



War fair sparks protests

**AIDAN WHITE
AND SIMON SHAW**

Community organisations and trades unionists from across Newham joined forces with nationwide campaigners in September to protest as leaders of the global arms industry came to the Borough to showcase their killing machines and high-technology weapons of war.

Every two years since 2011 hundreds of arms manufacturers from around the world come to the Excel exhibition centre in the Royal Docks for the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI).

"The arms industry profits from violence, exploitation, and the suffering of people across the world," it said. "Hosting an arms fair in Newham dishonours our communities and makes our city complicit in the machinery of war."

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan has said the exhibition conflicts with the values of a global city that is home to people affected by violence and conflict and Newham's Mayor, Rokhsana Fiaz, has called the event "abhorrent and unwelcome", adding that it undermines Newham's status as a Borough of Sanctuary.

Centre; and Mizan Rahman, of the Royal Docks Welfare Association. The full list of signatories is available on the *Newham Voices* website.

On 7 September, trades unionists also gathered to protest. Teachers were angered

"Hosting an arms fair in Newham dishonours our communities and makes our city complicit in the machinery of war."

that Lockheed Martin—the largest US arms manufacturer—was allegedly supplying colouring sheets for UK primary schools that included images of F-35 fighter jets, the same aircraft now used to rain death on Gaza.

An activist who had been jailed and tortured after the Arab Spring in Bahrain recalled that, as he was dragged away, the shackles on his wrists bore the words "Made in Britain."

Newham medics at the protest also spoke of their campaign against the data company Palantir, which in 2023 was awarded a £330 million

contract with NHS England to manage a new federated data platform. Palantir works with both the Israeli military and US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and is a Bronze sponsor of DSEI 2025, exhibiting in the Tech Zone at Stand S16-120.

Eleanor, a theatre worker who lives in the south of the Borough, summed up the feelings of many: "I feel sickened that the arms fair at ExCeL hosts arms firms that manufacture weapons to kill civilians. I don't think they should be in our community. Genocide is being perpetuated on our doorstep."



This year, in the shadow of the war and genocide in Gaza, there was added controversy because 51 Israeli arms companies were among the 1600 exhibitors, undermining the gesture from the government, which is a co-organiser, not to invite an official Israeli delegation.

Among the hundreds of protesters this year were trades unionists, and religious and community leaders representing all sides of Newham's diverse population.

During the fair from 9-12 September, protesters from across the UK gathered outside the Excel centre. A trenchant statement from Newham's community organisations highlighted why the event is not welcome and how it does not reflect the values of the community.

The community leaders acknowledged the widespread protest movement which has targeted the arms fair and also called for more actions from political leaders to stop future arms fairs from being held in Newham.

"Alongside organisations of conscience across London and beyond, we commit ourselves to opposing DSEI and to speaking out against the immoral trade in weapons," they said.

Among the almost 50 organisations and individuals from different faiths and community organisations who issued the statement, were Imam Muhammad Ali, from Masjid e Quba; Rev Becca Rogers, from Ascension Church; Ann-Marie Ashton, representing the Born Everywhere Made In Newham network; Kamal Hussain, of Central Park Community



West Ham Park Photo Competition winners

See page 12



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Publishing date: 26/09/2025

Council Notebook

By Peter Landman

Housing crisis: tenants appear more satisfied

The Council Cabinet is told of rising confidence among council tenants

Council leaders have been told that the confidence of residents in council property is on the rise after last year's criticism of the Council's housing record by the housing regulator.

According to a new survey reported to September's Council Cabinet meeting, tenant satisfaction ratings are up to 71 percent this year, rising well above the score of 59 percent last year on the government's tenant satisfaction scale.

At the same time the number of non emergency repairs in council properties completed on time has risen to 84 percent, up from 67 percent last year.

The news is an indicator of a turnaround that is taking place since the

Council was given the lowest grading after an inspection by the government housing regulator.

Meanwhile, a separate strategy for involving housing residents has been set up, after public consultation, to bring tenant participation up to the social housing regulators standard.

In place of focusing mainly on formal tenant associations the strategy includes Estate Action Days, Local Advice Champions and there are plans to set up Leaseholder Groups.

For information: Blossom.Young@newham.gov.uk

New homes strategy in place

In her report to the Cabinet on the affordable housing programme, Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz outlined the change of direction, from new builds on small sites, to big estate regeneration schemes, and acquisitions of freehold properties for leasing out;

with Populo, the Council's wholly-owned housing company moving from construction work to tenancy management.

The two main regeneration schemes currently underway are Carpenters Estate in Stratford and the Silvertown Development. The report gives schedules on all the small sites picked out with details of stages of construction, and gives detail of nine properties where costs have been exceeded. The Cabinet agreed to an extra £16.6 million pounds to cover the cost increases and an extra £6.3 million to contingency.

The main sources of funding for these works are the housing revenue account and grants from the Greater London Authority.

Walking and cycling bridge at Royal Docks

The Council considered a review of the plan for a walking and cycling bridge at the Royal Docks. An Overview and Scrutiny committee report, prepared by councillors independent of cabinet decisions, called for the report to be reconsidered with several recommendations objecting to the funding arrangements.

As a result, Cabinet agreed to obtain £6.9 million from S106 planning, to gain money from the neighbouring Royal Wharf development, and to seek further ways to lessen council capital expenditure. For more information contact the Mayor on mayor@newham.gov.uk

New consultation on Calverton

Discussing the plan to close Calverton School, Cabinet members were told that pupil numbers have dropped to 217 from a capacity of more than 400 with consequent loss of government funding.

As result of the first stage consultation, staff and parents came up with the alternative of a one-form entry school with a special needs centre.

Meanwhile, the education planning officer has conducted a local population trend analysis, which indicates that there might be even fewer children to join the school in the near future.

So the Council decided to start the formal Stage 2 consultation. The Council has pledged to work with parents, carers and teachers to ensure smooth transition for all the children to other schools.

For more information contact Sarah.Ruiz@newham.gov.uk

October – a month for health awareness

SHEILA NURSIMHULU

October is a time for health awareness. It is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an important annual event educating the public about symptoms of breast cancer and promoting early detection, while also supporting those affected by the disease. Further information can be found at www.nationalbreastcancer.org and www.breastcancer.org.

