



Talk of Thamesmead

The publication for Thamesmead residents

Issue 13
Spring
2024



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Find out what's happening

Do you want to find out more about what Peabody's team in Thamesmead is up to? There are a number of ways you can stay in touch.



Keep an eye on our website

www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk



Connect with our social channels

X, Facebook and TikTok
@ThamesmeadLDN and Instagram
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Sign up to our monthly online newsletter

via the 'Contact us' section at www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk



If you have a question

email thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk

If you'd rather speak to someone in person

We can arrange to meet you at The Nest Community Building and Library, 3 Cygnet Square, SE2 9FA. Please email us at thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk to arrange a date and time.

If you have a sales enquiry

Register your interest at peabodynewhomes.co.uk and a member of the team will be in touch.

Hello Thamesmead

With spring here, and summer hopefully not far behind, it's the perfect time to talk about what's happening in the months ahead around the town's parks, lakes and canals.

As Peabody's Landscape Activation Manager in Thamesmead this is the time of year when things really start to ramp up, as you can read about in the article on page 14 where I talk about some of our exciting plans.

These range from social gardens and boosting local wildlife to boating returning to Southmere Lake and supervised outdoor swimming at Birchmere Lake.

On pages 12 and 13 you'll see the brilliant work that's being done by local people at two of the community gardens that have been transformed over the past year.

Away from dry land you can find out all about how Gallions Lake is being made a more welcoming place for all sorts of different wildlife on page 15.

If you'd like to start a project yourself locally for the benefit of the community there are details about how to apply to the Thamesmead Community Fund, which now also includes the Making Space for Nature Fund, on page 5.

And remember there's always a whole range of activities at the Tump 53 Nature Reserve. If your child hasn't visited this year, tell their school they can contact us at msfn@peabody.org.uk to book a trip.

This publication is about what's most important to you. If there's something going on you want to share more widely then please get in touch at thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk and we'll feature it in these pages.

Hopefully I'll see some of you out and about in our tremendous green spaces this spring.



Jack

Jack Gower
Peabody's Landscape Activation Manager for Thamesmead



Let's get social

The café at the Lakeside Centre has got a new name and a new owner and is still serving the same great food.

Steve Field, who was chef under the previous management, took over ownership of the café on Southmere Lake at the start of the year and has changed the name to Thamesmead Social.

Under Steve's management the kitchen and bar are now open seven days a week (Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm, weekends 10am – 4pm). It's doing a roaring trade in Sunday lunches with diners having to book in advance to guarantee a table.

Steve said: "The reaction from the local community has been really positive with lots of people coming along and really enjoying our food. So far, it's been way beyond my wildest expectations."

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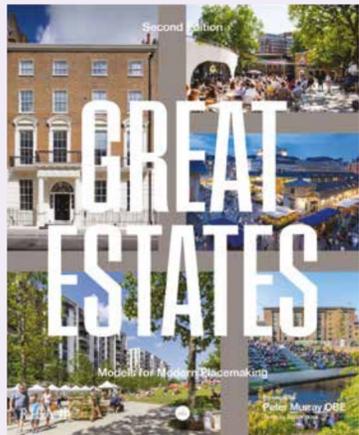
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Thamesmead by the book

Thamesmead has been featured in a prestigious new book celebrating the rich heritage of London's housing estates.

Great Estates: Models for Modern Placemaking is published by independent planning and development forum, New London Architecture (NLA), in partnership with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).

The beautifully illustrated, comprehensive book exploring London's historic and contemporary great estates includes a chapter charting the history of Thamesmead as well as exploring what makes the town a great place to live.

You can order a copy of *Great Estates* online from the RIBA book shop, www.ribabooks.com

Thamesmead gets connected



Five community projects in Thamesmead, which were recently awarded £15,000 to improve people's mental health and wellbeing, are now underway!

The activities are being funded by the Connecting Thamesmead programme – a partnership between Peabody, the London Borough of Bexley and Royal Borough of Greenwich – through the Thamesmead Community Fund.

The following five projects are being supported:

SENDability: A 10-week programme for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), as well as their parents and carers. Delivered by The Morning Dew Foundation.

Next to Blow mic sessions: An opportunity for local musicians to perform live in their community. Delivered by Jerusha Ujanga.

Feel Good Centre: A weekly social club for residents aged 50+. Delivered by the Listening Ears charity at The Nest every Monday afternoon.

Mum's Aid: Art therapy for local pregnant women and mothers with children under the age of three. Delivered by Art Group Facilitator Tanaz Assefi.

Thrive Youth club: A weekly after school club that focuses on soft skills development, career development, games and activities. Delivered by Parent Power Education.

