



Talk of Thamesmead

The publication for Thamesmead residents

Issue 20
Winter
2025/26



DLR is coming
to town
page 4



Volunteers
bring joy
page 7



Public artwork
unveiled
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Community digs deep for tree-planting efforts

Find out what's happening

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



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www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk



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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 make an appointment.

If you have a sales enquiry

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

New year positivity takes root across town

While it's traditional to begin the new year with a sense of optimism, it feels especially fitting for Thamesmead at the start of 2026.

There is a genuine feeling that big things are happening for the town. That's not only because of the new circle of oak trees planted in Crossway Park (page 9), although it certainly adds to an atmosphere of hope and growth.

The announcement that the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) is coming here (page 4) made national headlines. Alongside other improvements to transport links being proposed by TfL (page 4), this crucial development will pave the way for investment that benefits the whole community.

This issue of Talk of Thamesmead is full of encouraging, positive stories – from big decisions affecting thousands of people to smaller scale activities benefiting local community groups.

Even when the weather is coldest, there is so much warmth in our communities. At the Moorings Sociable Club, people of all ages are gathering this winter to enjoy a hot drink in a cosy community space (page 4). And a wonderful team of volunteers are serving delicious food to bring their neighbours together in West Thamesmead (page 7).

We've also seen the community come together to celebrate South Thamesmead's first permanent public artwork (page 10).

Meanwhile, just a few steps across Cygnet Square from Turner Prize-winning artist Jasleen Kaur's sculpture, young residents are working on a pilot project for a new hub, giving young people a place to socialise and learn new skills (page 6).

It all adds to a feeling of optimism in the air that I hope stays with us all throughout 2026 and beyond. Happy New Year to you from everyone at Peabody.



Matthew Foulis
Peabody's Director of Place and Regeneration in Thamesmead

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Become a contributor

Share your stories and photos with the rest of the community. Email thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk with your ideas.



Dancing duo step into jobs

Two enthusiastic dancers have landed jobs after impressing a dance teacher during classes at the Moorings Sociable Club.

Samy Tchangoum and Elizabeth Oyeniran initially joined Dandelion Collective's inclusive dance sessions as interns from Brighton Future Specialist College. The classes help adults with learning disabilities to communicate and share their feelings through dance.

Samy, aged 24, and Elizabeth, aged 22, caught dance teacher Kuan-Yu Chen's eye in the sessions – so much so that she has now hired them both as her dance assistants.

She explained: "Samy and Elizabeth both love dancing and love singing. I could immediately see their potential and wanted them to help me lead classes."

The pair have been gradually building their experience and both now lead the warm-up activities at the start of sessions.

"I like it because it helps keep my body active," said Elizabeth. "Me and Samy help people to do stretches and circling movements, and after that we do breathing exercises."

Elizabeth and Samy have each taught more than 200 children at inclusive dance events in Thamesmead and the surrounding areas.

Samy's mum, Edith Feulefack, revealed: "One of the places he went to was his former school, and his old teachers had tears in their eyes. Sometimes when you have a child with autism and learning difficulties, it's hard to see how they will fit into work life. They were delighted to see him doing so well."

"He loves it because he's a people person. Dancing and singing are his things, and he likes to feel that he's part of a team."

"I feel happy," added Samy.

Kuan-Yu recently secured a National Lottery Awards for All grant to keep Samy and Elizabeth in their roles for at least six months. Her funding application made it clear that the pair are now an important part of the team.

Free coffee and warmth bringing the community together



Residents are flocking to enjoy complimentary coffee at a cosy community hub.

Peabody's popular Warm Hubs programme has returned to the Moorings Sociable Club, creating a warm, inviting and affordable space for people to get together this winter.

Everyone is welcome to chat, charge their phones, use free WiFi and enjoy time with friends and neighbours – all while keeping heating bills down at home.

The warm hub is open every weekday from 9am to 5pm, with different activities taking place each day. Among those taking advantage of a free coffee and chat session between 10am and 12pm on Thursdays are the families from Waterways Children's Centre's Buggies Walk.

"We go for a walk and, once we hit 10,000 steps, we end our walk here, where there's a warm space," said Ozge Ali, Family Hub Co-ordinator at Waterways Children's Centre. "This is a good opportunity for us to come, chat and enjoy something warm – especially in cold weather."

The coffee and chat sessions have also been embraced by the Moorings Sociable Club's weekly seated Pilates class. Group members gather for a hot drink and conversation before their session starts.

"It's really nice to get together before our class," said class member Hermione Matthew. "We'll come again next week!"

Everyone is welcome to come along to enjoy a free hot drink and pastry served by Camouflage Cafe.

"With the cold weather likely to be around for a while yet, we would love to see more residents enjoying a cuppa on us," said Peabody's Health and Wellbeing Projects Officer Khadeja Chowdhury.

The warm hub at the Moorings Sociable Club is available throughout the winter. For more information about Warm Hubs, call 07765 742 387.

Scan the QR code or visit dandelion-collective.org/communityclasses/greenwich-classes to find out more about Dandelion Collective's classes at the Moorings Sociable Club.



Getting better connected

DLR extension will make life easier for residents



The Docklands Light Railway is officially coming to Thamesmead, giving local people the reliable transport link they have been calling for.

The announcement in the recent Budget means the long-awaited extension can now move ahead.

For many residents, this will be a major improvement. SE28 is the only postcode in London without a Tube or rail station.

The new DLR link will make journeys quicker and easier, and connect people to opportunities across the capital. It will also attract more investment to the town, bringing new shops, services and jobs closer to home. A consultation by TfL last year showed that the majority of local people support the project.

The new transport link also unlocks plans for up to 15,000 new homes, new community facilities and green spaces at Thamesmead Waterfront – a large riverside site that can be seen from Gallions Hill.

The Thamesmead Waterfront project includes an improved town centre, dedicated walking and cycling routes, and a focus on low-carbon design to support healthier living.

John Lewis, Executive Director of Sustainable Places at Peabody, said the DLR extension is a key step in helping Thamesmead reach its full potential.

“This vital transport link will help bring lasting benefits for local

people,” he said. “It makes it possible to deliver new homes, support local businesses and create new opportunities for generations to come.”

TfL has reported that work on the DLR extension could potentially begin in 2028 and finish in 2033. The two-mile extension includes a one-mile tunnel under the river, with new stations at Thamesmead and Beckton Riverside. Construction firms have been invited to share their ideas ahead of the procurement process.

Peabody will continue working with partners to bring the Thamesmead Waterfront plans to life and make sure residents are at the heart of the changes taking place.



Keep up to date on what's happening at Thamesmead Waterfront by scanning the QR code.

Plans for new bus lanes, cycle lanes and road

Residents are invited to have their say on planned improvements to transport links across the town.



TfL has launched a consultation to get local people's thoughts on proposals for new bus lanes and cycle lanes. Separately, they are also asking for feedback on a scheme to build a new road in the west of the town.

The planned bus lanes would enable faster journey times

between Thamesmead, Abbey Wood and Woolwich. The new SL1 Superloop is among the services that would benefit.

Alongside the bus lanes, the plans include new cycle lanes, improved pedestrian crossings, and easier access to expanded bus stops.

TfL explained: “This is intended to support improved public transport links, including to the Elizabeth line at Woolwich and Abbey Wood for residents.”

TfL also wants to build a long-planned new road in the town. The ‘missing link’ road will connect Barnham Drive, off Central Way, with Battery Road in West Thamesmead.

The two ends of the proposed road are already built. The new road would join them to create a route for buses, cyclists and pedestrians. Cars and other vehicles would not be allowed.

This would improve connections between housing estates in the area. It would also create more convenient routes for people travelling on foot or by bike.

While both proposals aim to improve public transport connections for the town, they are separate schemes that would operate independently of each other.



