



Hackney Supplement

Peace March

More than 250 churchgoers and local residents marched along 'peace mile' (Upper and Lower Clapton Roads) on Palm Sunday (April 1) to declare Clapton as a place of peace.

Supported by the Borough Deans group, by their actions the marchers said that they believe our streets should be free from violence and fear.

The March, organised by the Rev John Macauley, Minister of Upper Clapton URC, moved through Pembury Estate, with prayers said for peace and an end to drug taking, and then went to St John at Hack-

ney, Lower Clapton Road, where there was a Service of Witness for Peace in Hackney. Hackney's Street Pastors, led by Rev Joyce Daley, also gave support.

'We want to see a peace in our community, a peace which is more than the absence of conflict. It is 'Shalom', a richer meaning of 'well being' in our community, a growth of friendship, of fellowship, of hope, a place of harmony. We want to see an end to the drug dealers, and other people of violence, who bring a destructive influence to our communities,' said Rev Macauley.

Rev Ian Harper, on behalf of the Borough Deans group, added: 'The Bible talks about the need for us to be 'repairer of broken walls, re-

storers of streets' and local churches are taking that seriously. Peace needs to be restored to our streets, particularly for the sake of our young people who are being attacked.'

Speaking outside the now closed Palace Pavillion nightclub, Lower Clapton Road, where a young man was shot dead in the street outside, Leabridge Ward Cllr Ian Rathbone, said: 'We are not going to put up

Prayers were later said at Pembury Estate for an end to drugs, violence and gangs on the estate, to be replaced with peace and a growing community based on respect for each others.

Cllr Rathbone added: 'Only a whole community action will effectively deal with our problems. The successful destruction of crack dens in the borough and tackling of gangs in a concerted campaign by Police, Council and community in recent times has demonstrated that. We also need to offer hope to young people, listen to their needs, and help them to find a good life.'

'The removal of the licence for the Palace Pavillion, and Chimes night clubs is the sign of a new era for Clapton, with people feeling more confident on the street and in their home.'

Speaking at the service at St John at Hackney, Supt Leroy Logan, Deputy Borough Commander said: 'There's to be no more sad acceptance by communities of drugs and violence. I saw the Pembury Estate two weeks ago, with people smiling, free of gangs. But we need to continue to be vigilant and keep watch.'

Ian Rathbone 



any more with our young people being murdered, being damaged by knives and drugs. We stand here today to say 'no more' to evil places like Palace Pavillion, and Chimes. We want to see a better quality of life here, a better environment, where we can be a friendly community living together in a positive way.'

Standing beside him, Stoke Newington Baptist minister, Rev John Taylor, lead some prayers, saying: 'This spot serves as a reminder of some of the things that are wrong in our society - some of the things that sadden our hearts and sadden the heart of God.' Everyone joined in a time of silence 'as we remember those who have died so young and so needlessly' added John.

Local Charity Shop Gets Free Make-Over by City Company

Hackney charity Wayside opened a revamped store in May after workers from City insurance firm Aon helped with the store's transformation. The Wayside Community Centre aims to improve the mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing of people living in Clapton, Hackney, one of the most deprived areas in the country. They support those who need it most – economically disadvantaged, lonely, elderly and frail people or those suffering any form of distress (mental, physical or emotional). They run a social drop-in centre, exercise and fitness classes, healthy living workshops and day-trips, and operate a charity shop where people can afford to buy clothes and basic goods (like toys for their children). Proceeds from the shop help fund the activities at the community centre



Initially run by two volunteers, without financial aid, the Wayside Community Centre developed from a house-based prayer group started in 1987, by local Methodist Preacher, Sister Jean John. Though founded on a Christian ethos, the centre is open to all and

serves a large and varied community. It is run by local people for local people.

A team of volunteers from Aon and some of its suppliers carried out the refurbishment of the Wayside shop during the week commencing 30th April. The work included fitting new ceiling and lighting, cabinets and display units and a new shop front sign as well as painting and decorating to give the shop a total facelift. Many Aon staff who couldn't assist with the actual refurbishment played their part by donating designer clothing to help restock Wayside's second hand clothing range.

Wayside was introduced to Aon by ELBA, the East London Business Alliance, who broker relationships between city companies and local charities. Sally Coode-Bate, community affairs manager for Aon in the UK, said: "On first meeting Sister Jean John we were so impressed by the work that she and her team carry out for the local community that we had no hesitation in selecting Wayside as one of our eight community projects being carried out around the country to celebrate Aon's 20th anniversary."

Sally said that in addition to the work by Aon employees, "we were joined by volunteers from several of our suppliers including planning and movement company 4-Mat, removal specialists TBS, JCD ceilings and Acorn builders". She felt that



the enjoyment of working with the team at Wayside and their excitement and appreciation of the transformation "made every minute worthwhile".

After years of relying almost solely on the income from the shop to fund operations, Wayside received a grant from the Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund (from the Home Office) this year to develop the organisation. The charity is also part of inShape, the Healthy Living Partnership for Hackney's over 50s, which is a network comprised of seven charities working together to improve the health and wellbeing of elders and inShape is funded by the Big Lottery.

For more information visit www.waysidecommunity.org.uk or call 0208 986 7531 ☐