

Thomas Deane TRUST

Making a difference

New grant-making trust announces its first awards

Further information: T: 01449737342 E: ThomasDeaneTrust@btinternet.com

A potential “gamechanger” for debt advice at £26,000, and the provision of regular singing opportunities – for men, at just £3,600. These are among the first grants awarded by Thomas Deane Trust – a (very) small family-run charity seeking to make a difference in the fields of advice work, community art, end-of-life-care, and environment.

The grant for debt advice goes to Citizens Advice Colchester to pilot the use of Advice Assistants. “Eight million people need debt advice each year, but currently only around one million people receive any,” says Jon Elwes of Citizens Advice. “We need to support both Citizens Advice clients and debt advisers better.”

With the support of Citizens Advice’s head office, Citizens Advice Colchester is using this grant to design, implement and evaluate a new Advice Assistant role for debt advice. “If this project succeeds, it will be a gamechanger for Citizens Advice’s clients,” adds Elwes.

Men need to sing together, for their mental health, says Paul Rogerson of Restoke, an arts organisation working with the people of Stoke on Trent. “During the production of a performance with a group of men last year we noticed that singing together had a profound effect on the group.” So this very modest grant is supporting the development of the Up Men Choir to offer the opportunity for more men to come together to sing.

Other grants in this first round of funding from Thomas Deane Trust went to:

- London Philharmonic Orchestra: £10,000 towards developing a new model of out of school music-making.

Open Sound aims to support the musical progression, personal development and social musical opportunities of disabled young people aged five to 18 in south east London. What’s important about this grant, says LPO’s Anna Quillin is that it will enable rollout of the model: “It will enable us to develop a regionally scalable ensemble model to sustain and develop activity across a wider area to benefit more disabled young people,” says Quillin.

- Wakefield Hospice: £14,612 for a photography project providing bereavement support “Feelings in Focus encourages individuals facing an end of life diagnosis or bereavement to explore thoughts, feelings and emotions through the taking of images,” explains Emily Murphy. This grant enables new and different ways of supporting people, says Murphy. “The project overcomes any language or communication barriers and offers an alternative support structure to a younger audience.”

- Manchester-based Contact: £15,000 to equip its new Media Lounge with instruments. “Contact is where young people change their lives through the arts,” says Jane Hall. “Recent years have seen a steady increase in participants, especially for music projects, beyond our capacity.” A

major capital redevelopment includes a brand new Media Lounge, and this grant will enable the fitting-out of the lounge with instruments. The result? “More young people will be able to take part in free music workshops and develop their talent with professional musicians,” says Hall.

Sue Thomas, chair of Thomas Deane Trust, says she was “delighted” to have been able to support the five projects. “We set ourselves the task of choosing work that chimed with my parents’ interests and also with those of the family trustees. In the very first round of funding we have been able to fund very strong projects in three out of four of our fields of interest.”

“We are particularly pleased to be funding projects all of which are designed to make a difference to people’s lives – whether that’s two-dozen men experiencing the individual effects of group singing, or potentially seven million vulnerable people terrified by debt able to receive help and advice.”

Grants covered the fields of advice work, community art, and end-of-life-care. “We haven’t yet found projects in the environment field that are a good fit with our funding criteria,” added Thomas.

A second round of funding opens soon.

Notes to Editors

For further information about Thomas Deane Trust or the projects we have funded this round, E:ThomasDeaneTrust@btinternet.com T: 01449 737342 (not a public number), W: www.ThomasDeaneTrust.org

1 Thomas Deane Trust background

Joyce and Eric Thomas led modest lives, characterised by an interest in people and a desire to help them. So it was a surprise to daughter Sue Thomas that her parents left almost all their savings to family members and very little to charity. Sue Thomas and her partner Kathryn Deane decided to waive most of her legacy, redirecting it to charity. Both have spent their working lives in the third sector, so it was natural for them to set up their own grant-giving charity with Joyce and Eric’s grand-daughter Elinor Mead as a third Trustee.

2 Operating model

In total, the initial assets of Thomas Deane Trust were under £500,000, and the trustees are not seeking to raise other funds. So the trust intends to “spend out” over the next two or three years, and then close its doors.

3 Grants policy

Our grant-making policy starts with trustees’ clear views of what fields they would like to support, based on personal passions that in turn are well based in evidence that trustees have encountered. They are keen on developmental projects that have the potential for rollout and scaling or that explore new and better ways of working. And they want their funding to lead to identifiable changes, or otherwise make a demonstrable difference. More detail on our themes, ways of working and outcomes focus on our website.

4 Applying to Thomas Deane Trust

Applications to Thomas Deane Trust for funding can be made only when a funding round is open. A round of funding is likely to be open soon. We have clear and detailed rules about what we will and will not fund, and what information applicants need to include, and applicants must read our website before thinking of applying.

Thomas Deane Trust is a charity registered in England and Wales no 1179182 and recognised by HMRC as a charity