



Ambition Aspire Achieve

Newsletter – Autumn 2023

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It gives me great pleasure to share our latest newsletter after a summer that seems to have gone by in a flash! In this edition, we share some of the highlights from what proved to be one of our largest summer programmes since opening our doors in 2016, along with wider developments at our hubs, new projects and initiatives as we look ahead to the Autumn.

But before that, I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank the many organisations and individuals that have really gone the extra mile to support AAA’s work since our last update. This has included an exciting and much needed make-over of our adventure playground structure at the Arc and well over 100 volunteers taking part in the many corporate team days organised at both our hubs, to help us best prepare sites for the summer holidays, along with ongoing support to develop our new woodland facility in Stratford. We honestly could not deliver what we do without our supporters giving their time and energy so generously.

That support will be ever more important as we look ahead to the Autumn and remainder of the year. It seems very early to be mentioning Christmas, but we have an early call out to support our annual Christmas appeal, the 2023 Kevin Jenkins OBE Newham Toy Appeal. After an unprecedented year in 2022, which saw record numbers of referrals to the Appeal, our stock of toys is severely depleted and in need of replenishing to meet what is expected to be even higher demand in the run up to Christmas Day this year. If you or any of your contacts can help, please do get in touch. Thank you as ever for all your interest and for helping to make a difference.

With best wishes,

Jonny Boux
Chief Executive - Ambition Aspire Achieve



Summer at AAA

It has been quite the Summer at Ambition Aspire Achieve. With the six-week school holiday break now over, we can look back at one of our busiest ever. Well over **300** children and young people accessing a whole range of opportunities - playschemes, youth and holiday activities at our hubs, local pop-up parks playschemes in Canning Town and Custom House along with residential experiences to Gloucestershire, the Lake District and Mersea Island, a visit to Fairplay House Outdoor Education Centre, day trips to Epping Forest, nature themed excursions and river-walks and exciting 'Big Days Out' trips to Whipsnade Zoo and Adventure Island in Southend-on-Sea.

There have been lots of highlights and stories recently shared by our staff and the young people who have benefited from activities this summer. This includes testimonials from those taking part in trips and residentials, with many experiencing time-away from their families for the first time. Despite some initial nerves at the beginning, young people taking part have really thrived and grown as a result of all their experiences.

We would like to thank all our supporters and funders who have helped to make it a summer to remember for so many local children and young people accessing our services.

Summer activities have been kindly supported by a range of sources this year including the **East End Community Foundation's Newham Giving Fund**, the **DfE's Holiday Activities Fund (HAF)** and the **London Borough of Newham** and **BBC Children in Need**.

You can check out some of the action included in our Summer Highlights reel [here](#).



Arc in the Park Updates

It's been a busy and fun filled summer term and summer holidays at the **Terence Brown Arc in the Park** with lots of projects and activities taking place. Our **Positives Transitions** group enjoyed their end of programme trip to Southend-on-Sea! Everyone had a great day on the rides at Adventure Island, games on the beach and lots of fun in the arcades, all topped off with ice creams and seaside treats!

During the summer term our **LEGO Clubs** were as popular as ever with sessions now running 3 days a week. The groups are enjoying being creative through LEGO themed play with some of our older attendees working on building a replica of the NASA Space Station! We would also like to say a **BIG** thank you to the LEGO Group for their wonderful donation recently of large LEGO sets which all of our young people can't wait to start building!

Our groups for young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities have enjoyed lots of fun activities - we were really excited to work with **Step Change Studios** recently! Young people had a great time taking part in the dance workshop in addition to their programme of life skills work, sports and art and craft activities. Our SEND Disco nights continue to be popular providing a fun, safe and inclusive space for SEND young people to meet up with friends and to enjoy a dance and a great evening out!

Our Arc **Garden Rangers** group were over the moon and thoroughly enjoyed their first harvest this year of carrots, lettuce, beetroot, radishes and garlic! And the **ECOHub** took part in the **Wanstead Wildlife Weekend** getting involved in workshops around conservation and ecology. And a big thank you to the **Newham Cyclists** who have kindly ran a number of bike maintenance sessions at our Cycling Club recently, teaching the young people the basics of bike maintenance such as chains and punctures and the importance of keeping their bikes in good condition.

