

Prayers and protests as Newham responds to Gaza

AIDAN WHITE

Across Newham, where a large number of residents are of Muslim origin, the Gaza war and humanitarian crisis has sparked protests, calls for an end to hate-speech and sombre acts of unity by faith leaders praying for peace.

Since the massacre of around 1,400 Israelis on 7 October and the capture of more than 200 hostages, Israel's armed forces have laid siege to Gaza and launched missiles, killing more than 6,000 people and forcing a million Palestinians to flee their homes.

Protests and vigils in support of the victims, both Palestinian

and Israeli, have been held across the Borough, at the Greater London Authority headquarters in the Royal Docks, at East Ham Town Hall, and at a moving peace vigil supported by religious leaders from Jewish, Muslim and Christian communities at St John's Church Stratford.

The vigil was one of the actions proposed by Newham Council on 13 October in a resolution prepared by Councillor Rohit Dasgupta which also called for fresh resources to combat hate crime and for action to support a major charity working on the ground in Palestine to ease the humanitarian crisis.

On the day of the Stratford vigil Councillor Josh Garfield, the cabinet member covering education announced on X, formerly Twitter, that he was standing down from his cabinet position.



Newham's religious and interfaith community gathered to call for unity and solidarity with those who have been displaced, injured or missing loved ones as a result of events unfolding in Israel and Gaza. ©Andrew Baker and Monika Szolle



Pro-Palestinian demonstrators protest in London, 16 October. ©Sylvie Belbouab



Dr Farzana Hussain at a Moment of Reflection, St. John's Church, Stratford. ©Andrew Baker and Monika Szolle

According to his leaked letter of resignation this was in protest over the Council's resolution on Gaza, which he said went against Labour Party policy that discourages Council statements on the conflict.

However, the Mayor of Newham Rokhsana Fiaz, who spoke at the vigil has warned of growing divisions.

"A big concern for all of us will be the impact that the war is having on our communities in Newham, from all faiths and none," she said in her weekly newsletter.

"I know that there are some trying to tear us apart, when we need to come together as a community to provide comfort, encourage dialogue to deepen understanding, respect and peace."

She warned of a dangerous surge in anti-Semitism and Islamophobia in London and is urging people to report hate

YOUTH VOICES OF NEWHAM

Peace appeal, see page 5

crimes to the police.

Combating hate-speech also means showing more respect in online discussion says councillor Dasgupta.

"A calling-out culture without putting issues in context that we see in some WhatsApp groups is not helpful in the current situation," he said.

Meanwhile, the Stratford-based charity the Refugee Council is leading calls for a Ukraine-style support scheme to help bring Palestinian families displaced in the Gaza conflict to Britain.

Enver Solomon, chief executive of the Refugee Council. "People who aren't secure and safe in their homes need

– continued on page 2



Remembering Charlton the legend

See On the Ball page 15



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Newham Voices is a not-for-profit newspaper published by Social Spider Community News: Visit socialspidercommunitynews.co.uk

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Council Notebook

£14 million in the red over care and homes crisis

Peter Landman reports from the October meeting of the Newham Council Cabinet

Latest Quarter Financial Report

This showed a forecast overspend of £14.2 million, on the general fund. The Council, by law, must not have an overspend at the end of the financial year.

- The main sources of overspend are:
- £4.2 million on temporary accommodation for homeless people
 - £3.6 million on children and young adult services and
 - £3.4 million on health and adult social care.

The report lists measures to reduce this.

On Temporary Accommodation, the key objective is to reduce expenditure on overnight stays for homeless people in hotels.

The Council is working on a raft of measures including finding accommodation for homeless families outside of Newham (see page 5).

Council Acquisitions of Properties in Newham

The Council estimates that £2.8 million could be saved by buying back of council properties that were subject to right to buy.

The arrangement is the Council gets a government loan for the purchase, sets up lets, and gets a return on the loan from rental income.

Bringing back into use empty properties on Custom House and Canning Town estates.

Homelessness Prevention

The Council has set up a prevention team. Main task is negotiation with landlords to avoid evictions, leading to more homelessness.

On Health and Adult Social Care

There have been inflationary costs also on care services, and there has been a 50 per cent increase in nursing home costs. But on the other hand the Government has introduced a Hospital Discharge Fund for grants to projects freeing hospital beds.

Future of Canning Town Library

Cabinet agreed to start a tender process to convert the empty library into a social use hub, with a Newham Archive Centre, learning centre, public spaces, and workshops.

Substance Misuse

The contract with Newham Rise is coming up for renewal. The new contract will put more emphasis on community outreach and prevention. And the Council will need to think of more warning action for young people about the risks of vaping.

Prayers and protest

Continued from page 1

access to safety and the UK must be ready to play a role by implementing a package of emergency measures at short notice."

"I think this is an excellent idea," added Councillor Dasgupta.

He said the Council had passed some time ago a motion saying that refugees are welcome in Newham.

"But Newham does not have the resources to take on this task without government support. This action has to be co-ordinated and paid for by central government."

Instances of anti-Semitism can be reported to the Community Security Trust at www.cst.org.uk and anyone facing anti-Muslim hate and prejudice can find similar support at the Islamophobia Response Unit at www.theiru.org.uk

As well as the Mayor, those attending the vigil at St John's Church in Stratford included: The Right Reverend Monsignor John Armitage from St Margaret's Catholic Church; Edwin Shuker, vice-president of the Board of Deputies of British Jews; Dr Farzana Hussain from the Project Surgery; and Cllr Canon Ann Easter, the Commissioner for Interfaith and Interreligious Dialogue at Newham Council.

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Council by-election in Plaistow North on 23 November

Following the resignation of Councillor Daniel Lee-Phakoe (pictured) for personal reasons there will be a Council by-election in Plaistow North on 23 November. The councillor's wife is Carleene Lee-Phakoe who holds the cabinet position for housing needs, homelessness and the private rented sector.



This would normally be a safe seat for Labour, but there is fresh interest following the surprise result in an earlier by-election in June this year when independent councillor Mehmood Mirza defeated the Labour candidate in the neighbouring ward of Boleyn.

Council legal victory

See page 7

“Unfair vote” fear as ballot opens on people’s projects

Residents in Newham have until November 12 to register votes in a ballot to select community projects that will receive a share of a £1,600,000 fund to spend on improving their neighbourhoods.

But as the ballot opened last month concerns have been raised about “unfair competition” as scores of individuals and organisations battle for votes.

All the selected projects will be voted for by individuals – some as young as 13 – and the top ten projects in each of the eight neighbourhoods with the highest number of votes will get funding.

However, there are fears that the voting process will favour bigger organisations that will be able to draw upon support from their own well-established local communities.

“Some schools and churches



which have access to mass votes through their classrooms and congregations have also submitted projects and they will have an unfair advantage,” said one project leader heading for the launch ceremony of the vote at Stratford Library on October 21. “They will find it easier to mobilise votes. Smaller groups of residents and individuals could be at a disadvantage.”

The rules say that anyone who lives, learns or works in

Newham will be able to vote for their favourite projects on shortlists drawn up by community representatives.

Online voting is open to residents who are 13 and over. Even younger children can vote if they attend in person at local libraries, with adult supervision. Everyone has ten votes which they can use to support their top ten preferred projects.

The new programme, now called People Powered Places, has replaced commu-

nity assemblies, and it covers eight neighbourhoods in Beckton and Royal Docks, Custom House and Canning Town, East Ham, Forest Gate and Maryland, Green Street, Manor Park, Plaistow, and Stratford and West Ham.

Each neighbourhood has been allocated £200,000 to spend on small-scale projects that have been prepared by residents that will improve the environment or support other community actions.

Individual residents can get up to £5,000 for a local project while voluntary and community organisations can get up to £20,000.

Project proposals will be ranked by number of votes received, both online and in person. Projects with the most votes will be awarded funding first until the Community Neighbourhood’s budget of around £200,000 is exhausted.

The successful projects will be announced later in November and will be delivered by residents themselves and local organisations with support from Newham Council.

The projects will be implemented and evaluated during the coming year.

