

Save Preston Bus Station banner, 2013

This banner was designed and made by banner-maker, Ed Hall. He contacted the Save Preston Bus Station group and offered to make a banner to help the cause to save the building from demolition.

It was carried in a parade on Saturday 2 November 2013 which became a celebration of the building being granted Grade II listed status. For many of the supporters it was the first time they had met, as much of the campaign had been carried out on social media.

Bus Station Connections

These cases contain items brought in by people who responded to a callout for objects that connect them to Preston Bus Station.

They offer a glimpse into what the building has meant to the people of Preston and further afield over the last 50 years.

Sarah Walker

This photograph was taken by Sarah's daughter, Emma, in 2015. She is now studying architectural design at Liverpool University.

Norman Payne

Norman Payne used this National Express discount card in the 1990s when he was a student at UCLan and travelled from Preston Bus Station to Southampton.

Helen Lindsay

This collection of items reflects Helen's long interest in Preston Bus Station. The concrete fragment and Christmas card were from colleagues at Lancashire Post. She also has a part in the film 56,000.

Charles Quick

The postcard was a present. It is always kept in the back of his notebook and is carried at all times as reference.

Mr Leaver

Was a keen bus spotter. This bus spotting manual dates from the 1960s and many of the buses in it used Preston Bus Station.

Rita Whitlock

This mug and coaster used to be sold in Preston Tourist Information Centre where Rita was Manager. She purchased them as she loves Brutalist architecture.

Chris Lonergan

Chris is a Senior Engineer at ARUP in Manchester. All of the staff in the office have a cube with their picture on. It also includes something representing a hobby and their favourite building.

Bryan James

Bryan took these photographs on his Voigtländer camera in the late 1960s. He was interested in the building as it was being constructed.

Ian Stezaker (brewer)
Gavin Renshaw (artist)

This beer has been brewed by Priest Town brewery as part of a series depicting Preston landmarks. This month they are featuring Preston Bus Station.

James (Terence) Charnley

This project was researched and written in 1996 for his History of Art and Design MA at Manchester Metropolitan University.

David Prescott

These photographs are part of David's large collection. He organised vintage vehicles for an event on the 20 July 2019 at the Harris, and some of the buses in the pictures came along.

Hannah Whitlow

Hannah travelled through Preston Bus Station on her way to T in the Park in 2012.

Trailer

2011

Film

Shezad Dawood

Trailer accompanied the exhibition, Piercing Brightness, at the Harris in September 2011. It consisted of new prints, textile and neon works by Dawood, and toured to Modern Art Oxford, the Newling Art Gallery and The Exchange.

Trailer supported the feature film, Piercing Brightness, a science fiction film which was the outcome of a two and a half year collaboration between Shezad Dawood, In Certain Places, and the people and places of Preston.

The story takes place in Preston and climaxes with a dramatic car chase which ends on the roof of the bus station. 70 people from the city – including Preston actress Samantha Edwards – feature in scenes that were filmed in local buildings and spaces.

Following its premiere in 2012, it was distributed to cinemas across the UK and internationally.

Commissioned by In Certain places
Part of Harris collection

Preston Bus Station: Clothing Connections

These clothes have been worn by people with a connection to Preston Bus Station.

Some have worked in and around the building. Others campaigned to save it from demolition.

Some shine a light on a moment of time in the building's 50 year life.

1. Ribble Conductors' Uniform, 1950s. This uniform was still a common sight when Preston Bus Station opened.
2. This T-Shirt belongs to Helen Lindsay. It was designed by Bernie Blackburn and won the RIBA Printed Architecture award in 2013. T-shirts were sold to raise money for the campaign to save Preston Bus Station and to increase awareness that the building was at risk of demolition.
4. Hi-Vis Vest worn by artist, Keith Harrison, during his performance of Conductor at Preston Bus Station on the 14 July 2019.

3. Cravat and hat worn by Preston Corporation Bus Conductress, Miriam Hopkins. She was on the first Corporation Bus to enter the new Preston Bus Station at 5:20 am on the 12 October 1969.
5. This Pulp Fiction T-Shirt was bought in 1994 from the record kiosk in Preston Bus Station by Julie Mayer for Norman Payne. They had been to see the film on their first date. It's still a favourite today.
6. This Ribble Drivers' Jacket belongs to Christopher Wolter who is a fan of Preston Bus Station.

Ourhouse

2015

Film

Nathaniel Mellors

Ourhouse is an episodic absurdist drama and conceptual artwork that uses the control of language as its core theme. This episode features an eccentric family who inhabit Preston's iconic bus station, which has a TARDIS-like interior, subjecting them to a series of fantastical events.

The location for much of the film was Preston Bus Station. It is usually presented as a projected film installation. A 13 minute clip of the hour-long film is shown here by kind permission of the artist.

Credit

Presented by the Contemporary Art Society, 2015, through the Annual Award funded by the Sfumato Foundation with the support of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, the Mondriaan Foundation and Arts Council England. Commissioned by the Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston. Produced by NOMAD, Nathaniel Mellors with the assistance of the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan's) Media Factory facility and In Certain Places.

Interior Woodwork

These plans are for the distinctive bay dividers and curved seats.

The interior woodwork is extremely high quality and made from the hardwood, Iroko, which is given an oiled finish.

