

Danzey Green Windmill

For many people, when they think of Avoncroft Museum they think of the windmill. It is clearly visible from some distance away and it a local landmark.

Where did this building come from?

The windmill you see at Avoncroft was originally built at Danzey Green near Tanworth-in-Arden, Warwickshire. The windmill was constructed around 1790 and was in use until about 1885.

The windmill is a Post Mill (so called because the upper part of the structure pivots on a huge central post) with a Midland type brick roundhouse as a base.

Amazing fact: The windmill's builders used the properties of natural materials to great effect. The main post through the centre of the windmill is, made from an Oak tree trunk. The teeth in the main cog are made from very hard hornbeam and the bearing is made from oily apple wood.

The windmill was near collapse in 1969 when it was carefully surveyed, dismantled and reassembled at Avoncroft Museum. The windmill's move was completed in 1970. It took a further 7 years of careful restoration to get the windmill working,

The mill is now one of only three surviving post mills in the Midlands although in the past windmills would have been a common sight.

What was this building used for?

The windmill used the wind to turn it's large sails. The sails then power grinding equipment, to grind grain, to make flour.

Who would have lived or worked in this building?

The person who works in a windmill is called a miller. It was the miller's job to grind grains to produce flour, as well as a number of other by-products.

Did you know? Millers tended to die early from breathing in dust. They suffered from asthma, bronchitis, and other lung diseases



How does a windmill work?

The machinery is all housed in the top section of the windmill which can turn to face the wind. When the miller wants to begin milling he would lift the stairs using a lever and use a winch to turn the sails towards the wind. As the sails turn they operate gears inside the windmill, which transfer the power of the wind to the grind stones. There is a brake made from elm (elm does not polish to a smooth surface very well so is useful in providing friction).



The white rope here is attached to a winch and is being used to help to turn the top of the wind mill so that the sails face into the wind.