

Details of the buildings

SCOTLAND

PORTENCROSS CASTLE

Portencross
Ayrshire

Listing: Category A, Scheduled Monument

Date built: c14th century

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In the 14th century the Clyde estuary was the M6 into the heart of Scotland. To protect this crucial waterway, two castles were constructed – one on the island Little Cumbrae and the other at Portencross. Legend has it that it was through the natural harbour at Portencross that the ancient Kings of Scotland were taken to Iona for burial.

Portencross Castle, which today is on the verge of collapse, became an important site for Robert Stewart on his journey to kingship. On the unexpected death of his uncle, King David II in 1371, Stewart (grandson of Robert the Bruce) is thought to have stopped off at the Castle on his journey between Rothesay and Scone Palace. It was there that he was crowned King Robert II of Scotland – the first Stewart King (the longest-lasting Royal lineage culminating with Queen Anne). Robert II frequented the Castle at Portencross and signed many Royal charters there.

KNOCKANDO WOOL MILL

Knockando
Morayshire
(Speyside)

Listing: Category A
Date built: c1784

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In the heart of Spey Valley amid the distilleries of the whisky trail is an 'A' Listed woollen mill that has been working continuously for the past 200 years.

The mill is a small industrial jewel overflowing with Victorian machinery that can transform fleece into a finished blanket or a length of tweed for the local gamekeepers. Knockando



Wool Mill is of international importance, as it is one of a handful of integrated local mills of this type left in the whole of Europe.

It is still working today, thanks to Hugh Jones, who has spent the last 30 years learning the skills and keeping the complex machinery running. But the building that houses all these machines is falling down around his ears – the mill's roof is collapsing and the main beams are giving way.

HALL OF CLESTRAIN

**Orphir
Orkney**

**Listing: Category A
Date built: 1769/70**

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In a remote and beautiful part of Orkney is a splendid 'A' Listed Georgian mansion overlooking the Hills of Hoy and Scapa Flow.

Rich landowner Patrick Honeyman wanted a house that would reflect his wealth and status and he looked to the Georgian elegance of Edinburgh for the inspiration when building the Hall of Clestrain in 1769.

The Hall was once home to Arctic explorer John Rae, who found the last link of the legendary Northwest passage and discovered the fate of the Franklin expedition.

In the 19th century, three-quarters of the Hudson Bay Company's workforce were Orcadian and John Rae learnt his survival skills as a boy in the hills and waters around his home in Orphir.



Today the building is a tragic shell; but there are tantalising glimpses of its former splendour – a section of banister, a Georgian doorframe and the grand stone staircase.

Hopefully, it may soon have a new lease of life as Orkney's first Boat Museum. The whole visitor complex will cost around £3m, which will restore the mansion to its former Georgian splendour. It will house the museum's exhibits and will also have a room dedicated to the exploits of adventurous local boy John Rae.

NORTHERN IRELAND

LOCK-KEEPER'S COTTAGE

**Newforge
Belfast**

Listing: Grade B I

Date built: Between 1827 and 1934

**Edward Patterson or Clare Jamison
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This derelict cottage is the last remaining one in public ownership on the famous Lagan Navigation canal network. The cottage played a vital role in a water transport system that served Northern Ireland.

The Lagan Navigation opened in 1763 and boosted industrial development and, in particular, the economy of Lisburn. The chief cargos from Belfast were imported coal for the industries of the Lagan Valley, which were mainly linen.

This simple, vernacular two-storey house with four rooms is testimony to a way of life that is

now almost forgotten. The last lock-keeper took up his position in 1922 and he and his wife raised their family of 10 within the cottage's modest walls. All cooking was done on an open fire and washing was done outside; water had to be fetched from a nearby farm.

In 1954 the Lagan Navigation Company was dissolved, unable to compete with modern transport. The lock-keeper bought the cottage and stayed there until his death, willing it to one of his daughters, who, in turn, sold it to the council so that it would stay in public hands.

