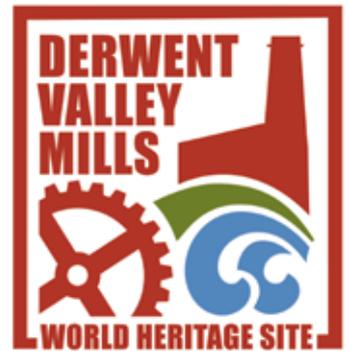


World Heritage news

Issue 15 - 2016

www.derwentvalleymills.org



Tour passes through

ON A sunny Friday in September the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site welcomed the Arriva Tour of Britain.

The professional cycle race brought hundreds of people out to viewpoints along the route, to catch a glimpse of the cyclists.

By the time the cyclists arrived in Belper the race had split into two separate groups, so the opportunity to get into a new position or retake your photos for a better shot was greatly improved.

The cyclists came through much of Derbyshire's glorious scenery and steep inclines which pushed them to the limit. In the DVMWHS they firstly came through Cromford – passing the mills and village up to Middleton, then through Belper – again passing the mills, then along the A6 and past a special cycle-themed market in the Market Place before heading through crowds on High Street on their way towards Kilburn.

MILL RACE: Cyclists pass Strutt's North Mill in Belper.

Gateway to the future

CROMFORD MILLS has now opened its £6.7m regeneration project – the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Gateway and Cromford Creative.

The Gateway is located on the ground floor of a previously derelict warehouse known as Building 17, with *Cromford Creative* on the four upper floors, providing a new facility with all the resources needed for flexible workspaces – from conventional office units to co-working spaces.

The building had been empty and in a state of disrepair for decades leading to its inclusion on Historic England's 'At Risk' list, but it has now been fully restored.

Major funding partners for the Arkwright Society project included the Heritage Lottery Fund, the European Regional Development Fund, and The Architectural Heritage Fund. Donations were also received from The Monument Trust, one of the Sainsbury's Family Charitable Trusts, which donated £500,000. "But it was not all about the big funders, every penny on this project really mattered so even the pocket money donations made by visiting

school groups really made a difference," said Sarah McLeod, Chief Executive of the Arkwright Society.

The project was the first phase of a £50 million regeneration and restoration masterplan, to transform Cromford Mills into a multi-use sustainable heritage, cultural, tourism and hospitality business and enterprise destination.

Added Sarah: "The restored building is one of the most important heritage assets on the Cromford Mills complex and we really wanted to continue the sense of entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity that characterised Arkwright. Some tenants have already moved into the units and we are currently going through more recent applications to ensure we get a great mix of people at *Cromford Creative*."

The Gateway Centre highlights the international significance of the Derwent Valley and signposts people to explore what there is to see and do within the World Heritage Site. The state-of-the-art information hub allows visitors to find out more about each of the 17 designated sites contained within the



DVMWHS and encourages them to go out and explore. There is an interactive model of the valley with touch screens, a film, interpretation and interactive activities for all of the family.

"We wanted to ensure that we promoted the whole of the valley and not just Cromford, though we were lucky to receive a grant from the AIM Biffa Landmarks Scheme which has allowed us to create an area dedicated to Sir Richard Arkwright himself," said Sarah.

The Gateway is open from 9am to 5pm throughout the year (except Christmas Day).

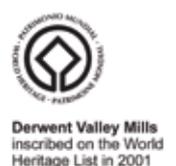
NOW OPEN: Visitors study the new interactive map in the Gateway.



Duke of Devonshire helps mill celebrate anniversary
- Page 3



DerwentWISE Landscape Partnership has a busy and successful year
- Pages 5 to 8



A perfect union of old and new at Darley Abbey

THE LAST year has seen considerable changes and improvements at Darley Abbey Mills.

A number of new businesses have moved onto the site and West Mill has been converted into a stunning wedding venue.

The introduction of superfast broadband has meant the mill complex is very attractive to all types of business wanting to join those already based there. GCI, a large telecommunications firm, relocated from Pride Park to the site during the summer, and the open plan floor space is perfectly suited to larger organisations, but for smaller businesses there are options available to suit. It is now an established hub for a range of businesses from financial

consultants, designers, photographers, bicycle retailers, a craftsman knife maker, a gym and specialist garages, not to mention Darley's restaurant.

The site owners, Pattern's Properties, have converted West Mill into a wedding venue, with the first wedding held in July 2015, and bookings steadily coming in for the already popular venue. There is a civil ceremony room, a separate dining room and a reception area for drinks and dancing – all refurbished sympathetically so the character of the mill is still there. Outside,



the courtyard and newly landscaped gardens by the river allow a great opportunity for photographs.

PERFECT PLACE: One area within the West Mill, transformed for its new use.

Restoring lamp-posts

WORK continues to progress on the Belper and Milford cast-iron street light column project.

Funded entirely by Derbyshire County Council, the scheme has seen the refurbishment of historic cast-iron light columns in the communities shaped by the Strutt family.

By March 2017, around £40,000 will have been spent on the project.

The majority of the columns in Belper have already been completed, including a pair of listed columns on Long Row, with about six remaining to be done in early 2016.

Once the Belper lamp-posts are done, the refurbishment of the columns in Milford will take place.

