



Issue 9 Summer 2001



starpeople

The Millennium Fellowship Magazine

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M
Millennium Awards



Erica Roberts OBE
Director of
Millennium Awards

There are lots of new and interesting things going on at the Millennium Commission at the moment. Hundreds of our Capital projects are now open. Our Festival Unit has closed after a fantastic year of celebrations and following the recent general election, we have a new Chairman, The Rt. Hon. Tessa Jowell MP, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. On the Millennium Awards side, we keep on growing! 26 New Award Partners are currently launching their schemes, new members of staff are joining the team and we'll soon be announcing our 20,000th Award winner. The number of Fellows continues to rise and there are now over 7,000. I read recently that some people think volunteering is in decline. Looking at the number of new individuals applying for Awards, the variety of projects you undertake and the amazing commitment you show to the community, I find that hard to believe. The letters you write to me prove just how much passion and strength people have to make a difference. We have just found a new quote that reflects the ethos of the Fellowship: *be the change you want to see*. You are that change.



Andrew Farrow
Senior Fellowship Manager
Editor of **Starpeople**

Welcome to the autumn issue of **Starpeople**. Plans for developing the Fellowship are moving along! As you may remember from the last

issue, feedback from the consultation days we held earlier this year highlighted your desire for further training opportunities. We've now asked a number of organisations to suggest how they would deliver a training programme to meet your needs. Once we have your questionnaires in, we'll have a clearer idea of how to move things forward. This is a new area of work for us, so we need to make sure you're getting the training you want. It will take a while to set up. We'll probably start by initiating a pilot programme of training opportunities early next year, possibly running a set of the most popular courses in a small number of venues around the UK. The results of the pilot will help us to assess the future training needs and aspirations of Award winners in this area. The Fellowship only works if you take part in it. If you haven't already expressed your views through the consultation exercise, please write and let us know what you think. The same is true of the magazine and web site: please keep sending in your stories and visiting our site. It's your Fellowship, and it won't happen without you!

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Background on unLTD

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This Starpeople magazine is now
available in Braille and large print,
on email, disk and audio tape.



Photo Competition

Here are the winners of our 'snap happy' competition. Each winner will receive an all-expenses paid trip to a Millennium Commission project of their choice. Thank you to everyone who took the time to submit an entry. It was a difficult choice!



We were looking for unusual, emotive, striking, happy or celebratory images that summed up people's projects at a glance. There were five categories: environment; regeneration; education; science and technology; and communities. No one submitted an entry for the science and technology category. And the winners are...

Regeneration

Greta Palmer, Suffolk ACRE Millennium Award winner.

"I have submitted this photograph because we are a small rural community and this image sums up, for me, how all the Millennium Awards have enabled a 'turning of the earth' so that ideas could be sown, cultivated and brought to a rich fruition. Our project was conceived as a gift for future generations to have an insight into the personal lives, hopes, fears and dreams of the inhabitants of one small village in the year 2000."



Environment

Anthony North, Scope 'Give it a Go' Millennium Award winner.

My project was about living with restricted growth. This is a picture of Rebecca North, and shows how a local community shop proves problematic even though the shelves are not as high as those found in the supermarkets."

Communities

Lesley Mount, West Lothian 'Breaking Down Barriers' Millennium Award winner.

Ewan Mount helps his mum publicise the 'Signpost Helpline' for carers of children with special needs in West Lothian.

"I started the helpline when I realised that there was no central place for parents, like myself, to go to if they needed information. I gathered a team of parent volunteers who now provide that information and, most importantly, offer friendship, support and a sense of community to people who often feel isolated from other parents by their child's differences."

