

X marks the spot on 5 May: use your vote! Pages 2 and 6



Makeover for neglected area

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'Scary walks' for parking row GP

JEAN GRAY

Out of hours GP Safiya Ahsan is caught in a parking permit trap that has left her often facing a lonely 20-minute walk home in the middle of the night after a long shift.

Dr Ahsan has been refused a permit by Newham Council because she lives on the private Chobham Manor estate in Stratford's E20 Olympic Park. Parking on the scheme's roads is managed by a private company, Parking Control Management.

For some residents, a parking space was included when they bought their apartment, but for others like Dr Ahsan, who bought without a space, they are now hard to come by, sometimes changing hands for as much as £50-£100,000. Parking without a permit in the area costs £18 for 12 hours.

Dr Ahsan said: "I pay council tax to Newham Council but I am being denied this service. I am told that I cannot have a permit in my post-code because it is a private estate. I have challenged this and asked for an East Village area permit, but had no response and it's really difficult to get through to talk to anyone about it."

She added: "I often have to go out or come home in the early hours when there is no one around and it can feel very scary if you are alone. I don't see why as a resident I cannot be given an East Village permit which would allow me to park much closer."

A spokesperson for L&Q, the Chobham Manor development company, said: "We appreciate and understand the frustration felt by Dr Ahsan.

"As a car free development, the number of parking bays at Chobham Manor was limited from the outset due to planning regulations. The parking spaces available are sold in

tandem with properties on a first come first served basis.

"Unfortunately, as allocations have already been made, we do not have the power to make exemptions or change parking arrangements."

Newham Council's parking permits website advises that residents 'may

be able to apply for a permit', but there are exclusions as well as special categories, none of which apply to a key worker like Dr Ahsan who is also sister of Liberal Democrat mayoral candidate Dr Saleyha Ahsan.

Newham Council failed to comment as *Newham Voices* went to press.



"I often have to go out or come home in the early hours when there is no one around and it can feel very scary."

'They're all the same, why bother voting?'

That's a sentiment you'll often hear, particularly when faced with four-yearly council elections.

Apathy usually gets the blame for low turn-out, but perhaps lack of faith in politicians deters a trip to the polling station. It's easy to see why people think this way when sleaze, law breaking and corruption hit the headlines.

But read what Newham's Mayoral candidates have to say (See pages 2 and 6 and our April issue at newhamvoices.co.uk) and you will see how important it is to vote on 5 May.

Seven passionate and committed politicians want to represent you as Mayor. They have different world views and, more importantly, different views on how your life should be.

For example, if you care about parking, will you support incumbent Rokhsana Fiaz whose council has introduced a new charging system, recognising that half of Newham residents don't have cars? Or will you back plans to abolish charges for the first car and even offer visitors two hours free parking? Perhaps you support the Green Party's Rob Callender who wants a 20mph speed limit throughout Newham.

These are important issues. It makes sense to vote for the Mayor and local councillors who will deliver what you need for a better life in Newham.

As Rosario Lobo, a Canning Town resident since 1972, told us: "My father used to tell me that if you don't vote you have no right to expect anything." ●

– The Editor





By local people, for local people

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Mayoral candidates face tough questions

JEAN GRAY

Real divisions among the candidates who want your vote to be Mayor of Newham emerged at a fiery pre-election question time debate hosted by *Newham Voices*.

Chaired by *Newham Voices* Publisher Aidan White, the meeting attracted more than 50 people to Morrisons supermarket in Canning Town. They had come to hear what the seven candidates for Mayor had to say on the important issues facing the Borough in the next four years.



Those attending were:

- Simeon Ademolake, Christian Peoples Alliance
- Rob Callender, Green Party
- Rokhsana Fiaz, Labour
- James Ivens, (on behalf of Lois Austin who was out of the country) Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC)
- Trish O'Hara (on behalf of Mehmood Mirza who was running a food bank) Independent
- Attic Rahman, Conservative

Unfortunately, Liberal Democrat candidate Dr Saleyha Ahsan, was unable to attend because of close contact with someone who had tested positive for Covid and so she was isolating.

Questions from the audience covered housing, parking, youth services, safe streets, austerity and the cost of living crisis, 'rogue' landlords and the closure of Newham City Farm.

No candidate could deny the problems facing the Borough with figures showing that Newham does badly on too many indicators, from poverty to pollution. But, overall, most contentious divisions came over the issue of how to deal with austerity given the rising costs of living and restrictions placed on local councils by the government.

Incumbent Mayor, Labour's Rokhsana Fiaz, came under fire from other candidates but she mounted a robust defence of the council's record during her four years in power, claiming that she had set out to rebuild trust in a council that had previously failed the public.

She said £2.5 billion was being spent on housing and highlighted

actions on parking, youth services and local democracy that are tackling inequalities in the area. She emphasised inequity in the government's spending allocations which had led to the council having to increase council tax, albeit with a 90 per cent rebate scheme to help the less well off.

James Ivens and Rob Callender both challenged the figures, with the Green Party claiming that there are unallocated funds that could be put to good use. But Ms Fiaz challenged them to look again, claiming they were misleading people.

"They are all there on the Council's website", she told them. James Ivens said TUSC has members who work in local authority finance who are experts in this area and that it is possible for the council to spend more without breaking the law.

Although, in the end, he said, the council should put up a fight against the government. He cited the case of Poplar Council in 1921 when 30 councillors went to prison in a fight with the government over what it saw as unfair charges on a poor area of London.

Conservative Attic Rahman said Labour had to stop blaming others such as the government and had to start taking responsibility for what happens locally.

Simeon Ademolake gave a passion-



Newham Voices Publisher Aidan White chaired the meeting

ate speech on behalf of young people in the Borough, saying there was not enough for them to do and that this was leading to stabbings.

Read more about what candidates Simeon Ademolake, Lois Austin and Mehmood Mirza stand for on page 6. The other four candidates featured in the April issue of *Newham Voices*, which you can see at www.newhamvoices.co.uk

The hustings meeting was part of a research project being run by *Newham Voices* in conjunction with the Public Interest News Foundation. It aims to discover whether local newspaper activity can impact on voter participation in the 5 May elections. ●



Top l-r: Trish O'Hara, Simeon Ademolake, Attic Rahman; Bottom l-r: Rokhsana Fiaz, Rob Callender, James Ivens. Photography ©Andrew Baker

Going Green: £130,000 makeover for neglected area



Residents of Alma Street and surrounding streets in Stratford are celebrating the completion of a huge community effort to transform a neglected play area into a new space for play and exercise.

The revamp is part of 'Greener Together', a community-led project bringing residents and local authorities together to take climate action and create a greener, healthier, and more connected neighbourhood.

More than 80 households have been involved in improving the area, deciding they wanted to focus on creating cleaner, greener communal spaces where residents could spend more time enjoying the outdoors. Over the last year, residents have helped to plan the new play area and raised over £130,000 to make it happen.

They have also created a wild-flower garden with wildlife friendly flowers and plants; installed a community allotment for growing herbs and vegetables; and taken part in regular community clean-ups. At their first tidy-up session, residents collected 30 bags of rubbish and over 10 bags of green waste, helping to reduce not only local litter but also discourage fly-tipping, which has been a huge issue locally. The residents are also taking part in a series of free workshops to help improve their growing skills so they can continue to maintain the green spaces in the long-term.

The project has also allowed residents to work alongside Newham Council to tackle other social issues within the area including accessi-

bility issues for disabled residents, rough-sleeping, security concerns and anti-social behaviour.

Greener Together is a partnership between local residents, environmental charity Hubbub, the Mayor of London, 'Ten Years' Time and Afterpart. It aims to address the fact that lower income and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in London are most likely to experience the impacts of climate change, including overheating and flooding as well as poor air quality and lack of access to green spaces, and yet are often underrepresented in main-

stream environmental programmes and groups.

A 2020 study by CentricLab highlighted the Borough as having the highest compounded factors of "structural racism", looking at population density of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities per 100k population, overlapped with pollution and deprivation.

Local resident and community coordinator Billie-Jean Holmes said: "For a long time residents have felt disheartened and pessimistic about the issues our community was facing – from litter and fly-tipping to lack



Community Coordinator Billie Jean Holmes.
© Greener Together

"Through coming together to tackle these problems, many members of our neighbourhood now feel empowered and valued."



Children planting in the new Alma Street space, © Nyla Sammons

of accessible green space. Through coming together to tackle these problems, many members of our neighbourhood now feel empowered and valued."