There are just under 30 to be tackled in three areas; the first will cover Hopping Hill and Shaw Lane, then on to Makeney Road and finally the scheme will end on Chevin Road, Well Lane and Sunny Hill.

The contractors are hoping to refurbish one or two columns per week.

Success again for Discovery Festivals in 2015

THE WORLD Heritage Site's two annual festivals, Discovery Walks in May/June and Discovery Days in October/November, again proved to be a big hit in 2015, attracting nearly 13,000 people to events in the Derwent Valley.

Begun in 2005 as a single day of activities to celebrate the diversity and importance of the Derwent Valley Mills, Discovery Days' popularity, and the enthusiasm of the World Heritage Site volunteers who deliver activities, have grown and grown.

One significant day was 29 October 2015, the tenth anniversary of that first Discovery Day. To celebrate, members of the public had the chance to see inside the valley's newest attraction, on a Preview Tour of the World Heritage Site Visitor Gateway at Cromford Mill.

Also that day, there was a guided walk around Belper Town Centre, remembering the old shops and businesses, the last of the celebrations for the town winning the first Great British High Street Competition in 2014.

In 2016, the Discovery Walks run from Saturday 28 May to Sunday 12 June, and Discovery Days takes



place from Saturday 22 to Sunday 30 October. More details are available from www.derwentvalleymills.org and look out for the programme booklets about six weeks before each festival.

ACCESS ALL AREAS: A tour around the West Mill watercourses at Belper during Discovery Walks.

LADY PORTERS: A tableau impresses visitors during the Belper in Wartime Discovery Walk.



Duke visits Belper



THE DUKE of Devonshire visited Belper in July, helping the Belper North Mill Trust and volunteers celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Strutt's North Mill museum and visitor centre.

He was able to look at the new interpretation in the main gallery of the museum, and officially unveil display screens showing short films illustrating the history of the mills and workers.

After unveiling the screens, the Duke visited the Strutt-built housing in Long Row and the Clusters, going inside two properties to discover how mill-workers lived over two centuries ago. On his way he met representatives of the Cluster Roads Group who are putting together an ambitious scheme to restore the historic Telford-style roads around the houses (see story below).

The Duke's visit ended at Belper Station, where he met Ian Jackson from Belper Transition and Alastair Morley from the

Community Rail Partnership, who explained the improvements made to the station in recent months. He greatly admired the planting and newly installed mosaic on the platform, and was interested to hear about the work of the Transition group in the town.

UNVEILED: Strutt's North Mill manager Nicky Crewe watches as the Duke unveils one of the new display screens in the museum.

IN THE CLUSTERS: The Duke meets members of the Cluster Roads Group.



Caring for the Cluster roads

AN APPLICATION is currently being prepared for Heritage Lottery Funding to reinstate the roads in the Clusters at Belper, and maintain their historical significance.

The project also seeks to deliver arts and education projects linked with this unique group of historic social housing.

Five years after Jedediah Strutt established the first of his cotton mills in Belper and Milford in 1776, he began creating houses and streets for his workers. The Clusters is the best-known collection within Belper and comprises three parallel roads – William Street, George Street and Joseph Street, named (many years later) after his three sons.

These streets contain a mix of house types in various styles from various periods. Included within the mix are Cluster Houses, after which the area gets its name. Constructed in 1805, the Cluster Houses are three-storey detached villas divided north-south and east-west forming four back-to-back houses. Although

the concept of Clusters was not uncommon amongst early industrial housing the group in Belper are considered to be some of the earliest surviving examples of their type.

Also of significance are the roads themselves. They complement the housing they serve in a rare and interesting way, by offering a late 18th and 19th century streetscape that is almost unchanged.

In recent times the streets have deteriorated through modern traffic, water and frost. In 2004 Amber Valley Borough Council commissioned a series of research projects under the Belper Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) in order to determine an appropriate method of repair.

Following this a small voluntary group of residents has continued with a determined spirit in the hope that the community of Belper will benefit from the research produced by the THI. The bid for lottery funding is the result of their efforts.

OUV training

ONE OF the most important but challenging duties for the World Heritage Site team is ensuring people understand about the key UNESCO term 'Outstanding Universal Value' and how it relates to the Derwent Valley Mills.

In 2015, training sessions were held along the valley for planning and conservation officers, to help them understand the concepts involved.

A further session will be taking place in Belper early in 2016 for those involved in putting together the town's Neighbourhood Plan.

DerwentWISE

THE DERWENTWISE Landscape Partnership, funded by the Heritage Lottery has continued to develop over 2015, delivering a range of projects within the Derwent Valley. The team has worked closely with partners within the World Heritage Site and the Countryside Service of Derbyshire County Council.

Projects completed include a conservation management plan for Willersley Castle, the opening up of views at Cromford, a survey of Slinger Mill Pond, Art workshops and film and photography projects.

DerwentWISE also supported the reprinting of the Derwent Valley Heritage Trail in association with the Derwent Valley Trust.

For more on DerwentWISE turn to page 9.

Framework

THANKS to the support of Historic England the Research Framework for the World Heritage Site is nearing completion. Following a range of workshops led by Dr David Knight of Trent Peak Archaeology/York Archaeological Trust the research objectives have been completed. Each of the 56 themes will be accompanied by a short introductory piece written by participants in the project.

