

MEDIA RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE, 10TH JUNE 2019

GUINNESS WORLD RECORD MURAL LAUNCHED IN SOUTH LONDON

- **2,300 KIDS AND LOCAL RESIDENTS SET MASSIVE NEW GUINNESS WORLD RECORD FOR BIGGEST COLOURING-IN MURAL IN SOUTH LONDON**
- **MURAL CAN NOW BE SEEN TRANSFORMING HERNE HILL'S UNDERPASS**
- **ACTOR MARK RYLANCE, ALONGSIDE HELEN HAYES MP, MAYORESS OF SOUTHWARK, MAYOR OF LAMBETH AND MD OF SOUTHEASTERN HELPED HERNE HILL KIDS TO BEAT THE GUINNESS WORLD RECORD**
- **NEW WORLD RECORD SMASHES PREVIOUS RECORD & MORE THAN DOUBLES NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS**

Herne Hill, SOUTH EAST LONDON, 10TH JUNE 2019: The [Guinness World Record](#) breaking mural can now be seen in Herne Hill South London. Last year 2,300 children from 8 schools alongside local residents all came together to set a new world record. Previous record holders in [Mexico](#) achieved 1,119 participants across 3 days. Herne Hill kids and residents doubled this to 2,300 in just two days. Herne Hill's long, dark and grotty underpass between Station Square and Milkwood Road has now been transformed with the newly hung forty metre artwork a reproduction of the original is now taking pride of place alongside new community gallery installations.

George Hornby, Chair of Herne Hill Forum said: "The Wonderful Walk mural has brought people from across Herne Hill together. Over 2,300 school kids and locals rolled-up their sleeves to bring the mural to life and break the Guinness World Record for the most contributions to a colour by numbers mural. The mural, designed by Victor Szepessy, captures the spirit of Herne Hill and its community, past and present.

The 40m long mural, finely reproduced onto highest grade durable vinyl to protect the original from graffiti and vandalism, has just been hung in the underpass in Herne Hill. With the original mural to follow on public display as soon as a safe home has been found, for example, possibly

in Station Hall. Transforming what was previously a dark and grotty passageway, the mural has transformed this space into an incredible community focal point. As the artwork began to be unveiled along the walls, the tunnel began to reverberate with exclamations of amazement from excited passers-by: 'Wow!', 'It's here!', 'It's amazing!', 'I coloured in that square!'. Already, the mural is becoming a special focal point at the heart of this proud and active community.

Herne Hill Forum commissioned local artist, Victor Szepessy, to create a design for the 40 metre long mural, which has brought to life the spirit of Herne Hill, its community, key people, places fables and myths. Did you know that a Nobel Prize was achieved in Herne Hill? Or that we had our very own Great Train Crash? Children from eight primary schools in Herne Hill - Jessop, Michael Tippett (children with special educational and physical needs), Herne Hill School, St Jude's, Turney (children with learning difficulties), Rosendale, St Saviour's and Judith Kerr - coloured in the whole mural with paint pens over two days - a whopping 1,161 primary school kids and 1,171 local residents, setting a huge new world record.

The event was an epic effort from across the community, with everyone involved making this a day to remember - with children from as young as two years old, people with a range of disabilities, climbing stairs to get access to the building, and volunteers working 24/7 to deliver the project on time. Key local dignitaries including the Mayors of Lambeth and Southwark, David Statham MD of Southeastern, Cllrs Jim Dickson and Becca Thackray, and Helen Hayes MP all turned up to support this monumental undertaking.

The record busting achievement took place on 12th and 13th September 2018 in Station Square, Herne Hill. It was made possible with funding, resources and support from Aviva, Southeastern, Network Rail, Lambeth Council and local businesses, and an army of volunteers from Herne Hill and Network Rail.

Mark Rylance, acclaimed actor and local resident said, on the day of the record attempt: "I regularly use this underpass - what was once a very unattractive space, will now be transformed. It's great that this space can be celebrated and has been decorated especially by the children."

Lucy Reynolds, Project Manager from the Herne Hill Forum, said, "We are so excited that we have broken the Guinness World Record and that the incredible mural artwork is now on display for all to see. The mural has been a massive, community-led project and has brought together so many people. Over 6,000 colour-by-number sections were completed over the two record attempt days by the Herne Hill local community. Now that it is in position, it has been so moving to see local children and residents carefully scanning the artwork to find 'their' very

special square. The support we had was a true inspiration and reflection of the spirit of this community and we hope that people from far and wide will come to see and enjoy such a unique, collaborative creation.”

