

CLITHEROE TOWN WELLS CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN

'Save Our
Ancient Town
Wells'



HEALD WELL

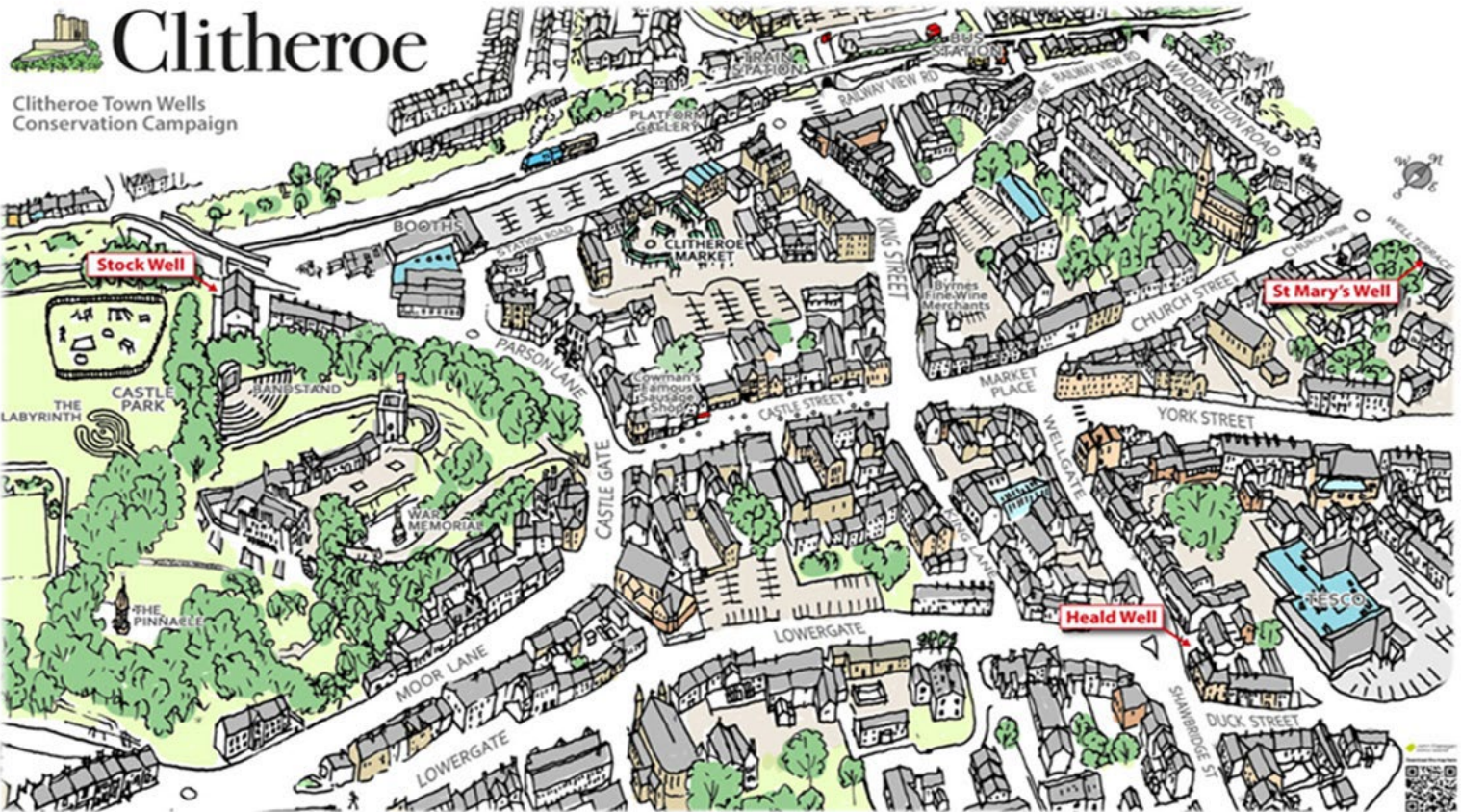


STOCK WELL



ST. MARY'S WELL

CTWCC Autumn 2025 Support Appeal



Clitheroe Town Wells Conservation Campaign (CTWWC) contacts you at a critical point in its Campaign **'to secure a lasting and meaningful future'** for all three of Clitheroe's ancient and unique former Public Town Well sites. This to request local Community, Academic, and Amenity Organisation to simply acknowledge the significance of these three sites and request to encourage our elected Councillors do the same when the decision about their stewardship is made by them in the near future.

