

Thamesmead Newsletter

December 2020

A year we never expected

At the time of writing things remain uncertain and we don't know what sort of festive season we'll be having.

That's why it's important we maintain the traditions we find comfort in, such as the Christmas tree in the town centre.

At **Peabody** we've had to find new ways of providing support to Thamesmead's communities who have reacted to the pandemic with determination and compassion.

Our **Economic team** has been backing local businesses and entrepreneurs with programmes such as the online **Thamesmead Business Forum** and **Thamesmead Sessions 2.0**.

The first lockdown made us appreciate Thamesmead's parks even more and our **Environmental Services** colleagues have ensured they've stayed pristine and accessible, while the **Landscape team** has transformed **Southmere Lake** for everyone to enjoy.

The **Making Space for Nature** initiative has also been working hard to enhance these spaces as well as showing us how to create our own islands of greenery at home.

Young people have been hit hard by Covid. Schemes like **YouthBuild**, **Young Ambassadors** and the **Youth Eco Development Council** have been key in showing there is hope beyond the pandemic.

Meanwhile, the **Culture team** has introduced some brilliant new colourful artworks to the town and held community markets where we've come together safely to celebrate the best of **Thamesmead**.

If you need any extra help over Christmas, on page 8 there's details about the support available from **Peabody**, as well as our partners at **Royal Borough of Greenwich** and **London Borough of Bexley Councils**.

Have a safe Christmas and let's all look forward to a happier 2021.

John Lewis,
Executive Director Thamesmead
Peabody

Litter takes flight

A group of environmentally aware young people in Thamesmead have made an artwork out of litter to highlight the plight of an endangered bird of prey.

The '**Marsh Harrier's Shadow**' was created by the **Youth Eco Development Council (YEDC)**, in collaboration with artist **Miyuki Kasahara**, and funded by **Peabody** and the **National Lottery Heritage Fund**.

YEDC organised a litter pick and collected 2,500 litres of rubbish to create a silhouette of a flying Marsh Harrier, once common in Thamesmead. Local resident **Dave Cooper** captured the artwork with a drone. Watch it on the **YEDC Thamesmead YouTube** channel.

To find out more about the **YEDC** contact **Nadia Kassab** at nadia.kassab@peabody.org.uk





Peabody staff and local councillors with Verity-Jane Keefe in front of the new mural.

Moorings reborn

You might have noticed things are starting to change at the former Moorings Social Club, not least with the large eye-catching mural now outside the building.

That's because it's set to open as a community space again after planning permission for major improvements was granted to **Peabody** by the **Royal Borough of Greenwich**.

Over the past two years, Peabody has been working with the local community to reimagine what the former social club could become. Their ideas for a café, museum, workspaces and rooms for residents to hire for events, are to become a reality with work due to start in Spring 2021.

Other improvements will include: a refurbished roof terrace; reinstating the great hall; replacing all the windows and upgrading the appearance of the building.

Works by artist-in-residence, **Verity-Jane Keefe**, will be displayed throughout with the first already unveiled outside, the photo collage featuring local people.

Peabody is also launching a competition to name the new building with suggestions needing to be submitted by the end of December.

We are also collecting memories of the club for the planned museum. Send your names and memories to thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk



*The Christmas Market is currently scheduled for December 12th, check website for confirmation nearer the time

Building on success

The popular **YouthBuild** programme continues to go from strength to strength with all the learners on the most recent course successfully graduating and two-thirds already finding jobs.

The Peabody-backed scheme, which teaches youngsters buildings skills and helps them to develop leadership qualities, has also moved into new purpose-built premises at Titmuss Avenue.

Peabody's Economic Inclusion Manager, **Christofi Christou**, said: "It's exciting the course is helping so many young people in Thamesmead to develop their personal and professional skills and, most importantly, get at a job at the end of the programme."

Anyone interested in talking part in the YouthBuild programme should contact Peabody's Socio-Economic Team at [Thamesmead.portal@peabody.org.uk](mailto:portal@peabody.org.uk) or check the Thamesmead Portal for training opportunities www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/portal/



The current YouthBuild learners.

Ideas wanted

The next phase of improving **Southmere** and **Parkview's** outdoor spaces is starting and we want to hear your ideas.

Muf architecture/art will lead the work supported by the **Making Space for Nature** team.

