

Mr Mario de Pace  
The Grange  
Barkla Shop  
St Agnes  
Cornwall  
TR5 0AB

**Your ref:**

**My ref:**

WHS 08/03

**Date:**

24<sup>th</sup> August 2009

Dear Mr de Pace,

### **The St Agnes Miners and Mechanics Institute (MMI)**

On the 30<sup>th</sup> July 2009 the steering committee of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site, the Officer Working Group, were taken on a tour of the Miners and Mechanics Institute (MMI) in St Agnes, which is currently completing a major refurbishment. The Group, kindly invited by the MMI Executive Committee of Trustees, were to experience first hand the major improvements being made.

Constructed in 1893 by the renowned St Agnes born philanthropist John Passmore Edwards, the Institute was formed, like many others in Cornwall during the latter nineteenth century, as a means by which working men could better their education. While having been considerably enlarged to the rear during the twentieth century the Institute retains its essential late Victorian character, though the building has suffered to a degree from neglect for some years. Fortunately the impressive Victorian frontage has survived in good condition and essentially as constructed.

Recent moves to save and refurbish the Institute for modern usage have fortunately born fruit with the generous contribution of a number of funding organisations and support of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site. The building work observed during the visit revealed the excellence of the design which successfully integrates an open modern approach to the use of space for the twentieth century parts of the building, with high-quality renovation of the nineteenth century fabric. A glass-fronted lift has been incorporated to allow disabled access to the reconstructed first floor, together with an impressive octagonal roof light atop a spacious foyer. A large public function room has also been created to the rear with licensed bar, in addition to a suite of modern offices suitable for a variety of uses, including a tourist information centre.

The World Heritage Site team congratulates the Executive Committee of Trustees for all their hard work and initiative in conceiving and delivering such a worthwhile project, which has brought a new lease of life to the Institute. The Trustees of the MMI have also committed themselves to support World Heritage Site objectives and have kindly dedicated one of the refurbished rooms, included as the Heritage Room, as a permanent space for this purpose.



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The World Heritage Site team is proud to have played its part in supporting this exciting project, which we regard as an outstanding example of what a suitably committed community group can achieve when working with enthusiastic partners.

Yours sincerely,

*Amy Cole*

pp. Deborah Boden

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