

WEEKLY NEWS

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NO 1378

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A NEW BEGINNING?

BY JOEL TURNER

YOU may have crawled past it in rush hour traffic and wondered why the imposing red brick church had fallen on hard times.

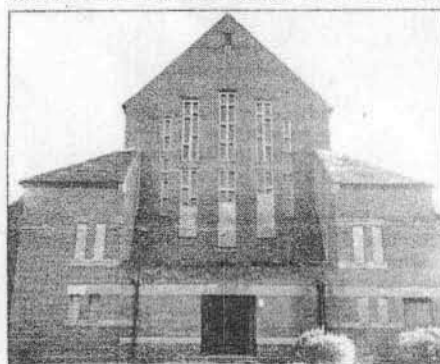
But St Margaret of Antioch Church, on Cardigan Road, could be beginning a new lease of life, thanks in part to a £116,000 grant from English Heritage.

The Grade II* listed church has been on the Buildings at Risk register since 1997 and was bought by a trust made up of local people in 2003.

Mike Love, one of the trustees, who lives next door to the church in the old vicarage, said: "The building is a bit like a Tardis: the inside is so different from the outside. It is really amazing inside."

"It's just a big empty space and has a fantastic Art Deco war memorial at one end."

The church was built in 1908 to the designs of ecclesiastical architect Temple Moor. The west



LISTED BUILDING - St Margaret of Antioch Church.

end of the building was designed by renowned architect G G Pace and added in 1964.

It was constructed with money from community subscriptions, a fact the trust believes should have a bearing on its future.

"It was always obvious from when we first looked at the building that we wanted to give it back to the community," said Mr Love.

"The money will be used for repair work, not to make any alterations to the building. We have also got some money for a feasibility study which hopefully we will be able to use when looking for other funding."

Since the trust bought the building it has been used by a variety of different people.

A Bradford-based trapeze troupe practised under its high vaulted ceilings and the Northern Film School used it for location shooting.

More recently the building has been shut after an infestation of pigeons made it a health hazard.

The church's trustees recognise there are already a number of community centres in the area with the former Royal Park and Headingley Primary Schools also likely to be opened up for community use.

Mr Love explained that the trust don't want the building to move away entirely from being a place of worship.

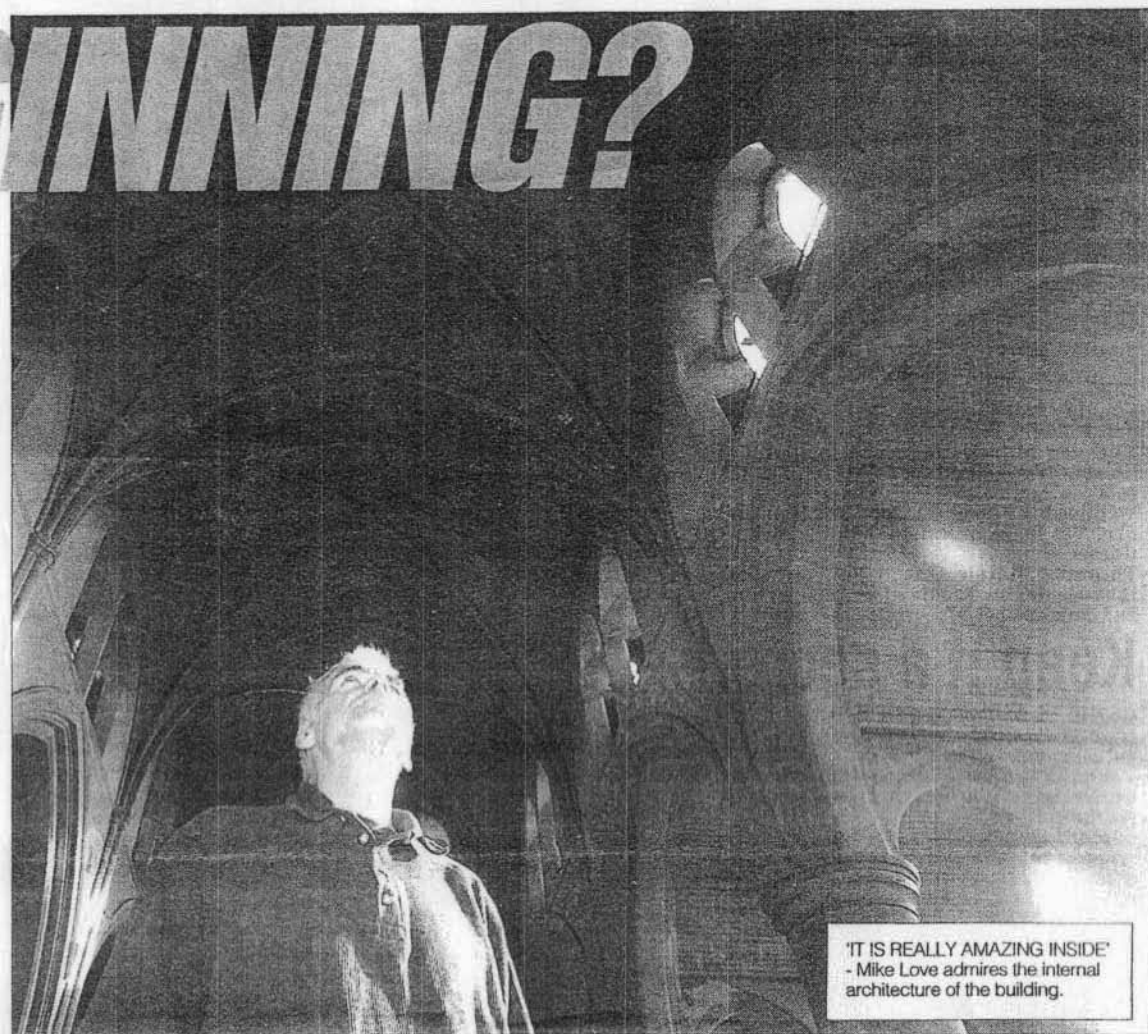
He said: "We will continue its use as a place of prayer and worship but that will be a very small part of its use."

"We are looking at it being a space for performance, people from the creative arts, musicians, art exhibitions and visual arts."

"We know of people who have expressed a lot of interest in it."

The English Heritage money will be used for repairs to the nave roof, south aisle roof, drainage, brickwork and glazing.

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'IT IS REALLY AMAZING INSIDE'
- Mike Love admires the internal
architecture of the building.