

SPAB Working Party 2017:

Lumsdale Mills Site, nr Matlock, Derbyshire

RDA see it as important to update and review its understanding of the historic environment and the conservation methods used by specialists in the field

Britain's oldest heritage body, SPAB (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) took its annual Working Party to the Lumsdale Valley, enabling volunteers to carry out essential consolidation and repairs at a unique heritage site.

Therefore, when Jacob Rock from RDA was selected to take part in this year's SPAB working party, he jumped at the opportunity to develop his existing skills and work with new approaches to traditional materials and processes in hot lime pointing, in soft capping of walls from specialists and so keep up to date with current practice in the conservation of the historic environment.

Nestled at the heart of a steep and densely wooded valley, the Lumsdale Mills, near Matlock in Derbyshire, are a unique time capsule of industrial heritage with structures dating from the 17th century and earlier.

The annual summer working party attracts volunteers ranging from heritage and architectural professionals, to those with an informed interest in buildings and history. The group was united in their efforts to help the Arkwright Society stabilise and protect its ancient monuments.

SPAB specialists worked to:

- carefully remove ivy where required
- repoint and consolidate the stone walls throughout the Lower Bleach Works using a hot lime mortar mix.
- provide a 'soft cap' to protect newly- repaired ruinous stone walls using locally cut turf
- carry out roof repairs buildings in the Lower Bleach Works.
- introduce sections of new oak into the original and rotten oak window frames (at the Bleach Works).