Find details of the projects and how to vote in person or online at: www.newhamco-create.co.uk/en/pages/people-powered-places

Go-ahead for affordable homes in Custom House

Newham Council’s strategy to ease the Borough’s housing crisis moved forward in October with the decision to back the latest phase of the masterplan for development of Custom House which includes more than 300 affordable homes.

The Council says approval marks another milestone in efforts to provide new homes that residents can afford.

Custom House is one of three council-led estate regenera-

tion schemes in the Borough.

The masterplan planning approval for this phase of Custom House provides outline consent to deliver 629 mixed-tenure genuinely affordable homes along with new community facilities including a new health hub, nursery, bus stand and cycling links which will make Custom House a better place to live

This is the second planning application to receive approval this year and follows

the success of the application approved in January 2023 to accelerate the delivery of 95 genuinely affordable homes which are now under construction.

Together, these approvals across the overarching masterplan provide 50 percent genuinely affordable homes for local people.

This development comes 10 months after residents voted yes to the Custom House regeneration plans last December. As well as investment in new homes the plans will support the wider transformation of Custom House..

Existing shops have also been brought back into use to invigorate the High Street and provide an improved offer for local residents as the works progress.

For the latest update on the Custom House regeneration, please visit the Custom House co-create page or email regeneration@newham.gov.uk



Visualisation of Custom House redevelopment by Adam Khan Architects via adamkhan.co.uk

Checking out



End of an era: The closure of the Wilko store on 8 October, one of the last of the company’s 400 branches to close its doors, marked the end of a 22-year era for Stratford shoppers. Among those most affected were the company’s 20 staff who suddenly found themselves out of a job. But two who live in Newham, Cindy and Sabrina, pictured here just two days before the closure, were looking on the bright side. “I’ll miss the place and the friends I’ve made here,” said Cindy, on the left. She joined Wilko when it first opened and is already looking forward to a rest. “I think I’ll take it easy and retire.” But her friend Sabrina, who has been with the company just two years will be job hunting. “I’m sure I’ll be able to find something,” she said, “but it’s a sad day for everyone.”

Table of Love and Loss: 2023 Memorial

Sunday 3 December 2023 | 1:00pm – 4:00pm, East Ham Town Hall

REBEKAH SAMUEL

Following the success of the December 2022 memorial organised by Ayse Hussain, politicians voiced their commitment to change.

Newham's Mayor, Rokhsana Fiaz pledged that under her watch, this would become an annual event. Everyone who has lost a loved one is welcome to attend, and more organisations and institutions will be present this year.

Ayse organised the 2022 event in memory of her murdered cousin, Mary-Jane Mustafa, initially to bring together the families of other female victims of crimes, but instead welcomed everyone stating, "such is the trauma of homicide how can you turn anyone away? "Pain and frustrations were shared by those who took to the



stage to speak about loved ones lost (their mother, son, daughter, brother, sister), victims to crimes such as domestic violence, stalking, and knife crime.

Their feelings resonated with others experiencing the same pain and were laid out before official guests including politicians, the police and other professional bodies. Many attendees interviewed spoke of travelling from out of borough for help and support, because there was nothing like this in their area.

Ayse explained that the December 2023 expands on the previous year's event. "I listened to the feedback" she said, "and this year's event will support all forms of homicide, knife crime, car crime, stalking and suicide. Everyone is welcome".

Planned support from additional

institutions and organisations will include representatives from the Victim Contact Team (a division of the Probation Service), that provides post-trial support for families on matters relating to those convicted and other legal changes that may be relevant or be of interest. Representatives from the Court service who regard families as the number one voice of feedback, and the catalyst for change and improvements should also attend. In addition, agencies, or institutions to support families and provide public guidance for attendees on the day will include suicide charities, stalking, drugs and alcohol, homicide, mental health.

Sign language support will be available.

For more information contact Ayse on 07958 475 212

Forest Gate school with links to Eton tops the class in Newham

Forest Gate Community School is the best performing school in Newham for GCSE results according to government figures.

The school had a progress score of plus 1.06 which was more than a quarter of a grade higher than the school in second place, Brampton Manor. Other schools performing well above the national average in Newham include Plashet, Sarah Bonnell and Cumberland Community School.

Forest Gate Community School also runs a scholarship programme helping students from disadvantaged backgrounds win scholarship to fee paying private schools including Eton, where two students in recent years have won scholarships worth £80,000 each.

Executive headteacher Thahmina Begum, pictured, said: "We are over the moon to be once again the best performing school in Newham. These results will once again put us among the best performing in the country. These results are life changing for our students."

Cumberland Community School, which like Forest Gate is a member of the Community Schools Trust, has



Thahmina Begum ©Maja Smiejowska

seen a turnaround in its performance. It was ranked the worst school in Newham in 2019 but is now among the best.

Headteacher Ehklas Rahman said: "Joining the Community Schools Trust and working in partnership with the team at Forest Gate has been transformative."

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Note: Our next issue goes to print on 30 November 2023

'No choice' says Council in homeless row

AIDAN WHITE

Plans to ease Newham's housing crisis by moving homeless families out of the Borough to Chatham have angered the Kent town's leaders who accuse Newham of "people dumping".

But Newham has hit back saying the scale of the homelessness crisis in the Borough means they have little choice.

Chatham Council leaders say the plan to move 81 families on Newham's homeless register into temporary accommodation in the town will only put fresh pressure on the area's own social services.

They are now calling for the government to change the law that allows boroughs like Newham to bypass local planning rules and to move people without consultation.

But a Newham Council spokesperson told *Newham Voices*: "Newham, like much of London, is experiencing an acute housing crisis and we have seen an almost 50 percent rise in homelessness presentations over the past two years.

"There is also an increasing shortage of suitable homes in Newham, making it incredibly difficult to house families in the Borough despite our best efforts."

Council £4 million overspent

The depth of the problem has also been reflected in the increased costs of paying for the sudden rise in homelessness. Councillors were told at the last Cabinet meeting that this year's budget for temporary accommodation costs is already overspent by £4.2 million. (See page 2)

Using places outside the Borough to provide homes for our neediest families is not new, but the strength of opposition in Chatham to the use of the converted office block Anchorage House for temporary homes has underlined the nature of Britain's country-wide housing crisis.

Medway Council which covers Chatham already receives the most homeless households from London local authorities according to an investigation by the specialist housing publication *Inside Housing*.

Council leaders say moving more of London's homeless families into the town puts more pressure on their own social and welfare services

and makes it harder for them to house their own homeless families.

Adrian Gulvin, the leader of Medway Council's Conservative Group, criticised the

Newham plan. He said he was not attacking the families who are being moved. "But what we are seeing is people dumping."

Medway's Conservative Council has asked the government to "urgently" review the policy of permitted development rights, a system that has long been controversial because developments, like the conversion of the Anchorage House office block for Newham, do not need to go through the full local planning process during which councils can scrutinise the level of suitability for residential properties.

Newham is using Theori Housing Management Ser-

vices, a company that specialises in work with councils, to provide short and longer-term temporary accommodation for homeless people.

The Newham spokesperson added: "We are working with an external management agency to provide homes at Anchorage House for families who would otherwise face the uncertainty of life in hotels or bed and breakfast accommodation.

"There will be a daily on-site management presence as well as regular inspections of the property and we will work closely with Medway Council to provide ongoing support as needed."



"Anchorage House, Chatham" by Nigel Chadwick is licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0.

Newham Youth Voices: time to speak out for peace

Watching the news unfold on the conflict between Palestine and Israel, young people in Newham from all backgrounds are feeling low, powerless and deeply upset by the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

In the school curriculum we are NOT taught about the history of Palestine and Israel, and this leads young people to get their historical information via social media which can often lead to inaccuracy and false narratives.

It is important for young people to be educated and understand history,

News of war wherever it is from can have an emotional impact and affect our mental well-being as young people. Newham also has residents who are of Arab, Muslim, Christian and Jewish heritage who are directly affected, many are worried and concerned about their family members caught up in this conflict.

Most young people learn about the Israel/Palestine conflict through books, news and social media. Some facts are well known – that Palestine has been under illegal occupation for many decades and that there are still Palestinians who have lived in refugee camps for generations waiting for the right to return to their



This column has been prepared by Maria, Faisal, Lina, Mohammed, Adam, Karima, Abdus, Adam, Miraj, Sara, Yusuf, Daniel, Hasan, Ayden, Amira, Ilyas, Hamza, Elia, Hussain, all members of the Newham Voices Youth Voices team.

homes. And, of course, there is the continuing reality that many in Israel are fearful for their security.

