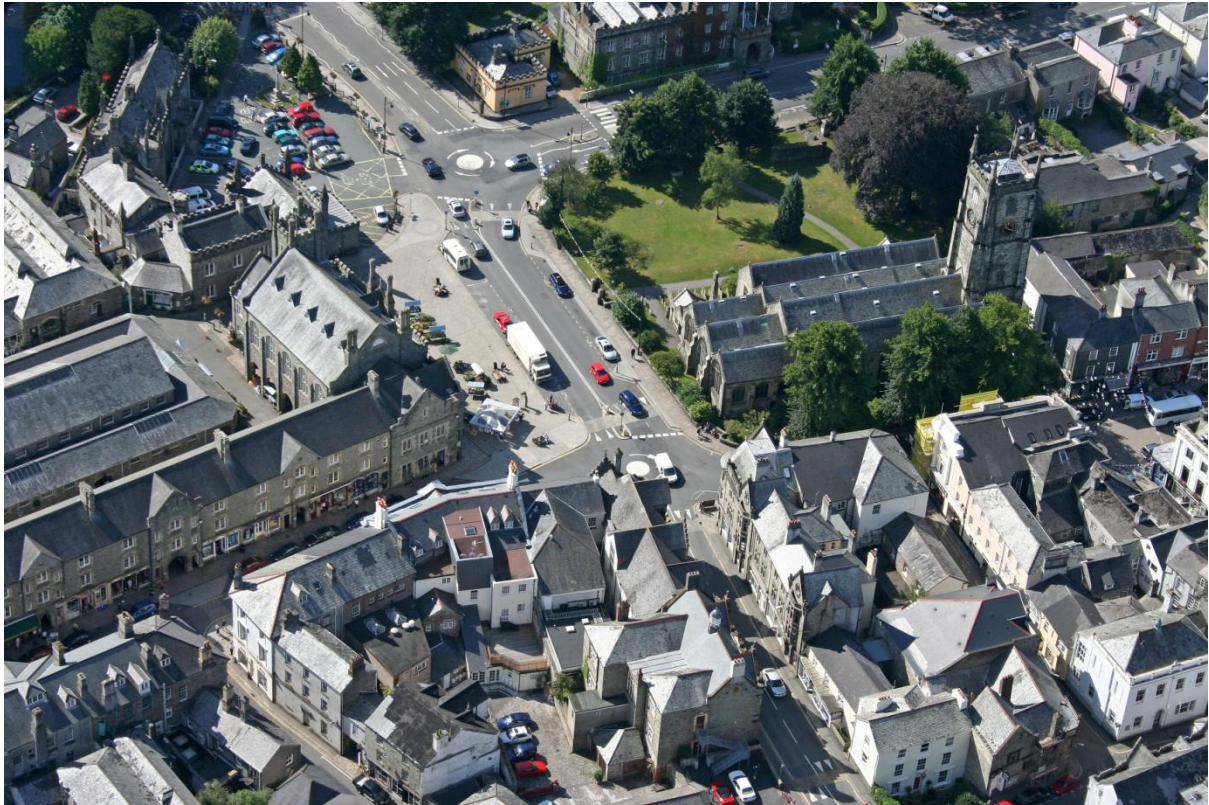


# Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme



Stage 2 Submission and Action Plan

April 2014



West Devon  
Borough  
Council

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## **Tavistock THI Stage 2 HLF Bid - Executive Summary**

The Tavistock Townscape Heritage Partnership through the Tavistock Town Council is pleased to submit this Stage 2 Bid for a Townscape Heritage Initiative in the town centre of Tavistock. This follows the successful Stage 1 award in March 2013.

The Initiative will be focused upon the central part of the historic market town of Tavistock which is a Conservation Area and World Heritage Site. It is within an area which has suffered from a lack of investment in the heritage infrastructure and declining confidence amongst the business community. The town depends to a considerable extent on its retail businesses and tourism which have both been declining in recent years. Local income levels and productivity have remained low while house prices remain high compared to local wage levels. Some of the properties in the central area are now in a critical condition and the economic decline is likely to continue because of the vulnerable state of the local economy.