Significant progress towards this aim was achieved at the July 2025 Full Council meeting when a motion was unanimously approved to **"..... to prepare a report for Community Committee on the appropriate route that this Council can take to acquire the ownership of the two remaining wells of Heild (sic) Well and St Mary's Well, to align their guardianship following the Council's 2019, successful, application for Stock Well."**

Without a registered Title two of our three wells are condemned to unnecessary dilapidation. With registered Title for all three wells will enable the Council to work with CTWCC and the wider community - in partnership - to secure the necessary funding which will support a joint Municipal/Community based project. This will see all three sites fully surveyed, investigated, repaired in accord with best historic building conservation practices - and their social and historic significance fully interpreted and presented at each site. This will provide ensure sites will to be fully appreciated in future by this community – and the many beyond it who visit Clitheroe to appreciate its historic and unique importance within the County Palatine.

These are just some of the reasons why these sites are important:

- No town in England is known to have three ancient Wells so recognisable.
 - Most of the existing stone enclosures date back to the reign of King Henry VIII.
 - They are all natural ‘Spring’ wells and - by research of into the origin of their existing or former names - they are confirmed as having Anglo-Saxon origins.
 - These sites are older than Clitheroe Castle. They were in continuous use for a thousand years or more – until mains water came in 1854.
 - Without a clean and reliable water supply - the Anglo- Saxon ‘**Clyderhow**’ could not have developed into today’s Clitheroe.
 - They take an indigenous advantage of the special geological conditions that exist on Clitheroe’s ‘*Limestone Reef Knoll*’ - the interface between porous upper and - impermeable lower - strata’s.
 - Historic England recognises their significance by their ‘**Grade II Listed**’ Building Status.
 - Clitheroe’s Conservation Area Assessment records them as ‘**most notable**’ for their ‘**distinct identity**’.
 - RVBC’s Core Strategy confirms ‘**...its Heritage Assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced**’
 - With effective stewardship, all have great Heritage Tourist potential, akin to that in the Peak District where thousands flock annually to the **Well Dressing Festivals**.
 - They are unique to Clitheroe, contributing to its status as one of Lancashire’s finest historic towns.
 - They inspired Andy’s Bowes’ book, ‘**Reflections on the Water,**’ published in 2024 - probably the best historical narrative of Clitheroe and available @ Clitheroe Library.
 - All are, avoidably, deteriorating - year on year. This can be arrested – **with the will to do so!**
- STOP PRESS!**
- Halloween themed ‘**Spirits of the Wells**’ broadsheets are now, temporarily, displayed at each site, promoting a mythical aspect for each site. Subject to weather we hoped to put on a short, repeated ‘**Open-air, Audio-Visual presentation**’ of this on All Hallows Eve. At Heald Well running between 6.00pm & 7.00pm.

CTWCC continues to promote and develop its ‘**Roadmap**’ to secure a lasting and meaningful future for our three ancient former Public Town Wells. In pursuit of this aim, this appeal seeks your support to encourage our elected Councillors and our appointed Officers to:

- a. Accept their Municipal & Legal abilities to adopt Heald and St. Mary’s Wells - in a similar manner done for Stock Well in 2019 – and apply to the Land Registry for ‘title’ over them, and
- b. Regard these ancient and unique sites as the ‘**Communal Assets**’ they have always been **and not potential ‘liabilities’** - which has been our Council’s position to date.