During the recent restoration of the building, the wood was sanded back to remove the graffiti and looks as fresh as the day it was installed.

This bay divider was removed to make a double bay when the building was owned by Preston City Council.

Litter Bins

These bins were designed by Keith Ingham and made by Glasdons. They were designed to display A6 card timetables and have the ability to be mounted onto the bay dividers as well as the walls.

As elegant as they were, the floor in the background betrays the fact that not everyone threw their litter into them.

Architect, Keith Ingham, liked the bins so much that he also installed one in his kitchen at home.

Barber's chair and sign

This chair and neon sign were in Top Trend barbers in Preston Bus Station from 1977 until the building was restored.

Barber, Steve Molloy, has written a book – Tales From Behind the Chair – about all of the people who have sat in this seat and told their story to him. As Steve has said about his life as a barber, ‘there is no better place to witness life in real time than a hairdresser’s salon.’

Why not read some of his stories in the chair itself?

Kiosk at Preston Bus Station, 1971

This drawing has been kindly lent by Donald Sidebottom of Glasdons. It shows one of the company's kiosks in situ at the foot of a ramp in Preston Bus Station.

The colour of these kiosks was a vivid orange. Glasdon's involvement in the construction of Preston Bus Station gave the young company a boost. Today they make everything from bollards to litter bins.

GRP Kiosk to North and South Ramps, July 1969

Glasdon Ltd of Blackpool worked with architect, Keith Ingham, on the design for ticket and information kiosks for Preston Bus Station.

The final design informed the blueprint for a modular building system that the company has continued to sell all over the world for the last 50 years.

This kiosk design is now named the 'Olympic' and a modern version is on display in the Harris' foyer as part of this exhibition.

PEOPLE

2019

Film

LOW PROFILE

PEOPLE is a new temporary artwork and film created at Preston's iconic bus station during a period of redevelopment. In early June 2019, LOW PROFILE commissioned Laserline Road Marking Ltd to paint the word 'PEOPLE' on the forecourt of Preston Bus Station – creating a temporary artwork for visitors and passers-by to engage with. The artists were interested in using this format to mimic the way that road markings direct our attention and behaviour, shaping how we navigate through public spaces. The creation of the text makes a statement about this part of the station's future use as a new public space for Preston's residents and visitors.

The text disappeared as the forecourt underwent further development in Autumn 2019. This new film creates a portrait of two workers installing the text – drawing attention to the changing nature of the space, and the skill, labour and teamwork involved in creating changes in the built environment that may otherwise be overlooked.

Preston Bus Station, built in 1969 and striking in its design and scale, has recently been refurbished and reopened following a public campaign that fought to save it from demolition.

A special regard for those using the bus station (commuters, local students, visitors and staff) sits at the heart of the ambition of the station's design and construction – something echoed in the way in which people continue to value it as architecturally and socially important today.

LOW PROFILE wanted to mark the moment of the bus station's 50th anniversary by again placing value on, and celebrating, the people of Preston – highlighting the role that people play in shaping and making place.

Daytime Splendour

These beautiful photographs were commissioned by BDP and some used in their marketing materials.

The base of the 180ft lighting column, which was topped with a rotating 'Bus Go Go Go' sign, is just visible. The bridge link with the Guild Hall has not yet been constructed, but the structure has been designed to accomodate it.

Other photographs show off the landscaping – elegant granite setts and planting.

People and Architecture

Keith Ingham wrote this introduction to BDP's in-house magazine, Contact. Tongue-in-cheek, he talks about people invading his new building.

Although the team of architects tried to predict the behaviour and needs of the users of the building, it is evident from the newspaper cutting that Preston Corporation had not realised the enormous amount of daily maintenance required to service the needs of Europe's largest bus station.

Beautiful and Brutal 50 years in the life of Preston Bus Station

Preston Bus Station is an internationally important piece of architecture that was built for everyday use by the people of Preston. Now in its 50th year, the Harris Museum, Art Gallery & Library and In Certain Places are celebrating this iconic building and what it means to people.

Designed by local architects, Building Design Partnership in 1969, Preston Bus Station set in concrete an ambitious vision of Preston's future as the major transport hub for Lancashire. It was the largest bus station in Europe, a space-age structure built in the same year as the moon landing, with 80 bus bays and space for 1000 cars. Architects Keith Ingham and Charles Wilson were involved in every aspect of its design, from the delicate concrete curves to shelter passengers and soften its rugged modular form, to its unique Pirelli rubber floor and Helvetica signage.

Preston Bus Station was saved from demolition in 2013 and is now Grade II listed. It has been revitalised through an extensive restoration programme by building owners, Lancashire County Council and John Puttick Associates architects, working with local contractor, Conlon.

This exhibition brings together archival material, films and literature with objects associated with the building and the people who use it. Explorative new contemporary art commissions by Keith Harrison and LOW PROFILE examine the relationship between people, buses and architecture, and Anna Raczynski's video portraits present memories and opinions from across the city and further afield.

