



Ambition Aspire Achieve

Newsletter – Summer 2021

IN THIS EDITION

Welcome – Chief Executive

Tribute – Kevin Jenkins OBE

Easter and Summer Term 2021

Arc Updates

Ernest Cook – Green Influencers

Wellbeing Group

AAA Food Bank

Sunday Fun Club

SEND Youth Clubs

Abbey Hub Updates

Act As 1 Consortium

Partner Updates

Save The Date

Support Us & Get Involved



Welcome to the latest edition of the **Ambition Aspire Achieve** newsletter. With our centres now re-opened and a very busy summer programme ahead, we are looking forward to engaging and supporting as many local children and young people as possible, many of whom have been most impacted by the events of the past year and a half. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all our partners, funders and individuals who have provided so much support to us during such a challenging time in so many ways, helping to make the best possible difference where it's been needed most.

Earlier this year in April, our founder **Kevin Jenkins OBE** sadly passed away unexpectedly. It is difficult to find the words to express just how much Kevin will be missed and the lasting difference he made to local children, young people and communities in Newham. There have been so many tributes honouring Kevin since his passing - supporters, friends, colleagues and individuals whose lives he helped to transform during many decades making an incredible difference. Kevin was a great mentor, leader, friend, inspiration and so much more for us all.

Looking ahead to the Summer and beyond, we are determined to honour Kevin's legacy and build on everything he accomplished - creating, steering and building AAA was one of his proudest achievements. As we turn 5 years old as a charity this year, we will be celebrating Kevin's life and marking our anniversary during a very special event on **Saturday 25th September at Arc in the Park** – a date for your diaries and we hope you can join us.

In the meantime, I wish you a very happy summer. Thank you once again to all who have provided such great support during our first 5 years, helping to make the best possible difference and change lives.

Jonny Boux

Chief Executive - Ambition Aspire Achieve



Kevin Jenkins OBE – A Tribute



If you are lucky in life you get to meet one truly great person. I met mine more than 40 years ago. It was Kevin Jenkins.

Kevin Jenkins was the most remarkable man I have ever met in my time on this planet. His death on Wednesday 7th April was a tragedy of immense proportions.

There is no doubt that he touched the lives and has been a massive part of the existence of many thousands of people in the community in Newham and other parts of East London. Many hold him dear in their hearts for the good that he did...and with very good reason.

He changed the lives and made a real difference to the quality of life for so many underprivileged and disabled youngsters in more than 44 years of dedication to doing good.

His love and devotion to making a difference was always about giving people a chance to improve themselves and to make their own dreams come true.

A few years ago, I took part in a feature in the Newham Recorder, the paper I edited for many years. One of the questions was to name a person I admired living or dead. It took me only a second to name Kevin.

Much is made of the term hero and too often today it is a label given to those who have not achieved true greatness. Kevin was a hero to thousands, and it was an honour for me to have been part of his life since the day we first met to discuss the chance of creating a toy appeal to bring joy into the existence of young people and their families who would otherwise have gone without. And he deserves that honour as well as the warranted OBE bestowed on him.

When he came into the Newham Recorder's East Ham office to talk about launching a Christmas Toy Appeal for underprivileged youngsters 44 years ago, I was lucky enough to be chosen by my then Editor Tom Duncan to co-ordinate it. Little did I realise just how much that appeal would change the lives of so many generations of youngsters. It still does so today.

He loved newspapers and the news, and we had a joint passion for history. We started the Heritage Newham group four years ago and that has gone from strength to strength.

So many people have a better chance in life because of Kevin and his devoted partner Paula and their family – through the love and care they have given.

Through his work as co-founder with Community Links, his long service as a councillor in Newham, as founder for Ambition Aspire Achieve and the founder of Heritage Newham – People, Places, Progress, Kevin has been an inspiration for generations of people. A force for good and a mastermind of much that is good in Newham. He was awarded an OBE for his outstanding work.

Mention an idea in passing to Kevin and it was actioned with an hour and put into practice not long after. He was an inspiration to so many and the world has lost a gentle man and a pillar of the community.

He inspired others to come on board and help. There was never any desire for any praise. The glow in his cheeks was due to witnessing a creation come to life, a youngster achieving a dream, an idea becoming a reality. He believed young people can achieve anything despite their background.

There was still so much for Kevin to do in his life. On the Thursday before his passing we were all planning the future of AAA at a trustees meeting. A few days before I had been talking to him about things we could do with our Heritage group – involving both young people and the older generations.

