

## GIBRALTAR HERITAGE TRUST

### CAMPAIGN LIST 2019

#### Introduction

Gibraltar's heritage is one of our only domestic products. From our architectural traditions, military fortifications, to our iconic Rock and its natural heritage assets, our heritage is a source of national pride and an important pillar in our economic growth. It is vital that heritage takes a central role in planning for a sustainable future, that businesses and individuals alike know that restoring and repurposing what we have in imaginative ways helps to create jobs and wealth at the same time as affirming the unique Gibraltarian identity and Sense of Place.

The Trust's view is that the future survival of heritage depends on the private, independent and public sectors working together to create the right framework for success.

This document aims to provide a set of aspirations and goals in terms of heritage conservation and planning for Gibraltar. Its principles are at the heart of what the Trust believes needs to be achieved in order to protect our unique and fragile heritage.

#### Main Action Points

##### 1. LEGAL REVIEW, ENFORCEMENT AND RESOURCING

- i) Against the backdrop of the new Heritage & Antiquities Act 2018, to continue to **build resilience** into the cultural heritage management structures established in a way that fosters the **professional management** and promotion of Gibraltar's heritage.
- ii) A review of the **Landlord and Tenants Act** to incentivise an investment in the maintenance condition and standard of pre-war properties. Such a review would potentially unlock some of the issues standing in the way of investment in areas of Gibraltar's old town and improve the lives of those living in squalid conditions. At present there exists some relief for landlords who repair and maintain the façade of their properties. This needs to be built upon to offer further relief through other mechanisms so as to **incentivise and support** heritage enterprises which offer traditional services such as carpentry, stonemasonry, masonry, lime mortar repairs etc.
- iii) With the commencement of the Town Planning Act a **compliance** with requirements and **consistent enforcement** of conditions across the board with both private and Government projects alike.



- iv) That laws, policies and regulations are **policed** and **enforced** in a timely manner and that departments or units tasked with these responsibilities are **appropriately resourced** to do so.

## 2. CLIMATE COALITION AND CARBON REDUCTION

Research shows that reusing heritage buildings can contribute significantly to the challenge of climate change resulting from excessive carbon emissions. Government Policy to recognise the substantial carbon benefits of retaining and adapting older buildings has started to be addressed, with this potential already being identified in the Governments 'Building Renovation Strategy' which was published in February 2015 and states:

*'A renovation strategy that specifically targets the barriers faced by this part of Gibraltar [old town] has great potential to improve and preserve old houses and maintain the historical character of the area'*

We would like to see a commitment to the preparation and resourcing of a **renovation strategy for Gibraltar's historic quarters**, which goes hand in hand with action on all points on the Climate Coalition Petition to urgently address Gibraltar's Carbon responsibilities and the declared **Climate Emergency**. The points made include action on Pollution, Waste, Energy, Transport and Development.

## 3. SUSTAINED FOCUS, INVESTMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF LARGE AREAS OF HERITAGE REAL ESTATE

We have recently welcomed the announcement of a project to regenerate **The Mount** and work at the **Northern Defences** continue. Other important areas requiring sensitive and sustainable development with a strong heritage lead are the **Moorish Castle Complex** (incl. Old Prison); **Rosia Bay** and the **Victualling Yard**. Historic buildings such as **Duke of Kent House**, **Fortress House**, and **ex-St. Bernard's School** are amongst buildings in need of regeneration. The **North Front Cemetery**, although an active burial ground, holds a historic archive of those who died in Gibraltar and events leading to their death. Many of these graves are of national and international importance and a strategy is required for their management and retention. A further major area of Gibraltar that we believe should be earmarked for long term planning and recovery is that of **HM Dockyard**. We would advocate a 20-30 year plan to decant non-ship repair related industry from the area. The Dockyard as a complex is unique in the world and should be showcased as such. With a carefully thought through long term strategy this area could become Gibraltar's next up and coming residential, office and leisure district with waterside leisure activities, warehouse/loft apartment style living and business activity all within a short distance of the Main Street and Europort business areas.