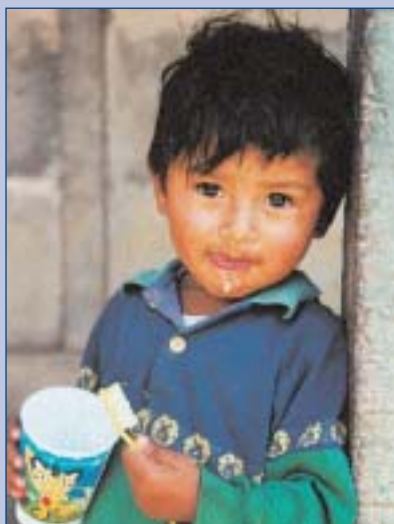


Education

Danielle Soper, British Council Millennium Award winner.

Hazzel brushing his teeth, Venecia, Nicaragua, June 2000.

'This picture shows Hazzel (pronounced Axel in Spanish!), a three year old boy, learning to brush his teeth. This is one of the various hygiene activities taught to the children at the pre-school. Others included washing hands and eating with a spoon! As a volunteer, I worked with a local organisation, Prodejovent, which sets up local pre-schools in very poor communities in northern Nicaragua. My work involved running a local pre-school with the help of local 'teachers' as well as giving workshops to teachers, parents and children on health, hygiene, child development and environmental issues."





Interview with...

Tyrone Woolfe, Jack Ashley
Millennium Award winner

What did your Award allow you to do?

I have been able to set up a befriending project for deaf signing adolescents.

How did your Award benefit you personally?

The befriending project has been a great challenge. The greatest reward is seeing the children's confidence grow in their deaf identities. We have a lot to look forward to including a drama workshop, a residential weekend and a countryside walk.

What was the benefit to your community?

Today's trend towards mainstream education has, to some extent, neglected this important factor of education. This project aims to give the social buffering deaf teenagers need. Students have been recruited voluntarily to be befrienders to nine buddies. They go out every two or three weeks for a one-to-one session doing a social activity.

Do you have a message for other Award winners?

Sorting out money is the most frustrating part, but I had relevant support from the team at National Deaf Children's Society. There is a web site about the project, so why not go and have a look at the photos! www.sbpdc.co.uk

Jack Ashley Millennium Awards for Young Deaf People is offering 330 young deaf people aged 14-25 years in the UK the opportunity to take on a new challenge to boost their self-confidence, develop their leadership skills and contribute to their communities. For further information contact: Pat Charles on 020 7490 8656

Millennium Star Nights



"Brilliant - there were stars inside and out." This was a typical response to Millennium Star nights, a series of public astronomy events made possible by the Royal Society/BAAS Millennium Award given to Dennis Ashton based at Sheffield Hallam University. Over one thousand people attended the events run by a team of volunteer astronomers and similar events will continue to run in the future.



Dennis Ashton, Director of Star Centre said: "The Award enabled us to buy two computer-controlled telescopes giving superb views of planets and deep space. A data projector and lap top computer enhanced our indoor presentations where images included those from a camera, as well as the latest views from the internet.

"As well as the main *Star nights* event, the project included the public observing the night sky, Astro drive-ins together with Astro take-aways where community groups booked astronomy talks.

"At 'SUNday' 250 members of the public came to Sheffield University to explore astronomy. The day was so successful that another 'SUNday' will be held in the future."

The resources provided by the Millennium Award meant that the Star Centre will continue to develop its programme of public astronomy events. New dates have been set for September, December and the next Science week in March 2002." If you would like to find out more you email Dennis at: dennis@stardome.freereserve.co.uk

The Royal Society/BAAS Millennium Awards scheme made over 300 Awards to professional scientists for community-based initiatives which increased public awareness and understanding of science and technology. The scheme has now closed.



