SAVING LANCASHIRE’S MINING HERITAGE

THE LANCASHIRE MINING MUSEUM
@ Astley Green Colliery
The colliery at Astley Green was begun in 1908 by the Pilkington Colliery Company, a subsidiary of the Clifton & Kersley Coal Company. The first sod was cut by Lady Pilkington and the mine opened for extraction of coal in 1912. In 1928 the colliery was amalgamated with a number of local pits to form part of the consortium called Manchester Collieries. In 1947 the coal industry was nationalised and this led to considerable modernisation of the mine. After 23 years of operation under the National Coal Board the mine was closed in 1970. It is now a museum. The monument includes the pit headgear for the number 1 shaft, the concrete thrust pillar for the 'tubbing' which supports the headgear and the steam winding engine in its original engine house for the number 1 shaft. The first shaft on the site (the number 1 shaft) was sunk in 1908. Because the ground was unstable and wet the shaft was sunk using a pioneering method known as a 'drop shaft' in which the hole is dropped using forged iron rings with a cutting shoe at the bottom of each ring. These 'tubbing' rings were forced into the underlying ground by the use of 13 hydraulic jacks braced under an iron pressure ring which was locked into the 2000 ton brick pillar which now supports the headgear. The headgear is a steel lattice construction, riveted together, and stands 24.4 metres high. It was built by Head Wrightson of Stockton on Tees and completed in 1912. The winding engine which served this shaft is the largest colliery steam winding engine of its type in Europe. It was made by Yates and Thom of Blackburn. It has four cylinders in twin tandem compound arrangement developing 3300 horsepower at 58 rpm. The engine was installed in 1912 and took two years to complete. It is connected to a bicylindro-conical drum which in turn was connected to the headgear pulleys to wind up the coal and wind down the miners and maintenance supplies. Most of the remainder of the colliery buildings and a second shaft with its gear have been destroyed and the winding gear is the last surviving example in the Lancashire coalfield. It wound its last coal on the 3rd April 1970 so in just 3 years time, it will have been closed for exactly 50 years. The aim must be to get the head gear fully restored for this anniversary.
LISTED BUILDING STATUS

Both the headgear, the winding house and winding engine are Scheduled monuments and Grade 2 listed structures as detailed in the listed building records of English Heritage.

Astley Green Engine House
53°29′44″N 2°26′48″W / 53.4956°N 2.4467°W

1912
The former engine house housing Astley Green’s twin tandem compound Steam Engine is now part of Astley Green Colliery Museum. It is built in brick, seven bays long and three bays wide under a slate roof. The bays have round-arched windows with iron glazing bars. The site is protected as a Grade II Scheduled Monument.

Astley Green Winding Tower
53°29′43″N 2°26′48″W / 53.4952°N 2.4467°W

1912
Astley Green Colliery Museum has the only surviving headgear on the Lancashire Coalfield. It is made from wrought iron lattice girders with riveted plates at the joints. It has two large and one small wheel mounted at the top. It is nearly 30 metres (98 ft) high and was built by Head Wrightson of Stockton-on-Tees in 1912 for Astley Green Colliery. The site is protected as a Grade II Scheduled Monument.

ENGLISH HERITAGE AT RISK ENTRY

The head gear has suffered with deterioration and is now in need of significant repair and painting to avoid any further deterioration. The headgear was placed on the English Heritage at Risk register in 2010 and since then has had a further 6 years of weathering. The report indicates it is in poor condition with slow decay with no solution agreed.
List Entry Number: 1017061
Scheduled Monument

ENGLISH HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

Assessment Type: Building or structure
Condition: Poor
Occupancy / Use: Occupied / in use
Priority Category: C - Slow decay; no solution agreed
Previous Priority Category: C
Owner Type: Charity (heritage)
Designation: Scheduled Monument and Listed Building grade II
List Entry Number(s): 1017061 and 1068445
New Entry: No
Astley Green closed as a working colliery in 1970 and most of the site was cleared leaving only the buildings detailed in red on this map are intact. The RedRose Steam Society was formed in 1983 as a registered Charity to preserve the site for future generations and is registered with the Charity Commissioners.

