

Cornish Buildings Group 'Buildings at Risk' Project

Caring for Cornwall's heritage

Newsletter – Top 15 Buildings 2022

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.



The Cornish Buildings Group have released their top 15 buildings at risk in Cornwall, 2022

Paul Holden, Buildings at Risk Project Lead, said

Our spreadsheet of buildings at risk in Cornwall now extends to over 100 buildings of all ages and types. Some are listed buildings, others are not. Shortlisting particular cases has been challenging to say the least. In picking our top15 we have focused as much on the absence of solutions than neglect and/or dereliction. Buildings not featured on our list, such as Northlights at Tuckingmill; Loggan's Mill at Hayle; Wheal Busy at Chacewater; Davidstow church rooms and Market House in Penzance, are subject of ongoing discussions regarding repairs or future use. Others, such as the former Ganges Restaurant in Penzance or the Hotel Bristol in Newquay, have uncertain futures but are currently maintained in some way.

The buildings on this list have been selected because their respective futures are not certain, or because they have been subjected to protracted neglect and/or decay. Some are on the point of collapse; some are subject to enforcement investigations by Cornwall Council while others also feature on lists of buildings at risk managed by statutory consultees or national interest groups.

We understand that the reasons behind buildings becoming at risk are varied and unique – however, by publishing this list one of our aims is to raise awareness of these neglected heritage assets in the hope that new owners or custodians may offer a more positive future.

Cornish Buildings Group chairman, Patrick Newberry, adds

Our latest list focuses attention on a number of highly significant Cornish buildings which need urgent work if they are not to be lost to future generations. Despite the hard work of many dedicated people, there are still too many historic buildings falling into disrepair. The problem is about to be exacerbated by the Church of England's restructuring plans which are likely to result in the closure of many of Cornwall's highly historic churches – ironically, just at the moment when ordinary people struggling with the global cost of living challenges need places for quiet contemplation.

Paul Holden adds 'We are always on the lookout for new cases or updates on our current list, so please send any details and photographs to cbgcasework@gmail.com and we will follow up'

The following list is not in any priority order.

Carpenters Workshop, St Day



Carpenter's Shop, St Day. A Grade II listed eye-sore in the World Heritage Site

This long-neglected vernacular building is in the heart of the St Day Conservation Area and set within the World Heritage Site. An ongoing enforcement case, we hope, will encourage the owner to smarten the building up and give it some hope for the future. The former 19th century workshop is constructed of uncoursed killas rubble, part-rendered with some weatherboarding on a timber frame. The building is Grade II listed by Historic England.

Botallack Manor, St Just



Collapsed roofing on the Grade II* outbuildings at Botallack Manor

This Grade II* listed building, in the World Heritage Site, is much neglected – it forms an interesting grouping with its associated buildings. The case has been reported to Historic England, who have visited the site and have offered support and advice. Uninhabited for many years, the building is slowly deteriorating and is, in part, open to the weather. There is no evidence of ongoing restoration or maintenance, nor have the owners kept the building adequately secured. A current enforcement case relates to the collapse of sections of the outbuilding roof that form part of this group and thereby falls within the listing. The building needs a complete internal and external refurbishment.

St Paul's Church, Clarence Street, Penzance



The damp infested interior of St Paul's, Penzance

First sold on the open market in 2020 and again 2022, St Paul's has now been now listed on the market once again. A live enforcement case relates to holes that are now appearing in the roof structure. The church, in the early-English style, by the architect John Matthews, dates to 1843 and was gifted by Rev. Henry Batten, curate of St Mary's. A new porch was added by Silvanus Trevail in 1886 and a new north aisle by J W Trouson in 1893. This was once a grand building serving the needs of the local community in Penzance. It is Grade II listed by Historic England.

Lamb and Flag Smelting Works, St Erth



An archive image of the former smelting works tarpaulined against the weather.

The building has declined rapidly since, the roof is now largely lost. This Grade II listed smelting works in Canonstow also features on SAVE's endangered building list.

The Cornish Buildings Group has been watching the deterioration of this smelting works for over a decade – it featured on our first list which was issued in 2014. We have reported to Cornwall Council the major deterioration of the structure in general but are particularly concerned that the west side of the roof which has now fully collapsed. It seems the building is now in a dangerous condition. We also understand that some work has carried on without the appropriate consents.

