

150 years of caring for
Berwick: the history of the
Infirmary

The iconic sandstone tower and accompanying wards were designed by architect John Starforth (1822-1898) and when finished in 1874, cost £3,320, 13s and 3d. Starforth was born in Bishop Auckland but made his career in Scotland, where he was known for his churches, hospitals and books on farm and country house architecture.

The Infirmary was laid out with wards on either side of a central corridor, an 'H'-shaped pavilion plan as advocated by Florence Nightingale and considered at the time to be the best for ventilation and hygiene. Starforth chose a striking Italianate style for the building, with gently rounded window arches and bold rusticated stonework.

Over the following 150 years the Infirmary grew from strength to strength, and was able to offer more specialised treatments and care including operations, thanks to energetic fundraising by the local population, whether rich or poor.

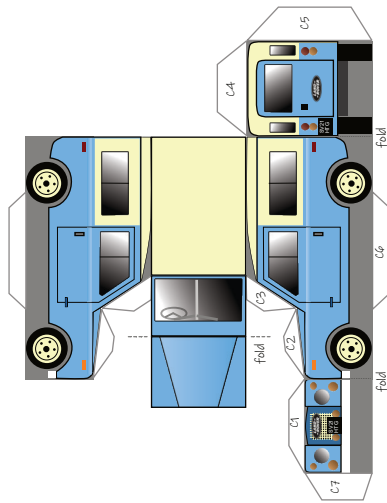
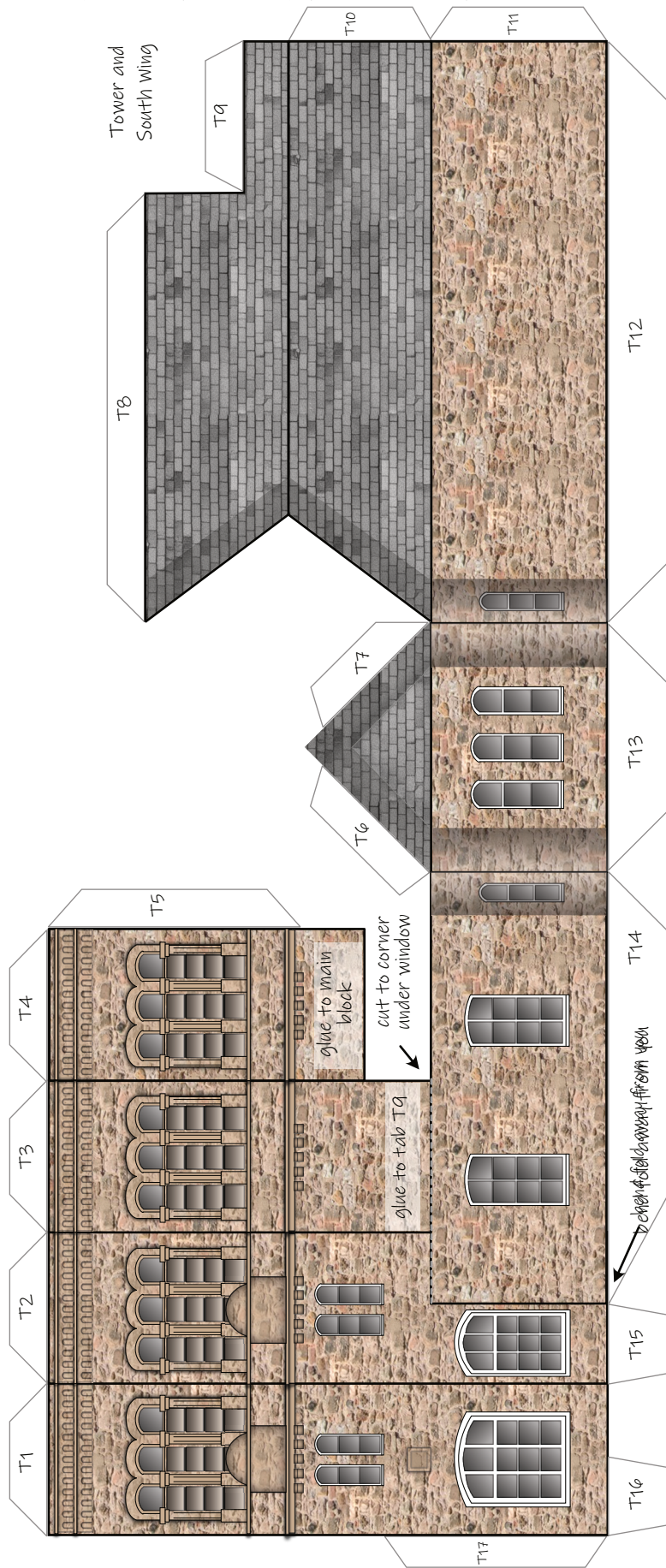
A heartfelt local protest against demolition in 2016 elicited the promise that the frontage of the old building would be saved and incorporated into the new hospital scheme. The plans noted that it will form "the historic gateway to the site... preserving its contribution to the historic townscape and elevating its landmark status."

This characterful Victorian building is an integral part of Berwick's rich heritage, and once renovated, will continue to delight residents and visitors as it is put to new use. Here's to the Infirmary's next 150 years! Model instructions and further copies can be downloaded from:

berwick-heritage.co.uk/infirmary

Berwick Heritage is a group of residents seeking to preserve the beauty of Berwick.

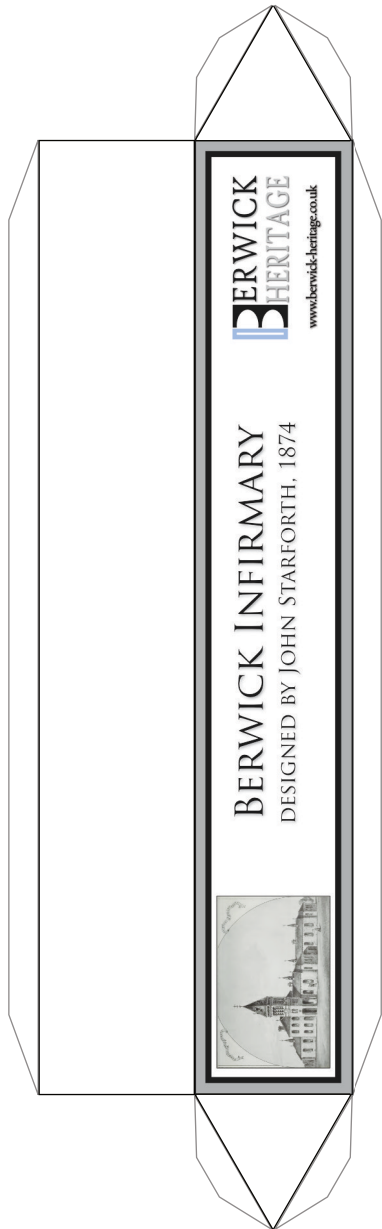
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Land Rover



Heritage Enthusiasts



Plaque