The results will be published as a book and a live document on the Derwent Valley Mills website. It will be launched at the Arkwright Society industrial heritage conference in the autumn of 2016.

David said: "Historic England were pleased to support this project as our approach was to involve the communities and individuals in the Valley to produce a framework that came from within the World Heritage Site rather than have one which was top-down. I am delighted with the results and wish to thank all those people who have contributed to it."



Busy year at mill

NICKY Crewe (above) was appointed manager of Strutt's North Mill in Belper in March 2015.

She says: "I took up the manager's role in March, just as the Mill extended its opening hours for the summer season. In the same week the Belper North Mill Trust learnt that not only had they received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a governance review, but that they had also been given the go ahead to recruit a Fund Raising and Volunteer Support Officer, thanks to Arts Council England's Museum Resilience Fund.

"Tom Wyke joined the team in July and his role is funded until spring 2017. Tom is really moving ahead with fund raising for projects around craft and education.

"At the same time we have been able to enhance our volunteer programme to attract new volunteers and support the whole team, many of whom have been enthusiastically involved for some time.

"There have been challenges, including a mysterious flood over the summer months, and the issues around the condition of the East and North Mill buildings. The shorter winter opening hours gave us a chance to draw breath and catch up with some behind the scenes work.

"School and group visits have been an increasingly successful part of our work. Exhibitions, especially during the Belper Arts Trail and Discovery Days, have also brought new audiences to the Mill. We have also had some great collaborations with the University of Nottingham (Cotton Connections) and the University of Derby's internship scheme.

"2016 looks set to be another lively year with walks, exhibitions, craft activities and art events taking place alongside our core work of sharing the amazing story of the World Heritage Site and Belper's part in it."

Nicky left the mill in January 2016 - her successor has not yet been appointed.

Lottery success for Silk Mill

RE:MAKE the Museum is the title of the plan to re-vision Derby's Silk Mill into a modern museum celebrating the past, present and future of Derby.

This ambitious £16 million project was submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund in December 2014. It was awarded a Stage One pass on a grant of £9.38 million and is also supported by a capital grant of £4 million from Derby City Council. The Stage One grant of £817,000 is now being used to develop the project.

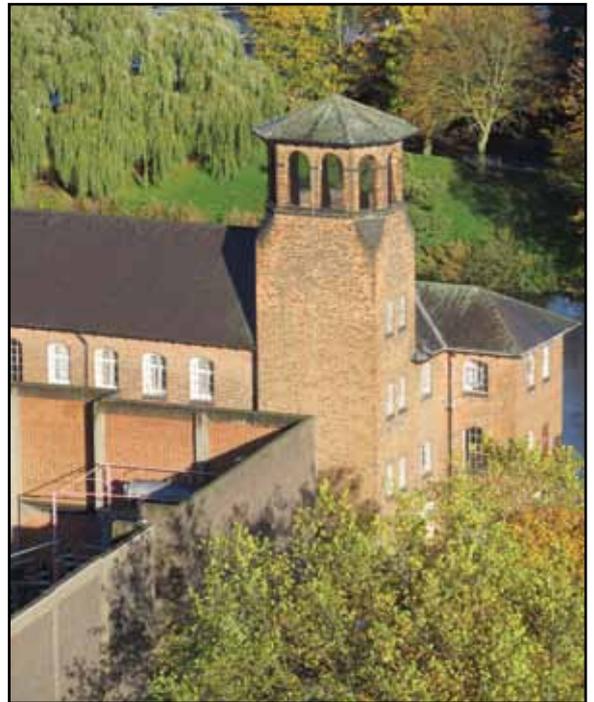
This is a major achievement for the Museums Trust. The grant was awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund's National Committee and faced stiff competition from a range of projects across the country.

The Silk Mill, at the southern end of the World Heritage Site, was established as Derby's industrial museum in the 1970s and was in need of a complete re-think to make it a museum relevant to the 21st century.

The museum closed in 2011 and over the past five years the Derby Museums Trust has been working with volunteers to develop the Re:Make the Museum project.

It has held Makers Fairs and a host of pop up events that have helped shape the project. This wide group of people will be involved in actually making the museum itself, thereby extending the concept of a museum working with people one step further.

The new museum will occupy the whole of the building and aims to tell the story of Derby's industries and creativity, linking it to the history of making things, which Derby is internationally renowned for through Rolls Royce, Bombardier and Toyota. It is inspired by the makers of the past and will be for the makers of today to inspire those of tomorrow. Its



foundation stones are engagement and accessibility.

A key feature will be an innovative open storage facility, which will allow visitors to see all of the collections that were previously in store on the upper floors. It will have a strong educational element based on the STEAM agenda of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths.

An important element will be a section explaining the significance of the first mill and its influence on the later developments in the Derwent Valley.

The team at Derby is currently developing the details of the project in order to submit their second round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

PREPARING FOR TRANSFORMATION: The Silk Mill at Derby.

First book on history of Masson

A NEW book is the first published study of the history of Masson Mills, which utilises hitherto unseen archive material.