Company number 01682997
Charity Number 513511
Date Registered 1983-08-03

The charity is run by a number of volunteers who have managed to get the winding engine working again, after many years of hard work.
LOCATION

The Museum and Pithead is located just 8 miles from the centre of Manchester and is surrounded by a full motorway network with the M6 - M60 - M61 and M62 all less than 5 miles away. The site is also located on the side of the Bridgewater Canal and just off the A580 East Lancashire road between Manchester and Liverpool. The site is also centrally located to Bolton, Wigan and Warrington and has a population measured at approx 2.7 million (2014 estimate) in the Greater Manchester area.
In another 12 years (as of December 2016) Astley Green Colliery will have been closed for as long as it was open. But when that day comes those who respect England's industrial heritage hope that the pit village's historic headgear will still be a familiar landmark. Because the steel lattice headgear - the last standing in the once great Lancashire Coalfield - needs an overhaul and has been placed on English Heritage's Buildings at Risk register.

The old colliery museum site off Higher Green Lane is home to the Red Rose Steam Society whose chairman Geoff Jones explained the situation. He said: "Although the headgear is Grade 2 listed and a scheduled monument this in no way guarantees its future existence and we consider it would be tragic if, for safety reasons, it required demolition at any time in the future. After canvassing English Heritage to include it on their Buildings at Risk Register, they have finally done it."

The 120 ton, 98 feet tall headgear, according to Red Rose experts, is one of six left in the country and by far in the most original condition. The pit site belongs to Wigan Council, but a lease condition means Red Rose volunteers have responsibility for it and the site's upkeep.

Mr Jones highlighted problems facing the group: "Being a purely volunteer operated organisation and a registered charity we cannot afford to fully restore the headgear but we have protected the base steelwork up to a level within safe limits of working. "The objective of attaining inclusion in the Risk Register was to act as a focus when financial and practical support can be afforded to it, either by grant applications, or by canvassing support from mining communities.

When the pit closed the National Coal Board had painted the headgear with bitumen but this blistered. In places you can still see the red paint which was a feature of Manchester Collieries (successors to the Pilkington Colliery Co) who were the pit owners until nationalisation in 1947.

Wigan Council's environmental services director Steve Normington said: "The report reflects the problems that the development industry is facing nationally in terms of the preservation of Listed Buildings and as reduction in funding opportunities. The Council does pro-actively work with English Heritage, developers and property owners to mitigate any risks to the integrity of such buildings and wherever possible seeks to secure solutions.

"However, there are limitations prescribed within legislation that has an impact on the extent to which the council can intervene and, in a climate of reductions in funding streams, the report does acknowledge the risks that a lack of resource will have. "Nonetheless, the Council will use its best endeavours to minimise the risk to such sites but this has to be in the context of limitations imposed by legislation and reduced funding opportunities."
RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT & LANDSCAPE OBJECTIVES

In a report prepared by Wigan Council it was stated the Astley Green area contains a variety of different landscapes requiring differing approaches to landscape objectives and management. The land relating to Astley Green Colliery museum has undergone a very basic form of restoration relying mainly on natural regeneration and the design/management of disturbed marshy ground. It also appears to be used in relation to the museum for passive recreation. A surfaced gravel footpath through the site has been provided. The resulting landscape is reasonably attractive and has created a degree of habitat diversity. Continued management will be required to establish a balance of naturally invading pioneer tree and shrub species and open space/wetland and grassland. Astley Green village is quietly situated off the A580 East Lancashire Road and the mining museum enjoys neither through traffic or a prime visual position. A far greater degree of signage and interpretive advertising should therefore be considered if the site is to be well visited.

Page 8
GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK - CONSULTATION

Taken from document issued October 2016. This is taken verbatim from the document and sets out the councils vision for the maintenance of the heritage surrounding the proposed building lands identifies for future development. *Time will tell if this is a commitment on behalf of all the local councils to help preserve our heritage or just another paper exercise and words, with no actual practicable help forthcoming.* The main points relating to the Astley Green site in the document, have been highlighted in red.

**Policy GM20**

Greater Manchester will be a dynamic, forward-looking city region anchored by a deep respect for its heritage, particularly its leading role in the industrial revolution, social advancements and subsequent innovations.