The THI is urgently needed to inspire confidence in the area, reverse the impact of the economic downturn in the fringe areas of Market Street and King Street and enhance the Public Realm. This will improve employment prospects and regenerate the historic core of the town.

Over the next 5 years the THI projects will:

- Repair the external elements of historic buildings
- Reinstate missing architectural detail and remove insensitive alterations
- Return vacant floorspace to productive use
- Enhance the quality of the public realm (eg. in front of the Guildhall and around the Pannier Market)
- Provide a worthy setting for the unique ensemble of civic buildings in the town centre
- Create a town which will attract more shoppers and visitors
- Raise awareness among residents of the WHS and the town's heritage

The key buildings which need investment are situated around Bedford Square which is an outstanding ensemble of high architectural quality thanks to the planning by successive Dukes of Bedford from the nineteenth century. The Critical project at the Butchers Hall will be a programme of repair which will bring this unique building into use to meet the needs of an expanding Pannier Market. It will allow some of the current market stall holders to move

into this building while urgently needed repairs are carried out to the roof of the Pannier Market – now critical to its continuing operation.

As well as these critical projects, a further nine have been identified as likely to be at risk if repair works are not carried out soon.

The other priority projects are within West Street, Market Street and King Street, the medieval streets lined with historic buildings which still remain in the town centre. Most of the owners and tenants have expressed an interest in seeking grant assistance towards the cost of carrying out the urgent repairs needed to their properties. In some cases the reinstatement of lost architectural detail – particularly on shopfronts – can be achieved with grants at a higher rate. These higher rates are justified partly because this work is unlikely to provide any uplift to the value of these properties.

The THI will ensure that these historic buildings can once more flourish to the wider benefit of the town and enhance its appeal to visitors and residents alike. This will encourage further investment and increase economic activity leading to better opportunities for employment in the town and helping to regenerate the commercial heart of the town.

The public spaces within the THI area will also be improved during the THI. The area surrounding the Pannier Market has become degraded and cluttered with unsightly additions. This will be upgraded and enhanced with mainly resurfacing works from the THI and the adjacent Guildhall Square will also benefit from improvements to the historic setting of these important nearby buildings and spaces, improving pedestrian movement, and meanwhile, maintaining accessible and safe car parking. Market Street will be resurfaced in historic materials to improve access to this fringe area of the town centre.

### Activities

There is a problem with the shortage of local contractors and professional advisors with the skills in addressing the needs of heritage buildings. It is therefore proposed that work on the Critical Projects will include a heritage skills open day which will provide an opportunity for local people to see close up how conservation work is delivered and enable them to have a go at building craft skills such as slating or lime rendering. It is also proposed to widely publicise the THI scheme and in particular through the key events and festivals including Heritage Open Days and the newly launched annual Tavistock Heritage Festival. The scheme also includes a conference on Tavistock Abbey, which was so important to the creation and layout of the town centre where the THI is set.

Training Providers at City College Plymouth and Saltash College have agreed to support the THI and provide bespoke skills courses for building crafts during the five years.

Since the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site was inscribed in July 2006, there has been limited awareness raising of the importance of Tavistock to the

WHS. However there is now a commitment to establishing the town as a Key Centre and Eastern Gateway for the WHS. Local people will also be encouraged to engage more fully with the heritage of this town and the idea of World Heritage Status.

Outline spending

The funding partners which support the THI include:-

The Heritage Lottery Fund,

Tavistock Town Council,

West Devon Borough Council,

Devon County Council

and Greater Dartmoor LEAF.

There will also be significant match funding contributions from property owners.

Together we plan to deliver a £2 million pound investment in the heart of the town.



## Section 1.0 Managing the scheme

### 1.1 . The THI Partnership

The Tavistock Townscape Heritage Partnership (TTHP) has been established since April 2008 all the relevant stakeholders in the town. More specifically this includes members and officers from West Devon Borough Council (WDBC), Tavistock Town Council (TTC) and Devon County Council (DCC), representatives from Tavistock and District Historical Society, Tavistock Museum, The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (WHS) Partnership, Tavistock and Chamber of Commerce, Tavistock Forward, TaVi Network and Tavistock BID Company.

