

**The
Gower**
TELFORD



**Using our heritage
to shape the future**

Investment and partnership prospectus

Our vision

The Gower Telford is a community-led revitalisation that will celebrate the area's heritage but also bring opportunities and investment benefiting local people and the local economy.



The Gower Heritage & Enterprise Foundation is proud to lead a £2.25 million restoration of the Gower Street School in St Georges, known locally as ‘The Gower’.

Our ambition for this 145 year-old historic building is to re-open it as a vibrant community centre and heritage attraction for learning, wellbeing, enjoyment, employment and enterprise.

Since the threat of demolition ignited the community's passion to save The Gower in 2013, we have come a long way and want to thank everyone who has shown an interest, supported or worked with us to get this far.

Inside this document you'll discover our plans for the project and ways you can get involved in the renovation phase such as:

- Providing services to help us keep costs down
- Sponsoring projects, equipment or events

- Volunteering your time, skills or expertise
- Fundraising activities or making a donation
- Raising awareness, brokering connections
- Pledging to rent or lease space in the building
- Using the services and space once opened.

Please join our endeavour to write a new chapter in The Gower's history. Together we can make this much loved building the beating heart of St Georges again and create a sustainable legacy for future generations.

Robert Grice

Chairperson

Gower Heritage & Enterprise Foundation

Why The Gower?

The Gower Telford is managed by the Gower Heritage & Enterprise Foundation, under a license from Telford & Wrekin Council.

Situated in St Georges ward in North Telford, the building is intrinsically linked to the wider heritage of the area and holds fond memories for many local people who attended The Gower when it was a school and youth club.

Following years of neglect, causing the building to fall into disrepair, we are working to care for and restore this iconic building because of its historical significance, and because of what it can offer the people of St Georges and neighbouring areas.

The transformation will create an inspiring building of prestigious quality that St Georges and Telford can be proud of. It will meet the needs of local residents by creating opportunities to increase income, employment status, qualifications, skills and health.



THE STORY SO FAR

1873

Built as a cottage hospital but converted for use as a school until **1961** when it became a youth club. Closed in **2006**. Earmarked for demolition. Planning permission granted for housing development.

2013

Planning permission revoked and building protected following major campaign by residents to save The Gower. In 2014, the Gower Heritage & Enterprise Foundation registered with the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation to take the project forward.

2014

Granted Grade II-listed status on the grounds of rarity, architectural quality, historical and sociological significance.

"One of the best-preserved Victorian buildings of its kind."

2015

Telford & Wrekin Council pledges £650,000 towards renovation subject to successful applications from other funders.

2016

Community engagement activities including family fun-days, clean-up events, heritage group and grounds maintenance (these activities have continued since 2015).

2017

Development grants received from Telford & Wrekin Council, and Architectural Heritage Fund.

2018/19

Children's playpark opens. Major funding bids and investment prospectus launched to reach £2.25 million target. Detailed designs, business and cost planning, funding strategy prepared.

An unknown piece of history

Playpark grand opening



2018



2016

Young families and children enjoy the 80s inspired re-boot of The Gower playpark thanks to our volunteers and young people from the Prince's Trust, Juniper Training and the National Citizenship Service who learned skills and volunteered 2,000 hours to refurbish the site - amounting to £20,000 worth of labour. Telford & Wrekin Council's Pride in Your High Street provided £22,000 and local companies also contributed materials, groundwork, construction and engineering works.

"The Gower is a well-loved local landmark which the community has rallied around to save and support. Its rebirth will bring exciting new opportunities and services into St Georges, addressing local needs and aspirations."

Councillor David Wright
St Georges East Ward

An exceptional educational resource



Outreach work to teach the children at St George's Church of England Primary School about the history of the building was combined with a creative project to produce a mosaic that will be displayed as the centrepiece in the reception area when the building is re-opened to the public.

"The building has played a pivotal role in this area over many years and to see it become a living part of the community again would be absolutely wonderful."

