

LANCASHIRE EVENING TELEGRAPH 19 AUGUST 2013
RIBBLE VALLEY NEWS
Plea for help to save Downham
banner

3:08pm Monday 19th August 2013 in [Ribble Valley news](#)



By Jon Robinson, Reporter



The Downham banner

VILLAGERS have appealed to the Heritage Lottery Fund to help save a 128-year-old banner.

The Downham Banner, which was made in 1885 to commemorate the centenary of the Downham Benevolent Society, has been stored in a box in St Leonard's Parish Church for several years and is in desperate need of restoration.

A group of residents want the banner to be professionally conserved and put on permanent display at The Museum of Lancashire in Preston. They hope a grant will help move them a step closer to their goal.

They have received support from Chatburn School, Downham Village Hall and Lancashire County Council. Hamish McFall, a member of the steering group said: "It's very important that a banner like this is preserved for future generations and it's about time that something was done to make that happen. I think children in the future need to know what this banner meant to the people who made it and how important it was to them.

"It shows how people existed before the emergence of the welfare state and it would be terrible if it was lost."

The group wants the restoration to be undertaken by the conservation department of the People's History Museum in Manchester.

The banner is made out of silk with images of the Good Samaritan parable painted on it, but the condition of the banner has deteriorated since it has been stored away.

Tom McLean, co-ordinator of the steering group, said: "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."