

Context

The drinking fountain is located on the eastern side of Top Green, nearby to Warwick Road.

Visits

23rd June 2017

Assessment – Discussion

A cast iron drinking fountain, possibly dating to approximately 1918 and located at Top Green, Coventry. Embossed lettering: "A gift Mrs Alick S Hill Mayoress of Coventry 1916-1918"



Drinking fountain – May 2016

It is ornate in design, and at the foot of the pillar is a small trough to catch the water provided via the spout from a decorative lions head, at the turn of the decorative valve knob above it. The top of the drinking fountain has been broken away, and the loop may have had a cup chained to it.

Top Green were pleasure gardens. In the mid-19th century the City Council was looking for an area of public land on which they could create a city park, and part of Stivichale Common was eventually identified in the 1880s and work began on a 4 acre site, which is now known as Top Green. The drinking fountain stands to the east of this area, alongside Warwick Road, the main road from Coventry to Kenilworth.

It is a survivor of the 19th and 20th century movement to provide fresh, clean drinking water, and is a reminder of the philanthropic donation by a civic leader.

Assessment – Criteria

Assessing the heritage asset against the Local List criteria; the heritage asset is valued locally for the following:

Historic: This drinking fountain has a strong associative interest with Mrs Alick S Hill, Mayoress of Coventry from 1916 to 1918; and shows the community gift from a civic leader, as a philanthropic act. It also illustrates the facilities that were part of Top Green in the Edwardian period.

Artistic: The ornate design of the fountain shows its decorative nature and artistic interest, with the lion-head spout and the classical column design.

Community: The drinking fountain is an example of the community value of the Top Green pleasure gardens.

Evidence: The drinking fountain represents structural evidence of an Edwardian drinking fountain.

Age. The fountain possibly dates to 1918, as the plaque indicates that this was a gift from the Mayoress from 1916-1918.

Rarity. This is one of a very few surviving Victorian drinking fountains in Coventry. One other example is the drinking fountain on Earlsdon Avenue South (listed – Grade II).

Integrity. The top of the drinking fountain is broken, but it is otherwise intact.



Drinking fountain detail, May 2016



Drinking fountain detail, June 2017

Group value. This drinking fountain has group value with the Top Green, the Victorian pleasure gardens that surround it.

Coventry's identity. This fountain is a distinctive historic element of the Victorian and Edwardian suburbs near Earlsdon.

Conclusion

After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for local listing are fulfilled. It is recommended that the drinking fountain, Top Green is locally listed.

Reasons for recommendation decision

The drinking fountain, Top Green is recommended for local listing for the following principal reasons:

- Historic interest: This drinking fountain has a strong associative interest with Mrs Alick S Hill, Mayoress of Coventry from 1916 to 1918; and shows the community gift from a civic leader. It also illustrates the facilities that were part of Top Green in the Edwardian period.
- Artistic interest: The ornate design of the fountain shows its decorative nature and artistic interest, with the lion-head spout and the classical column design.
- Rarity: This is one of a very few surviving Victorian drinking fountains in Coventry.

This report dated: 15th September 2017

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