

Taking Our Place in London  
**Waltham Forest's Culture Strategy**  
2010 - 2030

**our  
place  
in  
london**



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# Foreword



‘Taking Our Place in London’, is an ambitious and assertive strategy that celebrates Waltham

Forest’s vibrancy, diversity and unique contribution to life in the capital while also setting Waltham Forest Council, its partners and the local creative community some challenging objectives for strengthening and expanding our cultural life in the short, medium and long-term. We recognise that culture has a crucial role to play in bringing communities together and enhancing the quality of our lives and that participation in the arts and sport contributes hugely to our physical and mental wellbeing and general levels of happiness.

When we started this work, we recognised that Waltham Forest possesses a rich heritage to draw upon and a diverse population that adds tremendous variety and appeal to life in the borough. Our numerous parks, open spaces and waterways provide ideal locations for taking up a new sport, developing a more active lifestyle or simply having space to relax and enjoy one’s free time. East London has become a hub for creativity in the capital

and Waltham Forest is fortunate to have attracted increasing numbers of artists to reside and work in the borough, particularly in the visual arts.

There is a great deal to see and do in Waltham Forest and yet we appreciate that both residents and people living outside our borough are not always aware of the variety of activity that takes place within our borders. Part of the focus of the strategy is therefore on better communication and marketing of all that this borough has to offer. We want to make it easy for people to get involved in an activity that they enjoy and can benefit from. We also want to generate wealth in the borough through culture for the benefit of all our residents and the business community.

We recognise that there is much that we can do to expand upon and improve cultural life in the borough. Aspiring to excellence in all that we do is an ambition that is threaded throughout this strategy. The borough is due to benefit from significant investment through regeneration schemes in Blackhorse Lane, Walthamstow Town Centre and the Northern Olympic Fringe areas, the Building Schools for the Future programme and the refurbishment of our leisure centres and the continuing

refurbishment of our libraries. We are incredibly fortunate to be one of the host boroughs for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and to have the Stratford City project on our doorstep. It is imperative that we do all that we can to ensure that these developments result in significant cultural benefits for the people of Waltham Forest.

We will now be moving into an action planning phase where we will work with Waltham Forest’s culture and arts community along with our partners to deliver the great ambitions of this strategy.

‘Taking Our Place in London’ signals a new confidence in what Waltham Forest has to offer as part of one of the world’s largest cultural centres and the ambitious steps we plan to take to improve, strengthen and expand upon this agenda over the next twenty years.

**Cllr Geraldine Reardon**  
Cabinet Member for Leisure,  
Arts and Culture

# A snapshot of Waltham Forest

Surrounded on all sides by a combination of green space and waterways, the London Borough of Waltham Forest provides a perfect living space for those who appreciate an opportunity to enjoy peace and tranquillity while also being able to access all that city life has to offer. Its proximity to central London and excellent transport links means that within half an hour you could be shopping on Oxford Street or enjoying the latest musical in the West End. Independent theatres, clubs and cinemas in east London are also within easy reach. This unique environment and location provides a distinctive and cherished place for residents and visitors to live, study, work and enjoy their free time.

Waltham Forest's estimated population of 225,000 is hugely

diverse in terms of age, ethnicity and religion. A sizeable number of residents with disabilities live in the borough and we have an active Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender population. Such diversity creates a beautiful cultural mosaic, greatly enriching life in the borough. Our challenge is to find how best to enable different cultural identities to flourish while also promoting inclusion.

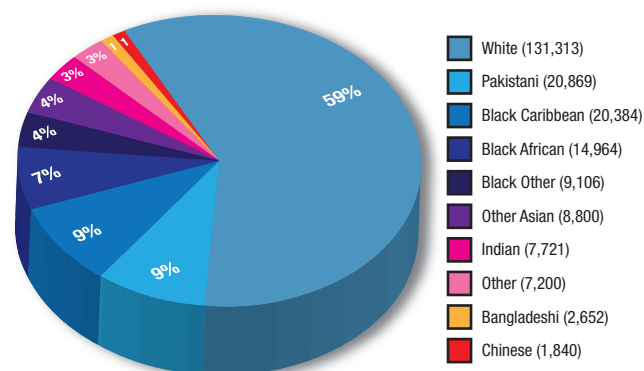
The age make-up of Waltham Forest is very similar to that of the whole of London, which differs from the rest of the UK in that it includes a higher proportion of children and young adults, particularly in age groups between 25 to 44.

There are 26,700 disabled people of working age living in the borough, which makes up

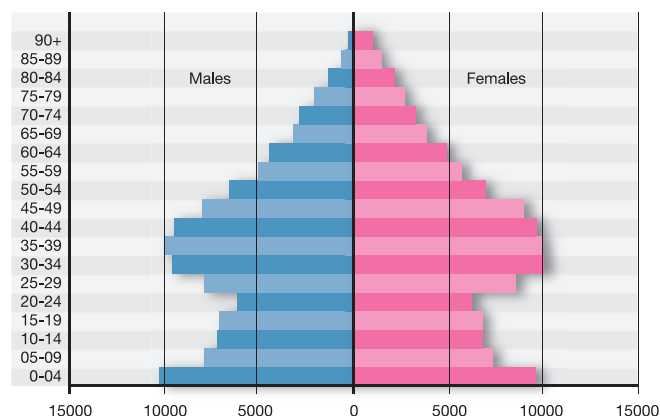
18.2 per cent of the total resident working-age population.

The largest ethnic groups are classified as White (58.4%), Black Caribbean (9.1%) and Pakistani (9.3%), closely followed by the Black African community (6.7%) of the total population. The number of minority ethnic communities in the borough has been rising since 2001 and is projected to grow further. In recent years, Waltham Forest has attracted a large and growing number of people from the A8 countries – the eight Eastern European countries that joined the EU in May 2004.

In terms of faiths practiced within the borough, the 2001 Census data shows that 57 per cent of residents identify themselves as Christian, 15 per cent Muslim and two per cent Hindu.

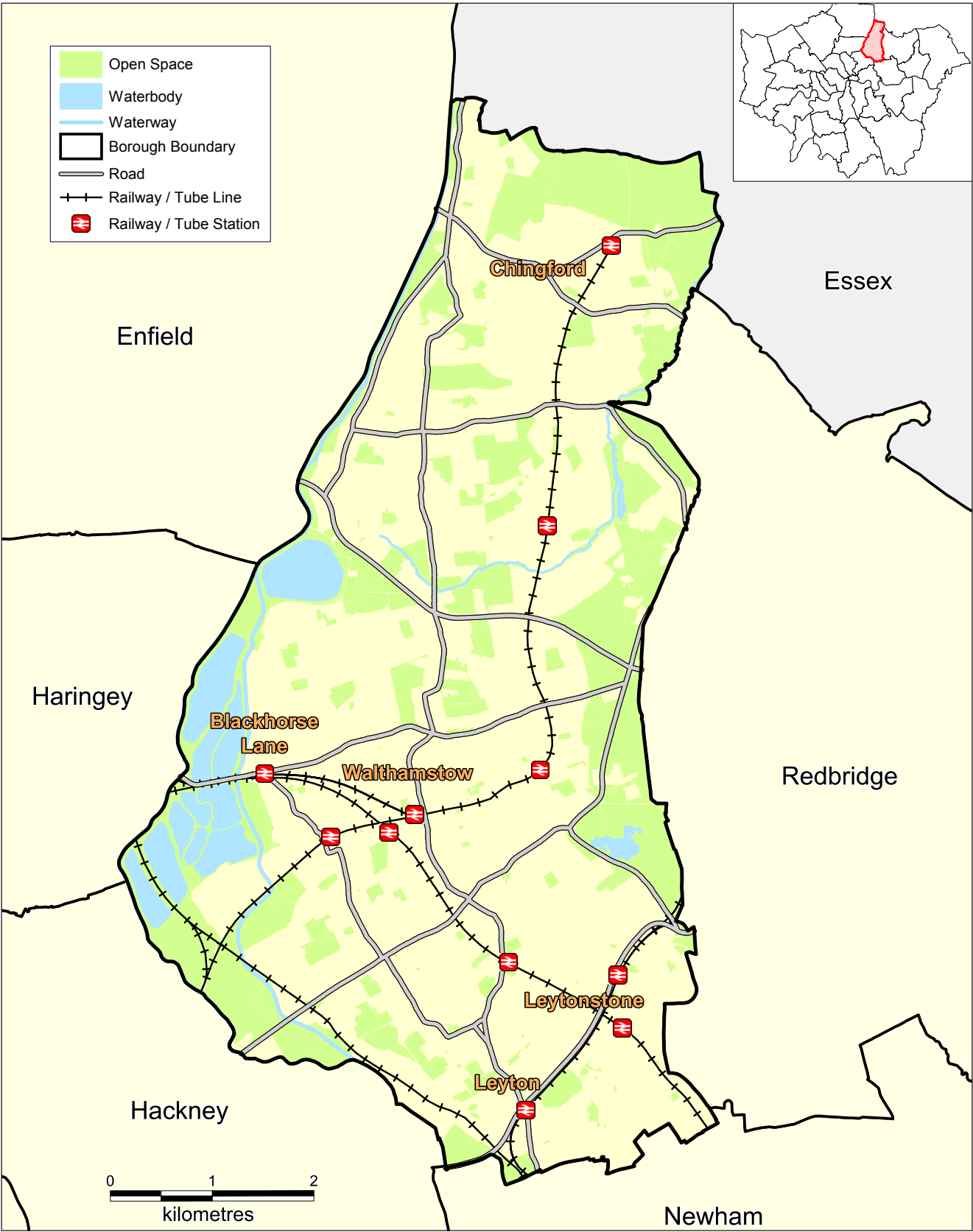


*Ethnic composition of the population 2009, thousands (in brackets) and percentages. Source: GLA 2008 Round Population Projections – Low*



*Waltham Forest population pyramid 2009, number of people in 5-year age groups. Source: GLA 2008 Round Ethnic Group Projections – Low*





## Regenerating the borough

### Waltham Forest's Local Development Framework

Waltham Forest Council has a number of exciting regeneration initiatives in the pipeline. The forthcoming Local Development Framework, which will guide the future development of the borough, will include area-based strategies that focus on specific areas and locations for significant change and major regeneration.