Notes to Editors

For further information, interviews, or if you are interested in attending the event on the 12th September please contact Kate Hinton - kateahinton@gmail.com, Mobile 07714 708416

Visuals

- Photography of the event including, children from the schools that were involved, Mark Rylance, Helen Hayes MP, Mayors of Lambeth and Southwark, Cllr Becca Thackray
- Film footage of the event is also available
- Images of the passageway prior to renovations taking place

Guinness World Book of Records

Guinness World Book of Records have confirmed that the Mural has passed all their requirements. Please see link to confirmation that this is an award winning project.

Underpass Project

The underpass project has been led by the Herne Hill Forum and funded from Section 106 funding from the Tesco development, with the funding being managed by Lambeth Council. Additional funding was also secured from the Aviva Community Fund, as a result of the Herne Hill community voting en masse and enabling the Herne Hill Forum to win this Award. In-kind resources have also been provided by Southeastern (who have invested in new lighting, removal of the old anti-graffiti panels, installation of new panels, and re-painting of existing surfaces) and Network Rail (who are providing volunteer resources and supplying paint for improvements to the station side of the underpass).

Herne Hill Forum - a volunteer led community group.

We are a volunteer-led community group of local residents and traders, who work together to make Herne Hill amazing, independent and unique. The Forum was formed over 15 years ago and as well as organising fun community events we have successfully spearheaded local campaigns to make Herne Hill a better place to live, work and do business. For more information please see - <http://www.hernehill.org.uk/groups/herne-hill-forum>

Lucy Reynolds

Lucy is an experienced project manager who has led community transformation and regeneration programmes, both within Herne Hill and across the country. Lucy lives in Herne Hill with her little boy

Ralph, and has delivered many local projects on behalf of the Herne Hill Forum. These include establishing a groundbreaking recycling collaborative amongst local traders; leading the installation of public artwork throughout the area; and campaigning on behalf of flooded businesses to secure Thames Water compensation. Lucy has been leading the underpass regeneration project for the past four years and fronting the partnership that is behind this ambitious piece of work. Please direct all ideas and enquiries to info@hernehillforum.org.uk.

The making of the Mural - an incredibly difficult logistical challenge:

- Gathering over 2,000 people together in one place to colour in the mural. This involved finding a space that could accommodate everyone and ensuring that it was accessible to everyone, as well as space for the 40 mural itself. And then of course giving everyone enough time to colour in, but at the same time ensure that we complied with Guinness Book of Record's meticulous requirements. Feedback from Guinness World Record was that for a UK attempt to achieve such high participants numbers was unusual.
- Ensuring that the mural goes up in a timely fashion and is on display for a long time:
 - A large part of the delay thus far has been caused by difficulty working out a way to glue the original safely to the wall - the mural fabric corrodes easily with strong adhesives, and the underpass is a fire escape for the station so requires a zero rated glue to be used. The one type of glue found that was non-corrosive and met such stringent fire regulation requirements unfortunately required an ambient temperature of at least 18 degrees for eight hours - extremely difficult to achieve in the underpass and to hold the mural in place without slipping while the glue cures felt almost impossible.
 - Ensuring that the mural meets all the fire standards, protection from being vandalised, and is also weather proof. By reproducing the artwork onto a high grade but tough vinyl, we opened up a much wider range of glue options which enabled the reproduction mural to be easily and quickly glued into place, without risk of slippage or damage to the original, and without the need to close and heat the underpass.
 - But most importantly, it also means that we won't lose the precious original if graffiti takes place (which we fear they inevitably will).
 - In addition the vinyl is water resistant and the underpass suffers from frequent leakages from rain running down the walls. Whereas the original mural fabric was flimsy by comparison and would have been prone to rotting in such damp conditions even when treated with varnish.
 - If any sections do get damaged, they can be reproduced and replaced. Or if the artwork seems to be left alone, then we'll feel much more confident about putting the original up there.
- Utilisation of a small team with one project manager on a small budget, delivering on an ambitious project.
- Meeting all the license and regulatory arrangements for a publicly owned piece of artwork that everyone can enjoy. Victor Szepessy granted Herne Hill Forum a license in perpetuity for creation of

the mural which means that a reproduction could be made. We also had to ensure all regulatory compliance regarding fire regulations, and permissions for landlords to hang the reproduction.

- Viewing the original which everyone was involved in making. We feel this is really important, and we'll hang the original somewhere safe for public display in Herne Hill - possibly in the newly opened community space at the heart of Herne Hill, [Station Hall](#). The reproduction gives everyone a chance to see and celebrate the finished creation without further delay or risk of damage while we work out the best way to hang the original.