



TGSE Newsletter

NEWS FROM THE THAMES GATEWAY SOUTH ESSEX STRATEGIC HOUSING GROUP

SUMMER 2011

Sporting village opens with a splash



Swimming champion Mark Foster is joined by local schoolchildren as they leap into the borough's new 50 metre pool

"Place making" comes to Basildon as the brand new £38m Sporting Village opened its doors to the public on Saturday 30th April.

Funding partners (Essex County Council, the HCA, Sport England and Veolia ES Cleanaway Pitsea Marshes Trust) who have made the Basildon Sporting Village possible hailed it as a 'fantastic achievement'.

A full day of sport and activities was headlined by gymnastics troupe and the 2010 winners of Britain's Got Talent, Spelbound, as thousands of local residents packed the new facility that includes the county's only 50 metre swimming pool, 8 court

sports hall, gymnastics centre, fitness suite, climbing wall and studios.

Councillor Tony Ball, Leader of the Council, said: "I am absolutely delighted that the Sporting Village has opened, after 18 months of construction. It is a fantastic achievement from everyone involved to deliver it on time and on budget." The facility will complement the existing and new homes being built in Basildon and the wider sub-region by providing a focus for sports and leisure activity.

For more information please contact the centre direct on 01268 722450.

New creative and cultural hub for Thurrock

Kier Eastern has been appointed as the building contractor for the new National Skills Academy for Creative and Cultural on the High House Production Park in Purfleet.

The new facility will be the National Skills Academy for Creative and Cultural's central training facility, providing accreditation and training in the backstage skills required by the theatre and live music sectors. The facility will be

built alongside the Royal Opera House Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop, which opened in January 2011.

The building contract will be managed by Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation on behalf of High House Production Park Limited.

The new facility will open in summer 2012, whereupon the academy will become an important national and local

Southend Council commission Access Point

Southend-on-sea Borough Council has commissioned Family Mosaic to provide a single access point to a range of Supporting People funded services available in the Southend area. The Access Point is attached to the Southend Floating Support Team and employs 3 Access Point Co-ordinators - Sharon Hawes, Sian Laidlaw and Tina Draycott. The Access Point receives referrals for floating support as well as carrying out all floating support assessments and any crisis work required.

Intervention Project success

A project in the sub-region which aims to prevent homelessness by giving intensive and co-ordinating support for families with complex needs, has been hailed a success.

The Family Intervention Project (FIP) is managed by Family Mosaic's staff seconded from their Floating Support Services.

The Basildon project was identified by Government as one which has formed strong inter-agency partnerships and delivered tangible results in its local area by reducing anti-social behaviour, improved attendance at school, reduced debt and prevented homelessness.

Mo Slade chairs the FIP which has been match funded by Essex County Council and Basildon Councils homeless initiative fund. The schemes on-going success is dependant on future funding.

First residents benefit from Empty Homes Scheme

A Basildon family at risk of being homeless has received the keys to their new home thanks to a government funded empty homes scheme. This South Essex initiative led by Basildon Council and its delivery partner, Genesis focuses on turning empty properties on the fringes of society back into much needed homes ready to house tenants. Following the renovation of the three bedroom Laindon property, the new residents will benefit from a complete re-decoration which includes a brand new kitchen, new central heating and new double glazed windows. The initiative also prevents properties from becoming a target for crime and an eyesore for local residents. In return for leasing the property to Genesis for



five years, landlords of empty homes receive a grant up to £35,000 from the scheme for refurbishment work and, importantly, help more families who are waiting for housing. Owners of empty properties who are interested in the TGSE Empty Homes Initiative should contact Louise Biddiss at Basildon Council on 01268 294056.

Low cost home ownership



The current average deposit for first time buyers is 30% and this figure is pricing many prospective first time buyers out of the market. Therefore the Government has announced that it will use £250 million from the banking

5 years) to cover a proportion of the value of the property. Under the FirstBuy scheme this proportion is 20% of the purchase price. The Buyer will be expected to contribute a minimum cash deposit of just 5% themselves.

