

# hastings trust

issue 33 Summer 2011

news

## ECOFABULOUS

Ecofabulous on June 18th in the Ore Valley Hastings – free and open too all – show cased environmental building and heritage construction skills. Over 700 visitors enjoyed demonstrations and stalls, discussions and workshops covering strawbale building, lime plastering, solar clubs, Fair Trade, consultation on Hastings pier, volunteering, keeping heritage skills alive and much else. There were live bands and children's activities throughout the day.





# EcoFabulous

**Opportunities are fast arising for the Trust to focus on one of it's key objectives for supporting the environmental development of Hastings and the surrounding area**

## **EcoFabulous Event- 18th June, Hastings Adventure Playground, 10.00 am to 4.00 pm**

This year we started off the EcoFab project (see box right) with a day (see front page) celebrating all aspects of green living and working with stalls and music, demonstrations and workshops, strawbale building and bricklaying as well as a day of discussion and debate around all the issues.

The day was sponsored by Osborne Energy, who were on hand with free energy advice. Other supporting and participating organisations included: EcoFab, Interreg I Va, Pathway into Construction, In2play, Hastings Borough Council, Sussex Coast College Hastings, The Bridge and Community Enablers.

## **Vision of the Pier Schools Competition**



### **EcoFab**

After a two year pilot project we heard in March 2011 that our application for a three year Interreg I Va project had been successful. This funds us to organise an event each year promoting eco and heritage construction skills in partnership with French organisations from the Basse Normandie region. We will also be helping to develop eco-construction and renewable energy training courses with the French groups and local partners The Bridge Community Centre, HBC, Sussex Coast College Hastings and the Low Carbon Trust Brighton.

Secondary and Primary schools were invited to build their vision of the Hastings pier for the future and what they would like to see on it, all from recycled materials. These models were brought along on the day with the best ones on display afterwards in the pier shop.

Ideas from the school children will also be used by the Hastings Pier and White Rock Trust to contribute to their consultation on the future of the real pier – the pier architects ran a consultation session at the event.

*Carol Biggs, Assistant Director*



### **Eco-refurbishment**

The Eco refurbishment in Cambridge Gardens received Building Control sign off on March 10th 2011 and three out of the four flats are now occupied. During the course of the project, thanks to Future Cities funding, more than 18 trainees and volunteers helped to complete the building work mainly on the basement flat. Donations of energy efficient boilers from Baxi and a solar sunpipe all helped to bring the finished flats up to a highly energy efficient standard which will result in low running costs for each of the flats.

We are now exploring ways that we might transfer the lessons and experience gained from this project into other eco- refurb possibilities.

# Visionary Soap



**The Trust has entered into a social enterprise agreement with the world renowned Visionary Soap Company**

Visionary Soap Company is the UK's leading Fairtrade certified body care company. All of our products carry the Fairtrade Mark as well as containing a very high percentage of Fairtrade ingredients, much more than any other company in our industry. We have always been keen to be innovative in our approach to our manufacturing processes as well as aside from supporting a soap making project in Khayelitsha Township in South Africa, we have recently embarked on a collaborative effort in our local community of Hastings. Hastings Trust is the perfect organisation for us to team up with and they support various skills development & training programmes in the Hastings/St Leonards area. Visionary Soap Company currently has 4 people on site who are employed through Hastings Trust and they are increasingly overseeing and running our factory floor.

The idea is to support local job creation, give opportunities to those who may need a bit of a support and empower the local community to feel a sense of ownership and pride for our company being based here. Our customers embrace our products because of their high quality, first and foremost, but also because they want to support economies abroad through Fairtrade. The extra element of

having a Fairtrade product produced here in the UK, especially supporting a very meaningful local project, further bolsters support for our company's ethos and approach. There is also the great educational and cross cultural element that comes into play with the Hastings Trust participants getting an opportunity to learn about and interact with our Fairtrade suppliers in other parts of the world and vice versa.

*Monica Norley, Visionary Soap Director & Co-Founder*

This exciting collaboration has already secured employment for three local individuals and plans are afoot to expand further. Anyone interested in learning more about how these amazing products are produced or wishing to become part of this exciting venture please contact Sam Skinner at the Hastings Trust on 01424 201925 or by email, sam@hastingstrust.co.uk.

*Sam Skinner, Community Enabler*

## Mel, Simon & Nathaniel

So, last year Simon and I got married on a lovely sunny February day – and this January our son Nathaniel Louis Hedges was born at the Conquest hospital at a rather tiny 5lb 6oz. Nathaniel has changed our lives completely and we are pleased to say that he's a sunny, happy individual with his own personality and a stubbornness inherited from both of his parents – we're going to have fun over the next few years.



