

Free car parking: a hard road ahead

AIDAN WHITE

Newham's divided Council is facing a major challenge over the introduction of free car parking for residents.

On 21 July Council leaders announced an inquiry into car parking in the Borough, but it is not clear if this will cover Labour's controversial election pledge.

But councillors have been told the issue will be discussed in September after a public consultation.

The issue of free parking is a lightning rod for conflict in a borough where the majority of residents are not car owners. The Council is divided over the policy.

Labour is the largest party but relies on opposition parties, the Green Party and Newham Independents, for support.

The Independents, like Labour, campaigned for free parking for the first car in May's election. But Green Party Mayoral candidate and former Councillor Areeq Chowdhury opposed the policy.

At the 13 July Council meeting there was unanimous support for the London-wide Vision Zero 2041 campaign launched by London Mayor Sadiq Khan which aims to discourage car use and to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries from London's entire transport network.

Some residents fear the promises of free parking will clash with the Vision Zero campaign.

Labour's Council leaders say the parking promises "remain commitments" but they chose to delay a decision on whether to include them in their parking review.

Officially named the "parking and kerbside space review" it will look at how parking rules and provision currently work in Newham, and what needs to change. In fact, Newham is facing an old dilemma – how to balance the rights of car drivers and non-car owning residents.

This month, in an exclusive interview with *Newham Voices*, Councillor John Morris says that on a range of fronts – air quality, climate change, and road safety – there is urgent need for change.

As a Labour backbench and former Deputy Cabinet member for highways and sustainable transport, he spoke out strongly at the 13 July Council meeting



People before cars debate

See pages 10–11

with a clear warning – road safety isn't a niche issue, it's a public health emergency hiding in plain sight.

Meanwhile, as this issue of *Newham Voices* highlights, there are growing concerns over road safety and car use across the Borough with hot spots for accidents highlighted in Green Street, Forest Gate and Stratford. (See Pages 10–11).

In his speech, Councillor Morris said there were four deaths a day on UK roads, with someone killed or injured every 18 minutes, and 1,600 lives lost a year.

He said that recently there had been a string of serious incidents, a Green Street crash which seriously injured six people and an eight-year-old was hit by a car during School Street hours.

"We've normalised this," said Morris. "We wouldn't accept these numbers in any

other context, yet we treat road deaths as an unavoidable cost of getting around."

He supports the The Safe System approach to traffic management— underpinning both the Government's new Road Safety Strategy and the Mayor of London's Vision Zero Action Plan — which calls for designing streets, setting speed limits, and regulating vehicles so human error doesn't have fatal consequences.

"We are going in a positive direction," he said. "Vision Zero is ambitious with more crossings, more school streets. We know through research that school streets improve air quality and road safety."

Morris is calling on Newham Council to adopt its own Vision Zero target, to match the ambition already shown at national and regional level.

But he fears that a new generation of

councillors in Newham and across London may not have the political experience or resilience to deliver controversial policies.

"When you experience pushback and people say they don't want it there is a tendency to accept that, but you are ignoring a silent majority."

He believes something can look politically polarising when actually it isn't. For example, arguments that traffic restrictions are bad for business have been challenged.

Newham Council gets substantial income from cars including parking fines, street parking, and car permits. This year it expects to raise almost £45 million and has budgeted for income of almost £50 million next year.

He says: "You can provide business friendly options – loading bays, short stay bays, and business vehicle exemptions. Often there are a range of options."

All parties are finding their footing in a council that has no overall majority for the first time.

"I would be surprised if it wasn't possible to find more common grounds for working together", he said.

He also stressed the need for a new approach as Newham expands but space remains scarce.

"We have to build higher as more people move to Newham. Sustainable transport is needed with more trains, walking, and cycling. With our restricted space all other forms of transport are more efficient.

"Then there are the climate arguments. Saving energy and rationing energy – walking, cycling and public transport are much more efficient than cars. Even an electric car is not green."

There is, he says, no time to wait.

"Climate change is accelerating more than we initially thought. Emissions are higher than we thought. The impact of the emissions already being delivered is already greater."



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Council Notebook

By Peter Landman

Probe over pension fund links to human rights abuse

PETER LANDMAN

Newham Council has voted unanimously to investigate whether its workers' pensions are invested in companies "complicit" in human rights abuse including Israel's illegal occupation of Palestinian land.

Councillors voted unanimously at the Council meeting on 13 May to launch an audit of the authority's pension fund investments and to declare its intent to divest from companies "complicit in human rights abuses, war crimes or illegal settlements".

Their resolution said: "Council administered pension funds must not be used to fund the machinery of war, genocide, or military occupation."

