

Parc de Wesserling



BECOME A SPONSOR

**Support the growth of France's
National Eco museum Sharing French
Textile History.**

Support the **preservation** of a **unique** industrial
heritage site in France.

Becoming a sponsor of Parc de Wesserling means making a commitment to preserving industrial heritage.



Beautiful themed gardens surround the castle, which was renovated in 2024.

This historic site was once a royal textile factory and later became the residence of its owners.

SUMMARY

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P.6-10 The Wesserling Project

- Create a living open-air museum on this beautiful site that brings 250 years of regional industrial history to life.
- Become a hub for innovation and the future of the textile industry.

P.11 Your Sponsorship: Supports the AGAPTW, a non-profit public interest association.

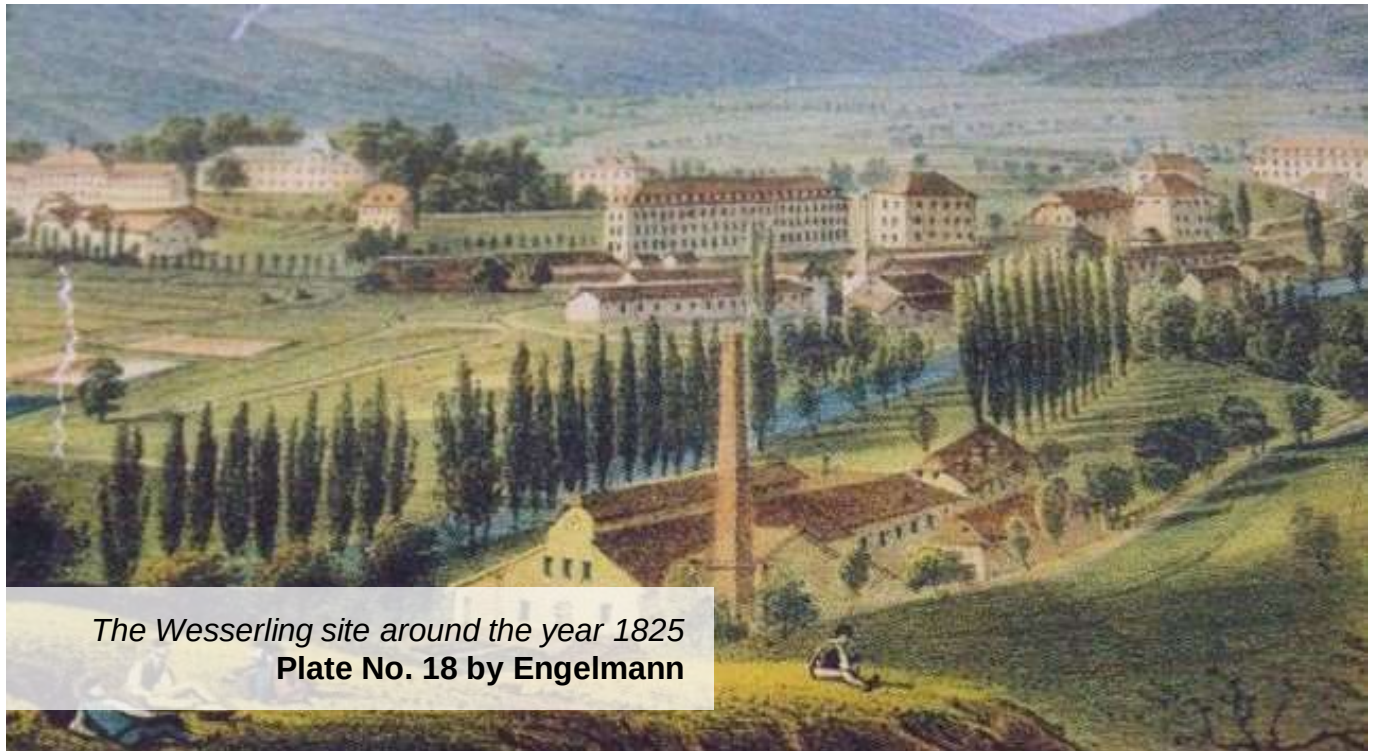
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Wesserling: A Major Historical Site of Industrial Heritage, Preserved and Restored

The Wesserling Castle and Park were created in the 17th century by the prince-abbots of Murbach, who owned the Saint-Amarin valley. In 1762, the site was rented to industrialists, and in 1786 it was awarded the title of Royal Factory.