The author, Professor Stanley Chapman, formerly Pasold Professor of Textile History at the University of Nottingham, is an internationally recognised authority on the history of the industry.

The first cotton-spinning mill at Masson, on the Derwent about a mile upstream from Cromford, was built in 1783.

Larger and architecturally more ambitious than the earlier mills at Cromford, Masson was

modernised and extended both before and after the works were acquired by the English Sewing Cotton Co. Ltd in 1897. They remained in use until 1991.

The site has since been transformed into a successful retail complex alongside a museum dedicated to the textile industry in the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site, to which it forms the northern gateway.

This fascinating and informative volume, with full colour and black and white archive pictures, is available to purchase at the museum entrance at Masson Mills priced at £4.99. ISBN 978-1-898937-79-1



What a wonderful year!

DERWENTWISE, the Landscape Partnership Scheme to protect and conserve the Lower Derwent Valley has been up and running for over a year now, and already it has achieved great things – and there are still four years left to go! Claire Hanley-Öpik takes a look at the projects and the people behind them.

Parts of the Lower Derwent Valley have, in the past, been overlooked when it comes to conservation, and that is where DerwentWISE comes in. It links the cultural status of the World Heritage Site to the environmental needs of the surrounding area, extending the value of the conservation works and involving the community to maintain and improve the area for generations to come.

The DerwentWISE Landscape Partnership (to give it its full title) is a group of local and national bodies, all with an interest in the Lower Derwent Valley, which joined together to seek funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Led by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, the partnership includes Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site partnership, Natural England, English Heritage, National Stone Centre, Fleet Arts, The Arkwright Society, Environment Agency, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Forestry Commission, Derby City Council, Amber Valley CVS, University of Derby, and Amber Valley Borough Council, and is supported by the National Farmers Union.

Following a successful application, DerwentWISE was granted £1.7 million by the Heritage Lottery Fund (with the remaining funds provided by the partnership) to fund a £2.5 million five-year project; to protect and enhance not just the landscape, but also the architectural and cultural heritage of the area, improve access and provide the local community with traditional skills. It's a lot to cover.

The Lower Derwent Valley covers 71 km² from Bonsall and Matlock Bath in the north to the Silk Mill in Derby in the south. It includes many characteristic elements of Derbyshire's landscape, extending from the limestone plateau in the north through ash woodland on steep limestone slopes, and then opens out into settled farmland

and riverside meadows in the south. It includes one of the largest concentrations of ancient woodland in England, archaeology, diverse geology, wildflower meadows and river habitats. It's a living working landscape with a real heritage and future, making it all the more important to preserve and protect.

To appreciate the scale of the project, you first need to know what a 'Living Landscape' strategy is. It's much more than just another 'initiative'.

Our landscape provides many essential functions - food production is perhaps the most obvious, but also flood protection and climate control, issues that are often forgotten about when accounting for its worth. When our natural environment is weakened and fragmented, it can't perform those tasks so well, putting our economy, and even our society, at risk.

A Living Landscape works to restore damaged habitat and recreate natural wildlife corridors, so that isolated fragments of habitat (like the green spaces in our towns) can be reconnected to the wider countryside. Working to make the entire landscape healthier rather than concentrating on individual sites means the environment will be more robust and better able to cope with changes in the future.

It is not about making the countryside into a museum. A Living Landscape has to live. It can't just be static and unchanging; it has to work for the community, landowners and employers of the area if it is going to be sustainable.

The industrial and agricultural heritage of the area makes the Lower Derwent Valley landscape what it is, and so DerwentWISE is not just about the natural environment, but the working landscape too.

To that end, there were extensive



consultations with local landowners, community groups, locals, visitors, employers, heritage bodies, and environmental agencies to find out what they would like to see in the long term.

From those discussions, four themes emerged that DerwentWISE would focus on: conservation and restoration, community participation, increasing access and learning, and increasing heritage training opportunities.

Now it was up to the DerwentWISE partnership to fulfil those requirements.

Under the guidance of Scheme Manager Tania Pells and her team, there are now 60 projects covering the various themes, delivered by 15 partner organisations. Just one year on and 26 of the projects have been started.

SIGNING UP: Consultation and questionnaire stall at Belper Food Fair (above).



TEAM DERWENTWISE: Community Engagement Officers Dave Savage (Natural Heritage - far left) and Annice Fuller (Cultural Heritage - far right) with Finance and Administration Officer Nadine Stevenson and Scheme Manager Tania Pells.



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Conservation and Restoration

WORKING with landowners, community groups and volunteers, so far DerwentWISE projects have restored 5.74 hectares of habitats, including UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats, riverside and woodland, planted 150 trees and cleared 1.1 hectares of rhododendron.

Conservation works have produced management plans for Willersley Castle and Darley Park, and a reappraisal report for Duffield Castle.

Community Participation

The partnership has been actively encouraging people to get involved in art projects, running 18 art workshops at children's centres, community groups and schools, getting local people to create their own art, and having a well attended art exhibition created by local university students hosted at Cromford Mills.

Access and Learning

DerwentWISE has worked with schools to create 12 new habitats, delivered quarry heritage workshops, taken two schools on overnight woodland residential trips, produced a walking guide with Derwent Valley Trust and supported the County Council to improve the towpaths at Cromford Canal.

