

Press release

17 December 2007

Celebrating Hackney's people

Taking the time to say thank you and well done is something that we often forget to do. That is why Hackney Homes invited over 150 local people to the 2007 Hackney Homes Active Residents Awards last Thursday to show our appreciation.

The annual event recognised Hackney residents who have volunteered their time and effort for the benefit of their communities, are encouraging others to get involved and are regarded as role models where they live.

Over 150 residents who are actively involved on Tenants and Residents Associations, neighbourhood panels, mystery shopping and youth programmes in Hackney were joined on the night by Great Britain's Paralympics swimmer Dervis Konuralp.

The night kicked off with a superb welcome by Dervis Konuralp. Born and raised in Hackney, Dervis told the audience about his upbringing in the borough and some of the local people who have inspired him to fulfil his dream. He congratulated all nominees and thanked them for taking pride in where they live.

Giving out awards on the night was Rupert Tyson, Chair of Hackney Homes Board and well-known figure in the community. "I have lived and worked in Hackney for over 25 years and I have met so many people who are organising meetings, running workshops and planning fun events- all in an effort to make a difference in their communities. These unsung heroes need to be recognised and I am glad that these awards allow us to do this".

Rupert added that he is especially proud of the younger residents who are going the extra mile to do their bit to educate and inform their peers about being a good citizen "These young winners are an example to us all. They are proud of where they live and they are using their experience to help others"

Award winners were nominated by residents in three categories – Resident of the Year, Resident Group of the Year and Young Resident Group of the Year.

The winners were:

Veronica Mensah (Resident of the Year) for ensuring that the voice and needs of residents living on Woodberry Down Estate are heard. With the regeneration project ongoing on the estate, Veronica tirelessly attends

meetings and liaises with Hackney Homes and the London Borough of Hackney to ensure that the needs of residents on the estate are prioritised.

Wilton Estate Tenants and Residents Association (Resident Group of the Year) for working hard to ensure that activities are available for all residents (young and old) on the estate. They have organised trips to France and Southend, annual barbecues, regular coffee mornings and dedicated youth activities such as play areas and youth clubs. They have also worked hard to ensure that everyone living on the estate regardless of age, background and tenure are welcomed.

Sinead Jones and Michelle Quarshie (Joint Winners) for Young Resident of the Year for being proactive in promoting and encouraging young people to be role models in their communities. As members of the Chatham and Victoria Youth Committee, Sinead and Michelle have both completed youth work courses and are now running workshops for their peers on a range of topics including healthy eating, tackling bullying and role play based workshops dealing with anti-social behaviour and homophobia. Both Sinead and Michelle are committed to making a difference in Hackney and are positive role models for their peers within the borough.

More pictures from the event are available on request.

Notes to Editors

- Hackney Homes is an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) launched in April 2006 to manage the Council's social housing stock. Hackney Homes is responsible for managing 22,000 tenanted properties and 8,000 leasehold properties in the borough.
- Hackney Homes is led by a board which includes five residents. The Board along with staff and residents are fundamental to ensuring that services are delivered to the highest standards.
- There are 98 registered Tenants and Residents Groups in Hackney working to ensure that tenants and leaseholders have a say in the way their estates are run.
- Over fifty nominations were received in all categories, three times more than last year.

Ends

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