

An Urban Renaissance In East London

Annual Report 2004-05



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Contents

Page	
3	Foreword by Cllr Kallar
4	Introduction
5	Leading and Managing An Urban Renaissance
6	Areas of Opportunity
7	Barking Riverside
8	Barking Town Centre
10	Dagenham Dock
11	South Dagenham and Dagenham Heathway
12	Education and Skills
13	Local Jobs and Business
14	Housing
15	Transport
16	Environment
18	Neighbourhood Renewal

Introduction by Councillor Kallar

I'm very pleased to introduce our Fourth Annual Report on the implementation of the regeneration strategy, An Urban Renaissance in East London. This year, things have really started to happen in the regeneration of the borough.

In particular, we have started work on some key projects. The Tanner Street Gateway is well underway, replacing a run-down estate with new affordable housing. And we have started building work on our flagship project, the Lifelong Learning Centre in Barking Town Square.

We've also set the agenda for Government and our partners, making sure that the needs of Barking and Dagenham are heard and met. Projects in the borough secured £15 million of Government and European funding last year, including funds for a new health facility, money to redevelop estates and cash for important transport improvements. We also won the argument with Government for an Urban Development Corporation, which would bring private sector funds into Barking and Dagenham, as well as helping social and economic regeneration.

I'm also pleased that we've got some key regeneration projects started to provide new job opportunities for local people. Gateway to Health and Social Care will help residents into public sector careers. Building East will work with local construction companies to win regeneration contracts.

It's been a year of solid progress. Next year I'm confident that we'll have even more to tell you.

Councillor Sid Kallar
Lead Member for Regeneration
July 2005



Introduction

This is the fourth Annual Report of our regeneration strategy, An Urban Renaissance in East London. It sets out the work that we have done in the past year (2004/05) to implement the strategy.

Our vision is for a well educated, highly skilled population, able to access new jobs from the varied opportunities available within the borough and elsewhere. We want Barking and Dagenham to become a place where people choose to live, work and invest because of the provision of excellent work, education, health, housing and recreation for individuals and the family.

These are our key objectives:

- A vibrant local economy
- A diverse and cohesive community
- A safe and attractive public realm and environment
- Excellent retail, leisure, cultural, community and social facilities
- A full range of housing choices
- Accessible and affordable public transport
- First class education and lifelong learning services providing the basis for greater personal wealth and a better quality of life for all our residents, including those who are not economically active.

The Council has achieved a lot this year, including:

- Regeneration was assessed as a 2 star "good" service by the Audit commission
- We won £12.5m from the Sustainable Communities Fund
- The St Anns housing development was completed
- Work on new affordable housing started at Tanner Street
- Building work started on the Lifelong Learning Centre
- A new regional centre for the performing arts opened at the Broadway
- A major project to help construction companies win regeneration contracts, 'Building East', was launched in December 2004
- Gateway to Health and Social Care was launched to help young people and adults get careers in public services
- Fred Tibble Court won the prestigious Evening Standard award for best development by a Housing Association

Leading and Managing an Urban Renaissance in East London

Best Value Review

The Audit Commission visited the Council during October 2004 to inspect our Regeneration Service, assess performance over the last year and to look at our prospects for improvement in the future. The results of this assessment may count towards the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) of the whole Council.

The Audit Commission gave the Council's Regeneration service two stars out of a possible three - a "good" standard. Although, there have been comparatively few cross-cutting reviews of this sort, this is one of the best results for a regeneration division in the country and one of the best received by the Council.

We were praised for having a clear understanding of regeneration, for focussing projects on areas of greatest need, our track record of learning from experiences as well as learning from others, and for policies in line with the Government's programme for the Thames Gateway.

Partnership Working

Barking and Dagenham was one of the first local authorities in East London to call for an Urban Development Corporation for London Thames Gateway, lobbying successfully for a social regeneration role and the inclusion of key estates within its boundary.

The Government has now set up the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation (LTGDC) to take forward regeneration in the Lower Lea and London Riverside, incorporating Barking Town Centre. The LTGDC has powers on planning and land assembly and will support job creation schemes and community facilities

for local people as well as building new homes. The Council set up a Strategic Partnership for Barking Town Centre, bringing together business, the community and key agencies including English Partnerships, the London Development Agency and Transport for London, to support regeneration in Barking.

