

Bancroft Mill Engine Trust

Bancroft Mill

Gillians Lane

Barnoldswick

BB18 5QR

www.bancroftmill.org.uk

Registered Charity: 517795

19th August 2017

Cllr Mohammed Iqbal
Leader, Pendle Council

Dear Cllr Iqbal,
Bancroft Mill Engine Trust, Barnoldswick

I am writing to inform you of the situation in which the Trust finds itself, which may result in the closure of the Mill and the loss of its unique Engines, and to seek whatever help, advice and support the Council may be able to offer.

The Trust was established as a charity in 1986 following several years of discussions between a group of volunteers and officers of Pendle Council. The prime object of the Trust was to establish a museum to preserve the Engine and Boiler of Bancroft Mill in their original buildings. Bancroft was the last Cotton Mill to be built in Barnoldswick in 1920, and the last to close in 1978.

The establishment of the Trust was only made possible by Pendle Council purchasing the buildings and machinery from the developer and then selling them in May 1986 to four individuals for £10. These people then became the first Trustees of the Charitable Trust. At this point the direct involvement of the Council ended, though we have been very grateful on occasions when the Council has stepped in with financial assistance for specific projects. In 2007 we embarked on an ambitious project, now almost at completion, to restore a second steam engine, rescued from a mill near Skipton, and I am very pleased to attach an invitation for you and a guest to attend the inauguration of this engine on Friday 8th September.

In early 2012 the Trust began to be charged for 'Highways Drainage' by United Utilities (but billed through Yorkshire Water) at a rate of about £1200pa. This was fiercely contested at the time and we involved Andrew Stephenson MP who was very supportive, writing letters in our support and asking questions in Parliament. So far, all our efforts to get these charges removed or reduced have come to naught. We have received regular bills and the amount continued to increase, but we were not chased for payment until in July this year when we were threatened with disconnection of our water supply by Yorkshire Water if we did not pay the outstanding sum of over £7,200. Waterplus have now taken over the charging for Highways Drainage from United Utilities and have confirmed that we will be charged at a rate of £1148pa for this year.

We have been told by Waterplus that we do not fall within the parameters of the concessionary scheme which covers Places of worship, Scout and Guide halls, Sea cadet units, Community Amateur Sports Clubs and Village halls and Community Centres. Further they say that the only way we can look to have your bill reduced is if our site area banding is incorrect.

Our position is that, though these charges are legally valid, they are wholly unfair to small charities such as ours. As a charity, by statute we receive an 80% rebate on our Business Rates and we are grateful that the Council waives the remaining 20%. There is no such provision for reduction of Highway Drainage charges, which in our case would be more than double the amount we would otherwise pay in Business Rates. Our average annual income over the last seven years is less than £8,500 and from this we need to put £3,000 in reserve each year to fund maintenance on our buildings - principally the 130ft chimney, and all our equipment. Our operating surplus would be wiped out by the ongoing Highway Drainage charge and our reserves would be depleted to the point where we are no longer financially able to continue to run the museum.

Since the closure of Queen Street Mill in Burnley, Bancroft Mill is now the only working textile museum of its kind in Lancashire. We are a premier tourist attraction in the Borough of Pendle. We are running two unique and irreplaceable engines, one being the largest in Lancashire. We are therefore a site of significant industrial heritage, locally, nationally and internationally and we make a full contribution in playing our part in ensuring that there are so many things to do in Pendle. We hope and believe that our input enhances the overall standing of the Borough of Pendle. Our visitors come from around the world and they have increased in number steadily over the years.

Bancroft Mill is now under the most serious threat which it has faced during the entire life of the Trust. If we cannot prevail against the Highway Drainage charges, we see no way in which we can continue under the current financial arrangements.

We would be grateful if the Council was able to offer any potential solution to our dilemma or give us any advice and support which might enable us to resolve the situation and enable the museum to continue to exist.

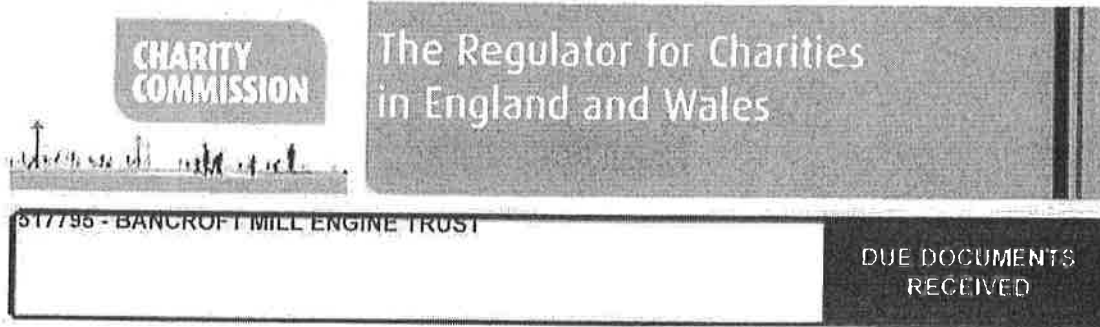
Yours sincerely,

Tony Nixon

A K Nixon

Treasurer – Bancroft Mill Engine Trust

treasurer@bancroftmill.org.uk



Charity overview

Activities

PRESERVATION AND OPERATION OF TEXTILE WEAVING MILL ENGINE AND BOILERS. DEMONSTRATION AND INTERPRETATION OF TEXTILE RELATED ARTEFACTS, INCL WEAVING DEMONSTRATIONS. ALSO PRESERVATION AND REBUILDING ANOTHER RARE MILL ENGINE. PROMOTING TEXTILE HERITAGE OF AREA, EDUCATION AND TOURISM.

Financial history

Financial summary

Financial year end (FYE)	Income	Spending	Accounts received	Annual Return/Annual Update received
31 Jan 2016	£7,117	£6,274	Not Required	27 Nov 2016 **
31 Jan 2015	£7,458	£4,159	Not Required	13 Oct 2015 **
31 Jan 2014	£9,314	£3,811	Not Required	04 Nov 2014 **
31 Jan 2013	£6,985	£4,697	Not Required	14 Nov 2013 **
31 Jan 2012	£8,211	£4,950	Not Required	23 Oct 2012 **

** Annual Update received - charity below Annual Return £10,000 threshold for this financial year

Contact & trustees

Contact

Ian McKay
Bancroft Mill
Gillians Lane
Barnoldswick
BB18 5QR

Email: info@bancroftmill.org.uk
Website: www.bancroftmill.org.uk

Charity trustees

MR BRIAN ASHBY
MR ARNOLD BETTESS

MR RICHARD SHARPLES

Charity framework

Date of registration

05 Nov 1986

Other names

None

Governing document

TRUST DEED DATED 7 MAY 1986

Organisation type

STANDARD REGISTRATION

Registration history

05 NOVEMBER 1986 REGISTERED

Charitable objects

1) TO ESTABLISH A MUSEUM. 2) TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE HISTORY OF COTTON WEAVING AND OTHER SUBJECTS OF INDUSTRIAL OR ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST. (FOR FURTHER DETAILS SEE SCHEDULE TRUST DEED DATED 7 MAY 1986)

Classification

What

- EDUCATION/TRAINING
- ENVIRONMENT/CONSERVATION/HERITAGE

Who

- THE GENERAL PUBLIC/MANKIND

How

- PROVIDES SERVICES
- OTHER CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Area of benefit

NOT DEFINED

Where the charity operates

- LANCASHIRE

Note: This report is compiled from public information that the Charity Commission holds on the Register of Charities on 21 August 2017.