

hastings trust

issue 31 Summer 2009

news

The Trust's mission is to create active cross-sector partnerships to work together for the economic, environmental and social regeneration of Hastings. The Trust's current dynamic state is doing just this with unprecedented vigour, engaging in a wide but connected range of new initiatives to improve life in the Borough. These cover youth, employment, energy, housing, construction, training, the arts and community development.

More staff have been taken on (see pages 3 and 5) and will be taken on, with the Trust HQ bursting at the seams. The Trust has attracted substantial funding of £4.25 million from The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) for the Myplace youth hub project (see below) and smaller sums which have enabled innovative Third Sector partnership working from Hastings Borough Council's Area Based Grants programme and Community Partnerships Fund. Thanks also to support from the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation we have been able to sustain an expanded management team which has broadened the skills and expertise and enabled us to explore more exciting ventures.

Equally important, and a central concern of the Executive Director Mel Bonney-Kane, is ensuring that projects the Trust sets up and manages have life after funding and that the Trust itself has a more sustainable funding future. An example of how we are trying to do this is that the Trust has attracted funding from the Development Trusts Association's 'Cultivating Enterprise' programme to work up a business plan for an ethical letting agency. If feasible, the proposed enterprise would acquire property on behalf of private investors, upgrade the property using our 'eco-retrofit'

model, and then manage the letting of the completed units, protecting the investment, and providing high quality, energy efficient, affordable to run, private rented accommodation. Alongside this the Trust would seek to provide access to appropriate support for more vulnerable tenants through our effective partnership working including the Hastings Advice Services Partnership.

Why is the Trust doing so well in challenging times? There is a recognition that the Trust's flexibility and holistic approach can arrive at solutions that larger more compartmentalised organisations cannot manage. The members of the Trust team can draw connections between each others' projects and the projects of partners. Take, for example, the forthcoming supported work placements, the existing Energise Hastings (in partnership with SEEDA, Hastings Borough Council, RDP Architects and interested individuals) and Myplace. The terraced house that the Trust owns in Cambridge Gardens as part of its Skills2Build scheme will link these projects and become both an example of how the existing housing stock can be made more energy efficient while respecting architectural style, will train local people in traditional building skills and will help tackle fuel poverty, skills shortages and unemployment.



Myplace

Myplace too has multiple benefits: it is not just about youth provision but job opportunities, enterprise development and preparing young people for adulthood and integration with their community. There were misleading press reports which created unnecessary controversy about the future of St Mary-in-the-Castle, the fine listed 1828 church set in its own crescent on the Hastings sea front. The youth hub will not threaten the church's architectural integrity, indeed it will reveal

features that have been hidden, but it will teach young local people to respect and help preserve their own historic inheritance. This beautiful building has faced the continual problem of finding a local use that can generate funds to maintain it into the future. This is challenge that, with expert help and guidance, the younger generation will now take on.

Here is an excerpt from the Trust's description of the Myplace project to the Borough Council:

The overall vision is for a multi functional arts, music and cultural based provision led by the needs and views of young people, providing opportunities for young people to explore new aspirations through world class facilities, innovative activities, intergeneration and inter cultural contact / working, alongside access to high quality specialist support services.

The project will provide a Centre of Excellence in arts and culture whilst acting as a 'hub' with co-located specialist services, open access youth space, and activities / opportunities for young people and for the wider community.

The project will provide four key elements, identified as priorities by young people consulted:

- live performance space to give young people a unique insight into and involvement in culture and creativity – including facilities management, technical support,
- music, studios, live arts, digital media, enterprise space, including a live performance venue, all open to the general public (which will provide experience in all aspects of facilities management) and a working café / snack bar with associated training opportunities
- office, one-to-one, workshop, meeting, training space for agencies working with young people
- open access leisure space with easy access to advice, information and support, etc

Specialist services will be provided by Youth Development Services, alongside other statutory and voluntary providers.