The consultation on the new bus and cycle lanes closes on 15 January. You can discuss the plans with TfL team members at the Moorings Sociable Club between 11am and 2pm on Saturday 10 January. Visit haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/thamesmead-proposals to share your thoughts.

The consultation on completing Barnham Drive is open until 22 January. Visit haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/barnham-drive to give your feedback on those plans.

Rooftop movies coming soon to the Moorings



Movie stars will take on a completely different meaning when a new rooftop cinema opens beneath Thamesmead's night skies this month.

Camouflage Rooftop Cinema will screen films on the Moorings Sociable Club's roof terrace. Residents will be able to wrap up warm and enjoy a range of different movies in the fresh air.

Films will be shown on a big screen, with cinema-goers listening to the audio through headphones to keep the noise levels down for neighbours.

The rooftop cinema is being organised by the team behind Camouflage Cafe. Just like the cafe, the cinema will be run by young adults with learning disabilities.

“Going to the cinema is expensive for families,” said Kemi Madumere, co-founder of the cafe and its offshoot cinema. “When you look at the costs for a family of four, for many families it's impossible.

“We'll be showing affordable, blockbuster films for families to enjoy. More importantly, our young adults will get work experience because they will be running the cinema.

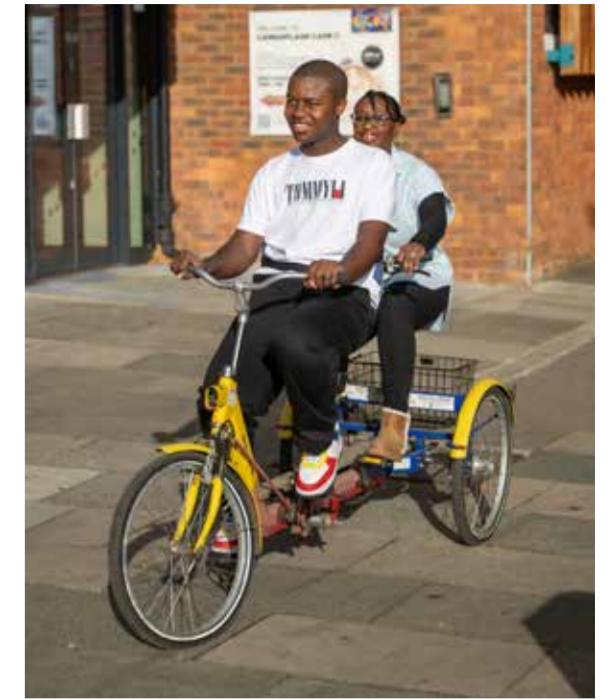
“All the setting up, the ticket team, serving food and clearing up will be done by young adults with learning disabilities. Creating those opportunities is behind everything we do.”

The cinema is launching after securing funding from Black Culture Collective's Connected Communities Commission. The commission, which is sponsored by Peabody, supports the delivery of African and Caribbean cultural projects, workshops and community events in the town.

The rooftop cinema was awarded a grant in a round of funding to mark Black History Month in October 2025.



The first film is due to be screened on Friday 16 January at 6pm. Visit camouflagecafe.co.uk or scan the QR code for information.



Bikes for all at inclusive cycling club

A new inclusive cycling club is hoping to make sure everyone in the town can get on their bikes and get healthy.

Camouflage Cafe, in the Moorings Sociable Club, has secured a variety of adapted and specialist bikes to start Cycle Harmony. Its fleet already includes trikes, tandems and wheelchair bikes – all serviced and ready to go.

The driving force behind the project is a plan to help people with special educational needs and learning disabilities to stay fit and healthy.

“For adults with learning disabilities, weight can be a problem,” explained Kemi Madumere, from Camouflage Cafe. “But adapted bikes are very expensive, and finding places to participate in activities is difficult. This will be an opportunity to make friends but also get active.”

The inclusive bike club has benefited from bicycles donated and delivered by the charity Pedal Power. As well as the adapted bikes, standard bikes are also available to borrow so other family members can ride alongside relatives with learning disabilities.

Camouflage Cafe, which is run by a team of adults with learning disabilities, already hosts a popular weekly disco for adults with learning disabilities. Kemi is hoping many of those who come to dance on Thursdays will also take the opportunity to get pedalling.

To find out more about the inclusive cycling club, email info@camouflagecafe.co.uk or call 020 8191 9622.

What I've learned about designing buildings



Spirit-Gigi Lansiquot reveals how much more goes into designing a space than you might think at first.

I'm a fine art student and a lot of my art looks at community-based things. While I'm really interested in community, I never had a deep-rooted connection or the right networks to get involved in a hands-on way.

When I found the opportunity to get involved with the Young Makers' Assembly, that seemed like the chance I'd been waiting for.

We've been doing a wide range of things that have helped us to understand all the things you need to think about when designing spaces. We've visited Karakusevic Carson Architects' studio to look at site analysis and think about how a building works within its surroundings. We've made models out of scrap materials to see how our ideas work in practice. We even went for a walk around Hackney together, just to look at the fronts of different buildings and how design is being used.

We also attended the Price & Myers structural engineering studio, which gave me an intriguing insight into how professional engineers conduct efficient project management, as well as the planning and design elements.

Given my art background, the interior design aspect has been really interesting to me. Developing a mood board, taking in ideas, and thinking about the little details are all things that I can bring from art and apply to designing spaces.

But there are also so many elements that I never thought about in relation to interior design. Is it safe or could something be a hazard? Is it accessible? It's not just about the right look because there are so many other factors to consider.

But, of course, the look is an incredibly important thing. For me, a youth space in South Thamesmead should feel like a second home. It should be a place where people can relax, but also where they can feel inspired to learn and be educated.

Young makers shaping future careers on youth hub project



A group of local young people are helping to design a new youth hub in South Thamesmead, gaining valuable skills and confidence along the way.

The Young Makers' Assembly has been meeting weekly in South Thamesmead to develop and share their ideas for an attractive and useful youth space in the area. The six-month pilot, produced by creative consultancy social enterprise Beyond the Box CIC, will run until March.

The group have already rolled up their sleeves and got stuck into studying the site, creating models and started developing design ideas. As well learning how to shape a space from scratch, they are also building everyday skills that will help them long after the project ends. This includes budgeting, fundraising, marketing and planning events.

To help the young people bring their ideas to life, Peabody has offered one of the commercial units in Cygnet Square to use as a temporary youth hub. The unit would otherwise be empty until a business moves in, so the group have a blank canvas to test their plans.

The square is already home to Anytime Fitness, Abbeywood Dental Practice and the TACO! cafe, gallery and event space. More business and services will open there in the future.

"I wanted to build my confidence and gain public speaking and communications skills, and I've already been able to do that," said 18-year-old Michael Mandzondzo, one of the young people involved. "This has been my first chance to get work experience and see what it's like to work in a team of individuals, give feedback and take criticism."

Another member of the group, May Mbabazi, believes the experience will help her in the future.

"I'd like to be an occupational therapist," said May, aged 16. "The skills that I'm getting in teamwork, talking to people and leadership are all things that will impact me in my career."

For Spirit-Gigi Lansiquot, the process is broadening her horizons as she considers her employment prospects ahead of graduating this summer.

"It has opened up ideas of different things I can do," said the 20-year-old fine art student. "I never thought of doing architecture, but I now see opportunities to develop a career."

"I loved looking at interior design, which could be another path to use my art skills."

Each of the young people is paid the London Living Wage for their work. The pilot is part of Peabody's wider work to create training employment opportunities and positive activities for young people. This includes encouraging young residents to help shape the activities and spaces they want to see in their town.

The project is being funded by Peabody's partners Karakusevic Carson Architects, landscape architects Turkington Martin, structural engineers Price & Myers and low-carbon building engineers Beyond Carbon.