It is also World Mental Health Day on 10 October. In Newham there will be workplace wellness workshops, youth resilience programmes, and public forums aimed at encouraging residents to seek help when needed. Events include:

- Newham CAMHS Wellbeing in Newham Schools Senior Mental Health Lead Forum on Wednesday 8 October 2025, 2-4 pm, a free in person event with the venue to be confirmed. Tickets from: <https://tinyurl.com/y7stk5p3>
- Music for the Mind is being organised at Stratford Library on 24 October. For further information, visit: newham.events.mylibrary.digital.
- There's also the ASK User-Led Mental Health Group (Men's Group) for

adults. For more information, go to the Council website at: newham.gov.uk/health-adult-social-care/mental-health-support-services

Baby Loss Awareness Week takes place from 9-15 October which is driving improvement in care and support of those affected by baby loss. The week culminates with the global "Wave of Light" on 15 October at 7pm local time when a candle is lit in memory of all babies gone too soon. For support services for parents in Newham, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/hunwvcp2>. OCEAN Mental Health Service East London can provide support for birth loss or birth trauma. Opening hours: Monday - Friday 9-5pm. Call 0203 222 8047, email elft.eastlondonocean@nhs.net, or visit: elft.nhs.uk/services/ocean-mental-health-service-east-london

Finally, 18 October is Menopause Awareness Day, recognising the impact menopause has on women's health and wellbeing, Newham Vicarage Practice in Vicarage Lane, Stratford is running "Let's Talk Menopause", a service offering awareness and accurate information about menopause. See Newham Vicarage Practice for further information at <https://tinyurl.com/y5pjrf6h> or visit themenoopausecharity.org

Chastening defeat for Labour in Plaistow

AIDAN WHITE

Newham's ruling Labour Party suffered a stunning by-election defeat on 18 September when Newham Independent candidate Md Nazrul Islam took the seat with 913 votes – almost double that of the Labour candidate Asheem Singh who received 436 votes.

The victory means that the Newham Independent group on the Council now becomes the official opposition party with four councillors.

The by-election was called following the death of Neil Wilson at the end of July who had served on the Council for more than 30 years.

Although the turnout was



Md Nazrul Islam (centre) ©LDRS

low – just 23 percent – the size of the majority and the performance of Reform, whose candidate Lazar Monu came third with 329 votes, will concern Labour who have now suffered by-election defeats in areas that have been traditionally unassailable.

The Green Party came fourth with their candidate Nic Motte securing 152 votes

ahead of the Conservative Rois Miah on 123 and the 90 for Lib Dem Sheree Miller.

Problems at local level – the Council's programme of cuts to solve its budget problems, along with a continuing homelessness and housing crisis – as well as the party's difficulties in government, and continuing divisions over the horrors of the war in Gaza have squeezed Labour's core vote.

Next May Labour, which still has a healthy majority on the Council, will face further tests when there are full council elections, including for an elected Mayor to replace Rokhsana Fiaz, the current Mayor, who is not standing for re-election.

HAVE YOUR SAY: LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@newhamvoices.co.uk

A13 canyon not so grand

I write to bring attention to a truly important and ongoing issue for people living along the A13 in Newham who are affected by extraordinary anti-social behaviour, often coupled with the criminality of speeding.

Over the years, Newham has allowed many developments along the A13, meaning that thousands of residents are now affected by damaging levels of noise from both high-revving motorcycles and backfiring cars. The 'canyon' effects of the high rise developments only exacerbate noise levels.

Yet while these developments have been welcomed, there is little or no requirement for noise-polluting vehicles to reduce their impact on increasing numbers of residents.

In the mornings, motorcycles weaving their way through London-bound traffic will occasionally rev insanely to let slow-moving cars know they are there. It's the same in the evenings.

To describe some of these moments as heart-stopping is hardly an exaggeration.

Sometimes, motorcycles roar up and down the A13

at speeds well in excess of the ever-prosecuted 50mph average speed notices. And at weekends in particular, cars modified to backfire are a regular night-time disturbance.

As a resident in one of the flats along the A13, I have written to both the police, the Council and even my (now-ex) MP to draw attention to this antisocial and health-harming behaviour, but nothing is ever done to help. It is mentally, physically, environmentally, socially and illegally a massive blight on the lives of so many residents.

Two suggestions to help alleviate this issue:

One, install a few speed cameras near the foot of the A13 flyover and further along by Newham Leisure Centre.

Two, I believe there are roadside noise-capturing cameras being trialled. These capture evidence to deter antisocial drivers. If ever there was a place which could use them, it is along the A13 around Canning Town.

This is not an attack on the majority of motorcyclists or motorists who cause little disturbance. But the A13 has become a site of considerable antisocial behaviour affecting the well-being of residents. Please can something be done?

– Don Bowen



Dangerous days at the Greenway

JONATHAN ROTHWELL

Abbey Road with his pregnant partner.

With the closure extending to Upper Road in October rendering efforts to improve the existing diversion useless, Newham Council is developing an alternative with cycleways on West Ham Lane. But these won't be built until next year at the earliest, even assuming funding is available—and Thames Water has refused to delay the next phase of their works.

That will be cold comfort for thousands of people, including schoolchildren and hospital workers, who walk and cycle on the Greenway every day, and are now left to travel on dangerous alternative routes or find another mode of transport.

Advertisements

LICENSING ACT 2003

Notice of Application for a Premises Licence

Kwenched Ltd, of Unit 23, Coppermaker Square Private Storage Facility, 1 Cherry Park Lane, Stratford, London, E20 1NX, has applied to the London Borough of Newham for a Premises Licence.

The application is to allow the supply of alcohol by retail for consumption off the premises, including online retail orders fulfilled via Amazon and other courier partners. 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week.

The licensing register and details of the application can be inspected at: Licensing Team, London Borough of Newham, East Ham Town Hall, Barking Road, London, E6 2RP.

Any person wishing to make representations about this application must do so in writing to the above address, or by email to licensing@newham.gov.uk, by **13 October 2025**.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. A person is liable on conviction to a fine of any amount.

Date of application: **15 September 2025**

LICENSING ACT 2003

Application for a New Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that Radar 16 Ltd have applied to the London Borough of Newham Council for a new premises licence for:

Hybrid, 162 Bidder Street, Canning Town, London E16 4ST to permit:

- The performance of dance, indoor sporting events, the performance of live and recorded music and the provision of late night refreshment** from 23.00 to 04.00 the following day Monday & Tuesday and from 23.00 to 05.00 the following day Wednesday to Sunday;
- The exhibition of films** from 10.00 to 04.00 the following day Monday & Tuesday and from 10.00 to 05.00 the following day Wednesday to Sunday;
- The sale of alcohol for consumption on the premises** from 10.00 to 04.00 the following day Monday & Tuesday and from 10.00 to 05.00 the following day Wednesday to Sunday;
- Non Standard Timings:** One additional hour on the morning of the day that the clocks go forward; and an additional hour on Bank Holiday Sundays.

The address of the Licensing Authority where the register is kept and the application may be inspected during normal business hours is the London Borough of Newham, Licensing Team, East Ham Town Hall, Barking Road, East Ham, London E6 2RP or on the Council's website: www.newham.gov.uk Email: licensing@newham.gov.uk

Any representations by any other person or responsible authority must be received in writing by the Licensing Authority by **20th October 2025** stating the nature and grounds for making such representation.

