

Play for children in Islington

IPA Newsletter



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Children's Protest at Plans to close their Playgrounds

An exhibition of over 200 postcards from children will be on display at Islington Town Hall from Monday 6th December.

Children at playschemes and adventure playgrounds across the borough have contributed their thoughts and feelings to show what the children will miss out on if facilities are forced to close due to government-imposed cuts in funding to pay for an economic crisis caused by banker's greed.



In answer to the statement on the postcard: We need Play because..... one postcard written by an Islington child stated that : “withought play more than the children of play shemes will without doubt be watching over the limit of television, in addition, the children may join gang’s meaning they do smoking, selling drugs and other stuff. Furthermore when I’d gone to timbuktu, surely you’d see on my face that was laughing to death, whilse having tones of fun. Won’t you see your crushing our community. Are you going to change it, or fix it?” [sic] Youssef, Archway.

Hundreds of ordinary people in Islington give up their free time to volunteer to help children and to sit on management committees at play schemes, youth clubs and adventure playgrounds; they have been working to create a “Big Society” long before it suddenly became fashionable!

The IPA is committed to working with the Islington Council to try to save children’s play provision, one idea is to set up a “Land Trust” to take over ownership of adventure playgrounds to prevent them ever being sold off for profit by a future Council.

IPA the Mayor's Chosen Charity 2010/11

We would like to thank the following local businesses for their support at our Christmas Raffle: GEM Restaurant; The Vineyard; Igloo Stores; Revel Loyd; Aria; Ottolenghi; Lucky Voice

Islington Play Association, Head Office, West Library, Bridgeman Road, London, N1 1BD 020 7607 9637

Dear colleagues,

A hard time is ahead.

The latest information from LBI indicates a massive reduction in funding for play - estimated to be at least 60%. We will all need to get a lot more creative and efficient to ensure that we can continue to deliver excellent play opportunities for children in the borough.

Last month we held a public meeting at Timbuktu adventure playground which was very well attended with more than 50 people signing up to be more involved. Councillor Richard Watts, lead member for children, spoke at the meeting and committed to working with the voluntary sector to support play in the borough. Which was very good news!

Part of this innovative thinking has led the play association to develop the idea of a land trust. This is to protect the existing play sites from any sell off or change of use which might result in the ending of services like adventure playgrounds. We are inviting supporters from the community who want to help so if you would like to get involved in the plans, please contact me.

Meanwhile we continue with our funded projects as you can see in this newsletter. The children will always need to play.

Please make sure you come to Islington Town Hall from 6th Dec onwards to see the exhibition of postcards sent by school children in Islington about why they need play.

IPA is heading for its 40th birthday next year and will be celebrating with a number of events that you are all invited to.

We will also be launching our twitter and facebook pages soon.

See you soon,

Anita Grant

Director

Waterside Play & Youth Project

50 Dame Street, London, N1 7FR



Proud nominees of the Play award at the Children and Young People Now Awards 2010.

The awards were held at the Royal Horticultural Halls in London, November 18th.

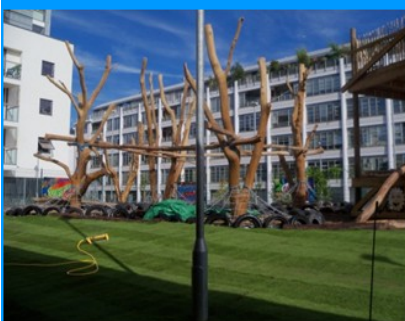
(Left to right Cassandra Favager (Hyde Housing), Bernice Ramchandani (Hyde), Guy Lawrence (Islington Council), Diana Fitzwilliam (Hyde), Dawn Jarrett (Waterside Play & Youth Project), Suzanne Murray (Islington Play Association), Wendy Jeeves (I.P.A) Max Mueller (I.P.A), Ray Peter (Waterside Play & Youth Project).)

Photo shows representatives from Hyde Housing, Islington Council and Islington Play Association who worked in partnership on the development of new Waterside Play and Youth Project site and building. The development of the site involved groups of volunteers from businesses and also the children and young people who attend the centre.