All partners have committed to help improve the lives of young people in the town while working on the third phase of Peabody's seven-phase masterplan for South Thamesmead.



To get more information about events for young people taking place at the youth hub, scan the QR code.



'Special little community' built on full bellies

Meet the team of volunteers treating their neighbours to delicious free meals.

From her serving hatch at the back of the hall, Nana Adjei has a clear view of the entrance to Broadwater Hub and the clock above it.

"They'll be here soon," announces Nana. The clock has ticked past school hometime and she knows that, just like every other Thursday, the children of West Thamesmead are on their way.

For Nana and her fellow volunteers at Love Soup Cafe, that means things are about to get busy. But they wouldn't have it any other way.

"I just love being around people and I love feeding people," says Nana. "I love to cook food for people to enjoy, to give them something that makes them happy. Especially the children. Every Thursday, apart from holidays, I'm here."

The volunteers give what time they can around their other responsibilities.

Not everyone is here today, but those who are available have been coming and going all day. Tidying, preparing ingredients, cooking and playing their part in getting everything ready for this moment.

"In the morning I help out in the kitchen, in the afternoon I do arts and crafts with the children, and afterwards I help to pack up," explains another volunteer, Devon Barthorpe. "So I'm here all day on a Thursday."

Soon the children are lining up at the counter to collect delicious roasted potatoes with chicken or sweet potato and carrot soup with freshly-baked naan bread. Or perhaps a bit of both.

Some parents dine with the youngsters, while neighbours of all ages have been dropping in since the team started serving at midday.

After, or sometimes before, they've eaten, the children get stuck into arts and crafts activities with guidance from Bea Burckhardt and Devon. In the warmer months, they play outside instead.

None of it costs the children or their families a penny.

"Everything is free," says Bea. "There's always someone to chat and talk to. I personally got to know a lot of people. My partner has lived in the area longer than me but now I know a lot more people because of Love Soup Cafe."

Harriet Sasse started volunteering at Love Soup Cafe at the same time as Nana, around five years ago. She has switched her work schedule to be able to help out.

"Today I had to run here from north London," she says. "I've changed my Saturday off to a Thursday so I can volunteer. It's just the joy of having the children around and contributing to the community."

"I love the community," adds Beatrice Kigozi, leaving her chopping board at the rear of the kitchen. "When people come together, we get different ideas from each other."

While there is nothing like tasty, home-cooked food to bring people together, at Love Soup Cafe the bringing together is perhaps even more important than the meals.

"There's something special here, this little community we have," reflects Nana. "When we talk to people, it's uplifting."



To join the team of volunteers at Love Soup Cafe, email wtccinfo2025@gmail.com



Time to blow off the cobwebs

Start 2026 as you mean to go on by enjoying the town's stunning outdoor spaces. Shake off the winter blues and any holiday season excesses by getting outdoors and staying active.

With so much greenery to choose from, here are some top picks for places to get out and about.



Abbey Way

Abbey Way has been landscaped as part of the South Thamesmead Garden Estate. There's an upgraded playground, refurbished pathways and new trees, plants and seating areas. There are even cooking areas to rustle up a winter warmer.



Manorway Green

Get out among the revamped greenery of Manorway Green. Residents have helped to plant 15 trees to replace diseased sycamores that had to be felled in recent years. The result is a richer and more diverse space for park-goers to enjoy.



Fairway Drive Ball Court

The new and improved play area in North Thamesmead, provides plenty of opportunities to work up a sweat on a winter's day. There are new football goals, upgraded basketball hoops and outdoor gym equipment to choose from. A new seating area offers the ideal spot for a breather.



Crossway Park

Take a stroll past the town's new circle of oaks, which now take pride of place in Crossway Park. With parkland, playgrounds and sports pitches, there are many other activities to enjoy.

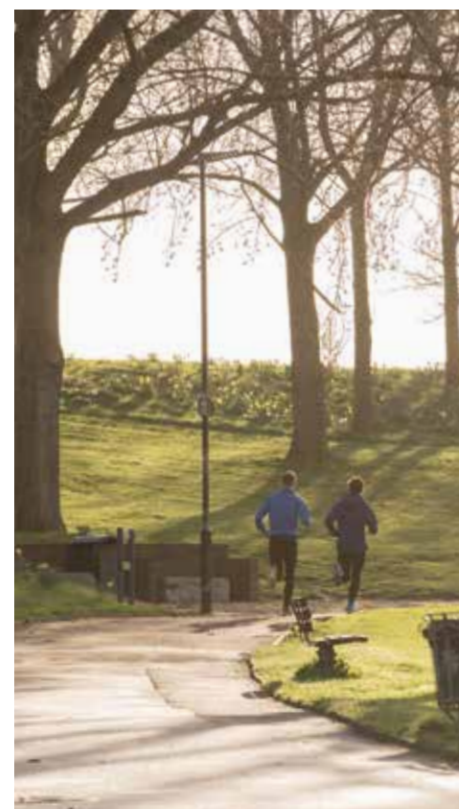


Gallions Park

Tucked away in West Thamesmead, Gallions Park is something of a hidden gem. Those who live nearby know this idyllic spot, with willow trees skirting its lake, offers stunning views. Recent improvements made by Peabody and Thames21 include the new wildflower meadow and wetland area. A half-mile walk south takes you to Broadwater Green with its play tower and revamped play area.

Southmere Lake

Southmere Lake and Southmere Park are always picturesque places to go for a leisurely stroll. For a more intense workout, join Our Parks' free beginners' bootcamp fitness class at the outdoor gym, near the Lakeside Centre. One-hour sessions take place every Tuesday at 10am.



Birchmere Park

One of Thamesmead's largest outdoor spaces, Birchmere Park has ample room for burning off calories or letting off steam. Enjoy a game of football, an Ashes-inspired visit to the cricket pitch, a gentle walk around the lake or the Saturday car boot sale.



Where's your favourite spot for a winter walk?

Have we missed your favourite outdoor space to blow off the cobwebs? Share your photos with @thamesmeadnow on social media or send them to thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk

Town rallies for tree-planting push



More than 20 new trees have been planted after a flurry of community activity in December.

Renowned artists Ackroyd & Harvey joined Peabody tree surgeons and schoolchildren from nearby Jubilee Primary School to welcome six of the seven oak trees planned for Crossway Park.

The artwork will be completed when the seventh oak is planted as part of the London Borough of Bexley's Night Visions cultural festival on 29 January.

The oak circle was grown from acorns by artists Heather Ackroyd and Dan Harvey. They collected the acorns from some of the 7,000 oak trees planted by artist and environmental activist Joseph Beuys in Germany in 1982.

The Thamesmead oaks are planted in a circle to make Crossway Park a gathering place for discussions about climate change and other important issues.

Charity Trees for Cities is planting a further 705 small trees to fill out Crossway Park's wooded areas.

Pupils from Jubilee Primary School celebrated the trees' arrival by making leaf prints with Heather and Dan.

The artists also took part in another community planting day at the rejuvenated Manorway Green in North Thamesmead. They led a leaf

printing workshop for volunteers planting trees with Trees for Cities.

With funding from the Environment Agency, a diverse range of new trees were planted to replace dead and diseased sycamore trees that had recently been cut down.

Three Erman's birches, two small-leaved limes, two ornamental pears, a Japanese zelkova and a tulip tree were planted. Another six trees are being planted in open spaces around Manorway Green.

"I just came to offer service," said volunteer Gift Aigbokhai. "I'm coming to contribute to my quarter – this is my environment."

Why are trees being planted?

Planting in winter means trees can focus on putting down roots before using their energy to grow in spring. This helps the tree become strong and healthy.

The tree planting is part of a new Thamesmead Urban Forest Strategy being developed by Peabody and land-use consultants LUC. This involves making sure existing trees are protected and new trees planted to create cooler streets, cleaner air and healthier neighbourhoods.

