



# Talk of Thamesmead

The publication for Thamesmead residents

Issue 19  
Autumn  
2025



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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 lots of ways to stay in touch.



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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](mailto:thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk) to arrange a date and time.

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## Find space for community this autumn

**With so many beautiful trees dotted around Thamesmead's green spaces, the falling leaves and golden light of autumn are bringing new colour to the town. And the good news is that many more trees are being planted soon (page 7).**

Summer may have come to an end, but memories of incredible moments live on. These include another wonderful Thamesmead Festival. Relive the day and see if our photographers spotted you in this issue of Talk of Thamesmead (pages 8-11).

It was fantastic to see the community come together, and there's no reason that shouldn't continue into autumn and beyond. There are more than 20 community properties owned and managed by Peabody across the town, offering plenty of places for local people to socialise, participate in group activities and have fun.

A perfect example is Sporting Club Thamesmead, where the exciting new Unity Lounge and Bar has just opened (page 5). Everyone's welcome. Young footballers from Erith Town may well be calling in for a well-deserved soft drink. They've just found a new home next door, on the pitches at Crossway Park (page 4).

As ever, our What's On section (pages 13-17) is packed with events and activities. Many of them take place at our vibrant community hubs, where you might find knitting, boxing

or a disco celebrating Black History Month, depending on what time you drop in!

Now that we're into autumn, it's worth a special mention for our warm hub at the Moorings Sociable Club (page 14). The space is open 9am to 5pm, five days a week. Come along to take part in the daily activities or just enjoy time in a cosy space with friends and neighbours.

Whether you're looking for arts and crafts, sport and exercise or landscape and nature, even the quickest glance through this issue shows there really is something for everyone. Get involved this autumn, and build stronger connections with your community.



**Claudia Marracci**  
Peabody's Community Properties Manager

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## Become a contributor

Share your stories and photos with the rest of the community. Email [thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk](mailto:thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk) with your ideas.



## Youngsters make their mark with ball court art



**Young people in South Thamesmead have helped to design a new artwork to transform the scenery around a popular ball court.**

Working closely with local artists Joseph Ijoyemi and Cieron Peel, the youngsters created art to adorn the walls outside The Cage in Wolvercote Road.

Over the summer, young people attending a six-week outreach project delivered by Youth Unity CIC were invited to play their part in designing the murals.

The free sessions at The Cage included creative workshops with Joseph and Cieron, alongside ball games, video games and mentoring.

Joseph, who grew up in Thamesmead, understands the significance of the project, which was commissioned by Peabody and its local partners.

"It's been an honour working with the young people on this project at The Cage," said Joseph. "Growing up round here, I was always in The Cage playing ball, so I know how deep this space runs for the community."

"That's why it means so much seeing the next generation not just using it, but actually shaping how it looks and feels."

Joseph and Cieron were previously commissioned to breathe new life into The Cage in 2021. Joseph created a striking artwork that covers the entire floor of the multi-use games area. His design, Believe and Achieve, was chosen by a panel of local residents and funded by Peabody. Cieron led a team of local graffiti artists, who created murals on the inside walls.

"Believe and Achieve ain't just about the artwork," added Joseph. "It's about giving young people the power to own their space and see their ideas standing tall."

The latest mural adds a splash of vibrant colour to the area around Wolvercote Road and Yarnton Way. It creates an inviting atmosphere for a space that is widely used for basketball, football and other games, as well as for socialising, dancing and creative projects.

"Delivering weekly sessions and positive summer activities has given young people an opportunity to utilise the space," said James Hensman, CEO of Youth Unity.

"By building trusted relationships through our mentors on the ground and providing structured activities throughout the holiday period, we've been able to support the young people in creating this incredible new artwork."



Scan the QR code or visit [youthunity.org/the-cage-2/](http://youthunity.org/the-cage-2/) to find out more about Youth Unity's work.





## Residents have their say on DLR

More than 1,400 local people have shared their thoughts on extending the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) to North Thamesmead.

Over the summer, TfL asked for feedback on proposals to create a new DLR station in the town centre. This included face-to-face consultation sessions at the Moorings Sociable Club and at the Thamesmead Festival.

A DLR extension would create the potential for 15,000 new homes on a 100-hectare brownfield site at Thamesmead Waterfront, as well as 10,000 new homes north of the river.

The riverside development would deliver a rejuvenated and expanded town centre for Thamesmead, outstanding natural spaces, and significant economic growth throughout the town.

The new transport hub would be transformational for local people, connecting them to jobs hotspots of the Docklands and Central London. The SE28 postcode, where the station would be located, is the only one in London without a tube or rail station.

**The findings of the consultation and proposed next steps are due to be published later this year. Search 'DLR extension' at [tfl.gov.uk](https://tfl.gov.uk) for more information.**



## Erith Town youth teams find new home at Crossway Park

**Erith Town has announced an exciting new signing ahead of the 2025/26 season – a permanent home for its youth teams.**

The Isthmian League South East Division club has signed a two-year deal to manage and use the Peabody-owned pitches at Crossway Park.

In previous seasons, coaches of each of the Dockers' 20 youth teams struggled to book a variety of different grounds across Bexley for training and matches.

They now have a home ground conveniently located next to the first-team stadium at Sporting Club Thamesmead. Total Development Academy (TDA) football club will also continue to play on the Crossway Park pitches as it celebrates its tenth season.

"To have a facility like Crossway Park, where all our young players can enhance their football, is fantastic," said the Erith Town's Head of Youth and Community, Michael Avery. "It will see us build on our solid foundations in the borough over the last couple of years.

"We would like to thank TDA for supporting us with this important new arrangement, and Peabody for their continued support."

