Unique windmill’s restoration to go ahead

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Bursledon Windmill, with its adjacent granary and barn, is a unique reminder of the county’s early industrial history. The present structure, which is Grade II* listed, is owned by the Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust and leased to Hampshire County Council. The windmill is managed through a partnership between the County Council, Eastleigh Borough Council and Bursledon Parish Council.

Built in 1814, the five-storey windmill is the only English example of a traditional tower mill with its original timber machinery. Surveys have now shown that the windshaft has reached the end of its operational life and this will now be replaced. The sails were removed last year and these will also now be restored by the project. The original timber windshaft will become an exhibit in the on-site museum.

A key aspect of the work will be the recruitment of around 20 volunteers who will gain a range of skills and knowledge about the mill’s heritage. They will be instructed in traditional milling skills and also support the management of the site in the future, helping to run guided tours, workshops and special events.

Nearby is the Grade II listed granary and a 16th century barn that provides visitor facilities. These will be augmented as the project develops the windmill as a community asset, learning resource and a visitor attraction.

Stuart McLeod, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund South East England, said: “This building is of national significance as a result of its unique qualities. Its physical restoration will be augmented by volunteer efforts that will once more create a living, working example of the county’s heritage.”

Hampshire County Council Executive Member for Culture and Recreation, Councillor Keith Chapman, said: “The windmill is the only complete structure of its kind left in Hampshire, and one of only 27 in Britain that work regularly, so it is of huge importance to the Bursledon area as a community asset, a learning resource and visitor attraction. As an operational mill, the restoration work will not only return it to full working order for tourism interest, but with the help of volunteers, it will also once again produce its own stone-ground flour as it has for around 200 years. This will both promote local Hampshire produce, and preserve a heritage asset and tradition for all visitors including local schoolchildren.”

Notes to editors

Bursledon Windmill was built in 1814, replacing an earlier post mill which was built in 1766. The machinery of the earlier mill was incorporated into the new mill. The mill was in use until 1885 by which time it was considered archaic because it featured wooden, rather than cast iron, machinery.

The structure was rescued by the Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust who acquired it and inaugurated a restoration programme between 1976 and 1991.

A community partnership was established in 2011 to secure the future sustainability of the building. Its members include Hampshire County Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Bursledon Parish Council, Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust, Hampshire Mills Group, Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and Graylaydes Arts Foundation.

Further information

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