

'Secret' pathway leads to the past

A PATHWAY to the past has been unearthed during work on a property development at the historic heart of the Ribbles Valley. Excavations at an old joiners shop at the foot of Clitheroe Castle has revealed a previously hidden walkway that runs from the property, off Moor Lane, down to the centre of the town. The entrance to the pathway was discovered as work began on the old JH Fern Joiners that is now being turned in to 10 individual spaces for potential businesses.

Leading the development is John Turner and wife, Sam, who have run a financial advisers in the town for two decades.

Mr Turner said: "In one of the garages there used to be a path that runs down the back of Moor Lane adjacent to the backs of buildings.

"We found the entrance when workers had cleared away the rubbish that was in the garage. There's an archway in there but quite a lot of the passage has been blocked off."

Local history expert, Simon Entwistle, who runs ghost tours in the town, said there were similar passageways throughout Clitheroe that provide a snapshot of the past.

He said: "This is absolutely fascinating but the find is completely new to me. A lot of

Historic find sheds light on town's old walkways

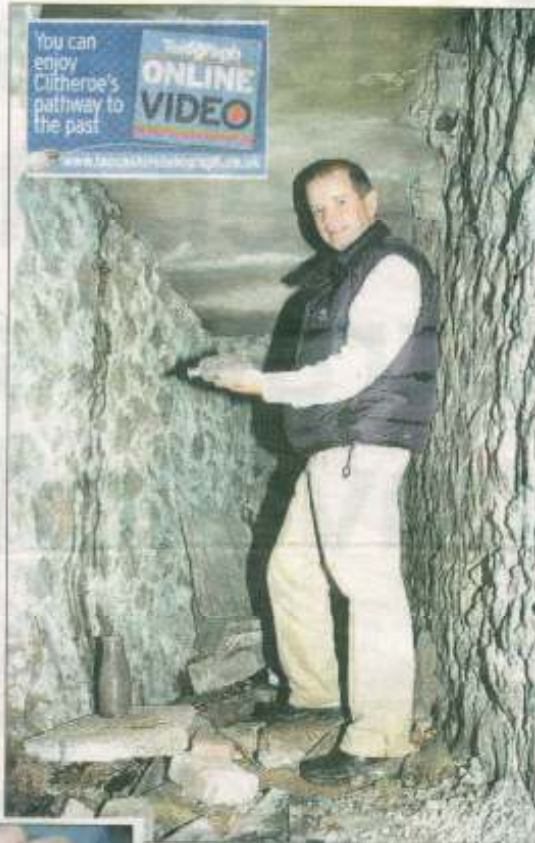


By BEN BRIGGS

the old walkways have been filled in through the years in Clitheroe.

"The Moor Lane road is quite new so older parts of Clitheroe would have disappeared when the road was built."

Mr Entwistle added that at the side of Moor Lane Motor Repairs there was a small gate that led on to a similar pathway, many of which would have led to



DISCOVERY: John Turner with an old 'Boots The Chemists' bottle found in the passageway off Moor Lane, Clitheroe

Pictures: NEIL JOHNSON

the park at the base of the castle.

The foundations of the new property development form part of the Clitheroe Castle bedrock and the historic theme is continued by the fact that one of the garages is believed to have housed the town's first volunteer horse-drawn fire engine.

The Turners have continued the transport theme with storage space specifically for

bicycles incorporated into the building to encourage their new tenants to walk or cycle to work, or make use of the local public transport links.

The couple have secured £103,000-worth of funding from the Rural Lancashire Development Grant and Lancashire County Developments to help cover the cost of converting the old workshop.

A grant from Lancashire Leader Plus has also been secured to assist in marketing the development.

Julie Whalley of Lancashire Rural Futures, said: "The challenge to market towns such as Clitheroe is to find ways of encouraging professional people who currently commute out of the area, to stay and work locally."

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