

FRIENDS OF BRANDY BOTTOM COLLIERY, PUCKLECHURCH

Newsletter N° 2, February 2014



While there may not have been much activity on the ground since the November 2013 newsletter, there has been progress with the paperwork. We received a 5-year Scheduled Monument Consent in December 2013, which will allow us to proceed with waterproofing the roof of the Horizontal Engine House and installing an internal ladder in the chimney. Sadly the associated grant was no longer available. English Heritage had had to allocate the funds to other projects and our application arrived after the deadline. The Heritage Protection Agreement is almost ready, with English Heritage only asking for a few minor amendments to the draft. Negotiations continue with Ibstock Brick over the lease of the site.

While the loss of the grant from English Heritage is a disappointment, it is not the end of work on site as we still have some funds available. We will also see if we can get grants from elsewhere. It does mean that we will have to scale down what we can do, and there will be a meeting of the steering committee to decide on the priorities.

Progress on-site in December 2013 and January 2014

There were only two work parties during this period. The storms over Christmas and New Year did not cause any damage to the top of the chimney, and the effect, hopefully none, of the latest batch will only be assessed at the 19 February work party.

The main task of the two work parties was to extend the path along the base of the Old Pit heapstead and make it easier to move materials into and out of the Old Boiler House in the future. There were no significant finds.

A visual inspection in December showed that an area of modern brickwork in the south wall of the heapstead lines up visually with the shaft capping. (See photo on right) It has been reported that the hole gave access to the shaft and was open in the 1960s/70s. It is unlikely that it was intended as a working access as it is only 46" high.



Future Work Parties

Dates for the work parties for the rest of 2014 are:

Wed 19 February; Sat 01, Wed 12, Sat 29 March; Sat 12, Wed 23 April; Sat 03, Wed 21, Sat 31 May; Wed 11, Sat 21 June; Wed 02, Sat 12, Wed 23 July; Sat 09, Wed 20, Sat 30 August; Wed 10, Sat 27 September; Sat 11, Wed 22 October; Sat 08, Wed 19 November; Sat 06 December.