The quality of Greater Manchester’s heritage will be maximised by:

1. **Preserving and enhancing heritage assets and their settings**;
2. **Ensuring that the design of new development fully responds to the historic context, reinforcing local character and identity**;
3. **Securing the sympathetic long-term reuse of heritage assets, helping to reduce the amount of heritage at risk**;
4. **Increasing the understanding and interpretation of the historic environment, including through archaeological works as part of new development and carefully recording lost heritage assets**;
5. **Maximising the positive contribution of Greater Manchester’s industrial heritage**,

**Reasoned justification**

23.0.1 Greater Manchester has a rich history, and has often been at the forefront of economic and social advancements of national and international significance, which has resulted in a diverse range of heritage assets. Many such assets relate to Greater Manchester’s role in the industrial revolution and textiles industry, for example including the world’s first passenger railway, a historically important canal network, mills and weaver’s cottages, as well as the vast array of distinctive Victorian buildings. Greater Manchester has had an equally important role in social history, such as the co-operative movement and the political radicalism of the eighteenth century, reflected in features such as its historic public parks and museums. Parts of Greater Manchester are also notable for the remnants of past mining activity, and the use of local stone in the uplands.

23.0.2 Heritage assets such as these, and the wider movements that they represent, are a fundamental part of the identity of Greater Manchester and its individual places, and a source of local pride. It is essential that this distinctiveness and connection to the past is protected and enhanced as the sub-region continues to evolve. This will be important to differentiating Greater Manchester from other cities, increasing its attractiveness as a place to live and visit, and supporting economic growth.
WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN TO SECURE THE SITE’S FUTURE?

The present site is owned by Wigan MBC and is leased on a 25 year lease to the Red Rose Steam Society who are custodians of the major assets on the site. The present lease has approx 5 year left to run and the society is currently trying to negotiate with Wigan MBC regarding renewing the lease for at least a further 25 years, to ensure the long term viability of the Winding House, Head Gear and Museum. Without this long term commitment to the site it will be difficult to get large scale funding for the major projects required. The community asset programme is a way forward to get the site either transferred freehold to the trust or extended now, with at least a further 25 year lease, with an option to extend under the same terms and rental as the current lease.

The pit closed in 1970 and although the Winding House, Winding Engine and Headgear were saved, it was not until 1983 that the site was leased to the society and work started on saving and restoring the winding engine and winding house and getting it working again. This has been achieved by a small dedicated team of volunteers over the last 30 years and it is now in working condition and is believed to be the largest colliery steam winding engine of its type in Europe. The engine finally ran for the first time in 2013 almost 30 years to the day when the Red Rose Steam Society took over the site.

The Head Gear due to the difficulty in maintenance has unfortunately not suffered the same fate and now is in need of significant investment in its repair and maintenance to ensure it is saved for future generations and does not suffer the fate of so much of our Industrial Heritage over the past few years. The structure is on the English Heritage at risk register and is in need of urgent repair and painting. Due to the likely cost of this work, to make the structure safe, and painting a 100ft steel lattice structure, it is impossible for a small society to fund these major capital expenses.

Approaches have been made to English Heritage and the National Lottery Fund regarding grants and support for the repair and maintenance of the Head Gear and although the project meets the criteria for funding under the Heritage grant criteria, both organisations would need proof that the museum and site would have a future, and could be developed to deliver positive benefits to the community in which it operates.

The present society is mainly in the hands of a small team of dedicated volunteers, giving up their own time and energy to maintain and restore the site assets, and although a valiant effort has been made over the past years, are not able to provide the site with the manpower or resources required to get all this work done.
To this end the suggestion is that the present Charitable Trust is re-organised to oversee the running of the site. The Red Rose Steam Society MUST be protected as it is only their work over the last 30 years which has got the site into a facility which is ripe for development as a major cultural and heritage site. The re-organised Trust would be responsible for the Management, Repair and Maintenance of the general site and museum and tasked with increasing the visitor numbers and widening its ability to serve the community with a much larger range of initiatives, including skills training and community development.

It is anticipated that by recruiting Trustees and volunteers, with the business acumen and the specific skills required to take the project forward, will be able to develop this site into a major attraction and bring significant benefits to the whole community. A large number of volunteers both male and female will be required in all areas, who have a desire to contribute to see this project through to a successful conclusion. It is important that everyone is made welcome and respected for their contribution whatever it may be. There has been a feeling in the past that this site is only suitable for people with an interest in engineering and restoring the machinery. This has got to change and embrace the whole community, to ensure we can deliver the aims and ideals of this document and give the community a 21st century facility, which recognises the Industrial Heritage of the whole Lancashire coalfield.

