

Mid-project report for Association for Industrial Archaeology



Amgueddfa Cymru
National Museum Wales
Inspiring people, changing lives

national
museum
wales
amgueddfa
cymru



About Amgueddfa Cymru

Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales was formed over 100 years ago and comprises of seven national museums across Wales. We offer free entry and visitor figures continue to grow, with 1.89m visits made last year – a record figure.

We believe that culture and heritage can change lives and we recently launched our new vision, 'Inspiring people, Changing lives', which encapsulates our aspirations, as a leader in the cultural sector, to break down barriers for young people and those in most need, and to increase participation and representation by all sections of society. Our strategy to combat the impacts of poverty is cited as sector-leading by the Welsh Government. We continue to develop programmes that are designed to have a lasting impact on the lives of the people.

We are the largest provider of learning outside of the classroom in Wales, welcoming over 200,000 school children and students annually to our museums. The experiential learning that we offer has, over the years, inspired children who are at risk of exclusion from the formal education system. We also reach over 600,000 adults and children in family groups each year, making us one of the biggest providers of informal family learning in the UK.

National Museum Cardiff
Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NP
029 2039 7951

St Fagans National History Museum
St Fagans, Cardiff CF5 6XB
029 2057 3500

Big Pit National Coal Museum
Blaenafon, Torfaen NP4 9XP
01495 790 311

National Roman Legion Museum
High Street, Caerleon NP18 1AE
01633 423 134

National Slate Museum
GilfachDdu, Llanberis, Gwynedd LL55
4TY
01286 870 630

National Wool Museum
Dre-fach Felindre, Llandysul,
Carmarthenshire SA44 5UP
01559 370 929

National Waterfront Museum
Oystermouth Road, Maritime Quarter,
Swansea SA1 3RD
01792 638950

Collections Centre
Nantgarw, Rhondda Cynon Taf CF15
7QT
029 20573 651

Llwydd / President Roger Lewis
Is-Lywydd / Vice President Dr Caroll Bell PhD, DLitt
Trysorydd / Treasurer Hywel John FCA
Cyfarwyddwr Cyffredinol / Director General David Anderson OBE
Elusen Cofrestredig / Registered charity: 525774
Rhif TAW / VAT number: GB 783 4541 10
Amgueddfa.cymru / museum.wales



Introduction

We would once again like to extend our warmest thanks to the Association for Industrial Archaeology for awarding us a restoration grant of £20,000 towards the cost of restoring the Grade II* listed steel headframe structure at Big Pit National Coal Museum.

This report is the second of three reports, updating you on the progress of the project. We look forward to sending you a detailed end-project report.



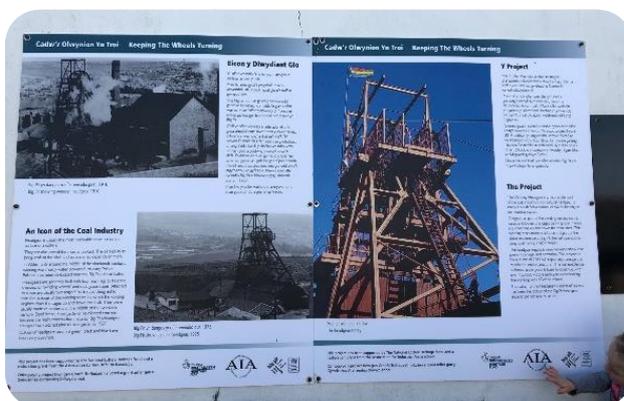
Scaffolding surrounding Big Pit

Progress to date

JJ Williams Ltd from Bridgend, was appointed on 8 August 2019 to carry out the essential restoration works on the headframe structure. Shortly following this, on 19 August, the access scaffolding around the Headgear was erected and work started on 2 September. The Headgear was cleaned, painted and restored and ran to time, finishing at the end of September.

Prior to the work a camera was placed on site to capture images and a time lapse video of the process from beginning to end. This project has provided a rare opportunity to carry out a time lapse recording for the first time of the restoration work from start to end. Once the video has been edited it will be upload onto the Museum's social media channels and onto a blog on the Museum's website. It will also form part of the important archives of the site. This is a unique story and experience at Big Pit.

