

AGENDA ITEM No 6(a)

NOTES OF THE MEETING of the HERITAGE ALLIANCE held on Wednesday 4th June 2025 at 11am.

In Attendance:

Representing Tavistock Heritage Trust- David Conn.
Representing Tavistock Town Council- Wayne Southall, Tabitha Teale, Cllr Jeff Moody, Cllr Bev Moody.
Representing West Devon Borough Council- Caroline Mott
Representing Tavistock Subscription Library- Ruth Blowey.
Representing Tavistock Local History Society- Chris Bellers.
Representing TASS- Simon Thompson.
Representing Tavistock Parish Church- Bob Owens.
Representing Tavistock Museum- Lesley Holliday.

Apologies were made on behalf of Sue Andrews, Win Cudlip, Simon Dell, Janna Sanders and Alison Holmes, who were unable to attend the meeting.

1. CONFIRMATION OF NOTES:

- a) The notes of the Heritage Alliance meeting held on the 23rd April were confirmed as a true record.

2. MATTERS ARISING:

- a) Attendees discussed the recent VE Day Celebrations, agreeing that the event overall was a success and had been well received by the public.

3. HERITAGE ORGANISATION UPDATES:

- a) Tavistock BID: A report had been submitted by Tavistock BID explaining that plans for the Cream Tea Festival were progressing well, with multiple locations being used and good coverage from the press expected. Tavistock Museum commented that they were intending to open on the Monday of that week to support the event. An overview of progress relating to the new Visit Tavistock platform was provided and it was explained that the events page information database previously lost had been recovered. THT provided an update of how they were working closely with Tavistock BID around promotion of the site to reach a wider audience. An update of the Tavistock BID promoted Heritage Trails was provided.
- b) Tavistock Museum: The museum manager explained that the current visitor comments are very positive, with online posts increasing with a hashtag being used to draw attention and traffic towards the museum. A meeting was suggested between TTC, THT and the museum to discuss what would be the best way to co-ordinate digital approaches. An overview of the difficulties relating to ensuring there was sufficient volunteer cover for opening times was outlined. It was explained what the £2,000 TTC grant was allocated towards, relating to improving visitor accessibility. A broad discussion was held around signage in general and the limitations within a conservation area and

scheduled monument site and what other mediums could be used, e.g. flag banners for promotion.

- c) Tavistock Parish Church: The representative explained that they were looking at future arrangements specific to the management of their heritage artifacts.
- d) West Devon Borough Council: An explanation was provided detailing what potential grants may be available in the short to medium term which could benefit the heritage community, including the Rural Services Network. An overview was provided specific to WDBC promoting heritage assets and it was discussed how this could be linked to the scheduled Heritage Fair and Heritage Open Days.
- e) Tavistock Local History Society: The representative advised that they had recently had a stall at the Robey Trust Steam Fair, which had been well attended. Suggestions were made that other Heritage Organisations could participate in similar events, to cross promote the Alliance activities. Discussions with the Museum, regarding films provided for those with access restraints, led to the museum representative giving an overview of the amount and type of videos currently available, with all museum stewards being aware that they can be provided. Further to this, discussions with the TTC representative surrounding the Cemetery Guided Walks, led to permission being granted to access the old waiting room/mortuary. The challenges regarding gaining access to the church tower for tours due to health and safety concerns was outlined and it was explained that further discussions would be held around a more limited access request.
- f) Tavistock Subscription Library: An overview of current activities was provided, including providing updates on their open days and an archiving activity following book donations.
- g) Tavistock Area Support Services: The representative explained their plans relating to VJ Day on the 9th September, specific to sharing memories and holding talks. A recent school project was outlined and that posters would be displayed within the museum. An overview was provided pertaining to a scheduled history conference in 2026 and how the alliance could potentially benefit.
- h) Tavistock Town Council: An update on the partnership between THT/TTC relating to the Abbey Remains Project was provided explaining that a draft grant application to Historic England was about to be submitted, totaling £254,000 (including match finding), primarily involving improving the Betsy Grimal Tower asset, which would in turn mean it would be removed from the 'at risk register'. It was explained that if the Historic England grant was awarded that the partnership would re-apply to NLHF for funding to support the wider project aspirations. The THT representative clarified that further alternative funding would also be sought to support the research team and archeological elements of the project. It was confirmed that the Heritage Fair

would be held on 26th July and that invitations would be issued shortly. To support such events the idea of providing street/theatre acts within the town to engage with the public and show case the local history was outlined.

- i) Tavistock Heritage Trust: It was explained that David Conn would most likely become the next Chair of THT and that THT were looking for new trustees. The challenges specific to relocating the three 6th century memorial stones currently within the Vicarage Gardens were outlined. An update on the newsletter was given, with feedback that it had been well received, and that the statistics pertaining to community reach were currently being calculated. Regarding Heritage Open Days, THT advised of progress being made specific to the administration of the event and the development of the newsletter/brochure. Finally it was explained that the guided walks were progressing well, with interest in personalised walks being requested, this being an area that THT have looked into previously for bespoke packages.

The next meeting is arranged for the 15th July at 11:00am.