

Trust Talk

September 09

Welcome to Trust Talk, the newsletter from Trust Thamesmead which keeps you in touch with what's going on at the Trust and in the community.

The September issue is invariably full of news about all the events and activities that have been taking place throughout the summer holidays and there will be plenty of that later but first ...



Children's Commissioner Visits the Trust

Children's Commissioner Sir Al Aynsley-Green and his Deputy Sue Berelowitz are to visit Thamesmead later this month as part of their 'Listening Tour', which aims to meet children and young people to find out what issues concern them and what work is being done to address these issues.



Sir Al Aynsley-Green to visit Thamesmead this month

The Trust's Community Development Manager with special responsibility for young people, Janice Songhurst-Jones told Trust Talk: "They are particularly interested in visiting a myplace project to establish the impact the funding will have on the lives of local children and young people.

"They will be spending approximately two hours with members of Thamesmead Youth Voice who are currently working on a presentation of the Youth Leisure Zone project, which they hope to deliver to our distinguished guests.

"Our young people have worked exceptionally hard on this project and are very excited by the proposed visit, which serves as a recognition of their efforts. On a personal level I am immensely proud of their commitment and their efforts to shape a positive future for themselves and their peers."

Trustee Janice Ward-Wilson said: "It will be good to be involved in the Listening Tour for the young people, the profile of the Youth Leisure Zone, the Trust and most importantly to raise the profile of Thamesmead and improve perceptions of the locality."

Trust CEO Mick Hayes reiterated Janice's comments adding: "This is good news and a big endorsement for the quality of our work and our commitment to Thamesmead Youth Voice and all the other young people in Thamesmead."

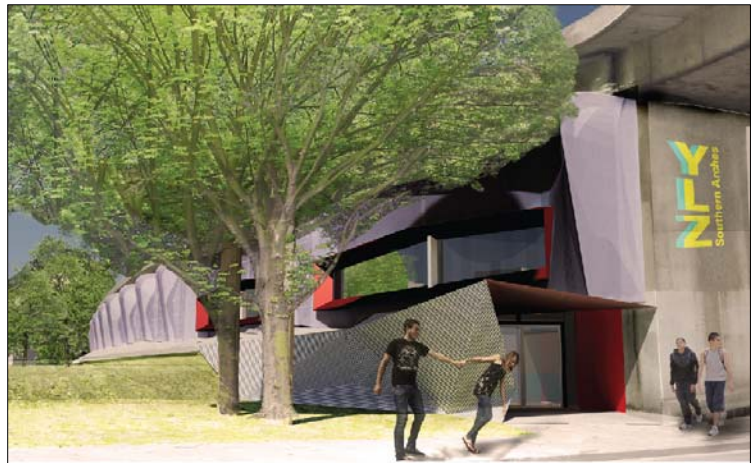
Multi Million Project Takes Big Step Forward

And talking of the Youth Leisure Zone – the multi-million pound project has taken a big step forward with the completion of the project’s capital delivery plan and the release of some exciting images of what the facility will look like when it is completed.

Since late February, when we received the fantastic news that we had been awarded a £5m myplace grant, the team has been working hard to develop the project proposal in greater detail with the production of three key pieces of work - a capital delivery plan, a business plan and a draft partnership agreement.

Project Manager Richard Fishlock explained:

“The capital delivery plan includes fully developed designs, technical reports, costings and delivery proposals and was led by Saville Jones Architects, who are also working with the Trust on their other multi million pound project, Sporting Club Thamesmead.



Youth Leisure Zone Entrance Perspective (above)

Youth Leisure Zone Corridor Perspective (below)

“The business plan covers in detail the background to the project, its future management and operation, financial forecasts, risk analysis, marketing and promotion and monitoring and evaluation.



The draft partnership agreement formalises the delivery of the project with our key service providers.

These are the Cave, Archway Project, Thamesmead Gym, Thamesmead YMCA, TYAP, Theatre Street and Bexley and Greenwich Councils.”

All this information – some 600 pages in total – has now been sent off to the Big

Lottery Fund for their assessment over the coming months and a pledge has been given that all funded schemes will receive a final decision in February next year.



Richard said: “The project has developed enormously, and we’re really pleased with the progress that has been made with Bexley and Greenwich Councils and our key service providers.

“The designs have also taken a big step forward, and really show what an amazing facility the Youth Leisure Zone will be.

“The work doesn’t stop here however – we expect further discussions with myplace as part of their ongoing assessment, and there’s still a lot to do in terms of finalising our partnership agreement, but the excitement surrounding the project is building all the time, particularly with Thamesmead’s young people.”

Trust Receives Award from Royal British Legion

Last month the Thamesmead and Abbey Wood Branch of the Royal British Legion presented the Trust with a plaque in recognition and thanks for the work we are doing with them and our “commitment of help and support to the local community”.

In recent years the Trust and the Legion have worked together on a number of projects including Armed Forces Day, the Summer Festival, providing venues for the poppy appeal in November, and linking them in with other community groups.

They are now having regular social bowls afternoons with the Pop in Parlour and this has also resulted in six new members for the Legion.



