

1, Mulcaster Place,

Croglin

4<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Dear Clerk of Ainstable Parish Council.

I am writing to update you on the progress of 'The Helm at Croglin' and hope that you will be able to support us.

#### Outline Development plan

The aim of the organisation is to 'encourage the use of Croglin Church for a variety of community and visitor purposes.'

This area of the North Pennines is a quiet area where there has been little development of facilities for local communities and visitors. The church building is made from good quality local materials and has no major structural faults.

There are no venues where the 'story of the Fellside' can be found.

We have already consulted with a wide range of groups and individuals who are keen to use Croglin church and see it as a community resource and visitor centre. We have discussed the facilities we plan to provide and their suitability for different activities. The centre will be open regularly and provide a 'drop in and explore' facility. We are now moving to a more detailed development stage as set out here:

- (i) Building design. We will ensure that, wherever possible, we design the spaces to facilitate the expected uses eg lighting and heating requirements; broadband and wifi; robust fittings; storage; toilets. Green technology will be used as far as possible.
- (ii) Space and its usage. The space of the church will need to be used flexibly but will include:
  - quiet area for work space
  - repair/craft area with appropriate sinks
  - kitchen area for popup café
  - homely area with comfy seats and the library
  - toilet and shower
  - display boards about local heritage and the natural environment
- (iii) Working in partnership. We have identified potential partners:
  - People who run local accommodation and hospitality services welcome the development as virtually all their visitors do not spend any time locally but use the accommodation as a base to visit the Lake District and Hadrians Wall.
  - Groups who need local history resources eg Kirkoswald, Castle Carrock, Lazonby, Langwathby and Armathwaite primary schools, and William Howard Secondary school. Local history groups including Renwick and Kirkoswald History group.
  - Groups who would benefit from the provision of a large space with good acoustics eg local musicians
  - Individuals holding celebrations or ceremonies eg. naming ceremony, celebration of life

- Cycling. The C2C (Coast to Coast) Cycle route passes close by. We can provide 'pit stop' facilities and also explore other cycling activities. The local specialist cycle shop in Carlisle (Palace Cycles) is run by Mike Lee a local resident who has agreed to advise us.

A number of people have offered to volunteer (helping to run activities, catering, maintenance etc). We see this as an excellent way of involving a wide range of people and creating opportunities for people to mix and make new relationships. We plan to introduce a volunteer programme including training and appropriate safeguarding.

The Helm trustees will provide leadership of this Development Plan and will involve others and co-opt as appropriate. It may be appropriate to form a separate Development team as the project progresses. (See Appendix for list of trustees with their relevant experience.)

Good progress has already been made in completing a Viability study, speaking to potential partners and seeking advice. We have basic architectural plans but now are at the point of engaging a Quantity Surveyor (Frank Whittle Partnership) to arrive at a 'costed plan' in order to progress to the Fundraising and renovation stage of the project. This costed plan should be completed by the end of August 2022 and ready to go to tender. At least three bids will be sought and planning permission required. Tenders will be in by mid October and it is envisaged the lease can be finalised with Carlisle Diocese by mid December with a view to starting work early in 2023.

The overall cost of the development will be between £ 300,000- £350,000 and Heritage Lottery Funding will be sought amongst other grants and community fund raising. Fell Foot Forward are supportive and keen to make us their 'flagship programme' in their Community Buildings programme in 2023.

The Helm would welcome support from Ainstable Parish Council in development of this site and particularly in relation to:

either Insurance of the building once the Lease is finalised ie. December 2022. This is estimated to be in the region of £1000, quotes are currently being sought.

Or

completion of the Development plan with a contribution of £1000. The first payment is due at the end of August 2022 and is a priority for The Helm.

Many thanks for your consideration

Yours

Ruth Lawley

Chair of the Helm at Croglin.

Attached Appendix

## Appendix: Trustees showing relevant experience

**Louise Fawcett:** Former deputy headteacher with 32 years' experience in primary education. Volunteer with Samaritans Carlisle (Director and Trustee 2017 - 2020). Shareholder and volunteer at Carlisle World Shop, a co-operative which supports Fair Trade.

**Bryan Gray:** Director of large retail/catering business, Chair Lowther Castle and Gardens Trust, Chair Settle Carlisle Railway Trust, led a number of regeneration and grant funded projects including Carlisle Cathedral Fraternity and Hunsonby Community Centre. Former Chair of North West Development Agency, MediaCityUK and Lancaster University.

**Ruth Lawley:** Trustee of Cumbria County History Trust, Chair of Croglin Village Hall committee, Experience in medical management as Clinical Director at North Cumbria Health Trust. Experience of volunteering with VSO which led to senior technical advisor post with the Ministry of Health to implement the National Maternal Death Response programme in Ethiopia.

**Mary Robinson:** Over 30 years working within Leisure Services for Carlisle City Council. Initially at the Sands Centre then alongside the Director leading on the redevelopment of Tullie House Museum 1990-2013.

Elected as District Councillor for Kirkoswald Ward over 20 years ago and served as a County Councillor for Alston and East Fell side for 8 years. Currently Deputy Leader of Eden District Council and cabinet member for Economy and Enterprise leading on the Inspiring Eden Economic plan.

**Julian Whittle:** Retired journalist who spent more than 20 years at The Cumberland News and News and Star as business editor and political editor. Latterly led on policy and business engagement for Cumbria Chamber of Commerce. Former pension fund trustee and non-executive director of Carlisle and District Credit Union.

**Mark Hetherington:** a partner at UNW LLP, a prominent Newcastle based accountancy and tax firm, and has lived in Croglin for more than 30 years.