The Sustainable Communities Fund

The second round of Sustainable Communities Fund bids in 2004 made £50 million available for regeneration projects in the Thames Gateway. The Council won £9.5 million to pay for a new Child and Family Health Centre in Barking, the redevelopment of The Lintons council estate, a new transport interchange at Dagenham Dock, play facilities for children at Castle Green in Dagenham, public art in Barking and the completion of work on the borough's new arts venue, The Broadway. In addition, the London Development Agency won £3 million to help develop Dagenham Dock as a centre for environmental technology, making a total of £12.5 million.

Raising our profile

This year we have worked hard to raise the profile of the borough across the Thames Gateway, London and nationally. We have attended a number of high-profile exhibitions including the Sustainable Communities Summit, Cityscape 2004 and the Thames Gateway Forum.

We produced a digital information kit and film about our regeneration programme, and a booklet called 'First Choice for the Future' for libraries, schools and Council offices.

We held a successful reception for potential investors in Barking Town Centre in March. The Minister for Housing and Planning, Keith

Hill MP and the Chair of the new Development Corporation were the keynote speakers.

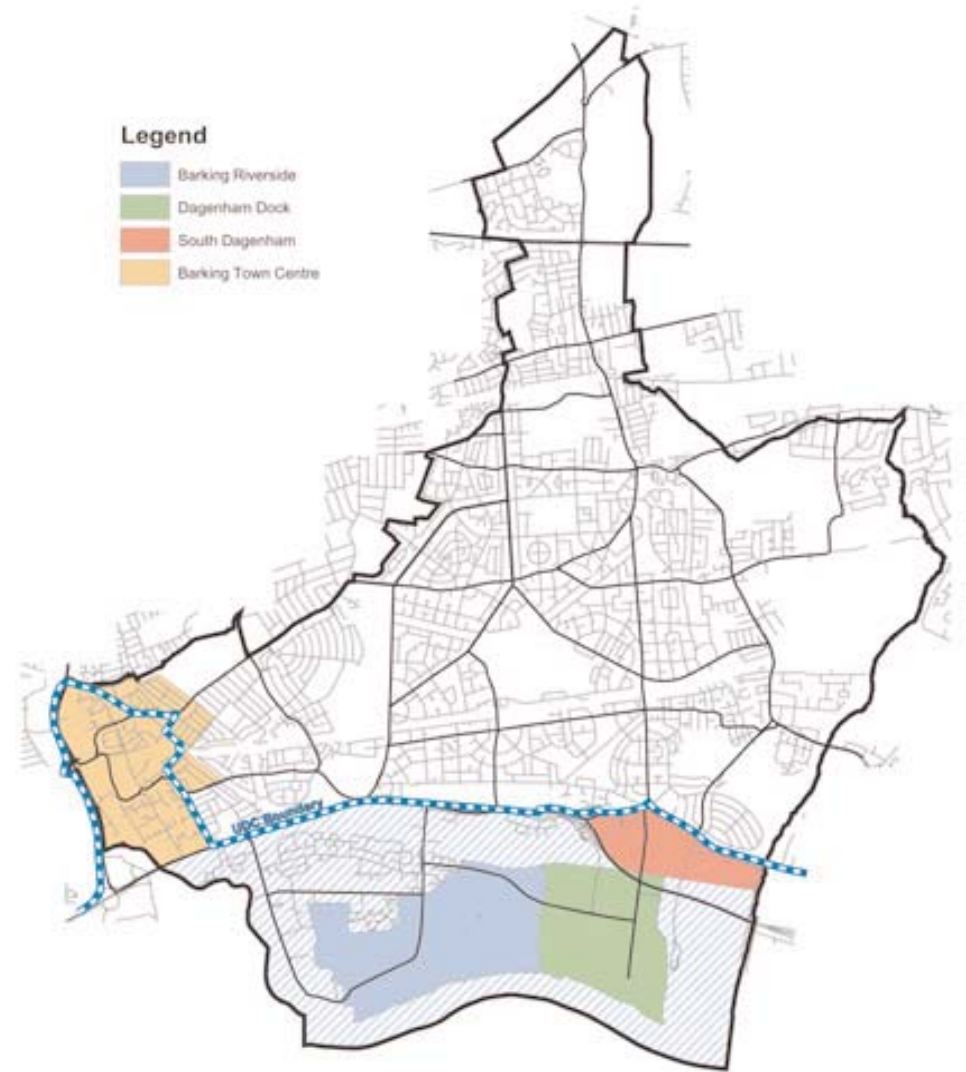
Awards

The Council was 'commended' in the Sustainable Communities category of the Local Government Chronicle Annual Awards for councils throughout London.