The councillors' vote comes after a long campaign involving political activists and local campaigners calling on the authority to withdraw pension fund investments from "companies involved in the genocide of the Palestinian people".

Newham Palestine Solidarity Campaign protested outside Newham Town Hall, in East Ham, where the vote took place.

Councillor Mehmood Mirza, leader of the Independents, proposed the motion which called for withdrawal of any investments connected with illegal Israeli actions in Gaza and Palestine as well as the withdrawal of any other investments to countries involved in human rights abuses.

Councillor John Gray, Labour Cabinet member and Chair of the Pensions Committee, suggested an amendment supporting the motion, saying the Council had a fiduciary duty to serve the 32,000 people covered by the pensions and this should not be undermined.

But this was defeated and the unamended motion, also supported by the Green Party members, was unanimously adopted.

Mayor highlights new homes and fly tipping action

The Mayor Forhan Hussain (pictured right) thanked all three parties for agreeing to share responsibility as Newham Council moves forward into an era with no single party in overall control.

He reported on two major actions the new Council had already taken a £12.5 million allocation over four years to tackle fly tipping, and 350 new homes from a new development in North Woolwich.

The meeting went on to pay tribute to the outgoing interim Chief Executive, Paul Martin; and to ratify the appointment of the new Chief Executive Maria Christofi. Maria has 25 years experience in local government.

Action on diversity and unity against extremism

A motion proposed by Councillor Simon Rush and seconded by Councillor Shantu Ferdous, titled Newham's Diversity, was adopted unanimously. The motion affirmed the Council's commitment to celebrating diversity and standing united against hatred, extremism, and division and acknowledged Newham's status as a Borough of Sanctuary.

Councillor Questions:

- Councillors Ilyas Shaif, and Syed Naqvi, Independents asked when free bulky waste collections would be resumed. Without these collections they were finding many instances of outside dumping. They were told in a written response that this was work in progress.
- Councillor Saheer Begum, Independents, asked about action on youth unemployment, and said apprenticeships were not being properly promoted. The written response said the Council offers young people the choice of further education,



an apprenticeship or work and provides help with CVs, applications and preparation for interviews. The Council has taken on 80 apprentices.

Budget ups and downs

The Council cabinet meeting on 21 July heard that the cost of housing homeless people in temporary accommodation in the Borough is falling, with £6 million underspent in the current budget year.

At the same time, however, councillors were told that adult social care costs were overspent by £4 million and the cost of care for children and young people was a further £5 million over budget.

- Accommodation costs are down because of reduced costs for overnight stays for homeless people in hotels and the adult social care costs rose due to increases in the cost of nursing home accommodation and specialist care packages.

Stories of courage mark Refugee Week

The Renewal Programme, based in East Ham, launched a busy series of actions to celebrate Refugee Week in June. A migration storytelling project included a session on media training helping people build confidence and skills to share their experiences. Throughout the week, a series of videos was released exploring migration, identity and belonging, alongside the *Stories of Courage: Immigration Services* series, which highlighted the experiences of those navigating the immigration system.



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Olympic gift abandoned in dockland wilderness

ANDREW CHRISTY

As part of the celebrations associated with the 2012 Olympic Games coming to London a set of four statues was created by Chinese artist Huang Jian, who was the International Olympic Committees' first Olympic Art Ambassador.

The Sino-British Polo Friendship sculptures were originally on display on a plot of Greater London Authority Land and Property Limited (GLAP) land at Royal Albert Dock in Newham leasing the land for a period of time to facilitate their display.

The land was released for planned regeneration – which subsequently never happened – and the statues were placed in a private, open-air, fenced storage compound on another GLAP site elsewhere in the Royal Docks area.

At one stage there was even a proposal that the statues would most usefully be melted down and the proceeds used to fund other cultural activities! Thankfully



that idea was not taken forward.

But the statues have languished in a derelict location inaccessible to the public since around May 2020 and recently it seems that two of the group have disappeared

from storage. It also appears that some of the statues have been damaged due to vandalism.

Repeated attempts to gain any information from either the Mayor or Newham Council officers on

plans for the installation have been unsuccessful until now, when the following information was provided by a Council officer.

"The sculptures were gifted to Newham Council by the Chinese Government ahead of the 2012 Olympic Games and were displayed adjacent to Newham Dockside. In May 2020, they were moved to storage.

"During their time in storage, the facility was subject to a break-in and the sculptures were vandalised. A condition assessment was subsequently carried out, which identified that the damage was significant and it was determined that repair to a standard suitable for public display would not be financially viable."

The assertion that they were gifted to the Council is wide of the mark. They were gifted to the people of Great Britain under the care of Newham Council. That duty of care has been neglected.

