



The Waterwheel at Sunset

Group Visits to Cromford Mills

SIR RICHARD ARKWRIGHT'S
**CROMFORD
MILLS**

Why Visit Cromford Mills?

Cromford Mills has been described as the most important preserved textile heritage site in the world.

Discover how Sir Richard Arkwright and his contemporaries changed the world on one of our fascinating tours.

Cromford Mills is a key part of the Derwent Valley Mills UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built in 1771 by Sir Richard Arkwright, it is the world's first successful water-powered cotton spinning mill and a cornerstone of the Industrial Revolution.

The site is open to the public 36 days of the year attracting on average 250,000 visitors per year. We run local walks, guided tours, group tours, and offer self-guided audio tours as well. Our tours and walks are mostly outside with some inside the ruins of some of the mill buildings.

What we offer

- Group Guided Tours of this beautiful historic site
- A selection of artisan shops in the Mill Yard
- Two cafes offering a selection of great food and drink
- All one ground floor level - no steps nor staircases to climb.
- Wheelchair Access
- Free short-term and cheap long-term coach parking
- Easy river-side and canal-side walks close by
- A heritage village located within close walking distance
- Free Entry into the whole site
- Dog friendly



FREE
ENTRY



NO STAIRS



WHEELCHAIR
ACCESS



TOURS &
WALKS



SHOPPING



CAFES



OUTDOORS



TOILETS



COACH
PARKING



DOG
FRIENDLY



Cromford Mills from the air

Most Popular Guided Tours at Cromford Mills

We have two main tours:

The Mill Managers Tour including the Arkwright Experience 🗣️

Group Rate: £12.50 per head.

The tour begins with a visit to the First Mill, a ruin but inside is the **Arkwright Experience**, a chance to meet Richard Arkwright himself in our immersive audio-visual presentation inside the first mill built in 1771. Your knowledgeable and enthusiastic tour guide will then escort you around the mill yard, bringing the site to life with stories of the cotton mills. Hear about the incredible history of Sir Richard Arkwright and how he became *'the Father of the Factory System'* and see the mini water-powered cotton spinning frame model based upon Arkwright's original design.

Duration: 1hr 15 Minutes approx.

Combined with our most popular catering offer, **Soup & Scone** (with tea/coffee), it makes the visit more of an event and would only cost...

£21.25 per head.

and

The Mill Managers Tour with Cromford Village Tour 🗣️

Group Rate: £15.50 per head.

Including everything with the **Mill Managers Tour** as well as the a **Village Tour**.

Learn the secrets of the historic Cromford village that even some of the villagers don't know!

Discover how Arkwright changed the hamlet when he built the world's first successful water-powered cotton spinning mill here in the Derwent Valley. See the first ever workers houses built in North Street, the "bearpit" - a water management system for the mill, and the Greyhound hotel built to accommodate visitors coming to see the new and amazing industry.

Duration: 2hrs 15 Minutes approx.

Combined with our most popular catering offer, **Soup & Scone** (with tea/coffee), it makes the visit more of an event and would only cost...

£24.25 per head.



Catering Offers



Soup & Scone



Cream Teas



Sandwiches & Cakes

We are very fortunate to have two immensely popular cafes on site. **Arkwright's café** is situated within the historical Cromford Mills yard and **Wheatcroft's Wharf** is alongside the picturesque Cromford Canal. Both offer seasonal dishes made with locally sourced ingredients.

Option 1 - Sandwich Buffet

£11.20 per person Duration 1 hour

- Mixed Sandwich selection
- Crisps
- Bite-size cake selection
- Tea / Coffee

Option 2 - Soup & Scone

£8.75 per person Duration 1 hour

- Hot Soup selection
- Homemade savoury scone
- Tea/ Coffee

Option 3 - Cream Tea

£7.25 per person Duration 45 mins

- Homemade scone with Clotted Cream & Fruit Preserve
- Tea / Coffee

Option 4 - Hot Drinks & Biscuits

£3.95 per person Duration 30 mins

- Tea / Coffee / Chilled water
- Biscuit selection

We cater for tours, meetings, whether it be fresh filter coffee and a selection of teas, or a buffet lunch. In addition to our menu, our catering team are happy to create bespoke menus for any special events or dietary requirements you may have. Both cafes are licensed and serve a choice of specially selected wines, lager, fruity cider and their very own Arkwright's Ale which is brewed locally. Our fresh ground coffee and home made scones are a delight!