Muf will be holding online information sessions and are looking for residents to join the **South Thamesmead Garden Estate Community Panel** to co-create the designs. If you want to join the panel, contact the **Making Space for Nature** team at thamesmeadnature@groundwork.org.uk

Local Hero Making a Difference

Thamesmead resident, **Thelma Obirai**, 18, has been making a massive contribution to the local community during the pandemic.

Using skills learnt over the past two years on Peabody schemes **Thelma** has worked at a number of different events and helped to recruit more much-needed volunteers to help those hit by Coronavirus.



Thelma, who has lived in Thamesmead for the past ten years, first came into contact with Peabody after taking part in the Young Ambassadors scheme.

Since then she's been involved with many Peabody initiatives including: Trainee Producers; the Youth Eco Development Council; Masterclass Tuesdays, as well as working with the London Transport Museum and on consultations with local MP, **Abena Appong Asare**.

Thelma said: "I've gained so many skills since working on the projects and programmes with Peabody. My mindset has changed completely. I know you have the ability to become whatever you want to be, despite sometimes the world telling you otherwise.

"My confidence has grown; I've built connections and had the most amazing experiences. I never thought I would have the opportunity to have such an impact on other people's lives, none of which would have been possible without Peabody. It's changed my life!

"I've particularly enjoyed the experience of liaising with the National Health Service as my ultimate goal is to study medicine after taking a gap year."



Nadia Kassab, Peabody's Youth Development Coordinator and who coaches Thelma, added: "When I first met Thelma, she was very shy, but it was obvious she had the drive and determination to learn new skills. Through establishing her strengths and weaknesses, we were able to work together on various projects that helped her to develop her leadership skills."

If you're interested in finding out more about the opportunities Peabody offers in Thamesmead contact Nadia at nadia.kassab@peabody.org.uk

Stone built his own oasis

South Thamesmead resident **Dan Stone** has been using lockdown to transform the balcony of his flat in Dexter House into an oasis of peace and calm.

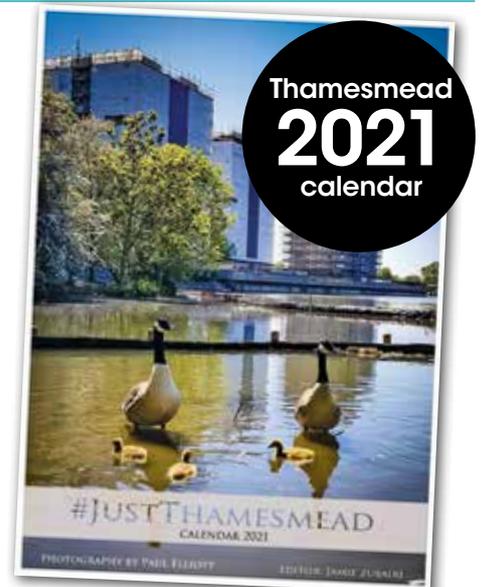
He's repainted, laid flooring, put in plants and flowers, added a shelving unit to hold planters and now has a space where he can enjoy his views over Thamesmead.

Dan said: "During lockdown I wanted to create a relaxing outside area to escape to on breaks from work and on the warm summer evenings. I'm really proud of how it's turned out and it has really transformed my balcony into an extra room."

This is just the sort of project being encouraged by the **Making Space for Nature** team, the joint initiative from **Peabody**, **Groundwork** and the **Mayor of London** helping Thamesmead residents connect with the natural world around them.

If you'd like to know how to transform your outdoor areas or make the most of Thamesmead's green spaces, visit the Making Space for Nature Facebook page.

You can also sign up for the regular newsletter by going to: www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk and clicking on the 'In Your Community' section.



Brilliant local photographer **Paul Elliott** has produced a fantastic Thamesmead 2021 calendar. Details on his FB page - www.facebook.com/iamboodidit

Lockdown litter pickers

A group of local people have been using lockdown to clean up the streets – literally.

In March two West Thamesmead residents noticed lots of litter while taking their regular exercise. They started a Facebook group, printed some posters and **Tidy West Thamesmead** was born!

From those humble beginnings **TWT** has grown to more than 160 members and spawned three more local Facebook Groups: the **Royal Arsenal 5K Clean Up**,



Tidy South Thamesmead and **Tidy North Thamesmead**.

Mark Pickering, Chair of the **West Thamesmead Community Association**, said: "TWT and the other groups regularly get together to remove litter and trim back overgrowth. Why not join us in helping to make Thamesmead a neater, tidier, more pleasant place for us all to live in."