Craftworkers on strike

Newham Council workers were among more than 1,000 craftworkers across England who took part in strike action on 6 and 8 July in a national pay and conditions dispute. Members of the Unite union are in dispute with the Local Government Association and council employers over below inflation pay increases which have been imposed on the workforce.

Secondary students to get free school meals

The Mayor of Newham Forhad Hussain has announced that all Newham secondary school pupils will be able to have free school meals.

At an event on 17 July hosted by the Newham Power to Prosper hub and East Ham MP Sir Stephen Timms, the Mayor said that universal free school meals would be rolled out across the Borough.

"After two years of organising and campaigning, we're thrilled to see the mayor make this commitment," said Dr Loubaba Mamluk, head of organising at the New Economics Foundation, "Newham is one of the most deprived local authorities in England, where too many families struggle to afford the essentials"

The campaign for universal free school meals in Newham was backed by the national Power to Prosper programme, a national programme run by the Runnymede Trust and the New Economics Foundation.

Celebrating first statue to a named black woman

Newham Voices correspondent Julia Omari was among those who gathered at the statue of 19th Century Crimean war nurse Mary Seacole to celebrate ten years since the unveiling.

The statue, the first to honour a named black woman in the UK, stands in the grounds of St Thomas' Hospital, Westminster. Julia is pictured at the statue with sculptor Martin Jennings.

The event was also attended by Newham Voices Chief Reporter Neandra Etienne and Managing Editor Jean Gray, who is a Trustee of the Mary Seacole Trust.



Image ©Neandra Etienne

New school and 120 homes agreed for Carpenters Estate

Newham Council has agreed to build a replacement primary school on the Carpenters Estate in Stratford alongside 120 new apartments and sports pitches.

The Council says the development makes better use of land and will put in place an upgraded school to cope with demand because of the regeneration around the Carpenters Estate.

The plan involves building new apartments, creating commercial space and sports pitches on the existing Carpenters Primary School site.

Populo Living, the Council's wholly-owned development company says the project makes the best use of land on the site, creating much needed new facilities and homes for Newham in line with plans for regeneration of

the area which will over 12 years collectively bring nearly 3,000 homes to Newham.

The new two-form entry school and nursery will retain a friendly, local-school feel, with the additional apartments facing Warton Road located on a part of the site currently used as a car park.

Root and Erect Architecture, the team behind the award-winning Tumbling Bay Playground at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, designed the external landscaping.

The new sport facilities will be used by the school during the day and will be available for the community at other times, managed by The Carpenters and Docklands Centre from its new facility to be delivered at James Riley Point.

"This is a major step forward for our long-term ambitions for the area," said Forhad Hussain, the Mayor of Newham. "It means new homes and community space, but crucially a replacement primary school that will help give young people the best start in life for many years to come."



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Awards for Maryland community group

PAUL CLEMENT

One of Newham's newest residents' groups, launched earlier this year in response to a range of problems in Maryland – unsafe pavements because of cyclists; endemic fly-tipping, and the open selling of drugs on residential streets – has won one of east London's leading community honours.

The Maryland Ward Group received the Outstanding Initiative in Community Cohesion award at the East London Community Heroes Awards 2026, hosted by Rotary Club Stratford at the Royal Docks's Good Hotel in July.

In addition, Babs Pierre, the Group leader, received the John James Memorial Good Neighbour Award, recognising her outstanding commitment to bringing local people together and championing the Maryland community.

The event was attended by local MPs Sir Stephen Timms and James Asser, as well as the mayor of Newham, Forhad Hussain.

Since its launch in March, the Maryland Ward Group has grown into a can-do grassroots association, and a respected voice for one of Newham's most overlooked neighbourhoods.

Volunteers held a *Big Cultural Lunch* in June, a meet-the-neighbours afternoon with food and family games on the Chandos Road Open Space. This is the only public green in Maryland.

Several dozen people came along – including Maryland's two Green councillors, and the new Mayor of Newham. The Maryland Ward Group has built bridges between neighbours, businesses, councillors, police and community organisations, creating a trusted forum where local people work together to solve problems, rather than simply complain about them.

In its short existence, the group has racked up several wins, campaigning to have the popular Freetail Unit community swap-shop on Chandos Road E15 reinstated. It has also supported efforts to safeguard the Hibiscus Centre, a local meeting hub for African and Caribbean elders.

Importantly, the group has also become Maryland's "village square" – a positive, constructive space where residents exchange information, celebrate local successes and support one another. Monthly meetings are now help-

ing strengthen links with local businesses and encouraging wider civic participation.

The group is now looking to build on this momentum. Among its ambitions is the creation of an occasional Maryland street market centred around the neighbourhood's distinctive twisted clock, the local landmark that inspired the Maryland Ward Group's logo. The aim is to breathe new life into the attractive but underused public space.

