

building begins

new community centre for Ore Valley gets green light



It's Really Happening...

On 22 November 2004, residents of the Ore Valley saw real signs of regeneration in their neighbourhood when Westridge started on site to transform the Priory Neighbourhood Centre (PNC) into a state-of-the-art community facility. The old building, which has been in the care of Hastings Trust since March 2002, will be redeveloped according to the needs of the Ore Valley residents. The continued involvement of these residents has been decisive in getting this project underway.

The project is more than a new building though. Hastings Trust has employed a Community Development Worker to ensure the community is ready to take advantage of the new centre. Since it was residents' enthusiasm which triggered the commitment from English Partnerships to rebuild the centre, the Trust wants to ensure this involvement is supported and sustained so that the community itself will own and manage this asset.

Building for the Future

This building embodies local aspirations. With an eye on future sustainability, energy and material conservation is at the heart of the design: solar panels, a sedum roof, underfloor heating all housed in locally grown Sussex sweet chestnut and insulated with Sussex lambs' wool.

More than this, access to facilities for all the community, whether young or old, disabled or able-bodied, has been a priority. The new community centre will be a unique venue, a centre for training, offering an onsite crèche, a life skills kitchen and computer and internet provision.

A Catalyst for Change

The role of the new centre is to create opportunities at a local level. It will bring new jobs to the neighbourhood in catering, maintenance and administration. The café, fitted out to commercial standards, will lead the way as a self-sustaining social enterprise, employing and training people for jobs in the catering industry. In the children's

area, childcare staff will not only be employed, but also trained and assessed to supply the growing market in this field.

On top of these opportunities, local residents will be empowered to affect the way services are delivered. As this is the only venue in the area that provides full accessibility, affordable and healthy refreshment plus childcare provision, the community has a strong case for obtaining health, education and advice services delivered to its doorstep.

Forging Partnerships

The project illustrates the power of partnerships. The national regeneration agency, English Partnerships, by contributing over £1 million, has led a partnership of public sector funders, including ERDF Obj 2 and SRB, to ensure the community gets an appropriate building according to its needs.

At a crucial time for Hastings' regeneration, the weight of this investment and its profile has allowed community groups to engage as equal

partners with Hastings Borough Council, Youth Development Service, the Primary Care Trust, to name but a few. Most significantly it has opened routes to the business sector and offers of trainee placements, business support and sponsorship through college.

A Lasting Community Asset

Hastings Trust and English Partnerships will hand this asset over to a community-managed charity in early 2006. The community will own and manage this asset ensuring it continues to meet to its own needs.

Currently, Residents Associations have difficulty in gaining access to meeting places. They go to whoever offers an affordable option but locally there is not one available which is easily accessible, large enough or furnished to purpose. From January 2006, there will be such a facility and it will belong to the residents.

James Leathers, Community Development Worker

comment

One of the Trust's objectives is helping others to achieve their own goals. This kind of work does not always grab a headline or even a by-line but contributes every day to the regeneration of Hastings and its inhabitants.

Helping individuals, groups, organisations move forward in their lives and their communities can take many forms: helping the long-term unemployed back into work via information, advice and guidance; working with a group offering environmental site-based experience; bringing older and younger people together for cookery lessons; helping ethnic communities to explore and share their culture – the list is as diverse as it is long.

For those kinds of activities, the Trust has raised funds to cover the work needed to achieve the goals.

However, sometimes this work is unpaid and can take a heavy toll on the Trust's limited purse. Take, for example, holding a building in trust for the community and then putting a new building in its place. Simple words which hide the hours of unpaid work which go on behind the scenes

to achieve the end goal: fund-raising, negotiating, contracting with consultants and builders and finally having to pay the bills.

The Trust is doing this because the project will deliver an asset for a community on which it can build a sustainable future. With government and European funding streams ending in 2006, threatening the sustainability of many voluntary and community projects, this one has a better chance to succeed because the Trust is delivering its objectives.