Project and Exhibition Partners

Preston Bus Station
Lancashire County Council
Preston City Council
Harris Museum Art Gallery & Library
In Certain Places
Grenfell-Baines School of Architecture
University of Central Lancashire
Building Design Partnership
Ove Arup
Manchester Metropolitan University
Laing
Lancashire Archives
Laser line Road Marking Ltd
Stagecoach
Preston Bus
Smithy Joinery
John Puttick Associates
Save Preston Bus Station
Gate 81
Glasdon UK Limited
Ribble Vehicle Preservation Trust
Preston Field Audio
Matt's Gallery
British Commercial Vehicle Museum

Central Area Road Proposals

EH Stazicker

August 1950

This map illustrates a proposal for a central bus station for Preston and a modified central road network.

By the 1950s Preston's roads were congested and its bus services distributed between small stations across the town. A scheme was developed for buses to link directly with a new ringroad, which would avoid the congestion of the town centre.

A large site for the bus station was identified on Tithebarn Street.

Proposed Bus Station Lords Walk Preston January 1960

In 1959 Preston Corporation appointed Grenfell Baines and Hargreave to produce a scheme for a bus station and carpark for 500 cars.

This design, drawn up with Preston Borough Surveyor, EH Stazicker, includes a carpark above the bus concourse with waiting rooms and a club room.

Circular Preston Bus Station 1961

This design by Building Design Partnership was rediscovered in the company archives.

The building was designed to take 80 buses, and has a separate circular carpark for 500 cars with a central spiral ramp.

These photographs are of a model of the building which gained approval in principle from Preston Town Council. The scheme was abandoned as the brief for the project continued to develop.

Details of a double-sided clock

This drawing from BDP's archives has been enlarged so that the clock is 4ft wide as stated in the drawing. The clocks in Preston Bus Station look small in the context of such an enormous building, but viewing them in other spaces confirms how large the building is.

Many people fondly remember that the clock face and 24-hour time did not usually agree. Interestingly enough, they are telling different times in this drawing as well.

Clock by Bernie Blackburn, 2019

This is a miniature clock that plays homage to the full-sized versions in Preston Bus Station.

Like the originals, it uses a digital display rather than the original mechanical 24-hour time readout.

Unlike the originals, its hands and 24 hour time agree with each other.

Reproduced drawing Date Unknown

The brief for the bus station continued to evolve until it was handed to the architect in January 1965.

The evolution was led by the economics of building a multi-storey carpark that could accommodate a large number of cars and buses.

This drawing of Preston Bus Station is getting closer to the final design, but it does not yet include the curved parapet units that are its most distinctive feature.

Proposed arrangement of floors, September 1966

These structural drawings show Arup and BDP's proposed floor arrangement with precast-ribbed floors.

Preston Corporation was keen to obtain the cheapest building to meet its specification. In October 1966 it asked for these drawings to be sent to 29 contractors who had shown an interest in tendering. They were invited to suggest alternative floor arrangements.

Proposed arrangement of floors, October 1966

Four alternative designs were put forward. Two were in steel, did not comply with fire regulations, and were not aesthetically acceptable to the architect. A third was pre-cast concrete but did not meet the required specification.

The serious competition came from a fourth scheme – a ‘warped slab’ design proposed by British Lift Slab Ltd. After serious consideration, BDP advised Preston Corporation that their original scheme was superior, and in June 1967 contractors were invited to tender.

Elevations, September 1966

This drawing shows BDP and Arup's design for Preston Bus Station in all its glory. The length of the building is 171 metres – longer than Blackpool Tower is tall. It has 80 bus bays and space for 1,100 cars over nine floors above the concourse.

Its design is elegant and functional. The floors fall from the centre to the external columns to allow drainage, and the distinctive curves offer a sculptural edge to the parapet as well as providing weather protection for cars and pedestrians.

Master Site Plan, March 1967

This site plan shows the streets that were cleared to make way for Preston Bus Station.

Tithebarn Street had been at the heart of Preston's theatreland, but the area had become run down and was in need of redevelopment. The old Ribble Bus Station was located where the Guild Hall is today.

This site put the new bus station near what was the retail heart of Preston – just off Church Street – and ensured good road links.

Construction Photographs,

John Laing Ltd were appointed the main contractor. Their fee was agreed at £1,082,720.

Work began in March 1968. The concrete units for the building were all cast on site in fibreglass moulds. A travelling derrick crane was set up on the east side of the building and served the casting yard. A travelling tower crane on the west side placed the units in position.

The concrete aggregates used were crushed Silverdale limestone, sea dredged washed gravel and Portland Ribblesdale cement.

Site Board, 2019

Bernie Blackburn

This colourful site board has been created by Bernie Blackburn. A black and white image of this board appears in BDP's *Continuous Collective* book. We thought it was a poster, but further investigation has revealed that it was a hand-painted site board.

The original colours are unknown, but Bernie Blackburn has selected a 1960s colour palette to recreate this exciting vision of the building.

Preston Bus Station by Alan Mitchell, 1967

This artist's impression shows the proposed scheme with the taxi rank in the foreground. The base of the 180ft lighting column is just visible.

The drawing shows the building's distinctive white tiles made by Shaws of Darwen and supplied by Lionel Arnold Ltd of Euxton.

The rough boulders became granite setts in the final design. In between these were mounds with ground-cover planting and plane trees.

Preston Bus Station Interior by Alan Mitchell, 1967

This artist's impression shows a busy concourse full of people with many of the features that made it into the final design.

The distinctive iroko bus bay dividers are present as well as glass display cases along the length of the concourse. These were smashed very soon after the building opened.