During the school holidays our **Summer Short Breaks scheme** has been in demand this year with **90** SEND young people attending the respite scheme throughout the holiday period. The sessions offer the young people the opportunity of a break from their normal daily routines and to enjoy a variety of activities and games including sensory activities, sports and cycling, and a highlight this Summer was our brilliant music workshop with **Newham Music**! The Arc Summer Playscheme has been fully booked each week with over **120** young people accessing the scheme. There was something for everyone including arts and crafts, sports and games and amazing visit from a **Team GB** softball player who coached the children. The scheme also went on a number of day trips including pond dipping and Bush Craft at West Ham Park and a visit to the Olympic Park. They also enjoyed a number of workshops including an art, nature and heritage workshop with **The Line London**.

We have also had a number of corporate volunteer days recently and would also like to say a huge thank you to **Barclays, Axis** and **Zurich** for all of their hard work and efforts helping us to ensure that the Arc is maintained and safe for all of our young people and families to enjoy – we couldn't do it without you! If you would like to find out more about any of our projects and activities at the Terence Brown Arc in the Park, please contact Operations Manager **Paula Blake** paula@theaaazone.com or visit our [website](#).



Arc Adventure Playground Support

The **Terence Brown Arc in the Park** adventure playground has been a great focal point and treasured facility at the site for many years, enjoyed by thousands of local children and young people who have accessed our various playschemes and clubs. With heavy use and the expected wear and tear that occurs, the playground has been in need of repair and renewal of late, with funding and support limited.

Just before the Summer break, local construction firm **Morgan Sindell** came to the rescue! The firm, along with teams from their contractors **Bridge Gap** and **Regal Construction 200 Limited** have spent several days on site treating the structure to a full makeover, including jet washing, cleaning, repairing, renewing old timbers, re-staining, painting and repairing and reopening parts of the structure that had been out of use.

The end result has been a complete transformation, and we cannot thank Morgan Sindell and their contractor teams enough for such brilliant and generous support. The work completed on the adventure playground has made such a positive difference, ensuring the facility can be enjoyed by many more children for years to come, enabling them to have fun, make friends, build confidence and learn through play!



Abbey Hub Building & Woodland



Plans to transform **The Glyn Hopkin Abbey Hub** site and new **Abbey Hub Woodland** facility continue to gather pace! Work has continued on clearing and readying the woodland, with several corporate volunteer teams joining us during the spring and early summer, including kind volunteers from supporters at **Barclays**, **Valero**, **Berkeley Homes** and **Thames Water** and **BAIN Capital**. As we look ahead to the next phase of work, our vision for the site is starting to take shape, with preparations underway to draw up a masterplan of the site and begin work on new natural play areas, creating new pathways and walkways.

Work has also begun on a brand-new building extension and activities space at the Abbey Hub site, thanks to earlier funding secured from the **London Legacy Development Corporation**. The new facility is expected to be completed by the end of the year along with a full building refurbishment, significantly improving the space for years to come. We can't wait to share the photos of all the progress soon!

Abbey Hub Updates

We had a jammed packed Summer at **Abbey Hub** with lots of activities and project taking place! Groups enjoyed a number of activities and workshops over the Summer including an empowerment workshop, and they all enjoyed putting their running shoes on with **The Outrunners** – a fantastic initiative aimed at getting more young people involved in outdoor activities, particularly running, and providing a fun way to boost well-being and help improve teamwork and communication skills. Our young people have enjoyed a number of sessions, training for a half marathon which they all completed at the end of the Summer! A big thank you to everyone at **The Outrunners** and a huge well done to all of our young people on their achievements!

Young people attending our **Holiday Activities Fund Project**, aimed at providing children with a hot healthy and nutritious meal each day during the school holiday periods, had a fun filled time! The group enjoyed preparing their own healthy meals each day along with learning about nutrition, along with many fun and interactive workshops including a woodwork workshop with AAA Green Mentor Candy, a music making workshop with **Newham Music**, where we enjoyed making music with a variety of different instruments and technology including iPads!

Other highlights included a great daytrip to The Royal Docks where we went canoeing with the Cadets and all enjoyed a spot of gardening too! Another highlight of the Summer was our trip to the **HAF Festival** at Central Park, where we all had a fantastic time taking part in all the activities on offer.

The **Abbey Hub Summer Playscheme** welcomed large numbers of children during the holidays, so much so that we had to facilitate different groups to facilitate as many children as possible. There was lots to do and to take part in each day including arts and crafts, sports, baking and outdoor adventure play. All of the young people attending had a brilliant time and were sad the Summer was coming to an end! If you would like to find out more about our projects and activities at Abbey Hub, please contact Abbey Hub Manager **Marie Painsamy** marie@theaazone.com or visit our [website](#).



