

The Big Melt - giant pyrotechnic display

The money, from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), will pay for the conversion of the Steelos Gallery, near the entrance of the visitor attraction, to create a new display telling the story of the former Templeborough steelworks site. There will be a section devoted to the First World War, when the main steelworks was constructed to produce steel for armaments. Staff and volunteers at Magna will be teaming up with the faculty of arts and humanities at the University of Sheffield to research the steelworks' role in the war.

Stuart Ballard, Magna's education manager, said: "It's great to have received this grant from HLF, which will help create an exciting and interactive introduction to the site's history for both schools and families. We know already that there are plenty of fascinating stories to tell and we would love to find out more. So we are keen to hear from anyone who thinks they may have family who worked at the plant, particularly during the First World War."

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber, said: "This project will really bring to life the heritage of Templeborough Steelworks, enabling volunteers to learn new skills and uncover the major contribution Templeborough made during the First World War. HLF is dedicated to supporting projects that open up our heritage for locals and visitors to get involved and learn about their past."

At its height Magna employed 10,000 people and produced up to 18 million tonnes of steel a year. The steelworks, which were a mile long and said to be Europe's largest, became known as Steelos, after the owners Steel, Peech and Tozer. There were 14 open-hearth furnaces and 14 chimneys, which were replaced in the 1960s with electric arc

furnaces. The steelworks closed in 1993 and were mothballed until conversion to Magna in 2001.

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One of the arc furnaces is now a giant pyrotechnic display in the visitor centre called the Big Melt. Regular steel tours telling the story of Magna are led by former steel workers. As well as being a visitor attraction with more than 100 hands-on exhibits designed to explore the four elements of air, water, earth and fire, Magna hosts regular school trips and is a corporate and events venue with spaces that can cater for five to 5,000 people.

Dr Jane Hodson, Director of External Engagement, Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Sheffield, said: "We're thrilled to be working closely with Magna to develop the Steelos Gallery. We're looking forward to contributing our expertise to this community-focussed project, and we know that we'll learn a lot from working with the staff and volunteers. It will enable us to forge closer links with Magna and explore possible future projects. These mutually beneficial outcomes are what we aim for in our public engagement work."

Visit the Magna website for more information.

Notes to Editors

The University of Sheffield
With almost 26,000 of the brightest students from around 120 countries, learning alongside over 1,200 of the best academics from across the globe, the University of Sheffield is one of the world's leading universities. A member of the UK's prestigious Russell Group of leading research-led institutions, Sheffield offers world-class teaching and research excellence across a wide range of disciplines.

Unified by the power of discovery and understanding, staff and students at the university are committed to finding new ways to transform the world we live in.
In 2014 it was voted number one university in the UK for Student Satisfaction by Times Higher Education and in the last decade has won four Queen's Anniversary Prizes in recognition of the outstanding contribution to the United Kingdom's intellectual, economic, cultural and social life.

Sheffield has five Nobel Prize winners among former staff and students and its alumni go on to hold positions of great responsibility and influence all over the world, making significant contributions in their chosen fields.

Global research partners and clients include Boeing, Rolls-Royce, Unilever, AstraZeneca, Glaxo SmithKline, Siemens and Airbus, as well as many UK and overseas government agencies and charitable foundations.

Further information

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