By the 19th century, it had become a vast textile manufacturing site covering 41 hectares – 17 hectares of park and gardens, and 24 hectares of factory buildings. Internationally recognised and run by the Gros and Roman families,

Wesserling's textile factories employed around 5,600 people by 1860. They produced beautifully woven and printed fabrics. Wesserling stood out for its industrial innovation, striking architecture, and landscaped surroundings – designed to showcase the owners' wealth and stability.

In 1933, it was taken over by the Boussac group, but the site declined towards the end of the 20th century due to globalisation in the textile market. It permanently shut down in 2003.

Today, the 17-hectare estate with its castle, villas, and farm is owned by the Haut-Rhin Department. The 24 hectares of former factories are owned by the local council of the Saint-Amarin Valley. The site is gradually being renovated to host homes, businesses, and heritage activities.

The Association for the Management and Promotion of Wesserling Textile Park (AGAPTW) plays a key role in developing the site for tourism.



Wesserling Today: A Community of 250 Residents, 100 Small Businesses, and 80,000 Visitors

This is a 41-hectare site of exceptional beauty.

Almost in ruins around the year 2000, much of it has now been restored thanks to a model sustainable development approach over the past 20 years.

It's now a living village, rich in social and community-driven enterprise. The site hosts around 100 small and medium businesses in retail, services, craftsmanship, and industry. It also houses around 300 residents, an artist collective, public cultural facilities (like a music school, small theatre, and library), and two social inclusion associations.

Every year, around 80,000 visitors come to explore its outstanding tourism, heritage, and environmental attractions.

This mix of everyday life and visitor activity makes Wesserling a one-of-a-kind place where diverse people interact daily.

