



## **Jane Pit Activity Plan**

### **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this plan is to outline our plans for community engagement/activities in relation to the Jane Pit Project. The plan has been written by Workington Town Council (Chris Bagshaw, Town Clerk and Emma Chapman, Events Assistant). Advice was sought from two experts in order to prepare this plan; DigVentures (archaeologists) and FACE Consulting (Community Engagement Officer).

The overall project has the main aim of commemorating the contribution of mining to the town's history and to act as a memorial to the former mineworkers. Jane Pit is a 19<sup>th</sup> century coal pit (National Heritage List Entry: 1017559) and the remains are protected as a Scheduled Monument (*SM 1017559*). The project is split in two halves: a development phase (now complete) and a delivery phase. This plan relates to the delivery phase of the project. The contribution from the National Lottery Heritage Fund covers all aspects of this project.

The development phase of the project included a dig / excavation of the site by archaeologists which involved volunteers and schools from the local community (appendix 7). Our Community Engagement Consultant also attended a number of Council events and gathered feedback and informed people of the project (appendix 10).

This plan was written in October 2018 and updated in February 2019.

### **2. Jane Pit Heritage / project background**

Workington's present day fortunes are founded on the coal mining and iron industries of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although mining of the Workington coalfields extends back to at least the seventeenth century, it was not until the eighteenth century that coal mining really took hold, culminating in 1802, when the coalfield was producing 65,309 tons of coal per annum. It was the availability of both coal and iron ore, coupled with the Workington port facility, that encouraged the development of the iron and steel industry in Workington. Throughout this period, the town of Workington was expanding rapidly to house the increasing workforce, and its development was closely tied to that of the coal and steel industries.

The discovery of a rich seam of coal at Jane Pit in 1846 was heralded with much celebration that included all the occupants of the town. Although the coal industry had been in a slow decline since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the wealth of the new seam provided a period of optimism and hope for the future of the town.

The working of the mine was relatively short lived, closing in 1875, but it was in production longer than many of the others in this part of the coalfield, such as Annie Pit and Buddle Pit.



The pit used both a horse gin and a steam engine, housed in an elaborate engine house, to lift the coal and overburden, but also to pump water from the mine. Subsequent to the abandonment of the mine, housing has encroached on the area and rugby and football pitches have been constructed. The latter resulted in the removal of a substantial spoil heap around the mining site; however, this process allowed the survival of the large engine house and two chimneys and provide the most visual representation of the mine. There are, however, less visual, but nevertheless significant components of the mine that have survived as either structural or earthwork components. These include the former gin pit, a marshalling yard for a rail track, a former building associated with the western chimney, the shaft, and sections of retaining wall.

The desk top survey by Oxford Archaeology North (OAN) (appendix 1) uncovered many fascinating details regarding Workington and West Cumbria's coal mining heritage and found that Jane Pit is 'the best surviving example of the ornate castellated style of colliery architecture which was a feature of the large landowner involvement in the Cumbrian coal industry during the nineteenth century'. The extant building described as the winding Engine House has been described by another source as the 'castellated pumping house' (Davies-Shiel and Marshall 1969, 268). The overarching Scheduled Monument record includes records of the two Grade II listed buildings cited by Historic England as 1138109 (a detached chimney) and 114482 (engine house).

Although the desktop survey report by OAN revealed that no detailed maps of Workington appear to be available for the period between the 1830's up until the 1860's, the 1<sup>st</sup> edition of OS maps of 1867 (surveyed in 1864), indicate that the industrial development of Workington was phenomenal. Further maps were uncovered charting the development of this area and also RAF aerial photographs taken between 1948 and 1949 showed that the gin circle was very prominent, the buildings, ramp and associated mine workings, Holy Oak Farm and Frostoms Cottages were all clearly visible. OAN's report makes fascinating reading and the Jane Pit project hopes to share these findings with our local community and wider audience, to preserve our local heritage. Even now, the engine house and ornate castellated chimneys and engine house provide a very visible symbol of the part that coal has played in the development of Workington, as we know it today, which should be celebrated.