ARMAGH GAOL

Armagh

Listing: Grade A

Date built: Between 1780 and 1852

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Armagh Gaol is Northern Ireland's oldest prison. It was built between 1780 and 1852,

and closed in 1986. The prison buildings span the history of incarceration in Ireland from the mid-18th century to the late 20th century.

In 1765 Archbishop Robinson was appointed Primate of the Church of Ireland. This brought him to Armagh, where he set about improving the city with buildings designed by Northern Ireland's finest architects of the time – Francis Cooley and William Murray. Buildings such as the palace, library, courthouse and gaol turned Armagh into a fine Georgian town.

At one time the prison was described as “one of the most advanced houses of detention in the kingdom”. However, in the mid-1800s, overcrowding became a problem, with up to 10 prisoners sharing a cell. In 1920 the gaol was used for women but, by the 1950s, it housed no more than 12 female prisoners at a time, mostly on charges of drunkenness, stealing and prostitution.

Finally, with the onset of political unrest, Armagh Gaol became a place for holding female prisoners. In 1986 the prison had outgrown its usefulness and was emptied of staff and inmates; it has been slowly decaying for 18 years.

THE PLAYHOUSE

Derry

Listing: Grade B I

Date built: Between 1887 and 1911

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Set on one of the oldest sites in Derry, nestled against the city walls, the Playhouse is situated in the former St Mary and St Joseph's school buildings, part of a complex originally owned by the Sisters of Mercy.

The building, which stands above just about all other buildings in the city walls, tells the story of the first convent to be set up in Northern Ireland after the Reformation. It also bears witness to the work of the nuns who ran it and the important role they played in Derry's Catholic education over many years.

The Sisters were established with the aim of going out to help the poor and the sick. This was a shift from previous practice, which saw convents keep themselves isolated from the community. In 1840, Bishop Dr McLaughlin purchased the site and, in 1948, invited the Sisters of Mercy to set up a private boarding school for girls, which financed free schools for the poor.

Schooling on the site came to an end in 1981, at which time the building was left derelict. Eleven years later, The Playhouse was established and has grown into one of Northern Ireland's most diverse and busy arts centres, with a strong community foundation and support. The Playhouse is committed to cross-community work and provides a radical and neutral space, fulfilling its remit of making the arts more accessible to all.

As well as housing a 180-seat theatre, dance studio, play resource centre, education and outreach department, and contemporary art gallery, the buildings are also home to a number of art/culture-based tenants, including the Lillyput Theatre Company, one of Northern Ireland's first special needs theatre companies.

The Playhouse is well used and loved but little funding has been available for maintenance, and the listed buildings are now in need of urgent attention.

WALES

CARDIGAN CASTLE

Cardigan
West Wales

Listing: Grade I/Grade II*
Date built: c11th century

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At the head of the River Teifi in Cardigan, West Wales, once one of the busiest seaports in the UK, lies the ancient ruins of a castle that claims to be one of the most heavily besieged in Wales. It has been abandoned, destroyed and rebuilt at various times during its colourful life. Now in a dilapidated state, Cardigan Castle – the first Welsh-built stone castle – was the site of frequent battles between Welsh princes and ambitious Norman invaders.

Henry VII stayed there during his march to Bosworth in 1485. He then gifted the castle to Catherine of Aragon as a dowry when she married his son. And, in 1645, during the English Civil War, it was attacked by Cromwell's soldiers and fell once more.

It is also the birthplace of Europe's largest cultural festival. The castle was once the stronghold of Wales' most prominent rulers, Rhys ap Gruffydd (Lord Rhys), and he established the National Eisteddfod in 1176, when he held a huge medieval house-warming party.

In 1808 an impressive Georgian mansion was built on the site, incorporating one of the medieval castle towers into its structure. It was sold in the 1940s to its last private owner but is now in public hands; the council purchased the site in April 2003.

LLANFYLLIN WORKHOUSE

Powys
Mid Wales

Listing: Grade II
Date built: 1838

Wynne Morris
Chairman of Y Dolydd Llanfyllin Bulding Preservation Trust
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The buildings

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Back in the 1830s a grim fate awaited those who fell on hard times.