"Our Urban Forest Strategy is a really important part of our work to create a sustainable, climate-resilient town," said Desiree Shepherd, Peabody's Public Realm and Landscape Manager. "We're working with residents to ensure Thamesmead remains a green and beautiful place for future generations."



The strategy is still being written and residents can share their ideas and priorities. Visit treesforcities.org/thamesmead or scan the QR code to get involved.

Fly-tippers hit with £30,000 in fines

Fly-tippers are being warned they will face action – and financial consequences – for illegally dumping rubbish.

Fines totalling £30,000 have been issued to fly-tippers dumping waste on Peabody-owned land in Thamesmead in the last year.

Almost 500 warning letters and 143 fixed penalty notices were issued to offenders, thanks to daily warden patrols and reports by Peabody teams and the local community.

As the number of fly-tipping incidents starts to drop, the teams will continue to patrol the town and take action against anyone leaving out waste illegally.

"Fly-tipping is carried out by a minority of people, but the impact it has is massive," said Mick Francis, Neighbourhood Warden at Peabody. "We bump into lots of residents on our patrols. They're really pleased to learn that we're taking robust action and that things are gradually improving.

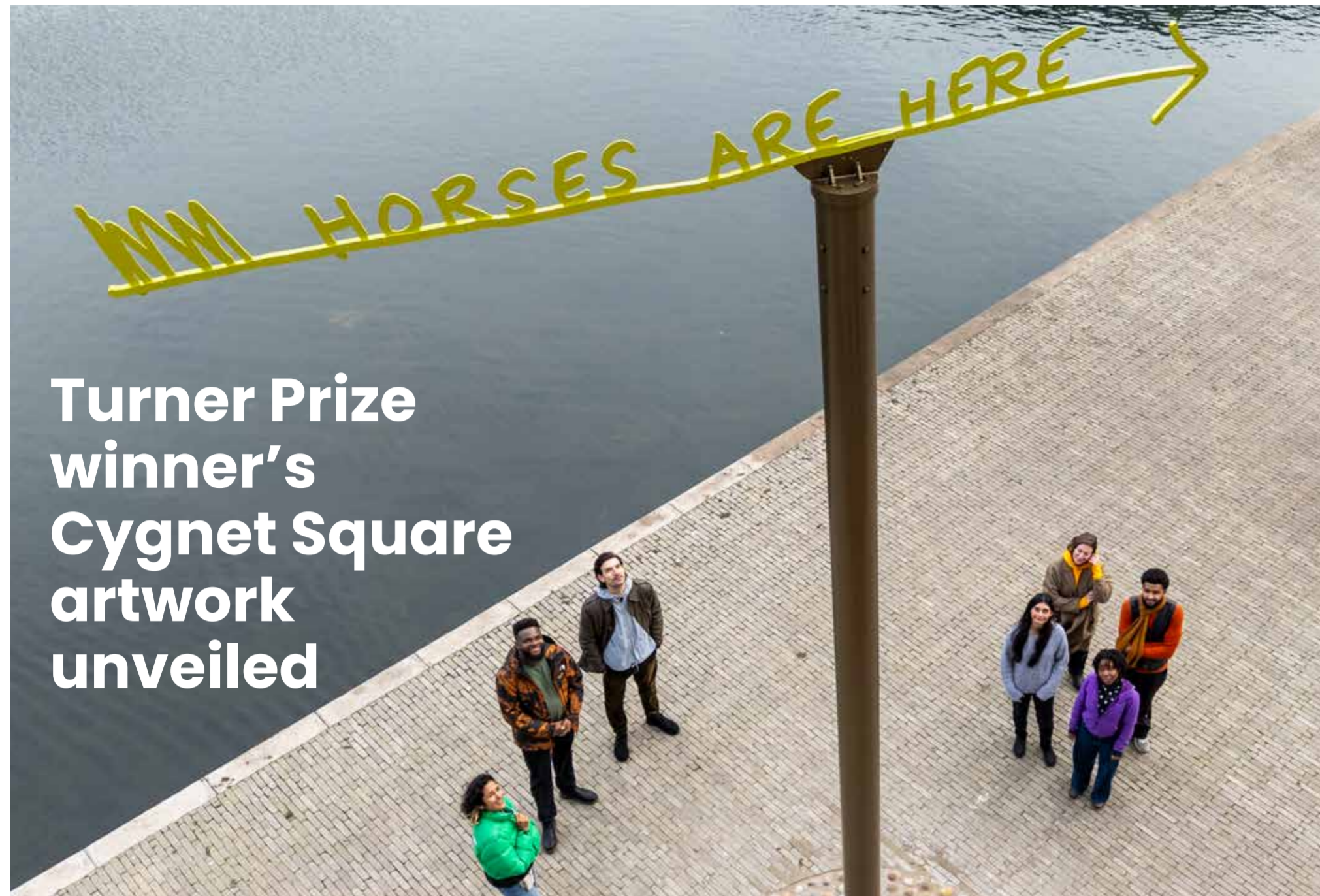
"As time goes on, we hope anyone tempted to fly-tip will see that it just isn't worth it, especially when there are other ways to get rid of unwanted items."

Peabody owns two-thirds of the land in Thamesmead. Making sure these spaces feel well looked after is a key part of its long-term plan for the town

To find out more about getting rid of your bulky items, visit your council's website. Peabody also runs a bulk collection scheme for its tenants and leaseholders. Find out more and book through My Peabody: www.peabody.org.uk/your-home/my-peabody or call 0300 123 3456.



If you see anything that needs clearing in your neighbourhood, contact Fix My Street.



Turner Prize winner's Cygnet Square artwork unveiled

Turner Prize-winning artist Jasleen Kaur's first public artwork has been unveiled in Cygnet Square.

The artwork – entitled Was. Is. Will Be. – is part-poem, part-community archive. It embeds local voices, memories and feelings in the square for generations to come.

The poem is etched across Cygnet Square, culminating in a spinning weather vane-style signpost featuring the words, 'Horses Are Here'. The words move with the wind, pointing to past, present and future sightings of Thamesmead's iconic cobs.

Horses belonging to the Gypsy Traveller population have lived in the area for centuries and can still be found grazing on Erith Marshes.

"My ideas for this work were led by residents' feelings of living in Thamesmead," Jasleen told Talk of Thamesmead. "In workshops, we spoke about what they'd choose to salvage or cling onto from their area in a time of rapid change.

"In a way, the work is a memorial or an attempt at ensuring these things are not forgotten about."

Residents who had gathered for the unveiling heard readings of the poem that forms Was. Is. Will Be. After Jasleen described the artwork as a "wayfinder", Thamesmead singer-songwriter J Cocoa treated the crowd to an impromptu performance of a newly-written song

called Wayfinder.

Attendees also took part in a workshop at The Nest. They wrote answers to the question 'What is your centre?' across the windows in chalk paint.

Jasleen's design was commissioned by five residents chosen through an open call in 2021. The group of young creatives – Comfort Adeneye, Qozeem Lawal, Shalini Panchal, Whitney Manassian and Gonzalo Fuentes Pinto – formed the Thamesmead creative studio.

They researched the area, wrote an initial brief for an artwork centred on the people of Thamesmead, selected a shortlist, and ultimately commissioned Jasleen.

"We worked closely with local people to tell the stories of Thamesmead that often get overlooked," said Qozeem. "Jasleen, with her fearless care for community, totally got that. Her artwork is a brilliant reflection of the brief we wrote.

"We're excited for people to experience it and for it to ignite conversation locally."

Qozeem and Comfort also collaborated to create Horse Hotline, an interactive photography and sound project in response to Was. Is. Will Be. Visitors to Cygnet Square can call a phone number to hear the imagined histories of horses who have lived in the area for centuries.

