

# Compassion

## How Newham gives hope to 600 refugees

**SIMON SHAW**

Ibrahim is a refugee from Darfur. He is 27 and has been living in a hotel in Newham for almost eight months – seven months and 15 days to be precise.

The fact that Ibrahim (not his real name) is tracking time so carefully is an indictment of how slowly it is passing. He already has a degree in economics and accountancy, and now he desperately wants to take a course in a local college to improve his English.

But like so much else in his life, official bureaucracy is getting in the way.

He shows three applications to local colleges – all unanswered. In the

meantime he spends his days studying English with apps on his phone.

He talks about his father aged 107 and his mother who is in her sixties and his siblings, two of whom died just after he left home and made the long journey to Newham via Calais.

This is just one of hundreds of stories that Care4Calais hears when it does daily distributions to refugees staying in hotels and dispersal houses in Newham.

In Ibrahim's hotel there are around 300 mostly young men, but there are also 12 women and five children. We estimate there are 600 in the Borough; all refugees from the world's danger zones: South Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, Chad, Senegal, Kurdistan.



Courtesy Simon Shaw

At the best of times the bureaucracy involved to start a new life in the UK is onerous and these are certain-

ly not the best of times. Impending new legislation; the Nationalities and Borders Bill, will make it almost impossible for the people we help in Newham to reboot their lives.

The Home Secretary Priti Patel is determined that only those who have left their home nations legally can claim asylum, but remembering the mayhem at Kabul airport last autumn as people scrambled to flee Afghanistan. It is difficult to understand what legality means in such chaos.

The fact is that only a tiny percentage of the world's refugees or even Europe's refugees want to come to the UK.

We want to continue our proud tradition of ensuring that Newham is a haven for those fleeing persecution and for those who now face perils of the emerging climate crisis.

For further information and how to support refugees and vulnerable migrants contact [care4calais.org](http://care4calais.org)



**Scan here to support us!**

Newham Voices needs your support. To make a donation please scan this code with the PayPal app.





*By local people, for local people*

Our aim is to provide a voice for all of Newham's people. We are committed to helping you share your news, views and experiences with each other. We aim to be transparent, accountable and responsive to your needs.

We are a non-profit Community Interest Company (number 12790786). Our journalism is based on core values of accuracy, fairness, independence, humanity, accountability and transparency with a strong commitment to citizen journalism. More information is available on our website:

[www.newhamvoices.co.uk](http://www.newhamvoices.co.uk)

**Newham Voices CIC Directors**

Jean Gray, Catarina Joelle, Shagufta Nasreen, Rebekah Samuel, Winston Vaughan and Aidan White

**Publisher**

Aidan White 07946 291511

**Editors**

Catarina Joelle and Jean Gray

**Designer**

Mary Schrider

**Editorial Team**

Mickey Ambrose, Andrew Baker, Sylvie Belbouab, Fawn Bess-Leith, Nicole Blythe, Cecilia Cran, Phoenix Debola, Noah Enahoro, Neandra Etienne, Coco Garcia Acevedo, Charlotte Hall, Michelle Harris, Thomas Holdroyd, Wendy Jackson, Karolina Króliczek, Peter Landman, Shofa Miah, Phil Mellows, Zhenreenah Muhxinga, Thana Narashiman, Julia Omari, Farzana Rahman, Rebekah Samuel, Daphne Stedman, Mir Tasin, Lorraine Tapper and Winston Vaughan

**Thank you to all of our supporters!**

**Complaints**

If you have a complaint regarding the content of our newspaper or website contact the editor at [editor@newhamvoices.co.uk](mailto:editor@newhamvoices.co.uk) Or by phone: 07946291511.

We will normally respond to your complaint with a final decision within 21 calendar days. If we uphold your complaint, we will tell you about our actions to remedy the situation. If you are not satisfied you can submit a formal complaint to IMPRESS, who will independently examine your complaint. *Newham Voices* agrees to be bound by the outcome of IMPRESS investigations.

For more information, go to [www.newhamvoices.co.uk/feedback](http://www.newhamvoices.co.uk/feedback) For general inquiries email us at [info@newhamvoices.co.uk](mailto:info@newhamvoices.co.uk)



## Newham Voices Democracy Campaign

# May 5 election: it's all to play for in Canning Town South

**John McNeill looks at why there is low voter turn-out in Canning Town South**

**T**urnout for Council elections in Newham is low and still lower in South Canning Town. The number-crunchers tell us that in 2018 there were 11,479 voters in the ward with three votes each (one for each of the three ward councillors) making 34,437 possible votes. In fact only 8,756 votes were cast or about 25 per cent. Are there reasons for this?

In 2003 the proposed removal of secure tenants because of the Canning Town Regeneration led to a ballot box revolt and the election of Christian Peoples Alliance councillors. That local vote was ignored and the regeneration went on as planned. If votes meant nothing some people might have thought there was no point voting in future.

Since then, many secure council tenants have been moved out leaving places empty or with short stayers put in the abandoned blocks with unknown voting intentions. Does that mean that some traditional supporters of the majority party



Contact us to have your say [info@newhamvoices.co.uk](mailto:info@newhamvoices.co.uk)

have gone for good?

Now that the regeneration has taken place many people have moved into the new private flats while other areas are empty and cleared of people.

In the 2016 EU referendum 47 per cent of Newham electors (49,371 of them) voted to leave the EU. In South Canning Town a majority of voters went for leave.

All this could add up to a different result at the local elections this time round. No one knows how the residents of the new blocks will vote

or how many old timers are left or whether the shorter stay tenants will vote or who they will vote for.

In South Canning Town, and much of the rest of Newham, around a quarter of a quarter of eligible voters decide who runs the Council because of the 25 per cent who vote only a quarter of them vote for the ruling party. That is not the best way of deciding who governs but perhaps Winston Churchill was right when he suggested that democracy was the least worst way of deciding things.

Another factor unique to Newham is that 60 out of 60 councillors are from one party. Could less opposition have its cost and lead to a background complacency? In councils where there is an opposition there are public rows about policy providing stark choices for voters. In Newham the opposition is within the ruling party and so is less likely to make the newspapers. This could add to low voter turnout in Newham. ●

**John McNeill** is General Manager, Custom House and Canning Town Renewal Project

## Do you live in Canning Town South ward: What would encourage you to vote?

**L**ocal elections take place on May 5, a chance for you to elect the people who will represent you on Newham Council for the next four years.

As well as our pre-election coverage across the Borough *Newham Voices* has been awarded a grant to target Canning Town South ward to see whether action by a local community newspaper can increase voter participation.

We chose Canning Town South as a focus for our attention not just because it had the lowest turn-out in Newham at the last election, but also because the area is changing so much with huge redevelopment that could transform the area.

It has never been more important for people in Canning Town to make sure they make their voices heard. *Newham Voices* is here to help you do that with our 'Speak Out, Vote on

5 May' Campaign to improve local democracy.

In the coming weeks we will be extending our circulation throughout the area, and we want to hear from you about the issues that really matter in the area.

Our campaign is funded by the Public Interest News Foundation's Impact Fund. The results will be

analysed as part of a research project that could influence community news media into the future.

Let us know what would get you to the polling station on 5 May. If you are not planning to vote, then we want to know why. Would you like to become a local *Newham Voices* ambassador? Contact us at [info@newhamvoices.co.uk](mailto:info@newhamvoices.co.uk)



# Promise to spend development cash after Green Party 'hoarding' claim

AIDAN WHITE

The Green Party in Newham has accused the ruling Labour Party of hoarding millions of pounds that should be spent on improving homes and tackling poverty in the Borough.

Newham Greens say that £30 million is sitting in bank accounts with no specific plans to spend it while "the council is cutting £12 million from its budget, including £1.5m from children and young people's services".

The Greens say that recent reports show there is up to £80 million in unspent 'developer contributions', which is money set aside for improving infrastructure, supporting affordable housing, job creation, and expanding community facilities.

The Green candidate for Stratford Olympic Park, in May's council elections Nate Higgins, said: "It's shocking that Labour councillors don't seem to have a plan for this £30 million 'unallocated' funding.

"It is far from clear that our neighbourhood will get the investment

we deserve if left to Labour councillors," said Higgins. "Residents are repeatedly told we must accept development in return for increased investment in infrastructure and services, but the council is not keeping its side of the deal.

"In a borough with the worst air pollution in London and some of the worst poverty rates there are so many things this money could and should be spent on immediately".

