

GREEN Museums

TRANSPORT

Gorge Connect Bus at Coalport



The Telford & Wrekin Council Gorge Connect bus service links to Ironbridge park and ride site via the Museum of the Gorge bus interchange and links all Ironbridge Gorge Museums including Blists Hill Victorian Town.

The service runs from Easter to the last Saturday in October.

RE-USE OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS



Engine Shop c1980

Engine Shop 2010



The Engine Shop, once a heavy industrial manufacturing area, now hosts a continual calendar of Corporate and Banqueting functions for the Museum, private clients and public organisations.



Engine Shop c1875

Engine Shop 2010



COMMITMENT TO FAIRTRADE

Enginuity March 2013



Gerardo Arias Camacho, a coffee grower from Colombia visited the Museum as part of his nationwide tour of the UK to promote the plight of small coffee growers specifically in Costa Rica. The tour was organised by the Shropshire Fairtrade Coalition of which Ironbridge is a flagship employer.

Gerardo gave a fascinating talk to staff and visitors at Enginuity and samples of Fairtrade drinks and snacks were available.

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POLYTUNNEL - BLISTS HILL VICTORIAN TOWN



Project start spring 2013

Capgemini staff helped to clear this semi-derelict area adjacent to the Brick & Tile Works at Blists Hill Victorian Town and helped to create compost bays, build retaining walls, raised planting beds and erect the polytunnel.

Museum gardener Jane Gledhill-Higgins with 2 Museum volunteers who helped with the Polytunnel during the summer months.



Summer 2014

By the summer of 2014 the Polytunnel was well established. Our resident gardener Jane Gledhill-Higgins and a team of excellent volunteers worked extremely hard to stock and nurture a multitude of flowers and vegetables which are used, mainly for display purposes throughout Blists Hill Victorian Town everyday in the shops and cottages



A large cast-iron pot makes an excellent water butt, situated close to the allotment

WATER BUTTS & ALLOTMENT



The allotments are behind the Bakery alongside Colliery Lane and the Shropshire Union Canal towpath. They are carefully and lovingly cared for all year round by our resident gardener, Jane Glendell-Higgins and a team of volunteers.



Harvest Festival display

SPECIAL EVENTS

Produce from the Polytunnel and the allotment are used on a regular basis throughout the Town but especially so on Special Event days such as the Harvest Festival celebrations which take place in the Mission Church and the Victorian Pleasure Gardens.



Mission Church altar



The Ironbridge Gorge Museums are situated in the beautiful UNESCO World Heritage Site and have a choice of venues for both wedding ceremonies and receptions. There is a range of unique and fantastic venues and your day can be tailored to suit your taste and budget.

Look on the Conference and Banqueting page of this website for further information.

Wood, feathers and leaves were used very effectively at two separate weddings and of course made lovely keep-sakes for the guests.

The Museum hosts, on average, 20 weddings every year. The Bridal parties vary considerably in size and theme and many have used innovative and environmentally friendly methods for decorating their tables and transporting guests.

The double-decker bus, pictured left, ferried all the guests from Enginuity at Coalbrookdale to Blists Hill Victorian Town when the couple chose to use both venues to celebrate their wedding.



Conference & Banqueting - EVENTS

The Wrekin Housing Trust hold an annual information gathering event at our Coalbrookdale site. Representatives from all the Trusts drop-in to exchange the latest information and external suppliers are invited to advertise and display their products.

In September 2014 the latest electric vehicles were showcased.



GREEN Museums

RECYCLING AT IRONBRIDGE

A winter scene from February 2013, Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron site



Rear of Ennigunty

COALBROOKDALE SITE

Tucked away under the viaduct arches are paper, cardboard and mixed recycling skips for the Museum staff, visitors and the local community to use when the site is open, which is 7 days a week, 10am to 5pm.

More skips are available to the rear of Ennigunty.

For special events, particularly large scale events such as festivals, weddings and conferences, extra bins are provided.

CATERING AT COALBROOKDALE

The Museum catering team are on-board with ensuring as much recycling is achieved as possible and rather than have bins inside the café, visitors are encouraged to leave all their recycling on the tables to enable the catering staff to clear everything away and take care of the recycling.



Café area table top signs

SPECIAL EVENTS

The site car park was used as an information point and recycling centre



Smaller bins were placed where activities happened

FESTIVAL OF STORIES - APRIL 2014

The Coalbrookdale site was transformed into a fantasy world of literature and art over the Easter weekend attracting over 3,000 visitors. Writers, poets, illustrators and story tellers gathered to bring books and stories to life through a programme of imaginative events and art-works.