Since relocating to Thamesmead in 2022, the club has enjoyed success on and off the pitch. The first team won promotion in its second season in the town. At the same

time, the youth programme has expanded rapidly, providing more opportunities for local youngsters to develop their skills.

The club also offers free football sessions for young people with disabilities, walking sessions for older players, and dedicated mental health initiatives.

"Football is a great way to bring communities together," said Peabody's Head of Community Properties, Fiona Hamilton. "We know how important it is for Erith Town's youth teams to have a permanent home, and we're so pleased to support them with this.

"Being right next to the first team at our community facility, Sporting Club Thamesmead, is an added bonus for the players. It's fantastic to see the club grow and to provide quality spaces for them to do this. I wish all the players the very best of luck for the new season."



Scan the QR code to find out more about the facilities at Sporting Club Thamesmead.

## Unity Lounge and Bar opens at Sporting Club Thamesmead



**An exciting new lounge and bar offering drinks, world food and a place for local people to socialise has celebrated its launch.**

The Unity Lounge and Bar is now open on the first floor of Sporting Club Thamesmead in Bayliss Avenue.

Mother-and-son partnership, Hazel Chawapiwa and Taurai Ajayi, of 2inspire Academy CIC, are behind the new venture. The pair are already known by many residents for their popular monthly markets in Cygnet Square.

"We're introducing a new chapter in community connection with the opening of Unity Lounge and Bar," explained Hazel. "Our partnership aims to bring warmth, flavour and tasty options to every visit.

"This new space is more than just a place to eat. It is a locally rooted hub designed to bring the community together through shared experiences, inclusive events, and meaningful connection."

The venue will offer inclusive community events and workshops, live music, themed nights and private hire – all shaped by the wide range of people who regularly use the

Peabody-owned and managed facilities at Sporting Club Thamesmead.

"We are so pleased to welcome Unity Lounge and Bar to this great venue," said Claudia Marracci, Peabody's Community Properties Manager for Thamesmead. "Their team have created a much-needed place for local people to socialise, eat and relax.

"I'd encourage everyone in the area to come along, see what's happening and connect with others."

Among those already using the space regularly are the players, coaches and fans of Erith Town FC and Sporting Club Thamesmead FC.

"Hazel and her team in the kitchen and behind the bar have done a great job so far, and we look forward to a positive future together," said Lee Hill, Chair of Sporting Club Thamesmead FC.

**Unity Lounge and Bar is open every weekday from 6pm to 11pm, and on Saturdays and Sundays from 9am to 11pm.**



## Thamesmead Shed tackling isolation

**A new community group will see residents take on group DIY projects – and build friendships at the same time.**

Thamesmead Shed will offer a welcoming environment for local people to learn and share skills while working together to make, repair and repurpose items.

"The goal of Thamesmead Shed is to help men and women combat isolation and loneliness, boost mental health, and foster a sense of purpose and camaraderie," said organiser John Hogan. "Sometimes it's hard to talk face-to-face, but when you're shoulder-to-shoulder working on a task, like woodworking for example, it can be easier to open up."

John and his fellow organisers hope the shed will become a community of like-minded people.

Although practical projects will be the focus of the group's get-togethers, there is no need for members to have any existing DIY skills.

"You can just join us for a cuppa with no expectation to take part in activities," added John.

**For more information about getting involved with Thamesmead Shed, email [thamesmeadshed@gmail.com](mailto:thamesmeadshed@gmail.com).**

## South Thamesmead spaces 'exemplary', says Deputy Mayor



**The Deputy Mayor of London for Environment and Energy said he was "blown away" by transformed outdoor spaces in South Thamesmead.**

Mete Coban visited the South Thamesmead Garden Estate in September to see the impact of Peabody's £10m investment in creating a greener, healthier environment for residents.

"What I've seen in Thamesmead is an exemplary transformation," said the Deputy Mayor. "It's an important investment in people's mental wellbeing, creating spaces where people can go out and unwind with their families."

"It's authentic, genuine engagement. It's fantastic that Peabody has got community buy-in and that local people have a stake in it. This is an excellent example of local people co-designing spaces that work for them and help deliver our vision of a fairer, greener London."

The Deputy Mayor was joined on his tour by members of the Community Design Collective, a group of local people who co-designed the outdoor spaces to ensure they met the needs of the community.

"It's been really eye-opening to see the positive impact that we can have in terms of having a say in our own communities," said architectural assistant Dorrëll Gayle-Menzie, of the Community Design Collective. "Making sure that we have some decision-making power is important because, as members of the community, we're able to maintain and care for it better than anyone else."

The improvements seen by the Deputy Mayor are open for all residents to use. New spaces along the green chain walk at Abbey Way and the wider £3.9m transformation of the South Thamesmead Garden Estate were completed in the summer.

Changes include better lighting, new planting, upgraded and new play equipment, attractive seating, accessible pathways, and a variety of areas to cook, play and relax.



## Thamesmead's new paddlers making waves

**Paddlers from Thamesmead's recently formed canoeing club have taken to the water for competitions at Southmere Lake and further afield.**

The Sharks started operating from Southmere Water Sports & Activity Centre this summer. Already, a steady stream of talent is emerging from its ranks.

Youngsters Jacob and Emilia Flottweg, and Zakaria Ahmed all made their competitive debuts in races at Shepperton Slalom Canoe Club in July. They also competed when The Sharks hosted Southmere Lake's first competitive race at the start of September.

Jacob, aged 16, and 14-year-old sister Emilia, from Thamesmead Central, were new to paddling when they joined the sessions on Southmere Lake in May.