The tragic and horrifying events of the 7 October massacre and the bombing of Gaza that has followed have caused further upset leading many young people to attend peaceful demonstrations in Newham and across central London.

Young people in Newham want to express their solidarity with the Palestinian people and with all the victims of violence.

We are witnessing a human catastrophe. Young people are saying, it does not matter what faith or background you are from – all human lives are important, and we

as young people must condemn violence that impacts millions of innocent civilian lives during these wars.

To the media we say that we feel there is bias in coverage which does not allow the public to have the full story. When, for example, mainstream media journalists report that Israelis are killed and Palestinians died, it creates a narrative that people don't trust. It drives young people to share content from social media and create their own social media messages.

To politicians we say that we feel you are not listening. There is a growing mistrust of political leaders. Israeli flags on government buildings and statements that Israel has the right, not just to defend itself,

but also to block access to the necessities of life to two million Palestinians do not appeal to all sides.

Young people feel that the situation in Gaza is something everyone needs to care about. In the UK there is division and discord. Negative headlines and overblown rhetoric in situations like this can create yet more division and leads to more anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

Too often we feel that we are silenced by the political establishment from expressing our views.

Sometimes, because everyone is forced to take sides, it seems the safest thing to do is to say nothing. We cannot simply say, I am on the side of humanity. Or I want peace.

We have first hand experience of family members and friends who have suffered discrimination for stating their positions on the issue; this suggests that free speech may not exist for all.

A lot of us opt out of speaking out. We choose to keep our feelings to ourselves. This can be very mentally, socially, and emotionally damaging causing us to feel isolated. All we want to do is speak out for humanity and peace.

And we are not alone. A recent yougov poll (19 October) suggested that 58 percent of Britons think there should be an immediate ceasefire.

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Landmark legal win for Council over dangerous cladding

Newham has become the first local authority in Britain to successfully prosecute a building owner for failing to remove flammable cladding.

In a verdict delivered on 18 October, Tan Ikram, Deputy Chief Magistrate at City of London Magistrates Court, ruled against Chaplair Ltd after it failed to meet a deadline to remove dangerous cladding from its Lumiere building at 544 Romford Road, London E7.

Newham Council pursued legal action using its powers under the Housing Act 2004 after Chaplair Ltd failed to remove dangerous cladding on the Lumiere building by the 31 March 2021 deadline imposed in an improvement notice issued by the Council in September 2020.

Work eventually began in May 2021, with dangerous cladding removed by February 2022, and through its legal action, the Council successfully



argued that there was no reasonable excuse for the delay.

Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz said: "We have zero tolerance for owners of buildings delay-

ing essential life-saving fire safety work.

"Failing to remove dangerous cladding as quickly as possible places lives at risk and, where

necessary, we will act with full force using the powers we have to protect our residents.

"Six years after the Grenfell Tower disaster, today's deci-

sion by the court symbolises a landmark ruling in our fight to raise standards and hold building owners to account in Newham. It will also help authorities across the country to safeguard the interests of their residents using the powers available under vital housing legislation.

"This monumental ruling sends a clear warning to all building owners operating in Newham that they must act swiftly in the interest of our residents, otherwise we will take decisive action."

Newham Council's Cladding Action campaign puts pressure on building owners to act urgently to complete all fire safety works required, including removing all outstanding and unsafe ACM cladding in blocks, or face prosecution.

Sentencing was due to take place at Westminster Magistrates Court as *Newham Voices* went to press.

Queens Market support grows

Support for the petition to save Queens Market now has 6,000 signatures, 1000 more than when it was handed in to Newham Council in September.

Friends of Queens Market then staged a deputation at the October Council meeting. Those presenting on behalf of the campaign were able to

convey the benefits of Queens Market in terms of opportunities for small businesses, relatively low cost of doing business, community building, multicultural integration, affordability amid the high cost of living and creation of local jobs.

The Council is currently looking at two options to develop the market. Both options seek to build a health centre, library and neighbourhood centre on the market land, but option two adds blocks of apartments.

Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz has promised that the market is here to stay, but the Friends believe it is not possible for the planners and designers to put all the extra buildings on the land without demolitions and possibly shrinking the space for stalls.

The Council is due to take a final decision on the plans in March next year.

Twelve years for armed robber who posed as a police officer

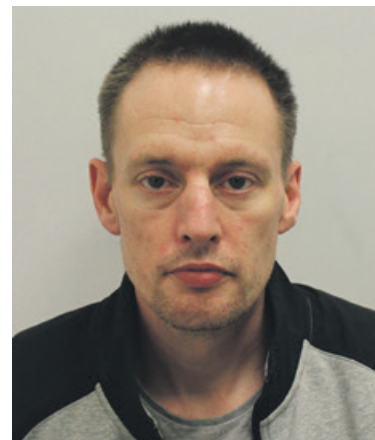
SHEILA NURSINHULU

Armed robber Crispin Kent, who fired a gun at terrified Newham shopkeepers during a spate of robberies, has been jailed for 12 years.

The sentencing hearing at Snaresbrook Crown Court on 28 September took place after Kent, of Alnwick Road E16, was found guilty on three counts of armed robbery which took place in December 2019.

On all three occasions, between 11 and 18 December, Kent entered stores with his face covered, fired a gun at the floor before demanding money from the till. One brave shop worker chased him off the premises where he committed his last crime.

Undeterred, only an hour later, Kent and an accomplice went on to pose as police officers in nearby Bow where they asked a lone woman to pull over. They stole her vehicle and



Crispin Kent, photo courtesy of Metropolitan Police

drove off. He was found guilty of posing as a police officer and robbery of a vehicle.

Police arrested him at his home in February 2020 where officers found clothing worn during the offences.

Forensic evidence, including DNA and ballistic evidence further linked Kent to the robberies after the gun was recovered. CCTV footage also appeared to show Kent

replacing the number plates of the vehicle outside his home address.

The other man involved has never been identified and police are still trying to establish his identity.

Despite the terrifying experiences of his victims, the court was told there were no reported injuries.

After the hearing Detective Constable Craig Prout of the Metropolitan Police Flying Squad, said: "Kent is clearly a violent individual who thinks nothing of getting what he wants, or of the long-lasting impact his offences have had on these innocent victims.

"They are people who were going about their day as normal and Kent made them fear for their lives. I am pleased that the sentence handed down reflects the seriousness of Kent's offending. It is entirely correct that he spends a significant amount of time behind bars."



OUT AND ABOUT WITH NEANDRA

Family Tree Connects Caribbean family with their island past

For many Newham residents 3 November is a special day – it's Dominica Independence Day when people from the Caribbean island celebrate their heritage.

Our own columnist Julia Omari and her family who originated from the island will also be having a special celebration as a family tree produced by Julia will feature in the *Designed for Life* exhibition as part of a project called Traces being shown at the London College of Fashion.

Julia said: "I joined the project which supported participants in creating a piece of Story Cloth that represented our family roots and journey to England."

"It was extremely interesting to learn how families who started elsewhere in the world ended up in Newham. There was also a family who held

deep roots in Newham long before the Borough was given its name in 1965."

She said her father, who was from The Commonwealth of Dominica, passed away before her daughter was born.

"As a result I am always looking for ways to create a bond between the two," she said. "The Traces project which ran in Rosetta Arts was an enjoyable way to share a small part of the family tree with her."

She says she had previously visited Dominica Close, which is a road in Plaistow named in honour of the many people of Dominica who moved to Newham during the Windrush Generation years.

"My daughter was also a model in the Sakafet London Dominican Fashion Show, produced by Neandra Etienne *Newham Voices* Chief Reporter,



Julia's family tree ©Neandra Etienne

held for last year's Windrush Day at Stratford Town Hall," she said.

"I hope in the future to take my daughter to visit Dominica and see her grandfather's birth place for herself," she said.

Designed for Life is the inaugural exhibition at London College of Fashion, UAL's new East Bank home, at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park. It runs until 19 January, Tuesday – Saturday 10am – 5pm. FREE admission, no need to book in advance. London College of Fashion, UAL, 105 Carpenters Road, Stratford, E20 2AR.