Llanfyllin Workhouse is an early example of a building that was created as part of a government drive to reduce the tax burden needed to look after society's poor. At that time, society in Wales was changing from rural and agricultural to industrial, the population was increasing and poverty was rife.

A board of guardians was responsible for running the workhouse and a "master" was put in place to look after the "inmates". Each was run with a different degree of severity. Rules were strict, "inmates" were dealt with harshly and there was strict segregation of men, women and children. It was difficult for people to leave the workhouse once they had entered.

Built by well-known local architect Thomas Penson, the Llanfyllin Workhouse is architecturally impressive and one of the few remaining examples of its type. The interior courtyards were built roughly from local stone but an outwardly grand façade was built on to the front. The Workhouse is decaying rapidly and has been a target for vandals.

WORKINGMAN'S INSTITUTE & MEMORIAL HALL

**Newbridge
Gwent
South Wales**

**Listing: Grade II
Date built: 1908**

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Among the defining sights of industrial Wales, along with the pit head gear of its collieries, are the Workingmen's Institutes and Memorial Halls. Back when South Wales could boast about its huge coal industry, and villages ordered their days by the sound of the shift change hooters, these buildings were at the centre of the communities they served.

Most were built after the introduction of the Miners' Welfare Fund, which was set up in



The buildings

1920, but this Institute at Newbridge was, unusually, paid for by the miners themselves. The group of miners boldly established their own welfare scheme and, funded by subs levied from their weekly wages, built a hall that provided educational, leisure and cultural amenities for times above ground.

Placing a great deal of importance on education and self-improvement, these halls contained libraries and reading rooms, as well as areas for social interaction such as billiard rooms and social clubs. Interestingly, alcohol was never an option in the early days, with provision only for soft drinks.

In 1924, when the cinema was fast becoming a popular form of entertainment, the Newbridge miners took out a further mortgage and built the Memorial Hall. It contained a beautiful art deco cinema, a theatre and a well-used dancehall with the “finest sprung floor in the Valleys”.

The buildings were then at the heart of the community, with people coming from all over to attend the dances and various events, but they are now a target for vandals and the Memorial Hall, in particular, is becoming structurally unsound.

ENGLAND

REGION: NORTH

LION SALT WORKS

Ollershaw Lane
Marston, Northwich
Cheshire

Listing: Grade II and Scheduled Ancient Monument

Date built: 1894

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The Lion Salt Works is the only remaining open pan salt works in the UK that made salt from natural brine – a technique unchanged since the Romans used this method 2,000 years ago – and one of only three left in the Western world. Its buildings are characterised by attractive timber-framed structures, constructed to counter the effects of salt-mining subsidence in the area.

Located beside the Trent and Mersey Canal, the Works exported salt throughout the British Empire, often leading to claims of exploitation and oppression from the colonies, most famously illustrated by Mahatma Gandhi's salt marches in the 1930s.

The Thompson family ran the business for five generations, from the 19th century to its closure in 1986, leaving this unique relic as a monument to an industry which gave this region its economic lifeblood. It was the predecessor of the chemicals industry that flourishes in the area today.



The buildings

GAYLE MILL

Gayle
North Yorkshire

Listing: Grade II* and Scheduled Ancient Monument
Date built: 1776

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Gayle Mill is an 18th-century water-powered cotton mill and is located in the charming village of Gayle in the Yorkshire Dales.

The mill was built at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution by landowner Oswald Routh, who wanted to capitalise on the vast fortunes being made in the cotton industry. Powered by a water wheel from the local river, the mill has a sophisticated system of aqueducts and a millpond that are still in place.

In the early 19th century the mill was converted to a woollen mill, selling thread to village knitters who had a reputation at the time for producing fine-quality socks for soldiers fighting in the Napoleonic Wars.

In 1878 the mill's water wheel was removed and replaced by the revolutionary Thompson Water Turbine. The vanguard of technological innovation in its day, every modern turbine, including nuclear ones, are descendants of the Thompson. Gayle Mill is thought to be the last one remaining in its original location.