The TTHP Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix 1.

The Partnership meets every two months to guide the progress and implementation of the THI and oversee the implementation of the Conservation Area Management Plan. The Partnership communicates with other bodies developing strategies and initiatives within the Tavistock Conservation Area and will have the opportunity to make representations to relevant bodies regarding wider issues that affect the town.

The Partnership formed a THI Steering Group which guided the preparation of the successful Stage 1 submission to the HLF in 2012.

During the delivery stage the Partnership will delegate the assessment of third party grants to a Grants Panel which will have its own Terms of Reference (Appendix 2) and will report progress back to both the Partnership and Tavistock Town Council. The Panel will consist of key members of the Partnership, including representatives from local businesses, funding partners, the Town Council and West Devon Borough Council and the Devon County Council.

The THI Steering Group comprised:

John Taylor; Chairman of the Tavistock Townscape Heritage Partnership (TTHP)

Robert Plumb; Economic Development Officer, West Devon Borough Council (WDBC).

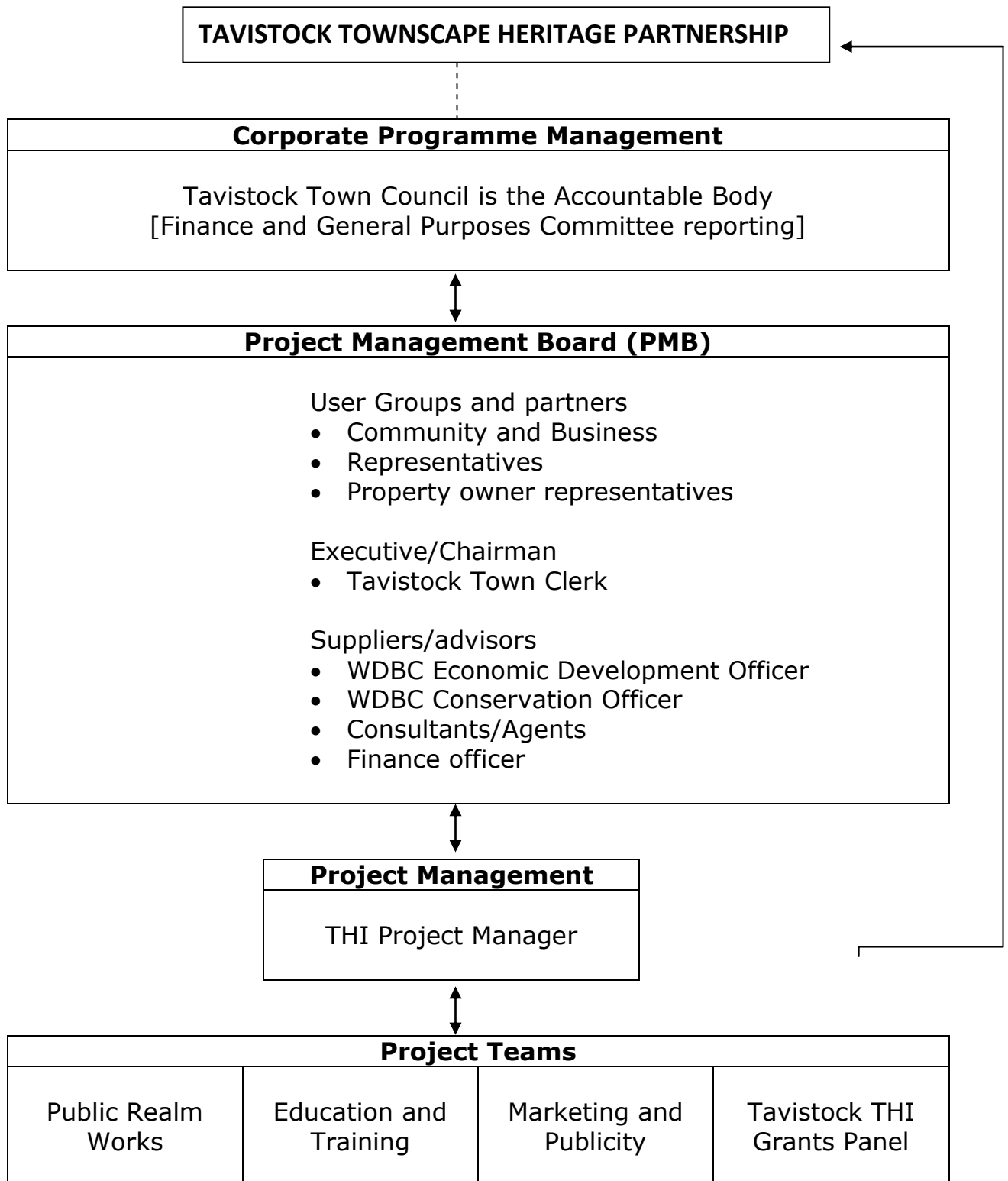
Carl Hearn; Town Clerk, Tavistock Town Council