Anyone interested in joining any of the groups can find their details on Facebook.



Resident and contributor, Michelle Sanchez, with a copy of the cookbook

Cooking the books

A new cookbook celebrating the rich culinary and cultural heritage of **Thamesmead** is also helping to generate much needed donations for local food banks.

The **Tastes of Thamesmead community cookbook** is part of a wider archive project commissioned by **Peabody** and created by renowned artists **Floro Azqueta** and **Hannah Ringham**.

The artists worked with residents to showcase the great variety of food heritage in the town with recipes from as far afield as Mexico, Nigeria and Nepal.

At the recent Thamesmead Market local people could collect a copy of the cookbook in exchange for an item of non-perishable food. All donations were then distributed to Thamesmead food banks. Peabody plan to run the scheme again at the **Christmas Market** scheduled for **December 12th**.

Adriana Marques, Peabody's Head of Culture for Thamesmead, said: "Thamesmead is an incredibly diverse place, attracting people from all over the world. This cookbook not only celebrates that diversity but also gives residents the opportunity to cook some fantastic food at home and in doing so find out a little bit more about Thamesmead's heritage and their neighbours."

You can download a copy of the cookbook for free at the Thamesmead Now website at www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk

FREE HOME ENERGY ADVICE IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Green Doctors are expert energy advisers who help London and Slough residents save money, stay warm, and improve energy efficiency in the home.

We are now offering **FREE** pre-booked phone consultations as a response to the Covid-19 outbreak.

At this difficult time we think personalised energy advice is more important than ever. Energy bills may become more of a concern due to changing financial circumstances, and many residents' will see increased home energy bills when reducing social contact.

What support can the Green Doctor offer on the phone?

- Energy saving advice in the home
- Switching energy providers to save money
- Applying for grants for energy or water debt
- Identifying and tackling damp or mould problems
- Further referrals to additional support
- Accessing the Warm Homes Discount

Who is eligible?

- those with disabilities
- those with a long-term health condition
- those who are pregnant
- residents over 60 years
- residents with children under 10 years
- residents who have a low income (below £16,190)
- residents with energy costs that are more than 10% of household income
- residents on benefits
- residents who have recently lost their job or income

To enquire about a free phone consultation, get in touch:

greendoctors-london.org

0300 365 3005

GreenDoctorLDN@groundwork.org.uk

GREEN DOCTOR



Bringing nature home

At the start of 2020 none of us could have imagined how important our natural spaces would become. However, government restrictions meant we learnt to cherish our limited time outdoors.

It also meant **Making Space for Nature** had to shift from community events like February's popular **Light Festival** to focus on helping residents create their own green spaces at home with the #GetSetSow campaign.

Students from **Harris Garrard School** also connected with the team and had their own 'Environment Day' to learn about the environment and habitats.

In the summer and autumn, 750 residents snapped up growing kits, meaning they were able to grow produce from lettuce and tomatoes to coriander and chillies at home.



The team have stayed virtually connected to residents, with a thriving online **Nature Forum** and the creation of the **Thamesmead Green Guardians group**. These have enabled residents to share their passion for nature and shape the changes happening in the town.

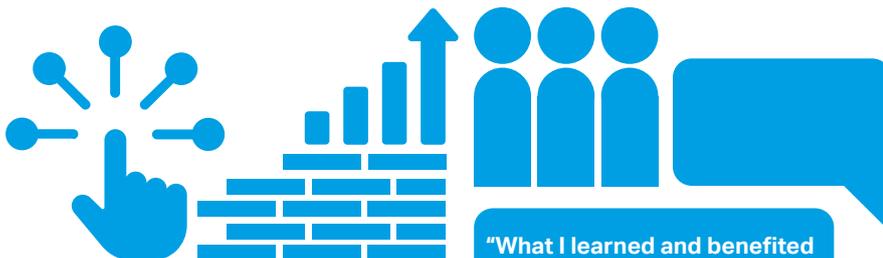
After being closed during the first lockdown the **Tump 53 Nature Reserve**, with its meadow area, fire circle, pond and classroom, reopened and continued its 'Learning in the Landscape' outdoor education programme.

Jack Gower, Peabody's Landscape Activation Manager, said:

"We had to change our plans to react to the impact of Covid, we hope introducing residents to the joys of growing at home has helped them cope with the pandemic. Reopening Tump 53 has given young people the chance to get outside and immerse themselves in nature."