The regeneration of these areas will create permanent physical changes in the form of landmark buildings, facilities and new public spaces. This will have a direct and measurable economic impact, creating a 'hub' around which creative industries, arts, media, sport and leisure

quarters can flourish. The focus on sustainable design will improve accessibility by linking these places to and from the rest of the borough and London. These developments will be designed to be enjoyable and convenient for social gatherings, cultural and artistic exhibitions and sport and leisure pursuits.

### Walthamstow town centre

Walthamstow town centre, home to one of the longest street markets in Europe, is a key transport hub and the borough's busiest shopping area. The town centre was the focus of a master-planning process in partnership with The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment, which resulted in an Interim Planning Policy Framework being produced to support future development.



The vision is for a vibrant, sustainable town centre building on the cultural diversity of the community with specialist shops and market stalls, a well-developed culture and leisure offer, integrated transport links and over 2,400 new homes. The Arcade site, at the heart of Walthamstow town centre, is one of the Council's major sites



Walthamstow market





Walthamstow bus station

for redevelopment. The long term plans for the site include a new cinema and leisure facilities as well as commercial uses and housing. Due to the financial downturn this has taken longer than anticipated and the site has been empty for a number of years.

In May 2009, the Council took a decision to utilise the site for temporary activity while awaiting its permanent development. The area has been cleared and resurfaced and is now being used as a public square. Extensive consultation has been carried out with local people and businesses on preferred temporary uses and the Council plans to run a series of cultural and leisure events until the site is ready for permanent development. Suggestions put forward by the public have included art installations, concerts, craft markets and sporting events.

### Blackhorse Lane

Blackhorse Lane, to the north-west of Walthamstow town centre, is another important regeneration area for the borough. The vision is to transform the area into a high profile gateway to the borough with improved access to the adjacent green space and waterways of the Lea Valley and develop a new, high density mixed use urban quarter around the key transport hub, Blackhorse Road Station.

### The Northern Olympic Fringe

The neighbourhoods in and around Leyton and Stratford New Town form the Northern Olympic Fringe area is another focus for regeneration activity. The Northern Olympic Fringe Masterplan sets out a plan for future development in which inward investment will bring a whole range of improvements to

travel routes, open spaces and shopping areas. It sets out long-term ambitions for the next 25 years as well as shorter term proposals to be in place before the London 2012 Games. The Masterplan has been commissioned by a partnership of Waltham Forest Council, Newham Council, the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation, Design for London, London Development Agency and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority.

### The Hall Farm Curve

The Council has campaigned for many years for a rail service - the Hall Farm Curve - to be introduced between Chingford and Stratford to connect Waltham Forest to the Lower Lea Valley. Walthamstow and Chingford are located only a few miles from Stratford but are not connected to it by rail. In recent years the case for this has strengthened considerably. The need to connect the borough to the Stratford City development, the Olympic Park and the major regeneration areas in the Lower Lea Valley means that there will be an increased demand for the service. Two projects are being carried out to further develop the scheme: (i) an expert rail consultant is being employed to develop an outline business case for the scheme and (ii) a professional lobbying organisation will help promote the scheme to government, regional organisations and a wider audience.

## Regional developments

Regionally, Waltham Forest is well placed to benefit from the physical regeneration and economic development opportunities that have been identified as the legacy benefits of the 2012 Games, as outlined in the Host Borough's Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF). The regeneration includes the establishment of Crossrail, which will provide the infrastructure for local, national and international transport for residents of east London. To the south of Waltham Forest, Stratford City will be a major development project that will generate jobs, office space and affordable housing. The Olympic Park will leave residents of the borough a legacy that will include world-class sports venues and facilities and 102 hectares of landscaped open space. Further major regeneration projects will focus on the development of Greenwich peninsula into a commercial and residential neighbourhood and the continued commercial growth of Canary Wharf.

The London Thames Gateway Development Company is leading a further series of regeneration projects focusing on the Lower Lea Valley area. The 28 miles of the River Lea that stretches from the Lee Valley Regional Park in Hertfordshire through to where it enters the River Thames at East India Docks will benefit from 61 hectares of open space, of which 14 hectares will be reclaimed brownfield land.

Alongside the benefits identified through the delivery of a Games legacy, Waltham Forest, along with its north London neighbours, forms the southern end of the London Stansted Cambridge Peterborough (LSCP) growth area, as identified within the East of England regional plan.

## Improvement in our schools

Waltham Forest was one of the first local authorities to receive government funding to rebuild and remodel its secondary schools and is currently benefiting from over £320million investment



*Frederick Bremer School*

through the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

Three projects have already been completed and pupils are now benefiting from new technology and purpose-built modern facilities at the brand new Frederick Bremer School (which includes a substantial performance space), Walthamstow Academy and Kelmscott School. Improvements to Walthamstow School for Girls is also underway with the refurbishment of the atmospheric outdoor 'Greek Theatre' and Edwardian assembly hall and the construction of a new lecture theatre and drama studio. The BSF programme provides us with unparalleled



*Canary Wharf in the distance*



opportunities to improve sports and arts facilities for young people studying in the borough and the Council has established a board which oversees the inclusion of arts and sport at the planning stage of all new BSF projects.

### Refurbishment of our libraries and leisure centres

The borough's ten libraries have benefited from substantial council investment in recent years. Four libraries have already been transformed and are now delivering services to more users than before, and two further library refurbishments are underway. This will bring total investment in library improvement to £10million over four years.

The Council is also committed to improving and modernising its five leisure centres and is continuing to explore options around how to achieve this.

### The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

As one of the 5 host boroughs for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Council aims to make the most of all the energy and inspiration the Games will provide. Everyone should feel that they are part of hosting the Games, so they can develop their skills and confidence, find work and enjoy the Games. This unique opportunity will be used to promote volunteering across our diverse population thereby enhancing the sense of community and cohesiveness in the borough.

The Games will bring world-class sporting and leisure facilities to east London such as the Olympic Stadium, the Aquatics Centre and Velopark. However, they will also enrich east London with the legacy they will leave behind. Eton Manor is an area of the Olympic

Park that falls within Waltham Forest and after the Games it will be the home of brand new hockey, tennis and five-a-side football facilities. The Council is working with its partners, such as the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, the Olympic Delivery Authority and the London Development Agency, to ensure that Eton Manor and other facilities for use after the Games are accessible and affordable for residents.

The Council is also working with the other host boroughs on plans to get more people involved in the sports associated with the legacy venues including athletics, basketball, swimming, cycling, football, tennis and hockey. Sports for people with a disability will be fully integrated into these plans. Waltham Forest's profile is being raised to the competing Olympic nations to encourage them to stay in the borough before and during the Games. The Council aims to encourage the athletes and their teams to help promote the Games to schools and local communities and to build links between different communities. The borough is also part of the Cultural Olympiad and the annual CREATE programme, which celebrates and promotes local artists and creative activities and festivals taking place in Waltham Forest and the other host boroughs over the summer months.



Walthamstow library

# About 'Taking Our Place in London'

## What 'Taking Our Place in London' is about.

'Taking Our Place in London' is about how we make the most of our talents, keep fit and active, express our creativity, celebrate our rich heritage and enjoy ourselves during our study, work and leisure time.