The site presently consists of:

- The Winding House
- The Winding Engine
- The Headgear
- The Old Colliery Offices, presently used as the small museum
- A small classroom to hold meetings and talks etc.
- The Engineering workshops
- A small mineral railway line
- Various Electric engines used in mining
- An assortment of static displays in various stages of repair and refurbishment.
- Engines and Industrial machinery in storage waiting for refurbishment.
- Sufficient and Spare land to develop some of the ideas and plans outlined in this document

The trust will be actioned to:

- Increase the visitor numbers,
- Increase the level and type of fundraising.
- Generally improve the maintenance and safety of the site.
- Ensure the long term financial stability of the site
- Improve the visitor experience and facilities on the site.
- Improve the museum, exhibits and improve the information available to visitors.
- To involve the community more and provide education facilities and open the site regularly for more community events.
- To arrange training on site for some of the engineering and other skills used on site.
- Record, repair and maintain the assets on site.
- Improve the disabled access to the site and museum.
- Provide a facility for young people to learn the old skills which are being lost.
STRUCTURE OF THE CHARITABLE TRUST

It is anticipated the trust would be re-organised and run as it is now as a non profit trust in line with the requirements of the Charity Commissioners of the UK, with all proceeds being funnelled back into the running of the museum and maintaining the assets held. The trustees would be a voluntary position carrying no financial rewards, however to ensure the smooth running and long term future of the organisation, it is anticipated that a re-structure of the present organisation, to cover all aspects of the development programme, would benefit the organisation.

BASIC STRUCTURE

RED ROSE STEAM SOCIETY
( Legal Holders of the assets and lease)

FINANCIAL TRUSTEES

DEVELOPMENT TRUSTEES

BUDGETS  COMPLIANCE  FUNDRAISING - MAINTENANCE - PUBLICITY - VISITORS - LEARNING

RED ROSE STEAM SOCIETY MEMBERS

It is anticipated a board of trustees in the region of six to nine members would be the optimum number, each trustee with their own responsibility for part of the development of the project. The Financial Trustees and Development trustees would be tasked to manage the various departments under their control and review budgets for the financial requirements, of each department, for the coming 12 months.

The six areas which have been identified so far are detailed below. A couple of areas such as Health & Safety and security cross over a couple of positions and a detailed job responsibility document would need to be produced for each Trustee to ensure all the areas are covered adequately. The trustees would also take an overview and review the budgets for each area, each year, based on funds and grants available.
Certain positions require specialised knowledge such as Financial and Compliance and it is hoped a suitable candidate would be found for these positions.

To ensure that the Red Rose Steam Society, who have maintained the site for the past 20 years are fully involved and protected it is hoped that they would provide the trustee responsible for the maintenance of the assets. They would still be custodians of the assets on site and the leaseholders. The re-organised trust in no way seeks to undermine this position but only to give the running of the site a much needed makeover to ensure it can carry out many of the jobs that have been neglected over the past years and turn the site into a more profitable going concern and an asset to the local community.

**COMPLIANCE AND FINANCIAL**

This is an important position and would require a Trustee with a sound financial resume as it must ensure the Charitable Trust conforms to all the requirements and regulations of the Charity Commissioners. It is likely this position will also be required to produce and review operating budgets for each part of the project on an ongoing basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term Plan</th>
<th>Recruitment of suitable Trustee to fill this role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What needs to be done</td>
<td>Extensive advertising on Social media etc. to recruit suitable volunteers for this role. Ensure adequate support is given to carry out the duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Plan</td>
<td>To ensure all the requirements and financial requirements of the Charity commissioners are met and to produce yearly budgets for each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FUNDRAISING & PUBLICITY

The site has not maximised the potential it has for fundraising. The trust would need to ensure all avenues are explored including the following.

DIRECT GIVING:  Mount a concerted effect on social Media and other outlets to get people interested in the site and its heritage to allow them to donate directly to the Charity. This can be done through social media, newspapers and linking to other sites with a similar heritage. Many internet sites exist which will allow people to make charitable payments online.

GIFT AID: At present Gift Aid is not collected on any donations made to the site. This could increase the donation by up to 25% and must be implemented and publicised to ensure the maximum amount is achieved.

CROWDFUNDING: On major projects it may be beneficial to set up a Crowdfunding campaign through the various Crowdfunding internet sites. These are better for major investments and projects, as they can be specifically targeted to a specific project and advertised as such.