However, Mayor of Newham Rokhsana Fiaz OBE challenged the claims. She told *Newham Voices*: "We are on the side of working people and have made sure developer contributions are used to help residents such as our recent allocation of £32 million to affordable housing and £7 million to Our Newham work.

"We have plans coming to Cabinet in summer to make sure every penny is spent for the people of Newham as part of our Towards a Better Newham Covid-19 recovery strategy and our response to the climate emergency.

"We have made a major investment in youth services and over the last



'Residents are repeatedly told we must accept development in return for increased investment in infrastructure and services, but the council is not keeping its side of the deal.'

## ANNOUNCEMENT ON PUBLIC NOTICES

### NEWHAM VOICES

IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY  
AND WE ARE AVAILABLE  
FOR PUBLISHING

### PUBLIC NOTICES TO DISCUSS PUBLISHING NOTICES SUCH AS

CORPORATE AND PERSONAL INSOLVENCY NOTICES  
BLOCK TRANSFERS, DECEASED ESTATES,  
COMMERCIAL LICENSES  
OR  
ANY OTHER FORMS OF PUBLIC NOTICES

CALL  
07711057096

EMAIL  
XAVIER@SOCIALSPIDER.COM

Note: Our next issue goes to print on 24th February 2022

three years have increased the number of youth workers from 3 to 43 through an investment of £19 million."

The annual report on funding outlines council plans for money collected, and lists what it has been allocated for spending. Since 2014, say the Green Party, the amount of 'unallocated' has been steadily growing, with councillors not acting to ensure this funding was allocated.

The Greens also criticised a similar underspending problem, of around £52 million of infrastructure funding, including almost £23 million of 'unallocated' cash, for spending in and around the Olympic Park collected by the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC).

Newham Council currently has no control over this money, but is due to take on direct responsibility for planning and infrastructure spending in Stratford Olympic Park in 2024 when LLDC hands jurisdiction over the area back to the Borough.

The Greens say this hoarding of development cash compares badly with neighbouring boroughs such as Barking and Dagenham and Waltham Forest, which have respectively amounts of £7 million and £8.6 million of 'unallocated' development funds.

Higgins, who is also co-chair of the Newham Green Party, said: "Councillors should be standing up for their community and demanding that available money is spent."

The Greens says this issue will figure strongly in the upcoming May council election battles.

"Labour have 100 per cent control of the council, with no opposition, as well as a Labour mayor," said Higgins. "There is nobody scrutinising council deals, and nobody to challenge their decisions."

[www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/4052/lbn-annual-infrastructure-funding-stmt-part-cil-and-s106-reports-2020-21-1](http://www.newham.gov.uk/downloads/file/4052/lbn-annual-infrastructure-funding-stmt-part-cil-and-s106-reports-2020-21-1)

## CABINET TALK

# Action on homeless a priority

**Peter Landman reports on a citizen's night out – attending a recent Newham Council cabinet meeting**

First of all, I must say I was treated with the utmost courtesy. I started off in the Mayor's Gallery. The Mayor, realising that I could hardly hear invited me to sit out in front. Later, a member of staff asked me if he could get me anything.

In December, fourteen reports were presented for discussion and decision by the Council Cabinet – the Mayor's leadership team – that works between meetings of the council and prepares reports and decisions for the council members to consider and decide upon.

Two reports stand out: the Household Support Fund and the Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy. These are the top priorities as they deal directly with the most vulnerable.

**The Household Support Fund Report:** Two of the main channels of funding are for Holiday Vouchers for Children receiving Free School Meals; and for Families and Care Givers not in Receipt of Public Funds.

The main eligible spends are for

provision of food, and ensuring availability of heating and water in households facing hardship. The fund is administered across Council Departments.

**The Homelessness Strategy Report:**

This was by far the longest report presented. The Action Plan for year 2022-2023 dealing with Prevention of Homelessness proposed the following actions:

- More collaboration with private landlords.
- More collaboration with the police over cases of illegal evictions and harassment.
- Purchase of Lady Helen Seymour House as a centre of excellence for homelessness assessment

**Less use of Temporary Bed and Breakfast Accommodation:**

In this area the actions proposed are for the Council to lease more properties and to bring more empty properties into use.

**Priority: Health, Family... and Life issues that could lead to Homelessness.** Actions proposed are to work to multidisciplinary pathways... with specialist support officers and also

- To help women suffering from domestic violence.
- To support vulnerable young people.
- To liaise with the probation service if necessary.
- To ease bottlenecks on discharge from hospital.

**Priority: Transition Support for people going from Rough Sleeping.**

In this area the Council claims some success with 90 percent of rough sleepers now registered with GPs;

204 rough sleepers have received help on immigration and 92 have obtained settled status.; and finally there is no longer a congregation of rough sleepers in the Stratford Centre.

According to the Interim Financial Management Report the Council has saved money by reductions in use of Agency Staff, the removal of Senior Management Posts and departmental efficiency drives, but on the debit side as a result of Covid the Borough's reserves are down to £4million. ●



## Stay connected with Newham Voices

Sign up to our monthly newsletter and receive regular news and information



### It's easy to sign up

Just use the link: [bit.ly/NVnewsletter](https://bit.ly/NVnewsletter)  
Or simply scan the QR Code

Follow us on social media for timely updates:



@newhamvoices



## 2022 FOCUS ON LEVELLING UP

The January meeting was briefer but also involved big money, and a major success. The Council has had two bids accepted from the Government's Levelling Up Fund. These are in respect of Fifteen Minute Neighbourhoods and Connecting Communities.

### Fifteen Minute Neighbourhoods

The aim of this programme is to support residents to have a journey time of no more than fifteen minutes from their homes to reach key services.

The benefits are claimed to be: Less use of cars, with car free zones, and so less pollution; more walking and cycling leading to better health; more sociability, as people are more likely to stop and socialise with each other as well as more shop sales. Among the projects are

- Delivery of four low traffic neighbourhoods.
- Delivery of three pedestrianised streets
- Delivery of cycle way and bus priority measures along Romford Road.
- Making narrow alleyways safer.

### Connecting Communities

These include:

#### 1. Project East Docks Eco; Around Beckton and London City Airport there are plans:

- To bring four disused buildings back into use in particular for

workspaces for green enterprises and cycle repairs.

- To provide 4.7 km of new walking and cycling routes.

#### 2. Project Custom House Heritage and Creative Enterprise

The plan is to develop the old Canning Town Library into cultural and learning spaces with partnerships with higher education colleges, and with cultural institutions such as Sadlers Well and London College of Fashion.

#### 3. Project Leaway Link

The main schemes are:

- For a new bridge over the River Lea
- For improvements to the Leaway Riverside Walk

Through all employment development initiatives, there is an emphasis on IT innovation.

For more detail please email [mayor@newham.gov.uk](mailto:mayor@newham.gov.uk) To see the video of the meeting contact: [Adrian.May@newham.gov.uk](mailto:Adrian.May@newham.gov.uk)

# Home truths: Can women trust the police over domestic violence?

KAROLINA KRÓLICZEK

A crisis of domestic abuse and violence against women including in Newham is made worse as a result of falling public trust in police and social services according to local campaigners.

Now, in order to encourage victims to have trust that the police and local authorities will give them protection and justice, the Greater London Assembly has welcomed a new Violence Against Women and Girls strategy from the Metropolitan Police.

However, a major question remains, as one East Ham resident asked: “Why would you report anything if you are scared for your life and the police will not do anything in the end?”

Although women from all sections of society and all groups are potentially at risk, the problem facing some Muslim women was particularly highlighted by Iman Atta, national director of the anti-Islamophobia organisation, Tell Mama at the launch of the

new Met Police strategy.

“Muslim women are more likely to initially come forward and report they are victims of domestic abuse to their closest friends, than to the Metropolitan Police,” she said.

“The majority of cases go unreported since many women are not aware of their rights and feel that there will be a major fissure in the family structure and they don’t want to be the ones to cause a family breakdown.”

Although this is a problem facing all women, she said: “The MET needs to include more outreach particularly with more serving Muslim female police officers and contacts with British Muslim communities.

“We know that unless confronted, perpetrators will continue. There really needs to be an educational campaign in Newham on this. After the recent case of Sarah Everard, who was murdered by a serving Metropolitan police officer, trust between women and the police has been shaken. There is no doubt about that,” she said.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also worsened domestic violence as the victims are stuck at home with their aggressive perpetrators. A United Nations report in November covering 13 countries shows that almost half of all women reported that they experienced a form of violence during the pandemic. The negative impact of the pandemic is also confirmed by the Newham Area Manager Alina Kaur of the charity Hestia that works to support victims of domestic abuse.