One of the many small businesses

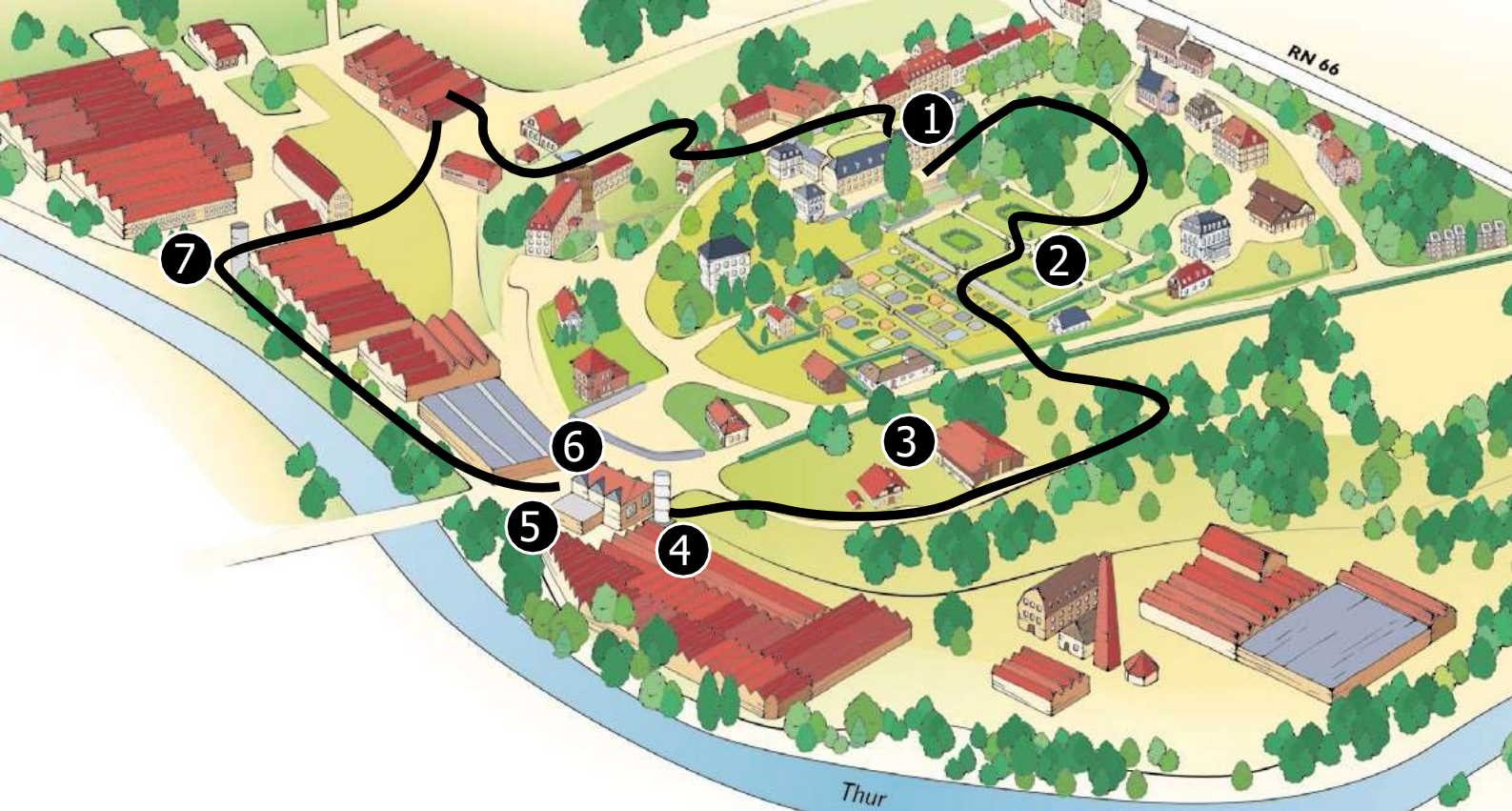


Housing inside an 18th-century factory



A vibrant visitor welcome centre





Create a living museum trail on a beautiful site that tells the story of local industrial history.

A national-level tourism and cultural project inspired by British "Living Museums".

The project aims to create a cohesive visitor experience throughout the site, starting from the renovated castle, following a path inspired by the great open-air industrial museums in the UK, known as "Living Museums."

Visitors will discover three centuries of industrial history through a remarkably well-preserved site of European importance.

Wesserling is one of the few industrial sites in Europe able to showcase the historical, social, and technical evolution of the textile industry – from the 18th to the 21st century – across nearly 41 hectares of land and 80,000 square metres of buildings.

The goal is to increase annual visitors from 80,000 to 150,000, which would have a strong positive impact on the local economy and help improve the public image of France's textile industry as a key part of the country's heritage.

This experience – combining history, fun, and learning – will attract new visitors who are passionate about industrial history and its future.

The site will continue to welcome a wide family audience, but will also attract people who are curious about industrial history and passionate researchers from further afield.

In particular, beyond the 12,000 young children who already visit each year, the tour will also be designed for high school and university students, to spark their interest in the world of industry. Partnerships are already planned with local textile engineering schools.

The 1 km immersive and engaging walking trail will bring Wesserling's rich textile history to life.

It will include five interactive and theatrical stops to help visitors discover this regional industrial story.

In 2025, the trail will begin with a walk up to the castle (1), followed by visits to the historic gardens (2), the industrial farm (3), the large boiler house (4), and finally the laboratory (5). Visitors will then explore the shop and café-turbine (6) located in the old turbine hall next to the boiler house. The trail ends with a stroll through the charming "Boulevard des Italiens" (7), a small riverside path along the Thur, which tells the story of Wesserling's recent restoration in the early 21st century.

Quick overview of the new stops in the open-air Living Museum

At the renovated castle:

Discover the **origins of textile printing (indiennage)** in the **18th century**, and the **strategies of Protestant factory owners** in the **19th century**.

As a key part of the museum trail, the castle will serve as the main visitor centre – a lively space that tells much of the site's textile history: The ground floor will focus on 18th-century textile printing, The first floor will explore the industrial vision of Protestant owners in the 19th century.



In the 5 themed gardens:

There will be **poetic, lively, and fun activities** for visitors to enjoy.

Wesserling's 17 hectares of beautiful gardens will continue to be used as landscaped, interactive spaces with events – especially during the Mixed Gardens Festival. Their historic beauty will be enhanced through new features and the presence of gardeners dressed in 1900s-style outfits, who will guide and explain the gardens to visitors.



