

MEDIA RELEASE

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Kele Le Roc & Terri Walker to headline the Thamesmead Festival this August



This Summer, legendary singers Kele Le Roc & Terri Walker will headline the Thamesmead Festival on Saturday 10 August at Southmere Park.

The festival is funded by Peabody, which is putting culture at the heart of its long-term regeneration of Thamesmead. It will see Kele Le Roc – the multiple MOBO award-winning star of top 10 smashes ‘My Love’ and ‘A Little Bit of Lovin’, and the voice of Basement Jaxx hit ‘Romeo’, teaming up with R&B and soul singer Terri Walker, the voice behind Shanks & Bigfoot hits including ‘Sing-A-Long’ and solo tracks ‘Missing You’ and ‘Ching Ching (Lovin’ You Still)’. This very special set with DJ Cappa Chxno is set to make waves across the cool waters of Southmere Lake this summer.

In the collaborative spirit of the free South London festival, renowned for celebrating the talent and creativity of local people, the duo will welcome onstage Jerusha Frimpong – a Thamesmead-born Soul and R&B artist and a former contestant on The Voice. Jerusha said: “I can’t wait to perform with Terri and Kele and represent Thamesmead. Their songs are so influential in the music scene, so what an honour to be able to support them! I’m ready to sing my heart out on stage and enjoy such an amazing moment. Thamesmead I hope you are ready for us!”

Featuring a host of talent from Thamesmead, the wider South London and beyond, the community-powered festival will see Park Stage performances by MOBO-winning conscious rapper Still Shadey, award-winning funk and soul outfit Groove 101, Black Wolf Blues, and local favourites Old Boy Blues Band and MC Redrum. The shady Unplugged Stage will host intimate spoken word and acoustic sets from the likes of Brit School graduate Gönül and singer-songwriter Sam Winston. A short walk away through the trees, the Southmere Stage will be the place to see a rich range of dance styles from street dance by locally-based Dynamix to performances by Bollywood Vibes and Capoeira Muzenz.

Produced by Serious, the festival is programmed by the Festival Production Group (FPG) a dedicated team of 14 local residents who, in response to an unprecedented number of requests to perform, convened a listening session and a Eurovision-style scoring system to select the line-up. In the words of FPG member and lifelong Thamesmead resident Deborah Frimpong, “People of different ages, genders, ethnicities and beliefs have come together under one common umbrella to help plan, organise and deliver the BEST Thamesmead Festival so far!.” New FPG member Amanda Eatwell said: “As a newcomer to the area, the best way to get to know a place is to get involved. For me the festival is a way for people to come together and celebrate the place they live while witnessing the wealth of talent that resides here.”

New for the festival this year will be a performance of the Thamesmead Anthem, written by local rapper, singer-songwriter, and aspiring author Jules, jazz vocalist J Cocoa, actor/performer Jamie Zubairi, local multifaceted artist Kei and a community choir led by J Cocoa and Jamie for the ultimate collaboration. Joining the team are Crossness Records founder Hannah Ehrlich and filmographer Riordan Tyson who is documenting the journey. The ‘Hometown Pride’ anthem will be performed by the songwriters and a 20 member-strong choir from across Thamesmead. Jules said: “Thamesmead has given me so much, so this anthem is dedicated to the place we live and that I grew up in. It allows us all to give something back to the town and its people of whom we are so proud.”

Adriana Marques, Head of Cultural Strategy for Thamesmead at Peabody, said: “From the Thamesmead Anthem – which perfectly encapsulates the town’s collaborative spirit – to the flags, bunting and colour-popping banners designed by local artists, everywhere you look there is evidence of local creativity and ingenuity.”

Adding to the festival’s family-friendly atmosphere, this year sees an expanded Play Zone and the addition of a Calm Zone, created in collaboration with a consortium of local special educational needs (SEN) charities including Brighter Futures Foundation (Woolwich), Advocacy Greenwich, Javan Cocker Foundation and Bexley Mencap. This is an innovative approach which will help to ensure that everyone can enjoy the festival.

Returning to the festival after its hugely successful debut in 2023 is the Wanderlust Hill Stage, designed and programmed by South East Way, a creative group of local 14-16 year olds committed to offering up-and-coming bands the chance to perform in their hometown. Talking about the project, which is made possible by the Three Rivers programme in Bexley, 16-year-old Dezi Amata said: “Wanderlust Hill felt like such an amazing stage to be at in 2023, partly because I know I played a part in having it come to life. This year will be unlike last year in the best way possible, but I don’t want to give anything away! In the years to come I hope we can find more innovative and amazing ways to bring Thamesmead together. I’d love for even more local acts to be showcased.”