"It's nice that we can get out on the water twice a week, even though we don't live near the sea," said Emilia. "I was a bit nervous before my first race, but once you've done one you get used to it. Now, I want to try more races and keep getting better."

"I find it quite relaxing to be out on the water, although races

are a lot more intense," added Jacob. "It's a fun sport to do, and it's great that it's only five minutes away from home."

For the Southmere Lake race, local paddlers from The Sharks were joined on the water by competitors from other clubs. With the results counting towards national rankings, there was plenty at stake.

"Young people from Thamesmead are getting opportunities to develop new skills and compete in other parts of the country," said Club Chair Neal Underwood. "But we're also helping to make Thamesmead a destination, bringing people into the area to the benefit of local businesses."

**The Sharks hold paddlesports sessions for children and adults on Southmere Lake every Tuesday and Thursday evening between 4pm and 7pm. This season's sessions run until 23 October. To get involved, email [thamesmead@thesharks.org.uk](mailto:thamesmead@thesharks.org.uk).**

## Circle of oaks coming to town



**A circle of seven oak trees will be planted at Crossway Park this autumn as part of Beuys' Acorns, a project by influential artists Ackroyd & Harvey.**

The planting is inspired by artist and environmental activist Joseph Beuys, who planted 7,000 oak trees in Kassel, Germany, in 1982.

The oak trees coming to Thamesmead are grown from acorns collected from Beuys' oak trees by Heather Ackroyd and Dan Harvey. The pair, who were commissioned to plant trees at all 10 entrances to the Olympic Park, are renowned for using art to campaign on environmental issues.

The oak circle in Crossway Park is being created in partnership with Peabody. It is one of just 17 oak circles being planted in public spaces across the UK for Ackroyd & Harvey's work.

"Our project looks at planting trees within urban environments," said Heather and Dan. "It's not just about the climate-proofing they will provide but making sure the community in Thamesmead benefits too from creative interactions with ecology at the centre."

Ahead of the planting, local children took part creative workshops with Heather and The Hundred Club to find out about the planting. The youngsters visited Crossway Park to plan out where the circle of oaks will be.

They then returned to TACO! Print Studio in Poplar Place to enjoy print-making with leaves and woodblocks, making crowns and creating their own posters.

## Residents to branch out into tree planning

**Local people are invited to have their say on a new plan to protect the town's existing trees and decide where new trees will be planted.**

The Thamesmead Urban Forest Strategy will also set out which species are best suited to the needs of the community, now and in the future.

The town's mature trees are particularly important for offering shade, absorbing carbon dioxide and preventing flooding. The tree strategy will plan how to protect and replace these trees as they come under threat from extreme weather and other dangers.

"A well-crafted tree strategy will ensure the species we select can cope with changing climates, new pests and diseases," explained Desiree Shepherd, Peabody's Public Realm and Landscape Manager. "It will also guide where and how we plant to maximise benefits for people and wildlife."

These benefits include cleaning the air, cooling streets, supporting biodiversity and improving mental wellbeing.

"A tree strategy is not just a technical document – it's a community commitment," added Desiree. "That's why it's so important that local people are involved in shaping the strategy."

Peabody and charity Trees For Cities are hosting a tree strategy workshop on Saturday 25 October. The workshop is an opportunity for residents to learn more about the strategy and help set its priorities.

This will be followed by a community planting day on Saturday 6 December. Local people will be able to roll up their sleeves and play their part in making the tree strategy a reality.



**Scan the QR code or visit [treesforcities.org/thamesmead](https://treesforcities.org/thamesmead) for more information on how to get involved.**

## Planning the festival



**Timmy Akalugwa explains his role as a young producer of the Wanderlust Hill stage at the Thamesmead Festival 2025.**

Helping create the Wanderlust Hill stage was an incredibly fun opportunity.

As one of the music programmers, I spent most of my time on social media looking for artists to perform on our stage. There were lots of young and talented performers, so we put together a list of all the artists we liked. With only six spaces available on our stage, we had to make arguments for which artists should perform. We picked fairly, making sure we had a diverse lineup of performers.

In the end, we had rock, rap, R&B, drum and bass, DJ sets and spoken word performances. Our performers were Yemi Yohannes & Tanum Sound System, Grace Georgia, Chizitara, Blewska, 4 The Brotherhood, Saasil On Earth, Saintclair and our headliner N3 — a plethora of different genres and styles.

Other people in our collective worked just as hard with their roles. Tasks varied from designing the logos and the stage, rehearsing long scripts and running social media accounts. All this was led by Three Rivers and artist and musician Rosie Ridgway, who guided us through our respective jobs.

The festival itself was wonderful. On the day, I worked as an artist liaison, finding the artists before they performed and getting them ready to go on stage so the festival could continue to run smoothly.

In the end, everyone's work paid off. Lots of people came and I really enjoyed seeing all the separate parts of the festival that we had worked on over the months coming together.

Share your stories by becoming a community contributor. Email [thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk](mailto:thamesmeadnow@peabody.org.uk) with your ideas.



## Koda's key trick unlocks dog show glory

**Assistance dog Koda was crowned best in show at the Thamesmead Festival 2025.**

The five-year-old chocolate labrador captured the hearts of the audience and the votes of the judges with a brilliant display of his skills.

"It was amazing to win," said Koda's owner M Holland. "It was a nice feeling for me because, before I got Koda, I didn't come out of the house for eight years.

"It was Koda's first time experiencing anything big like that, so it was an experience for both of us. I had my back to the crowd. When I turned around, I couldn't believe how many people were there."

Despite being new to big crowds, Koda was only too pleased to lap up the plaudits.

"He loved it — you could see that," revealed M. "When people clap, he barks, so he was happily joining in with all the applause."