Fred Tibble Court won the prestigious Evening Standard award for best development by a Housing Association.

Areas of Opportunity

London Riverside extends across six square kilometres along the Thames from Barking Creek to the edge of Greater London. The borough's most important development sites - Barking Town Centre, Barking Riverside, Dagenham Dock and South Dagenham - are sited along this stretch of the borough.



Barking Riverside

In December 2004 Barking Riverside Ltd., the joint venture company formed between English Partnerships and Bellway Homes, submitted an outline planning application for development of Barking Riverside. The application envisages roughly 10,800 new homes, and a range of community facilities including new schools, shops, green spaces and new public transport links. The Framework Plan, which forms the basis of the planning application, has a mix of dwelling sizes, types, tenures and densities spread across the development. The density ranges from 40 dwellings per hectare to 240 dwellings per hectare with the higher densities located near the new transport interchanges.

Two public exhibitions were held, at Vicarage Fields and at a meeting of the Thames View Sure Start, showing the plans for Barking Riverside.

Transport Improvements

Transport for London has made a commitment to the construction of the East London Transit (ELT) from Ilford to Barking Riverside via Barking Station. ELT will be undertaking their public consultation in early 2006. The service is due to commence in late 2007.

Docklands Light Railway (DLR) Ltd are currently developing the business case and three route options for an extension of the DLR from Gallions Reach to Dagenham Dock Station.

Castle Green Complex

Construction work on the Castle Green Community Complex, which includes the Jo Richardson School, has made good progress. Castle Green is due to open for the new academic year in September 2005.



Barking Town Centre

Masterplanning and Strategies

Interim Planning Guidance, based on the Barking Town Centre Framework Plan was agreed in December 2004 after extensive Public Consultation during the summer of 2004.

The Council and English Partnerships have jointly commissioned Masterplans and feasibility reports for three areas within the town centre - Station Quarter, Axe Street and London Road North Street.

The Barking and Dagenham Code was agreed in November and provides guidance for public realm improvements within the borough. The first scheme, in front of the Broadway Theatre, was completed in Spring 2005.

We have completed studies on the retail capacity of the town centre, as well as a study into the links between Barking Town Centre and Barking Riverside.



Construction of the Lifelong Learning Centre (March 2005)

A Movement Strategy for Barking Town Centre has been commissioned and will be completed in May 2005. The strategy will help improve the movement of vehicles, pedestrians, cycles and public transport within the Town Centre.

New Funding

We were allocated £2m in government grants for improvements to the public realm in Barking Town Centre.

We also won £10 million from the Sustainable Communities Fund to pay for a Child and Family Health Centre, the redevelopment of the Lintons, public art in the Town Centre and the completion of The Broadway.

Housing

Construction of the mixed tenure St Ann's housing development, was completed in the Spring and the first tenants have moved in.

Work on the redevelopment of the Bloomfields, Clevelands, Wakerings and Tanner Street site has now commenced and is due to be completed by the end of 2005. This area is now known as Tanner Street Gateway.

Ground preparations are underway for the Furlongs development on Abbey Road.

Stage one of the building works for the Town Square project is now on site and the Lifelong Learning Centre is due to open in the Spring of 2006.

Parks and Green Spaces

We have commissioned Groundwork East London to produce a vision statement for Abbey Green, which is a site of archeological and historical importance, containing the ruins of Barking Abbey. We want to improve the space to create a prestigious town park (including a 'vibrant, colourful garden' and a



A concept drawing of the Lifelong Learning Centre

'welcoming gateway feature'), improve pedestrian, visual and functional links, and to promote the site as a primary outdoor events space. The proposal will create better strategic links between Barking Town Centre and the River Roding.

As part of the regeneration of Barking Park consultants were appointed in June to develop a Masterplan for a programme of improvements in preparation for a £3.5 million bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The draft masterplan includes refurbishment of the lido, new fountains, a new boat house, improvements to the lake, and new seating, lawns and flower beds. The project application will be submitted for appraisal by the London HLF panel and the National Board of Trustees by May 2005.

Broadway Completed

The redevelopment of the Broadway was finished in the Autumn and was officially opened by Billy Bragg and Phil Jupitus on 4th December.

We held a reception, at the newly opened Broadway Theatre with guest speakers including Keith Hill MP and Lorraine Baldry, Chairman of the London Thames Gateway Development Corporation, to promote Barking Town Centre to potential investors.