The Awards recognise innovative and inspiring initiatives taking place across the UK and the professionals working hard to improve the life chances of children and young people. The Play Award went to Bolton Lads and Girls Club at the Queens Park Project.

Waterside Play and Youth Project have received plenty of interest including a BBC London news report showing it as an example of what a playground should be like. It was a great night celebrating many fantastic projects, project workers, children and young people, a positive moment in

the current climate of impending cuts.



IPA Project Updates



TREEHOUSE PROJECT



After 18 months the Tree house Project (funded by the Big Lottery) has already worked with hundreds of children across Islington. Although the Summer was quite a wet one the interest and enthusiasm from the children was fantastic.

The project visited four sites during the holidays spending roughly a week at each one. Sites visited were the Peel Centre Play Club, Toffee Park Adventure Playground, King Henrys Walk Play & Youth Project and Waterside Play & Youth Project.

The project also ran den building activities at public events such as the Work Live Play Fun day at Ring-cross St, The Market Rd Festival and Play day at Highbury Fields.

Children had a great time building dens at Play day and took refuge in their dens when the rain came.



'It's better than the sports hall' said children of the Peel Centre whilst building their fantastic dens in the car park. They attracted the attention of the older users of the Peel Centre who were impressed with the designs and the skill and dedication of the children. One den was of a 'chalet' style with windows and a table and chair whilst the other had a bunk bed and a high sloping roof.

The children at Peel had high aspirations and picked up the skills needed to achieve their ideas very quickly working well together and with the Peel staff and the project worker.



At Toffee Park and King Henrys Walk tree house are now well under way and as they are developing so are the skills, ideas and confidence of the children.

IPA Project Updates

TREEHOUSE PROJECT Continued...



(left) King Henrys Walk



(right) Toffee Park children begin work on their tree houses

As a play activity and

therefore child led, children are choosing to make all sorts of things whether to take home or as props for their play. Often inspired through finding cut off pieces from building the tree house, children have made a variety of objects and the sense of achievement and pride which comes from the success of their personal endeavours is evident. The ability to be able to create whatever they can think of is encouraging an 'I can' attitude in the children.



Waterside's new play space is now being worked on by the children who have begun building their first tree house which will be one of four to be reached by bridges and a swing. Using round timber cut from felled trees children design the frame of their tree house.

It seems that whether children have used tools before or not they love the opportunity to do so and whilst some are happy sawing or nailing for the fun of it others quite quickly become very creative. A child at Toffee Park said 'the only tools we get to use at school is a calculator'. During the life of the Tree house project so far there have been no serious accidents, the children have shown the ability to be safe and use tools without harming themselves or others. They are benefitting greatly from the informal learning experience and working well together, sharing skills and ideas and ultimately making a great contribution to their play sites, building fun play structures for all to share.

IPA New Staff



Lucy Benson - Finding Nature Through play worker

I have just taken on a new role as the lead on Islington Play Association's 'Finding Nature Through Play' project which will run from October 2010 to October 2012.

This project will be delivered at Islington's twelve adventure playgrounds where children will create mini nature reserves providing homes for birds, insects and other native wildlife.



Playing in nature creates opportunities for discovery, solitude, imagination, fantasy, exploration and an understanding of life cycles, all of which help children to discover their own human nature.

Along with a small team of nature workers I will be supporting children and their play workers enhance 6 playgrounds in the first year of this project. Children will dig ponds, plant hedgerows, trees and shrubs; they will build nesting boxes and hides where they can secretly watch animals. The development of playgrounds will be empowering for children by offering them the tools and skills they need to transform and adapt their own play spaces.

I am overjoyed to be working with the children of Islington on such an exciting project as I am able to combine my love of nature with my commitment to providing children with opportunities for development through play.



The 'Finding Nature Through Play' project is funded by Natural England through *Access to Nature*, as part of the *Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme*.



We are very grateful to them for their support.
If you want to be involved in this project in any way please contact lucy@islingtonplay.org.uk



Paul Durr

Head of Adventure Playground Development

As we all adjust to the on-set of winter, it seems a long time since the summer month of August when I started at Islington Play Association as Head Adventure Playground Development.