### **3. Where we are now**

As a Parish-tier Council, and as part of our remit, we have an extensive Cultural programme that runs annually with the main objective, along with others, being to engage with the local community. The budget for this is £160K a year and allows us to organise 50 events during that period.

The plan includes a wide range of events; family fun days, Christmas lights switch on, live music in the Town Centre, kite festival, outdoor theatre performance and more. Our aim is to provide something for everyone in the Town, for all ages and all interests. It was at some of these events our Community Engagement Consultant attended and talked to people about the project, its history, and heritage. Alongside the data and feedback that DigVentures collected during the on-site excavations, school visits and talks at the Helena Thompson Museum in Workington, we were pleased with the response and it showed a great interest in this site, within our community.



The Community Engagement Consultant commented that attendance at these events and levels of community engagement were very positive with regards to the Jane Pit project and the usually under-represented groups (teenagers and males / females in the under 35 age bracket) came forward and engaged with the project, sharing memories of playing at the Jane Pit location and expressing interest in the project as a whole.

A summary of audience participation and community engagement is shown in the following tables:

<i>4 WTC organised community events attended with display boards and documents relating to the desk top survey and site test digs</i>	
<i>48 community memories and / or comments recorded</i>	<i>Data logged and provided separately (appendix 10)</i>
<i>5 additional anecdotal notes recorded by Community Engagement consultant</i>	<i>Data logged and provided separately (appendix 10)</i>
<i>3 pieces of heritage information were donated to the project by local residents who have taken an interest in the project</i>	<i>2 x sketch drawings by Tom Routledge local artist - Jane Pit and Hagg Hill on Market Day; 1 x photocopy of booklet published by Herbert and Mary Jackson of Workington and Harrington Pits, copies of maps and an inventory of old mines, hotels, inns and taverns, wine and spirit merchants from 1847 and 1882</i>
<i>Curiosity and interest were shown and lack of knowledge or understanding of what the remaining buildings represented were expressed by some local residents</i>	<i>Annie Pit? A Victorian Folly? Rapunzel's Castle?</i>

<b>Dig Ventures Community Involvement</b>	
<i>3 test pits dug</i>	<i>by Frostoms cottages, the ramp and wall and the area of the gin wheel</i>
<i>38 people reserved a place on the dig days</i>	<i>within one week of the online booking system going live.</i>
<i>24 people were logged onto the reserve list</i>	
<i>2 of the community volunteers participated every day of the dig</i>	<i>Even during inclement weather!</i>
<i>2 events held at HTM - introductory talk on project and talk by archaeology expert on mining in this area and of other places</i>	<i>Attended by approximately 50 people all together</i>
<i>Final dig team consisted of 29 volunteers</i>	<i>mainly residents, with different levels of archaeological experience and knowledge different ages, occupation, and economic backgrounds</i>



<i>7 volunteers post dig collated info post dig</i>	<i>probably from out of this area as this work was undertaken at the Dig Ventures offices at Barnard Castle</i>
<i>84 days</i>	<i>Volunteer days</i>
<i>588 Hours</i>	<i>Volunteer hours</i>
<i>Volunteer learning</i>	<i>Survey techniques, fieldwork, regional and national research context finds-processing, post-excavation recording and research. How to record findings on the Digital Dig Team website</i>
<i>Volunteer highlights included:</i>	<i>"Just taking part! And cleaning and recording the finds when we got rained off. We all loved the little pieces of pottery - it's funny to think that they were someone's plates - maybe their Sunday Best!"</i>
	<i>" I've lived here all my life, so I wanted to come and have a nosy - and I got my son Jack out in the sun and found some pottery in trench 3"</i>
	<i>"I grew up and currently live in Workington and have always wanted to see its heritage to be investigated and placed on the archaeological map"</i>
	<i>"Watching each layer be peeled back and knowing that you would not just stop there but continue to the next layer"</i>
<i>Visitors came to the site to find out what was happening</i>	<i>Many expressed a connection to the pit - due to living nearby, playing by the chimneys.</i>
<i>Visitor comments</i>	<i>General feeling of approval that something was going to be made of the site as many expressed the opinion that the site was open to neglect and abuse and the project might change this.</i>
	<i>" I am very interested in the dig because we live directly across the road from Jane Pit, I feel the site gets abused very much by the children playing on it"</i>
	<i>"I love things like this and spending most of my life playing over at Jane Pit. I would love to know more about its history. My Nanna lived opposite and always told me stories.</i>
<i>Archaeological Skills Passport</i>	<i>Volunteers who were actively interested in developing skills in Archaeology were encouraged to record their learning via this method</i>
<i>How to do Archaeology - Dig Ventures online course</i>	<i>one person signed up to this due to his new-found interest in this subject</i>
<i>Additional volunteer info</i>	<i>some volunteers were inspired to do additional research about the site and wider area. Thus, stimulating interest in not only archaeology but also coal mining and Workington Heritage</i>
	<i>Volunteers showed pride in their involvement and invited family friends to visit the site to be given a tour of the dig sites by the volunteer.</i>
<i>Schools</i>	<i>All local schools were contacted, and 3 schools participated in development phase test digs</i>