For more information on LCF's cultural programme at its new East Bank campus, please visit: www.arts.ac.uk/colleges/london-college-of-fashion/cultural-programme

D Double E's new EP is most cathartic work to date

Trailblazing 2022 MOBO Award winner D Double E, from Newham, has announced the release of his forthcoming EP *No Reign. No Flowers* due out 10 November via Bluku Music.

This EP, produced entirely by TenBillion Dreams, including recent single "Ghetto Love Story" will feature Danny Brown, Hamzaa, Suspect OTB and Newham musician Ghetts.

D Double E has a show at KOKO on the 24 November

www.koko.co.uk



D Double E ©Fiz Vancasso

@omygoshitsddoublee
@DDoubleE7

The poppy appeal for needy veterans

Every year on 11 November Britain remembers and pays tribute to the sacrifice and service of people in the armed forces who have contributed over the decades to the safety and security of the country.

The poppy, which dates from the First World War more than

100 years ago, is the iconic symbol of this act of remembrance and The Royal British Legion East Ham Branch and volunteers will be in Westfield Shopping Centre from 30 October until 11 November collecting cash for the Remembrance Day poppy appeal.

They will also be providing and delivering poppy boxes around schools and shops in the Borough. The money raised is used for veterans and their families in need. It can provide food, heating costs, clothing, prescription medication, medical appliances and equipment, essential home repairs and emergency shelter, as well as housing accommodation and care facilities.



Allan White, Royal British Legion East Ham Branch ©Neandra Etienne



Royal British Legion East Ham Branch ©Neandra Etienne

The Royal British Legion East Ham Branch itself was formed in 1921 and is believed to be one of the founding branches of The Royal British Legion. www.britishlegion.org.uk

Our Chief reporter on events that reflect culture, history and heritage in Newham



Sir Lenny Henry visit inspires children to keep writing

Newham Schools gathered together in Old Town Hall, Stratford on 11 October for a visit from British actor, comedian and author Sir Lenny Henry.

From the moment he mimed his way to the stage Sir Lenny had the full attention of the school children and it was great to see him interact with them.

Sir Lenny told *Newham Voices*:

“It was a brilliant opportunity to introduce my new children’s book, *Clash of the Superkids*, to so many enthusiastic children. It’s the third story starring Tunde the winged superhero, and follows my first book *The Boy with Wings*, then *Attack of the Rampaging Robot* which I wrote for World Book Day.

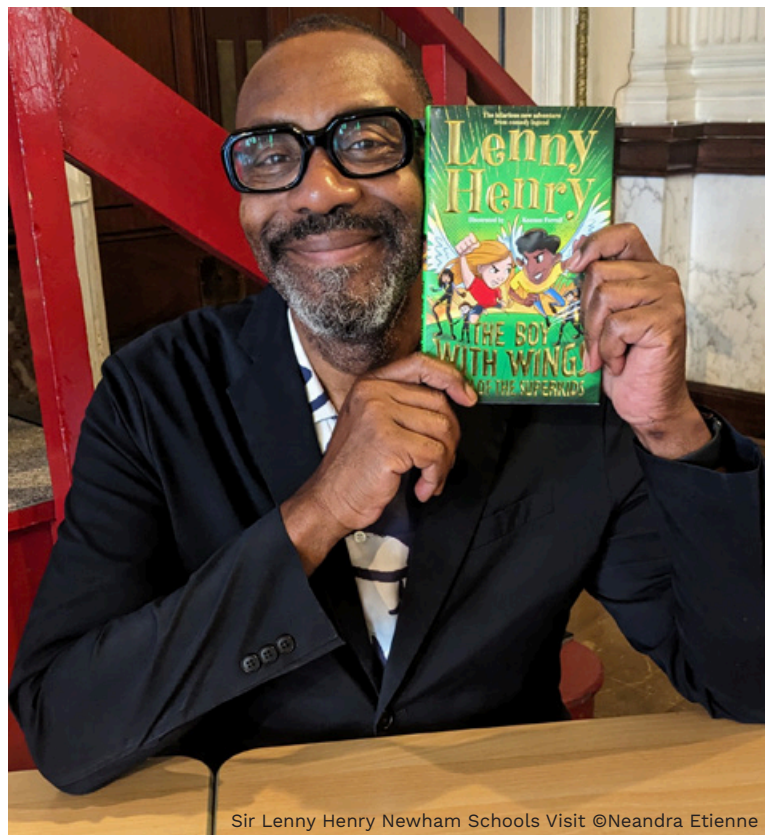
“It was great telling the children about the book, reading them extracts, and hearing all their best jokes. I hope I inspired the children to have a go at writing their own stories, and helped them to realise how much fun coming up with ideas is!”

After the event Sir Lenny spent time with the school children, signing books and taking photos.

Menahil Butt, Assistant Head Teacher and English Lead at Nelson Primary School told *Newham Voices*:

“I think it was an amazing once in a lifetime experience – because we know he is really busy doing interviews so it was special that he took the time to be with us. A few children have been inspired to take part in the 500-word reading challenge because of the trip! Taking their own initiative to take part. The children remember that he said “whenever you see a strange thing, write it down!” Take a book and pen with you wherever you go.”

Sir Lenny explained why he decided to write Children’s books:



Sir Lenny Henry Newham Schools Visit ©Neandra Etienne

“It’s very important for children of all backgrounds to see themselves in books, so that they feel accepted. That’s why I began to write children’s books.

“I was an avid reader as a child, and loved escaping into different magical worlds and going on amazing adventures with the characters. Reading enhanced my imagination, gave me joy and a sense of what is possible to achieve. But I didn’t see myself reflected in the stories I read. It’s very important for children of all backgrounds to see themselves in books, so that they feel accepted. That’s why I began to write children’s books. Writing is also so much fun – you really can write from anywhere!”

Sir Lenny also reflected on how different his childhood would have been if his younger self could have read

his children’s books:

“Reading about people of colour going on out-of-this-world adventures would have made me feel more included in the world. It also meant the world to me as a child to escape into so many different imaginary worlds through books, so I would have loved to read about Tunde, an ordinary boy who has extraordinary adventures. Like many of the books I read as a child, reading *Clash of the Superkids* would have told me to expect the unexpected and that you really can accomplish anything!”

He added: “*Clash of the Superkids* is an action-packed adventure: Tunde’s parents

take him to a top-secret testing facility where he meets loads of other children with super powers, including Tai-phoon who controls the weather and

Backlash who can go back in time. There’s some very scary things going on in the facility but to find out more, you’ll have to read it!

Sir Lenny Henry’s visit was organised jointly by Newham Bookshop and Newham Libraries. They brought together 370 children from 13 schools across the Borough. www.newhambooks.co.uk

East London schools join BBC Singers to celebrate planet Earth

Three east London schools, Bobby Moore Primary and Secondary Academy in Stratford and St Winefride’s Catholic Primary School in Manor Park, performed with BBC Singers in a celebration of planet Earth, at UCL’s new campus in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

After taking part in workshops and rehearsals in their schools, led by BBC Associate Conductor for Learning and director of the performance Nicholas Chalmers, the students joined together with BBC Singers as one choir for a joyful and thought-provoking performance.

The backdrop for the performance on 6 October entitled *Earth, Air and Moon*, was the 8-metre-wide Gaia globe artwork by Luke Jerram, which gently spins in the campus’s Marshgate building.

The songs performed included Laura Mvula’s *Sing to the Moon* and the 1960’s classic *Moon River* by Henry Mancini. The performance was recorded and an extract was broadcast on BBC Radio 3’s drive-time show *In Tune* and the network’s *Breakfast* show.

The bringing together of local young voices with BBC

Singers at the UCL East campus marks the first of many collaborations set to engage the public with the Gaia globe artwork.

Pupils from both the Bobby Moore Primary and Secondary Academy were among the 100-strong choir, 12-year-old Glenn Meta, a pupil in Year 8, said:

“It’s been fun to sing with our primary school choir too and we’ve all learnt lots of new songs. The BBC Singers sound really good, and it’s been great to work with them. I really like the building too and the chance to sing around the Gaia globe. We’re here singing together, and we all need to tackle climate change together.”

