

Love Local Landmarks

In the 2010 London Borough of Hackney's Local List consisted of a simple list of addresses. Very little was known about the history, significance or condition of the buildings on the list, including elected council members, planning conservation officers, developers and local people. The status of the buildings had not been assessed since 1991 and there were no published selection criteria.

This trend is reflected at the national level where locally listed buildings are poorly documented, despite the contribution they make to local character and distinctiveness, and local authorities have limited statutory power to protect them from demolition, decay or neglect.

The Love Local Landmarks campaign was initiated by the Hackney Society to raise the profile of locally listed buildings locally and nationally and to help integrate their architectural and historic interest into masterplans and new development proposals. The project objective was to comprehensively update and enhance the London Borough of Hackney's Local List through the skills and voluntary efforts of the local community.

The campaign was delivered by members of the Hackney Society and interested members of the public managed by an architectural historian. It was overseen by a steering group containing officers from the Society, the London Borough of Hackney and English Heritage. A group of independent experts were also drawn in to assist with the sifting and review process before nominations were adopted by the Council.



The project began in 2010 and has been funded by LB Hackney, English Heritage and local heritage groups.

What it has achieved

Following the Love Local Landmarks campaign LB Hackney's local list is now publicly viewable as a database of detailed building entries. Each list entry contains a brief written description of the building's significance, a photograph and map

location. The website is owned and managed by the Hackney Society, and entries will be made available on the LB Hackney GIS system and on the Greater London Historic Environment Record.

As a result of the project the entire borough has been surveyed; the Borough's local list criteria has been reviewed and over 100 entries have been added to the Local List and any out-dated entries have been removed. There is a clear and simple process in place for future nominations by members of the public.

The website supports greater protection of the historic environment, providing LB Hackney's planning officers and community groups with a detailed and transparent

evidence base for planning decisions. For local residents it is a valuable source of information about the local historic environment.

During the project 28 volunteers were recruited and given training in surveying techniques and 12 in architectural photography, including architects, professionals, graduates, and young people with an enthusiasm for local history. Each volunteer received two to three days training on buildings surveying and architectural history from an architectural historian, as well as practical sessions on photography and IT skills to allow them to upload content to the Love Local Landmarks web pages. In order to produce their building descriptions the volunteers received training in basic archival research techniques.

The volunteers gained a thorough understanding of the local listing process; they surveyed the borough to put forward nominations to the local list, helped develop the selection criteria, took part in an initial sifting process and produced new local list descriptions for individual entries.

As a result of this work there is greater awareness amongst the community of the Borough's rich architectural history, and a clearer understanding of the role planning system's role in conservation. Local residents and the Hackney Society's members are in a better position to contribute to this through their improved understanding of architectural history and historic significance.



The volunteers really enjoyed the experience. According to one: *"I took on this project as a volunteer. I have really enjoyed it and I believe it will help me in my future work. The big highlight would be seeing any of my suggested 'Additions to the List' making it onto the Local List"*.

A tool kit has been produced, containing lessons and best practice in the training and management of volunteers for communities and planning authorities wishing to pursue similar projects elsewhere. The tool kit explains how the project was delivered and provides template volunteer job descriptions, survey sheets and local list entries.

More information is available at www.Lovelocallandmarks.org.uk

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Services Department:

Telephone: 0870 333 1181

Fax: 01793 414926

Textphone: 0800 015 0516

E-mail: customers@english-heritage.org.uk