

Cornish Buildings Group 'Buildings at Risk' Project

Caring for Cornwall's heritage

Newsletter No.16

A 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 supports a case officer in order to help identify and monitor buildings at risk and seek solutions for neglected, redundant or derelict listed buildings and unlisted buildings.



'On the Way' by Patrick Newberry, chairman of the Cornish Buildings Group



St Germans priory church. A wonderful Norman church that sits alongside the iconic Port Eliot house. In consequence of the new Church of England initiative 'On the Way' many Grade I and Grade 2* listed heritage assets like this could become at risk.

The Diocese of Truro has launched an initiative called 'On the Way' which is intended to revive the Church's fortunes post Pandemic and to put it on a path of growth. As part of the initiative, the Deaneries (Subdivisions) of the Diocese have been invited to make proposals for growing 'fruitfully and sustainably'.

One Deanery, East Wivelshire, which covers the south-east of Cornwall and includes such fine churches as St Germans, published a proposed vision which involved the closure of between a half and two thirds of its 34 churches, two thirds of the 34 being Grade I or Grade II* listed (i.e. in the top eight percent of the country's listed buildings).

Predictably, uproar ensued, and the Deanery hastily retracted its proposals, saying that the draft should never have been published. A new proposed vision has been published which avoids mention of numbers of churches, but the principles are the same and could well result in significant closures. Other deaneries are working on their proposals and the risk is that similar ideas will be floated elsewhere in the Diocese.

Nobody can deny that the Church has problems, but possible large-scale closure of Cornwall's churches is a very worrying development. Cornwall's churches are some of its finest historic buildings, very often the most significant historic building in a community. But more than that, they are important places of sanctuary and calm in a stressed world. Rural communities have lost many facilities, including pubs and shops. If they lose their churches, they will become even more soulless places.

If you come across a threatened church get involved in the debate and argue for its retention. Also, let this project know. We are planning a campaign to raise awareness of this problem and to encourage debate about possible solutions.

Hotel Bristol, Newquay



The Hotel Bristol on a commanding position on the Newquay headland.

On 13 April 2022, the developer Salboy Ltd presented proposals to Newquay Town Council Planning Committee to completely demolish the Hotel Bristol and build a new hotel with flats.

<https://www.cornwalllive.com/whats-on/nandos-wagamama-five-guys-talks-6975629>

You can view the presentation to the Council here.. <https://fb.watch/cyc5lu8NgE/>

A recent unsuccessful application to Historic England to get the building listed now puts this iconic hotel at serious risk of demolition.

Although the building dates to the early-20th century there was a major extension added in 1933. Despite this the hotel retains much of its art deco interior. Its demolition, or a major alteration, would continue the piecemeal loss of Newquay's historic holiday heritage. Recent examples of change has rendered the Narrowcliff Hotel (next to the Hotel Bristol) and the Tolcarne beyond recognition, the Edgumbe has fallen into a state of dereliction and the art deco style Fistril Hotel has been demolished.

The Hotel Bristol sits within a cluster of historic hotels left standing in Newquay – alongside the Headland, Atlantic, Victoria and The Great Western. Of these, only the Headland has any statutory protection. The Headland, Atlantic and Great Western were by the renowned architect Silvanus Trevail while the Victoria was designed by Liskeard based John Sansom who also responsible for the Porthminster in St Ives. Unfortunately, the architect for Hotel Bristol remains unknown.

Several large hotels along Narrowcliff were developed from 19th century residential villas. Only two of these villas now survive which potentially will be lost under these proposed plans. The significance of the Hotel Bristol and the Narrowcliff villas have been outlined in the *Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Urban Survey – Newquay, Historic characterisation for regeneration* (2003).

Boslowick Reprieve



Homes plan for pub site rejected

PLANS to demolish an empty pub and replace it with up to 10 new homes have been rejected by councillors in Cornwall.

Outline planning permission was sought to replace the Boslowick Inn, in Falmouth, with the new housing.

However, when the plans went before Cornwall Council's central sub-area planning committee yesterday, the application was refused.

Councillors said they were concerned about the loss of the pub, an historic asset.

Restineous Farm



Restineas Farm, near St Austell.

The Historic England listing notes 'C18 house. Coursed granite. 2 storeys. 5 windows, sashes with glazing bars. Central plain door. Slate roof with half hipped ends. End chimney stacks'.

This historic farm complex first appeared on our buildings at risk register in 2014. Since that time the buildings have fallen into a major state of disrepair. A planning application PA21/04171 'Application for Listed Building Consent for Works and rebuilding to the Grade II Listed Buildings at Restineas and change of use to training and research purposes' proposes to turn the farmhouse and ancillary buildings into a training centre for the Eden Project.

<https://planning.cornwall.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=QRTF49FGN4200>).

The Cornish Buildings Group has supported this application and has recommended that the SPAB request for conditions to planning is followed. We feel that the proposals are pragmatic and likely to offer a realistic and sustainable future for Restineas. The proposal offers positive interventions to buildings that are now in a very poor state. We doubt if much of the internal fabric will be salvageable.

Our overriding view must be to support a scheme that will secure the future of an important grouping of listed buildings set within a significant setting. We hope that this scheme will provide a useful long-term solution for the site.

Lamb and Flag



The sorry state of the Lamb and Flag smelting works.

This project has reported the condition of the Grade II listed smelting works, near Canonstow, to Cornwall Council's enforcement department. The building appears on the Cornish Buildings at Risk Register and is on SAVE's endangered building list.