Hubbub and the Mayor of London are urging Londoners to visit www.hubbub.org.uk/london to find ten key actions they can take to help the planet, from cutting emissions to protecting the city's wildlife. ●

Call for working party on community space

JOHN MCNEILL

Community spaces and community centres are a vital part of any community offering affordable space for family parties and where community groups like youth and pensioners clubs can meet.

Years ago in South Canning Town alone there were three substantial community centres purpose built by Newham's housing department. Two of these have gone and the third is standing empty. Two other important centres in the area, based on local churches, have stood the test of

time and still function.

This sort of problem exists all over the Borough.

A newcomer is the Old St. Luke's which uniquely is owned by a charity that is funded by its letting offices in the building. St. Luke's has been able to rent out its halls at a heavily subsidised rate to local people and this has helped a healthy growth in community activities over the years.

Our experience letting halls at St. Luke's shows that there is a huge demand for flexible space that can't be met.

Also a newcomer is Newham Council's managed space located at Rathbone Market although it does risk making it too expensive for the community to use.

What can be done about this?

Firstly, Newham Council must ensure that there are purpose-built affordable meeting spaces included in the Custom House and Canning Town Regeneration plans.

Second, effort must be put into reclaiming and putting to use what spaces there are already available or that could be made available in the area.

Money is of course the big issue. Unfortunately, Council-run buildings at the moment cost more. What is needed is a community/council working party to be set up that will be committed to creating and managing low cost spaces for all.

The fact is that there are spaces and there is non-council money available for such an effort. ●

John McNeill is Director of Custom House and Canning Town Community Renewal Project.

Getting help with birth trauma

Women in Newham who have suffered a birth trauma are being offered a special support service.

Ocean is a therapeutic mental health service targeting women who have suffered a miscarriage, medical termination, a neonatal death or still-birth or another kind of birth trauma.

To coincide with Perinatal Mental Health Awareness week in May, the service is hosting an east London-wide online webinar on Thursday 5 May.

“The Ocean service is for all people living in the community.”

Specialists from the East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) will describe the kind of support people can expect to receive.

Dr. Danielle D’Mello, Counselling Psychologist and Ocean Lead for east London, says the experience of birth loss or trauma can be devastating and often people feel they have no alternative than to struggle on alone.

If lucky, they may have supportive family or friends. But now there is professional therapeutic support available.

She said the service offers an initial assessment within 28 days of someone making contact.

“The Ocean service is for all peo-

ple living in the community and we have specific therapeutic groups – one for Black women and another for Bangladeshi women.”

For more information and to register for the Ocean webinar on 5 May visit or search online for Ocean East London or visit www.elft.nhs.uk.



Still waiting for blood tests action

Delays in providing access to blood testing in Newham continue and plans to open a fifth clinic to relieve pressure on the service have still not been finalised.

People seeking an appointment to have a blood test currently have to wait at least nine days to get a slot in any of the Borough’s four clinics in Shrewsbury Road (covering East Ham and Forest Gate), Stratford, Manor Park and Canning Town.

After *Newham Voices* reported concerns the East London Foundation Trust promised last month that a new clinic would be opened at the Vaccination Centre at the Westfield shopping centre, but arrangements have not yet been put in place.

Around 300,000 people take blood tests each year in Newham and long delays followed the introduction of an online appointments-only system to replace the former walk-in service. Many people, particularly older residents, found the new system difficult, raising fears that some people might lose out on getting timely and vital treatment.

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Note: Our next issue goes to print on 26 May 2022

HAVE YOUR SAY – LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@newhamvoices.co.uk

Nearly 73 and I'm giving up on the NHS

I am approaching 73 years of age. I am constantly told by hospital and GP staff to invest in a smartphone or to obtain a cheap laptop so that I can have online consultations with the hospital or my GP but I do not see why I should have to go online for appointments.

Recently one of the GPs at my surgery told me that's the way things are going and I should invest in a "second hand smartphone or second hand laptop". I was due to have a blood test, and once again, it would have to be arranged online.

Having used one of the local library computers I did manage, with the help of library staff, to go online and access the network in order to obtain a hospital appointment, and also arrange a blood test. At the last moment the network

failed because I could not get to the required site.

I have now missed two blood tests, and have had to miss hospital phone consultations. This has now got to the point where I do not bother to contact any NHS services as it's a struggle to do so.

This is really sad state when people are told we should buy a smartphone or invest in a cheap laptop just to have a consultation or arrange for a blood test.

I have now given up trying to have a consultation with my GP, it seems to be one obstacle after another.

– Martin Walsh

Get walking for a better life

During the pandemic, many of us rediscovered the simple act of walking – the oldest, cheapest and

greenest transport there is. Walking kept us connected to ourselves and to others and helped us to stay healthy and happy.

Walking is good for our minds, our bodies, and our cities, towns and villages. But lots of us still struggle with narrow, cluttered, uneven pavements; crossings that prioritise cars rather than people; and growing numbers of speeding vehicles.

Over the next four years, the city faces a choice between business as usual where cars dominate, increasing congestion, danger, carbon and pollution, or a city that prioritises people and their health and wellbeing and the climate.

That's why I support the demands Living Streets London Group has made, asking local election candidates to pledge to improve our

streets for all, cut air pollution and make walking easier and safer.

We call on candidates to commit to: default 20mph speed limits in all London boroughs; improvements to our crossings, kerbs and junctions; maintaining pavement standards so wheelchair users and people with buggies can navigate comfortably; and an increase in the number of low traffic walking routes around the city. Visit livingstreets.org.uk/may22 for more information.

Compared with all other ways of getting about, walking is the healthiest, cheapest, kindest to our planet and reflects the widest diversity of the population. To create this truly sustainable, people-friendly city, we must put walking on top.

– Jo Clayton, Forest Gate

UEL leads Europe with high-tech hub for healthcare training

A new Hospital and Primary Care Training Hub has been launched at the University of East London to support the development of health and science courses, preparing students to be career-ready for the NHS and health and social care workforce.

The inter-professional simulation suite is equipped with augmented

and virtual reality equipment and virtual placement software. Cutting-edge tools include two high-tech patient simulator mannequins, who are able to display neurological as well as physiological symptoms including sweating and crying. The university is one of only two universities in Europe to have this technology.

Students from nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, podiatry, public health, science, physician associate and sport courses will all learn together to demonstrate where their roles support and complement the delivery of safe and effective healthcare.

Professor Jane Perry, Dean of the School of Health, Sport and Bioscience, said: "The learning spaces include a general ward, an intensive care unit and a flat to imitate an at home environment. UEL is one of only two universities in Europe to install a simulation mannequin (SimMan 3G) providing students with the chance to deal with high-pressure situations. The life-like mannequin is an advanced simulator able to display neurological as well as physiological symptoms including sweating and crying.

"An ambulance has been placed outside which will be used to support skill-based training through the use of role-play activities and scenario-based learning. The development of the various spaces will allow students to experience a range of clinical scenarios where they can reflect on human factors and improve their knowledge and skills for safe and

"The development of the various spaces will allow students to experience a range of clinical scenarios where they can reflect on human factors and improve their knowledge and skills for safe and effective high-quality care."

effective high-quality care.

"These new spaces will also provide students with a full patient journey starting from their home to hospital, developing full exposure to a true patient journey and preparing them to be flexible and responsive in a changing healthcare arena."

Phase two will start this summer. The Office for Students recently awarded a £2million grant which will go towards further works. These include a new flexible working space that resembles an accident and emergency department but can also be used for consulting, running clinics and rehabilitation. ●



UEL Hospital and Primary Care Training Opening © Osman Marfo-Gyasi

Give me your vote for mayor

There are seven candidates on the ballot paper to elect Newham's next Mayor. Last month, *Newham Voices* featured statements from four of the candidates. This month we asked the remaining three to have their say.

Simeon Ademolake: Christian Peoples Alliance

Simeon has lived in Newham for over 30 years. He became a local councillor here for the CPA Party in 2006 becoming the first black Christian Democratic Councillor in British electoral History.

Simeon is an Environmental Designer and a Law graduate from the University of East London in Newham. He's been the pastor of The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Harvest Chapel based in Newham for over 15 years. He's now the Chairman of Newham partnership for Complementary schools.



Simeon Ademolake

He says: "Education was in a terrible state when I came to Newham. Black children were under achieving and I decided to start a not-for-profit supplementary school to support them in my own way. The school is 22 years old and it is still running. My supplementary education initiative was replicated by the then Mayor after my motion on it was passed in the Council."