In 1890 a Gilkes Turbine was installed to generate electricity for the mill and village, again putting the mill at the forefront of technology – the village was not put on the national grid until 1948.

In latter years it operated as a sawmill, providing cradle-to-grave wooden fittings for the local community and has been left untouched since its closure in 1988.

SHEFFIELD MANOR LODGE

115 Manor Lane
Sheffield

Listing: Grade II*/Grade II and Scheduled Ancient Monument
Date built: 16th century

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Sheffield Manor Lodge – a 16th-century manor house today located in the middle of an inner-city housing estate – was in its day one of the most important residences in England. It was here that Elizabeth I entrusted her loyal servant, the Earl of Shrewsbury, and his wife, Bess of Hardwick, with the task of



imprisoning Mary Queen of Scots. But there were no dungeons for Mary; she arrived with over 30 servants and the Earl and Bess ended up looking after her for 14 years, ruining their marriage and making a serious dent in their fortune.

Today the Manor Lodge is largely a ruin, but the remains of a long gallery, an exquisite chimney, with accompanying fireplaces, and vast cellars for food and wine are still clearly visible.

Most outstanding, though, is the Turret House, built in 1574 as a gatehouse and hunting tower. Constructed during Mary's "imprisonment", it has a turret built in the French style, possibly from Mary's influence (she spent her childhood in France). There is also a banqueting room with decorative plaster ceiling, possibly designed by Bess and Mary, with emblems containing hidden secrets.

REGION: MIDLANDS

NEWSTEAD ABBEY

Ravenshead
Nottinghamshire

Listing: Grade I
Date built: c1165

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Newstead Abbey, best known as the ancestral home of poet Lord Byron, was originally an Augustinian priory founded by Henry II in about 1165. A small religious community existed there until Henry VIII dissolved the monastery in 1539. In the following year, Henry granted Newstead to the poet's ancestor, Sir John Byron, who converted the priory into a house for his family.



Sir John Byron and his successors kept much of the monastic structure and layout so that, to this day, the house retains its medieval character. The most famous surviving section is the West Front of the church, which dates back to the late 13th century, with its statue of St Mary, to whom the priory was dedicated.

Since then, the West Front, with its exquisite carvings of birds, animals and foliage, crowned by a statue of the Virgin, has come to be a powerful visual symbol of Newstead and an internationally significant icon of the Romantic Movement, uniquely important because of its strong associations with Byron's life and work. The poet dedicated a number of works to the ruin and featured it as "Norman Abbey" in his magnum

opus, *Don Juan*. Conservation and repair work is needed to restore this magnificent, largely untouched 13th-century monument. It is crucial that the West Front remains a Nottinghamshire and national landmark for the enjoyment of future generations.

BAWDSEY TRANSMITTER BLOCK

Bawdsey Manor

Bawdsey

Suffolk

Listing: Grade II*

Date built: Between 1937 and 1939

Mary Wain

Bawdsey Radar Group

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The T-Block is an overgrown and rather mysterious concrete building, found in the windswept grounds of an ostentatious Suffolk coastal mansion. Thirteen Second World War pillboxes encircle the site. At the start of the last war, this was one of the most important buildings in England and pivotal to the nation's victory in the Battle of Britain. It is the world's first radar station.

In 1936, the RAF bought Bawdsey Manor, an isolated Victorian mansion on a particularly desolate part of the Suffolk Coast. In it, they housed a remarkable group of boffins, including the physics genius Professor Robert Watson-Watt. Their task was to develop the nascent radio direction-finding technology into an operational device that could detect approaching enemy aircraft from a great distance. Their invention – radar – could do just that and Bawdsey became the first of a chain of radar stations that surrounded the south-east of England. Its staff located the enemy and directed Britain's Spitfires and Hurricanes to the Luftwaffe formations before they reached the coast.

The work carried out here was so secret that the public found out about it only after the War. Even today, the story of Bawdsey, its radar and the men and women who operated it is little known, despite the fact that it was of equal importance to Bletchley Park.