Project Spotlight – Green Influencers Scheme

Thanks to funding provided by **The Ernest Cook Trust** over the past 2 years, we have engaged a range of Schools in Newham engaging children in youth social action with a focus on connecting with nature, exploring solutions to climate change and consequences of pollution, learning about food chains, the impact of intensive farming and consumption on wildlife and the importance of biodiversity on the health of our planet. School children decided how to spend their funding and projects ranged from assembly presentations to transforming outside spaces, planting new growing beds and making art from recycled materials.

Our Green Mentor Candy witnessed first-hand how young people are such creative and inquisitive learners and over 100 Green Influencers have taken part in activities developing their growing skills, using tools, building birdboxes, observing nature and exploring our urban green and blue spaces as well as venturing out to the countryside.

The impact of the scheme has included increased numbers of children taking learning home and changing behaviours, children feeling more positive and confident that they can make a difference and influence others to conserve wildlife and habitats. All Green Influencers have developed positive partnerships with teachers who have supported their projects, taking part in ECO Awards Schemes.

At Arc in the Park and Abbey Hub the Green Influencers have volunteered time to provide workshops for our groups supporting vulnerable young people, taking part in green research projects, A Newham Green Fair and an International Youth Day hosted by City Hall

The Scheme has also established Arc and Abbey Hub's Garden Rangers groups, increasing opportunities for children to engage in growing fruit, vegetables and flowers throughout the year and attracting corporate volunteers who have been greatly impressed with our outdoor learning and growing areas.

Green Influencers guide younger children through the seasons of sowing seeds to harvest as well as taking part in Eco programmes, AAA residentials and wildlife events.

We would like to thank The Ernest Cook Trust for the funding and support they provided, helping us to grow our outdoor offer for local young people – stay tuned for further developments in this space and contact our Outdoor Coordinator Candy Buckler candy@theaazone.com to find out more.



Project Spotlight – Positive Transitions

Funded by the **City Bridge Trust**, our **Positive Transitions** project works with young people aged 16 to 25 who have additional needs. The main focus is to help individuals develop their independence and life skills, helping them to engage in physical exercise, socialise and explore their creativity, whilst building independence

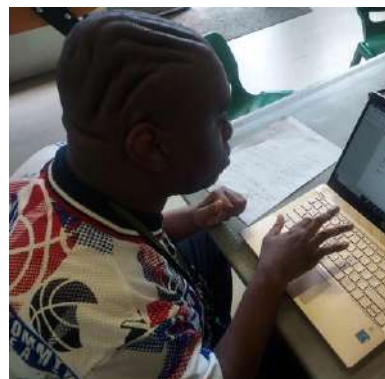
The young people meet regularly providing opportunities to make new friends and enjoy time engaging in activities away from their usual routine. Participants are supported throughout their journey, ensuring all are able to get involved, benefit from their time at the project and learn new skills.

In recent months, the group have enjoyed taking part in money management and problem-solving workshops, have cooked their own meals to take home, and organised an afternoon tea party for themselves and staff, developing their core life skills and team building skills. They have also engaged in a range of sports activities and exercises, such as table tennis, cricket, basketball, and tennis which has helped them to develop their coordination skills and awareness of their surroundings.

Young people engaging in the art and crafts sessions have continued to develop their artistic skills, with a number of high-quality works from individuals being displayed at a local arts exhibition in Stratford! Many within the group have been working hard to achieve an arts awards certificate.

To celebrate all of the young people's personal developments and achievements, the entire group went on a celebratory trip to South-end on Sea, where they enjoyed the amusements and rides at Adventure Island followed by a group meal of fish and chips and ice cream together. Yum!

If you would like to find out more about Positive Transitions please contact SEND Co-Ordinator **Liam** liam@theaazone.com



Residentials 2023

In our last edition, we reported the news that AAA had been selected as a beneficiary of the **Evening Standard's 'On the Breadline Campaign'**. Delivered in partnership with **The Childhood Trust**, the campaign successfully raised significant funds to support charities working with vulnerable children and young people in London hardest hit by the cost-of-living crisis. The award has made a great difference, with a full programme of residentials and exciting 'Big Days Out' trips delivered, with over **150** vulnerable and disadvantaged young people benefiting from the experiences so far.

This Summer has been a particularly exciting time for our residentials as we have been able to offer new locations and experiences this year! We returned to **Essex Outdoors** on East Mersea Island where we were able to take two groups over the Summer. The groups were able to enjoy fun filled adventure-based camping breaks, with 24 AAA young people benefiting from the experience overall. All had a fantastic time taking part in a variety of activities such as bushcraft, wall climbing, zip lining, caving, BMX and beach walks!