Graham Lawrence; Conservation Officer, West Devon Borough Council

Christopher Pancheri; THI Project Manager (employed through TTC)

This will be replaced by the Project Management Board during the delivery phase and this will be run in accordance with Prince 2 Project Management principles (See Figure 1 below)

Figure 1 **Tavistock THI Scheme Structure Chart**



The Project Manager will be the main point of contact with the HLF on all these matters

The PMB will report any major variations to the project Action Plan to the Town Council as the Accountable Body and to the TTHP for overall guidance. It will be chaired by the Town Clerk as the senior Executive in the TTC and will draw representatives from User groups – Community, Businesses and Property Owners. It will include suppliers of services and advisors, such as the EDO and Conservation officer at WDBC and the County Archaeologist as well as finance officers. The Project Manager will report progress, including the outcome of grant applications and how Complementary Activities are progressing.

## 1.2 .The Project Team

The dedicated members of staff, including the project manager, support staff and any external advisors or consultants will be employed by Tavistock Town Council as the Accountable Body. In addition they will draw on in-kind support and the active involvement of other local authority staff, principally from West Devon Borough Council and Devon County Council as indicated below.

It will be overseen by the Town Clerk and it will be led by the THI Project Manager.

### **Project Manager and main contact**

Christopher Pancheri – Tavistock THI Project Manager (TTC).

### **Lead Partner /Chair of the PMB**

Carl Hearn, Town Clerk (TTC)

### **Administration**

Jan Smallacombe; Office Manager (TTC)

### **Finance Officer:**

Carl Hearn – Town Clerk (TTC)

plus Project Support Team. (See Appendix 2)

### **Legal:**

Project Support Team (See Appendix 2)

### **Valuations:**

District Valuer/Project Support Team (See Appendix 2)

### **Quantity Surveyor:**

Project Support Team (See Appendix 2)

### **Energy conservation:**

Advice resourced through SPAB by Project Support Team.

### **Members of the Project Team outside the Town Council**

Development Management and Conservation:

## Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme

Graham Lawrence – Conservation Officer (WDBC) and Richard Gage – Conservation Officer (South Hams and West Devon)

Ben Wilcocks - Enforcement Officer (WDBC)

Strategic Planning:

Michelle Luscombe - Senior Planning Officer (WDBC).

Archaeology;

Bill Horner – County Archaeological Officer (Devon County Council).

Communications:

Lidia Pearce – Communications Officer (WDBC)

Regeneration & Economic Development including External Funding:

Robert Plumb – Economic Development Officer (WDBC).

### **Grants Panel**

The Grants Panel will run in accordance with the Terms of Reference as outlined at Appendix 3.

Expert advice will be sought if this is required from professionally accredited consultants who will be engaged by the Town Council through a competitive tendering process. Applications will be scrutinised for their completeness and eligibility for grant by the Project Manager. A technical assessment will then be carried out by experienced assessors before the project Manager will set out his recommendations to the panel.