DONATIONS: To ensure all visitors are made aware of the donation boxes on site and encouraged to fill in the Gift Aid form if they are a UK taxpayer.

A number of sites such as uk.virginmoneygiving.com will manage these online donations for an initial set up fee of £100 and a small service charge. They will claim Gift Aid back on all donations which qualify. This means a £10 donation with gift aid, would return £12.50 and after their charges of 0.35p would mean the charity gets £12.15. This has been actioned and should be live once HMRC gives us the gift aid registration number. This can take up to 6 weeks to process.

EMAIL DATABASE: The charity must maintain an up to date database, which conforms to the Data Protection Act, for all visitors and financial supporters to ensure it can maximise its fundraising. The database and information contained cannot be used for anything but promoting the site and museum.

EVENTS: The site should promote itself as a location for more events to ensure more visitors to the site and therefore more possible supporters. The hire of the site may need to be formalised more to ensure the maximum benefit to the museum.

CORPORATE GRANTS: The trust needs to look at how it can maximise any community grants etc from larger businesses and corporations who are having an impact on the local community.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE: The current membership stands at approx 75 members but there is tremendous scope to extend this by a concerted advertising campaign not only around the local area but to the areas of coal mining around the country. Country membership should be offered to these people. For a membership fee it is important that they feel they get some benefit from supporting the museum and a newsletter covering all aspects of mining should be produced at least 4 times per year and issued in PDF format by email to all registered members, along with a membership badge. The cost of producing this newsletter is zero, apart from time, as it would be provided by email. New members could also order back issues on CD ROM.
MAINTENANCE OF ASSETS

It is anticipated that a member of the RED ROSE STEAM SOCIETY would be the trustee sitting on the executive board, responsible for this part of the plan. He/she would ensure the ideals and requirements of the society are met with the new structure, so the society can carry on with the work restoring and repairing the assets they currently hold as custodians. An asset register must be completed and the legal ownership of all the assets determined and formalised to avoid any future disputes. If necessary transfer of ownership documents if possible, should be produced for any items currently held on loan or storage.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The visitor experience at its present level, is not inviting. The site is not up to the standard of a 21st century heritage site, possibly due to a lack of funding and not having a formal plan to work with. The trust will be actioned to try and resolve this situation. There are a number of things that can be done to make the Visitor experience more rewarding.

OPENING HOURS

At present the site is only open on Tuesday Thursday and Sunday afternoon. The museum would benefit greatly from extended opening hours. The aim would be to open 7 days a week from 10am - 4 pm, at least in the summer months.

To achieve this we would need to find volunteers prepared to give the museum, on average, 10.5 hours a week on a rolling 4 week cycle. This would enable us to staff the museum entrance and tea rooms and meet and greet visitors. Two volunteers a day would ensure safety and carry out necessary duties to ensure the smooth running of the museum, security and fundraising.

This could be achieved with the 4 week cycle shift pattern outlined below. This shift cycle would entail each volunteer committing to working 1 Saturday and 1 Sunday a month and one other day per week. It would be a cycle of 2 days a week for 3 weeks and 1 day a week for the 4th week. There is a possibility with adequate funding that remuneration could be paid in the future for these positions.
This will give us the opportunity to extend the opening hours as follows:

In **SUMMER** (From 1st March to the 30th October)
It is intended to open the museum 7 days a week from 10am - 4pm

In **WINTER** It is intended to open the museum on Saturday & Sunday from 10am - 4pm.

However The museum would remain be closed on Christmas Day and New Years Day

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<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
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<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
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</table>

**MUSEUM SIGNAGE**

The **A580** (officially the Liverpool-East Lancashire Road) is the United Kingdom's first purpose-built intercity highway. The road, which remains a primary A road, was officially opened by King George V on 18 July 1934. It links Walton in Liverpool to Salford near Manchester. In a survey carried out by Salford Council in 2011 the busiest all-purpose road they found was the A580 East Lancashire Road in Swinton where the 24–hour AAWT flow estimate reached 57,400 vehicles (Salford Council November 2011) This indicated it was the busiest A road in the Manchester district. The traffic flow was measured in 2011 and is likely to have increased significantly in the intervening 5 years. This road also has major Junctions to the M57 - M6 - M61 and M60 motorways along with junctions to a further 11 primary A roads and 6 minor A roads along its route.