Both the BBC and UCL are partners in East Bank, the UK’s newest cultural quarter at the heart of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.



BBC Singers UCL East, ©BBC/Mark Allan

NOVEMBER EVENTS

Compiled by Neandra Etienne

Rosetta Arts Black History Month exhibition, in the Humble Gallery, showcases a diverse range of artwork submitted by talented artists from the community.

The exhibition is an opportunity for artists and art enthusiasts to come together and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of Black communities.

Newham-born artist **Priscilla Acquah-Arhin**'s artwork is on display at the exhibition. Priscilla studied at St. Angela's and St. Bonaventure's Sixth Form but describes herself as being "self-taught".



Priscilla Acquah-Arhin

Priscilla's mum Phyllis Acquah-Arhin attended the launch event.

"With art I bare my soul on the canvas my thoughts and feelings come to life."

Priscilla Acquah-Arhin
17 October - 10 November, 1 Hamilton Road, E15 3AE

www.rosettaarts.org
@rosettaarts
@Rosettaarts

Maryland Primary School is hosting its annual art exhibition to commemorate Black History Month. The exhibition, which is in line with this year's national Black History Month theme of Celebrating Black Women, honours the powerful legacy of Black women artists.

The school celebrates famous artists such as Augusta Sav-



Maryland Primary Year 6 pupils creating a native quilt inspired by Faith Ringgold.



age, Faith Ringgold and Alma Thomas throughout the year.

Maryland hopes their artwork will highlight to others the significance of these women's work in relation to the Black Arts Movement and Civil Rights Movement.

You must call to book an appointment - 0208 534 8135
Monday to Friday from 30 Oct - 7 December, 9am-5pm, Gurney Road, Stratford, E15 1SL.

For access to the exhibition enter through the school's main office and sign in.
maryland.newham.sch.uk

To mark **Islamophobia Awareness Month**, Newham Council will launch a programme of activities including film screenings, art exhibitions, talks, art workshops and performances.

The programme is themed around 'Muslim Stories' and aims to facilitate connections among people from diverse backgrounds using the transformative power of storytelling.

The programme launches, in collaboration with London Indian Film Festival, with a screening of Barir Naam Shahana (A House Named Shahana)

Islamophobia Awareness Month takes place annually to celebrate the positive contributions of Muslims to British society and raise awareness of Islamophobia with the hope of creating a society free from hate.

1-30 November
The full programme is also up on the website.
<https://www.newhamiam.org>

Rosetta Arts will be unveiling their new public artwork at the Gainsborough Centre, marking 30 years of creative excellence in Newham.

The artwork includes many of the intricate elements that

make up Rosetta Arts and the community: students' artwork; the building; past and present staff such as photography tutor Hajia Dahiru and ex CEO Sanaz Amidi; Decolonising Fashion project with London College of Fashion and founder Yvonne Humble alongside her student Lee Alexander McQueen CBE.

There will also be a display of students' work from Rosetta Arts and Caramel Rock, a film screening from Francesco Mazzarella, talk from local Councillor Rohit Dasgupta and contribution from Lab E20. Also invited are a mix of their alumni, community, key funders, artists and designers: people who make up the fabric of Newham and Rosetta Arts.

3 November, from 5-7pm, Rosetta Arts, 1 Hamilton Rd, London E15
www.rosettaarts.org



Voices of East Bank are having a day of free family activities in celebration of East Bank.

There are two events being held: spoken-word and dance performances by local groups and a family story-telling day.

Voices of East Bank Breakin' Convention Collaboration Performance - The event starts at 4pm; the performance will last approximately 30 minutes, The Foyer of UCL East, Marshgate Building, 7 Sidings Street, E20 2AE

Voices of East Bank Celebration - Family arts drop-in with Discover Children's Story Centre, Ages 5-11, Drop in

anytime between 10am until 4pm, Community Room at UCL East Marshgate, 7 Sidings Street, E20 2AE.

East Bank is a place of entertainment, inspiration and discovery and is made up of V&A East, Sadler's Wells East, London College of Fashion, UAL; UCL (University College London) and the new BBC Music Studios.

4 November, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/whats-on/voices-east-bank



Voices of East Bank Breakin' Convention Collaboration

Join **West Silvertown Foundation** for a joyful Diwali gathering. Bring a dish and share with others to celebrate the festival of lights and the spirit of unity and joy.

14 November, Britannia Village Hall, 65 Evelyn Road, E16 1TU
www.wsfroyaldocks.org

Remembrance Sunday Services taking place in Newham on Sunday 12 November include:

East Ham Cenotaph, Central Park, High Street South, E6. Guests are asked to arrive at Newham Town Hall from 10.15am.

There will be a service led by Reverend Simon Nicholls at All Saints West Ham Parish Church, Church Street, E15 3HU commencing at 10am.

Monsignor John Armitage and Canon Ann Easter will lead a service at St Mark's Memorial, Factory Road. The service will start at 10.45am.

A service will also take place at St Luke's War Memorial, 89 Tarling Road, Canning Town, E16 1HN led by Carole Davidson commencing at 10.45am.

An Armistice Day service led by St Joachim's School takes place on Friday 10 November at East Ham Cenotaph, Central Park, High Street South. Please arrive at 10.45am.

***All events are subject to change*

Cheers! Rugby club links with the Irons

East London Rugby Club, who play at the very first home of West Ham United Football Club have teamed up with the pub most closely associated with fans of the Hammers.

The Boleyn Tavern on the corner of Barking Road and Green Street, Upton Park, next to the football club's former home has been welcomed as a Gold-level sponsor of ELRC.

The rugby club plays in in Memorial Park, West Ham, where first Thames Ironworks FC and then West Ham United FC played between 1897 and 1904.

The Remarkable Pubs group, a chain of independently-run, traditional pubs in London, has restored the Boleyn Tavern to its full Victorian glory at a cost of £1.5 million.

It had fallen into a state of disrepair since the Hammers moved to the Olympic Park and the London Stadium in Stratford seven years ago.



Chris Brown, East London Rugby Club first team player and club membership officer, presented a framed team shirt to pub manager James Brown.

Robert Thomas, chair and owner of Remarkable Pubs, said: "We are delighted to sponsor East London Rugby Club and welcome members of the club's team to the Boleyn Tavern. We wish them great success on the field during the season."

East London Rugby Club chair Simon Crick said: "Our rugby club has an historic link with the Hammers. Remarkable Pubs have done a marvellous job in making the Boleyn Tavern, much loved by Hammers fans, a great place to socialise once again.

For more details about sponsoring East London RFC visit the information section at www.eastlondonrfc.com

Greens win battle for scrutiny role

NOAH ENAHORO

After a 17-month-long campaign, Newham Council has agreed to implement a report that will appoint Green Party councillors to every committee on the Council, including vital Audit and Chief Officer Appointment committees.

The Council was forced to appoint Greens to committees after legal advice confirmed their claims that the Council was not acting in line with legal obligations. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 s.15(5)(a) requires that 'no party can be given all the seats on any Council committee'. Despite the 2022 election of two opposition Green councillors, the majority of committee members remained Labour.

Green Councillor Nate Higgins (Stratford Olympic Park), who led the campaign, said: "This report confirmed that the Council was not acting in line with its legal obliga-



Councillor Nate Higgins. Photo ©Gary Pendlebury, Newham Green Party

tions in shutting Green councillors off of vital committees like Audit and Chief Officer Appointments Committee as they have for the last seventeen months."

"We should have and we could have reached this point much sooner. When we were first elected, we made the case that opposition must be represented on our committees. We were told we were wrong. Today's report confirms they should have listened to us then."

"We should have and we could have reached this point much sooner... Today's report confirms they should have listened to us then."

The 2022 election of two Green councillors in Newham, Higgins and Danny Keeling both representing the Stratford Olympic Park ward, made history. It marked the first time in 16 years that non-Labour councillors had won seats during a local election and became the first Green councillors to join Newham Council. Danny Keeling also became the first non-binary councillor elected to Newham Council.