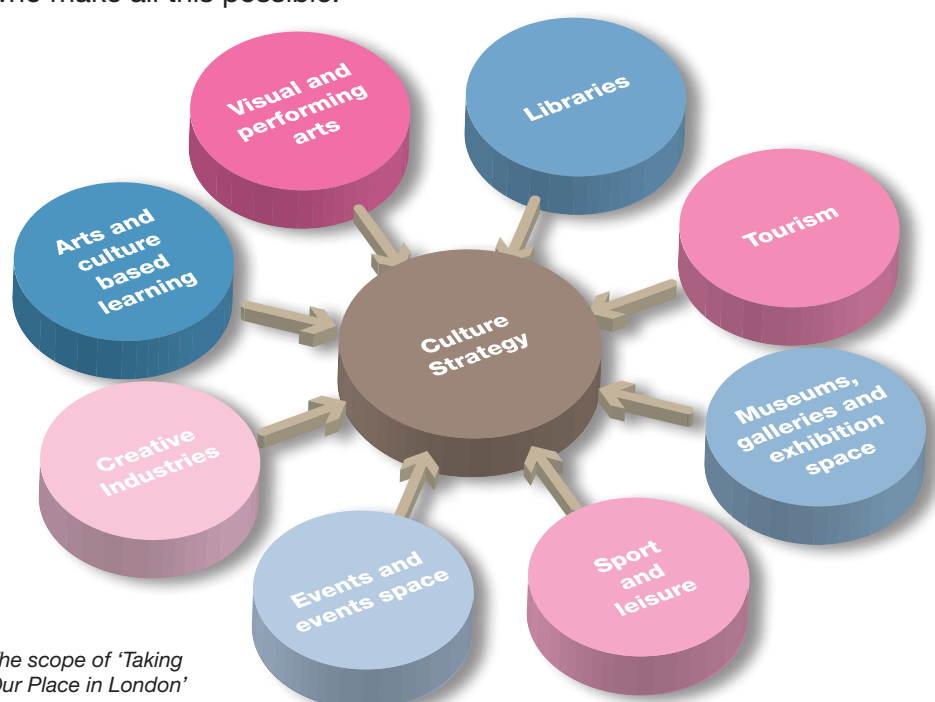
It includes activities that require us to play an active part, such as performing in a play or taking part in a physical activity, and those where we enjoy watching others perform through, for example, attending a concert or watching a sports match.

This strategy considers the places where we can learn and try out new things, including schools and colleges, libraries, museums, galleries and through our adult education service. It also looks at the wide variety of spaces where we can enjoy watching or taking part in all kinds of activities. These include our popular outdoor spaces, the 49 parks within the borough, our town squares, the famous Walthamstow market, the wonderful Lee Valley Regional Park and Epping Forest as well as our indoor event spaces such as schools, libraries, museums and galleries, leisure centres and assembly halls.

'Taking Our Place in London' is being developed alongside the Council's Open Spaces strategy, which looks at the supply and demand for our open spaces. It also identifies ways of protecting, creating and enhancing them and improving their quality through good management.

As well as ensuring that what is on offer meets the needs of our residents, the strategy considers how best to attract more visitors and tourists to the area for the benefit of our local economy. This includes making our high streets and shopping centres more attractive with clusters of cafes, restaurants and pubs available for people to enjoy and with a variety of good quality, interesting things to do. Last but not least it considers the people who make all this possible:

our sports clubs and coaches, those working in creative industries, and the voluntary sector to name just a few. The borough is a great place for creative industries to settle and clusters of visual artists are emerging in the west and south of the borough. Looking at how to attract more creative industries into the borough will help us to further develop its dynamism as well as contribute to the economic growth of the area. Strengthening our sports club infrastructure will enable us to increase the range and quality of sports and physical activities on offer and make the most of our role as a London 2012 Host Borough to inspire and engage people in organised sport.



*The scope of 'Taking Our Place in London'*



Workshop with regional and national stakeholders at Leyton Orient Football Club, 5th June 2009.

## How ‘Taking Our Place in London’ was created

The vision for the future of Waltham Forest is set out in our Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), ‘Our Place in London’. This outlines our ambitions for the borough for the next 20 years, to make the most of London’s opportunities and to bring prosperity to all our residents now and in the future.

During the extensive consultation that was carried out in the development of the SCS, it became clear that having attractive arts, sport and leisure facilities and activities is a priority for residents. These aspirations have underpinned the development of this strategy and will be central to its delivery. Following the publication of the SCS, the Council commissioned Professor Sue Robertson,

former Dean of Arts at City University, in consultation with Paul Roberts, Director of Strategy at the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), to carry out a review of the practice, provision and potential of Waltham Forest’s Arts and Cultural Service. Her report, entitled ‘A Risk Worth Taking’, has been an invaluable resource in informing the development of this strategy.

‘Taking Our Place in London’ has been created for and by the borough as a whole and the experience has been a journey of mutual discovery and learning with many new and exciting partnerships developed along the way.

A six-month period of consultation has involved a wide cross-section of people. We have carried out surveys and

focus groups with over 1,100 residents and workshops with local arts and sports providers. A workshop with regional and national arts and sports institutions and funding bodies explored future partnership opportunities, and representation from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Greater London Authority helped us to ensure that the strategy is in line with wider plans for London and the UK. We have spoken to staff across the Council as well as with other local authorities in order to learn from and incorporate best practice. Please see Appendix A (page 48) for a detailed summary of the consultation process.



# Our vision, priorities and ambitions

## Enhance the health and happiness of people time in the borough

### Priority 1

Increase participation in arts, culture and sport across the borough's diverse and changing population

### Priority 2

Generate wealth in the borough through culture



#### Ambition 1: Standing out from the crowd

- Promote the borough's history and heritage and its continuing contribution to popular culture.
- Enable people to enjoy distinctive cultural experiences in the borough that are different from yet complementary to what is available in central London.
- Continue to celebrate our diversity while creating opportunities to build our communities and bring them together.



#### Ambition 2: Raising the bar

- Develop partnerships with regional, national and international institutions in order to provide world-class cultural programming within the borough.
- Strengthen the local arts, sports and leisure sectors.
- Provide people with an opportunity to take part in a range of high quality activities at varying levels.



#### Ambition 3: Creating a buzz

- Develop clusters of restaurants and arts, sports and leisure venues and activities within the borough that provide a distinctive and appealing local offer throughout the year.
- Decide what creative industries means for Waltham Forest and actively encourage and support the development of these niche markets.
- Ensure that arts, sport and leisure are taken into account in the design of our regeneration programmes.

# who live, work, study and spend their leisure

## Priority 3

Retain wealth in the borough by providing attractive and high quality sport and culture opportunities

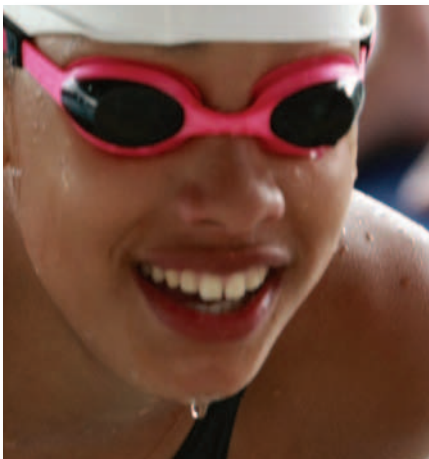
## Priority 4

Build capacity to make possible the implementation of this ambitious strategy



### Ambition 4: Great spaces

- Maximise the use of our open spaces for community activities.
- Make the most of our buildings by using them for a variety of activities.
- Situate events and activities in neglected areas of the community to help bring them back into general use.
- Improve the design of public spaces.



### Ambition 5: Feeling good

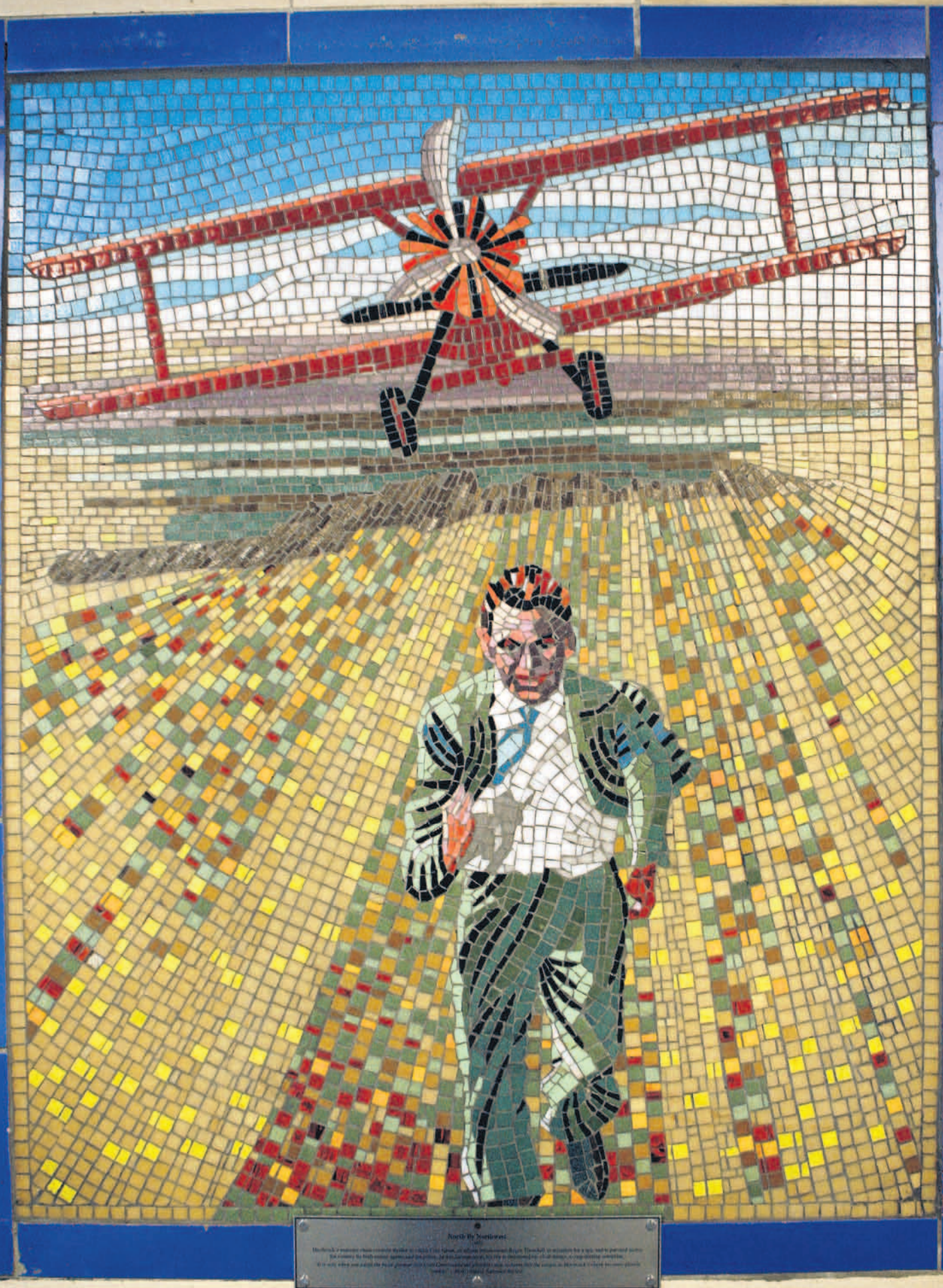
- Encourage active lifestyles.
- Provide people with an opportunity to try something new, including volunteering.
- Make the most of our role as a London 2012 Host Borough (in the run-up period, Games Time and Legacy) to inspire people to engage in sport and wider cultural activities.
- Continue to involve residents in the running and development of local cultural venues and activities by encouraging and supporting the establishment of bodies such as friends and user groups.