The new Broadway theatre



Construction at Tanner Street Gateway

Dagenham Dock

Progress in the development of Dagenham Dock as a 'Sustainable Industrial Park' (SIP) continued throughout 2004 /05 . The SIP will create a 'new generation' manufacturing and processing centre catering to contemporary needs for environmental industries. It will ensure that London and the Thames Gateway capitalise on the commercial opportunities arising from addressing environmental issues.

Dagenham Dock's privately owned and poorly maintained roads have long been a barrier to investment. 2004/05 saw a £10m package of infrastructure improvements worked up with Phase 1 commencing on site in April 2005.

The Centrepiece of the Sustainable Industrial Park is the Environmental Technology Resource Centre for London (ETRCL). In March 2005 the London Development Agency, supported by the Council, purchased the 3 acre site for the ETRCL. A further 3.4 acres of land adjacent to this was purchased thanks to a Sustainable Communities Fund grant of £3.2m. This is a significant step forward in delivering the centre and a Business/Delivery Plan is currently being commissioned. In total over £20m of external funding has been secured for Dagenham Dock.

London Riverside Industrial Area Signage & Identity

A Signage and Identity Strategy for London Riverside's industrial Areas was produced in December. Over £200,000 of London Riverside SRB funding has been secured to implement a first phase of signage in 2005/06.



The Environmental Technology Resource Centre Site

South Dagenham and Dagenham Heathway

A model showing proposals for Goresbrook Parade



Dagenham Heathway

The Council continued work on a strategy to revitalise Dagenham Heathway as an important local centre during 2004-05. The centrepiece of the strategy is a new library and council one-stop shop.

We are working with Living Streets and the Walkability project to encourage residents in Dagenham Heathway to use their cars less and to walk to their local shops. The findings of the project will form the basis for an application for funding from Transport for London to make changes to Dagenham Heathway.

South Dagenham

Up to two thousand new homes could be built at Chequers Corner following its purchase by insurer AXA Sun Life. The dilapidated corner will be demolished along with the old Ford Hi-Bay Warehouse. The site could also provide 120,000 sq ft of retail space.

We are working with site owners at South Dagenham, to promote the area as a distinctive eco-community providing a range of new housing and retail units incorporating enhanced standards of environmental design, sustainable materials, renewable energy and environmental management. The new communities will be served by a full range of local facilities, including doctors' surgeries, schools and a network of open spaces linked into the Goresbrook Valley.

Dagenham Dock Interchange

£3million was secured from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for a new transport interchange at Dagenham. Over 8,000 new jobs are expected to be provided in the immediate area with at least 16,000 daily employment trips, of which up to a quarter may be made by public transport. The interchange will bring together new and existing services including the proposed Docklands Light Railway extension, C2C services, bus services, East London Transit, cycle and pedestrian paths. A planning application is expected to be made in July 2005.

Goresbrook Parade

Community consultation was carried out in December on the redevelopment of the shops and flats at the junction of Goresbrook Road and Ripple Road. The feedback was positive. The Council is now seeking a development partner with the intention of submitting a planning application in early 2006.

Education and Skills

Education is the key to the borough's future. We want high levels of achievement to be the norm, to raise the aspirations of residents, supporting their employability and earning power.

Schools

Construction work on the Castle Green Community Complex, incorporating the Jo Richardson School, made good progress. The complex is due to open for the new academic year in September 2005.

Work began at the new site of Eastbury School at Rosslyn Road. The £15m project will provide larger classrooms, a new learning support centre and an extension to the current sports hall.

Adult Learning

In November Barking MP, Margaret Hodge, launched Gateway to Health and Social Care a new employment project promoting training opportunities and careers in health and social care. This project will eventually be located in the new Lifelong Learning Centre in Barking Town Centre.

The Gateway to Health and Social Care project is based on the concept of the NHS skills escalator, which allows the workforce at all levels to identify progression routes within the NHS. Both this project and the Gateway to Industry project have worked with young people of all abilities to identify career opportunities.

The Adult Basic Skills Initiative (ABSI), part of the Council's Education Department, has continued to build the capacity of training providers in the borough through the development of literacy, numeracy and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) materials. ABSI has also successfully delivered the Embedding Basic Skills pilot project within the Council's own workforce.

