

For the benefit of the community

Over 130 projects that improve the lives of local people have now been approved to receive funding from the Mayor's Fund and the locality funds. Here, we feature a small selection of them

Local assemblies were established in Lewisham nearly two years ago as a means to involve local people in deciding how money should be spent on improving their areas. Two pots of money were made available to each of the 18 wards in the borough – the Mayor's Fund, which is a one-off sum of £50,000 to each ward, and an annual locality fund of £10,000 per ward which generally goes to fund smaller projects.

Attendance at assemblies has been very good with over 4,000 attending in 2008 and more in 2009. Attendees consist of people living, working or studying in the borough, councillors, Council officers, and representatives from voluntary and community groups. Together they decide how to allocate the funds.

Catford Energy Savers

By the end of March, around 1,000 homes in Catford South will have received a package of measures to help cut fuel bills and reduce the borough's carbon footprint. The

DOUBLE JAB, FOREST HILL

Double Jab is a project which uses boxing and football activities to engage youth who are involved in anti-social behaviour who are either offenders or are in danger of becoming offenders. Police can refer young people to the scheme. Funding of £7,350 has been allocated to help provide the activities at the David's Road Gym in Forest Hill. £2,500 will be used to take 25 of the young people on a week-long outward bound course to an educational centre in Wales, where they take part in mountain climbing and abseiling and other activities.

Gym manager David John said: 'Without the Mayor's fund money, we wouldn't have been able to carry on. We constantly need to buy equipment such as boxing gloves. We get around 84 kids a day coming in here and it's growing all the time. As well as football and boxing skills, we teach the kids life skills and an awareness and respect for their environment. Our motto is "jab don't stab."'

i To find out more please email: info@doublejab.org or visit; www.doublejab.org or call the gym on 020 8699 8903.



Gym manager David John (far right) teaching boxing skills

by the North Downham Training Project, it received £4,770 from both the Downham and Whitefoot Mayor's Funds. Project manager Sue Barry said: 'When bidding for the funding at our local assembly, some of our students gave a speech on what they had gained from the project. Not only did this help win the funding but it gave them the experience of public speaking.'

Ladywell Alert box scheme

The Ladywell Safer Neighbourhood Team and local businesses worked together to secure funding of £7,222 to provide 25 Alert boxes for retailers in the Ladywell area. The boxes will allow shopkeepers to alert the police and other shopkeepers in the area if they observe any criminal activity or anti-social behaviour. They will also help the police to combat crime. Once installed, the Safer Neighbourhood Team will show shop owners how to use the system.

Sergeant Dave Hawtin of Ladywell Safer Neighbourhoods Team said: 'With the Alert boxes, if a shopkeeper feels unsure about a customer or there is a minor incident occurring in the shop, they are able to summon help or reassurance by pressing the button on their Alert box. This is particularly useful for traders who are running stores on their own.'

Volunteers who helped to clear the embankment area at Hither Green Station



HITHER GREEN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Hither Green Community Association secured £5,000 from the Lewisham Central Mayor's Fund to help improve the appearance and use of the embankment area at Hither Green Railway Station. The association is working with Network Rail to make the improvements and has recruited over 20 volunteers for each session to help with clearing the embankment, pruning and planting. The funding helped to provide

protective clothing for the volunteers, refreshments, and tools. Planting will take place in the spring and the association will continue to maintain the site.

Head of the community association Jo Deverson said: 'It's been a very positive experience and a great way to get people in the community together. If anyone else would like to join in, email info@ourhithergreen.com or call 020 8244 0621.'

emissions by 450 tonnes a year. installed at no cost. Loft or cavity wall insulation is also being delivered for free where required.

If you live in Catford South and wish to participate in the scheme, email catfordenergysavers@g-ten.co.uk, visit www.lewisham.gov.uk/catfordenergysavers or call 0800 081 0030 to see if any places are left.

It is estimated that participating households will save an average of £100 a year on their fuel bills and the scheme will reduce carbon

Back on Track

Aimed at young people aged between 18 and 24 who are not in education or training, this project equips young people with the skills they need to enter education, volunteering or employment. Run

‘We couldn’t have put on the festival without this funding’

JONATHAN KAUFMAN,
FESTIVAL DIRECTOR



A festival art exhibition

Sydenham Arts Festival

The Sydenham Arts Festival held last July was one of the first schemes to benefit from the Mayor’s Fund. It hosted more than 50 events over eight days including workshops, exhibitions, music, comedy and theatre. It received £10,000 from the Mayor’s Fund and £2,500 from three of the locality funds – Sydenham, Forest Hill and Perry Vale.

Director of the festival Jonathan Kaufman said: ‘Many of the performances were sold out and the positive feedback we received was overwhelming. We couldn’t have put on the festival without this funding. The festival provided a great platform for artists, musicians and comedians in the borough.’

Grove Park Nature Reserve

The Grove Park Nature Reserve, which promotes and enhances the indigenous wildlife and botanical aspects of the area, has been awarded £4,000 from the Mayor’s Fund. Improvements that will be carried out include clearing rubbish, additional seating, repairing fencing and planting trees, plants and shrubs. It recently won a Green Pennant Award and received money from the Tutu fund for a sculpture.

‘The Grove Park Nature Reserve User Group has been incredibly valuable in attracting funding to support and improve the reserve,’ said Nick Pond, the Council’s ecological regeneration manager.

Downham Tamil Association

The association has been running since 1998 and provides English and maths lessons for children between ages 5 and 20 and Indian dance and drum lessons to people of any age. Children and young adults from all sections of the community are invited to attend, regardless of race or religion. The Association received £6,000 to run activities from the Mayor’s Fund. Chair of the association Bala Vallipuram said: ‘We are delighted to receive this funding which will help us to carry on what we do for another year.’



Indian Dance lessons at the Downham Tamil Association

FUNDING ALLOCATED TO OTHER PROJECTS:

- ▶ £4,500 to repair the scout hut of the 2nd Deptford Scout Group
- ▶ £2,200 for the Bobby Dazzlers over 50s club at the Ringway Centre in Grove Park to run activities.
- ▶ £2,000 was given to Signal – a support group for parents of autistic children in Lewisham.
- ▶ £4,312.50 was provided for a transport project to help older people access shops and services in the Whitefoot area.
- ▶ £3,818 for a summer carnival in Honor Oak organised by Honor Oak Residents and Tenants Association to help bring different people in the community together.
- ▶ £3,024 for a project run by the Ahoy Centre in Deptford to provide sailing activities to children with learning difficulties at Brent Knoll School in Perry Vale.

For lists of projects by ward that have been allocated funding see www.lewisham.gov.uk/localassemblies

GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR LOCAL ASSEMBLY

All the local assemblies are now reviewing their ward priorities for 2010, and seeking the views of people who live, work and study in the wards. To make your voice heard, go along to your local assembly. Dates and times of the next meetings are listed in the What’s on section of this magazine on p25.

For more information on local assemblies see www.lewisham.gov.uk/localassemblies or call the Assemblies Team on 020 8314 7034.