Casini, a young Bolton band aiming to hit the big time have secured a Bolton 'Citizens of Tomorrow' Millennium Award. They are five teenagers who met at school and began playing music together. They were encouraged to apply for a Millennium Award after the mother of lead vocalist, Neil Ward, saw a young band who benefitted from a grant on the National Lottery TV show. They play at schools and youth centres around the country. They have also produced a CD. Casini is made up of Neil Ward (vocals) Paul Tong (lead guitar) Gavin Hibberd (rhythm guitar) Ryan Burch (bass guitar) and Ian Findlay (drums). If you would like to find out more about Casini, you can visit their web site: www.casini.co.uk



A Scottish-Ghanaian fusion

Initially conceived as a play to promote understanding and awareness of African culture, 'Stories in Harmony', which was funded by the On the Line Millennium Awards scheme, developed into a five day festival of Scottish and Ghanaian culture in different venues across Edinburgh.



Stories in Harmony was the idea of Nina Alexandersen and Richard Lace, who wanted to create a fusion of Scottish and Ghanaian culture to produce a story that could be understood and appreciated by everyone. The idea developed into a festival called *Infusion* which included dance, drumming and music performances and workshops, story telling and an exhibition by a Ghanaian artist.

"We began with the simple idea of proving that cultural differences could be overcome by stressing what makes people similar. But we realised we also wanted to celebrate and share those qualities that make us different as well," explains Richard.

In March, Nina and Richard travelled to Ghana with four other students and worked with performers and a director from the University of Ghana to create a performance based on fairy stories from the two cultures. The resulting *Stories in Harmony* was presented to students at the University of Ghana and then at The Edinburgh Festival. One of the highlights of the festival was when the acclaimed Scottish band, Shooglenifty, played with Abrempon, a group of Ghanaian drummers based in London.

"Our aim was to make the festival accessible to the entire community. The response was fantastic. Around 1,000 people took part in the various events and hopefully learnt something about a different culture along the way," said Nina.

On The Line Millennium Awards made over 240 Awards to young people who are active in their community so they could realise their ambition to change the way their community sees the world. The Scheme is now closed to applicants.



Jane Lewis received an Edinburgh Environment Partnership Millennium Award to set up the Edinburgh Real Nappy Network to promote the use of real nappies in Edinburgh and the surrounding area. She has set up a web site as part of the project. The address is www.ernn.org.uk



Stephen Hunter's Millennium Forest for Scotland Millennium Award has enabled him to research the history, timber types and techniques of traditional Darvel Chairs. He has written up his findings and built a database for future researchers. Check out his web site www.darvel-chairs.co.uk



Interview with...

Jayne Taylor, Glasgow New Opportunities Millennium Fellow

What did your Award allow you to do?

The Award financed 40 fabric recycling workshops at a local school. These produced the fabrics for a three metre high patchwork tepee. The tepee then went on a tour of children's adventure playgrounds and hosted workshops involving crafts, music and discussion.

How did your Award benefit you personally?

Having money to invest in equipment and materials was a tremendous boost to me professionally and being able to 'prove' my abilities was great for my confidence. However, the best bit was seeing the children's faces when they saw and went into the tepee, which was priceless!

What was the benefit to your community?

About 100 children and adults got involved in my project and we had great fun recycling and workshopping. The networking and new contacts that I made have given me more confidence to continue to develop new projects.

Do you have a message for other Award winners?

It's great to be supported in what you believe in and fantastic to see the results of your hard work. But remember to value 'quality time' to recharge your batteries.

Glasgow New Opportunities Millennium Awards made 160 Awards to people at risk of social exclusion living in Glasgow to tackle issues in their neighbourhoods. The Scheme is now closed.



Interview with...

David Evans, Arthritis Care Millennium Award winner

What did your Award allow you to do?

I was trained by Arthritis Care to become a home visitor. This involved visiting people with arthritis in their homes to befriend and listen to their problems and if possible advise them on how to take control of their arthritis and subsequently their lifestyle. Being disabled myself, we always found a common ground - just having someone who understands helped them.

How did your Award benefit you personally?

Receiving a lecture from a person in a wheelchair made me realise what could be done by people worse off than myself and their example has encouraged me to live a better and fuller life. Also meeting a client in a supermarket who had been house-bound for two years who thanked me for explaining about the wheelchair loan system was great for me.