Jerusha Ujanga, who is behind the Next to Blow events, said: "This fund has uplifted the local musicians in the area. Without it we wouldn't be able to do what we love and put on a show for the local community, whilst showcasing the town's amazing venues."

Rachel Carder, Peabody's Programme Manager for Connecting Thamesmead, added: "We're so excited to be supporting these five fantastic projects. Each project will benefit different groups in the local community, and collectively they'll involve diverse groups of people from across Thamesmead."



Find out more about Connecting Thamesmead at www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/connecting-thamesmead



Community fund open for business

Are you an individual, community group or small organisation who wants to organise a local project but doesn't have the funds? You can apply to the Thamesmead Community Fund (TMCF) which opens in May this year.

Grants of up to £3,000 are awarded to Thamesmead projects that connect the community and provide social and cultural activities for locals.

The money for the fund comes from income generated by location filming in Thamesmead as well as a contribution from the Peabody Community Foundation.

This year, for the first time, the Making Space for Nature Fund will form part of the TCF – providing funding to individuals and groups who want to transform Thamesmead's green spaces and help people engage with nature.

The Connecting Thamesmead programme, which aims to bring people together to improve health and wellbeing, is also joining the fund.

Last year nearly £65,000 was awarded to local initiatives such as: banner-making workshops run by artist Marcus Orlandi (pictured); Listening Ears – the over 50s social club for residents in local care homes; and the Thamesmead Running Club. This year the amount of funding available is increasing to £75,000.

The successful grant applications are chosen by a panel of Thamesmead residents. Panel

members receive training and are reimbursed for their time. If you are interested in joining you can find details below.

Uzma Ali, Peabody's Community Development Projects Officer for Thamesmead, said: "Bringing the Thamesmead Community Fund, Connecting Thamesmead and Making Space for Nature Funds together will give us the opportunity to support a broader and more diverse range of activities. We cannot wait to see what creative and inspiring projects local people come up with this year."

Prospective applicants will be able to join a Q&A to find out more about the fund and ask project-specific questions.

Please see the link below to find out about Q&A dates and links to the online meetings. Successful applicants will be contacted in July.



If you'd like to apply for funding, or are interested in becoming a panel member, please visit www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/thamesmead-community-fund

Local talent



Back chat

The amazing work of the Javan Coker Foundation is set to continue now they have secured funding. Peabody has joined forces with the Royal Borough of Greenwich to help support the foundation.

The local charity is dedicated to empowering children and young people with special educational or additional needs, along with their families, to help them reach their full potential.

When the charity's 'Ladies Breakfast and Chat' project, chiefly funded by the Royal Borough of Greenwich, was in danger of cancellation due to a financial shortfall — Peabody agreed to make up the difference.

Cllr Ann-Marie Cousins, Greenwich Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Enforcement, said: "We are incredibly pleased Peabody didn't hesitate in working together with the Royal Borough of Greenwich, to support the foundation in delivering a 'Ladies Breakfast and Chat' personal development programme for parents and carers of children."

Esther Sesay, Co-Founder of the foundation, added: "Ladies Breakfast and Chat" was piloted in May 2023. It has become a much-needed programme with great outcomes. We are grateful to now be funded by the Abbey Wood Ward budget and Peabody."

You can find out more about the important work the charity does at www.thejavancokerfoundation.org



Everybody Afro-Dance



Local parents and young people recently got the chance to boost their health and happiness with a series of Afro-Dance fitness classes supported by the Thamesmead Community Fund.

The free interactive dance sessions help to promote and enhance physical, social, and mental wellbeing through dance, fitness, and fun.

Dupe Makinde, Director of the Positive Futures Group which organised the sessions, said: "Our charity was founded with the aim of supporting young people and their families and we are committed to continuing to provide these services. This funding has empowered us to fulfil our mission, serve the community and contribute to positive social change."

Those who took part in the sessions gave their enthusiastic feedback, with one saying:

"Thank you for these brilliant classes. You have no idea how positively they impacted us individually. [The] ladies I've spoken to have said they were counting down the days during the week in anticipation of Saturday."



Find out more about the charity's work and upcoming events at www.positivefuturesgroup.org



Walking football kicks off

If you want to enjoy playing the beautiful game of football, but in a more leisurely way, then Erith Town Football Club's walking football might be for you.

Walking football requires players to walk instead of run, but while it's played at a slower pace, the passion on the pitch is on display for all to see.

Erith Town's Walking Football Co-ordinator, Robert Grant, said: "Walking Football is a huge passion of mine, and to have had the number of players that have taken part so far has been absolutely amazing. It really shows the popularity of this growing sport."

