

WSSSEN

Social Enterprise of the Month

Amberley Museum & Heritage Centre

A 36 acre open-air site set in the heart of the South Downs. For over three hundred years it operated as one of the South East's most productive Chalk quarries, but since 1979 it has been owned by WSSC and has been dedicated to preserving the industrial heritage of the South East.

The museum operates a narrow-gauge railway and a vintage bus service both of which provide free nostalgic travel around the large site. It also houses an extensive collection of steam rollers, stationery engines and industrial equipment. The Museum is also home to several traditional craftspeople.

Amberley is a charity relying entirely on its volunteers; they currently have over 400 volunteers. One of the key's to the success of Amberley has been the informal way it seeks to include people who might otherwise be excluded from some of the more 'mainstream' activities.

The Museum Director, Paul Hashfield, has introduced a policy of trying to involve other social enterprises. He is keen to develop links with youth oriented organisations, skills training organisations and those health care organisations where skilled care is either not required on site, or can be provided by carers accompanying their clients on site.

For the past two years HLF has funded a volunteer co-ordinator for the museum, but that grant finishes soon, so Amberley is looking at as many ways as possible to keep that good work going. If you have ideas on ways your organisation could work with Amberley Museum, or if you'd just like to know more about the 50 events a year Amberley organises and hosts just contact director@amberleymuseum.co.uk or look at www.amberleymuseum.co.uk

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