What was the benefit to your community?

I should like to think that all the people I visited benefited in some way, even if it was just having someone to listen to them.

Do you have a message for other Award winners?

By helping less fortunate people and by giving time and effort to others, we receive in return a fuller and more satisfactory life.

Arthritis Care Millennium Awards made 310 Awards to people with arthritis to give them the skills and resources to help others with arthritis. The scheme has created a new national self-help workshop. The scheme is now closed.

Sensory Garden

Gavin Cashman received a Community Service Volunteers Millennium Award to create a community sensory garden at Boverton House, a community resource centre used by organisations and groups for people with disabilities, learning difficulties or mental health problems. Gavin, who has learning difficulties himself, wanted to create a garden which would be more accessible for people with sensory impairments and wheelchair users.



"Gavin's project was really inspirational," says Dave Moor, Wales Co-ordinator for CSV Millennium Awards. "With the help of his mentor, Amanda Amey, he recruited a dedicated group of volunteers from a local school and set about transforming an underused plot into a garden that BBC's Groundforce crew would have been proud of."

Gavin (centre) and his volunteers prepared the site for planting and attended training in Health & Safety issues and Disability Awareness. They also took part in work-shops run by local artists to learn how to create tactile sculptures for the garden.

Gavin had to overcome many problems along the way. As Dave Moor says, "It was far from plain sailing. Six months in, the rains poured down, delaying the laying of paths and transforming the site into a mud bath. It looked as if it would never be finished." Help arrived in the form of 20 volunteers from Russia who were in Wales to learn about youth volunteering! "As actions speak louder than words, they quickly found themselves mucking in to plant the first spring flowers," said Dave.

The finished garden includes strongly scented plants and flowers and is low maintenance so other users and groups can be involved in caring for it. It also provides a great space for social gatherings and barbecues, including the grand opening which was attended by Gavin's local Welsh Assembly Member and members of the Press. Unfortunately, in true British style for such outdoor events, it rained!

The CSV Millennium Awards scheme made 180 Awards to young people aged 16-25 years to develop projects which forged new partnerships between schools, colleges and universities and their community. The scheme is now closed.

Cwlwm Rhwng Cymru a Phobly Saharawi

Wales Saharawi Link. Four young people from North Wales travelled to the Saharawi refugee camps in Algeria. They brought back with them an awareness of global interdependence through photographs, film, exhibitions and presentations in their communities. To find out more about their project and other On The Line Millennium Award winners, visit: www.ontheline.org.uk



From Tandragee to South Africa...



Adrian McKinney always had a dream of visiting South Africa.



But not for a holiday. He saw it as a country, which despite all odds, had moved on in leaps and bounds and whose people had taken the courage to face their difficulties head on. The similarities to Northern Ireland were obvious. So, would it be possible for Adrian to learn from their experiences?

Adrian secured an ABC Millennium Award to carry out a 10-day study visit to South Africa in February 2001. Adrian visited areas such as Soweto, Durban and Johannesburg. Contacts were made with people and organisations involved in peace building and conflict resolution programmes, youth and community workers and Church leaders. The children pictured are proof of the pain which still exists. They all have HIV, a disease which ravages one in five of the South African population. We've been told that at least two of them have died since this photograph was taken.

Adrian was especially impressed with the work of the 'Healing Minds' organisation which provides an open forum for the perpetrators of violence and their victims to discuss the atrocities of the past. This innovative project has contributed significantly to the healing process and is one which Adrian is keen to explore here in the UK. Seminars and workshops are also planned, as are other community information events which Adrian is currently organising.

"It was a wonderful trip, a fantastic opportunity and a powerful learning experience," says Adrian. "I have left South Africa, but South Africa has not left me, nor is it likely to."

The ABC Millennium Awards scheme is offering 135 Awards to people from Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon, who have never been involved in their community and are committed to developing a healthier community. For further information contact: Martina McDonnell on 028 406 28844.



