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## **Press Release**

### **Friends Chip in for Restoration**

The Friends of the Black Country Living Museum have chipped in with a £1000 cheque towards the restoration of elaborately decorative tiled wall panels in Hobbs Fish and Chip Shop.

Hobbs Fish and Chip Shop was originally built in Hall Street, Dudley in the 1880s and was famed for its painted tile panels showing underwater scenes of fish swimming among fronds of seaweed, as well as its mouth-watering fish and chips. Only 11 out of the 14 panels could be saved.

The landmark building was saved from a state of near collapse by the Black Country Living Museum and was rebuilt, brick by brick, at the Museum site where it forms the centrepiece of the new 1930's High Street.

It took conservators six months of painstaking work to restore the tiles to their former glory, after thieves broke into the Hall Street shop and caused extensive damage trying to prise the tiles off the wall.

Enlisting expert help, restorers from the Jackfield Tile Museum cleaned and dried the damaged tiles and over 300 tile fragments rescued from the shop floor before piecing them together, like a jigsaw puzzle, to discover the overall picture.

The tiles were made by Pilkington's Tile and Pottery Company in the 1930s and the design was created by one of their favourite artists, John Chambers. The Jackfield team used specialist clear ceramic glazes for the painting, mixing pigments to exactly match the colours of the original tiles. Only the plain tiles, sections of tiles and joins were painted safeguarding the integrity of the original tile.

Caroline Taylor, Streets Ahead Campaign Manager said: "Restoring the 11 tiled panels was a key factor in achieving an authentic renovation of Hobbs Fish and Chip Shop. The Museum's newest attraction can now dish up our award-winning fish and chips to the sons, daughters and grandchildren of Hobb's former clientele who can enjoy a real taste of the past."

**For further information please contact:**

Fiona Carding, Media Relations Officer Tel: 0121 521 5692 Email:

[fionac@bclm.co.uk](mailto:fionac@bclm.co.uk) Mobile: 07901 575995

Emma Middleton, Marketing Manager Tel: 0121 521 5603 Mobile: 07747 312196