The FirstBuy arrangement will reduce the size of the mortgage required by the Buyer to 75% making it easier to secure funding and will boost growth in the housing market. For more information on FirstBuy and other HomeBuy products, visit www.homebuyoptions.co.uk or contact Moat's HomeBuy Services team on 0845 359 6161 or at marketing@moat.co.uk

New creative and cultural hub for Thurrock



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training facility that will help meet the UK's anticipated need for 30,000 skilled backstage and technical theatre staff by 2017. The building will complete phase three of the Production Park's transformation from a derelict and decaying farmstead to a

modern training, production, and community facility in the heart of the Thames Gateway. With the Academy under construction, High House Production Park Limited will now focus its attention on bringing forward the remaining development plots available

on the site. These plots are anticipated to provide around 100,000sqft of accommodation for businesses and artists from related fields. For further information please contact Lawrence Luketa on 01375 362016 or email lawrence.luketa@thurrocktgd.org.uk

Design Training brings positive outcomes

Participants from the recent sub regional design training course were invited to comment on how the course has helped them to achieve higher standards of design in schemes. Sarah Paxton from Moat Housing explained how it helped her improve a 80 homes scheme she had been working on in Mid Sussex.



The scheme was located on a green field site but allocated to residential in the local plan. Developer, Redrow were encouraged to develop a high quality scheme with a boulevard and green approach with better public realm. Sarah used her newly learnt skills to

enhance the scheme further by introducing a vista. "Having recognized that the main access was a boulevard, I looked to see what the vista at the end of the street was and discovered it was a small unimposing unit and thought

this was inappropriate. Redrows redesigned the end of the street to take my views into account and create a better streetview at the end. The design of the boulevard and vista was changed as a result of my intervention."

South Essex landlords gain Accreditation



Private sector landlords attended a Thames Gateway South Essex Landlord Accreditation training event in June as part of the voluntary accreditation process designed to improve the quality of the sector in the sub region.

The scheme is being run by the London Landlords Accreditation Scheme (LLAS). Accreditation is the voluntary compliance by private landlords with good standards in the condition and management of their properties and their relationship with their tenants.

If you are interested in further training and becoming a member of the TGSE scheme, please go to www.londonlandlords.org.uk



TGSE Housing Conference picture special

On Friday 18 March 2011, around 100 partners from the Public, Private and Community / Voluntary Sector attended a Thames Gateway South Essex Housing Conference at the Freight House, Rochford, Essex. Cllr Tony Ball, Leader of Basildon Borough Council, opened the Conference. Key speakers included Terry Fuller from the Homes and Communities Agency, Dick Mortimer from Family Mosaic, Mark Pragnell from Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership, Rab Fallon representing the Housing Officer's Group and Alistair McIntosh from HQN.



The key focus for this year's conference was the challenge and opportunities arising out of the Localism Bill. The radical changes being brought in through the Bill also provides an ideal opportunity to review our TGSE Housing Strategy. To this end a new Housing Strategy for 2012-15 is currently being prepared and following consultation in September, it will be available later in the year. The Conference re-enforced the integral role of housing, planning and regeneration in the creation of sustainable and successful places in the TGSE sub region.



Housing schemes in the sub region



^ Five Links Basildon

Basildon and Billericay MP, John Baron, visited Five Links Estate on 25 March, to view progress of the estate regeneration works currently underway. The MP congratulated Swan Housing, the HCA and Basildon Borough Council for pushing forward with this latest Phase of work which will deliver much-needed housing in the area. This latest phase of works (phase 3) will deliver 185 homes including a landmark development and affordable homes for people on the local housing needs list. The affordable homes for those on the housing needs list, will form part of a bid package from the HCA's Affordable Homes Programme 2011-2015 by Swan.



^ Schoolfield Rd Thurrock

A development of new homes in West Thurrock is nearing completion at Schoolfield Road. Barrett Homes and CHP are delivering the scheme which includes 52 affordable housing units for intermediate rent, with funding from the HCA.

