

EAST MIDLANDS INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE NETWORK MEETING	Friday 24th March 2023, 11:00-12:30 Zoom
SESSION 1	
Dr Mike Nevell, Industrial Heritage Support Officer for England	<p>Historic England has extended the funding for the Industrial Heritage Support Officer post, which will now run until March 2025</p> <p>The project aims have been updated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support and promote best practice • Promote partnership working across the different industrial sites • Provide strategic leadership, post pandemic • Gather data on all the different sites across the country • To develop and implement sustainability for the project beyond 2025 • To assess all wind and watermills in England • Two webinars are planned for the Spring and the Autumn, Heritage Crime and Net Carbon Zero will be the topics <p>All ten regional industrial heritage networks are now up and running and it is hoped that for next year's meetings, some will be held in person/on site as well as continuing online</p> <p>Mike has been expanding the online presence of the project – it now includes: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, websites and a e-news bulletin every 2-3 months. Mike is planning on merging the two websites into one (https://industrialheritagesupport.com/the-industrial-heritage-support-officer) in the near future</p> <p>The last review of the industrial sites was carried out in 2008, building on the original 1998 report. A new review is planned next year which will aim to capture what has happened to all the sites since 2008, to explore which sites have opened or closed since then</p> <p>The Covid survey carried out by Mike in 2021 provided data on how sites coped during the lockdowns. The results indicate that the larger sites coped better and were able to gain more emergency funding during this period than the smaller sites. As of March 2022, there have been no permanent closures, but the cost of living crisis poses a larger threat</p> <p>The recent AIM survey of independent museums (including industrial sites) has indicated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 museums are at risk of insolvency • Reduce visitor numbers are a concern but the largest worry are the increasing energy costs • Many sites have had to scale back on activities to reduce costs • Some sites are exploring restructuring models and possible redundancies • Lower income and visitor numbers are expected for 2023 <p>There is still an intention to hold more face to face meetings in 2023, the online meetings will also continue</p> <p>Mike reminded everyone that he is happy to provide advice and guidance, and that they should get in touch if they need any help</p> <p>Mike's presentation will be distributed with these notes</p>

SESSION 2

The attendees each introduced themselves and the organisations they represented. They described the challenges they have faced this year. An interesting discussion took place on the lack of textile industry buildings and machinery etc that is listed, Mike said that it is hoped that this can be rectified with input from IHN members

Ian Wilson	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The site reopened fully in the Spring of 2022 but as they hold a large stock of compartments, it did allow them prior to that to continue running socially distanced services.• Volunteers are about 600+ but 2/3's are safety critical, so they have lost a significant number, but they are now in the process of replacing them• The cost of living crisis has hit hard, with the price of coal rising by 400% so they are running fewer mid-week trips as it costs around £2k to run a locomotive so will only run between May-September• The catering side was severely hit as a result of the pandemic and they have not been able to get this back. School numbers have also reduced but the profile has changed with younger children in keys stages 1 and 2 coming in rather than the older ones as previously• A total non-coal replacement is trickling down• There are some issues which have arisen due to Covid, but it isn't a disaster, more of a "watch this space" situation• Ian told the meeting that this year marked the 50th anniversary of heritage and preservation of the GCR, their site has continued longer than other groups such as GCR and BR, this can provide a huge scope for oral history etc, from the volunteers and local people
Geoff Taylor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Forge reopened in July 2020 for the Blacksmith's business• They have taken the closed time to do some restoration and new build work• They are currently using anthracite for fuel as well as rape seed briquettes, neither of which work as well, and they don't get hot enough or impart enough heat. They would move to induction heating if they stopped using the anthracite, but this wouldn't fit into the building, either physically or historically and would also be very costly• Visitor numbers are coming back, especially for taster sessions, which are currently very buoyant• Are working with Boston Grammar School in providing paid lessons in blacksmithing, these are now fully booked through until July
Mike Nevell	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mike felt that there would be a limited amount of coal mined in certain parts of England for specific uses, such as heritage and historic buildings
Ian Wilson	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ian feels that all parts of the heritage sector need to pull together in finding a solution to issues such as fuel

Any Other Comments

- Mike discussed starting up in-person meetings and Ian offered the Board Room at Loughborough, which holds 15, or the marquee at Quorn, which holds 40+

ATTENDEES:	
Jason Morden	Notts CC Historic Buildings Conservation Officer
Ian Wilson	Great Central Railway
Geoff Taylor	Chain Bridge Forge, Spalding, Lincs