



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Trust Talk

January 2010

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.

Happy New Year!

The arrival of 2010 coincides with the publication of the Trust's annual report and review for 2008-09, a year which presented many local, national and international challenges.

The theme of the challenges we all face has been picked up by Trust Chief Executive Mick Hayes, who has called for new thinking in the current turbulent times caused by the global economic crisis.

Speaking at the launch of the Trust's latest annual report and review Mick said that the solution to the problems caused by the current economic crisis can only come from within our local communities.

He said: "We will live with the legacy of the failures of the banks and the recession that followed it for decades to come but how did we all allow it to happen?"

"During these historic times I cannot help but reflect on the scale of the forces that impact upon our lives and how little control we appear to have over them.

"This terrible period could however be the stranger we never recognised, the opportunity we were always seeking, the challenge we always wanted.



Trust Thamesmead Chief Executive Mick Hayes

"As the institutions we once trusted fall apart, as public funding disappears and as the welfare state becomes unrecognisable the solutions can only come from us within our local communities. We need to change our focus; community wellbeing is as important as Gross Domestic Product.

“In Thamesmead we have a 40 year history of local action; self help when the services of the state were either not available to a new town or for what ever reason still remain unavailable 40 years on. It’s now up to us to take our own history in our hands and build the Thamesmead we want.”

You can read more about Trust Thamesmead’s work in the charity’s Annual Report and Review 2008-2009 which can be downloaded from the Trust’s website: www.trust-thamesmead.co.uk.

It is also available in hard copy by contacting the Communication Department, Trust Thamesmead, 19a Joyce Dawson Way, London SE28 8RA or by emailing contact@trust-thamesmead.co.uk

Understanding our Voluntary Sector

With a General Election a matter of months away and the threat of cutbacks to public services looming there is little doubt that the voluntary sector is going to be playing an increasingly important role in delivering services to local communities in the future. This means that organisations such as the Trust will need to be as effective as possible in supporting the many local groups operating in Thamesmead as the belt tightens.

In order to do help us do this our Community Development Team is undertaking a comprehensive research programme, meeting with as many of Thamesmead’s community groups as possible in order to get a much clearer understanding of the sector’s needs and issues.

We will also take the opportunity to strengthen our evidence base about the sector and identify what gaps there may be in provision. We already know that Thamesmead is significantly under-represented in key areas and have benchmark data for both local authorities. At the same time we will also be mapping the type, range and suitability of community facilities in Thamesmead.

Essentially, these two research projects will produce an analysis of community voluntary sector needs that may help shape our actions and priorities over the next few years.

If you would like to contribute to this intensive piece of work which the Trust is aiming to complete by the end of February, or would like further information please contact David Stone, Head of Community Development on 020 8320 4470 or email dstone@trust-thamesmead.co.uk

Trust Honours ‘Mr Thamesmead’

The Trust has bestowed the honour of Life President on former Vice Chair Ted Claridge, who is universally recognised in the community as ‘Mr Thamesmead’.

Mr Claridge, who moved from the east end of London to Thamesmead in 1976, has since worked tirelessly for the local community.

He has raised thousands of pounds for young people's charities, was instrumental in improving leisure facilities, including Thamesmere Leisure Centre, for local people and has been a staunch supporter of local organisations for more than three decades.



New Trust Life President Ted Claridge and wife Pat

Trust Chair Vic Grimes said: "Ted's commitment to the public good is well known. He has been a loyal and valued Vice-Chair to the Trust for the past ten years and the position of Life President is a fitting tribute to him, a celebration and recognition of his contribution since 1976, not just for this organisation but for the whole community."

Mr Claridge, who recently celebrated his 85th birthday, was elected a Freeman of Greenwich in 1996, primarily for his work in and for Thamesmead. He has also been Mayor of three London boroughs; Shoreditch, Hackney and Greenwich.

Taking on his new role at Trust Thamesmead Mr Claridge paid tribute to his wife Pat saying: "Pat has stood by my side since coming to Thamesmead and she, too, has made a significant contribution to my work," adding "I may have gone from the powerhouse but I'm still on the near outside and believe you me I shall be looking in."

Meanwhile the Trust is delighted to welcome three new members to its Board of Trustees.