### Ambition 6: Spreading the word

- Make it easier to access information about what is on in the borough.
- Work together to promote Waltham Forest as an exciting place to be.
- Increase cross-promotional work with other boroughs and neighbouring partners.





North by Northwest  
1946  
Hitchcock's masterclass mosaic is made of 100,000 tiles, all of which are hand-cut. The mosaic is a tribute to the film, and to the man who made it. It is a masterpiece of art, and a testament to the power of the mosaic.

Mosaic of Alfred Hitchcock's 'North by Northwest' at Leytonstone Tube Station.



## Ambition 1

# Standing out from the crowd

## promoting and celebrating the borough's distinctiveness

**We have a great sense of pride in our borough and the role it has played in the lives of a wide range of hugely talented and celebrated figures.**

William Morris and David Beckham are two of our most famous residents but they are just two in a long list of illustrious names.

The borough has made significant contributions to life as we know it today. Walthamstow is home to the first petrol driven car, invented by Frederick Bremer in 1892 and now in pride of place at the Vestry House Museum. In 1909, under the Railway Arches on Walthamstow Marshes, Alliott Veron Roe assembled his Avro No.1 triplane and from

there made the first all-British powered flight. One of the greatest producers of silent films and masters of the suspense and psychological thriller genre, Alfred Hitchcock, was born in Leytonstone in 1899 and the area was a centre of film production for many years.

More recently, Waltham Forest has made its mark in the music industry with the new urban music genre, 'grime', emerging in the borough, developed by local musicians that include More Fire Crew, Lethal Bizzle, Jammer and Ozzie B. It is the latest style to have evolved from the UK garage scene, influenced also by drum 'n' bass and hip-hop.

At the other end of the popular music spectrum, the borough is home to the celebrated London

Community Gospel Choir and on the classical music front, the Forest Philharmonic Orchestra.

In terms of the population more generally, it is our diversity that makes Waltham Forest such an interesting place to live. We are a borough that enjoys a multitude of different cultures, faiths, customs and traditions with 73 per cent of residents agreeing that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well. As well as the people there is the place. Our green spaces are cherished natural environments and there is a recognition that it is our waterways, reservoirs, woodland and parks, situated so close to central London, that makes our borough distinctive.

### Cultural figures associated with Waltham Forest

The footballer Colin Kazim-Richards, sprinter Jeanette Kwakye and cricketer Graham Gooch were all born in Waltham Forest as were TV presenters June Sarpong and Jonathan Ross. Actor Derek Jacobi, choreographer and dancer, Matthew Bourne, photographer David Bailey and

classical pianist John Lill are also from the borough.

Peter Blake taught in the borough and many have studied here, including the politician Benjamin Disraeli and the musician Ian Dury.

Others have been drawn to the borough later in life. The actress and comedian Meera Syal made her home in Leytonstone and the ceramicist and Turner Prize winner Grayson Perry has his studio in Walthamstow.

## Objectives

- Promote the borough's history and heritage and its continuing contribution to popular culture.
- Enable people to enjoy distinctive cultural experiences in the borough that are different from yet complementary to what is available in central London.
- Continue to celebrate our diversity while creating opportunities to build our communities and bring them together.

## How we will achieve this

- We will preserve and promote the borough's history and heritage.
- Having successfully secured £3.6million Lottery funding to restore Lloyd and Aveling Park, Waltham Forest Council is currently applying for £1.3million Lottery funding to transform the William Morris Gallery, which houses an internationally acclaimed collection within the park. This would deliver new world-class facilities in Waltham Forest, in time for 2012.
- We will be supporting the City of London with their restoration and development of the Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge in Chingford.
- Events such as the summer festival programme will continue to provide opportunities for us to come together and celebrate our diversity and creative and sporting talents.

## Fellowship Symphony

This ambitious project involved a partnership between the Council's Arts and Events Service, the Music Service and the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Professor Mike Roberts of the Guildhall was commissioned in 2007 as lead composer to create a new composition based on William Morris' utopian novel, *News From Nowhere*,

Professor Roberts and students from the Guildhall conducted over 20 composition workshops with hundreds of children in Waltham Forest moulding their ideas into this new work. Involving a variety of ensembles and a mass choir of over 400 children and young people, the final work was premiered at the borough's Green Fair event in the grounds of Lloyd Park and William Morris Gallery in July 2008.



*The Fellowship Symphony being performed in Lloyd Park in July 2008.*

## The art of Zarah Hussain

Zarah Hussain is one of the many artists who have contributed enormously to the cultural life of the borough. Her work has included introducing school children to the visual art of the Islamic world through the Fellowship Art Challenge and exploring the creative connections between Islamic art and the work of William Morris. Zarah recently collaborated in the production of 'Morris and the Muslims' for BBC Radio 4. Local residents had an opportunity to view an exhibition of her work, 'Handasah', at the William Morris Gallery in 2007/08. Zarah describes the purpose of her work, based on geometric form and pattern, as "to help people to contemplate the Universe and to draw them into a sense of stillness. All my work has a

centre and I hope that when people view the work it helps to re-center themselves, enable them to meditate and find a way of connecting with their own spirituality."



*COPYRIGHT Zarah Hussain 2009*



*COPYRIGHT Zarah Hussain 2009*



*COPYRIGHT Zarah Hussain 2009*



## Waving the community flag



*Flying the 'Rainbow flag' at Walthamstow Town Hall*

The Town Hall flag pole celebrates our different communities throughout the year. The Sikh festival of Vaisakhi is marked annually as is the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO) by the flying of the 'Rainbow' flag.

## Forest Philharmonic

Forest Philharmonic has been part of Walthamstow life since 1964. It is rated as one of the leading community orchestras in the country thanks to its artistic director Mark Shanahan and the commitment and skills of the orchestra members. Being a performance and training ensemble, each string section

has a professional leader whose role includes rehearsal and technical advice for the musicians. Members are drawn from music students, teachers and local amateurs, thereby fulfilling its aim of helping to train the musicians of tomorrow while providing a forum for the leading amateur players of today.

Recently, young local musicians have been attending rehearsals and feedback has been positive. One participant said that she now wants to play in an orchestra and really appreciated the skill of the musicians she was sitting near: "It was great to have this opportunity. Please can we have more?"



*Forest Philharmonic in concert*

## Lloyd and Aveling Park and the William Morris Gallery

### Lloyd and Aveling Park

Waltham Forest Council has secured £3.6million from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Big Lottery Fund to restore and renew Lloyd and Aveling Park. In April 2009, planning permission was received for the project and the Lottery bodies gave their final funding approval in January 2010. Plans for the park include:

#### A new play area

This will provide play for younger children near the café and for older children near the skate park. Innovative design and equipment will maximise play opportunities, fun and social interaction.

### William Morris Garden

The area behind the William Morris Gallery will be restored to how it used to be in the early 1900s, when the park first opened. The terraces will be reconstructed and decorative urns restored. Historic photos and maps will help inform the design. To the east of this, a new contemporary garden will be planted which will incorporate interpretation of William Morris' life and work and link to the collection inside the gallery.

### William Morris Gallery

The Council has also bid successfully for £80,000 HLF funding to develop plans to transform the William Morris' Gallery, by refurbishing the existing Grade II\* listed building,

and creating new space for learning, improved visitor facilities and new events and activities to make our heritage more accessible to a wider and more diverse audience. The total project costs are £5million, and the Council will apply for £1.32million second round lottery funding in spring 2010.



The William Morris Gallery

## Dance and Romance

Each year, Waltham Forest hosts a series of events to celebrate LGBT History Month in our libraries and other venues throughout the borough. 'Dance and Romance' was a Rainbow Valentine Ballroom Dance held on Valentine's Day 2009 at Chingford Assembly Hall.