A consultation (pictures this page and cover) took place on 27th of May at St Mary-in-the-Castle

organised by the Trust to involve young people in helping to create the proposed Youth Hub and in selecting the project's architect (downloadable report available soon from www.hastingstrust.com)



For more on Myplace see New Trust Officer on the next page. To go into detail about the 'controversy' over the use of St Mary-in-the-Castle click on www.hastingstrust.com go the Myplace page and click on the truth about Myplace for the Director's comments. On



the same page you can download a pdf of a Myplace stakeholders' meeting chaired by the Director. This answers concerns as well as finding support from those interested in the future of St Mary-in-the-Castle. Click the Director's Blog on www.hastingstrust.com for the latest news.

Why not join us?
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Contact details page 7.



Innovative Finance

I have broken this down into four areas, three of which cover the three types of loans we offer. The last area being what I hope to develop in the future.

Growth Fund Loan

Demand is still high for this product, since the first loan was agreed in February 2007.

Appointments are held on Monday and Tuesday, with a drop in service available on a Monday morning.

Details of applications and amounts received and agreed are as follows:-

From	To	apps received	apps agreed	amounts requested	amounts agreed
1/3/07	31/3/09	998	420	£502912.46	£192550.80
1/4/09	31/5/09	106	29	£52099.62	£12184.42

There has been a drastic reduction of loans agreed. This is mainly due to the quality of the applications and our increasing the processing procedure.

Bearing in mind the type of clients the current arrears as at 29th May 2009 are within manageable limits.

We have built up a good working relationship with the Citizen Advice Bureau, by referring suitable applicants for debt management advice. This is helped by having a representative from the Bureau in each Monday.

The Growth Fund I Contract ended on 31st March 2008. The book and remaining funds then came under control of Innovative Finance.

Innovative Finance Social Enterprise Loan

Of the three loans that were agreed, they have all been fully repaid, except one, which has been written off.

Return to Work Loan

This loan was introduced in September 08 as a result of a number of applications being received through the DWP scheme with requests for assistance in returning to work.

The Loan is aimed at those who want to return to paid employment, and can be used for course costs, licence fees, tools and equipment. As with all loans the main criteria for agreeing will be the ability to repay. Interest is charged at 12.5% with a flat £20 administration fee.

It has been supported by the Job Centre team at Heron House and they are providing us with referrals.

We have received 12 applications and agreed 7 for the amount of £7,151.85.

Three have already been fully repaid and the remaining are reducing in line with the loan agreements

Courses

Three Money Advice courses on behalf of the Fellowship of St Nicholas have been run. This is to provide advice on financial matters to the financially excluded and had 7 attendees. Further courses are planned

Brian Tanner, CDFI Loans Manager

New Trust Officer

My name is Jodie Taylor and I have been appointed as the Youth and Community Engagement Officer for the Hastings Trust.

Primarily my role is associated with the exciting My Place funded project at the lovely St Mary-in-the-Castle. The aim is to create a new state-of-the-art youth facility that is a centre of excellence in arts culture. It will act as a 'hub' with co-located specialist support services, open access 'chill out' space and activities/opportunities for young people and the wider community.

My main role is to work with young people throughout

Hastings and St Leonards to ensure the success of the hub, as well as empowering and encouraging their participation throughout the process; from design, through the construction, and on to the operational management of the facility itself. Secondly I aim to act as a source of information and a point of contact for agencies from across the town. I intend to keep everyone up to date with the progression of the project and encourage wider community involvement in a bid to create a more cohesive, participatory town that embraces the young people within it.

Jodie Taylor

Resource Centre

The Resource Centre had 7156 visits from April 2008 to May 2009 compared to 5922 visits in the same period in 07-08.

The attractions were new computers; the contact points for Hastings Credit Union and the Trust's Innovative Finance offering Return to Work Loans and Personal Loans (see page 3); the jobcentre+ outreach service for people on health related benefits; the Trust's info/advice service on learning, looking for work and volunteering; the redecorated space and displays of paintings and photographs by local artists and students; the still super cheap broadband access (2p a minute); the high quality low cost digital colour printing; and, not least, the friendly help from the staff and the excellent volunteers.