Tavistock Conservation Area

### 1.3 Financial Management

Tavistock Town Council has an experienced financial management team which runs the Council's annual budget of £1,600,000. The THI scheme will be set up as a separate account and managed using the Council's established financial system with technical support available, if needed from West Devon Borough Council. The Council's fraud procedures are in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for smaller entities as applied to local councils by Part 4 of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – A Practitioners Guide.

The Town Clerk will oversee the financial management of the Common Fund and account for the overall funding of the project.

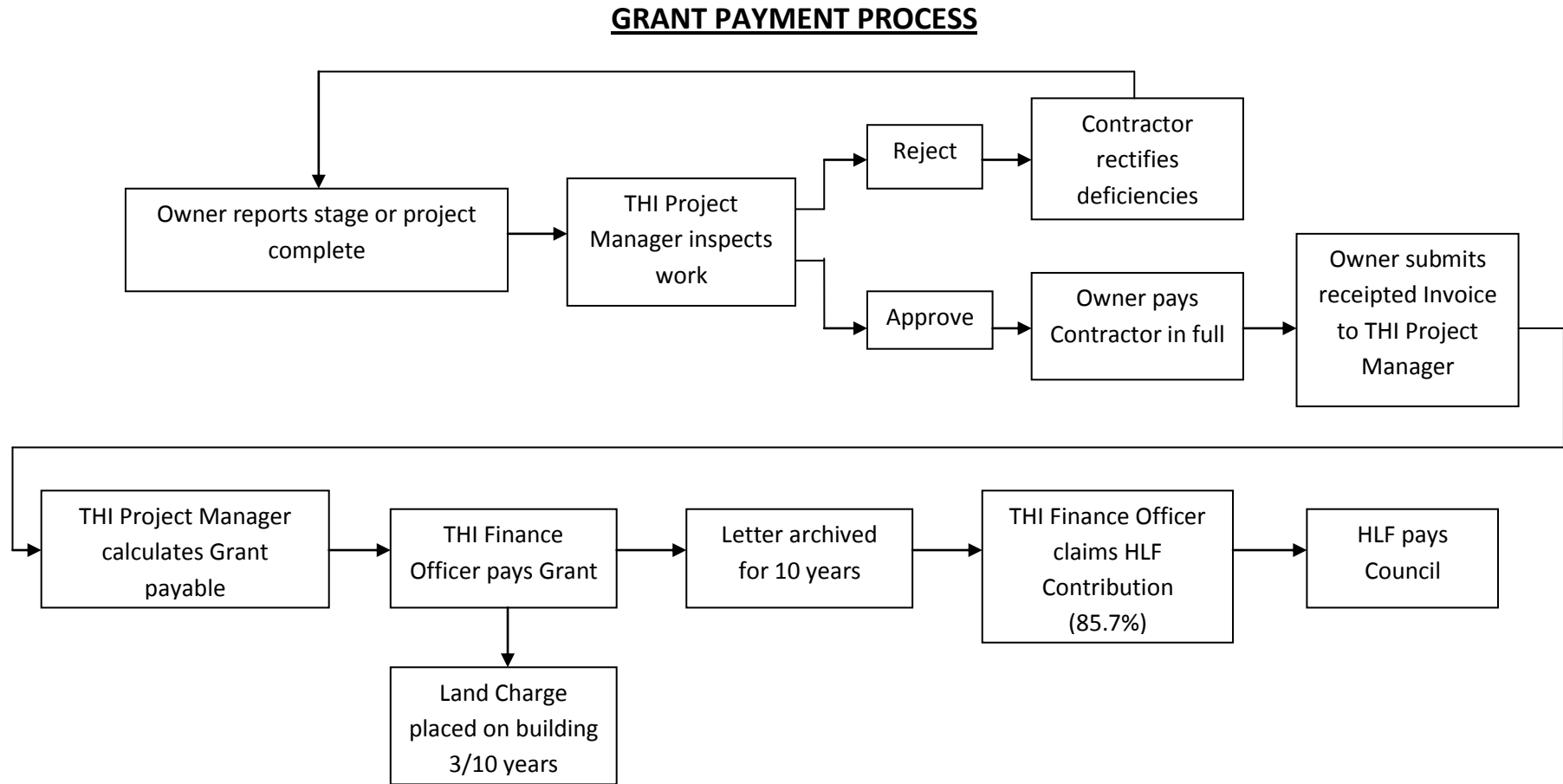
Draw-down payments from the Common Fund will be allocated to each project according to the breakdown of its elements. Detailed record of payments certified will be made by the Project Support Team to inform an audit of the fund and funding partners.