Keeling, who leads the opposition, said: "Since our election, Greens have been

working hard to scrutinise the Council across the few committees Labour have allowed us to sit on. Now that legal advice has forced them to accept scrutiny, Greens will work that much harder to hold this administration to account including constitutional changes."

Councillor Anam Islam, Chief Whip of the Labour Group said: "At October's full Council meeting, a report was presented by the Council's Monitoring Officer on new proposals for the allocation of committee seats, acknowledging that these are different from previous recommendations presented and approved by all members, including the minority Green Group in May 2022.

"It is normal, reasonable and in line with good governance to follow the advice of officers, with the appropriate challenge and scrutiny. That is why Mayor Fiaz asked the Monitoring Officer to seek legal advice as part

of the Constitutional Review she announced last year and following the by-elections in July 2023. As stated by the Council's monitoring officer at the meeting of Full Council in October, the new committee allocation proposals as agreed by the Majority Group of Labour Councillors and Green members does not render the previous allocations or any decisions of the bodies to which they applied unlawful or open to challenge."

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Men's health: take part in Movember

SHEILA NURSIMHULU

It's Movember, the time to show the world we all stand for better men's health by fostering conversations about crucial health issues.

Important facts about men's health appear on the November website: "Men will die on average 4.5 years earlier than women, and for reasons that are largely preventable. Which means that it doesn't have to be that way: we can all take action to live healthier, happier and longer lives."

Movember is an annual event that takes place in November, where men grow a mustache to raise awareness of health issues, in particular, prostate cancer, testicular cancer and mental health.

While prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men over 45, testicular cancer is the most common cancer in young men.

There is a higher incidence of prostate cancer amongst men from African heritage and those with a family history of prostate cancer. Men from this group are advised to start talking to their doctor about this when they hit their 40th birthday. It is important for men to know that often, prostate cancer grows slowly and many men don't notice any signs at all. This is why early detection is key.

Men can be proactive about testicular cancer too. It is important for every man to know what's normal for him. So, if you notice a change - or that something doesn't feel right such as hard lumps on your testicle or unusual sore-



ness, feeling of heaviness in your scrotum or a dull ache or ongoing pain in your testicles, groin or lower back, you'll know to act on it and speak to your doctor promptly.

Early detection plays a key role in early diagnosis and successful treatment. Therefore, understanding your risk of prostate and testicular cancer is key.

Mental Health among men is another serious issue that remains a taboo subject Globally, one man dies by suicide every minute of every day.

Movember is not just about growing facial hair but also about making a positive impact on men's well-being by challenging traditional stereotypes of masculinity and encouraging men to take charge of their health by talking more and seeking help early. Funds raised are used to finance projects related to prostate cancer, testicular cancer, mental health, and suicide prevention.

While primarily aimed at men, Movember welcomes support of "Mo Sistas," women who can participate by supporting and fundraising for the cause.

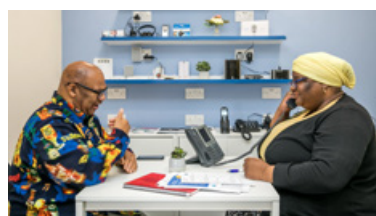
More information can be found at: uk.movember.com

Sign up! Free course on deaf awareness

Enabled Living is offering free courses on deaf awareness and an introduction to British Sign Language.

Delivered by Deaf trainer Audrius Kiminius from BSL Now! and a communication worker, the course takes place every Thursday for six weeks from 2 November.

People taking part need to attend all sessions which run from 3pm-5pm.



Enabled Living Deaf Drop-In. Image courtesy Enabled Living

Venue: The Enabled Living Lounge, 200 Chargeable Lane, Plaistow E13 8DW

Contact: Uzma.Khankhara@enabledlivinghealthcare.co.uk



Hedge funding in West Ham Park?

ROGER JONES

West Ham Park is about to plant 200 metres of native hedgerow around the outside of the Childrens playground. This project, funded by the Friends of West Ham Park, will benefit both playground users and local wildlife.

It will improve the air quality in the playground and give the area a more natural feel. There will be flowering bushes and ones giving autumn colour. It will provide nectar and berries for insects and birds, and also shelter.

The plan is to plant the new hedge in the early spring next year once the winter rains have softened the ground enough for the plants to survive.

We are also seeking grant funding to plant a similar

hedge around some of the mounds in the area between the sports pitches, where we already allow the grass to grow long to provide food for pollinating insects, without which many plants and crops cannot grow. This includes a lot of our food plants. These will enclose small areas reserved for wildlife, but still visible to all visitors.

This will be especially useful for study by school groups but will provide interest for everyone. YOU can help to secure this funding by voting for the project in Newham's People Powered Places ballot which is open until 12 November.

When the hedge plants are ready to be put in, local people and school groups will have the opportunity to help with the planting. Watch this space for dates and details.

Success for TruLittle Heroes

JULIA OMARI

The spotlight shone on Newham during this year's TruLittle Hero Award Ceremony (TLHA), as not only was the celebration co-hosted by Dr. June Fileti, Director of Newham's former music program Every Child a Musician (Ecam), but the night also saw two former Ecam students as nominees.

Both nominated for their writing skills, Kristabel Kuagbela of Curwin Primary School in the under 12s TruLittle Scribe Hero category and Adanya OH of Sarah Bonnell Secondary School won in the TruLittle Collaborative Group Heroes Award.

The awards were founded by CEO Titi Omole in 2012.



Kristabel, Adanya and Dr. June Fileti, Managing Director at The International School of Musicians, posed for photos, each with a certificate, medal, gift voucher, chocolates and many new memories to take home. ©Julia Omari

In the pink for the fight against breast cancer

LORRAINE TAPPER

Ruscoe Road Sheltered Housing Scheme held a Wear it Pink Day on 18 October to raise awareness of the threat posed by breast cancer.

Ruscoe Road is local authority accommodation managed by the Pinnacle Group who proactively work with Ruscoe Road to provide activities to engage the local community. It is renowned in Canning Town for the regular events held there for the local community to reduce social isolation and to provide a space for fun and friendship.

This year the community



decided to support Cancer Research UK which runs campaigns which are held locally all over the UK. This October the Wear it Pink Campaign on 20th of the month was also held in the Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

But Ruscoe Road decided to hold their event a couple of

days earlier - on their regular bingo day - to maximise attendance!

Between 2016-2018 there were 55,920 new cases of breast cancer. Breast cancer is prevalent in women aged 50 or older. Apparently 1 in 2 of us will get cancer in our lifetimes. The stakes are high. Cancer Research UK has helped to double cancer survival and provide vital support. However in order to continue their research it requires funding.

At Ruscoe Road volunteers decorated the community area beautifully with pink themed decorations, raffle tickets were sold for fundraising.

SOMETHING'S BREWING

Phil Mellows discovers a hidden gem where you might encounter some famous faces – over a good pint

Over the past decade a modest bar under the railway arches in Forest Gate's Winchelsea Road has become an unlikely destination where book lovers and the simply curious can meet top authors – and drink some exceptionally good beer while they're at it.

In recent weeks the Wanstead Tap has hosted talks by the likes of geographer Danny Dorling, actor Nigel Planer, broadcaster Robert Elms and Rebecca Lowe, who cycled for a year to get to Tehran in Iran.



"That was one of the best we've done," says the venue's founder Dan Clapton. "We had a full house and you could hear a pin drop while she was speaking, it was so interesting."

Dan was a pioneer of the craft beer revolution in the UK, selling brews from market stalls around east London, before finding a place to call home.

"We were the first in Winchelsea Road that wasn't a garage or a car repair shop. Since then, others have come and gone but we're still here.

"I think we've cornered market around here for quirky book events. We work very closely with Newham Bookshop in Barking Road, and if an author interests me, I'll book them. We keep the bar very high. We're able to attract world-renowned talent that people can see for £15 or £20 a ticket."

And that isn't the only attraction at the Wanstead Tap, open from Thursday to Sunday. Dan has continued to pursue his passion for beer with six constantly changing draught lines and at least 20 more beers in cans.

"We're moving to darks, reds and stronger IPAs for the colder months," he says. "We have a Lost & Grounded 6% red ale and a Baltic Porter from Bristol, Little Critters Hazelnut Milk Stout from Sheffield and Duration Ebb and Flow American stout from Norfolk.



