A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

‘Sticking with young people’ is what Salmon Youth Centre has been doing since its foundation in 1906, when Bermondsey was one of the very poorest districts of London.

Most recently, this approach to working with young people in the community has been exemplified by the life and commitment of Jim Guild, who died on his way to work at Salmon on 16th June 2016, aged 66. Jim had worked at the Centre since 1995 and had been a constant presence during the winding down of the old building and the construction of the new.

Amidst all the various administrative and practical tasks that he was responsible for, what gave him the most satisfaction was the club for 6-9 year olds. By 2016, young children were attending who were the offspring of club-members from his earliest days.

The Sports Hall was packed with current and former club members on 7th July for the special service of thanksgiving for his life – a truly fitting tribute for a remarkable life of ‘stickability’ for the children and young people of Bermondsey and Southwark. Jim’s inspiration was his faith in and relationship with Jesus Christ as his Saviour and Lord – the one who promised to stick with us forever, saying ‘I am with you always, to the very end of the age’ (Matthew 28:20b TNIV).

Two other special mentions. First to the team who completed the Tough Mudder course and raised over £25,000 in sponsorship – which made a crucial difference to our income in 2015/16. And second to those who invested their time in leading on the renewal of the heating and ventilation plant in the building.

Finally, thank you to my fellow Trustees, to Sam and the staff, the volunteers, parents, funders, supporters and members of the Council of Reference for all your continuing support.

Adrian Greenwood
The Salmon Youth Centre has been reaching out to young people in inner city London for over a hundred years. We inspire young people to reach their potential and contribute positively to the community in which they live.

Most children and young people begin by attending one of our open access clubs. By offering a variety of activities aimed at their age group they get to try new things, develop skills and achieve accreditations & awards.

Many then go on to engage in one of our targeted activities in adventure, arts, dance, drama, music and sports. Our targeted provision also includes:

- Mentoring: young volunteers, befriending and apprenticeship schemes
- Mixables & Mixters: work with young people with disabilities
- Future & Hope Project: employability programme focusing on those who are at high risk of joining or are currently in a gang
- Salmon Express: speaking and listening programme
- Music is Power: youth empowerment programme using music
- Apprentices: offering young people the opportunity to learn and work over 9-12 months

We offer a range of trips, outings and residentials throughout the year, including outdoor adventure activities at our partner outdoor adventure site.

The long-term nature of Salmon’s work affords a good understanding of local and social issues affecting children, young people and their families. Salmon is therefore often the best-placed organisation to provide positive early intervention and support for the most vulnerable of children and young people and their families.

We work to promote positive change in young people and support their transition to adulthood in three key ways:

- Preparing Young People for Education and Work with the overall aim of improving their educational attainment, providing access to relevant training opportunities and supporting them in gaining meaningful employment
- Involving Young People in Positive Community Engagement through boosting their volunteering activities, increasing their political and spiritual awareness and their ability to relate to others in the wider society
- Improving Young People’s Health & Wellbeing and encouraging the development of healthy eating habits and overall lifestyle

“I go to Salmon to meet up with other young people and talk to staff about my anger problems and issues in school. The youth workers have helped me to apply for college, which I am hoping to start in September. People at Salmon actually care and want to help you.” LEAH, 16
This was the conclusion reached by Dr Richard Slade from the University of Leeds, who completed an external evaluation of our five-year apprentice programme at the end of 2015. The evaluation highlighted some impressive achievements, alongside making recommendations for future development.

Salmon was complimented on its approach to working with young people. A number of cases where young people's lives had been turned around as a result of the apprentices and young leaders programme were summarised in the report:

- a former looked-after child moved from casual work and homelessness to a university degree and employment in youth offending services.
- a young single parent experiencing mental ill-health moved from a chaotic lifestyle to achieving a first class honours degree and employment with a local authority.
- two individuals caught in a cycle of offending are now engaged as professional staff in youth work and youth offending services.

The evaluation report concluded that “Salmon’s interaction with apprentices represents excellent value for money” and that “the model of youth work practice developed by the centre represents important transferable learning for other organisations.”

“Salmon has given me people to talk to about things that I am going through. They have given me the support I needed when I was going through a difficult time in my life. When I am older, I want to work in either a nursery or as youth worker. Being a young leader at Salmon is giving me the skills I need to be able to make this happen. I want to make an impact in young people’s lives the same way Salmon has made an impact on mine.” Sophie, 16
Prayer in club
Prayer Shack was introduced to the young people in 10–13s Mixed Club. During club, young people were invited to come up to the chapel to talk to some of the youth workers. If they wanted to, the chat would be finished with prayer. Issues we talked about and prayed for included family members or close friends’ health issues, school work and pressures, relationships with parents or siblings, social justice issues, being bullied, personal health issues and future careers.

Manual for increasing Speaking & Listening Skills
We launched our new speaking and listening manual called ‘Let’s talk about’. This highly innovative tool helps youth workers and teachers develop the speaking and listening skills of young people through using the arts inspired by Shakespeare. It includes five different levels for the youth worker and young people to work through, including monitoring and evaluation tools. It has been developed with support from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and will be distributed to youth providers and schools in both London and the rest of the UK.

Reactions from external youth workers include:
“We are planning to include the manual in our curriculum and ingrain it into our organisation to benefit both staff and young people.”
“I am hoping to use the manual within schools and with children within the domestic violence houses.”

