Moor Pool Heritage Trust wins Heritage Lottery



Aerial shot of Moor Pool community hall

The campaign to save this significant example of heritage architecture has been led by volunteers from the local community who formed the Moor Pool Heritage Trust charity specifically to save the community hall. The Moor Pool project focuses on preserving the heritage of one of Birmingham’s hidden gems for future generations, and developing an education programme to share its hundred years of history with young people and the wider public. Ownership of these heritage facilities will transfer in December 2014, with the first education project taking place in May 2015.

The Grade II listed Moor Pool Hall will be at the centre of a new learning programme for schools, enabling young people to discover the origins and explore the history of a revolutionary early 20th-century housing estate in the suburbs of Birmingham. MPHT wants to demonstrate to those children and young people how planning and architecture can provide the infrastructure to create stronger communities. The achievement will be that the young people’s experience of visiting Moor Pool today will influence better communities in the future.

The Moor Pool Garden Suburb was established between 1907-1912 by John Sutton Nettlefold, first chairman of Birmingham's Housing Committee. Nettlefold saw it as a way of giving Edwardian working-class people the opportunity to lead a more healthy life, by moving out of “Back-to-Back” inner-city houses to garden city homes with improved living accommodation, gardens, as well as leisure facilities around which to build a community. The hall itself includes an historic stage/theatre, along with an ancient skittle alley and rifle alley. The architecture of the Moor Pool estate is 'an

exceptional survival' (English Heritage) of an Arts & Crafts Garden Suburb.

Securing ownership of the community hall will also enable Moor Pool to continue its long history of community volunteering – all the leisure facilities are managed and run by volunteer clubs – as well as providing more volunteering opportunities around the education project. The community had 12 months to save the hall and associated open spaces – all of which were under threat of potential closure or complete change of use. The Heritage Lottery Fund has provided a significant part of the funding to make this project possible.

Commenting on the HLF grant award, Rob Sutton Chairman of the Moor Pool Heritage Trust said: “We are thrilled to have received the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and we can now proceed with our new learning programme to support the education of young people on how a well planned garden suburb can have such a positive influence on community and the wellbeing and lifestyle of residents.”

Reyahn King, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund West Midlands, said: “The Moor Pool Hall is an integral part of this early 20th-century garden suburb. We are delighted to support this project which will ensure that the building can continue to fulfil its purpose as a resource for the whole community and the wider Birmingham public. Its role will also be enhanced by providing people with opportunities to learn about the social and architectural history of the estate.”

Notes to editors

Moor Pool Heritage Trust (MPHT) was set up as a not-for-profit company in 2011 and a registered charity (Reg No 1148252) in 2012 to protect and preserve the heritage of Moor Pool Estate.

Its primary objectives are:

- the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment within the Moor Pool garden suburb estate
- the promotion of community participation in healthy recreation for the benefit of the public through the use of Moor Pool's community facilities
- the advancement of education, including promoting knowledge of the social and architectural history and heritage of the Moor Pool estate

Further information

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