We have continued to support a voluntary sector Training Providers Network with monies for economic development made available to us by the London Development Agency. This network has now received further funding from the Learning & Skills Council London East to continue its work supporting local voluntary sector training providers in developing learning and training opportunities

Career Opportunities

We have promoted closer working with Jobcentre Plus through a range of projects as well as developing their role in Council recruitment. We have continued to support the Gateway to Health & Social Care, Welfare to Work for Disabled People and Heart of Thames Gateway Jobnet projects in helping residents into work.



Twelve year 12 students currently on the Gateway to Health & Social Care Bursary Scheme

Local Jobs and Businesses

The borough is striving to create a 21st century economy providing the appropriate space and environment for new and existing business to flourish.

Business Development

We worked with Greater London Enterprise to provide starter units for new businesses.

We provide funding to the East London Small Business Centre to provide start-up courses for new entrepreneurs. Over fifty residents have taken part in these courses.

The Manufacturing Advisory Service and Angle Technology are working with local companies to develop innovation and to improve productivity.

Building East, launched in December, aims to help construction companies to benefit from the major regeneration happening in the Thames Gateway. Local companies will be assisted to bid for large contracts associated with the Sustainable Communities Plan.

Green Business

The Green Mark project, which is an initiative that awards companies for environmental improvements they have achieved, is now operating in the borough.

Social Enterprise

We recruited a Social Enterprise "Champion" to help develop new social enterprises working with the Social Enterprise Network. A number of groups are now actively working to achieve social enterprise status.

Cultural and Creative Industries

The Malthouse is now proceeding with the development of a Thames Gateway Cultural Industries Strategy.

Barking College are providing training in the Performance Arts at the newly opened Broadway Theatre.

Industrial Estate Revitalisation

The present Industrial Estates Improvement Programme came to an end in March 2005. In its life time it helped the following areas:

Lyon Business Park, Barking Business Centre, Trafalgar Business Centre, Atcost Road Estate, Thames Road lighting, River Road road surface improvements, River Road general security, Thames Road security, Edwards Estate (Thames Road) Buzzard Creek Estate.

The programme also helped set up a number of tenants' associations and signposts businesses to business support services.

A new, but smaller programme is scheduled to start in October 2005.



New fencing at River Road Industrial Estate, part of the Industrial Estates Revitalisation Programme

Housing

We want to improve the quality and availability of housing opportunities available for all sections of the community, ensuring that all residents have a decent home and living environment.



Strategic Planning

The Masterplans for the Station Quarter; the Lintons; London Road/North Street and Axe Street are being developed in partnership with English Partnerships and are due in late 2005.

New Developments

Construction of the mixed tenure St Ann's housing development, on the edge of the Gascoigne Estate was completed in the Spring and the first tenants have moved in.

Up to two thousand new homes could be built at Chequers Corner following its purchase by insurer AXA Sun Life. The site will be known as South Dagenham West and could also provide 120,000 sq ft of retail space.

Estate Renewal

We started the procurement process to appoint a developer/s partner for Gascoigne estate.

The consultation process for the redevelopment of the Eastern End of Thames View Estate has begun.

The redevelopment of Cadiz Court began in January with tenants being rehoused.

Following consultation with residents, the Council agreed to demolish the Lintons Estate and provide new affordable homes on site. This is one of the key estate renewal projects linked to Housing Futures, and part of a government drive to ensure everyone has a decent home within six years.

36 properties with 'space for learning' are currently being built at Tanner Street Gateway.

Sustainable Homes

12 flats in Rugby Road and Tanner Street

Gateway achieved the EcoHomes "good" standard. Housing projects currently under development will meet the standard for excellence in line with Borough policy. Projects include the use of green roofs, passive solar gain, photo voltaics, and wind turbines to meet 10% renewable targets.

Thirty new homes were built at Meadow Close, Barking on derelict Council land. Eight of these have been adapted for residents with physical disabilities or learning difficulties.

Wired Communities

The 'Test Bed' and Wiring up the Gascoigne projects have helped to improve IT skills by use of the Internet. We are encouraging developers and Registered Social Landlord's (RSLs) to include wiring up into their new housing projects.

Option Appraisal for Decent Homes

Stock Options Appraisal Consultant (Beha Williams Norman) and Independent Tenant Advisor (PPCR Associates) have been appointed for the Housing Futures Stock Options Appraisal. Consultation was carried out through the Housing Futures Forum and the Housing Futures Residents Forum. A Stock Condition Plus Survey included focus on high-rise accommodation and a Housing Needs Survey. Six estate regeneration schemes were identified through this process. The Stock Options report is due to the Government Office for London by July 2005.

