



Explore Moor Pool: Self Guided Trail of the Moor Pool Estate:

This pilot self-guided tour is part of the consultation for the panels that are being developed around the Estate, for which MPHT has received Heritage Lottery Funding. The current interim laminated panels have been designed in-house but will eventually be designed professionally. Please let us know what you think.

This is a self-guided trail leaflet designed to provide some information about the history of the Moor Pool Estate as you explore this unique Garden Suburb. The trail starts at the Moor Pool Hall. Additional images and information can be found on the numbered information panels located around the Estate. Please refer to the accompanying map for the numbered location panels.

The Moor Pool Estate: The Moor Pool Estate was originally known as Harborne Tenants Ltd. It was a garden suburb and low-density housing scheme founded by John Sutton Nettlefold (1866-1930) between 1907 and 1912 consisting of 500 houses built across 54 acres and interspersed with green spaces. Now a designated Conservation Area it remains a fine example of a Garden Suburb, built to provide affordable housing in a semi-rural environment.

Start at the corner of the Circle and Moor Pool Avenue



The Circle and the Moor Pool Hall

Located at the centre of the historic Moor Pool estate, the Circle is the communal heart of the estate and complete with the Grade II listed shops, Offices and Moor Pool Hall it was built to provide residents with facilities where people could gather, encouraging a sense of community, which was integral to Nettlefold's vision. Beneath the Moor Pool Hall is the original Edwardian Skittle Alley believed to be the only one left in the country with a flat and rounded alley side by side. This is one of the earliest sporting clubs that was established when the Estate was first built to provide sporting facilities.

Now walk round the Circle until you are at the junction with Wentworth Gate.



The Circle Tennis Club and Harborne Tenants Office

The Circle Tennis Club is one of the two original Tennis Clubs on the estate and among the variety of sporting facilities provided. It was originally a village green but became a Tennis Club in the 1920's. It changed from grass to shale in the 1930's and to concrete in the 1980's.

To the left is the original Offices where the Harborne Tenants Ltd managed the estate until 1996 when it was taken over by a commercial company. Moor Pool was founded on the

principals of co-partnership. The intention was that residents would gradually buy shares and become co-owners themselves. However, by the 1970's when Moor Pool was designated a Conservation Area, most of the houses had come under private ownership. Above the Harborne Tenants office is the Snooker and Billiard Club complete with its original fixtures and fittings. Added in 1948, it is another one of the indoor sporting clubs provided to improve social and physical wellbeing.

Continue to walk round the Circle until you reach Carless Avenue. Walk up Carless Avenue until you reach the Square.



Green Principles



Moor Pool was built over 54 acres, with approximately 10 houses per acre in comparison to the 50 per acres permitted under bye laws of the time. 10 acres of the Moor Pool Estate were reserved as green spaces which included gardens, open green spaces, and allotments. Gardens were designed to be large but not so large that they were unmanageable, and beech hedges, tree lined avenues and grass verges prevailed throughout the estate. For the planting that took place across the estate, advice was sought from Thomas Humphries, the Curator of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens at the time of the building of the Estate.

Moor Pool Houses

Moor Pool Estate was designed with a range of 6 different houses to choose from to cater for a social mix of society. They were made of quality materials, with roughcast render contrasting with the red brick. The larger houses were located up Carless Avenue and High Brow. Traditionally, houses were passed down through family connections and it wasn't until the 1970's that those who did not have family connection could apply to move on to the estate.

To have a look at some of the allotments you can now walk back down to the Circle, turn left to reach North Gate. Walk up North Gate and turn right down one of the hidden pathways to access the allotments.

Allotments

The provision of allotments was an important part of the design of the estate, and they were interspersed amongst the houses, accessed by interconnecting passages that exist across the estate. In addition to adding character, and a semi-rural aspect they also ensured that every house overlooked green space whether it looked out onto allotments, gardens, open green spaces or the bowling green.

Follow the path through the allotment so that you come out onto Park Edge. Cross the road and walk back up towards the Circle. Turn left so that you are overlooking the Bowling Green.



