



LOVE LOCAL LANDMARKS X

By Ann Robey

Many readers of *Spaces* (especially those who volunteered their time and expertise to help) may be wondering what has happened to the Love Local Landmarks project. This project, which started in 2010, looked at Hackney's existing local list of heritage assets, surveyed and photographed them and also identified additional buildings that might be added to the list. You will be pleased to know that all your efforts have culminated in a revised local list being taken to Cabinet in December 2012, after extensive consultation. All the additions that had previously been agreed with Planning & Regulatory Services were accepted by Councillors and therefore Hackney now has a new, revised local list, which will soon appear on the Council's website. At the start of the project we had anticipated adding perhaps 50-100 buildings, but in fact 127 new buildings or groups were finally added.

The additions include many industrial buildings and structures from the Victorian and later eras, as well as some unusual and unique building types, including the important post-war, flatted-factory workshops in Ada Street, beside the Regent's Canal. Appropriately in this Olympic year, three boathouses were added – Gilbert Johnstone Boathouse at Eton Mission Rowing Club in Wallis Road (from the inter-war period) and two boathouses at Spring Hill in Upper Clapton (the post-war Tyrell's Boathouse and Verdon's Boathouse, a Victorian structure). Other additions include Nos 1-22 Meynell Gardens, a cul-de-sac of Arts and Crafts houses just off Well Street Common, and the post-war St Paul's Church, Stoke Newington High Street. Other additions to the new local list include many of the refurbished Victorian villas and houses around Victoria Park, London Fields Lido and Graham Mansions – a fine Victorian mansion block of flats. An unusual but important 'local' heritage asset is the Hackney Peace Carnival Mural in Dalston Lane, which was also added.

Before this project, the local list was last updated in 1991 and much has changed in Hackney since then. It was necessary to remove 108 buildings from the original list, including a few which are now in adjacent

boroughs due to boundary changes. Many of the others have been demolished – some in unfortunate circumstances, such as the Clapton Great Synagogue in Lea Bridge Road and the former Gibbons Furniture Store in Amhurst Road. Others have been so substantially altered that their retention on the local list is inappropriate. More positively, some of the buildings on the original list have been upgraded to become statutory-listed buildings, including the former Lower Clapton Road Baths (Kings Hall Leisure Centre), Gainsborough Primary School, Berkshire Road and the Dolphin Public House in Mare Street. Unfortunately some of the more ephemeral listed structures – such as horse drinking troughs, gun posts, post-boxes and railings – have disappeared and been lost forever.

The volunteers also contributed to a website for both public and professional use. This will be accessible at www.hackneybuildings.org.uk sometime soon. Designed to archive standards, this online catalogue now contains all the borough's locally listed buildings with architectural descriptions, photographs and maps. Fully searchable, it will be a valuable asset for the Council's officers and the general public. Having more information about the buildings included on the local list is needed if a list is going to prove useful to planners, amenity groups and the public. At the moment a revision of the entries of the final descriptive text is being undertaken for around 500 buildings. The data will soon be submitted to English Heritage's Historic Environment Record.

While our project was being undertaken, English Heritage was writing the first comprehensive guide to developing local heritage lists, based on examples of good practice from around the country. Published in May 2012, *The Good Practice Guide for Local Heritage Listing* is available to download from the English Heritage website and uses the work that we did in Hackney as a specific example. The experience of the volunteers on the Love Local Landmarks project contributes to 'Case Study 8: The Role of Volunteers in Identifying Assets'. We have recently received a small amount of further funding from English Heritage to extend the Love Local Landmarks project by finalising the uploading of details onto our website, and to produce a case study/toolkit to enable



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groups in other areas to benefit from our experiences. We have provided copies of our training materials to English Heritage's South-East Regional Office to help them train volunteers in their area.

To all the volunteers and everyone involved in getting Love Local Landmarks going and almost completed – thank you. We now have a new local list in Hackney and the database will be finished in the next few months so that all of you will be able to see your hard work online. Our experiences in Hackney will hopefully inform other community groups interested in doing similar exercises elsewhere. The final word should go to one of our volunteers, Laurie Elks, who said: 'It made me look at the streets around where I live with greater detailed interest and perception than before; the research I have done has also given me a better understanding of some aspects of the history of the area.'