Training

Thanks to the Partnership, sixteen trainees have had Forest Schools training, including practical assessments and an outdoor first aid course. People have trained to be citizen scientists, and been taught how to set up bee and butterfly transects – there are now ten transects at five different sites in the area. Other learners helped to produce an ecology plan for Darley Park. So far 85 people have enrolled on various training activities, and 124 children have taken part in our family learning events.



Lea Wood

THE ANCIENT woodland at Lea Wood owned by Derbyshire Wildlife Trust is being overrun by a non-native garden escapee, and that's bad news for our wildlife. Rhododendron is very invasive and almost indestructible once it's established.

The dense coverage prevents traditional woodland plants from growing, and local trees are suffering too as there is no light for their seedlings.

The evergreen foliage is toxic to most native insects and mammals so it's no use as food either!

Rhododendron is hard to remove too. It

produces vast numbers of seeds, and the seedlings are hard to spot for the first five years, so re-invasion is a big problem. That's why the clearing project at Lea Wood will take at least 5-10 years.

Alongside the Trust, dedicated volunteers hack down bushes, burn the cuttings and treat the stumps.

Annual checks keep on top of any regrowth or new seedlings. As the rhododendron is cleared, it allows the natural regeneration of tree species like oak, silver birch and wych elm.

Existing indicator species such as bluebell, yellow archangel, wood melick, and wild daffodil should take advantage of the newly opened up areas, allowing this special

woodland to make a glorious comeback.

A great example of two different bodies working together, the DerwentWISE work clears the ground for geophysical surveys and archaeological digs, and the Heritage Community Project team records the landscape and ecological sightings of species at Lea Wood.

To find out more about the Lea Wood Heritage Community Project visit the website www.leawoodhcp.wordpress.com.

LEA WOOD: As the undergrowth is cleared by the Trust and their volunteers, community work will continue with the Lea and Bow Wood Archaeological Survey group to support historical investigation of Lea Wood.



Opening up the vistas at Scarthin Rock

SCARTHIN Rock is what remains of a Limestone outcrop which ran from Cromford Mills across the A6 to Cromford Village.

There was no route through until around 1700 when a hole was blasted into it to create access to the newly founded spa in Matlock Bath.

These days Scarthin Rock is a shining example of how wildlife sits hand in hand with our industrial heritage.

The rock separates Cromford Mill from Willersley Castle and over the years has become colonised by a wide variety of trees, shrubs and ground flora including rare plants like stinking hellebore and narrow-leaved bittercress.

Removal of a number of self-set trees from the cliff edge on both sides has improved safety and opened up spectacular vistas of the castle and mill. The focus has been to remove invasive species and retain native trees and shrubs.

Some trees have been pollarded (removing the upper branches) to extend their lives. Four locally grown large leaved lime trees, kindly donated by Derbyshire Dales District Council have been planted to replace some of the sycamore.

New information panels have been erected at both the top and bottom of the ascent. Now it's a lovely place to sit and watch the bustle in the mill yard while all you can hear is birdsong!

GREAT VIEWS: Willersley Castle (above, right) and Cromford Mill Yard (right) can be seen from Scarthin Rock.



Duffield Castle

DERWENTWISE is working with the National Trust to protect and improve Duffield Castle.

This community project is investigating the history of this nationally important site and remains of the Keep through research, events and activities.

The JESSOP Consultancy produced a report for us providing a comprehensive overview of all archaeological work done to date, the history of the site and gaps in knowledge.

Oliver Jessop led the first talk and walk in June; it was a great success and the

community had an opportunity to discuss the findings of the report with the project team. Later in the month this was followed with an informal evening talk and walk on site, complete with some very tasty flapjacks and biscuits!

Fifty people gathered at the site on a beautiful June evening, and BBC East Midlands filmed the event. The next stage of the project includes the development of a community 'Stone Mapping' project and work involving oral history.

RECONSTRUCTION: Duffield Castle is said to have been one of the largest and most important Medieval Keeps of its time.





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Volunteer stories

LOCAL people are essential to the success of DerwentWISE; here's what two of our volunteers have to say about their experiences:



GETTING STUCK IN: David, Steve and Jane at Crich Chase.

"Volunteering for DerwentWISE has allowed me to spend numerous hours out amongst nature, gain valuable hands-on experience in landscape management, and share my passion for conservation with like-minded people, all in some of the most beautiful areas of the Derwent Valley.

"I've taken part in dry stone walling, hedge laying, planting local native species and pulling out non-native plants, as well as enjoying the odd BBQ! These activities have made for fantastic days out in all sorts of weather and surroundings.

"In six months the volunteer team has more than doubled in numbers, making this project not just about conservation of the Derwent Valley, but also about bringing people together to appreciate the wonderful natural landscapes and heritage that Derbyshire has to offer."

Zoe Dryden – DerwentWISE volunteer

IF YOU can give some of your time to help care for this special place then DerwentWISE needs people to help on our practical conservation days in a number of sites around the Lower Derwent Valley.

The scheme is also recruiting for an office based social media and marketing volunteer, and in 2016 the scheme will be looking for people interested in surveying the heritage in their local area.

