

'Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.'

Albert Einstein

After eleven whirlwind weeks in post as Property Manager at Tredegar House I have been bowled over by the energy and passion everyone has for this place and I feel privileged to be part of such a wonderful community. Tredegar House is undoubtedly a very special house and, as we are learning, the gardens and parkland are equally unique and significant for a variety of reasons. (Did you know that we have veteran oak trees in the park that are over 400 years old and masonry bees in the orchard garden? David Bullock, the National Trust's nature expert, was very excited about these when he visited a few weeks ago.)

Periods of immense change are never easy and I am very aware that the transition from Newport City Council to National Trust has been a bumpy ride at times. It is the first time, for many years, that the National Trust has taken over a council-owned mansion property and it has been a learning experience all round. Looking to the future, I am keen to build a united Tredegar House community that includes all our fabulous staff and volunteers, the craft shops, library and nursery, Growing Space, the Caravan Club and, importantly, the Friends of Tredegar House. As we move forward, I hope that together we will create communication networks, projects, talks and events that will be open to everyone in this wider community. This will be discussed in more detail at the first Team Tredegar House meeting which will take place on 26th September and to which the Executive of The Friends have been invited.

In the meantime, however, my immediate priority continues to be establishing a robust and secure foundation from which we can grow. We need to make sure, amongst other things, that; the building is secure and protected, any urgent conservation issues are addressed (the Brown Room ceiling is badly in need of attention), we have a fully resourced and well trained team in place, we clearly understand our financial position and our legal obligations under the agreement with Newport City Council, we are offering our visitors a very enjoyable experience, we are building an innovative volunteering offer and that we are establishing constructive ways of working in the context of an organisation which is new to all of us. This will take some time and I ask for your patience while we settle in. The National Trust is one of the largest membership organisations in the world and it is an expert in the care and conservation of historic buildings. For all the right reasons it is also complex and demanding. It will take us time to learn the ropes.

It is early days for the National Trust at Tredegar House but it is important for us all to recognise that this magical mix of **people** and **place** means we have the potential here to create something completely unique for Wales. It is a very exciting time for all of us and the beginning of a fifty year journey which will see Tredegar House spruced up and brought to life in ways of which the Morgans would have been proud. For now we can only imagine how that might look but while 'Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere'. I hope you will join in the imagining. Watch this space!

Joanna Cartwright, Property Manager