It is an offence under Section 158 of the Licensing Act 2003 to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine on summary conviction for this offence is an unlimited fine.

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NHS East London leading the way on diabetes care

The NHS in north east London (NEL) is leading the way nationally in supporting people with diabetes to effectively manage their condition, official figures show.

The latest National Diabetes Audit for 2024/25 shows NHS NEL, which covers Newham, has the best record in England for delivering eight key annual

checks for people diagnosed with the condition.

The audit, delivered by NHS England in partnership with Diabetes UK, shows 73.1 percent of the 158,405 people in north east London diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes received all eight essential annual health checks – significantly above the national average of 57.6 percent.



The checks monitor blood glucose levels, blood pressure, cardiovascular risk, kidney function, weight, smoking status, and foot health. Completing these is crucial for detecting early signs of deterioration and helping patients manage their condition more effectively.

Clarification

Mo Miah, representing Residents and Businesses Opposing LTNs in Newham, has asked us to point out that he did not use the term "tin ears" in referring to the Council, as suggested in last month's letters column ("Traffic and the Climate Crisis", Letters, September) and that his August article dealt solely with the integrity of consultation data. We're happy to clarify and clear up any confusion.



Urgent plea for blood donors

There is an urgent need for Londoners to help fill available blood donation appointments across the capital, including over 27,000 appointments available at London donor centres including locally West End, Stratford, Shepherds Bush, Brixton, Tooting, Edgware and Twickenham over the next six weeks – around 4,500 per week.

Currently, there is a particular need for more O negative and B negative donors, as well as more donors of Black heri-

age to help treat patients with sickle cell.

O negative is the blood type used to treat patients in emergencies, including accidents and childbirth, and is therefore in constant high demand.

If you have one of these much-needed blood types and are able to donate, please go online at www.blood.co.uk or call 0300 123 23 23 to book an appointment.

By giving up an hour of their time, people can save up to three lives with one donation.

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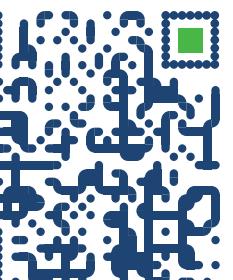
We have launched an online portal that gives you secure access to your health record.

Once you've signed up, you'll gain access to a wealth of information including your hospital Outpatient appointments, documentation, radiology appointments, radiology reports, and blood test results.

It's free and easy to use for all Barts Health NHS Trust patients.

For more information and to sign up to Patients Know Best, please scan the QR code.

Or visit: bartshealth.nhs.uk/patients-know-best



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BETTER

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Frederic's creative revival thanks to Manor Park

PETER LANDMAN

Frederic Billet, originally from Lyon in France, has seen a remarkable turnaround in his life thanks to a Manor Park community project.

As Frederic puts it, the Community Garden Project "triggered me back" to a full and creative life. His story is a testament to the powerful impact of community and the support provided by organ-



isations like the Newham Voluntary Sector and People Powered Places.

He embarked on a remarkable journey of recovery and community engagement after a challenging period in his career.

A fluent English speaker, he holds a Higher National Diploma in Hospitality Management from the prestigious Grenoble Hospitality Management School and for years he managed the five-star Luton Hotel Golf and Spa, overseeing a staff of 370. However, the hotel faced a staffing crisis after Brexit and Covid, when many employees returned to their home countries. Frederic found himself working 16 hours a day, six days a week, which eventually led to a severe burnout.

To recover, he turned to the voluntary sector and discovered a passion for working with people and community engagement. He began with an eight-week course

on community engagement at Birkbeck University. This led him to the Manor Park Community Garden Project, where he was introduced by staff from the Council's People Powered Places scheme.

He was recruited as a working group member for the initiative, a position he is now in for a second cycle. He has also been appointed a trustee of the Manor Park Community Garden.

Frederic has also been proactive in his personal development, taking IT courses at Newham College. He is now continuing his education with a course on Cybersecurity. He is particularly proud of a website he created called "I am Here for You".

Beyond his existing roles, he collaborated with local artist Jo D Wood (@jdwoof) to run two upcycled art workshops in the community garden in September thanks to funding which he obtained from Newham Council.

Public Notice

Tribute to Remi Osunsanya

July 1950– July 2025

Remi Osunsanya, Chair of Newham Carers Adult Learning Difficulty Co-Production Group, who died in July was a dedicated volunteer, advocate, and friend. Her unwavering commitment to inclusion, dignity, and empowerment left an indelible mark on the lives of many across the Borough.

She was a remarkable woman whose life was defined by compassion, resilience, and service. Born in Nigeria, Remi was a proud mother of two children and came to England to further her studies, driven by a desire to grow, learn, and contribute meaningfully to her community.

She was more than a chairperson. She was a champion for people with learning difficulties. Through her leadership, the Co-Production Group became a safe and vibrant space where carers and service users could share

their experiences, shape services, and be heard. Her warmth and integrity helped foster trust and collaboration between communities and local services. Whether facilitating meetings, advocating for better access, or mentoring new members, Remi's presence was always reassuring and inspiring.

Those who worked alongside Remi describe her as compassionate, always ready to listen and support others. She was relentless in pursuit of fairness and visibility for adults with learning difficulties. Humble: she never sought recognition, only impact.

Her legacy lives on in the strengthened voices of those she empowered, and in the continued work of the Co-Production Group she helped shape. Her kindness, courage, and dedication will never be forgotten.

– Zhenreenah Muhxinga

Newham London

London Borough Of Newham – Audit and Governance Committee Appointment of Independent Members

Newham Council is recruiting for two independent members of its Audit and Governance Committee, one of whom will be the Chair. The Committee has responsibility for oversight of the Council's risk management and audit functions, annual accounts and treasury management as well as a key focus on organisational culture and improvement.

The terms of reference for the committee and the job description and person specification for LBN Independent

Chair and LBN Independent Member can be found on our online jobs page <https://www.newham.gov.uk/jobs-training/find-apply-job-us-under-job-reference-4948>

Independent Members are appointed for a term of two years which may be extended by up to a further two years. An annual allowance of £1,390 is payable to the Chair and £579 to the other independent members.

Members are expected to attend approximately six evening meetings each

year, preferably in person although online attendance can be facilitated by exception. It is helpful for independent members to bring professional expertise (not necessarily financial) to the Committee, but just as important is the ability to challenge information in an appropriate manner and bring a broader perspective to its work.

Knowledge of local authorities is not required, but an interest in public services and the local area is and applicants should be able to demonstrate a connection

(personal or professional) to East London and ideally to Newham.

Applications can be for the role of Chair or the role of independent member, or both and should be by way of a CV (two pages maximum) and a covering letter explaining your motivation for applying and the approach you would bring.