Criggan Mill, Mullion Cove



Criggan Mill

This former water mill near Mullion Cove, probably dates to the mid-19th century. It has whitewashed rubble walls with brick dressings, a slate roof and brick chimney which has been substantially reduced in height. The building appears to have recently lost its 30-foot over-shot hybrid (metal and timber) wheel, by Williams and Son of Lady Street, on the rear elevation. Inside the building is machinery including a sack hoist gearing, two pairs of millstones, a stone crane and one of few complete Cornish flour dressing machines known as a 'Jigger'. The complex is typical of many grist mills in area and is part of farmyard group.

SPAB have shown an interest in this Grade II listed building and have featured it in their own casework. Cornwall Council enforcement are currently investigating the apparent neglect of the buildings and the loss of the waterwheel.

Church of St. Paul, Tregolls Road, Truro



St Paul's, Truro faces a very uncertain future

This Grade II listed church is situated on the Tregolls Road approach into Truro. The Cornish Buildings Group have long campaigned for this building to be spared the wrecker's ball. It has been nominated as an entry on The Victorian Society's 10 endangered buildings list. More details at [Save St Paul's church, Truro | 38 Degrees](#)

Despite ongoing discussions between the church and various interested parties, no solutions have been brokered – we fear that time is running out for this wonderful example of an Arts and Crafts style church by J D and E H Sedding. The 2014 revision of *Buildings of England: Cornwall* noted that the exterior is 'highly accomplished' and 'richly ornamented'.

Former Baptist Chapel, Dennison Road, Bodmin



Derelict, unlisted and unloved chapel in Bodmin. A blot in a conservation area.

Recent deterioration to the building is evident with the roof now showing signs of openings, windows are broken, and the porch is structurally failing. The site has been fenced off for several years with no sign of development. Any falling slates will potentially fall onto, or close to, the public highway – Cornwall Council Building Control have been notified.

This former nonconformist chapel in Dennison Road, Bodmin, is not listed but is in a conservation area. The chapel was subject to a planning application for conversion into residential units however the work was never started. The chapel is noted on *Heritage Gateway*.

Polvellan Manor, West Looe



Polvellan House, Looe – a disgraceful long running saga of deterioration and neglect

A late-18th century Gothic style country house that can be overtly seen by all visitors to Looe using the Mill Pond car park. The Cornish Buildings Group put this building forward for listing but was unsuccessful because much of the building has already been lost to neglect. Inside much of the historic plasterwork and 19th century timberwork features, installed by Liskeard architect John Sansom, have now been lost. Several planning applications have been put forward however none have proved very sympathetic to the historic assets. We have long followed the declining condition of this once magnificent home, later a hotel, set within an impressive, landscaped park. SAVE have recently added it to their list of buildings at risk.

4 Penryn Street, Redruth



4 Penryn St, Redruth, first featured on the Cornish Buildings Group risk list in 2014

Another long-neglected Grade II listed building in the heart of a conservation area. This pair of late-18th or early-19th century shops, with dwellings over, are excellent examples of their type and deserve better treatment. The interiors were in a good state of completeness. Redruth is currently part of the Historic England initiative 'High Street Heritage Action Zones' which hopes to reinvigorate historic high streets throughout the country. We hope that some future investment in this handsome and historically significant structure will help Redruth regain its confidence and resilience.

Roseland Gig Club, 8-10 Kings Road, St Mawes



Former Pomery's garage – the building continues to decline while planners decide if it is to be demolished. The building has recently been added to the SAVE risk register.

Our attempt to list this former fish cellar, warehouse, garage and artist studio was unsuccessful. Demolition of this building is a very real prospect however, the negative backlash from the local community and local heritage interest groups against the recent planning application to demolish and replace with an inappropriate design has prompted the withdrawal of the application.

Pomery's Ltd has put a statement out in September 2022 regarding the next stages of the project – they write

Pomery's Ltd. decided to withdraw the proposals for Pomery's Building submitted to the Planning Department in May so that some alterations could be made to take into account the feedback

received at the Exhibition and from the Parish Council. The changes eliminate the risk of those in the flats being able to overlook the conservatory of 8 Bohella Road and the harbourside balconies of the buildings on each side of Pomery's.