Go to www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk and sign-up to the newsletter to hear what activities, events and giveaway opportunities the **Making Space for Nature team** will be having in 2021.

THAMESMEAD SESSIONS 2.0



Interested in developing personal skills, learning about growth sectors or achieving goals, there's a **Thamesmead Session** for that

Sessions 2.0 will return in 2021, visit www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/portal/ for updates. If you want to suggest topics for future Sessions contact us via the details below.

Sessions delivered via zoom
11am - 12:30pm

"What I learned and benefited from the sessions is to come up with a vision that gets me going every day"
Enoch

Book your place with
thamesmead.portal@peabody.org.uk
or call 07880101223

Shore thing

Last year, **Peabody** partnered with international construction company **Lendlease** to form the **Thamesmead Waterfront Joint Venture** to plan and deliver the development of Thamesmead Waterfront.

A new waterfront district is going to be created in north Thamesmead with homes, improved shops, commercial, leisure and educational facilities in the town centre.

In October the **Joint Venture** launched a competition to appoint a team to develop the vision and masterplan for the development. The winning company will be announced in Spring 2021.

The **Thamesmead Waterfront Joint Venture** is also working closely with **Transport for London** and other partners to deliver transport improvements, especially a DLR extension from north of the river to Thamesmead, needed for the project to fulfil its full potential.

For more information about the project, please visit: www.thamesmead-waterfront.co.uk



Local artist brings colour to canals

Thamesmead's **canal underpasses** have been given a radical and colourful transformation with the help of a local artist.

Print designer **Paige Denham** won the **Peabody** competition to work alongside four international artists as part of its Thamesmead Canal Mural Programme.

Paige, with artists **Louis Masai, Jo Peel, Hixxy** and **Xenz**, have been creating murals, featuring the area's wildlife and natural inhabitants, along four underpasses that connect Thamesmead's seven kilometres of picturesque canals. Another two will be completed in early 2021.

Paige said: "Painting a large-scale piece of art has been a career goal of mine. It is an incredible opportunity to share my colourful outlook on the world with the residents of a town I treasure so much."

Adriana Marques, Peabody's Head of Culture for Thamesmead, added: "It's so important to celebrate the great artistic talent we have in Thamesmead, like Paige, and to give the opportunity for career development through opportunities like this. We also hope these murals will bring some joy and creativity to Thamesmead, while showcasing some of our lesser-known wildlife."



Artist Paige Denham

Become a champion

During the pandemic we all need to work together to keep our communities safe and supported. **Peabody**, working with Greenwich and Bexley Councils, are keen to recruit local people to share health information with family and friends.

As a **Thamesmead Champion** you could play a key role in looking after your community, telling us what they need and sharing information on available services. Together we can provide free training opportunities and access to webinars on key topics such as Mental Health Awareness.

Could this be you?

Email ThamesmeadCommunityTeam@peabody.org.uk to find out more.

Making the change

Peabody has been working with **Champions 4 Change** to deliver a ten-week programme at Woolwich Polytechnic School for Girls.

The boxing and personal development programme was designed to break down stereotypes about females taking part in boxing and empower young women by building their confidence at a time when it could be impacted by the pandemic.

Scott O'Connor, Director of the Champions4Change programme, said: "It's been a joy to see the progress of each individual girl and I really look forward to seeing the next level of what they can achieve, as they work towards becoming the best versions of themselves."

Playing the Claridge Way

Claridge Way is being transformed as part of a major investment in the area. **Peabody** is providing £250,000 and the **Greater London Authority** is contributing an additional £50,000 from their Greener Team programme.

Work has been going on throughout the summer with a painted play route and a 'Growing Club' set up at **Hawksmoor Primary School**.

Peabody has collaborated with the school as well as **Hawksmoor Youth Club**, **Windrush Primary School** and nine residents, whose homes back onto **Claridge Way**, to create designs for the well-used path.

Kate Batchelor, Peabody's Head of Landscape & Placemaking in Thamesmead, said: "**Claridge Way is a vital route between the Moorings and local amenities. This is a great opportunity to work with local people to make sure the path is used to its full potential.**"



Peabody will be investing in a green space near the boundary of **Hawksmoor Primary School** and **Claridge Way** to improve the area. Peabody's Gardener-in-Residence will also work with the students of **Hawksmoor** to help them work out how it will be used.

