

# ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LOOKING AFTER YOUR SHOPFRONT





This guide aims to give you the basics of retaining and maintaining your traditional shopfront and is a companion to Preston City Council Preston Shopfront Design Guide, Dec 2017.



To view the Preston City Council Preston Shopfront Design Guide, Dec 2017, please visit:

[www.preston.gov.uk/shopfrontguide2017](http://www.preston.gov.uk/shopfrontguide2017)



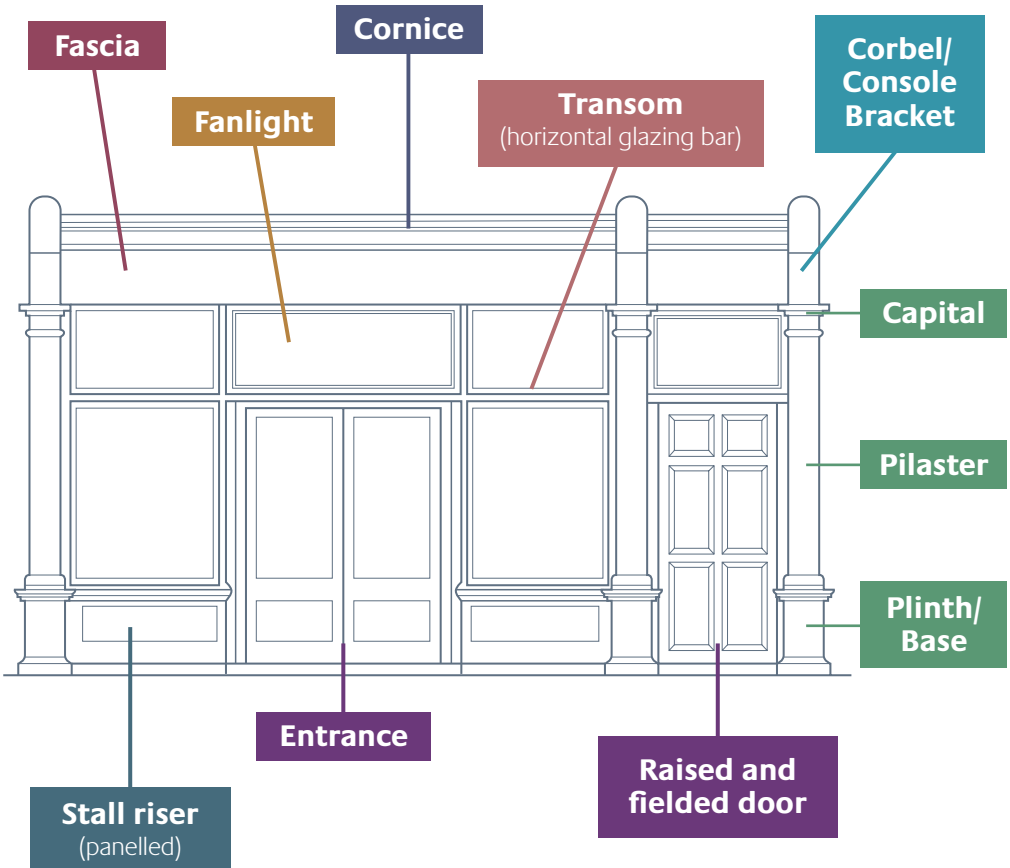
Shopfronts are the main advertising method for retailers and if well designed and maintained make a huge contribution to the character and trading success of a street. On the other hand, shopfronts can be very easily devalued by poor alterations, repairs and maintenance.

As well as the impressive Winckley Square, Preston has a wealth of streets with historic buildings at their core. Listed Building and Conservation Areas provide an opportunity to preserve and enhance, making them attractive and lively places for people to live and visit.

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This guide is aimed primarily at buildings in **Conservation Areas**, but the maintenance and basic design principles are relevant to all shopfronts in the City.

# WHAT MAKES A TRADITIONAL SHOPFRONT?



## Traditional Shopfronts are made up of several elements that come together to provide a visual framework:

**Fascia** - a fascia board is used to display the name of the shop. It should not extend into the first floor area.

**Cornice** - this provides a horizontal divide between the shop front and the upper floors.

**Corbel/Console Bracket**  
- these provide support to the cornice and are found at the top of the pilasters located at either end of the shop front.