"Anyone can come along and it's a great way to meet new people and keep active. We would also like to thank Peabody for all their fantastic support with getting this project off the ground."

Erith Town Walking Football takes place every Friday evening on the 4G pitches at Sporting Club Thamesmead's Stanmore Stadium from 8pm to 9pm.



You can get more details and request a registration form by emailing walkingfootball@erithtown.com or by visiting www.erithtown.com/walkingfootball

Make practice perfect

Do you want to have a say in the decisions made at Lakeside Medical Practice in Southmere? If so, the Patient Participation Group (PPG) would like to hear from you.

The PPG is a collective of patients who work alongside healthcare professionals at the practice to ensure that the voices of patients are heard loud and clear.

By joining the PPG, you will have the opportunity to:

- represent your community
- provide feedback and suggestions
- shape the future of healthcare in Southmere
- connect with like-minded individuals.

Getting involved is easy. Please let the reception staff at the practice know that you want to have your say, and they will provide you with more information. Or you can email your details to, lakeside.reception@nhs.net and somebody will be in touch.

My Thamesmead

Local artist and actor, Jamie Zubairi, who also runs the life drawing classes at the Lakeside Centre, reveals what he loves most about Thamesmead.



How long have you lived in Thamesmead?

Nearly six years. I came here as part of the Bow Arts guardianship scheme that offers artists the opportunity to look after empty flats due for demolition in return for reduced rent.

I was really attracted by the prospect of becoming part of a growing artistic community in one of the most interesting parts of London.

Where do you live in Thamesmead?

I live just off Yarnton Way. I like that I can see all the different types of brutalist architecture styles from my flat.

What's the best thing about Thamesmead?

I enjoy the greenery and the architecture, it's a combination you don't get in many other parts of London.

I'm a photographer and the kind of nightscapes you get in Thamesmead with the towers, and walkways are really quite cool and unlike anything you'll find anywhere else.

Where's your favourite place to walk in Thamesmead?

My favourite place is actually Lesnes Abbey Woods. Every time I go, I seem to get a little bit lost. I never seem to find myself walking along the same path — maybe that's intentional — but I always find something interesting.

What's your favourite fact about Thamesmead?

That my flat was used for a music video by Skrillex, Stannah & Four Tet for the track *Butterflies*.

I think they chose my flat because I'm quite high up and they wanted the view. They dismantled my bedroom and created a kind of teenager's bedroom instead. Then put it all back to how it was originally. It was amazing.

Where's your favourite place to eat and drink in Thamesmead?

I'm very keen to try the Thamesmead Social at the Lakeside Centre on Southmere Lake. I've only heard good things and I'm going there for Sunday lunch with some friends soon. So far though The Birchwood for its roasts and atmosphere is my favourite.

What's your favourite Thamesmead memory?

I'm obsessed with snow and when Thamesmead is covered in snow, or even on a frosty night when the trees are frozen, it turns into a magical place. It almost looks like it has been created by AI.

What's the best-kept secret about Thamesmead more people should know?

Well, it's not a secret as such but it is currently a little under the radar. Not for long, I hope!

Last year I helped to create the Thamesmead LGBTQ+ group. We organised drinks and thought it would be just the three of us who started it but more than 15 people turned up and it was great and insightful. There's now also a monthly coffee morning where people can come along, have a chat and give support to others.

I'm also the organiser of the Shantay Drag nights, the first one was at the Thamesmead Sporting Club earlier this year and was a real success, so there are more of those coming up (see details below and on the What's On section).

That's one of the great things about living in Thamesmead, people are open-minded and always up for trying something new!



The next Shantay nights are scheduled for 27 April, 7 June and 8 July. Go to www.buytickets.at/thamesmeadlgbtqia to book.



You can find details about the LGBTQ+ meet ups at www.meetup.com/thamesmead-lgbtqia and there's more information about Jamie's life drawing classes at www.thamesmeadlifedrawing.co.uk/drawing-for-everyone

Cygnets Square activities return



Cygnets Square in Southmere is starting to get busier this spring with a string of new companies and organisations moving into the units by Southmere Lake.

Local arts organisation, TACO! opened its doors in 2023 and this year it has already been joined by the Anytime Fitness gym and Brighter Futures — a specialist skills hub for people with learning difficulties. The Southern Co-op supermarket has moved into a commercial unit on Yarnton Way near the pedestrian crossing.

Kemi Madumere, co-founder of Brighter Futures, explained the benefits of moving into the square, saying: "The move to Cygnets Square perfectly aligns with the college's mission to expand minds while being an engaged partner in the local area.