The evening featured same-sex Ballroom and Latin Cabaret with music and teaching provided by Heather Gladding and Haddas Armon from Studio La Danza.



'Dance and Romance'  
Ballroom dance event





*Parallel Spaces 3, Oil on Canvas, Jonathan O'Dea, 2009*



## Ambition 2

# Raising the bar aspiring to excellence in all that we do

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**It is important that people are able to take part in activities regardless of their ability and that the quality of experience they receive at every level is of the highest standard in order to retain interest and enjoyment.**

Excellence inspires people to do what they might not have thought possible. It develops confidence and enables people to value and gain a real sense of achievement from what they are doing.

Waltham Forest is ideally situated to provide residents and visitors with fantastic experiences of the highest quality. Close to central London, which is home to some of the world's best sporting and cultural institutions, and a part of east London, where many of Britain's liveliest creative talents reside, we are able to develop collaborations with nationally

and internationally renowned organisations. Such partnerships can result in memorable one-off spectacles that bring together residents from across the borough and attract significant numbers of visitors. They can also lead to the development of more long-term cultural programming with our schools, museums and galleries.

There is a wealth of local talent to engage with that includes artists, musicians, dancers, athletes and sports coaches. Many of them feel that support to build their capacity and confidence would help to further grow these sectors. This could take the form of mentoring, assistance with bid-writing and fostering networks and collaborations. Strengthening our home-grown talent will further enhance the range and quality of activities available locally for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

## Objectives

- Develop partnerships with regional, national and international institutions in order to provide world-class cultural programming within the borough.
- Strengthen the local arts, sports and leisure sectors.
- Provide people with an opportunity to take part in a range of high quality activities at varying levels.

## How we will achieve this

- We will ensure that our local activities and events are the best that they can be for residents and visitors alike.
- For people actively engaged in creative and physical activity, there will be stepping stones available for them to be able to progress from one stage to the next.
- Local arts and sports organisations will be supported to develop their capacity and work collaboratively through establishing networks and providing assistance with funding applications.
- We will provide schools, sports clubs and budding local artists with opportunities to engage, seek inspiration from and perform with professional organisations.
- We will work with partners to establish awards for excellence in the arts and sport.

## Arts Award



*Students delivering an Arts Award apprenticeship to year six pupils at Chingford C of E junior school.*

Arts Award is a programme delivered as a partnership between the Arts Council England and Trinity College to accredit work in the Creative and Performing Arts field produced by young people between 11–24 years of age. It is the only accredited qualification in the arts that is effort rather than skills-based and it rewards the individual for their hard work. It is therefore completely inclusive and can be delivered in any setting to diverse groups of students.

Chingford Foundation School has taken a lead on this and has successfully entered students for Bronze and Silver accreditation. The young people involved are amongst the youngest in the country to gain these awards. The school has now been given Arts Award Welcome Status, which will allow it to offer the Arts Award

programme to young people from all over the borough through its Extended School and Saturday College programme. In addition, five further secondary schools in Waltham Forest have now trained Arts Award advisers to deliver the programme to their students.

Projects run across the arts forms and at Chingford Foundation School have

included: creative writing and poetry, music, dance, drama, fashion design and soft-toy making, 3D model-making, jewellery making, card-design and quilting, mosaic work, yoga, Ariel theatre and film-making. Its Arts Award collaboration with CineClub resulted in students making a documentary on Alfred Hitchcock, which was screened at the British Film Institute.



*The celebration event when our first 11 students got their Bronze awards.*



## Kuumba Youth Music

Kuumba Youth Music (KYM) is a social enterprise enabling young people from five to 18 years of age to achieve their potential through access to high quality classical music education. It encourages all and especially those from black minority ethnic and disadvantaged communities to learn about and become involved in classical music and thus benefit their overall cultural education. The organisation recognises that training in classical music raises young people's aspirations and increases their life ambitions. It also benefits the individual's family and the wider community

in which they live. Through local community concerts, intensive workshops, mentoring and access to inspirational role models KYM aims to offer the

necessary networks, support, training and inspiration to encourage young people to pursue musical education to the highest standards.



*Kuumba Youth Music young musicians with Julian Lloyd Webber.*

## London Youth Games

The London Youth Games is London's largest competitive sporting event for young people with teams from the 33 London boroughs competing in over 30 sports. Waltham Forest gives young people the opportunity to represent their borough and compete at a high level. Trials and training sessions are held for many of the sports and these are supported by local schools, sports clubs, coaches and volunteers who work tirelessly to offer

opportunities for participation in sport at both recreational and competitive levels. Each year over 600 young people within

the borough take part in the Mini and Main Games trials, qualifications and finals.



## Suspicious Behaviour and partnership with the Barbican



'World in Motion' project

Suspicious Behaviour is a local creative group that works with young people and the wider community on creative projects ranging from art and design, music production, photography and digital video production.

The company recently undertook a film project in partnership with the Barbican as part of 'World in Motion', a large-scale creative collaboration between the Barbican and the Guildhall School, supported by Arts Council England. 'World in Motion' gives young Londoners from across the Olympic and City fringe boroughs the chance to develop their artistic and performance skills by working with professional artists from Guildhall Connect and the

Barbican's joint network of local, national and international artists and workshop leaders.

Four young people from South Leytonstone were chosen to make a film on young people's perspectives on young people. They used the following quote from Plato as inspiration; "What is happening to our young people? They disrespect their elders, they disobey their parents. They ignore the law. They riot in the streets inflamed with wild notions. Their morals are decaying. What is to become of them?" Young people involved learnt all aspects of production while making the film, which was shown at the Barbican and Shoreditch Festival.

## Waltham Forest Music Service and partnership with the London Symphony Orchestra.

Waltham Forest Music Service (WFMS) has established a partnership with the London Symphony Orchestra 'LSO On Track'. The partnership has established the Next Generation scheme whereby young, gifted and talented musicians, recommended by WFMS, work with LSO musicians that enable students to get the most

out of their individual musical journeys. The result has been great music infused with real raw energy.

Initiatives have included 'Take A Bow', which brought together 30 young string players ranging from beginners to grade 8 to play alongside world-class professional musicians.

World-renowned musical educator Paul Griffiths worked with WFMS orchestras and some Y4 musicians from Riverley Primary School who were part of the Government's Whole Class Instrumental Tuition scheme. This scheme encourages more young people to take up playing a musical instrument.





*'Light Up at Langthorne' Festival*



## Ambition 3

# Creating a buzz

providing people with enjoyable experiences on their doorstep

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**We like to feel that there is a lot going on in our local area and that we do not have to get on a bus or a tube in order to do something enjoyable.**

Our summer festival programme is very popular with residents for this reason. The findings from our consultation showed that residents who participate least in the arts and sport are less likely to leave the borough to take part in cultural activities. They have a greater focus on their local area and tend to be retired or younger with more family commitments. Having activities available on our doorstep also provides us with an opportunity to get to know our neighbours better and play an active role in our community. Two-thirds of residents agree that arts and cultural activities offer opportunities to bring different communities and age groups together.

One of the most popular activities that people like to do locally is to eat out. In the last year, three-quarters of residents have been to a restaurant in Waltham Forest and a quarter eat out locally at least once a month. Areas of the borough such as Station Road in Chingford and Walthamstow

Village are particularly popular locations for an evening out as they have a range of restaurants, cafes and pubs available in close proximity to each other. In many other parts of the borough however, there is an acknowledgement that bars, restaurants and other community venues tend to be isolated, with few other attractions around them. If these businesses were clustered together in small areas, people would have greater choice and the opportunity to enjoy a broader entertainment experience.

Making temporary use of empty properties on our high streets can also inject energy and excitement into an area. The 'Pick 'n' Mix' events that have been held in the former Woolworths shop are a wonderful example of this. Creating a varied daytime as well as an evening economy is being built into future planning recommendations for the borough. A significant amount of regeneration is in the pipeline, particularly in the areas of Walthamstow Town Centre and Blackhorse Lane and there is general consensus among residents that sports, arts and cultural facilities should be considered at the design stage of all such initiatives.

The creative industries, encompassing businesses such as visual and performing arts, media, photography, fashion and architecture also contribute hugely to the dynamism of an area. The borough has much to offer this sector with some industrial sized building space, reasonable rents and proximity both to central London and access to key transport links.

We are fortunate to have a burgeoning creative industry sector in the borough already, particularly in the visual arts, and it is recognised that additional encouragement and support could attract more artists and creative businesses into the area.

## Objectives

- Develop clusters of restaurants and arts, sports and leisure venues and activities within the borough that provide a distinctive and appealing local offer throughout the year.
- Decide what creative industries means for Waltham Forest and actively encourage and support the development of these niche markets.
- Ensure that arts, sport and leisure are taken into account in the design of our regeneration programmes.

## How we will achieve this

- We will work closely with the local business, arts and sports communities to attract new investment and enhance the local day- and night-time economies.
- We will ensure that arts, sport and leisure are integral to our physical regeneration plans and that clusters of appropriate and desirable venues are considered in the designs for different parts of the borough.
- We will attract new businesses and energetic individuals to contribute to the creative economy, as employers and investors to help grow and energise the existing creative economy. We will make it easier for creative industries to move into the borough by providing a single point-of-contact at the Council that can provide advice and a package of support.

