

Media Release

Stowe Club Mural Project

April 6th

For immediate release

3 pages

Date: Saturday 7th April

A 92 foot canal wall is to be transformed by a colourful mural made from recycled litter, designed by the efforts of Paddington children, Westminster police, and Thames 21, an environmental charity. This project has been funded by regeneration funds from London's Waterway Partnership.

Westminster Police Schools Involvement Team, the Stowe Youth Club and Thames21 are hosting an opening ceremony and funday at The Stowe Youth Club, 258 Harrow Road, W9 this Saturday 7th April at 2pm.

The mural has been designed and made by children of the Stowe Youth Club, police officers and local artist Kevin Herlihy.

It is made from rubbish which has been collected from the canals and rivers of London to form a scene reflecting the diverse wildlife to be found on London's waterways such as swans, kingfishers, dragonflies and water plants.

The ceremony will be take place at 2pm on Saturday 7th April, 2001, at the Grand Union canal adjacent to the Harrow Road bridge, 10 minutes from Little Venice. Attending will be the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Mr Michael Brahams, who will conduct the official opening.

Watching will be the young people of Stowe Youth Club, local people, members of the Westminster Police Schools Involvement team, and members of the Thames 21 team.

The mural is currently about 20 feet wide, out of the intended 92 feet. There will also be other sections made in the future. This is just one canal enhancement project among many that London's Waterway Partnership Fund.

Between 2pm and 4pm, at the Stowe Club there will be activities for all the family will including 5-a-side football, displays and stands by organisations involved in the project, an Easter Egg competition, Mixing and DJing for young people, and refreshments.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. Thames21 is a joint programme supported by Tidy Britain Group, the Port of London Authority, the Environment Agency, Thames Water and the Corporation of London. Over two thousand volunteers take part in its pioneering Adopt-a-River scheme, which aims to involve local communities and businesses in the enhancement of river environments throughout the capital. It also carries out research, runs education programmes, works with offenders through the Probation Service to clear up rubbish and create wildlife habitats and aims to prosecute people tipping waste in and around rivers. It is part of the national charity, the Tidy Britain Group.

The River Thames is cleaner now than it has been for 130 years. As recently as the 1960s, the river was biologically 'dead'. Now, it is the cleanest metropolitan estuary in Europe, with 118 species of fish living in the tideway, hundreds of thousands of birds and a thriving fishing industry. The Thames is one of the most important nursery grounds for the Dover sole caught in the North Sea. Sea bass, flounder, salmon, smelt, and shad are just some of the more well-known fish which have returned to the nation's premier river.

However, thousands of tonnes of litter end up in the river each year, from badly stored waste, people throwing rubbish off boats, rubbish in the street being blown or washed into the river. Once litter hits the water it becomes too heavy to be blown away again and therefore rivers act as a sink within the system. Wherever people drop litter it can end up in the Thames and its tributaries.

2) London's Waterway Partnership is a seven-year programme with funds from the Single Regeneration Budget. The partnership's vision is that London's waterway network becomes a focus for economic and environmental regeneration, through funding a variety of projects in the capital.

3) Tidy Britain Group.-Going for Green is Britain's biggest environmental campaign aimed at the public. Formed following the Rio Earth Summit of 1992, it has private and governmental support. The Theme Months Campaign aims to promote aspects of good environmental action. Five months of events take place over a 12 month period as follows: Biodiversity – April, Water-May, Transport-June, Waste-October, Energy – November.

4)Stowe Club is a local youth and community centre whose membership reflects local population, and is predominantly from the ethnic minorities. The club was set up 73 years ago, originally for boys and men in the forces who were on leave. Today it offers a range of activities for both boys and girls, men and women, including making costumes for, and taking part in the Notting Hill Carnival, boxing, sports, organised trips to museums & exhibitions and community art projects. The Stowe Club is a registered charity number 303308.