OLD GRAMMAR SCHOOL & SARACEN'S HEAD, KINGS NORTON

The Green

Kings Norton

Birmingham

Listing: Grade II*

Date built: c15th century

Canon Rob Morris

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Kings Norton is a large, multi-cultural district to the south of Birmingham with more than its fair share of tower blocks. But in the heart of the borough is an oasis of village life – “the Green”.



A number of buildings of historic interest surround the Green, in particular the Old Grammar School (above), which is in need of extensive structural work, and the former Saracen's Head public house, built in 1492.

The 15th-century, timber-framed "Old Grammar School" produced one of the Midlands' greatest teachers, a puritanical Mr Chips – the Rev Thomas Hall. He arrived in 1628 at the age of 19 and his time spanned one of the most dramatic periods in British history – the Civil War and, later, the Restoration of the Monarchy.

Hall transformed an early "failing school" into one that was famed throughout the land. His legacy to Birmingham also included one of the largest library collections in England. He was expelled following the Restoration and died a pauper.

The Saracen's Head, next door to the church, is now the Parish Office and meeting room. It is said that, up until the Civil War, Kings Norton was predominantly Royalist and Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I, came to the area leading a replacement army. The Queen is said to have slept in the Saracen's. Following the visit, a room in the Saracen's Head became the "Queen's Room".

REGION: SOUTH EAST

STRAWBERRY HILL

Twickenham
Middlesex

Listing: Grade I
Date built: 18th century

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Strawberry Hill is a world-famous house that changed the course of architectural history and appears on the World Monuments Fund watch list of the 100 most endangered sites.

Located in the leafy London suburb of Twickenham, Strawberry Hill is the Gothic villa designed by Horace Walpole, the youngest son of Sir Robert Walpole, considered to be Britain's first Prime Minister.

Strawberry Hill was originally a modest house but, between 1747 and 1792, Horace Walpole

– a high society and influential trendsetter – transformed it into a breathtaking Gothic fantasy.

It became the tourist attraction of the day with its pinnacles, stained-glass windows, bookcases and fireplaces – all based on designs from ancient tombs and cathedrals that had not been fashionable for hundreds of years. It was a stark contrast to the symmetrical Georgian Palladian mansions of the day.

Walpole's Strawberry Hill led to a Gothic revival in this country, which, in turn, led to great buildings such as the Houses of Parliament.

REGION: SOUTH EAST

SEVERNDROOG CASTLE

Greenwich
London

Listing: Grade II*

Date built: 1784

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Standing 63ft tall on top of one of the highest points of south-east London and commanding spectacular views across the capital, this triangular and rare Georgian folly was erected as a token of love. Built in 1784, Severndroog Castle is the dedication of a grieving widow to her dead, swashbuckling husband. It is a lasting reminder of the daring, rags-to-riches tale of courageous seafarer Sir William James.

Sir William started life as the humble son of a Welsh miller. Aged 12, he went to sea as a deckhand and, at 18, he was in command of his own ship. In the employ of the East India



Company, he became commodore and commander-in-chief of the company's fleet, protecting their ships from pirates. His most famous battle was at Severndroog, just off the Bombay coast, where he defeated the pirates.

He returned home to a hero's welcome and settled down to married life. However, tragedy was to strike. At the age of 57, he died suddenly from a stroke in the middle of his only daughter's wedding festivities. Severndroog Castle, now vandalised and derelict, is his lasting memorial.

REGION: SOUTH EAST

ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE

Charing
Kent

Listing: Grade I and Scheduled Ancient Monument

Date built: c13th/14th century



The buildings

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This great medieval complex of buildings, now partially ruined, was built to serve the second most powerful man in the land, the Archbishop of Canterbury. It was constructed in the Gothic style, the “must-have” design for medieval Church buildings of the time.

Henry VIII took possession when he dissolved the monasteries but, in 1629, it left Royal ownership to become a simple farm.

