

EAST FOUNDATION

Annual Review 2007/2008

Making a positive and lasting contribution to neighbourhoods in east London and Essex.



Review of the year



By Richard Henchley, Chair

East Foundation was established in early 2006 to support East Thames Group's mission – to make a positive and lasting difference to the neighbourhoods in which it works – by funding diverse and innovative community work and research projects. This review contains a summary of our activities during our second full year of operation.

During 2007-08, we awarded grants to the value of £581,000 to 13 new projects. These vary from large projects such as a 'Supporting Families' initiative in Bromley by Bow, which provides support to vulnerable and excluded families, to smaller projects such as the Roma Support Group, which delivers cultural activities in schools promoting understanding of the Roma culture.

We continue to focus our grant giving on priority areas selected by us each year. Thus, in 2007-08 the majority of our main grants were awarded in Newham (Canning Town South and Beckton wards) and Tower Hamlets (Bromley by Bow ward).

We are also committed to supporting small resident-led initiatives and helping individuals to realise their aspirations. We have now awarded 79 Community Chest grants for activities that bring together local communities and promote cohesion and wellbeing. Through our Aspirations Fund we have helped 54 residents pursue life-enhancing and development opportunities that they could not otherwise afford.

We can only provide a limited number of examples in this review, but I hope they will give you a feel for our work. If you would like to join us in making a difference to people's neighbourhoods and their lives, or you are looking for support for a community or personal training and development project, please visit our website, www.east-foundation.org.uk.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Henchley". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Richard Henchley

Our programmes

During 2007-08 we supported communities through the following grant programmes:

- **Main grants** – supports projects that are innovative, sustainable and build the capacity of communities, organisations and individuals;
- **Strategic grants** – for projects with a national significance;
- **Development grants** – small grants for organisations or individuals that have innovative ideas for projects that need funding to get off the ground;
- **Small grants** – includes two funds:
 - a **Community Chest** to support projects that help bring people together or enable them to promote community activities; and
 - an **Aspirations Fund** for East Thames residents, which helps, among others, young people, unemployed and homeless adults or people with special needs, to access life-skills training, education or other development opportunities.

For full details, criteria and application forms, please visit our website:
www.east-foundation.org.uk

East Foundation is keen to learn from the projects it sponsors and places emphasis on project management. This should include a good process of review, reflection and modification as the project progresses.

The examples on pages 3-5 illustrate the range of projects we supported during 2007-08. Some of these are new grants. Others give feedback on projects that were granted funding before.

Support East Foundation

Whether you already run corporate social responsibility programmes, or are looking for the best way to start, we have the expertise to ensure that your support makes a lasting difference.

We are seeking partners to play an active role in the future of the Foundation, helping us make decisions about our activities and donating funds. Whatever you choose to do, however you choose to work with us, you will be investing in and making a real difference to the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in the country.

If you would like to help us make a difference by empowering people and changing lives, please talk to us:

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Reducing the risk of re-offending

Youth Justice Board statistics show that nearly two-thirds of young offenders who receive a custodial sentence go back to crime. Together with London Councils, City Parochial Foundation and The Henry Smith Charity, East Foundation funded a six-month scoping study of a new approach to working with young offenders to reduce re-offending.

The resulting report, *Young Offenders in East London: A New Approach*, (available at www.east-potential.org.uk/youngoffenders), was launched in the House of Lords in June 2008. It highlights the importance of overcoming interruptions to education, training and development



services and disconnection from family and friends. These issues are common when young offenders are in custody far from home.

If adopted, the model of a Young Offenders Academy proposed in the report would ensure consistency and continuity in support and education services while restoring and maintaining young people's links with family members and the business and social community.

The study, which was disseminated among policy-makers and featured on national media, was conducted by an expert steering group that included Lord Ramsbotham, former HM Chief Inspector of Prisons, and Professor Rod Morgan, former chair of the Youth Justice Board.

Lord Ramsbotham said: "The numbers of young people at risk of offending, through parental neglect, truancy or eviction from school, lack of meaningful employment, drugs, violence and other causes, is a threat to our national future. The Academy offers a practical and purposeful alternative."