The drawing also shows off Preston Bus Station's unique Pirelli rubber floor. When the building opened, the new floor gave off an overwhelming smell of rubber.

On loan from the British Commercial Vehicle Museum, Leyland

Preston Bus Station Drawing John Puttick Associates

This digital drawing shows the remodelled design for Preston Bus Station and was produced by John Puttick Associates architects.

The former taxi rank is now used by coaches and the buses only use the east side of the building. The large public square and planting improves the pedestrian links with Preston City Centre.

It is the only digital drawing in the exhibition, and shows the way architectural drawings are presented today.

Courtesy of John Puttick Associates

Office plan, September 1966

This office plan shows the mezzanine level above the concourse. Office spaces include those for schedule checking, female conductors, typists and a mileage office.

The most interesting feature is the plan for a restaurant. In 1967 the council studied the quantity surveyor's report and said that costs needed to be cut by 20%. Nearly £190,000 was saved by the removal of a public restaurant, recreational facilities, ramp heating, lifts and landscaping. Nothing was taken out of the structure.

Sketch model 1:250

John Puttick Associates

This model shows Preston Bus Station with its new public square.

The original design for the building included three subways to keep passengers away from the buses. Despite this, many passengers preferred to walk – sometimes dangerously – above ground.

50 years later this original design flaw has been rectified, and the space remodelled into a public square.

BDP Brochure, 1969

Keith Ingham had a keen interest in graphics and led the design of this brochure. He collaborated with Andrew Mather at the printers next door to BDP's Preston office.

The brochure has the same colour palette as Preston Bus Station – monochrome with the selected use of colour. The six-sectioned print uses dramatic images of the exterior on one side and interior shots on the other.

It describes in detail the different elements of the building and the construction methods used.

Bus Station clock mechanism

Digitime International Ltd

1969

This is the mechanism from one of the clocks in Preston Bus Station. The original clocks are still in the building and have been restored, but the mechanical 24-hour time display boards have been converted to digital.

The clocks were designed with analogue faces – visible from a distance – and 24-hour displays to match how bus times were displayed around the building.

Bus Station at Night

These items illustrate the importance of light to the original design of Preston Bus Station, and one of these black and white photographs was used in BDP's brochure.

The 180ft lighting column was topped with a 'Bus Go Go Go' sign to act as a beacon across the town. Glass walls allowed light to spill out over the forecourt, and the building was punctuated by illuminated orange bay numbers along its length.

Preston Bus Station at night continues to be a subject that inspires photographers today.

Lancashire Archives, DDX 3180/10

On loan from MMU Special Collections and BDP

Opening of Preston Bus Station, October 1969

These items relate to the opening and early operation of Preston Bus Station. The building started operation on the 12 October 1969, and bright new passenger guides and timetables helped people to navigate through Europe's biggest bus station.

Beautifully designed invitations and programmes were issued for the official opening by Lord Stokes – Head of British Leyland – on the 22 October. This was the culmination of 10 years of planning and 18 months of construction.

Construction and Finishes

The finish of Preston Bus Station is of extremely high quality. Glasdon of Blackpool was commissioned to make the timber formers and GRP moulds to cast the concrete for the building. Ove Arup were the structural engineers and their journal records the weight and cost of each of the cast units.

John Laing Construction were the main contractor. Laings joiner, Graham Carr, used this set square to work on the wooden cladding above the doors outside the building. He also worked on the shutter moulds for the staircases.

On loan from Ove Arup, BDP and Graham Carr

Bus Bay Numbers, 1969

BDP were ahead of their time and employed graphic designers as part of their team. Their influence is evident in the attention to detail and high level of finish in the building.

Signage was considered an integral part of the design. Principal architect, Keith Ingham, liked the aesthetic of Helvetica font, which has its origins in Swiss graphic design of the 1950s and 1960s. It became the font of British transport, with its clean bold lines, and was used for the bay numbers and signage throughout the building.

Sketch model 1:100

John Puttick Associates

This is a working model to show a stage in the design process of Preston Bus Station's recent restoration by John Puttick Associates architects in London.

The buses now service the station on the east side, and the west side has been converted into a public square to improve the building's links with Preston City centre.

Some of the original bus bay dividers have now been removed to open up the space and have been converted into seating.

On loan from John Puttick Associates

North Ramp

This car is driving up the north ramp of Preston Bus Station towards one of the 1,100 car parking spaces.

The design of Preston Bus Station sought to separate cars, buses and pedestrians. The architects created roadways in the sky and subways for pedestrians to keep them away from the bus traffic outside.

South Ramp

This plan shows the elegant sweep of the south ramp of Preston Bus Station.

Before the building's restoration, the ramp had a central barrier which provided a good test of driving ability – especially in icy conditions.

One false move meant scratches to paintwork or worse.

Lighting board control panel

This is the master panel that controlled all of the lighting in Preston Bus Station.

Buttons include those for bay numbers, perimeter lighting and destination lighting.

The physical buttons and jewel-light building display make the panel both functional and beautiful.

**Breautiful from the ongoing
series Gathering And
Hunting (2001-) Nine identical
postcards
Martin Hamblen**

Loan Charles Quick

Conductor

2019

Film

Keith Harrison

Jared Schiller

Preston Field Audio

Conductor: 8 Movements by Keith Harrison was a live choreographed 60 minute interruption to the life of Preston Bus Station with accompanying soundtrack by Preston Field Audio.