Trust Vice-Chair Ted Claridge proudly accepts the award from Branch Chairman Sam Petty with Legion members and Trust staff looking on.

Tackling Health Inequality

One of the Trust’s key aims is to support statutory agencies and other organisations to tackle health inequality in Thamesmead and we are pleased to report that significant progress has been made recently with Greenwich and Bexley Primary Care Trusts agreeing to work together to create an action plan to improve health promotion activities in Thamesmead.



A working group has now been set up which also includes Dr Eugenia Lee from Gallions Health Services, representatives from Lakeside Medical Centre and Active for Health (Greenwich), Age Concern Greenwich, Community Health Trainers programme managers from Bexley and Greenwich and Gallions Housing Association.

Trust Community Development Officer Roz Williams has been asked to be Interim Chair of the group and at its most recent meeting they agreed to support and attend the Trust's event in Thamesmead for International Day of the Older Person on 1 October.

Canal Improvement Programme

The London Development Agency and other statutory bodies have indicated that support may be available to develop a canal restoration programme in Thamesmead which could be worth up to £5m.

The Trust's Head of Community Development David Stone explained more: "A programme such as this could have wide ranging benefits for the people and communities of Thamesmead by raising volunteering numbers, improving access to the natural environment, providing health benefits through greater participation in sport such as fishing and leisure activities.

"An initial application to Design for London (now a part of the LDA) has been approved and this paved the way for a site visit that was held at the beginning of August involving the Trust, Gallions Housing Association, the Environment Agency and Bexley Green Grid.

"Design for London has now encouraged a more detailed bid to be put forward and this will be led by a Green Grid officer. This second stage of the process will include a technical appraisal of the options for improving and/or restoring parts of the canal system and crucially will also set out to resolve a long standing and contentious issue of land and canal ownership; at the moment there are competing and confusing claims made by the various parties – Gallions, Tilfen Land, the Environment Agency and local authorities.

Some Disappointing News

Last month we were informed that our 'Inspiring Community' bid, which we reported in the last issue of Trust Talk, has been unsuccessful. This is very disappointing news as we believed our bid to be very strong and had it been successful could have made a significant and positive impact on the lives of many young people in the Moorings area of Thamesmead, as well as the wider community.



The Trust was excited by the ethos behind this initiative of investing in locally conceived, locally delivered projects that would have built a neighbourhood partnership to help get behind young people, break the cycle of generational underachievement and broaden our young people's horizons.

The bid was supported by many of our partners including local schools, community groups and statutory organisations and although the funding will not be coming our way we will continue to strive to address the issues highlighted in our bid. However, we thank all those active partners for their support in developing the bid.

Summer Festival

After almost a year of planning, the Trust's summer festival took place on 11 July with an estimated 10,000 people joining in the fun.

Trust CEO Mick Hayes told Trust Talk: "This year's summer festival achieved everything we hoped it would; it was more family friendly than ever before; it was clear that the majority of young people there were Thamesmead residents and the activities were very well attended throughout the day.

"However, as we all know, the event was brought to an early close due to the actions of a minority of people who came along not to enjoy the music and activities on offer but to simply cause trouble.

"We regret the impact this might have had on the genuine festival-goers and remain proud of all we achieved."

Our T Factor winner 2009, Becky Downes, pictured left with X Factor contestant Laura White, said: "It feels great to win The T Factor. I was up against so much talent, which makes it even more special.

"The whole day was amazing and I can't wait to attend Abbey Music Studios for my recording session. Thank you Trust Thamesmead."



Matthew Clarke Football Tournament

Nine Thamesmead primary schools took part in this summer's annual Matthew Clarke seven a side football tournament at Woolwich Poly which is led by the Trust and managed by Thamesmead Town Football Club.

As usual, the day was full of enthusiasm from each of the teams, which saw Castilion Primary School and the Business Academy Bexley (BAB) both competing in the tournament for the first time, battling it out in the final which went to penalties with BAB coming out overall winners 2-1.



Armed Forces Day

More than fifty Thamesmead residents and community group members enjoyed a day out in July to mark Armed Forces Day thanks to the Trust.

Members of the Thamesmead Town and Abbey Wood Royal British Legion and older people's including the Pop in Parlour and The Friends of the Atrium went on a guided tour of The Royal British Legion Poppy Factory in Richmond, Surrey to celebrate Veterans' Day.

Among the many interesting facts that came to light during the visit was that every poppy; all 32 million Remembrance poppies, 80,000 wreaths and wreaths laid by Her Majesty the Queen and other members of the Royal Family are made by hand at the factory, which employs ex-servicemen and people with disabilities.

Later this year members of the Thamesmead Town and Abbey Wood Royal British Legion will be going into local schools to talk to the children about poppies, Remembrance Day and their war experiences.

Community Film Project

During the summer the Trust has been working on a community film project with the London Metropolitan Archive and community film production company Chocolate Films.

This has involved a series of screenings of old films about Thamesmead starting at the festival and subsequently for a wide range of Thamesmead groups including the Youth Awareness Project, Abbeywood Brownies and Rainbows, the Pop-in Parlour, Thamesmead Football Club and Trust staff. The next stage of the project will be to involve these groups in series of filmmaking workshops, which will take place in October.