The Bowling Green



Leisure facilities were integral to Moor Pool to encourage physical and social wellbeing. In addition to the indoor sporting facilities at the Circle, a variety of outside sporting amenities were also provided to encourage physical activity.

Originally located on the site of the current Moor Pool Tennis Club, the Bowling Green moved to its current location in 1913, complete with its wooden pavilion. The flagpole was later added. The location of the Bowling Green was such that even the listed flats on the Circle looked out onto green space.

Go back onto Park Edge and continue down the road away from the Circle towards Ravenhurst Road.

Turn right on Ravenhurst Road and walk towards the Pool.



The Moor Pool

The site chosen for the Moor Pool Estate was located around the Moor Pool, an existing pool, albeit initially much larger. In addition to fishing, the pool had historically been used by local people from Harborne Village for washing clothes and bathing.

The Moor Pool itself is a natural habitat for wildlife including geese, ducks, toads, newts, dragonflies and a variety of bird species.

The location of the Moor Pool Estate was ideally located so that tenants could easily commute to urban areas by bicycle, bus or train for employment, and those living on the estate in the early years were artisans, labourers and middle-class professionals. It was described as 'an Edgbaston for the less wealthy' at the opening ceremony. The rent for houses on Moor Pool ranged from four to eleven shillings per week and therefore would not have been affordable to the poorest sections of society.

The Listed Flats on Ravenhurst Road (Opposite the Pool)

The houses on Moor Pool were built within the natural contours of the lands, utilising existing features and gradients. Although there was a sense of unity across the Estate with the use of materials, no one building was the same. Variation in design was maximised in stark contrast to the rigid uniformity of terraced housing. The unique design of the listed flats, accessed by small bridges added to this variety and the unique character of the Estate.

Walk down to the new houses that exist between the listed flats. There is a large information panel to the right just past the allotments.



Winterbourne Lane – New Houses

The new houses, developed in 2012, are the first new houses to be built on the Estate since 1912. The name Winterbourne refers founder John Sutton Nettlefold's residence in Edgbaston Park Road, also built in the Arts and Crafts style. There were originally allotments, before garages were built over them.

Walk back up to Ravenhurst Road and turn right and head towards Margaret Grove

Margaret Grove

The variation in house design and building into the natural hillside with steps to access the houses reflect the deliberate attempts to ensure that Moor Pool was built into the existing natural landscape. Streets were also narrow to maintain a village feel and built only 16ft wide to allow two hansom cabs to pass by each other.

Walk down Margaret Grove and turn right into the Nettlefold Garden

Nettlefold Garden

The location of the Nettlefold Garden is on a plot of land originally designed to be open green space, and also the location of the cutting of the first sod by John Sutton Nettefold's wife, Margaret Nettlefold. After a successful bid to acquire funding to transform the space into a pocket park, the area is now managed by volunteers and has been created by them as a wild-life friendly garden and community space. This was also to location of May Day Festivities in the early days of the Estate.

Walk down to the corner of Margaret Grove and Moor Pool Avenue.

Moor Pool Tennis Club

The Moor Pool Tennis Club is the older of the tennis clubs that serve the Moor Pool Estate, and is the original location of the Moor Pool Bowls Club before it moved to its current location near the Pool.

Moor Pool Avenue & Park Hill Road

The house across the road was the first house to be built on the Estate, and where the ceremonial opening of the Estate took place. The now disused Harborne Railway also ran through this area, in what is now the Harborne Walkway. The Harborne Flyer also ran over this bridge and is clearly visible from this position. This provided easy transport for residents of the Estate to commute to work in urban areas or industrial works.

To head back up towards to the Circle, go back down Moor Pool Avenue.

Please let us know your feedback on the information content of the self-guided leaflet. (Please note that the panels will be done by a professional graphics designer and the current ones have been made in-house):

Please return feedback comments to manager@moorpoolhall.com or to 37 the Circle, Moor Pool Hall, B17 9DY