Heather Smith, Training and Development Co-ordinator, was kept busy ensuring the well-being of the volunteers. Volunteers also participated in 'It's never too late' UKonline week aimed at introducing older people to the computers and the internet. And, of course, the volunteers continued to give their indispensable help and skills to the running of the Centre. Heather and Lynne Alison helped those using the Centre for work-place experience. Heather was in constant demand for producing CVs, which she used as a tool to allow clients to understand their own achievements throughout their life.



Maureen Connett and Michael Foster MP on March 20 at the Preview of Maureen's very successful exhibition of paintings which brought colour to the Resource Centre and profit to the painter. See the back cover for examples of hers and other exhibitors' work.

HBC Community Partnerships funding

We're really excited that Hastings Borough Council has supported our consortium of Hastings Trust, Hastings Furniture Service, Horizons Community Learning and the Fellowship of St Nicholas to the tune of £126k over two years to deliver vocational and life skills training.

The Trust welcomes and looks after its volunteers. Here are some of their (entirely uncensored) comments on the Trust today

'I started volunteering with the Trust in April 1998. The Trust is more diverse in its objectives in line with its mission statement; more professional in carrying out all objectives; accessibility to Resource Centre much better as now open plan.'

Jason Burrett, volunteer receptionist, who has given well over 3000 hours of time to the Trust.

Good skills and teambuilding to be had along with increased additional skills learning from tasks undertaken, good fun and excellent chances to socialise.

William Riddihough Resource Centre IT

Volunteering for the Hastings Trust can be rewarding, stimulating and interesting. As a broad range of people use the Trust's facilities and services, volunteers can expect an induction followed by a gradual introduction to volunteering in the form of short taster sessions, which build towards working a few hours that can be agreed, around other commitments. Responsibilities

can include offering advice and information on the services within the community, and dealing with in a professional confidential and courteous manner. As a new volunteer at the Trust I have enjoyed the challenge, personal growth and bringing gains of greater confidence and understanding.

Kay Hamilton, volunteer receptionist

'Enjoyable, friendly work.'

Kevin Venton, Resource Centre worker who did much work for the Green Team, the Trust's old environmental enhancement team

I enjoy working for the Hastings Trust because the Trust is in the heart of the community providing help and support where it is needed. Working at the Trust is very informative and provides great learning and training experiences. Best of all it is very welcoming and friendly.

Dawn Mitchell, volunteer receptionist

Pathway to Construction

Saturday June 6 was the third year for the Pathway to Construction event in Alexandra Park showcasing the Construction Industry (see pictures in right column). It was organised in a grand partnership by local construction companies including George Stone Ltd, West Oaks, Booker & Best, Trade Paints as well as Hastings Borough Council and, of course, Hastings Trust. Against a background of music by local bands, there were opportunities to have a go at carpentry, bricklaying and other trades offered by Sussex Coast College. Traditional building skills such as lime plastering and flint knapping were demonstrated by a group from Normandy, France, partners with local organisations in an International project called Écofab (funded by Interreg, European Regional Development Fund). They were along side local companies Chalk Down Lime and Reed Conservation. There was also the chance to take part in discussions about the future Youth Hub (Myplace) and try strawbale building. And there were plenty of play activities for younger children organised by Interplay and the Play Development Team from Hastings Borough Council. Click Director's Blog on www.HastingsTrust.com for more or to see a video of the event click www.ecofablog.blogspot.com

The very next day there was a hands-on one-day Strawbale Building course organised by Carol Biggs the new Assistant Director of the Trust (pictures below left).

Carol is also busy with Energise Hastings, a club for everyone interested in reducing fuel bills and tackling climate change in Hastings. The club meets roughly once a month and provides a forum to share experience, discuss problems and develop ideas for increasing the use of energy reducing methods.



Carol Biggs new Trust Assistant Director

I have always been impressed by the work of the Trust and I am delighted to be working here now with such an enthusiastic and committed team. With my background in construction and a keen interest in all things environmental, the challenges of the job – including Myplace, the eco retrofit, Écofab, Energise Hastings – keep me motivated, inspired and very busy. Equally significant responsibilities are building up the use of the Skill2Build workshop at Linton Road Arches as a key training centre and ensuring that the Trust's assets are maintained.