Christine Goldschmidt, Director

resource centre



Nigel Harvey, the Trust's long time environmental volunteer and artist in residence, enjoyed a terrifically successful preview on October 8th of his three week exhibition in the Resource Centre (some of his creations escaped his imagination and joined the crowd). His wide range of work includes naturalistic scenes of local town and seascapes, nudes, versions of archetypal tales, surreal illustrations to his own Edward Lear-like poems, as well as environmental protests and warnings. Nigel's success has inspired Chris King, the Centre manager, to plan two more exhibitions of other artists' works.

The centre can look back on a busy and fulfilling year having provided more individual and community group regeneration opportunities than ever before – increasing the Trust's ability to provide capacity building initiatives in support of the Borough's ongoing drive to regenerate Hastings – and around the world

Visits and Volunteers

The centre now has eight volunteers - a mix of all ages and nationalities, some long serving and highly experienced. The valuable training provided to new volunteers by the Trust through the centre, includes basic ICT, customer relations, customer care, administration, inter personal skills, networking and much more.

The centre provided advice and guidance on setting up similar centres to a number of overseas NGOs such as Tanzania, as well as continuing to provide opportunities for local clients to improve their self-esteem through personal development and to set up community projects through management and funding advice - the greatest deficiency in a town with so many deprived wards, and the drawback to positive capacity building.

Centre Development

The centre has recently been audited for both disability friendliness and health and safety standards. Safer & more user friendly access is planned and already display racks have been removed from table tops and fixed in accessible positions.

The future development of the library will be linked to the return of the Tools for Community Regeneration (TCR) project, which has recently received new funding.

The Resource Centre database has been readapted by Kevin Carías to meet new recording needs and is now even more comprehensive.

Web Design

Jeremy Cuthbert, who worked in Resource Centre providing quality value web sites to the community is now working for the CRU as a support worker. He has also set up the new Trust website (www.hastingstrust.co.uk). Jeremy continues his business as web designer outside office hours and is contactable through the Resource Centre .

Chris King, Resource Centre Development co-ordinator

Silchester Mews

A Community Resource Centre
in the heart of St. Leonards

Summer is over and Silchester Mews is as busy as ever with regular and new activities. To give you a taste please view the following, which is happening now!

Monday

Surestart Mums & Toddlers Music group. Methodist Women's Fellowship Meetings. Social Services Contact. Terrance Higgins Trust – Drop-in every fortnight

Tuesday

HCAT – Skills for Life. Women in Action (WIA) – Workshop sessions. KAMM (Kids & Muslim Mothers) – Book Study. Tuesday Club for the over 60's. Surestart Counselling. Social Services contact.

Wednesday

HCAT – Skills for Life. WIA – Development Course. KAMM – Arabic lessons for children & playgroup.

Thursday

Surestart – Mums & Toddlers Family Fun. HCAT – Skills for Life. ESDA – Outreach Information Unit (once a month). Tomorrow's People – c.v help. FORASS (Friends of Refugees & Asylum Seekers) – Asylum Seekers and PCT (Primary Care Trust) Health drop-in and Tomorrow's People Ethnic

Advisor for Employment. Rainbow Playgroup – Russian mums & toddlers.

Friday

HCAT – Skills for Life. WIA/HCAT-Basic English & Family Learning. Women's Fellowship (once a month).

Saturday

KAMM – Arabic lessons for children and a once a month social.

Also in the last few months we have had 4 seminars for *Self Publish Your Writings, a Personal Development Course*, Yoga classes, Family Conference, Fellowship of Saint Nicholas – Play & Learn, Horizon and 1066 Enterprise interviews, Pulse, KAMM, PCT, HVA meetings amongst others.

New courses for January 2005 HCAT – Children's Picture Books and Women in Action – 10 week course.

In September there was a visit from the European Social Fund who were very impressed with the centre. Our Macmillan Coffee Morning took place and we all drank too much coffee! We also produced our display for Hastings Trust Day and the AGM.