Before being named best in show, Koda had earlier won the best trick category. He showed the judges and a large audience gathered in

Southmere Square how he picks up and returns M's keys and other belongings when she drops them.

But festivalgoers only saw a tiny part of Koda's repertoire.

"If I drop anything, even as small as a pen, he picks it up for me," revealed M. "He also does the shopping, strips the bed, takes my clothes off and fetches new clothes to put on. He was doing the washing up at six months old!

"If I have a fall, he taps me to make sure I'm conscious, runs to bring the phone to me, opens the door to let the ambulance in, and comes back to keep tapping me."

Koda came to M when he was a puppy. He was initially trained by Ineta Stanley in Erith, and later by the assistance dog charity Dog A.I.D.

"He hasn't left my side," said M. "We're a team. Wherever I go, Koda goes."



**Dog A.I.D. needs more volunteer dog trainers in the local area to help train assistance dogs like Koda. Scan the QR code or visit [dogaid.org.uk](http://dogaid.org.uk) for more information.**



## Omar: 'Thamesmead is the place to be'



**There's nothing like Thamesmead. That's the verdict of Thamesmead Festival 2025 headliner Omar. The neo-soul legend brought the curtain down on a fun-packed day for the community with a dazzling performance in Southmere Park.**

He changed the lyrics to his top 20 hit There's Nothing Like This in tribute to the town.

To big cheers from the crowd gathered at the Park Stage, Omar sang: "There's nothing like Thamesmead. It's the place to be."

Speaking to Talk of Thamesmead after his performance, the famous singer-songwriter, who lives in south London, said: "This is my first time in Thamesmead. First time playing by a lake as well. I'm so happy that the weather held out for us. It was a great crowd.

"I've just come back from two-and-a-half weeks in the States so it's great to have a local, south London vibe."

Thousands of people flocked to see Omar and an array of other talented performers. They enjoyed a diverse offering of music, dance, comedy, food and craft stalls, and community group

The festival was another unforgettable occasion for the town. Local people were involved in every aspect of the event. This included the 11-person Festival Advisory Board, which is made up representatives from the local community, and two residents in paid roles as producers.



# Faces of the festival

Long-time residents, first-time festival-goers and visitors from further afield. Everyone came together for a fun-filled day of music, culture and community spirit. Here's what they had to say about Thamesmead Festival 2025.



◀ "The community coming together is very good, so we can learn from each other. Embrace each other and embrace each culture."  
**Marla Ajala, with Jessy, Shalom and Ahava**



▲ "It's really nice to see the diversity that is here today, and the new talent. We felt we needed to support that because we don't see much of it in London anymore."  
**Rebekah Mitchell, with Lucasz and Jacob**



▲ "I've come here before but I think this is one of the best ones. They've got everything for everyone. We've been to the bouncy castle. We've seen different types of music. I loved the dog show. The food selection is really good, too."  
**Ines Ampeti**



"It's inclusive for all the family. You can have an ice cream, ride the teacups, enjoy the food and everything else. The little one really enjoyed sitting inside the street cleaning machines."  
**Natalie Meah, with Isla**



◀ "It's the community coming together. All different diversities and everybody gets a chance to enjoy themselves. It's nice to see people enjoying themselves."  
**Sarah Brooks**

▶ "It's really nice with all the different activities for the kids — there's loads for them to do. They've loved it."  
**Rebeka Rangelov, with Jack and Freya Oddi**



▲ "We heard about this on BBC Radio London so we decided to come up and check it out. It's good, it's chilled and there's a nice family vibe. You can relax."  
**Stanley, with Henghaneh**



▲ "The area that the festival is set in is nice and relaxing. Even though there's lots going on, you can still find pockets of chill time."  
**Jade Green, with Chris and Rei**



▲ "It's a good community. I've seen so many people that I know. It's nice that you can get together and say hello to people you don't always see on a day-to-day basis."  
**Helen Snape, with Diane Snape and Dawn Woolgar**

◀ "It's just a really nice thing to have locally. It's nice to see local talent, and others coming to this area and seeing how beautiful it is."  
**Melissa Quibell, with Christopher**



## Free model plane training to help club membership take-off

A long-established model aeroplane club is offering free training to encourage residents to try their hand at flying models.

Thamesmead Model Club is based on Maran Way and flies from a field next to Southmere Park. It has been running since 1986, but membership numbers have not recovered since Covid-19.

The club hopes the offer of free training using one of its models will bring in new members.

"People can come down to us for free training," said Chairman Derek Boud. "We've got a club trainer and we can help them learn to fly."

"It's mastering a skill. It's like learning to drive — except landing is the hardest part!"

Depending on the wind direction, club members fly at weekends and sometimes during the week. The foam and balsa wood models fly up to 400ft (122 metres), which is the maximum allowed in the flight path of London City Airport.

"The cost of learning to fly nowadays is so much that most people have to think of another option," added Derek. "If you've got an interest in flying, flying models is the next best thing."



For free training to fly model aeroplanes, scan the QR code to get in touch with the club.

# My Thamesmead

Artist and creative Marcus Orlandi is heavily involved in community workshops and activities. His project, Thamesmead Learning Circle (TLC), has just secured funding from Thamesmead Community Fund.



### What's your connection with Thamesmead?

I have lived here for seven years. I'm really proud to be here as part of the Bow Arts scheme, and of and all the work we do locally.

### Where do you work?

I work all over the place, including museum and gallery work in London and Oxford. But in recent years, I've been involved in more local projects in Thamesmead and Abbey Wood. Working in a community is something I've always wanted to do, and being in Thamesmead has allowed me to do that.

