

The Moor Pool Duck



www.moorpool.com



Residents' Newsletter for Moor Pool Garden Suburb. Nr 48 April 2010

Easter Signals a New Beginning?

Letter from the Chair

Hello Everyone,

Its election time soon, as I am sure you are only too well aware. As on a previous occasion we have decided to put a question to the 4 main candidates in the both the National and local elections. Each answer has been limited to 150 words. Candidates were also sent a copy of the last 'Duck' newsletter and the document 'An Alternative Way Forward' which proposes the basis for a Heritage Lottery Fund grant application.

The question we have put to each candidate is as follows:

Given the uncertainty over the future of the historic Moor Pool Estate, following the plans by Graingers to build on the open spaces and with their financial investment in Tenant properties constantly dwindling, how would you, if elected as an M.P or Councillor, support maintaining the integrity of an area that is both architecturally significant because of its buildings and open spaces and currently a great example as Nettlefold intended, of a vibrant community?

Answers have been printed General Election first and in the order that they were returned. We would like to thank all those candidates who replied, particularly as they were given a very short timescale in which to respond.

General Election. May 6th

Deirdre Alden – Conservative Party

The Residents' Association's suggestion is eminently sensible and I will urge Graingers to work with them to achieve it.

The Labour Government told Birmingham to find room for 50,000 more homes before 2026 and, if necessary, to do it through "infill". This is far too intense. A Conservative Government will tear up Labour's crazy house building targets to protect areas like Moor Pool.

I want more protection for gardens and pockets of land. The original designers of the estate appreciated the need for green lungs amongst the houses. One hundred years on, Government must be made to appreciate it too.

When an area is under threat, people come together. This has happened here, and there is a thriving programme of events. I have supported many (e.g. planting bulbs) and will continue to. I also regularly get the Council Hit Squad to remove fly tipping, and will continue to do this.

Roger Harmer - Liberal Democrat Party

"If elected as your MP, I will work to protect both the architectural integrity of the Moor Pool Estate and to prevent further development of the local open space. The threat of climate change and its likely impact on summer temperatures and rainfall volumes, makes protecting and expanding urban greenspace vital. Greenspace helps to reduce the urban heat island effect and provides a good way to protect Birmingham against flash flooding caused by run-off from hard surfaces. My current job as a senior

fundraiser for Groundwork UK, a national charity, which improves greenspace, means I have the skills and experience to support the development of the major funding applications that will be needed as part of the solution in the Moor Pool Estate. I have successfully bid for major grants from the Lottery and, as your MP, would offer my time to help with funding applications and any subsequent negotiations."

Gisela Stuart – Labour Party

Unique estates like Moor Pool are living communities. Residents deserve to have them properly protected. That needs local and national politicians to work together effectively – because decisions are made locally, but within frameworks set nationally.

What we've seen in Moor Pool over recent years is real support nationally, that sadly wasn't matched locally. Together with residents I helped secure article 4(2) enhanced protection for the Estate, but it didn't offer the security it could have done, because the Tory-led Council did not conduct a character appraisal. The Council did not make full use of the legislation available to them to protect the Moorpool. Neither did the Planning Committee flex its muscle and turn the application down .

The Moor Pool community is a model of what can be done when people come together. This is something politicians should encourage and defend – not stand by and watch it bulldozed. You deserve representatives who won't take 'no' for an answer.

Phil Simpson – Green Party

I would press for the Character Appraisal of Moor Pool to be published immediately. The Planning Dept should publish a Masterplan for this area. These two documents after effective consultation would be adopted as the Local Planning Guidance for Moorpool.

Website: www.moorpool.com

Then all future proposals could be judged openly against them. A regular review would ensure they could be relied on in Planning Inquiries.

The loss of the Post Office in The Circle was terrible. As part of our national policy the Green Party are committed to funding an expansion of the Sub Post Office network and I would press for The Circle to get it's PO back. We also want Local Banks to support small local businesses like a Trust to run community services based on The Circle. A clear Planning Concept; enforced uniformly and real support for community activities is my Commitment to Moorpool.

Birmingham City Council Elections

James McKay – Labour Party.

There is a choice facing Moor Pool's politicians. We can let the developers in, shrugging our shoulders that nothing can be done. Or we can genuinely get behind local initiatives and alternatives, such as the planned funding application for a community trust. If elected, Gisela and I will do all we can to support this plan, and others like it – local communities deserve nothing less from their representatives.

