



## Rocks By Rail: The Living Ironstone Museum

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### ***NEWS FROM ROCKS by Rail***

#### **ROCK SOLID SUPPORT FOR QUARRY RAILWAY EXHIBITION CENTRE**

In June 2014 Grantscape announced that the Mick George Community Fund had awarded the volunteer run Rocks by Rail museum a significant grant to cover the basic cost of erecting a new quarry railway exhibition centre at the museum site near Cottesmore in Rutland. At the museum site the volunteers have brought together a unique collection of quarry railway locomotives, wagons and exhibits from the local ironstone and cement industries in particular.

Planning permission for the building, which will provide secure covered accommodation over three rail tracks housing the quarry railway exhibits, was granted by Rutland County Council in October 2014. The building site was first levelled during late October with erection of the new building beginning in earnest in November.

By the end of December the building was approaching completion and the museums volunteers have now turned their attention towards re-installing the internal rail tracks and fitting out the building ready for its new role.

The building will provide public access to the exhibits and an extensive walkway is planned around the tracks inside the building. To help deliver these facilities the museum volunteers appealed for help from local mineral companies for construction materials to assist in the scheme.

Despite challenging economic times the response has been terrific with Hanson offering 20 tonnes of cement and aggregates from their local cement works at

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Ketton and quarry at Baston. These materials will go a long way in assisting the volunteers in constructing the visitor walkways in concrete.

A generous donation of 40 tonnes of granite chippings by Lafarge/Tarmac from their Mountsorrel Quarry will also enable the base of the rail tracks to be laid out following compaction of a layer of limestone fill sourced from both Ketton and the Mick George quarry at Thornhaugh.

Once the fill and granite ballast has been laid part of a quantity of rail donated earlier by building materials company Cemex UK, being surplus from their re-building of the Barrington Light Railway, will form the new display track within the building.

Some other offers of assistance have been received which will help to maintain progress on the project towards its projected opening by the middle of the year.

Mr Robin Bickers , Museum Trustee commented

“ We are very grateful for the support of the minerals industry in furthering our project which aims to highlight the heritage of the role played by railways in past quarrying activity in the East of England. We look forward to welcoming their representatives to view the completed project later in the year ”

Stewart Jones, manager of Hanson Cement’s Ketton works said: “We are delighted to be supporting the museum project, which recognises the work of extractive industries, with the supply of both cement and aggregates. We wish them every success.”

Rocks By Rail – March 2015

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