Building capacity, improving quality of life

Action for Redbridge Forum was initiated by housing associations working in the borough to develop services to improve the quality of life in priority wards. It also facilitates the sharing of good practice and a broader approach to tackling anti-social behaviour, youth crime and fear of crime.

In addition to housing associations, the Forum includes charities, local authority departments and other community agencies. It works closely with local residents in planning and developing projects and has found that, when residents participate more in their communities, there tends to be greater cohesion and more positive perceptions and attitudes.

East Foundation funds a number of the Forum's activities. Many of these activities engage residents of different age groups and from different backgrounds, helping them develop skills and have fun together. In this way, they have raised awareness of social responsibility and helped counter negative attitudes towards different groups and particular areas.

Action for Redbridge Forum often builds on existing programmes. One example is boxercise training

in Chadwell Heath. This has been well supported by young people and has helped reduce the level of anti-social behaviour in the area. With support from East Foundation, the Forum is expanding the programme to involve more young people and extending it to other areas.

One 12-year old resident said: "I now train four times a week and feel fitter than I have ever been. I have arranged with my year head at school to open up boxing classes during lunch time; this will help my friends to get fit and healthy too. Thank you Action for Redbridge."



The value of mentoring

Many people involved in activities to develop individuals' abilities and community cohesion recognise the value of mentoring, 1:1 support for individuals, or working in very small groups. The School for Social Entrepreneurs places emphasis on tailored support and learning opportunities for individuals who have business and project ideas for giving back to their local neighbourhoods.

East Foundation provides funding for residents in East Thames properties to take part in the School's one year mentoring and leadership development programme. To qualify for our support, residents must have a good idea for a new community project, and be committed to delivering it. They must also be prepared to undertake a one day a week, year-long training course.

In 2007-08, three East Thames residents graduated from this programme. We have now decided to extend our support to any local resident who can offer innovative ideas and projects that will benefit their community, providing it includes East Thames residents.

Listening to learn

Discover, based in Stratford, is a provider of creative play and learning opportunities for disadvantaged families. East Foundation has sponsored their children's newspaper, Forum News, and an arts-based education programme, Listening to Learn.

Listening to Learn explores how children learn and express their opinions through four art forms – drama, photography, video and visual arts. It is a three-year mentoring programme of peer-learning for 5-11 year olds. In particular, the project focuses on developing the role of older children as educators and facilitators of younger children, and enabling the children to express their opinions about their urban environment.

Continued next page >



Feedback from Discover tells us that:

- many of the younger children show natural leadership in their groups and are developing great communication skills;
- the older children have gained confidence and understanding of how to communicate their ideas to younger children;
- the children's teachers could see that both age groups were benefiting from the experience.

Discover has a flexible approach of review and revision which suggested that the theme of some sessions could be explored in more depth. So, from January 2008, the structure of the sessions was changed to enable the children to spend more time together and to give the adults facilitating the sessions more input into workshop contents.

Funding aspirations

Marcella Cazeley aspired to start a mobile make-up business – a customised service providing time-pressed individuals with consultations on the use of beauty products. However, she felt the need for further training in image consulting. So she applied to the Aspirations Fund for £4,800 to finance the training and purchase of basic materials.

An initial grant of £1,700 was approved and Marcella was invited to come back six months later to discuss her progress. The grant enabled Marcella, who was living in a foyer for young people in need of housing or support, to develop the business. She returned after the six months with an impressive slide show that included video clips of her work during modelling photo shoots and wedding events. She had also developed a brand for the business.

The panel was impressed. It awarded the balance of her initial request to help her keep up the momentum. With this support, Marcella has developed a website for her business and built up her clientele. She also works as a make up artist at fashion shows.

Marcella has also now moved out of the foyer and into a flat of her own.

Another Aspirations Fund grant of just under £5,000 was awarded to a single parent living in temporary accommodation who aspires to be a driving instructor. She has now passed the first of three stages and is currently preparing to take her stage two test. She is looking forward to completing her training and earning money for herself and her son.

Relieving hardship

Some people find their aspirations unachievable because they cannot afford essential items.

In one case, a resident in temporary accommodation successfully applied for £1,598 for essential tools he could not otherwise buy. In another, an unemployed foyer resident wanted to work in security but could not pay the necessary licence fee. He was granted £250 to cover the fee and is now working in his chosen field. He has subsequently moved into a flat of his own.