**Fanlight** - this is often incorporated into the entrance design and can be used to display the property number.

**Stall riser** - this forms a solid base to the shopfront and balances the proportions. They are usually made of panelled timber. Other materials, brick stone or render have also been used to resist dampness and rot. What is appropriate will be seen in upper floors or neighbouring properties.

**Pilaster** - provides vertical framing to the shopfront upper floors and should stand proud of the shopfront face. They generally include 3D modelling in the form of plinths, panels, capitals and console brackets. These must always be an integral part of the design. Details applied to a flat surface are unconvincing and should be avoided.

**Glazing** - transoms and mullions are the horizontal and vertical divisions used to divide large expanses of glass. Historical glazing patterns should be retained or reinstated.

Transom lights can be used to disguise suspended ceilings.

**Entrance** - design and positioning of the door should reflect the character of the whole building. Any doorways providing independent access to upper floors should be positioned carefully within the design.

## MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR SHOPFRONT



**Unfussy design and high-quality detailing are trademarks of a good shopfront. It should be connected and in balance with the whole building and respect the character of neighbouring properties.**

## RETAIN AND MAINTAIN IS KEY

On Listed Buildings and quality buildings within Conservation Areas traditional materials must be used to keep and enhance the character of the building and the area. This means no modern materials such as UPVC, fibreglass or aluminium.

Timber is one of the most versatile and easy to maintain materials used in shopfront construction. It should be close-grained, knot-free and capable of being painted.

Where timber panels are used for stallrisers, it is important that they are treated with a preservative and that there is adequate damp separation from the ground.

### **Busting the wood windows myths:**

Wood windows have undergone significant improvements over the last few years that make them more durable and long-lasting than ever before:

- ✓ You can fit single, double, or triple glazed windows within the frames
- ✓ Well maintained wooden windows can last for as long as 60 years
- ✓ Wood has good insulation properties and with high specification glazing will provide excellent energy efficiency
- ✓ They add value to your property
- ✓ Environmentally friendly, a natural, sustainable product
- ✓ Wood windows are available which comply with the Part Q Building security standards of the building regulations.



## Colours

Traditional timber shopfronts should be painted in a good quality semi-gloss paint. Use colours that are appropriate to the age of the building and shopfront. Preston Planning Team can help you with suitable colour palettes for your shopfront.

Gilding or lighter colours may be used sparingly to highlight architectural features and mouldings.

Bright, garish colours should be avoided, as should colours that clash with or detract from the materials of the whole building.



## Shutters and Security

All security devices should have a minimal effect on the look of the shopfront and of the street. If security shutters are needed, they should be internal with hidden mountings and operating mechanisms.

They should be of open mesh construction and of an unobtrusive colour.

It is worth considering the security benefits of toughened or laminated glass. You can also get enhanced security windows that comply with 'Secured By Design', the UK Police initiative supporting the principles of 'designing out crime'. It promotes the use of security standards for a wide range of applications and products, including wood windows.

Thought should also be given to ensure that burglar and fire alarms are positioned unobtrusively.

Solid external roller shutters are not acceptable.

## Signage

Signage should be limited to the name and purpose of the business rather than the advertisement of products. Hand painted lettering is the most suitable for historic shopfronts. It should be in a traditional typeface and coloured to contrast with the fascia, preferably a light colour against a dark background.

They should not be back lit or situated above the fascia. Hanging signs and their supporting brackets must be carefully thought out to ensure the size, materials and detailing are appropriate in terms of scale and design.



## Consents and Permissions

Planning permission is required for any alteration or change which materially affects the appearance of a building (such as the shopfront).

Advertisement Consent, Listed Building Consent and Building Regulations Approval are other consents that may also be required when carrying out works.