For further information for any of the above or renting of rooms/offices please contact Annie or Sue 717 770 or just pop in.

Starting in January HCAT – Making Children's Picture books.

Annie Hunter, Centre co-ordinator



information & advice

on learning, looking for work and volunteering

I've been keeping really busy these last few months with an increase in people coming along to see me for information and advice. Those I meet require support with anything from getting started again on learning to finding funds for postgraduate studies. The service is available to all adults wishing to find out more about learning, work, career development and volunteering. I don't pretend I know the answer to everything, but I have links with all sorts of groups and organizations and can also help to signpost people in the right direction.

Between April – Sept '04 over 50 new people got in touch. This was in addition to those who continued to use the service. Some have now obtained work in key skills shortage areas such as hospitality and care. Others are really getting stuck into their computer training, having never touched a keyboard before. A number have begun volunteering and these include some of whom we ourselves were lucky enough to recruit.

I keep in contact with the people I meet to find out how they are getting on and to see if there's anything further I can help them with. I especially appreciate it when people are able to pop-in when passing, or find time to stop me in the street to tell me their good news. This happened just the other day, when one person greeted me with the news that they had succeeded in getting the job they were after on their 3rd attempt and another rang to say they were over the moon to be starting a job that also included NVQ training.

If you would like to meet up you can phone me on 01424 446373 for an appointment, or alternatively you can just call into the Hastings Trust Resource Centre, 35 Robertson Street, any time Mondays to Fridays between 10 – 5pm to arrange a time to meet. I'm not always booked up so I may be able to help you straight away.

Heather Smith, Training & Development Co-ordinator

message from Joy

After three and a half years working for Hastings Trust as Ore Valley Forum Co-ordinator, in August this year I moved across to Hastings Borough Council and become Neighbourhood Co-ordinator. My relationship with Ore Valley and the Forum is still a key part of my role but in addition I get involved in more strategic Neighbourhood Renewal work across the priority areas of the town. It is still early days to judge the difference it has made moving from the voluntary to the statutory sector. In many ways the culture shock was less than it might have been as for some time I had been working alongside the Neighbourhood Renewal team so my new colleagues were already old friends.

But in other ways the shock waves of the cultural shift are still reverberating around me. From organic to corporate, from intimate to institutional, from individual to team member. So many differences and yet the essential task remains the same – making real renewal happen for real

people and places. I've been told I still have the mind set of a worker in the voluntary sector and have still to make the crossover. Analysing what that actually means is still a work in progress for me. I know that when I look out of the kitchen window in the Forum's flat at Farley Bank and see the autumn trees in the heart of the Valley I treasure that view. I also know that the view will inevitably change with the building of the Millennium Community. The task is to ensure that everyone who shares that view in all parts of the Valley enjoys some positive change in their lives as a result of all our efforts – community, voluntary, business and public. So the window's the same although I do get to look out of another window onto the scaffolding at the back of Robertson Terrace. And three months into the new job the view is still the same as is the passion for the task. I'll let you know when the mind-set changes, or maybe you'll be able to tell me first.

Joy Collins

OASIS

ESOL group

This group continues to expand – there are now students from six different countries.

ADHD Support group

Isobel's group is now well supported with plenty of mums coming along each week to discuss issues and listen to guest speakers.

Over 50's Craft group

The craft group have been very busy producing goods to sell and made over £60 at our AGM and quiz night. The extra funds have enabled them to replace materials and come up with new ideas.

Credit Union

We continue to promote the benefits of this low cost loan and savings service to local residents at every opportunity.

Outings

Outings for the over 50's include a Christmas lunch with over 60 attending; this number includes St Helens House residents who wish to come. Excursions to a performance of the Nutcracker ballet and a Strauss Gala are also planned. In

Southwater

The Southwater Area Community Centre in St Leonards has been in operation for the last three years, and our activities have grown accordingly. The Centre has three part time staff to do the day to day stuff, and a selection of volunteers who make up the Management Committee who really run the Company. As a registered charity and a limited company we are very much autonomous. Hastings Trust operates a management function for the part-time staff and give us guidance on organisational matters and staff training. The Centre and Hastings Trust have worked well together.