“Many victims have been isolated at home with their abusers, unable to contact friends or family for support,” she said.

In response, Hestia has launched a Safe Spaces project. This provides dedicated places for victims of abuse, at Boots, Superdrug, Morrisons, Well pharmacy and local TSB bank branches. It’s a discreet way to contact specialist support services such as Newham domestic abuse support services or police. A victim can come forward and ask a staff member for help.

“Usually it’s the social worker, not



directly the victim, who calls us to reserve and prepare the Safe Space to meet with domestic abuse victims,” said the store manager of Boots in East Ham. ●

Anyone who needs to report an incident should call 999 or 101 to speak to the police or contact Victim Support ([victim-support.org.uk](http://victim-support.org.uk)) who offer free, confidential advice through their helpline on 0808 1689 111.

# Call for urgent action to combat homophobic hate crime in Newham

A dramatic increase in homophobic hate crime in Newham and London has prompted a call for more action from the police and civic leaders.

Local campaigners say there has been a third annual increase in attacks and hate crimes since 2019, with incidents of verbal hate speech, harassment, stalking and attempted acid attacks across the Borough and in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

“Last summer homophobic attacks in London rose to a shocking 10-year high as nearly 400 offences were recorded by the Metropolitan Police in the month of June alone,” according to a letter sent to Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick; Mayor of London Sadiq Khan; Newham Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz; and to Greater London Authority members including Unmesh Desai, the GLA Member for City and East.

The figures, they warn, are likely to be much higher as research has found that more than three quarters of LGBTQ+ people who experience hate crime, particularly young vic-

tims, do not report it to the police.

“The above represents the worst record for anti-LGBTQ+ hate crimes in London since records began (April 2011),” say the signatories, Caron Harrison and Rob DesRoches, Co-Founders of Forest Gayte Pride, Martin Smith and Nick Monopoli, the



Co-Chairs of Maryland Community Group, and Calu Lema, of Queer Newham.

“Worryingly 399 homophobic hate crimes recorded in June 2021 included 52 attacks targeting trans people, again, the highest num-

ber on record. The most high-profile LGBTQ+ murders in the last seven years have occurred in East London with victims such as Ranjith Kankanamalage, Anthony Walgate, Gabriel Kovari, Daniel Whitworth, and Jack Taylor.”

The group says the LGBTQ+ com-

Last summer homophobic attacks in London rose to a shocking 10-year high as nearly 400 offences were recorded by the Metropolitan Police in the month of June alone.

munity in Newham have had no assurances from Newham Council, Metropolitan Police, or the Mayor of London that necessary measures are being taken “to protect our members from abuse and violence so that they can feel confident in com-

ing forward reporting hate crime incidents, let alone any details of mitigation.”

The letter calls for the establishment of a working group “with budgets and powers to transform change, none of which has been announced”.

They say examples of failure in policy include a lack of funding from Newham Council for organising the only Pride event in the Borough of Newham for Forest Gayte Pride. They also point to the fact that streets and policing are not designed with consideration for queer, feminist and racial geographies which lead to marked inequalities in access to and safety in public space in Newham.

“Many of our members report up to a four-month wait for a simple update that their reported hate crime is even being investigated by the Met; this leads to apathy in our community,” they say.

However a step change is possible by adopting ‘community policing’ and physical improvements to public spaces. ●

# Dance Dosti: helping partially sighted people take the floor

Visually impaired people from a South Asian background have a chance to step out in style over the next month thanks to Dance Dosti which is piloting a face-to-face dance programme in Newham.

Funded by the Vision Foundation, the Dance Dosti initiative has established a website containing more than 100 dance sessions in English, Bengali, Gujarati and Hindi.

After a first phase of digital contact, the second phase sees Dance Dosti piloting face-to-face dance sessions and the Newham programme, supported by Newham Ability Camp, will take place at Newham Sixth Form College, in Plaistow (E13 8SG).

The programme launched on January 26 and involves one-hour sessions running from 5pm-6pm each Wednesday for 12 weeks.

Participants in earlier programmes report a range of benefits including improved physical and mental health, confidence, independence and feeling part of a community.

Programme organisers Dance Dosti are also looking for volunteers to fill two roles at Newham – one to support people in the classes by guiding them to follow the moves and secondly someone to help people navigate the

Participants in earlier programmes report a range of benefits including improved physical and mental health, confidence, independence and feeling part of a community.

route between the local station and venue to enable them to attend. No previous experience is necessary.

Dance Dosti will monitor the impact of dance on a range of measures including mental and physical health, confidence, friendships, and independence. Learning from the programme will inform the development of more diverse, inclusive opportunities to be creative and active. ●

To register for the Newham dance programme visit: [www.dancedosti.com/pilots](http://www.dancedosti.com/pilots) or call 07462 895461



## A day to celebrate Newham's 104 languages

FARZANA RAHMAN

International Mother Language Day on February 21 is a chance to salute Newham's language diversity. With 104 different languages spoken by residents, the Borough has much to celebrate.

This special day was launched by the United National Cultural agency UNESCO in 1999 and aims to create awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity, and promote multilingualism.

Language focuses on emotion and feelings, communication, and can demonstrate aspirations. Around the world, there are 7117 different languages spoken, but just 23 of them are spoken by more than half the world's population.

When speakers of English say "Hello", people in the Arab world say "Salam", and the speakers of Bangla say: "Valo". In every land and region, UNESCO hopes that International Mother Language Day will lead to more respect for the dignity of each language.

*My mother's pleasant words.  
Encircle in my ears  
The sweet impression of all children.  
The world is brimming with luminosity.*

For more information go to <https://en.unesco.org>



Photo via Facebook

### HAVE YOUR SAY – LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[editor@newhamvoices.co.uk](mailto:editor@newhamvoices.co.uk)

#### Tell the developers' side of the story

The interesting article *Newham Resists on the March* in your January edition mentions campaigns to stop the MG Sphere Development, to save Durning Hall and to save West Ham Park but does not tell the full story of these issues.

I would like to offer some further background.

The MSG Sphere site at Angel Lane, Stratford is a pokey, small site, hemmed in by buildings, and the railway line. I cannot understand how this could comfortably fit in a huge dome sphere as wide as the London Eye, and nearly as tall as Big Ben.

Regarding the Durning Hall campaign, I can't understand the basis for this. The owners, the Aston Mansfield Trust, say the costs for repairs to the old building are so great they have had to develop the area including a new, bigger building as well as 78 new homes (27 of them affordable), courtyards, youth enterprise pop up spaces; a creative play space; and space for shops. The existing Durning Hall will remain open until 2023.

I can't help but think that it would be fairer to welcome the Durning Hall development.

In West Ham Park, the site for redevelopment is only in one corner, where glasshouses now are standing. The Park Charity proposes to

demolish them for houses and say they will channel rental income to upkeep of the park.

The Friends of the Park acknowledge the need for housing but believe the houses will disturb the vista of the park, but I'm not convinced houses in that corner would be visible in all areas of the park.

I suggest that if *Newham Voices* wants to cover campaigns against development, they should also give the position of the developers to give readers a balanced perspective. Residents will have a more factual basis then to submit their public comments on these plans.

[peterlandman85@yahoo.com](mailto:peterlandman85@yahoo.com)

### CORRECTION

Last month's report on the MSG Sphere plan incorrectly reported that the Olympic Park area would return to Newham Council control this year. In fact, it will be handed back in 2024.

# Legacy of 2012: Olympian spirit of volunteers in the park

**Pearl Saunders on behalf of Diversity and Inclusion Champions Voice and Our Parklife**

The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park volunteers are referred to as Park Champions in recognition of the key role they play in shaping the park.

The volunteer programme is delivered by Our Parklife, the Park's Community Interest Company. Since 2014 it has been helping people to participate in the legacy of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Park Champions, with their enthusiasm, dedication and knowledge have continued the spirit of the 2012 Games Makers.

Volunteers have been a vital part of the park's success, supporting all aspects of the park's day to day life. From assisting at major events, welcoming visitors from the Information Point, running the park's Mobility Services, to delivering education vis-



Photos courtesy Our Parklife

its and tours as well as ensuring that the gardens continue to look stunning all year round, Park Champions' role is vital.

