

The Project

The project to build a viewing point on Royd Moor was suggested in 2003 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of H. M. Queen Elizabeth II by John Gledhill Smith, a past President of the Penistone & District Society, on land purchased by him and donated for the purpose.

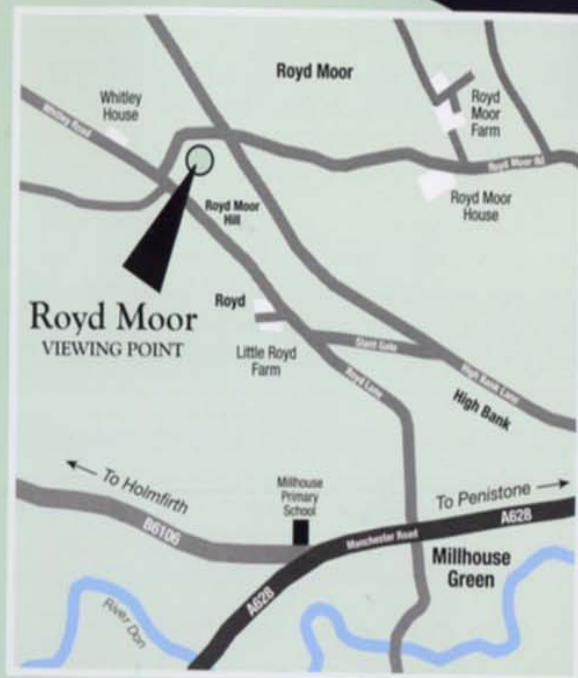
Funding for the project was given by the Countryside Agency (Local Heritage Initiative), Yorkshire Rural Community Council, and the Community Investment Fund. The initial building work began in August 2004, and was completed in early 2005. The structure was designed by John Wade of Penistone & District Society.



The Penistone & District Society have involved local people in the completion of the project. Local firms were used for building, as well as volunteers from Yorkshire Water and local groups.

The project has been supported throughout by Penistone & District Community Partnership.

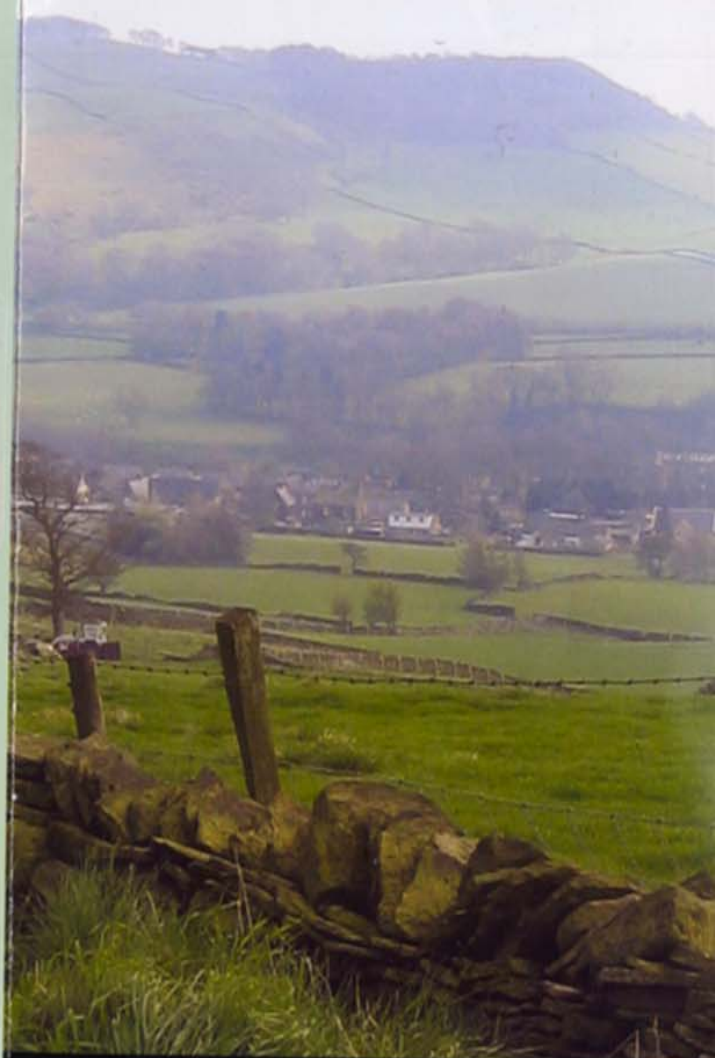
The completed viewing point was handed to Penistone Town Council in perpetuity in Spring 2005.