Why is he seeking the office of a Mayor? According to the Trust for London 2022 publication, "Half of Newham children (50 per cent) are judged to be in households in poverty, compared to 37 per cent in the typical London borough". This is after many years of continuous Labour rule. Simeon has the robust capacity and experience to change Newham to a prosperous borough by emulating the best practises from other successful boroughs.

He says: "My commitment to reduce the disgraceful housing waiting list is on top of my agenda, I promise to build 2000 genuinely affordable homes in four years and make supplementary schools free for all chil-

dren ages 4-16. I will stop the closure of City Farm and review all the parking restrictions and road closures. Small businesses will be given support to make them flourish."

Newham needs change and will undoubtedly benefit from Simeon's leadership. @simeonademolake

Lois Austin: Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition

Working-class people in Newham have been let down. The Labour mayor and council choose to carry on making the Tory government's imposed cuts rather than stand up for us.

The cost of living crisis is worsened by council tax hikes. Newham already has some of the worst poverty levels in the country.

Our local services are being destroyed, with Newham City Farm and Durning Hall set for closure and Stratford Circus 'repurposed'

At the same time, the monstrous and polluting MSG Sphere and Silvertown Tunnel get the green light and West Ham park is threatened by development.

I am a longstanding local anti-cuts campaigner, and as a Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition mayoral candidate I will only take a worker's wage if elected mayor.

Newham Council has £616 million in 'usable reserves'. A socialist mayor and councillors would vote against every austerity cut and charge, start rebuilding the jobs and homes we need and send the bill to Number 10.



Lois Austin

As part of the local campaign alliance, Newham Resists, I drafted a 'needs budget' to give the working class what it needs, not more cuts.

Instead of gentrification, build thousands of high-quality council homes. Seize empty properties for council housing. No to the demolition of the Carpenters Estate! Repopulate with those in housing need, and all homes let at council rent.

Stop the land grab! No to gentri-

fication of Green Street market and Hamara Ghar elderly accommodation.

Newham's young people deserve a future. Restore and expand closed youth services.

Profit out of schools! Stop allowing community schools to become academies.

As mayor, I would champion quality free education and training, a £15-an-hour minimum wage for all ages and investment in socially useful job creation with living wages and trade union conditions.

As mayor, I would campaign to end racist policing, 'stop and search' and for democratic community control of police policy and hiring.

To end Newham's record-level pollution, we need a publicly owned and fully funded transport system. No to public transport cuts, car charges and increased parking charges.

Other anti-cuts community campaigners are standing in the mayoral and council elections - Vote for all 'needs budget' candidates!

Mehmood Mirza: Independent

My name is Mehmood Mirza. I am standing as your independent socialist candidate for Mayor of Newham. I have lived and worked in the Borough for 23 years and love it!

I used to be a member of the Labour Party, believing it would fight to defend ordinary people. Sadly, as you will know yourself, this is no longer true.

I believe Newham's Mayor should be leading the way in challenging the Tory Government and refusing to implement its cuts. Newham Council has substantial financial reserves which means it could shield the people of Newham from unaffordable housing, dangerous streets, increasing pollution, the destruction of our community resources and cuts in health and social care. Sadly, Newham's current Labour Council and Mayor are doing the Government's dirty work for them rather than standing up to the Tory Government and working across London to build resistance to cuts and poverty.

I have run a food bank in the East of the Borough for the past one and half years. This is important work because we provide food and resources to thousands of people who desperately need support and solidarity in this deprived borough, but it really should not be necessary in the 21st century. We live in the capital city of one of the richest countries in the world, yet we have to fight to survive in one of the poorest and most polluted boroughs. Whilst criminal oligarchs own plush and often empty apartments here and in

other parts of London, residents of Newham are forced to live in some of the worst housing conditions in the country. We have record homelessness in Newham, which is a disgrace and completely preventable.

I am a community activist and want to see a Mayor and Council in Newham which works to defend the people of the Borough. I pledge to take only London living wage instead of taking £86,000 Mayoral special responsibility allowance. I am not in this for a career. I am standing because I am passionately



committed to changing things for the better in Newham by working with the community to challenge injustice and poverty. As your Mayor, I will continue to live amongst and alongside the working class people I will be proud to represent.

As Newham's Mayor I will work with the Council to freeze Council Tax; reverse budget cuts; build genuinely affordable public housing; tackle Newham's backlog of repairs; and bring services back in-house to defend jobs and service quality. I will re-open the City Farm closed by the current Mayor and council; support a focused plan of street cleaning and road repairs, coming down hard on fly tippers, crime and other antisocial behaviour. I will work with the community for a greener borough with an end to the current profiteering punitive parking regime and introduce incentives to tackle the climate emergency in the Borough. I will stop work on the Silvertown Tunnel and MSG Sphere, engaging in genuine and transparent community consultation before starting any significant public works.

Please use your first preference vote to get real, lasting change in Newham. We all desperately need it. If someone else is your first preference please give me second preference. ●

To access statements from Saleyha Ahsan (Liberal Democrat), Rob Callender (Green Party) Rokhsana Fiaz (Labour) and Attic Rahman (Conservative), go to our website: www.newhamvoices.co.uk

How EastBank Seniors make the Internet work for them

GILLIAN LAWRENCE

EastBank Seniors evolved from Up Your Street, a free online sharing of information service to seniors around the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. It was set up in 2007 to encourage seniors to access the Internet, to email and share events and also to counteract negativity about London 2012. We have aged together and come from many boroughs increasing in numbers every year. We are not funded.

It is free to join, the only two requirements are being senior and being able to provide an email address. Other enterprises try to get my email list to no avail.

I use email to share free events and activities with that subscribed group of older persons who in turn share what they think is relevant to 60-year-olds and better.

EastBank Seniors takes its name from the local East Bank being developed in E20 with the new V&A museum. We are always welcome at the V&A, likewise the Tates in London and the British Museum, all landmarks from where we source free tickets for major exhibitions.

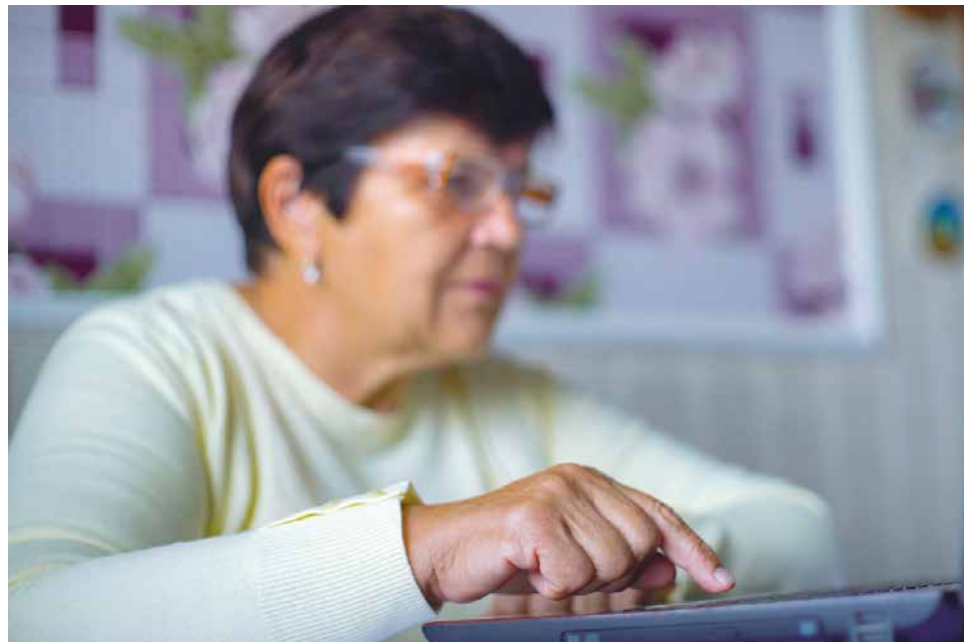
We tea dance, join art classes, Zumba, join and even set up reading groups and discussions, and are a Museum of London Focus Group. We support the East End Women's Museum in Barking, interact in theatre productions, brunch together, dine at rock bottom prices, throw clay, group together for pub quizzes, go cooking, computing and do so much more.

You can connect with EastBank Seniors at:

Facebook: @EastBank Seniors
Twitter: @UpYourStreet6

Communication is mainly by email at gillianamuir@aol.co.uk

Gillian Lawrence is founder and owner, Eastbank Seniors



It depends on how you look at it

LORRAINE TAPPER

A new art exhibition opened on 23 April in an unusual setting: Stratford Unitarian and Free Christian Church.