DerwentWISE is about more than money. It's about teaching whole communities and generations of people to look after and improve the landscape they live, work and play in. It's designed to create a lasting legacy of community involvement.

The fundamental aim of the partnership is to enhance and manage the local landscape and



ensure it is sustainable for centuries to come. Supporting local community involvement will hopefully inspire more people to care for the environment that, after all, supports all of us.

"My first experience of DerwentWISE was in early winter 2014, clearing scrub at the Sandbed Lane site. I thoroughly enjoyed the day and was particularly impressed with the diverse skills of the volunteers and how well we all slotted into parts of the task that suited our skills best.

"The leadership and co-operation between group members is fantastic and the policy of immediate stump treatment makes the work worthwhile by ensuring dense regrowth does not undo all the hard work in the following years.

"Being fairly skilled in this area of work, I was "earmarked" by Dave the volunteer co-ordinator as a person to undergo chainsaw training, which I was keen to do.

"The initial crosscutting and felling of small trees soon escalated to tree climbing, aerial rescue and learning how to use chainsaws. This was a really scary prospect for a bloke in his 50's who hasn't climbed any trees since his teens! Dave had confidence in me though and I was up for the challenge.

"We very quickly had to get to grips with hauling ourselves up trees using ropes and various hitches and knots, branch walking (I was scared even if I didn't look it!) and practicing rescuing each other. The worst bit was the pole rescue, but somehow we survived. I'm looking forward to using the new skills I've learnt beneficially within the DerwentWISE project area."

Adrian Rochford – DerwentWISE volunteer



A SKILLED JOB: Hedge laying with Get Skilled for DerwentWISE.

If you would like more information on any of the projects or how to get involved then you can find all of the information available on the website www.derwentwise.com, or call 01773

881 188 for a friendly chat with one of the team.

WELL DONE: Volunteers showing off their dry stone walling skills.

Great season for Birdswood

THE FRIENDS of Cromford Canal's trip boat *Birdswood* had another excellent season offering public and charter trips between Cromford Wharf and High Peak Junction.

Following her introduction late in 2013, her first two full years of operation has attracted over 5,000 passengers each year, from all over the UK, and across the world.

Public trips are run at 11am and 2pm on Saturdays, Sundays and Wednesdays, plus



Thursdays from June to August. Charter trips are offered throughout the year.

On weekends when Leawood Pump is in steam, *Birdswood* offers horse-drawn trips – one of only six places in the UK where such an experience is possible.



A flying success!

BECAUSE she carries more than 12 passengers the Friends of Cromford Canal's trip boat *Birdswood* has to be inspected every two years by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) – the same organisation that licenses cross-

channel ferries! So immediately after Discovery Days in October 2015, the Friends hired a 50-tonne crane to lift her out of the canal onto the peninsular beyond Wheatcroft's Wharf café.

Here her hull was cleaned and blacked, and she passed the MCA inspection with flying colours – not bad for a boat built in 1938!

Better bearings for swing bridge

IN JUNE, following problems with the operation of the swing bridge at High Peak Junction, the Friends of Cromford Canal used some of the money raised by its historic passenger trip boat *Birdswood* to fix it.

A large mobile crane was hired, the bridge lifted, and the original worn bearings replaced by a 'new' set. In fact these were almost as old as the ones being replaced, but having been rescued from a disused bridge on the Nottingham Canal, were in far better condition.

Following the work, the bridge was immediately back in action.



Eroica returns

IN JUNE the Eroica festival returned to Derbyshire and over three days the county came out in force to celebrate cycling. About 2,500 cyclists took part, with many passing through the World Heritage Site, coming down the High Peak Trail and passing John Smedley on their way to Chatsworth.

As this was not a race, there were plenty of stops along the route, to chat with fellow cyclists and admire the views, before continuing on the rest of the route.

Transition funding

IN MARCH 2015, the Belper North Mill Trust successfully secured HLF Transition Funding to undertake a governance review. The Trust has recently appointed consultants to carry out the review and this will be completed in 2016.

The funding will allow the Trust to look at the way it is run and any changes needed to support its long term future, improve partnerships with other organisations, and help to expand its role to promote the museum and visitor centre offer within Belper and the World Heritage Site.

World Heritage UK

WORLD HERITAGE UK is the new organisation for the 29 World Heritage Sites in the UK. Its mission is to raise the profile and secure the future of all sites within the UK by advocating for support and resources, promoting the Sites' values and facilitating training, networking and the sharing of good practice.

It held its first successful conference in Saltaire in October. The theme was tourism and it featured speakers from Visit England, UNESCO and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

World Heritage UK was also presented to a European conference of similar organisations by DVMWHS Director Mark Suggitt at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg the same month. His attendance was funded by the European Union. Mark said: "It was useful to meet colleagues from other countries and compare the similarities and differences in how we manage and promote our Sites."

World Heritage UK is open to individual members. If you are interested in supporting it visit www.worldheritageuk.org

Changes to how we work

IN JULY 2015 Derbyshire County Council's Cabinet approved proposals to revise the governance arrangements for the DVMWHS following a consultation in late 2014/early 2015.

Those actively involved in the Partnership had expressed a desire to develop a more simplified structure with wider stakeholder buy in. This will enable the Partnership to continue its work with schools and businesses and attract visitors to invest in the area, but also focus on the regeneration potential of the site.

