



AUGUST 2009 UPDATE

Hot News

National Housing Federation East of England 'What we are proud of' award for Flagship/Peddars Way and Abbey Neighbourhood Centre

Working closely with the Abbey Neighbourhood Centre staff, volunteers and community groups, Peddars Way Housing Association (a member of Flagship Housing Group) won a regional prize in July. David Seaton, Managing Director of Peddars said;

'The transformation of the Abbey Estate has gone from strength and this has been achieved by tenants and residents taking pride in their community. The whole community made this project the success it is today and their journey has been exceptional.'

The Eastern winner will go through to the National Finals.

Keystone hosts the national Asset Transfer Unit's Stakeholder Forum

The ATU came to Thetford to see asset development in action at the Keystone Innovation Centre. The forum focused discussions on the future of community sector housing. The ATU is a Department of Communities and Local Government project.

Development Trust Association Chair visits Keystone

Micheal Pyner the DTA Chair and Chief Executive of Shoreditch Trust visited Keystone during a tour of trusts in the Eastern region. Micheal said;

'My visit to the East region confirmed what I have found up and down the country; that Development Trusts are incredible, not only in the work that they do but in the diversity of their offer. I saw Trusts in all very different in scale, work and services but all linked by their commitment and passion for what they do. It is incredibly important that Trusts take the opportunity for co-operation and partnership and each becomes an advocate for the movement. I want to thank everyone who made my couple of days so interesting and different. The East has the potential to be a real powerhouse in the movement but we will only see that if there is real pro-activity and mutuality'

Joseph Rowntree Foundations Community Assets Programme Advisory Network

Neil Stott, Keystone's Chief Executive has been asked to join a national forum from government, NGO's and researchers to guide JRF's work on the asset development agenda.

Children and Youth

Kollectiv

The monthly rehearsal and practice sessions continue to take place at Connexions on the first Tuesday of each month. Plans for gigs and other activities in 2009 are currently being explored.

Charles Burrell Community Garden Project:

This project is now drawing to a close. Fourteen youngsters from the project recently went on a trip to Whitlingham Outdoor Activity Centre and took part in a raft-building session, and archery and rock-climbing. The event was to build team working skills and a 'thank you' for their commitment to the project.. It is hoped that youngsters from this project will sign-up to the new Barnham Cross Big Sitting Project.

Abbey Table Tennis Club

This project has progressed well since launching in February and been attracting young men aged between 16 – 30 years. The vast majority of which have either been in prison, and / or experienced drug and alcohol misuse.

The project will explore ways to support and improve life chances. This is an important project for the Abbey Centre as it provides an activity for an otherwise unprovided for group.

Keystone Community

Barnham Cross Big Sitting Room

A contract between Keystone and the Fulmerston Family and Community Project has now been agreed. The first session of the Big Sitting Room started in July, and will run weekly on Friday nights. The 'Little' Sitting Room, for a younger age group, will run on Wednesdays and will commence once the Charles Burrell project ends.

META Health

META staff continue to be busy in Thetford running drop-in sessions on Thursdays, Friday evenings and Saturday mornings to assist clients with issues relating to their health and well being

In July and August META will be running informal ESOL classes in the waiting room to assist clients with gaining new skills and confidence in the English language between 6 and 7pm on a Friday and between 11 and 12am on a Saturday. Outreach staff from Thetford Library are planning to attend and promote their services.

Suffolk META

Suffolk META continues to be well attended in Ipswich, Newmarket and Felixstowe. The service in Ipswich on a Friday is to be extended into the afternoon (at an alternative location) to enable the team to meet the growing demand in this area.

In Stowmarket and Sudbury large employers will be visited with custom made question cards translated into Portuguese, Polish, Lithuanian and Russian. These can be filled in by employees and returned to META for a speedy answer. Feedback from this trial will help to steer the local authorities in the direction of the best use of resources to assist migrant workers in these more rural locations.

Keystone Area Voluntary Organisations (KAVO)

Forthcoming training events include a second 'How to Create your own Website' workshop and 'Basic Food Hygiene' training course funded by Breckland District Council. There will also be two events open to the public a Promote and Celebrate event on behalf of the Southern Area Forum for Voluntary Sector Organizations Working with Children and Young People on Wednesday 30th September and a Volunteer Fayre on Tuesday 27th October.

KAVO is also seeking funding to launch a Health Forum for the local Voluntary and Community Sector this September, enabling them to engage with local health developments and projects as well as discuss issues and develop partnership working.

The KAVO E-bulletin service was also recently launched offering members regular communications specific to their areas of interest. The KAVO Newsletter will continue to be produced on a quarterly basis. The next KAVO Networking Coffee Morning is due to take place on Tuesday 28th July from 10am in the Small Court of the Guildhall

Keystone Buildings

The Abbey

Regular activities include the weekly Tuesday Youth Group attended by on average 60 children every week, bingo on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Other activities

include; math's courses on a Thursday morning, table top sales, various meetings and training as well as private functions.

Fiona Drew continues to volunteer at the centre full-time, handling all bookings related enquiries and processing payments. The café continues to be popular, and is now running as a social enterprise and exploring alternative funding opportunities. The centre will be used by Peddars Way Housing Association for a community fun-day on the 1st September where various agencies will be able to come and showcase their services.

The Limes

The Thetford Healthy Town Project has moved into The Limes which mean all of the rooms are now fully occupied.

Innovation Centre

The current building occupancy is 93% and there are discussions with potential tenants for the three remaining offices. During May and June there were a total of 74 meetings/conferences attended by 972 delegates. June was the best ever month in respect of conference activity.

Enterprise Factory

The building is now 83% occupied with the Bicycle Recycling project taking over Unit 4 with effect from 1 July

Keystone Enterprise

Local Food Group

Thetford Healthy Town Joy of Food project is being managed by Local Food Group.

Keystone Research and Consultancy

Recent work undertaken and new contracts are;

- Flagship Housing Group West Thetford 2020 consultation
- Flagship Housing Group community development strategy development
- New Deal for Communities DCLG sustainability review - Leicester
- NDC sustainability review DCLG - Newham
- Blacon Community Trust (Chester) and Cheshire County Council asset development project review