



WHITEHAVEN TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE

Newsletter

WHITEHAVEN TOWNSCAPE HERITAGE INITIATIVE NEARS COMPLETION

Townscape Heritage Initiatives (THIs for short) are projects designed and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Copeland Borough Council was successful in its bid for a THI for Whitehaven and it commenced at the end of 2013. It aimed to raise awareness of the value and quality of the historic built environment and promote good practice in building conservation. Whitehaven's THI covers an area from the former YMCA on Irish Street, through James Street to the Market Place.

The project comes to an end in December 2018 and by its completion it will have transformed 10 properties, facilitated the creation of four new businesses in previously vacant properties, provided a public space where the former toilet block once stood and provided training and learning opportunities for nearly 1,400 people. We would welcome your feedback and thoughts on the project and would be grateful if you could complete a short survey by visiting www.copeland.gov.uk or by coming to talk to Jane Taylor, the THI Officer, at the Heritage Skills Fair, at Whitehaven Market, on the 15th September.



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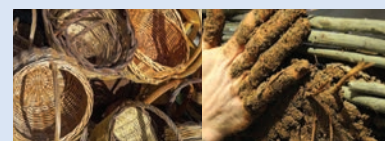


HERITAGE SKILLS FAIR
15th SEPTEMBER 2018
WHITEHAVEN MARKET
10am-3pm

Come and try your hand at a heritage skill. The Heritage Skills Fair will consist of 12 exhibitors demonstrating traditional crafts ranging from stone masonry to stained glass work and lead-working to willow basket weaving. Visitors will have the opportunity to have a go at the various activities.

The exhibitors will be presenting a range of important traditional skills, including lime plastering, earth walling, blacksmithing, sash window repair and dry stone walling. The public will be able to join in and try each craft, ask questions, and learn about the relevance of these traditional crafts today.

There will also be technical experts offering 'building surgeries' where visitors can discuss any issues they have with their properties, such as damp (why not bring a photo). Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAfS) will be present, providing information and advice regarding improving energy efficiency and flood resilience in old buildings.





Work Starts on Final Five Properties

Work has started on the final five properties to receive building grants under the THI scheme.

The latest grants are for work at 35, 36 and 38 James Street (Cafe 35, AG Fashion and James Street Barber Shop), the Chicken Shop at 42 Market Place and The Market Deli at 43 Market Place.

Owners of the James Street properties, R & I Robson Ltd and W H Robson Ltd, will receive a grant towards new sliding sash windows, shop fronts, roof repairs, re-rendering and external decoration. Work is already well under way and should be complete by the end of September.

Debra Law, of W H Robson Ltd, said: "As a family-run business we have owned these properties since 1972 and all our tenants have been local residents or local independent businesses, some of which have been with us over 30 years. It's important to us to offer affordable rents to local people. This grant will allow us to continue to do this and will improve the buildings for the occupiers and visitors to the area."

Copeland's Heritage Champion, Coun Michael McVeigh, said: "This is yet another enhancement to what is already an architecturally attractive area of Whitehaven. These are among the final grants of the Townscape Heritage Initiative, which has been the catalyst for major improvements to this area of the town. I look forward to seeing the results."



Heritage Skills Training Courses

Residents and building professionals learned how to conserve heritage stonework in workshops held at St. Bees Priory in March. The events, which explained the specialist methods needed for masonry in older buildings, were part of the Townscape Heritage Initiative.

Eight professionals attended a 'masterclass' and 11 members of the public enjoyed a hands-on taster day. They learned about traditional walling, lime mortar, different repair techniques and much more.

William King of William King Brickwork Solutions, said: "I sent three employees and found it of great benefit. It's important for professionals to have the right skills to work on historical properties, especially in an area with a rich architectural heritage."

In June local builders were also given the chance to improve their stonemasonry skills. The participants were introduced to banker masonry and the tools used and received guidance on cutting and shaping stones, including boning a block, shaping and profiling mouldings.

Iona Frost-Pennington, owner of Muncaster Castle, (where the course was held) said: "I am delighted that the THI has been able to run restoration courses and I have very much enjoyed having them at Muncaster. It is so important that these restoration skills are not lost."





