

The Journal

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THE VAST CENTRE THAT COULD TURN US INTO A DIGITAL HUB

TECH FACILITY HAS ITS OWN SUPPLY FROM THE NATIONAL GRID: PAGE 15

Gates Foundation puts its cash behind bid to save millions of lives

North East firm aiming to tackle awful TB toll

Graeme Whitfield
Business Editor

A TECHNOLOGY company in Newcastle has won the backing of one of the world's richest families to develop lifesaving work in the developing world.

QuantuMDx, which makes handheld machines that can diagnose diseases, has received "significant" funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to develop its work on the testing of tuberculosis.

TB is one of the world's biggest killers. Without action, it's estimated that an extra 75 million people could die over the next 35 years.

QuantuMDx's partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will allow the Newcastle company to accelerate the development of a diagnostic machine.



► Bill and Melinda Gates stand alongside President Obama during a Presidential Medal of Freedom presentation ceremony at the East Room of the White House last week. The couple both received the medal, the highest honour for civilians in the United States, for their work to promote health and eradicate poverty – work which includes funding the Newcastle research

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ANDRÉ RIEU


DECEMBER 14TH 2016
METRO RADIO ARENA NEWCASTLE
 TICKETS: WWW.ANDRERIEU.COM

Topping off ceremony brings Duchess to base



► Tony Gates, chief executive of Northumberland National Park Authority, 93-year-old Jack Hope from Wooler, the Duchess of Northumberland and Coun Glen Sanderson, chair of Northumberland National Park Authority with Henshaw Primary School pupils Reed Bryson and Chloe Makepeace Simon Williams

Tony Henderson
Reporter
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A £14M landscape discovery centre was hailed as a “once in a lifetime” opportunity by the Duchess of Northumberland as she marked the completion of a key stage in its construction.

The Duchess witnessed the completion of the core structure of The Sill centre in Northumberland National Park in a topping off ceremony and took a tour of the site at Once Brewed.

Supported by a £7.8m investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund, The Sill represents the largest scale initiative of its kind in the history of national parks across the UK and is due to open next June.

The vision is that as well as being a visitor destination to help people explore the county’s finest expanses, The Sill will become a leading education facility for landscape, conservation, countryside management, leisure, and tourism skills and will nurture developing rural businesses.

The Duchess was joined by 93 year-old Jack Hope from Wooler, Northumberland National Park’s original warden, and pupils from nearby Henshaw Primary School at Bardon Mill.

The Duchess said: “The Sill is an exciting new development for the county and I would like to congratulate Northumberland National Park

Authority on their vision and determination to create a building which captures the unique qualities of the national park and will re-engage people with the landscape, nature and the great outdoors.

“The Sill also heralds a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to shine a national spotlight on the vital importance of landscape to our health, wealth and well-being.

“The activity and engagement programme promises to stimulate and

We are incredibly proud and excited to be entering the final stages of construction

Coun Glen Sanderson

nurture the next generation of landscape enthusiasts, open up access to the countryside for everyone and ensure that these important wild places - and the communities within them - continue to thrive.”

Coun Glen Sanderson, chairman of Northumberland National Park Authority, said: “Years of planning and hard work by the authority, our partners and our contractor, have enabled us to reach this significant milestone for The Sill.

“We are incredibly proud and

excited to be entering the final stages of construction and thrilled to welcome the Duchess to share this significant moment with us.

“A major purpose of The Sill is to enable the landscapes of Northumberland National Park and surrounding North Pennines and the Northumberland Coastal Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty to be opened up to even more people, including children, families, older people, disabled people and those who are less confident at exploring natural places.

“The Sill promises to provide a 21st Century platform for us to work closely with our partners locally and across the wider region to attract more people to the county, enable local enterprise to thrive and create more jobs by capitalising on growing tourism opportunities.”

The Sill is expected to attract over 100,000 visitors per year and deliver substantial economic benefits by contributing an estimated £2.5 million per annum to the North East economy.

The project will boost the rural economy by creating new employment and opportunities for skills development and training, along with a year-round activity, education and events programme that will deliver 30,000 activity days throughout the park.

The building has serviced office facilities for more than 20 local start-up businesses related to rural and

outdoor pursuits and a café which will offer output from food producers across the county.

There will also be a new YHA Youth Hostel on site with approximately 90 beds.

Caroline White, YHA’s chief executive, said: “We can’t wait to start welcoming guests to The Sill. It is going to be such a fantastic place for people to stay, learn and enjoy.”

Meanwhile, a new report reveals that visitors to Northumberland National Park are spending more - and staying longer.

Figures for 2015 show tourism contributing £76.44m to the rural economy and supporting 1,128 jobs in the park. The park currently attracts 1.76m visitors to the area per year, of which 1.41m are day visitors and 350,000 stay overnight.

Coun Sanderson said: “This is great news for us and the wider region. Growth in tourism is a key means by which the North East can close the economic performance gap with the rest of the UK. The report shows that during the last five years, Northumberland National Park’s tourism economy has grown faster in relative terms than the UK economy.

“We very much want visitors to first and foremost enjoy the park but also to make a positive contribution to the economy of the area. The economic target set for the year was to increase the value of tourism from visitors to £75.8m and we are delighted to have surpassed it so substantially.”

BRITAIN TODAY

Gove criticises the critics

MICHAEL Gove has bemoaned the “football manager culture” of British politics as he said critics are “too quick” to call for the head of a politician who makes a mistake.

The Tory former frontbencher who served as justice secretary, education secretary and chief whip, said elected representatives should be given the opportunity to learn from their errors.

Mr Gove said on the BBC’s Andrew Marr Show: “One of the things ... is that there can sometimes be a football manager culture of politics which means that we are too quick to condemn people when they make a mistake and too quick to call for their resignation when the best - and I think that’s true of most politicians - learn from their errors and improve on the job.”

Sheeran ‘cut’ by princess



PRINCESS Beatrice accidentally cut singer Ed Sheeran’s face with a sword during a party prank which involved her pretending to “knight” James Blunt, according to reports.

The Sun said that Sheeran, 25, went to hospital to have stitches on his cheek after Beatrice, 28, accidentally swung the ceremonial blade over her shoulder, not realising that the singer was behind her.

The incident is reported to have happened at a party at the Royal Lodge in Windsor.

Pay up or face prison warning

A MILLIONAIRE could face time behind bars if he fails to pay £132,000 for breaching planning laws.

A confiscation order was made after Christopher Wright built holiday homes without permission and constructed storage for an unauthorised landscaping business. According to the order, made under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, Wright is liable for £132,500 to be paid by February 16 next year or he faces two years in prison.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council have been pursuing Wright, from Kent, since 2010.