Over the summer further discussions with stakeholders resulted in broad agreement to a revised set of governance arrangements. The proposed arrangements consist of:

- A Partnership Steering Group – to provide expertise, challenge and advice to the County Council and other funding partners and comprise representatives from key stakeholders with an interest in developing the potential of the site.
- A Conservation and Planning Panel retaining its focus on protecting the Outstanding Universal Value of the DVMWHS, a key criteria of its original inscription as a World Heritage Site.
- A Learning and Research Panel to focus on education and promotion of the site to visitors, schools, businesses and local residents and provide credible peer reviewed research and maximise academic funding opportunities.
- A Development Panel which will focus on encouraging businesses in securing a sustainable future for the DVMWHS, developing its potential as a driver of social and economic development.

Recruitment to the panels is now taking place.

Website revamped

THE NEW Derwent Valley Mills website was launched in April 2015.

This collaboration with the DerwentWISE project contains all you need to know about both organisations.

Go to www.derwentvalleymills.org and have a look for yourself.

Belper's a winner



BELPER was chosen as winner in the 'Best Market Town' category and 'Winner of Winners' in the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) first Great British High Street Awards, at the end of 2014.

The Belper bid was co-ordinated by Amber Valley Borough Council and the DVMWHS team. Over 135 entries were received and 21 shortlisted in seven categories.

The judges were impressed by the scale of local involvement and drew particular attention to the DVMWHS ambassador scheme (see story, right).

The award provided considerable publicity and also a small sum to kick-start future initiatives.

Belper hosted a conference for all the finalists in March 2015, where successful schemes were discussed and knowledge shared. Representatives from the Belper bid team have also been giving presentations at other events about the town's achievements, including the Future High Street Conference in Nottingham and Visit Peak District and Derbyshire's Annual Conference.

An exhibition at Strutt's North Mill and No.28 Market Place was held about the history of the town's High Street during the Discovery Days Festival in October, and continues at Strutt's

North Mill until mid-March.

The new Minister for High Streets, Marcus Jones MP visited Belper in June, and was given a tour of the town, meeting some of the Ambassadors.

WALKABOUT: Retailers enjoying a 2015 Belper Ambassador session.

Lots of interest in Ambassador Scheme

ONE of the projects that wowed the Great British High Street judges was the Belper Ambassadors Scheme, a training scheme for retailers to improve awareness of what the town centre has to offer visitors.

Retailers are provided with a free tour, information and branded signage to invite queries from members of the public to enhance their visit. Over 100 Ambassadors from 40 organisations in the town have now been trained. To register an interest in future sessions ring 01629 536831.

Publicity about the scheme has encouraged other towns and communities to come forward asking for details, and it is hoped there will be other Ambassador-style awareness sessions happening elsewhere in Derbyshire and beyond in the near future.

Continuing to commemorate WWI

COMMEMORATIVE events relating to the centenary of World War One continue to take place in the World Heritage Site.

On April 25 2015, a fund-raising coffee morning was held at No.28 Market Place in Belper to remember those men from the town who died at Gallipoli, 100 years previously. It included an exhibition about Belper in wartime and ended with a talk.

The event raised £278, which will help towards the costs of further events in 2016.

July 1 this year will be the centenary of the first

day of the Battle of the Somme, when more Belper men died in a single day than at any point in the town's history. A temporary memorial will be re-erected in the Market Place, as it was for the centenary of the outbreak of war in August 2014. It will be erected on Thursday 30 June and stay up until the Farmers Market on July 9.

A theatrical commemoration entitled 'The Somme' is scheduled for 1 July, the day of the centenary, at St Peter's Church. An open air service is being planned for 3pm on Sunday July 3. More details will be available nearer the time at www.belperinwartime.org.

Volunteers come together to share their knowledge

SEVERAL visits across the DVMWHS took place in 2015 as part of a continuing programme to bring together the volunteers from across the World Heritage Site so they can get to know each other and the other parts of the valley better.

Visits in 2015 included Derby Museum and Art Gallery, where Jonathan Wallis gave a guided tour, and Crich Tramway Village for a behind the scenes tour and a trip on a tram. Most recently the volunteers had a preview of the new visitor gateway at Cromford Mill and the Creative Cluster workspace above.

As so many volunteers came to see the new visitor centre it was the perfect opportunity to thank them, with six receiving an engraved bobbin and certificate as part of the annual awards for all the work they do. This year awards were given to Janet Honey, Doreen Buxton, Alan Foord, Dawn Churchill, Ian Jackson and Mary Smedley.



AWARDED: Dawn Churchill with her certificate.

Introducing Accessible Belper

FOLLOWING on the success of Belper's Great British High Street win, Siobhan Fennell and George Gunby were looking for ways to build on that and where it could be improved.

They were concerned about the issues around health and wellbeing and with the award winning retail offer in the town it seemed to make sense to try and encourage more understanding about everyone's needs. This in turn could then encourage more people to visit the town.

Accessible Belper was established in the summer and is a group helping businesses to be welcoming, friendly and inclusive for everyone. Over the last few months they have been consulting the public for suggestions on improving access around the town and at the attractions and shops within it.