The London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), Our Parklife and the Park Champions volunteer team work hard together to ensure that Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park really is a park for all, where activities are accessible, inclusive and encourage diversity. Being a Park Champion offers local residents, especially young people, opportunities to gain skills, confidence, wellbeing and earning potential as well as giving something back to the community. There is something for all and everyone is welcome.

Among other activities, Our Parklife and the Park Champions deliver the Park's Mobility services to the public, making the park accessible to everyone. The current service consists of free access to an eight-seater 'golf' buggy driven by a trained and experienced volunteer. Mobility scooters and manual wheelchairs are also available for hire.

Our Parklife has many projects

of interest to local people, including an Oral History Project to celebrate ten years since the 2012 Games, and some Greenspace Volunteering opportunities. ●

More information about Our Parklife, the Park Champions programme and the services delivered can be found at [OurParklife.co.uk](http://OurParklife.co.uk)



## Fancy a night out with the stars?

**LYNDSAY JONES**

No one would claim that Newham is the best place in Britain for looking at the stars – the light pollution from all our homes and street lights means that only the brightest stars are visible.

Surprisingly, this can be helpful if you are new to stargazing, as it makes it easier to see the well known constellations. The centre of West Ham Park is quite a lot darker than anywhere in the surrounding streets, and on a clear night we can show you how to recognise the major stars and constellations, and show you where there are stars being born, growing up, and dying.

Friends of West Ham Park plan to hold an astronomy event over the weekend of 5-6 February 2022. There will be guided stargazing on both evenings, weather permitting.

On Sunday 6 February people will be able to help build a scale model of the solar system in the park, as well as learn about the planets and other aspects of astronomy in an "Ask an Astronomer" event on the park's bandstand.

This will happen whatever the weather. Two members of the Friends are Fellows of the Royal Astronomical Society, and will be happy to talk and answer questions, as well as owning up to what they, and maybe even Brian Cox, don't know about this fascinating subject. ●

[www.friendsofwesthampark.co.uk/star-gazing/](http://www.friendsofwesthampark.co.uk/star-gazing/)



Photo courtesy Friends of West Ham Park

## West Ham Friends set out alternative plans

**LORRAINE TAPPER**

Friends of West Ham Park are encouraging more local people to support their campaign to prevent the Corporation of London from building homes on part of the park that was previously used as nurseries.

In a recent webinar the Friends discuss the campaign and put forward three alternative proposals to the Corporation of London including restoration of parkland, allotments and tiny forests, but so far have not been listened to.

Local MP Lyn Brown has writ-

ten to different organisations on behalf of the Friends of West Ham Park since 2019 plans for its development were made public. All of the letters are publicly available on her website [www.lynbrown.org.uk](http://www.lynbrown.org.uk)

A soft market testing has been undertaken by Saville's, the outcome of which will determine the planning permission process which could start in spring this year.

Visit the website [friendsofwesthampark.co.uk](http://friendsofwesthampark.co.uk)

**Lorraine Tapper** is a social entrepreneur who works from home.

Advertisement



**Be confident.**



**Be yourself.**



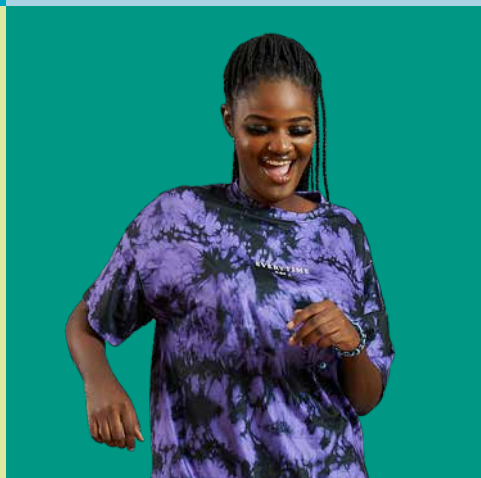
**Have fun.**



**Make friends  
for life.**



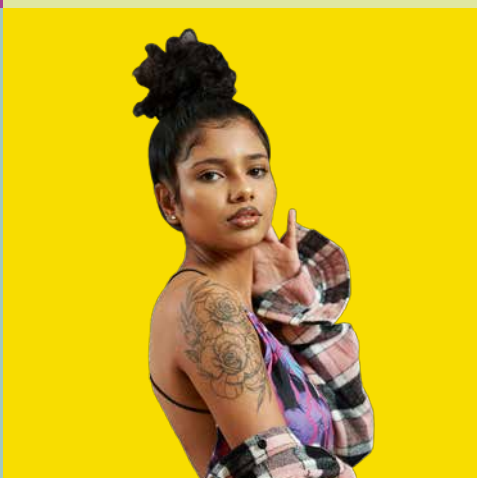
**Challenge  
your thinking.**



**Dance.**



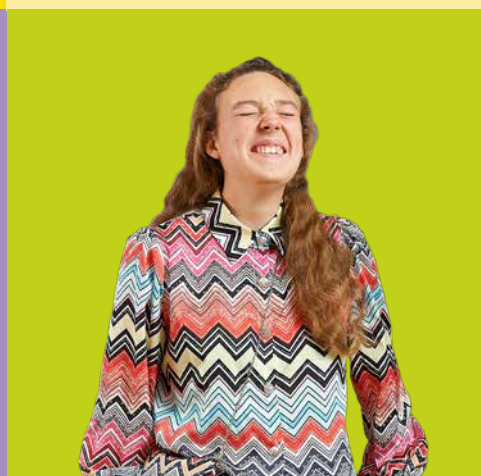
**Open Day**



**Saturday  
5 February  
2022**



**Register Online  
newvic.ac.uk  
/open-days**



## NewVlc alumnus student talks about life after finishing A-levels, setting up a company called Humble Grove and releasing 'No Longer Home' on PC and console, to critical acclaim in 2021.



Cel

NewVlc alumnus **Cel** is the co-founder of Humble Grove, a video game company who released 'No Longer Home' on PC and console, to critical acclaim in 2021. Cel is a former A Level student at NewVlc and came from local Eastlea Community School. We caught up with Cel to find out a little more about their journey.

### What made you choose NewVlc?

"My mum worked at and still works at NewVlc, so that was my first introduction to the college. However, it was when I went to the open day and saw the art department that I was convinced by the facilities and staff that I should apply."

### Tell us about your journey from NewVlc to where you are now?

"Leaving NewVlc, I knew I wanted to do something with the creative skills I'd built, but I wasn't quite sure what. My Graphic Design tutor recommended I apply for a foundation course. I got accepted by UAL and went on to study BA Illustration at Camberwell College of Arts. The course was incredibly flexible and allowed us to work with any me-

dium, and so in my final year I began working on a video game.

After graduating I continued making small and personal video games. I started working on my first commercial release with Hana who I met on my course at UAL. Together we formed our company, Humble Grove and released No Longer Home on PC and console, to critical acclaim in 2021. The game is about letting go of the life you've built due to circumstances beyond your control."

### How did you get into the position that you are in now?

"Through the kind help and support of friends and family. After graduating university, I spent a lot of time going to games' events and meeting people. I

formed a lot of friends over the years, with people who have come through for me many times. I try to return the kindness by supporting those in the industry who need lifting up. Of course I've worked hard, but it amounts to nothing if you don't have people to advocate for you. I'm incredibly grateful to those who have helped me in my journey so far."

### What are your fond memories of NewVlc?

"I always really enjoyed my Graphic Design class. Both my tutors Lisa and Mark were incredibly supportive and helpful pushing me gently towards figuring out what I wanted to do. I was definitely biased towards my creative courses, because I knew it was the area I wanted to take further. Without the encouragement of my tutors I would have struggled much more with finding my way."

### What is your advice for students who wish to pursue a career like you?

"Take your time figuring out what you want to do if you aren't sure. Art Foundation courses are designed to help you figure out what field you're interested in. Look for people who will advocate for you and return the favour. Also collaborate with others as much as opportunity allows you. Collaboration is an incredibly important skill and you get to make better work with others."

### What is your advice for students considering NewVlc?

"My advice would be - don't be afraid to ask for help as everyone is very supportive and friendly here at the college.

Take a look at the unique options that are available at NewVlc. Attend the open days and careers advice sessions. Put yourself out there and join as many clubs and societies that you are interested in. Do not be doubtful about it, in the end it will possibly be the best decision you have made."