Joining as new Independent Trustees are Nicola Insley and Ken Miller.

Nicola was educated at Cambridge University and is now a solicitor by profession specialising in town and country planning and highways law. Nicola lives in West Thamesmead with her husband and young son and is an active member of the Tideslea Path Residents' Association as well as being a Sunday school teacher.

Ken has worked in education for 32 years as a teacher, teacher trainer, advisory teacher, inspector and local authority senior officer. He has a passion for active teaching and learning and an in-depth understanding of educational systems. He now works as a freelance education consultant.

Our new Resident Trustee is Nayeshh Pitla, 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.

Finally on Board matters, at a recent away day our Board of Trustees agreed plans to further strengthen our governance in 2010.

Tackling Health Inequality

One of the Trust's key aims is to support statutory agencies and other organisations in tackling health inequality in Thamesmead.

With this in mind we are pleased to report that significant progress has been made recently with Greenwich and Bexley PCTs, representatives from Gallions and Lakeside Health Clinics and other service providers agreeing to work together in a cross borough strategic manner to address health inequalities in Thamesmead and facilitate, support and advocate programmes, projects and health services to address these needs.

This will be achieved by networking, advocacy, information and resource sharing, signposting, joint events such as World Health Day in April, guest speakers, peer support and participation in local and regional forums and surveys.

The Thamesmead Health and Well Being Partnership Forum is chaired by Trust Community Development Officer Roz Williams and meets on a regular basis at the Trust's offices in Thamesmead Town Centre.

Meanwhile some eighteen months ago a steering group was formed by Bexley PCT and Bexley Accessible Transport Services (BATS) to oversee the use and development of a service using a purpose built bus as a mobile health clinic.

Roz told Trust Talk: "This group, with representatives from several Bexley service providers and the Trust, has been meeting regularly to facilitate and support this project, bringing services to both the Bexley and Greenwich sides of Thamesmead.

"BATS recently heard that they had been successful in securing a £10,000 grant which will pay for a project worker to develop the formation of a formal collaboration partnership for the service, a business and income generation strategy and associated legal and contractual matters.

"The project's outcomes will aim to make this service sustainable for the future, extend the delivery across a wider geographical area, and provide better accessibility for the community to health services and health promotion activities."

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 and providing health benefits through greater participation in sports such as fishing and leisure activities.

"An initial application to Design for London (now a part of the LDA) was approved, paving the way for a visit to a number of areas in Thamesmead involving the Trust, Gallions, the Environment Agency and Bexley Green Grid.

"Design for London has since 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 try to resolve the long standing issues 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.

Growing Greenwich Scheme

A £450,000 scheme to promote local food production in Greenwich has been launched. It is called 'Growing Greenwich', which will be lead and supported by the Trust and Greenwich Cooperative Development Agency.

The central idea behind the scheme is that locally produced food will reduce our carbon footprint, provide healthier food, promote volunteering and health based activities.

David Stone said: "Thamesmead has very few allotments and others areas where food can be grown and at the same time we have some of the poorest health indicators in London. This scheme will provide an opportunity for the people and communities of Thamesmead to get involved, reclaiming underused green spaces, leading to better food preparation and eating habits and even to the possibility of local produce being sold through local suppliers.

"The scheme could get people involved from different backgrounds and various parts of Thamesmead who might not otherwise bother to participate – it could provide a pathway back into training or employment and lead to a real enhancement of our green spaces."

Thamesmead Travelled

More than one hundred people attended the gala performance of the play 'Thamesmead Travelled' at Thamesmere Leisure Centre at the beginning of December.

The play, which was commissioned by the Trust and developed from our highly-acclaimed 'T'riffic Thamesmead' education resource, was written and directed by Greenwich and Lewisham Young People's Theatre and performed by pupils from Herongate Primary School, Linton Mead Primary School and Woolwich Polytechnic.

Trust Chief Executive Mick Hayes said: "We are very proud of the T'riffic Thamesmead project and the way in which all schools in Thamesmead have embraced it. There is real evidence that the work being done in the classroom is making a tangible difference to the children's appreciation and understanding of where they live.

