



## PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE

CATEGORY: NATURE AND LANDSCAPE

CASE STUDY YEAR: 2007

### Business Details:

**Beamish, The North of England  
Open Air Museum  
Beamish  
County Durham**



<http://www.beamish.org.uk>

### Description:

Beamish is a world famous open-air Museum. Situated in County Durham, the Museum offers a snapshot of two important periods of North East history – the years 1820s and 1913. Beamish entered the scheme with a silver award. The site covers an area of over 300 acres and welcome over 300,000 visitors every year. There are three cafés, two retail outlets, offices and temperature – controlled collection storage building, all of which use electricity and water. There are energy and water saving measures incorporated into the newer buildings on site; these include PIR sensors, which switch lights on in bathrooms and control the flush of urinals and there are future plans for rainwater harvesting on a large scale. Some local food is used and in general the whole site is dedicated to promoting further understanding and appreciation of the history of the local area. The site is very special in that they preserve old buildings and vehicles in working order.



#### Economic

This type of activity brings economic benefits to the museum due to the visitor numbers involved. Beamish is one of the most popular visitor attractions in the country and was voted best UK visitor attraction for long visits in the 2006 and 2007 group travel awards. Their work also helps them attract funding from organisations such as the Heritage Lottery Fund.



#### Environmental

The reuse of materials is fairly obvious at Beamish. Buildings and other items of historical importance are sourced then photographed in great detail. The buildings are then carefully dismantled transported to Beamish and rebuilt on site, referring to the photos. The electrical vehicles on site are also treated in a similar way. Many of these buildings would have ended up being demolished and going to landfill sites or in the case of vehicles they would have ended up as scrap metal. The preservation work Beamish carries out is of great value to the local area and the nation as a whole.



#### Social

Beamish carry out lots of work, which has a social benefit. They have a huge collection of historical items dating back to the year 1600. These items are available to local historians and historical groups for carrying out research; they also provide themed 'loan' boxes to schools. The organisation also provides curriculum-based activities for visiting school groups as well as allowing local groups the opportunity to store historical items in the state of the art facilities available at Beamish. Many of these services are free of charge and allow people from the local area access to important artefacts from their heritage.

#### WEB

Beamish Museum: <http://www.beamish.org.uk>