Everyone who knew him will be grateful for any time spent in his company. We will miss him dreadfully. He was a true great.

But at this moment, it is his wife Paula and his family who need our love and support. All the things he has created will live on, as a tribute to his memory.

Those who bring sunshine into the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.

God bless you mate.

**Colin Grainger, founding Trustee
Ambition Aspire Achieve**



Easter and Summer Term 2021

After the lockdown period earlier this year, we re-opened both our centre as soon as restrictions permitted and delivered a busy programme during the Easter break, May half-term and Summer Term at the **Terence Brown Arc in the Park** and the **Glyn Hopkin Abbey Hub**. Thanks to hard work, planning and determination, we were able to open our doors to provide much-needed respite for local children, young people and their families after a very challenging start to the year. During Easter and May half-term, our short breaks programme for children and young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities most in need returned, providing fun activities for groups of up to 15 per day. Afternoon sessions were re-opened at Arc in the Park with our popular weekly **youth clubs** and **Wellbeing Groups** enjoying a full programme of activities, events and trips in the lead up to the Summer. This has included one of our newer youth clubs, **Good for Girls**, supporting and progressing young women (aged 10 to 14) from minority groups and our regular weekly **Young Londoners Fund** youth clubs, which have been extremely popular since re-opening our doors!

Over the past few months, we were also thrilled to secure new funding for longer-term projects, joining a brand-new consortium partnership as part of the **London Mayor's VRU My Ends** initiative to grow our outreach work in Canning Town and Custom House. Following a successful application earlier this year we also received the great news that AAA had been chosen as one of **LB Newham's** commissioned youth providers, to deliver daily youth clubs for young people with Special Education Needs or Disabilities throughout term times and holiday periods over the next 2 years. More to follow about these exciting new projects later-on in this newsletter!



Arc Updates

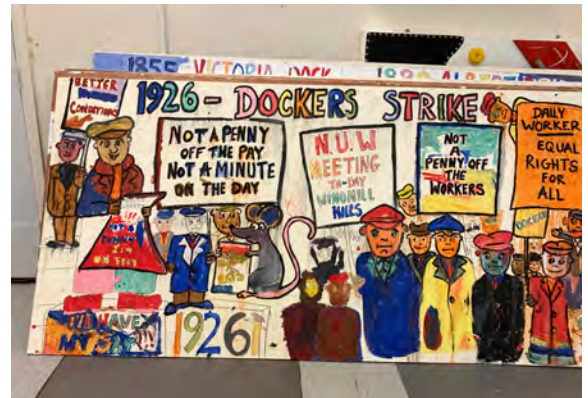
In May we organised and delivered our Arc Heritage Days to celebrate Newham Heritage Month. The days were a big success with over 70 children taking part - **St Helen's School** and **Gainsborough School** brought along groups of Year 6 and Year 4 students with our recently established **City Bridge Group** also participating in a range of fun, heritage-based activities.

The theme this year was **'Docks, Shops and Factories'** focusing on the docks and factories in the borough including Newham landmark Tate and Lyle, the soap factory that used to be in Canning Town and the ink factory that was located in Chargeable Lane. Children experienced and enjoyed a range of activities including a scavenger hunt, picket sign making, Lego workshops, t-shirt screen printing and heritage themed mural paintings. All involved had a great time and were able to experience and learn all about local heritage and the role that the people of Newham, the docks and the factories played to shape our life today.

Our **Arc Edible Gardens** area has been thriving during the Spring and early Summer and is enjoyed by all the groups we have on site - whether it's getting their hands dirty and enjoying some sensory play, or just a quiet place to sit, relax and watch all the wildlife who have made it their home. The garden and greenhouse offer new experiences and opportunities for our clubs and groups on a weekly basis including our **SEND Youth Group**, our **Wellbeing Group** and the **AAA Garden Rangers**.

Our Summer Programme is now underway, including a 5-week **Summer Playscheme** which is fully booked with waiting lists! Our **outward-bound camping trips** are back and will be taking place throughout August at both Mersea Island and Debden and our **respite short breaks** for young people with SEND will be running throughout the Summer along with **daily youth groups**. Following a successful pilot last year, we are also delighted to be delivering daily **mobile playschemes** in parks/areas surrounding the Arc in Canning Town and Custom House. Completing our busy programme are our regular clubs which have now re-opened including a **Sunday Walking Club**, **The Garden Rangers**, **All Stars Cricket** and **SEND Multi Sports Club**. Thanks to new funding kindly provided by the Newham Rotary Club, we will also be delivering a weekly employability project **Moving On and Up** for young people aged 14-19, providing progression support during the Summer and beyond.