Completed applications should be submitted via the online jobs page referenced above.

Closing date is 3rd October 2025

WE ARE NEWHAM.

OUT AND ABOUT WITH NEANDRA

October events round-up

Standing Firm in Power and Pride, a month-long celebration of heritage, resilience, creativity, and community for **Newham Black History Month** includes film screenings, talks and performances, family activities, creative workshops and community markets.

newhamblackhistory.org

Fun Places workshops and coffee morning are being organised at Forest Gate Library.

3 October from 12pm - 1.30pm and 4 October from 4pm - 5.30pm

Miss & Mr Philippines UK, a celebration of Filipino culture founded in the late 1970s by Mrs Eva Macadangdang, takes place on 4 October, at The Royal Regency in Manor Park. Tickets are available via Eventbrite.

@philippinesuk

Charlynne Bryan and Yvonne Murray from Newham Poetry Group have written a new poetry collection, **Partners in Rhyme**. They said: "As two Black poets, we are deeply committed to inspiring and uplifting people through the power of words. Launching our collection during Black History Month holds special significance, as it is both a celebration of our voices and an opportunity to share poetry that speaks to resilience, creativity, and community."

25 October, 2pm - 5pm, Stratford Library

newhampoetrygroup.com



Charlynne Bryan and Yvonne Murray
©Sonia Quintero

Newham Super Choir is inviting residents over 60 to join a free singing for health course. There will also be an opportunity to take part in a December concert in East Ham. 7 October to 9 December, 10.45am - 12.15pm, St. Bartholomew's Church 292b Barking Road, E6 3BA.

No audition, just email: sovra@sovranewman.com



©Neandra Etienne

Up-Cycled Art in the Garden creative workshop is on 4 October, 11am - 1pm, Manor Park Community Garden, Manor Park Road, E12

@manorparkcommunitygarden

Big Mama is a solo exhibition by local artist Marilyn J Fontaine which she calls "A bold reclamation of the Black woman's image, a spiritual, cultural, and emotional re-centring of power, presence, and peace."

17 - 19 October, 3 - 7 pm, Tower Gallery East Tower 395 Barking Road, E13 8AL

@mjfontaineart

Being Black and British: Before, During and After Drama School book launch. Free tickets are available from the Stratford East theatre website.

3 October, 5.30pm
stratfordeast.com

UCL's exhibition **Space Tangle, for World Space Week**, brings together three distinct works by artist Dr Sarah Fortais; Cosmic Debris, Cosmic Flock, and Lunga 6. Each explores the entanglements between people, place, animals, and materials that shape how we imagine and make future worlds.

Free exhibition, open to all from 3 October - 2 November, 10am-6pm daily, UCL East Marshgate Campus. Special performances of Cosmic Flock October 7 - 9, 11am - 1pm at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park ucl.ac.uk/ucl-east

Industry Takeover Series to help make a podcast/radio show on 8 October, doors open from 6.30pm, £5, Talent House 3 Sugar House Lane E15. UDTickets.com udmusic.org

Zero Waste Sustainability Day features upcycling, workshops and a green market with eco-friendly stalls and family-focused businesses. Free or donation on 4 October, 1pm-4pm, Park Village Oasis, E15 3PH. Register online at youngminders.org

People and Places of Newham photography exhibition will be open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 3 to 7pm until 5 October. Tower Gallery East Tower at 395 Barking Road, E13

@towergallery.e13



Big Halloween Market event on 25 October, 12pm-6pm, Riverside East Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Stratford. The market is free to attend.

riverside-east.co.uk

Halloween fancy dress party on 31 October, 8pm - 12am, The Fox and Hounds, 178 Forest Lane, E7. You must have a £1 wristband to enter. All money goes to Save the Chimps and Celia Hammond.

All events are subject to change. Please email your event details and news to neandra.etienne@newhamvoices.co.uk

Film tribute to cycle legend

Edward Ernest Etty, the owner of Etty & Tyler on Upton Lane who died in June was honoured by family, friends and the local community during September's Newham Heritage Month with a tribute screening of the film *Mechanically Minded* at Forest Gate library.

Edward, known affectionately as Ted, was the legendary owner of the business which was set up in 1963 although he had been working on the premises since 1954, first for Odessa Cycles and then with Nick Tyler.

The film is part of the National Lottery Funded Project Full Cycle, exploring Forest Gate's cycling heritage. All material, photographs and filmed footage, will be donated to Newham Archives.

Etty & Tyler is an integral part of the community with regulars like John, who knew Ted for over 50 years, and Tony, aka Shaft, often popping in for a beverage and chat.

Christian first started coming to Etty & Tyler when he was a troubled teenager aged 15, now 32 he is still a customer and friend of the family. Christian credits Ted for helping to keep him on the right track. He even bought Ted his last dressing gown for Christmas.

Ted's dedication to Etty & Tyler was immense. He worked right up until March 2025 aged 97 with his sons Anthony and Martin and grandson Tyler.

Martin told *Newham Voices* that his dad would be working on bikes, MOTs and bookwork - he "never used a calculator" preferring to use pen and paper. He recalls how he and his brother started working in the shop when they were kids. Ted's 15-year-old grandson Tyler has been coming to the shop since he was aged five.

Martin spoke of the importance of documenting his dad's life, which was done by Bo and Zoe, the directors of participatory arts organisation, Frames of Mind and themselves local cyclists.

Wonderful Stories

They said: "While making *Mechanically Minded*, we formed a close relationship with Ted, who generously shared nearly a century of wonderful stories; the realities of surviving in East London and hair raising two-wheeled escapades. We thoroughly enjoyed and feel honoured to have spent time filming Ted."

Ted is fondly remembered by the community. The group Newham Cyclists said they were saddened by news of his death. "We have been honoured to celebrate Ted's legacy by leading rides of the "Full Cycle" heritage trail," they said. Martin added, "It makes you feel proud that people still appreciate him even when he's gone."

framesofmind.uk/mechanically-minded



Edward Etty
©Andrew Baker

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



Emotions on the canvas

Local artist José Neves told *Newham Voices* why the use of colour in his work helps people to connect with their emotions. "I like to paint what I feel and what I see. My emotions show in the paintings of what I feel. When people see pictures or painting with happy and summer colours they change, they feel happy and I feel happy," he said.



José Neves ©Neandra Etienne

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Star-struck at school

During a visit to North Beckton Primary School BAFTA award winner David Jonsson shared his journey to stardom.

"David's visit was truly inspiring – our pupils left buzzing with excitement over his journey to stardom," said teacher Adam Eastick, "David was a fantastic role model – humble, relatable, and generous with his time."

Wasteman starring David will be shown at the 69th BFI London Film Festival.

