

AGENDA ITEM 7i (1)

NOTES OF THE MEETING of the HERITAGE ALLIANCE held on Wednesday 7th February 2024 at 11am

In Attendance:

Representing Tavistock Heritage Trust – Geri Parlby, Alex Mettler
Representing Tavistock Museum – Tony Rose, Chris Rose
Representing Tavistock Town Council – Wayne Southall, Louisa Semmens
Representing Life Stories and Rediscovering Tavistock Abbey – Simon Thompson
Representing Tavistock BID – Janna Sanders
Representing Tavistock Subscription Library – Ruth Blowey
Representing Tavistock Local History Society – Chris Bellers
Representing West Devon Borough Council – Cllr Caroline Mott
Representing DALC (representative for WHS Partnership) – Paul Ward

1. CONFIRMATION OF NOTES

- a) The Notes of the meeting of the Heritage Alliance held on 10th January 2024 were confirmed as a true record of the meeting.
- b) The Chair welcomed new attendees representing West Devon Borough Council and DALC (representative for the WHS Partnership).

2. HERITAGE ORGANISATIONS UPDATES

- a) Tavistock Museum outlined its plans for an upcoming D-Day exhibition on the 6th June 2024 and depending on whether they could source vehicles again, it was agreed that they could have a display space on the granite piazza. It was explained that there was also an option to use the Robing Room to showcase potential exhibits/displays. It was suggested that representatives should also liaise with RAF Harrowbeer event organisers. The museum also advised that they had had a successful volunteer recruitment exercise and hoped that this would eventually lead to them being able to provide physical resource to open Tues-Sat, 10am-4pm, April to Oct, which was their current short-term aspiration.
- b) A discussion followed pertaining to the remit of the volunteering organisation Tavy Help, and whether this was another important link to volunteer recruitment.
- c) Tavistock Local History Society advised that their members had concerns pertaining to available archival storage space and discussed their challenges pertaining to outdated presentational material.
- d) The Subscription Library mentioned that they were attending the Book Fair in Butchers Hall on 9th March and a discussion was had on whether there was an opportunity to have a collaborative approach to showcase the diverse array of heritage books and publications. Relating to the matters discussed earlier, Tavistock Museum advised that they had book shelf space that could be utilised post their official opening.

- e) An update was provided on the Rediscovering Tavistock Abbey Project where attendees were advised that a grant application, just under £30,000 had been submitted to Historic England, pertaining to works to Betsy Grimbals Tower, with the applicant awaiting a decision. A more broader project overview was provided which included outlining that a community archaeological dig was planned with several expressions of interest to be involved already received.

3. HERITAGE OPEN DAYS:

- a) A discussion was had about the delivery of Heritage Open Days for 2024, which is a 10-day festival of history and culture, with this year's theme being the "History of Roots, Networks and Connections" for its 30th anniversary. Given the significance of this milestone, it was made clear that early organisation and planning would be crucial to ensure that Tavistock's offer ran smoothly.
- b) THT explained that they had again committed to supporting the HODs and would fund the production of the events leaflet. Concerns were raised regarding the recent changes to the National website, which had made it more challenging to submit event information and that the administration of HODs was challenging from a THT resource perspective. It was agreed that THT would advertise for a HOD co-ordinator to lead on the administration, co-ordination and promotion and reinforced the point that it was imperative to implement a working party asap for this year's delivery, and how best this could be achieved, including funding opportunities. The idea of whether Tavistock should deliver HODs in 2024 was discussed but the consensus was that they should go ahead and future resource support was debated, where it was agreed that the Council would look at what was achievable for 2025 from a collaborative perspective.
- c) Tavistock Museum advised that they had again reserved Butcher's Hall to support Heritage Open Days, building upon the success of previous years, where approx. 70 attendees participated. This led to discussions on developing methods to accurately measure event attendance, which would provide insights into the festival's impact on the local community.

4. HERITAGE FAIR

- a) It was agreed that the Tavistock Heritage Fair would take place on the **16th March between 10am-4pm**, with activities/displays spanning the Robing Room, the back of the Courtroom and the Granite piazza, weather permitting. Confirmed attendees were Tavistock Town Council, Tavistock Heritage Trust, Tavistock Museum, Museum of Policing, Life Stories, Tavistock BID, Subscription Library, WHS, Discovery team and Tavistock Local History Society.
- b) The aim of the event would be to focus on volunteer engagement and to showcase the heritage related initiatives and services provided by participating organisations, with the Robing Room being utilised as the central hub for volunteer recruitment activities.

- c) The Guildhall Duty Officer was tasked to liaise with all attendees to agree their requirements and associated layout, and promotion would be led by Tavistock Town council and Tavistock BID, re: social media etc.
- d) It was suggested that a potential tagline for the event could be: 'Tavistock's Heritage Fair – Come and See what we are doing' emphasising the opportunity for attendees to engage with local heritage initiatives and activities.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

- a) It was explained that the results of the poll of BID levy payers meant that Dickensian would be on the 6th December this year.
- b) A discussion was held in relation to the 'Visit Tavistock' website where it was explained that additional funding IRO £4,000 was needed to convert the existing system to a more flexible platform. An update was provided on the administration process relating to the events calendar, with all stakeholders having now been emailed the links for updating their activities/events, for the BID Manager to upload/edit.
- c) Due to the financial challenges faced by heritage organisations, a discussing ensued that heritage events may require commercial sponsorship, how this could be obtained and what matters needed to be considered pertaining to appropriateness and precedence.
- d) It was agreed that the next meeting of the Heritage Alliance would be held on **12th March at 11am** in the Robing Room, Guildhall.