Its hard to believe that he's coming up to five months already and he

changes every day. Never having considered myself to be a 'maternal type', Nate has certainly changed that and I love my new role more than anything I've ever done before.

Returning to work full time when he was only 11 weeks old was hard, but it was probably better sooner rather than later, and we now have a great routine which sometimes sees Nate joining me at the office and in meetings – we're getting him into training early.

*Mel*

# Resource Centre

The Resource Centre is now an established hub for all those seeking to improve their employment prospects in these difficult times: the Centre is a regular drop-in for JobCentre Plus; Community Enablers offers careers advice on Thursdays as well as the weekly Monday Club (see page 2) and the latest job vacancies are on display.

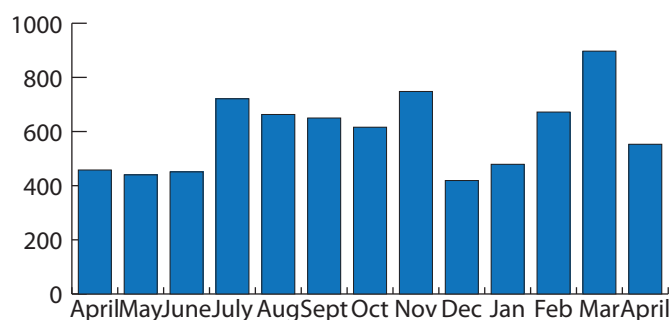
The Credit Union continues to use the Centre as a collection point and Innovative Finance also offers a regular drop-in. HEAT (Hastings Energy Advice Team) advised 30 people on energy efficiency on Saturday March 12th.

Inexpensive colour printing and internet access (free to job-seekers) with friendly help is available during the centre's opening hours of 9:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday. Visitor numbers are higher than ever (see graph)

– over 1000 up on last year's (despite an 11-day break this year's April numbers are higher than last year's).

Gina Lelliot ([www.ginalelliott.co.uk](http://www.ginalelliott.co.uk)) displayed her beautiful, uplifting and colourful art work and we are planning more exhibitions.

Resource Centre Visits April 2010–April 2011



## Don't squash that logo

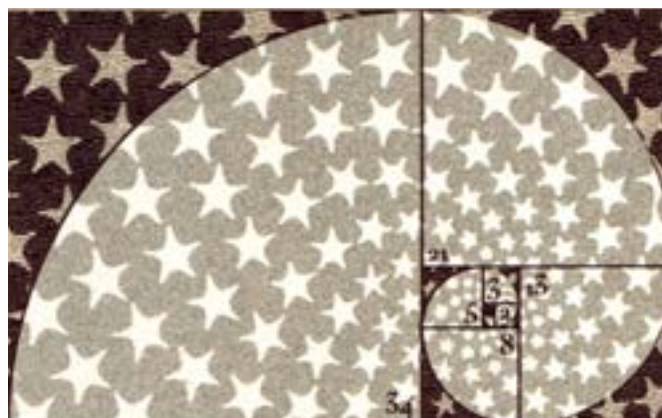
Most logos are pretty arbitrarily associated with what they represent and usually have no intrinsic meaning. The Hastings Trust logo is different: it's based on the golden section, a way of creating harmonious proportions known across the world for thousands of years. It underlies the proportions of the human body, of many paintings, pieces of music and much architecture, as well as familiar objects from paper sizes to credit cards. In nature we see it in the shells of sea creatures, in the spacings and number petals of flowers, the structure of pine cones and of animal bodies. If you Google 'golden section' you will soon see versions of the Trust logo.

So why does this make it right for the Trust? The golden section exemplifies organic growth and the Trust has always sought to help the community not through imposition but from the ground up by making best use of existing resources and allowing them to flourish and grow. And, of course, the logo and its colour can be seen as a wave and a sea shell – right for the Trust's seaside location.

The logo was designed by the fine local graphics designer Jeremy Brook ([www.graphicideas.co.uk](http://www.graphicideas.co.uk)) in a competition held for a Trust logo about 20 years ago.

The illustration is from the cover of a little book *The Golden Section: Nature's Greatest Secret* by Scott Olsen (about £4 from Amazon), which demonstrates the ever expanding richness generated by the golden section from its simple foundation. As in the Trust logo,

the main oblong contains miniature versions of itself spiralling forever into the distance. The golden section divides a line unevenly such that the whole is to the longer part as that is to shorter part. No space here to say how the division is done but you only need a compass and a ruler. You can see how this works by using three sheets of paper A3, A4 and A5 – lay the A3's longest side horizontally, place the A4 at one edge longest side up and then place the A5 longest side horizontally at the bottom of the A4. The logo begins to form – smaller sheets are versions of the bigger: each sheet's longest side becomes the shorter side of the next one down. The area of each square is the square of a number from an expression of the golden section the Fibonacci series, where each number is the sum of the two previous (so 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, etc.). Fibonacci introduced the Indian/Islamic numeral symbols into Europe in the 13th century – we might still be living in the 21st and not the 21st century without him.