Accounting for the scheme will be maintained on the Council's financial information system under a separate designated account. The account will be subject to established rigorous accounting procedures and approved financial regulations of the Authority. The THI finances will be subjected to periodical checks by the internal audit section of the Authority. This will scrutinise the robustness of the financial management system to ensure an efficient and effective delivery of service.

Procedures will include two substantial audits, one at the end of the first full year of the THI and one at the end of the scheme. Accounting records will be kept and archived for at least 10 years from the date they are created. The employment of an independent Auditor to carry out and report on the two audits will be financed from the Common Fund.

Figure 2 illustrates the process of making grant payments.

Figure 2



#### 1.4 The THI Project Manager

The THI Project Manager will have the day to day responsibility for the delivery of the Tavistock THI scheme. The Job Description and Person Specification are included at Appendix 4.

In the early stages of the delivery phase, promotion of the scheme will be vital and the THI Project Manager will work with the Communications Team at West Devon Borough Council, which already has a good working relationship with the local newspaper, to achieve an effective launch, to generate positive press coverage as the scheme develops and ensure this continues throughout the life of the THI.

The THI Project Manager will be proactive in achieving the aims of the Action Plan and delivering a successful outcome for the Critical and Priority projects. Where further buildings are identified as needing repair or reinstatement, the Project Manager will provide advice to property owners about the benefits of the THI and encourage further applications.

He will use the THI Action Plan, the Conservation Area Management Plan and relevant government guidance and planning policies to assess proposals for the area and as the basis for the Grants Panel's assessment of applications for third party grants. During this process, the Project Manager will liaise with the key members of the Partnership as well as the Technical Support Officers in the WDBC.

The Project Manager, together with the WDBC Conservation Officer will continue to oversee projects in course of implementation on site to ensure that the necessary standards are achieved. The financial control process on behalf of the funding partners will be closely monitored and reviewed regularly, including through regular meetings with the HLF Monitoring Officer.

The Project Manager will be responsible for the following:

- Promoting the THI scheme through regular newsletters, website updates and press releases when appropriate.
- Managing the day to day operation of the scheme.
- Providing professional advice to the PMB and Partnership and Grants Panel.
- Assessing applications for third party grants and advising the Grants Panel of their suitability for grant funding or otherwise.
- Maintaining up to date records of the THI projects and overall scheme.
- Monitoring outputs of the THI scheme.
- Liaison with the Project Team, other stakeholders and third parties to achieve the aims of the THI scheme.
- Co-ordinating Complementary Initiatives for Heritage Interpretation and Education.

The THI Project Manager will be assisted by Finance Officers in undertaking the following tasks:

- Ensuring the correct allocation of match funding.
- Recording the agreed grant offers.
- Monitoring the budget.

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- Initiating the payment of grants.
- Ensuring the registration of land charges.
- Reclaiming the funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- Assessing projects for claw-back as required.
- Producing audited accounts at end of first year and at end of final year.

### 1.5 Management Overheads

The salary cost of the THI Project Manager and any other staff directly employed on the scheme will be met by the Town Council as the Accountable Body funded through the THI budget.

All costs for the management and administrative support for the Project Team will be met in the same way; including accommodation, equipment and printing costs where appropriate.

Since Tavistock Town Council has no dedicated staff it is proposed to secure project support for the THI Project Manager by commissioning a dedicated independent team to provide the resources needed (See Appendix 2)

This team will assist the THI Project Manager throughout the five years of the THI Project by providing administrative and technical support, to service the grants panel, including the registration of Land Charges and obtaining valuations required to determine any claw-back of grants to properties which are subsequently sold on within the specified timescales.

