

## **AGENDA ITEM 12a**

### **NOTES OF THE MEETING of the HERITAGE ALLIANCE held on THURSDAY 11<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2024 at 11am.**

#### **In Attendance:**

Representing Tavistock Heritage Trust- Geri Parlby, David Conn.  
Representing Tavistock Parish Church- John Rea  
Representing Tavistock Town Council- Wayne Southall, Tabitha Teale.  
Representing West Devon Borough Council- Cllr Caroline Mott.  
Representing Tavistock Subscription Library- Ruth Blowey.  
Representing Tavistock Local History Society- Chris Bellers.  
Representing Museum of Policing in Devon and Cornwall- Alison Holmes.  
Representing Tavistock BID- Janna Sanders.  
Representing Tavistock Museum- Tony Rose.

Apologies were made on behalf of Simon Thompson who was unable to attend the meeting.

#### **1. CONFIRMATION OF NOTES:**

- a) The notes of the meeting of the Heritage Alliance held on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024 were confirmed as a true record of the meeting.

#### **2. HERITAGE ORGANISATION UPDATES:**

- a) The Museum of Policing in Devon and Cornwall discussed that they were now closed for the winter period but would reopen for special events such as the upcoming Dickensian evening. It was explained that there were challenges around volunteer recruitment and retention and that for the new season opening times may vary dependent on availability of volunteers.
- b) Tavistock BID discussed that arrangements for Dickensian evening and that the Christmas lights installation were progressing well. It was acknowledged that it was a positive intervention that the Heritage Quarter were planning to open in the evening of Dickensian.
- c) A discussion was led by West Devon Borough Council regarding how best the town could promote the status of being a World Heritage Site. It was explained the Tavistock Town Council were in regular liaison with WHS representative regarding various future promotions/initiatives and would report back accordingly. A more general discussion was had around how best the heritage community could engage with the public, re: such activities/events as Heritage Open Days, projects including Abbey Remains and looking at past practice regarding community events delivered. It was acknowledged that any such initiatives should be reviewed taking into account resource implications.
- d) The Subscription Library updated the group regarding their membership levels and that they expected to achieve their yearly targets.

- e) The History Society representative discussed that they had held a recent talk that was well attended and received and a discussion followed around possibly using floor maps, dependent of available space. A general update was given regarding the Ward and Chowen archiving explaining that it had moved from Pitts Cleave and was currently in storage and that discussions were ongoing with Tavistock Museum relating to availability of space and storage conditions, including also the condition of the archived material.
- f) Tavistock Museum discussed that the Mary Freeman documents are available and that these are pertinent for the Abbey Remains Project, due to being excellent resources which are available in a PDF Format and can be given out if requested.

In addition, it was explained that the museum is currently closed but would reopen for Dickensian evening for tours and readings, hrs aligned with the Guildhall opening times for this event. The Museum of Policing added that last year they were very busy and intended to open as well.

A discussion was had relating to property maintenance challenges within Tavistock Museum specific to damp, mold and damaged lather and plaster. It was explained that a meeting was planned for 1pm today with a follow up meeting with the architect scheduled for 20<sup>th</sup> November. It was acknowledged that the Council had recently invested heavily from a capital perspective and that there were ongoing interventions being considered, with the tenant managing/monitoring such aspects as ventilation, heating and using dehumidifiers to mitigate further deterioration. Ongoing challenges around maintaining building fabric in the Guildhall courtroom after significant capital investment as a comparator due to the type of porous external stone was referenced for context.

- g) The Tavistock Heritage Trust updated the group regarding the social media posts, directed around supporting the Abbey Remains Project with encouraging community engagement. Further to this, approx. a dozen individuals were involved within the research team and it was explained that a draft funding application had been compiled to be submitted to NLHF for IRO £200,000. An overview of works that had been undertaken to Betsy Grimbals Tower was provided, funded by Historic England and Tavistock Town Council, including a review of the condition survey previously commissioned on 2017. It was explained that part of the project would include housing artifacts within Tavistock Museum and would include improving the interpretation within Tavistock Guildhall. Furthermore, Tavistock Town Council were considering the implications of being accountable body for the project.

An update was provided relating to the project to relocate the 6<sup>th</sup> century memorial stones located within the vicarage garden.

Tavistock Heritage Trust discussed the Devonshire Association Grant and if there was any opportunities to secure funding.

- h) Tavistock Parish Church representative discussed the upcoming Christmas Tree Festival as well as the Christmas Carol Service being held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

### **3. OTHER BUSINESS:**

- a) Attendees were advised that the Chair wished to step down from the position and it was agreed that David Conn would take over the role at the next meeting.
- b) Tavistock Town Council explained what would be the interim operating arrangements for at least the next 6 months following the resignation of the Guildhall Duty Officer and that the facility would be closed from the 22<sup>nd</sup> December until the 14<sup>th</sup> January for a deep clean and maintenance.
- c) It was agreed that the next meeting of the Heritage Alliance would be held on **22<sup>nd</sup> January at 11am** in the Robing Room, Guildhall.