

SHERBORNE STEAM AND WATERWHEEL CENTRE



Open days 2024

April 21

May 12

June 02

July 21

August 11

September 7 & 8

October 13

Trustees

Paul Belliss (Chairman)

Nigel Bartram (Vice Chairman)

John Thomson (Treasurer)

David Wilkins (Secretary)

Geoff Ward

Craig Henderson

Interpretation Project

The interpretation project was officially opened by well-known BBC correspondent Kate Adie at the open day on June 2nd



The visitor centre has been transformed by the new panels and displays which look very professional and tell the story of the water supply in Sherborne. Many other new panels have also been erected around the site including one on the waterwheel and it was this one that was unveiled as part of the opening ceremony.

Find us on our website or on Facebook

<https://www.sswc.co.uk>





The SSWC team have worked hard with the consultants Smith & Jones to make this happen and to ensure that the resultant panels are informative and accurate. We now have a greatly improved visitor experience.

Many thanks are due to Dorset County and their Museums Advisor Vicky de Wit for her advice and her help in obtaining the funding.

The Official Opening

Proceedings opened with an address by Paul Belliss and he reviewed the many achievements of the project since it first started in the 1970's. The initial aim was just preserving the waterwheel but he laid out how much more has been achieved. As mentioned above Kate Adie kindly agreed to perform the official opening which was performed at the waterwheel.



She gave an excellent speech and reminded the audience that projects like this were educational as few people knew about where their water comes from. Also, she reminded

us about the struggles in the Victorian era to get clean water. She also stressed and praised the important part played by volunteers in the success of the project.

We were very pleased to be able to welcome the Mayor and Councillors of Sherborne and many other VIP guests.



Music and sound was provided by Abbey FM for what proved to be a memorable day and an event for which all who contributed could be proud.

Dorset's Newest Waterwheel

Did you know that Europe's largest electricity-generating waterwheel is to be found here in Dorset at Buckland Newton. It is the largest waterwheel generating electrical power in Europe at 9.0m in diameter. (This demotes our own waterwheel to be the second largest in the county). To achieve the required head for the project, Buckland Newton Hire raised one of the lakes on the family farm by around 11m. The lake is supplied from a large spring and run-off rainwater from the valley slopes.

The galvanised steel waterwheel, which has 92 individual buckets carrying a total of 6 tonnes of water at a time, now delivers an average flow of approximately 150 litres per second 24/7 nearly all year round, supplying an average of 150 kWh per day.

Brad Perrett, Manager and Director of BNH, explains, "As the lake is in front of his home on our family farm, my father wanted to watch a huge waterwheel from his window and we have made his dream come true, building the biggest wheel we can for him



"We could easily have installed a cross-flow turbine, but we wanted to do something a bit different that showcases our capabilities and our green credentials as a company. We think we could replicate this project in the future to provide similar lake-based energy generation projects for clients."

The grounds around the waterwheel will be landscaped by BNH so that visitors can come and view the pioneering electricity generation project from summer 2025.

Volunteers

SSWC is immensely lucky to have a small but enthusiastic team of volunteers, but we could always do with more.

It is not just those with mechanical skills who are needed but there is always much paperwork, publicity and other tasks that need to be done to keep everything running.



To take a slight liberty with a well know poster

Your Project Needs You

If you feel you could help just let any of the Trustees know or make contact with Nigel Bartram bartramsafloat@gmail.com or alternately come along to one of our open days.

Local Steam

As reported in the last newsletter The Great Dorset Steam Fair is not happening this year and is up for sale as an event if a bidder can be found.

There are many smaller shows in Dorset and just a couple you might like to try are listed.

FRI 28TH - SUN 30TH JUN 2024:

Roads to Rail Steam Rally

SWANAGE RAILWAY 2024

Classic Cars / Commercial Vehicles / Fairground
/ Miniature Steam / Models / Railways /
Stationary Engines / Steam and Vintage Rallies

FRI 9TH - SUN 11TH AUG 2024:

Purbeck Rally

Dorset

Steam and Vintage Rallies / Tractors

A very worthwhile visit is to the Crofton Beam Pumping engines at Crofton in Wiltshire. On steaming days you can see the oldest steam engine in the world still in its original location and still doing its original job of topping up the canal with water.

For all of these it is always best to check for the latest information on websites before visiting.