report, we celebrate the collective achievements of our community and reaffirm our commitment to making Cornwall a hub of tech excellence. We invite you to join us on this exciting journey, as we continue to innovate, educate and collaborate for a brighter tech-enabled future.

Our Approach
We believe in a community-driven approach, where every voice matters. Our activities are shaped by the needs and aspirations of our members and the broader tech community in Cornwall. We strive to be inclusive, innovative and impactful in everything we do, ensuring that Cornwall not only keeps pace with technological advancements but leads the way in creating a sustainable tech future.

Cornwall Tech Jam

**Polperro
Primary School**

**Tech Connect - For
the Future**

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH

**Spaceport Cornwall
Rocket Launch**

**Gateway into Tech
Learning Day**

Looe Primary School

Cornwall Tech Jam

Imagination Unleashed

Tech Connect LATE

**Cornwall
Chamber Presentation**

Cornwall Tech Jam

Cornwall Tech Jam

The World Famous, Second Annual, Software Cornwall Pop Culture Quiz Night

Introduction to Docker

Cornwall Tech Jam

Build with AI

HalfStack 2023

Tech Connect LATE

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

AI Chat sessions

Tech Connect - Help us technology you're our only hope

Introduction to Kubernetes

Cornwall Tech Jam

Mission to Mars Recruitment Day

Pitch Club Training

JULY

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

Agile on the Beach

Agile Fundamentals

AI Chat sessions

Four new Work Experiences

Cornwall Tech Jam

Startup Cornwall Powered By Slush'D

Cornwall Tech Jam

Cornwall Tech Jam

T-Level Students

**From Patterns
to Products**

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

**Cornwall Festival of
Tech Launch event**

Cornwall Tech Jam

Cornwall Tech Jam

Battle Bowling

DECEMBER

IMPACT AREAS
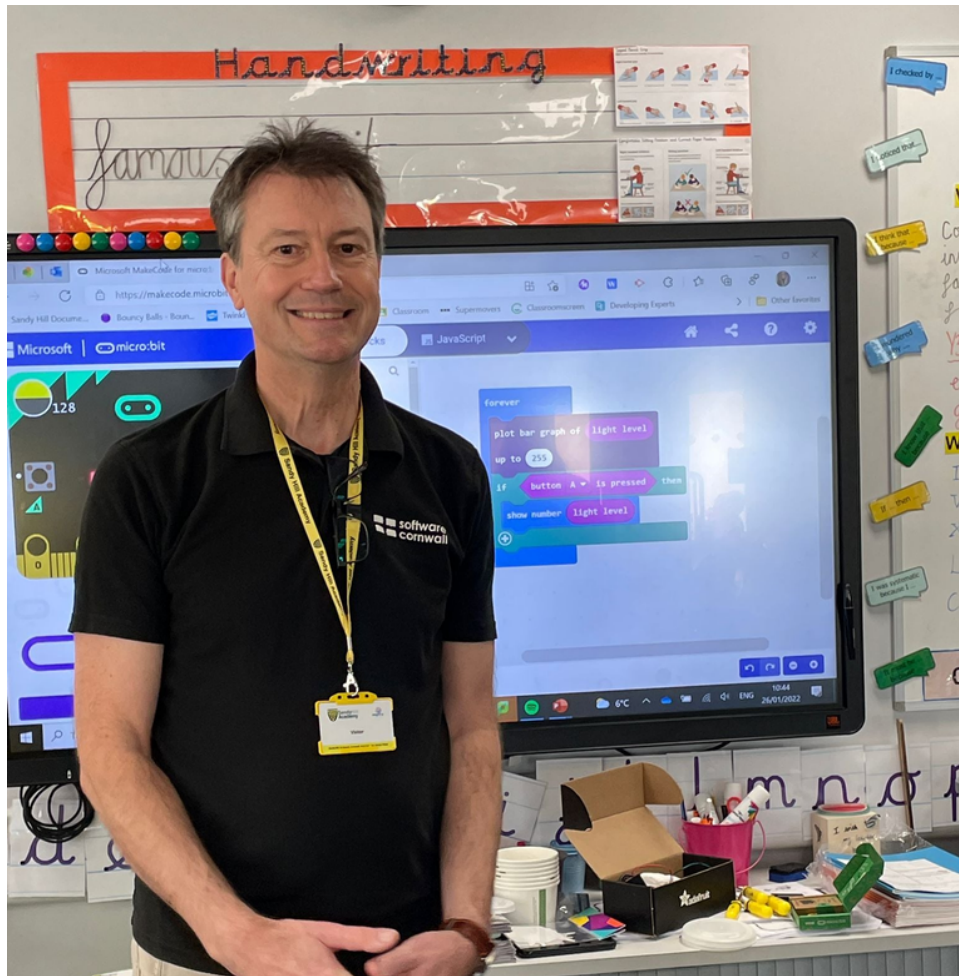
Education Outreach

Software Cornwall still goes out to any primary or secondary school that asks for help. We've visited more than 52 primary schools and hosted workshops utilising the BBC Microbits, Raspberry Pi and the Mission to Mars rovers.

