

REDISCOVERY TAVISTOCK ABBEY - PROJECT PLAN

The Abbey project as accepted by the NHLF consists of four main elements:

- A. The repair of Betsy Grimbal's Tower and the Stillhouse plus improvement to the physical access where possible, plus the installation of solar panel lighting to the archway to view the artifacts.
- B. Geophysical survey of the abbey precinct (the churchyard, a portion of the Square, a portion of Plymouth Road and portion of Abbey Place), plus digs and documentation of the outcomes, plus investigation of previous archaeological investigations and research, to improve the understanding of the site.
- C. Interpretation in the Guildhall with the updating/creation of resources for local education and to support walks, talks and events.
- D. Community engagement programme with volunteers, conservation training visits, a talk series, school event days and activities with the Youth Café.

In more detail each element consists of:

A. The repair of Betsy Grimbal's Tower and the Stillhouse plus improvement to the physical access where possible, plus the installation of solar panel lighting to the archway to view the artifacts.

The repairs to both buildings along with the conservation training days will be managed by the Town Council, however, the Group involvement will include meetings with the appointed archaeologist to finalise details of the dig area within the archway as shown on the attached Appendix A. The removal of the cobbles and subsequent back filling and replacing the cobbles will be part of the build contract. The estimated time for the dig is 10 days and this will have to fit in with the contractor's contract programme.

B. Geophysical survey of the abbey precinct (the churchyard, a portion of the Square, a portion of Plymouth Road and portion of Abbey Place), plus digs and documentation of the outcomes, plus investigation of previous archaeological investigations and research, to improve the understanding of the site.

The archaeological work will be managed by the Group and the consultant will be sought via tender through the Town Council and the appointee have been selected based on the brief already prepared, plus a plan showing the area for investigation and the location of the dig sites. The Group representatives will liaise with the consultant, but will manage the day-to-day running of the digs when on site.

The Betsy Grimbal's Tower dig will be overseen by the appointed consultant archaeologist working with the Group's representatives, with the works carried out by

volunteers, and due to the timescale, this is likely not to include children due to digging being carried out during the working day in term time.

The cloister dig will be programmed such that it will take place during the school summer holidays to enable children on holiday and the Youth Cafe to take part. The dig will be overseen and recorded by the consultant archaeologist working with the Groups- representatives. The recorded information will be made available to the Group for interpretation, and events and activities.

The Group's representatives will report back regularly to their co-ordinator (see Governance document) to enable us to meet the NHLF grant requirements and for publicity purposes.

The co-ordination of previous archaeological investigations forms part of this element such that the project end data base will contain reference sources as a minimum to enable researchers to find out more about the abbey in the future via one main source.

C. Interpretation in the Guildhall with the updating/creation of resources for local education and to support walks, talks and events.

To enable the interpretation, research forms a major part of this element and is treated as such as shown on the Governance document, forming a separate group from the Interpretation element. The research will be carried out by volunteers who will investigate subject areas relating to the life and times of the abbey. Various levels of research will be carried out, some of which will be used for the interpretation. Others will be stored on a data base to be used to create the proposed book on the abbey in due course. The data base will be a source of information for other researchers and for education purposes.

The interpretation in the Guildhall will see the removal of the existing information about the abbey and a designated room set specifically for the abbey. A consultant/organisation to design and install the interpretation will be appointed by the Town Council. The leading person for the interpretation, will liaise with the consultant to investigate the best possible audio/visual active outcome possible with the budget available.

Walks, talks and events will be organised by the THT as part of their annual programme.

D. Community engagement programme with volunteers, conservation training visits, a talk series, school event days and activities with the Youth Café.

Conservation training days - will happen when the repair works are underway and will be managed by the Town Council, the appointed architect and the contractor for those working in the building industry as well as those who either own buildings where traditional materials used, or have a keen interest in understanding conservation best

practice. This may include older school children who are interested in conservation as a career.

School event days - through the Discovery Group visits will be organised through their existing school contacts to visit the abbey and explore what the outcomes of the digs, repairs and research has provided.

Talk series - will be managed by the THT following the conclusion of the project.

Tavistock Youth Café - two events are to take place in which the Youth Café will take part.

- a) Setting out the abbey church within the churchyard based on the known medieval paces with the help of a volunteer surveyor. Once flagged/marked out it will be photographed by drone and this will be compared with the geophysical findings.
- b) Viking boat race - model Viking ships to be built by the young people and sailed down the canal to commemorate the ransacking of the abbey in 997.

Suggested programme for the project based on the information submitted to the NHLF.

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>ACTIVITY/EVENT</u> |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 2026 | |
| February: (early) | HNLf grant approved and signed off by the Town Council. Architect appointed for the repair works. Tenders sought for the appointment of the archaeological consultant. |
| (end of) | Tenders sought for the repair works. |
| March: | Group's archaeology volunteers continue the search for pieces of the abbey in town and surrounding area - this work continues throughout 2026- early 2027. The records of the finds to be evaluated by the archaeological consultant. Group's research volunteers continue with the various elements of the research for the interpretation, booklet, etc - this work continues throughout 2026 to early 2027. |
| End of) | Tender received for the repair works and company appointed. Tenders received from archaeologists and company appointed. |
| April: (early) | Working with the Group's archaeology team the extent of the geophysical work and the digs is finalised. BGT artefacts removed by the conservator to enable repair works and dig. Geologist/Groups team work with the contractor to set up the BGT dig. <i>(Subject to appropriate consents being in place).</i> |

