

NORTH WEST INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE NETWORK MEETING		Friday 20 th November 2020, 13:00-15:00 Zoom
SESSION 1 A brief introduction and update from Shane and Mike		
Introduction by Shane Gould, Head of Industrial Heritage Strategy, Historic England	Shane is the Head of Industrial Heritage Strategy within Historic England, which funds the Industrial Heritage Support Officer post. This Network is one of 7 that are up and running across the country in the following regions: London, North East, North West, Cornwall & Devon, South West, South East and West Midlands. Three other Networks are also planned in Yorkshire, East of England and East Midlands. Any suggestions for speakers at future Network meetings should be sent to Mike and Shane (Action = ALL).	
Dr Mike Nevell, Industrial Heritage Support Officer for England	The Industrial Heritage Support Officer post was established in 2012 to provide support and advice to the 600 Industrial Heritage preserved/protected sites that are open to the public. Mike started his role in March this year and managed to visit a few sites before the lockdown started. There are four social media channels for industrial heritage support: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Website https://industrialheritagesupport.com/ (for guidance)• Website https://industrialheritagenetworks.com/ (for stories)• Facebook https://www.facebook.com/IHSOengland/ (for news)• Twitter @IHSOengland (for immediate support) Of the 600 industrial heritage sites that are open to the public – approximately 350 are water & wind mills and preserved railways/transport sites. The remaining 250 sites include textile mills and mining sites. The mills tend to be run by volunteers and aren't part of larger museums. The railways are more business orientated and better at lobbying and raising money. .	
Challenges	In 2020 the Industrial Heritage sector has faced 2 major challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Climate Change (flooding and storm damage) – industrial buildings needing maintenance and changes made to adapt to climate/environmental issues such as erosion and degradation• Covid-19 pandemic – many industrial heritage sites rely on visitors and volunteers to survive. The two periods of lockdown have seen annual visitor numbers reduce by more than 50% and increased vandalism on some. When sites could reopen in the summer, 46 confirmed that they would remain closed until 2021. Many of the small volunteer sites are struggling to stay open. The long-term effect of the pandemic on volunteer support is not yet known; there's a concern there might be less volunteers in the future. Another concern is that Local Authorities may have to transfer assets as a way of reducing costs. This could lead to very few industrial heritage sites being managed by LA funding in the future.	
SESSION 2 The attendees each introduced themselves and the organisations they represented. They described the challenges they have faced this year.		

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Tim Kirker, Calderdale Industrial Museum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survived reasonably well as finances were good before the lockdown. Could survive another year under these conditions. Run by mostly volunteers, with no indication of their numbers dropping The museum did reopen in September with limited numbers 	
Anthony Piling, Heritage Trust for the North West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteers are keen to return but their numbers have to be limited for safety It's been difficult to keep all 24 sites running A few grant applications have been made with Historic England, but it's been difficult with staff being furloughed 	
Ian Gibson, Higher Mill Museum Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Trust isn't currently suffering but they are concerned Science Museum Group are looking at disposal of some items by Spring 2021, but there are concerns that the museums won't be ready to take any of the objects available due to the pandemic 	
Tony Nixon, Bancroft Mill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is completely run by enthusiastic volunteers, with an average age of 65. Would like to encourage more volunteers. Visitor income mainly comes from "steam days" the last one was held just before lockdown. It's difficult to be Covid safe due to the shape of the building so the site won't reopen to visitors until after March. Doing well selling tea towels online (currently sold out). 	
Neil Davis, Manchester Region Industrial Archaeology Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking at different funding sources – including from the Architectural Heritage Fund (although there are issues as the site isn't in the town centre). It's unlikely that the current funding streams will continue. 	
Philip Butler, Lancashire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queen Street Textile Mill in Burnley is one of the sites looked after by Lancashire County Council – it is hoping to reopen in 2021. As government employees, no staff were furloughed – instead they were redeployed into other areas (such as social care). A bid to ACE Recovery Fund was successful and £45K was awarded based on skills loss caused by not running the mills. 	
Clare Brown, Quarry Bank Mill, NT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was able to reopen, after the team were furloughed during lockdown. The Mill grounds remained open during the second lockdown, along with the gardens via paid entry – they have both been very busy. 	
Diana Leitch, Catalyst Science & Discovery Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellcome Trust funding allowed for all the education material to be updated and have been installed during lockdown. Initially past the first round of NLHF funding approval for the proposal "Birth of an Industry Building" project will have been told by NHLF to restart the process. The diversity of the Trustees will need to be looked at. 	
Andrew Fielding, ECOSAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More connected via zoom as there are no geographical restrictions. Virtual meetings reduce travel and subsistence costs which could help with funding bids. The move to webinars for local groups etc means that speakers might be 	

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	more careful in what they say as they might be recorded.
Any Other Comments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's likely more meetings will be online in the future. This is difficult for people who aren't computer literate. • Blended forms of delivery would be beneficial, so no-one is knowingly or unknowingly excluded. • The online approach could help to encourage younger generations to engage • Online talks allow for worldwide access and international engagement • Mike agreed to circulate his presentation as a PDF (Action = Mike Nevell) • Any thoughts on how to structure future network meetings should be sent to Mike (Action = ALL) 	

ATTENDEES SPEAKING (15 attended, 6 apologies):	
Clare Brown	Quarry Bank Mill, National Trust
Philip Butler	Lancaster County Council
Neil Davis	Manchester Regional Industrial Archaeology Society
Andrew Fielding	Ecosal UK
Ian Gibson	Higher Mill Museum Trust
Tim Kirker	Calderdale Industrial Museum
Tony Nixon	Bancroft Mill
Anthony Pilling	Heritage Trust for the North West
Diana Leitch	Catalyst Science and Discovery Centre