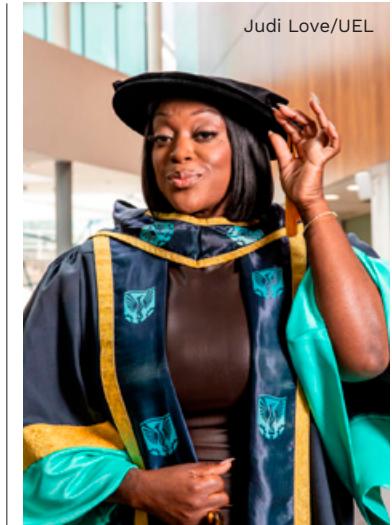


David Jonsson visits North Beckton Primary School. Image ©Adam Eastick

Another award for Dr Judi

Comedian Judi Love was honoured with a Doctorate of Arts by the University of East London on 11 September, recognising her outstanding contribution to comedy, broadcasting and advocacy for underrepresented voices. She received the doctorate during the School of Arts and Creative Industries' summer graduation ceremony at UEL's Docklands campus, from the university's Chancellor, Lord Sarfraz of Kensington. Judi was a mature student and completed an MA in Social Work at UEL.

<https://www.uel.ac.uk>



Judi Love/UEL

Forest Gate Festival

Applications for the Forest Gate Festival Market 2025 are open. Independent makers, creators, artists and micro-business

based in E7 and the surrounding neighbourhoods are welcome to apply. Applications are open until 17 October.

[@foresetgate.festivemarket](https://www.foresetgate.festivemarket)



Still from *Turtles of Newham*

A film that honours the community

During Newham Heritage month locally-based Art Beyond the Shell, an art and music collective, curated *Turtles of Newham* an immersive event that included workshops, hall party, multimedia exhibition, panel discussion featuring Newham Creatives and the screening of social documentary *Only in Newham* and short film *Rebirth* directed jointly by Joel Maisanda and Joel Claudio.

"As the Borough where I grew up, Newham's spirit drove the production of *Rebirth*," said Joel Claudio, "I wanted to tell a story that honoured my community, the streets where I grew up and most importantly to

give back. We used *Rebirth* to provide on-set experience for young Newham based filmmakers and open the door to our younger selves."

Since the film was made they have started their own Newham-based creative studio US.MAN.DERE.

Local author and academic Dr Joy White, who gave a guest lecture on the topic of *Reflections on Grime as an Emancipatory Disruption*, highlighted the social, economic, and cultural importance of grime. She said: "It was wonderful to see Newham's young multicultural population take up space in the Town Hall."

newhamheritagemonth.org

CUSTOM HOUSE, OUR HOUSE



Photo by Chris Donley-Brown

A community oral history and photography project with people participating in community-led regeneration in Custom House, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

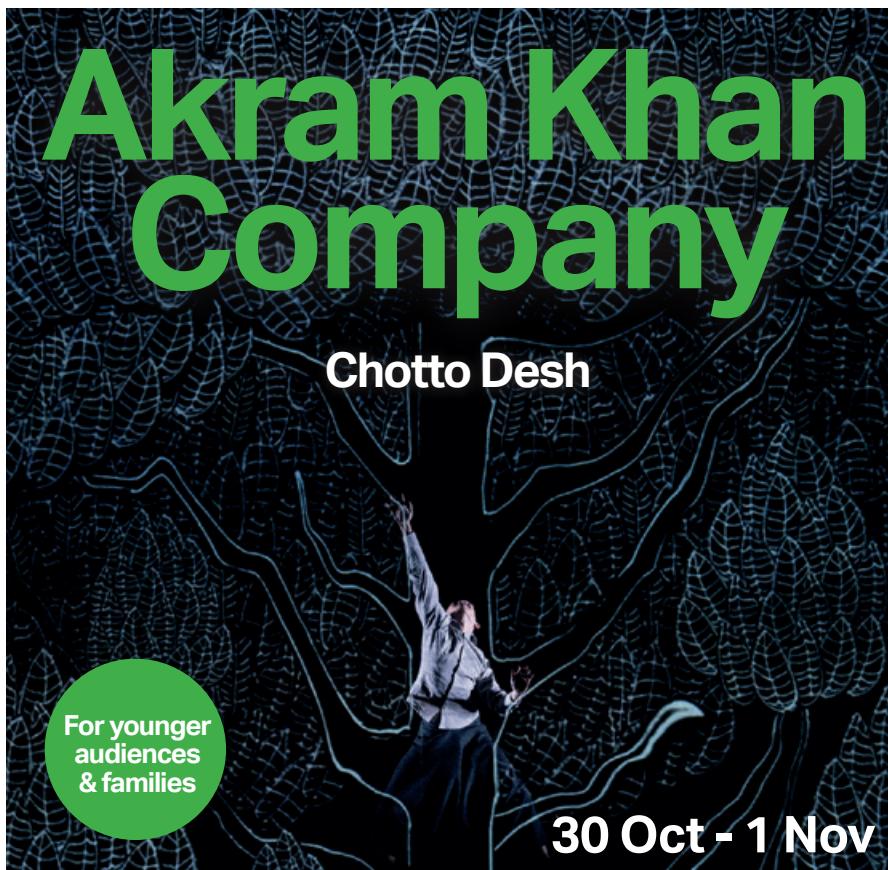
Stratford Library, 1–31 October;
Public View (closing event): Saturday 25 October, 2–6pm

Please book a ticket via Eventbrite, so we have an idea of numbers.

*Open: Monday–Saturday, 9am–8pm;
Sunday, 12–4pm*



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Volunteering with Care4Calais

Simon Shaw finds the best of times and the worst of times while volunteering to help refugees and asylum seekers in Calais

Even after a brief stint with Care4Calais, you return to Newham empowered to cut through the racist rhetoric that echoes across the political spectrum – from the far right, through to Nigel Farage, and even to Keir Starmer. Rhetoric amplified daily in much of the media.

You return able to advocate for this small community of frightened people fleeing civil war in Sudan or life-long conscription in Eritrea – people aiming to complete the last 40 kilometres of their long, brutal journeys in the hope of beginning a new life in the UK.

This summer, my learning support assistant at our language exchange table in Calais was a 16-year-old from Iraq. He loved helping me trans-



Volunteers from Care4Calais. Image ©Care4Calais

late for young Sudanese men at the table. He told me it was impossible to stay in Iraq – though he did not want to say why. He described walking for 48 hours across a European mountain range in flimsy shoes, with no sleep. After that, he said, nothing about the future frightened him.

In the squalor of the Dunkirk distribution site, an immaculately dressed young woman from Tanzania told me she had trained for six years in China to become a doctor, enduring constant

racism along the way. She wanted to come to the UK – even though her qualifications would not be recognised – because the only alternative was a return to poverty in her own country.

