

Tavistock Conservation Area Management Plan

This Management Plan has been drawn up following the production of a detailed Character Appraisal for the Tavistock Conservation Area. It provides a framework for future actions which are primarily the responsibility of the Borough Council, although their successful implementation will also depend on the co-operation and enthusiasm of the other local authorities (Devon County Council and Tavistock Town Council), local people and local organisations.

Government policy has made it clear that conservation areas are not necessarily 'preservation' areas. Change is an inevitable facet of modern life and the challenge is to manage change in a manner that does not lose sight of the special historic qualities of a place. This Conservation Plan seeks to provide a framework for 'managed' change which will ensure that the special architectural and historic interest of the Tavistock Conservation Area is both preserved and enhanced for future generations.

Local authorities are required by law to periodically review their conservation areas and the preparation of Character Appraisals and Management Plans is part of this obligation. Indeed, in the past keeping Character Appraisals has been a Key Performance Indicator in the Best Value assessment of local authorities, and as a result, a five year review cycle is now considered to be best practice.

The involvement and approval of the local community in the formulation and delivery of these documents helps to strengthen their status and will hopefully mean that the various actions identified in the Management Plan will have greater impact and longevity. For Tavistock, this has been achieved by the establishment of the Tavistock Townscape Heritage Partnership, with representatives from local businesses and amenity groups, which has provided comments on the emerging documents and monitored the whole process. Additionally, the documents were subject to six weeks of full public consultation, commencing with a public exhibition at the Methodist Church Upper Hall on Saturday 25 October 2008. Following this, a Public Consultations Report was prepared (copies are available on request from the Borough Council), the text amended, and the documents illustrated and printed.

The proactive management of conservation areas gives clarity and robustness to decision making, which means that issues may be more defensible in, for instance, planning appeals. The Character Appraisal and this Management Plan will therefore be of use to the Borough Council when determining applications for change within or on the edges of the conservation areas, and for property owners and their agents when considering schemes for refurbishment, alteration or new development. The documents will also be of interest to visitors and to Tavistock's residents and business community, all of whom value the buildings and spaces of the town so highly.