I'll also push for Community Chest funding to go towards schemes that have real, lasting benefits for our communities.

Finally, if community groups need to legally challenge Council decisions, the Council should not seek costs if it wins, as the Tory-led Council did recently. The amounts are small to the Council, but potentially devastating to community groups. They're a price the Council should pay, to protect grassroots democracy.

Phil Simpson – Green Party

Phil Simpson is also standing as a local Councillor as well as M.P and we have

Chair: Rob Sutton. 426 5669.

printed his response in the General Election section.

Mike Whitby - Conservative

The local character and charm of housing has been threatened by the Labour Government - forcing us to meet national housing targets, against our wishes, by infilling and building on 'Brownfield' sites (your back gardens).

As Council Leader, Councillor, and former spokesman on planning, I have resisted these threats by seconding an all-party motion requesting the Government redefine Brownfield sites to exclude back gardens. Sadly, the Government has failed to respond.

I have liaised to create local planning guidelines such as '*Places for Living*', '*Mature Suburbs*' and article 4.2 directives to ameliorate the threat of Government Policy; and chaired the Moorpool Conservation Steering Group which dramatically reduced the original Grainger proposals from around 70 units to just 16 houses.

I am fully supporting the creation of a Moorpool Trust to include the community facilities, through ongoing personal negotiations with Grainger's senior management, whilst leading an application for Heritage Lottery Funding.

Moor Pool in Bloom

What a show the daffodils and tulips made! The results of all the hard work at the Square bore fruit and Park Edge looks a treat! Liz Muir and the team have plans for ongoing work with clearance, seed sowing and planting. Discussions are taking place with the Wildlife Trust for them to come and host a day's event. The programme is not yet finalised but will probably include walks around the estate, bug hunts and talks on wildlife. Watch this space. If you have ideas

for MiB or want to help a little or a lot give Liz Muir a ring on 07792473975.

Japanese Knotweed - Again

A petition is being circulated requesting that local Councillors get the various parties including Grainger together to find and carry out a solution once and for all.

Video Grant Application

The application to the media Trust was unsuccessful but a follow up visit to London illustrated many other ways that Moor Pool can get across information on its history, successes and ongoing fight to save Moor Pool. Other options are available to raise funds for equipment and we will also look at working with local media centres to produce films and documentaries.

Moorpool News and Wine

The place to shop locally and without the hassle of trying to park near the High Street. Please do use it whenever you can instead of going to the supermarket. Raj has a cash machine, fax machine and copier, all up and working, along with tempting special offers on wines and beers. The shop also has the MRA letter box inside where you can post correspondence to us. Opening times are on the website.

An Interesting Afternoon Out

Last Saturday, fancying a change from usual, Rob and I went to Moseley to scout out the Farmers Market and craft stalls which were advertised in one of the local papers. It was a nice afternoon; Rob walked up and down obligingly, we perused the stalls, investigated the 'swop shop', and then noticed a sign stating 'Moseley Park and Ice House Open to the Public'. Intrigued we followed the directions. The entrance pathway widened out into a magnificent park, bathed in sunlight, with many people enjoying the sunny afternoon. We walked across the grass, round the extensive lake, admired the views and envied the residents their beautiful scenery. Our meander back brought us to the Ice House. What a curiosity! Set into the slope of a bank was a doorway into a brick

lined passageway with a very dark end. Unfortunately there had been a power cut, but the guide suggested letting your eyes become accustomed to the gloom and you could then see this amazing structure. The brickwork is a monument to craftsmanship of times gone by. Moseley Park it seems is a private park opened once a month to the public. It originally belonged to Moseley Hall and like Moor Pool is a hidden gem. More information on opening times is on the Moseley Society website www.moseley-society.org.uk. Well worth a visit.

Siobhan Collins - McCarthy
Dance Academy

Royal Academy of Dance Registered Teacher Status
R.A.D. T.C. R.T.S. (Dist)
Pilates Instructor Advanced Cert Level 3
Register of Exercise Professionals

New Pilates Classical Matwork Class

Wednesday Lunch Time 12:30 – 1:30 pm

‘Ladies who Crunch’

All Ages and Abilities

First Class £5.00 Taster Session
£10.00 Thereafter Or £48.00 for a Six Week Course



The Moorpool Hall, The Circle, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 9DY.

