



## Bulletin 10 March 2015

*If you would like to get involved in any way, please get in touch. [houghendhall@gmail.com](mailto:houghendhall@gmail.com) or ring Carolyn Kagan (0161 881 6887)*

We are pleased to bring you the latest update on the achievements (and frustrations) of the Hough End Hall project.

## Progress of the Sale of the Hall

The Friends of Hough End Hall had to withdraw from the bidding process after being unsuccessful in the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. RBS, the Hall's owner, then set a deadline for bids from other interested parties to be submitted.

Not long before the deadline we were contacted by an agent for a charitable foundation endowed by a prominent and well respected entrepreneur who wanted to submit a bid for the Hall, incorporating the community interests and working with the Friends of Hough End Hall.

We were obviously delighted with this and after some discussions and meetings agreed to be a part of this bid, which was duly submitted. Full details of how any partnership arrangements would work are still to be worked out but we can assure you we are approaching this with careful risk analyses – particularly as far as any financial commitments might be concerned!

RBS received and reviewed all the bids and decided in January to work with three bidders (of which 'our' charitable foundation was one) as they refined their bids, clarifying any conditions they had put alongside their offers.

The last we heard (just before our public meeting on March 28<sup>th</sup>) was that RBS was commissioning a full condition survey with any associated specialist surveys needed (such as timber surveys) to give to the prospective bidders, to help speed up the process.

For us, this is a little frustrating as we had reached this point last August, by which time we had already got a condition survey completed and had professional costings of the repairs and restoration needed for the Hall.

Had RBS agreed to work with us without the messiness of other bidders, we could have been a lot further forward by now!

So... we still do not know what role we will have in the event of the Hall eventually being sold. We hope the charitable foundation will be successful and that we will be able to form a constrictive partnership for the future and ensure the Hall is made available for local people.

## What else?

We had a successful public meeting with about 40 people attending on March 28<sup>th</sup>.

Through the campaign we have already made aspects of the heritage of the Hall more visible and publicly available.

As many of you will know we had some **jigsaws** made of the Hall. These are still available to buy from the Chorlton Bookshop or from the Friends (contact below).

In addition, Andrew Simpson, our local historian and Peter Topping, Chair of the Friends of Hough End Hall and a local artist have worked hard to produce a **book – Hough End Hall: The Story** about the hall and the people who lived in it. This will be the first book to cover the stories of the life in and around the Hall, and is full of Peter's printing, old photographs and old site plans that have never been made public before. Watch out for notices of the book launch which will probably be in May.

Andrew and Peter have also designed a **heritage walk** from the Hall, via Chorlton Park and Beech Road to the Lloyds pub, with stories about links to the Hough End Hall Estate and those who lived in it. There will be premiered at the Chorlton Arts Festival – so join in if you can or meet the walkers at the Lloyds pub at the end of the walk. The Festival is on from 15<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> May so watch out for the programme and confirmation of timings for events. <http://www.chorltonartsfestival.com>

We were given two lovely watercolour paintings by Arthur A. Strange, painted in 1913 and 1914 – see the website for pictures of these and thanks to Pamela Woosey for her grandfather's paintings.

## What Next?

We are still accepting donations to cover our costs. Donations, orders and enquiries to Carolyn Kagan, 37 Chandos Road South, M21 0TH (cheques payable to Friends of Hough End Hall).