### How did you find the teaching at NewVlc? Did it prepare you for your next educational steps?

"I think my form tutor, Prince, was always quite worried about me, and rightfully so, because I was so focused on my creative studies. I was only going to apply for UAL's foundation course and Prince had to convince me to stop being so narrow sighted and apply for some back up options, which fortunately I didn't need in the end. I developed my creative skills to a wide array of styles and practices, my Graphic Design tutors were amazing for that. Studying Sociology helped me develop a political eye which has been important in all of my work. I can't imagine creating art without the different perspectives I began learning at NewVlc."

### How would you describe yourself before you came to NewVlc?

"I was very shy and not very confident, but I've been able to find my footing since then."

### What are your future plans?

"Hana and I are figuring out what our next game at Humble Grove will be. In the meantime I'm taking on freelance work for other video game studios."



No Longer Home

# We don't like Reggae - we love it!

**Zhenreenah Muhxinga tunes into the story of Fola Phillips, director of Newham's Reggae Choir**

The Director of Reggae Choir Fola Phillips, who has worked in Newham for over 15 years, says that one of her favourite things about Newham is its diversity.

"It's almost like the world is in Newham. You learn so much just by being in close proximity with different people and cultures," she said.

From the age of five, she was influenced by her father playing the song Hey Fatty Boom Boom, a song she remembers to this day.

Fola wanted to create a business that fully incorporated her skills, experience and abilities in music, but there was already a plethora of

vocal ensembles doing gospel, pop and rock. She wanted something different, and then she saw a concert on the BBC called 'Reggae Britannia' - a celebration of some of the greatest Reggae legends.

She vividly remembers being struck by the diversity in the audience and that everyone was having such a great time, singing and dancing. She knew immediately that this was what she wanted to do and the Reggae Choir was born in September 2012.

In October last year Reggae Choir performed at the World Mental Health world day event held at Highway Trinity Church, Romford Road, Stratford, singing songs that cheered up everyone and helping the residents to feel uplifted.

Fola said: "Reggae Choir is an amateur, non-audition, non-religious vocal ensemble open to anyone who enjoys Reggae music. The vast majority of the songs we sing are Reggae classics from across its many sub genres. These include,



Jamaica Ska, Blue Beat, Rock Steady, Two Tone, Lovers Rock, Reggae, Contemporary Reggae, Pop Reggae, and pop songs given a Reggae twist.

There are a few classics that provoke a great audience reaction - for example Enjoy Yourself by Prince Buster, No No No by Dawn Penn and, of course, One Love by Bob Marley and The Wailers.

Reggae Choir is an adult choir for 18+ open to all regardless of skills, experience and abilities, with a location at Carpenters & Docklands Centre (a seven-minute walk from Stratford station), 98 Gibbin Road, E15 2HU

Anyone interested in joining can get in touch via email: [info@reggaechoir.com](mailto:info@reggaechoir.com) to book a free taster session. ●

## Poetry in Mind

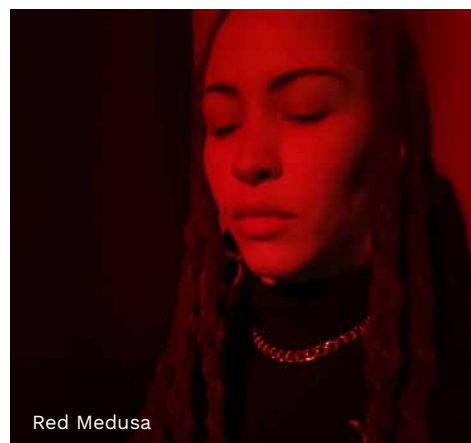
It's Valentine's Day on 14 February, so we asked our readers to send us their poems. Here we present three from a rich crop of verses representing many aspects of love. You can read all the poems on our website [www.newhamvoices.co.uk](http://www.newhamvoices.co.uk)

### Without me

There is comfort in the warmth of the salt  
That once stained my face forcing my eyes to close  
Starved of breathing in, what I once let in  
No longer allowing you to impose  
Even if I still crave you  
Every breath of you  
In every moonlit view  
I know I have to let go of things that are connected to you  
But try telling that to the water that drenches my skin  
Every haunting night  
Leaving droplets of you, that swirls through your water supply  
Into mine  
That leaves me wanting more of you  
Leaves me wanting to lay for hours under the water  
That I know travels in ways I never could  
In a language that I never understood  
Your lips never spoke your secrets  
But your eyes always did  
What you thought you kept hid  
Always found a way to liquidise into my soul  
Beyond my blood, way beyond my bones  
Every fragment of me, manifested into us  
Into this love that I had little or no control of  
Yet the seasons of you, consumed me  
I could only blossom in your forest

But the wind uprooted me  
It changed direction, pushing me on a path I didn't want to be  
And now I'm in this life and you're in that life without me  
Even the sky paints your name, and wind screams that you're gone  
The breaking of dawn grieves for your light as much as I  
And we mourn your existence, because goodbye really was goodbye

By Sharena lee Satti



Red Medusa

### Two Ticks

'Online', the screen says  
And I see you and really wanna say "Hi, how you doing?"  
but I'm way too shy and I overthink everything  
It's the gift and curse of a neurodivergent mind  
So I think you'd think I was annoying

but are far too polite to say  
and rather than hearing you say 'go away'  
I stay away  
because the discomfort that comes with rejection would overwhelm me  
And I would undoubtedly sink into the hole  
that I would conjure to swallow me up  
So I swallow my pride instead and quit tapping on the screen that invites me

to step out of my comfort zone  
send an emoji...maybe a message  
and then spend the next ten minutes  
praying that the grey ticks turn blue ...

So for now, I'll keep my  
"Hey, how are you?" hidden from your view

By Red Medusa  
[poetrybyredmedusa.co.uk/about](http://poetrybyredmedusa.co.uk/about)

### Love is 20/20

My name is Jordan Williams I'm a poet and rapper from Newham, my stage name is AURA-KL (pronounced Oracle).

"Bro it's one of them ones where... I'm just pro single, I tried the relationship stage, as a teen mature for my age

But I'm 30 rotations too late and starting to show wrinkles  
I'll never be someone's baby again.  
But my advice is to graduate as fiancée on Valentine day, while I find an old flame to rekindle.

Love is 20/20,  
In 2021 I wasn't ready, life was unsteady  
I'm wiser, now, I could settle down for a plate of spaghetti  
Netflix and a bowl of Ben and Jerry  
Pushing a pram and a trolley looking for rice and confetti...  
You get me?"

By AURA-KL  
--  
AURA-KL Music  
Rapper  
Film Director  
Art Director  
[linktr.ee/aurakl](http://linktr.ee/aurakl)



AURA-KL

# Steam engine Robert finds a safe home in Stratford

As part of our regular series on local landmarks, **Julia Omari** discovers a children's favourite

Robert is the 38 tonne saddle tank steam engine that sits outside Stratford station, however when he first arrived in Newham back in 1993, his original spot was next to the gas works in Beckton. His change of location in 1999 was due to ongoing vandalism.

The red locomotive was actually built in green by the Ironside Engine Company, Bristol in 1933 and was originally named Lamport number 3, being one of three engines that transported coal for Lamport Ironside Mines in Northamptonshire where he worked until the mines closed in 1969. After spending many years providing fun family trips on heritage railway lines, Lamport Number 3 then went on display at various locations including a number of museums.



After receiving an image and name upgrade Robert can now enjoy his permanent home in Newham, to the delight of many young children who often associate him with Thomas, that other very famous tank engine. ●

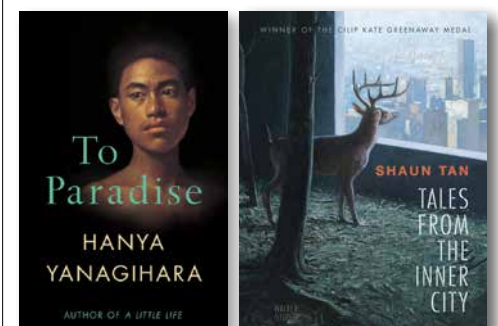


## Good reads in Newham

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

- **Forest Gate: A Short Illustrated History** – signed copies  
By Mark Gorman and Peter Williams (local authors)
- **Mrs Death Misses Death** (paperback edition) – signed copies  
By Salena Godden
- **To Paradise** – signed copies  
By Hanya Yanagihara
- **Princess Sophia Duleep Singh**  
By Sufiya Ahmed
- **Tales from the Inner City**  
By Shaun Tan
- **Poems Aloud**  
By Joseph Coelho

Compiled by David Ceen,  
Newham Bookshop



[newhambooks.co.uk](http://newhambooks.co.uk)  
[@NewhamBookshop](https://twitter.com/NewhamBookshop)

## When money gets tight claim your benefits!

Newham Voices reader and supporter Janet Greaves has written with a kind donation (thanks Janet!) but also with some advice for pensioners and others who are feeling the pinch as money gets tight, inflation sets in and Covid continues to squeeze job opportunities.