"And we have a good range of wines plus 20 vermouths for our negroni menu – all made to order and really popular."

He partners with locals businesses such as Yard Sale Pizza and Wanstead Kitchen so customers can have food delivered to their table, and there's sport on screen, too.

Speakers taking the stage in November will include Matt Tiller on Canning Town-born footballer Jack Leslie who was blocked from playing for England in the 1920s because he was black, and Dan is hoping poet Michael Rosen will be back for a special Christmas show.

He's also launching a live audience podcast and promises "exciting projects for January and February".

"We don't take anything for granted. You can't sit back and expect people to come, and we're always looking for something new."



Good reads in Newham

The Newham Bookshop in Barking Road tells us these are the top sellers this month:

- **The Lion Who Never Roared: Jack Leslie, The Star Robbed of England Glory** By Matt Tiller
- **Welcome to New London** By John Rogers
- **Christmas Eve at the Moon Under Water** By Carol Ann Duffy
- **Animal Tales From India: Ten Stories from the Panchatantra** By Nikita Gill
- **Where Magic Grows: Unique Tales of Wonder and Enchantment** By Onjali Q. Raúf
- **Diary of a Wimpy Kid: No Brainer (Book 18)** By Jeff Kinney

– Compiled by David Ceen, Newham Bookshop



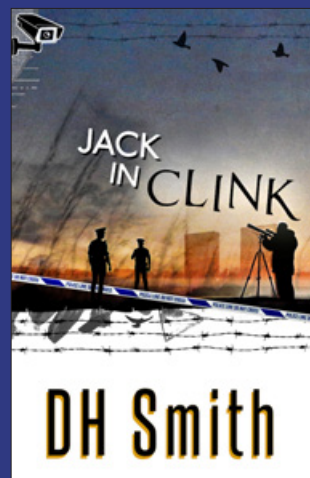
Angela, MBE

Angela Caroo, a familiar face for people visiting the cafe she runs in West Ham Park on summer days, rubbed shoulders with royalty in October when she received her MBE from Princess Anne. She celebrated with her family at the O12 bar and restaurant in Stratford. Her award, announced in the King's honours list, is in recognition of her tremendous support for charitable work challenging poverty and supporting children in Newham.

Local author's free book launch event

Forest Gate author Derek Smith will launch the next in his crime series featuring Jack Bell, a Forest Gate builder as sleuth, on Wednesday 8 November at Forest Gate Library, 6.30 to 8.00 pm. The event is free.

Jack Bell lives on Earlham Grove and murders take place where he works, in the various novels of the *Jack of All Trades* series. All the books are in Newham Libraries. The settings are local: a sleazy hotel on Romford Road, Manor Park cemetery, Forest Gate Community Garden, a guest house



on Earlham Grove, a house on Ham Park Road, and an armed siege on Claremont Road.

With all these murders, it had to happen, in the latest, Jack is thrown in the clink as the killer. With the evidence mounting up against him, how can he fight his case stuck in jail?

At the launch of *Jack in the Clink*, Derek, who writes as DH Smith, will talk about his life in writing, beginning as a playwright with works on stage, radio and TV, and explain how his *Jack of All Trades* series came about.

For full details of these books, and to request a copy, visit: www.newhambooks.co.uk



SPORTS SHORTS

Compiled by **Neandra Etienne**

A two-week **Self-Defence course** for all girls 11+ and women will help to improve their confidence and awareness when protecting themselves.

4, 18 November, 12.30pm - 2.30pm, South Hall, Memorial Community Church, E13 8AL

www.psbl.org.uk

Author, Presenter and Paralympic Medalist **Ade Adepitan MBE** will be presenting BBC Children in Need 2023 Appeal show for another year.

Live on BBC One and iPlayer on Friday 17 November.

Ade Adepitan MBE was brought up in Newham.

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



Ade Adepitan, Children In Need Presenters 2023. ©BBC Pictures

Congratulations to **St Bonaventure's** student JG on winning his Youth London Boxing title. Next stop is the nationals.

St Bonaventure's Year 10 B Team won their first round fixture in the Newham Cup by defeating Eastlea School 4-1.

St Bonaventure's Year 10 team won their first game in the National Elite Cup by defeating Riverside 4-3 on penalties, after a 1-1 draw.

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



JG from St Bonaventure's

More than 150 local school children attending the latest **'Sport In Your Futures'** session at SportsDock got to meet local Olympic Champion Christine Ohuruogu MBE.



'Sport In Your Futures' with Christine Ohuruogu MBE

The SIYF programme is aimed at encouraging primary school children to participate in and enjoy sport.

Christine Ohuruogu MBE spent an hour talking about her athletics career and offered words of encouragement and advice about taking their own journey through sport.

Christine, a former World and Commonwealth 400m Champion said: "I lost a lot of races before I won any medals, so please keep trying and do your very best."

The children got to see Christine's Olympic Gold, Silver and Bronze medals and have their picture taken with the Team GB star. Christine also spent time looking at some items of Olympic memorabilia at SportsDock, which had been sourced and displayed by the University of East London archive team. The items included an Olympic torch from the Beijing Olympic Games, where Christine won her Gold medal.

After meeting the school children, Christine also took time out to meet some of UEL/East London Sports Scholars, while the children took part in a range of sports including indoor cricket and skipping.

<https://uel.ac.uk/study/student-life/sport/sportsdock>

Versus and Spotify launched **'The Equaliser'**, a film that explores racial inequality in women's football.

Host Newham-born rapper and women's football advocate, Guvna B, and influential coach and mentor, Tyra Mills, meet pro players who are changing the narrative around racial equality in the women's game.

www.versus.uk.com



Guvna B, Tyra Mills, The Equaliser Film, Screenshot 2023

The Wanstead Tap and Newham Bookshop are hosting an 'In Conversation' event with Matt Tiller, author of 'The Lion Who Never Roared' and co-founder of the Jack Leslie Campaign.

Jack Leslie, from Canning Town, was denied an England call up in 1925 because of his Black heritage. Thanks to the Jack Leslie Campaign, Jack's family was awarded his posthumous England cap in March 2023.

16 November, The Wanstead Tap, 352 Winchelsea Rd, E7 0AQ, doors open from 6.30pm, £8 in advance

Newham Bookshop will be selling copies of the book at the event. (See Something's Brewing page 13)

www.jackleslie.co.uk

www.newhambooks.co.uk



Jack Leslie (left) in training

Free Badminton, Table Tennis and Boxing is available for the whole family.

26 November and the last Sunday of each month, 4.30 - 7.30pm, Victorious House (Elim Pentecostal) 49 Vicarage Lane, East Ham E6 6DQ

Four captains, with two team mates each, represented North, South, East and West in a **London 'Break Dancing' Battle** at Somerset House (7 October) curated by Jade Hackett with Dance Umbrella. Jade has worked all across Newham in secondary and primary schools and most of her dance training has been there, including Maryland Dance Studios, X7 space, Forest Gate Youth Centre, Pastures youth centre (straddling Newham and Waltham Forest boroughs) and Drapers Fields.

Jade told *Newham Voices*: "My first major theatre performance was Pied Piper I believe in 2006 at Theatre Royal Stratford East which has opened me up to the theatrical world that I work in today. Without that experience and that space, I'm not sure I would work in the field I do. Then when I launched my own solo work as a choreographer, one of my first places was at Stratford Circus."



London 'Breaking' Battle, East London ©Neandra Etienne

The event, hosted by Newham born actor and writer Ashley Joseph, also featured music by Newham musicians Kano and Ghetts.

London Battle had a fundraising stand for Maryland Dance Studios that allowed people to donate to the space.

The final, between South and East London, was won by East London led by their captain Jordan JFunk, 1/3 Creative Director of Maryland Creative dance studio and founder of Y.O.U

Jordan told *Newham Voices*: "Y.O.U is my own training programme and collective that I founded. It stands for Your Own Understanding and aims to help dancers find themselves and how they move within dance."

Break Dancing 'Breaking' has been chosen to feature on the Paris 2024 Olympic sports programme as a new sport.

www.jordanjfunk.com

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

[@y.o.ubollective](https://www.instagram.com/y.o.ubollective)

Clapton Punks, the Clapton CFC Supporters Group, will be putting on a DIY Arts event with their friends The Local at the Clubhouse. They will have short films, stalls and music.

