

hastings trust

issue 29 Spring 2006

news

Local voluntary organisations, community, social enterprises and all wanting to work for the good of Hastings in Hastings

Would you like to share premises open to the public five days a week with a shop front in Hastings town centre plus services and friendly help?

At its HQ at 35 Robertson Street, Hastings Trust can offer:

- Town centre premises open to the public Monday to Friday
- Shop front publicity
- Use of computers for word processing
- Broadband internet
- The opportunity to create mailing lists and print labels
- Copying, faxing and emailing facilities
- A place to leave and receive messages
- Shelf space
- Disabled access and toilet
- Help with creating or producing newsletters, leaflets, posters, etc
- Tea and coffee making facilities
- A receptionist who can take messages and help with word processing and similar tasks
- The opportunity to network with other organisations
- Opportunities to have special days dedicated to displaying and publicising your work
- Help and advice from Trust staff
- The opportunity to use grant finding databases
- The use of a library and database designed to help people act more effectively at a local level
- Meeting room hire (unfortunately, not with disabled access)



Whether you want to be there an hour or five days a week this is a unique opportunity for your organisation. The Trust will charge only enough to cover costs – £5 an hour maximum – with discounts for new organisations or those with small budgets. **We intend to upgrade our equipment and would like the opinion of all Resource Centre users on our plans – please see the enclosed questionnaire.** We are also always open to suggestions for other uses for the Centre.

For more information call the Centre on 01424 446373, email resourcecentre@hastingstrust.co.uk

Director's news

New Finance Initiative

The Trust is part of an innovative project which brings together existing partners in Hastings and Bexhill to form a Community Banking Partnership (CBP). This is a new initiative to establish a gateway to existing service agencies, adding the loan service of the Trust's cdfi – Innovative Finance – together with the Credit Union, plus debt advice and access to financial literacy training from CAB and others. The CBP will also act as a conduit to assist people to open basic bank accounts and credit union accounts, with the intention of promoting full financial inclusion and literacy for all.

We have secured SRB funding for the initial set up and are part of the successful Hastings' Local Growth Initiative Bid for further funding support. The Trust has also put in a bid with South Coast Money Line to the Department of Work and Pensions for funding from their Growth Fund to expand Innovative Finance, our own community development finance institution

Skills2Build

Skills 2 Build is a new project that will provide training and employment in construction, to NVQ

level 2, for mainly young residents of deprived wards in Hastings. This will be achieved through a social enterprise that will buy, renovate and sell residential properties starting in Central St. Leonards Housing Renewal Area. Trading surpluses will be recycled back into the enterprise, allowing growth and sustainability.

S2B has been developed by a partnership led by Hastings Trust, comprising Ore Valley Residents Services Organisation (OVRSO), Amicus Horizon, 1066 Housing Association, Hastings College of Art and Technology (HCAT), Hastings Borough Council, and Rother Homes. The group has been advised by The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB), and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), Westridge Construction and George Stone Construction.

We are waiting for SEEDA approval of funding, having already secured funding support from ERDF Objective 2.

Christine Goldschmidt, Director

Stop Press
Self-contained basement office space at 35 Robertson Street, the Trust's HQ in Hastings town centre now available: £74 per week

resource centre

One phase ends

Resource Centre SRB funding ended on March 31st. Chris King, the Centre's dynamic manager, has left after eight and a half years for a period of rest before launching himself into new challenges.

A vanguard operation when it opened in 1998, the Centre was visited by communities from all over the country and even overseas. Its services included help in finding grants for groups and individuals and the first publicly available broadband access in Hastings. Despite competition from increasingly faster and cheaper internet technologies, the Centre maintained its casual visitor numbers at a high level but numbers began to fall off in 2004.

In contrast, tailored advice to clients from Heather Smith and Chris King actually increased, and such help was an original and primary purpose of the

Centre. But now with Chris's farewell what next?

Another phase begins

After much discussion amongst the Board, staff and volunteers the decision has been made to test a number of possibilities including promoting the Centre as a means for voluntary sector organisations to establish a Town Centre presence (see the front page). Other complementary possibilities include greater use of the Centre as an exhibition space for local artists, photographers, students and voluntary work.

The Centre's equipment is out of date. We have some ideas about what equipment would best serve our clients but to help us make sure the Centre is meeting a genuine need please fill in the questionnaire enclosed with this Newsletter. You could win a bottle of champagne!

OASIS

We are pleased that our plans for a new venue for Oasis are coming together. With the funds and pledges raised, we can start on turning the old taxi office into a new community facility for the Ore Valley.

Our groups have been very patient during our period of change: the craft group has been continuing to produce wonderful cards, knitted scarves and seasonal gifts from their homes, the Over 50's club has attended several outings and the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes have been meeting at Broomgrove Community Centre three times a week. They are all very excited about meeting at the new centre which will have a reception area, meeting space, offices, a kitchen, disabled toilet and crèche area.