Horse Hotline is installed in the square along with Homage to the Block, an artwork by late

creative studio member Gonzalo Fuentes Pinto. Gonzalo's work uses textiles coloured with natural dyes foraged from the local landscape to represent the staircases of Thamesmead's architecture and the flow of the community.

"By letting the next generation decide what goes in our public spaces, we're encouraging celebration of stories and communities that might otherwise have remained hidden," said Adriana Marques, Peabody's Assistant Director of Cultural Programme and Strategy.

Since being commissioned to design the Cygnet Square artwork, Jasleen has secured one of the most prestigious honours in British art. The London-based creative won the 2024 Turner Prize for her exhibition, Alter Altar.



Share your photos of Was. Is. Will Be. by tagging @thamesmeadnow on social media.



Call the Horse Hotline on 07380 337 609* to hear stories exploring themes of community, land and change.

*Calls are charged at your network provider's standard rate.

Community welcomes Was. Is. Will Be.

Residents share their thoughts on South Thamesmead's first permanent artwork.



"I'm really grateful that the project engaged people from the community. It's a beautiful experience to know that people care, that people are showing up for themselves and that history has been made."

Jecoliah Frimpong



"It's absolutely amazing and it resonates with local people. It's just engrained within the community. It seems like there was a missing piece of the square and all of a sudden, it's complete."

Tapiwa Dingwiza



"It's really impressive. I feel happy. I've been here the majority of my life and, if I eventually leave, I have something here permanently. I have a stamp here."

Macsaviour Ofoegbu



"The basketball cages, the green spaces, the river, even the chicken shops – this beautiful sculpture puts all of those Thamesmead experiences together."

Habeeb Lawal

Beloved shopkeeper Gogi cements his place in town's future



Long-serving shop owner Gogi Deol has seen his name etched into Cygnet Square in recognition of his role in the town's history.

Gogi is featured in the new artwork Was. Is. Will Be. thanks to his legendary status in Thamesmead. The 76-year-old ran Gogi's Supermarket, in Arnott Close, for almost five decades until his retirement in 2022.

His former business features in the poem that now stretches across Cygnet Square, making Gogi a permanent part of the town he served for so long.

Artist Jasleen Kaur included Gogi's Supermarket in the work after residents pinpointed its importance as a local landmark during workshops.

"It's so great," said Gogi, speaking at the artwork's unveiling. "I've spent almost my whole life here – 55 years in Thamesmead – and I ran my shop here for nearly 50 years.

"I'm really proud to see it because I was always so proud to serve the community here."

Despite announcing his retirement more than three years ago, Gogi hasn't quite been able to resist the lure of shopkeeping. He still works regular morning shifts with his family at Tari's, on Yarrnton Way.

£1 million funding to restore disused spaces

A community arts programme co-designed by residents has secured £1 million in funding to revive local playgrounds, shops and parks.

Three Rivers, which is supported by Peabody, was awarded the grant by Arts Council England. The funding will support its new Hello Earth project for three years.

Named after a song by the area's best-known cultural figure, Kate Bush, Hello Earth will launch in April. It will deliver a series of creative community projects to bring underused or forgotten spaces back to life.

Afia Yeboah, resident and Co-Chair of Three Rivers, said: "We really wanted to find a way for different communities to come together and respond to the issues that matter to them locally."

"Many of the people we talked to explained that reviving the empty playgrounds, shops and parks in their neighbourhoods to restore a sense of civic pride mattered most."

The projects will run alongside major new commissions along the Thames, Cray and Shuttle — the three rivers that give the organisation its name — including a new art trail.

Scott Burrell, Director of Three Rivers, said: "Our programme has been made with, and by, thousands of local people. This funding will enable us to support more communities to engage with arts and culture by experiencing their local surroundings in new creative ways."

Hello Earth builds on the work Three Rivers is already doing locally. This includes a successful programme at Tump 39 in North Thamesmead, where 45 volunteers run an arts and ecology space at the former Royal Arsenal munitions site. It was inaccessible to the public before Friends of Tump 39 was formed in 2023. The new funding will enable residents to run similar projects to give spaces in their neighbourhoods a new lease of life.

Funding will also be invested in developing The South East Way, a group of 12 to 18-year-olds who run their own stage at the annual Thamesmead Festival, sponsored by Peabody. This will help more young people to develop skills and experience in the creative industries.

Stay up to date with Three Rivers and Hello Earth at www.threeriversbexley.org or follow @threeriversbexley on Instagram.

My Thamesmead

Freelance community researcher Bukola Joel has spent years bringing people together in Thamesmead. Her social enterprise Beyond Braidz teaches cultural pride and respect to young people across the town.



What's your connection with Thamesmead?

I moved to Thamesmead in 2010. In that time, I've moved from North Thamesmead to Central, so I've experienced different parts of the town. I had my children in Thamesmead, and I love the environment here. It feels like home.

Where do you work?

I'm a freelance community researcher for the NHS, Southwark Council and other clients. I did research for the Connecting Thamesmead project to reduce loneliness and isolation, and improve health and wellbeing in the community. I'm still involved as a Connector.

I also run Beyond Braidz CIC, which facilitates community skills development in schools and community hubs. It's about people working together to reduce isolation and increase community awareness of different cultural heritages. We do this through hair braiding and other skills.

What's the best thing about Thamesmead?

The best thing is the landscape. The landscape is gold. Also, the diversity in this community is amazing. There are so many people from different ethnic backgrounds. I love bringing them together to share cultural skills.

Where's your favourite place to walk in Thamesmead?

Southmere Park is my number one go-to. The scenery is perfect for relaxation and reflection. When I feel like I need fresh air, space and to rediscover my creativity, I'll go for a walk in Southmere Park and sit by the lake.

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

I don't usually eat out, but I love the street food stalls at the Cygnet Square Community Days. It's a good chance to pop in to see what's around and try different foods without going out for a meal.

What's your favourite Thamesmead memory?

I have so many memories of my kids growing up here and visiting the different parks. In recent years, it has to be memories of the Thamesmead Festival. It's such a game-changer for the town. It brings all the people together and creates a sense of community.

I also ran a Beyond Braidz summer workshop with the London Borough of Bexley at Sporting Club Thamesmead last year. I'm still looking at the photos and smiling. That's a memory that I'll cherish for a very long time.

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

I would say that the negative assumptions some people have about living here are completely wrong. The way I see it, it's been a sanctuary.



Scan the QR code or visit beyondbraidz.org to learn more about Beyond Braidz.

Winter events



Visit town's biggest ever volunteer fair

Location: The Nest, Cygnet Square, SE9 2FA

Date: Tuesday 27 January

Time: 12pm-3pm

Price: Free

Info: bexleyvc@bvsc.co.uk

Residents who want to develop skills and experience to improve their job prospects can explore a range of volunteering opportunities at an upcoming event.

The BVSC Volunteer Fair, taking place at The Nest on 27 January, will bring together local charities and community organisations with volunteering roles available. Opportunities on offer range from flexible, short-term positions to regular, long-term commitments.

"Volunteering is a great way to develop new skills and experience, build your confidence and your CV, and take steps towards future employment opportunities," said Louise Partridge, Volunteer Development Lead at Bexley Voluntary Service Council. "People can come along and chat to organisations face-to-face about opportunities in the area."

Anybody interested in volunteering can drop in on the day and there is no need to book.

Say 'hola' to Spanish group

Location: The Nest, Cygnet Square, SE9 2FA

Date: Every Wednesday

Time: 12pm-1pm

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

A new Spanish conversation group is helping local people to brush up on their language skills.

The group, which meets every week at The Nest, gives residents a chance to improve their Spanish in a relaxed and supportive environment.

There is no need to book a place. Just drop in and join the group between 12pm and 1pm every Wednesday.

