



ESKDALE MILL & HERITAGE TRUST

PATRONS OF THE TRUST:

Anna Ford, Lord Rea of Eskdale, Lord Frank Judd, Margie Foots, Patrick Gordon-Duff-Pennington, Eric Robson and Marcus Worthington.

ESKDALE MILL & HERITAGE TRUST Company No. 5743618 & Registered Charity No. 1113837

Press release

Heritage Lottery Fund award

2 February 2018

Eskdale

Partial re-roofing of the mill and miller's cottage and other essential repairs are urgently needed to make the buildings weather-proof and ready to welcome visitors once more. Original machinery will be restored to full working order for the first time in many years. Information about the mill's long history will be brought up to date, and how the mill worked and its role in the life of the valley will be better explained. A new manager will move into the cottage when builders finish on site in over a year's time, and the National Lottery support will then run for two more years.

Working with the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway and Muncaster Castle, the Trust aims to make sure that more people know about the village of Boot and its ancient mill. Both inside and outside the buildings there will be activities for visitors and children, with packs for school parties.

Volunteers have kept the mill open to the public for the last two summers, and will continue to have a vital role showing visitors around and maintaining the buildings and grounds.

Paul Pharaoh, chair of Eskdale Mill & Heritage Trust said : "We are thrilled that after a period of running on a shoe-string the next phase of the mill's long life looks secure, thanks to the National Lottery and Copeland Community Fund. We will now be able to conserve the buildings and machinery, and tell their story more effectively. That will make the mill a more enjoyable place to visit and give a boost to Eskdale's economy, but we shall take great care to preserve the very special character of this extraordinary place."

Sue Bowers, HLF Deputy Director of Operations, said “One of England’s oldest water-powered mills now has a bright future, thanks to money raised by National Lottery players. Volunteers have worked very hard over the past two years to keep the mill open to the public, so we’re delighted that they will play a vital role in this exciting new chapter for Eskdale’s heritage.”

David Moore, Chair of Copeland Community Fund, said “It is true to say that without fantastic vision and significant hard work from the trustees - all volunteers - this project would not be happening. The CCF Board are delighted to have been able to support the Eskdale Mill project with funding, bringing significant National Lottery funding into Copeland and enabling the creation of a valuable heritage asset.”

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

About Eskdale Corn Mill

The Grade II* listed Eskdale Corn Mill at Boot is the last working water-powered mill in the Lake District National Park. A rare survival of a traditional watermill and drying kiln, it has two waterwheels turned by the Whillan beck, each driving a pair of millstones. Martin Watts, a national authority on mills, describes it as “a local mill of national importance.”

Parts of the buildings date from the Tudor period, although most are eighteenth or nineteenth century. Locally grown oats and barley, and later wheat, were milled for the valley’s community. Due to its picturesque appearance the mill was often chosen as a subject by artists, including J M W Turner.

After milling for human consumption ceased about 1900, the mill produced animal feed until the 1930’s. Then it lay untouched until it was bought and restored by Cumbria County Council, and first opened to the public in 1976.

About Eskdale Mill & Heritage Trust

Eskdale Mill & Heritage Trust, a registered charity, was formed by local people after the County Council put the mill up for sale in 2003. The Trust succeeded in raising sufficient funds to buy the mill in 2006.

The Trust is currently run wholly by volunteer effort. Seven trustees are supported by a group of advisers. During the last two summers, the mill has been kept open to visitors by volunteer reception, guiding and maintenance staff. New volunteers are always welcome and the Trust is also looking to recruit additional trustees.

About the project

The mill building, its wheels, machinery and outbuildings, including the miller's cottage, will be restored and conserved to operate as a working mill and visitor attraction. Works include re-roofing and repairs to timber roof support structures, replacement or repair of windows and doors, removal of unsympathetic earlier repairs, fixing unsafe floors and stairways, and new electrical and public safety fixtures.

Visitor facilities, educational materials and signage will be enhanced. A fully accessible toilet will be constructed in the present garage, which will also house the reception area and a small shop. Audio-visual systems will allow virtual access to areas of the buildings without disabled access.

How the project is funded

Funder	Amount £
Heritage Lottery Fund	842,200
Copeland Community Fund	75,000
EU Rural Development Programme for England – Cumbria Fells & Dales	36,000
Other funders	20,800
Still to be raised to reach funding target	29,200
Total	1,003,200

Timing of the project

Construction work is due to begin by the end of April 2018 and be completed in about one year. Once the restored mill cottage is ready for occupation, a new resident mill manager will be employed. We hope to open the restored mill to the public in June 2019. Operation will continue to be supported by the National Lottery until the beginning of the 2021 visitor season. After that the mill must be self-supporting from visitor admission fees.

For further information please contact :

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