	<i>Dig Ventures class room sessions reached 190 KS2 school children</i>
	<i>Site tours were conducted - children were encouraged to ask questions</i>
	<i>Children were asked to create a drawing on the site inspired by Lowry's sketch of the site</i>
<i>Public Access</i>	<i>approximately 100 visitors to the site - between around 9-15 people per dig day, came over to the site to see what was happening and were shown around the site and introduced to archaeology and the industrial heritage of the town.</i>
<i>Digital and Media</i>	<i>Audience reach and participation extended beyond the site. A dedicated project microsite was created and includes site records, documentation and artefact information, showcasing the project and engaging both local and global audiences. WTC and DigVentures also used their social media channels to promote the project and share their findings</i>

Information from the initial exploratory excavations - methodology, the trench, context descriptions and the finds, is detailed within DigVentures' Assessment Report (appendix 7) for a Community Excavation.

### **Workington**

The town of Workington, in the Local Authority area of Allerdale, is situated on the west coast of Cumbria in North-West England. Census data (2011) indicates that there are 25,205 people living in this locality in 11,500 households. The ratio of males to females is approximately a 50% - 50% split and approximately 98% of residents identify as white British.

Lower levels of educational attainment reflect in the higher proportion of people in lower skilled occupations (in Workington these are currently retail, manufacturing and health and social care employment sectors). The decline, then closure, of major industrial employers (the Steel Works and Pits) has meant that many of the people who worked in these occupations were made redundant and have not worked again. The legacy is that we can now see families who are 3<sup>rd</sup> generation reliant on benefits and out of work due to a lack of working family role models and no opportunities for employment in the "traditional" industrial sectors.

Wards with the greatest proportions of residents living in postcodes that have been classified as belonging to the most deprived ACORN socio-economic category (ACORN Category 5, aka Urban Adversity) are Moss Bay, where Jane Pit resides. The Paycheck dataset confirms that the greatest proportions of households with an income of less than £10k includes Moss Bay, also found to be the greatest claimant of Job Seeker's Allowance. Allerdale has six Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) that rank within the 10% most deprived areas in England. Three of these LSOAs are located within Moss Bay ward. (Appendix 11 - Workington ICC – Cumbria County Council)

However, on a brighter note, the quality of the living environment in Workington is far higher than the Cumbria and England averages.



We hope that this project will provide the opportunity for local residents to learn about the town's industrial mining heritage, gain new skills and potentially open the door to widening aspirations in the fields of archaeology and the importance of preserving local heritage for future generations to learn about and enjoy.

#### **How we currently engage with the community:**

As well as the culture programme we engage with the community in other ways such as the allotments we manage. Workington Nature Partnership, who WTC manages alongside Allerdale Borough Council, is responsible for our parks, nature reserves, and open spaces and regularly organises pond dipping, litter picks and bug hunting events with the schools and volunteers from the general public.

Workington Town Council received funding from Wythegill Community Benefit Fund to implement a management plan for woodlands in Siddick; derelict 30-year-old woodland that suffers from vandalism and fly tipping. Our plan was to enhance the amenity and bi-diverse value of the woodland to minimise damage and increase robustness against pest and disease attack. As part of this funding we implemented an event schedule to take place in the woods and have successfully ran bug hotel, summer detective and tree and shrub planting sessions.

