



Sydenham Arts has been awarded funding by the Big Lottery

December 2015

Sydenham Arts has been awarded funding by the Big Lottery to introduce the local community to their new home – the Sydenham Centre on Sydenham Road.

Under the Big Lottery's Awards for All funding, Sydenham Arts will receive £10,000 for The Happenings Project. The initiative will introduce the community to the arts charity's new home, which will be a new community hub in the heart of Sydenham, SE26.

Sydenham Arts plans to make the centre an accessible 'go to' space for the people who live, work or study in Sydenham and Forest Hill. The regenerated centre will house numerous cultural and social groups and activities, providing opportunities for local people, young and old, to become more active citizens by taking part in engagement projects and enhanced volunteering opportunities.

The project will be managed by specially recruited Volunteers and Community Outreach Project Managers. They will be responsible for partnering with organisations in identifying outreach opportunities and leading workshop and training sessions.

As well as covering the costs of staffing, the funding will pay for training and development sessions for volunteers and a series of arts workshops, for the local community.

The Happenings Project will give children, young people and adults the chance to try out new activities at the centre. The venue on Sydenham Road, next to the Post Office, is in an ideal location to capture a wide range of people as the arts charity aims to have an open door policy during the project so people can come in and discuss the project with them.

Helen Goward, Sydenham Arts' Managing Director, says: "Having a high street presence facilitates a continuous dialogue, not necessarily focused on the arts, we will be seen to be more representative of the community we serve. The project is an opportunity to launch our presence by showcasing the activities of the diverse communities on our doorstep, with those communities leading their own activities and us providing back up resources to support them."

"Sydenham is experiencing a period of rapid change and the rising housing market is bringing new communities into the area. As the area changes we want to ensure we are engaging a diverse population who feel that the arts events still serves the interests of all local residents."

The Happenings Project is scheduled to start in the New Year.



Photography by Mark Drinkwater

Pictured above at the Sydenham Centre: Sydenham Singers at the finale of Sydenham Arts' 2015 summer festival .