Website: www.ballet-birmingham.com

Mob: 07896315199

Easter Scarecrow Competition

Congratulations to Maureen Mauser's team of boys: - Connor, Josef, Jatinder, Freddie, Zak, Panayotis and Teifion, who are the winners with 'Come on England!' taking the gold medal and £20 prize.

"Wow" said Janice, our judge, "So good and the setting is wonderful too."

Website: www.moorpool.com

Even the World Cup and flags!" Even as we stood looking at the scarecrows, cars were stopping and reversing to take a second look at this tremendous effort. If the boys can keep the 'team' together maybe they will appear again at the Moor Pool Festival for a lap of honour!

Runners up again with a silver medal and £10 prize were Rose, Tasmin, Liberty and Eden with 'Edward and Bella from Twilight'. "Liked the faces, very realistic figures and scary too" said Janice.

Third place and bronze medal with £5 prize went to Jamie Bench (who was last years winner) with 'The Moor Pool Ducks'. Described by Janice as "Two for the price of one, very good use of materials, even a face, eggs etc".

Thank you to everyone for taking part. We hoped all the entrants enjoyed building their scarecrows and will be entering again next year.

Thanks must go to our Judge, Janice Bridger, who stepped in at the last minute to help us out. Janice found the quality of entries made final decisions quite difficult. In the end we created a new category 'Highly Commended' which went to 'Lady Lucy of Moor Pool' made by Amber, Gabriella, Elspeth, Claudia, Molly and Annabel and also 'Sir Wilberforce Gummige' by Anne Claridge. The weather was marvellous all day and couldn't have been better for our Easter egg hunt and scarecrow competition.

Lastly the medals were kindly donated by Eugene Hayden. Many thanks, Eugene.

(Pictures on the website)

Easter Egg Hunt

The MRA held its first Easter egg hunt at The Square, which had recently been restored from its derelict state by the efforts of the MiB team and local residents. The superb weather and the great efforts of the organising team ensured the event was a

Chair: Rob Sutton. 426 5669.

tremendous success. The proceedings were in 2 parts with a hunt for clues by pre-school children amongst straw at one side of The Square and a second competition for older children comprising a trail with 5 'chickpoints' at which answers to questions had to be found before returning to collect one of the Easter eggs generously donated by Cadbury World. A lot of effort went into organising this first event and manning the 'chickpoints' by Jim, Anne-Marie, Alison, Etlyn, Liz, Barbara, Jason, Jan, Margaret and Maureen. We would also like to thank Rachel New and Cadbury World for supporting this event which was greatly enjoyed. (Pictures on the website)

Mums & Toddlers Seed Sowing.

On the 26th March MiB and the local mother and toddler group held a seed planting morning at the Moor Pool Hall. Led by Rachel New, morning breakfast presenter for Heart FM, the children had great fun planting various seeds which are currently being germinated and will be planted out when ready. This is part of MiB's strategy to get all sections and ages of the community involved. Many thanks to Rachel for coming along and Elise, organiser of the mother and toddlers for her support. (Pictures on the website)

Royal Horticultural Society Visit.

Ken Whittaker, RHS Judge for Britain in Bloom, visited the Moor Pool coffee morning and gave a talk on the tips and tricks of seed sowing. Ken brought along a few items which he had made himself over the years, all intended to make the process of seed sowing easier. Ken then kindly walked the proposed route for Moor Pool's entry for Britain in Bloom and explained to residents how the judging process operated. Fortunately the recent improved weather meant bulbs were beginning to flower. Ken noted there was already a big improvement due to the hard work of residents since his last visit. Thanks again to Ken for giving his time to come along to Moor Pool.

Bill Taylor.

Bill Taylor who deals with local transportation matters for the Council retired on the 25th April. Whilst we have sparred on occasion in the past over transport matters, I shall not forget seeing him leg it in pursuit of a miscreant who was driving over the verges at the Circle. Obviously his heart was in the right place. Best wishes for a long and happy retirement, Bill.

City of Culture Bid. Moor Pool Jewel in the Culture Crown?

As part of the Birmingham City of Culture bid, Council leaders have started a public appeal to nominate the most memorable buildings in Birmingham. Cllr Douglas Osborne has nominated the Back to Backs in Hurst Street amongst others. Moor Pool of course was the next step forward from the Back to Backs and demonstrated a way forward for Birmingham. It would be a worthy entrant. If you would like to submit a nomination for 'The Moor Pool Estate' go to <http://flickr.com/groups/birminghamarchitecture/> and upload your pictures of Moor Pool.