### What's the best thing about Thamesmead?

Do I have to name just one? Green spaces everywhere. Water everywhere. Ancient woodland. Everything is within walking distance. And you're still on the doorstep of London. It's amazing. The other thing is the people. I meet so many people who have lived here since Thamesmead was built. They have made Thamesmead what it is from the ground up.

### Where's your favourite place to walk in Thamesmead?

I love walking through the estates of Thamesmead and Abbey Wood. I'll go at 7pm or 8pm, when people are milling about. You get a feel for who lives here and how they interact. Those are my favourite walks because they feed a sense of community.

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

The Abbey Arms does a really good gluten-free pizza. Diavola is my pizza — I highly recommend it! Also, Shona and Jane's Sunday roast at The Birchwood is worth every penny!

### What's your favourite Thamesmead memory?

A really strong memory is that I met my best friend in Thamesmead. She now lives in Belfast. We would go for long walks around the area during Covid. I think we helped each other get through a very difficult time, so that's a powerful memory for me.

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

The untapped skills and creativity of a lot of the people who live here. In my workshops, I'm always meeting people who are involved in art, music, dance, theatre, and entrepreneurship. That's one of the reasons why I've started TLC. It's a group with creative and craft activities delivered by its own members. We're going to train each other and build each other up.



Thamesmead Community Fund is financed and run by Peabody with support from a panel of local residents and stakeholders, who advise which organisations should receive grants.



Thamesmead Learning Circle starts this autumn with sessions including collaging, crocheting and bookbinding. Email [thamesmeadbanners@gmail.com](mailto:thamesmeadbanners@gmail.com) or ask in The Nest for more details.

# Autumn events



## Introduction to Risograph

Learn how to create prints using a Risograph with help from experienced artists.

**Location:** TACO! Print Studio, 30 Poplar Place, SE28 8BA

**Date:** Saturday 25 October and Thursday 27 November

**Time:** 6pm-8.30pm

**Price:** £40 plus booking fee

**Info:** [taco.org.uk/riso-print-studio](http://taco.org.uk/riso-print-studio)

A new workshop is helping local residents, artists and community groups to make their own Risograph prints.

Described as a cross between photocopying and screen printing, Riso printing uses digital files and other graphics to create eye-catching layered images.

The Introduction to Risograph workshop gives participants an opportunity to get to grips with the technology, then create their own artwork. Using drawing, collage and two-colour printing on the Risograph, each participant will make 10 prints to take home.

"I came away with a solid understanding of the basics of Riso printing thanks to the personal guidance provided," said Louise Sinniah-Burr, who was looking for a creative outlet when she signed up for a workshop. "I wholeheartedly recommend this workshop to anyone, of any age, who is artistically curious or looking to broaden their skill set."

Chloe Cooper is one of the experienced artists who runs the Riso sessions at the recently opened TACO! Print Studio in Poplar Place.

"Risograph printing is a great way to spread the word about community events," said Chloe. "You can use it to make eye-catching flyers and posters in an affordable and environmentally sustainable way."

"Once you've learned, you can book time on the machine to complete your projects."

The TACO! Print Studio is available to book for anyone who has attended a workshop or completed an induction. Open access sessions are held every Friday for Riso printing. See [taco.org.uk/riso-print-studio](http://taco.org.uk/riso-print-studio) for booking and pricing information.



## Halloween Fun at Crossness Pumpkin Station

Spooky family fun day at the iconic 160-year-old sewage pumping station.

**Location:** Crossness Pumping Station, Bazalgette Way, SE2 9AQ

**Date:** Friday 31 October

**Time:** 11am-3pm

**Price:** £16.50 (concessions available)

**Info:** [crossness.org.uk](http://crossness.org.uk)

Crossness Pumping Station will transform into Crossness Pumpkin Station for a day of family fun this Halloween.

Visitors will be able to ride a ghost train and listen to spooky stories in the gloomy Beam Engine House of the Victorian sewage treatment facility.

Award-winning writer Oscar Nearly has penned The Rat of Crossness especially for the day. The creepy tale will be performed by actor Sally Reeve, who has appeared in The Basil Brush Show, Jane Eyre and Killing Eve.

A vintage Routemaster bus — rebranded as a 'Spookmaster' for the event — will be shuttling visitors from Abbey Wood Station to the pumping station.

## Thamesmead Times: Revisited

Explore a collection of old local newspapers and create your own souvenir front page.

**Date and Location:** Tuesday 4 November (Moorings Sociable Club, Arnott Close, SE28 8BG), 11 and 18 November (TACO! Print Studio, 30 Poplar Place, SE28 8BB) or Wednesday 5 November (Moorings Sociable Club, Arnott Close, SE28 8BG), 12 and 19 November (TACO! Print Studio, 30 Poplar Place, SE28 8BB)

**Time:** 6pm-8pm

**Info:** [ThamesmeadTimesRevisited@gmail.com](mailto:ThamesmeadTimesRevisited@gmail.com)

Join local artist Chloe Cooper for a chance to delve into local news from yesteryear. Chat about the past, present and future of Thamesmead while leafing through issues of the Thamesmead Times from the 1990s.

Inspired by the saying 'today's news is tomorrow's chip paper', free fish and chips will be served while attendees browse old headlines and get ready to create their own front pages.

"These will be made up of our favourite articles, adverts and photos," explained Chloe. "We'll collage them together before printing them on the risograph machine at the TACO! Print Studio."

The sessions are funded by a grant from the Thamesmead Community Fund. A panel of local residents and stakeholders advises which projects should receive grants from the fund, which is run by Peabody.