These are also important career influencing opportunities highlighting at an early stage working with technology locally in Cornwall.

As well as primary schools, our education outreach has visited Scouting groups assisting in the provision of the Digital Maker Badge.

Software Cornwall continue to take an active role in careers fairs and networking events across the county, as well as providing our work experience opportunities that give a more in depth look at the world of work.

IMPACT AREAS

Work Experience week(s)

July 2023 saw four new work experiences being run for the Year 10 Cornwall Work Experience week.

Web Development, Digital Marketing, Lora Environmental monitoring and Data Science weeks provided different outlooks on the tech industry around Cornwall to 37 students from Cornwall and the rest of the UK.

"I do think that the work experience with you, as far as George is concerned, was hugely helpful. It definitely led him to the next step in getting his apprenticeship with Cornwall Council, however that transpired."

IMPACT AREAS

Outreach to Older Learners

Outreach also includes activities for adults too. Attending Cornwall Job Centre Careers Fairs highlights the industry as well as being an opportunity to reach those who don't realise a career in tech is possible in Cornwall.

We also hosted four T Levels students at our FibreHub office in October as part of their placement.

"I saw the adult tech jam advertised and jumped at the chance! It did not disappoint; I was amazed at how much I learnt in just a couple of hours. I really had a lot of fun"

IMPACT AREAS

Tech Connect and Tech Connect LATE

This year our Tech Connect and Tech Connect LATE events were hosted at New County Hall by our friends in Cornwall Council, our home, the FibreHub in Pool and at the iconic Old Ale House in Truro.

We reached over 200 of our members and the larger community and featured talks from Cornish speakers and other experts from all over the South West.

Not forgetting our youngest speakers ever - The Penpol Pirates who joined us just before heading across the pond to take part in the Lego League finals!

IMPACT AREAS

HalfStack 2023

Once again, we brought the globally recognised JavaScript and Web conference, HalfStack, to Cornwall.

We packed Sailors Nightclub with the UK's best developers, freelancers and tinkerers to put on another exciting day of talks, demos and discussion from Front-end / Web / JavaScript / Mobile / IoT speakers and technologists.

"The tech community were incredibly supportive and friendly and gave me great advice on what the best platforms were to learn on and what coding languages may be the most suitable for me to learn. This was really the boost and the guidance that I needed!"

IMPACT AREAS

Gateway into Tech

2023 was the final year of Business Clusters, the part funded EU program. This supported the development of the Gateway into Tech. The program will be continuing with investment from the Shared Prosperity Fund.

The program provides support and guidance for these individuals creating opportunities to work together, build projects, learn through each other's experiences, network at Software Cornwall events and meet the businesses. A community program from the heart of the tech community in Cornwall.

Successful career switchers finding jobs: **30%**

"The Gateway to Tech helped me land the role as I was using similar technology in our weekly sessions, therefore I was used to the tech stacks and jargon of the industry, which is vital if you want to successfully manage projects in the industry"

"It is a good way to get support in making a career change, feeling as though you have a team to ask for advice and guidance is a big motivation, having access to a range of courses is amazing.

Being part of Gateway gives an immediate feeling of being welcomed into the tech community and is a great motivator and having ongoing support is really fantastic."

"Joining Gateway to Tech helped me to gain the confidence to start applying for tech jobs.

It also provided me with lots of educational opportunities by enabling me to attend local Tech Connects to learn about a variety of topics from local and national speakers, complete multiple online courses and attend the internationally recognised conference Agile on the Beach."

TRAINING DELIVERY

Building a Skilled Community

In 2023, Software Cornwall proudly upheld its commitment to nurturing talent and fostering skill development within the tech community.

Our focused training programs achieved significant milestones, making a profound impact on individuals and the broader industry.

120+ Aspiring people trained

14+ Comprehensive courses

EMPOWERING SKILLS

The success of our training initiatives is not just measured in numbers, but also in the transformative experiences of our participants. As Software Cornwall continues to evolve, our commitment to education and skill development remains unwavering.