At the farm and in the rural park:

Learn about the **role of animals in the factory** at the start of the 20th century — and enjoy a space that is both **lively and interactive**.

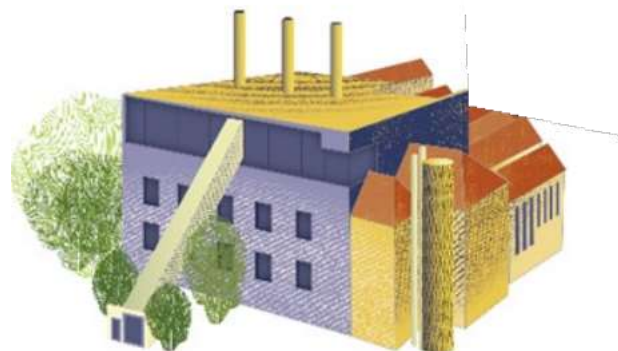
The farm and stable were built in the mid-19th century by Wesserling's factory owners to house their animals and serve as an industrial tool. Today, this area becomes a lively educational space, showing the important role animals played in the textile industry and the need to produce food for the Wesserling community. The beautiful rural park is also a place for walks, picnics, and artistic activities.



In the Large Boiler House:

Explore how energy powered the factory, with its spectacular and complex network of pipes.

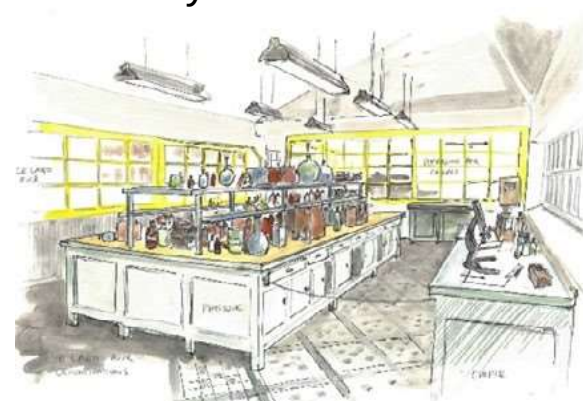
This space is a striking example of 20th-century energy production. Once a thermal power plant, it housed three coal boilers and one steam turbine, which provided steam-powered electricity for the entire site. A hands-on, educational experience takes visitors deep into the heart of these 15-metre-high boilers! The setup includes a maze of pipes, suspended staircases, walkways, and railings, creating a truly immersive environment.



In the Laboratory:

Learn about **textile techniques** and how the factory worked in the **late 20th century**.

This testing lab, built in the 1900s to develop fabrics and dyes, will be the final stop on the museum trail. Films and displays will explain how spinning, weaving, and printing evolved – and how the Printing Factory operated right up to the year 2000.



In the Turbine Hall:

Discover the **end of the factory's story** — and its **new beginning**, with a **café and gift shop**.

Visitors will explore a dynamic exhibition about the closure of the factory in 2003, as well as its current revival. The shop and café-turbine will be set up in this space, right next to the Large Boiler House. A nearby room will also feature a fun, science-themed play area focused on industrial techniques



Wesserling will also be a place to create and promote the textile industry of the future

The future open-air museum will tell the **incredible story of the region's textile heritage**. It will also **highlight today's textile companies** and their **innovation projects** in several ways:

- Every year, dedicated spaces will host exhibitions about companies from our region.
- Specialised professional meetings will be organised and held on site.
- A textile "fab-lab" will be developed in spaces already reserved near the laboratory. It will welcome researchers, creators, and also individuals who want to take part in research.
- An international documentation and archive centre will be set up, welcoming academics, researchers, and textile professionals.
- It will also allow researchers and academics to make use of this educational tool and inspire new vocations.
- Finally, young textile entrepreneurs, designers, and creators of small businesses will be able to use the annex spaces, making use of the fabric collections and heritage archive.



Wesserling will also become a place to introduce young people to industry, its history, and its future.

A high-quality educational programme is planned for young people and adult groups, which includes creating a team of facilitators and performers to welcome teenagers, students, young artists, and more. The goal is to help them discover textile and industrial projects and to inspire new vocations.