Oasis continues to support Broomgrove Playscheme, which has organised outings this Easter to Glynde Gap Bowling Centre, Madame Tussauds and the Imperial War Museum. There are also theatre trips to see Spirit of the Dance,

Saturday Night Fever and Starlight Express, and there are still a few places left for residents who wish to attend from the Ore valley. Plans are being drawn up for summer outings with Legoland and Southend being top of everyone's favourites list.

Lottery success

We are very pleased to announce at Oasis that our application to the lottery for the Oasis Befriending Scheme was successful. We were awarded £96,000 to extend provision of the Befriending Scheme, employing a full time worker for three years. This exciting news means that we will be able to increase the delivery of the Befriending Scheme to even more residents within the Ore Valley community.

Jackie Gaunt, Co-ordinator

information & advice

on learning, looking for work and volunteering

Have you read this newsletter?

If you've read through all this newsletter, noticed how essential volunteers are to the running of the Trust, and still can't think of a good reason to volunteer yourself, here are some ideas to get you started:

You could learn something new; use your existing skills; meet new people; build your confidence; make the most of your retirement; improve your chances of work; have some fun and... most importantly... make a personal contribution to the regeneration of Hastings.

Now that Spring's arrived, how about keeping fit and active with the Green Team; you may also wish to think about befriending people who need a bit of support or maybe just a friendly chat; or how about helping to run our busy HQ reception and resource centre in the heart of town.

You might also have some suggestions of your own

and I'm always happy to help you think about your skills, abilities, life experiences and how you can further utilize and develop these.

I can also help you identify other opportunities for volunteering with other groups and organisations and provide you with general information and advice on lifelong learning; looking for work and career development.

So...before you put this newsletter away, have another look through and imagine what it would be like to be featured in our next edition...

I look forward to hearing from you and can be contacted between 10am – 5pm most days. You could call into the Resource Centre at 35 Robertson Street, phone me on (01424) 446373 or email me at: heather@hastingstrust.co.uk.

*Heather Smith
Training and Development Co-ordinator*

Silchester Mews

A Community Resource Centre
in the heart of St. Leonards

Volunteers

There are two volunteers at the Centre who work along with Centre Co-ordinator and assistant. Yvonne has been with us for a few years now and gives her time, 3 hours for 2 mornings per week at least, sometimes more! Her help is invaluable; she helps on reception and to design the posters, leaflets etc. Jason has only been with us a short time and helps behind reception. Very many thanks to both of them for their help, time, company and effort!



The last months have seen several new exciting bookings at the centre. The PCT held a 2- day training programme for Self Harm Awareness. Anchor Foster Care Services ran a 3-day course. Surestart ran a 'Baby Signing' course for six weeks. KAMM (Kids and Muslin Mums) attended a lecture on Post Natal Depression, with Crèche facilities for their children. After the new Blue Plaque unveiling in Silchester Road for the suffragette, Miss Elsie Bowerman, everyone wandered to the centre for a short talk on her amazing life given by local author Helena Wojtczak and, of course, refreshments.



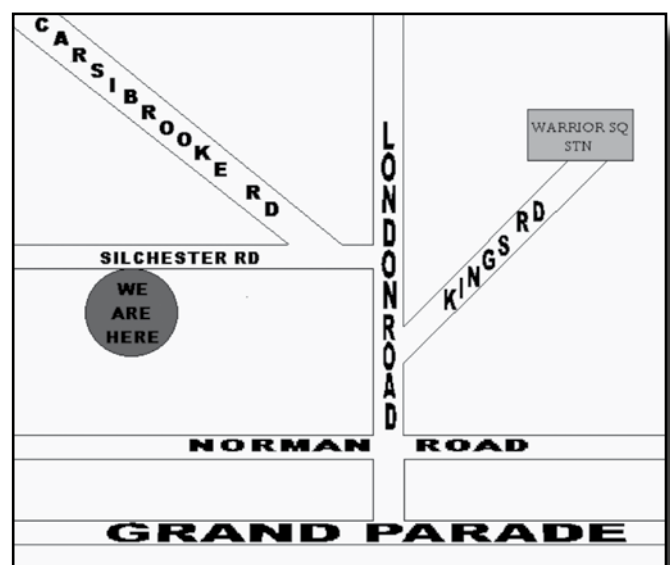
Funding

An application to the Community Chest for a new computer, new crèche tables and chairs and an intercom system direct to the offices upstairs was successful. Thanks to the funding, we now have e-mail: silchesternews@hastingstrust.co.uk

Regular bookings at the centre still continue, for up to date details of what is happening, availability of rooms etc please ring 01424 717770, pop into the centre, e-mail on the new number above.