## E17 Arts Trail



*Art Trail Identity (artwork Anna-Lucie Feracci).*

The E17 Art Trail is an artist-run project that provides a framework for E17's and Waltham Forest's artists and makers to exhibit and promote their work and art practice. It was founded in 2005 by two Walthamstow-based artists who wanted to find a way to help motivate and strengthen the local arts community as well

as find interesting and creative solutions to the shortage of dedicated arts spaces.

Now in its fifth year, the E17 Art Trail is firmly established on the cultural calendar for Waltham Forest. For 2009, there were over 350 participants taking part from all visual arts disciplines and at various stages in their

careers, with over 150 events and exhibitions in 90 venues all across Walthamstow.

The E17 Art Trail aims to create more opportunities for visual arts in the area, supporting a local network of artists and establishing new relationships between artists, audiences and business.



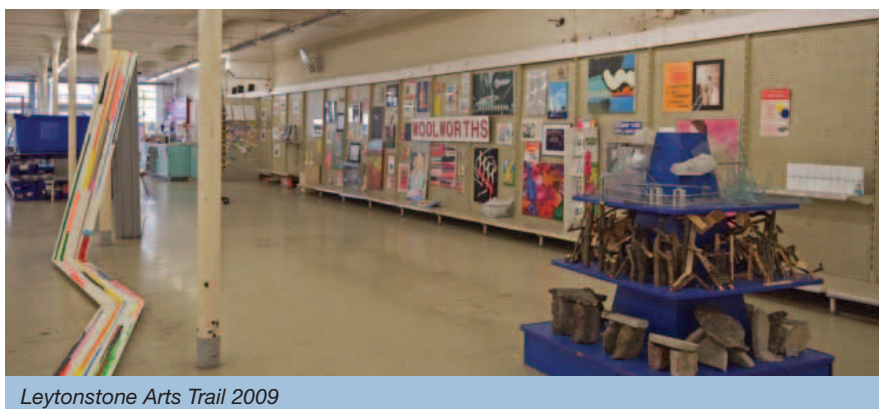
## Waltham Forest High Street Arts

This initiative aims to use empty commercial properties to house temporary arts installations, including visual and performance arts, engaging local community arts and local arts organisations. Each project supported will need

to be accessible to the public and make a direct impact on brightening the high street and increasing visitor numbers.

The first pilot project to be developed as part of this initiative is 'Pick n Mix' –

60 artists who exhibited in the former Leytonstone Woolworths over four extended weekends in June/July 2009 as part of the Leytonstone Arts Trail. Each exhibiting artist was invited to respond, reinterpret and revitalize the empty shell of the store. This was followed on the 24th October 2009 by Pick'n'Mix: The Dance Selection - a day of dance organised by choreographer Fearghus O'Conchuir with the support of Waltham Forest Council, East London Dance and The Arts Council of England.



*Leytonstone Arts Trail 2009*

## Estate of the Arts

Estate of the Arts is one of the borough's most dynamic youth arts organisations. Based at the Outset Centre, the youth service creative hub for young people, Estate of the Arts provides high quality opportunities in street dance and music and has trained a number of vocalists to an exceptionally high standard. The organisation runs sessions for young performers throughout the year and is a regular feature on stage at our community festivals.



*Estate of the Arts regularly features in festivals such as the Young Peoples' Caribbean Carnival, Light Up Langthorne Park and the Fellowship Symphony.*

## Inky Cuttlefish Studios

Inky Cuttlefish Studios, in Blackhorse Lane, offers studio space to twenty artists, and includes film-makers, a photography darkroom, a graphic designer, painters, illustrators and printmakers. There is a printmaking studio and workshop area that offers open access and use of the printmaking equipment to artists two days a week.

Regular evening printmaking workshops for adults are run on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. There is an artist-in-residency programme that offers studio time to students in exchange for help with covering open access and administration.

Inky Cuttlefish has been involved in a variety of projects, exhibitions and events in the borough and over the past two years has run workshops for a wide range of groups that have included nursery children, ASDAN teenagers from Waltham Forest College, older people, disabled adults and local school children. It has a range of extremely experienced professional facilitators that deliver workshops to these groups.



Workshops at Inky Cuttlefish studios







## Ambition 4

# Great spaces

**increasing people's engagement in creative and physical activity by making the most of our unique spaces**

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**Nestled between the Lee Valley Regional Park and the River Lea to the west and Epping Forest to the east; and with the Essex borders to the north and Wanstead Flats and the Olympic Park on the southern border, the borough is surrounded by a combination of green space and waterways.**

A fifth of Waltham Forest is made up of forest, reservoirs, open spaces, parks and playing fields. We are also home to Walthamstow Market, one of the longest street markets in Europe.

These outside spaces are a cherished aspect of the borough with half of residents identifying our parks and open spaces as very important. They provide great locations to go for a walk, have a picnic or simply wind down at the end of the day in the fresh air. Their popularity also makes them ideal sites for a range of creative and physical activities, ranging

from concerts and festivals to bowling tournaments and early morning Tai Chi sessions. As our climate changes, making the most of our outdoor areas will become increasingly important and desirable.

We also have some wonderful indoor spaces including the William Morris Gallery; Vestry House Museum, a Grade II listed local history museum and archives; Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, used by Henry VIII as a grandstand during the hunting season; and the galleries of Leyton Orient Football Club. Our function rooms include the renowned art deco Walthamstow Assembly Hall in the centre of the borough and the recently refurbished Chingford Assembly Hall to the north. There is a desire for us to make the most of these fabulous facilities but also to make more use of our schools, libraries, leisure and community centres.

Refurbishment programmes have brought important public buildings up to a standard that creates beautiful venues for

significant community events. For example, our libraries across the borough can now be opened up to host many of the events run annually as part of Black History Month and Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender History Month.

Amongst our young people, 72 per cent agree that greater use should be made of facilities in schools for arts and cultural activities and 60 per cent agree the same for sports activities. More than twice as many local residents would like to see libraries and leisure centres utilised for events rather than creating new venues as they provide a safe and familiar environment in which to engage in a wide range of activities. Situating creative and physical activities within unfamiliar or unused space can enable the community to reclaim areas that may feel unsafe or unattractive. It can also help to create an unusual event that appeals to visitors and tourists alike.

## Objectives

- Maximise the use of our open spaces for community activities.
- Make the most of our buildings by using them for a variety of activities.
- Situate events and activities in neglected areas of the community to help bring them back into general use.
- Improve the design of public spaces.

## How we will achieve this

- The Council is currently working on plans to further improve the quality of the borough's open spaces, in particular our parks, recreation grounds, play areas and wildlife sites.
- We will improve our street scene and proactively develop a strong programme of art in the public realm that will challenge and excite.
- We will continue to support communities to reclaim their public spaces through investment and by targeting activities in areas known for anti-social behaviour.
- The Council is investing heavily in its schools and public buildings through the Building Schools for the Future programme and the Council's library and leisure centre investment programme. This will result in excellent facilities for creative and physical activity and learning for our young people and the community as a whole.
- We will draw in new partners to help develop the facilities we need as we expand and strengthen our cultural ambitions.

## Light Up Langthorne Park

In 2008, the Council launched the national Cultural Olympiad in Waltham Forest with the unique, Light Up Langthorne Park, in Leytonstone. Thousands of local residents visited the park to enjoy spectacular street performers juggling light and fire, a mechanical horse breathing fire and an art exhibition displaying the works of artists that take inspiration from light. The spectacle was repeated in 2009.



*Light up Langthorne Park festival 2009*

## Music in the Forest

Each July, 'Music in the Forest', organised by Waltham Forest Music Service and local schools, entertains visitors and passers-by with the sounds of woodwinds in the glades, fiddlers in the forest and songs drifting through the trees.

The afternoon is relaxed and gives local musicians a chance to showcase their talents who often ask the audience to participate!





## Opera on the Big Screen



*'Barber of Seville' screening on the Big Screen in Walthamstow Town Centre*

In July 2009, the Big Screen in Walthamstow relayed a live broadcast from the Royal Opera House. Rain did not dampen the enthusiasm for a production of the Barber of Seville and the event included performances from the Council's Music Service, the London Forest Choir and Vision Opera. The Big Screen is a partnership project between the Council, the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and the BBC and will become an increasing focus for engagement in arts and the London 2012 Games.

## Walthamstow Borough Bowling Club (WBBC)

The bowling green in Lloyd Park, Walthamstow, provides a unique facility to bowlers in Waltham Forest. Thanks to the all-weather synthetic surface, people who enjoy the sport can use it throughout the year. The WBBC's green and clubhouse are a meeting place for old friends and new. This is true for members as well as for the regular bowlers who attend the 50+ pay-and-play sessions.

The success of the club is down to an energetic, well-organised and very active core group of members. Members have actively engaged

with the Council's proposal to have the club's facilities relocated as part of the refurbishment and restoration of Lloyd and

Aveling Park and worked with the Council to successfully raise £85,000 towards a new green and pavilion.