Awards

Fred Tibble Court won the prestigious Evening Standard award for Best New Development by a Housing Association, and the Tanner Street Gateway project has been shortlisted for a CABA (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) design award.

Environment

High environmental standards are an important part of our vision for regeneration.

Strategic Planning

Masterplans have been developed for Barking Park, Old Dagenham Park, and Valence Park and a Masterplan is underway for the Scrattons Eco Park Extension.

Consultation and feasibility works were carried out for the 'Transforming Your Space' projects at Old Dagenham Park, Padnall Green and Parsloes Park.

We commissioned Groundwork East London to produce a vision statement for Abbey Green.

Funding

We secured over £730,000 from external sources and £225,000 through Section 106 planning agreements to fund projects, set out in the Council's Parks and Green Spaces Strategy.

Park Improvements

Park improvement works were completed at King George V Field and Tantony Green. Improvements are underway at Castle Green and Beam Valley.

Consultants were appointed in June to develop a Masterplan for a programme of improvements to Barking Park, in preparation for a £3.5 million bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The draft masterplan includes refurbishment of the lido, new fountains, a new boat house, improvements to the lake, and new seating, lawns and flower beds. The project application will be submitted for appraisal by the London Heritage Lottery Fund panel and the National Board of Trustees by May 2005.

New Planting

A Woodland Planting contract was prepared, tendered and awarded to Tillhill Forestry Ltd. Operational works will commence in September 2005.

Public Art

A video arts event, 'Love and Light' took place over Valentine's weekend to mark the beginning of Barking Town Centre's regeneration programme and the completion of the A13 Artscape project.

The A13 Artscape project is now complete after eight years of development. The project aimed to shape the road by improving access and the environment at junctions, roundabouts and

Charlton Crescent Subway (below) and the Pumphouse (right) are part of the now completed A13 Artscape project



subways as well as on local estates and parks. Work included landscaping, sculptures, lighting and subway refurbishments.

We received £300,000 from the Sustainable Communities Fund for a new piece of public art for Barking Town Centre.

Crime

A new strategy for tackling crime, disorder and drugs is being developed by the Council for 2005-08.

Public Realm

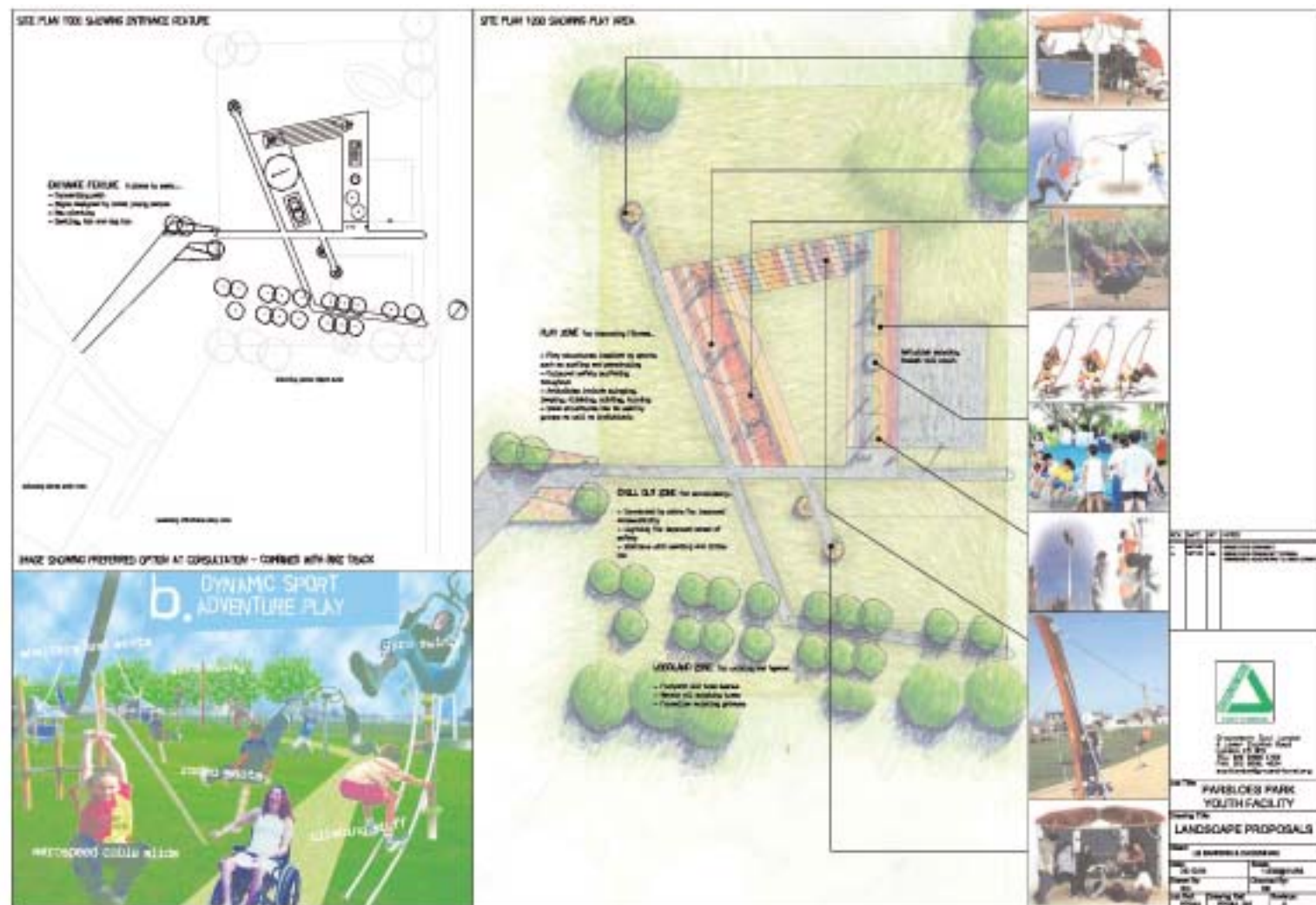
The first Public Realm project has been completed outside the Broadway Theatre in Barking.

