

**TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL  
BUDGET AND POLICY COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2023**

**BRIEFING NOTE  
BETSY GRIMBAL'S TOWER**

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Committee will recall prior discussions, on various occasions, regarding the viability/possibility of securing financial support for the restoration/protection of the above, which represents one of the most historically significant structures in the ownership of the Council.
- 1.2 Unfortunately, with the impact of Covid – both on the Council and on potential external funding streams, it was not possible to further progress the matter.

**2. THE CURRENT SITUATION**

- 2.1 In February a meeting was held with representatives of Heritage and Community organisations to discuss a suggestion for consideration by the Council in connection with both Betsy Grimbal's Tower/Still House and the wider remains of Tavistock Abbey. Following that meeting a project proposal has been submitted (Appendix 1) by the Heritage grouping for consideration by the Council.
- 2.2 It is evident that the scope of the project is both ambitious and extends to include not only physical conservation and care, but also information, education and research. It is understood that initial discussions with both Historic England and National Lottery Heritage Fund (HE and NLHF) have been encouraging.
- 2.3 The Heritage grouping sponsoring the project is aware of the Council's financial position and, at this stage, is not asking for financial support from it. (NOTE it is acknowledged that, should external funding be secured, there is a reasonable expectation that a level of contribution from the landlord might be required to enable the project to proceed. Similarly there might be resource implications associated with delivery arrangements depending of funding format.
- 2.4 However, the 'ask' of the Council at this time, is to indicate its support for the project in principle to enable the project group to initiate discussions with potential funders with a view to developing a

prospective scheme (with which the Council would be fully involved insofar as properties in its custody were concerned).

### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 The proposal under consideration is consistent with the relevant provisions of the Council's Strategic Plan 2017-2023 and accords with its continuing commitment to maintaining Heritage assets in its ownership and working collaboratively. It further represents a natural "next step" from the detailed survey of Betsy Grimbal's Tower undertaken pre-Covid, and links into long standing discussions regarding town promotion. Clearly if/when any project is better developed the Council, as land owner, will need to consider and as/if appropriate sign off against both project details and any associated landowner costs.

### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 It is therefore recommended that Tavistock Town Council welcome the project "A Future for the Tavistock Abbey Remains" and confirm its support, in principle, for the development of a bid to NLHF/HE (or other relevant funders) along the lines set out in Appendix 1.

**CARL HEARN  
TOWN CLERK  
TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL  
MARCH 2023**