The Maryland Ward Group shows that community spirit can thrive when people are given opportunities to connect. But it hopes more residents will become part of that story.

Babs Pierre said: "Winning these awards is a wonderful recognition of what local people can achieve when they come together with a shared purpose. We've accomplished so much. I hope these awards will be a springboard for even greater things."

The East London Community Heroes Awards celebrate individuals and organisations making an exceptional contribution to their communities across East London. Receiving two awards in its first year is significant.

For information visit: facebook.com/groups/738034955680436



Image ©Paul Clement

Farewell to war hero Gilbert

JULIA OMARI

East Ham Town Hall was the setting for a heartfelt farewell on 4 July, as family, friends, military representatives, community organisations, and local residents gathered to honour the life of Gilbert Constantine Clarke, a Royal Air Force veteran, Windrush pioneer, musician and community elder.

Gilbert passed away on 23 May at the age of 100. He was remembered for his military service, and for the example he set through a lifetime of humility, music, and service to others.

As one of the last remaining RAF veterans, he understood how important it is for younger generations to know that West Indian men and women served in the Second World War. For many years he shared his story, ensuring that the sacrifices of West

Indian service personnel would be remembered.

The funeral was conducted by Rev Dr Michael King, son of Windrush pioneer Samuel King MBE. The ceremony featured an RAF Procession of Honour, military tributes, the playing of the Last Post, reflections from Esmon George MBE of the British West Indian Regiment Heritage Trust, and a musical tribute by Alexander D Great.

Following the private cremation, the Clarke family returned to East Ham town hall for a celebration of his life and further tributes during an open mic session, accompanied by steel pan music from Lance Corporal Kavel Alexander. Mourners shared Caribbean food from Plantation Inn Restaurant, celebrating Mr Clarke's Jamaican heritage.

Among those paying their respects were His Excellency

Alexander Williams, Jamaica's High Commissioner to the UK; Sir Patrick Vernon, the Windrush campaigner; and Michael I. Ohajuru, founder of the John Blanke Project

Also present were representatives from the British West Indian Regiments Heritage Trust, the Royal British Legion, the Royal Air Force, the Royal Air Force Association, the Taxi Charity for Military Veterans, the Caribbean Social Forum, Why Are West Indian Project, and local community organisations.

Newham resident Marlene, who met Gilbert, said: "To meet Gilbert Clarke, a genuine war hero, living here in Newham was an honour. He was so humble and never acted as though he was anything special, but at the 60-plus club we both attended in Newham, everyone looked up to him as someone truly special."

Poetry in Mind

A Jamaica Independence Day poem by Zhenreenah Muhxinga

On the sixth of August, we proudly say,
Jamaica's freedom shines today.
Black, green and gold wave in the sky,
A symbol of hope that will never die.

We honour the people who came before,
Who dreamed of freedom and so much more.
Their courage and strength helped light the way,
So we could celebrate this special day.

Some left Jamaica, young and brave,
Crossing the ocean, the future to chase.
They came to England ready to work,
Driving buses, nursing, and doing every job.

But life was harder than they were told.
The weather was bitter, the streets felt cold.
Some heard, "You're not welcome," every day,
Though they worked hard in every way.

They missed home, family, sunshine and sea,
Yet never gave up on what could be.
With heads held high and hearts so strong,
They proved that kindness would always belong.

From reggae music to jerk on the grill,
From stories and laughter that warm us still,
Jamaica's spirit lives on with pride,
At home and across the world so wide.

So every sixth of August we stand as one,
Remembering how far our journey has come.
With one love, one heart, and dreams so bright,
Jamaica forever—our guiding light.



Zhenreenah Muhxinga ©Neandra Etienne

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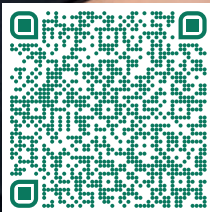
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Anti-poverty groups seek space aid from Council

Campaigners against poverty in Newham have joined forces calling on Newham Council to provide a base for them to help the Borough's neediest residents.

Several anti-poverty groups provide vital support to people struggling to live through the cost-of-living crisis, but they face homelessness themselves with no permanent premises out of which to operate.

A campaign has been launched calling for them to be given space in Council-controlled buildings.

On 17 July the groups met at an event with local politicians hosted by East Ham MP and government minister Sir Stephen Timms and called for a new charter with Newham Council.

The campaign is led by community anti-poverty organisations Money A+E, Ankh Place CIC, Plaistow South Big Local, Hawaa Network and Shpresa.

