

Press release

Release date: 22nd June 2010



City prepares to celebrate Centenary Birthday of Nechells Baths

One of Birmingham's most treasured landmark buildings is this year celebrating its 100th anniversary with a series of activities that will highlight its remarkable heritage and showcase the contribution it makes to its local community.

Officially opened by The Lord Mayor Alderman W.H. Bowater on June 22nd 1910, Nechells Baths is a magnificent Grade II listed Edwardian building that formed part of a general provision of public baths and wash-houses across Birmingham.

The city treasure closed in 1995 and fell into major disrepair. Following a £5.5 million refurbishment it was restored to its former glory and has filled the gap in Nechells for a much needed community centre.

The landmark building is owned by Birmingham Community Foundation and managed by Nechells Regeneration Project. The building now houses crèche and nursery facilities, training facilities, a café and office accommodation for several local not-for-profit community organisations and is host to many day-time, evening and weekend activities ranging from martial arts classes to employment preparation, a dad's and children's activity group to a credit union, English speaking lessons to a church.

Ann Stanton, manager of Nechells Regeneration Project said: "Those that work in, use and visit this much loved building have created a vibrant community base that attracts young and old alike. It is a central hub of activity for Nechells and continues to attract more and more people through its doors.

"We start to celebrate our 100th anniversary today (June 22nd) which is our actual birthday, and have invited all the children that use the centre to our party! We will also be contacting

local residents throughout the summer to invite them to share their memories with us as well as involving local historian Carl Chinn and others to help us celebrate further.”

The funding for the refurbishment was provided by AWM, the Heritage Lottery Fund and ERDF (via Government Office for the West Midlands)

David Bucknall, chairman of the Birmingham Community Foundation and chair of Rider Levett Bucknall added: “The impact that the refurbished Nechells Baths has contributed to the local community has been dramatic in a very positive way helping to make Nechells a better and safer place to live and work.”

“From its grand architectural presence to its remarkable contribution to the local community, Nechells Baths is a unique gem set within minutes of our city centre and I am proud of what the Birmingham Community Foundation and the NRP team has achieved.”

A grand open day event to be held at the premises is planned for Saturday 4th September. Further details of what this will entail will be released within the next few weeks.

Ends

Pictured: Tim Watts, president of the Birmingham Community Foundation and Ann Stanton, manager of NRP pictured with some of the children who use Nechells Baths and the birthday cake that marks the 100th year since the Baths were officially opened by The Lord Mayor Alderman W.H. Bowater on June 22nd 1910.

For further media information contact Jennifer Chatham 07775 912818.

Notes to the editor

Part of the wider Community Foundation network, the Birmingham Community Foundation is an independent charity that helps an average of 750 community and volunteer groups each year across Birmingham and Black Country. Its unique approach to philanthropy allows individuals and businesses to support their own specific local interests and causes and in doing so invest in the future of their community.

With an in-depth knowledge of local communities and grant making, the Birmingham Community Foundation link people who care about their local community and the wide range of voluntary organisations, community groups and local charities who do the hands-on work to make a real difference.

NECHELLS BATHS

Architect: Arthur Harrison FRIBA

Builder: John Bowen and Sons