Southwater hosts a variety of groups who use our Centre on most days, plus we have an IT training activity for new IT users and for those with a learning disability. We welcome new ideas to improve our service to the community as a whole. The Company now have a lease on the adjacent house in Stainsby Street which we lease as small

conjunction with Broomgrove Playscheme we have organised a trip to the Brighton Ice Show (81 going) and the Panto at the White Rock (61 going). Pub lunches are planned for next Spring. In December we had the latest in our series of quizzes.

Falls Prevention Project

Michelle, Mike and I have been conducting home visits to give out slippers. We were welcomed with delight, especially by a lady in her 90's who did a little jig around the room with joy at being given free slippers.

Over 50's

Our mailing list keeps expanding through word of mouth recommendations and recently our visits lead to another recommendation.

Befriending Scheme

Mike and Michelle have been busy with an increasing number of residents. Slippers, nightlights and long life bulbs have been distributed to nearly all residents on our list.

Jackie Gaunt, Co-ordinator

office space. This generates income and helps with the sustainability of the Southwater Centre project.

Some of the groups that we welcome to our Centre include Hastings College, Women in Action, Club 4 Kids, a Youth Club run by the St Nicholas Centre, The Credit Union, The 5 a Day project, Surestart, and 'Gizmo' award winning youth group.

There will be further changes to staff in March 05 when the existing SRB funding runs out. Currently bids for funding are being considered to support the three part time staff. This is a worrying time for our young organisation when secure funding is not in place and volunteers are increasingly hard to find locally. On the positive side we have a great facility, and with more time, support from Hastings Council and the voluntary sector this can be what every one wants it to be – a success!

Digby Brodrick, Community Development Worker

community regeneration unit

The second multi-cultural 5 A Side Football Tournament built on the success of the previous year's event, with 16 teams battling to win the two-day 40 match tournament.

The contest brought together Bengali, Kurdish, African and European communities. The whole tournament was a relaxed, fun weekend, with the teams bringing along family and friends for support and encouragement. All teams are looking forward to the 3rd Tournament with anticipation and good natured rivalry!

Social Enterprise Conference featuring American social enterprise expert, Jerr Boschee, was part-funded by the CRU, in partnership with 1066 Enterprise and Harley Reed Consulting. It was an opportunity for local people interested in social enterprise, to get some practical help and information and also to network with other like-minded people. The CRU continues to work with individuals and groups who are interested in starting social enterprises.

Further to research by the PCT into the need for locally based trained interpreters, the CRU financed a ten-week accredited interpreting course for refugees. Training for 10 individuals was provided by WEA and facilitated by South East Interpreting Service.

Financed and organised by the CRU, Hastings Trust Day was a chance for the public to meet with staff to find out about the work of the Trust and

how they could get involved. Other organisations who the Trust works with, including HVA, Sure Start, Kivu Peace Initiative, United African Community in Hastings, Hastings Bengali Welfare Association, Decoda and the Credit Union, plus street entertainers

and musicians, all made sure the day was a success.

The working relationship between the CRU and Hastings Voluntary Action has been strengthened by intensive joint working on the grant schemes (CC/CLC/CEF). Working in partnership with East Sussex County Council, the CRU also now jointly administers a new match-funded grant scheme: Global Grants. The grant will provide added value to the three schemes already operating and is aimed at moving individuals towards employment.

The last six months have been a period of great change within the CRU personnel, welcoming back faces from the past as well as recruiting new, vibrant individuals to work as part of the team. The team has been restructured and from December, will consist of Team Leader, Community Involvement Worker, CRU Support Worker, Trainee Community Involvement Worker and CDFI Worker.

Claire Harris, Community Involvement Worker



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@htgate.demon.co.uk