

**P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

23 November 2006

## **THURROCK YOUTH CABINET OUT IN FORCE FOR BILLBOARD AT THAMES GATEWAY FORUM**

**Thurrock Youth Cabinet**, a democratically elected body, representing the views of young people in Thurrock has been out in force this week at the Thames Gateway Forum in support of the **Billboard Project**.

The Billboard Project, a unique project to harness young people's views about the regeneration of the area in which they live, focuses on a one-off resource – a bespoke, architect-designed, shipping container which slides apart to create a multi-media filming studio and exhibition space.

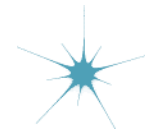
During the Forum, key members of Thurrock Youth Cabinet were mentored by a professional production team from Channel 4 Television's 4Talent. Participants were introduced to the art of programme-making and broadcast journalism and researched and conducted interviews with stakeholders and policy-makers to create filmed output from the event.

Over the last few months the Youth Cabinet have been training to develop their skills. Much of the footage already captured on the streets of Thurrock by the Youth Cabinet identifies peoples' concerns about a dwindling sense of community and pride and more specifically a lack of development opportunities which will engage the next generation in positive ways.

The Youth Cabinet's efforts at the forum have taken direction from these findings and attempts to move the story on by consulting with key players in the regeneration industry. The resulting documentary will examine regeneration in the Thames Gateway and look at how young people can have a say in the development of their future towns and cities. The footage produced will feature on 4Talent's website.

The work here and at future Billboard workshops will contribute to the development of a Young People's Manifesto for Urban Regeneration and a national conference.

Built around a partnership between Creative Partnerships Thames Gateway, FuturecityArts, Basildon District Council, Southend and Thurrock Unitary Authorities and Channel 4 Talent, Billboard will create a unique, positive, public space for young people and local authorities to engage in a conversation about regeneration.



The Billboard Project is supported by Arts Council England, East and EEDA via their unique shared prospectus. The only one of its kind in the UK, the shared prospectus identifies three common areas for strategic joint investment that will harness the power of the arts and creativity to transform the social, economic and material conditions of local people and communities.

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

**Thurrock Youth Cabinet** is a unique group of young people who actively participate in the political process in Thurrock. The Cabinet was formed to engage, consult and represent young people across the borough and it met for the first time in March 2006. The creation of the Youth Cabinet was based on the reasoning that those who best understand the issues faced by young people are not the Officers or Councillors, but young people themselves. Support for the Youth Cabinet is strong throughout Thurrock with the Council and partner agencies regularly consulting the group.

**Creative Partnerships** is a Government-funded creative learning programme run by the Arts Council England, working in 36 of the most deprived areas of England. It brokers relationships between the education, cultural and business sectors to effect positive change in the lives of young people. Since Creative Partnerships has been working in the Thames Gateway area it has introduced over 75 creative practitioners or artists to a total of 31 schools.

[www.creative-partnerships.com](http://www.creative-partnerships.com)

### **Channel 4 Television's 4Talent**

From the moment it went on air in 1982, Channel 4 has provided a platform for talented people to break through in British television. 4Talent works with young creatives – entry level and established practitioners - and offers and supports a vast array of initiatives to help them realise their career ambitions and grow their skills in broadcast media across multiple platforms.

[www.channel4.com/4talent](http://www.channel4.com/4talent)

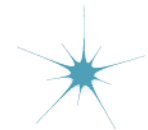
### **Futurecity Arts**

Set up in 2000, Futurecity Arts has developed a specialist arts-led model of creative industry regeneration; our innovative approach has attracted attention from the private sector, which forms over 90% of our client base. As a result the agency has become uniquely successful at involving a new audience in the wider context of contemporary culture. Many of our projects have substantial educational and community aspects projects built into the proposals. Our cultural strategies have led to a continuous series of public art initiatives from a new bridge commission in London for Thomas Heatherwick, to a new technology project in Brussels for Langlands & Bell. Recent projects include the creation of contemporary art galleries sponsorships for the Royal Academy of Arts, the Chelsea School of Art Alumni and the new Museum of Kinetic Art at Old Spitalfields Market.

[www.futurecityarts.com](http://www.futurecityarts.com)

### **Arts Council East**

The Billboard Project is supported by Arts Council England, East and EEDA via their unique shared prospectus. The only one of its kind in the UK, the shared prospectus identifies three common areas for strategic joint investment that will harness the power of the arts and



creativity to transform the social, economic and material conditions of local people and communities. Through joint interventions Arts Council England, East and EEDA will empower communities and businesses, maximising their contribution to the regional economy and the sustainable growth of the East of England.

[www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

**Thames Gateway Forum**, 22-23 November, at London's Excel Centre, is an award-winning event and the annual meeting place for all those involved with the regeneration of the Thames Gateway and Olympic regions.

[www.thamesgatewayforum.com](http://www.thamesgatewayforum.com)

**For more information:**

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