Before you decide to do anything with your shopfront get in touch with Preston's Planning Team:

[www.preston.gov.uk/  
planningvalidationcheck](http://www.preston.gov.uk/planningvalidationcheck)

Tel: **01772 906912**



## REGULAR MAINTENANCE SAVES MONEY

**Well looked after shopfronts increase impact and footfall, they also save you money over time.**



Working with your neighbouring properties owners will often provide cost effective maintenance and repairs. As there are often discounted rates to undertake basic maintenance across a number of properties, for example to clean guttering and downpipes.

### Maintenance Schedule

Every year	Every 2 – 3 years	Every 5 -10 years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• gutter cleaning</li> <li>• inspect and repair roof slates</li> <li>• check roof flashing</li> <li>• check render/plaster/wall finishes</li> <li>• check chimney heads and pots and fixings on roof/walls</li> <li>• check for damp patches inside and out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clean and repair fascia and signage</li> <li>• check and repair cracks</li> <li>• check security systems and shutters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• repaint doors, windows, gutters</li> <li>• check window casements and draft proofing</li> <li>• check and repair any felt roof covering</li> </ul>

**Lack of a maintenance schedule can cost you dearly:**

- Minor repairs not dealt with quickly can cause further and much more expensive problems concealed in other parts of the property
- Costs of repairs increase faster than inflation
- If building elements such as slates or chimney bricks fall and injure, you are legally responsible



# CHECKLIST



## Do's

Making the most of the streetscape and of course your business.



- ✓ Repair and restore existing traditional shopfronts



- ✓ Hand painted timber fascia and cornices
- ✓ Use matt finishes in subdued colours
- ✓ Take design solutions from surrounding traditional shopfronts and images of traditional shopfronts



- ✓ Careful detailing

- ✓ Emphasise the vertical using mullions and pilasters

- ✓ Traditional materials – painted timber, brick, stone and glass



- ✓ No illuminated signage

- ✓ Retractable roller or fan type canvas blinds

- ✓ Internal open grilled shutters, only if security shutters are needed



- ✓ Traditional based signage such as painted lettering with street/property names/ numbers included

- ✓ Check and apply for planning permission - Listed Building consent and Building Regulations where needed



## Don'ts

Bad practice which could reduce interest in your business and even lose you money.



- X** Replacing existing traditional shopfronts – unless beyond repair then a suitable replacement needs to be produced

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- X** Overlarge plastic box fascia
- X** Link two different buildings with a common fascia

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- X** New shopfronts of an inappropriate modern design

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- X** A horizontal emphasis with large sheets of glass and frameless doors

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- X** Modern materials – e.g. UPVC, aluminium

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- X** Internally illuminated or halo lit signage

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- X** Oversized, raised lettering/signs

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- X** Dutch blinds or balloon type plastic canopies

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- X** Externally mounted roller shutter boxes, that are not carefully concealed with in the shopfront fascia

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- X** Bright or basic primary coloured signs

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- X** Starting works without the relevant permission(s) – could result in enforcement action

# WHERE TO GET FURTHER HELP AND ADVICE

**Shops can be deceptively complex in terms of their history, materials and architecture, but help is at hand:**

- Summary of city centre investment opportunities: [www.visitpreston.com/invest](http://www.visitpreston.com/invest)
- Business support: [www.preston.gov.uk/businesses](http://www.preston.gov.uk/businesses)
- Business finance and grants: [www.preston.gov.uk/financeandgrants](http://www.preston.gov.uk/financeandgrants)
- Disabled Access - Preston City Council Building Control on **01772 906913** or by email at [buildingcontrol@preston.gov.uk](mailto:buildingcontrol@preston.gov.uk)

## Planning Permission

This is required for any alteration or change which materially affects the appearance of a building (such as the shopfront).

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For further information visit [www.preston.gov.uk/minordevelopmentadvice](http://www.preston.gov.uk/minordevelopmentadvice) or call General Planning Support on **01772 906912**.

This guide has been produced by Preston's City Townscape Heritage Initiative project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. It has provided grants for the repair and regeneration of historic buildings and streets in and around Winckley Square.

To find out more about the Project visit [www.winckleysquarepreston.org/winckley-heritage/townscape-heritage](http://www.winckleysquarepreston.org/winckley-heritage/townscape-heritage)