The Society also acknowledges and thanks:

- Mr John G. Smith, Planner & Director
- Mr John Wade, Architecture & Design
- Mr Edgar Davies, Royd Moor House Farm
- Mr Tim Scourfield, Wilbys Surveyors & Valuers
- Mr J M Johnson, Dransfield, Hodgkinson & Lofthouse Solicitors
- Mr David Gladwin & Associates, Gladwin Building Services
- Mr Yan Sawicki, PryorSign
- Professor David Hey, History
- Mr Nick Waterfield, Penistone & District Community Partnership
- Penistone Town Council
- Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
- Yorkshire Water, Outer Post & Rail Fencing
- Silkstone Waggonway Restoration Group
- Outokumpo, Stainless Steel

Royd Moor VIEWING POINT





The History

Penistone and District is filled with a colourful and varied history, many landmarks can be seen from the viewing platform that give clues to the areas past. The view has been shaped by over a thousand years of history.

Penistone (or "Pengeston" as in the Domesday survey 1080-86) itself has a long history. It has latterly been known for its linen manufacture, agriculture (sheep and cattle) and from the mid-1800's steel manufacture. The annual Penistone Show still attracts thousands of visitors each year and is held on the Showground Fields.

There are earthworks in the town, at **Castle Green** that date from early times, and there is a Saxon cross in **St John the Baptist Church** where parts of the building date from 1200 onwards, making the church by far the oldest building in Penistone, it was completed around 1500.

The **Grammar School** at Penistone was founded in 1602, but has a history back to 1392.

The rectangular fields and straight roads near the viewing platform date from 1812-16 when the **Thurlstone** commons were converted from moorland to farmland.

The names of local farms in more sheltered positions were recorded much earlier, some of them in the thirteenth century. The earliest surviving farmhouses are seventeenth century, but a few timber framed barns are older. The barn that was built at **Gunthwaite** for Godfrey Bosville about 1550 is one of the finest in Yorkshire. It is believed that Oliver Cromwell's 'Ironsides' were accommodated in the barn on a number of occasions.

The former railway from Manchester to Sheffield emerged at **Woodhead Tunnel** at **Dunford Bridge**. When the tunnel was completed in 1845 it was the longest in Britain. In 1850 Penistone was also linked to Huddersfield, via a spectacular viaduct of 29 arches.

The village of **Thurlstone**, which before the railway arrived in 1845 was in fact larger than Penistone, was the birthplace of **Nicholas Saunderson** known as "The Blind Professor" (1682-1739). Saunderson was blinded by smallpox at an early age, but despite all hardships, studied a variety of subjects, especially mathematics and eventually became Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University.

The importance of cloth and linen manufacture to the area can be seen in a number of places including the old "weavers cottages" which can still be seen in the village.

The most important house in the upper Don valley was **Bullhouse Hall**, built in 1655 by Sylvanus Rich and enlarged by his son, Elkanah, in 1688. **Bullhouse Chapel** is one of the oldest Independent chapels, with worship taking place there since 1692. The Rich family also owned the Bullhouse Corn Mill (recorded in 1486), which was the highest on the River Don, and also the fulling mill for cloth (recorded 1598) which gave **Millhouse** its name.

The wider area is full of Historic industrial sites worthy of note and even a visit, including:

- **Wortley Top Forge**, and the **Nail Forge** at Hoylandswaine, and various mills throughout the valley.
- Silkstone to the east is the site of the **Waggonway** trail, which follows the route of the original 1809 waggonway. Silkstone is also the home of the **Huskar Memorial** commemorating the tragic events of 4th July 1838 when 26 women and children died in a flood that swept through the mine.
- Slightly further afield to the East is **Wentworth Castle & Gardens**. The building now an adult education college, is a grade one listed building, and is amongst the most important in the country.
- The gardens at **Wentworth** have also been given heritage status, and are open to the public at weekends between March and October.
- The most important road in the district was the one that can be seen coming over the moors from **Woodhead** and **Saltersbrook**. In the Middle Ages salt was brought on packhorses from the salt works in Cheshire along this ancient route to Barnsley, Doncaster and Rotherham. In 1741 it was made a turnpike road, the first in south west Yorkshire.