They would like to hear from people who are interested in demonstrating some of their work. They are particularly keen to hear from people of colour, women, LGBTQ+, neurodivergent people and people involved in politics or subculture.

Please email clapton-punks@gmail.com or contact them on Instagram

11 November, the Clubhouse, 212 Upton Lane, Forest Gate, E7 9NP

www.claptoncfc.co.uk

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



Clubhouse Screening, Old Spotted Dog Grounds

Congratulations to **JK Silvertown FC** who were crowned Champions of Europe.

Manager, Ben Short and players Barry Stevens, Steven Starkey, Tony Varghese, Jamie Wallace, Niall Quinn, Jordan Pritchard, Ray Coker (Captain) Dan McLean, Chris Wright, Aaron Chapman, Daniel Cook.

Chris Wright was the top goal scorer with 12 goals and Player of the Tournament was Tony Varghese.

Jamie Wallace scored the winner in the final.

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

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



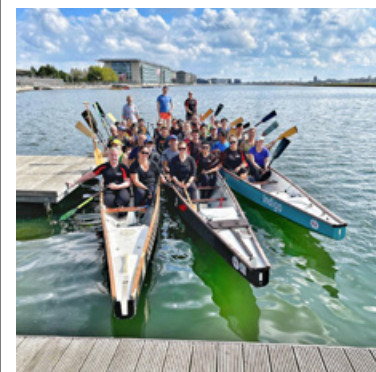
JK Silvertown

Thames Dragon Boat Club's end of season and 30th anniversary celebration included past and present Thames paddlers (13 October).

Thames Dragons, established in 1993 as part of Texaco, have competitive, mixed, ladies and open crews.

They are based in East London, paddling from the London Regatta Centre at Royal Albert Dock.

www.thamesdragons.club



Thames Dragons Club. Photo via Facebook

Congratulations to **Jodie Waite** and the GB U25 Women's side on claiming Silver at the 2023 IWBF World Championships.

This will be Jodie's first appearance for the GB team after impressing in her debut season with East London Phoenix.

Jodie is still in the East London Phoenix squad and she is also studying (1st year) for a BSc Sport, PE and Development.

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

Dates and times of all games and events are subject to change. Please email your news game fixtures to neandra.etienne@newhamvoices.co.uk

Charming and soft spoken, but ferocious on the pitch



Mickey Ambrose and friends pay tribute to England's finest player

Sir Bobby Charlton was renowned for his attacking instincts and passing abilities from midfield. He possessed ferocious long-range shooting power and scored goals as an attacking central midfielder for fun.

Born on 11 October 1937, he played his first game for Manchester United at the age of 18. He played 758 games for Manchester United and scored 249 goals during a 17 year career at Old Trafford. He was an integral part of Sir Matt Busby's wonderful and talented team nicknamed 'Busby Babes' who were a group of footballers, recruited and trained by Manchester United Chief Scout Joe Armstrong and Assistant Jimmy Murphy, who progressed from the club's youth team into the first team under Sir Matt Busby.

I have played the central midfield role and trust me you have to be fit, have an engine, and Bobby he had stamina and he could shoot using both his right and left foot. When he struck the ball he elevated himself while taking the shot. He told me it was to get more power behind it when I asked him at an Awards ceremony.

Charlton won a European Cup, three league titles and the FA Cup. He held the records for most club appearances and goals until being surpassed by Ryan Giggs and Wayne Rooney, respectively.

As young boy aged five years, growing up in Poplar, 1966 is a year I will always remember. We had street parties and the following morning everyone had a smile on their face.

I never saw Bobby play 'live' but I met him and we chatted - charming and softly spoken, he gave me his time and he signed my autograph book on the same page as England Captain Bobby Moore.

Charlton was diagnosed with dementia, which was made public in November 2020.

Sally Tucker, Trustee for Head for Change, myself and John Stiles son of 1966 World Cup hero Nobby Stiles, who also passed due to dementia, led a successful and sustained campaign by challenging football authorities and putting pressure on the government to ban under 12s from heading footballs in training and matches.

John Stiles sent me this message for our *Newham Voices* readers about the relationship he and his brother had with Sir Bobby.

"Bobby to my brothers and me was uncle Bobby. Whenever we saw him he would smile and ask us what we had been up to. He made you feel special. When dad and Bobby were together all they ever seemed to do was laugh. A truly great player, England's finest but more than that, a humble, modest, kind man."

A statement on behalf of Bobby's relatives read: "His family would like to pass on their thanks to everyone who has contributed to his care and for the many people who have loved and supported him."

I contacted my friend Harry Redknapp born in Poplar too, former West Ham stalwart and Manager of

Tottenham Hotspur, to get his reaction. He said: "Sir Bobby Charlton was an amazing man, a great sportsman off the pitch and on the pitch. I first saw him play for the great Busby Babes pre-Munich. I played against him on many occasions. He was pure class and always a gentleman. He and Bobby Moore in my opinion, were England's greatest ever players."

Harry not only played against Bobby who inspired United to a 6-1 win in 1967-68 at the old Upton Park ground against many of Harry's England teammates - Moore, Peters, Hurst. Harry also had to contend with the likes and greatness of George Best and Denis Law. Imagine playing in that game. Wow.

Rest In Peace Sir Bobby and Thank You for the fantastic memories you gave not only the country but the world. You will always be remembered and be in our hearts forever.

One word to describe Sir Bobby Charlton - 'LEGEND'.

Back to the Premier League and following West Ham's hard fought 2-2



Mickey Ambrose

draw against Newcastle they took on Aston Villa at Villa Park and the only positive news from the 4-1 drubbing was that Jarrod Bowen became one of only three players in Premier League history to score in his team's first five away games, matching the feats of Thierry Henry and Mohamed Salah.

Well done Jarrod!

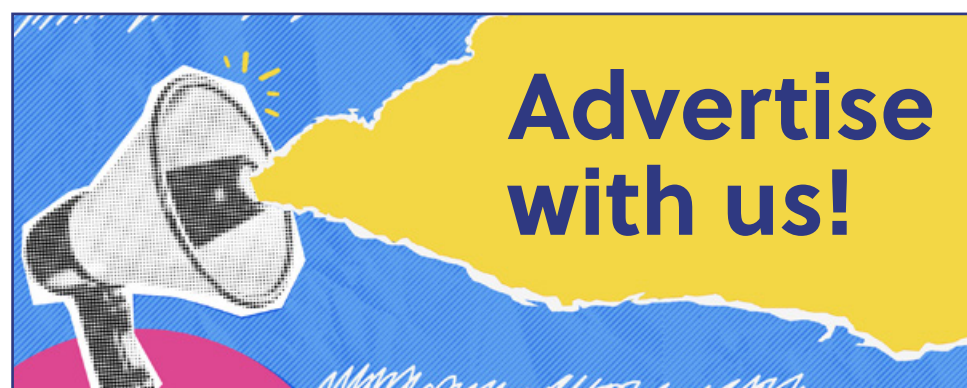
Mickey Ambrose is a former Chelsea and Charlton player who lives in Stratford



2021: Myself and campaign colleagues present the People's FA Blueprint to Boris Johnson at number 10 Downing Street calling for more research to be done into the link between heading a football and dementia of which Bobby Charlton was a victim.

Unfortunately, many of these talented young men died in the Munich air disaster in February 1958. Bobby survived after being rescued by teammate Harry Gregg and was the last survivor of the crash from the club.

He earned 106 caps for England, scoring 49 times, a record which he held from 1970 to 2015, and won the 1966 World Cup when England beat the then West Germany 4-2 in extra time in a thrilling match watched by nearly 96,000 spectators, before winning the Ballon d'Or that conformed him in football history.



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- We hold authority to account, expose scandals, highlight inequality, promote good causes, and provide a platform for local people
- Every penny of income from Newham Voices helps us deliver more journalism in Newham
- Currently, we are just about able to cover the paper's costs (design, printing and distribution).
- Our editorial team is entirely voluntary and in future, we would like to create paid jobs for aspiring local journalists.
- We currently have 20 supporters who contribute regularly, but we need more!

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