

**“Derby is becoming an outstanding symbol of regeneration, famous across Europe”**  
says Sir Tim Smit

Sustainability champion and co-founder of Cornwall’s Eden Project, Sir Tim Smit, has recently launched a new community garden at the new £175m [Nightingale Quarter](#) complex in Derby city centre.

The £40,000 pilot project is a collaboration between Wavensmere Homes and Down to Earth Derby, which will also now rolled out across the housebuilder’s city-wide development portfolio.

Down to Earth Derby is the Community Interest Company (CIC) behind the city’s widely-acclaimed [Electric Daisy](#) attraction. By connecting the urban community with nature-based activities and a diverse events programme, it has become a nationally recognised symbol of the ambitious regeneration and revitalisation of the city.

This ethos has been in play for the past six months, while an expansive community garden has been planned, landscaped and planted by residents living at the 18.5-acre redevelopment of the former Derbyshire Royal Infirmary, working together with Down to Earth’s team.

Now also a magnet for nature and wildlife, the interactive garden and allotment space is being enjoyed and maintained by locals of all ages, including groups of school children from nearby St James’ C of E Junior School.

Sir Tim Smit, mentor to Down to Earth Derby, explains, “The nature-based regeneration that’s been achieved across Derby during the past 12 months shows the potential, together with the public support and appetite for more vibrant urban spaces. Down to Earth launched Electric Daisy 12 months ago and has received fantastic support from local people, businesses and organisations. The team has also undertaken a number of projects to introduce interactive nature beds and green spaces to inner city schools. And now, this first collaboration with a housebuilder has opened.

“Derby is becoming an outstanding symbol of regeneration, famous across Europe. As the community garden was not a planning obligation, we are very grateful to Wavensmere Homes for the investment, commitment and shared vision. Collaborative nature projects like this bring people together to learn about flora and fauna, and the joy that comes with growing seasonal fruit and vegetables. I am encouraging all those involved to see that the success of this pilot may ignite a national appetite for funded community gardens.”

The former Derbyshire Royal Infirmary was derelict for a decade before the Birmingham-headquartered regeneration specialist acquired the site and commenced construction in 2019. Alongside the 125 houses, 800 apartments, co-working space, running track, and over six-acres of open space, Nightingale Quarter (taking its name from Derby’s close association with Florence Nightingale) has brought about the restoration and redevelopment of the former hospital’s two iconic pepper pot buildings - built in 1894.

Pepper Pot South is being transformed into a residents’ gym and community meeting room, while the other accommodates The Fulton Partnership’s highly acclaimed gastro-style [Pepperpot](#) restaurant.

For further visitor information about Derby, visit <https://www.visitderby.co.uk>.

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