There have been several scene changes at the Montpellier Baths, Cheltenham, since it opened in the fashionable spa town in 1806. As noted on page 23 the baths was taken over by the council in 1898 and a pool added. But at only 64' x 23' in size and with curved ends it was never adequate, and so in 1945, at the suggestion of the town clerk, the pool was converted into what it is now called the Playhouse Theatre. Run by volunteers as an arts and theatre club for the use of amateur companies, the stage sits above the old deep end (traces of which can be seen under the trap door), while under the seats (bought from the Theatre Royal, Bath) the tank area, still tiled, is used for storage. The pool's layout is also still evident from the iron columns, decorative arches and galleries seen here. A fire in 1950 nearly brought down the curtain on this intimate auditorium, since when it has also suffered from subsidence, and in 2007, shortly after this photograph was taken, from serious flooding. But the show goes on, making this a double delight to visit for all theatre loving swimmers.

Former baths are ideal for pubs, as the JD Wetherspoon chain has found. The Sir Titus Salt (above and above left) was originally the Bradford Central Baths (also called Windsor Baths), designed by the City Architect FEP Edwards, with AH Tiltman. Opened in 1905, it was converted into a pub in 1998. Also by Edwards, Hirkness Bains, Sheffield, opened in 1926 and closed in 1990, is now the Rawson Spring pub (left). If that balcony steelwork looks familiar, that is because we have already seen it featured on page 2. 384 in Sheffield, Grosvenor Road Baths (opened 1898) is now the Swan Inn pub (opposite), a beautifully restored Turkish baths from 1877 next door. In Kendal, Wetherspoon has converted the Allhallows Lane Baths into the Sir Miles Thompson pub.