Janet gives a couple of examples of money advice where readers might get help. Claiming marriage allowance, for example. This is a tax break that allows the lowest earners to transfer over any of their unused personal tax-free allowance to their husband or wife or civil partner.

To be eligible you have to be born after 5 April 1935 and have one partner earning less than the personal tax allowance and one paying the basic rate of income tax. Look for advice online – but beware of “reclaim” offers that may have a sting by scooping up a chunk of what you’re due.

Also there’s the pension credit that can provide a valuable income boost (particularly in a year when inflation may wipe out

the £5 a week pension increase due in April). Up to a million eligible older people fail to claim this benefit each year. This is a mean-tested benefit that can boost retirement income by up to £177 a week for a single person and £270 for couples.

It’s always worth checking if you’re eligible for this, having personal savings or owning your own home does not immediately mean you are excluded.

If you have any other advice to share send it to us at [editor@newhamvoices.co.uk](mailto:editor@newhamvoices.co.uk)



## Our reader survey winner

Thanks to all our readers who took the time to fill in our survey. You have given us some great feedback and suggestions for future coverage.

We will be publishing the results of the survey next month.

Thanks also to Morrisons supermarket in Canning Town who kindly provided our prize of £50 in vouchers. We are grateful also to Veera Ibrahim for her support and assistance. She will also be taking part in our Canning Town South project (see page 2).

The winner is **Robert Edmonds** who lives in Plaistow.



## SOMETHING'S BREWING



**Phil Mellows** *discovers a pub where, win or lose, Hammers fans are never offside*

**P**ubs and football go together. Not for every pub, perhaps, but for so many at the heart of their communities it's the footie that helps bring the crowds while the beer delivers the camaraderie.

When West Ham United departed the Boleyn Ground in 2016 the pubs of Upton Park were bereft. But, like football, there are always winners as well as losers.

And on this occasion the winner is... the Carpenters Arms in Stratford.

The original Carpenters Arms dates back to the 1860s, but that was demolished a century later and the current version built as part of the housing estate that surrounds it.

For another 50 years, the pub happily served the locals. Things started to change when the 2012 Olympics arrived on the doorstep, and when the Hammers moved to what is now the London Stadium, many fans adopted the Carpenters as their new home.

And behind the bar, Pauline Clarke, who owns the freehouse, was ready for them.

On matchdays, from at least a couple of hours before kick-off, the resident DJ is ramping up the atmosphere. Traditional pie & mash is served, or a cooked breakfast if it's a morning game, and – win or lose – the party continues after the final whistle has blown.

And, especially now the team's battling near the top of the Premier

League, it's some party, a good old-fashioned singalong with choruses of 'Bubbles' ringing out till closing, and the pub rocking with revelry. There are even videos of it on YouTube!

“People know the Carpenters is a very secure, very safe environment, because we work closely with the police, and we simply make sure everyone can enjoy their day.”

“Being the closest pub to the ground has had a huge impact on us,” says Pauline. “People know the Carpenters is a very secure, very safe environment, because we work closely with the police, and we simply make sure everyone can enjoy their day.”

“When you open your arms to customers and give them a good session, they'll keep coming back.”

The planned redevelopment of the estate casts a doubt over the future of the Carpenters. But it's been knocked down before and got to its feet. And now there's a whole terrace-load of Hammers fans who'll be throwing their support into making sure match days continue to be made down the pub. ●



*Nothing beats cooking home grown vegetables, and the humble carrot is a particular favourite, says Cecilia Cran*

### What to grow:

I've noticed a growing trend (pardon the pun!), among friends over the last few months – everyone is increasingly keen to understand more about vegetable growing. So this month that's what I'm starting to think about, with a spotlight on carrots specifically. Carrots are one of the easiest and most rewarding vegetables to grow from seed. Call me a garden geek, but I cannot tell you the joy I get when I pull up my carrots and make a meal from scratch using them.



Photos courtesy Cecilia Cran

Carrots are perfect for growing in containers or directly in the ground and they take up very little space, as they grow vertically. There are a whole host of varieties to choose from – they come in all colours, shapes and sizes, so explore which would work best for your growing space. I suggest you also check the seed packet, which will state whether it is an 'early' or 'maincrop' variety and will indicate when best to sow, so you can carefully plan out your garden month by month.

Although the main outdoor sowing season starts around April, running to the beginning of July, early varieties can be sown in late February/early March under protective cloches or covered with horticultural fleece.

### How to grow:

To begin, choose where you will be sowing your carrots – I will be putting mine directly into the ground. Carrots need light and prefer to be grown in fertile, well-drained soil, so select a spot that has maximum sunlight.

Before getting your seeds in the ground, dig over the area where you plan to grow them, remove weeds, stones, debris and any other plants or old roots from last season. When you have done this, use your hand or the edge of your trowel to create a seed drill (small, shallow trench), around 1cm-2cm deep. Then carefully place seeds along the drill, sowing them thinly, you should look to try and space the seeds around 5cm-8cm apart.

Once this is done, cover the seeds with soil mixed with some peat-free compost and gently press the soil down to ensure the seeds have made contact with the soil, so they will be able to access the nutrients they need to germinate. Water the seeds well when you first plant them, but be careful not to over-water, as you do not want the seeds to rot.

Cover with simple horticultural fleece to protect them from the elements and sit back and wait patiently. Early varieties will take around 10-12 weeks to grow fully and maincrop carrots slightly longer, around 12-16 weeks.

### Green escape: Lister Gardens

Blink and you may miss this little green haven. Tucked away on Upper Road, just a short walk from Plaistow tube station, this slice of Newham nature is small, but perfectly formed. As you approach the gardens, you're welcomed by impressive gates, which were designed especially for the park. They host a lovely decoration – painted a dark green and adorned with lots of iron foliage.

Despite the size of the space, it has been well designed and a lot has been packed in – ornamental flower beds, lush shrubs and bushes of foliage, along with a little forest of bamboo – all beautifully maintained and very well managed. The park also houses a great little kids play area and a basketball court that seems to attract a steady stream of enthusiastic players. There are also some benches to sit and relax on.

As I find with so many of our best loved spaces in the capital, there is some interesting history to Lister Gardens. The garden owes its name to Lord Joseph Lister, who revolutionised modern day surgery by introducing antiseptic procedures into our hospitals. The medical pioneer was born at Upton House that originally stood between Lancaster Road and Upton Lane. ●



# Talks continue as college teachers strike

NOAH ENAHORO

Teachers at Newham Sixth Form College (NewVIc) are exercising their right to strike in a series of stoppages to highlight worries over teaching conditions and the future of the college.

Selected staff among the 102 National Education Union (NEU) members at the college have held 12 days of strike action in December and January.

Talks with college management are taking place, but the stoppages will continue “until we reach a resolution with management,” said local lecturer and NEU Representative, Robert Behan.

The strikers say they are taking action over bad college management practices, academisation, and working practices that harm students’ studies. They say these policies and practices are harmful to teachers and students.

“Workload has been steadily increasing over the last five years,” said Behan, “and we are spending more time on lesson planning, mark-



ing and non-teaching duties than ever before.”

Teachers believe that less face to face teaching harms students academically. He also warned against the college setting itself up as an Academy.

“Academisation is a form of pri-

vatation,” he said. “Schools and colleges that are academies are run like private businesses. This means that the college would no longer be accountable to governors who represent the community.” The NEU says that becoming an Academy adds little if nothing of benefit to a college.

However, a college spokesperson told *Newham Voices*: “We are not currently pursuing academisation. We are exploring all options for the future looking to protect our ethos and the long-term future of the college. We don’t understand why this action is taking place now when no decisions have been taken.”

The management says that 70 per cent of the college’s non NEU members are working normally and not taking part in the strikes.

When asked if the strikes would negatively impact learning, Behan pointed out that teachers’ “working conditions are our students’ learning conditions”.

The strikes, on selected dates, are “for the current and future good of the college”. He added: “Striking teachers are all eager to “be back in the classroom doing what we love.”