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| | Abbey Group to seek Schedule B consent from the Exeter DAC for the cloister digs. |
| (Mid/late) | Geologist/Groups team commence the dig with volunteers. 10 days on site? |
| | Geologist/Groups team present documentation on how the dig in the churchyard to progress. |
| Half term? | The abbey measurement project takes place with Paul Blowey (volunteer surveyor) and the Youth Café. |
| June: | Once consents are in place Schedule B + SAMC commence geophysical investigation of the abbey precinct as shown on plan A. |
| | BGT conservation day. |
| July: | Archaeology consultant/Archaeology Group finalise the geophysical investigation and the cloister digs with the Youth Café and other volunteers. |
| | Stillhouse conservation day. |
| School holidays | |
| August: | Archaeology consultant/Archaeology Group commence the geophysical investigation and cloister digs with the Youth Café and other volunteers. ** days on site? |
| | Viking ship race on the canal with Youth Café, Discovery Group and other volunteers. |
| Sept/Dec: | Using the materials obtained from research and the geophysics the Abbey Group develop how they see the interpretation to clarify the brief to appoint the company to design and install the audio/visual/computer generation for the interpretation and alterations in the Guildhall. |
| 2027 | |
| February: | Seek tenders from companies to design and install the audio/visual/computer generation for the interpretation and alterations in the Guildhall. |
| March: | Appoint company to design and install the audio/visual/computer generation for the interpretation and alterations in the Guildhall. |
| May: | Abbey Group work with the company to finalise the interpretation content. |
| | The Group work on a leaflet which will be available re the VIC for visitors and schools. |

July: The agreed design for the interpretation is signed off the by TTC.

December: Interpretation installed and other displays rearranged.

2028

March: Official opening event of the interpretation.

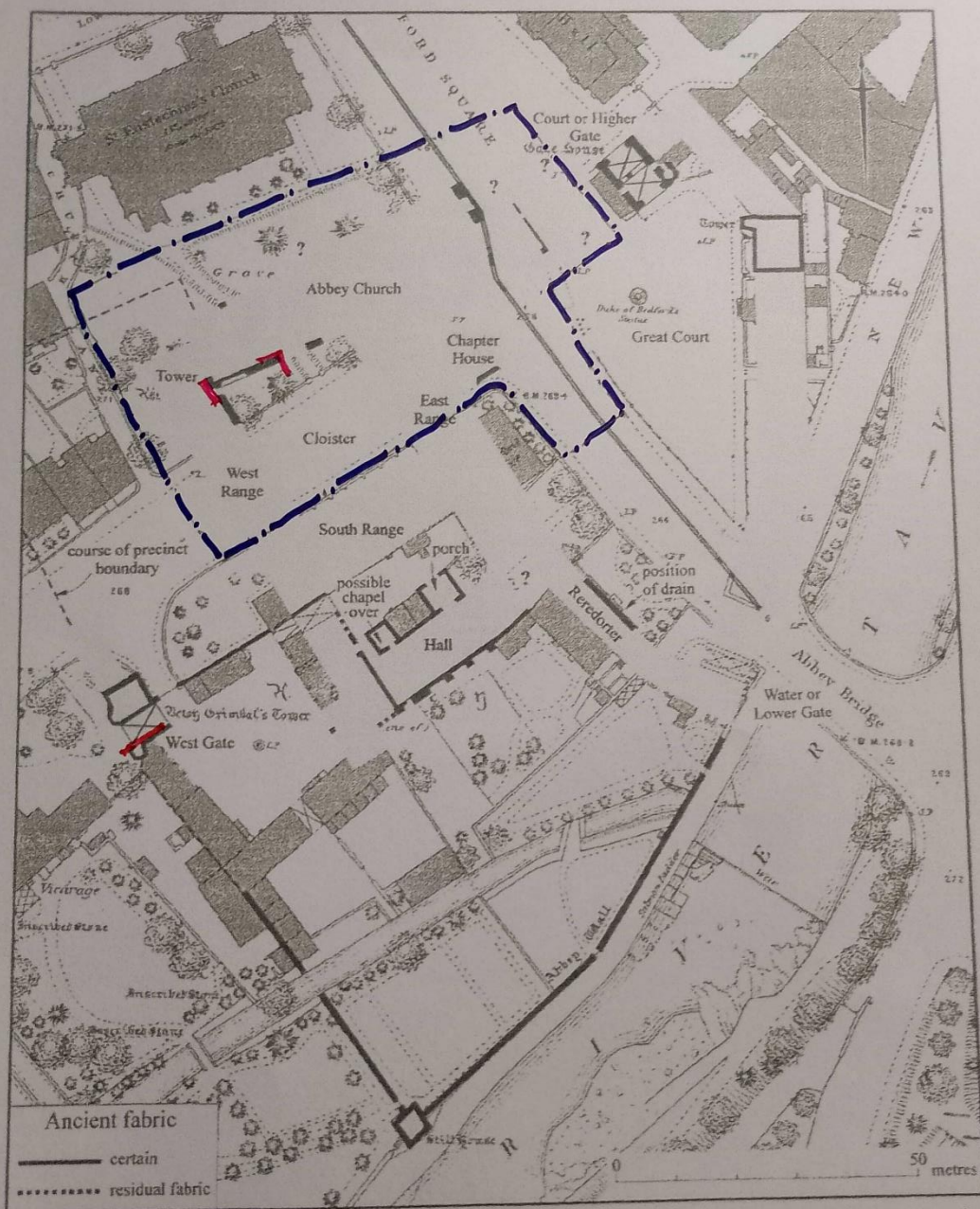


Fig. 4 Conjectural reconstruction of the main elements of the plan of Tavistock Abbey, superimposed on the OS 1:500 town plan of Tavistock, sheet CV.8.17, of 1885 (revised version of Blaylock 1998, fig. 3; and Stead and Blaylock forthcoming, fig. 11).

--- Area to be investigated
 = Location of digs