## adiZone



*Young people enjoying the adiZone facilities in Langthorne Park*

Sporty residents in Leytonstone are enjoying the benefits of being a Host Borough for the 2012 Games through the creation of an adiZone in Langthorne Park. The adiZone, paid for by London 2012 sponsors, Adidas, includes a streetball court, tennis wall, traversing climbing wall, outdoor gym equipment and performance space.

The facilities provide a fun and enjoyable way to enjoy sport, get fit and lead a healthy life. Coached sessions have been provided for residents to increase their participation in physical activity.





## Ambition 5

# Feeling good

## enhancing health, happiness and general well-being

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**In our increasingly busy lives, it is important to take time out to enjoy and appreciate the world around us. Evidence shows that creative and physical activities help us to do that, contributing to our sense of well-being and happiness.**

Art and sport have an increasingly important role to play in improving the health of residents in the borough, including those who have a long-term limiting illness or mental health condition. Waltham Forest experiences high levels of mortality from cancer and heart-related diseases and there is a gradual increase in child obesity levels. Providing people with the opportunities to get involved in an activity they really enjoy can help to combat some of these issues and significantly improve both our physical and mental health.

Starting a new activity can be quite a daunting prospect. There is the fear of going to a new place or starting a new activity. Residents have told us that they

would like an opportunity to try new activities before they fully commit and have the flexibility to take up a hobby in a relaxed environment where they do not have to take a qualification at the end of the course.

One way of doing this is through volunteering. There are already very active volunteers all over the borough including within our libraries, museums, galleries and sports clubs. It is a great way to engage and contribute to the local community.

The London 2012 Games is just around the corner and provide us with a fantastic catalyst for promoting sport, culture and healthy, active lifestyles.

As well as sport, a five host boroughs cultural partnership has been formed to increase engagement in creative activities through the Cultural Olympiad and the summer CREATE programme. This brings together and promotes some of London's most celebrated outdoor festivals and events occurring within the five host borough region as well as putting on a series of cross-borough collaborations.

Feeling good does not always have to focus on participating in organised activities. It can simply involve developing a more active lifestyle – walking up the stairs rather than taking the lift or cycling to the office rather than driving or catching the bus. It is also about being able to relax and enjoy our surroundings – eating lunch in the local park rather than at our desk or stopping to appreciate a piece of public art on the street. Increasing the attractiveness of our public spaces can help us to appreciate and benefit from creativity as we go about our daily lives.

## Objectives

- Encourage active lifestyles.
- Provide people with an opportunity to try something new, including volunteering.
- Make the most of our role as a London 2012 Host Borough (in the run-up period, Games Time and Legacy) to inspire people to engage in sport and wider cultural activities.
- Continue to involve residents in the running and development of local cultural venues and activities by encouraging and supporting the establishment of bodies such as friends and user groups.

## How we will achieve this

- We will use the Games as a catalyst to drive active lifestyles in the borough. The over-45s, women and girls, disabled people and those new to sport are at the heart of our efforts to encourage healthier living and the take-up of regular exercise. A dedicated programme has been designed with these residents in mind.
- Our street scene will be improved and incorporate a range of public art displays and creative installations.
- Volunteering opportunities will be developed and promoted including the Personal Best Programme, coordinated with Haringey and Enfield councils to recruit volunteers for the Games.

## Winter of Sport Events

For many disabled people, embarking on a new activity can be daunting; not always knowing if the venue will be accessible or whether their support needs will be understood and catered for.

As a way of encouraging people to try something new, Waltham Forest Low Vision Forum and Disability Action Waltham Forest obtained funding to run a number of taster sessions, aimed primarily at people with visual impairments. Activities have included introductions to using a gym, aero biking, swimming, yoga, horse riding and ice

skating. During the initial programme, 48 people took part and the events proved so successful that a further round of funding was obtained to run another series of sessions.

Not only did the sessions allow individuals to discover (and in some cases rediscover) sports that they were able to do and enjoy but it also gave staff at the various venues an understanding of what disabled people can achieve when given the opportunity. They also learnt how to make their activities fully accessible for people with visual loss.



*Horse-riding classes held as part of the Winter of Sports programme.*

## Thinkarts

Thinkarts provides arts-related events, projects and vocational opportunities for people who have experienced mental ill health and who would like to engage in creative activity as part of their recovery journey. It supports members to engage in meaningful and community-based creative activity, aiding the development of new life roles and general well-being.

Thinkarts members produce customised logos, advertising, newsletters, photography,

creative writing and artwork. Opportunities may arise for members to use their creative skills to run sessions for local community groups. Members can volunteer, be supported to pursue their artistic goals, be paid as freelancers or simply go on the mailing list to keep up-to-date with all the latest activities. The organisation is affiliated to the North East London Foundation Trust.



*Ken Broadbear exhibiting some of his artwork*



## Tour de Waltham Forest



The Council's annual festival of cycling is delivered as part of Bike Week and aims to promote cycling in Waltham Forest as active living, recreation and sport. The event has been running for three years and is growing in popularity. The event itself consists of bike-related activities in Walthamstow Town Square and guided rides of varying difficulty and length around the borough.

## Bees Knees Women's Quilt Making

As part of Active8, London Circle 33 Housing Trust runs the 'Bees Knees' patchwork and quilting project in the Priory Court Community Centre, Walthamstow. Women of all ages and from different backgrounds learn how to design and make quilts by working together on cultural themes and experimenting with quilting effects using both hand and machine techniques.

Some women are beginners and others, mainly older women, bring the craft skills they learned early on in life. Learning new skills and reviving old ones provides good mental and physical stimulation. Trips to quilting projects in neighbouring boroughs provide

further inspiration and quilting challenges. Their inspiring 'Peace' quilt is hung on display

in the centre and provides food for thought for everyone who uses the Hall.



## Coping Through Football



Delivered in Waltham Forest since 2007, 'Coping Through Football' has shown how two sports charities (London Playing Fields Foundation and Leyton Orient Community Sports Programme) can work with the statutory health service, NELFT, to create a sustainable recovery model for the long-term mentally ill. The project aims to help people diagnosed

with an enduring mental illness to engage more fully with their current care provision, enhance their mental wellbeing and improve their physical health. The objectives of the project are to raise the group's self-esteem and confidence, improve their interactive skills and develop their commitment to participating regularly in physical activity and adopting a healthy

lifestyle. Alongside twice-weekly football sessions, the project encourages participants to access mainstream activities such as training courses, commercial five-a-side leagues and Football League matches.

Over 130 service users have attended football sessions to date. Two service users have completed their Level 2 Football Coaching Certificates and are coaching in the local community. Twelve clients have undertaken voluntary roles within the project and a number have gone on to enrol in training and education courses. The project has been recognised as an example of best practice by the Department of Health and was showcased at the British Heart Foundation National Conference in 2008.

## Fit Club

The Council and its partners from the Community Sport and Physical Activity Network secured funding from Sport England's Community Investment Fund along with partner match funding to develop and promote an umbrella brand for sport and physical activity - Waltham Forest Fit Club – so that the profile of sports and physical activity can

be raised across the borough. Fit Club aims to get the residents of Waltham Forest physically active by offering a wide range of outreach health and fitness programmes that encourage a long-term take up of activity. The activities are provided in local settings at low cost, for example walking groups and volunteer-led activities.







The Forest Flava Press Gang



## Ambition 6

# Spreading the word

**making people aware of all that the borough has to offer**

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**There is a lot going on in Waltham Forest, we are just not always aware of it; 42 per cent of residents have told us that they do not know what is available in terms of arts and culture in the borough and 41 per cent of young people state that not having enough information on what is available prevents them from taking part in arts and cultural activities within the borough.**

The local organisations that provide creative, active and leisure opportunities, which we consulted with on the strategy, discovered that there is more going on than they knew about and were unaware of the opportunities around events and marketing.

Communicating and marketing is crucial in enabling residents as well as visitors to access and enjoy the wide range of activities that we have to offer. The way in which we can communicate this information is varied and growing all the time, whether that be through a poster, print media or internet.

Evidence also highlighted that for the majority of residents, geographical borders do not determine where and what activities people choose to do. If an event is taking place that is attractive, not too far from home and easy to get to, it is not important who is organising it or which borough the event is taking place.

There are great events and fantastic venues in our neighbouring boroughs. By working more closely with these boroughs and our partners such as the City of London and Lee Valley Regional Park Authority on cross-marketing and programming, we can ensure that our residents can benefit fully from each others' varied and complementary activities all year round.

## Objectives

- Make it easier to access information about what is happening in the borough.
- Work together to promote Waltham Forest as an exciting place to be.
- Increase cross-promotional work with neighbouring boroughs and other partners.

## How we will achieve this

- Following on from the consultation carried out as part of the development of this strategy, we will work with Audiences London to gain a better understanding of how local residents engage with cultural activity in the borough. This will then inform how we promote these activities to residents and visitors.
- We will work with partners such as Visit London to promote the borough and the activities and places it has to offer, both to its residents and visitors. We will also make it much easier for people to access up-to-date information on what is happening in their area.
- We will work with our neighbouring boroughs, the Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and the City of London, to develop exciting collaborations and partnerships throughout the year.
- We will identify information and communication channels that can assist the Council reach a wider range of people.