The Architect has also proposed some changes to the shape of the roof at the rear of the building which should allow even more light to reach the properties on Bohella Road. We will also ask the Cornwall Design Review Panel to undertake an independent assessment of the design of the building especially the front façade and how the design fits into the harbour-side location.

When these activities have been completed, we will show the revised proposals to the Parish Council and hope to re-submit the formal application to the Planners in late September or early October.

We watch with interest the next stages of this application.

Bible Christian chapel, Scarcewater



Not listed but a building now in a shocking condition. Built in 1869, it was no longer in use in the early 1990s.

Planning was approved in 1994 for residential conversion however no development was ever carried out. This former Bible Christian chapel remains a small wayside example complete with Sunday school buildings, now also disused. The granite rubble building with some granite rustication has a dry slate roof with crested clay ridge tiles, round-arched openings with 2-light windows and Y-traceried heads and a gabled porch integral with forecourt walls. The building has recently been added to the SAVE risk register.

Pendower Beach Hotel



Former Pendower Beach Hotel,

Now an eye-sore welcoming visitors to the wonderful Cornish beaches at Pendower and Carne

Developers had wanted to turn the site into a 14-bedroom boutique hotel and restaurant with 25 residential apartments. However, the plans attracted more than 500 objections and the proposal was subsequently withdrawn. The former hotel is not listed but remains an important local heritage asset. The Heritage Gateway entry reads

Extant hotel complex, the culmination of a steady process of enlargement, with a farmhouse dating from 1600 at its core, and three major phases of extension: in the late C19, in the 1930s, and in the later C20. It was owned by the Peters family of Treviles in Philleigh for most of the 19th century. Towards the end of the 19th century the farmhouse was reinvented as a gentleman's seaside residence, and in the 1930s it was converted into a hotel. Each new phase was accompanied by modifications to the original farmhouse and the construction of new outbuildings. A building thought of as being locally significant.

It is currently in a very poor state of repair and under investigation by Cornwall Council enforcement team as an untidy site. Also, a recent addition to SAVE risk register.

Pixie House, Tintagel



The Grade II listed Pixie House near Tintagel in its former glory.

No recent image is available. In September 2022 it was noticed that the roof has collapsed into the building. The site is generally unkept.

Described by Historic England as

Shop, possibly built as cottage. Probably late C19. Slate stone rubble. Scantle slate roof with semi-conical hipped end on left and hipped end on right with gable end to porch. Projecting front lateral stone rubble stack. Very small 1 room plan with entrance through gabled porch on right and rounded left end. Heated by a front lateral stack. Single storey. Picturesque asymmetrical front elevation with low slate roof with semi-conical hipped end on left and gabled open-fronted porch on right slightly to right of centre of front a large lateral stack with wide set-offs, the shaft with slated weathering at top. 2 narrow window openings flank the stack, the left hand half dormer window with a gabled roof. Narrow window opening in left hand side wall. Interior has segmental arched slate lintel to the fireplace and an exposed collar rafter roof. A board inside the porch states that this house, traditionally built for the piskies in the C19, was formerly inhabited by an old woman.

This much-loved local heritage asset has had concerns raised against its current condition by the parish council and SPAB. It was previously investigated by Cornwall Council enforcement who are taking no further action.

Riviera Farmhouse



Riviera Farmhouse, near Hayle. now in a ruinous condition

Mid-19th century farm buildings immediately west of the Grade II listed Riviere Farmhouse. The farm buildings include stables, a cart shed, shippens, an engine house and granaries with fodder stores in the lofts. The buildings were originally built to accommodate the pack-mules and horses of the Cornish Copper Company.

The buildings are suffering serious neglect. Their strength is in their grouping and history rather than fine interiors. An ongoing enforcement case is being dealt with by Cornwall Council.

Pontus Piece, near Minions



Pontus Piece near Liskeard

Not considered listable by Historic England as the building has declined too far – a salutary warning for other buildings on our list! A full history of Pontus Piece by Emma Trevarthen can be found on our blog at

[Pontus Piece, St Cleer – Cornish Buildings Group 'Buildings at Risk' Project \(wordpress.com\)](https://www.wordpress.com)

The buildings were recently offered for sale at auction.



Published by buildingsatrisk

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.