Killhope celebrates major funding announcement

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Killhope: the North of England Lead Mining Museum has been awarded the funding for its Rediscover Killhope project, which will include conservation work and improved visitor facilities.

Work will begin next month (July) and the project is expected to be completed in October 2015.

Mike Boase, manager at Killhope Museum, said: “We are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given us this grant. The museum is an important resource to the people who live in County Durham and the wider North Pennines and this investment will see new opportunities for community involvement, education and training.”

Ivor Crowther, Head of Heritage Lottery North East at the Heritage Lottery Fund, said: “At its peak, Killhope was the world’s largest producer of lead and its contribution to local life is not to be underestimated. This project will enable the museum to improve their visitor offer, through a range of engaging and exciting activities, helping local people and visitors alike learn about and enjoy Killhope’s incredible heritage.”

Cllr Neil Foster, Cabinet member for economic regeneration at Durham County Council, said: “Killhope Museum is already a hugely popular visitor attraction in County Durham, welcoming thousands of visitors every year. This funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the Rediscover Killhope project will not only improve the visitor experience but will also bring a range of volunteering and training opportunities for local people.”

The Rediscover Killhope project will include the conservation of the Buddle House, which will provide an all-weather exhibition and activity space, and the conservation of key objects in the museum’s collection to ensure their preservation.

New water play equipment will be installed for younger visitors to help them understand more about Killhope’s heritage and an outdoor eating area will also be created.

A new project manager will be appointed to increase opportunities for local people to get involved in the museum through volunteering and to develop an extensive programme of activities for visitors.

As part of the volunteering programme people will have the chance to train in heritage skills and object conservation.

Notes to editors

Killhope Museum is an established heritage attraction at the top of the North Pennines, focussing on the lead mining heritage of the area and providing a snapshot of extraction techniques and living and working conditions of the Victorian lead miners from 1850 to 1900.

The museum sees annual visits of 20,000 people per year and has a successful educational offer for schools.

The Killhope experience is a mixture of exhibits, intensive hands-on experiences – such as sorting through lead ore on the washing floor, an hour long underground mine trip and a tour of the working machinery of the Jigger House and water wheels.

There are also extensive walks through a plantation woodland and workshops in local skills such as willow weaving, proddy mat making, quilting, crochet and herbal medicine.

Further information

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