

## **Thamesmead to become a major Cultural Hub for London**

As Thamesmead approaches its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Peabody, supported by the Mayor of London have announced a major partnership with Bow Arts to help the area become one of the capital's newest cultural location for artists, designers, makers and food entrepreneurs.

Funded by the Mayor's London Regeneration Fund (LEAP) and Peabody, the partners will fully renovate the iconic Lakeside Centre. As well as breathing new life into the building - with its stunning views of Southmere Lake and Thamesmead's iconic tower blocks – the project will also include a wider partnership of events, school programmes, public art and affordable housing for cultural key workers.

This amazing building will once again become the focus of cultural and community life for residents and visitors alike to Thamesmead. The Lakeside Centre is planned to open by April 2018 and once complete will offer:

**40 new affordable creative workspaces** for some of London's emerging talent from fashion to film makers.

**The Front Room Café** - a flexible and welcoming space for people to meet, eat, relax, work and learn

**GCDA's Enterprise Kitchen** supporting production and training for brand new catering businesses run by social enterprise Greenwich Cooperative Development Agency

The centre will also include a new day nursery, a gallery and project space as well as hosting a range of pop up stalls and markets. A planning application for the scheme has been submitted to London Borough of Bexley, anticipated for determination in summer 2017.

The new space will be managed by Bow Arts, a charity with a long track record for delivering cultural programmes that engage local communities in east London. Bow Arts is now one of the largest creative workspace providers in London, managing both studios and live work spaces for young professionals, they also manage an award winning education programme, that matches professional artists designers and makers with schools and supports over 10,000 young people annually.

**Peabody's Executive Director for Thamesmead, John Lewis, said:** "Our partnership with Bow Arts will bring this much-loved Thamesmead landmark back to life. The Lakeside Centre will be a very special place for residents to enjoy and will also help develop Thamesmead's existing creative and entrepreneurial spirit and bring new businesses, jobs and visitors to the area. Alongside the other exciting changes taking place in the area, this will help Thamesmead fulfil its promise as London's new town."

**Bow Arts' Chief Executive, Marcel Baettig, said:** "It's very exciting to land in Thamesmead and immediately become a part of such an important project such as the re-imagining of the Lakeside Centre. We know the Centre will become a catalyst for unlocking the talent that we know already exists in the area. But behind the excitement lies our long term commitment to Thamesmead, as one of its newest residents it will take us time to establish and become part of the community – but this is a process that we are very much looking forward to."

**Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills, Jules Pipe, said:** “I’m really pleased that plans for the Lakeside Centre are progressing at speed and that the Mayor’s London Regeneration Fund is helping to transform Thamesmead into a more vibrant destination for creative businesses and talent. Small businesses in London face real challenges in finding affordable workspace in which to grow and thrive: these sorts of spaces should be part of plans to build new homes and rejuvenate neighbourhoods in the future.”

**Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries, Justine Simons, said:** “Not only will this exciting new partnership put culture right at the heart of the community, it will transform Thamesmead and provide vital creative workspaces and affordable housing for key cultural workers. A lack of affordable space is one of the biggest threats to London’s reputation as a cultural powerhouse and we need more partnerships like this. We recognise the immense value artists bring to the capital’s identity and success, and I’m delighted that we are working with Peabody and the wonderful Bow Arts to do just this.”

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## **Editors Notes**

### **About Bow Arts**

Bow Arts is an arts education charity that provides affordable creative workspaces for over 500 emerging artists. Alongside this, Bow Arts manages one of the country's most exciting education programmes, which takes world-class artists into 90 schools to improve the lives and learning of children and young people. Bow Arts runs the Nunnery Gallery, a public gallery that supports a diverse range of high quality exhibitions and events as well as the delivery of a public arts programme, and is home to the Carmelite Café. Established in 1995, Bow Arts holds an important place in east London which is fast becoming known as London’s Artist Quarter. For more information, visit [www.bowarts.org](http://www.bowarts.org)

## **About Peabody in Thamesmead**

When Peabody acquired Gallions, Trust Thamesmead and Tilfen Land in 2014, it meant housing, community investment and over 100 acres of developable land in Thamesmead became owned by a single, well-resourced organisation for the first time in a generation.

Last year, Peabody announced its proposals for a £1bn regeneration programme for Thamesmead over the next ten years. This, together with two Housing Zones which are being led by the London Borough of Bexley and Royal Borough Greenwich and delivered by Peabody with funding from the Mayor of London's office, has pushed Thamesmead into the top regeneration projects in the UK.

Peabody has been creating opportunities for Londoners since 1862, when it was established by the American banker and philanthropist, George Peabody. Our mission is to ensure that as many people as possible have a good home, a real sense of purpose and a strong feeling of belonging.

We work solely in London, with a presence in the majority of London boroughs. We own and manage more than 29,000 homes, providing affordable housing for around 80,000 people. This is set to grow with plans for 8,000 new homes across the capital, meaning Peabody will provide a good home to one in every 100 people in London.

As well as bricks and mortar, we provide a wide range of community programmes for our residents and neighbourhoods, including help with employment and training, health and wellbeing projects and family support programmes. In 2015/16 we delivered over 44,000 hours of community activities.

## **About the Mayor's London Regeneration Fund (LRF)**

The London Regeneration Fund aims to re-energise the capital's places of work and high streets by embracing the city's incredible talent for creativity and technological innovation. It was launched by City Hall in 2016 following a successful bid from the London Enterprise Panel (now known as London Economic Action Partnership) to Government as part of the city's Growth Deal.

The London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP) brings entrepreneurs and business together with London's government to identify actions to support and lead economic growth and job creation in the capital. It is the region's Local Enterprise Partnership.