"The square's proximity to excellent transportation links makes it an exceptionally convenient location for our students who, in some cases, will be learning to travel independently for the first time."

Peabody's Senior Regeneration Manager, Dan Sherlock, added: "It's great to see that so many companies and organisations have recognised the advantages and potential of being based in Cygnets Square. We're delighted to welcome them all and will be announcing more new tenants in the months ahead."

This spring has also seen the return of the Cygnets Square market which falls on the first Saturday of each month (starting April) from 10am to 4pm. Organised by Bow Arts and Ace Events, it offers a range of delicious food and drink stalls as well as interesting workshops and activities.



Food traders will also be returning to the square from April on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays between 3pm and 9pm.



Costly tips

Thamesmead has so many beautiful parks, lakes, and canals for everyone to enjoy. If issues like fly-tipping are spotted, residents have been reporting them via Fix My Street. But what else can be done to make sure Thamesmead is looking its best?

The Royal Borough of Greenwich and London Borough of Bexley have granted Peabody the ability to issue fines for acts of anti-social behaviour, such as fly-tipping.

In the past year Peabody's Neighbourhood Services team has issued nearly 50 fixed penalty notices in this way, with the fines paid going back to the councils.

The team can also issue Community Protection Warnings for gardens kept in an untidy state which impacts the community, followed by Community Protection Notices, which come with a large fine if action isn't taken.

Ernel Cottrell, Refuse Enforcement Supervisor in Peabody's Neighbourhood Services team, said: "We aim to improve the look of the area and reduce the amount of fly tipping throughout Thamesmead. This promotes wellbeing, a sense of pride in the community and reduces vermin.

"We don't get any financial gain from this, the aim is purely to give residents a cleaner, greener environment to live in and enjoy."

If you spot anything that needs clearing away in Thamesmead's outdoor spaces, like the parks or lakes, please report it through Fix My Street at fix.thamesmeadnow.org.uk

Community activities and spaces for hire



Are you looking for activities to do locally? Peabody runs nine different community centres across Thamesmead where events and activities take place. If you and your family would like to take part in any of these activities, or are looking for a space to run a session or hire a room, check, www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk or contact the Community Properties Team on communityhubsTM@peabody.org.uk or 0203 828 4920.



Recreational cheerleading classes

Cheerleading is one of the fastest growing sports in the UK. It is a fun and exciting way to challenge yourself, keep fit and make new friends. Cheerleading involves tumbling (gymnastics), stunting, jumps and dance – all put together to create mesmerising routines. Utopia Cheer classes are open to Thamesmead residents aged 5 to 15.

Location: Utopia Cheer, Arch C, The Link, Bazalgette Way, SE2 9BS

Dates: Every Thursday

Time: 6pm – 6.45pm

Price: Free

More info: utopiacheer@outlook.com



Thamesmead 5km & 10km race, family 1 mile

Join the Thamesmead Running Club for a fun and social, family and child-friendly 1 mile walk/run along the beautiful Thames Path in North Thamesmead which will run alongside the popular 5km and 10km road races. All races are open to non-club runners. No prior experience needed. The route is entirely off road, traffic free and wheelchair/pram accessible.

Location: Meeting point will be the grassy verge off Lytham Close, SE28 8QH

Date: Saturday 27 April

Time: Check website below

Price: Early bird saving: Family 1 mile £1 per adult in advance, children go free

More info: www.thamesmeadrunningclub.co.uk



Shantay 2: drag cabaret magic

Hosted by Lettie O'Burn, Shantay 2 will welcome drag magician and comedienne extraordinaire, Ms Kat De Bra, who will astound the audience with her magic and illusion. Also on the lineup is punk burlesque artist, Fanny Bleach, and the all-singing, all-dancing Miss Courtney who will close out the evening.

Location: Sporting Club Thamesmead, Bayliss Avenue, SE28 8NJ

Date: Saturday 27 April

Time: 7pm – 10.30pm

Price: £6 in advance, £8 on the door

More info: www.buytickets.at/thamesmeadlgbtqia



The Javan Coker Foundation ladies breakfast and chat

Come along for impactful sessions which aim to reduce social isolation, improve wellbeing, and promote positive mental health.

