

Pro-Chancellor

Sir Tim Smit is a successful entrepreneur who has enjoyed a career spanning archaeology, the music industry, horticulture and global education. He was fundamental in the development of two of the UK's biggest tourist attractions, the Lost Gardens of Heligan and The Eden Project.

Born in Holland, Sir Tim studied archaeology and anthropology at Durham University, subjects that remain close to his heart.

Following a year working as Deputy County Archaeologist for Durham, Sir Tim moved to London to pursue a music career. It was pure luck that during a game of football, he kicked a sound engineer from Abbey Road Studios. They struck up a friendship, and eventually produced a record entitled 'Midnight Blue' which sold several million copies and was a huge hit in France. Sir Tim says that he felt nothing for his new found fame, commenting that he felt more of a 'business product'.

A family holiday took Sir Tim to Cornwall where he was enlisted to recover and restore Heligan Gardens. This led to the opening to the public of the Lost Gardens of Heligan in 1992 and Sir Tim remains a Director to this day. This discovery ignited a passion for horticulture and in 1995 he had an idea that became The Eden Project, which opened its doors to the public in 2000. Eden is estimated to have contributed well over £1.7bn to the Cornish economy and has welcomed more than 18 million visitors since opening. It is now a global brand with a project under development in Qingdao, China. He is also a Director of 'Jurassica', a project to convert an old Portland stone quarry into a major educational centre and tourist attraction in Dorset by 2021.

Sir Tim was awarded an honorary CBE in 2002 and an honorary KBE in 2011, which was made substantive in 2012 when he became a British Citizen. He keeps his feet on the ground and was greatly humbled when on a visit to his alma mater in 2014, he found himself sat next to his tutor, Dame Rosemary Cramp; she told him that she had followed his career closely, and that she was extremely proud of his accomplishments.

Pro-Chancellor, I have the honour to present Sir Tim Smit, and I ask you to confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Education, *honoris causa*.