Shaun Tyas, Headteacher
St George's Church of England Primary School

How The Gower will benefit St Georges



INVESTMENT

St Georges requires more investment for economic and community regeneration

Improve public realm, preserve heritage, attract new investment, new services, stimulate culture of enterprise ✓

RAISING ASPIRATIONS

St Georges has households in the bottom 10-20% of deprivation nationally

Job opportunities, volunteering, work placements, learning, skills, qualifications ✓

HEALTH

Death from cancers, circulatory disease and heart disease are higher in St Georges compared to other wards in Telford

Advice services, exercise activities, community garden, health promotion ✓

SOCIAL CARE

A quarter of the local population are long-term sick or disabled, limited provision for carers

Local services, support groups, volunteering ✓

LONELINESS AND ISOLATION

A third of St Georges is made up of one-person households

Community spaces where people can come together, café, activity groups ✓

CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Childhood obesity levels in St Georges are worse than the Telford and national average

Children's playpark, sports pitches ✓

MEN'S HEALTH

Life expectancy for men is markedly lower than women in the area

Men's shed, landscaping, maintenance, heritage garden ✓

EDUCATION

A third of residents have Level 1 or no qualifications

Volunteering, skills development, courses and qualifications ✓

COMMUNITY PROVISION

There are limited opportunities for younger residents and a lack of community facilities

Activities and groups, heritage opportunities ✓

Our goals

2019/21

£2.25 million raised to revive The Gower and undertake renovation works to a high architectural standard. Sign lease with Telford & Wrekin Council to place the building under community management.

2021

The Gower opens as a multi-functional community and wellbeing hub complete with a café/restaurant, offices, venue hire and heritage tourism creating **five new jobs** and **35 volunteering** opportunities.

2022

Over **20,000 centre visits** recorded. **50 community organisations** and special interest groups regularly use the building.

2023

Over **1,500 tourism visitors** welcomed annually as The Gower becomes an established part of the heritage tourism offer in Telford.

2025

The Gower is **self-financing** through income generation activities and is home to **10 local businesses**.

It will cost **£2.25 million*** to reopen the Gower...

- Repair and conservation work to existing building: **£664,000**
- Extension pods and orangery: **£647,000**
- Kitchen fit out and other capital equipment **£42,000**
- External works including roof: **£259,000**
- Fees and permissions: **£249,500**
- Risks: **£142,000**
- Running costs for five years: **£260,000**

Total costs are **£2.25m** of which **£2m** are building costs.

Our fundraising target...



* Includes VAT

So far we have raised **£75,000**, with our main contributors being The National Lottery Community Fund, Telford & Wrekin Council, Architectural Heritage Fund, Locality, St Georges & Priorslee Parish Council and ASDA. We have also received donations and in-kind support from these businesses. Thank you to everyone who has supported us so far.



A place for everyone

Reopening The Gower will provide the community of St Georges with a space of their own.

We have consulted the community extensively, through open days, our website, social media and community surveys, which have generated support for the project and identified potential uses for the building.