In a previous life (early 1990's!) I worked for the Play Service in Islington so it was a joy to return to revisit Islington's adventure playgrounds at the height of summer, and especially to discover all are still open and providing a fantastic variety of free play opportunities.

However it's apparent that this is no easy feat, and is no small part due to the ingenuity, innovation, skill and dedication of the play workers and organisations that run them.

I am currently working to directly support Crumbles Adventure Playground through a period of reorganisation and transition focused around their fantastic natural play environment and diversifying the opportunities for nature play.

The Crumbles building has had an upgrade and part make-over since the summer with a redesigned office, a new activity room and beautiful modern new toilets - with heating!

Following the refurbishment project and recruitment of new play workers we reopened the Playground for a successful half-term programme. This is now continuing with a new term-time programme that includes a Saturday opening, and a real focus on nature play activities and developing the site's potential.

As part of this we are very pleased to be working with Groundworks Teen Green project. We have a tremendous group of local young people working on a range of repairs and improvements around the Playground, such as clearing undergrowth, replacing the wood store, new planters for food growing, and the refurbishment of the much used fire pit. With the fire pit just completed, and clean, warm toilets, Crumbles is ready for the Winter!

Lottery Programmes:

1) Community Sustainable Energy Programme (England)

Not for profit organisations such as community groups, charities, schools, colleges and faith groups, etc are being invited to apply for funding to install renewable energy technologies (such as wind turbines and solar panels) and energy saving measures (such as roof and cavity wall insulation). Under the new Community Sustainable Energy programme. The maximum Capital grant available is £50,000 or 50% of the project costs. The maximum project development grant is £5,000 or 75 per cent of the study cost - whichever is lower. The final Capital grant application **deadline is 5pm Friday 17th December 2010.**
www.communitysustainable.org.uk/

2) Funding to Improve Community Spaces (England)

Community Spaces provides grants to community groups to create or improve green and open spaces. Possible projects can include:

- Community gardens and parks
- Informal sports areas and multi-use games areas
- Nature reserves
- Squares and village greens
- Creation or improvements to churchyard gardens

Ponds and projects which improve the local community's access to green space; etc.

The closing date for applications is **12 noon on the 7th January 2011.**

<http://www.community-spaces.org.uk/default.aspx?page=63>

3) Funding for Innovative Sports Projects (England)

Sport England has announced that its Sustainable Investment in Communities Fund has re-opened for applications. The fund is available to organisations such as sports clubs, voluntary or community organisations, local authorities, and education establishments, such as schools, colleges and universities to invest in innovative projects capable of transforming the places where we play or take part in sport. The closing date for applications is **the 16th December 2010.**

http://www.sportengland.org/funding/sustainable_facilities.aspx

New funding for local anti-knife crime projects

The Prince's Trust will be administering a new anti-knife crime fund, the **Ben Kinsella Fund**. 50 grants will be made to young people in areas to run positive anti-knife crime activities. The grants will be targeted in areas of high knife crime and youth violence. 'Over the last few years I have seen people of all ages working together with their neighbours, the police, local charities and government to try and make a

difference and drive knife crime out of their communities. This fund will give some of these young people the support they need to run anti-knife crime projects in their local area and I really hope it will make a difference to their neighbourhoods.'

Brooke Kinsella

For more information see the Prince's Trust website http://www.princes-trust.org.uk/news_2010/101111_ben_kinsella_fund.aspx

Places People Play programme from Sport England is a 2012 Olympic and Paralympic legacy sports programme

1. Places: Inspired Facilities - upgrading sports facilities across the country. Clubs, community and voluntary sector groups and councils will be able to apply for grants of between £25,000 and £150,000 to modernise, extend or modify sporting facilities. Five funding rounds will run **from April 2011 until 2014/15**

Protecting Playing Fields - £10 million of National Lottery funding will be made available to protect playing fields. The first of five rounds running until 2014/15 will **open in January 2011**

Iconic Facilities - the existing Sustainable Facilities fund has been enhanced. £30 million of funding will be available through three funding rounds until 2012. The deadline for the first round is **16 December 2010.**

2. People - recruiting, training and deploying 40,000 sports leaders as the next generation of sports volunteers to organise and lead grassroots sporting activities. Anyone over 16 can become a sports leader. This programme will **launch in April 2011** It will run for two years.

