King Edward Mine secures £35,700 HLF grant

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The grant has been match-funded with £10,000 from Cornwall Council and £2,477 from the Rural Development Programme for England.

King Edward Mine (KEM) is the oldest complete mine site left in Cornwall and the entire complex of buildings is designated Grade II* listed. The whole site is within the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site. The overall complex has Outstanding Universal Value as the best preserved mine head complex within the WHS for the 1700-1914 period for which the WHS was inscribed by UNESCO.

For over 100 years KEM served as the practical teaching site for the Camborne School of Mines. The site contains engine houses, an original Holmans' winding engine, a calciner for cleansing arsenic from tin concentrates, a number of buildings such as the count house, carpenter's shop, winder and compressor houses, and the mill containing a range of tin-dressing machinery that represents the last of its kind in the world.

The funding will support the development of a larger programme of events and activities for families, local people and schools, building on the brilliant success of the 24th International Mining Games held at the mine earlier in the year.

Alongside creating more hands-on activities for young people to help them explore the science and technology involved in mining, the project will investigate the flora and fauna of the site and the archaeological remains in the vicinity of the 19th century South Condurrow Stamps Engine House.

Tony Brooks, Chairman of KEM Ltd, said: "This is a real boost for us as it will enable the museum to move forward in areas that up until now we have been unable to progress."

Cllr Joan Symons, Cabinet Member for Culture, said: "King Edward Mine is one of the treasures in the council’s portfolio of heritage properties and we are delighted that the team there has attracted this grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The project aims to encourage more people to come and enjoy the site, consider volunteering on the range of projects that take place there, including working on a new environmental scheme to support local flora and fauna of interest identified by the ecological survey and to create a nature trail. We are particularly keen for the site to develop its relationship with schools and are pleased to see that this project will include working in partnership with the local school to develop hands-on and digital learning tools."

Commenting on the grant award Richard Bellamy, HLF Head of South West, said: "The King Edward Mine site offers a wealth of opportunities for local people and visitors to the area alike to become involved with their heritage in a very practical way. This project, which we were delighted to be able to support, focuses not just on the pioneering industrial heritage of the area, but also on its rich natural heritage, and seeks to provide a range of new activities that will stimulate the interest of visiting families and especially young people."

Notes for editors

The team of volunteers at King Edward Mine Museum are looking for more people to become involved in the future of

the mine. It is vitally important to preserve and develop the mine within the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site. This is an opportunity for local people to become volunteers to help maintain what remains of Cornwall's rich industrial heritage, involving all aspects of the Museum, site maintenance, landscape management, industrial archaeology, engineering, model making, events programming and marketing, evening guiding and perhaps taking groups around the Great Flat Lode.

About King Edward Mine Museum and King Edward Mine Ltd

King Edward Mine is at the eastern part of the South Condurrow Mine which was abandoned about 1890. It was re-opened in 1897, and developed as a fully operational / training mine, by the Camborne School of Mines.

The mine regularly produced tin up until the First World War when operations were suspended. By 1920 it was back in production. This was short-lived for in 1921 the adjacent deeper Grenville Mine stopped working. As the two mines were interconnected, the consequent flooding of Grenville also flooded the King Edward workings. Underground operations, on a much reduced scale, were transferred to a dry shallow section of the Great Condurrow Mine to the north.

In 1974, the pilot plant and most of the lecturing in mining, ore dressing, management, and surveying moved to the main School of Mines building. The mill complex was no longer needed and it became a store.

In 1987, a volunteer group was formed with the objective to conserve the site as an educational resource for the future and to operate it in a manner that benefits the local community. Using rescued machinery, the mill has been restored to working condition much as it would have been in the early years of the last century.

King Edward Mine and its satellite mine Great Condurrow ceased to be used by Camborne School of Mines in 2005. KEM, then operating as a museum, was purchased by Cornwall Council and Great Condurrow by the Carn Brea Mining Society.

The site covers over 20 acres and is leased by KEM Ltd, a not for profit organisation, from Cornwall Council.

Further information

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