Specifically, a cultural programme will be created for disadvantaged young people, to give them visions of the future.

An integration project linked to textiles may be set up, in areas such as sewing, creating objects for the tourist shop, and more.

The site will also encourage networking between the different participants in the project: researchers, students, journalists, historians, chemists, textile creators, designers, textile companies, and the blending of knowledge and techniques.





The renovated château is the entry point of the new ecomuseum route.

The financing plan and the search for sponsorship

The Wesserling Textile Park Management Association, which has run the site for more than 20 years, is leading the current project. The Park is located on public land: 17 hectares of château, gardens, and farm owned by the Collectivité Européenne d'Alsace, and around 2 hectares belonging to the Communauté de Communes of the Saint-Amarin Valley for the Boiler House, the Laboratory, the Turbine Hall, as well as technical areas.

Development work for the living ecomuseum project is underway, with the aim of creating the various discovery hubs.

The total cost of the project is around €6,500,000 excluding tax.

Phase 1	Renovation of the Château and its surroundings	€3,800,000
Phase 2	Pathways and walkways, development of the Boiler House, the Laboratory, and the Turbine Hall	€1,700,000
Phase 3	Cultural and museographic installations	€600,000
Phase 4	Creation of the heritage, education, and economic/ networking hub (training, development of educational products, communication, etc.)	€400,000
Total cost (excl. tax):		€6,500,000

Significant public funding for the works has already been obtained or is in the process of being secured.

The Collectivité Européenne d'Alsace, the Grand Est Region, the French State, and the European Union have been strong partners of AGAPTW and CCVSA for many years: they have committed to financing 80% of the development project, or around €4,900,000.

The Fondation du Patrimoine, the Mission Bern, the Française des Jeux, and local donors are already supporting this project with €600,000. We still need to raise around €1,000,000 through self-financing and sponsorship — and we need your help.

Mobilise your sponsorship in support of the Association for the Management and Development of the Wesserling Textile Park, a non-profit organisation recognised as being of public interest, working in partnership with the Communauté de Communes of the Saint-Amarin Valley.

Valuing and Preserving Wesserling, Our Shared Heritage

**Whether you are an individual, a company,
or a foundation, you can take part in a
sponsorship project that suits you.**

Every donation, whatever its amount, helps support our effort to safeguard and enhance this major site of French industrial heritage, which has been remarkably preserved.

By contributing to the complete renovation **of a major site in the Grand Est region**, you are helping to preserve and pass on local heritage and traditional know-how to future generations. Each act of sponsorship keeps this great heritage site of the Haut-Rhin alive — a site that also belongs to you.

Choosing to become a sponsor of the Wesserling site means joining the community of enthusiasts who have been investing in this major renovation project for many years, keeping alive an exceptional built heritage. It also means ensuring that your contribution endures — creating a moment, a memory, and something to share with your loved ones.

**Supporting the Wesserling Park means guaranteeing yourself
exceptional visibility with our large community.**

**If you are a company or a foundation,
sponsorship offers you advantages.**

Corporate sponsors benefit from a 60% tax reduction on the amount of the donation, applied to corporate tax (within a limit of €10,000 or 0.5% of turnover, with the possibility of carrying forward any excess above the threshold over the next five financial years).

Counterpart benefits will be offered and can be adapted according to your wishes: a special mention on-site in an artistic form; hosting your teams or partners at the Wesserling Park site with tailored offers (activities, access to spaces, etc.); showcasing your expertise at the park or elsewhere, and more.

Of course, you will also be invited to join the “Wesserling Park Partners” club, which can create a network of influence and help us keep this exceptional site alive.

Your contacts to support the Wesserling ecomuseum project:

Donations for all the works (gardens, farm, Boiler House, Laboratory, Turbine Hall, and museographic developments) will be received by the Wesserling Textile Park Management Association, recognised as being of public interest.

To make your donation easier, and for any request for information, we are at your disposal:

Parc de Wesserling - Textile Ecomuseum

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François Tacquard, President of the Association:

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francois.tacquard@wanadoo.fr

You can also fill in this form to support us or to be contacted:

[Link to the form](#)

Or scan the QR code.