Running alongside the screenings and workshops is the production of a documentary for which it's hoped there will be a gala screening in late November.

Thamesmead Archive Grows

The Thamesmead Archive at Bexley's Local Studies and Archive Centre continues to grow thanks to more material being unearthed as part of the Trust's T'riffic Thamesmead education project. This time it was a collection of leaflets, brochures and reports dating back to the mid 1960s which were discovered in a cupboard at the Gallions Residents Board offices.

The Trust was alerted to their existence and after copying some of the finest items everything was handed over to Bexley's Senior Archivist Simon McKeon for safekeeping.



Website Visits Reach All Time High

An average of 2,500 people log onto the Trust's website each month to find out more about us and the local area. We are delighted with this figure which demonstrates that the people in Thamesmead are increasingly using the site to access information.

You can imagine our astonishment then when the access figures for July came through, showing that a staggering 5,167 people had visited the website during that month - 2,168 of who logged straight onto the festival section of the website. We hope they liked what they saw and will keep coming back.

Another interesting fact from our online activity came from the social networking site Facebook. Following the early closure of the festival due to crowd trouble more than 50 members of the 'Friends of the Trust Thamesmead Festival' group had signed up to another group called 'Say No to Knives' - a positive outcome from a disappointing end to the day, you'll agree.

Summer of Fun

With the schools returning and the leaves falling don't our memories of the summer soon fade as autumn approaches? However, the Trust has been involved in a great deal of activity in and around Thamesmead's open spaces during the summer break and Trust Talk is here to bring you a flavour of how Thamesmead has enjoyed July and August.

Pride of place goes to the Thamesmead Extended Schools Cluster Summer Programme, which ran throughout July and August in the Trust's community halls and local schools, the aim of which being to explore the potential for establishing a summer school in Thamesmead using this year's programme as a platform.

On offer were a wide range of family arts and education activities including mask and puppet making, story telling, photography, percussion and the design of an imaginary landscape for a future Thamesmead.

The programme ended in style at the end of last month with a Celebration Day at Birchmere Park, with around 350 young people and their families joining in the activities and barbeque



Sarah Feleppa from the Trust's Community Development team said: "We had the chance to speak to a wide range of people, each giving us different perspectives of Thamesmead, their suggestions for the future of the area and a desire to become involved with our events, which is an extremely positive outcome for us."



“We were also able to promote the work of the Trust whilst giving parents and children a place to play and learn together. The children particularly enjoyed parading their work around the park behind a huge white heron!

“We’d like to extend a massive thank you to Thamesmead Youth Voice who gave up a day of their summer break to help out and to our contracted artists Capture Arts, Emergency Exit Arts and Once upon a Story for providing educational and enjoyable workshops.

“The Celebration Day on Wednesday was a culmination of all their efforts and judging by the impressive attendance and positive comments, we’ll be seeing more of the Summer Programme in our halls and open spaces next year!”

International Flavours at Picnic

The second annual Gallions Urban Village Neighbourhood Action international picnic also took place during the summer. Supported by the Trust the day was a great success, helped by wonderful weather and a steel band which could be heard across West Thamesmead.

Dishes from around the world were available for tasting including jollof rice, onion bahjis, sausage rolls and Peri-Peri chicken, which embodied the concept of experiencing aspects of different cultures.

Summer Fete at Greenmead

Greenmead Parents Forum held a Summer Fete at Greenmead Community and Children’s Centre in July. The day was blessed with wonderful weather and the crowds flocked to the centre to take part in the fun. There was a puppet show, a play both performed by members of the Parents’ Forum, face painting a Treasure Hunt run by 1st Thamesmead Brownies and lots more.

Trust Community Development Officer Linda Delieu said: “The forum is made up of a very enthusiastic group of parents and carers who attend various services on offer at the Children’s Centre and in addition to everything else they do, they are very keen to deliver additional activities that support local families. It is hard to believe that the parents and carers have little or no experience of organising projects. The members of the Parents Forum deserve a real round of applause.”



A warm welcome to the Trust

The Trust welcomes Nayeshh Pitla onto our Board as a new Resident Trustee.

Nayeshh is a Chartered Secretary by profession with a wealth of experience of Corporate Governance and organisational operations. He has a Masters Degree in Business Administration and has 11 years experience of working in the Adult Education sector.

He is a respected member of the Thamesmead East community where he lives and has been a driving force behind the improvement in this area, acting as Vice Chair of the area's Neighbourhood Watch and regularly attending the Thamesmead East Safer Neighbourhood Teams Neighbourhood Panel Meetings.

Nayeshh says "I am sure that we all agree that Thamesmead is facing new challenges and local residents need to be heard. I am committed to helping to improve Thamesmead and make it a place where people want to live, volunteer, work and go to school"

In the coming weeks the Trust will welcome two further new trustees to strengthen our governance.

And Finally

We hope you've enjoyed reading 'Trust Talk'. If you'd like to comment on any of the stories featured in this issue please contact the Editor Elaine Johnson. If you know of anyone who would like to be added to our circulation list please email: ejohnson@trust-thamesmead.co.uk