Awards

Green Flag Park Awards was secured for Eastbrookend Country Park and Newlands Park.

12 park playgrounds now meet either the NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play) or LEAP (Local Equipped Areas for Play) criteria as set out in the National Playing Fields Six Acre Standard.

Beam Valley, Mayesbrook Park Lake (South) and Parsloes Park 'Squatts' have been designated as Local Nature Reserves, under the Local Public Service Agreement programme.



Transport

Improving and extending the borough's transport infrastructure is a key driver for regeneration, economic development and environmental improvement.



Improving Public Transport

The Mayor of London, Ken Livingston, unveiled plans in October 2004 which mean major investment into the borough's public transport links. Schemes which will benefit the borough are:

- the Thames Gateway Bridge, with 3 traffic carriageways in each direction, plus cycle and pedestrian lanes, connecting Jenkins Lane with Thamesmead
- the East London Transit, a new high-tech bus service will link Ilford, Barking and Dagenham Dock, and will eventually cross the Thames Gateway Bridge to the south
- a string of improvements to the Silverlink metro train line including extending the times staff are at stations and security improvements
- funding to design an extension of the Docklands Light Rail line to Dagenham Dock and Barking Riverside.

Altogether £3.5m was awarded from Transport for London, with £1m for bus priority schemes, £900,000 to improve major roads, £500,000 for improving access at Dagenham Dock Station and around £600,000 for road safety schemes.

Improvements for pedestrians

We are working with Living Streets and the Walkability project to encourage residents in Dagenham Heathway to use their cars less and to walk to their local shops. The findings of the project will form the basis for an application for funding from Transport for London to make changes to Dagenham Heathway.

Improvements to Stations

The Council has been awarded £3m for a new transport interchange at Dagenham Dock from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Sustainable Communities Fund to create a multi-transport system station.

Barking Station has had a £500k facelift and now has public toilets, a manned information point and a new booking office window adapted for wheelchair users. Further improvements to the station are planned and Transport for London are looking at improvements to the Barking - Gospel Oak line.

The Barking Town Centre Movement Strategy, which will be completed in May 05, will outline improvements to Barking Station interchange and underpin future funding bids and transport improvement schemes in Barking.

In January, the Greater London Assembly Member for East London, John Biggs, announced the March extension of the 387 bus route, which runs from Little Heath to Marine Drive in Barking Riverside. The route now carries on to Galleons Drive.

Local Implementation Plan (LIP)

The LIP is a five year transport plan for the borough and its main purpose is to deliver the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy in the borough. A consultation draft is being developed and is due to be ready for May 2005 with the final strategy published by the end of 2005.

Neighbourhood Renewal: Healthy Lifestyles

Our citizens have the right to expect high quality health and social care when they need them. Our vision is for people to live as long and healthy lives as possible.

