

BRAMALL

DEVELOPING PROJECTS TO IMPROVE BRAMALL HALL AND PARK



inside:

A Friend in need is a friend indeed

Friends of Bramall Hall & Park

Conservation Work at the Hall

Myths and Legends

Archaeology in the walled garden

Woodland management and pond repairs

Developing projects to improve Bramall Hall and Park and keeping you informed about the work currently going on in the Park and Hall and our larger plans for the future.



BRAMALL HALL & PARK

TUDOR MANOR HOUSE SET IN 70 ACRES OF PARKLAND



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Welcome

Welcome to the third issue of the Bramall Hall & Park Project newsletter

Two of Stockport Council's priorities are promoting an 'attractive and thriving' and 'greener' borough. As part of this, the Council is continuing to develop proposals to improve Bramall Hall and Park and would like to keep everyone informed about this work. A key priority is to develop a holistic and sustainable vision to guide the future management of the site.

Read on to find out in more detail about the progress we are making with this work and the other exciting projects that have been going on at Bramall recently, such as the Friends Evening Event, the new Myths and Legends tour and the work being undertaken to the Park.

A Friend in need is a friend indeed

The Friends stepped in to share their ideas on how the Hall & Park could be developed for the future when they attended a special evening at the hall in September.

The event was organised by project team members to provide the Friends with opportunities to see what changes are being proposed and allow them to directly offer their ideas into the melting pot.

Friends and staff got creative and messy when they were asked to plan out their ideas for the historic walled garden and to attempt to re-create sections of the famous plaster ceiling in the Withdrawing Room using modelling plaster and water.

Everyone who attended said they had enjoyed themselves and that they hadn't expected to be getting so involved in the detail of the project. The activities based on areas of the Hall and Park where work is likely to take place, were also designed to encourage a sharing of information between the Friends, a charity which supports the council-run venue through volunteers and fundraising, and Council staff who are the leading the project.



Friends of Bramall Hall & Park

Over the last few months some of the Friends have been involved with running the brass rubbing sessions during the school holidays; others have helped with the Park Working Party - general tidying up and **planting new shrubs which we have purchased.**

We also had a very successful hands-on Members Evening (see the related article on left), with some learning how to reproduce patterns based on the ornate plaster ceiling in the Withdrawing Room, using modelling materials, whilst others got together with the Park Team to discuss ideas and plans for the Walled Garden. **In 2011 we are paying for the restoration of the Hall's three longcase clocks.**



If you are interested in joining the Friends, please contact the Treasurer, Mrs Eileen Garratt on 0161 439 7202.

Heritage Lottery Fund Visit

Two representatives from the Heritage Lottery Fund visited Bramall Hall and Park in early November to provide the project team with advice on their available grants. They were given a tour of the Hall and Park and shown some of the areas where work is most urgent and it is anticipated that improvements are required.



Conservation Work at the Hall

The Friends of Bramall Hall & Park have funded a new programme of object conservation and restoration alongside the hall's curator Laura Wigg-Bailey.

There are a number of long case clocks, often called Grandfather clocks, on display at the hall and these require a lot of care and attention. The moving parts inside a clock mean that there is a lot of wear and tear, they also need careful cleaning to keep them dust free and well oiled. Over the years they have ceased to work and now need urgent attention to bring them back to life.

A registered clock conservator will work on three of the hall's seven longcase clocks, sourcing new parts where necessary from other clocks of similar age and type to ensure a high level of accuracy in the restoration. The conservator has already worked with Laura to identify the age, maker and type of each clock and has also trained her in the best methods of keeping the clocks clean. In addition to the clocks, the Friends have also funded the repair of a bronze statue, depicting a killed highlander with a stag slung across the back of a horse, which sits on a table in the Nevill Room at the hall.



Youth. Culture. Stockport get hands on at the Hall

In May this year, a number of young volunteers from Youth. Culture. Stockport. met at Bramall Hall to get hands on with some conservation work, under the guidance of the Collections Access Officer.

They learned how to safely handle objects whilst cleaning, and use specialist equipment such as soft brushes to remove dust without damaging the object, and then got on with the task of getting rid of the dust in the Housekeeper's bedroom. We're sure she would have approved! The recently restored Arts and Crafts metalwork on the door of the Withdrawing Room also got special treatment, with the volunteers using Renaissance Wax to clean and protect it. Two keen young volunteers took on the job of documenting some of the archive records about the Hall, like letters, which have been added to the Hall's catalogue and will allow us to search easily for this information. For more information about Youth. Culture. Stockport. what they do and how you can get involved, please contact Amanda Phillipson, Formal Learning Manager on 0161 488 4286.

