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Eddisons

## **Britain's tallest folly up for sale after financial failure of building preservation trust**



Three historic listed British properties owned by the Vivat Trust, which went into liquidation in August 2015, including a Gothic tower, are to be sold.

Property consultancy Eddisons is marketing the properties, some of which have been fully restored, creating modern living accommodation.

They include the UK's tallest folly, the 53m, Grade I listed Hadlow Tower near Tonbridge in Kent; as well as a 15th century timber framed gatehouse in North Yorkshire and a 14th century manor house near Hereford.

The Vivat Trust, a registered charity and a national building preservation trust, was dedicated to rescuing neglected and dilapidated historic buildings throughout the UK and providing them with a viable new use, as holiday properties. The trust's directors called in insolvency firm Begbies Traynor last summer however, when the charity was hit by financial difficulties.

Now the properties owned by the trust have been put up for sale and Eddisons is inviting offers for the unique buildings, which have not been given a guide price.

Abdul Jambo, associate director at Eddisons, explained: "The properties are of such a unique and historic nature that we have rarely, if ever, seen anything comparable come to the open market.

"Because of this their values are likely to differ wildly depending on the potential buyers, whether they are a charity or a private enterprise. As such we will be leaving this to the market to decide and are looking to receive offers from anyone interested in owning an incredibly special piece of British history."



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Further information on all the Vivat Trust properties is available at [www.eddisons.com/property](http://www.eddisons.com/property)

The historic properties up for sale are:

### **Hadlow Tower, Tonbridge, Kent**

Hadlow Tower, built by Kent industrialist Walter Barton May, is a fully restored rare Grade I listed early 19th century Gothic tower which originally formed part of Hadlow Castle.

The tower was begun in 1838 to a design by naval architect George Ledwell Taylor. Constructed of brick and rendered with Roman Cement, it stands 53m high - 1m taller than Nelson's column which was built at the same time - and is the tallest folly in the UK.

In the Second World War it served as a vegetable store and observation post for the Observer Corps and Home Guard. It was used as a landmark by Luftwaffe pilots on their way to London, who dropped bombs in nearby fields.

Damage caused by the exceptional storms of 1987 created major structural problems and in the mid 1990s Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council carried out urgent safety work, removing the 40ft 'lantern' that crowned the structure.

The Vivat Trust took over the building 2008 and carried out a full-scale restoration of the tower with donations from local fundraisers, £2.6m from the Heritage Lottery Fund, as well as other funding from English Heritage.

With a steel staircase rising to the summit of the tower, the living accommodation is made up of three bedrooms, a drawing room, dining room, two bathrooms and a wet room spread over five storeys. The tower also has outdoor space.

Further information on the history of Hadlow Tower at <http://www.hadlowtower.com/>

### **Bolton Percy Gatehouse, near Tadcaster, North Yorkshire**

The 15th century timber framed Grade II\* listed gatehouse is located in the Yorkshire village of Bolton Percy, eight miles south west of York, and has been converted into a fully modernised two-bedroom house.

Restored by the Vivat Trust between November 2009 and April 2010, the gatehouse originally formed the defensive entrance to the village rectory and a courtyard of medieval buildings. The rectory was

rebuilt in 1698 and the outbuildings, with the exception of the gatehouse, were demolished in the early 19th century.

The gatehouse now includes a kitchen and bathroom on the ground floor and a two-bedroom suite at first floor level with a sitting and dining area. The house also has its own private garden.

With the village pub on one side, the churchyard on the other and magnificent oak gates to hide behind, the gatehouse is in an idyllic village setting.

### **Wellbrook Manor, Peterchurch near Hereford**

Wellbrook Manor, in rural Herefordshire, is a Grade II\* listed farmhouse and has the substantial remains of a fine medieval hall house, dating from the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, at its core.

The house's main surviving medieval elements are the ground floor entrance hall and sitting room which extends to the floor above, with a high ceiling and timber framing. It also has a medieval 'solar wing' or dining room, as well as a main bedroom above which has a spectacular roof structure and fireplace.

The Vivat Trust took over Wellbrook Manor in 2011, carrying out a rigorous restoration process which was not fully completed. The 2-acre estate includes the farmhouse, farm buildings, stone-built garages and a garden studio house.

**Manor Cottages**, a two-bedroom caretaker residence for Wellbrook Manor, is being marketed separately and is also available via Eddisons.