Some facts & figures

Location of projects

Each year, through a process of research and consultation, we select three priority areas: one from Newham, where most East Thames residents live, one from outer London and one other. Of projects funded to date, approximately 37% have been in Newham and 41% in outer London. Havering, which so far has not received any direct funding from East Foundation, has been selected as one of the priority areas for funding in 2009-10.

Location of funded projects, 2006-09	Quantity
Newham	19
Tower Hamlets	11
Waltham Forest	2
Redbridge	8
Barking and Dagenham	3
Essex	7
Havering	0

Projects that cover more than one borough have been counted twice.

Who benefits?

Projects supporting children, young people, and their families have benefited significantly from East Foundation's funding, as shown in the table below.

Beneficiaries 2006-09	Quantity
Young people and children	20
All residents	11
Young people and families	4
Older people	3
People with disabilities	2
Other	1

Excludes strategic projects. Projects that cover more than one group have been counted twice.



Main grants awarded 2007–08

During the year, we supported 13 new projects through our Main and Strategic Grants programmes. The largest financial commitment was for £100,000; the smallest grant was £7,000.

The projects, listed alphabetically by organiser, were:

AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN DANCE AND CULTURE – ALE DOUVAN

PROJECT: Dance for Life

DESCRIPTION: Provides African dance drumming activities for children and families in Bromley by Bow, and aims to increase the participation of young people (girls particularly) and families.

BRITANIA VILLAGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

PROJECT: Educational Sustainable Sensory Garden

DESCRIPTION: Primary school project to create an eco-garden involving pupils and their families.

BROMLEY BY BOW CENTRE

PROJECT: Supporting Families

DESCRIPTION: Provides support to vulnerable and excluded families, especially Bengali and Somali families. Parents will be provided with 1:1 support and helped to take part in a range of learning activities.

CHAIN REACTION THEATRE COMPANY

PROJECT: Totally Together

DESCRIPTION: Drama workshops in eight schools in Newham to create performance around the theme of community cohesion.



COMMUNITY CHILDCARE SERVICE

PROJECT: Training and Employment in Childcare in Canning Town South

DESCRIPTION: Providing training in childcare for local people to help them to access jobs.

COMMUNITY FOOD ENTERPRISE (CFE)

PROJECT: Newham food distribution centre

DESCRIPTION: The development of a food distribution centre from current CFE premises to enable local residents to have access to a range of fresh fruit and vegetables at reasonable prices.

EAST HOMES

PROJECT: Grand Union Place research (strategic project)

DESCRIPTION: Research into the results of mixed tenure housing at a new East Thames estate. A three-year study to measure residents' satisfaction and the impact of the development on the adjacent Ocean Estate.

EAST LIVING

PROJECT: Multimedia Advocacy Implementation and Review

DESCRIPTION: Extension of an East Foundation funded pilot project to deliver multimedia advocacy to 18 East Living residential homes in partnership with the University of East London Rix Centre.

EAST POTENTIAL

PROJECT: Young Offenders in East London – a new approach (strategic project)

DESCRIPTION: Scoping study into a new model for working with young offenders to prevent re-offending.

EAST POTENTIAL

PROJECT: Multimedia suite at Focus E15 Foyer

DESCRIPTION: Support for a multimedia training suite at Focus E15 foyer to deliver 12 digital media projects which will enable young people to gain qualifications and skills.

HACT

PROJECT: Housing needs of refugees and new migrants in London (strategic project)

DESCRIPTION: Engaging with refugees and new migrants living in North Tower Hamlets and South Hackney. A partnership with Praxis and refugee community organisations to examine housing problems, and solutions.

ROMA REFUGEES

PROJECT: Community Cohesion Project

DESCRIPTION: Work with Roma and non Roma children to increase understanding of Roma culture. The activity focus is Roma culture workshops in Newham schools and after school activities.



THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

PROJECT: Hidden Children (strategic project)

DESCRIPTION: Research into children in east London who are brought to UK from abroad, live with someone who is not their parent, and/or are exploited. Involves working alongside children who have previously been 'hidden'.



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