

## **Go on a solar-powered boat ride - through a UNESCO World Heritage Site**

A solar-powered, zero emission riverboat will set sail through historic waters in Derby in 2021, offering visitors a new perspective during a year of triple celebrations for the city.

After a year of design and construction, the fully accessible and environmentally friendly boat hopes to launch this spring, providing scenic tours through the city and along the River Derwent, a World Heritage Site that marks its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021.

Stretching 15 miles from Derby to Matlock Bath, the World Heritage Site contains a fascinating series of historic mill complexes, with one of the site's most significant being The Silk Mill in Derby, where water power was first used for silk throwing machines.

And 2021 sees the 300th anniversary of the Silk Mill becoming the world's first factory, while Derby's rich history of making will be celebrated still further when the multi-million pound Museum of Making opens in the city, on the very site of that first factory.

Developed by Derby Museums, the new attraction – which sits within the Derwent Valley Mills UNESCO World Heritage Site - will be a contemporary space telling Derby's 300-year history of innovation and 'making' within the former Silk Mill.

Set to be an inspirational new gateway to the 'city of making', as well as to the World Heritage Site, the historic Mill is being 'reimagined' as a museum designed from the floor up as a place to not only celebrate past and present, but encourage the makers of tomorrow through 'hands-on' experiences and immersive displays.

Setting sail from Exeter Bridge, just a short distance away from the Mill, the new Derby and Sandiacre Canal Trust riverboat service will run from spring to autumn, taking 12 passengers at a time on a 45-minute return trip up the river, past the Silk Mill, to Darley Abbey.

An electric lift will allow passengers in wheelchairs to use the boat, and once on-board passengers will listen to an audio commentary as they cruise, revealing facts about Derby's fascinating history and its exciting plans for the future. The boat – which has been named 'Outram', after Derbyshire born Benjamin Outram, one of the country's leading engineering consultants at the start of the industrial revolution, will also boast on-board refreshments, plus educational entertainment for children.

Designed with the environment in mind, the river boat's propulsion system is fully electric with the batteries being partially charged using solar panels. The Trust hopes that this will inspire local people to adopt electric vehicles and encourage local boat owners to convert to zero emission propulsion too. The service will be launched when restrictions allow, and for more details and to book tickets, see [www.derbycanal.org.uk/derby-riverboat/](http://www.derbycanal.org.uk/derby-riverboat/)

The UNESCO Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site marks the 20th anniversary of its Inscription in 2021, recognising the area as having global significance and being of 'universal value to humanity, both in the present and for future generations' ([www.derwentvalleymills.org](http://www.derwentvalleymills.org)).

The Museum of Making at Derby Silk Mill, with original features and the façade left in place wherever possible along with a new triple height glass atrium, is set to open its doors in spring/summer 2021 (<https://bit.ly/35YZnAu>).

For tourist information about Derby, and for the latest updates on what's open, see [www.visitderby.co.uk](http://www.visitderby.co.uk)

**EDITOR'S NOTES**

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