More than a Mill project secures backing

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Quarry Bank is the most complete survival of a designed industrial revolution community on the fringe of the first industrial city in the world- Manchester. In February this year, the National Trust launched a national appeal to raise £1.4million as part of the £6 million needed to transform the experience of visiting one of the country's most significant industrial heritage sites and to ensure its long term conservation.

The primary focus of the project is to bring the whole story of Quarry Bank back to life, sharing more of this special community which includes the mill, a farm, a village and the homes and workplaces of the owner, mill manager, workers and apprentices – a story of power, people and the birth of industry. Few, if any other sites of comparable significance are as complete or as untouched.

As part of the project, the National Trust is looking to involve volunteers and local communities to help restore key parts of the property, develop their own skills and conserve the skills needed to look after this special site into the future. The aim is to deliver great conservation and help more people to make their own connections with Quarry Bank, from first impression to parting reflection.

Catherine Prasad is the trust's project manager for the Quarry Bank Appeal. "This fantastic project will help people of all ages discover more about the many stories of Quarry Bank" says Catherine. "In particular, it will enable them to discover and explore the fascinating collection of archives held here at the Mill, which contain gems such as the apprentice indentures and medical records of the workers."

Until now, the archives have remained locked away and unresearched but through the project, there is an opportunity for both specialists and volunteers to explore the archive in detail. When fully catalogued, the archives will give a wonderful picture of working life and practices at Quarry Bank from the early days of the 1790s to the last working years of the 20th century.

Samuel Greg established the cotton mill on the banks of the River Bollin in 1784, making use of the readily available water supply to power the mill. Like many other such developments, when the mill was first built there was no community of any size on the site, which was chosen more for the availability of water power than for a workforce. The Gregs soon built housing to attract adult workers and established a village complete with Unitarian and Methodist chapels, a village school, a shop, allotments and a farm to provide food for the mill community. Uniquely, Quarry Bank today contains the complete range of buildings of a self-sufficient mill complex from the early Industrial Revolution.

Today, Quarry Bank is a focal point for the local area. Over 140,000 people visit the mill and other features each year and many more enjoy the network of paths around the wider estate. Quarry Bank is renowned for its learning programme, with over 30,000 school visitors a year with children coming from all over the North West and beyond.

Eleanor Underhill, General Manager of National Trust's Quarry Bank said: "We're thrilled that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given us this support. The project team are in the planning phase of a five-year project to bring Quarry Bank back to life – to share stories of this truly unique place and engage audiences in its magic. Now at last we have our first chance of showing the property as a whole, opening up parts of the property currently not open to the public and telling the complete story – an opportunity not to be missed."

Sara Hilton, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund North West, said: “Quarry Bank represents an incredibly important part of our industrial history, which has helped to shape the modern world. This project is a great opportunity to restore and open up a fascinating site and we look forward to working closely with the National Trust as they develop their plans further.”

Development funding of £164,400 has been awarded to help the National Trust progress its plans to apply for a full grant at a later date.

The total cost of the project is £6 million and is expected to take five years to complete. The National Trust is appealing to the public and to various funding bodies and organisations for their support. To date the appeal has raised approximately £400,000.

To make a donation to the Quarry Bank appeal, for special online fundraising games and for the mill’s opening times visit the National Trust website or call 01625 527 468 opt 6.

Notes to editors

The National Trust is a UK conservation charity, protecting historic places and green spaces, and opening them up for ever, for everyone. They rely for income on membership fees, donations and legacies, and revenue raised from their commercial operations.

They have over 3.7million members and 61,000 volunteers. More than 17million people visit their pay for entry properties, while an estimated 50million visit their open air properties. They protect and open to the public over 350 historic houses, gardens and ancient monuments. But it doesn’t stop there. We also look after forests, woods, fens, beaches, farmland, downs, moorland, islands, archaeological remains, castles, nature reserves, villages.

Further information

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