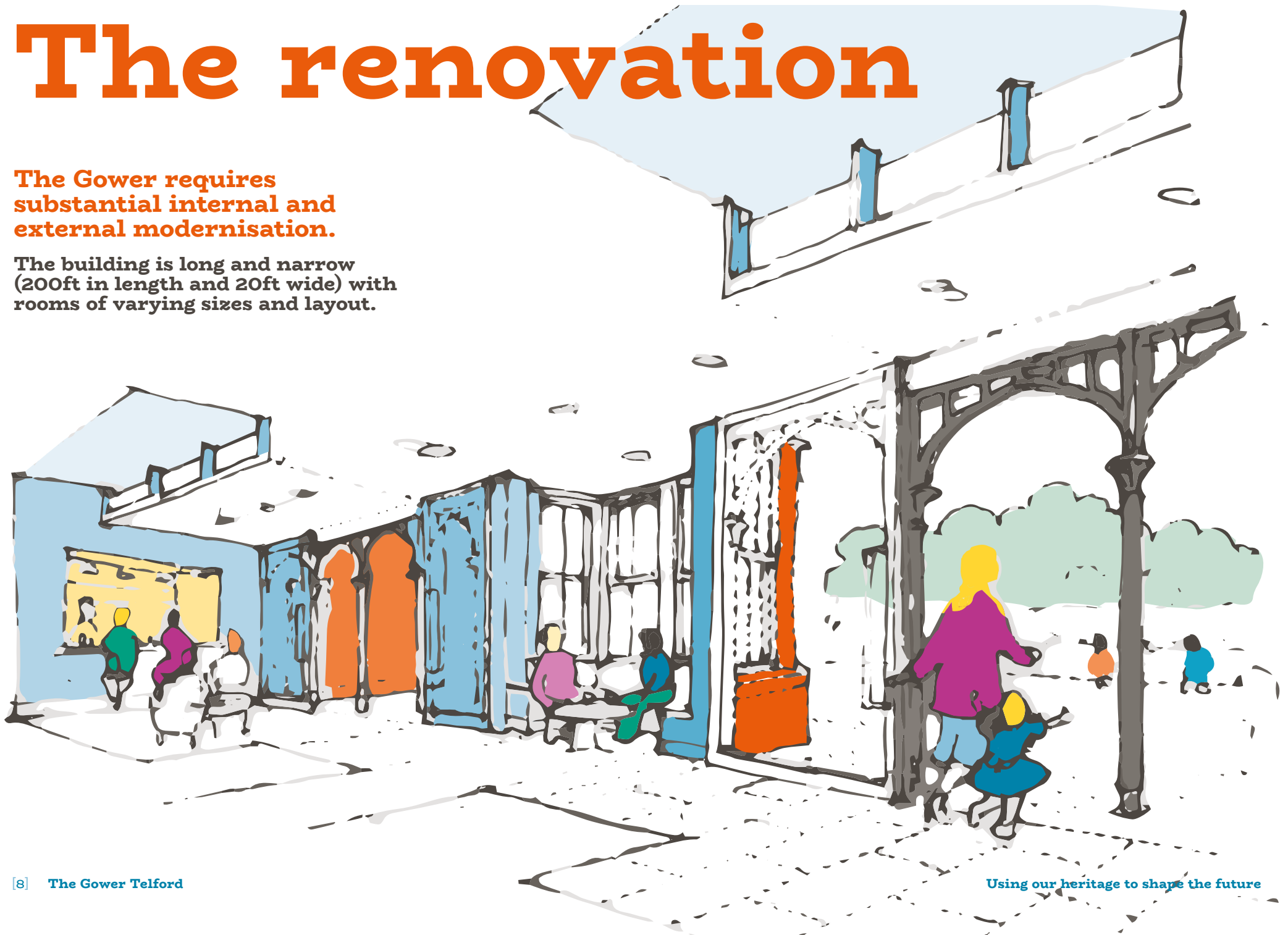
- **People** want a place to come together, do things, access services, volunteer, celebrate community and heritage
- **Businesses** want a place to work, hold events and network
- **Local groups** want to deliver and improve access to services, create opportunities for young people
- **Public agencies** want people to be more involved in their neighbourhoods by shaping services to meet their aspirations and improve their wellbeing
- **Heritage enthusiasts** want to preserve and engage with their local heritage.