Community buttered up for shea event

Location: Unity Lounge and Bar, Sporting Club Thamesmead, Bayliss Avenue, SE28 8NJ

Date: Friday 20 February

Time: 6.30pm-10.00pm

Price: £10

Info: info.sheanature@gmail.com

Take a tour through the art, history and culture of shea and cocoa butters at an event at Unity Lounge and Bar.

Attendees will be able to whip their own body butter products and mix them with essential oils. At the same time, they will learn about the importance of cocoa and shea within Black communities.

"I'm from the Ivory Coast, which was the first cocoa exporter in the world," explains organiser Mylene Adiko, from She'a Nature. "Shea butter and cocoa butter have been used for hundreds of years by our ancestors. I want to showcase that history with the people of Thamesmead."

The event is being funded by Black Culture Collective's Connected Communities Commission, which is sponsored by Peabody.



Model train show coming down the track

Location: Harris Garrard Academy, Yarnton Way, DA18 4DW

Date: Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 January

Time: 10am-5pm (Saturday), 10am-4pm (Sunday)

Price: £9 adults, £1 children

Info: erithmrs@gmail.com

It's full steam ahead for a model railway exhibition taking place in the town later this month.

Erith Model Railway Society Exhibition's event at Harris Garrard Academy will see more than 30 layouts of different trains, tracks and landscapes spread throughout the venue.

There will be demonstrations taking place throughout the weekend, as well as static displays. Hot and cold refreshment will be available.



Our Parks Beginners' Bootcamp

Join a free fitness class for a full-body workout.

Location: Southmere Lake outdoor gym, Bazalgette Way, SE2 9AN

Date: Every Tuesday

Time: 10am-11am

Price: Free

Info: ourparks.org.uk/borough/southmere-lake-link-outdoor-gym

Chinese New Year Feast

Celebrate the Year of the Dragon with a delicious feast, themed decor and good vibes.

Location: Unity Lounge and Bar, Sporting Club Thamesmead, Bayliss Avenue, SE28 8NJ

Date: Friday 30 January

Time: 6pm-10pm

Price: From the menu

Info: [@unityloungeandbar](https://www.instagram.com/unityloungeandbar)

The Social Kitchen

A chance for children and parents to make delicious food they can share.

Location: Rainbow Cafe, Waterways Children's Centre, Southwood Road, SE28 8EZ

Date: Thursday 19 February

Time: 11am-2.30pm

Price: Free (but booking is essential)

Info: 020 8311 5491 (ext.1)

Stay and Play

Enjoy a fun and interactive session for little ones aged up to five.

Location: Waterways Children's Centre, Southwood Road, SE28 8EZ

Date: Thursday 19 February

Time: 1pm-2.30pm

Price: Free (but booking is essential)

Info: 020 8311 5491 (ext.1 or 3)



Cygnets Square Community Day

A day of local crafts, great food, and family-friendly fun in the heart of Thamesmead.

Location: Cygnets Square, SE9 2FA

Date: Saturday 7 February and 7 March

Time: 12pm-4pm

Price: Free

Info: [@cygnetsquarecommunityday](https://www.instagram.com/cygnetsquarecommunityday)



Valentine's Day Ball

Dress to impress, and celebrate love and friendship with dinner, music and dancing.

Location: Unity Lounge and Bar, Sporting Club Thamesmead, Bayliss Avenue, SE28 8NJ

Date: Saturday 14 February

Time: 7pm-11pm

Price: Free

Info: [@unityloungeandbar](https://www.instagram.com/unityloungeandbar)



Beuys' Acorns

Get involved in the completion of Thamesmead's new oak circle.

Location: Crossway Park, SE28 8NG

Date: Thursday 29 January

Time: 5.30pm

Price: Free

Info: thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk

See the culmination of renowned artists Ackroyd & Harvey's project to bring a circle of oaks to Thamesmead as the seventh and final oak is planted. The last tree is being planted as part of Bexley's Night Visions festival to complete the artwork.

Expect an atmospheric evening with the new oaks illuminated and Thamesmead Community Choir performing.

Regular events

Monday

Atrium Tea Room

Drop in for a hot drink and a chat with neighbours.

Time: 10am-3pm

Price: Free

Info: communityhubsTM@peabody.org.uk

Storytime

Enjoy stories with your pre-school age little ones, every Monday in term time.

Time: 10.15am-10.45am

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

CraftA

Socialise with others while working on your own crochet, textile and fibre arts and crafts.

Time: 10.45am-12.45pm

Price: Free

Info: 020 3828 4920

Befriending Cafe

Join Age UK for tea, a chat, games and to meet new people.

Time: 11am-1pm

Price: £10 per month

Info: [befriendingcafes@ageukbexley.org.uk](https://www.befriendingcafes@ageukbexley.org.uk)

Feel Good Mondays

Senior residents' social group for over 50s organised by Listening Ears.

Time: 12pm-4pm

Price: Free

Info: feelgood@listeningears.org or 07798 923 657

IT Buddies

Get support with IT and any other digital issues you're currently facing every Monday (also Wednesday, Thursday and Friday)

Time: Contact library to check availability

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

Prestige Dance

Open dance class for children aged 5-11.

Time: 5pm-7pm

Price: £5

Info: 07989 829507 or corinnadance@hotmail.co.uk

Brownies & Rainbows

Arts, crafts, cooking sports and other activities to help girls aged 4-10 learn new skills.

Time: 5pm-7pm in term time

Price: £4

Info: 5thabbeywoodbrowniesrainbows@gmail.com

Chess Club

Casual games every Monday with Thamesmead Chess Club.

Time: 5pm-7pm

Price: Free

Info: info@tmchess.co.uk or 07444 123 550

Rising Phoenix Fight Academy

Muay Thai, K1 and fitness training for children and adults.

Time: 5pm-8.30pm

Price: First session free

Info: risingphoenixfightacademy@outlook.com

Charlton Athletic Community Trust Premier League Kicks

Free football sessions for boys and girls aged 8-18 of any ability.

Time: 5pm-6pm (girls 6-11 years), 6pm-7pm (girls 12-16 years), 5.15pm-6.15pm (4-8 years), 6.15pm-7.30pm (9-14 years)

Price: From £5

Info: [cact.gives/courses](https://www.cact.gives/courses)

Abbey Wood Tennis Club

Weekly tennis classes for all age groups.

Time: 5.30pm-7.30pm (Children), 7.30pm-8.30pm (Adults)

Price: £60 per term

Info: abbeywoodtennisclub@gmail.com or 07835 896557

Tuesday

Scouts

A chance for young people to earn valuable life skills and teamwork through fun activities, games and challenges.

Time: 5.30pm-6.30pm (4-6 years), 6.30pm-7.30pm (6-8 years), 7.30pm-8.30pm (8-10 years)

Price: Free for new starters (then £15 per month)

Info: debbie@6rgscouts.uk

Tuesday



Healthy Walks

Take a two-and-a-half-mile walk around Thamesmead, led by volunteers.

Time: 10am-11am

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team



Coffee and Chat

Enjoy a friendly chat with other local residents over a hot drink and a biscuit.

Time: 10am-12pm

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

Seniors in Touch

Gentle exercise, singalongs, games, refreshments and more fun for the over-50s.

Location: Titmuss Avenue Baptist Church Hall, SE28 8DJ

Time: 11am-2pm

Price: £4

Info: 07957 727 955

Seated Exercise

Get active during classes for older adults and others with low mobility or disabilities.

Time: 12.15pm-1pm

Price: Free

Info: 020 3828 4920

LGBTQIA+ Drop-In

An informal get-together for members of the LGBT community.

Time: 1pm-3pm

Price: Free

Info: team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk

Adult Colouring

A quiet and relaxed colouring session for adults.