The artist is Berkay Bugdan who divides his time between the UK and Turkey where he still has his studio.

His first show was in Istanbul in 2012 but Berkay recently moved to London, a place he believes is the best fit for him as an artist.

What you see when you look at his art is dependent on your perspective. Your view changes according to the distance from the painting. This is intentional and a result of the techniques he uses to create his art.

The industrial polarised charcoal he uses creates something that is both beautiful and mysterious.

You can see some of Berkay's work on Instagram @berkay.bugdan

The exhibition opens to the public on 30 April and continues until 20 May.

Opening Hours:

Saturday 30 April, 2.00pm–7.00pm and thereafter Thursday to Saturday, 3.00pm–7.00pm

Stratford Unitarian and Free Christian Church, West Ham Lane, London E15 4PH, phone: 079 5638 1995



Berkay Bugdan

Fresh strategy for retirement and the challenge of old age

PETER LANDMAN

The council is developing an ambitious strategy for helping people in the Borough as they move into old age. A survey has been carried out among residents over the age of 50, with more than 1,500 residents taking part in mainly Zoom consultations.

Now the council's commissioning team has produced a series of tasks and action schedules, which have been put out for further consultation. The main themes on the schedule cover finance, employment, volunteering, and retirement.

- **Retirement:** A special document for dealing with retirement supported by two public sessions on how to prepare for retirement;
- **Finance:** this covers advice on personal finances with more interventions and promotion by Newham Money Service. There will also be special advice to residents who are struggling to manage their finances, but who are not entitled to benefits;
- **Employment and Volunteering:** plans envisage production of an advice booklet for local employers on how they can support their elderly workforce.

There will also be actions to support people who wish to work beyond retirement age;

- **Planning for Later Life:** this theme confronts the health challenges of retirement with advice on coping with onset of dementia, ways to get more frail residents to contact their GP; and more pain management courses;

There will also be preparation of a guide on sorting things out in preparation for end of life, including advice on preparing a will and setting up of powers of attorney.

For more information or comments, please contact lydia.drummond@newham.gov.uk

Other suggestions include support for volunteering projects by elderly people in schools and colleges. For example, reading for young children and organising social history talks on what Newham was like in the young days of elderly generations.

The council's final report will also include suggestions to develop a council framework for resident engagement to encourage participation in meetings, to ensure good chairing and facilitation of meetings and to advise residents later how their meeting contributions have been followed up, so that they might not feel ignored.

What more Newham can do to end homes crisis

NIALL MULHOLLAND

Newham has an unenviable record on housing. It has the highest levels of overcrowding in the country; the highest proportion of people living in insecure private rented homes; and the largest number of homeless people, including those in temporary accommodation.

Low wages in Newham and the cost of living crisis will only exacerbate these problems. Average rents now represent 65 percent of average wages in Newham, compared to 30 percent across the UK.

Newham Council's 'Housing Delivery Strategy' identifies many of the acute problems in the Borough which have led to a housing waiting list of almost 30,000.

The Council's five year housing strategy pledges 1000 new social rent homes by 2022 and to "embark on a massive programme to upgrade the Council's housing stock". The Council also says it will promote housing liaising teams, walk-in hubs for residents, and support for new tenants' associations.

While steps in this direction are to be welcomed, Newham's housing crisis requires urgent and radical measures. The Local Government Association said a 27.2 percent increase in funding of homelessness services would be needed to maintain the current (inadequate) service level over the next three years. How



Photo via www.shaction.org

does Newham's plan measure up?

The Social Housing Action Campaign in Newham is part of a national network calling for genuine tenants' and residents' democracy, improved repairs and maintenance services, reduced rents and service charges, better health and safety provision, and an end to the exploitation of housing workers.

Private renters in Newham also need protection from exploitative landlords - rent caps and proper regulation to ensure decent, quality housing.

Decades of central government cuts and retrogressive housing policy has largely created the housing crisis, but there is still a lot more councils like Newham Council can do.

We reject raising council tax, rent and service charges to make up for

cuts in central funding. Why didn't Newham Council freeze rent during this year of rising living costs, as even Tory Wandsworth Council have done?

Councils can use their powers to begin a mass building programme of eco-friendly, affordable council homes. We support a redistributive revenue raising system to finance local council services, and demand that central government restores the cuts and funding it has imposed.

Councils can use reserves and borrowing powers to avoid making cuts and to start building more homes. There are also other measures - empty properties can be acquired by the Council and housing co-ops funded and supported. ●

Niall Mulholland is the Chair of Social Housing Action Campaign (SHAC), and a housing coop tenant in Newham
www.shaction.org
shac.action@gmail.com

Fact File: Housing

- Newham plans to build 43,000 more homes in the Borough by 2033. These will be to rent or buy and built by the council, housing associations and private developers.
- Up to 50 per cent of these homes will be affordable housing.
- Since 2019, Newham has achieved the greatest proportionate reduction in rough sleeping numbers of any local authority in the country.
- Newham has the highest rate of homelessness of any local authority in England. It is estimated that one in 22 people in Newham are either homeless, living in temporary accommodation or on the street (2021).
- Low incomes and high housing costs drive the high rate of homelessness - in Newham, two in five people are living in poverty.
- Over the last ten years rents have increased by 55 percent, while wages have only risen by 37 percent. In 2022 rents have begun to rise sharply.
- The latest figures from the council reveal there are 109,000 homes in Newham:

Council rented

17,015

Housing Association rented

16,848

Owner occupied

34,771

Privately rented

40,569



Caritas Anchor House opens Hope Street, a new 15-room accommodation unit for rough sleepers in Canning Town

Council seeks support for Carpenters Estate plan

Peter Landman reports from Newham Council's April Cabinet meeting

The Newham Council plan for regeneration of the Carpenters Estate has been submitted to the London Legacy Development Corporation for approval.

After approval the next stages will be preparation of specific plans and agreements between developers and local authorities for the building of 1,858 new homes (a mix of houses, maisonettes, and flats, 50 per cent of which are affordable), refurbishment of 317 existing homes, and designation of non residential and education space.

Community engagement is key to housing strategy

AIDAN WHITE

Newham is focusing on providing affordable homes, targeting rogue landlords, eliminating overcrowding and reaching out to residents and tenants in a fresh bid to ease the Borough's housing crisis.

Last month the council opened up the first of a string of housing hubs that will provide a walk-in housing advice service.

According to London Councils more than 80 percent of residents have seen an increase in cost of living over the past six months, rents have increased, energy costs hit record levels and food banks are busier than ever. Around 155,000 people in London now live in temporary accommodation – including 86,000 children.

The latest blows to funding and fresh austerity blunts any hopes of reviving the dream of well-main-

tify and deal with those who are breaking the rules."

The need for a fresh crackdown on rogue landlords and caps on rent increases has been a theme of recent discussions among candidates standing in the May council elections.

Community engagement is a key element in the council strategy says Councillor Shaban Mohammed, the Council Cabinet lead on housing services during a visit by *Newham Voices* to the Bridge Road depot in Stratford, where providing support for people and property in Newham has been brought under one roof. From here repairs to homes and support for residents is co-ordinated.

A team of 20 housing liaison officers has been expanded to provide regular support for people living on estates across the Borough and a new council service – estate busters – is being launched.

Donna Morelli, assistant Director of Housing and Tony Lynes, head of housing services, told *Newham Voices* that the expanding housing liaison work is improving security and confidence and providing more face to face contact with residents on estates around the Borough.

"The housing liaison team and concierge lodges in high rise accommodation are the eyes and ears of our service," said Donna.

"They can raise the alarm if there are problems. They monitor security and repair issues and they alert us to fly-tipping or other anti-social behaviour," said Tony.

Over the coming year up to ten fresh "estate buster" actions will take place. This unique programme involves council officers targeting estates where there will be consultation with residents and a survey of work to be done – cleaning up, repairing and improving living space and shared open space – and this is followed by four weeks of work to get the jobs done.

Pilot programmes in Forest Gate, have already been successfully carried out.

At the same time, repairs and maintenance work and response is being stepped up. All of this says Shaban Mohammed is evidence that the council is "committed to making community engagement a key element in improving the conditions in which our people live."

Newham Voices also caught up with

a group of local youngsters whose lives are being transformed by new career opportunities being provided by the council housing services.

A new apprenticeship scheme has been launched which gives opportunities for ten young people from Newham neighbourhoods to get practical skills including plumbing, carpentry, electrical fitting, and home decoration.