To find out more about activities delivered at the Terence Brown Arc in the Park please visit www.theaaazone.com/whats-om.html or contact our Operations Manager **Paula Blake** paula@theaaazone.com or **0207 511 4253**. Please contact our Youth Coordinator **Jen Walton** jen.walton@theaaazone.com **0207 511 4253** to find out more about our youth and employability projects.



Project Spotlight – The Green Influencers



Our new and exciting **Green Influencers Scheme** funded by the **Ernest Cook Trust** is aimed at enabling young people aged 10 to 14 years to connect with nature, learn about their local environment and plan and deliver a campaign or social action project that will benefit the local community - making a difference to the health and wellbeing of the young people, their communities and our environment.



As Green Influencers, young people from the **Glyn Hopkin Abbey Hub** (named Green 15) have been enjoying fire building, litter picking, gardening, growing food and have launched a campaign to reduce single use plastic in Newham Schools, taking place in September 2021 in collaboration with **Kids Against Plastic** (kidsagainstplastic.co.uk).

At the **Terence Brown Arc in the Park**, the Green Influencers, (named Arc 16) have sowed seeds and planted out a wide range of vegetables in the Edible Garden. They have been to the River Thames to explore new habitats and treasures found on the riverbed, litter picked in Hermit Road Recreation Ground and will be learning camping and foraging skills.

The new project is already proving to be extremely popular with new faces coming along each week, and we are proud to announce that both groups have already been asked to be part of **GoParksLondon** to inspire other young people to take an interest in their local parks too.



Candy, our newly appointed Green Mentor, works with Newham Schools and Youth Groups delivering programmes that can run for 5 to 12 weeks – we are currently very excited to be working with **Selwyn School** over the next few weeks and the **Youth Group** at Arc in the Park during the Summer as well as continuing to build valuable partnerships with a range of organisations that offer further opportunities for our Green Influencers.

For more information on the Green Influencers Scheme contact **Candy Buckler** on candy@theaaazone.com

Project Spotlight - Wellbeing Groups

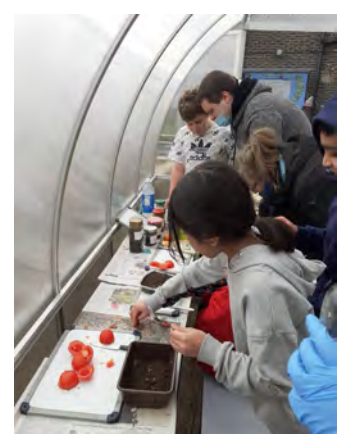
The **AAA Wellbeing Group** have been busy recently with everyone really excited to return to some outdoor fun including a greatly anticipated break away to the East Mersea Youth Camp near Colchester during May Half Term, where 24 of our young people aged between 8 and 15 enjoyed and greatly benefited from this brilliant experience.

Although the group continued to meet during lockdown, being able to provide outdoor opportunities again and enable the young people to have some time away from their normal day to day environments has greatly helped their mindfulness as well as enabled them to develop new transferable skills, build their resilience, develop their social skills and strengthen friendships. They all had a great time and didn't want to come home!

The group have also had the exciting opportunity to attend new music recording and technology workshops, utilising our new music studio at the Arc and a professional studio based down the road at Community Links, enabling them to learn and develop new transferable skills and think creatively. The workshops helped the young people to understand sounds and words in music, as well as develop skills such as mixing music and producing their own tracks!

Additionally, the group have been having a lot of fun at **Arc in the Park** too with creative silk-screening sessions, arts and crafts and getting their hands dirty in our new edible garden area and greenhouse. Lots more to follow for the group this summer!

To find out more about our Wellbeing Groups, please contact Operations Manager **Paula Blake** – paula@theaaazone.com



Ambition Aspire Achieve - Food Bank



The AAA Food Bank was one of the emergency initiatives AAA introduced at the beginning of the Covid-19 Pandemic, supporting local families living in poverty, young parents, homeless individuals, young people who are struggling and those with no access to public funds.

The need and demand for the service has continued to grow over the past year for individuals and families accessing both our **Arc in the Park** and **Abbey Hub** food banks and we are currently supporting over 130 individuals each week, with the demand continuing to rise.