Angela Duntsch received a NIEL Millennium Award. Her project offers workshops for enjoyment, awareness and learning, looking at similarities and differences of skills, games & toys around the world. These workshops are tailor-made for schools, community groups, colleges, fairs and festivals. You can visit the web site: www.skillsgamesandtoys.org.uk

The Portadown Folksong Club used to meet in the 1960s and 70s, until the escalation of the troubles meant that it could no longer continue. Rodney Corder's ABC Millennium Award has allowed him to revive this interest in local culture and the Folksong Club is being reformed meeting again on a monthly basis. Much of the impetus has come from a CD which Rodney has produced with his ABC grant, which celebrates the work of local musicians. Check out the web site: www.listen.to/portadownfolksongclub



Interview with...

Lucia McCarron, NIEL
Millennium Award winner

What did your Award allow you to do?

To convene the first ever conference in Londonderry on Women and Sustainable Development. I wanted to raise the profile of women in politics and peace making, Local Agenda 21 issues and Environmental Law. I organised a cultural celebration evening and set up a web site.

How did your Award benefit you personally?

It was profoundly moving listening to the conference speakers and the evening cultural celebration was a great joy. I was invited to speak in Boston, USA as a result of the conference.

How did your Award benefit others in your community?

It raised issues for women and gave us a voice. We even began to raise issues in the Northern Ireland Assembly regarding environmental concerns. A small beginning!

Do you have a message for other Millennium Award Fellows?

Go for it! A Millennium Award is a great gift. It is hard work but a privilege. Few people get to have an impact upon their community directly and creatively. Be positive, hang in there through the never ending organising. It does all come together in the end. Rejoice in one's achievements and learning!

The NIEL Sustainable Communities Millennium Award scheme made 200 Awards made to people living in Northern Ireland for projects which contributed to sustainable living. The scheme is now closed.

WWWWhat is it?



The Internet is a worldwide network of computers that allows you to send and receive information practically instantly. This feature attempts to de-mystify the world of the web for those with little or no knowledge about the Internet.

The Web is home to millions of web sites, set up by businesses, agencies, institutions and individuals. You name it, it's probably somewhere on the Web.

There's more than one way to access the World Wide Web. Many people browse the Web from their desktop computer with the help of a modem and telephone line. But you can get Web content in other ways, including through your television, at cybercafes, libraries, some airports and even in your car.

What's in a Web browser?

A Web browser contains the basic software you need in order to find, retrieve, view and send information over the Internet. This includes software that lets you:

- Send and receive electronic-mail (or email) messages worldwide almost instantaneously
- Read messages from newsgroups (or forums) about thousands of topics in which users share information and opinions
- Browse the World Wide Web (or Web) where you can find a rich variety of text, graphics and interactive information

A URL (or Uniform Resource Locator) is the address of an Internet file. Usually it consists of four parts: protocol, server (or domain), path and filename. Sometimes there's no path or filename. Here's an example: <http://www.microsoft.com/windows/default.asp>

Email

Electronic mail is one of the most popular features of the Internet. You can chat with your friends and family (and total strangers), conduct

business, send documents and stay in touch with people near and far all for the cost of a local phone call. You can even check your e-mail while on the move!



To send and receive email messages over the Internet and to organise your messages, you need an email account. You can get this through an Internet Service Provider (ISP) or Online Service Provider. You also need an email client software for your computer. Your email client creates an inbox on your computer. When you check your email, new messages are downloaded into your inbox. Here are some examples of email clients:

- Microsoft® Outlook® 2000
- Hotmail™
- Eudora
- Microsoft Outlook Express
- Microsoft Exchange

To send a message to someone, you must type their email address in the 'To' section of your email message. Generally, there are two parts to your email address: your logon identity and the identity of your ISP. These are separated by the symbol @. A typical email address for someone who uses Hotmail, for example, looks like this: yourname@hotmail.com. The extension *.com* indicates that Hotmail is a commercial

establishment. Other common extensions are *.gov* for government users, *.ac* for educational users and *.org* for charities and voluntary organisations. Email addresses outside the United States may include letters that indicate the country of the user's ISP.

