

Connecting Thamesmead Evaluation

Evaluation findings Community Update

Snapshot 1

dg:cities



**CONNECTING
THAMESMEAD**

Connecting communities for
better health and wellbeing



Connecting Thamesmead Evaluation

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Connecting Thamesmead aims to improve social connection, mental health and wellbeing, for residents in the wards of Thamesmead Moorings, West Thamesmead and Thamesmead East.

As part of the year 1 evaluation DG Cities has been speaking to groups across Thamesmead to understand the impacts of the programme.



Thamesmead Community Fund Panel 2024:
<https://www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/media>

Connecting Thamesmead

Local assets
(e.g. The Nest)

Resident
Community
Connectors to
enable connection

Thamesmead
Community
Fund funded
projects

Coordination
between Peabody,
Royal Greenwich
and London
Borough of Bexley

Supported or
promoted
community groups

Royal Greenwich and
London Borough of Bexley
service offers

Our evaluation engagement:

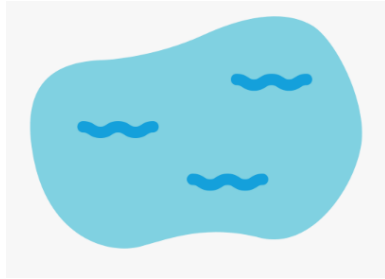




**What people
told us...**

What we heard...

Our 44 survey respondents rated things to do in Thamesmead...



80% rated “Enjoy nature and the outdoors” as Very Good or Good



52% rated “Support my mental health and wellbeing” as Very Good or Good.

What we heard...



58% rated “Enjoying arts and culture” as Very Good or Good.

“Social connections make a big difference to my life, I have some local connections who make the local area welcoming as I am getting to know the area.”

Benefits and impacts

Those we spoke to shared the following benefits of accessing Connecting Thamesmead projects and networks.

Improving skills and learning e.g. leadership, and how funding is managed.

People feel they are **developing new social connections** and bonds.

Benefits and impacts for users

Group members feel they gain **access to more information** and resources.

Some feel **supported by a network** of others.

Connection is leading to a **sense of improved wellbeing** and mental health

Benefits and impacts

People we spoke to mentioned the following...

“Something else is that local support network for people when things aren’t going great; a few examples where someone had a bereavement... rather than being isolated there were people who could support.” (group interviewee)

“It really helps for both of us as we can’t get out much because of our mental health. We feel like it’s hard to get out, but this is a nice energy and space at Love Soup.” (User, group visit).”

Benefits and impacts

Community events and organising were a benefit highlighted:



**“All of our ideas are pooled together in order to produce an event that the whole community hopefully enjoys and celebrates and brings like-minded people together.”
(Group volunteer)**

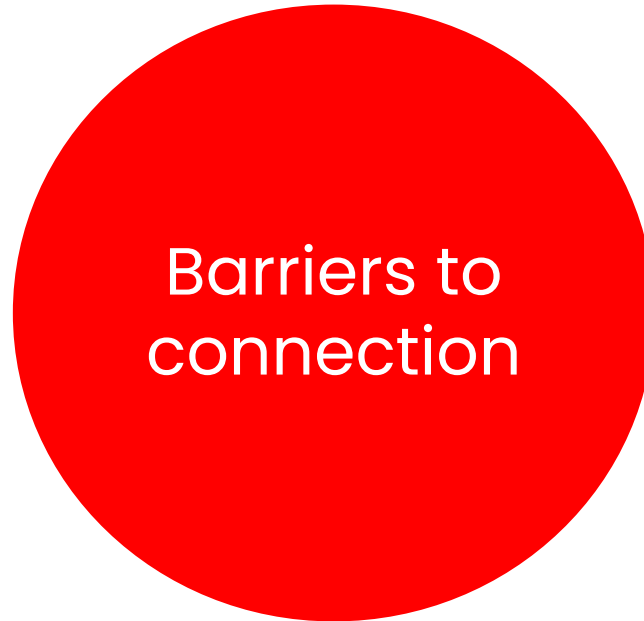
Thamesmead Festival, developed and run by volunteers.

Barriers to connection

The following barriers to connection were captured from our data...

Lack of venues/available space throughout the week to connect

Tight-knit communities need support to open up to others



Access inclusion or inequality limits participation

Lack of awareness / knowledge of what's available

Gaps in provision (e.g. youth groups, those with mental health needs)

Health and vulnerabilities limit some participation

Barriers to connection

People we spoke to mentioned the following...

“There are a lot of activities to tackle isolation going on in Thamesmead but these are not advertised well which then impacts the quality of signposting, as no one knows these groups exist”

“It frustrates me that there are no sober venues that are open after 5.30... I’d like to in 2025 have an evening drop in, to offer to people who can’t make it in the day but most venues close at 5:30.”



Ways to improve...

Recommendations

Improve monitoring and data capture for projects to help tell their story.

Use a variety of communication channels to reach out and ensure as many residents understand the available offer.

Review and update the aim of the Connectors to help this group develop and grow their potential.

Ensure funded activities provide consistent information and support to users to ensure the offer is clear.

Ensure GPs, shops and other services can share information so all the community can be reached.

Explore how a 'wellbeing map' of Thamesmead can be developed to track progress.

Support the sustainability of funded projects beyond their funding round.

Thank you



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Our evaluation wouldn't be possible without the valuable time and input from all those who participated. Thank you to everyone for your thoughtful engagement, including:

- Thamesmead Connectors
- Thamesmead Festival Advisory Board
- The Art of Self-Expression
- The Carers Network
- Craft-A group
- Divine Buzz
- Javan Coker Foundation
- Love Soup
- LGBTQI+ Network
- Men's Football Group (Birchmere)
- Moorings Neighbourhood Forum
- The Nest
- The Nest Chatters & Walkers groups
- Waterways Children's Centre and its parents
- All who completed our surveys!
- And many more!

What next?



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- > **The findings are being shared** with stakeholders across Thamesmead, such as residents, community groups, Bexley and Greenwich councils, and Peabody.
- > The Connecting Thamesmead group is now looking to implement **the first set of recommendations** from the evaluation, to better respond to local needs.
- > **DG Cities are continuing this research**, with **new engagement opportunities** for residents, organisers and volunteers to share their views and experiences on local connection.

– *see the next slide!*

Take part in 2025



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We will continue to explore the impact of Connecting Thamesmead in 2025 and share more insights in future community snapshots!

To find out more and take part in our new engagement opportunities visit:

www.thamesmeadnow.org.uk/connecting-thamesmead

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Any comments or questions??

Get in touch!

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