

**BRADFORD BUILDING PRESERVATION
TRUST
SPRING NEWSLETTER 2004**



Television programmes like *Grand Designs* have highlighted the fascination of setting up home or business in an unusual and interesting old building. There are hundreds of old, beautiful - and sometimes decaying - Victorian and Edwardian buildings but they are often too large for the use of small business. It is the small and unusual buildings - those that rarely rate a mention in the history books - that tell us so much about the history of towns and cities, but which also suffer the most when they lose their original use.

The North and South Cemetery Chapels, Ilkley

Conservation work is an expensive exercise and the meticulous restoration work required on old buildings is often more costly than the eventual value of the buildings themselves. Also grants are much more difficult to come by these days. The two cemetery chapels in Ilkley are a case in point. Squatters in the north chapel - a colony of bats of discerning taste that had foreseen the property's eventual desirable qualities - are protected by law and can't be evicted. Expert advice has been sought and a licence was obtained in order to continue restoration work on the chapel. A suspended ceiling has been inserted to preserve the bats' habitat and still allow full use of the building. The cost - £6000 - has added to the overall expense which has risen as further decay and stone deterioration has been uncovered during repair and investigation work.

Some of the stonework has been damaged due to vegetation growth. The original iron pegging has rusted and caused stone to 'blow' (expand outwards), and cracks have been found in some columns. Conservation of the chapel includes obtaining the right sort of guttering and repairing the original door and floor. However, although the ultimate costs will be far higher than the market value of the chapels, the end product will be two beautiful Victorian buildings ready for a new lease of life and still contributing to Ilkley's present and future.

Bradford Building Preservation Trust is a 'revolving' trust so it is hoped that the trust will shortly be able to find a suitable new use for the south chapel, which will help towards financing restoration works on the north chapel. Although there are limits to the future uses of both chapels, any small firm that sets up business in the former cemetery chapel will not only be contributing to preserving Ilkley's past history but will have a beautiful and unusual building to enjoy.



Conducted Walks - free of charge

Ilkley Civic Society and Bradford Building Preservation Trust have planned a walk in the cemetery on Sunday 25 April. There will be a chance to look inside the south chapel as well as see how the work on the north chapel is progressing. The walk will last for about 1½ hours and everyone will meet outside Ashlands School on Leeds Road at 2.00pm.

Heritage Open Days 10th-13th September.

As part of Heritage Open Days Christopher Hammond of Bradford Building Preservation Trust has organised a walk round the buildings of Bradford City Centre on Sunday 13 September. Starting at 11.00am, it will take about 1½ hours. Under its title 'The Good, The Bad and the Ugly', it promises a fascinating - even controversial - insight into Bradford's best and worst buildings! Please meet Chris on City Hall steps.

Anyone who has watched bats flying and catching insects on a warm summer evening will know what fascinating creatures they are. We are hoping that a twilight 'Bat Walk' around the cemetery chapels and the river in Ilkley can also be arranged for one of the Heritage Open Days. If this is possible, further details will be included in the next newsletter.

The Headstones

Many of the old headstones that originally came from All Saints churchyard in Ilkley have been piled up in the cemetery for several years. There is concern that they will become damaged with the passage of time and that they are not accessible for people to look at. Discussions are continuing as to the best place in the cemetery to display and protect the stones. We know that their inscriptions were noted when they were still in the graveyard but these records are only available in the local history section of Ilkley Library. We would like to re-examine the stones with a view to producing a written record for research and family history studies. With this in mind we are hoping to get more groups interested in funding the work.

Properties at Risk

For those who were gripped by the fascination of the 'Restoration' programme last year on BBC2 a further series is apparently being planned for this summer. 'Restoration' and 'Grand Designs' have excited the public interest so much that the number of local properties across the country that were deemed to be 'at risk' has apparently decreased! This is good news for us all but still leaves very many small, unusual but derelict local historic properties which once formed a vital part of a community. If you know of any properties in your area that could be said to be 'at risk', please write to the Trust's address (below)

Website

The Trust has recently set up a website. The domain name is www.bbpt.org.uk and you will be able not only to read the latest newsletter but also pick up more information about the Trust and its work. If you have friends or colleagues who are interested in membership, please refer them to this site.

Membership Subscription reminder.

Subscriptions are due by 1st April every year and include a twice-yearly newsletter. You will recently have received a subscription reminder with details of payment. Membership is still only £15 but if you are a taxpayer and sign the form on your reminder, the Trust will benefit by a further 28%. Every subscription helps when it comes to paying bills and more importantly your money forms an essential part of the capital funding needed to attract grants for saving an historic building. Please help us to continue this vital work by sending your subscription for this year. (Address below) **Subscriptions: contact telephone number 01274 732522**