We can also cater for larger events.

Wheatcroft's Wharf



Information For Group Leaders

Getting to Cromford Mills

- Cromford Mills is located just off the A6 a mile south of Matlock Bath.
- At the traffic lights on Cromford Crossroads, follow the brown "Arkwrights Mill" tourist sign and turn down Mill Lane (left if approaching from Matlock Bath, right if coming from Ambergate, or straight across the staggered junction if coming from Wirksworth).
- Approaching from the A6, Cromford Mill is located on the left-hand side of Mill Lane, about 250 yards from the junction.

Parking at Cromford Mills

Coaches are not permitted to park in the main car park. This is due to the presence of historic 18th Century culverts just below the surface in this area, which could be seriously damaged, or even destroyed, by the weight of a coach.

- Coach drop-off is available on Mill Lane adjacent to the side entrance to the mill, which is next to Point 1 (the Mill Shop) on the map provided.
- If you arrange for a meet and greet for your coach, then a member of the team will open the side gate to provide access at this point.
- Once you have dropped off your passengers you will be able to drive further along Mill Lane to turn the Coach around and then return to park in the small layby on Mill Lane opposite the side gate, where we have permission for coach parking on a short-stay basis for 2 coaches. For long-stay parking take the second right and park in the Rugby Club car park.

- If you are arriving by car or minibus you can park in our main visitor car park on the same side of the road as the mill. At weekends we also use the car park on Mill Lane opposite the mill (this car park is only for business tenants Monday to Friday). Both of our car parks are pay and display.

Once you have arrived

On arrival in the Mill Yard, please assemble your group outside Mill Yard Shop (No. 1 on map) and report to the member of staff inside. They will put you in touch with your guide(s). It is important that self-guided groups also register with us so they can be co-ordinated around guided groups where possible.

There are toilet facilities on site (adjacent to the Mill Shop) and two cafes. Arkwright's Café is in the Mill Yard (No. 12 on the map) and Wheatcroft's Wharf Café is across the road on the canal side (No. 10 on the map).

Delays to your arrival at Cromford

If you experience any problems that will delay your arrival at the Mill, please contact us on 01629 823256. Our Reception is manned 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. At weekends, please press the option for 'Retail' to speak to a member of staff.

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Mill Yard Shop | 6 St. Mary's Church |
| 2 Free Visitor Centre | 7 Gothic Wharf |
| 3 Waterwheel Viewpoint | 8 Canal Boat Trips |
| 4 Education Room | 9 Wheatcroft's Cafe |
| 5 Outdoor Play Area | 10 Arkwright's Cafe |



Other Tour Options at Cromford Mills

Other Tour Options at Cromford Mills

The Village Tour

Group Rate: £7.50 per head.

Follow in the footsteps of the hundreds of mill workers with a walk into Cromford Village to see and hear more about the cotton community Arkwright built and discover his engineering ideas to create a village wide water management system to power his mills.

Duration: 1 hour (approx.)

Self-Guided Audio Tour

Group Rate: £6 per head.

Discover Cromford Mills and Village at your leisure with an audio tour. The route covers 23 stops including an introductory tour of the main mill complex, St Mary's Church, the Canal Wharf and Cromford Village. Follow the route and hear more about why Sir Richard Arkwright chose Cromford to build his cotton mills and the legacy the Arkwright family left behind.

You can tour at your own pace, though most visitors find it takes them about 90 minutes to complete the route.

There are a maximum of **15 handsets** that can be pre-booked from the Mill Shop, where they can be collected and dropped off.

The Arkwright Experience

Group Rate: £6 per head.

The Arkwright Experience is a fantastic cinematic show inside the very first mill Sir Richard Arkwright built here in 1771. This is a chance for you to step into Arkwright's world and see inside this historically significant building. Once inside you'll hear Sir Richard Arkwright himself share the story of his mill empire as the building is brought to life in front of your eyes.