On a Sunday morning 32 double-decker buses and drivers from Preston Bus and Stagecoach, steered their buses in slow and sequenced movements from the bays and across the forecourt, triggered by volunteer performers in the passenger concourse. Preston Field Audio's sound track of recordings and electronic loops was played through the bus station tannoy, responding to Keith Harrison's schematic drawings. The whole haunting piece uniquely appropriated all the resources of the station to create a dramatic new work that paid homage to and celebrated the interaction between the people, vehicles and the architecture of the Europe's biggest bus station.

The performance was recorded by filmmaker, Jared Schiller, and is represented in the exhibition across a number of screens, with a live recording of the soundtrack by Preston Field Audio.

Conductor: 8 Movements

Schematic drawings

Bus + Volunteers + Movements

06 Key

09 Bus Movement Sketch

Keith Harrison created these schematic drawings as a way of designing the movements for the buses and volunteers. They were then used to communicate his ideas to the bus drivers. 06 Key was used to communicate his ideas about sound to Preston Field Audio who he collaborated with for the soundtrack that was played through the tannoy of Preston Bus Station.

Preston Bubble Bus Route Map 2017

Digital print

Rebecca Chesney

Particulate Matters was an artistic research project designed by Rebecca Chesney to explore air quality in relation to daily routines, and how it affects human health and the environment.

Between 2015 and 2017, Chesney monitored air quality in Preston, Glasgow and London, measuring and recording levels of fine particulate matter. She conducted walks with volunteers in each of the cities, and they helped her gather data by recommending routes.

Conversations revealed the desire of many people to change the way they travel. The result was the proposal of the Preston Bubble Bus – a small fleet of 100% electric, zero-emission shopper buses running on three routes around the city. Running seven days a week from 6am until midnight, and costing only 50p for a single fare, they would provide a regular and affordable way to travel short distances in Preston.

Commissioned by In Certain places
On loan from the artist

Architectural Details in Focus

These photographs were discovered in the Keith Ingham archive at Manchester Metropolitan University's Special Collections.

They show the curved parapet units and elegant forms of the ramps in all their sculptural beauty, and tell a different story than the official photos commissioned by BDP.

Perhaps they reveal the details that interested the architect.

Skateboard and photographs Jo Garrett

This skateboard was purchased from Scene on Friargate in about 2003. It was last used in Preston Bus Station in about 2007.

These images by Jo Garrett show her husband, Ben, skating in the now-lost subterranean world of the subways.

A brief film clip in the Harris Café shows someone skating up the bus station curves on the top floor.

Subways

Three subways and an overhead bridge linked Preston Bus Station to the town centre. The ambition was to create underground streets leading to the town centre.

Passengers preferred to walk above ground, dangerously crossing the busy bus concourse. There were a number of accidents.

The subways were filled in with concrete during the restoration of the building and the bus concourse on that side of the building is being converted into a public square.

Subway sign by Bernie Blackburn, 2019

This sign is a miniature recreation of one of the original signs in Preston Bus Station.

The font is Helvetica and it is lit like the originals.

Ticket machine and bag

This bus ticket machine from the 1970s can issue six different types of ticket. Each ticket dispenser has a counter to show how many tickets have been issued.

In the days before contactless card payments, fares were paid in cash, and collected in bags. This fabric bag was for clipping onto the ticket machine when Preston Corporation's buses went to one-man operation in 1976.