In order to secure the skills needed to support the Project Manager in delivering the Critical Projects, Priority Projects and any Reserve Projects which come forward as applications, it is proposed to go out to tender to at least three potential providers. A draft specification of services is included at Appendix ... This will need to include legal expertise to advise on any issues which arise and to ensure that each grant is formally registered as a Land Charge. There will also be a requirement for a surveyor's valuation before and after grant aided work has been carried out.

### 1.6 Making Decisions

In making decisions, the Grants Panel will first consider the proposals against the key aims of the THI scheme which are as follows:-

- Uplift the general environment and setting of the Conservation Area and World Heritage Site.
- Address the urgent needs of key buildings at risk at the commercial heart of the town.
- Bring vacant and underutilised buildings back into beneficial use.
- Help to address the weaknesses of the local economy by increasing business turnover, improving income and skill levels, thus safeguarding and creating jobs, both directly through the building and repair works and by boosting business performance.
- Improve knowledge and public understanding of the historic environment through education, learning and training events and programmes.
- Increase the commitment of both local people and key partners to the enhancement and preservation of the town's historic environment.



## Tavistock Townscape Heritage Initiative Scheme

The PMB and Partnership will receive reports of all applications at its meetings. Applications will also be referred to the HLF, as required, prior to any grant offer being made.

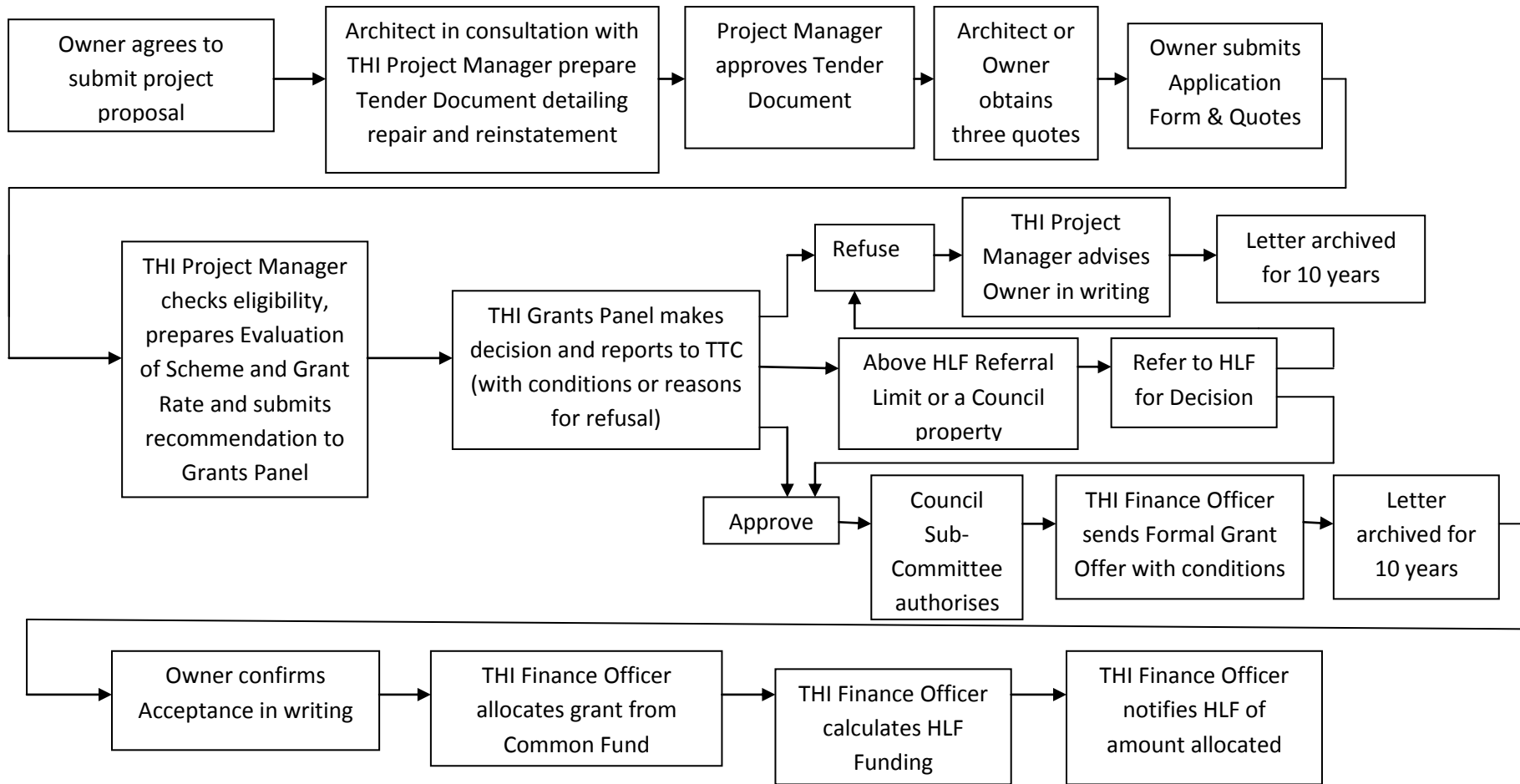
The process for applying for a grant is set out in Figure 3.