You can send more than text in your email messages. You can also attach computer documents, including word-processor, spreadsheet, graphic, and video files, to an email message. So email is a useful way to share files that more than one person needs.



We have created a web site exclusive to Award winners and Fellows (www.starpeople.org.uk). Many of you have already been to visit the site. There are over 50 star pages, which have been built by Fellows talking about their Award projects. People have also been chatting in the Star centre. So if you haven't already logged on, go and take a look. So far 600 Award winners have registered. If you don't know your password and login, check the membership card we sent to you (page 10) which has your details. If you haven't received one let us know. We will also be writing to you in the near future about basic Internet training we will be holding across the UK.



Scheme profile

Based in Guildford, Surrey, Young People's Trust for the Environment and Nature Conservation is offering 115 Awards to young people aged 16-23 who live in Surrey, Sussex or Hampshire and who have a passion for and commitment to the environment.

'Living for the Future Millennium Awards' are targeted at young people who would like to lead environmental/conservation-related projects that can make a real difference to the way in which other young people behave towards their environment.

Scheme objectives

To unleash the full potential of Award winners, harnessing their passion and commitment for the environment by:

- Equipping them with leadership and other skills which enhance their ability to lead fulfilled, confident and active lives
- Providing personal challenges that help them to achieve their own aspirations
- Helping them to bring about the kind of society in which they would like to live by influencing the way that younger people behave towards the environment.

The Living for the Future Millennium Awards scheme aims to change and enrich the lives of young people for the overall benefit of the community by creating active and assertive citizens who will make a real and worthwhile contribution to society.

Contact Details

Eleanor Bridgman
Young People's Trust for the Environment and Nature Conservation,
8 Leapale Road, Guildford,
Surrey GU1 4JX
Tel: 01483 539600

Living for the Future Millennium Awards



Young People's Trust for the Environment and Nature Conservation (YPTENC) is one of the 26 organisations that were awarded a share of £22 million by the Millennium Commission in December 2000 to run a Millennium Award scheme.

YPTENC launched the 'Living for the Future' Millennium Awards in May of this year and is currently accepting applications for its first round of Awards which will be announced this Autumn. To tie in with our new 'Youth Insert' we thought it would be interesting to focus on one of our newest schemes aimed at young people who are committed to working to protect the environment. We spoke to Eleanor Bridgman, Scheme Leader, about YPTENC and the 'Living for the Future' Millennium Awards. Eleanor says:

"The Young People's Trust for the Environment and Nature Conservation has been working in the field of environmental education for more than twenty years. YPTENC provides a range of services for young people including free environmental fact sheets, free school talks, an environmental bulletin for teachers and a range of study expeditions and residential courses. YPTENC believe that the best people to take care of the environment for the future are young people - those who will have to live in it for many more years to come.

"Until now, much of the work done by YPTENC has been targeted at school - age young people, but with funds from the Millennium Commission the Trust is now able to offer exciting opportunities to young adults (aged 16-23) who would like to undertake their own environmental project.

"Every Award winner will benefit from support and mentoring provided by dedicated staff at YPTENC. They will also have the opportunity to take part in a special residential training week which will include presentation and communication techniques;

assertiveness training; physical activities such as canoeing and abseiling to develop self-confidence and leadership skills; health and safety advice; information on environmental issues and peer education training.

"Award winners will develop their communication skills and their confidence. Through peer education they will extend their own understanding of the environment and will experience both the difficulties and rewards of persuading others to take care of it. They will have the satisfaction and the sense of achievement gained from following through, from start to finish, something that is worthwhile for the community, for the environment and for themselves.