Duration: 40 minutes



Audio Guide Handset



Audio guide



Coach of visitors arriving at the Mills

Combined Tours with our Partners

We are pleased to be working with our local partners to be able to deliver to you a full day out. Their compatible tours and activities compliment our own tour offer.

Birdswood - Friends of Cromford Canal

Embark on an adventure as you board **Birdswood**, an historic longboat, as you travel leisurely along the Cromford Canal, a haven for wildlife (and a Site of Special Scientific Interest) for the 2 hour experience.

Although the navigation is a short section it passes through a variety of landscapes, from open meadows to self seeded natural woodland. Different plants and animals have established themselves in various habitats along the way. Passengers can see the water birds including moorhens, coots, little grebes and the usual ducks and swans.

Duration: 2 hours



Birdswood Canal Boat

Masson Mills - Textile Museum

Clock in to your shift at Sir Richard Arkwright's 1783 water powered cotton spinning mill and experience the working environment of a historic textile mill.

Discover the heritage machinery that industrially revolutionised the processing of raw cotton into spun yarn and woven fabric.

Follow the Mills' journey into steam power in the Boiler House and experience the 1884 W&J Yates cross compound steam engine in operation.

Duration: 2 hours



Belper North Mill 1804



Masson Mills 1783

Belper North Mill Trust

Visit Historic Belper and enjoy the Town's fantastic shops, cafes and pubs. Go along to Strutt's North Mill, built in 1804, and take an external guided tour of the mill site, its watercourses, and the River Gardens, to discover the history of cotton spinning in the heart of the Derwent Valley. Delve deep into the North Mill Basement and see the support pillars designed by William Strutt, that utilised a revolutionary and safe fire-proof construction that is now seen as the forerunner to modern skyscrapers.

Our Walks and Tours are reasonably priced at £7.50 per adult. To find out more and book, go to our website -

www.belpernorthmill.org.uk

Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes



North Mill

Masson Mills

Other Things To Do at Cromford Mills

Other Things to do at Cromford Mills

Cromford Mills is the Northern Gateway to the Derwent Valley Mills UNESCO World Heritage Site, Snaking 15 miles down the river valley from Matlock Bath to Derby contains a fascinating series of historic mill complexes, exceptionally rich in wildlife with ash and oak woodlands, charming villages, flower rich pastures and flowing streams where the lowlands meet the rugged grandeur of the Peak District.

Nestled in the heart of the Derbyshire Dales, Cromford Mills and the surrounding area provide a great range of walks and activities for all ages and abilities. Some of our walks are out in the open, some are deep in the valley, and some are set in woodland, but wherever they are, there is no getting away from the fact that they are stunning.

Artisan Shops

Wander around the restored Mill Yard and explore the different independent retailers selling everything from hand spun wool, books, art, to collectable treasures with a bit of cheese along the way.

- Mill Yard Shop - Gift Shop for Cromford Mills
- Cromford Mill Cheese Shop - locally produced food and drink
- Heritage Antiques - interesting range of antiques and collectables
- Countryside Books - antiquarian & collectible books
- WeaveKnitit - fleece, yarn and woolly goods and everything knitting
- Mill Yard Studio Gallery - contemporary working art studio and gallery
- Polkadot Florist - bouquets, wedding flowers and flowers for funerals
- Arkwright's Repair Shop - Repair & restore antique and contemporary.



Heritage Antiques



Wool Shop



Mill Yard Shop



Wool Shop



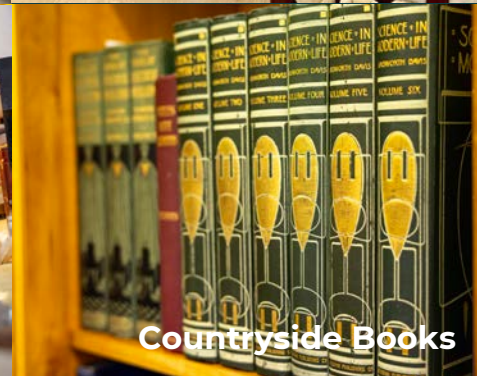
Cheese Shop



Studio Gallery



Repair Shop



Countryside Books

St Mary's Church

Originally planned as a chapel for Willersley Castle, St. Mary's was completed five years after Sir Richard Arkwright's death in 1797. It became a parish church for the villagers in 1869. St Mary's is open 11.30am – 2.30pm on Saturday's between May and September, and also to coincide with heritage and discovery days at Cromford Mills. Services are first and third Sunday mornings of each month.