# Autumn events



## Black History Month

**October is Black History Month and the perfect opportunity to recognise the role of Thamesmead's Black community in shaping the town's history.**

Planned celebrations include a family disco at Camouflage Cafe in the Moorings Sociable Club on Sunday 12 October.

The Nest Community Building and Library will host Black History Month children's events during October half-term. Visit [arena.yourlondonlibrary.net/web/bexley/whats-on](http://arena.yourlondonlibrary.net/web/bexley/whats-on) for more details.

Meanwhile, applications for Black Culture Collective CIC's Connected Communities Commission, sponsored by Peabody, closed at the end of September. Grants of up to £4,000 are now being awarded, including funding for workshops, events and performances as part of BCC's Black History Month programme.

**Follow @bla.ckculturecollective on Instagram for updates on events.**



### Canoeing Club

Canoeing, kayaking and paddlesports sessions on Southmere Lake.

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

**Date:** Every Tuesday and Thursday until 23 October

**Time:** 4-5pm (7-16 years), 5pm-6pm (all ages and families), 6pm-7pm (adults)

**Price:** £6

**Info:** 07951 770241 or [thamesmead@thesharks.org.uk](mailto:thamesmead@thesharks.org.uk)

### Black History Month Family Disco

An afternoon filled with music, dancing and fun for the whole family in celebration of Black History Month.

**Location:** Camouflage Cafe, Moorings Sociable Club, Arnott Close, SE28 8BG

**Date:** Sunday 12 October

**Time:** 12pm-4pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** 020 8191 9622 or [info@camouflagecafe.co.uk](mailto:info@camouflagecafe.co.uk)



### Colour Foraging

Join artists and gardeners Anna Hughes and Ellie Pritchard for a natural ink-making workshop funded by the Thamesmead Community Fund. Take a colour foraging walk to collect local plants, then create a natural ink that captures the colours of Thamesmead.

**Location:** TACO! Print Studio, 30 Poplar Place, SE28 8BA

**Date:** Saturday 11 October

**Time:** 10am-1pm

**Price:** Free (booking essential)

**Info:** [taco.org.uk/colour-foraging](http://taco.org.uk/colour-foraging)

### Victorian Frost Fair

Enjoy a traditional Christmas celebration, including carols, winter stalls and festive games, surrounded by the Victorian architecture of Crossness Pumping Station.

**Location:** Crossness Pumping Station, Bazalgette Way, SE2 9AQ

**Date:** Sunday 14 December

**Time:** 11am-3pm

**Price:** TBC

**Info:** [crossness.org.uk](http://crossness.org.uk)



### Encompassing Thamesmead (West) Wildlife Walk

Intrepid ornithological investigator J D Swann leads a three-mile walk taking in Birchmere Park and Lake.

**Location:** Thamesmead Social, Lakeside Centre, Bazalgette Way, SE2 9AN

**Date:** Saturday 4 October

**Time:** 11am-1.30pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** [thamesmeadsbestbeaks@gmail.com](mailto:thamesmeadsbestbeaks@gmail.com)

### Jobs Fair

Explore employment opportunities across construction, maintenance, administration and other sectors. Get CV advice and take part in employability support sessions.

**Location:** Moorings Sociable Club, Arnott Close, SE28 8BG

**Date:** Thursday 16 October

**Time:** 1.30pm-4pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** [EconomicInclusionTeam@peabody.org.uk](mailto:EconomicInclusionTeam@peabody.org.uk)

### Cygnets Square Market

Food stands, stalls and open mic featuring local vendors, artisans and performers. Location: Cygnets Square, SE9 2FA

**Date:** Saturday 4 October, 1 November and 7 December

**Time:** 12pm-5pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** [cygnetsquaremarket.com](http://cygnetsquaremarket.com)

### Thamesmead Shantay: Halloween Ball

Halloween-themed drag, comedy and cabaret night for LGBTQ+ residents.

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

**Date:** Saturday 18 October

**Time:** 7pm-11pm

**Price:** £9 (concessions available)

**Info:** [team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk](mailto:team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk)

### Warm Hubs

Save on heating bills and enjoy company in a community space. Take part in regular activities, including craft sessions, seated exercise classes and coffee mornings. Use free WiFi and charging points while chatting with friends and neighbours.

**Location:** Moorings Sociable Club, Arnott Close, SE28 8BG

**Date:** Every weekday

**Time:** 9am-5pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** 020 3828 4920

# Regular events

## Monday

### Baby Me Fit

Parent and baby workout sessions.

**Time:** 9am-11am

**Price:** Free

**Info:** 020 8319 5320

### Women's Lounge

Join group cooking sessions, sewing and other activities.

**Time:** 10am-3pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** 020 3828 4920

### 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](http://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](http://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](mailto:feelgood@listeningears.org) or 07798 923 657

### Prestige Dance

Open dance class for children aged 5-11.

**Time:** 5pm-7pm

**Price:** £5

**Info:** 07989 829507 or [corinnadance@hotmail.co.uk](mailto: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:** 5thabbeywood [browniesrainbows@gmail.com](mailto:browniesrainbows@gmail.com)

### Chess Club

Casual games every Monday with Thamesmead Chess Club.

**Time:** 5pm-7pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** [info@tmchess.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto:risingphoenixfightacademy@outlook.com)

### Abbey Wood Tennis Club

Weekly tennis classes for 6-18 years.

**Time:** 5.30pm-6.30pm (Beginners), 6.30pm-7.30pm (Advanced)

**Price:** £60 per term

**Info:** [abbeywoodtennisclub@gmail.com](mailto:abbeywoodtennisclub@gmail.com) or 07835 896557

### 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](mailto:debbie@6rgscouts.uk)

### 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](http://cact.gives/courses)

## Tuesday

### Health Walk

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](http://www.bexley.gov.uk/bexley-libraries) or talk to a member of the library team

### Women's Lounge

Join group cooking sessions, sewing and other activities.