An email sent to students by the college stated: “The College is committed to ending the strike action as soon as possible and is engaged in frequent and extensive negotiations to try and solve the dispute.” ●

## Helping to deal with Long-Covid

A targeted service to help Newham people suffering from extended symptoms from Covid is now in operation. Residents can get access through their GP if they have ongoing Covid symptoms for 12 weeks or longer.

Around one in 10 people suffer from so-called Long-Covid and the new service for Newham is specifically set-up to support them. People referred to the Long Covid service get a telephone assessment with a clinician lasting between 30-45 minutes.

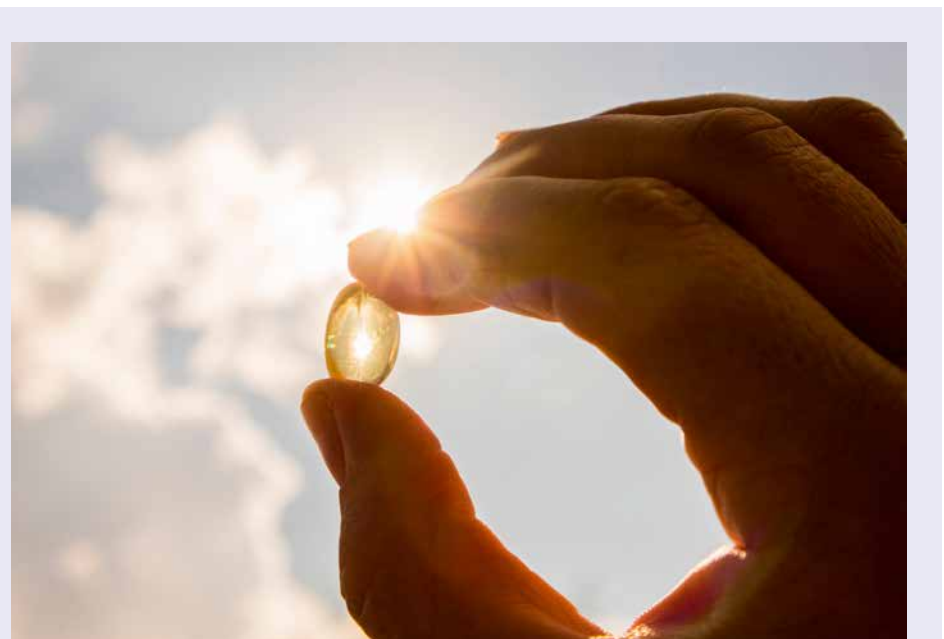
Following the assessment, the clinician and the team will collectively agree the most appropriate way to provide support.

Being diagnosed with Long COVID does not seem to be linked to how ill a person is when they are first infected by the virus. As this is a new condition, lots of research is being done to better understand

what causes it and how to help people living with it.

Symptoms can vary a lot, fluctuate over time and may have an impact on the ability to do day-to-day activities. There are many symptoms of Long COVID, the most common are: extreme tiredness, shortness of breath, muscle ache, difficulty concentrating/memory loss/confusion, loss of smell or taste, headache, trouble sleeping, anxiety and a fast heart rate

Other help for people in Newham includes Mental Health support through Talking Therapies on **020 8475 8080** or the Newham Mental Health Crisis Line on freephone **0800 073 0066** and the Citizens Advice Bureau, providing confidential information to assist people with legal, debt, consumer, housing and other problems. For Newham contact: <https://www.eastendcab.org.uk/newham/>



## Free Vitamin D available for older people

Newham is piloting a new offer of free vitamin D supplements for residents aged 65+.

Anyone in that age range can get vitamin D from various collection points throughout the Borough until April.

Vitamin D helps keep bones, teeth and muscles healthy. People who don’t have enough vitamin D are more likely to fall or break bones.

A good source of vitamin D is sunlight, but it can be hard to get enough in winter as the sun is not strong enough for the body to make vitamin D.

It is difficult to get enough vitamin D from food alone so doctors recommend taking vitamin D supplements (tablets) during winter to keep healthy.

For more information go to: [www.newham.gov.uk/health-adult-social-care/vitamin-d](http://www.newham.gov.uk/health-adult-social-care/vitamin-d)

Increased thoughts about life not worth living?



Call the Newham Mental Health Crisis Line

Trained staff can help you.  
Telephone 0800 073 0066.

## SPORTS SHORTS

Compiled by Neandra Etienne

The **Jack Leslie Campaign** presented Barking FC with a bronze statuette of the Canning Town-born Footballer Jack Leslie before a pre-match game at their home ground.

The statuette was created by the artist Andy Edwards.

[jackleslie.co.uk](http://jackleslie.co.uk)



Matt (Jack Leslie Campaign), Barking FC Chairman Rob O'Brien, President Dave Blewitt and Greg (Jack Leslie Campaign).  
©Neandra Etienne

**Bonny Downs Community Association** offers free Music and Movement Classes Monday lunchtimes 1.15pm – 2.15pm at the Well in East Ham for anyone aged 65+

For one week only on February 14 it will be online

The Well Community Centre, 49 Vicarage Lane, London E6 6DQ

[bonnydowns.org/whats-on](http://bonnydowns.org/whats-on)

**Athletic Newham FC** has been drawn at home to Brockenhurst FC in the next round of the FA Vase cup on Saturday 12 February 2022, 3pm kick off. Supporters welcome

218 Prince Regent Lane, E13 8SD

▶ [UCv0gz7ldfVCMi6SiboAg-yA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCv0gz7ldfVCMi6SiboAg-yA)  
 @athleticnewhamfc

**East London Rugby Club** is recruiting both men and women players. You can attend a taster training session.

There are three men's teams and one ladies' team. All three men's team have home games on February 12 and February 19.

East London Vixens (Ladies team) February 20 vs. Millwall.

Training on Tuesday and Thursdays at 7pm.

Home games are played at West Ham Memorial Park, 71 Holland Road, E15 3BP

[www.eastlondonrhc.com](http://www.eastlondonrhc.com)



East London Rugby Club in action



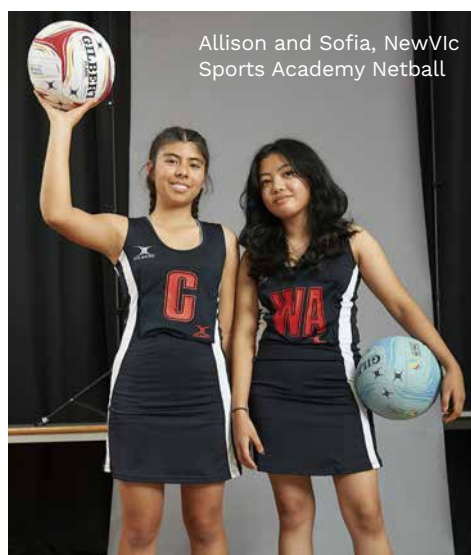
**Pretty Decent Beer Company** has set up a 5km Run Club starting at 11am on Saturday 19 February from their Taproom in Forest Gate. It is free and open to all running abilities. You will be rewarded with a beer.

[prettydecentbeer.co](http://prettydecentbeer.co)  
 @prettydecentbc

**NewVic Sports Academy** teams have had another impressive start to the academic year, with Basketball and Cricket Academy, Netball and Table Tennis beating teams from Newham College and Leyton Sixth Form.

NewVic has a strong group of sporting students who have successfully qualified for the National Championships and will represent the college in Nottingham in April. It is the first time the college has had Women's Netball and Men's Basketball players at this level.

[www.aocsport.co.uk](http://www.aocsport.co.uk)  
[newvic.ac.uk/elite-sport-academies](http://newvic.ac.uk/elite-sport-academies)



**Clapton CFC** has signed two new players to their men's first team. Colin Mugoya-Tabingwa and Jason Sam-Franks made their debut in the Essex Premier Cup win over Leigh Ramblers.

The full fixture list for their February games is available on their website: [www.claptoncfc.co.uk](http://www.claptoncfc.co.uk)

To make a donation to their Old Spotted Dog Ground changing room fund please visit: [chuffed.org/project/osd-changing-rooms-appeal](http://chuffed.org/project/osd-changing-rooms-appeal)

**West Ham United Foundation** runs separate men's and women's Walking Football sessions all year round apart from Xmas and bank holidays!