"An Award winning project could cover any aspect of the environment or conservation, provided that it includes an educational element. Projects might educate members of the community through talks, tours, debates, web sites, videos, or performances. We are expecting to support a whole range of creative projects. We feel that it is important to realise that education is not only about sitting in a classroom or reading a text book. The most powerful learning experiences often take place in much less formal situations. Young people are in touch with learning environments and we believe they are well placed to educate their peers in interesting and innovative ways. Many young people are extremely knowledgeable and, perhaps just as importantly, are passionate about environmental issues and it is this knowledge and passion that we hope to harness and encourage through the Award Scheme."

The Millennium Awards cover a range of issues, including health, education, communities, environment and science. Every Award winner who successfully completes their Award will become a member of the Millennium Awards Fellowship.

Please send your letters, expressing your opinions and views to Andrew Farrow, Editor of Starpeople. A Millennium mug will be given to the author of every letter published.

Questions & Answers

Q *Why have you sent me a Millennium Awards Membership Card? I don't have access to the internet.*

A You should have received a letter from us recently containing your very own Millennium Awards membership card. If you are an Award winner you will have received a blue card and if you have finished your project and are a Fellow, then you will have received a gold card. When you become a Fellow you will automatically receive a gold card in your Fellowship pack. The cards have login details for www.starpeople.org.uk. However, if you don't have access to the internet keep hold of this card because you never know when it might come in handy! In the not so distant future, the Fellowship is planning to provide you with more exciting opportunities, such as training, discounted entry into capital projects and an Ambassador programme. You may need your cards for the above. Not only that, we feel it is something you have to show that you are part of the Millennium Awards family. Look out for other Award winners flashing their cards!

image of blue card

Millennium Awards
Membership Card

image of gold card

Millennium Awards
Fellowship Membership
card



Q *Who has taken over the role of Chairman of the Millennium Commission now that The Rt Hon Chris Smith has left?*

A The Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP was appointed Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on 8 June 2001. Tessa Jowell, who is 53, has been the MP for Dulwich and



Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP
Secretary of State for
Culture, Media and Sport

West Norwood since 1992. She was born in London and was educated at St Margaret's School in Aberdeen and at the universities of Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Goldsmith's College in London. Ms Jowell's previous ministerial appointments were Minister of State for Employment, Welfare to Work and Equal Opportunities at the Department for Education and Employment (1999-2001) and Minister of State for Public Health at the Department of Health (1997-1999). She became a Privy Counsellor in 1998. Before her election to Parliament in 1992, Tessa Jowell had a career in psychiatric social work, social policy and public sector management. She is married with a daughter, a son and three step children.

"I joined the Commission as Chair in June 2001, and I am discovering just how diverse and extensive its portfolio is. The Commission's investment of Lottery money has ignited celebrations, united communities, opened up centres for education and wonder, created woodlands, parks, cycle paths and village halls, brought much needed regeneration to our cities and villages alike - and much more.

Entertainment, Education and Excitement



Over one in four festivals created permanent employment and nearly 350,000 hours of voluntary labour were spent on the Millennium Festival, a recent Impact Study has revealed. The study commissioned by the Millennium Commission and conducted by Jura Consultants with Gardiner & Theobald Management Consultancy is one of the UK's biggest ever studies of events and festivals. It is hoped that the findings will lead to recognition of improvements for the events sector in the longer-term.



The study included research into events and festivals in and outside the UK, questionnaire surveys across the UK completed by funded organisations and Millennium Fellows and focus groups in the East Midlands and in Scotland. It enjoyed positive responses and a higher than expected response rate. The Millennium Commission is pleased with the results of the impact study:

“After a successful Millennium Festival across the UK in the year 2000, we wanted to see what the benefits and legacies were, both tangible and intangible. We wanted to find out if it really had been the biggest year-long celebration ever held. We also wanted to know what organisers and audiences would want out of events and festivals and what lessons could be learnt for the future. The results of the Impact Study exceeded our expectations,” commented John McCarthy, Director of the Millennium Exhibition and Festival.