Church Walk

Church Walk is a riverside footpath that starts at St Mary's Church and follows under the shadow of Scarthin Rock, a limestone tor with steep cliffs, towards the A6. Get up close to nature walking through the meadows full of wildflowers and spot visiting birds including dippers, grey wagtails and even kingfishers.

Church Walk along the River Derwent

Other Things To Do at Cromford Mills

Cromford Village

Cromford is a charismatic village, with a pretty village pond and delicious surprises around every corner. Here you can discover some of the oldest purpose-built industrial housing in the world, as well as traditional shops and pubs and school, built by the Arkwright family, for the millworkers. Look out for the Old Lock Up which used to be the jailhouse, but is now a contemporary art gallery.

In the Market Place, to the side of **The Greyhound Hotel**, you will see the authentic Georgian Shambles. They still contain small shop units for local independents which are well worth exploring.

Why not saunter up Scarthin, to the rear of **The Shambles**, for a wonderful view of the Greyhound pond? Whilst there, you can also drop into the famous **Scarthin Bookshop** to browse this treasure trove of books, old and new.

The village has a vibrant community and events diary too. With independent shops, art galleries, pubs and cafes, you're sure to find something unique here.



Scarthin Books



Greyhound Hotel



Greyhound Hotel 1924



Greyhound Mill Pond

Other Things To Do at Cromford Mills Further Afield

Canal Walk 🚶

The level towpath aside the Cromford Canal to **High Peak Junction** is a mile long, gentle walk. The canal is a haven for wildlife (and a Site of Special Scientific Interest) and High Peak Junction has facilities, light refreshments, a visitor centre, and picnic area with waterside views. Discover some of the oldest surviving railway workshops in the world, from the former **Cromford and High Peak Railway**. The **High Peak Trail** starts here too. Just a little further on along the canal is **Leewood Pumphouse** and the newly restored **Aqueduct Cottage**.

High Peak Trail 🚶

The High Peak Trail runs from High Peak Junction over 17 miles to near Buxton. The High Peak Railway line first opened in 1831 and was mainly designed to carry minerals and goods between Cromford Canal and the Peak Forest Canal. Following the closure of the line, the Peak District National Park bought the route in 1971 and turned it into a traffic free trail for walkers and cyclists. A mile and a half up the trail is **Black Rocks**.

Black Rocks 🚶

Black Rocks, a weathered outcrop of grit, a popular walking and climbing area has interesting wildlife walks through different types of deciduous and conifer woodland. The climb up onto the gritstone outcrop of Black Rocks is rewarded with superb views.

Dunsley Meadows and Slinger Woods 🚶

Follow the famous Bonsall Brook (that powered Arkwright's Mills) from Cromford Village. Enjoy the beautiful landscape of ancient woodland and meadows.

Lumsdale Waterfalls 🚶

Lumsdale Valley, a wooded gorge, is a **Scheduled Ancient Monument** and one of the best examples of a water-powered industrial archaeological site in Britain. There are walks and trails through the ruined mills, past the mill ponds, water pools, and waterfalls, all under the canopy of trees; it is simply sublime.

Located just outside Matlock.