**Time:** 10am-3pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** 020 3828 4920

### 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](http://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 LGBTQ community.

**Time:** 1pm-3pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** [team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk](mailto:team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk)

### Prestige Dance

Open dance class for children aged 5-11.

**Time:** 5pm-7pm

**Price:** £5

**Info:** 07989 829507 or [corinnadance@hotmail.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto:team@lgbtthamesmead.co.uk)

### Learning Disability Movement & Dance

A joyful session for people with learning difficulties. All abilities welcome.

**Time:** 1pm-2pm

**Price:** Free

**More info:** 020 8191 9622 or [info@camouflagecafe.co.uk](mailto:info@camouflagecafe.co.uk)

### Laugh and Workout Cardio Hit

Fun and challenging aerobic workouts set to high-energy music.

**Time:** 7pm-8pm

**Price:** £8

**More info:** [laughandworkout.com/classes](http://laughandworkout.com/classes)

### Vibes on Vibes Skating Session

Vibrant roller skating club for adults.

**Time:** 7pm-9pm

**Price:** From £6

**Info:** [wearevibesonvibes.co.uk](http://wearevibesonvibes.co.uk) or 07484 224983

### Dance Me Fit Line Dance Class

Get fit while learning steps to classic and new country songs.

**Time:** 7.15pm-8.15pm

**Price:** £5

**Info:** 020 8191 9622 or [info@camouflagecafe.co.uk](mailto:info@camouflagecafe.co.uk)

## Wednesday

### Advice Hub

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

**Time:** 9.30am-12.30pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** tmdviceinschs@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

### Digital Help

Get help with IT and other digital issues.

**Time:** 10am-12pm and 1pm-3pm

**Price:** Free

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

### Women's Lounge

Join group cooking sessions, sewing and other activities.

**Time:** 10am-3pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** 020 3828 4920

### 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

### Wednesday 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

## Thursday

### Coffee Morning

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

**Time:** 10am-12pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** 020 3828 4920

### 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:** www.better.org.uk/greenwich-sport-development

### 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-5pm

**Price:** Free

**Info:** 07788 563253 or wtccinfo2025@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

**Info:** 07494 055298 or utopiacheer@outlook.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

### Baby Me Fit

Parent and baby workout sessions.

**Time:** 10am-11.30am

**Price:** Free

**Info:** 020 8319 5320

### Board Games and Chat

Socialise in a relaxed environment while playing board games.

**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

### 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 food, culture and creativity. Expect a diverse range of entertainment and a rotating chef residency.

**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

### 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

### 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

### Thamesmead Cycle Hub

Cycling sessions for beginners and established riders.

**Time:** Over-16s sessions: 10am-12pm. Family sessions (aged 5+): 12pm-2pm

**Price:** Free (booking required)

**Info:** roadsafetyeducation@bexley.gov.uk

### 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:** 12.30-1.20pm (6-10 years), 1.30-2.20pm (11-13 years), 2.30-3.20pm (14-18 years)

**Price:** £30 per month

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

## Sunday

### Sunday Brunch

Weekly pop-up events featuring local businesses, creatives and food producers. Enjoy a laidback brunch with good vibes.

**Time:** 11.30am-4pm

**Price:** Free

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



Visit [thamesmeadnow.org.uk/whats-on](https://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](mailto: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 community organisations. Email [businessready@peabody.org.uk](mailto:businessready@peabody.org.uk) for upcoming events.

### Thamesmead Culture Forum

Regular updates on culture in and around Thamesmead. Email [lisa.drew@peabody.org.uk](mailto:lisa.drew@peabody.org.uk) to join the mailing list.

## Meet your representatives

Councillors from Greenwich and Bexley councils, and the Member of Parliament for Erith and Thamesmead, Abena Oppong-Asara, hold regular surgeries. These are opportunities for people to meet them to raise any issues they are facing.

### Thamesmead Moorings, Greenwich

#### Councillor Averil Lekau and Councillor Olu Babatola

Appointments:  
[averil.lekau@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:averil.lekau@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)  
[olu.babatola@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:olu.babatola@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

### West Thamesmead, Greenwich

#### Councillor Lade Hephzibah Olugbemi and Councillor Jahdia Spencer

Appointments:  
[lade.olugbemi@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:lade.olugbemi@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)  
[jahdia.spencer@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:jahdia.spencer@royalgreenwich.gov.uk)

### Thamesmead East, Bexley

#### Councillor Zainab Asunramu, Councillor Larry Ferguson and Councillor Mabel Ogundayo

Appointments:  
[councillor.zainab.asunramu@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:councillor.zainab.asunramu@bexley.gov.uk)  
[councillor.larry.ferguson@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:councillor.larry.ferguson@bexley.gov.uk)  
[councillor.mabel.ogundayo@bexley.gov.uk](mailto:councillor.mabel.ogundayo@bexley.gov.uk)

### Member of Parliament

#### Abena Oppong-Asare MP

Appointments:  
[abena.oppingasare.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:abena.oppingasare.mp@parliament.uk)



## Sandie sure of compassionate neighbour John's support

Thursday morning breakfasts and laughs with her best friend have lifted the burden of some of life's biggest challenges for local resident Sandie Wroe.

Four years ago, the 76-year-old was dealing with bereavements, serious illness in the family and caring responsibilities.

"I was quite lonely at times," said Sandie, who moved to Thamesmead with her husband in 1974 and has been in the same home ever since. "Things got very hard and I went to the doctor for advice."

