



On the afternoon of 18 July members met at the Silk Mill for a guided visit. The mill has received a lottery grant and major work will start soon to improve the facilities for visitors. We wanted to see the mill before work commences.

Our guide was Laurie who is the 'tackler' – that is, the engineer in charge of all the machinery. She gave us a very interesting tour starting on the top floor with the silk cocoons (each one contains up to a mile of silk thread!). The machines for winding the thread onto bobbins are on this floor (*right*). The weaving takes place on the ground floor where there was one lady at work threading the loom, a very skilful job which has to be done by hand and can take days or even weeks.



Laurie spoke of the balance between conserving the very old machines but also maintaining them in working order. The waterwheel is in use but its power is supplemented by electricity.

Members thanked the staff of the Silk Mill for a very interesting visit.



Laurie explains
how ribbons
are woven

Marie counting
threads before
weaving can
begin