Location: The Javan Coker Foundation Centre, 47 Abbey Grove, SE2 9EU

Dates: Every Wednesday during term time, starting Wednesday 8 May

Time: 10am – 1pm

Price: Free

More info: www.thejavancokerfoundation.org

What's on at The Nest



Monday

Listening Ears 50+ senior resident group

Time: 12pm – 4pm

More info: Call 07798 923 657

Prestige Dance

Age: 4 – 11

To book: Corinna 07989 829 507 corinnadance@hotmail.co.uk

Chess Club

Time: 5pm – 7pm

Tuesday

Walking Group

Time: 10am – 11am

Meet: Meet in the Library

Coffee & Conversation drop in

Time: 10am – 12pm

LGBT coffee and chat

Time: 1pm – 3pm

Mind in Bexley – Women's Group

To book: Referral only from Mind

Wednesday

Toddler Time

Time: 9:45am – 10:15am

Digital Help

Time: 10am – 12pm

To book: Drop in every week

Thursday

Seated Pilates

Time: 11:45am – 12:30pm

Date: Term time only

To book: Rosanna 07985 086 788 or rosannecorefitness@gmail.com

Digital Help

Time: 10am – 12pm

To book: Drop in every week

Come out of hiding at The Nest

Mental health and wellbeing sessions which includes creative activities, talks, chill time and mentoring for visitors aged 11 – 30.

Date: 4th Thursday of the month

To book: Please call 0203 828 4920 to find out when the next available session is.

Friday

Parent & Baby Fit

Time: 10am – 11:30pm

To book: Just turn up and register

Reading Group

Time: 2pm – 3.30pm

Date: Last Wednesday of the month

Saturday

Lego Club

Time: 10am – 12pm

Read with Me

Time: 11am – 12pm

Are you an older person who wants to be more active or get out and about?

Go to www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk to find the Health and Wellbeing timetable for older people.

What's On

A year in the life of social gardens

By Joseph Griffiths



Thamesmead’s social gardens play a crucial role in connecting local people with the town’s smaller green spaces as well as giving them the opportunity to grow delicious fruit and vegetables

Two community specialists, Joseph Griffiths and Anne Poole, who both live and work in Thamesmead, have been developing a social gardening programme in two neighbourhoods, the Parkview Estate and The Moorings.

Here Joseph reveals how the initiative has been progressing:

Last year, myself and Anne embarked on an experimental new project with Peabody – Thamesmead Social Gardens.

We focused on two main sites: the Edible Garden on the Parkview Estate and the Hawksmoor Growing Club at The Moorings. Both gardens are open to the community and anyone is welcome to visit either space at any time.

Through a programme of gardening, events and research, we wanted to find out what the people who lived locally thought about the gardens, and how the spaces could potentially be run in the future, to increase the number of regular users.

Focusing on residents living within walking distance of each site, the scheme was led by the community with no assumptions being made about what people wanted from these gardens.

At the start of 2024, we spoke to 32 of our main garden user’s – consisting of young people and adults – to understand more about what they want from the future of the programme and their community gardens.

They told us that growing fruit and vegetables and the up-keep of the gardens was central to the appeal of taking part in the programme.

One user said: **“I was never really interested in planting in my own garden but coming here, I started to enjoy it. I like to be near the soil, planting the seeds and watching them grow.”**

Others described the benefits of growing produce for themselves and trying new foods: **“The vegetables and fruit are all organic. It’s expensive to buy organic in the shop. If you grow it, you know how to do it. It’s not like buying it.”**

Another added: **“picking the items that you’ve got... they’re nice and you’ve never tried them homegrown before... I don’t know why, but they taste better”**

However, the experience was not just about growing, several of the garden users explained the potential of the garden as a space to connect residents, with many of our older volunteers echoing their thoughts.

One said: **“I find it difficult socialising which makes me anxious but decided to join the group and help. They are very welcoming and I feel comfortable being there. I have met some great people and found talking whilst carrying out various tasks makes conversations flow easier.”**

Younger members also talked about how being in the gardens directly affected their wellbeing with a number of the adults also talking about this:

“It’s helping educate everybody from all walks of life, helping educate people about healthy eating and trying to get away from inequalities of health.”

Others highlighted the significance of the community taking ownership over the gardens: **“It gives the children a sense of achievement, satisfaction, ‘this was our idea, we’ve done it, let’s look after it.’”**

Another added: **“It’s for all age groups, it’s for everybody and it’s important everyone knows that”**

Over the year of the scheme visits to the gardens increased with more than 800 recorded and around 120 people coming more than once.

If you’d like to hear about our findings in more detail, we will be launching a publication in June which will be available at the Moorings Sociable Club and at the Peabody reception on the first floor of The Nest.

This will contain guidance for how the gardens could operate in the future, views and opinions from garden users and our recommendations to Peabody.

And If you want to get involved in the Edible Garden, Hawksmoor Growing Club or find out more about other gardens within the Thamesmead Garden Network, please get in touch.

