

## **Goal: Cost effective enhancement of older homes in Tavistock**

### **Background**

About 164 Bedford Cottages were built in Tavistock in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century as healthy homes for industrial workers. There are about another 140 Bedford Cottages in the surrounding area. Most, but not all, of these are listed properties. Today, many of these homes require enhancements to be healthy, comfortable and economic in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In the last decade national organisations for conservation, building standards, and the planning, conservation and building control staff of many city and local authorities, have been investigating the best ways to enhance the energy efficiency of older buildings. Their aims are to meet modern requirements while safeguarding their historic fabric and character.

New technologies of home repair, insulation, heating, ventilation, lighting and control systems are making greater efficiencies possible. Older homes will remain a significant proportion of our housing stock and we need to maintain their value to the wellbeing of our community.

West Devon BC, Tavistock Heritage Initiative, Tamar Energy Community and Plymouth University are working together to develop a guide for enhancing Bedford Cottages and similar properties in ways that are consistent with good conservation practice. We will also carry out measures in a few properties as examples to demonstrate their cost effectiveness.

### **Benefits**

The guide will address the key issues raised by households, such as; dealing with damp, ventilation, insulation, heating, lighting, repair and maintenance. Often problems are made worse by poor or inappropriate repairs. Good conservation practices can deliver improved performance.

All households will be able to check what is worth doing in their property, the performance benefits and the details of such enhancements. The guide can also provide links to approved specifications and methods for measures that would receive a Listed Building Consent.

### **Next Steps**

This winter we are sending a questionnaire to all Bedford Cottages in Tavistock. This survey asks the householder to identify the present condition of the building fabric and services, and any known issues. Householders will also be asked if they would like to participate in any demonstration improvement works.

The responses will inform the team on the issues that most affect householders and indicate the proportion of homes that would benefit from such improvements.

In four representative Bedford Cottages we have surveyed the areas of floors, walls ceilings and windows to model their heating requirements.

An expert panel with building and conservation expertise will review potential enhancements and their compatibility with these heritage buildings. These will be professionally modelled to test the potential effectiveness of each energy saving enhancement.

Where the results look worthwhile, we hope to pilot installations to be able to demonstrate their costs and benefits.

### **Participation**

Tamar Energy Community welcome participation by Bedford Cottage residents in this work

If you are interested in participating, please contact Peter Smith at 077 078 77702 or by email: [peter.youlditch@gmail.com](mailto:peter.youlditch@gmail.com)