This project has long been concerned with the ongoing major deterioration of the buildings; it is of note that the west side of the roof has now fully collapsed. The buildings have been in stark decline for over a decade (we first reported it back in 2014) and now because of serious neglect they are now in a dangerous condition. We understand that some work has been carried out without the appropriate consents.

Making the News: 'Race to Save Historic Buildings'

Race to save historic buildings

OLIVIER VERGNAULT
olivier.vergnault@reachplc.com

THERE are real concerns that some of Cornwall's beloved heritage could crumble into dust if nothing is done to save and preserve old buildings.

The three-year Buildings at Risk project has highlighted historic properties at risk of disappearing forever. Started in September 2020, the project is led by the Cornish Buildings Group with support from Historic England and the Cornwall Heritage Trust.

Funding supports a case officer, whose role is to help identify and monitor buildings at risk and seek solutions, whether or not they are listed. Among the 50 or so at risk, the Cornish Buildings Group has highlighted a handful that remain in a poor state.

The Grade II listed Carpenter's Shop in St Day has its roof held together with battens, and boards cover some of the windows. It is subject to one of the group's applications to Cornwall Council to help save it.

The unassuming mid-19th century building is in both a conservation area and a World Heritage Site and has major structural problems. The parish council and local history group have petitioned the owner to ensure the building is maintained, but it continues to decline.

The Cornish Buildings Group said: "It is not an architectural masterpiece but it is an important heritage asset that contributes to the character and history of the village."

Also in St Day, the group has concerns for the Old Post Office, which it said was in a declining condition. Opened in 1830, 10 years before the introduction of the Penny Post, it remained in service until 1969. It also housed the first manual telephone exchange for the area.

The group said: "This historic building, although watertight, is proving a concern to locals. It would appear that the timbers in the handsome facade and the window glazing bars are beginning to fail. Sadly, the liberal application of filler has not helped. This is one to watch."

Tredethy Walled Garden, in Heland Bridge, near Bodmin, is also on the concerned list. There is an application to demolish, reconstruct and realign parts of the historic wall structure within the curtilage of a listed building.

The Buildings Group has put forward a listing application to recognise the wall structure in its own right, and said: "We are concerned that parts of this historic structure will be lost due to the development plans."

A spokesman for the group added: "Any loss would be a great shame as inserted in the wall are medieval building stones which, evidence suggests, were once part of the nationally important Bodmin Priory."

However the group highlighted a few good news stories on historic buildings, including the former Ice Works in Newlyn.

Newlyn FISH Trust has commissioned consultants to carry out a project viability appraisal, using an Architectural Heritage Fund grant. The aim is to assess its suitability as a venue for telling the story of Newlyn.

A spokesman for the Newlyn FISH Trust said: "It will help us understand what options there are for restoring, adapting and using the former ice works in the light of our ambition for it to be the location for Newlyn FISH Centre and which option is most likely to provide a long-term sustainable future for the building."

"The PVA Report will bring together these findings and help the trust take an informed decision about whether we should commit to further cost, risk and effort in developing the project."

Old Brewery Yard, in Lower Tresuswell, Penryn, has been in sad decline for several years. The main issues include the loss of part of the roof structure and poor condition of the floors. The kiln drying floor and the kiln furnace room have survived.

The group said: "This building was very clearly in need of a new use and residential was proposed. It should be stressed there were good features in this conversion, with the retention of internal wooden shutters and in some instances the wooden diamond mullions to the windows."

The group also highlighted the Prince of Wales Inn, in Newton-St Martin, on the Lizard Peninsula. The building, which has been closed for two years, has reportedly been awarded £340,000 from the Government's Levelling Up Fund. This, alongside the £120,000 raised by the local community, should help bring the 17th century pub back into use.

Meanwhile, Bicton Manor, which has been derelict for years, has sold for £500,000, having gone on the market for the first time in 60 years. It means it could get a new lease of life from its owner.



➤ 4 Penryn Street, Redruth



➤ Roseland Gig Club, St Mawes



➤ Wheal Busy, St Day



➤ Poyntons Piece, Minions, St Cleer



➤ Carpenter's Workshop, St Day



➤ St Paul's Church, Truro



➤ Polvellan Manor, Looe



➤ Lamb and Flag smelting works, near Hayle

Western Morning News, April 2022.

North Hill Church



St Torney's, North Hill.

Described in the 2014 revision of Pevsner 'One of Cornwall's most enjoyable churches, specially ambitiously decorated without and rich in interest within.

We are pleased that the closed church of St Torney's, North Hill has now been vested in the Churches Conservation Trust. The scheme transfers the care and maintenance of the building and contents to the Trust.

Paul Holden, FSA. Project Lead.

How can you follow the project?

Our WordPress blog <https://buildingsatrisk.wordpress.com/>

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.

Please support us

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of the project and its aims.

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

[Report a building at risk](#)



Historic
England



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Since 1969 the aims of the Cornish Buildings Group have been to stimulate interest, appreciation and knowledge of good building in Cornwall, and to encourage the erection, protection, repair and recording of such buildings. Like any amenities group, we depend on numbers, strength and support of our membership, who provide the force and knowledge that have made us effective for over fifty years. We encourage the protection and repair of historic buildings whether these are listed buildings or simply good examples of traditional building. We aim to encourage good architecture and to raise the general standard of building throughout the county. We hope that our generation may leave behind it buildings which will be looked back on with that same pleasure and enjoyment that we experience when we look at the architecture of past ages. [View more posts](#)