A Win-Win Partnership!



Association for the
Management and
Development of the
Wesserling Textile Park
www.parc-wesserling.fr



Communauté de
Communes of
the Saint-Amarin
www.cc-stamarin.fr

I wish to become a sponsor of the Parc de Wesserling or discuss a collaboration

Name of your organisation:

Person to contact :

E-mail address :

Web site :

Telephone Number:

Send

(For the paper version, you can scan this completed form and send it to the following address: patrimoine@parc-wesserling.fr)

**Thank you for contacting us.
Our team will get back to you very soon.
See you soon at the Parc de Wesserling!**

Appendices



Appendix 1: Today, Wesserling is already a major heritage site that has been transformed into a “living village” using sustainable development methods.

In 20 years, local authorities and associations have implemented a coherent overall renovation project thanks to the following success factors:

- Control of land ownership and the collective definition of a long-term global development plan;
- Respect for heritage structures to preserve the integrity of the site, with developments carried out carefully to greatly reduce costs and make it possible to finance the project with the support of institutional partners;
- Hosting numerous different projects to foster local development dynamics, with a strong presence of social and solidarity economy structures;
- Adapting the “real estate products” to different needs (in particular through low rental prices and extensive services for businesses and individuals).

Thanks to this approach, Wesserling has become a living city, rich in social and solidarity economy initiatives. Today it hosts around one hundred SMEs in the trade, services, crafts, and industry sectors, about 300 residents, as well as an artists' association, public cultural facilities (a music school, a small theatre, a media library...), and two integration associations.

The exemplary renovation of the Wesserling site stands as a model for other former rural manufactories.

The farmers' products hall



The creators' pavilion



One of the many SMEs



Appendix 2: Wesserling is also a hub for economic development in the mountain region, thanks to over 20 years of active work in social and solidarity-based enterprise.

Wesserling Park is the result of a mobilisation of citizens and local elected officials around a unique textile industrial heritage. The safeguarding of this heritage has brought together stakeholders from across the territory. Around ten associations were created, later joined into a federation of social and solidarity economy associations.

The first economic redevelopment action on the site was the creation of the Textile Museum, to preserve know-how, along with the gardens supported by the Association for the Management and Development of the Wesserling Textile Park (AGAPTW). Later came the beautiful kitchen gardens, managed by the integration project *Les Jardins de Wesserling*.

Other collective structures then developed: the GIE of Farmers' Products, the Pavilion of Creators association, the *Collectif des Possibles* bringing together 4 artistic companies and about 15 artists, and various cultural associations such as *Les Musicales du Parc*. The Vosges Club, the Haute Thur Music School, the Protestant parish of Fellingering, and the media library also contribute to the vitality of the site, where restaurant activities have also taken root.

The Communauté de Communes of the Saint-Amarin Valley supports a second integration project, the *Patrimoine et Emploi* association, which contributes to the heritage restoration of old buildings while employing long-term unemployed people.

Wesserling Park is therefore a generator of innovation and of economic and social connections. The many organisations on the site form an “incubator” for rural renewal.



The superb Wesserling kitchen gardens, created through a work integration project

Appendix 3: Wesserling is already a major tourist destination for exploring industrial and landscape heritage, and it's currently being reorganised for better clarity and visitor experience.

The quality of Wesserling Park - Textile Museum's cultural, heritage, and tourist offering lies in the landscape strength and the history of the site, shaped by both technical and social innovations. Because of their exceptional character, the 17 hectares of parkland, gardens, and buildings surrounding the château have been listed as Historic Monuments since 1999.

Three particular areas form the focus of visits:



The Château – Reviving the textile industry trades from the late 18th to early 19th centuries: spinning, weaving, dyeing, drawing, engraving, and block printing. It also highlights the living, working, social, and artistic spaces of the 19th-century industrial captains.



The Five Remarkable Gardens – Recognised with the official "Remarkable Gardens" label, these spaces showcase diverse atmospheres and outstanding arboreal heritage: a surprising kitchen garden, a formal French garden, Mediterranean terraces, a rural park, and an English-style park.