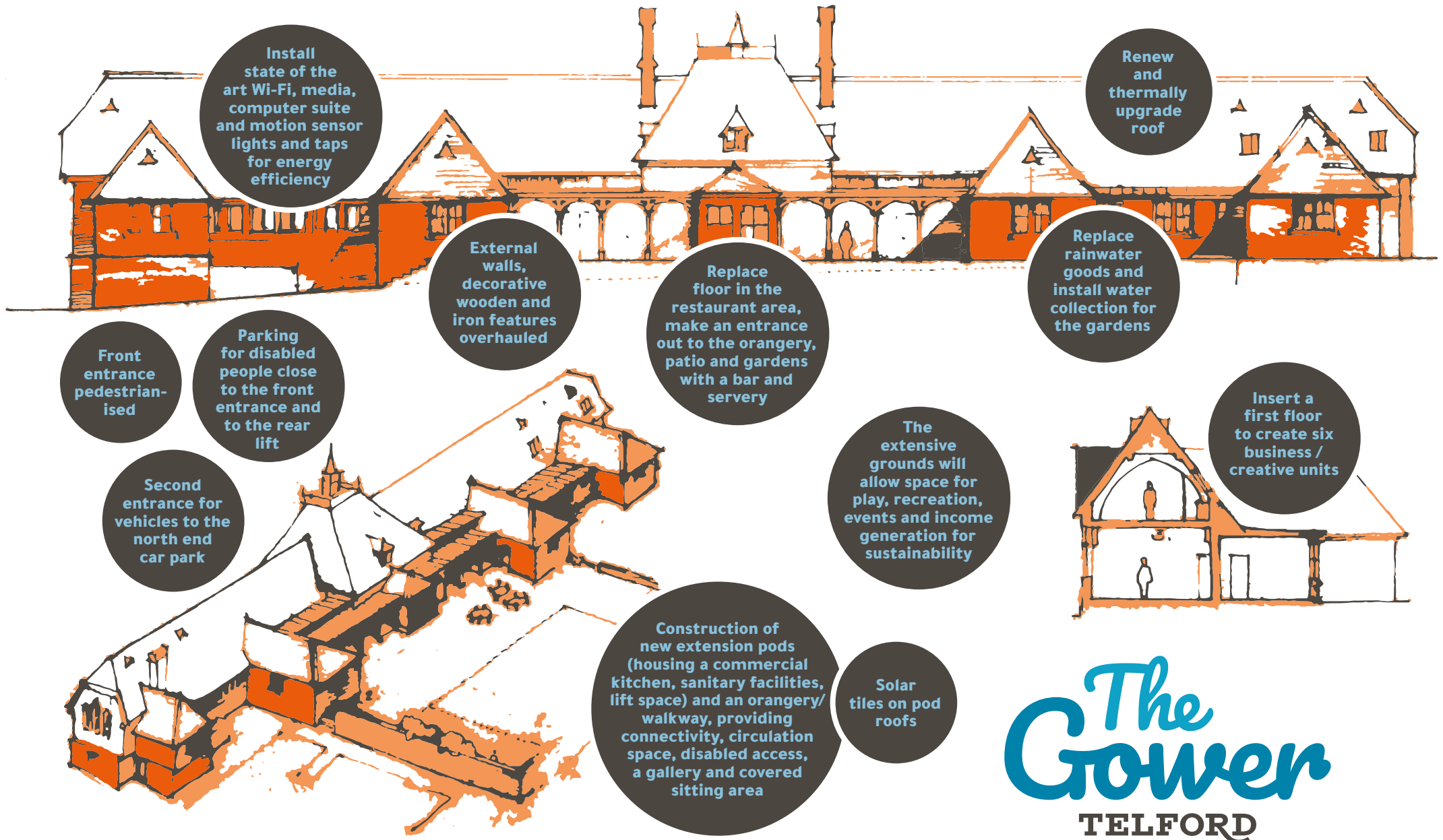


The renovation

The Gower requires substantial internal and external modernisation.

The building is long and narrow (200ft in length and 20ft wide) with rooms of varying sizes and layout.





Install state of the art Wi-Fi, media, computer suite and motion sensor lights and taps for energy efficiency

Renew and thermally upgrade roof

Replace rainwater goods and install water collection for the gardens

Replace floor in the restaurant area, make an entrance out to the orangery, patio and gardens with a bar and servery

External walls, decorative wooden and iron features overhauled

Parking for disabled people close to the front entrance and to the rear lift

Front entrance pedestrianised

Second entrance for vehicles to the north end car park

The extensive grounds will allow space for play, recreation, events and income generation for sustainability

Insert a first floor to create six business / creative units

Construction of new extension pods (housing a commercial kitchen, sanitary facilities, lift space) and an orangery/ walkway, providing connectivity, circulation space, disabled access, a gallery and covered sitting area

Solar tiles on pod roofs

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Opportunities for business

The Gower has a community and enterprise focus underpinned by its heritage.

The building will be home to small businesses and entrepreneurs looking for a unique and affordable space from which to start and grow.

Flexible workspace

The Gower offers six attractive offices/units suitable for local businesses, start-ups, creative enterprises and co-working for home workers and freelancers. Our offices will offer a bright and contemporary environment, with ample car parking for staff and visitors.

Each unit is approximately 215sqft. Larger units and customisation can be provided subject to early lease arrangements. Network cabling, fast broadband and telephone lines all in place for when you move in.

- Meeting, training and conference facilities
- On site café and catering
- Superfast broadband
- Garden spaces
- Creative setting
- On site parking.

Café/restaurant tenancy

The Gower is seeking an experienced catering partner to operate our flagship café and restaurant enterprise, 'Fogerty's', under a profit share arrangement.

Named after the building's architect, Fogerty's is an exciting opportunity for the right tenant to make their mark and input on all aspects of the eatery - design, layout, menu and staffing.

By day, the cafe will run as a healthy homemade food establishment which will mostly cater for centre visitors, local groups, individuals and tenants. The food will be prepared on site using produce grown in the community garden where possible. A modern commercial kitchen will be large enough to service the café, a catering business for on-site and off-site orders, and a pop-up restaurant in the evenings and weekends.