At the Calais hospital distribution site, eight-year-old Mohammed stood with tears running down his cheeks. Minutes earlier, he had been happily dodging around the pop-up barber shop and the line for hot drinks on an old battered scooter – but it had suddenly disappeared. Our team leader tried to distract him with a game of hopscotch until word spread through the camp and, thankfully, child and scooter were reunited.

These vignettes matter because they remind us we are

meeting people. As the former Archbishop of Canterbury said of the rage outside refugee hotels in August: “The migrant, too, is an ordinary person. Anyone who has spent time with refugees knows the conversations that are likely to happen... To speak as though these people are anything other than ordinary is to reinforce the violence they experienced, to refuse to see them humanely.”

Sadly, sometimes the way asylum seekers live and die prevents us from telling their stories. In the Calais border zone, at least four people were killed this summer as a direct result of racist border policies enacted by the EU and UK governments. Four times we gathered in Calais town

centre for vigils to remember them – vigils that have already been held around thirty times in 2025.

As always, extraordinary people were volunteering with Care4Calais this summer: young people gaining valuable experience before starting careers as humanitarian workers; retired people putting their skills to use maintaining our equipment; people from the corporate world searching for meaning beyond their unfulfilling jobs. And then there were the curious, the kind, the adventurous, and the angry – people determined to stand up against the state of the world.

You need no superpowers to volunteer with Care4Calais – but you will return with many.

Poetry in Mind

Black History Month poem by **Rochelle LoRo**

Question Me

Why is your skin dark?

Well, God saw my labour in the fields and—
He picked a pigment that would shield me,
From UV light,
You see, the risk of skin cancer is curtailed for me,
As well as vitamin B9 (folate) deficiency.
So, this caramel cloak or mahogany mack
Protects me—and that's a fact.

How come your hair is kinky?

On this head is the strength of iron and the shading of coal,
My own blank canvas,
Illustrating the designs of my soul—
I control.
I try and go easy with the Western styling,
Because when these kinks are straightened, they stop smiling.
I love being Afrolicious; I love being Afro-proud,
My head and my hair are to be respected
Everyone should love their own crown.

Where are you from?

I originate from the land of gold,
From where my ancestors were bonded and sold,
From the same home of pharaohs and queens,
From the fruitful ground of yam and greens.
The birthplace of medicine and ideologies of the wise,
Adam and Eve's mystifying paradise.

Who are you?

Who am I?
Who are we?
We are the chance that our grandmothers never got.
We are the scars that healed but never forgot.
We are the songs that prophesied we'd overcome,
We are the movement that chose not to succumb.
We are the strength exhibited by Martin Luther King Jr. and Mary Seacole—
But only when we are fully united, are we truly a powerful people

JULIA OMARI

Local hero Gilbert Clarke (pictured), who turns 100 in December, is a World War II veteran who joined the Royal Air Force at 16 – two years under the minimum age. He was also one of a group of some 6000 men and almost 100 women from the West Indies who enlisted when the RAF temporarily lifted a colour bar on recruitment.

Born in Jamaica, Clarke lost his father at the age of three, but he was exceptionally bright. He was handpicked by his head-teacher to remain in school for an additional year of study. At 16, he spotted Britain's recruitment drive and thought it would offer him a way to travel. Despite a persistent cough (later diagnosed as asthma), he was in good health. He signed up, sat the test, and passed with flying colours.

He joined the ground crew for basic training and learned how to service the electronic equipment vital to Britain's air campaigns. He travelled to Yorkshire for advanced technical training where conditions were tough. It was cold, often wet, with challenging lessons in advanced physics, maths, and weapons training.

In 1947 the colour bar was removed permanently, although systemic racism remained. After four years of service Clarke stepped out of



his uniform and into civilian life, choosing to make England his home.

Clarke first settled in Kensington, then Putney, and later in Harold Hill, surrounded by other ex-services families. The area had a community spirit that provided a safe space for Clarke and his new wife to raise their family.

He avoided the notorious “No Blacks, No Irish and No Dogs” signs that appeared in many boarding houses during the 1940s and 50s. Clarke was able to find work quickly due to his electrical skills, repairing appliances for the now defunct high street retailer Rumbelow's.

He felt that his lighter complexion often made his experience in England easier, thought there were times when customers did not open

their door but instead peered behind curtains. He never let such moments burden him; he simply moved onto the next client. After retirement, Clarke moved to Plaistow, where he still lives happily.

Clarke's experience forms part of the wider history of Caribbean people who served in wartime Britain, but who were forgotten for too long.

Thanks to increased advocacy through Black History Month in October and organisations such as Black Poppy Rose (blackpoppyrose.org), Nubian Jak Community Trust (nubianjak.org) and The New Black Film Collective (tnbfc.co.uk) public awareness is growing. In 2017, a memorial to African and Caribbean personnel was unveiled in Brixton's Windrush Square.

This renewed recognition has brought Gilbert Clarke into the public eye – meeting King Charles and Queen Camilla, sharing breakfast with former Prime Minister Boris Johnson and even playing piano alongside actor Jeff Goldblum!

He has also spoken at many community events inspiring all who hear him and answering school children's questions. Unlike many Caribbean service members who never lived to share their story, Gilbert Clarke's voice has been heard. Speaking to the BBC he said: “I feel proud I did something for peace.”

Stratford loves Jazz at the Dialogue Express Café

RICHARD STUBBS

I walk through the new exit from Stratford Station leading on to Gibbins Road, where signs direct me to the site of the Dialogue Express Café. The sound of jazz fills the air, and I meet Hakan Elbir who says this event is Dialogue Hub's (DH) contribution to National Inclusion Week. Hakan is the Founder of DH, a social enterprise that focuses on supporting the social inclusion of people with disability such as blindness or deafness. We talk on comfortable seating outside the café's premises where the baristas are deaf and customers are encouraged to order their food and drink using sign language. The café is a '69 British Rail carriage that was in service until '92 and has been converted into seating space for customers, and a kitchen.

I ask Hakan how much of their income is through trading,



and he says only about 30 percent, with the rest coming from himself, though he expects to receive grants and corporate sponsorship. Hakan explains that if your primary aim is to give deaf people training and

experience of work, thus helping them gain skills, confidence and build up social networks, you cannot also prioritise profit by reducing staff to a minimum and only employing highly experienced people.

Hakan says that Dialogue Hub wishes to expand their work by opening new Dialogue Cafés around London using a partnership model. Dialogue Hub is delighted to collaborate with the London East Jazz Network

(LEJN) to present today's Jazz Festival for the launch of Dialogue Express Café. He says they are planning to continue these events in November.