The Former Thermal Power Station ("Grande Chaufferie") – A spectacular testimony to 20th-century energy industry heritage, now discovered via panoramic walkways.

Today, the museum and gardens attract nearly **80,000 visitors per year**. More than 50 full-time equivalent staff are employed within the tourism and heritage sector of the Parc de Wesserling:

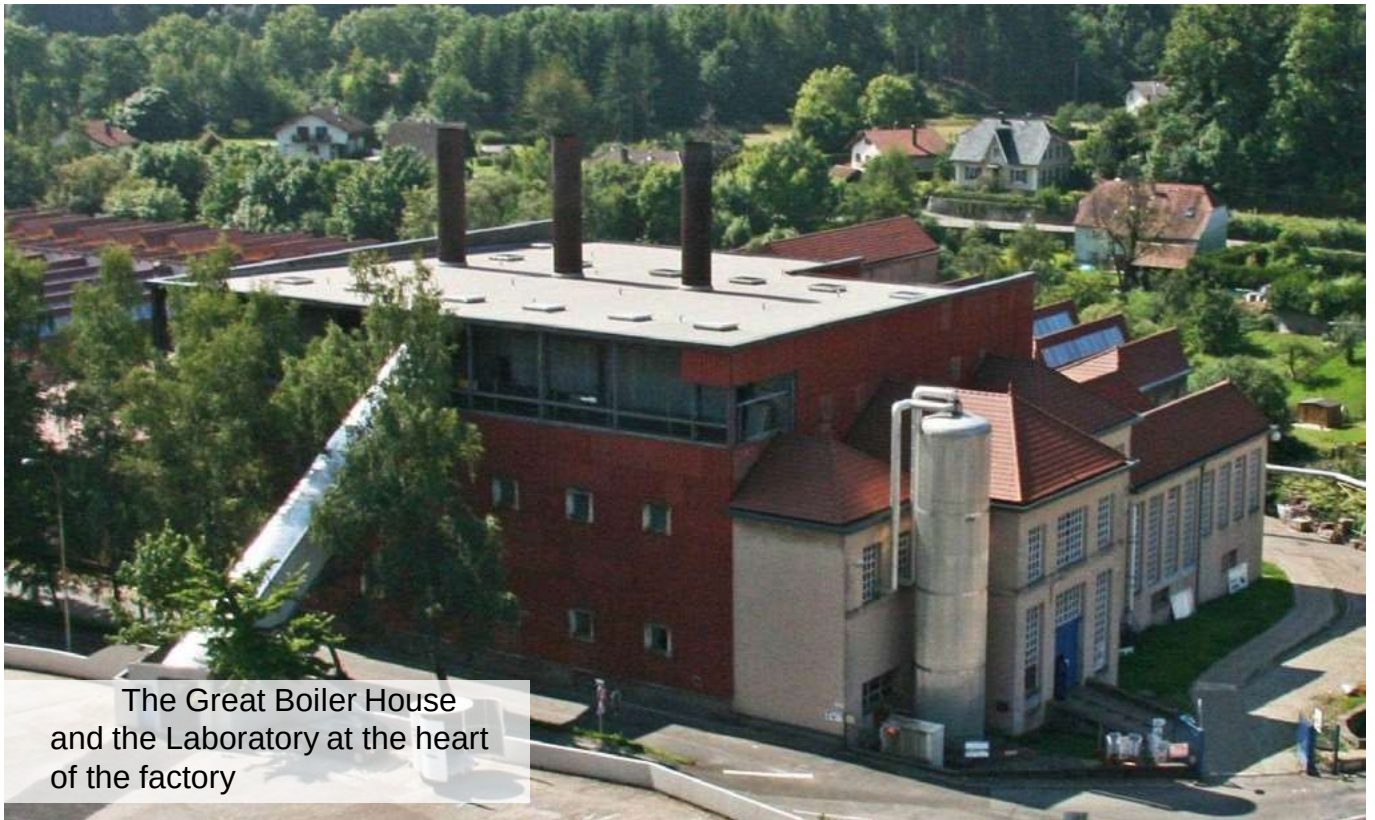
- **23 people** within the Association for the Management and Animation of the Wesserling Textile Park,
- **21 people** within the association *Les Jardins de Wesserling*, and **over 10 people** employed across the four restaurants located on-site.