Nature



You can email Peabody/Making Space For Nature at msfn@peabody.org.uk or contact the Social Gardens Team directly via WhatsApp, text or call on 07704 731 502



Jack to nature



As Peabody's Landscape Activation Manager in Thamesmead, it's Jack Gower's job to bring residents and nature closer together.

During his five years working in Thamesmead, Jack has created and overseen a new strategy to enhance the town's green spaces and increase everyone's ability to get out and enjoy them.

The raft of new activities and projects he has introduced and managed range from the creation of the Tiny Forest and setting up the Nature Forum, to supporting the development of social gardening and welcoming thousands of new visitors to Tump 53 Nature Reserve.

Jack says: "The progress we've made over the past few years relies largely on collaboration and teamwork with the local community, which is what Peabody's work in Thamesmead is all about.

Thamesmead is a unique area of London thanks to the vast amount of green space here. We look after 5 lakes, 7km of canals and 5km of Thames River frontage so it's important that there are interesting things for people to do that can help them to enjoy nature.

Thousands of trees have been planted with help from the community, 10,000 school children have visited Tump 53 Nature Reserve to get hands on with nature and we've supported dozens of community projects through the Making Space for Nature Fund.

The walks and tours have also been really popular, such as Callum F Kerr's walks led by his character J D Swann. They give residents the opportunity to connect with nature.

The development of social gardening at The Edible Garden in South Thamesmead and Hawksmoor Growing Club in The Moorings are projects Jack is particularly proud of.

Community gardening isn't about us coming up with a plan and imposing it, instead it's about listening to what residents want to do with their green spaces and then working together to help deliver it," he says.

That's one of the reasons I've been a governor at Windrush Primary School for the past few years. It's allowed me to get to know the community better and understand what people want as well as using my local knowledge and networks to benefit the school.

It's not just about planting or gardening, it's about using the great spaces we have in new and interesting ways. This could be a foraging walk, a bird spotting tour, yoga in the park or a community barbecue."

Jack also reveals what's going to be coming up this summer: "We're working with our Environmental Services team to trial a new monthly volunteer activity where residents will get the chance to work alongside the team.

It will involve us organising larger and more impactful projects so volunteers can see they've made a real difference to their neighbourhood while helping to boost biodiversity.

This could be things like joining the waterways team out on a boat working on the canals, building new habitat structures in the park or trimming and pruning trees to increase space for nesting birds and beetles.

We're teaming up with the Thamesmead Community Fund to make it easier for residents to apply for funding for their nature-based projects.

We're also in the process of appointing someone to run the Water Sport & Activity Centre at Southmere Lake, and outdoor swimming at Birchmere Lake so this summer we should have all sorts of activities happening there too."



If you're interested in the work Jack and his team are doing or want the latest nature updates sent straight to your inbox, sign up for the Making Space for Nature monthly newsletter at www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/making-space-for-nature



Residents feel the need for reeds

Residents in Thamesmead have helped to add more than 400 plants in floating reedbeds at Gallions Lake, creating new wetlands that will improve water quality and increase wildlife.

The planting was carried out on behalf of Peabody by community volunteers, and supervised by charity Thames 21 along with wetland designers Biomatrix and Aquamaintain. It marks the end of a £170,000 improvement programme at the lake.

Species planted included: Forget-Me-Not, Pennyroyal, Yellow Iris and Dwarf Ragged Robin — all native to Thamesmead and

offering benefits such as providing food and cover for wildlife while attracting pollinators like bees, birds and moths. They also filter pollution out of the water.

These improvements add to the 1,100m² of floating reedbeds Peabody has created in five canal areas in Thamesmead (an area almost as big as an Olympic sized swimming pool) as well as Birchmere and Southmere Lakes.

Jack Gower, Peabody's Landscape Activation Manager for Thamesmead, said: "It's been brilliant to see residents come along and get their hands wet to help carry out this work.

"We will be keeping an eye on how the new plants develop at the lake over the next few months and will provide an update later in the year."



Find out more about the work that Peabody is doing to enhance and maintain Thamesmead's landscape at www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/nature



Forums

Peabody Business Forum

The Peabody Business Forum is open to business owners, local council representatives and entrepreneurs who are looking for a place where they can discuss opportunities, provide information, and offer advice.

All sessions now take place in person between 5pm and 7.30pm. The next sessions are on Monday 15 April, Tuesday 21 May and Monday 17 June.

Email businessready@peabody.org.uk for more information.

Thamesmead Culture Forum

The Culture Forum is for all those interested in culture in and around Thamesmead.