They all are in the frontline of the Newham fight against poverty but share a struggle to find an operating base. The group aims to work with the Council

on a charter that will give them access to council-controlled buildings.

The campaign says the current tendering system for access is unfair, difficult and expensive.

Because there is little financial support for upkeep, maintenance and restoration of buildings, it is harder for organisations that need these buildings to tender for them.

The campaign has been backed by the national Power to Prosper programme, which operates out of grassroots community hubs in

Lambeth, Newham, Nottingham and Greater Manchester and has published a report exposing the scourge of poverty and debt for Black and other racial minorities.

Jerry During, CEO and cofounder of Money A+E, which gives money advice to disadvantaged groups, said: "Buildings for

local community groups, charities and small businesses are an essential lifeblood – both for the local organisations and for their communities' survival. But we are subject to short tenancies and expensive rents, which threaten our ability to continue this essential work."

Rent crisis hits beauty business

NICK CLARK, Local Democracy Reporting Service

A beauty salon owner in Custom House has warned her business is "struggling to survive" as she can't afford council rent.

Suleica Lebours, owner of Suli Divine Hair and Beauty Spa, has asked Newham Council for help with her rent. The Council is set to contact her.

Suleica has rented her salon, at 31 Freemasons Road, from the Council since 2023. Earlier Council literature says the town hall accepted her tenancy because she would give jobs and training to others in the community.

However, rising costs such as energy bills mean that, like

many businesses, Suleica's salon is struggling.

She says she's fallen into rent arrears. "Right now our rent is £15,000 a year", she said, "but they want to set it at £18,000".

Suleica said she has asked the Council for help, but has yet to receive an offer. She said the uncertainty is "giving me anxiety". Now a Council spokesperson has told the LDRS the town hall would be in touch with Suleica.

"We are aware that, unfortunately and in common with many small businesses, the current economic climate is causing financial stress for this trader.

"As a council, Newham actively supports local community-based business and offers to discuss difficulties to give them the best

chance to be successful," they said.

Suleica successfully bid to rent the shop on a temporary basis at the southern end of Freemason's Road which earmarked for demolition as part of the regeneration of Custom House. The Council was seeking community businesses to occupy vacant units until then.

Since opening, Suleica says her business has become a place for Spanish-speaking people to gather and socialise. She says she's also given training and employment to young people from Custom House.

Council literature praised "her desire to not only establish Suli Divine Hair and Beauty Spa but also to create opportunities for others in her community".

Memorial to Matchgirls strike leader Sarah

The leader of one of Britain's historic industrial battles 138 years ago has finally been recognised with a headstone on her grave in Manor Park cemetery.

The headstone has been placed on the previously unmarked grave of Matchgirls strike leader Sarah Dearman (née Chapman), known to history as Sarah Chapman.

The stone was funded by the London and Eastern region of the trade union Unite and the GMB. It was designed by John das Gupta, a local stone mason, but has been stored in the basement of the TUC's Congress House for several years, awaiting transfer to the cemetery.

It was unveiled at a ceremony at the grave on 26 July.

The unmarked grave was discovered by researcher Dr

Anna Robinson, whose pioneering research first brought Sarah's story back into the light in 2017.

The Matchgirls Memorial organisation commissioned the headstone in 2019. The unveiling takes place in the 138th anniversary year of the Matchgirls' Strike, and just one day before the anniversary of the inaugural meeting of the Union of Women Matchmakers on 27 July 1888 of which Sarah was the President.



Sarah Chapman top row (circled) with the Matchgirls' union committee. Image via e7-nowandthen.org

Olympic legacy: Is Newham fit for purpose?



Twenty-one years ago the International Olympic Committee visited Stratford to examine London's bid book for the 2012 Olympic Games. The area was polished to perfection. You could hardly move for hanging flower baskets, community events and sporting activities showcasing the Borough and its young people.

Five legacy promises sat at the heart of London's bid:

- Make the UK a world-leading sporting nation.
- Transform the heart of East London.
- Inspire a generation of young people.
- Make the Olympic Park a blueprint for sustainable living.
- Demonstrate that the UK is a creative, inclusive and welcoming place.

Let's focus on the first promise: making the UK a world-leading sporting nation. As far as Newham was concerned, I was always a little sceptical.

In January 2012, Newham Council announced the closure

of the Atherton Leisure Centre and admitted there was a risk of reputational damage if funding could not be found to rebuild it. A local campaign ultimately embarrassed the Council into finding the money.

But what about the wider Olympic legacy in terms of sport, fitness and participation?

The evidence is far from clear. Research from Sheffield Hallam University, *Did London 2012 Deliver a Sports Participation Legacy?*, concluded that it is difficult to establish a direct link between the Games and long-term increases in sporting participation. So, while the Olympics

may have inspired some people to become more active, proving a lasting participation legacy is much harder.