Building Design Partnership

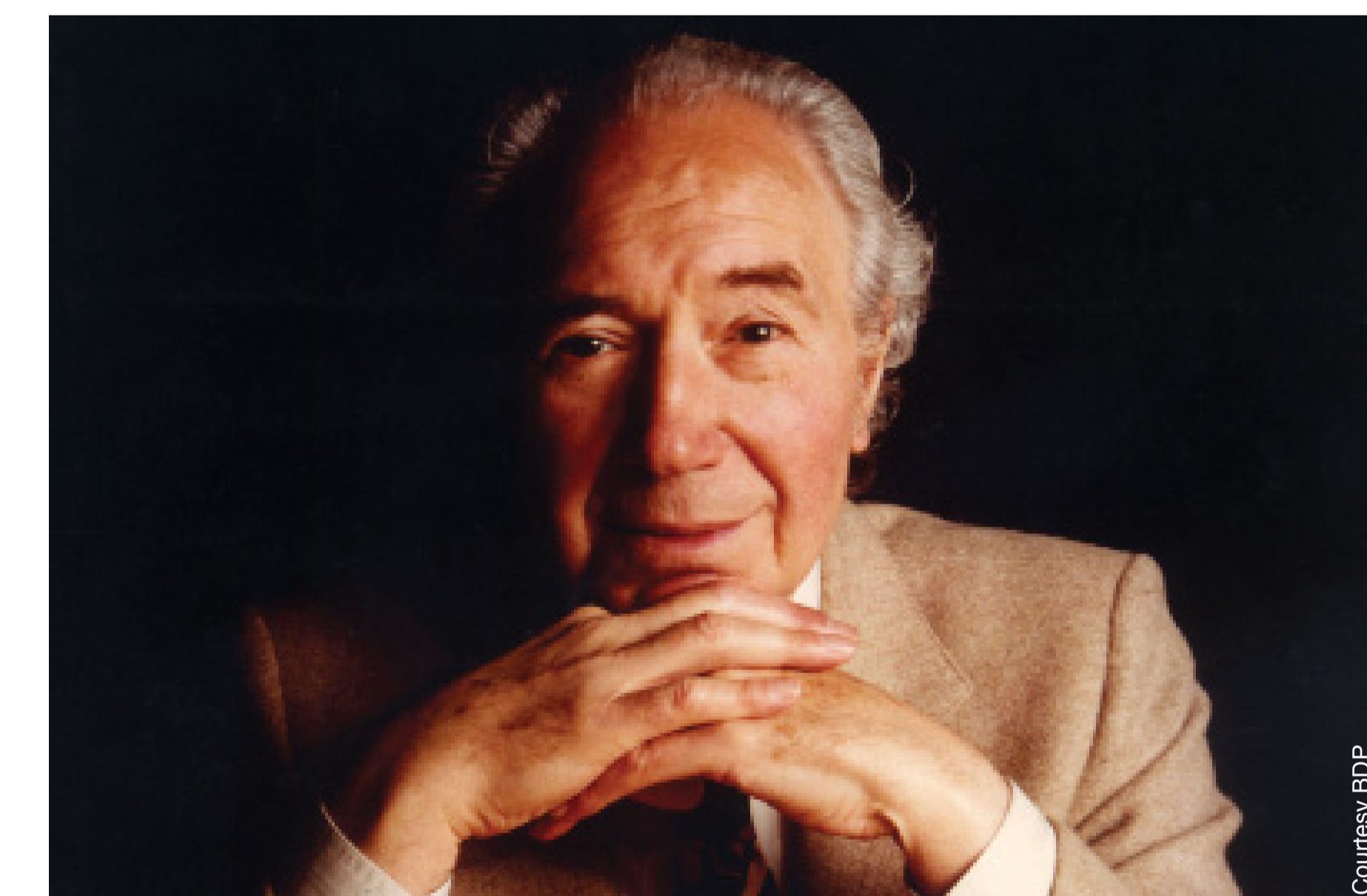
A Preston firm
with global reach

History

George Grenfell Baines, the son of a Preston railway worker, began his career as an architect in 1937.

Four years later, George – always known as GG – teamed up with two other Preston practices. The business expanded rapidly, and in 1951, he was the only northern architect appointed to design a building for the Festival of Britain in London.

In 1961 he set up Building Design Partnership, the world's first interdisciplinary practice. The firm brought together all of the skills necessary to complete a project, from architects and engineers, to landscapers and graphic designers. Today the practice has grown to over 1,200 people operating from a global, collaborative network of city studios, all creative hubs connected to the regions they serve.



When he retired in 1974, GG's advice was 'keep going, getting better.'

Book: 61/11 BDP Continuous Collective

This book reviews the work of BDP over the last 50 years. This page shows BDP's Preston office, which opened in 1968 in a former biscuit factory on Vernon Street. It was the UK's first burolandschaft office – a form of open plan office developed in Germany in the 1950s. The building is now part of UCLan.

Central Railway and Bus Station, 1946

This drawing shows a scheme for a central railway and bus station for Preston. It was drawn in 1946 by members of the Grenfell Baines Group. By 1950, the scheme for Preston's new bus station had shifted its focus from rail to road connections, and the present site on Tithebarn Street was identified.

George Grenfell Baines' diary, 1969

This diary belonged to BDP founder, George Grenfell Baines. The brief entry for 22 October 1969 records the opening of Preston Bus Station – a building that would become one of the firm's most famous.

Lancashire Archives DDGB/ACC9673/BOX19/1

Preston Bus Station opening speech

In this speech George Grenfell Baines says, 'how pleased and proud I am, personally as a Prestonian and professionally on behalf of the designers in BDP and Ove Arups the consulting structural engineers to be taking part in these proceedings which mark the end of a commission to design the new bus station and the beginning of its life.'

Boarding gate connections are subject to alterations

2015

Silkscreen print

Cherry Tenneson

The work was one of a series of silk screen posters installed in Preston Bus Station. It was part of the research project, 'Outward journeys must not be in the past'.

They examined the city's significant relationship with modernist transport information design from the late 1950s to late 1960s. The artworks reflect Tenneson's fascination with the prevalence of modernist signage in the city, such as the original Swiss influenced signs in the bus station.

The project emphasised the conflicting styles and messages which have developed in the city over time, and explored the role of typography within everyday urban experiences.

Fake Moon
2008
Photograph
Simon Faithfull

Simon Faithfull's installation, Fake Moon, was first presented at the Big Chill music festival in 2008. It reappeared over Preston Bus Station in 2010 at the opening of his exhibition, Recent Findings, at the Harris.

Although the light was as bright – if not brighter – than the real moon, it became clear that a rather deficient subterfuge was in process. The light emanated from powerful film-making lights housed in a 3 metre diameter helium balloon. Over the course of three hours, the apparition gradually moved through the sky – the carefully mapped out path mimicking the arc of a true celestial body moving through the heavens.

The Last Bus
2009
Photograph
Michael MacKenzie

This is one of 17 photographs that Michael MacKenzie showed as part of his exhibition – The Last Bus Station – at the Harris In 2009.