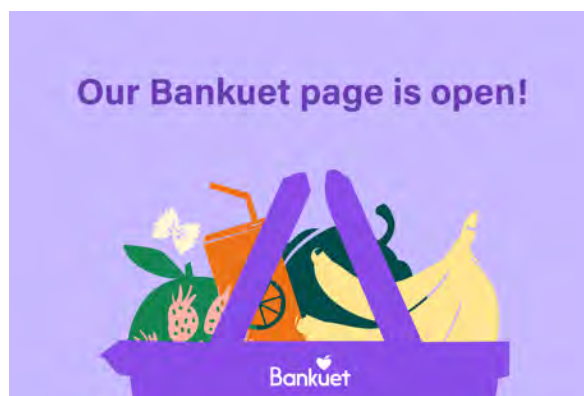
As an affiliated member of the **Newham Food Alliance**, our food bank relies heavily on the kind support, generosity and tremendous donations from key supporters that really do make a vital and positive difference for our areas most disadvantaged children and families, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank all who continue to donate non-perishable foods and household items, including **Morrisons** (top left) and **Gainsborough Primary School** (middle left), **Selwyn Primary School** and **Portway Primary School** all of whom enabled us to continue to provide this vital and essential service. To find out more about our Food Bank and/or to make a donation, please contact **Paula Blake** paula@theaaazone.com or **0207 511 4253**



You can also find our Best Food Guide on our website www.theaaazone.com/donate.html

To support our work in this area, we have recently partnered up with **Bankuet** - an online platform which has been created specifically to give to food banks. Bankuet makes it easier than ever for our supporters to donate and help us to continue this vital support to our young people and their families.

You can give online through our dedicated AAA webpage and Bankuet will use the donations received to purchase goods for AAA, using a request list we submit, ensuring that we receive the items we need most.



Any donations, big or small, will help to make a real positive difference, and you can donate at any time via <https://www.bankuet.co.uk/ambitionaspireachieve>

Sunday Fun Club

Our **Sunday Fun Club** ran from October last year to the end of June 2021 thanks to support provided by the National Lottery. The Club focused on providing opportunities for SEND young people and their families who do not receive other support from surrounding agencies – a vital service, which was greatly needed.

Each session, delivered under Covid-19 guidelines, provided 10 young people with SEND needs with a safe and inclusive experience, enabling them to gain valuable social skills, build confidence, self-esteem and resilience, develop new skills and interests and make new lasting friendships.

The young people were encouraged and enabled to build and develop their independence by having their own leisure time opportunities, choosing their own activities and how to spend their time. Activities included cooking, arts and crafts, soft play, sensory play, cycling, adventure play and messy play. The project was a great success, opening-up the Arc during weekends to provide valuable fun and engaging sessions for young people in need.



SEND Youth Clubs



Building on funding secured last year from the **City Bridge Trust** to deliver new opportunities and life-skills provision for young people with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities we were delighted to be confirmed as one of **LB Newham's** chosen youth commissioned providers in April, to grow our youth clubs, activities and offer for some of the borough's most in need youngsters.

As a chosen provider, we are now delivering daily youth clubs for SEND young people (aged 9 to 25) across venues including our very own **Terence Brown Arc in the Park** and **Glyn Hopkin Abbey Hub** along with a weekly club based out of **St Luke's Community Centre** in Custom House.

We have exciting activities planned for groups attending over the coming 2 years, including traditional youth activities, sports, music, arts and crafts, dance, access to the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme and much more.

To find out more about this exciting new project and to make a referral, please contact our SEND Coordinator **Leo Featherman** leo@theaazone.com 0207 511 4253.

Abbey Hub Updates

It's been a busy and exciting time at the **Glyn Hopkin Abbey Hub** recently! As Covid restrictions have been eased we have been able to reopen our on-site clubs and activities including our fully inclusive **Cycling Club**, our popular **Family Fun Days**, our growing **Multi Sports project**, and our successful **Weekly Youth Club** which offers a variety of activities from cooking, sports, arts and crafts and gardening.

Everyone at AAA is thrilled to have been able to welcome back the children, young people and families we serve, and to be able to restart more of our vital activities, clubs and services.

Additionally, we have also been able to launch a new and exciting initiative - **The Garden Rangers** providing green fingered fun and opportunities for children aged 5 to 10 years including growing and planting their own herbs and vegetables, designing their own flowerbeds, and learning about all things green including the secrets of composting and the importance of wildlife in our green spaces, all whilst having a lot of fun and developing new practical and transferable skills. We are hoping that the warmer summer weather will encourage even more young people to pick up a trowel and get their hands dirty!