If your Community, Academic, or Amenity Organisation share these concerns, **please confirming this by signing and returning the Support Form at the foot of this page - or registering this via the website Petition @ www.clitheroe3wells.com** Completion of this petition here, or on the website, will be of great assistance when our elected representatives meet to determine the fate of the three oldest sites in this Parish.

Thank you for taking the time to consider – and hopefully responding - to this invitation.

CTWCC Officers: Steve Ragnall, Steve Burke & Shirley Penman.

Date: 13th October 2025

Community, Academic, or Amenity Organisation Support Response Dear Mr Ragnall On behalf of We confirm our support for the principles of Clitheroe Town Wells Conservation Campaign and Ribble Valley Borough Council’s 15th July motion to secure an ‘<i>appropriate route that this Council can take to acquire the ownership of the two remaining wells of Heild (sic) Well and St. Mary’s Well to align their guardianship following the Council’s 2019, successful application for Stock Well</i>’. Signed: For:
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Clitheroe Town Wells Conservation Campaign
Chairman: Steve Ragnall
Secretary: Steve Burke Dip.Arch (Oxf’d)
Tel: 01200 425528 M: 07975 518113 Email: sbcaltd@outlook.com

CLITHEROE TOWN WELLS CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN

A Halloween Tale of Clitheroes Wells

Long ago, before pipes and valves, before charters and deeds, the land around Clyderhow was watched over by three ancient spirits – **guardians of the sacred springs**. They were known not by name, but by their service: **The Healer, The Watcher, and The Rememberer**.

Each Halloween, when the veil between worlds thinned and the dead walked softly among the living, **these spirits stirred**. Their waters ran clearer, colder, and deeper – not just through stone and soil, **but through memory**.

HEALD WELL

The Healer



Once sought by monks and midwives, **Heald Well** glows faintly at dusk. Its guardian, **the Healer**, was once a feared water spirit of Anglo-Saxon lore – who was tamed by kindness and bound by blessing. Now, she offers healing to those who approach with reverence. **But beware:** she remembers the days when offerings were made, and **she does not suffer arrogance**.

A Ritual for Restoration

Each year, the spirits gather at twilight. If the **people of Clitheroe walk the wells** with lanterns, leave soul cakes or sprigs of rowan, and speak aloud the names of those who came before – the guardians may stir. And if they do, they will grant a blessing: not of riches, but of **healing, watchfulness and remembrance**.

"We served you well," they whisper, "and still we stand. But will you serve us now?"

Make haste, visit the other two wells to get their blessing before the bells toll at midnight!

Or visit www.clitheroe3wells.com to join us in the campaign to save our wells.

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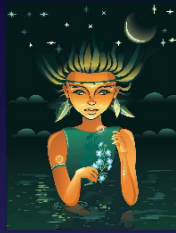
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STOCK WELL

The Rememberer



It is said that **Stock Well** holds the names of those long forgotten. On Halloween night, if you listen closely, you may hear whispers rising from the depths – echoes of those who drank here before battle, before birth, before the clash of roses. **The Rememberer** keeps their stories, **waiting for the one who will listen**.

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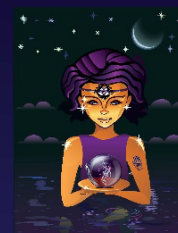
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ST MARY'S WELL

The Watcher



Hidden and half-forgotten, **St. Mary's Well** was sealed by stone and prayer. Yet its spirit, **the Watcher**, remains vigilant. She sees the passing of time, the neglect of memory, and the slow fading of care. On Halloween, she rises – not in anger, but in sorrow – **seeking those who will restore what was once sacred**.

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THE BOWLAND CHARITABLE TRUST



THE CLITHEROE LIONS CLUB

H₂O designs
Interior water features

John Flanagan
GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Jane Birtwell
GRAPHIC DESIGNER

AND

All the people of this ancient parish of Clitheroe/'Clyderhow' for their generous, positive - and continuing - support for this Campaign
'to secure a lasting and meaningful future for our three former public town