The photographs were taken at night when Preston Bus Station was empty. He deliberately made the work devoid of people to create a cold, barren and almost alien feel to the place, as if it had been abandoned – not unlike Stanley Kubrick's epic science fiction film, 2001: A Space Odyssey.

Afro Boy
2013
Photograph
Jamie Hawkesworth

Hawkesworth studied forensic science at UCLan in Preston, before switching to photography after discovering a love of this medium. He now works all over the world shooting fashion campaigns for brands such as Miu Miu and Alexander McQueen.

In 2013 Hawkesworth heard that Preston Bus Station was at risk of demolition and he returned to Preston for a month to photograph this space and the people in it. This image is from the artist's Preston Bus Station series.

Glasdon Archive Material

Glasdon UK Ltd of Blackpool were instrumental in making many of the internal fittings in Preston Bus Station. They worked with architects, Building Design Partnership, on internal signage, litter bins, telephone cabinets, and the original large arrows in the carpark.

The company also made the GRP (Glass Reinforced Plastic) framework moulds which were used to cast the concrete for the building. These included the mould for Preston Bus Station's most distinctive feature – its curved parapet units.

The items were discovered in the archives of BDP, Glasdons and Manchester Metropolitan University Special Collections.

- 1. Glasdon Application Sheet
January 1970
On loan from BDP**

- 2. Photograph of GRP Kiosk System
The reverse is labelled 'Prototype:
Preston Bus Station, Designer Keith
Ingham, Dip Arch RIBA MSIAD 1967
On loan from MMU Special Collections**

- 3. Photograph of GRP Kiosk System
The reverse is labelled 'Prototype:
Preston Bus Station, Designer Keith
Ingham, Dip Arch RIBA MSIAD 1967
On loan from MMU Special Collections**

- 4. Kiosk Plan PO064 M173
22 July 1969
Reproduced courtesy BDP**

- 5. Glasdon Brochure
2019**

- 6. Photograph of first Olympic Kiosk
Preston Bus Station, 1971
Reproduced courtesy Glasdons**

Glasdon Olympic Kiosk

This kiosk – made in 2019 by Glasdon UK Ltd of Blackpool – is the product of 50 years of design evolution from the first information and ticket kiosks they made for Preston Bus Station in 1969. The design that they pioneered with principal architect, Keith Ingham, resulted in the blueprint for a high quality and durable modular building system that has been in continuous demand for the last 50 years.

Glasdon were also instrumental in making many of the internal fittings in Preston Bus Station. They worked with architects, Building Design Partnership, on internal signage, litter bins, telephone cabinets, and the original large arrows in the carpark. The company also made the GRP framework moulds which were used to cast the concrete for the building. These included the moulds for Preston Bus Station's most distinctive feature – the curves on its parapet units.

The Preston Bus Station project was a major springboard for Glasdon and the company now exports to more than 88 countries. This kiosk has been loaned to the Harris as part of the exhibition, Beautiful and Brutal: 50 years in the life of Preston Bus Station.

Glasdon Archival Material

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Café Tables, 1969

These tables are from the original café in Preston Bus Station.

They were removed when the building was restored.

On loan from Lisa Hawes

Destination Blinds

These blinds were displayed on the front of buses and they list routes operated locally by Ribble and Fishwick buses

On loan from Ribble Vehicle Preservation Trust

Preston Bus Station publications

This collection of books and journals demonstrates the large amount of interest there is in Preston Bus Station.

It is recognised as a unique example of Brutalist Architecture in Europe. Some of the chapters single out Preston Bus Station as a rare example of a Brutalist building that has been listed, while others discuss its architectural merits.

Left to right

- Neate, Hannah & Craggs, Ruth (Editors) (2016). Modern Futures.

- McLaren, Sue. (2015) Megastructure a small book about Preston Bus Station.
- Calder, Barnabas (2016). Raw Concrete: The Beauty of Brutalism.
- Hatherley, Owen. (2009). Militant Modernism.
- Quick, Charles, Speight, Elaine, Van Noord, Gerrie (Editors) Sub plots to a City In Certain Places.
- Hatherley, Owen. (2012). A New Kind of Bleak – Journeys Through Urban Britain.
- Hopkins, Owen (2017). Lost Futures – The disappearing architecture of Post War Britain.
- Grindrod, John (2018). How to Love Brutalism.

Left to right

- The Architects Journal: landscape and public realm 09.08.18 Vol 245 Issue 15. Brute Instinct, the restoration of Preston Bus Station by John Puttick Associates, photographs, Gareth Gardner.
- Building Design Partnership, (2011). 61 11 BDP: Continuous Collective.
- Urban Realm Vol 9 issue 37, Spring 2019 Preston Bus Station, Ian Banks

Preston Bus Station
Craig Atkinson
Published by Café Royal

Photographer and founder of Café Royal Books, Craig Atkinson, passed through Preston Bus Station every day for many years. During that time he photographed the people and structure of the station, capturing its grittiness and character.

Interested in barbers', café, subways and the lost property room, his bus station is populated by people going about their daily business. He has created an archive of the building over six titles.