Mentoring vulnerable young people
We provided a mentoring programme for vulnerable young people and their families, some of who were referred to us through Social Services. Those with complex needs were offered weekly support with the aim of avoiding exclusion from mainstream schooling. Our work is preventative, whereby we engage young people at the first sign that they need support. In this way we reduce risk and build resilience by ensuring that the key factors that young people need are available in their lives.

2015–2016 HIGHLIGHTS

“The Salmon Youth Centre has helped me so much throughout this past year. My mentor gave me the opportunity to do a youth work course and study English. I joined a trip to Germany, which was amazing. Salmon also helped me to find a job at a bank. I am very grateful!”

Mollie, 18

“We are planning to include the manual in our curriculum and ingrain it into our organisation to benefit both staff and young people.”

“I am hoping to use the manual within schools and with children within the domestic violence houses.”

Mollie, 18

ABOVE: TOSHAWN, TOGETHER WITH HIS MENTOR RAZZ (RIGHT) AND YOUTH WORKER MATT (LEFT), AFTER BEING AWARDED MEMBER OF THE YEAR 2015.
Naod Kahsay, 20

“SALMON CHANGED MY LIFE”

I was born and bred in Bermondsey and live with my mum and younger brother. I studied sport science and have always been into football. I started coming to Salmon from the age of fifteen. I liked the great facilities and mainly came to meet with my friends and play football.

For a long time I was hoping to turn football into my main career, but it didn’t work out. This made me very frustrated and angry. Most of my friends were doing really well but I felt lost and didn’t know what the next step was going to be. I brought my frustration to Salmon and used to kick off every week. I only used the football match as a cover up, but deep inside I was just lost and confused.

One of the youth workers started mentoring me. He was like an older brother to me. This is when I realised it was not the end of the world if football didn’t work out. Through chatting with staff I started redefining my goals for the next few years and I was offered an apprenticeship at Salmon. I started in October 2015.

Salmon literally changed my life. Even in my time of trouble and kicking off in club every week, staff at Salmon kept pushing me and never gave up. They saw the potential in me, constantly checked up on me and took time to come out and meet with me.

I am now leading football sessions at Salmon myself. I meet a lot of boys that want to be professional sportsmen. I know what they feel like; the pressures from school, home and peers. Because I have been there myself, they respect me and listen to me. Even though I don’t know all the answers, I know how to help them take that first step and see positivity.

Most young people struggle to open up straight away. A lot of the relationships they have might not be consistent; a dad who is in and out of their lives, a mum who is busy with younger siblings. That’s why long-term relationships with young people are so important. After a while, the young people start being comfortable with you. They care of what you think about them and their actions change because they respect you.

In the future, I would love to start my own football academy. I also want to progress here at Salmon and keep bettering myself. The lessons that I have learnt at Salmon will always stick with me: to always care about people and be a good, loyal and loving young man.

“Salmon has a friendly atmosphere and has helped me to make friends. The youth workers are nice and make everything fun. They are always around to listen and very supportive. I feel comfortable talking to them.”

Isla, 13
THE UNDERLYING PERFORMANCE FOR 2015/16 WAS SATISFACTORY ALTHOUGH THE REPORTED DEFICIT WAS £13,331.

Total income was slightly lower than the previous year, which included several one-off items. Greater use of our facilities by various other groups resulted in higher letting income. More than £25,000 was raised by a team from Salmon participating in the ‘Tough Mudder’ challenge, for which we are most grateful.

Total expenditure was also lower as cost savings in some areas were offset by higher repair and maintenance costs connected with the £125,000 upgrade of the Centre’s heating and ventilation systems. More efficient boilers and better controls will reduce future running costs and ensure the building remains compliant with the many regulations. About half the total cost has been covered by grants with the balance coming from reserves.

Cash balances held at 31 March 2016 of £220,183 were lower than a year earlier, mainly because of the heating upgrade; also some grants were not received until after the year-end. Free reserves (General Funds less other fixed assets) amounted to £310,618.

Fundraising remains a constant challenge. The 2016/17 budget maintains current activity levels although another deficit is in prospect in the absence of increased income.

We are most grateful to all our funders and donors for your generous support in 2015/16 and look forward to your continued support in the coming year.

Peter Knight
Honorary Treasurer
I might be stating the obvious when I say that central to our ethos at Salmon is establishing long-term, meaningful relationships with young people and their families. Embedded in this philosophy is the importance of creating a positive culture and environment where young people have a sense of acceptance and belonging.

There are no shortcuts or quick fixes to young people improving their health and wellbeing, becoming involved in positive community engagement and being prepared for education or work. What we have learned over the years is how to turn the meaningful relationships that we build with young people (through the various activities that we offer) into helping these young people develop “want to” attitudes. Through our work, we go through a series of processes of transformation. These processes are as important as the final goals. Getting young people to a “want to” attitude means that we are no longer working for them but we are working with them. It is the ‘sticking with’ that gives young people a sense of being accepted and belonging, instead of just tolerated. They bring their energy, abilities and determination and we decide to walk alongside them, encouraging them to fulfil their potential. We are looking forward to doing more of this ‘sticking with’ during the coming year with the help of our volunteers, staff, funders and supporters.

Sam Adofo
Our mission is to inspire all young people to fulfil their potential and contribute to their community, within a framework of Christian life and values.

with grateful thanks to all our supporters & funders in 2015/16

Age Unlimited
Angus Lawson Memorial Trust
Basom Trust
Botches Trust

Bermondsey & Rotherhithe Community Council
Gordon and Louise Izatt

Hyde Housing
Jerusalem Trust
Newcomen Collett Foundation

St Olave & St Thomas Charities
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