

Buildings at Risk

October 2020

Newsletter No.1



A new three-year project led by the Cornish Buildings Group and supported by Historic England and the Cornwall Heritage Trust commenced in September 2020. The funding will support a case officer in order to help identify and monitor buildings at risk and seek solutions for neglected, redundant or derelict listed buildings, regardless of listing.

Progress

Over the past six weeks we had constructive conversations with representatives of Historic England, Cornwall Heritage Trust, Truro Diocese and Cornwall Council, we have been particularly pleased by the positive response and active input from parish clerks. Details of the project have been sent to local groups and organisations such as the Old Cornwall Society, Civic Societies, Arts Society and the National Federation of Women's Institutes, and we have received positive reaction from national bodies including the Georgian Group, the Victorian Society and SAVE.

Looking ahead, meetings have been set up with Cornwall Archaeological Society, the Buildings Preservation Trust and Cornwall Council Historic Environment Service. We look forward to working with all these groups and are grateful for their co-operation in sharing details of the project across their social media platforms.

This work constitutes the first stage of the project which is to get support and recruit volunteer area representatives. We are grateful to our 12 new recruits for coming forward and offering their expertise in monitoring their local areas and reporting concerns. Once the structure is set-up we will begin to review and add to our current buildings at risk list (which was set up in 2014). More on this later.

How can you follow the project?

Our main platforms to disseminate the project will be a Wordpress blog

<https://buildingsatrisk.wordpress.com/> and our website

<https://sites.google.com/site/cornishbuildingsgroup/home> Updates and alerts will be shared via our Twitter feed @CbgCornwall

To keep up-to-date on the project please follow our blog, when we have something to say you will receive an alert. Or you can follow us on Twitter.

We would like to thank those who have already made contact. It seems that some of our early focus should concentrate around building types.

Churches



St Paul's, Penzance 1843 in the early-English style by John Matthews with additions 1893 by J. W. Trounson. Porch 1886 by Silvanus Trevail. Good 19th century stained glass recently highlighted in an article by the *British Society of Master Glass Painters*.

Churches are a concern, something that is reflected in Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register 2020 <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/har-2020-registers/sw-har-register2020/>

Cornish churches currently closed are St Paul's, Truro; St Ruan Major (a ruin); St Pinnock; St Nicholas, Tresmere and St Torney, North Hill. In addition, 20 churches are deemed at risk through findings in their architect surveys.

St Paul's, Penzance is a real concern, a church that has been closed for two decades, sold by the Duchy of Cornwall in June 2020 for a reported £112,000 and now back on the

market again for a guide price of £50,000 <https://www.primelocation.com/for-sale/commercial/details/56634314>

Please note our online petition to save St Paul's, Truro from demolition is still online at <https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/save-st-paul-s-church-truro> please take a minute to take us up to 2,000 signatures.

Mine Engines

Concerns have been expressed regarding the condition of Budnic chimney stack, Marke valley Mine at Upton Cross, St Aubyn Mine near St Day and New Chiverton Mine near Perranporth. The great news about funding for repairs at Great Wheal Busy <https://wordpress.com/post/buildingsatrisk.wordpress.com/220> only sharpens our focus on Cornwall's rich and varied industrial past. We would be glad to hear of any industrial buildings at risk in your areas.



The failing structure at St Aubyn mine near St Day. At the Marke Valley copper mine three engine houses remain. Two chimney stacks remain but in much need of stabilisation. The third has collapsed.

High Streets

The Cornish Buildings Group welcome the award by Historic England of up to £1.68m for the Redruth High Street Heritage Action Zone <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/redruth/>

This money will support Cornwall Council and other partners to complete the transformation of Redruth into a 21st century market town, broadening its function to attract a wider range of users and investors. It will focus on the repair and repurposing of historic buildings, including the Buttermarket (previous winner of a Cornish Buildings Group award), to provide new homes, business premises and creative spaces. The Heritage Action Zone will also capitalise on the strong arts and creative scene in Redruth, working with organisations including Creative Kernow and Kresen Kernow (Cornwall's new archive centre) to develop exciting activities to celebrate the town's rich history and successful regeneration.

The Cornish Buildings Group is mindful of the health of our Conservation Areas and individual buildings at risk in town centres, one example being this Arts and Crafts style building in High Street, Falmouth (right). The building dates to c.1905 but we are not sure of its original use? If anyone has any more details please make contact.

We have also recently learnt of two early 19th century, Grade II listed, houses in Castle Street, Liskeard (below), which make a significant contribution to the streetscape but have been woefully neglected. These have just come onto the open market. <https://www.primelocation.com/for-sale/details/56634291>





Grade II listed houses
in Liskeard in Castle Street.

More concerns

While these building types are important, they by no means reflect all the concerns raised. So far, we have received details of three 19th century workshop buildings in poor condition in our towns; a Methodist Chapel; a former hotel; a country house by the Cornish architect Silvanus Trevail; a corrugated garage building and a farm. In addition, some concerns raised over the welfare of an important scheduled monument. We will be looking at these individual cases in the near future and will report back.



Buildings that are not listed can be important heritage assets within conservation areas of local streetscapes. This 19th century carpenter's shop in St Day, a redundant hotel near the centre of Mevagissey and a farm near Polruan are good examples.



Please support us

This project has made a positive start. You can play your part in this work by volunteering to support our aims. You can do this by reporting your concerns about historic buildings or valued heritage assets in your area which are either derelict or not being properly looked after. Please contact Paul Holden at cbgcasework@gmail.com

A form that will help us with some background local knowledge is available on our website <https://sites.google.com/site/cornishbuildingsgroup/buildings-at-risk-register?authuser=0>

Thank you for your support

Paul Holden, FSA.