## 4. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN, INTEGRATED VISION FOR GIBRALTAR'S URBAN ENVIRONMENT WITH HERITAGE AT THE HEART OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

With the announced review of the Gibraltar Development Plan we would wish to see a framework for **protecting strategic views and vistas** both out of town and back in towards



key monuments and the silhouette of the Rock itself. A **holistic planning approach** will aim to ensure that our limited land resources are utilised in an optimal way.

The Gibraltar Development Plan outlines and provides policies for strategic development of Gibraltar for a 10 year period. We would say that any new document needs to plan looking further to a 20-30 year period and integrate a **vision for Gibraltar's urban environment** that has heritage and environment at the heart of sustainable development. It is essential that this plan should have **cross Parliamentary support** as a masterplan for taking Gibraltar forward.

5. AN INVESTMENT IN HERITAGE TOURISM & TIGHTENING UP OF BRAND 'GIBRALTAR'  
Gibraltar's Tourism industry brings £252million per annum (2017 figures) to the Rock's economy. There needs to be a **holistic tourism strategy** that focuses on a rolling programme to invest in and develop tourist sites with an emphasis on quality control of information, displays, scripting, a quality assurance structure for information guides, as well as strict control on branding and appearance of the heritage product.
6. DPC EVOLUTION & INVOLVEMENT IN GoG PROJECTS
  - i) The Development and Planning Commission (DPC) meetings are now firmly established as meeting in public. Government projects will now be subject to the **full planning process** which will improve transparency on all aspects of the process. We trust that the spirit and aims of the Act to improve the quality of our built environment will be carried through from the outset.
  - ii) We would like to see the proceedings of the **Development Appeals Tribunal** also open to the public as a natural evolution of the open planning process.
7. RECOGNITION OF THE VALUE OF HERITAGE & ATTRACTING HERITAGE SENSITIVE DEVELOPERS AND INVESTMENT  
Gibraltar's urban environment is the physical embodiment of the Gibraltarians, their history and culture. We would like to see policy reflect the value of this heritage so that it is protected and woven into the way **business** is done in Gibraltar. Inward investors and developers should be made aware of the requirement to **retain, invest in and develop** Gibraltar always keeping this at the heart of their proposals.
8. RETENTION OF CIVIC BUILDINGS IN PUBLIC OWNERSHIP  
Important civic buildings of heritage significance should be retained in public ownership. The **value** of these buildings and **investment** into them brings significant positive knock on effects to the surrounding areas. The successful regeneration of Montagu Counterguard, Casemates, Kings Bastion, St. Bernard's School at the Ex-Civil Hospital, the University of Gibraltar at Bombproof Barracks and the healthcare facilities at the Royal Naval Hospital demonstrate the value of keeping these buildings and giving them a new use. Many of the sites and buildings referred to in point 3 of this list would benefit from seeing similar public



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investment, be it in partnership with the private sector and with the required commercial attractions or temporary lease assignments, but with the long term effect being that buildings or sites remain in public ownership. These **unique places** are the inheritance of future generations and we should invest in those assets sustainably.

9. MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME FOR HERITAGE MONUMENTS AND ASSETS  
The establishment of a **rolling programme** for the **clearing** and **restoration** of our city walls of damage causing vegetation and derelict accretions is necessary. A **quick response team** for small repair and maintenance jobs is also acutely needed.
  
10. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN APPROVED CONTRACTOR LIST FOR HERITAGE SENSITIVE PROJECTS  
Government is the largest landlord in Gibraltar. In the same way as there is an approved contractor list for companies able to undertake Government work, we would wish to see a list of contractors with **proven track records** or **experience** in undertaking design, maintenance and repair work in our old buildings. This quality assurance rating should also be extended to those working in the private sector. Aiming for quality workmanship goes a long way towards the **sustainable management** of our heritage assets.