3. Play * Sportivate - a nationwide campaign that will provide opportunities for teenagers and young adults to receive six weeks of coaching in the sport of their choice and will guide them into regular participation within their community. **Launch in April 2011** with £32 million of National Lottery funding coming through Sport England. For more information see the Sport England website http://www.sportengland.org/media_centre/press_releases/places_people_play/places.aspx?dm_i=AXF,AVAM,2C2RVI,U2H8,1

True Colours Trust is one of the **Sainsbury Family Charitable Trusts**. It offers small grants to local organisations to support children with disabilities and their families. The Trust has a particular interest in funding:

- * Hydrotherapy pools
- * Multi sensory rooms
- * Mini buses
- * Young carers projects
- * Sibling projects
- * Bereavement support.

The grants are one off grants and cannot be used for direct salary costs.

For more information on all

these grant programmes, see the True Colours Trust website http://www.truecolourstrust.org.uk/application_guidelines.aspx

Breaks4kids grants is a charitable fund, founded and supported by the **Youth Hostel Association (YHA)**. It helps to fund youth groups and school trips for children from low income households, by contributing towards the cost of their YHA accommodation and food. This gives children who would otherwise be left behind, the chance to be included in the trip with the rest of their group.

The YHA can award up to 50% of the cost of accommodation and food, for any person under the age of 18, who is entitled to free school dinners or is from a low income household. You can organise your own trip or choose from a selection of YHA School Trip packages.

More information and application form from the website <http://www.breaks4kids.co.uk/schools-and-groups/index.aspx>

Barclays Community Sports Award

Barclays have launched a **Community Sports Award** which recognises the achievements of groups and individuals who have used sports to benefit their communities.

One award of £1,000 will be made each month during the Barclays Premier League season (approximately August - May).

At the end of the season the monthly winners will be entered into an end of season award with a chance to win a further £5,000.

For more information see the Barclay's Community Sports Award website <http://www.barclayscommunitysportsaward.com/>

The New Look Foundation can give grants to local schools, community groups and charities. The priorities for its local giving are: Educational activities aimed at helping people to help themselves

Activities aimed at regenerating local communities and promoting a positive community spirit
Activities which help people to feel included in local community life who might otherwise feel excluded

Activities which promote positive self-esteem and confidence.
For more information see the New Look website <http://www.newlookgroup.com/newlook/en/sustainability/foundation>

Staying Alive Foundation

The **Staying Alive Foundation** gives grants for youth-led projects which educate young people about AIDS and HIV. Grants are up to a maximum of \$12,000 and can be given to groups anywhere in the world. There are two grants rounds each year. See the Staying Alive Foundation website

<http://foundation.staying-alive.org/en/about>



Playday 2010 research

New figures released for Playday 2010 reveal that the loss of community spirit in Britain is leading to children not being allowed to play outside where they live.

An ICM survey commissioned by Play England, found that 79% of adults believe community spirit has weakened since they were a child. This is compounded by the fact that nearly half of men (44%) and 28% of women would be wary to help a child in need of assistance in their neighbourhood, in case they were suspected of attempting to abduct the child.

The research also found that 47% of adults think it is unsafe for children to play out without supervision, and that 1 in 3 (37%) parents are concerned they will be judged by their neighbours if they let their children play out unsupervised.

71% of children worry about being followed or taken by strangers, but despite evident fears, nearly three quarters of children (73%) say they would like to play out more where they live.

The research demonstrates a resounding call for communities to pull together to create better places for children to grow up, with a belief that improving opportunities for children to play outside would improve neighbourhoods in general. 81% of adults believe children playing outside helps to improve community spirit and 70% think that it makes an area more desirable to live in.

More Information at www.playday.org.uk