



© St John's House Trust

How a 500-year-old house became a home for the future

St John's House, nestled on Newcastle Hill just minutes from Bridgend station, is a beautifully preserved historic home that tells the story of centuries of local life. From its medieval roots to modern community events, the house bridges the past and present, welcoming visitors to explore heritage, arts, and education in a unique setting.

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- National Lottery Heritage Fund

Throughout the UK, people are coming together to rescue, restore, reuse and manage historic buildings and spaces for the benefit of their communities. This case study is one in a series highlighting their incredible impact.



St John's House

Location: Newcastle Hill

Local authority area: *Bridgend County Borough*

UK Parliamentary constituency: *Bridgend*

Senedd Cymru constituency: *Bridgend*



6,100+
visitors
(2011–23)



2,000+
social media
followers



23
trustees &
volunteers

Today, St John's House is a welcoming and inclusive heritage space, open to the public twice a month and hosting a year-round programme of events – from candlelit storytelling to craft workshops and school visits. Its mission is simple: to share Bridgend's layered history and create space for the community to gather, reflect and grow.

From hidden gem to cultural anchor

The house is now a cornerstone for local engagement, hosting storytelling sessions, creative exhibitions, choral concerts, plant sales, and heritage craft days. It draws footfall into Bridgend and supports local makers through its shop and exhibitions. As an accessible venue, it welcomes residents of all ages – especially children and young families – offering meaningful opportunities to connect with their past, their place, and one another. By blending heritage with community activity, the house plays a vital role in strengthening local identity and ensuring the building remains relevant, inclusive, and widely used today.

Five centuries of fascinating history

Dating back to at least 1512, St John's House is believed to be the oldest habitable secular building in Bridgend. Once known as Monckley House or 'The Hospice', its origins may lie in medieval pilgrimage or ecclesiastical use. Over the centuries, it has evolved with the town – from a merchant's home to miners' lodgings, from an ambulance hall to a hub for the local community. Through every phase, it has stood as a constant witness to Bridgend's shifting landscape, embodying the town's layered history and ongoing connection to its past.

Saving a landmark from decline

Once under threat of redevelopment, St John's House is now a thriving, volunteer-led heritage centre in the heart of the town. When the Trust was formed in 2011, St John's House was at risk of being converted into flats. Its rescue and transformation into a cultural hub reflect the power of grassroots action to reclaim historic spaces – not only preserving the past but reimagining it for future generations.

Since the house was purchased in 2023, ongoing conservation efforts – from window restoration to future accessibility plans – continue to safeguard the building's unique character for generations to come.

St John's House Trust

The St John's House Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, founded by local residents committed to preserving this rare historic site. Its purchase was made possible through years of community campaigning, careful planning, and volunteer dedication, and the building is now permanently protected. With no admission fee, a dedicated volunteer team, and a strong commitment to inclusivity, the Trust ensures that St John's House remains not only a monument to Bridgend's history, but a vibrant, living part of its present – open, welcoming, and rooted in the values of community stewardship and access for all.

For more information, visit:

www.stjohns-bridgend.org.uk

www.heritagenetwork.org.uk

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