Creativity in all its forms will be on show across the festival site, from the small business market where you can buy hand-stitched African garments and honey made by Thamesmead bees, to the Unplugged Stage where audiences will find themselves sitting on a giant picnic rug made by local artist Paige Denham whose trademark bold colours and patterns decorate the walls of the town. Mouthwatering culinary creativity can be found in abundance from vendors like Yeti’s Authentic Kitchen offering the best of home-cooked Nigerian cuisine, to ZIZI’s delicious variety of Lebanese and Sierra Leonean food.

The Thamesmead Festival takes place from 12pm – 7.30pm on Saturday 10 August.

Find out more about Peabody’s culture programme in Thamesmead [here](#).

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About the Thamesmead Festival

The Thamesmead Festival is a unique cultural event in London, wholly led and programmed by a dedicated group of residents. It draws on the heritage of the Thamesmead Town Shows and Party in the Park and was revived as a large-scale event in 2017, complete with fireworks on Southmere Lake. In 2018 a residents' procession celebrated 50 years of Thamesmead as part of the festival, and now this event has become an annual expression of this creative community. In 2023, the festival was attended by more than 8000 people. The festival is a flagship community event each summer, showcasing home-grown Thamesmead talent. The Thamesmead Festival is commissioned by Peabody and Three Rivers and produced by Serious. This year the festival has also received funding from Arts Council England.

About Thamesmead

Thamesmead was founded on a dream. Hailed as the town of tomorrow, it was built in the late 1960s, following utopian ideals of modernist architecture and model towns. More than 50 years on it is home to over 45,000 people and a growing creative community, drawn by the unique landscape of picturesque canals weaving through wild green spaces, Brutalist buildings and historic Royal Arsenal ammunition dumps. From the Victorian engineering marvel of Crossness Pumping Station in the East to the brooding presence of Belmarsh Prison in the West, Thamesmead is atmospheric, distinctive, individual. It is this unexpected mix that attracts new creatives to the area and continues to inspire those who have spent their lives here. There's a genuine sense of opportunity. This is especially powerful given Thamesmead has one of the youngest populations in London, strong communities from Nigeria, Ghana, Nepal and Vietnam, and a longstanding Traveller community. The principles of self-organisation and fairness that helped form the town's cultural landscape back in 1968 still influence the way it works today. Early residents started a radio station, a newspaper, and one of the UK's first community trusts. Visit the [Thamesmead Now website](#) to find out more.

About Peabody

More than 160 years after it was established, Peabody is one of the oldest not-for-profit housing associations in the UK. The Peabody Group is responsible for more than 108,000 homes, with around 220,000 residents across London and the Home Counties. We also have around 17,000 care and support customers. Our purpose is to help people flourish, and we are getting closer to residents by taking a local approach. We are committed to delivering a responsive and easily accessible repairs service and investing in our existing homes so they are safe and well maintained. Our retrofit projects will make thousands of our homes more energy efficient. We work with councils and communities to promote economic inclusion, tackle inequality and poverty, and prioritise wellbeing. Our rents were £621m lower

than the market in 2022/23. With an average rent of £127 per week in London and the south-east, we offer significant value for residents and communities. We are also committed to building much-needed affordable homes.

About Serious

Serious is one of the UK's leading producers and curators of live jazz, international and new music. Serious produces events that range from major concerts, festivals and national and international tours through to learning and participation programmes, conferences and specially commissioned bespoke events. Alongside its core role as a live music events producer, and programme consultant, Serious is committed to ensuring that music is accessible to all, and that artists have opportunities needed to reach their full potential. Its charity Serious Trust is crucial in enabling this ambition through supporting talent development, learning & participation and commissioning programmes.

Thamesmead Culture Guide and Directory

Rappers, poets, painters, dancers, filmmakers, artist studios, a community radio station, a travelling cinema, a contemporary art organisation, a flagship festival and street artists have all made Thamesmead their home. The Culture Guide and Directory showcase this growing cultural groundswell. Over the last five years Peabody has worked with local creatives, groups and community leaders, as well as partners from further afield, to develop a diverse and energetic cultural programme for Thamesmead. Unconventional and non-conforming, this guide captures the momentum and activity of the area's culture scene over the past five years, sets out what to expect for 2022, and provides information about how to get involved. Featuring 111 creatives, groups, businesses and places, the Culture Directory is an A-Z of everything that makes Thamesmead great. [Find out more here.](#)