Walking football is a non-contact sport that involves playing at a slower pace

All abilities are welcome. Ages 18+

• **Women:** Wednesday 6.30pm – 8.30pm, Flanders Playing Field, AstroTurf pitch, 118 Napier Road, East Ham, E6 2SG

• **Men:** Mondays 10am – 11am, Memorial Recreation Ground, Memorial Ave, E15 3BS

Email: [health@westhamunited.co.uk](mailto:health@westhamunited.co.uk)



East London Phoenix, L-R: Freya Levy, Amy Conroy and Charlotte Thornton White

**East London Phoenix British Wheelchair Basketball** games will be available to watch live on YouTube and BBC digital platforms during the Women's Premier League season.

The East London Phoenix will play their home matches at UEL's Sports-Dock. The venue in London's Docklands will also host the finals.

• **Saturday 12 February (16:30)** Home Game. East London Phoenix v Loughborough Lightning – Live on YouTube

• **Saturday 19 February (16:30)** Home Game. East London Phoenix v Worcester Wolves – Live on YouTube

• **Saturday 26 February (13:00)** Away Game. Worcester Wolves v East London Phoenix – Live on YouTube

Tickets are on sale now for Phoenix home games (Adult tickets £5 plus booking fee) at [eventbrite.co.uk/e/east-london-phoenix-fixtures-tickets-170306614669](http://eventbrite.co.uk/e/east-london-phoenix-fixtures-tickets-170306614669)

▶ [UC\\_Knin1ybWiuSp7gDl\\_dz1A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UC_Knin1ybWiuSp7gDl_dz1A)  
 ▶ [BritishWheelchairBasketball](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UC_Knin1ybWiuSp7gDl_dz1A)

Stratford based **City Boxing Camp** offers a variety of daily classes including 1-on-1, Boxing Camp Class, Pairs Session, the Sparring Clinic and Private Sessions.



City Boxing Camp

You can also apply for a Day Pass which allows you to train freely and use their facilities without a coach. 1 Bridge Terrace, London E15 4QZ

[www.cityboxingcamp.co.uk](http://www.cityboxingcamp.co.uk)  
 @cityboxingcamp

**JK Silvertown FC** raised £435 for Mind Charity during a charity team game. This amount equals over 12 hours of counselling for someone in need.

@jksilvertownfc/

**London Lions Basketball** team have an important home FIBA second round game against BC Avtodor Saratov February 1. The crucial European home game against Bakker Bears February 9 and British Basketball League home games against the Leicester Riders February 4 and the Newcastle Eagles February 20.

The London Lions have announced that Vince Macaulay will be moving on from his 11-year tenure as head coach at the club.

[www.thelondonlions.com](http://www.thelondonlions.com)

**Forest Crusaders WFC** player Georgia Maxwell Jones fired in another treble and Charmaine Homans notched her first of the season in a comfortable 4-0 home victory against Essex Premier division side Rayleigh Ladies 1st team

The team faces a tough quarter final home game against Billericay development on February 20 with a 1.30 kick off.

February 6 Home Game. Forest Crusaders WFC v CB Hounslow (Sue Sharples Cup) 1.30pm kick off

Spectators are welcome to support home games at West Ham Memorial Sports Ground.

@forestcrusaderswfc



St Bons Year 7 Football team

Congratulations to **St Bons Year 7 Football team** who are through to the quarter finals of the London Cup. The team won 2-1 against Woolwich Polytechnic Boys School.

The Quarter finals will take place at Harrow Road Playing Fields, Wanstead Flats.

@stbonspe

Fun based **Tots Football** sessions with UEFA B License and female coaches are every Saturday for ages 3-6 10-11am Newham Leisure Centre.

To register email: [playmaker-10coaching@gmail.com](mailto:playmaker-10coaching@gmail.com)

# Box-to-box thrills at the clash of the season



**Mickey Ambrose** revisits his old club Chelsea, ponders West Ham's fortunes and looks forward to the 2022 World Cup

I have to thank the directors of my old club Chelsea for inviting me to one of the biggest fixtures of the season which saw the Blues come from behind to claim a 2-2 draw in this top-of-the-table clash against Liverpool with all four goals arriving in a pulsating first half.

Sadio Mane set the tone of this fierce battle when he was shown a yellow card for an elbow on Cesar Azpilicueta in the opening ten seconds. The Liverpool forward could even count himself a little lucky not to be sent off because the replay showed him catching Chelsea's Captain heavily in the face with a swinging elbow and I did wonder why VAR was not used because that is what it is there for.

Chelsea enjoyed the better of the opening exchanges, keeping possession well and creating chances which they would rue later... because they could not put the ball in the net, or the onion as we tend to call it. The busy Mane getting boos from the home fans for the earlier incident capitalised on Trevoh Chaloba misjudging the flight of the ball and rounded the Chelsea keeper Edouard

Mendy to slot the ball neatly home which sent the Liverpool fans who made the trip down south wild.



I bumped into Steve Holland, former Assistant Manager of Chelsea and now Assistant Manager to Gareth Southgate's England Team. We shared our memories of the late great Ray Wilkins, my boyhood hero while growing up in Poplar who passed away on 4 April 2018. Let us hope England do well in the forthcoming FIFA World Cup scheduled to start with the first game kicking off on Monday, 21 November 2022. COME ON ENGLAND

The tempo of the game increased suddenly and we did not have to wait long for another goal because watching the pace of Mane and Mohammed Salah up close is frightening. You can see why Salah is rated as one of the best players in the world; he is pure class and from an acute angle, he slotted Liverpool's second. Two-nil down and only 20 minutes in I thought it was time to go home when Liverpool counter-attacked again and Salah could have made it 3-0.

I remember organising and playing in a celebrity charity match at Chelsea a few years ago, as part of a testimonial for former captain Steve Clarke against PSV Eindhoven. East End and Hollywood actor Ray Winstone said to me on seeing his performance on video: "Mickey was I really running that slow?" I replied: "Now you know, Ray, what box to box means because as a player you have to have the energy to run up and down the pitch something N'Golo Kante does so well as the heartbeat of the Chelsea team.

My despair turned to joy when Liverpool keeper Kelleher punched clear to the edge of the box, Kovacic volleyed a looping effort that evaded the keeper and went in off the far post. The Chelsea fans went wild and so did I - game on and we didn't have to wait long for the equaliser with Kante releasing Pulisic who took his time to calmly let a bouncing ball



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

settle before sending a left-footed shot high past Kelleher.

Two goals in four minutes turned the game completely on its head just as it seemed to be slipping away from the Blues. Chelsea kept up the pressure in the second half and in the closing stages, the atmosphere inside the ground grew ever louder as the home fans urged the Blues on in search of the winner, but it was not to be.

Since West Ham's 3-2 win against Chelsea they have had mixed fortunes and were narrowly beaten by Manchester United in the 93rd minute on 22 January with Marcus Rashford sending United into fourth spot in the Premier League table with the Hammers now fifth and Arsenal and Tottenham closing in. This is where West Ham really have to grind out some wins or they will slip back down the table - I hope not. ●

## MBE for Beagle star Jonathan

NEANDRA ETIENNE

Paralympic T44 High Jump Champion and Newham and Essex Beagles AC athlete **Jonathan Broom-Edwards** has been made an MBE.

Jonathan, who received the award in the 2022 New Year's Honours List, said:

"I am overjoyed. It makes the years of sacrifices and hard work totally worth it, particularly during the already difficult Covid climate.

"I will continue to do my best to defy gravity, champion resilience and use what I have achieved to promote education on the less visible disabilities. I will continue to give back to the sport that has given me so much."

📷 @BroomEdwardsT44/  
 📷 @newhamandessexbeaglesac  
 newhamandessexbeagles.co.uk  
 jonathanbroomedwards.co.uk

Photo: Jonathan Broom-Edwards. ©Paralympics GB



# When you advertise with Newham Voices you help bring an independent voice to Newham

Local journalism is valuable in providing a reliable source of local news and information. Every month our dedicated volunteers work hard, giving their time to write and collate the contents of our newspaper so we can bring *Newham Voices* to you free of charge.

Advertising revenue helps us to cover the costs of producing and delivering *Newham Voices* to the local community.

**We are all Newham Voices, let's work together.**

**37,500**  
estimated readership  
**12,500**  
free copies reach readers  
in Newham each month

## To talk to us about advertising, contact

Benji Taylor at [benji@socialspider.com](mailto:benji@socialspider.com) or on 07565 332497

*Discounts available for local small business*



**Want to advertise in Newham and beyond?**

Get in touch to learn about opportunities with our social enterprise partners.