<< Cranes Farm Basildon

Essex based housing association, CHP, is to launch nearly 40 high-quality affordable homes in Basildon, Essex, after receiving £1.3 million in funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). Working with Savills, Cranes Farm in Basildon will see 25 properties - comprising of five two-bedroom apartments, eight two-bedroom, eight three-bedroom and four, four-bedroom homes - for social rent being built after the development received £1 million in funding from the HCA. CHP's Moat House scheme in Basildon will feature 13 properties, nine two and three-bedroom homes for social rent and four two and three-bedroom properties for intermediate rent. Working with Savills, the Moat House scheme received £330,000 in funding from the HCA and is due for completion by the end of the year.

Estuary pilot homes out of London initiative

Estuary Housing Association was approached by East London Housing Partnership to pilot a Homes out of London initiative, funded by the HCA. The aim of the scheme was to release up 3 and 4 bed properties in London which were being under occupied by tenants, and move these residents to smaller properties in the outer boroughs of their choice. Estuary then purchased a programme of two bedroom houses in the host boroughs. Maldon and Thurrock Councils agreed to be the host boroughs, and a total of 19 two bed houses were purchased, achieved with grant funding of £2.25million. Estuary purchased 8 two bed houses in Maldon and 11



two bed houses in Thurrock. The initiative has been very successful and Estuary will be bidding for further funding under the 2011/2015 HCA Framework. The initiative will only operate in those boroughs that have agreed to act as a host and future re-lets will remain with the host borough.

Homelessness training a success



The TGSE Homelessness Officers Working Group has successfully run a series of training events to strengthen knowledge and skills of staff to deliver an effective cross boarder service. During a particularly turbulent year, there have been record numbers of approaches of clients towards the front line housing services for advice and support. The training events included courses on European Nationals, workers from abroad and housing rights, relationship breakdown and property rights, managing casework, housing law update, mental health awareness, domestic violence, forced marriages, welfare benefits update and joint training with social services for 16 to 17 year olds. The courses have also proved popular and provided significant value for money. The exercise also was able to strengthen staffs appreciation of different authority working practices and assisted with better future working relationships and support.

Community Land Trusts Seminar



The Gypsy Council and Basildon Borough Council co-hosted a seminar on 7 April with support from the HCA and the TGSE Housing Strategy Group. The purpose of the seminar was to have an open discussion on the Gypsy & Traveller site issues and to look at possible options for local authorities and housing associations. The HCA promoted the grant opportunities available to support schemes in the region.



New scheme for Rayleigh

Work has commenced on a new housing scheme in Rayleigh, Rochford to provide 23 one and two bedroom flats to be let at affordable rents. The scheme is being developed by Sanctuary Housing Association with funding from the HCA and is due to be completed in March 2012.

City Beach throws light on Southend seafront



Evening visitors to Southend, Essex will now be wowed by a spectacular light show of funky neon colours when they stroll along the town's famous seafront.

Six 80ft-high lighting columns have been installed along the resort's Marine Parade as part of the £7million City

Beach regeneration scheme. The lighting was funded through the Thames Gateway Programme by the HCA.

The scheme is one of four major infrastructure projects that have been undertaken by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council as part of the massive £25 million 'Better Southend'

initiative. The digital lighting columns will act as the centre piece of City Beach, hopefully encouraging more visitors and getting them to stay longer into the evenings and later into the year. Other improvements include landscaping, paving and a new refreshing fountain creating a family friendly area.



The TGSE Housing Group forms a sub group of the wider Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership and is represented by housing strategy and development partners from the following organisations:

- Basildon Borough Council
- Castle Point Borough Council
- Rochford District Council
- Southend-on-Sea Borough Council
- Thurrock Borough Council
- Estuary HA Ltd
- Family Mosaic
- Moat Housing Group
- Swan Housing Group
- CHP

A wider group of RSL's meet through a Forum and include the five representatives above and the following additional organisations:

East Thames Group, Guinness Trust and Sanctuary Group.

For further information, please contact:

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Thames Gateway South Essex