Book List

- 1. Preston Bus Station Box Set, 28.08 2019. Includes reprints of all six of Atkinson's Preston Bus Station titles in black and white.**
- 2. Preston Bus Station original titles:**
 - Lost and Found, 2013
 - Babies, Ladies and Gentlemen, 2014
 - Pie and Blow Dry, 2013
 - Exit Town Centre, 2014
 - Up and Over, 2014
 - Dead and Buried, 2019

Photographs

Iain Williams

Iain used Preston Bus Station – Gate 4 – when he was a pupil at King Edward’s School in Lytham St Annes. His father used to collect him from the taxi rank on his way back from work at the tax office next to the prison.

The photographs are the result of a reacquaintance with the building after 30 years of being away and moving back to Preston to explore a career in art.

Photographs

Joshua Cobbin

These photographs were taken in 2012 when Preston Bus Station was threatened with demolition. Joshua had a sense that the building was going to be lost.

He took many photographs in the building for a zine he was involved in, but chose these ones because of the iconic cafe seating, vintage colour palette and the colourful blue bins.

Save Preston Bus Station

In the early 2000s the people of Preston – and further afield – began to campaign to get Preston Bus Station listed. Calls to save the building dramatically increased when it was threatened with demolition for the retail development Tithebarn. On the third attempt, English Heritage and the 20th Century Society secured Grade II listed status for the building on 23 September 2013.

Andrew Lloyd who ran the Save PBS social media campaign posted,

‘The campaign was largely a decentralised and distributed effort consisting of artists, poets, photographers, songwriters, camera crews, journalists, architecture critics, PBS tourists, arts groups, academics, local supporters, heritage groups, letter writers, petition signers and countless others who kept the spotlight shining on the city’s most famous building and vital transport hub’.

1. Gate 81 Bag and Gate 81 Poster on loan from Sally Stone.
2. Heritage Alliance Heroes Award 2014 on loan from Andrew Lloyd.
3. Revisiting Utopia exhibition flyer 2012 on loan from Ben Rutherford.
4. Join the Parade postcard 2013 on loan from In Certain Places.
5. Aiden Turner Bishop letter on loan from MMU Special Collections.
6. Diary of A Beleaguered Icon, Bernie Blackburn, on loan from Charles Quick.
7. I love PBS board on loan from Andrew Lloyd.
8. Last Bus flyer 2006, Michael MacKenzie, on loan from Ben Rutherford.
9. Revisiting Utopia, 2012, on loan from In Certain Places.
10. Newspapers on loan from In Certain Places and MMU Special Collections.

Beautiful and Brutal: Photography Competition

These photographs were taken by local artists and photographers responding to an open call inviting them to share their connection to Preston Bus Station. The high quality of work is a testament to the skill of the photographers and how the building has inspired creativity over the last 50 years.

Many images celebrate the exterior architectural forms of the building or zoom into distinctive interior design details. Others focus on the people – the users of the building – who breathe life into its spaces. Some act as a record of now-lost places, such as the subways and original cafe.

This competition is part of Beautiful and Brutal, 50 years in the life of Preston Bus Station – an exhibition and events programme to celebrate the building in this landmark year. Loved by many, loathed by some, the building is distinctly part of Preston's skyline, and always gets a response from the people who interact with it.

Entries

1. **Graham Threlfall**, *Looking Up (Cyanotype)*
2. **Paul Melling**, *B/W Portrait View*
3. **Chris Darley**, *The Brutalist Chaplin*
4. **Victoria Dyer**, *Car Park Roof (2019)*
5. **David Millington**, *Preston Bus Station Parapets Abstract*
6. **Bernie Blackburn**, *Portrait of a Photo Booth*
7. **Victoria Dyer**, *Concourse (2019)*
8. **David Toase**, *Preston Bus Station 2*
9. **Russell Wood**, *Preston Bus Station (2013)*
10. **Sabina Mosalski**, *Untitled*
11. **Brett Aspinall**, *E*
12. **Joseph Gudgeon**, *The Height of Brutalism*
13. **Gina Shah**, *Preston Bus Station – An Abstract*
14. **Laura Cronin**, *Waiting*
15. **Laura Cronin**, *Subway*
16. **David Millington**, *Preston Bus Station Scallops Detail*
17. **Richard Nixon**, *The Needs of the Many*
18. **Caitlin Diston**, *Guildhall Walkway*
19. **Richard Nixon**, *Sweeping Statement*
20. **Jo Garrett**, *BT Phone Boxes*
21. **Bernie Blackburn**, *Midnight Cowboy*
22. **Lisa Brown**, *Preston Bus Station*
23. **Paolo De Angelis**, *0.00*
24. **Stuart Bulman**, *Situation XVII*
25. **Paul Melling**, *Brutalist Curves*
26. **Chris Darley**, *Parallel Parking*
27. **Alice Hydes**, *Preston Bus Station Ramp*
28. **Caitlin Diston**, *Stand 32*
29. **David Toase**, *Preston Bus Station 1*
30. **Yvonne Curran**, *Anti-theft toilet-roll holder (2013)*
31. **Joseph Gudgeon**, *Homeward Bound*
32. **Caroline Hughes**, *Concrete Rainbow*
33. **Caroline Hughes**, *The Ramp*
34. **Alice Hydes**, *Preston Bus Station #1*
35. **Charles Quick**, *Eighty (2006)*
36. **Gina Shah**, *Preston Bus Station by night*
37. **Graham Threlfall**, *Emptiness*

Many of these photographs are for sale. Please enquire at the Welcome Desk in the foyer for a price list.