

What is Happening at Bursledon Windmill??

Ros Plunkett



Following a very enjoyable day out at the Bursledon Brickworks Open Day on Sunday 17th August, I couldn't resist a quick "photo trip" to Bursledon Windmill, Quote: *"Hampshire's Only Working Windmill"*, to see what was happening there - It wasn't working!!

We were met with padlocked gates, a very abandoned site and notices telling us that the Windmill was currently closed due to "Major Restoration and a promise that the big Bursledon Birthday Bash will take place on Sunday, 2nd November 2014, it's 200th Birthday!

The following information is available on the Mill's [Web Site](#):

"The first stage of major restoration work to Bursledon Windmill has commenced. The sails and stocks of the windmill have now been removed as the first step to replacing the wind shaft, which has come to the end of its natural life.

The wind shaft is the main supporting shaft to which the sails are attached and drives all the mill machinery. During this first stage of work, your visit will be restricted to the stones floor of the tower. However we would be delighted to meet you to tell you about the exciting changes that are taking place. Other activities in the barn will be provided as usual.

After this first stage it is anticipated that normal access to the windmill tower can be restored. Admission during this initial period will be free. Donations welcome.

The windmill will be restored to full working condition by 2014 in time to celebrate its 200th anniversary.

Soffes Sawmill at Copythorne have the order for the New Forest oak, wind shaft for this project."

Hampshire Mills Group understands that Malcolm Cooper of Carom Water Crafts has been appointed as the Millwright for the restoration work on the windmill. Timber has been sourced from the New Forest through S. C. Soffe & Sons Ltd of Cadnam. Malcolm will be supported by Hampshire County Council's term maintenance contractors who will be providing scaffolding and the necessary crane lifts.

The millwright is in the process of selecting the best available oak tree trunk for conversion into a rough blank at the sawmills. It will then be transported to Bursledon and will be worked into its precise shape on the ground. The old shaft will be removed from the cap with the use of internal scaffolding and pulleys to a point from where it can be lifted clear by a crane. The replacement shaft will then be fitted in a reverse of this procedure. It is anticipated that work on site will be undertaken in the Autumn as planned.