Earlier this year, Newham Council published its Physical Activity Health Needs Assessment. The report identifies some genuine achievements: the expansion of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and School Streets, improved walking and cycling infrastructure, investment in parks and leisure facilities, and a growing range of community-based physical activity programmes.

But the report also delivers a sobering verdict. Physical inactivity in Newham remains con-

sistently higher than both the London and England averages. Significant inequalities persist, particularly among girls and young women, including those from South Asian backgrounds.

Twenty-one years after all those hanging flower baskets and carefully choreographed displays for the IOC, perhaps the reality is that while the Games transformed Stratford's skyline, they have been less successful in transforming the activity levels of the people who live here. The promised sporting legacy remains, at best, a work in progress.

— Simon Shaw

‘Rubbing along’ is the secret of the Forest Gate Festival

Simon Shaw on how our shared space is a beacon for community, fun and tolerance

Former student, Dr. Adam Elliot Cooper, recently visited my class to speak about the history and legacy of empire in relation to racism.

“What is to be done about it?” a Year 12 student asked. “Conviviality,” Adam answered.

It is a little-used but vital sociological concept—one that should be front and centre of what the exam board demands I teach. Conviviality refers to the “spontaneous tolerance” and routine, mundane interactions between diverse groups in urban and postcolonial spaces.

It captures how people “rub along” together in shared spaces, effectively navigating or outright ignoring racial, ethnic, and cultural boundaries.

The 26th edition of the Forest Gate Festival was the very epitome of this concept.

Where else would the local mayor—whom I described as the “King of Newham” to a group of ten-year-olds getting temporary tattoos at our Care4Calais stall—come over just to say hello?

He politely apologised for being in a rush because he was out with his kids. When



my wife asked how he managed to look so crisp, ironed, and cool in the middle of a heatwave, he jokingly explained that he and his twin brother just kept swapping places.

Later, while I was loudly reminding festival goers that the England football team playing that night would be nothing

without its migrant heritage, someone approached me.

They noted that I probably couldn’t get away with proclaiming this in another local area (name of place redacted). It was a reminder of just what a special place our place is.

Fortuitously, Laura, who organises the

festival stewards, knocked on my door while I was typing this, to collect some leftover tables and boxes. I asked her how she would sum up the festival.

“It’s the event that brings the whole community together,” she replied.

Over its 26-year history, the festival has evolved from mainly a community boot sale into something much slicker. This year featured around 120 stalls selling street food, plants, and pottery, alongside two live music stages, a children’s play area, and various interactive workshops.

As usual, the Kay Rowe Nursery hosted entertainment for the younger children, with a special focus on celebrating fathers and male carers.

Providing the soundtrack to the day were local talents, including the E7 Community Choir and the Dog Jammers.

Throughout the day, thousands of people strolled up and down Osborne Road in the blazing heat. Many wore England shirts, talking hopefully about the prospect of “bringing it home,” while jokingly worrying about the threat posed by Erling Haaland’s Norsemens that evening.

That is exactly what “rubbing along” is all about: eating a halloumi wrap and listening to a live drum demo, all while watching your kids try rock climbing in E7.

Residents take power into their own hands

RICHARD STUBBS

Four years after its launch, Community Energy Newham (CEN) is working to bring down bills, develop low-carbon solar projects in the Borough and take power away from large corporations by putting energy ownership into the hands of the community.

The major challenge is that Newham has London’s highest fuel poverty rate, so CEN plays a major role in empowering the community to take control of their own clean local energy.

Arifa Begum, who works for Repowering London (RL) as their Newham Community Lead told me that CEN is a joint development between Newham residents, Repowering London and Newham Council.

Established in 2022, the group has five directors and a group of local volunteers drawn from communities in Newham. It is a Community Benefit Society, which means it exists to serve the interests of the community.

RL is an award-winning social enterprise that for more than a decade has been empowering communities to fund, install and manage their own clean, local energy.

They believe that putting people at the heart of the energy system is the key to fighting the climate emergency, building resilient communities and promoting innovation that will democratise the energy system.

Arifa says that, in addition to installing low-carbon infrastructure, CEN is developing the social infrastructure to support the community to become active participants in their energy future. Through public meetings, ‘creative energy club’ activities, visioning workshops and presentations to local schools, CEN exemplifies the phrase: “Think global, act local”.

CEN’s achievements since 2022 include the installation of rooftop solar panels across eight schools and libraries in the Borough, creating one of the capital’s fastest-growing portfolios of community energy projects.