At the end of their training the apprentices get a qualifying certificate and a career path working in the community to build, repair and maintain the homes of residents in the neighbourhood.

Each of the youngsters has a story to tell. "I was a bit of a naughty boy," said Daanyal from Manor Park. "And I felt I was being let down a lot of times but this gave me a fresh start. It's best thing I could have done."

And Kevin from Plaistow took up a post as gas apprentice after failing to get a job after university. "I got a 2:1 degree, but struggled to get a job, when this opportunity came. Now I'm settled and enjoying working with people." ●

What is your experience? Let *Newham Voices* know how you think the Council is living up to its promises. editor@newhamvoices.co.uk



Stratford's new housing advice centre

A new apprenticeship scheme has been launched which gives opportunities for young people from Newham neighbourhoods to get practical skills including plumbing, carpentry, electrical fitting, and home decoration.

The first hub, based at 22 The Broadway in Stratford, is open daily and signals a new approach to community engagement and a return to providing residents and tenants with a face-to-face service over housing issues.

With around 30,000 on the housing waiting list and a chronic shortage of affordable homes to rent, the housing crisis in Newham is set to get worse in the coming months as rent increases and the onset of fresh austerity arising from the country's cost of living crisis begins to bite.

The government recently announced £40 million cuts to funding to councils for Discretionary Housing Payments which help residents struggling to pay their rent and at risk of homelessness.

tained public housing as a central pillar of housing strategy.

In reality, right to buy laws, which force councils to encourage people to buy their home at a discounted price, reduces council housing stock and open the door to sub-letting, which has sometimes led to illegal multi-occupation and overcrowding.

One resident at the opening of the new Housing Hub in Stratford complained about former council flats being turned into overcrowded private rented homes in her neighbourhood tower block.

"There will always be challenges like this," said Rokhsana Fiaz after cutting the ribbon to open the new hub, "but with new community engagement we will be able to iden-

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Get creative! Young people urged to support Art in the Docks

Phoenix Debola takes a stroll around the gallery aiming to inspire local artists.

A month or so ago, I wandered into a gallery run by Art in The Docks (AiTD) collective in Royal Albert Wharf and was so impressed with the quality of the exhibits that I couldn't wait to return.

In April I went back to see Layers, an evocative week-long exhibition exploring dreams, by sculptor Vincenzo Muratore and painter Annamaria Antonazzo, and took the opportunity to have a conversation

with some of the artists.

Christopher Mike, a painter, tells me that the collective, formed during the pandemic, comprises local artists engaged in the full spectrum of visual arts. They work from both individual studios and a central workspace/gallery, and their primary objective is to make art and culture accessible and approachable to ordinary people in east London, combining inclusivity and cultural diversity.

He said: "This is an area where meaningful engagement with the arts is often at a relatively low level. To combat this, we make art and

culture accessible through a combination of exhibitions and community workshops targeted at cross-generational audiences, and also events aimed primarily at school children."

The collective is planning to work with schools and colleges in the Royal Docks to create pathways for young people into the creative economies. "We have already forged good connections with the University of East London, likewise at primary school level, and are now opening discussions at secondary level. None of what we do challenges or replaces any aspect

for the programme of activities that they deliver.

In a plea to sponsors, the artists said: "Almost everything that we do has so far been at the artists' own expense. We are seeking funding partners who share our values, who believe in what we do, and who can see the doorway to a bright future that we open to young people in this part of east London."

Art in The Docks collective's future and past events are listed on their website artinthedocks.com and on Instagram [@artinthedocks](https://www.instagram.com/artinthedocks)

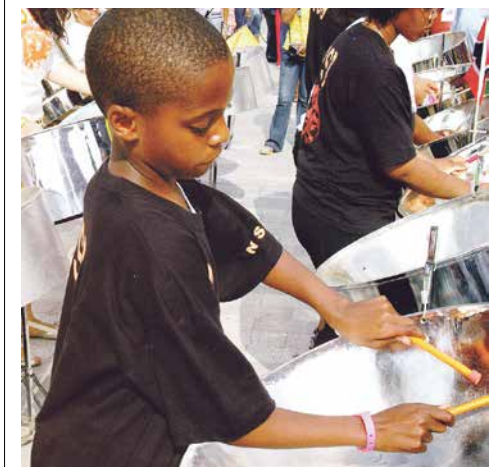


Vincenzo Muratore and Annamaria Antonazzo

The collective is planning to work with schools and colleges in the Royal Docks to create pathways for young people into the creative economies.

of the existing educational system, we instead intend to support it."

Inevitably, discussions turn to funding as exhibitions are generally free. I learn that the artists are studio tenants of Bow Arts, a registered arts charity that provides affordable workspaces across east London, and while the gallery's physical space is made available through the support of Bow Arts and Notting Hill Genesis, the artists have almost zero funding



Want to play in a steel band?

Newham Youth Steel Band was formed in 1990 and is still making a noise as the only steel band provider of training and community support in the Borough.

The band provides opportunities for music-makers of all ages with workshops for the over 60s and for young people as well as providing classes for people with learning disabilities, workshops for ex-offenders and anyone who is interested in the art of playing the steel pan.

There is also training on drums as well as history lessons on the progression of steel pan playing from its earliest roots until it became popular in Britain and Europe.

Anyone interested in learning to play should contact Felix Joseph on **0780 884 7974** or felixsteelpan@yahoo.co.uk. *Newham Voices* will have a special feature on the band in an upcoming issue.

Eliza finds home-made inspiration to take the stage

NEANDRA ETIENNE

Actor Eliza Collings is making the most of the end of Covid restrictions. She has enjoyed a belated honeymoon which was postponed due to the pandemic and she's planning to get back to auditioning for work.

Eliza, whose acting career follows a family tradition, previously lived in Walthamstow but has been happily living in Newham for the last eight years.

Eliza decided she wanted to pursue an acting career around the age of 21 and was lucky enough to get into Bristol Old Vic Theatre School.

Eliza and her twin brother Sam Collings both followed in their par-

ents' footsteps by working in the entertainment industry. Eliza's mother Karen Archer starred in *The Chief*, *EastEnders*, and *Doctors*, while



Eliza Collings, Karen Archer and Sam Collings

her father David Collings acted in the 1980s children's TV series

Look and Read, *Dark Towers*, *Doctor Who*, *Sapphire and Steel*, and the TV mini-series *Agatha Christie's Miss Marple: A Murder is Announced*.

Eliza told *Newham Voices*: "I guess you'd call it the family trade. Growing up we were always on TV sets or backstage in theatres while mum and dad were working during school holidays. It's a very intoxicating world to grow up in and hard to imagine making a living in any other industry."

Eliza has appeared in multiple stage and television productions over the years. Most recently, she was in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, both on tour and in the West End. She will also star in *Strike-Troubled Blood* for HBO/BBC which is due to come out in early 2023. ●

Daisy Parsons: A woman's place is in politics

Julia Omari discovers the woman behind the blue plaque on Stratford Town Hall

This May marks another opportunity for Newham residents to have our say by casting those all-important votes at the ballot box. The month also marks the birth of West Ham's first female Mayor, Mrs Daisy Parsons.

Born Marguerite Lena Millo on 21 May 1890 in Tower Hamlets to a father with health issues, an over-worked mother, and five younger siblings, the family moved to Canning Town before Marguerite "Daisy" turned one. There, she attended



Daisy Parsons on the right

Beckton Road Primary School until having to leave aged 12 to help support the family.

It was during those early work years that Daisy experienced firsthand the difficulties faced by women in the workforce and their limited power to improve their own conditions. However, change was in the air as suffragettes, led by Sylvia Pankhurst, were fighting for women's right to vote. At work Daisy had witnessed the factory men join together to demand more rights and better working conditions. She knew that women must do the same.

Marriage nor motherhood dented the strength and determination Daisy felt as she pushed forward, joined the East London Suffrage Movement and was later picked as one of six East End females to visit 10 Downing Street and speak with then Prime Minister Herbert Asquith. Daisy was not shy in voicing her concerns and championing mothers' rights.

She decided a political career was



the most effective way to help others. In 1922 she was elected Labour Councillor for Beckton. In 1931 she became Deputy Mayor – the first woman to hold that post, Alderman in 1935 and the first female Mayor of West Ham in 1936.

Daisy worked for the good of all, with a strong focus on women. She opened a Mother and Child Welfare Centre, drove the first West Ham trolley bus, and opened the new Beckton Lido.