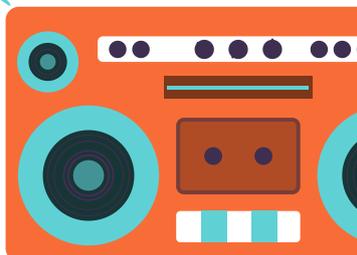
THAMESMEAD | BEXLEY | GREENWICH

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AN HOUR OF 'ME TIME'
ZOOM DANCE CLASS
FREE TO UNPAID CARERS
EVERY TUESDAY @ 11AM
OCT 2020 - MARCH 2021

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Free courses available

We are currently taking registrations for a range of free courses.

Basic Computer Workshop

L2 Business Administration

Mental Health and Wellbeing Level 1

Mental Health and Wellbeing Level 2

Personal Health and Wellbeing Level 1

Food Safety Level 2

Health & Safety in the Workplace Level 3

How to enrol

If you are interested in any of these courses, please contact Thamesmead.Portal@peabody.org.uk. If there are other courses you're interested in, let us know and we'll do our best to help.



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Local support during lockdown

We are constantly monitoring the situation and continuing to follow government guidance around community spaces. The **Joyce Dawson Way** office is open again but **The Link** and **Information Hub** will remain closed for now.

If you'd like to talk to us about anything or if you have any questions then please email us at thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk. We can support you with paying your rent, managing debt or finding a job. Call us on **0203 478 9750**.

If you have an urgent repair or housing issue we are still here to help in any way we can.

Please call our customer service centre on **0300 123 1237** if you need this sort of support.

Greenwich Residents

From help to get you a supermarket slot, to support around your mental and physical health or advice on staying warm in winter – a friendly advisor is waiting to speak with you. Call **0800 470 4831**

Bexley Residents

For guidance and support on a range of issues, residents can call **London Borough of Bexley Council Customer Contact Centre** on **020 8303 7777**. Open from 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Thamesmead Residents

Positive Steps Thamesmead can offer telephone advice and information on a range of issues including housing, benefits and immigration. Please call **Positive Steps Thamesmead** on **07815 734080**.



Getting tested for Coronavirus

If you have coronavirus symptoms: (a high temperature; a new, continuous cough; a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste) **even if they're only mild**, it's important to **get a test** and stay at home until you get your result.

Testing centres in the Royal Borough of Greenwich:

- 02 North Greenwich, SE1
- Charlton Athletic Football Club, SE
- University of Greenwich, Avery Hill Road, SE
- **NEW** – Plumstead Aberly Street, Plumstead, SE18
- **NEW** – De Vere Devonport House Car Park, SE10

Testing centres in the London Borough of Bexley:

- Sidcup House, Sidcup, DA15 7EX
- 221 Erith Road, Bexleyheath, DA7 6HZ
- Felixstowe Road car park, Abbey Wood, SE2 9RZ

Please visit the respective council websites for more details about the types of service being offered and opening times.

Booking is essential for all testing centres. Order a home test kit if you cannot get to a test site. Please go to gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test. If you have problems using the online service, call: **119**. Lines are open 7am to 11pm.

Testing is **NOT** available at the hospital Emergency Department or at your GP practice, so please **do not attend** here trying to get a test.

Support if you test positive and have to self-isolate

If your test result is positive, you and your household will need to stay at home and **self-isolate** for 14 days. This is important to stop the virus spreading.

This can be stressful and worrying when you need to go to work. If you are unable to claim sick-pay from your employer and are a low income household, a one-off £500 payment may be available from the Government to support you and your family during these 14 days. Find out if you are eligible to apply for this payment by calling **0800 470 4831**.

Flu Campaign



Flu can cause serious complications for people aged 65 and over. The free flu vaccine is your best protection. To get your free flu jab, ask your pharmacist or GP.

Flu can be horrible for young children and they can easily pass it on to those around them who could be vulnerable – even if they don't show any symptoms.

Children who get flu have the same symptoms as adults – including fever, chills, aching muscles, headache, stuffy nose, dry cough and sore throat.

The free flu nasal spray is easier to give to children than the injection, it is the best way to protect your child and can prevent the spread of the virus.

Ask your GP about your child's free flu nasal spray. Call NHS **111** if you are worried about your child's symptoms.

Please visit thamesmeadnow.org.uk for updates

Keep up-to-date with Thamesmead news

Sign up to the Thamesmead e-newsletter. Email us at thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk adding 'Sign me up' in the subject line.

Social media

For the latest news and information – please stay in touch by following us