Forgotten what the Trust logo looks like? go to [www.hastingstrust.com](http://www.hastingstrust.com)



# Community Enablers

More active communities with skilled and confident residents



Community Enablers is new and innovative three-year Trust project funded by the Big Lottery's Reaching Communities Programme. Since the project was launched earlier this year, over 150 local individuals, groups and employers have registered with many now actively participating across the town.

Community Enablers is unique in tailoring its help to meet the specific needs of individual and organisations. The work is underpinned with education, training and/or personal development, one-off community project support, general advice and guidance surrounding career development alongside signposting and referrals to specialist bodies.

Community Enablers network with a wide range of organisations, attending Business Linking events, the Hastings Community Network and other forums throughout the town.

We have helped employers prepare for work placements and other developments by assisting with risk assessments, first aid training, travel expenses, CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checks and special equipment; provided help with one-off events such as the Bikers Bank Holiday and preparations for EcoFab (see pages 1-2); to help sustain businesses and improve local quality of life; attended Census Training when staff assisted people to fill in their forms; helping to build an online community of poets and writers by facilitating workshops with the F-ish Educational Trust; are encouraging people to join PTLLS (Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector) training by WEA hosted by Chapel Park; and our staff arrived in pyjamas to collect for Horizons for their fund raising Community Learning day.

Our popular Monday Club is recognized by the Jobcentre as part of a national network of 'Workclubs'. We offer free use of the Resource Centre's computers for job searches with experienced and skilled volunteers available to help with CVs, application forms, interview tips and other ways into work. To meet demand, we now also offer the service on Thursday afternoons.

## L-earn Pilot Pre-Apprenticeship

A partnership of the Hastings Trust with HFS (Hastings Furniture Service, the lead body), Funding Futures, Rother Voluntary Action and 1066 Enterprise was awarded funding for a ground breaking pre-apprenticeship pilot to support local unemployed 16 to 18's with 6 months employment and training to move on. Since January we've helped with applications and had interviews for over 25 young people for 10 jobs including administration, furniture delivery, warehouse, and as Soap Maker with partners Visionary Soap (see page 3).



The project builds confidence and aspiration by helping individuals, community groups, voluntary organisations, social enterprises and private businesses to become more interlinked. It provides opportunities for volunteering, work placements, business development, community activism and other social, economic, cultural and environmental activities.

The young people also receive vocational training and help with their career development and we hope to gain more funding for additional pre-apprentice opportunities.

Heather Smith, Training & Development Co-ordinator

## Contact us with your ideas

Community Enablers welcomes ideas from organisations and individuals for connecting and enabling the Hastings community



LOTTERY FUNDED

### The Community Enablers Team

Heather Smith: heather@hastingstrust.co.uk

Steve Shonk: steve@hastingstrust.co.uk

Sam Skinner: sam@hastingstrust.co.uk

Ben Browton: ben@hastingstrust.co.uk

Jodie Cornford: Jodie@hastingstrust.co.uk

# Young Roots



The Young Roots project is an architectural, social and cultural study of St Mary in the Castle, Pelham Crescent and the Pelham Arcade funded by the Young Roots Heritage Lottery Fund. The project aims to provide opportunities for young people (13-25 years) to learn about their own and others heritage, whilst allowing the young people to take the lead in creative and engaging activities.

This project is now in its final stages and the young people involved have explored, investigated and are now documenting the heritage of St Mary in the Castle, Pelham Crescent and Pelham Arcade in a way that they see fitting.

The group decided fairly recently that they no longer

wished to produce a static exhibition that could only be seen by visiting a gallery, instead they decided that they would like to create a 'travelling exhibition': one that they could assemble and dismantle themselves and visit varying places to present their findings to both young and old. The exhibition itself will be interactive and the young people will be on hand to discuss their study and are also requesting some input from their audience.

If your community group, organisation, care home, school etc would like the group to come and present their findings at some point throughout June 2011 then please contact Jodie Cornford on 01424 201925 or email [Jodie@hastingstrust.co.uk](mailto:Jodie@hastingstrust.co.uk)

## Innovative Finance

Innovative Finance is the Trust's Community Development Finance Institution, which originally started granting small loans to Social Enterprises, but now offers loans to individuals unable to obtain finance through the normal channels i.e. the banks.

