

# Bennett launches £1.6m appeal to preserve Folly

by Adrian Braddy

[adrian.braddy@cravenherald.co.uk](mailto:adrian.braddy@cravenherald.co.uk)

Playwright Alan Bennett has launched a £1.6 million appeal to preserve one of Craven's most important buildings for future generations.

The world-renowned writer, who has a home in North Craven, is the figure-head of the fundraising drive aimed at restoring The Folly in Settle to its former glory, turning it into a building that the whole community can use.

The Folly was built in the late 1670s by Richard Preston, a wealthy lawyer, and since then it has been everything from a doctor's surgery to a fish and chip shop.

In 1996, parts of the building – the Hall and South Ranges – were purchased by the North Craven Building Preservation Trust and following a major restoration they were opened as the Museum of North Craven Life in 2001. That year, the remainder of the building – the North Range – was bought by the trust, support-



**APPEAL:** Playwright Alan Bennett gazes out of the rain-soaked windows of The Folly

ed by a loan from the Architectural Heritage Fund.

The trust is hoping to raise £625,000 to repay the loan and a further £1 million to provide an Endowment Fund to generate a regular income for the vital maintenance of the grade I-listed building.

Mr Bennett, who is president of the trust, spoke to invited guests at the official launch of The Folly Appeal on Saturday.

He described The Folly as

an “architectural pick and mix” that “looks older than it is”, adding: “It is a most distinguished if rather eccentric building, and the only building in Settle which is grade one listed. It is much loved in Settle, but is a rather uncharacteristic building.”

However, he added: “We want support for this, not simply because it’s a wonderful building and it’s not to preserve it in aspic. It’s to make it part of the communi-

ty and we think that with the right programme it can be a real asset to Settle as a whole. Even to people who aren’t particularly interested in old buildings. It can be as much an asset as Salts Mill is to Saltaire, a place that people will want to come and see and so it will generate income as well as being a desirable addition to Settle life.”

For more information, visit [ncbpt.org.uk/appeal](http://ncbpt.org.uk/appeal).