The road runs less than 400 yards from the museum site but it carries no signage to the museum. Although the 100ft Winding Gear can be seen from the road in both directions from a distance, sometimes it is covered by trees and no indication is made that the site is open to the general public. The lack of adequate signage inhibits the ability of visitors to find the site.
MUSEUM ENTRANCE:

At present there is no focal point for visitors at the museum to get information or to be greeted and informed about the museum. Signage on site is at a minimum and information on the static displays are virtually non-existent. It is suggested that a museum entrance is created which can maintain a visitors book and visitor numbers, welcome visitors, and provide them with printed guides and information, retail sales of books etc. and be the central point for donations. The museum entrance facility is important. Initially this could be created with a Portacabin type of building which could be erected on site near the entrance. We could also use a half winding sheave we have on site, to create a welcome sign to the museum.

Guide books and information brochures would need to be produced and displayed and issued to all visitors. The main exhibit needs identifying by mark posts which then cross reference back to the guide book which contain a more detailed history of the exhibit and its history and usage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term Plan</th>
<th>Get English Heritage signs from Wigan located on the A580 in both directions. Also get entrance sign on Higher Green Lane to indicate entrance to the museum.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What needs to be done</td>
<td>Approach Wigan for funding and erection for these signs to comply with their requirements for road signage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Plan</td>
<td>Erection of the English Heritage signs should complete this requirement for the completion of this task. Cleaning of these signs would need to be the responsibility of the museum.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LANCASHIRE MINING MUSEUM**

**STYLE OF APPROVED ENGLISH HERITAGE ROAD SIGN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term Plan</th>
<th>Procure a Portacabin type of building to serve as a museum entrance facility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What needs to be done</td>
<td>Fit out inside as a museum office with adequate guide books and information for visitors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Plan</td>
<td>Erection of a permanent structure on site</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFRESHMENT FACILITY

The site has no formal refreshment facility for Visitors. Again this could be achieved initially by installation of a Portacabin type structure on site capable of just basic refreshments such as tea, coffee and cakes etc. Long term a Victorian type tea room with china cups and saucers, capable of providing basic meals would be a great advantage on site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term Plan</th>
<th>Procure a Portacabin type of building to serve as a basic refreshment facility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What needs to be done</td>
<td>Fit out inside as a basic refreshment facility serving cakes and hot and cold drinks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Plan</td>
<td>Erection of a permanent structure on site opened as a Victorian Tea Rooms with China crockery etc and capable of serving basic meals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MUSEUM EXHIBITS

The museum has not had a make over for a number of years and the displays are looking tired and uninviting. There are plans on site to create an underground experience and the basic structure for this is up but needs completing. It is thought a number of exhibits presently in the museum could be moved to this new facility, freeing up space in the museum for new exhibits. Many museum fail because they do not change. Once you have been, what encourages you to go back if nothing changes? It is important that the basic exhibition space changes on a regular basis and gives visitors a new experience each time they visit. Some ideas for future exhibitions could be

**ART IN THE MINES.** An art exhibition of artists who have captured the mines and miners. Two local artists come to mind Lawrence Isherwood of Wigan and Roger Hampson of Tyldesley. It may be possible to get some paintings by these artists and others on loan to mount a significant exhibition.

**MINERS STRIKE 1984**: An exhibition of exhibits relating to the Miners strike of 1984

**MINING UNION BANNERS** - an exhibition of Union Banners either in photographs and mixed with actual banners
DISABLED ACCESS

The trust needs to look at how the disabled access to the site can be improved particularly with regard to toilet facilities, museum flow and site access. At present there is no disabled access to the winding engine.

TOILETS

There is only one visitor toilet on site at present which does cater for basic disabled access, however the site needs to be provided with proper toilet facilities in keeping with a modern heritage site. Short term again this could be Portacabin types but the long term solution needs to be proper toilet facilities for both able bodied and disabled visitors.

PARKING

Due to the closeness of older housing, street parking around the site is at a premium, and a dedicated area needs eventually to be given to visitor parking. At present there is enough hard standing to suffice but once accurate visitor numbers are known, it should be possible to determine the exact requirement for on site parking and a decision made as to a suitable location.

GROUNDWORKS

The site needs a general tidy up. Many of the outdoor exhibits are beginning to get overgrown. Specific areas need to be designated for the outdoor exhibits and these need to be presented in the best possible way with adequate signage and information, to allow the visitor to better understand the exhibit.

