



## **Weavers' Cottage Press Release June 2016**

### **A taste of pointing brickwork in lime mortar**

On the 17<sup>th</sup> June, in collaboration with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), building contractors Croft Building and Conservation, opened up the building site at the Weavers' Cottages in Horsefair, Kidderminster for a day to instruct and advise on the use of lime in historic building construction.

The SPAB Maintenance Co-operative project exists to empower volunteers at places of worship across Herefordshire and Worcestershire, to understand their traditionally built buildings and take on basic maintenance tasks to ensure these buildings remain in good condition for years to come. With several co-op churches built of brick and it being essential to carry out repairs using traditional materials, the chance to learn how to repoint brickwork in lime has been a regular request from co-op volunteers. Whilst not a church, the same skills are being applied at the Weavers' Cottages to match the type of lime mortar used when the cottages were originally constructed and this provided an ideal learning opportunity. Volunteers from churches in the Kidderminster area were also keen to get behind the scenes, take a tour of the site, and have a chance to see a live building conservation project at work.

Seven people were able to take part in the training day at the cottages, ably led by staff from Croft and organised by Kate Andrew (SPAB project officer for Herefordshire and Worcestershire), and Andrew Mottram from Worcester Diocese.

Kate said "Working on a live conservation building site and carrying out work that could well be in place for at least a century was a very special opportunity for both the volunteers and myself. Making sure everything was in place to allow the training to happen safely and effectively required a lot of careful planning but paid off with a superb day that everyone learnt from and enjoyed". If you would like to find out more about the SPAB Co-operative and get involved please contact Kate Andrew at [kate.andrew@spab.org.uk](mailto:kate.andrew@spab.org.uk)

Andy Hutchins from Croft said "We at Croft Building and Conservation Ltd are very happy to show our skills and hopefully pass on a small amount of this to help others understand the nature of our work, enabling them to carry out the skills they learnt on their own and various other buildings. Lee, Grant and I enjoyed having the SPAB Volunteer group with us on Friday and we all thought how much the volunteers being

novices learnt very quickly & hopefully got something out of the day, which makes it all worthwhile”.

Robert J Tolley, past Chairman & accredited Conservation Architect said “The use of traditional building materials has long been recognised as an important element in good historic building repair practice and the WBPT always endeavours to ensure that these practices are followed in all projects. Encouraging the use of such materials as lime is an essential aspect in repairs we undertake, using wherever possible Building Contractors experienced in the use of traditional techniques, which is why we have supported the recent SPAB initiative”.

The Weavers’ Cottages lay abandoned for over a generation but have recently been purchased by The Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust. They are a row of three historically important cottages, the earliest of which dates back almost 300 years. They are modest in scale and sit virtually unnoticed amidst more modern buildings in the Horsefair, attention drawn more by their derelict condition than their significance to the history of the town.

The scheme is to repair the cottages and convert them for modern-day residential use, bringing the buildings back to life, providing much needed town-centre housing and improving the physical environment and appearance of this part of Kidderminster. The Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust has secured a mix of grant and loan funding by the [Heritage Lottery Fund](#), the [Pilgrim Trust](#), the [Garfield Weston Foundation](#), the [D’Oyly Carte Charitable Trust](#) and the [Architectural Heritage Fund](#) to repair and conserve the cottages back to their former glory on the outside, and to return to use as houses on the inside.

The properties will not be actively marketed until later this year but all enquires in the meantime are very welcome and should be directed to either Nick Millinchip or Chris Smith, both of whom are based at Phipps & Pritchard with McCartneys Stourport-on-Severn Office on 01299 822060 or [Stourport@phipp sandpritchard.co.uk](mailto:Stourport@phipp sandpritchard.co.uk)

**ENDS**

### **Accompanying images**

The images accompanying this release are a photograph of Kate Andrew pointing up the front elevation and a group photograph of all those involved on the day.

### **About the Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust**

The Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust, a registered charity, aims to rescue buildings ‘at risk’ that are of historic or architectural importance. The Trust has completed successful projects at Church House, Areley Kings; Wyre Hill, Bewdley; Belle House, Pershore; Load St, Bewdley; and The Sargeants House, Ledbury; where sustainable uses have been found for otherwise abandoned historic properties. [www.wbpt.org.uk](http://www.wbpt.org.uk)

## About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk) @heritagelottery @HLFWestMids

### For further information, additional images and interviews, please contact:

Robert J Tolley at the Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust: telephone 01451 851701; email [robertjtolley@gmail.com](mailto:robertjtolley@gmail.com); or David Trevis-Smith, Project Organiser for the Trust: telephone: 07711 601560; email [david@dts-solutions.co.uk](mailto:david@dts-solutions.co.uk)

