



PRESS RELEASE

The Foundation for Jewish Heritage is delighted to announce the appointment of GWP Architecture as the Lead Architect for the Merthyr Tydfil Synagogue Project, and the creation of the Welsh Jewish Heritage Centre. GWPA has extensive experience with the design and development of heritage sites and cultural facilities, and the regeneration of historic buildings, and have recently completed work on the new Penderyn Whisky Distillery and Visitor Centre in Swansea. They bring creativity, understanding and passion to the Project as it starts to take shape.

Richard Townend, Director of GWGA, said, *“We are delighted to be appointed to assist the Foundation for Jewish Heritage to take forward their plans for the Merthyr Tydfil Synagogue site, to bring back to life this special Grade II listed building, rich in heritage; a project which will sit alongside the other heritage-led projects that GWPA are currently involved with across South Wales.”*

The Project will also be supported by Greenwood Projects, who have been appointed as Cost Consultants to the Project, and who are also highly experienced in the management and delivery of heritage projects in Wales and across the UK.

Stephen Goldman, Chair of the Project Steering Committee and a Foundation for Jewish Heritage Trustee, commented, *“The appointment of the Lead Architect and Design Team, and Cost Consultant is another important step forward for this exciting Merthyr Tydfil synagogue/Welsh Jewish Heritage Centre project. We are delighted to have GWPA and Greenwood on board and are looking forward to working with them.”*

The Synagogue is among the most important historic buildings in Merthyr, and a prominent feature of the urban landscape. A painting of the Synagogue by Lowry was recently sold for £277,000. However, it has stood empty since 2006, and was increasing at risk until it was acquired by the Foundation in 2019. Funding has been secured through the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Merthyr Tydfil Council and Welsh Government to bring the building back into use as a Heritage Centre, telling the stories of the building and the fascinating history of the Welsh Jewish community in Wales, including their integration with and contribution to the local community in Merthyr Tydfil. These are themes that resonate today, and the Centre aims to promote cross-cultural dialogue and address contemporary issues relating to diversity within Welsh society.

With the appointment of the Lead Architect, the plans for the Synagogue can be progressed. Michael Mail, Chief Executive of the Foundation for Jewish Heritage, stated, *“With the appointment of GWPA and Greenwood Projects, we are building an impressive team of professionals to see through this important next Development Phase. They have vast experience of working on historic buildings and have strong local knowledge, and they will play a crucial role in helping us think through how the Synagogue building can best be adapted to meet the needs of the proposed Heritage Centre.”*

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