The forum runs every two months, with the next meeting on Wednesday 1 May at 6pm.

Email lisa.drew@peabody.org.uk to join the forum or to be added to the Culture Forum mailing list.

Thamesmead Nature Forum

The Thamesmead Nature Forum is for anyone who is passionate about nature and Thamesmead's green and blue spaces.

It usually takes place on the last Thursday of every other month at 5.30pm. The next meeting is on Thursday 25 April at Gallions Lake in West Thamesmead. Environmental charity Thames 21 will be giving a guided tour of the recently constructed wetland system and new meadow areas.

Email msfn@peabody.org.uk for details about future sessions.



They have the power

Six young people from Thamesmead recently took part in a one-month internship with UK Power Networks (UKPN), the distribution operator for electricity in London and the South East.

Supported by Peabody and Youthbuild, the group spent two weeks developing their employability skills and understanding of UKPN. This included sessions on team building, communicating effectively, safety awareness and site visits.

At the end of the internship, three of the young people were offered permanent apprenticeships with UKPN.

Ayo Osere was one of those taken on. He was looking for a new challenge after working as a part-time delivery person. His local job centre referred him to Youthbuild, which led to the opportunity with UKPN.

He said: "My time at UKPN has been great. I've met excellent people who have taught me a lot. My favourite part has been going on site, which has given me a strong understanding of what electrical work is like. I was already interested but after this experience, I'm certain that this is the career for me."

If you are a young person aged 18+ who lives in Thamesmead and are currently looking for employment, you can contact Youthbuild Employer Partnerships Coordinator, Martell Lindsay, at mlindsay@youthbuildvuk.org



Brothers Bakery – one of the Greenwich businesses that has signed up

Pay a living wage

The Royal Borough of Greenwich is helping local employers to become Living Wage Employers by offering a grant to cover three years of accreditation with the Living Wage Foundation.

The London Living Wage (£13.50 per hour) is key to helping tackle in-work poverty and creating good jobs that pay a fair wage. The accreditation has also been shown to have a wealth of benefits for employers, including improved reputation and increased motivation and retention of staff.

If you're a business thinking about becoming a Living Wage Employer, you can find out about the grants scheme by visiting www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk and searching 'becoming a London Living Wage employer'.

Support & opportunities





YMCA WOOLWICH & THAMESMEAD
PART OF YMCA THAMES GATEWAY GROUP

LAKESIDE NURSERY

Funded spaces available

Overlooking Southmere Lake on Bazalgette Way, Lakeside Nursery offers morning, afternoon and full day care sessions for 1 – 5 year olds. The 44-place setting is open from 8am – 6pm, five days per week (earlier starts are available for an additional fee and must be booked in advance).

With musical activities, arts & crafts and a range of ICT equipment, there is plenty of opportunities for children to investigate, discover and experiment through play. The fully secure outdoor space is complete with creative sound walls as well as a range of play equipment to enhance physical development.

We pride ourselves on our caring, experienced and highly qualified team of staff who champion the highest standard of early years care, and ensure that every child has the right support to foster their development and emotional wellbeing whilst preparing them for transition to school.

For more information or to reserve a space, contact the nursery on 02077 818224 or email Lakesidenursery@ymcatg.org

YMCA Here for young people Here for communities Here for you

YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

FAMILY & YOUTH WORK HEALTH & WELLBEING HOUSING TRAINING & EDUCATION SUPPORT & ADVICE



MOVE MORE, EAT WELL, FEEL GOOD

The Xplore programme is designed to give lots of handy tips around healthy eating and activity, so children, young people and their families can try new things to improve their health and wellbeing within their everyday lives.

Our programmes include healthy eating workshops and physical activity sessions that are age appropriate. The service offers ongoing support to families after completing the programme to help them to maintain a healthier lifestyle.

The programme is part of the Young Greenwich Youth Service commissioned by the Royal Borough of Greenwich and is free to attend.

"After taking part in the programme we began to schedule time for working out at least once a week. Less screen time and more sleep time"
Chee, Parent

"Our outlook on nutritional consumptions have changed, we have started making healthier choices. Levi knows not to consume lots of sugary food. He complains where there is lots of sugar in his snacks or drinks now"
Doris, Parent



For bookings, new programmes or any other information please visit our website by scanning the QR code.

For more information please email xplore.greenwich@gll.org, call 0203 795 0715 or visit better.org.uk/xplore

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Good food for thought



Healthy foods for families are on the shelves in the Arnott Close area thanks to an initiative from the Royal Borough of Greenwich and Peabody.

The council's Good Food Retail programme has been working with specialists, Rice Marketing, to help the Tropikana and Londis stores improve the choice and affordability of healthier options for their customers.

