

## ***Nadelik Lowen ha Bledhen Nowydh da***

A message from the Mayor of Truro  
December 2020

At Christmas I think about poor old Joseph, on the road, the tax-man on his back, a dingy old stable out the back of a pub, full of animals, no midwife, and with all manner of star-struck dudes and angels calling by. Why did kings turn up with gold, frankincense and myrrh, when nappies and a buggy would have been more helpful? Of course, the baby slept through it all!

And then there's New Year – that ancient twin-faced god standing in the doorway looking back and forth with the same glance, letting all the heat out, ushering fresh air in.

Two-twenty's been an extraordinary year. Compelled by fighting an unseen enemy, yet full of joy and reconnecting with nature, slowing down, standing still looking at things for a long time, but distant, furloughed and masked, and the fatal number – the accumulator of grief – insistently climbing. Sudden change has bred tension and creativity in almost equal measure – John Rowe's 'fairy doors' have enchanted newly acquired Coosebean Wood; but vandals (for whatever reason!) came smashing and breaking. John of Trurra has mended the doors; the fairies are busy again, and the other world is whole!

Forces beyond Truro's direct influence – Zurich gnomes, treaty negotiators, markets, corporates and eccentric presidents – have instigated change. Shut shops, the internet, Covid – the town centre looks and feels stressed; but young people have ideas, are less averse to risk, and willing to plunge where others paddle – there is hope.

The Towns' Fund might inject some innovative investment into Truro, especially if we can spend some of it at least bringing our community back into its centre, and supporting young people to acquire and evolve new skills, to occupy those shops with new businesses. We have been a money-factory for faceless landlords for too long – a landlord who shares the daily experience of his tenant will know how things ebb and flow, and will trim his sails accordingly. Hopefully, with the Towns' Fund, we can start to bring our town back into Cornish ownership.

We have been diligent in locking-down. It can't stop yet, but we need to ease our sense of fear, and to encourage the young to see hope where persistent headlines have been spelling gloom. There will be a recession, things will be difficult – there is already hardship, but, because Truro is more of a community than it is a machine, we will find our way through, we will renew and nurture, and most of all, we will stand and fight for the intrinsic relationship that this town has with nature – with our trees, our animals, our plants, our rivers and their fish, and precious landscapes.

This is a market town, and much of our economy relies on a thriving rural hinterland. As we have done for nigh-on 1000 years, we will stand by our farmers and ensure that Truro, an estuary town connected to the ocean as much as to the mowhay, will be a harbour of thoughtfulness, endeavour, commerce and kindness – perhaps also, with lithium and indium, and moguls preparing to mine the moon, we will rediscover our Stannary roots as well – a tall order, but hell! You see a star; you get on yer camel, you chase it – doncha?

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