



Christmas Issue No 62 December 2012

Dear Residents

Christmas is nearly upon us and I very much hope that as many of you as possible will come along to the Residents Association AGM and after that the annual Moor Pool Carol Walk. As usual we shall meet back at the Hall afterwards for hot drinks, mulled wine and mince pies.

After 5 years, I am stepping down as Chair of the MRA. It has been a challenging 5 years and I wish to thank all those fellow committee members and residents who have supported me over this period.

As Chair of the Trust I shall have much to do and it is important that the distinct functions of the Trust and MRA continue to move forward. The MRA supports the community and social needs of residents. The Trust will ensure that the bricks and mortar and open spaces are retained for the benefit of all so that all the marvellous activities which take place on the estate can continue.

I wish to take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year.
Rob Sutton.

Hand-made Christmas decorations for sale in the shop until Christmas Eve.

Proceeds to Moor Pool in Bloom for new plants for the estate in 2013.

What's on?

Annual general meeting

This will take place on Sunday December 16th at 2.15pm for a 2.30pm start. This is your chance to let us know your views. Please come early to get a seat.

Carol Walk

The carol walk will follow the residents AGM at 4.15pm. Please come along and take part; dress warmly and bring a torch for lighting your way. The Carol booklet can be downloaded from the MRA website.

What's been happening?

Heritage Lighting: Amey's efforts to install heritage lighting resulted in a variety of interim light fittings as the heritage units were not in stock. The first heritage units have appeared in North Pathway; we are assured that embellishment will follow. The location and brightness of the lamps has upset many residents and little account was taken of the particular needs of the conservation area. Whilst improvement in lighting levels compared to the old lights is desirable the height and brightness seem to be causing particular problems in places. The post heights need reducing and this is not a problem to do, as all the signage posts were cut down to size after installation when the one way system was put in place. Those posts are exactly the same size as the new lighting. Let's hope the sizing is done at the same time as the heritage lanterns are fitted! Comments on the lighting are welcome on the blog on the MRA website.

Drainage super tank.

Severn Trent put forward proposals to site a massive drainage tank in the Valley allotments. This will be over 25 feet (7.5m) in diameter (wider than a house) and around 55feet deep. Construction of the tank will have a huge impact on the allotments and permanently remove the equivalent of one allotment in area. The retention of these allotments was hard won and any further loss cannot be mitigated by token hedge planting. Severn Trent have now visited the estate and

seen the Trust's proposals for restoration and the importance of these allotment areas as part of the community infrastructure. Working with the MRG and Trust it is hoped that a far better mitigation solution can be arrived at which will have long term benefits for the local community. The Council are in a difficult position as they put in place a legal agreement requiring the allotment space in question to be restored. With this in mind it is in everyone's interest to find an acceptable solution

Bulb planting and weed killer

Moor Pool was sprayed very late last year (March 2011). The chemical takes about six months to wear off and was applied rather too freely on the verges causing a yellowish tone; the early warm weather enhanced the problem. Strimming is not a viable alternative because it only lasts two weeks or so.

Following a meeting with Birmingham City Council, it has been agreed that the following areas will not be sprayed

1. Beds managed by residents e.g. Lower Moor Pool Avenue/Wentworth Gate
2. Planted areas round trees but please indicate these areas by removing weeds and mulching with spent compost.
3. Underplanted street signs and beds with defined edges.
4. Bulbs in grass verges. Please plant bulbs in large blocks for easy mowing at the ends of verges or centrally.

Please leave a clear edge along verge sections so edges can be trimmed.

Caroline's Cake Company

Moor Pool based cake designer creating tiered and sculpted cakes for those special times when only cake will do.

Clubs and societies

Reading club

Next meeting December 6th in the mall hall 7.30-8.30pm. Jenny Stevenson will introduce Sofka Zinovieff's 'The House on

Paradise

February meeting date to be confirmed.

The book will be here a thousand years by Mariolina Venezia (translated by Marina Harss).

Skittles club

Please contact Mick O'Malley on 0121 427 5051, or e-mail momalley39@gmail.co

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Moorpool players present their Annual Charity Christmas Show

Wednesday 12th December.

The usual mix of songs, sketches and poems together with some hearty carol singing will be provided. The doors open at 6.45 and admission is by payment of £3.50 which includes a glass of wine and a mince pie.

Proceeds will be shared between Birmingham University PHAB and Birmingham Christmas Shelter, a charity that the Players have supported for many years.

Job Vacancy

Chair wanted for local voluntary organisation providing social and community events. Supported by a loyal band of volunteers the appointee will be required to chair monthly committee meetings and attend occasional coffee mornings. Applicants should attend at 2.30 pm Moor Pool Hall 16.12.2012.

