

MOAT BRAE - THE BIRTHPLACE OF PETER PAN

Background

Moat Brae, a B-Listed Georgian townhouse and garden in Dumfries, in rural southwest Scotland, was designed by local architect Walter Newall in 1823 and acknowledged by JM Barrie as his inspiration for Peter Pan: “for our escapades in a certain Dumfries garden, which is enchanted land to me, were certainly the genesis of that nefarious work – Peter Pan”.

The Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust (PPMBT) was established in August 2009 as a company limited by guarantee with charitable status to save Moat Brae from demolition, successfully beating the bulldozers by just 3 days.

The Trust's purpose, as set out in its Memorandum of Association, is: “to advance heritage through preserving and restoring for public benefit the literary, historical and architectural heritage of Moat Brae House, Dumfries and its gardens, being a site of unique historical and literary interest by virtue of its associations with James Matthew Barrie, the world renowned author of ‘Peter Pan’ and of great architectural significance having been designed by Walter Newall.”



Moat Brae House, Dumfries

The Trust's aim now is to restore Moat Brae House and its gardens to create the National Centre for Children’s Literature and Storytelling. Learning and inspiration is at the heart of this innovative project that will contribute to the regeneration of Dumfries as part of a broader strategy that plans to use the arts and culture as a means to re-invigorate the town and will complement the major cultural developments already underway.



The saloon and cupola, Moat Brae

Lack of cultural facilities in Dumfries is a primary concern and there is considerable evidence to illustrate that Dumfries and Galloway has amongst the most severe economic and social challenges facing any region in Scotland. It suffers from all the problems associated with rural living: low wages, high living costs, an ageing population and emigration of young people.

The Moat Brae project presents a real opportunity to redress some of the economic and deprivation issues that currently face Dumfries. A transformed Moat Brae will be a place to learn, be creative, socialise, work and have fun. It has

the potential to attract in excess of 45,000 visitors to Dumfries each year, which in turn, will protect existing jobs whilst creating an estimated 40 new ones. The Trust has worked tirelessly to devise a project that is realistic, practical and sustainable.

The **strategic aims** of the Trust are to:

- ★ restore the structure and fabric of the building, securing its future as a major asset for the local community;
- ★ create a National Centre for Children’s Literature and Storytelling across all time and all cultures; and
- ★ re-invent the garden as JM Barrie’s Neverland, his ‘enchanted land’, where the playing of childhood games so inspired him.



Summer Light in Neverland, Moat Brae Garden

Phase A Works at Moat Brae, an investment of £0.75m, have recently been completed. Major funding was secured from Historic Scotland, the Garfield Weston Foundation, Wm Grant & Sons and many other smaller family trusts and individuals. The house has now been saved and secured for the community; it is wind and watertight, complete with a new roof and fully restored windows.



Proposed new west extension and entrance

The current **Phase B development programme** has been largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Creative Scotland. Stage D Design proposals for both Moat Brae house and garden have now been approved by PPMBT Trustees and are going through the planning process. This development period has involved the appointment of a multi-disciplinary design team led by Mark Hopton of architects LDN of Edinburgh, who recently successfully completed the redevelopment of Sir Walter Scott’s Abbotsford.

Phase B capital works - an 18-month programme scheduled to start on site in the autumn of 2015 - is estimated to cost approximately £5.5m which PPMBT Trustees are committed to raising. Potential sources of funding have been identified and various applications have been made, including to the Heritage Lottery Fund, Creative Scotland, Historic Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Garfield Weston Foundation, Foyle Foundation, Robertson Trust, Wolfson Foundation, Monument Trust, Clore Duffield Foundation, William Grant Foundation and a range of smaller family trusts and foundations. Sponsorship of a window has recently been secured from the Walt Disney Company.

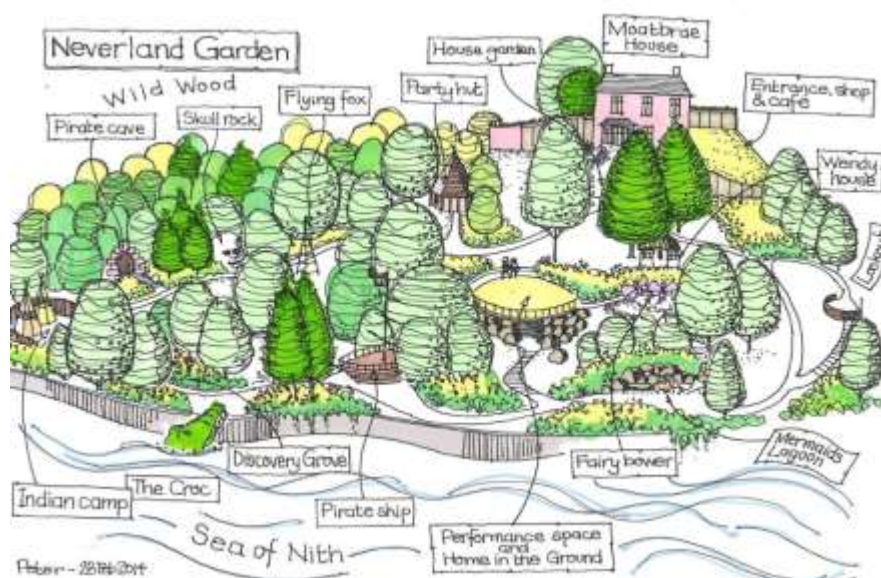


Children at Moat Brae Open Day

There has been much consultation with future long-term **strategic partner organisations** – including the Scottish Storytelling Centre, Scottish Book Trust, Scottish Poetry Library, Wigtown Book Festival, Seven Stories in Newcastle, The Oxford Story Museum and Great Ormond Street Hospital - as well as with local community bodies and individuals. A community

engagement and volunteering plan is in place as well as a Communications Plan to ensure continued appropriate press, PR and marketing opportunities on a regular basis.

PPMBT has maintained a high public profile for the project and has successfully engaged the local community by offering volunteering opportunities, regular events and news updates. It has raised the funds necessary to maintain and efficiently manage the office and current structures associated with the project’s administration over the last 5 years. There is a strong management team in place with considerable experience and expertise in sustainable project development and delivery. The Trust is fortunate in having specific expertise in managing national large-scale capital projects in our Chairman, Dame Barbara Kelly and 10 other trustees. PPMBT is a member of the Association of Building Preservation Trusts network; the project has the support of the **Prince’s Regeneration Trust** and **Joanna Lumley** is our Patron.



Sketch of Proposed Layout for Neverland Discovery Garden

Conclusion

The Chairman and Trustees of PPMBT are confident that this exciting project will contribute to the regeneration of Dumfries Town Centre and is both realistic and viable. It stands to make a very real difference to the lives of many people who live in or visit Dumfries by offering educational, heritage, artistic and employment opportunities.

Detailed business plans, audience development, interpretation and activity plans are available on request. Please do not hesitate to ask for further information.

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Peter Pan Looking Out to Neverland

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