



## **CASA DEL BALILLA “GIUSEPPE SINIGAGLIA” (HEADQUARTERS OF THE FASCIST YOUTH MOVEMENT, ENTITLED TO GIUSEPPE SINIGAGLIA)**

**You can find this point of interest in Como - Path 5 - Stage 2**

### **INFORMATION**

**Location:** the Casa del Balilla “Giuseppe Sinigaglia” is in Como, viale Sinigaglia

**Paving:** the pavement overlooked by the façade is surfaced with asphalt. The raised area leading to the entrance, the steps and the ramp are made of stone tiles

**Architectural barriers:** the swimming-pool entrance is preceded by a large raised area parallel to the pavement, protected by an approx. 1.40 metre high railing. It can be accessed either by climbing two steps on one of its sides, or by using the ramp on the other

**Access:** access is from viale Sinigaglia

**Services:** parking available in the area

**Leisure and Food:** bars, cafes, and a hotel in the area; sports facilities; public park

### **DESCRIPTION**

In 1932 the Opera Nazionale Balilla (Italian Fascist Youth Movement) bought the area where the “Giuseppe Sinigaglia” stadium stood. It had been built between 1926 and 1927 according to a plan drawn up by architect Giovanni Greppi for the centenary (1927) of the death of Alessandro Volta. The engineer Gianni Mantero was entrusted with the task of turning it into the Youth Movement’s headquarters. Mantero modified the stands and completely restructured the entrance and façade of the original stadium, completing the new building between 1933 and 1934.

The façade cleverly draws upon the contrast between smooth plastered surfaces painted dark red, large windows in light grey and impressive marble portals.

With a length of 141 meters, the building is composed of three main bodies: a central one containing a gymnasium, and two side bodies where a swimming-pool and the former local headquarters of the Opera Nazionale Balilla are located.

Inside the swimming-pool – the waters of which have different depths (between 0.47 to 3.17 metres) - the diving board is covered in an exedra in glass block framed in concrete which takes you to the terrace and garden, well visible from the outside. After many years of renovation works, the swimming-pool was re-opened in 2007 and offers - as well as the possibility to swim - swimming courses and other activities such as underwater diving, waterygym, diving and wellness.

On the first storey of the two wings there are offices flanked by a wide corridor which is divided from them by polished wooden partitions with clear glazing; the staircase which leads to this level is encased in a fully glazed semicircle inserted into the wall in front of the main entrance.