Easter Consultation Exercise

An essential piece of work for the project team is to engage with the public, both existing users of the Hall and Park and those who currently do not visit.

The team have already carried out initial public consultation but to build on this, a more extensive consultation exercise took place over the Easter Weekend earlier this year. This consisted of **targeted interviews with just under 700 park and hall users** over the 4 days, and a manned exhibition stand at the Hall during the Easter Sunday Festival which attracted just over 1500 visitors. The exhibition highlighted key information coming forward from the Conservation Management Plan, which has since been completed, and went onto tour key sites in Stockport including Bramhall Library, Bramhall Village Square, The Central Library and Vernon Park Museum. This gave people the chance to learn about the findings of the plan and comment on future proposals for the site.

Myths and Legends of Bramall Hall

October saw over 40 people attend a new Myths & Legends Tour of Bramall Hall. The tour explored some of the many legends about past occupants of the Hall, including the Legend of the Red Rider, a poem written about the death of one Hall owner in the 1600s. Not only did visitors learn about the history of the rooms, and stories of mysterious goings on over the last 700 years, they also got the chance to go around the Hall in the evening, and even experience the Withdrawing Room in complete darkness! Four young volunteers from Youth. Culture. Stockport. got involved in the planning and delivery of the Tour, with one even battling his nerves to introduce a story in the Chapel! We got lots of good feedback and hope to make some changes based on that, and run the Tour again in the future. To find out about events like this planned at Bramall Hall, please check our activities and events page on **www.bramallhall.org.uk** or call 0161 485 3708.

Woodland management work and pond edge repairs in Bramhall Park

In January 2011, the Council's Arboriculture Team will be undertaking woodland management work to the Park. This will involve **crown lifting, pruning and in some places thinning of trees as part of the planned management** of the trees and woodlands in the park. During the period of this work some footpaths may have to be closed temporarily on a daily basis to enable the work to be carried out safely.

During November, work was carried out to repair the middle pond footpath edging which was collapsing and becoming dangerous.



Archaeology in the walled garden

The Centre for Applied Archaeology based at the University of Salford carried out extensive trench excavations in the walled garden in December last year and a report has now been received from the team detailing their findings. Unfortunately the evaluation identified few archaeological remains of significance as it appears that the site was cleared and levelled with a layer of sand prior to the extension of the walled garden and the erection of new outbuildings by Charles Nevill in the late 19th century. However, **there were a few finds, including a Victorian rhubarb forcing pot**, and archaeologists uncovered the foundations of the original west wall of the former, smaller walled garden, probably dating from the late 18th early 19th century. The way is now clear to develop plans for the future of the walled garden.

Restoration works following the installation of the gas pipeline

Restoration work to the driveway has been completed following the installation of the new gas pipeline through the park last year by the North West Gas Alliance. The surface of the driveway has been coated in a double layer of surface dressing finished with fine stone chippings, which has been funded by the Gas Alliance. The work will protect and enhance the driveway, and extend the life of the tarmac surface, for many years to come.

Bramhall Green Roundabout improvement works

A scheme to improve highway safety and pedestrian and cycle access on the Bramhall Green roundabout has started and will be completed before the end of the financial year. The scheme will benefit pedestrians, cyclists and motorists through improved zebra crossings, shared use footways, realignment of the highway and bus stop improvements.

For more information please contact **Mary Clarke, Strategic Network Engineer, the Council's Traffic Services on 07800 618192 or mary.clarke@stockport.gov.uk**

Do you have any old photographs of Bramall Hall and the Park that you think would be helpful for the project? We are looking in particular for early photographs of the hall and landscape.

If you have anything you think would be interesting, please contact Melissa Marshall on 0161 218 1534 or email: melissa.marshall@stockport.gov.uk

Find Out More

If you would like any more information about the project or have any comments about the content of this leaflet please contact Melissa Marshall on **0161 218 1534** or see the project webpage

www.stockport.gov.uk/bramall

You can also post your comments to Melissa at Stockport Council, Regeneration, Stopford House, Piccadilly, Stockport, SK1 3XE or email: melissa.marshall@stockport.gov.uk