Celebrating 40 years down on the farm

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Founded in 1972 on a disused timber yard, it was the first of the 120 city farms now to be found around the country. Conceived as a working, educational farm, it is crammed into a densely built up part of Camden borough.

The four and a half acre site is home to an assortment of chickens, ducks, geese, cows, goats, horses, pigs and sheep in the once rural village of Gospel Oak. A group of young volunteers will be charting the history of the area from the 18th century to the present day focusing in particular on the farm's development from the 1970s to the 1980s.

Many of the adults who now visit the farm will have been the young children who came to see the animals in its early years. Their stories, together with photographs and other memorabilia, will be collected to shine a light on the social history of Kentish Town and Gospel Oak and the changes over four decades.

Themes that the volunteer researchers and interviewers will be delving into include Queens Crescent Market; trade unions and the Labour government; children's play, open spaces and festivals; and fashion, music and technology. The result will be an exhibition to be held at the farm, local heritage activities and dedicated pages on the Farm website.

Sue Bowers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund London, said: "This project, supported by our Young Roots programme, will give the volunteers the chance to learn about the social history of their area while they gain new skills in the process of explaining it to a wider audience."

For Kentish Town City Farm, Simone Uncle, activities and events coordinator, said: "The Heritage Lottery Fund is going to make a huge difference to our 40th anniversary celebrations; it means we can collaborate with members of our local community to record some of their fantastic stories and with the support of the London Metropolitan Archives, ensure these precious memories are kept forever and made available to all."

Further information

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