The Latest Completed Projects

45 Market Place

Works to this property were completed last year and it now houses a new business called Little Whims. Little Whims has been run online since 2013 designing and making, mainly personalised, wooden gifts. The new shop has helped expand the business to showcase not only their own items but also gift ranges from carefully selected suppliers.

The property had stood vacant and derelict for a number of years and thanks to a grant by the THI now consists of a retail unit with a two bedroomed flat above.



48-50 Market Place

Work has been completed on this quarter of a million pound scheme to transform the building into two high quality retail units with a bedsit and a two bedroom flat above. A new business, Timeless Beauty, has been created.



32 James Street

This long-vacant building has undergone a major facelift costing over £150,000. The ground floor shop unit has been totally refurbished and now houses Beauté by Joanne. A three bedroom flat with separate access has also been created on the upper floors.



All the shop units have also benefited from improved disability access.



Historical Information Boards

WHITEHAVEN'S rich history is being celebrated through the introduction of two information boards in the town's James Street area.

The boards feature a wealth of local knowledge describing the town's former YMCA building and surrounding area, right back to the 17th century.

One of the boards explores the Pow Beck and how it was possible to navigate a boat through Whitehaven's Market Place. It was crossed by a series of bridges before being covered in 1764.

The other details the rich history of the YMCA building, originally built for merchant James Milham. It has undergone many transformations over the years, eventually falling into a state of disrepair in the late noughties, before being taken over by the Whitehaven Foyer and receiving a £550,000 grant from the THI for its restoration.



Conservation Area Design Guide

A new guide has been produced which will enhance and maintain Copeland's conservation areas.

The guide has been produced by Copeland Borough Council and will aim to protect the conservation areas of Whitehaven, Cleator Moor, Egremont and Millom, the villages of Beckermere and St Bees and the areas of Hensingham and Corkickle, both in Whitehaven.

The document focuses on maintaining the architectural heritage of the area including advice on everything from the restoration and maintenance of period features to external signage and paint colours.

The guide has now been adopted by the council as a Supplementary Planning Document and will help the council when considering planning applications. It will also help developers and property owners to consider the possible impact of their proposals on a conservation area's character.

The document has been supported by funding from the Whitehaven Townscape Heritage Initiative with the aim of leaving a lasting legacy of the THI project for the borough. Councillor Michael McVeigh, Heritage Champion at Copeland Borough Council, said: "Copeland has a rich architectural legacy that we should be so proud of. As Heritage Champion, and as a member of the THI Stakeholder Partnership, I fully endorse the design principles and guidance that this document sets out. We need to ensure our heritage is enhanced and protected for the benefit of our residents and visitors, and for current and future generations to enjoy."

The document is available on the council's website www.copeland.gov.uk. A hard copy of the document can also be found at the Council's Market Hall office in Whitehaven and its Millom office and at local libraries.



Budding Leadworkers Raise the Roof in Copeland

LOCAL lead enthusiasts were given the chance to improve their skills at a series of master classes. The lead-working courses were held at Muncaster castle in April and were open to professionals, homeowners and anyone else interested in the trade.

The courses were attended by 17 people who were introduced to various techniques which were explored through talks, demonstrations and workshops. The participants were introduced to different types of lead, codes and their uses, technical considerations, typical defects and issues, practical dressing, bossing and welding. The group also discussed a variety of formed pieces such as hopper heads, vents, back gutters and sumps.

Nina Wilson, who attended the course, said: "I have learnt a lot from this course and the other courses put on by the Whitehaven Townscape Heritage Initiative which I have attended. They have been informative, enjoyable and an immense help in restoring elements of my own home."

Les Finley, Building Control Surveyor at Copeland Borough Council, said: "I went on the course initially because I have a strong interest in restoration works. The area I inspect in my role often sees a lot of very old properties undergoing restoration works and my improved knowledge of lead-working techniques and products on the market will support me in my role."



The THI is a partnership led by Copeland Council and, thanks to National Lottery players, receives almost 50 per cent of its funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, with the balance from Copeland Borough Council, Britain's Energy Coast and Cumbria County Council.

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