"This play is a wonderful development but we don't want it to end here. The Trust's remit is to serve the entire Thamesmead community, whether on the Greenwich or Bexley side of the boundary, and so we will be seeking to extend this theatre project into other Thamesmead schools in the future."



Erith and Thamesmead MP John Austin, who also attended the performance, said: "If you are like me, you will be fed up with Thamesmead being shown in a negative light. This play has shown we are 'top of the league'!

Woolwich Poly pupils in action in Thamesmead Travelled

Tremendous opportunities are coming to Thamesmead with Sporting Club Thamesmead and the youth project at the Southern Arches; they will provide great opportunities for young people and the wider community. I feel confident about the future of Thamesmead."

Charlton Legend in 'World Cup' Draw

While the great and good of the football world were at the World Cup draw in South Africa at the beginning of last month another 'World Cup Draw' was taking place much closer to home with the help of Charlton legend Bob Bolder.

Bob, who made 249 appearances in goal for the Addicks between 1986 and 1993, was guest of honour at Trust Thamesmead's World Cup Draw, which paired all fourteen local primary schools with a country taking part in the 2010 World Cup Finals.

Helping Bob do the draw was Thamesmead Town FC's Vice-Chair Mark Lee who explained: "Every June Trust Thamesmead and Thamesmead Town FC organise a junior football tournament for local primary schools and as 2010 is a World Cup year we decided to enter into the spirit and to give our tournament a World Cup theme too.

"All the schools now have an adopted country which they will study in the run up to the finals. We've even given them a flag and a book about their country to help them on their way.

"Then on 10 June, the day before the opening match in the World Cup Finals in South Africa, we will be holding our own World Cup tournament in Crossway Park in Thamesmead, which is now part of the exciting new Sporting Club Thamesmead development – the home of Thamesmead Town Football Club."

Bob Bolder said: "The Matthew Clarke Football Memorial Shield tournament is fantastic, not only to keep Matthew's memory alive but for the schools to come together. It will benefit not only the pupils but the coaching staff too."

Bob added: "What is really fantastic about the tournament is that it is open to both boys and girls and it's a great way to promote healthy living and occupy young people's time.

"Charlton is working hard to diminish street crime by getting kids into football. One of our full time coaches joined us to change the direction his life was going in and he's been with us for 2-3 years now. The other good thing is that he had the respect of a lot of young people who followed him into football too."



Mark Lee and Bob Bolder (back row left) with pupils from Thamesmead primary schools at the draw

The Trust Thamesmead-Thamesmead Town FC Matthew Clarke Memorial Shield annual seven-a-side tournament is held in memory of former St John Fisher Primary School pupil and Thamesmead Town Football Club under 10's player, Matthew Clarke who lost his fight against cancer 10 years ago.

It is one of the very few events which bring together all 14 local primary schools and the current holders, Business Academy Bexley Primary have vowed to fight to keep the title for a second year running.

Thamesmead Youth Voice Residential

Members of Thamesmead Youth Voice (TYV), which is supported by the Trust, attended a three day residential before Christmas, at the Margaret McMillan House Field Centre in Wrotham in Kent.

The purpose of the residential was to develop the young people's knowledge and skills, as well as build a cohesive team able to effectively work together to support the Trust's strategic objectives around a youth offer for Thamesmead.

The young people took part in five workshops, including a branding workshop for the Trust's myplace project at the Southern Arches.

The trip was led by the Trust's Janice Jones, who told Trust Talk "Of the four residentials for young people that I've delivered for the Trust, this has by far been the most successful.

"It's always a concern when you're taking young people away; particularly when there's a clear division between new and established members. You anticipate the conflicts that may arise and the barriers they need to overcome to develop group cohesion; always veering on the side of caution. Fortunately, our concerns were unfounded, and the members came together and worked well, successfully accomplishing the set tasks and meeting the objectives of the residential."

In her evaluation of the trip, TYV member Jerusha Frimpong said: "I like the way this residential has brought all the members together as a real group. Before I only used to really talk to my friends, even though I knew everyone because they were at all the meetings. I now feel confident to talk to everyone."

Staff at the centre said that our young people's negotiation and team-working skills ranked in the top bracket of groups in this age range that they've previously worked with and that we should be proud of them.

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

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