There are many organisations that help people with different conditions and *Accessible Belper* is working with them to promote what they do. Another aim is to initially encourage businesses to look at simple ways they can make improvements



to their premises, like having some seating or portable hearing loops.

BETTER ACCESS: Siobhan Fennell of *Accessible Belper* is shown around the new Slenderella Factory Shop on Queen Street by owner Gary Spendlove, after offering advice on access issues.

John Smedley looks to the past and the future

JOHN SMEDLEY Ltd, established by the Nightingale family in 1788, still carries the tradition of textile manufacturing from the valley to shops around the world, and continues to employ hundreds of local people.

The company launched its new collections at London Fashion Week in September 2015. 'Spectrum', the womenswear collection takes its inspiration from the shades of refracted light and features creative silhouettes in silk, cashmere and Smedley's world famous Sea Island Cotton. The menswear range features muted greys and blues.

John Smedley are clearly looking to the future but also take great interest in their illustrious past. Archivist Jane Middleton-Smith and a team of volunteers continue to catalogue and store the collections. The company has also published *Dear Mr. Marsden-Smedley*, a detailed record of the men of Lea Mills, the Smedley family and the family estate who served in the First World War. From the autumn of 1916 onwards J.B. Marsden-Smedley sent parcels of clothing and groceries to each of his employees serving in the forces. The book records their lives and the letters they sent back.



Project is awarded

DERWENT PULSE, a major Arts Council England funded arts and audience engagement project which celebrated the River Derwent and its communities along its banks from its source to its confluence with the Trent, took place in October 2014.

Supported by the Arkwright Society and Peak District National Park, it was seen by over 14,000 people and attracted 16,000 website visits and over 35,000 on Facebook and Twitter.

Conceived by the Derbyshire-based artist Charles Monkhouse and commissioned by the World Heritage Site it involved 17 passages of glowing spheres and associated activities. Supported by a team of artists and educators the spheres were shepherded by local people.

In addition to the light flows, the project included the production of photographs, maps, artwork, education projects, a performance and an exhibition. In a number of places local children carried specially constructed spheres in electric parades.

Derwent Pulse won the prize for best audience development project at the Derbyshire Heritage Awards in October 2015. DVMWHS Director Mark Suggitt is pictured with the award.



Electrification project for line is back on track after pause

THE ELECTRIFICATION of the Midland Mainline railway line – through Derby, Belper and Ambergate – was paused in June so a government review could be carried out.

At the end of September, work restarted, once the review was completed. The electrification north of Bedford to Kettering will now be completed by 2019, and the line north of Kettering to Sheffield, through the World Heritage Site, is expected to finish by 2023.

In June, before the project was paused, representatives from Network Rail attended a public meeting organised by Belper Civic Forum, to give an update on how work was proceeding. In 2016 that consultation work is expected to begin again.

The line from Derby to Chesterfield is one of the most important survivors of the 'pioneering phase' of England's railway development. It was designed by George Stephenson with his son Robert, leading railway engineers of the day, as part of the North Midland Railway.

This line opened in 1840 as the central link in their grand vision for a trunk route running from north to south. Today the vast majority of structures on the Stephenson's railway in the Derwent Valley survive essentially unaltered since their construction over 175 years ago.

The main challenge facing Network Rail is to find the most sensitive and pragmatic solutions for the electrification of this historic railway line in an early industrial landscape of international importance.

Awards for Derwent Valley Line stations

STATIONS along the Derwent Valley Line have been recognised with a series of awards in 2015.

Transition Belper's Station Mosaic and Art Gallery collected two top awards at this year's Community Rail Awards.

The first was for best community art scheme for the new station mosaic and artwork, developed by *Transition Belper's* artist Christine Gray, working with four local schools and hundreds of members of the local community. The project also won best community rail photograph, taken by local photographer Ashley Franklin.

Belper was also awarded runner up in the Community Partnership category at East Midlands Trains Best Station Awards in recognition of *Transition Belper's* community gardening and the Station Mosaic and Art Gallery.

Ambergate and Cromford Stations were winners at East Midlands Trains Best Station Awards. Ambergate took first prize for Most Improved Station and Cromford was winner of the Environment Award.

Ambergate's success recognises the floral displays created by the station adopters and substantial access improvements carried out by

East Midlands Trains on new steps, footway and access road improvements.

At Cromford Station, volunteers transformed the environment, improving the welcome to passengers. The work has seen native trees, bulbs and wildflowers planted, with many local organisations, including the Arkwright Society, Cromford Parish Council and DerwentWISE, joining forces with station volunteers and the Community Rail Partnership to transform the station.

"The awards recognise the fantastic range of work that has taken place to improve the Derwent Valley Stations, through the combined efforts of station adopters, community groups, Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership and East Midlands Trains," said Alastair Morley, the Community Rail Partnership officer.

TROPHY WIN: Belper Station representatives collect the trophy for Best Community Art Scheme. Left to right: Mark Hopwood, Managing Director Great Western Railway (presenting award) to Kevin Knight and Jonny Wiseman from East Midlands Trains, Alastair Morley from the Derwent Valley Line Community Rail Partnership and Christine Gray, Artist for Transition Belper.