We are also very excited to announce that we have been successful in becoming one of the first 250 **Alive and Kicking** Football Libraries nationally! **Alive and Kicking** have provided us with a resource library of match quality footballs which our children, young people and families can borrow to play in the park, the MUGA or in their gardens; and then return. We are thrilled to have been chosen and about the additional opportunities and experiences being part of the library offers for all AAA users.

And there is a great deal planned for the rest of the year at the centre. Thanks to valuable capital funding secured from the **LLDC** we are about to begin 2 exciting new projects, including a building extension and centre refurbishment to further improve facilities for local young people and the development of a new woodland area next to the site, kindly gifted to us by our partner **Thames Water**, which we plan to transform to create a one-of-a-kind outdoor learning and nature space! We look forward to sharing the progress of these exciting new projects.

To find out more about what's on offer, please contact Abbey Hub's Centre Manager **Marie Painsamy** marie@theaaazone.com or visit our website at www.theaaazone.com/whats-on.html



Act As 1 Consortium – Youth Safety



We are pleased to announce new funding to deliver vital youth safety interventions over the course of 2021 and 2022. As part of the **Act As 1 Consortium**, a partnership led by local partner **Fight for Peace** thanks to funding secured from the Mayor of London's VRU My Ends initiative, we will be expanding our detached street work and youth clubs in the Canning Town and Custom House area. The funding comes at a vital time – sadly the local area has experienced several tragic incidents of young people facing serious youth violence over the past few months. Moving forward, our team of detached workers will be delivering street-based sessions throughout the week, providing targeted support for at risks youngsters, along with a new building-based youth club delivered out of **St Luke's Community Centre** and an increased number of youth safety sessions provided for local primary and secondary schools. To find out more about the project, please contact our Outreach Coordinator **Bob Goldsmith** bob@theaaazone.com

Partner Updates – A Big Thank You!

We would like to say a very big thank you to all of our partners and individuals for their ongoing and continued support which is helping us greatly in continuing to make a real positive difference and changing the lives of our areas most disadvantaged, vulnerable and at-risk children and young people.

Recently we were thrilled to be able to restart our **Corporate Volunteer Days** again and welcome back our wonderful friends from **Turner and Townsend** who keenly got stuck in at Arc in the Park. Thank you to everyone for your tremendous hard work and brilliant support which has made a real positive difference at the Hub. Everyone's efforts are truly appreciated, and we are looking forward to welcoming more of our corporate friends over the coming months.

Our reading corners at Arc in the Park and Abbey Hub, have recently undergone transformations thanks to kind donations from supporters, including environmental themed books from new partner **Sonneditx**, books, bean bags and comfy chairs from **Zurich Community Trust** as part of a successful challenge day we set and new books from local partner the **Newham Bookshop**. The children using the corners are already greatly enjoying the new additions!



Save The Date – Celebration and Tribute Event 25th September

SAVE THE DATE! Join us on **Saturday 25th September** at the **Terence Brown Arc in the Park** to mark and celebrate our 5th year since our inception as a charity and to pay tribute to the remarkable life and achievements of our founder **Kevin Jenkins OBE** who sadly passed away in April.

The day promises to be a truly special event, with staff, trustees, young people and supporters of our work attending and a whole host of activities planned.

Further details about the event will be provided in the near future, along with a fundraising campaign which will be run in conjunction to raise support for our work next year.

In the meantime, please email **Lucy Jenkins** lucy@theaaazone.com to confirm attendance. We look forward to seeing you on the day!



Support Us and Get Involved



Our work relies on the tremendous generosity of individuals and companies giving their time and support. In 2021 we need your help more than ever and there are many ways you can provide support, including donating items, food and equipment for our projects and service-users, helping us to fundraise, sponsoring our programmes and of course a whole range of group and individual volunteering opportunities as soon as restrictions are eased.

We'd love to hear from you – please contact **Jonny** by email at jonny@theaaazone.com if you would like to get involved. We are also on the hunt for a **London Marathon** runner along with swimmers and cyclists to take part in fundraising events in 2022!

If you would like to donate to our work, either as a one time gift or regular contribution, there are many ways to support us. Please visit our **Virgin Giving Money** page via our website: <http://www.theaaazone.com/donate.html>




Ambition Aspire Achieve

Registered Charity No. 1167816 www.theaaazone.com