Moor Pool in Bloom (MiB)

We planted 4000 bulbs this autumn and will monitor their progress after the weed killer has been sprayed. We have continued to develop and maintain many of the open spaces on Moorpool. Most of this work has been carried out by volunteers but we have been able to pay for mowing in The Square and The Spinney. We now have two sections of allotment, one at Wentworth Gate (the greenhouse) and one at The Valley (the polytunnel). Help with weeding, dead heading, potting up etc. is always welcome. If you would like to help with any of our activities please contact the volunteer concerned or ring Liz Muir. Tel: 07792473975.

MiB Calendar 2012-13

December: Christmas decorations for sale in the shop until Christmas Eve
December 7th Mums and Toddlers Group - Tree decorating

December 8th Dec 10am. Decorating shops and hall entrance

January: Ordering plug plants: Please notify Liz or by 6th January 2013 if you want to suggest ideas for seeds/plugs

February: Workday at The Square and The Spinney. Date to be confirmed.

March: We need a lot of volunteers for pricking out plug plants.

Deadline for RHS entry 2013

April: Preparation for the plant sale. This is our major fundraising event. If you can help in any way: publicity donating surplus items from your own garden, collecting donated items, potting, setting up stalls, making or serving refreshments or any of the many other jobs that need doing, please contact Liz. There will be a meeting for volunteers in April.

May Our annual plant sale will take place on 11th May Plant Sale in East Pathway.

Harborne Neighbourhood Team.

Property Security

We are heading towards the winter months and darker nights. May I please

remind all to leave lights on when your not home or to use timer switches if possible. No one needs to know that you are not home think, "lock up light on" Remember to make sure all back gates are locked due to the access in the passage ways at the rear of your properties.

BMW Thefts

Recently there have been several thefts of BMW cars of all models. It is important to remember to secure all your vehicles and not to leave any valuables on display not even sat nav cradles, as this may alert thieves to the possibility that there is a sat nav concealed in the vehicle.

As always if you require any advice or information please do not hesitate to contact myself.

Pcso Charlotte Alcock 31047
Harborne Ward,
0345 113 5000 Ext 7863 6667

Raj says "Please... SHOP LOCAL at the Circle"

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orders & delivery | dry-cleaning | mobile top-ups | photocopier & fax | credit cards accepted | cashback up to £20 | cash machine | rents, rates & utility bill payment | small ads & notices | residents association post box

Monday–Friday: 7am–7pm

Sat: 7.30am–7pm, Sun: 7.30am–1pm

0121 428 1061 moorpoolnews@hotmail.co.uk

Raj says "Please... KEEP THIS AD to remind you"

Banner Site Manager.

Tim O'Toole is the Site Manager for the 2 Banner developments off Ravenhurst Road. Inevitably issues will arise as the development progresses but Tim wishes it to be known that he can always be contacted at the Site Office in the Valley Site to discuss problems. Tim is very approachable and wants to ensure that relations with local residents are maintained.

Banner development of the Valley site

Discussions are underway over boundary treatment and the unexpected stripping of allotments to facilitate the location of site huts. We will endeavour to ensure that the landscaping scheme satisfactorily restores the area. Banner is now putting in footings for the Site C properties and roadways.

Moor Pool Heritage Trust News

Restoring the Orchard by Will Harley

Recently, I started volunteering in The Orchard, an overgrown piece of land on the Moor Pool Estate which is now being used by Harborne Primary School in association with 'The Forest School' charity and the Moor Pool Trust. In this article, I'm going to tell you a little bit about 'The Forest School' and what it's doing in Moor Pool, as well as what it's like volunteering in The Orchard.

Last year, I started doing the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award with my school, and for the award you need to do at least 12 hours of volunteering spread over around three months for a non-profit organisation. I was all set to work in a charity shop on the High St, but it turns out that a project had been started here to do with Harborne Primary School. It is often said that children in the UK are becoming more and more isolated from the natural environment, and the charity basically exists to allow children in primary and secondary education to reconnect with it, but also to develop vital skills in many aspects of their development, including both social and cognitive skills. On the

Moor Pool Estate, the Forest School exists on a green space known as The Orchard, which is used by Harborne Primary School one afternoon a week.

I arranged to do my volunteering with the teacher at Harborne Primary and Moor Pool native, Mrs Gray. So now my dad and I go up every Sunday morning for an hour to work on the site. Now, before I tell you the sorts of things we've been working on, I should explain a bit about the Orchard itself.

As you walk into the Orchard, the first thing you see is a sort of clearing that has three large fruit trees in it, which is why it's called The Orchard. The ground is mostly clear of vegetation, no grass, just soil and fallen leaves, and apart from these large trees and two or three smaller ones there isn't really much else there, which is what makes it look like a clearing. Beyond the clearing in all directions are areas covered with brambles and ivy, small trees and bushes, a lot of holly, and unfortunately, also a lot of waste and litter. It seems The Orchard has been used as a dump over the years, and such abandoned items included four rusty water tanks, two old carpets and a hub cap from the wheel of a Ford.