Could you be our restaurant partner? An exciting opportunity awaits.



Our vision is for a comfortable and welcoming place where everyone can come to spend time, socialise and enjoy drinks, snacks and meals offering:

- Architecturally beautiful setting
- Dining with licensed bar
- Outdoor patio for use in warmer months with sensory garden
- Volunteering and work placement opportunities for local people
- Cookery workshops, raising awareness about food waste, healthy eating and food growing activities in the community garden
- A range of local artwork on display for enjoyment and purchase
- A place to connect and reduce social isolation for vulnerable people
- A meeting place for community groups.

Meetings and conferencing

The Gower will boost the conferencing offer in Telford by providing a unique venue in terms of its facilities, setting and Corporate Social Responsibility value.

- Event space for up to 150 people
- Newly refurbished facilities
- Architectural wow factor
- Conference hall and meeting rooms
- Training venue
- On site restaurant and catering
- Exhibition and gallery space
- Parking and easy transport links
- Lawn events space

Weddings and functions

The Gower's main hall with its original features is the perfect backdrop for wedding ceremonies, receptions, birthdays and family get togethers.

The high quality internal restoration combined with onsite catering and outdoor space, offers something truly unique and memorable.

Heritage destination

Through its architect Joseph Fogerty, who also designed the viaduct at Coalbrookdale, The Gower has close links to the Ironbridge Gorge and surrounding heritage, which attract millions of visitors each year. This close proximity enables The Gower to join the heritage trail appealing to enthusiasts, educational groups and local people who wish to explore the history of North Telford.

The Gower will create training opportunities in heritage conservation, springboard inter-generational projects and develop a variety of ways to provide a rich heritage experience linked to income streams for learning such as audio and group tours, souvenir sales, study visits, history lessons for schools and other community projects.

"Economically, The Gower strengthens our conferencing and heritage offer in North Telford. Importantly, it will be a catalyst for the regeneration of St Georges, bringing increased footfall to local businesses and stimulating new enterprise activities, supply chains and job creation."

Councillor Richard Overton
Deputy Leader, Telford & Wrekin Council

It's time to discover The Gower – arrange a visit to see this iconic building



Events and meeting organisers, try us before you book elsewhere



Work in the weddings or occasions market? Planning your big day? Let us be your first choice venue



Practical ways to get involved

From the physical renovation to implementing the business plan, The Gower needs local champions, tradespeople, technical expertise, tenants, entrepreneurs, investors, sponsors, media support and volunteers.

As an individual

Become a Friend

Show your support for the project by becoming a Friend of The Gower. Membership is free and provides updates on progress and opportunities to contribute.

Benefits:

- Receive information and regular Friends updates by email
- First call on tickets to The Gower Telford events, training and development opportunities
- Become a general volunteer
- Join one of our projects or start a new one
- Attend Friends-only social events.

Organisations can also register as Friends.

You can register to become a Friend of The Gower on our website: **www.thegowertelford.org.uk**

Become a volunteer

Join our wonderful team of volunteers and help bring the project closer to completion by getting involved in a range of activities:

- Gardening and grounds maintenance
- Events
- Heritage preservation
- Administration
- Fundraising
- Marketing and communications
- Management committee.

You'll get support and encouragement, learn new skills and contribute to a worthwhile project.

We expect some of our volunteers to move into paid employment at The Gower or build their CVs to secure employment elsewhere.

Make a donation

You can make a donation to the project today. Simply go to our website and click Donate to give an amount of your choice. Please talk to us if you would like our help with organising or promoting fundraising activities.

"These days you don't know your neighbours. This building is bringing people together. Such a good project to be involved with."

Phil Dudley, volunteer

"Supporting projects like The Gower have a positive impact on our local area and our business. Over the years we've grown and expanded, and I'm sure this is partly due to the positive outlook and team spirit our staff have developed by doing our bit for the community. I would recommend our approach to other businesses; the benefits can be surprising!"

Jason Woolley, Managing Director, Telford Transport Solutions Ltd

As a business

We are looking for local businesses to sponsor elements of the building by donating materials, workmanship skills, apprenticeship places or by helping us to fundraise.

Employment opportunities

Wherever possible, we will use local companies and suppliers on the renovation. This will present a valuable opportunity for training, work placements, apprenticeships during the works and once the building is open.



