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Campaign launched to save historic Downham banner



The Downham Banner

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Villagers from Downham and Twiston have joined together to try to save The Downham Banner.

The Banner was made in 1885 to commemorate the Centenary of the Downham Benevolent Society. The aim of the project is to have the Banner professionally conserved and put on permanent display at The Museum of Lancashire in Preston.

The team have this week launched a website – www.downhambanner.com – which explains the history of the Benevolent Society and the purpose of the Banner, which was used during the Society's meetings and parades. The next step is to submit a grant application to the National Heritage Lottery Fund to cover the costs of conservation and display of the Banner.

The bid is **backed** by St Leonard's Parish Church (where the Banner is currently stored), Chatburn School and Downham Village Hall, as well as Lancashire County Council. The conservation of the Banner will be undertaken by the Conservation Department of the People's History Museum, Manchester.

It is hoped a decision will be made by the National Heritage Lottery Fund later this summer and conservation work will start soon after, with the restored banner on display in autumn next year. Mini banners will also be produced for use by the project's four hubs – the church, library, school and village hall.

Tom McLean, co-ordinator of the [downhambanner.com](http://www.downhambanner.com) Steering Group, commented: "The Banner is badly in need of conservation and is too fragile to be displayed in its current condition.

"If we can obtain the grant then this bit of Lancashire's history can be saved and made accessible to all for the benefit of our children and future generations