We were also extremely excited to be able to take a group of **32** young people to the new **Farms for City** residential in Gloucestershire. Our young people were able to get their wellies muddy and experience life on the farm! The experience was very hands on with the young people able to take part in lots of different farming tasks including feeding the animals daily, beekeeping, sheep shearing, egg collecting and horse grooming. They also enjoyed baking and making meals from the fresh produce in the vegetable garden!

Our final new residential trip of the Summer was to **Outward Bound** in the stunning Lake District where 11 young people enjoyed an action-packed adventure break taking part in lots of outdoor activities including canoeing and rowing on the beautiful Lake Ullswater, along with rock climbing, abseiling, gauge walking and a waterfall walk! They also enjoyed a hike up Hallen Fell and cliff jumping!

Earlier in the year we also enjoyed a new residential opportunity to **Atlantic College**. 12 of our older young people, were able to take part in and learn a variety of survival skill activities including first aid and life-saving water skills.

A big thank you to the Evening Standard and The Childhood Trust for the support, helping us to deliver so many exciting experiences for young people this year!



NCS Targeted Experiences – Funding Success

We are delighted to announce that AAA has recently been awarded an **NCS (National Citizen Service)** grant to grow our work with local teens, helping them, to become ‘world ready and work ready’. The grant awarded as part of **NCS’s Targeted Experiences** programme is part of a significant funding package that the NCS Trust have awarded to charities and CICs across England for the delivery of community-based experiences at a local and grass-roots level.



Beginning in September, the new programme will deliver regular weekly sessions based out of the Terence Brown Arc in the Park, opening up experiences that will provide more opportunities for teenagers to engage in local activities that build important key life-skills, growing their confidence and independence, whilst supporting their progression. Designed for young people aged 16-17, our new programme is now taking sign-ups for early sessions.



You can find out more by contacting our programme lead **Tracy Smith** via email tracy@theaaazone.com or by phone 0207 5114253.

Newham Kailo Project

We are proud to have been recently chosen as a ‘Navigator’ partner, for a new research project that is being piloted in only 2 areas of the country – North Devon and our very own London Borough of Newham.

The **Newham Kailo** project is an initiative committed to addressing the root causes of young people’s mental health in the places where they live. Through research, design and collaboration, the project is discovering opportunities for change, developing strong partnerships with local grass-roots organisations, including AAA, to help develop the approach.



Over the coming year we will be working closely with the research team, involving young people attending our programmes to join regular ‘small circle’ co-design sessions and activities with the aim to improve and develop support for existing activities that young people rely on for their wellbeing.



We are looking forward to sharing more on this important initiative as the project develops. For now, if you would like to find out more, please contact project lead **Kiera Auguste** – kiera@theaaazone.com

AAA Young Person of the Month Award

At Ambition Aspire Achieve, we like to celebrate the achievements of our young people and recently introduced our **Young Person of the Month Award!**

Each of our clubs have been assigned a month where they get to pick a young person from their club to win! The winners are chosen for a variety of achievements and all of the winners receive a certificate of their achievement and a £20 Amazon gift card to spend!

The initiative launched in May and has been a big hit with five winners to date. Our roll of honor so far includes:

- ❖ **Hayden** from our Arc Wellbeing Groups
- ❖ **Tilly** from our Arc Wednesday evening Youth Club
- ❖ **Nadia** from the Garden Rangers group
- ❖ **Chinoye** from our SEND Youth Club.
- ❖ **Austin** from our Friday evening Youth Club.

Congratulations to all the winners so far!



Heritage Lottery Fund – Celebrating the Ferry Festival



Thanks to a recently awarded **Heritage Lottery Fund** grant, we launched a brand-new project in the early summer, enabling young people to curate a unique exhibition at the recently regenerated Factory Project in the Royal Docks, held during **Newham Heritage Month**. 30 of our young people helped to share and celebrate a history of community celebration in Newham through photography in the Newham Recorder Archive.

Focused on the celebrated Ferry Festival, young people took part in a workshop led by a professional artist, gaining skills, whilst learning more about their area's heritage and how to tell stories from days gone by, creating the exhibition together. The project continues during the early autumn, delving further into the personal archive of former Newham Recorder editor and AAA trustee Colin Grainger and a bigger archive saved by AAA's founder Kevin Jenkins OBE and Colin a decade ago.

We are actively seeking volunteers for the next stage of the project, who will gain skills in cataloguing and caring for paper and digital archives, to carry out important preservation and help bring this fascinating collection to public attention. If you are interested in taking part, please contact **Rosie Murdoch** rosamond.murdoch@gmail.com who is leading the project on behalf of AAA. A big thank you to National Lottery players for making this project possible.