The Commission-funded Millennium Festival Programme involved celebrations in 22 towns and cities in 1999/2000, just under 2,200 large and small festival projects throughout the year 2000 and New Year's Eve celebrations in 32 towns and cities to celebrate the end of the year 2000. In total, the Impact Study states that approximately 21million people participated or attended these events which is a third of the UK population. As well as being entertaining, Millennium Festival events proved educational for the audience and integral to the development of technical, creative and generic skills for organisers and volunteers. Over 75% stated that their festival had improved technical skills of participants, 90% reported improvements in communication skills, creativity, confidence and team working among organisers and participants. This finding in particular shows how one-off events can do as much for skills development as longer term and sustained activity. Over one third of festivals believed their events were educational and over 94% stated that their projects provided entertainment for the community.

Organisers said that entertainment, excitement and education were among the most successful elements of the Millennium Festival, all helping to ensure participation and attendance by people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. Over 95% of organisations stated their events had strengthened links within the community. This result is supported in the report by the completed

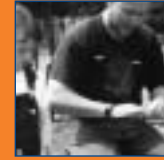
questionnaires of the Millennium Fellows which showed that the events they attended attracted a good cross-section of the community.

With such positive impacts to report and physical records created ranging from web sites and CD ROMS to books, films and permanent archives, it is perhaps hardly surprising that over 70% of organisations would like their festivals to take place again, generally on an annual basis. If these intentions turn into reality this could well alter the face of the UK as a centre for celebratory events.

A full copy of the Impact Study has been sent to over 400 Festival organisations and to funding, non-governmental and governmental organisations, including Award Partners, in the hope that some of the findings on this unique and growing sector may lead to changes and improvements in the support and delivery of events in future years.



Securing the Future of the Millennium Awards Scheme



As we reported in the last issue of Starpeople, the Millennium Commission has selected unLTD, The Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs, as its preferred candidate to continue the Millennium Awards Scheme and Fellowship after the Commission has closed its doors.

From the outset, the Commission has been determined that the Millennium Awards should be a part of its long-term legacy. Following a competition, unLTD was selected because of a shared commitment to investing in individual people in order to make a difference in their local communities and because of their innovative 'staircase' approach to grant making. The Commission was also impressed by unLTD's commitment to involving Fellows in the oversight and future development of the Awards Scheme and in decision-making on new Awards. They plan to achieve this by ensuring that they are represented on both regional and national committees.

unLTD will offer three levels of Awards. It is hoped that there will be opportunities for existing Award winners to apply for a second Award through the new Fund. In addition to funding, unLTD plan to offer advice, training and support through its network of resources and partner organisations throughout the UK.

As an entirely new organisation, unLTD is currently in the process of recruiting staff, setting up a network of regional offices and developing its grant-making systems. It will need to demonstrate that these are in place and fit for purpose before the Commission takes a final decision on whether or not to hand over the Millennium Awards Fund. It is hoped that this will happen early next year. If successful, unLTD will receive a grant of £100 million to be used as a permanent investment fund. This will enable individual people to continue to benefit from Millennium Awards in perpetuity. In time, unLTD will also take on the administration of the Millennium Awards Fellowship.

If you would like further information on unLTD, visit their web site at www.unltd.org.uk or write to them at unLTD, Studio 12, Style Works, 50-54 St. Pauls Square, Birmingham, B3 1QS.

unLTD is a consortium comprising Community Action Network (CAN), Changemakers, SENSCOT, Comic Relief, Ashoka UK Trust, The School of Social Entrepreneurs and The Scarman Trust.

Proposed levels of funding

Level 1

Small grants of around £2,000, similar to the current Millennium Awards

Level 2

Larger Awards of around £15,000 to expand and develop an existing project

Level 3

Large scale investment in sustainable community projects. To be funded by a separate new Social Venture Fund