When we started working in The Orchard, there was already evidence that the land has started to be managed again. In one corner of the clearing lay a huge pile of logs and branches. Nearer the top of the Orchard, a little circle of logs for children to sit on had been made and coming out from it was a path cut into the ivy. For the first two or three weeks, we set about finishing the work that had been started. We cut the huge pile of logs and branches into three much smaller piles of logs, sticks and leaves. We used the logs to complete the circle of logs for the kids to sit on, and when we came back the week after we had finished this, we found the clearing dotted with tiny houses made from the other two piles and some string, for the dolls and dinosaurs that we discovered were inside them. We also, with the help of my sister, finished cutting the path in the ivy from the circle of logs to

the clearing. After that, we started some bigger projects. Mrs Gray asked us to dig a 'mud pit' for the kids near the entrance, so, not knowing quite what a mud pit was, we dug a wide and shallow hole near the entrance and used the excess soil to fill in some uneven ground. Then we set to work on clearing the junk that had been dumped. Because of this rubbish, at least a third of The Orchard is out of bounds to the children for health and safety reasons. So far we've tackled most of it, but there is still a lot of rubbish under leaves and bushes around the site. More recently, we have been cutting paths into the ivy and the bushes in the previously cordoned off areas of The Orchard, and clearing up the rubbish we find there. Every week we make a little more of The Orchard usable for the kids, and I find that really rewarding.

A few weeks ago I and my sister, who had a half day from her school, got to go and see The Forest School in action. What we saw was about thirty kids, raking up leaves, helping to saw wood and peeling wood off sticks with potato peelers, and they seemed to be having great fun doing it. We talked to a couple of the teachers there, who were telling us about how the children learned such important skills here, which is what The Forest School was set up for. Once, in the middle of the circle of logs, I made an elevated, round structure out of stones and pebbles, the sort of thing that campfires would be made on (I don't really know why; maybe more for decoration rather than actual use) and according to the teachers, some of the kids thought this was made by a fairy, while others believe it is a dinosaur's nest. I also learned what a mud pit actually is: just a muddy pit where the kids can muck around in and have fun. The whole time I was thinking how much I would have loved something like this when I was in primary school.

The Orchard has certainly been put to good use, and everyone involved in it has brilliant ideas for it, but whatever we decide to do with it, it's going to be a huge job, and we're going to need all the help

we can get. If you feel like helping out, then contact Rob Sutton or Emma Gray, and whether it's clearing the rubbish, taming the ivy or digging mud pits, they'll probably have something for you to do, and you'll be able to do it whenever it suits you, as long as it isn't the afternoon in the week when the kids are there.

My dad and I have already agreed we want to continue volunteering at The Orchard after I've finished the Duke of Edinburgh Award, and I'm really looking forward to see it get better and better for the kids who use it.

(A fantastic effort Will! Many thanks.)

Hall Management & Offer to Graingers

The Trust has put a proposal to Graingers regarding the acquisition of the community assets and running the hall on an interim basis. Graingers are analysing the proposal and we await their reply. Karen Turvey, who has great experience in community hall management, is assisting us. She is making preparations for the Trust taking over the management.

The Builders Yard

Grainger and Banner are addressing issues relating to planning obligations. In the meantime, work is underway looking at the building specification and putting together costings for grant applications.

Fundraising

Monthly quizzes are held on the last Thursday of every month at 7.30pm in the Bowling Clubhouse. You don't have to bring a team, you can come along and join in with others on the night it's always very friendly. It's £3.50 per head and all funds raised go to the Moor Pool Heritage Trust. The next quiz will be on the 31st of January.

Publication dates 2013

Please send items by	For publication in
February 28 th	March
May 26 th	June
August 25 th	September
November 24 th	December

Membership of the Moor Pool Residents Association

We hope that you support the work of the MRA in making the estate a fine place to live for people of all ages, whilst preserving its unique character. This takes a lot of time and effort and money. We have been generously supported for special projects like the Trust and MiB from Community Chest Funds but we also need you as residents to do your bit by joining the MRA and paying the very modest subscription of £3 for an individual or £5 for a family, which goes towards our running expenses including printing of the Duck newsletter. There are many ways to spend money but raising funds is far more difficult. If you would like to join the MRA and support our efforts please fill in the attached tear off slip and send to the Treasurer at c/o 14 Pereira Road.

I/We should like to join the Moor Pool Residents Association. I enclose my payment of: £3.00 Individual..... or £5.00 Family..... (Tick which applies)

Cheques should be made payable to **Moor Pool Residents Association.**

Name

Address

Tel

Email

Please send your completed application to: **The Treasurer, C/O 14, Pereira Road**

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Annual General Meeting

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Please come early to get a seat.

Followed by

Moor Pool Carol Walk

The carol walk will follow the residents AGM at around 4.15pm. Please come along and take part; dress warmly and bring a torch for lighting your way. The Carol booklet can be downloaded from the MRA website. Hot drinks, mulled wine and mince pies afterwards at the Hall.