Fundraising Updates

We were thrilled to participate in **BGC's** annual **Global Charity Day** again this year, with West Ham United club legend **Mark Noble** joining the day on September 11th to represent AAA as our chosen ambassador! Organised in conjunction with the Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund to commemorate BGC and Cantor Fitzgerald employees who were tragically killed on September 11th 2001, the day supports charities around the world, with 100% of their global revenues on the day donated to many good causes. A huge thank you to BGC, West Ham United and Mark Noble for supporting our work with vulnerable children and young people.

Along with grant success reported earlier in this edition, we are also pleased to announce new grants secured over the past few months. Our application to **LB Newham's Mental Health and Wellbeing Grant Fund** was successful, enabling us to deliver more youth activities at the **Glyn Hopkin Abbey Hub**, providing much needed support and interventions for vulnerable young people residing in the area. And we recently received the good news that AAA will be taking part in the **Big Give's Christmas Challenge** this year, with all donations matched during giving week in the lead up to Christmas, helping to raise funds for our annual residential experiences for disadvantaged children and young people in 2024. Our involvement in the initiative has been made possible by AAA patron **Glyn Hopkin**, who has pledged to support our challenge. Thank you, Glyn as ever for all your support!



Stan Harris OBE Sponsored Walk



Long term AAA friend and supporter **Stan Harris OBE** will be helping to raise ever-important funds for our work, hosting a sponsored walk on **Saturday 14th October**, between our youth hubs **The Terence Brown Arc in the Park** in Canning Town and **The Glyn Hopkin Abbey Hub** in Stratford. Stan, who is a qualified walking guide has generously supported our work over a number of years, including making several donations of his various guided walks enjoyed by lucky bid winners attending our annual Brick Lane Music Hall benefit nights. Along with our hubs, the walk will take in several Newham landmarks including Cody Dock, sections of the Greenway and areas surrounding the Thames Water pumping station and will run in conjunction with activities and events taking place at the Arc and Abbey Hub on the day, providing an opportunity for supporters, local children and families to join all or sections of the walk, helping to raise funds.

You donate at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/stanharrisssponsoredwalk>

You can also Contact AAA's Chief Executive **Jonny Boux** jonny@theaaazone.com to join the walk on the day!

The Kevin Jenkins OBE 2023 Newham Christmas Toy Appeal

Last year, the **Kevin Jenkins OBE Christmas Toy Appeal** reached record numbers of children, reflecting the growing challenges and pressures faced by local families caused by the rising cost of living. The appeal was generously supported by many, enabling over **3,300** vulnerable children to receive stockings of gifts in time for Christmas Day. Despite the support, the record numbers in 2022 have had an impact on our remaining stock of toys – an essential resource to help kick start the Appeal each year. And with demand expected to rise once again, we have an early call out for support, to help us raise enough toy donations in time for Christmas this year.



THE KEVIN JENKINS OBE
NEWHAM CHRISTMAS TOY APPEAL

Any support, no matter the size would be greatly appreciated to help the Appeal reach as many vulnerable children as possible, making this Christmas one to remember. There are many ways to help - ordering toys online via our Amazon wish-list, providing direct monetary donations to support the running of the Appeal or organizing toy collections with colleagues/contacts. If you can help and would like to support the Kevin Jenkins OBE 2023 Christmas Toy Appeal, please do get in touch with Appeal Coordinator **Paula Blake** paula@theaazone.com or Chief Executive **Jonny Boux** jonny@theaazone.com

Get Involved



JustGiving

Our work relies on the generosity of companies and individuals kindly giving their time and support and we cannot thank enough those who have contributed to our work so far, helping to make a difference. We need your help to ensure we can reach and support as many vulnerable children and young people this year and beyond, with the funding landscape ever more competitive and the challenges faced by local children, young people and families accessing our services growing day-by day.

Any support makes a great difference, and you can help in so many ways - donating essential items included on our wish list to support the delivery of our programmes, becoming a regular donor and supporter, helping to fundraise for specific causes and a whole range of individual and team volunteering opportunities.

We also have lots of places up for grabs for exciting fundraising events throughout 2023 and 2024, including full and half marathon places, spaces for the 2024 Ford RideLondon cycling event, opportunities to take on the Swim Serpentine challenge. You can take part in various events this year, by joining and supporting one of our planned fundraising events or taking part in your own sponsored activities. You can also donate to our work by visiting our Just Giving page - <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/ambitionaspireachieve>

All donations made will further our work with vulnerable children and young people this year and are truly appreciated. We'd love to hear from you – please contact AAA's Chief Executive **Jonny Boux** jonny@theaazone.com if you would like to get involved.

