

Kingsley Mill, News

David Plunkett

The waterwheel project team includes Rupert Dawnay, Dave Hibbert, Ivor New, Peter Mobbs and myself as Leader.

The work has been progressing week by week, on this timber, 10ft 6in diameter, narrow clasp arm waterwheel. Following the first trial assembly on the mill first floor, to prove our construction expertise - site fixing began in early July with installing the clasp arms on the old axle and wedging in place.

This was followed by the double ring of felloes - secured with stainless steel fish plates and bolts. The starts and floats, all in oak, finally came together, with completion on the 6th of August 2014. This day was witnessed by John Reynolds and Mathew Lovering, with photographs taken at that time. An extensive photograph record has been maintained and is available to be archived.

Meanwhile, in the first week of July 2014, a Crown Court trial took place at Winchester with the fate of Kingsley Mill in the balance. I was called as a witness for owner, Richard Hills, at the trial. The judge trimmed the Environment Agency prosecution down and excluded much evidence and a site visit by the jury to Kingsley Mill.

Sadly, Richard lost in his defence to be allowed to impound water for operating the mill. This was mitigated by the judge limiting the prosecution legal costs, though a fine was imposed by the court. Not a happy outcome.

So now Kingsley Mill has a smart new waterwheel with no impounded water to operate it, although it turns very freely. The story does not stop here though. A stainless steel plaque was engraved and fixed on the wheel on Friday 22nd August, listing the men involved in its construction. It was unveiled by the owner Richard Hills.

Richard has plans for the future of Kingsley Mill which are aimed at ensuring the conservation of the mill with its main gearing, improved environment and water control. Watch this space!!



Water Wheel final fixing - In the undercroft, Rupert Dawney - watched by

(L to R) Ivor New, Matthew Lovering, John Reynolds and Dave Hibbert