I watch the Jazz Trio Sula, the first of four acts, before Hakan introduces me to Mark Kass, who is the organizer of the Jazz Festival. Mark and I retreat to where conversation is easy. He sees jazz as a timeless, diverse and multi-cultural music that is part of the inclusion agenda. He set up the LEJN as a social enterprise for community benefit in 2019 and feels that working at today's event is part of their inclusion work. At that point rain starts to fall and I flee to the railway carriage where I am treated to electronic jazz music played on carrots, melons, and similar items. Mark refers to it as the Melon-Cauli orchestra and I hope he is not referring to the mood of his performers given the weather! dialoguehub.co.uk

Remembering the Hallsville School Tragedy

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Exactly 85 years after a shocking WWII tragedy in which hundreds died in a disaster that was for years hushed up by the authorities, a memorial was organised for those who perished.

sheer negligence is more likely according to Ritchie Calder, a journalist, who repeatedly warned the authorities of the danger to the women, children and the vulnerable sheltering in the school.

The school suffered a direct hit. The official censor banned

Hallsville School Disaster Group outlined the tragedy and family members shared their memories. Three pupils from a group of 20 children from Hallsville School read a poem, and a soprano from Newham Music sang three arias that stunned the audience. Names of the 77

known victims were read out including eight from the same family. The event moved many to tears with a rendering of the hymn *Abide With Me*.

Afterwards, at the memorial outside, there was a minute's silence and wreath laying. Finally, a new exhibition

of 150 years of St. Luke's was available in the Fr. Goose Hall, along with home-made cake and tea, where the guests shared further memories.

The names of those who participated have been omitted as a mark of respect to the many nameless who died in this tragic event.



The bombing of South Hallsville School, where a new Hallsville School was built in 1951, was recalled by the Custom House and Canning Town Community Renewal Project (CH&CTCRP) who organised the memorial attended by relatives of those who perished, pupils from the school, and others.

The Blitz by German bombers started in the London docks on 7 September 1940. Bombs hit Canning Town homes, and families were told to shelter in the school pending evacuation. The official story is that there was a mix up with the buses but

reporting and pictures of the tragedy saying this would be devastating to morale.

The memorial event was held in the beautiful apse of the Old St. Luke's which was bombed on the same day. This was the first time the apse had been open to the public since 1985, when the church was closed. In 1994 the CH&CTCRP was formed and a powerful community campaign led to the saving of the building for posterity.

The apse provided a site fit for the event. The charity manager welcomed all assembled. A representative of the South

COMMUNITY NEWS ROUNDUP

By Neandra Etienne

Fee patron of Your Place

BBC Radio 1Xtra's Fee Mak has officially joined Newham-based homelessness charity Your Place as their Patron. Your Place supports 153 people at any one time, making it one of the largest hostels in the country.

Fee who was born and raised in Newham said: "Since my secondary school days, volunteering and giving back have always been close to my heart. I'm honoured to support the vital work Your Place is doing to empower people and change



Fee Mak, Image courtesy Your Place

lives in my community. It's a privilege to play even a small part in such an inspiring mission, and I'm excited for all that lies ahead!"

your-place.org.uk

Honour for Jack

Jack Leslie will be honoured with a community event during Black History Month in October at the Foundry. Jack who was from Newham should have been the first Black footballer to play for England in 1925 but he was deselected because of his Black Heritage.

jackleslie.co.uk

New trains for DLR

Transport for London (TFL) are introducing new DLR trains that will include air conditioning, improved accessibility and mobile device charging points.

Tom Page, TfL's General

Manager for the DLR said: "Customers may see out-of-service DLR trains running between Stratford International and Beckton as we've started reliability testing of the new trains."

tfl.gov.uk

Appeal for debt service

Bonny Downs Community Association has launched a £20,000 crowdfunding appeal to save its face-to-face debt advice service. So far almost half the money has been raised with around three weeks to go, recent funding cuts left one part-time Advisor, supported by one trained volunteer, with over 50 clients facing a combined total of £563,886 in debt. Aviva Community fund has pledged to match donations.

To give, go to crowdfunder.co.uk/p/bdca-debt-advice

SPORTS SHORTS

Compiled by Neandra Etienne



Ezri Konsa. Image ©Eddie Keogh/The FA

Congratulations to Newham-born **Ezri Konsa** who scored for England against Serbia during the World Cup Qualifying game on 9 September. Ezri, who plays for Aston Villa told his social media followers, "What a feelinggg! A night I'll never forget and something I've dreamt about since being a child. First goal for my country."

England are scheduled to play a friendly against Wales on 9 October and a World Cup Qualifier against Latvia on 14 October.

✉ @ezrikonsa

Badminton free sessions for young people aged 10 – 16 will be delivered by a Badminton England qualified coach with over 20 years' experience. All equipment will be provided

Every Thursday evening 6-7.30pm, Rokeby School, E16
<https://tinyurl.com/ybrkrwre>

London Lions have announced the fixtures for the basketball EuroCup campaign at the Copper Box Arena Stratford. Fixtures will run from October through to February
thelondonlions.com

Despite winning just one of the four and county group finals, the Cordell Cup, **Plashet Park Bowls Club** had a successful end to the outdoor bowling season winning the Ilford and District League and are division 2 champions of the Walthamstow and District Thursday Fours league. Including the Redbridge Afternoon League Rural Plate, it means they have won 4 competitions this year.

Cliff Dye, President and Captain of Plashet Park Bowls Club told **Newham Voices**: "The bigger challenge starts when the Council stop maintaining our bowling green. The club members are determined to carry on and we will do our best to maintain the green and pavilion."



Plashet Park Bowls Club ©Keith Riley

Drop-In Bereavement Centre Keep Fit Classes for over 60s will be held on 3, 17, 24, 31 October, from 12pm -1.30pm at St Bartholomew's Church & Centre, 292b Barking Rd, East Ham E6. Book a space by calling **0207 511 6444** thedropinbereavementcentre.co.uk

Newham Cricket Club had a mixed but encouraging season across all four sides.

The 1st XI endured a challenging campaign, finishing eighth out of 10, while the 2nd XI came 11th in a competitive 16-team league, showing promise but lacking the consistency. In contrast, the club's lower XIs



Newham Cricket Club

excelled. The 3rd XI enjoyed an outstanding year, finishing runners-up, driven by strong batting and bowling that delivered commanding victories and a sustained title challenge. The 4th XI also impressed, securing 3rd place and demonstrating depth and resilience throughout the season.