We try to educate people on the history of the Town and its exciting heritage, as our local community currently seems to underplay Workington's heritage and its connections to industrial and farming development through the efforts of the Curwen family and also its role in Mary Queen of Scots return to London to meet her fate. We produced a leaflet for our outdoor Theatre performance which gave detail on the history of Workington Hall which was the backdrop to the performance. Helena Thompson Museum was also at the event with a stall and much more information on the history of the hall and the park it stands in.

As part of our WW1 centenary activities we created a 'Walk of Remembrance' around the Town. We obtained 10 soldier silhouettes through funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund, which we have located in various venues across the Town. The idea is to encourage people to visit each statue and reflect on what they mean. The leaflet we are producing includes historical information on each venue and what was there / what it was used for during WW1. This really engaged the community and a Church received 25 visits in a day from people wanting to visit the silhouettes.

As there is clearly an interest for this historical information in the Town as we are looking at implementing a 'Heritage Trail' around the town which will focus on areas of historical interest and locations of the many pits that were worked in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

We have two websites which feature historical information; these are not widely visited pages. A lot of our online interaction is on social media; Facebook and Twitter. This is mainly used to promote events.

#### **4. Where we want to be**

A focus of the Council now is to implement a 5-year strategy to outline where we are going and what our focus should be on. One aim will remain the same and this is to continue to engage with our community and celebrate / commemorate our local heritage.



There is always room for improvement, and we have started looking at forms of marketing where we can target people we are perhaps not reaching now – WI's, mother and baby groups, fitness groups etc., we especially struggle to reach the 12-18 year olds and our strategy would look at how we can better achieve this.

We are also looking to promote Workington, what it has to offer and its history further afield and are investigating producing a 'Visit Workington' leaflet in conjunction with our shopping centre partners which would be distributed to holiday homes, cottages and tourist attractions across the Lake District and would feature the heritage of the Town.

Workington is classed as a deprived area and has low education output and skill level. We feel that introducing workshops such as the DigVentures mining the archives, tales of the Pit and the virtual museum will not only document important historical information but will also develop the skills available, not only of the individual, but also the Town.

Introducing the digital aspects of our activity plan, such as the virtual museum and oral recordings will help us to target an audience that we are not yet connecting with. It will also allow us to target people outside of the community who have an interest in aspects of this project. Everything will be easily accessed and available to view online. This is a very exciting prospect, at present we must visit the Museum in order to see this information and it is not as in depth as it will be once we have uncovered more in stage 2.

Google analytics shows us that in the whole of 2018, the 'history' section of our Town Council website, was not visited once and we achieved only 1 view of the history section on our Visit Workington website! This is something that we are working to change. We have set-up a Jane Pit Memorial Project Facebook Group and we already have over 139 members (as of 26<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019). The group was created on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

Digital media is a far more effective and interactive way of helping people learn about our local heritage. However, the option of the local Museum and the interpretation panels we plan to install will fulfil the alternative need of the people in our Town.

## **5. Action Planning**

A full action plan (appendix 23) of our proposed activities for the Delivery phase of the Jane Pit project has been prepared, utilising information we obtained and learnt from our stage one development work with our local community, stakeholders / partners, the experience of our community engagement consultant and community archaeology experts, DigVentures.

An individual action plan will be created for each event so we can see what needs to be done and who it will be carried out by.

We have commissioned DigVentures, who have experts in archaeological based community engagement projects and event delivery of the sort we are proposing. We also have the expertise of the Town Council's events team, who have over 17 years of Event Management experience and knowledge.



See also appendix 24 – activities overview. This document covers how we will plan each event and who is responsible for the execution.

Marketing plan (appendix 25).

## **6. Evaluation**

A full evaluation will be carried out per event and will aim to obtain feedback from participants, organisers and the wider community. Feedback will be obtained via our websites, social media, and feedback questionnaires.

We have prepared an evaluation framework, based on, and guided by, the Evaluation guidelines provided by HLF.

See also

Appendix 15 – WTC safeguarding policy

Appendix 16 – DigVentures safeguarding policy