In 1949, Daisy was made a Freeman of the Borough, a title given to a "person of distinction and any persons who have rendered eminent services to the Borough." She was made an MBE in 1951 and a blue plaque was unveiled at Stratford Town Hall in 2019. She was also commemorated with the Daisy Parsons Memorial Garden in Canning Town at Hermit Park Road.

Former Mayor Daisy Parsons MBE died in Stratford in 1957 but her legacy lives on as she continues to be recognised for her great work. ●

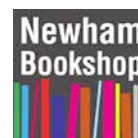
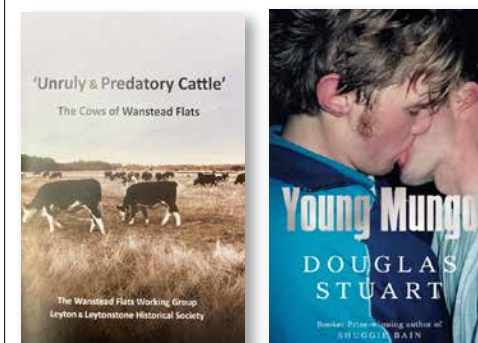


Good reads in Newham

The Newham Bookshop in Bark-ing Road tells us these are the top sellers this month:

- **Young Mungo** (signed copies) By Douglas Stuart
- **The Book of Form and Emptiness** (signed copies) By Ruth Ozeki
- **Unruly & Predatory Cattle: The Cows of Wanstead Flats** By Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society
- **Please Write Soon** By Michael Rosen
- **Maya and Her Friends** By Larysa Denysenko
- **One Tiny Dot** By Lucy Rowland

Compiled by David Ceen, Newham Bookshop



newhambooks.co.uk
@NewhamBookshop

Together again on Thursday

LORRAINE TAPPER

Every Thursday between 12 – 2pm people get together for an afternoon of socialising. It is a free, fun afternoon where people from Canning Town come together at Ruscoe Road Sheltered Housing.

Prior to the pandemic, Julie Impey, Manager of the scheme used to run regular socials on a Thursday at Ruscoe Road.



Reverend Amy Stott from nearby St Luke's Church and Julie decided to start the Thursday afternoon social again. Building bridges with our community is St Luke's slogan and one they live by.

Together on Thursday's is not limited to the older members of the community and is a wonderful way to meet new people if you're feeling isolated.

Tea, cake, biscuits, and fruit are provided, and people bring their own packed lunch. Jing Quah and Nana Bonsu, Community Pastors from St Luke's ensure the event is warm, welcoming and challenging with a range of activities such as dominos, bingo, card games and board games. There is lots of laughter as a diverse group of people come together. One attendee says this is the only event she attends by herself each week.

Jing and Nana have a big vision for the Canning Town community. The pandemic and lockdown have had a major impact on people's ability to socialise. They are mindful of the impact on some people's mental health because of the pandemic

and lockdown. Hence Together on Thursdays aims to reduce social isolation, and is an opportunity for people to forget their cares and concerns for a couple of hours each week.

Partnering with Ruscoe Road and The Pinnacle Group, managing agents for Ruscoe Road, is one of the ways to build bridges in the community. St Luke's is also partnering with Morrisons Canning Town who are providing a £50 gift card for their community survey. Everyone who completes the survey is entered into a free prize draw. One lucky winner will win the gift card.

The purpose of the survey is to help St Luke's to be more informed about how they can better serve the needs of the community. To complete the survey and enter the draw, go to www.stlukesE16.co.uk/survey

To find out more about Together on Thursday's contact Julie on 07730 761 723 or you can just turn up at 55 Ruscoe Road, Canning Town, E16 1JA.

Lorraine Tapper is a social entrepreneur who works from home.



SOMETHING'S BREWING



If you want a guaranteed quality pint, look for the Cask Marque says **Phil Mellows**

Funny things go on in pubs, and if you spot someone at the end of the bar dipping a thermometer in their beer, you might not take much notice. But the chances are they're an official beer inspector. And if you're anywhere between Stratford and Shoeburyness, his name will be Nigel Sadler.

Nigel is the Cask Marque assessor covering Newham and all the way out to the Essex coast. His job is to ensure the 145 pubs in his patch displaying the quality accreditation scheme's blue handpump plaque really do serve a good pint of cask beer.

After he's taken its temperature – which should be between 11 and 13 degrees centigrade – he'll hold it up to the light to check for clarity, then sniff and taste the beer to pick up any off-flavours. Once a year he'll also make a full cellar inspection.

"It's my second career," he says. "I worked in the City for 30 years until the credit crunch, and in 2009 I re-invented myself.

"I'd always loved beer, so I learned how to brew and set up my own training company. Then the vacancy came up at Cask Marque."

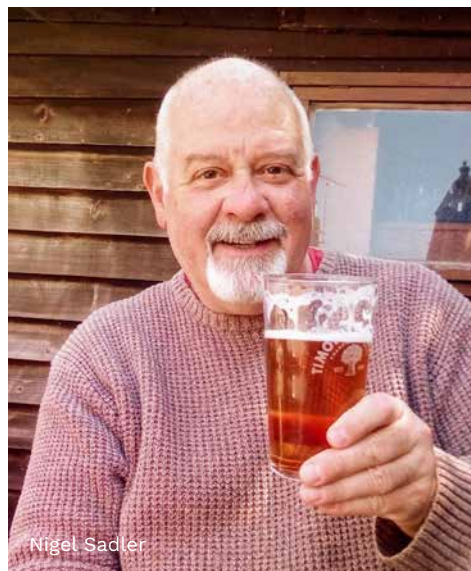
Only two pubs in Newham are members of the scheme, the Black Lion in Plaistow and Wetherspoon's Miller's Well in East Ham. Nigel believes there should be more and worries "there are a lot of misconceptions about Cask Marque".

"Some think inspectors go in looking for bad pints but I'm there to help, to educate. If something's wrong I can advise on how to put it right, and if the equipment is the problem, I can test that too.

"There's a lack of training out there, and a lot of the new generation don't drink so there are hurdles

to overcome. But it's not a matter of doing anything that a good licensee should not already be doing."

One hurdle is the price of membership at a time when pubs, like the rest of us, are struggling with rising costs. It's £180 to sign up with Cask



"If something's wrong I can advise on how to put it right, and if the equipment is the problem, I can test that, too."

Marque – though brewers and pub companies will often pay half of that.

"It comes down to convincing people it's worth doing, that it will put on more business for the pub," says Nigel.

"I look at it as being part of a giant ale trail with 9,000 pubs around the country. Cask drinkers know the standards are the same in each one of those pubs, and they'll come to you. It makes your pub more desirable." ●



GARDEN TALK

Cecilia Cran is enjoying the change of season as she gets planting her gladioli to ensure a steady stream of colour right through the summer



What to grow

London is well and truly in bloom! I love this time of year – it's when all the flowers have a chance to shine – bluebells offering carpet coverage, bushes of camellias and waves of cherry blossom, all signalling the end of spring and welcoming in the warmer, lighter summer months.

The Borough is waking from (what felt like a never ending) slightly monochrome spell. Flowers are appearing everywhere, announcing their arrival with bold scents and bright colours.

Thinking about colour – this month I'm focussing on getting my gladioli corms planted. I like to plant 8-10 bulbs every month, from May to July, this ensures I have a steady stream of flowers in the garden – known as 'successional sowing', meaning I always have some to pick and put in a vase inside, and some to keep to add some height, texture and general interest in my thumbnail of the great outdoors.

How to grow

Gladioli corms can be planted directly in the ground in May, right through the summer months to the end of July. Gladioli like rich, well-drained soil, in a position of full sun shine, in a spot sheltered from wind.



Photos courtesy Cecilia Cran

To get started, I use a simple bulb planter to create a hole around 12cm-15cm deep and plant the corms around 10cm apart from one another. One of the many joys of glads is they don't spread as much as other plants, instead they grow tall – some as high as 90cm+, depending on the variety you choose. Due to their height, consider adding stakes to provide support. Take care, to ensure you do not pierce and damage the corms, add the stake prior to adding the corm.

Unlike other corms or bulbs, it isn't always as easy to tell which way they should be planted, if you look carefully you should see a slightly more pointed area. Ensure this is facing up towards the sky. Once in the hole, add soil and a rich mulch to feed it, water in well. When the flower spike begins to emerge from the ground, start to feed the plant with a tomato fertiliser every couple of weeks to encourage good growth. You can expect flowers to appear around 12-14 weeks after putting them in the ground.