We are excited to build on this year's successes and continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of the tech community.

"Learning is a strategic goal for Bluefruit and Software Cornwall provides world-class trainers in a format that works for us. Software Cornwall does all the hard work organising the sessions and the whole thing is amazing value for money. I couldn't recommend it highly enough."

AGILE ON THE BEACH

This year saw Agile on the Beach continue to grow with 270+ speaker submissions, 50 speakers and 500 attendees. Hosted in the DuMaurier Building on the Falmouth University Campus. Attendees enjoyed a fresh approach on the welcome party for 2023 with a garden party at Tremough House complete with pasties and cream tea's. Which kicked off two full days of inspiring and well received talks and workshops followed by the famous beach party. The conference ended with a brilliant boat party through Carrick Roads!

During one talk members of our team, Robert & Niki took our conference attendees on a live coding demonstration with our Mars Rovers that helped show how important our Education Outreach programme (supported by Agile on the Beach) is to Cornwall.

Agile on the Beach is taking place on the 4th and 5th July 2024 - find out more at **agileonthebeach.com**

STARTUP CORNWALL

POWERED BY SLUSH'D

After a competitive pitching process, Software Cornwall was successful in bringing Europe's largest and most prestigious tech startup event, Slush, to the UK for the very first time in collaboration with Liverpool in September 2023.

Originating in Helsinki, Finland and now in its 15th year, Slush is the most founder-focussed event on earth and welcomes the biggest cohort of tech startup founders, entrepreneurs and VCs in Europe for a two day conference, packed with speakers, pitching, exhibitors and meetings. In the last few years, Slush have invited local tech communities to pitch to bring a 'Slush'd' event to their town or city in order to bolster the support for local startups and entrepreneurs.

Startup Cornwall is coming back in 2024 with tickets already available now and is set to be bigger and better. Stay tuned for more at **www.startupcornwall.co.uk**

STARTUP CORNWALL

POWERED BY **SLUSH'D**

PITCH COMPETITION ENTRIES = 40

PITCH COMPETITION FINALISTS = 10

PITCH COMPETITION WINNER = ONE

200+ ATTENDEES

15+ MINDBLOWING SPEAKERS

18 SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS

THREE PITCH JUDGES

ONE EPIC BBQ OVERLOOKING THE BEACH

AN AMAZING DJ SET AND AFTERPARTY

In a UK first, Slush'd arrived on the doorsteps of Cornwall and Liverpool on the same day for twinned events aimed at launching Slush'd in the UK and supporting founders with inspiring speaker lineups from other founders that have 'been there, done it', a pitch competition and infamous Slush'd afterparty.

Startup Cornwall, powered by Slush'd welcomed 250 entrepreneurs, investors, VCs and business support organisations to Newquay and are excited to be running the event at the same time next year.

Pitch competition winner Rachael Malthouse who's tech product Jam Up won the competition prize pot of a series of funded support services, a demo pitch at Web Summit in Lisbon and a fast track to the Blavatnik Prize for Innovation with a chance to win £50k, said

"Thank you so much for the incredible event on Thursday you hosted. It was so much fun. I'm so glad you made sure Slush'd came to Cornwall - and I know next year it will be even bigger. I am very excited about the incredible opportunities the prizes will bring me."

Software Cornwall's
FESTIVALOFTECH

We were awarded a significant investment into our Cornwall Festival of Tech project towards the end of last year, so instead of our regularly scheduled Tech Connect event, we decided to host a Launch Event at The Eden Project. With almost 150 attendees including Software Cornwall partners and business leaders we were able to talk about our exciting plans for the first Cornwall Festival of Tech.

Joined by our Keynote Speaker, Georgie Barrat, we spent a few hours in the shadow of the Eden Biomes talking about the future of technology and artificial intelligence. This is an exciting chance we have to put Cornwall on the map as a place for young people to have a career in technology and companies to run their business in a County that supports the local tech industry and talent.

Cornwall Festival of Tech is running 12th to 25th Feb 2024 - find out more at **cornwallfestivaloftech.co.uk**

SOFTWARECORNWALL.ORG

At the heart of Software Cornwall's success is our committed team, whose tireless efforts and innovative thinking have propelled us forward. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each member for their unique contributions.