Charles Ormoighe (pictured), owner of the Tropikana Convenience Store, has invested more than £16,000 on improvements, showing his commitment to people in his community and their health.

He said: "We are investing for the long term. The support from the council has made a massive difference as it has matched funding for my new chiller which holds fresh fruit and vegetables."

Cllr Denise Scott-McDonald, Cabinet Member for Health and Adults' Social Care, said: "Having good health is the foundation to living a happy life. It is fantastic to see businesses in Thamesmead prioritise the health of their customers with support from the council and recognise that investing in healthier options is vital in preparing for the long term."

The area is also part of the Greater London Authority's Superzones initiative, designed to create healthier places for children, young people and their families.

Looking for a job?

Sign up to our fortnightly jobs, apprenticeships and training bulletin and get opportunities sent straight to your inbox.

Sign up here: www.peabody.org.uk/jobs-bulletin

Peabody jobs in Thamesmead

Looking for a new job or a career change?

Peabody's Economic Inclusion Team can help you find local jobs and apprenticeship opportunities with Peabody and our partner organisations.

You can sign up to our fortnightly jobs bulletin to get new jobs and training offers sent straight to your inbox!



Volunteering opportunities

Connecting you with different employers and training providers

Help writing CVs, personal statements, cover letters and job applications

Careers guidance and coaching

Preparing you for interviews



Please contact us by emailing employment.training@peabody.org.uk

The Electoral Commission

Bring photo ID to vote in some elections

Don't have ID? Apply for free voter ID. For more information, visit

electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID

	Photo ID required
England	UK Parliament general elections (from October 2023) UK Parliament by-elections and recall petitions Local council elections and by-elections Police and Crime Commissioner elections
Scotland	UK Parliament general elections (from October 2023) UK Parliament by-elections and recall petitions
Wales	UK Parliament general elections (from October 2023) UK Parliament by-elections and recall petitions Police and Crime Commissioner elections

Photo ID is not required in Scottish Parliament and Senedd elections, or local elections and by-elections in Scotland and Wales.

A wide range of photo ID will be accepted, including passports, driving licences and cards with a PASS mark. The name on your ID should be the same name you used to register to vote. If you don't have an accepted form of ID, you can apply for a free voter ID document known as a Voter Authority Certificate.

To find out more, including which forms of ID will be accepted, how to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate if you need one and what will happen at the polling station:

- visit electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID
- scan the QR code
- call 0800 328 0280



Take part in the 2024 Thamesmead Festival

Save the date!

Thamesmead Festival
Saturday 10 August 2024
12pm - 7.30pm



The Thamesmead Festival is returning to Southmere Park on Saturday 10 August 2024 and we're looking for musicians, dancers, comedians, visual artists and much more!

Are you interested in being a part of this unique event? Take a look at our open calls below, then scan the QR code or visit our website - www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk - to apply.

Performers

This year's festival will see the return of our three main stages:

- The Park Stage up on the hill
- The Southmere Stage on Southmere Square
- The Unplugged Stage among the trees

We're looking forward to filling these stages with a variety of performances, including music, spoken word, dance, magic, comedy and more.

Visual artists

Outside of its green spaces and brutalist architecture, Thamesmead is brimming with creativity and is home to an abundance of visual artists who create for the local community.

Are you one of them? We're looking for different ways to represent the local art scene at this year's festival. In previous years we've showcased the voices of local people by making banners, creating temporary artists installations, offering workshops and showcasing creative spectacles across the site. Think you can bring something to the event? Let us know!

Community organisations and children's activities

We're looking for charities and community groups active in Thamesmead and the surrounding areas to have a stall. This would involve providing information about your work in the community and running small-scale, free workshops and activities for children and/or adults.

We're especially keen to hear from groups that would like to arrange games or workshops for all ages in our Playzone area – for example football, tug-o-war, and other fun activities.

Food and craft vendors

As always, we're looking for quality street food and produce vendors, along with businesses that sell crafts, art and more.

The Thamesmead Festival food and craft market is managed by CC Events. If you'd like to take part in this area of the festival, or if you have any questions, email info@cceventsuk.com

Scan the QR code to apply



Deadline for applications is Sunday 14 April

All decisions for open call applications are made by the Festival Production Group (FPG) made up of 14 residents who lead the planning of the Thamesmead Festival every year.

If your application is successful, you will be notified by someone from event producer Serious – an established production company and our festival delivery partner which works closely with the FPG.

If you have any questions about the 2024 Thamesmead Festival, please email lisa.drew@peabody.org.uk