PICNIC AREA

There is space on the site to make a nice picnic area and there are already a couple of picnic tables available but this needs to be developed with possible events linked to the space available on site such as a Teddy Bears Picnic in the Spring/ Summer for the children and Pumpkin Carving on Halloween. Outdoor activities can be held in this area at half-term and general activities over the rest of the summer for the community.

LECTURE THEATRE & SCHOOLROOM

School visits are an important part of the museums link to the community. The site hosts a number of school visits each year. Although the site has a room available for this at present, the long term aim would be to provide a more suitable lecture theatre, to accommodate these visits than is presently available. The present room could then be used to expand the museum exhibition facilities.
INFORMATION VIDEOS

The society holds approx 400 photographs of the history and building of the colliery. There are also a number of videos online, which with permission could be incorporated into a short video film along with a selection of the photographs the society holds, which could be run at different times of the day to give all visitors an insight into the history of coal mining and the development of the site. This would need the lecture room to be open and adequate projection and computer facilities to run these videos on a time loop system.

PERFORMANCE SPACE

Long term it would be beneficial to provide a small intimate performance space on site. Most local productions and concerts do not require seating above about 100-120 people. If suitable planning and safety requirements could be met then the Engine house could provide a small modern pop-up performance space which could meet the needs of the local community for a small intimate venue. However, disabled access to this part is currently lacking and needs eventually to be addressed.

RUNNING OF THE ENGINE

It is important that the engine is run on the most efficient days, to ensure maximum exposure. This would normally be week-ends and not during the week. At present it is the only working engine in the area and is certainly the largest. Significant publicity needs to be given when this is going to happen to ensure the maximum attendance. The reason given for the inability to run the engine at week-ends is a lack of volunteers, this needs to be addressed to achieve maximum exposure for this valuable asset. The current compressor can’t be run on cold days and needs at least to be serviced or replaced, to ensure the engine is capable of being run at all times, it is required.

CATALOGUING THE COLLECTION

It is a requirement that all assets are catalogued and recorded to the standards required by the criteria specified in the following manual http://www.collectionstrust.org.uk/images/documents/c1/a817/f6/Cataloguing_3.2.pdf This is necessary for accurate record keeping and traceability. There are a number of software programmes available to assist in this task. We should seek assistance in this matter from other local museums and their support programmes.

SITE SECURITY

The security of the site needs to be improved to protect the assets, the public and for insurance purposes.

EVENTS: The site will only be successful if it can attract or promote a series of regular events which the wider community can engage in. These will bring visitors to the site and increase footfall considerably. Some suggestions could include:

- CRAFT MARKETS
- STEAM RALLY
- TEDDY BEARS PICNIC
- OUTDOOR PAINTING
- CAMERA CLUBS
- PHOTOGRAPHY COURSES
- CHRISTMAS EVENTS
- BRASS BAND CONCERTS
- OUTDOOR PERFORMANCES
- ANTIQUE FAIRS
- SCHOOL HALF TERM EVENTS
- VILLAGE MAY QUEEN
- ARCHERY
- PROMS @ THE PIT
HERITAGE TRAIL:

The site is centrally located within 200 yards of the Bridgewater Canal and talks are ongoing to make this a stop off point on a Canal Heritage Trail. Walking routes on Astley moss have also been outlined by Wigan Council in their guide HEALTH WALK SERIES Number 4 which can be viewed here [https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Docs/PDF/Resident/Parking-Roads-Travel/AstleyGreen1240kb.pdf](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Docs/PDF/Resident/Parking-Roads-Travel/AstleyGreen1240kb.pdf) This takes in the Colliery site as part of the walk. A local Heritage Trail could take in the canal and mines at Worsley, the textile development at Leigh Spinners and the Astley Museum site.

TRAIN RIDES

The Red Rose steam society have made progress on the relaying of approx 400 meters of train track through the site. There is a further 400 yards of track to relay and ballast. The Society is working on getting an engine running which will be able to provide rides along the site to the canal and back. This could tie in with the Heritage Trail stop detailed above.

WOODEN HEAD GEAR

The museum has access to a wooden head gear which could be built on the No2 shaft meaning it would have a headgear of the type used to initially sink the shafts as well as the metal one presently over No 1 shaft.