Please contact me if you are interested in any of the above on 01424 446373



OASIS

Oasis is a one-stop shop providing community support, advocacy, individual support, information on health, activities & a community venue for residents to use for courses, social networking meetings, group activities & educational classes.

May 2008 saw the start of a series of health information sessions and physical exercise activities here at Oasis. We were joined by health professionals speaking on footcare, diabetes, bowel and urinary problems. Activities included ten pin bowling, chair exercises and walks around Alexandra Park. Outings last summer included an over 50's trip to Leonardslee Gardens and a couple of country lunches. Oasis supports Broomgrove Playscheme and they had an enjoyable summer visiting Southend, Legoland, London Zoo, Tower of London and Dickens World at Chatham.



Oasis now successfully facilitates the Fruit and veg stall, and with the lovely abundance of fresh produce delivered to us twice a week, we can help make it easier for local people to purchase locally grown products within walking distance to their home.

We now have four classes of ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) lessons at Oasis, each week ranging from entry level one, once a week to entry level 2/3 three times per week. There is a crèche provided to support the classes and students are encouraged to join other activities that Oasis provides.

Our fundraising activities continue to be popular with

quiz nights being organised every two months, along with sponsored walks and sponsored silences. If you are passing us in the parade of shops in Malvern Way, then why not pop in to see if you can guess the name of the teddy, and you could end up with winning the cuddly bear.

For further information please ring 438 500 or pop in to see us.

Jackie Gaunt, Oasis Co-ordinator

Oasis Befriending Scheme

The Oasis Befriending Scheme is run by the Oasis (Ore Advice Information Support Service) and managed by the Hastings Trust. The scheme supports residents of Ore Valley and is based within this area in Malvern Way. The scheme exists to support, in a friendly, professional and non-demanding manner, people who are isolated or are experiencing feelings of loneliness through providing home visits, phone calls, outings and assistance to attend activities and appointments; as well as friendship. The scheme can also help with understanding and filling forms, provide information on events and activities, and signpost to other agencies for other forms of support you might need. Most of the times its about being able to help especially with those little things that are easily taken for granted, such as uncapping a bottle of bleach, changing light bulbs, correcting time on clocks, knowing where to go when you need assistance, hanging curtains, a friendly chat and such like. It may not seem much to some, but it means a lot to those that need it. To truly provide support that is needed at the time it is needed, the

scheme is flexible and takes into account individual situations in order to tailor-make support to meet individual needs. To learn more about the scheme and find out whether it is the right one for you contact the Oasis office or ask at the Trust.

The Oasis Befriending Scheme is extremely grateful for the support of and contributions from our committed volunteers, both past and present, without whose kindness the scheme would not be able to achieve any of the services talked of above. A very very big CHEERS!!! to them, what a team! The project and the clients appreciate their work.

If you would like to be involved for support or volunteering opportunities please do not hesitate to contact the office through any of the following means:

Tel- 01424 438 500

Email- befriendingscheme@orevalley.co.uk

Website- www.orevalley.co.uk

Thembela Duri, Befriending Project Officer

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 9:30am to 5pm Mondays to Fridays), The America Ground, 35 Robertson Street, Hastings, TN34 1HT

hastings **trust** membership

Why not join us?

The Trust policy is decided by unpaid trustees who care for the future of Hastings. The Trust needs more of these dedicated people. Can you help? Please use the contact details on this page to let us know. Individual and organisational membership may be applied for using the form below.

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.

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 (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

Exhibitions at the Hastings Trust Resource Centre (see also page 4)

Since the Resource Centre revamp there have been four exhibitions in the improved space (examples below). Further shows are already planned, some from artists who have never exhibited before. Want to have a show? Contact Heather or Kevin on 01424 446373. The Resource Centre, 35 Robertson Street, The America Ground, is open 9:30am–5pm Mondays to Fridays.

paintings by Maureen Connett



paintings by Nick Rowland (www.nick-rowland.co.uk)



photographs by Kris Allan (www.krisallan.com)