Although the centre is busy, many people cannot find us, or cannot see us tucked away in the Mews, so here is a map, no excuse for not finding us now!

Annie Hunter
Centre Co-ordinator





The Bridge

Community Power – the magic ingredient



On 7th April the Bridge Spring Event celebrated the opening of this new community facility on Priory Road and, at the official opening on 23rd May, the Duke of Kent unveiled a plaque in memory of Pauline Joy . Such days are about raising our profile – getting people to come and enjoy the building. From the photographs you can see we did a pretty good job.

On the 7th Tania Eaglen, the Bridge Community Engagement Worker met every challenge that throngs of parents and children could present. Tania's been organizing fun days as a volunteer for years in her community and only recently managed a children's day at half term on a fraction of the budget. On the 23rd Pauline Hyland escorted the Duke around the building with the ease of a Duchess. Few people in Hastings can chair a community meeting as well as her and addressing large gatherings is nothing new. For the café staff, both occasions were further chances to display the fantastic scrumptiousness of their buffets.

Official opening by the Duke of Kent



The 7th April Spring event showed English Partnerships that how well we knew our own community: we ensured they paid the people providing entertainment and used small local businesses to advertise, decorate and clean.



Seeing people enjoy themselves and days well run makes all the stress worthwhile – it doesn't tick any boxes on any monitoring form yet it may be the most important output for the local community, the secret touch that ensures we get through the tough times stronger and more confident.

*James Leathers,
Community Development Worker*



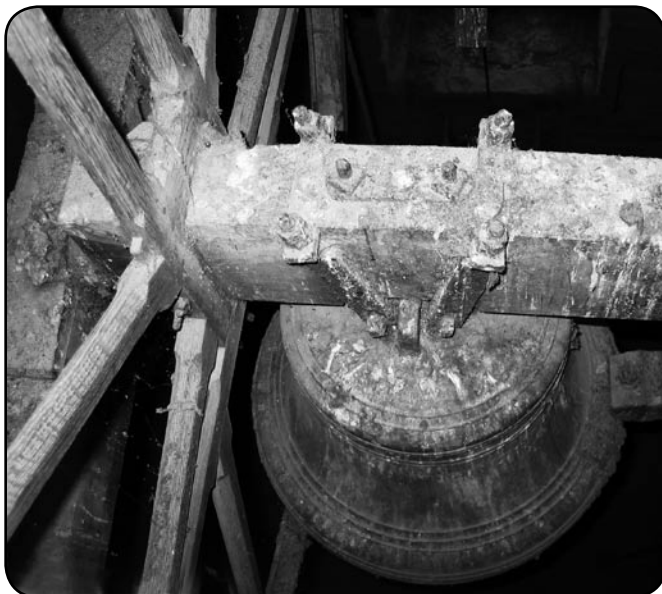
Green Team



Volunteer beginning work

Winter can be the most uninspiring period of the gardening year so to muster enthusiasm amid the dulllest coldest season is testing for the best of us. However, it is ideally suited for taking stock and charting our progress from one year to the next.

No matter what the season is St Mary Magdalen church needs care and attention both indoors and out and there is always work to do. During a routine check of the belfry we found several louvres teetering on the brink of falling to the garden below and had to take swift action to remedy the situation. Each piece of slate was fastened with rope, delicately removed and



The newly chiming bell

lowered to safety. Replacements have been made in plywood as a temporary measure to keep rain and pigeons out until enough funds are raised for the extensive repair of the tower. Our endeavours were extended to re-adjusting the wheel and striking hammer of the bell. This was perhaps our most rewarding achievement since the dulcet chime may once more summon people to church. It raised some eyebrows from disconcerted passers-by as well!

Come spring we hope to plant more shrubs. Species such as Berberis produce an abundance of berries during winter thus attracting birds and foraging animals to an invaluable source of food. We selected contrasting styles of foliage to complement multifarious growth habits that give



Clearing up

texture and shape. The introduction of indigenous species to the wild flower meadow will increase biodiversity as well as exhibiting our naturalistic approach to gardening.

As always, this work would not have been possible without the help of volunteers.

James Rose, Environmental Enhancement Officer

community regeneration unit

The CRU continues to provide support to their target communities: older people, asylum seekers and refugees, people interested in starting social enterprises and BME communities.

Innovative Finance is a loans scheme aimed at community/voluntary groups and social enterprises who cannot access more mainstream funding. Anyone interested in Innovative Finance should call William.

The asylum seeker and refugee drop-in had a break over this period. We welcomed new members of the community from Monday 24th April at the WRVS Isabel Blackman Centre.