MEMORIAL AREA

The museum should look at a memory wall where people could record past members of the family who worked in the mines around the area or as a personal dedication to their commitment to preserving the mining heritage of the Lancashire coalfield.

NAME CHANGE

As the headgear is the last in the Lancashire coalfield consideration should be given by the trustees to renaming the site the [Lancashire Mining Museum](#) at Astley Green. This would possibly increase its interest and scope. The original mining museum at Buile Hill Salford closed and it is believed there are no other sites in Lancashire which have a mining theme. This re-branding was agreed in Mid April 2017 and the new website was amended accordingly. Other areas of social media should follow when possible.
The Trust needs to look at a publicity plan. The present website www.agcm.org.uk is out of date and needs a complete revamp. It has not been updated since approx 2004 when it was produced and is now not compatible with modern operating systems or smartphones. Searching the internet Facebook has at least 7 sites with either Astley - Astley Green or Red Rose which does not help with an integrated publicity programme. It is suggested that we try and get these consolidated into 3 at the most.

- The Red Rose Steam Society
- Astley Green Colliery Museum
- Astley Green Residents Association

This will mean trying to make contact with the admin of the other sites to try and get them to integrate their pages with ours to create a central point of contact for everything to do with Astley Green Colliery and the site. Astley Green Residents association is possibly a different entity, so we should ensure they remain separate, but we are tied to us in some way to publicise all events etc.

**SOCIAL MEDIA**

Social media allows for transfer of free information and advertising, to a vast number of people with links and shares etc. Other local sites ie Old Leigh Photographs have over 15000 members at present and there are hundreds of local and national coal mining sites like this. It will be important to harvest these links to try and find people who are sympathetic to the scheme to increase visitor numbers, donations and members. A set of photographs of the colliery enlisted over 100 likes with a couple of offers for help in 2 days. This is the power of Social Media. A quick trawl of the Facebook entries for mining related sites and local sites, turned ups large number of entries coal mining related. Astley Green Colliery museum has 633 likes, (April 2017), which could easily be increased by contacting people on the other sites to like the page and hopefully increase the active members.

Although there is likely to be a lot of duplication of members on these sites, they are likely to be people who would be responsive to the efforts being made to save the museum. Advertising on these sites with regard to volunteering, fundraising and crowdfunding should be beneficial and would certainly help getting the profile of the site expanded to more local people and people interested in preserving the mining heritage the site has to offer.
TRIP ADVISOR

The site already has a very positive rating on this site [https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attraction_Review-g3566778-d6562628-Reviews-Astley_Green_Colliery_Museum-Tyldesley_Wigan_Greater_Manchester_England.html](https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Attraction_Review-g3566778-d6562628-Reviews-Astley_Green_Colliery_Museum-Tyldesley_Wigan_Greater_Manchester_England.html) with 25 reviews of which 19 are EXCELLENT and 6 VERY GOOD. There are no negative reviews. (April 2017) Again the information needs to be harvested and acted upon and all visitors asked to leave a review on the site which can help with visitor feedback.

LOCAL & REGIONAL NEWSPAPERS AND TV

Use needs to be made of the Local and Regional newspapers and if possible regional TV regarding the site and its facilities. This needs to be built round a newsworthy story.

BROCHURES AND MAPS:

A selection of brochures, maps and information packages need to be developed and distributed to interested parties and organisations outlining the vision for the future of the site and improve the information as to what's on and the site facilities.

WEBSITE

The website needs a complete revamp to ensure it meets the requirements of current operating and smartphone systems and needs to be updated on a regular basis. This has now been completed and the new site can now be viewed at:

www.lancashireminingmuseum.org

ON SITE TRAINING

Talks are ongoing to find funding to allow young people to acquire the old skills that are being lost. A resident Blacksmith is on site and initially he is looking to set up a complete workspace, that would allow him to bring in trainees and apprentices and carry out training courses on site. Long term the trust would like to have a range of these old skills on site, that could expand this facility to increase the training available to young people in the community. Week-end and vocational courses could also be run for hobbyists wishing to learn these lost skills as well as basic vocational courses for the general community.

Grants are available under Heritage Lottery funding. Their “Skills for the Future” programme is focused on creating paid, high quality opportunities for new entrants to the heritage sector, and helping to sustain the heritage sector in the longer term. They will give priority to projects which set ambitious and credible targets for the recruitment of trainees, with the aim of broadening the demographic profile of the heritage workforce.