An Alternative Way Forward.

This document which was given to Alex Greaves from Grainger on his visit to Moor Pool is available online and at the Coffee mornings. It lists various ideas and suggestions for the restoration of Moor Pool which would form the basis of a Heritage Lottery Fund application.

Coffee Morning

The next coffee morning is on Saturday 22nd May in the Lower Hall starting at 10.30am. This is a week earlier than normal because of the Bank Holiday. The turnout for the last coffee morning was somewhat disappointing and we do need additional volunteers for behind the counter, especially to provide cover when the holiday season approaches. If you would like to help occasionally, please let us know. The coffee morning is an opportunity to meet and introduce new residents. Do feel free to bring

along friends and invite neighbours to come along too.

Gillian Morgan Accountants Ltd

SMALL BUSINESS SPECIALIST

All Aspects of Accountancy, Taxation

And Self-Assessment

Sensible Fees.

Friendly Efficient Service.

Free Initial Consultation.

80, Moor Pool Avenue,

Harborne, Birmingham, B17 9DT.

0121 684 5949

www.gillianmorgan-accountant.co.uk

Website News.

Have you looked at the pictures of recent events? Have you navigated to the information on the other garden suburbs or Moor Pools clubs and societies? It's all there ready and waiting! The 'Items for Sale', 'announcements' and 'Wanted' section on the website is free.

Recently the Moor Pool website was transferred between service providers. We would like to thank Steve Pitchford and Andrew Hackett for their work in doing this, which was not a straightforward matter. Steve was the original webmaster and has kindly retained the domain for us for several years until it was convenient to finalise a transfer.

The MRG site www.moorpool.co.uk also carries information re the planning applications etc.

Letters to the Editor

It is a joy to walk down Margaret Grove with daffodils and tulips in bloom.

I should like to express my thanks to the public spirited residents who gave of their time and energy to plant bulbs.

Elaine Wheeler.

A big thank you for all the team efforts for the Moorpool in bloom spring show around the Estate. It has been a joy to all concerned, especially after a hard winter! People said they envied us living here.

Hope more flowers will arrive for summer. Can we have a few more flowers on the odd number side of Margaret Grove; the concentration was mostly on the even number side. But that is not a criticism, I know the hard work it must have been, but to all of you, your reward must have been the sight of dancing daffodils and the glory of the red tulips – absolutely gorgeous.

Thanks a million.

Christine Goodall

Verge Damage

Cllr Mike Whitby has secured funding to re-turf the badly rutted verge at the bottom of Margaret Grove once the daffodils have died back. A solution will have to be found for the damage which is occurring at the Circle and a sample of grass reinforcement has been obtained. This is a structure which allows grass to grow through, but can support the weight of a small bus.

Signs to Hall and Shops

The sign which might have set a 'precedent' in justifying local signage for our shops was smartly removed. It's not the only one in existence and we are documenting them fully before we show our hand next time. If you are out and about and you see any Council signs directing 'to the shops' please let us know. Even better send us a picture as well.

Just to remind you that we were informed the cost would be £2000 for 5 signs and we would need to fund half the cost ourselves!!

Rubbish Clear Up

We have had a serious issue of dumping in the Orchard between the Circle and Wentworth Road. Both the Council and Grainger were informed. Following a visit by BCC and discussions with the perpetrator most of the rubbish has been removed or will be. Thanks to BCC and John Alden for their intervention.

A similar situation is taking place on the Valley where a builder thinks it is acceptable to lay a trail of waste material through an allotment and dump excess concrete amongst the undergrowth. Grainger are fully aware of the problem.

The Square

It came to our attention that the large conifer trees were to be reduced in height. The consensus of locals involved in the Square clean up, was that reducing the height would leave them unsightly and still cause light problems to the ground below and neighbouring properties. We have asked for a meeting with Grainger and the tree officer to look at a better long term solution more in keeping with the Estate. What do you think?

The fence at the Square is a disgrace and a blot on what was otherwise a great Easter event held there. Again the consensus was that wooden posts and chain between would be a less visually intrusive replacement and easily maintained in the future. Your ideas and suggestions would be appreciated.

Subscriptions

There is a full programme planned for this year and although we have funding for Moor Pool in Bloom we still have to raise funds for the other events such as the Festival. Subscriptions of £5 per household or £3 per single person are extremely reasonable and show your support and commitment.