This is not to mention the economic benefits generated for local businesses in **crafts, tourism, and regional products** that operate on the site.

While Wesserling has experienced significant development in recent years, several issues of **coherence and tourist functionality** have emerged:

- The site lacks **clarity for visitors**, who often do not understand its complex layout.
- It is segmented by **open public roads**, which pose both safety concerns and difficulties in navigation.
- The **Château**, once a Royal Manufacture and renovated in 2024, has become the heart of the eco-museum project.
- Events are too heavily focused on the **gardens**, to the detriment of the museum offer.
- There is excessive **seasonality**, leading to financial difficulties during the off-peak months.
- The **former owners' farm**, built in Swiss architectural style, remains underused due to its isolated location, separated from the gardens by the Rue de Ranspach.

The tourist and cultural offer of Wesserling must therefore be transformed to provide visitors with a more coherent and lively museum experience, on a dedicated site and without interruptions.



Appendix 4: A Scientific Committee and “Partner Club” are supporting the Wesserling Park team in guiding the project.

The different components of the textile ecomuseum project are discussed with a scientific committee made up of recognised experts in the field.

Pierre FLUCK: Doctor of Science, Emeritus Professor at UHA-CRESAT*, Founder of CRESAT*, Knight of the Legion of Honour, Author of *Trésors d’usine, Wesserling l’eden du textile...*

Nicolas STOSKOPF: Emeritus Professor of Contemporary History at UHA-CRESAT, Author of numerous books and publications...

Jean-Marie SCHMITT: PhD in History, Director of Cultural Services for the City of Colmar, Author of *Aux origines de la révolution industrielle en Alsace, Istra...*

Marie-Claire VITOUX: Honorary Senior Lecturer in Contemporary History, Associate Researcher at CRESAT, Author of numerous books and publications...

Patrick GROS: Architect, Museographer, Descendant of the Gros family of industrialists and directors at Wesserling, Author of an extensive saga on Wesserling, Holder of a significant documentary and object collection relating to Wesserling.

Jean-Marie BOBENRIETH: Former technical manager at Gros-Roman Weaving Company, later Boussac Saint Frères, Risler in Kruth and Cernay, and SA Risler in Saint-Amarin, Author of a book on Wesserling, Head of documentation at Wesserling.

Régis BOULAT: Senior Lecturer in Contemporary History, Associate Researcher at CRESAT, Head of “History and Heritage” at CRESAT, Director of the History Department at UHA.

Claudine GRABER: Head of the Protestant parish and its documentary collection.

Marc RITZENTHALER: Vice-President of the Museum Association of the Dollfus, Mieg and Koechlin Families.

Some Friends and Volunteers of Wesserling:

Jean-Alain HAAN: Journalist at [DNA](#) (*Dernières Nouvelles d’Alsace* daily), graduate of UHA, wrote a dissertation on Wesserling, Son of a textile engineer who managed the Boussac bleaching works...

Jean-Marie BOBENRIETH: Former technical manager (see above), Author, and Documentation Manager at Wesserling.

Marcel NILLY: Head of the Wesserling Boiler House for more than 30 years.

Rolf MARTIN: Former Director of the Wesserling Testing Laboratory...

*[UHA](#) Université de Haute-Alsace

*[CRESAT](#) Research Centre on Economies, Societies, Arts, and Techniques

The Wesserling Textile Park Management Association is also in the process of creating a “Wesserling Park Partners Club”, a network of influence focused on the economic development of the textile sector in the region, and motivated to help us bring this exceptional site to life.

It will include collective associations such as the **SIM (Industrial Society of Mulhouse)**, the **Textile Cluster**, interested universities and schools, textile companies already partnering with us today, as well as patrons who wish to support the site in the medium term.

The Parc de Wesserling is also a member of [TICCIH](#) The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage, collaborating with and hosting the [FORCOPAR Summer Universities](#) (*Training for the Conservation and Conversion of Industrial Heritage*), and is in the process of joining the [ERIH](#) (**European Route of Industrial Heritage**) to become its anchor point in 2025.



European Route
of Industrial Heritage

Become a patron

Make the Wesserling Park our
shared project

