

Good Water Management on Show

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At the National Coal Mining Museum for England

A project of international significance, which focuses on the long-term effects of mining on the wider water environment, is taking place at the National Coal Mining Museum for England. Displays at the Museum will enable visitors and environmental stakeholders to see good water management in action.

The National Mining Museum for England at Caphouse in Wakefield is about to move into the research phase of the Integrated Water Management in Former Coal Mining Regions (INWATCO) project, which aims to provide information on the long term effects of mining on the wider water environment, across a broad catchment area.

Assisted by funding from the European Union's LIFE-Environment programme, the project is being run in partnership with the Mineral Industry Research Organisation (MIRO), ECS Engineering Services, the Authority, and Romanian link partner Human Dynamics.

The specific objective of LIFE-Environment is to contribute to the development of innovative techniques and methods by cofinancing demonstration projects such as the INWATCO project, which will lead to significant improvements in the understanding of hydrological relationships between surface water and groundwater in coalfield drainage systems.

Museum from two mine shafts at Hope and Woolley to control water levels across a wide area of mineworkings, including the Museum's underground exhibition gallery.

Following an Authority-funded £1.2m upgrade to the Hope shaft water management system, this facility has now been streamlined to eliminate expensive lime chemical usage, whilst taking full advantage of

cheaper night time electricity tariffs for pumping.

"This increased flexibility means pumping rates can be finely adjusted, enabling water levels and discharge quality to be accurately monitored by the Museum and MIRO staff," says Tim Sawyer, Senior Engineering Manager with the Authority.

In addition, installation of four new monitoring boreholes, drilled by Forkers, to assess water levels in the surrounding mineworkings, will allow information to be relayed by mobile phone to a public display area at the Museum.

The display area together with a nature trail which incorporates pathways around the Hope water management facility, means both Museum visitors, and environmental stakeholders alike will be able to see good water management practice in action.

Say Museum Director Margaret Faulk: "The Museum believes that this project will be of international significance and will sit the mining museum, with the displays and interpretation of the INWATCO project, firmly at the centre of how to deal with minewater and minewater pollution."

