

The Greenwich Peninsula Chaplaincy Steering Group's newsletter

November 2004

A unique project

If all goes to plan, by 2007 the Dome will have become a sports and leisure complex (hosting concerts and sports events). A hotel next to the Dome will follow, as will new homes, and by 2021 it is planned that there will be around 10,000 new homes, enough office space to fill two and a half Canary Wharf towers, some light industrial units, retail and service facilities, and a secondary school.

The faith communities: working together

In terms of its diversity and density, this development is unique. A second unique feature of it is the way in which the faith communities have been invited to work together from the beginning of the project, and have agreed to do so.

- Throughout, we shall provide industrial chaplaincy for the construction companies, retail trade, and commercial institutions
- We shall provide sports and arts chaplaincy when the stadium opens
- And when the dwellings are built we shall provide for the spiritual and other needs of the new residential community.

When the development is finished there will be around 20,000 residents and 24,000 employees on the peninsula every day, and often 20,000 visitors; and our privilege and responsibility will be to serve them.

As soon as there are significant numbers of construction workers on the site, Meridian Delta Ltd., the consortium in charge of the development, will provide temporary space for prayer and meetings for worship. Then the Greenwich Pavilion will be dismantled and rebuilt on the eastern edge of the peninsula south of the dome. This will provide a permanent space for faith communities to use for prayer, for worship, for dialogue with each other, and for serving the new community. Community development is on our agenda, and we are already negotiating with partners who will help us to meet this part of our responsibility.

Consultation

In September 2003 we held a conference to listen to a wide variety of people's views on how we should go about providing for the spiritual and other needs

of the new community. On September 27th this year the four presidents of Churches Together in England (The Most Rev'd Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury; the Most Rev'd Cormac Murphy O'Connor, Archbishop of Westminster; the Rev'd David Coffey, Moderator of the Free Churches Group; and the Rev'd Esme Beswick MBE) visited the peninsula and we took the opportunity to invite thirty people from the borough's faith communities and council to meet them. Next year we plan another consultative conference. In the meantime, this newsletter will be both a means of disseminating information about the new development and an invitation to communicate with us.

Activity

The steering group's major task at the moment is the completion of the necessary written agreement between the steering group, the developer, and the borough. The next task will be recruiting, training and supervising a team of chaplains to work amongst the construction companies when they arrive.

The Greenwich Peninsula Chaplaincy Steering Group

The steering group was appointed by a meeting in March 2003 to which members of Greenwich's Multifaith Forum and the borough deans (representing the Christian Churches) were invited. The steering group has now been established as a trust with the group's members as trustees. A Council of Reference (of faith group leaders) has been appointed to advise the steering group and to ensure good communication with the faith communities. The meeting in March 2003 appointed Malcolm Torry as Site Chaplain. His task is to co-ordinate the group's activities and to facilitate communication between the developer, the borough, and the faith communities.

For further information on the steering group's activities please contact:

The Rev'd Malcolm Torry, Site chaplain

St. George's Vicarage, 89 Westcombe Park Road,
London SE3 7RZ

Tel. 020 8858 3006, fax. 020 8305 1802,
email: Malcolm@mtorry.freeseve.co.uk.