

Bank Hall in Bretherton, Lancashire

Thanks to National Lottery support, the Grade II* listed Bank Hall has completed its extraordinary renovation journey and can welcome visitors to explore its heritage.

Originally completed in 1608, the mansion had also been remodelled in the 1830s when it became an intriguing mixture of Jacobean and Georgian architecture.

However, Bank Hall then fell into disrepair after being abandoned in the 1970s, leading to it being placed on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register.

Community-led campaign

In 1995, The Friends of Bank Hall embarked on their campaign to save the manor house. It was their tireless efforts that were instrumental in unlocking the grant of £2.2million from The National Lottery Heritage Fund that has made the transformation possible.

Louise Sutherland, Head of Engagement, England, North at the Heritage Fund, said: "Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, this spectacular manor has been saved for the local community and future generations to enjoy and continue to build on its captivating heritage."

In conjunction with Heritage Trust for the North West, The Friends have looked after the grounds and cleared the overgrown vegetation that covered the manor house. As a result of their hard work Bank Hall was finally removed from the Heritage at Risk Register in November 2022.

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>
> *John Howard, Chair of The Friends of Bank Hall*

One of the Hall's standout features is the unusual Prospect Tower, originally designed to provide views of the gardens and wider landscape. On 11 December, members of the public will get the chance to step into the tower for the first time.

Prospect Tower was added to the manor house between 1650-60, and is now home to a new exhibition about the history of the home and its inhabitants and a community space.

Renowned residents

Bank Hall began its life as the manorial seat of the Banastre family, and was passed down to other high profile families – including the Legh family and the Lilford family. The Lilford family used the Hall as a holiday home and it remained in their family until 2017 when ownership was signed over to Heritage Trust for the North West.

The Hall has also been home to a number of other notable residents, including prominent figures in Lancashire such as Sir Harcourt Everard Clare, and in later years housed the Royal Engineers of the British Army during the Second World War.

Giving the Hall a new lease of life

The wings of Bank Hall have been given a new lease of life as 12 apartments, thanks to Next Big Thing Developments, providing a new home for a host of residents.

John Howard, Chair of The Friends of Bank Hall, said: "Formed just over 27 years ago with a common interest of saving the derelict manor house from the ruin it had become, the group has now achieved the goals set out to 'Save Bank Hall'. However, the story is far from over as we look to a new era for the house and gardens with the opening of the Prospect Tower and Exhibition."

Bank Hall will be open to visitors on Wednesdays and Sundays throughout February 2023. Find out more about Bank Hall and book tickets to the Prospect Tower Exhibition.

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