Please make your payment to either Gill Morgan (Treasurer: 80, Moorpool Ave) Rob

Sutton (Chair: 64 Margaret Grove), or Mike Frost (Duck Editor: 1 Carless Avenue).

Moorpool Players

We remind residents again that The MOORPOOL PLAYERS will be staging five hilariously funny short 'Course Acting' plays by Michael Green from 12th to the 15th May.

Streuth, a tense tightly scripted thriller with a twist that will leave you gasping;

The Cherry Sisters, an early experimental work attributed to the Chekhovian School;

Last Call for Breakfast, the Company's first venture into experimental theatre and dance;

A Collier's Tuesday Tea, a look at life in the raw in a Yorkshire mining village;

Present Slaughter, an early piece from The Master.

Tickets at £6 are obtainable from Moorpool News and Wine or via the Box Office on 0121 426 2134

Advertising

A scale of charges is available for placing a commercial advertisement in the Duck newsletter and on the website. The Duck is delivered to over 500 homes on and around the Estate. Details can be downloaded from the website. Sponsors are also invited for the forthcoming events.

Crime

The following number can be used for reporting minor incidents to Rose Road Police Station. 0845 113 5000

Door Step Selling

A resident recently contacted us concerned about 2 door-to-door salesmen. Residents should always be extremely cautious when dealing with unknown door-to-door salespeople. If in doubt especially if it's dark, don't open the door. Remember it's your home and these calls are uninvited. If

you decide to have dealings with a salesperson bear in mind the following:

Ask them to come back another time when it's convenient or you have a friend with you.

Ask for identification with a picture, a name, identification number and company details. Check their identity whilst they wait outside by ringing the company from a phone book number not the number they give you. Do not invite them into your home unless absolutely necessary and provided you are confident of their identity.

You ask the questions, after all it's your doorstep. Don't let the salesperson take control.

Don't ever be hurried into a decision even if discounts are offered. Always check that the price is competitive and get a second opinion.

Do not leave a stranger on their own in your home or allow them to go off to other rooms out of your sight.

If in any doubt ask the person to leave.

Coffee Morning - Toys

We have already received a few toys donated for use at the coffee morning for which we are most grateful. Children and toddlers are always welcome to come along. If you have items you think might be suitable for the children to play with and you would like to donate them, please let us know.

Dates for your Diary

Coffee Mornings

Sat 22nd May 10.30 Lower Hall

Note this is not the usual last Saturday in the month.

Moor Pool Festival 2010.

Sunday 12th September. Various venues.

Hall Centenary

Friday 5th November 2010.

Unveiling of Civic Society Plaque.

Winterbourne Botanic Gardens.

TRADITIONAL EDWARDIAN FETE

Date: May 22nd and 23rd

Times: 10am-5pm

Cost: Adults £6,

Concessions £4. Small charges also apply for some activities.

Take a step back in time and see what life was like during Edwardian times. Play old fashioned games, try to knock a coconut off its stand, watch Punch and Judy or have your photo taken in period costume during this traditional Edwardian day out.

CLAIRE BENSON AND AMY NIGHTINGALE **'The Winged Secrets of Winterbourne'**

May 14th – June 30th

Sisters Claire and Amy are known as Particle Article. They have captured curious make-believe winged creatures, discovered at Winterbourne House and Gardens. These members of unclassified species came to life when people were absent, and evolved in response to the activity and environment of human being.

The Circle Kids Club

Local activity club inspiring children's creativity and imagination through arts and sports.

The Circle Kids club is open to children aged between 3 and 8 years old. Sessions will be held Monday to Friday during 9th-13th & 16th-20th August 2010 at Moorpool Hall, The Circle, Harborne.

Created by a Community Artist and Events

Organiser alongside qualified and experienced childcare professionals The Circle Kids club will offer an exciting range of arts activities, from taking part in making a real den to face painting and mask making. Children will find it's a real creative boost to the holidays and a stimulating alternative to those lazy summer days.

As well as taking care of the creative mind The Circle Kids club also aims to give children an active experience; with outdoor activities, mini-Olympics and childrens tai-chi. The Kids club will burn up that stored energy and ensure that children go home each night having enjoyed themselves in a fun safe active environment.

We are holding a Launch night on Thursday 20th May from 7.30pm at Moorpool Hall. Come along and enjoy wine and nibbles, demonstrations of activities with a tour of the facilities plus receive introductory offers with your first booking!

To find out more information call Elise Duncan 0755 444 7332.