

St Mary's Totnes Heritage Trust

NEWS RELEASE – 11 OCTOBER 2019

The St. Mary's Totnes Heritage Trust has received letters of support from individuals and organisations which will greatly assist it in funding applications for the St Mary's Church Project

The Trust thanks the many people and organisations that have helped and supported it so far and whose kind words of endorsement for our project have and will contribute positively to its funding applications.

Some examples of the fantastic endorsements we have received include:

"The prospect of a church interior that can more readily accommodate community-related activities of all kinds, would necessarily open up the prospect of our Image Bank introducing more ambitions and more complete exhibitions....We would eagerly avail ourselves of a better special environment to showcase the architecture, cultural heritage, thereby enhancing both Town and church".

Derek Meacher, Chair of Trustees, Totnes Image Bank.

"A range of new and innovative community activities will develop at the church so that wider groups of people will be attracted to this historic building.... As Bishop of Exeter, I heartily endorse this endeavour..."

The Right Reverend Robert Atwell, Bishop of Exeter.

"I was very grateful that the church allowed me to film and record my project with Moushumi Bhowmik, who came over from Kolkata, in the church last week. The sound and light within the space were just amazing... I wish St. Mary's all the best in their worthy endeavours to raise substantial funding in order to restore and improve the church. An arts production group like mine could take greater advantage of the space".

Mohini Chandra (PhD, RCA) Programme Leader, BA Photography, Plymouth College of Art.

"We have been thrilled to use St. Mary's Church in Totnes as one of our principle venues as part of our curation since 2015 and the space has become a much loved and cherished part of our programming. We would strongly support any work to renovate and modernise and I believe firmly that some achievable changes will offer the space as a very versatile space for hosting live arts".

Rupert Morrison, Coordinator, Sea Change Festival, Totnes and Dartington.

"We are keen to express our support for the project. The town desperately needs more community spaces, and certainly more performance spaces. The chance to see this emerge in one of Totnes'

most notable buildings is even more encouraging. In terms of programming, we see St. Mary's as an ideal location for our rehearsed readings series... St. Mary's matters to the town and its community. We will happily support the Heritage Trust in any way we can to rehabilitate and modernise this significant building for the benefit of the community".

Joanne Loosemore, Dartington Playgoers.

"The improvements... will make it possible for the TSO to use St. Mary's as a concert venue on a regular basis. The TSO is totally supportive of St. Mary's initiative. It will make a huge difference to the cultural life of Totnes and surrounding areas".

Richard Gonski, Music Director, Torbay Symphony Orchestra.

"I support the aims of St Mary's Church Project in reaching out to a wider audience in order that they can learn about and appreciate the heritage of Totnes and in particular St Mary's Church and its surrounds. I'm keen to see this wider audience include young people and have been asked by the project team to help explore ways of achieving this. I will be happy to be involved".

Simon Roberts, Area Youth Worker, Space.

"In this year alone, the Friends of St Mary's are hosting 12 concerts and other events at St Mary's Church... Our current activities are severely restricted by the lack of facilities in our ancient church. It is essential that St. Mary's raises the funds necessary to continue to inspire future generations. In the opinion of Dr. Todd Gray, Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Exeter and author of more than 40 books on the history of Devon, it ranks among Devon's half-dozen finest churches".

Anthony Gregg, Chairman and Julian Hall, Treasurer, Friends of St Mary's, Totnes