Improving Health Facilities

Barking & Dagenham Primary Care Trust have applied for planning permission to demolish the Medical Health centre in Lawn Farm Grove, Marks Gate and the Annie Prendergrast Clinic in Ashton Gardens, Chadwell Heath, and replace them with modern facilities which will house GPs, district nurses and other community health professionals.

The LIFT programme for improving Primary Care and Community services is on course for the completion of the first phase by March 2007. Through working with GPs there is a 26% decrease in the number of GPs surgeries below national standard.

Funding

An extra £55m, spread over two years, has been awarded to the Primary Care Trust to invest in Primary Health Care in the borough.

Teenage Pregnancy

The strategy in place has been assessed as good by the Governments' Teenage Pregnancy Unit. However, the teenage conception rate in the borough is still increasing. The programme of activities has a mix of initiatives around after care for young parents and their children as well as preventative work. The Government Office for London and the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit are working with the borough to look at ways of reducing conception rates to help make a better impact on floor targets.

Helping people to stop smoking

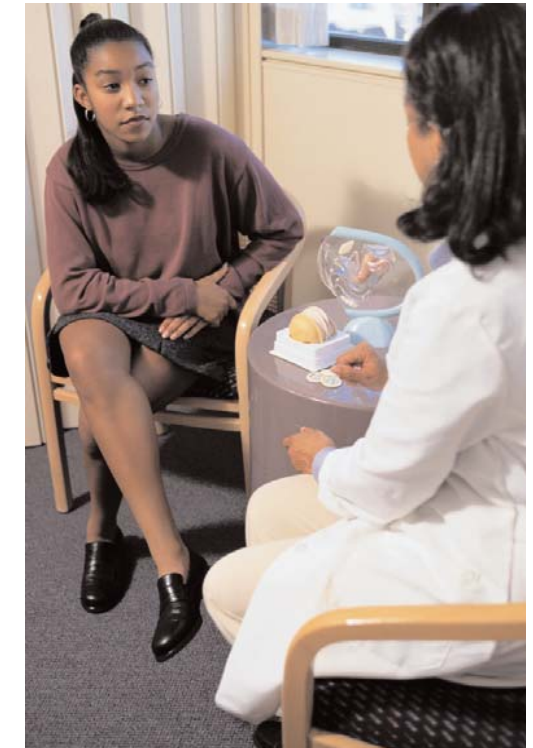
The number of adults taking part in stop-smoking schemes through GPs and pharmacies increased in 2004-05. A Healthy Lifestyle Strategy is being developed in the borough.

Healthy Eating

Healthy Eating schemes linked to Sure Starts and Children's Centres are still underway and Healthy Food Co-operatives are being piloted.

Access to Health Care

As part of our drive to ensure that patient's experience of primary care services are appropriate and sensitive to their needs, we funded a pilot project working with South Asian Older People. The project is part of initiatives to make sure that black and minority ethnic groups access services sooner so that serious illness can be prevented. This close working will also inform how existing services can be improved to aid access.



Neighbourhood Renewal: Working with the community

A key part of our vision for regeneration is a flourishing community, with support for residents to get involved and make a difference.

Community Capacity

The Community Empowerment Network (CEN) was launched in June. It is part of a national scheme to give local people a say on local issues. It trains ordinary people in the skills that they need to take an active role in improving the borough, like public speaking and making presentations. CEN will help one representative and one deputy from each of the Community Forums, as well as reps from voluntary sector groups, to take up places in the Barking and Dagenham Partnership.

A new Sure Start Children's Centre has opened in North Street, Barking and has brought together the existing Sure Start Abbey Local Programme and the new Abbey Neighbourhood Nursery. The centre provides integrated early education, childcare, health services, family support, training and help into employment.

Neighbourhood Management in Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames Wards

The Neighbourhood Partnership Board brings together representatives from key organisations in Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames wards and acts to improve the delivery of services in the area.

The Neighbourhood Management Team, overseen by the board, works to an annual delivery plan for the three wards every year. The team's primary focus for 2005/06 will be to involve and engage the local community on the proposed new developments for Barking Town Centre.

The Focus Three community magazine has continued to thrive and is published quarterly. A web site has also been developed to promote the magazine - www.focusthreenews.co.uk

Community Development Trust

A Community Development Trust has been set-up in the area to cover Abbey, Gascoigne and Thames wards. The aim of the Trust is to lever in external funds to support local community initiatives to benefit local people. The Trust has also set-up a web site - www.AGTCDT.org.uk

A Gascoigne ICT project client