Here are some of the things we need:

- Installation of a lift and stairs
- New roof and insulation
- Internal and external artwork
- Landscape gardening
- Curtains and window dressings
- Flooring
- Chairs
- Fixtures and fittings for the café and restaurant
- Railings for the building with scenes that depict the heritage
- IT equipment - computers, telephones, printers, interactive whiteboards
- Office furniture
- Sports equipment
- Security systems
- Staging
- Audio visual equipment - TV screens, sound systems
- Lighting and electrical installation
- Bat survey
- Plumbing and heating installation
- Painting and decorating
- Plastering
- Furnishings
- Designing and printing materials

Donating equipment and skills

The Gower is a multi-million pound restoration and we need lots of everything to deliver our project within budget. Whether it's donating skills and labour, gifting materials, sponsoring equipment and furniture, or providing pro-bono professional advice - there are so many ways your business can make a difference.

Help with running the charity and management of the building

Can you provide:

- Expertise for ongoing management of the charity and building
- Training, leadership, mentoring
- Business network membership
- Skills and expertise in accountancy, legal services, charity finance, property development, marketing and PR, hospitality, human resources.

Sponsor a room at The Gower

We have various indoor and outdoor spaces which can be sponsored including our main hall, training rooms, office space, sensory garden and men's shed. This is a great way to make a specific contribution to the renovation project, recognised with a plaque for visitors to see. We have various packages available, please get in touch to discuss options.

Fundraising Partnerships

If your company has a Charity of the Year scheme, please consider nominating The Gower. Our Events Team is highly experienced at running fundraising activities and can work closely with your company to raise money for The Gower whilst making it rewarding for your employees and increasing your local profile.

Working with local amenities

Re-opening The Gower will not only address a gap in facilities and services in the area but also benefit neighbouring businesses, community organisations and St Georges high street as a result of increased investment and footfall. We are keen to partner with nearby centres and amenities on joint initiatives, events and bids to improve community life for us all.

Local businesses and organisations can become a Friend of The Gower. It's free and you'll receive regular updates on the project. Sign-up on our website: www.thegowertelford.org.uk/friends

"The ASDA Foundation is proud to be involved with the dedicated group of volunteers at The Gower who are working hard to re-open an important local building. We have been supporting their fundraising and community activities and are excited to see the project gain momentum."

ASDA, Donnington Wood, Community Champion

As a service provider

The Gower offers public agencies, local authorities, health services, education providers and voluntary sector groups the opportunity to deliver services in the heart of the community - building relationships, increasing take-up and improving outcomes for the people of St Georges.

We have a range of facilities available and can work with you on a flexible basis to trial and promote satellite services, surgeries, events and activities.

Want to reach people in St Georges? Talk to us about running your services at The Gower.



Our team

The Gower is a story of a community that has come together to save a piece of their heritage and have become empowered to achieve their mission.

Around 35 active trustees, volunteers and ambassadors give their time and energy to directing and developing the project on a strategic and operational basis. Many have links to the building when it was a school or youth club.

The Gower Heritage & Enterprise Foundation comprises of a **Board of Trustees** with specific skill-sets and backgrounds including a property lawyer, entrepreneur, events co-ordinator and project manager. The Board has delegated some responsibility to a **Management Group** (Gower Old School House 'GOSH' Group) who look after the day-to-day running of the project.

Harnessing the power of the local community through volunteering is an essential part of what has already been achieved at The Gower and will continue in the operational model going forward. If you are interested in lending your skills and expertise to our board or management group, we would love to hear from you.

"I used to come here as a youth club member and met my husband here. It was always full, a lot of fond memories. People love the building, we couldn't let it go to waste."

Lynne Shepherd, Secretary
Gower Heritage & Enterprise Foundation

The Gower
HERITAGE &
ENTERPRISE
FOUNDATION



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Yes! I want to support The Gower Telford...

I'd like to become a Friend of The Gower Telford

Receive our regular newsletters and invites to events and activities.

Sign-up for free at

www.thegowertelford.org.uk
or call 07985 398600

I'm interested in volunteering

Join our exciting journey as a volunteer.
A variety of opportunities to suit all ages, abilities and availability.

I'd like to work with The Gower

Business ideas, tenancies, local services, sponsors, investment. We're looking for like minded partners.

I'd like to learn more

Contact us to visit this historic building. Be inspired by its past, present and future potential.



The Gower

TELFORD

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With thanks to



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