Cromford Canal



Canal Walk



Pumphouse



Black Rocks



Lumsdale Falls

Waterpower is back



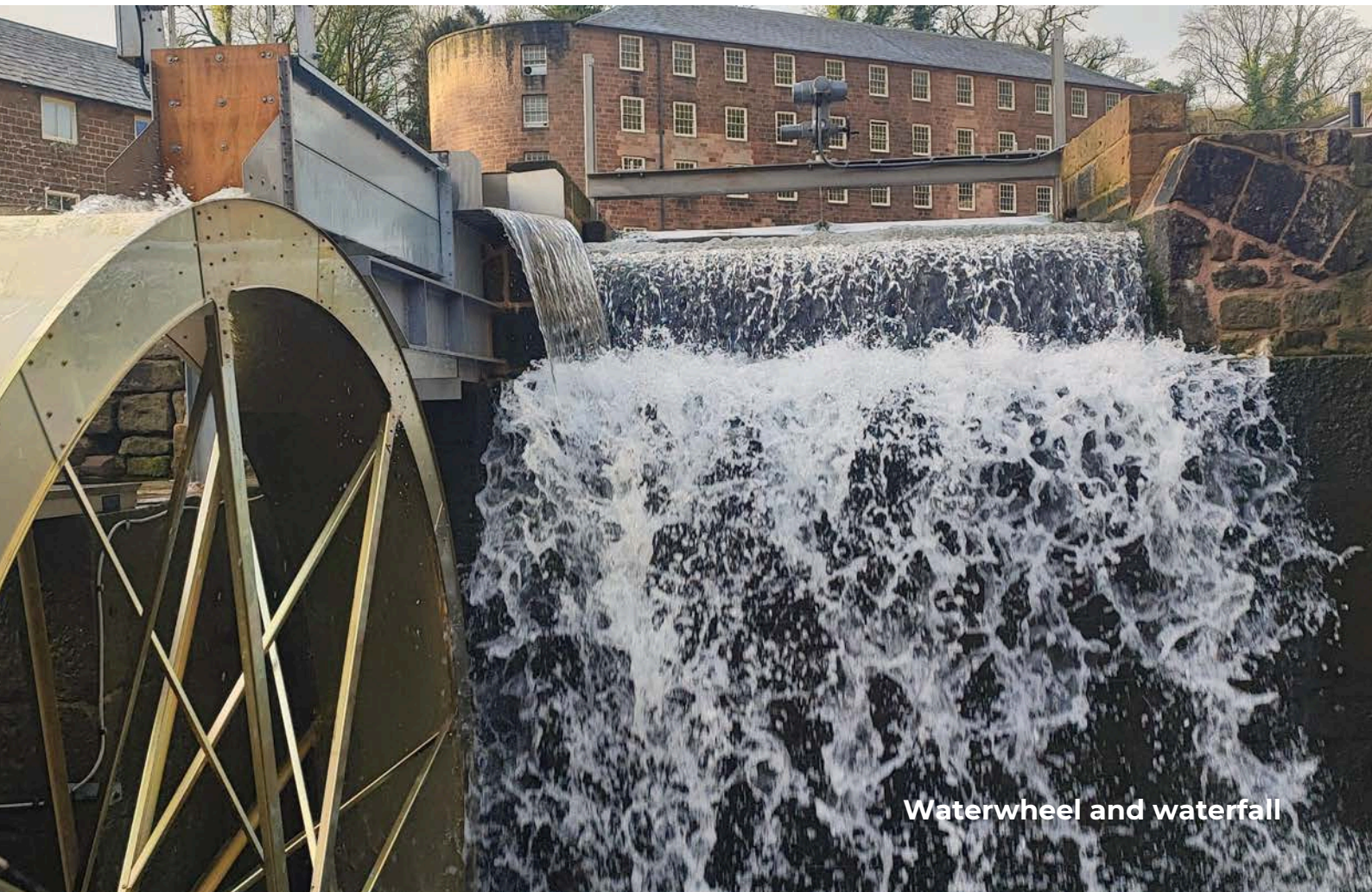
After many years the water power project is now operating on site and in its first month of operation supplied around 20% of our electricity needs.

The project features a new 4.9m diameter water wheel, a 15kWH hydro turbine and water source heating system. The wheel is visually stunning and attracts visitors who are drawn to its eye-catching motion. The wheel will now turn continually, except for during droughts, when water will be directed straight to the canal to maintain its critical levels.



Interpretation boards share the story of innovation with the public and explore how renewable energy has been harnessed on site for over 250 years. The waterwheel continues to be the catalyst for developing our formal and informal learning programmes around sustainability.