Green escape

With summer fast approaching and the hours of sunshine increasing, I have been taking full advantage and making the most of the opportunity to explore some of my favourite haunts and far flung corners of the Borough.

One thing that has struck me as I amble along the Greenway, stroll through Central Park and wander across Wanstead Flats is the array of blossoms that are out. I can't get enough of the cherry, apple and pear amongst others. They're something else, when the wind catches them it creates a fabulous wave of colour.

I encourage you all to get out and see the last of the blossom in the Borough, it's everywhere, bringing wonderful warm flashes of colour – pink, cream and purple. It's quite the sight!



Let's talk about commercial waste rubbish mountains

WENDY JACKSON

Congratulations to Newham Council for the bold new posters depicting littering in action and the consequences for those who casually abuse public spaces in this way. This assertive approach to tackling litter shows the council is listening to residents who are fed up



of seeing old clothes draped on walls and abandoned mattresses blighting our residential streets. So what about our local retail zones?

Could the council also use strong messages to deter retailers from sneakily dumping commercial waste on corners near to their shops after hours?

I'm not referring to legitimate commercial waste, placed in the right spot for timed collections; it's the illegal piles of cardboard, bags of chicken skin and grime that negates the Council's effort to improve our shopping experience by investing in our local high streets.

Although this sneaky dumping might seem harmless; it becomes a real problem when others start add-

ing to the piles, which soon grow into rubbish mountains at almost every corner of our high streets.

To be fair, I believe that most retailers take pride in our high streets and responsibly manage their commercial waste. However it is apparent that some don't really care or realise the role that pleasant retail surroundings play in creating the appetite for increased spending. So what's the solution?

Because some retailers might not understand the consequences of mismanaging their commercial waste, maybe it's time for the council to publish stern reminders that we want to spend our money in clean, tidy local high streets. I think it's worth a try. ●

Residents do their bit to keep our streets clean

Zhenreenah Muhxinga explains why neighbours in one Newham road took to the streets

When litter begins to accumulate in our streets, it then finds its way into the sewers. When litter builds up in the sewers, and can create a blockage.

A build up of litter can also attract rats and other pests that will find a space in our homes and possibly in the water holes, which can lead to flooding – this is a big issue on some streets in Newham.

If there's a ton of rubbish and fly-tips, bacteria will grow. Unhygienic insects will come out to feast, and the health of the residents will suffer.

The rubbish in the streets can also cause accidents on the roads and places full of rubbish look poverty stricken. A cleaner street will give residents a mindset of living a cleaner and healthier life.

Most of us at Maud Road want people to want to live in the neighbourhood and enjoy living there. We want the community to be welcoming to all residents – and stay that way for a lifetime.

The last thing we want is for someone to come into the neighbourhood, purchase a home, and then regret their decision because of how dirty the streets are or the excessive flooding issues. Everyone should recognise that clean streets lead to clean lives.

We know the council is employed to clean the streets, we pay our council tax for this, and residents are complaining. But sometimes we have to take matters into our own hands.

So, in our street, we pooled together, with residents in neighbouring Geere Road, who came out and supported us in cleaning up Maud Road.

We would like to thank all the residents of Geere Road for their support, helping us to keep Maud Road clean. ●

Silvertown Tunnel: the polluting truth behind the project

SIMON SHAW

Newham's *Draft Air Quality Action Plan 2019-2024* is an important document, full of necessarily technical and scientific jargon, but revealing and troubling for the Borough.

Maps show main roads of Newham coloured in blood red to indicate illegal levels of air pollutants. The text makes it clear that 14 percent of people in Newham are exposed to nitrogen dioxide levels above the air quality objective for human health.

On average all Newham residents are exposed to tiny air particles (PM2.5) that is 35 percent greater than the World Health Organization guidance.

It's no surprise that the document then goes on to express concerns about the proposed Silvertown Tunnel in view of the high level of pollution in the area.

The tunnelling machines have arrived and the UK's biggest road construction project is underway, at a cost of £2.2 billion and rising, but the fight to stop the project continues.

The biggest teachers' union, the National Education Union, has been at the heart of fighting alongside

the community against this climate thrashing project.

At the recent union conference a motion was passed recognising that environmental issues are at the heart of teaching work.

Liam O'Hanrahan, a teacher at Calverton Primary school and Newham NEU Assistant Secretary said: "As teachers our job is to keep the children we teach safe. How can we ignore the fact that the air they breathe is damaging their lungs and

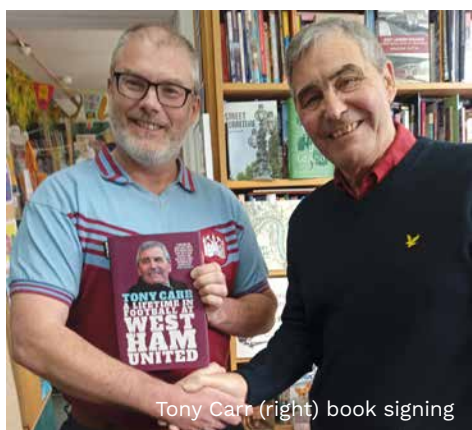
their development and increasing their risks of asthma, heart disease and cancers?"

The climate and ecological crisis in all its forms is the most pressing problem facing humanity which is why locally the Silvertown Tunnel campaign alongside the 'Trees not Towers' campaign in West Ham Park and action against the MSG sphere in Stratford, must all be won otherwise the fragile security of our planet will be further undermined.



SPORTS SHORTS

Compiled by Neandra Etienne



Tony Carr (right) book signing

West Ham United coach **Tony Carr** chatted with some happy Hammers fans during the signing of his new autobiography, *Tony Carr: A Lifetime in Football at West Ham United* at the Newham Bookshop.

Tony started coaching at WHU in the summer of 1973. He coached a few West Ham players from Newham including Alan Curbishley, Paul Brush, Alan Dickens and 'Mr West Ham' Mark Noble. Tony saw great potential in another local player.

He told *Newham Voices*: "I did coach Jermain Defoe and he always had the talent to go to the top, his goal scoring was exceptional." (see below)

www.newhambooks.co.uk

Congratulations to **ANMFC** who were officially named as the Ilford Church League winners and Champions of the Ilford Church League Shield Cup. The team were presented with their winning trophies and medals during a presentation after their home win game (5-0) against City Gates FC in Wanstead Flats Manor Park

During the presentation Captain Daniel Mbaku said: "We dedicate our cup and league win to our Chairman/Manager Kevin Toku, who recently lost his mother."

[@anm_fc2020](https://www.instagram.com/anm_fc2020)



ANM FC Team ©Neandra Etienne

People of all abilities are welcome to take part in a fun muddy Race obstacle course to help support **Cancer Research UK**.

There will be two events; one for the kids and one for the adults. Participants must be aged 13 or over to take part in the adult event and those aged 5–12 will be part of the kids' course. People of all abilities are welcome. Prices are £14.99 for adults and £10 for kids.

It's on 7 May at Queen Elizabeth Park. The meeting point is Hopkins Field, just off Waterden Road.

Run past the iconic venues from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in the **Chase the Sun 5k and 10k Run** event. Each kilometre is accurately marked out with distance flags. When you cross the line, you'll receive a finisher's medal and some well-earned post-race goodies!

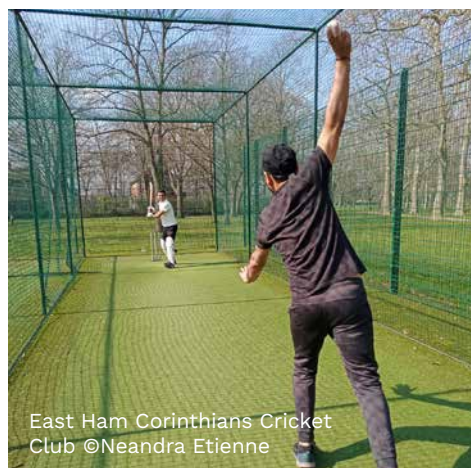
Entrants must be aged 15 and above and you must register in advance – no entries on the day!

11 May, Queen Elizabeth Park

www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/whats-on/events

East Ham Corinthians Cricket Club is made up of players who mostly live in Newham. They have been around for 125 years, but have never had their own ground. Instead they have been renting pitches over the years, most recently at the London Playing Field Ground at Hainault. However this year they have reluctantly decided to become a wandering team with no home pitch. At the moment the team only plays 'friendly' games on Sundays. Spectators are welcome.

easthamcorinthians.play-cricket.com/home



East Ham Corinthians Cricket Club ©Neandra Etienne

London Lions retained the WBBL trophy with a 72-36 win against Sevenoaks Suns Basketball club.