A visit to her GP led to her learning about Community Hospice's Compassionate Neighbours scheme. Life soon started to change for the better when she was matched with John Rees.

"Within a week, John was at my door – and it was the best thing that happened," revealed Sandie. "He's my best friend. He doesn't judge, he's so kind and caring. How lucky am I to have someone like that?"

Every Thursday, the pair meet for breakfast. They alternate between their favourite Thamesmead cafés, ordering avocado on toast or egg and chips. And the friendship extends beyond breakfast. John has taken Sandie to hospital appointments, and Sandie has joined him to see shows.

"When you say volunteering, people think it's work," said John, who volunteered as a compassionate neighbour after his dad died eight years ago. "But it's just an introduction, and a friendship blossoms. Sandie's been a big support for me too, especially when I lost my mum earlier this year. It's a two-way thing."

Peabody's communities team is supporting Community Hospice by helping them to reach more people in the town and providing space in community centres to train volunteers.



To volunteer as a compassionate neighbour or if you need support from Community Hospice, visit [communityhospice.org.uk](http://communityhospice.org.uk) or scan the QR code.



## Dentist Kaveh welcomes more patients to Cygnet Square

A local dentist has opened a new surgery and nail salon after fighting tooth and nail to keep his practice afloat.

Kaveh Shirazi, of Abbey Wood Dental Practice, says limited space for expansion and rising costs had put his business at severe risk.

But moving to Cygnet Square has enabled Kaveh to take on more patients and create five new jobs. A further 10 jobs are expected to be created in the next two years. Kaveh's wife Gazaleh Khoshkhoui also runs her new nail salon, Boutique Nails, from the premises.

"With more space, more dentists and a beautiful new practice, we're able to see more patients," explained Kaveh. "The idea is that we're more accessible to people in Thamesmead."

Kaveh says some passers-by are surprised to learn the practice had been in the town for 14 years.

"I'm confident having a significant frontage in Cygnet Square and being more visible will have benefits," he added.

The commercial spaces in Cygnet Square were completed in 2022 as part of Peabody's seven-phase masterplan for South Thamesmead.

"It's wonderful to welcome Abbey Wood Dental Practice to Cygnet Square," said Peabody's Senior Regeneration Manager, Dan Sherlock. "We wish Kaveh and his team all the best as they deliver their services to the local community."



Scan the QR code to find out more about the South Thamesmead masterplan.

## Free weight loss support for residents



Local people who want to lose weight, improve their health or feel better can join a new programme.

Gro Health is available for free to anyone living in Thamesmead. Commissioned by the London Borough of Bexley, the weight management scheme helps people build sustainable habits around food, exercise, sleep and wellbeing. It is available online or in-person group meetings.



To join Gro Health, visit [grohealth.com/bexley](http://grohealth.com/bexley), scan the QR code or call 0330 133 0307.

## Icy's African-Caribbean flavours scoop £4k prize



Ice-cream entrepreneur Oyinkansola 'Icy' Fajah has earned £4,000 to boost her business in a Dragons' Den-style event at The Nest. Icy's cool and confident pitch for Icy Creams, and her signature plantain caramel ice cream, wowed a panel of expert judges.

"Having an opportunity like this right here in Thamesmead has made all the difference," said Icy, whose nickname-turned-brand name comes from her chilled personality. "I've been able to improve my business acumen in a way I never have before. I want to say to others, 'If you have a dream, go for your dream!'"

Nine young entrepreneurs showcased their business ideas at the pitch event, which marked the final stage of YEA! (Youth Entrepreneurs' Alliance) Thamesmead. The intensive business accelerator for 18 to 30-year-olds was run by Local Champions CIC and supported by Peabody.

"I made my first ice cream samples in April. I just had such a very strong desire to make ice cream," said self-proclaimed dessert lover Icy.

She soon started experimenting with plantain and more of her favourite flavours.

"It's me tapping into my culture and roots," explained Icy, who moved to Thamesmead from Nigeria 13 years ago. "I wanted to create something that resonates with my community."

"The inspiration is to create flavours that resonate with African-Caribbean people. If I walk down the ice cream aisle, I don't see flavours that are a representation of where I'm from or the desserts I love."

Having secured the prize, top of Icy's shopping list is a bigger ice cream churner to increase production. This will enable her to start selling to local cafés and restaurants, as well as directly to customers.

"Winning the top prize means I can invest in better equipment and marketing to grow Icy Creams, meaning I can reach more people through events and pop-ups," she said. "I did my very first pop-up in

July, and the response from the Thamesmead community was incredible.

"It's been so much fun connecting with people where I live – it really showed me there's community cohesion and real space for Icy Creams to grow here. This is just the beginning."

Another winner at the pitch event was Caleb Watson Rensch, who earned £1,000 for his youth-led mental health initiative The World Within. It encourages 16 to 25-year-olds to process their emotions and build resilience through creative expression.

Fellow young entrepreneur Sam Ikhuoria (@theshapesuk) won three months of free co-working space at Peabody's New Mansion Square enterprise hub in Battersea Power Station. His inclusive digital hub, The Shapes, connects a diverse range of creatives with work opportunities.



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## Oh water show!

**An incredible struggle for survival was played out on a floating stage in Birchmere Lake as part of Greenwich and Docklands International Festival.**

Six performers combined dance and circus skills on an unpredictable moving platform for *The Weight of Water*, a nail-biting modern parable of the impact of global warming.

Visitors from across Thamesmead and further afield gathered to witness the skilful performers battling to keep their balance as they traversed the violently see-sawing stage.

The event was supported by Peabody, the Royal Borough of Greenwich and other partners. Providing great things to see and do across the town is a key part of Peabody's long-term plan for Thamesmead.