CEN’s first Community Share Offer raised more than £120,000 and brought the solar panels on the East Ham Library, Beckton Globe and Stratford Library into community ownership.

CEN is also helping to create the first “Repowered Community” in the Borough. Led by Repowering London and supported by £1.5 million from The National Lottery Community Fund.

The local energy neighbourhood model will provide reduced energy costs, retrofit support, locally generated green electricity, community owned heat generation assets, and community benefits such as employment for local people.

Arifa says CEN is urging residents to become involved and to invest at least £50 in its vision, and specifically to bring two more school solar energy systems into community ownership. All Newham investors will get a 3 percent return and become members of CEN. See: www.repowering.org.uk/community-energy-newham-share-offer/

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*a selection of our regular stockists, but it is not an exhaustive list



OUT AND ABOUT IN NEWHAM

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



Madge Gill drawing, courtesy Newham Heritage Service

ART

Newham Council has secured an Art Fund Reimagine grant for the new three-year project **Inspired Art: Madge Gill**.

Madge Gill's artwork will go on permanent display at Newham Heritage Centre, alongside a new educational resource exploring her life and work.

Madge Gill (1882–1961) spent much of her adult life living in Upton Park. Shortly after her death, over 1,200 of her artworks were donated to Newham Council by her son Lawrence. Now the Council holds the largest collection of her works.

Newham Heritage Centre is currently looking for an experienced Learning Resource Developer for the project *Inspired Art: Madge Gill*

- Deadline 17 August
 - Online Interviews 26 August
- Newham Heritage Centre opens in 2027.
[@newhamheritagecentre](https://www.facebook.com/newhamheritagecentre)

Tower Gallery is accepting submissions from artists living, working or studying in Newham, or with a close connection to the Borough, as well as from artists who have shown with them in the past, for the upcoming The September Open exhibition.

To apply, email towergallerye13@gmail.com for more information. Closing date is 24 August at 10 pm.

Tower Gallery, East Tower 395 Barking Road, E13
[facebook.com/towergalleryplaistow](https://www.facebook.com/towergalleryplaistow)

TELEVISION

Jimmy Akingbola, from Newham, has joined the cast of ITV's six-part lunar Thriller *First Woman*. Jimmy plays astronaut Dr Henry Evans who is in charge of

the nuclear reactor that sustains life on the moon.

The Crow Girl is a six-part psychological crime thriller starring Newham actor **Elliot Edusah**.

The second series started on 20 July on Paramount+

MOBO

The funeral for MOBO Organisation Founder and CEO **Kanya King** took place in July. Kanya had been ill with colon cancer.

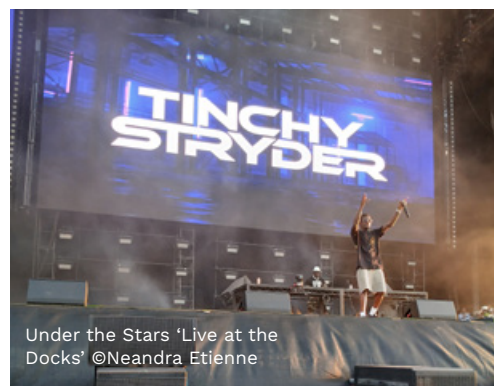
Newham musicians who have received MOBO Awards include Kano, D Double E, Guvna B and Kele Le Roc. MOBO honoured Sir Idris Elba with a 'Paving the Way' Stone at Barking and Dagenham College.

MOBO trademark documents are on display at the *Music is Black: A British Story* exhibition at the V&A East Museum.

MUSIC

Newham musicians performed at the free live outdoor music event **Under the Stars Live at the Docks** at Silverworks Island.

Former St Bons student Tinchy Stryder headlined and Ashley J from Newham hosted.



Under the Stars 'Live at the Docks' ©Neandra Etienne

AWARDS

Amandaland, partly filmed in Forest Gate, won Scripted Comedy at the **BAFTA TV Awards**. *Crongton*, starring Kelle Bryan from Newham, won Children's Scripted and *VE Day 80: A Celebration to Remember*, featuring Newham born Forces Sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn, won Live Event Coverage.

Danny and Dani Dyer, from Newham, were presenters.

The 71st **Ivor Novello Awards**: Kano, from Newham, was presented with the Visionary Award with Amazon Music.

EVENTS

Hush Festival features indie, folk, classical and jazz music, talks on awareness and meditation and a series of brunches built around slow food and music.

Hush is co-founded by Simon and local residents Peter and Shabira Cassidy.

29 July to 2 August, Central Park, East Ham

[@hush.festival.london](https://www.instagram.com/hush.festival.london)

Transition Town Newham open meeting of community groups and initiatives to come up with actionable steps to drive positive change.