Our journey this year would not have been possible without the enthusiasm and support of our members and contributors.
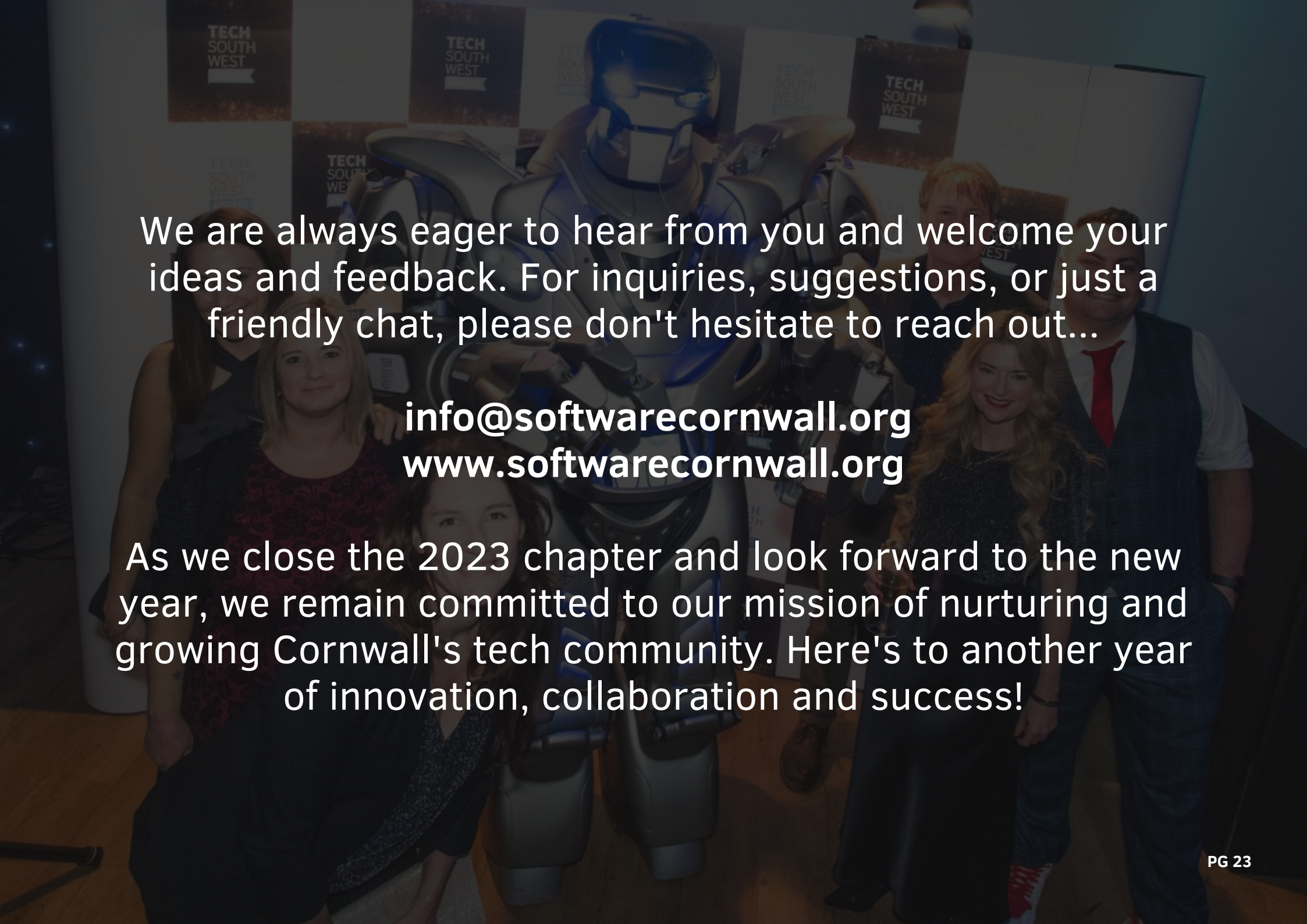
With 80+ member companies and a growing community, each of you play a vital role in shaping the tech landscape in Cornwall. Your ideas, participation and feedback have been the driving force behind our initiatives and events.

A special thank you goes out to all our partners, sponsors and volunteers who have supported at our events and throughout the year. Your commitment to our vision is invaluable.

This year, we were honoured to receive the 'Highly Commended' recognition at the Tech South West Awards 2023. This accolade is a testament to the collaborative spirit and dedication of our team and community. We share this achievement with every one of you.

We are always eager to hear from you and welcome your ideas and feedback. For inquiries, suggestions, or just a friendly chat, please don't hesitate to reach out...

info@softwarecornwall.org
www.softwarecornwall.org

As we close the 2023 chapter and look forward to the new year, we remain committed to our mission of nurturing and growing Cornwall's tech community. Here's to another year of innovation, collaboration and success!