Holly Winterburn, who was awarded the MVP, exclusively told *Newham Voices*: "We work so hard in practice; going at each other in practice every day and making each other better. It doesn't matter who scores or anything, we're just a team and want to get the win."

London Lions paid tribute to their Coach Andrea, a pioneer of British Basketball, during their game on Friday 22 April, 2022, Copper Box Arena, E20 Rest in Eternal Peace Coach Andrea.

www.thelondonlions.com



Holly Winterburn, London Lions

West Ham United became the first team to field three Black players during a game on 1 April 1972. Clyde Best MBE, Ade Coker and Clive Charles from Canning Town, played in the 2-0 win over Tottenham Hotspur at the Boleyn Ground.

An event was held (19 April) by Inclusive Irons, Love Football Hate Racism, WHUST and the authors of Football's Black Pioneers to celebrate this 50th anniversary.

Ade Coker attended via video and Clive Charles was represented by the John 'Charlo' Charles' family.

Canning Town Football player Jack Leslie was also remembered in the event because at the time Jack was a boot man at West Ham. Any profits from the event are being donated to Irons Supporting Foodbanks.

www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/ironssupportingfoodbanks2021



University of East London scholar **Arum Akom** has been nominated for the Lawn Tennis Association's President's Award as a tennis coach and the university itself will go forward for the title of University of the Year. The National Finals take place 19 May.

[@projectaatennis](https://www.instagram.com/projectaatennis)

[@eastldn_sport](https://www.instagram.com/eastldn_sport)

Central Park FC completed their first full season in the North East London & Essex Church Football League, with the previous two seasons being null and void due to the recent pandemic. The team also changed the location of their home ground to Wanstead Flats.

Overall it was a mixed season for Central Park FC. They played 20 matches, winning ten and losing ten. During the season they managed to score 53 goals and concede 46. They finished in 5th place in the league and enjoyed a decent run in the cup, losing in the semi finals. They hope to build on this next season.

[@centralparkfc](https://www.instagram.com/centralparkfc)

[Central Park FC](https://www.facebook.com/CentralParkFC)

Clapton CFC's Men's first team are scheduled to play Kensington Dragons in the Alec Smith Premier Cup final to be held on Sunday 8 May at 3pm at Uxbridge's Honeycroft

www.claptoncfc.co.uk

Clapton CFC Cricket team, formed in 2020, compete in the Victoria Park Cricket League.

All games take place in Victoria Park, are 16 overs-a-side, with eight players on each team. The game lasts around 2 hours. Fixtures: Monday 16 May 6pm, Wideboys VIII, Wednesday 25 May 6pm, Rigs

Monday 30 May 6pm, Wednesday Night Cricket Club

www.claptoncfc.co.uk

Sunday League and charity vets side **JK Silvertown FC**, set up in memory of James Kiely, are scheduled to play the following home games 1 May and 22 May at Beckton District Park.

[@jksilvertownfc](https://www.instagram.com/jksilvertownfc)

Forest Crusaders FC Ladies first team are scheduled to play a home game against Ridgeway Rovers WFC. Spectators are welcome on 1 May, Memorial Sports Ground.

[@CrusadersWFC](https://www.twitter.com/ CrusadersWFC)

[@forestcrusaderswfc](https://www.instagram.com/forestcrusaderswfc)

Athletic Newham FC ended their season on a high with a 1-0 victory against Cockfosters FC on Saturday 23 April. The goal was a first of the season for Perez Goumou.

The team finished eighth in their first season in the Essex Senior league.

[@athleticnewhamfc](https://www.instagram.com/athleticnewhamfc)



Mr Firth presenting Jermain with a St Bons anniversary tie

After 22 years **Jermain Defoe** announced his retirement from Football. The Newham-born striker joined West Ham United in 1999, aged 16. He scored a total of 41 goals in 105 games for the club.

Jermain made his England debut in a game against Sweden in March 2004

jermaindefoefoundation.org

Hammers fly so high, but Euro flight costs rocket



ON THE BALL

Mickey Ambrose reflects on a special night for special fans – West Ham United reach the semi-final of the Europa League for the first time in 46 years as Moyes hails his super hammers and Dawson does it again

I was four when West Ham last won the European Cup Winners Cup in 1965, and 14 years of age when West Ham finished runners up in the same competition. I've got my numbers right here – after all, I did pass maths O Level at St Bernard's Secondary Catholic School in Bethnal

Green in the 1970s – but I enjoyed totting up the number of goals in last month's stunning and memorable 3 – 0 away victory over Lyon at the Groupama Stadium/ Olympique Lyonnais. It must be that West Ham like playing at stadiums that have the word Olympic attached!

Declan Rice and Jarrod Bowen also got on the scoresheet to send the fans wild singing 'Irons' 'Irons' throughout the game as they celebrated well into the night.

Dawson may have been brought down to earth with his unfortunate red card during the 1-0 loss to Chel-

“It's a great achievement for West Ham to reach a European semi-final and we are thrilled by it. It's difficult to get the words for it.”



The victory meant a 4-1 aggregate victory which took the Hammers into the last four to face Eintracht Frankfurt over two legs the first at the end of April and the second the following Thursday 5 May at 8pm.

West Ham Manager David Moyes hailed his Lyon kings after they roared into a historic first European semi-final in 46 years and made a point of mentioning Craig Dawson who not only scored with a bullet header from a corner but put in a top class performance where data analysis showed the 31-year-old had 30 touches and made one interception, four clearances, and six blocks. He won two aerial duels and registered a 70 per cent rate from 17 attempted passes which is some going.

sea on April 24, but he will play in the European matches.

Moyes' side were underdogs heading to the city which is overlooked by the French Alps following the previous 1-1 draw at the London Stadium.

But it was the hosts, Lyon who were left with a mountain to climb, after two goals in seven minutes at the end of the first half from Dawson and Rice that put West Ham in control.

As part of my fitness regime I climb during the week at BXR Versa Climbing in Canary Wharf with Ashleigh and Faisal who put me through my paces. It's not for the faint hearted. But once Bowen made it 3-0, it was game over and Lyon heads dropped which is what I tend to do after my 45 minute session but not in despair like the Lyon players, but because I am knackered as Studio Manager Gareth Tempest can confirm!

All roads now lead to the semi-final and notwithstanding important premiership games to come David Moyes and his team of backroom staff – First Team Coaches Stuart

Pearce, Paul Nevin, Billy McKinlay, Kevin Nolan and Xavi Valero, Goal-keeper Coach – will hope the players rise to the occasion and that fans are not priced out of the game as the cost of flights to Frankfurt have rocketed.

The final word goes to Moyes, who said after the game:

“I'm extremely proud of how they performed. It's a great achievement for West Ham to reach a European semi-final and we are thrilled by it.



It's difficult to get the words for it. “We don't get the trophy tonight so we won't be jumping around. But we have come a long way in a short period and I'm extremely proud.” ●

Mickey Ambrose is a former Chelsea and Charlton player who lives in Stratford

West Ham Park pitch perfect for the first FA Cup

RON INNELL

On the evening of Monday 26 October 1863 the representatives of 12 London and suburban clubs met at the Freemasons Tavern in Great Queen Street to form an Association and establish a definite code of rules for the game. Out of the 12 teams 11 signed up and the Football Association was born.

In 1871 at a meeting on 20th July the FA Secretary Charlie Alcock proposed that it would be desirable to have a Challenge Cup that all association members would be invited to compete for. This Cup would be called the Football Association Challenge Cup (FA Cup) and was given the nickname “Little Tin Idol”.

All 50 member clubs were sent invitations but only 15 replied and after withdrawals only 12 teams took part playing just 12 fixtures.

The inaugural game took place in West Ham Park on 11 November 1871 between Upton Park and Clapham Rovers.

The first goal was scored by Jarvis Kendrick of Clapham Rovers who went on to win 3-0 (Kendrick scoring twice).

The match was watched by over 1000 spectators.

The final was played at the Kennington Oval on 16 March 1872 between Wanderers and Royal Engineers in front of 2000 spectators who paid 1 shilling (5p) each to watch the game.

The match was won by Wanderers (1-0).

The original trophy cost £20 and was passed between various clubs for over 20 years until Aston Villa won the cup in 1895.

Unfortunately the cup was stolen from a shop window where it was being displayed. A replica was made to replace it and survived until 1910 when it was replaced by the trophy that we know today. ●



The Royal Engineers squad that played the first FA Cup final in 1872

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