This complex served as administrative offices as well as the place where the rich archbishop would throw lavish banquets to entertain VIPs. The scale of entertainment was immense: for one visit lasting just two days, staff laid on hay for 80 horses, 428 loaves of bread, 15 gallons of wine and 160 gallons of beer ... and this was just one of the 17 palaces the Archbishop owned in Kent alone.

REGION: SOUTH WEST

CASTLE HOUSE
Bridgwater
Somerset

Listing: Grade II*
Date built: 1851

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In the last century, some of the world’s most challenging and controversial buildings were made from concrete. It changed the way architects work and made almost anything possible.

Although concrete has been around since Ancient Egypt, it wasn’t until 1824 that the concrete revolution really began in Britain when Portland Cement was patented and one man, John Board, a successful brick maker in Bridgwater, Somerset, saw the opportunities it could provide.

In 1851, the inhabitants of his home town were in for a surprise. He was one of the first people to use concrete in a domestic setting when he built the now-dilapidated Castle House. A rare surviving example, this visionary dwelling was a showcase for his pioneering pre-cast and reinforced concrete products. Concrete was used in virtually every aspect of construction, including moulded skirting boards, staircases, balustrades, mock beams, window mullions and gargoyles.

REGION: SOUTH WEST

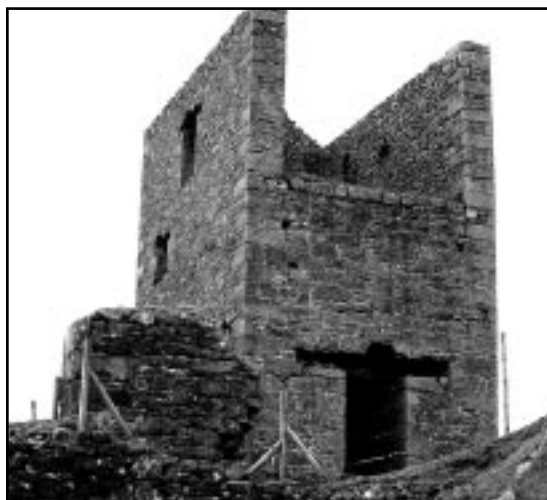
SOUTH CARADON MINE

**Near Liskeard
Cornwall**

**Listing: Scheduled Ancient Monument
Date built: Mid-19th century**

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Cornwall has been shaped by its industrial history, and its last mine closed only six years ago. All that now remains are the monolithic mine buildings, which are a testament to the county's past.

One of the largest and longest-running copper mines in Cornwall was at South Caradon and it has remained virtually untouched since its closure in 1890. It stretched over nearly two square miles, underground tunnels extended for 38 miles and four miles of tramways crossed the hillsides, bringing coal to the six engine houses and taking away thousands of tonnes of extracted ore.

The discovery of rich copper deposits in the South Caradon area in the early decades of the 19th century triggered an extraordinary burst of industrial activity that utterly transformed the appearance and economy of this area, with up to 800 men, women and children working at South Caradon alone.

However, for the miner working underground, there was a high price to pay – they would be very lucky to reach the age of 40.

REGION: SOUTH WEST

SHERBORNE HOUSE

**Sherborne
Dorset**

**Listing: Grade I
Date built: 1720**

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This impressive early Palladian country house was built to impress the 23-year-old wife of octogenarian landowner Henry Seymour Portman. It also acted as a “half-way house” between his estates in Taunton and Byranston. Its chief glory is the Baroque stairwell mural painted by Sir James Thornhill, whose other works include the dome of St Paul’s Cathedral in London.

By the mid-19th century, the house was the country retreat of Charles William Macready, a renowned Shakespearian actor. He hosted many literary events and one of his celebrated guests included Charles Dickens, who gave his second public reading of *A Christmas Carol* here. The house was to become the centre of Sherborne’s cultural life.

Most recently, the building has been home to Lord Digby’s School for Girls which closed in 1992. Although structurally sound, the House is suffering from water damage and the roof is in urgent need of repair, as it is threatening to destroy the precious interiors.