

community  links  
Meeting local needs, inspiring social change



a sixty second  
guide

# building ladders out of poverty

Community Links is an innovative charity running community-based projects in east London and sharing local lessons to create national change.

Social problems blight our communities. For people in Newham, where most of our local projects take place, life can be a challenge:

- Unemployment rate is double the England average
- 55% of children live in poverty
- Almost a quarter of the population have no qualifications
- Crime rates are a third higher than the London average

Our network of over 60 community projects empowers individuals and communities to help them build their own ladder out of poverty – and towards a brighter future.

With our record of success since 1977, our national work shares the local lessons across the country to widen the impact of our projects and generate lasting social change.



# a network of practical community projects

## For children

- Preschool groups
- Free, open access play schemes
- After school care provision
- Holiday play schemes

## For young people

- Youth advice
- Youth projects
- Education
- Employment support
- Crime diversion

## For adults and families

- New Deal – employment support
- Advice
- Older people home visiting
- Community development
- Advice and community development training

## Social Enterprise

'Auction My Stuff' – work placements for unemployed young people trading on eBay

## Our national work, linksUK

Sharing our experience with policy makers and community groups nationwide and inspiring social change

- Consultancy
- Training
- Publications
- Policy recommendations

## a track record of achievement and impact

- 3,600 children attending our play and care provision, keeping them safe and happy outside school hours
- 144 young people collecting a Jack Petchey Award for achievement each year
- 200 young people given a second chance in education each year, achieving exam passes and going on to study further, training and employment
- 800 long-term unemployed young people supported into employment, making our programme the best of its kind in the South East and rated second in the UK
- Over 17,000 helped by our free Advice service, freeing them from debt, unfit housing and poverty
- 12 national policy changes directly influenced in the last six years
- 10 ideas resulting in national awards, forums or brand new organisations over the past decade



“Community Links work inspires us all”

Gordon Brown, Prime Minister

## a powerful and unique network where everyone has a part to play

We are a network of service users, volunteers, staff, government partners, community organisations and supporters who give time, skills and financial resources.

80% of our staff are from east London, many of whom are former users of our projects.

“It was hard to avoid trouble around on the streets. But I felt it was in me to do better. One day, Community Links asked if I wanted to make music. I joined in at the Youth House, got a certificate and stayed involved with their activities. I wanted to work – but my CV was blank! Then the Youth House offered me volunteering. I became a Young Leader, took diplomas in youth work then became a deputy at the Youth House. When running the Asta Centre came up they said ‘Go for it Jason’. I got it. I am so grateful to Community Links for giving me the chance when I was young. I’ve got loads of ideas for Asta to reach kids like I was. Already I feel like we are making a difference to young people’s lives.”

Jason Forde, Asta Centre Manager

# We have set ourselves a challenge

Over the next five years, we will focus our energies on what we do best to have the greatest impact on social exclusion, for all our communities. We aim to:

- raise aspirations for a better life – for individuals and communities
- extend opportunities in education and employment
- reduce poverty
- build stronger communities

## We will do this by

- developing and running excellent practical activities in east London
- and by sharing the local experience with practitioners and policy makers nationwide



“With Community Links you can see the difference your support makes and the wider impact it has. Everyone feels valued.”

Michael Grier, Corporate Social Responsibility Manager, Tate & Lyle

# partnerships with Community Links are exciting, rewarding and tailored to you

- **Corporate Partners** We are passionate about developing excellent, rewarding partnerships, including opportunities for your employees to volunteer and make a meaningful difference
- **Fundraising Partners** Sign up to our excellent fundraising events, as a personal or team challenge, online
- **Individual Gifts** As a regular giver to our Turning Lives Around Appeal or a major supporter of our Opening Doors Appeal, your involvement will have a real impact
- **Trust Partners** Private trusts and charitable foundations help us to develop new, innovative work and strengthen existing projects
- **Government Partners** provide opportunities for statutory funding, partnership working and policy recommendations to create lasting change
- **Community Partners** Together we can extend our reach

“Community Links consistently breaks new ground. Together we can do more.”

Sir David Walker, Senior Advisor, Morgan Stanley,  
Chairman Community Links Leadership Group

Inspired? Everyone can play a part.  
Visit [www.community-links.org/get-involved](http://www.community-links.org/get-involved)  
or email [info@community-links.org](mailto:info@community-links.org)

# OUR VISION

To be champions of social change

# OUR MISSION

'To generate change. To tackle causes not symptoms, find solutions not palliatives. To recognise that we need to give as well as to receive and to appreciate that those who experience a problem understand it best. To act local but think global, teach but never stop learning. To distinguish between the diversity that enriches society and the inequalities that diminish it. To grow – but all to build a network not an empire. To be driven by dreams, judged on delivery. To never do things for people but to guide and support, to train and enable, to simply inspire'.



## Community Links

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