



Building trust's appeal is no act of folly

Every community needs a focal point, so it is pleasing to see playwright Alan Bennett spearheading a drive to turn one of North Craven's oldest buildings into a hub for the Settle community.

Despite being so close to the town centre, The Folly has, for many years, hidden its light under a bushel. Originally built on the main road into Settle, this elaborate piece of architecture was clearly designed to stand out, but the construction of a new road in the 18th century left it somewhat sidelined.

Later incarnations as a chip shop and a warehouse saw its standing in the town diminished still further. And 20 years ago, it was split in two, leaving The Folly struggling to retain its identity.

However, the North Craven Building Preservation Trust has done some sterling work in reuniting the two Ranges and returning The Folly to its former glory.

Never fazed by daunting challenges, the trust wants to raise £1.6 million to help preserve The Folly for future generations. It is a big target in these difficult economic times, but the trust is realistic and knows it will take time.

It is good to hear that the trust does not want to "preserve The Folly in aspic", for despite its great age and architectural worth, this building can play an important role in 21st century life.

A current exhibition at the Museum of North Craven Life, which is well worth a visit, shows how The Folly has adapted to 350 years of change. With a little help, The Folly will continue to adapt and this grand old lady of Settle will be at the heart of the community for many generations to come.