- Demand is still high for our loans, since the first loan was agreed in February 2007.
- Since that time we have agreed 1419 loans with a value of £656,322
- In this financial year we have done 777 loans with a value of £362,241
- Bearing in mind with the type of clients the current arrears are as at 31st March are within manageable limits.
- The Current value of the loans outstanding is now £370,442 (965 Loans).

- We have expanded the service and are picking up application from the South Coast between Brighton, This has led us to opening an office in Brighton for 2 days a week, at the same time we have closed the office in Folkestone, as this was not economically viable in view of the cost against the number of applications being received. Loans Officers seeing client almost every day for new applications.

- Whilst the funding for this project is due to end next March, we hope to be in a position to have enough of a lending book to be able to obtain an income that will enable us to continue. At the present time we have not been advised by the DWP as to whether there will be any similar contract available for the next financial year. We are in the process of looking at other alternative funding sources.

*Brian Tanner, CDFI Loans Manager*



# OASIS

*Oasis Community Project works with the community of East Hastings: a one-stop shop providing community support, advocacy, individual support, information on health, activities & a venue for courses, social networking meetings, group activities & educational classes.*

We have remained busy delivering activities such as ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) classes, walks, providing health information via leaflets and



posters and sending information out to residents on our mailing list. We have also been on walks around Winchelsea, held group lunches, and played crazy golf. All activities have included older people, and people where English is not their first language and their children. The residents all comment that they have enjoyed activities that really get the community



together.

We recently recruited Gaye Feltham as a part time Information and Communications project worker to join Graham Butcher in this role. Gaye started in February and has attended many of the Oasis activities to meet residents, visited venues around the area to gather information that we can pass on to residents and attended various meetings.

We became a charity in September 2010 and thanks go to Graham Butcher, our information and communication worker, who put in work to help us achieve this.

We were successful in our bid for the 'Active at 60' project provided by Sussex Community Foundation. We were granted over £2,000 to engage with residents who are reaching retirement age or have just retired. The aim of the project is to stop retired people becoming isolated and inactive. The project is headed up by our two community agents – Elsie Jones and Margaret Ellis, they plan to hold street surveys, talk to local people they meet, put up posters in the area and other suitable venues around the town and be holding meetings and visiting groups to advertise the service

We recently organised a health morning at



Broomgrove Community Centre with information on health for residents. Organisations included Seniors Forum, Stade Education worker, Health Trainers, Fruit and Veg project, Age UK, BTCV, and Smoking Cessation.

We have been out and about meeting organisations and residents in the last few months. One of our volunteers, Lauren and I attended an open meeting of the Hastings and Rother Bangladeshi Association in which we gave out lots of health information and engaged with members of the Bangladeshi community.

Gaye and I have visited the local sheltered housing blocks, including Fallowfield, Torfield and Halton Heights. We were able to provide lots of information on activities that Oasis provides and were very pleased to have new members who signed up to our mailing list and are interested in activities.



# Mel overview & news

As always, this newsletter is being produced at a time where the Trust is going through changes and times are as challenging as ever.

Recent successes include the £500k grant received last September from the Big Lottery's Reaching Communities fund for Community Enablers – this funding has helped us to develop new partnership initiatives including work with the Visionary Soap Company on a soap training and production workshop and the L-earn pilot project in partnership with Hastings Furniture Service. This partnership with HFS is leading to hopefully further and greater collaborations looking at improving employability, paid work placements, pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships.

I can't go without a mention of Myplace – following major developmental work since 2008 we believed that our project had been shelved with the change of government last May and therefore it was a huge surprise to receive a letter from Tim Loughton MP in December 2010 letting us know that the funding was still available and giving us time to reconsider our position and re-submit detail of our application. This

led to a period of time where we could reconsider our proposals and business plan in the light of changes in the economy and the funding environment since it was effectively shelved. Due to my being on maternity leave we brought in specialist consultants to review our proposals and this review gave us confidence that we could still deliver. Unfortunately the Lottery assessment of our submission was not so favourable, and there were several areas where their assessment indicated a misunderstanding, for example, stating that we hadn't yet achieved Listed Building Consent which, in fact, we did, some time ago. We requested an audience with senior civil servants dealing with the review process and submitted further information following that meeting, and are now, once again, awaiting the outcome of ministerial deliberations. We are of course hopeful that we can convince ministers of the deliverability and sustainability of our plans in order that our 'once in a generation' opportunity for Hastings' young people can become a reality.

*Mel Bonney-Kane, Executive Director*

## BAXI

Thanks to Baxi for donating a boiler worth over £800 for the Trust HQ



and donating a boiler to the  
Cambridge Gardens eco retrofit (see page 2)