Even the advertising is reusable



HEM WOOD PROJECT

The Business Environmental Support Scheme for Telford (BESST) involvement in the Hem Wood Project is a prelude to a full BESST event planned to take place at Blists Hill Victorian Town during 2015.

Hem Wood, an ancient woodland, is situated on the edge of the Halesfield Industrial Estate and owned by Telford & Wrekin Council but currently managed by Mark Ecclestone a Shropshire based Green Wood Worker. Mark has started a coppicing cycle and is removing the wood for firewood and craft projects. Mark also sells kindling (fire lighting bundles) called 'pimps' and 'faggots' (3' long bundles) as fuel.

PLANTING - BARE ROOT STOCK



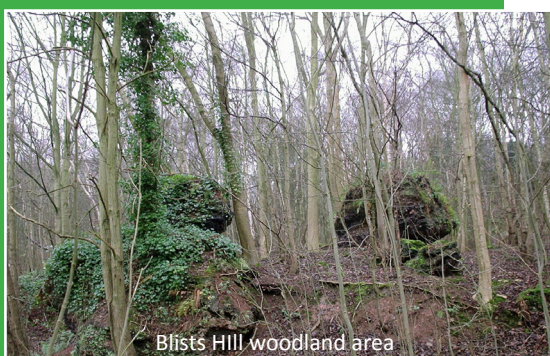
200 saplings required planting. The saplings, mainly *Ulmus Minor* (Elm), were donated by Alcoa Telford as part of the Alcoa's Ten Million Trees initiative launched on Earth Day 2003. The goal is to plant 10 million new trees, which can absorb more than 250,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year during their lifetime, by 2020.



Ulmus Minor (Elm)



BLISTS HILL PROJECT



The woodland area on the Blists Hill Victorian Town site is densely overgrown in parts. Following a site visit by members from BESST in July 2014 a BESST project was developed involving BESST members, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Museum staff and volunteers and undertaken during 2015. Initial ambitious plans were to have the woodland surveyed for tree species and condition, and identify areas for planting, then following advice, clear 'windows' in the woodland which will enable those visiting the site to experience a better view of parts of the Ironbridge Gorge.



The resident Mallard ducks
'walking on water' on the
frozen Canal near the Town

Canal Basin assessment

TREE SURVEY & CANAL CLEARANCE

Andy Whyte, Environmental Officer Ricoh UK Products Ltd and chair of BESST, Stuart Edmunds, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, accompanied Ross Davidson, Operations Officer Blists Hill Victorian Town, Richard Gough, Volunteer Co-ordinator and Barbara Taylor from the Museum gathered on a very cold February morning to plan the Corporate Biodiversity Days. Initial assessments were made for health and safety requirements and scope of the projects. It was decided to go ahead with some tree clearing and tree planting - further biodiversity days are to be planned to possibly create 'windows' and/or implement more tree management.

TREE MANAGEMENT AT IGMT



The southern end of the Blists Hill site is heavily wooded and criss-crossed with many official and unofficial paths. IGMT recognises that trees make a significant biological and cultural contribution to their surroundings. The beauty of the Ironbridge Gorge is a key factor in drawing tourists. Therefore, IGMT takes a sympathetic approach to remedial actions and avoid removing trees unnecessarily so as to preserve the aesthetic appeal of the Gorge. Where it is not possible to retain a tree due to it posing a significant risk, IGMT will endeavour to plant a replacement though not always in the same location.

BLISTS HILL PROJECT



A resident Robin looks on with interest...



...as plans are developed

After careful consideration and inspection of the woodland area and canal basin, plans were developed to undertake some remedial tree management and planting and clear young trees which had taken hold in the canal basin.

Two separate biodiversity days were agreed to tackle the work.

Unloading the essential equipment



View before work begins!

TREE MANAGEMENT & CLEARING 20 MARCH

On a beautiful Friday morning a large group of volunteers organised by BESST (Business Environmental Support Scheme for Telford), gathered at the Volunteer Centre at Blists Hill Victorian Town for a full safety briefing from Matt Hawkins and Stuart Edmunds from the Shropshire Wildlife Trust (SWT) before trekking to the canal basin at the far end of the 52 acre site.

Today's task was to clear the canal basin of young saplings, weeds and grass which had taken root.

VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED IN 20 MARCH EVENT INCLUDE:

Staff from Alcoa Fastening Systems, Ricoh UK Limited, Heinz Single Service Ltd, Saint-Gobain PAM UK, Shropshire Wildlife Trust and IGMT - all BESST members

SAFETY ADVICE AND TOOLS SKILLS

Tree felling cut



A tree survey was undertaken by Green Wood Worker Mark Eccleston and Matt Hawkins (SWT) prior to the Corporate Diversity Days to determine which trees and saplings would be felled. Most of the saplings were felled using a 'silky saw'. Goggles and gloves were issued for protection.



Matt Hawkins (SWT) demonstrating the correct way to use a silky saw.



Well earned tea break!

TREE SCALING

Matt Hawkins (SWT) scaled various trees to make an assessment of their condition and pollard branches (left) and also gave some of the volunteers a chance to have-a-go following a safety training session (far left).



Stuart Edmunds slowly making progress up a tree



Matt Hawkins showing how it should be done!



The branch to the left was found on the woodland floor - teeth marks probably made by wood mice or other small woodland mammal.

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TREE MANAGEMENT & CLEARING 20 MARCH
After a hard day's work...and a bag of the finest fish and chips from Blists Hill...the canal basin is cleared.



After a hard day's work!

TREE PLANTING



TREE PLANTING 27 MARCH
Volunteers waiting for the 'off' outside the entrance to the Blists Hill Victorian Town - today's task was to plant a hedgerow of trees on a field at the bottom of the site.

The field is used occasionally for charcoal burning workshops, but because of steep slopes on the western side, the field is not user friendly for young children. The hedge, once grown will give a natural barrier to the slopes.

There was also an opportunity for BESST members to gather film footage for future events.



Safety instructions



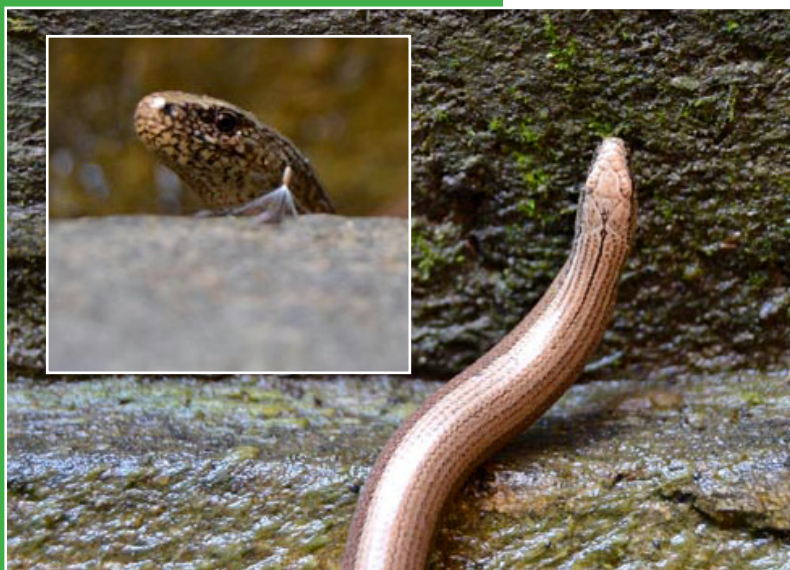
The Result:
A fine line of 200 young saplings.

GREEN Museums

FLORA FAUNA AND WILDLIFE



2016 has seen a very lush spring and summer, resulting in some spectacular flora and fauna at the Ironbridge Gorge Museums - here are some shots from Blists Hill Victorian Town Squatter Cottage exhibit, a Thomas Telford Toll House, beautifully showing off the traditional cottage garden. A replica of this cottage and its garden won a Silver Medal at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2007. The exhibit was created from a partnership between Telford & Wrekin Council, Harper Adam University and the Museums.



SLOW-WORM (*Anguis fragilis*)

Neither a worm nor a snake but in fact a legless lizard - this shy and not often seen juvenile was spotted in Coalbrookdale at one of the Museum sites by a staff member.



ANGLE-SHADE MOTH

Spotted basking in the summer sunshine on a cast-iron column at Coalbrookdale, this beautifully marked angle-shade moth.



RESCUE AND RELEASE

This beautiful juvenile female Kingfisher flew into the large glass windows at Enginuity and stunned itself. A Museum staff member took the bird to the Cuan Wildlife Rescue Centre in Much Wenlock where it was observed overnight and then brought back to Coalbrookdale to be released into the trees at the rear of Enginuity.