Market Street Repairs

Figure 3

**GRANT APPLICATION AND OFFER PROCESS**



Following approval of individual grants, the PMB will delegate authority to the THI Project Manager to oversee the satisfactory completion of the grant aided works, subject to regular update reports being made as required.

The THI Project Manager will have the following responsibilities in respect of individual applications:

- Promoting the THI scheme to potential grant applicants.
- Initiating the pre-application discussion with the THI Planning Officer.
- Advising on priorities and conservation requirements.
- Establishing the financial status of the applicant.
- Advising the applicant on the appointment of professional advisors.
- Assisting professional advisors in the development of a scheme.
- Providing design advice.
- Assessing proposed tender documents.
- Identifying appropriately skilled contractors.
- Assessing quotations.
- Appointing assessors
- Preparing reports and recommendations to the THI Grants Panel.
- Approving the satisfactory completion of the work prior to authorising stage and final payments.

Applicants for third party THI grants will be responsible for:

- Proving their ability to fund their proportion of the cost of the scheme.
- Engaging an appropriately qualified and accredited professional advisor.
- Agreeing the specification of works.
- Obtaining quotations.
- Selecting contractors.
- Obtaining all statutory consents.
- Approving the quality of work.
- Ensuring that adequate insurance cover is in place.
- Ensuring health and safety on site.
- Making payment to the contractor before claiming grant from the Common Fund.

As a checklist, the following questions will be asked to test appropriateness and assessment of grant applications:-

- Does the project help to realise the Vision and Aims of the Tavistock THI Scheme and is it consistent with the approved Action Plan as set out in the Stage 2 submission?

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- Does the project have heritage value?
- Does it bring back into use vacant or derelict floor space?
- Does it create or assist in retaining jobs, or attract new commercial activity?
- Is the project sustainable?
- Is the future maintenance guaranteed?
- Does it deliver high quality conservation repair?
- Does it reinstate original features to the building?
- Will the works be visible to the public?
- Will the works enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area?
- Have all other sources of grant been explored?
- Have outstanding enforcement issues been addressed?
- What if nothing happens?

Projects that can demonstrate the strongest match between these criteria are most likely to succeed.

### 1.7 Handling Applications

The application will forms closely follow the advice in the HLF Guidance Notes. A sample form is included in Appendix 5.

Each application will have a unique reference number. A record will be maintained on each application with the date the application was received, the date a decision on the application was made. The status of the grant offer will be clearly indicated on the file.

### 1.8 Publicity

A Communication Strategy will be developed by the Partnership prior to the delivery phase and will set out how the scheme will be publicised and promoted. The project will have its own dedicated website through which all information about the scheme can be obtained and on which news on progress will be reported.

Tavistock Town Council maintains a file of press releases and press cuttings as do WDBC and regular information about the Development Phase of the scheme has featured prominently in the local media and press.

This practice will continue vigorously throughout the delivery phase as each grant is approved, activity takes place and projects are completed.