



## Allt y Bela, Usk, Monmouthshire



It takes courage to enter into a restoration project even when the building is historically and authentically important and especially when vast costs are involved due to the poor condition of the structure. This Grade II\* medieval house which was built in the mid 15th century as a hall house underwent a major 'refurbishment' in 1599 with the addition of the three storey renaissance tower, the first of its kind in Wales. Over the centuries the tower suffered from a lack of maintenance so that in the 1970's the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) erected scaffolding around it for protection. Finally in 2001 the Spitalfields Trust acquired the building with funds from Cadw and the Architectural Heritage Fund and KB<sup>2</sup> were appointed to advise on the structure.

KB<sup>2</sup>'s first objective was to understand how the building behaved structurally and they carried out a detailed structural survey and foundation inspection.

With meticulous care from the craftsmen and the design team the building has been fully restored and in 2007 received a Civic Trust Award

The repairs were achieved by strengthening and stabilising the structure in-situ with minimum intervention and without damaging its character or disturbing historic fabric. It was not necessary to place great emphasis on structural calculations when analysing the structure and codes of practice, Building Regulations and British Standards had to be studied and used judiciously as they were not necessarily relevant to the work which was needed.



**“This project demonstrates that it is possible to avoid disturbing historic fabric and still repair an ancient building without damaging its character or altering features which give it its historic importance”**

Ken Brown, Senior Partner - KB<sup>2</sup>

**KB<sup>2</sup> Consulting Civil & Structural Engineers**

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