



Trust Talk

March 2009

Multi-million pound award for Trust Thamesmead

The lives and future prospects of young people in Thamesmead are set to be greatly improved thanks to an award from the government to Trust Thamesmead of £5 million.

The Trust, which has been awarded the money as part of the government's Myplace programme, will use the funding to redevelop the Southern Arches under Harrow Manor Way as a Youth Leisure Zone enabling it to offer young people a very wide range of leisure provision and opportunities to improve their education, skills and life chances.

Through an innovative mix of new build, extension and refurbishment, the Youth Leisure Zone project will transform the arches and give young people in Thamesmead somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to.

Local youngsters will continue to have a big say in the type of activities and support that is offered.



The Southern Arches today (top right) and an artist's impression of the Youth Leisure Zone (bottom right)

Trust Thamesmead Trustee Janice Ward Wilson said: "We are extremely thrilled to receive support from Myplace to help make our Youth Leisure Zone a reality. Thamesmead is a vibrant and diverse community, but historically we have been held back by a lack of facilities and activities for our young people."

“Myplace funding will both strengthen our existing youth offer and enable us to provide the opportunities our young people have told us they want. The Youth Leisure Zone will offer young people and the wider community cultural and sporting activities alongside the chance to develop skills and seek advice, and we can't wait to begin work with our partners to bring the scheme to life.”

The Myplace programme is funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and delivered by the Big Lottery Fund. It is funding projects across England that are working to create safe places for young people to go that are designed to a world class standard and where they can get involved in a wide range of exciting activities and get information and advice from people they trust.

Board Go-ahead for New Strategy

Trust Thamesmead's Board of Trustees have given enthusiastic support for the charity's new strategy document which will drive the organisation's work programme for the next three years.

The strategy, which gives renewed focus to community engagement, has been revised to take into account changing circumstances such as the credit crunch, deepening recession and the crisis in housing. Research has been commissioned to strengthen the evidence base that will inform the Trust's approach and provide the means for demonstrating how effective the organisation is. The over-riding aims are to ensure that the Trust's limited funds are put to the best use and the most effective outcomes for the people of Thamesmead are delivered.

Annual Report & Review 2007-08

The Trust's latest Annual Report & Review is now available on our website: www.trust-thamesmead.co.uk or in hard copy from our town centre office at 19a Joyce Dawson Way.

As always the report is crammed with wonderful colour photographs of people taking part in our activities and services.

Pride of place this time around goes to this charming little girl who with her family joined in the Chinese New Year celebrations in the Town Centre last year.



The report highlights the Trust's major achievements in 2007-08 with the big triumph being the agreement between our two local authorities on a cross-borough Joint Regeneration Strategy for Thamesmead.

The Trust played a key role in this achievement as did our partners Gallions Housing Association and Tilfen Land Limited.

The work built on our earlier work with Prof. Scase and the University of Kent to agree our shared vision for Thamesmead and was funded by the two local authorities, the London Development Agency, the Greater London Authority and the Environment Agency.

Now that we have achieved a shared political commitment to Thamesmead by both boroughs we hope to see this followed up by a much greater focus on the needs of our residents by local, regional and national government.

This will be evidenced by much needed extra resources coming into Thamesmead supported by a new planning framework which provides better coordination and begins to ignore the impact of the Borough boundary on the lives of local people.

We are very supportive of the five priority schemes agreed by the two boroughs. Support for our Sporting Club Thamesmead project and our proposed Youth Leisure Zone scheme in the Arches will be early tests that will evidence a renewed commitment to Thamesmead.

Thamesmead Youth Voice

Thamesmead Youth Voice, a youth-run organisation that is supported by the Trust and which lobbies on behalf of young people in Thamesmead is going from strength to strength.

Most recently Trust staff and the young people took part in a four-day residential, the purpose of which was to enable the young people to write a Youth Charter for Thamesmead.



Trust Community Development Manager Janice Songhurst-Jones, who facilitated the event, said: "It was a very productive residential and we achieved our outcome as we now have what can only be described as a unique (written in the form of a poem) Thamesmead Youth Charter".

Prefixed by a strong mission statement, which was also written by the young participants, the charter is presented in three parts: what the charter is about, how young people want to be treated and what young people want from services.

They also agreed the design brief and an eighteen month implementation timeline that includes: delivering a series of endorsement presentations to diverse groups of young people, such as Bexley SNAP, National Children's Home, the Youth Councils and Gay and Lesbian Youth Organisations; hosting a launch event for service providers and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the charter.