Together, these results highlight the club's strength in depth and provide optimism for future campaigns. Meanwhile, the first and second will aim to be more consistent to improve next season.

newhamcc.com

Better Club Games 2025 is an annual event across Better leisure centres that brings together senior members and customers aged 60 and above to represent their local Better leisure centre for the Club Games trophy. Activities include; Darts, Timed Cycle Challenges, Short Mat Bowls, Short Tennis, Badminton and Table Tennis. Specta-

tors are welcome to watch the full day of activities for £2

1 October, 10am – 4pm, Copper Box Arena, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, better.org.uk/healthy-communities/club-games

Henry Bateman has lived in Forest Gate all his life. He is a member of **Newham and Essex Beagles Athletics Club** and trains with them twice a week. He runs for the club in various athletics events, but his main race is 800m. Now he is running in the Royal Parks Half Marathon on 12 October to raise money for Papyrus, a suicide prevention charity. <https://tinyurl.com/mpkpyu9n>

Henry Bateman
©Sally Tully

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

Advertisements

LICENSING ACT 2003

APPLICATION FOR A NEW PREMISES LICENCE

Bhadreshkumar Patel has applied to Newham Council for a Premises Licence for:

Bhakti Foods Ltd, 247 Plashet Road, London E13 0QU so that the following licensable activities may be provided on the following days and times:

Provision of late night refreshment

• 11:00pm to 2:00am, 7 days a week

Newham Council's Licensing Register is kept at the Licensing Team, East Ham Town Hall, Barking Road London E6 2RP (open 10 am to 4 pm Monday to Friday), 0203 3731925 where details of the application may be inspected, any queries should be sent to Licensing@newham.gov.uk

Any representations against the application must be made in writing and received by the Licensing Team at the above address, by no later than **10th October 2025**.

Individuals, businesses and other bodies may make representations in relation to the application. Representations must be relevant and can only be on the licensing objectives of the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance, and the protection of children from harm. Copies of all representations will be sent to the Applicant. Persons making representations will have to appear at the Councils' Licensing Sub-Committee.

Note: It is an offence, liable on conviction to a fine up to £5,000 for an applicant to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with the application.

LICENSING ACT 2003

APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE

I Mr Abdul Sami have applied to NEWHAM COUNCIL for a premises licences for:

Maaz Café & Street Food, Unit 1, 819 Romford Road E12 6EA so that the following licensable activities may be provided on the following days and hours:

Provision of late-night refreshment

• 11pm-3am Monday-Sunday

Newham Council's Licensing Register is kept at the office of the Licensing Team, Town Hall, 328 Barking Road, East Ham, E6 2RT (open from 10.00am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday), 020 3373 1925, where details of the application may be inspected.

Any representations against the application must be made in writing and received by the Licensing Team at the above address, by no later than the **16/10/2025**.

Individuals, businesses and other bodies may make representations in relation to the application. Representations must be relevant and can only be on the licensing objectives of the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance, and the protection of children from harm. Copies of all representations will be sent to the applicant. Persons making representations will have to appear at the Councils' Licensing Sub-Committee.

Note: It is an offence, liable on conviction to a fine up to £5,000 for a person to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with the application.

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Gloom descends again as West Ham falter



Mickey Ambrose is at a loss to understand what must be going on at the West Ham training ground these days

Jarrod Bowen, Lucas Paqueta and Callum Wilson, his first goal for the club, earned the Hammers their first victory of the season at Nottingham Forest some weeks ago, but poor results against Chelsea, Tottenham and Crystal Palace have seen the return of frailties exposed in their stuttering start to the season.

Following the 5-1 defeat by Chelsea in their last home game, Hammers fans were hoping for a repeat of the Forest experience in their game with Tottenham.

Speaking to West Ham fans before the game one told me: "It depends on which Tottenham team turns up," and within minutes of the kick off Lucas Paqueta could have put the home side ahead when he turned on a sixpence and produced a tame swivel shot that he screwed wide of the post.

However, Tottenham blew the

Hammers away in this London Derby at the London Stadium thanks to goals from Pape Matar Sarr, Lucas Bergvall, and Mickey van den Ven.

After fans took the extraordinary step of calling for the people running their club to step down, perhaps the next move for West Ham's official fan advisory board is to issue a vote of no confidence in their team's defending.

Frankly, their defending is woeful and this was shown again against Palace. Nothing seems to have made Graham Potter's dreadful side realise that marking opponents at set-pieces is a good idea.

This is schoolboy stuff. It's something I learnt at my boyhood clubs Senrab FC and Poplar Boys in East London.

I don't like criticising players but you really do have to wonder what is going on at the training ground on set pieces.

They should have known that one of Thomas Frank's specialties while manager at Brentford was making teams pay at set pieces, and Pape Matar Sarr duly obliged when left all on his own at the back post to head the perfect header - even the ball boy behind the goal got in on the act he was pointing to West Ham players and shouting "pick him up". (I'm not sure if that is classed as interfering with play...)

A basic rule of thumb when defending corners is that you have someone on the front and back posts and, more importantly, you have a leader in the heart of the defence doing the organising, someone like Tony Adams of Arsenal, or John Terry of Chelsea or, perhaps the greatest of them all, the West Ham legend Bobby Moore.

The Hammers don't seem to have that. And checking who is behind you and not just ball watching would also help, but things got a lot worse for the Hammers when Tomas Soucek was given a straight red card for a reckless challenge, studs up, on Joao Palhinha.

The second for Spurs was a gem, a long ball out of defence

which found Lucas Bergvall who twisted his neck in a way to steer the ball from the hand of Hermansen.

Bergvall then had a hand in the third when he danced his way through the West Ham penalty box and his bad touch inadvertently found Mickey van den Ven who drilled in a low shot that gave the West Ham keeper no chance.

At the end West Ham were winless in seven home games while Potter has lost 13 of his 24 matches in charge. Everyone agrees - West Ham need to do something, and quickly!!

Moving away from football slightly, I want to mention former world boxing champion and Manchester City fan Ricky Hatton who was found dead at his home in Greater Manchester, aged just 46. Hatton won world titles at light-welterweight and welterweight and his all-action style made him one of the most popular fighters in the first decade of the new century.

His down-to-earth demeanour endeared him to fans across the world as did his openness about mental health issues he endured upon his

Mickey Ambrose



retirement from the ring. He was an avid Manchester City supporter and the club said they were devastated.

His loss is a reminder that mental health isn't a weakness. It's part of being human. And we must talk about it. We must reach out. We must lean on each other. We all owe Ricky a debt for raising the issue. Rest well, Ricky. You'll always have your place in the ring of our memories.

To everyone reading this: if you're hurting or struggling. Talk. Reach out. We need more light, more compassion, more understanding.

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



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We love reporting on local news in Newham but the business of local news publishing is really hard

Between 2007 and 2022, the number of local journalists employed by major news publishers in the UK dropped by two thirds from 8,847 to 2,830. And 293 local newspapers have closed since 2005.

We make local news freely available to people in Newham but local newspapers are not free to produce. Last year, published over 400 news stories in Newham Voices. We distributed 150,000 free copies of the paper.

We ran important news stories such as our in depth reporting on

Newham's housing crisis and its impact on local communities.

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