Time: 2pm-3pm

Price: Free

Info: 020 8191 9622 or info@camouflagecafe.co.uk

Prestige Dance

Open dance class for children aged 5-11.

Time: 4.15pm-5pm

Price: £5

Info: 07989 829507 or corinnadance@hotmail.co.uk

Gayzelles LGBTQIA+ Running Club

A fun way to both keep fit and socialise with other LGBTQIA people in Thamesmead.

Location: Outside St. Benet's Church, SE2 9EU

Time: 6.30pm

Price: Free

Info: team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk

Hula Hooping and Line Dancing

Join the Thamesmead Tornados for two fitness classes in one.

Time: 6pm–8.15pm

Price: Free

Info: 020 8191 9622 or info@camouflagecafe.co.uk

Vibes on Vibes Skating Session

Vibrant roller skating club for adults.

Time: 7pm–9pm

Price: From £6

Info: wearevibesonvibes.co.uk or 07484 224983

Wednesday

Advice Hub

Get guidance on housing, immigration, employment, domestic abuse and other issues.

Time: 9.30am–12.30pm

Price: Free

Info: tmadviceinschs@peabody.org.uk or 07815 734 080

Toddler time

Songs and rhymes for babies to three-year-olds every Wednesday in term time.

Time: 9.45am–10.15am

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

Atrium Tea Room

Drop in for a hot drink and a chat with neighbours.

Time: 10am–3pm

Price: Free

Info: communityhubsTM@peabody.org.uk

Stay and Play

Playtime with toys for under 5s. Stay and chat for the grown-ups every Wednesday in term time.

Time: 10.15am–11.15am

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

Adult Craft and Hobby Hour

A relaxing afternoon of crafting, knitting, sewing and more, with refreshments available.

Time: 2pm–4pm

Price: Free (suggested donation of 50p per refreshment)

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

Thrive Impact

Youth club for 11 to 17-year-olds to make new friends, learn new skills and take part in exciting activities.

Time: 4pm–7pm

Price: Free

Info: thriveimpact.co.uk/

KBT Academy of Martial Arts

Beginners' martial arts classes for over-5s.

Time: 4.30pm–5.15pm

Price: £40 per month

Info: 020 8303 8549 or kbtacademy@btconnect.com

Coffee and Chat

Socialise with friends and neighbours and enjoy free refreshments. Free craft sessions every other week.

Time: 10am–12pm

Price: Free

Info: 020 3828 4920

Thursday

Tai Chi

Sessions of the slow, free-flowing movements of this Chinese martial art.

Time: 10am–3pm

Price: Free

Info: ttrusty@netvigator.com

Good Life Garden

Drop in to volunteer while learning new gardening skills.

Location: Birchmere Park, SE28 8AL

Time: 10am–4pm

Price: Free

Info: lockwoodbryan44@yahoo.co.uk

Befriending Cafe

Join Age UK for tea, a chat, games and to meet new people.

Time: 11am–1pm

Price: £10 per month

Info: befriendingcafes@ageukbexley.org.uk

Gentle Pilates

Gentle pilates workout for people with disabilities or low mobility.

Time: 11.45am–12.30pm

Info: 07985086788 or rosannecorefitness@gmail.com

Love Soup Cafe

Drop in to enjoy freshly made soup and craft sessions in a warm space.

Location: Broadwater Hub, Goosander Way, SE28 0ER

Time: 12pm–4pm

Price: Free

Info: wttccinfo2025@gmail.com

FBM Ballet Class

Ballet class for little dancers aged four to six.

Time: 4pm–4.35pm

Price: What you can afford

Info: fbmdanceacademy@gmail.com

FBM Street Dance Class

Enjoyable dance sessions where 7 to 11-year-olds can groove to the beats.

Time: 4.40pm–5.25pm

Price: What you can afford

Info: fbmdanceacademy@gmail.com

Learning Disability Disco Night

Weekly disco night in a fully accessible space.

Time: 5pm–9pm

Price: Free

Info: 020 8191 9622 or info@camouflagecafe.co.uk

Afro-Dance Fitness Classes

Add some fun to your fitness routine with this high-energy dance class.

Time: 7pm–8pm

Price: £2

Info: positivefuturesgroup.org

Friday

Atrium Tea Room

Drop in for a hot drink and a chat with neighbours.

Time: 10am–3pm

Price: Free

Info: communityhubsTM@peabody.org.uk

Coffee and Conversation

Socialise in a relaxed environment, with board games available.

Time: 10am–12pm

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

Senior Citizens' Painting Workshop

A chance for over-60s to get creative with their art skills.

Time: 12pm–2pm

Price: Free

Info: 020 3828 4920

Thamesmead Library Reading Group

Discuss and review a nominated book in a relaxed setting.

Date: Last Friday of the month

Time: 2pm–3.30pm

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

Colouring Club

An afternoon of colouring for ages four and over.

Date: Every Friday in term time

Time: 4pm–5pm

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

ASG Boxing Academy

Get fit, build your confidence and learn the art of boxing.

Time: 5pm–5.50pm (11–13 years), 6pm–6.50pm (14–18 years)

Price: £30 per month

Info: bookings@activesportsgroup.org.uk or 07714 852528

Bollywood Community Dance Club

Beginner-friendly, inclusive and fun Bollywood-themed dance class for all ages.

Time: 5.30pm–6.30pm

Price: Free

Info: 07999 436701

Power Mobile Gym Youth Boxing Sessions

Youth boxing sessions for young people aged 13–18.

Time: 6pm–7pm

Price: Free

Info: info@powermobilegym.com or 07506 762 444

Charlton Athletic Community Trust Premier League Kicks

Free football sessions for boys and girls aged 8–18 of any ability.

Time: 6pm–8pm

Price: Free

Info: Joshua.Eales@cact.org.uk

Dynamix Dance Sessions

Street dance, Afro-beat and more for 5 to 18-year-olds.

Time: 6pm–8pm

Price: £10 (free first session)

Info: dynamix_dancerz@outlook.com or 07958 397083

LGBTQIA+ Tabletop RPG Night

Regular games night for role-playing games, including Dungeon Crawl Classics, 'Til The Last Gasp and Mausritter. Every other Friday

Time: 6pm

Price: £1 suggested donation

Info: team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk

Walking Football

Enjoy the beautiful game without bleep tests and shuttle runs.

Time: 8pm–9pm

Price: £5

Info: walkingfootball@erithtown.com

Friday Lates

An eclectic mix of comedy, theatre, conversations and entertainment.

Time: 6pm–9pm

Price: Dependent on entertainment – contact for details

Info: 020 8191 9622 or info@camouflagecafe.co.uk

Saturday

TDA Football Training

Open football training sessions for boys and girls aged 5 to 12.

Time: 9am–10am

Price: £5

Info: 07931 939999

Sunday

Queer Craft Club

Monthly craft session with LGBT+ Thamesmead.

Date: Sunday 25 January, 22 February and 22 March

Time: 10.30am–12.30pm

Price: Free

Info: team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk

LGBTQIA+ Woodland Walk

Inclusive stroll through Lesnes Abbey Woods with LGBT+ Thamesmead.

Location: Chestnuts Kiosk, Lesnes Abbey Woods

Date: Sunday 11 January, 8 February and 8 March

Time: 10.30am–12pm

Price: Free

Info: team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk

Acro Dance

Combining dance technique and acrobatics for over 5s.

Time: 9.15am–10.15am

Price: £5

Info: 07989 829507 or corinnadance@hotmail.co.uk

Canoeing Club

Canoeing, kayaking and paddlesports sessions on Southmere Lake.

Location: Southmere Water Sports & Activity Centre, SE2 9AN

Time: 10am

Price: £6

Info: 07951 770241 or thamesmead@thesharks.org.uk

Vibes on Vibes Skating Session

Vibrant roller skating club for children and adults.