We are carrying out research which aims to tell the real story behind people's reasons for applying for asylum in the UK, to present information in a positive way, showing the different conditions in their home countries and the background to their cases. If you know anyone who would be willing to share their story, please contact us on the number below.

The CRU piloted an innovative work placement scheme for refugees. The placement is a paid position and works on a rolling programme of 13 weeks, where refugees who may not have work experience in the UK can gain valuable skills and experience to enable them to be more confident

when applying for jobs.

The community interpreting and translation course was such a success that we ran it again! The course provides much needed professionally trained local interpreters and it is hoped will open up opportunities for employment which are sometimes lacking within the town.

CRU is involved with the forthcoming St Leonards Festival which will take place on 8th July in Warrior Square Gardens, Kings Road and the seafront. There will be performances by local community groups: Kings Road will be closed and given over to stalls and street art; there will be a heliosphere sponsored by the CRU, plus much more... Community groups based in St Leonards are invited to bring along information about their organisations.

The small grants scheme, which Community Regeneration Unit helps administer, has come to an end. The funding stream awarded the last grants in February 2006, so well done to those who were successful. We are waiting to hear what type of funding may be available for this financial year – look on our website for further information.

For further details of anything in this article, please call the CRU on 01424 446373.

Southwater

The Community Centre has seen an upsurge in business since taking on No 2 Stainsby Street, which used to be home to the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit. All offices are rented out and the Centre has its administrative support based there.

The Centre itself is busy and has seen changes to use. As well as regular bookings from groups such as Club 4 Kids, Kings Church and 1066 Healers, the Centre has developed a programme of activities itself.

There is a thriving Gardening Group which meets once a month and has regular plant sales and visits to local gardens.

A Reading Group has also developed from ideas brought to the Centre by the local community. Story telling in the Centre also takes place once

a month where volunteers read stories, organise activities and invite the children and their parents to join a relaxation session.

The Centre supports local services for the community, including the fruit and veg stall every Wednesday and the Credit Union every Thursday.

The Centre is currently looking to recruit members of the local community to the committee, which meets once a month to steer the Centre. So if you are a member of the local community and want to have your say, please get in touch with Sonia on 01424 461414. The Centre also now has a really enthusiastic group of volunteers who are involved in all aspects of the Centre and there is always scope for more volunteer involvement.

hastings **trust** vision

'To create active partnerships between the public, private, voluntary & community sectors and to enable them to work together for the economic, environmental & social regeneration of Hastings'

The Hastings Trust, a registered charity, has these aims:

- To help those who live, work or visit here to care for the environment.
- To help the local economy to flourish in ways which won't spoil the place for those who come after us.
- To spread the word to all concerned about how best to regenerate the town and, at the same time, conserve all that's good in it.

If you would like to know more about the Hastings Trust, or would like to help in some way, please phone 01424 446373 or call in at our Resource Centre (open 10am to 5pm Mondays to Fridays), The America Ground, 35 Robertson Street, Hastings, TN34 1HT

hastings **trust** membership

Membership of the Hastings Trust is open to both individuals and organisations.

Individuals - anyone aged 18 or over in the Borough of Hastings District or Rother or any other place at the Board's discretion. Organisations - any organisations at the Board's discretion. The Board of Management comprises up to six members elected by the Individual Members, up to six elected by Organisational Members, one nomination by Hastings Borough Council, one by East Sussex County Council, and one by English Heritage.

Membership benefits include:

- Entitlement to vote at Annual General Meetings to elect Board Members and determine policy
- Receipt of annual report
- Receipt of newsletter and other information on Trust activities
- Invitations to Trust events

I/We _____
(name of individual or organisation)

of _____

(address)

(telephone/fax)

(email)

apply to become a member of the Hastings Trust, a company limited by guarantee. I/We agree to be bound by the company's memorandum and articles of association (available

for inspection at the Trust's offices) and any rules made under these. In the event of the company being wound up whilst I am a member, or within one year thereafter, I agree to contribute such amounts as may be required, but not more than £1.00.

Date _____

Signature _____

Position in organisation (if relevant) _____

Payment may be made by cheque or cash

Individual membership £10 per annum £ _____

Students, Senior

Citizens, Unwaged £4 per annum £ _____

Organisation Membership £20 per annum £ _____

Donation £ _____

Total £ _____

Payment may be made by cheque or cash:

I/we enclose a cheque for £ _____ payable to 'Hastings Trust'

I enclose cash totalling £ _____ I do/do not require a receipt

I do/do not require a receipt (Please delete as appropriate)

Please return this form with your subscription to:

Peta McGarry, Hastings Trust, 35 Robertson Street,
The America Ground, Hastings, E Sussex TN34 1HT

Tel 01424 446373 Fax 01424 436740

E peta@hastingstrust.co.uk