This amazing project was made possible by many supporters including, The Midlands Net Zero Hub, The Rural Community Energy Fund, Severn Trent Community Fund, Green Entrepreneurs Programme (Derbyshire County Council), Vaillant UK, and Matrix. The project was also supported by a crowdfunding campaign, match funded by Gilbert Gilkes & Gordon Ltd. We would like to thank all our supporters and those who contributed through the crowdfunding campaign.



Waterwheel and waterfall



Visitors Centre

The Historic Collection

Inspired by the past, we showcasing some of the most significant historic objects, previously looked after by Belper North Mill Trust and Belper volunteers into the visitor centre.

This exhibition tells the story of the early days of industrialisation and the changes to Western society that started on this very site in 1771.

These cotton spinning machines and engines, and the working practices that gave us such things as our working week, our weekends, weekly pay, shift system of working, health care, sick pay, workers housing and estates, public amenities, and our holidays too.

Engaging our visitors

Throughout 2023-2024, we enhanced engagement through our heritage tours, events, and educational programmes. As a result of this work the water wheel installation along with new interpretation and placement of the historic objects in the visitor centre, are now enriching our heritage tours. During 2024, visiting schools were introduced to the waterframe in the exhibition area to help develop engagement around this historic object. We have also developed activities around waterpower with the thought provoking lego water wheel challenge adding to both formal and informal learning,

More visitors than ever are engaging with our events, which range from the artisan markets to the annual dog show. Recently we introduced new events, including a Viking re-enactment and Comic Con, which attracted over 2,500 visitors in one day. In March 2023, we launched the Highlighting Heritage series, evening events co-created by Cromford Mills and Belper North Mill volunteers, funded by a Heritage Fund grant. Six events were hosted across both places through the year, covering various heritage topics, such as Royal Crown Derby China, the reintroduction of waterpower to Cromford Mills, and the life of Georgian businesswoman Ellen Morewood. Over 160 people attended these events, receiving excellent feedback. This went on from strength to strength in 2024 with more heritage talks.

In 2022 we had over 190,000 visitors.
In 2023 we had over 220,000 visitors.
In 2024 we grew to currently 250,000 visitors.

Join us in 2025!



Historic machines



Dog Show



Heritage talks



Markets



Education Tours



Performances



Volunteering



Volunteering



Adventure Weekend



Comic-Con

Cromford Mills and The Arkwright Society

The Arkwright Society is committed to the regeneration of the Cromford Mills site and to the reuse of the buildings in ways that will provide them with a sustainable future and which offers year round employment that will contribute positively to the local economy .

At the same time Society is aware of the international significance of the historic buildings, inscribed by UNESCO, in its care and dealing with them is conscious of its obligation to use the highest standards of repair and conservation practice.

Email us at: info@arkwrightsociety.org.uk

Or call us on 01629 823 256

Thank you

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have tirelessly supported the Arkwright Society throughout the past year in advancing our vision and charitable objectives. Your contributions, from grant assistance and donations, volunteering and providing invaluable technical advice, to helping us spread awareness of the Charity, have been instrumental in driving forward our vision and charitable objectives.

It is through your varied forms of support that we have been able to make meaningful strides in our mission.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment and partnership. Together, we continue to make a meaningful difference in our community.

Location



Sir Richard Arkwright's Cromford Mills

Mill Lane, Cromford, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3RQ

By Car

Cromford Mills is located just off the A6 and is within walking distance from Cromford Village. We are approximately 16 miles north of Derby and within easy reach of the M1 (approx 20 mins).

By Train

We are a 10-minute walk from Cromford train station. Call National Rail for more information 03457 48 49 50.

By Bus

Convenient bus stops are located just outside the mill. Visit traveline.info for bus timetables.

By Bike

We have bike racks on-site and shower facilities.



The Arkwright Society is a registered charity (no. 515526). The Arkwright Society Ltd. is a company registered in England and Wales (Company No. 01630237). Registered with Entrust as an approved environmental body No. 337946. Cromford Mills are part of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site .

Sir Richard Arkwright's Cromford Mills, Mill Lane, Cromford, Derbyshire, DE4 3RQ

01629 823256

cromfordmills.org.uk/

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[cromfordmills1771](https://www.instagram.com/cromfordmills1771)

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As a charity we rely on our your continued support, please donate here.