During the restoration we have had some very exciting media coverage, including a slot on the ITV Wales evening news and an article in the South Wales Argus.



Information Panels next to the Winder

Information panels were installed near the headgear at the start of the project and have been in place during the entire restoration. These will shortly be moved but still kept on site as a legacy of the project.

Specialist Engineering Tours and surface tours have been available throughout the restoration works and the feedback received so far on these tours has been excellent. The surface tours have been fun, exciting and

informative and they involve a friendly, welcoming and personal experience of examiners as tour guides, inspiring and enabling people to engage with aspects of the mine.

The preservation of the Winder has enabled us to further develop tours for different groups for whom the significance of this personal history is important but who are traditionally excluded from the museum experience. Over the last three years, we have been working in collaboration with local ageing and dementia friendly organisations. This in turn led to the launch of Dementia friendly underground tours at Big Pit. Feedback from these tours further highlighted the importance of retaining as much of the original miners' experience to enable people to remember and connect with their own personal histories. We held our first dementia friendly surface tour on 25 September. The repair of the Winder has enabled us to continue to provide this authentic underground experience as part of the Dementia friendly tours. We have also engaged with the intergenerational group at Big Pit so they too can learn about the importance of the Winding headgear and the site's heritage status and why this project is needed. An Intergeneration Group Workshop took place in the afternoon on 23 September.



Filming taking place at Big Pit

Next Steps

We will now evaluate the project in detail and report on the results and outcomes in our final report. Thank you once again.



Scaffolding on the headgear

Big Pit
19 September at 08:00 · 🌐

Blaenavon Intergenerational Group, Wednesday September 25, 1.30pm-3pm

Join a miner guide for a special surface tour and find out about the work currently being carried out on the Headgear at Big Pit.

One of the most noticeable and iconic structures of the coal industry's rich cultural heritage has been having some much needed 'TLC'.

Join us to share mining and community memories over a cuppa and a Welsh cake.

Free transport available on request by calling: 029 2057 3663.

Free entry and a warm welcome to all!



👍❤️🗨️ 20 4 comments 7 shares

Big Pit Coal Museum @BigPitMuseum · 24 Sep

The weather's a little grey and dull today, but we're feeling a little cheery, as the scaffolding is slowly being take down from the Headgear as the restoration work comes to an end. This project has been supported by [#NationalLotteryHeritageFund](#) and [@AIndustrialArch](#).



👍❤️🗨️ 1 2 16 🔄

JJ Williams (Painting Serv...) · 16 Sep

Making good progress on the Headgear @BigPitMuseum - the difference is astonishing! [@AmgueddfaCymru](#)



🗨️ 🔄 ❤️ 2 📄

Mike Griffiths @mrmike... · 18 Sep

👉 One of Wales' most recognisable landmarks is getting a makeover!

👷 The headframe at @BigPitMuseum is being repainted for the first time in years... and it's no easy task!

🕒 We get a close up look at [@itwales](#) at 6pm 📺



Big Pit
25 September at 04:47 · 🌐

Guided Surface Tours during September

Whilst essential maintenance to the Winding Headgear is being carried out, the Underground Tours will be unavailable from 2-29 September.

During this period Big Pit will remain open to the public offering Guided Surface Tours, including information regarding the work being carried out, with the Pithead Baths Exhibition, Conservations Stores, Canteen, Gift Shop, Fan House, Forge and other original colliery buildings all open.

The project is supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and a restoration grant from The Association for Industrial Archaeology.



CRONFA DREFTADA HERITAGE FUND

ASSOCIATION FOR INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

👍❤️🗨️ 10 2 comments 2 shares

Big Pit
24 September at 02:53 · 🌐

The weather's a little grey and dull here today at Big Pit.

But we're feeling a little cheery, as the scaffolding is slowly being take down from the Headgear as the restoration work comes to an end.

This project has been supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and The Association for Industrial Archaeology and means that visitors can continue to explore an authentic and unique underground experience at Big Pit.



👍❤️🗨️ 99 12 comments 25 shares

Diolch, Thank you