## Forest Flava Press Gang

Forest Flava Press Gang is a team of young journalists aged 11–19 from across the borough of Waltham Forest, who are recruited and trained by the Council. They write articles for local newspapers and have their own website

([www.forestflava.org.uk](http://www.forestflava.org.uk)). Articles primarily focus on what is relevant and of interest to young people, such as politics or music. They also produce short podcasts for their website and receive a qualification in journalism, equivalent to half a GCSE.

As well as receiving training on journalism skills, interview techniques and making podcasts, the recently recruited 2009-2010 cohort will also learn film-making skills including story boarding, filming, editing and news presenting.

## Open House

Open House London is the capital's largest annual architectural showcase, which celebrates design excellence. For one weekend a year, hundreds of buildings open their doors for free and provide an opportunity for us to be inspired by the power of architecture to transform the quality of our lives.

Waltham Forest Council has been an active participant in Open House since its inception and on average a dozen buildings within the



*Vestry House Museum, Walthamstow Village.*

borough are opened to the public every year. These include Walthamstow Town Hall and Assembly Hall, Forest School, Hatherley Mews Offices, Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, St Mary's Church in Walthamstow

Village, St Mary's Church in Leyton, the Pump House Steam and Transport Museum, Vestry House Museum, Waltham Forest City Learning Centre and the William Morris Gallery.

## CREATE Festival

Waltham Forest is collaborating with Hackney, Newham, Greenwich and Tower Hamlets to deliver and promote the London 2012 inspired cultural festival 'CREATE'. CREATE is growing year on year showcasing

the home-grown and world-class talent across the five host boroughs and is a key element in the national Cultural Olympiad. In Waltham Forest the Young People's Caribbean Carnival, the Asian Mela, Leytonstone Festival,

the jazz festival season and 'Spirit of Dance' at Chingford Day are just some of the big shows on offer across the borough attracting thousands of residents and visitors to our open spaces and venues.



# Appendix A

## Consultation and engagement on Waltham Forest's Culture Strategy: January–July 2009.

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### Introduction

'Taking Our Place in London' is a borough-wide strategy and the extensive consultation and engagement process that has been carried out with a wide-range of people living, working and studying in the borough has therefore been crucial to its development. From January to July 2009, residents, partners, artists, sports people and school students have come together with others to share their ideas and voice their views on both the challenges and ambitions on which the strategy should be focusing. The process has also drawn on the expertise and experience of councillors and officers in other London boroughs as well as those working in the arts and sports sectors regionally and nationally.

### Listening to residents' views

Over 1,100 residents were consulted on the strategy through a face-to-face survey conducted during April and May 2009. The survey explored the level of awareness and usage of cultural venues both in and outside the borough, satisfaction levels, participation in arts and sports activities and barriers to participation. Similar questions to the residents' survey were incorporated into the 2009

Young Voice survey, which was completed by over 150 young people in the borough.

On 26 March, a Children's Rights Supper was held at Waltham Forest College as part of consultation for the borough's Children and Young People Plan 2010-2013. The evening was attended by children, young people, parents and professionals and a specific discussion was hosted around the question, 'What does culture mean for young people in the borough?'

Young people were also engaged through the Joint Schools Council held on 14 May and attended by representatives from each of the secondary school councils in the borough. The young people designed T-shirts reflecting what culture means for them in Waltham Forest today and what they would like to see in the borough in ten years time.

On 14 July, two focus groups were conducted with Children in Care at Barnado's, the first with a group of 14 to 15-year-olds and the second with an older group of young people up to the age of 22, many of whom are asylum seekers.

Faith perspectives were considered during a consultation with the Faith Forum at their meeting on 22 April.

For those residents who wished to feed their comments into the strategy but had not yet had an opportunity to do so, members of the project team were available at some of the summer festivals – Chingford Day Festival, Young Peoples' Caribbean Carnival, Green Fair Festival and the Mela.

A number of reports produced following consultation with residents were also a valuable resource in informing the strategy. These included the Report on Consultation with Older Adults on their Engagement with Arts and Culture and Audit of Creative Opportunities for Older Adults produced by Age Concern Waltham Forest in 2008 and a report commissioned from East London Out Project (ELOP) expressing the views of the LGBT community on the draft strategy.

### Engaging with partners

A team of partners – the Culture Strategy Advisory team – was established for the development of the strategy with an initial workshop taking place on 9 March and then followed by regular communication over email at key stages of the strategy development process. Members included representatives from NHS WF,

Waltham Forest Police, Arts Council England, Corporation of London, Voluntary Action Waltham Forest, Sport England, Lee Valley Regional Park Authority and the Learning and Skills Council as well as the Headteachers of Chingford Foundation and Rushcroft schools.

Waltham Forest's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), which brings together the senior decision makers of organisations working in the key areas of environment, employment, education, crime, health and housing, has had an opportunity to comment on a draft of the strategy and its members signed off the final draft prior to its submission to Cabinet.

There are six thematic partnerships that sit beneath the LSP, each chaired by one of the LSP members. Four of the six thematic partnerships have also been consulted including Employment and Enterprise, Healthier Communities, Sustainability and Environment and SafetyNet.

The Education, Culture and Creativity Board, chaired by the Headteacher of Chingford Foundation School, includes representatives from the Council's Cultural Services team, VT Education and the Arts Council and Sport England. The board meets regularly and 'Taking Our Place in London' has been a standard item on its agenda. This has been particularly instrumental in feeding in the perspective of schools in the borough and is

keen to take forward specific actions for schools and colleges in the action plan.

The draft strategy has been presented at the three Secondary School Area Head Teacher Boards and both primary and secondary schools as well as the three colleges in the borough will be fully involved in the action planning process.

### **Speaking to local businesses, cultural providers and the voluntary sector**

Over 50 representatives from local arts, heritage and sports organisations, creative industries and three colleges in the borough were invited to attend two local cultural providers workshops held on 10 March and 29 April. The first workshop considered what constitutes a realistic vibrant cultural offer in Waltham Forest and how we can increase participation levels and support the development of a creative sector and visitor market. The second presented the findings from the consultation to date before exploring the constraints and opportunities offered by space in the borough, developing collaborative working and how best to build relationships with schools.

Waltham Forest's Business Board was consulted on the draft strategy at its meeting on 9 September. In particular, it was asked to consider how best to attract restaurants and the creative industry sector into the

borough, the use of empty shops by private landlords and ways in which the Council could work more closely with the borough's business sector to develop the local arts and cultural offer. These areas will be considered in more detail at the action planning stage.

Both Apex Arts, the Arts Council for Waltham Forest, and Voluntary Action Waltham Forest provided detailed feedback on the initial draft of the strategy on behalf of their members.

### **Embedding the strategy across the Council**

'Taking Our Place in London' has provided an opportunity to develop a Council-and borough-wide approach to culture and enable the arts, sports and leisure sectors to significantly impact upon a number of priority areas including civic participation, cohesion and independent living, health and fitness, regeneration, the design and quality of our public spaces and the creation of vibrant town centres. In order to maximise the benefits that culture can bring to a whole range of services across the Council and identify the contribution that services can in turn make to cultural provision within the borough, Councillors and senior managers were engaged with the strategy at an early stage and have played a key role in its development.

An initial briefing was provided for all councillors on 11 March 2009 and the strategy was discussed by each of the Council's senior management teams.

A Members' Working Group has been established, consisting of two representatives from each of the three political parties and has met at key stages in the development process.

The Environment Scrutiny Sub-Committee has also played an important role in viewing the strategy and recommending amendments to the drafts and process.

A particularly strong link has been developed between the Cultural Services and Regeneration teams and a number of exciting and ambitious objectives, which maximise the opportunities for culture in the regeneration process, have been integrated into the strategy as a result.

Two drop-in lunch time sessions were held at the Town Hall and Silver Birch House to provide staff throughout the Council, many of whom are also residents, with an opportunity to feed in their views. The sessions included discussion tables on specific issues and a culture quiz.

### **Sharing experiences and expertise at a regional and national level**

In order to learn from experiences and best practice in other areas and gain an objective viewpoint on the strategy, a Peer Review team was established. Cabinet Members for Culture and Regeneration and heads of Culture from our neighbouring and fellow London 2012 host boroughs were invited to join. Members who accepted include:

- Amanda Smethurst - Director, London (Development) at Arts Council England;
- Sue Thiedeman - Cultural Services Improvement Manager for London;
- Paul Hogan - Head of Culture and Leisure at the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham;
- Cllr. John Fahy, Cabinet Member for Culture and the Olympics at Greenwich;
- Helen Ridge - Head of Arts, Culture and Film at Greenwich;
- Cllr. Guy Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, London 2012 Games at Hackney;

- Hilary Renwick - Head of Culture Services at Lewisham;
- Stefania Horne - Head of Strategy, Performance and Projects at Redbridge; and
- Heather Bonfield - Interim Head of Culture at the Tower Hamlets.

The team met at three stages throughout the process and provided invaluable input into the strategy.

A workshop with regional and national stakeholders, sponsored by Leyton Orient Football Club, was held on 5 June. The purpose was to ensure that the strategy is aligned with key regional and national initiatives and to explore opportunities for partnership working. Over 25 different organizations attended the event and key speakers included Archana Gudka from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Tom Campbell from the Greater London Authority and Mike Roberts from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. The event was facilitated by the Cultural Services Improvement Manager for London, Sue Thiedeman, and a number of interesting and exciting potential collaborations were explored.





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