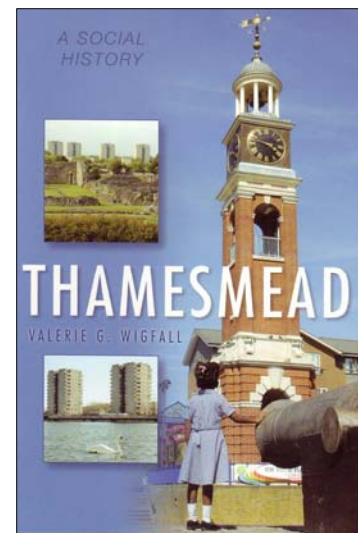
As well as producing the charter the young people participated in five outdoor activities; zip-wire, high ropes, leap-of-faith, mountain biking and tree-tops. For some, this meant facing their fears head on; and the joys of meeting such challenges were celebrated with tears and hugs. They also (with support from the staff) cooked all the meals and did the cleaning; which in itself was a challenge.

The History of Thamesmead is published

Everything you need to know about Thamesmead – and more – is now available in a newly-published book, commissioned by Trust Thamesmead.

'Thamesmead – A Social History' was first published in 1997 and this fully revised and updated edition reflects the changes of the last decade and looks to the future as the Thames Gateway is developed and London prepares to host the 2012 Olympics.

You can order your copy now by contacting the Trust's Head of Marketing and Communications Elaine Johnson on 020 8320 4477 or ejohnson@trust-thamesmead.co.uk



If you are Thamesmead town centre you can also buy the book from the Trust's offices at 19a Joyce Dawson Way. Copies costs £15.00 (plus £1.50 p&p).

T Factor 2009

Auditions for the Trust Thamesmead annual talent show, the T Factor, will be taking place at Woolwich Polytechnic School in April. On the judging panel this year will be Windrush primary school's Head Teacher Joanne Marchant, Anne Bassi from Woolwich Polytechnic, a representative from Abbey Music Studios and Trust Thamesmead Community Development Officer Romel Holmes-Lewis.

Organiser Julia Hickson said: "We have also replaced a 'celebrity' appearing as a judge with someone from a recording studio, the idea being that the winner receives constructive criticism from someone in the industry. The winner will also be offered the opportunity to go on to record a CD if they are a band or a vocalist or a DVD if they are a dance act which can be sent to record labels or agents if they wish to further their ambitions."

Trust Thamesmead Summer Festival

Here's a date for your diary – Saturday 11 July 2009. That's when the Trust will be staging its annual festival in Birchmere Park in Thamesmead.

Planning for the event is well underway and this year there will be even more community involvement with the return of the ever-popular schools parade and an opportunity for local sports groups to show what they can do with displays on a community platform.

This year the finals of the T Factor competition will take place on the music stage at festival too, giving an even higher profile to the best six acts with the overall winner going on to perform again later in the day as the headline support act.

For all the up to date news on the festival keep checking out the Trust website: www.trust-thamesmead.co.uk

External Funding Success

The Trust's Community Development team continually works with community groups to apply for external funding and it's been a great start this year with successful funding applications to Grassroots Grants secured by Greenmead Over 50s, The Monday Club and Friends of the Atrium.

In addition the Chinese Tai Chi group and the 1st Thamesmead Brownies have succeeded in gaining funding from Awards for All, part of the Big Lottery Fund.

Community Development Officer Linda Delieu said: "All of the groups have secured between £4,000-£5,000 which will enable them to go on free or subsidised outings to places that may have been out of reach without funding.

"We have some fantastic voluntary groups in Thamesmead who work very hard to provide top quality services to their members and successful funding help make that work slightly easier."

Community Fit Club a Success

In the last issue of Trust Talk we reported on the launch of the Thamesmead Community Fit Club and since then the scheme has gone from strength to strength. In fact the sessions have become so popular they now take up three rooms a week at Lakeside Health Centre.

Charlene Williams from Bexley Care Trust is delighted with the progress members are making, telling her that the classes are really helping them to lead healthier lives and that they are supported and encouraged by other members of the group to stick to the programme. Charlene adds: "We are hoping to arrange a team building day soon to strengthen the group's relationships with each other further and build on these successes."

The Trust's Facebook Friends

A fast-growing communication tool is the social networking site Facebook, where the Trust has more than 1,000 friends to whom we promote our services and activities.

We recently came across this piece of artwork from one of our 'friends' which although not particularly positive certainly demonstrates artistic talent. You should be able to make out the clock tower and old boiler house.



'A wintry night in Thamesmead'