Time: 10am–11am

Price: From £6

Info: wearevibesonvibes.co.uk or 07484 224983

LGBTQIA+ Coffee Brunch

Relaxed coffee brunch to connect with other LGBTQIA+ people in the local area. Every first Saturday of the month

Location: Thamesmead Social, Lakeside Centre SE2 9AN

Time: 11am–2pm

Price: Free

Info: team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk

Read With Me

One-to-one 10-minute reading sessions for primary school children.

Time: 11am–12pm

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

Lego Club

Build big, bright and better with your buddies. For 7 to 11-year-olds.

Time: 12pm–2pm

Price: Free

Info: www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries or talk to a member of the library team

ASG Boxing Academy

Get fit, build your confidence and learn the art of boxing.

Time: 12.30pm–1.20pm (6–10 years), 1.30pm–2.20pm (11–13 years), 2.30pm–3.20pm (14–18 years)

Price: £30 per month

Info: bookings@activesportsgroup.org.uk



Visit thamesmeadnow.org.uk/whats-on for more events

To suggest your event or activity for inclusion in What's On, email thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk.

All information is correct at the time of printing.

Get involved Peabody Business Forum

Networking and events for aspiring and existing business owners, startups and

Decide how community funding should be spent

Local people are being invited to have their say on how community grants are awarded in the town.

Peabody is inviting applications to join the Thamesmead Community Fund Panel.

The fund supports local community and creative projects with grants of £200 to £3,000. The money comes from the fees Peabody earns when Thamesmead is used as a filming location, and from the Peabody Community Foundation.

The fund is run by Peabody, the London Community Foundation and an advisory panel of residents and stakeholders.

"We're particularly keen for applications from residents who haven't been involved before, so that we hear from a range of voices," explained Rav Singh, Peabody's Project Officer for Community Development. "We are looking for a diverse group of people from different backgrounds, age groups, career paths and areas in Thamesmead who are interested in what is happening locally. It doesn't matter if you've not been involved in this kind of work before."

The panel is currently scheduled to meet four times this year – in May, June, October and November. Meetings take place in the evenings. Panel members are paid the London Living Wage for their time working on funding rounds. They are also given training on their role and can borrow a laptop to read funding applications.

How to apply



Email ThamesmeadCommunityTeam@peabody.org.uk with 'TMCF Panel' in the subject line. Explain why you would like to join the panel, where in Thamesmead you live, your age, and your occupation or interests. The deadline for applications is Monday 9 March.

Repair Cafe offers big fixes for small appliances



Residents are being invited to get small household appliances repaired for free while they enjoy a cup of tea or coffee.

Repair Cafe, which takes place at Sporting Club Thamesmead, will help local people to save money by giving old appliances a new lease of life.

Experienced repair professionals will be on hand to work on small electrical items, including kettles, toasters, vacuum cleaners, games consoles, air fryers, blenders and lamps.

After handing over their broken items, visitors to the Repair Cafe will be able to get refreshments while they wait.

The cafe is being organised by Peabody and funded by Lovell, in partnership with repair and reuse social enterprise The Restart Project.

Another social enterprise, Kundakala, will also be on hand to mend clothes. It offers a free sewing alterations service to fix items on the spot.

Rav Singh, Peabody's Project Officer for Community Development, said: "Replacing household electrical items creates a lot of waste and costs families a lot of money. Often, a simple fix will get these appliances working again."

"Through the Repair Cafe, we're helping households across Thamesmead to save money and reduce waste by giving the things they rely on a new lease of life."

Repair Cafe is unable to repair mobile phones, tablets or laptop screens without the replacement parts. E-bikes, e-scooters and other items with large battery packs, microwaves, power tools and large appliances that can't be carried by hand are also unsuitable for repair.

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

Date: Saturday 21 February, 21 March and 11 April

Time: 12pm-3pm

Price: Free

Info: ravneet.singh@peabody.org.uk or dan.wells@peabody.org.uk



To check if your item is suitable for repair and book a repair slot, email ravneet.singh@peabody.org.uk or scan the QR code.

Take free help to kick the habit, say ex-smokers



Former smokers are urging their fellow residents to sign up for free stop smoking services to help them quit.

Services offered by Peabody in partnership with Greenwich and Bexley councils' public health teams mean all Thamesmead residents aged over 18 can access free one-to-one support.

Noreen Muwanga-Nanyonjo, from North Thamesmead, is among those who have stopped smoking with the help of Peabody's Stop Smoking Advisor, Eromosele Eselebor.

She began smoking socially when out with friends, but found herself gradually buying her own packs and eventually smoking 10 cigarettes a day.

"I've been wanting to quit for quite some time. I wanted to start saving money," explained Noreen. "The most important thing is accountability. You sign up and the support is there. It's almost like a friend. Eromosele stays in touch and I can always send a message."

After six successful weeks, Noreen wants others to follow her lead.

"Do it for yourself. It's really difficult, but the support is there. Reach out," she said. "If you're serious and you really want to do it, this is the best route to go down."

Eromosele is also doing his share of reaching out. He recalled the story of one man who passed by his stop smoking stand during a Stoptober event.

"He was walking by with a cigarette in his mouth," recounted Eromosele.

"He was like 'I've tried everything, it doesn't work.' I said, 'you haven't tried with us, come try with us.'

"When we were packing up, he came back and signed up. At his second session, he came with a testimony that he saved so much money he was able to take his wife on a date!"

Another long-term smoker, David Ruglys, has saved hundreds of pounds since quitting with Eromosele's help.

"It's the best thing that I've done," he revealed. "I've been smoking for 42 years. I was smoking 30 a day at least, sometimes up to 40."

"I decided to quit for my health and because my partner doesn't smoke. But I had to be ready in my own mind. In three-and-a-half weeks, I'd already saved over £400 that I would have wasted on cigarettes."

David has been using free vapes provided under the scheme to cut out cigarettes. He has now set himself a target of three months to stop using vapes.



If you would like free, one-to-one support to quit smoking, email eromosele@peabody.org.uk or scan the QR code.

Community Group Forum relaunches

Community groups from across the town will have fresh opportunities to work together to achieve more, thanks to a relaunched forum.

Following a successful meeting of local groups last September, Peabody is now kickstarting the Community Group Forum. This aims to deliver extra support and encourage collaboration between the 70-plus organisations helping local residents.

The forum builds on the recommendations of Improving Outcomes, Connecting Thamesmead's recent report on Thamesmead's voluntary and community sector. It will help organisations in the town to overcome some of the biggest issues they face.

"The forum is an opportunity for community groups to get the support they need around training, funding and volunteering, while sharing ideas and working towards common goals," explained Dan Wells, Peabody's Community Investment Lead in Thamesmead. "It's open to any organisations that are passionate about making a difference and working with others to support local communities."

BVSC (Bexley Voluntary Service Council), Royal Borough of Greenwich, MetroGAVS and Greenwich Volunteer Centre are among the organisations already involved in the forum – and new members are welcome to join.

The forum will next meet between 2pm and 5.30pm on Wednesday 28 January at Sporting Club Thamesmead. It will be headlined by representatives from the National Lottery, who will lead discussions on funding.

To book your community group's place at the forum, email thamesmeadcommunityteam@peabody.org.uk.

Support & opportunities



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Get in touch

If you want to tell us what you think about Talk of Thamesmead, sign up for the monthly digital newsletter or get more involved in the work we're doing, then please drop us a line at thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk



MM HORSES ARE HERE →

Putting the 'neigh' in neighbourhood

A new artwork commissioned by a group of young residents has been unveiled in Cygnet Square.

Was. Is. Will Be. – by Turner Prize-winning artist Jasleen Kaur – celebrates the past, present and future of Thamesmead. The 'Horses are here' sign is the last line of a poem that captures the memories of the local community. The poem is now engraved across the square.

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