1 August, 11.30am – 1.30pm, Brunel Street Works, Canning Town

The Music is Black Festival from East Bank Queer Frequencies weekender

22 August from 12pm – midnight

23 August from 12pm – 6pm

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, The Dance Floor at Sadler's Wells East, The Waterfront Stage

[queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk](https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk)

Summer Nights in Queen's Square, supported by the Mayor of London, includes outdoor dining and live performances from talented musicians across Newham and East London.

• 21 August, 6pm – 9pm, with BBC Asian Network

• 22 August, 6pm – 9pm, with Arts Beyond the Shell

Queen's Square (next to Queen's Market), E13 9BA

WINDRUSH



Maryland Windrush Celebration ©Neandra Etienne

Baroness Lawrence of Clarendon was an invited guest at **Maryland Primary School's** Windrush Memorial celebration day to commemorate the arrival of HMT Empire Windrush.

The celebration included a school art and culture exhibition honouring the history and heritage of the Windrush generation.

Local broadcaster and comedian Quincy co-hosted Maryland Radio

Newham u3a hold monthly talk, tea and coffee afternoons

Their August talk will be on the hidden cemetery in the heart of Queen Mary University campus.

Non-members are welcome on a taster/one-off basis to meet and potentially join Newham u3a

6 August, 1.15pm, Clapton Community Football Club Clubhouse Upton Lane

The Mayor of London Sir Sadiq Khan is hosting **UNESCO Day for Remembering the Transatlantic Slave Trade** and its Abolition 2026

20 August, 6.30pm – 7.30pm, Online
<https://www.london.gov.uk>

Yaram Festival, a free open air event features: reggae music, afro beats, traditional african carnival arts and masquerade dances. There will be food stalls selling Afro-Caribbean cuisine.

30 August, 2pm – 8pm, Barking Road Recreation Ground, E6 3BA

Tickets Link: [Yaraminthepark2026.eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)

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

with students. During Quincy's talk show on Maryland radio he interviewed Headteacher Lorna Jackson and Mrs Healey about their Windrush journey. Local entertainer Kat B led a carnival dance with the students. The school choir performed songs wearing t-shirts with the national motto of Jamaica "Out of many, one people".

Jamaica Independence Day is celebrated on 6 August. Poetry in Mind (see page 5)

PEOPLE BEFORE CARS POLICY DEBATE

Why Green Street should become pedestrian only

Kerena Fussel on behalf of Better Streets Newham says that after a horrifying crash last month cars should be banned from a major Newham shopping hub

In June there was a tragic crash on Green Street, shocking footage of which has been widely shared on social media. Six people were injured, at least one with severely life-altering injuries. The road was closed.

Horribly, this is not an isolated event. Green Street has seen repeated collisions over recent years. Transport for London (TfL) show that between 2017–2025 there were 26 traffic collisions on Green Street alone, resulting in serious injury to 12 pedestrians and three cyclists and tragically, the death of a 14-year-old girl in 2022.

For many local residents, this latest crash is not a surprise – it is another warning.

At Better Streets for Newham, we think it's time to start thinking about putting people first and looking at pedestrianising Green Street.

Every day, thousands of people walk its pavements to shop, work, worship, and socialise. It is also key to children attending at least four secondary schools and about a dozen primary schools. Yet large volumes of traffic continue to pass within metres of dense crowds. This combination—heavy traffic and high pedestrian footfall—is inherently dangerous.

Green Street is one of Newham's busiest and most vibrant high streets. It has huge cultural, historical and economic significance across London and is one of the key South Asian shopping hubs. People come from miles around for its fashion, food, jewellery and the hugely popular Queen's Road market.

In a study by the University of Leeds, 89 percent of people visiting Green Street said the market was the main reason for visiting the area that day. As part of that study, they found that only 25 percent of visitors travelled to the market by car.

The question we should be asking is simple: why are we still prioritising through-traffic over people?

Unlike many places where pedestrianisation may be difficult, Green Street is already exceptionally well served by public transport. With nearby Underground stations and several well used bus routes, most visitors already have viable alternatives to driving. Reducing car access would not cut Green Street off—it would make it more accessible and safer for the majority of people who already arrive without a car.



There is also a strong economic case for making these changes. Despite common fears, evidence from across the UK and Europe consistently shows that pedestrianisation benefits local businesses. When streets are safer, quieter, and more pleasant to spend time in, people stay longer and spend more money. Cleaner air, reduced noise, and improved public space create thriving high streets.

Of course, any proposal to pedestrianise Green Street will face opposition. There will always be voices insisting that change is impossible, or that cars must continue to dominate our urban spaces. But political leadership means looking beyond the loudest objections and acting in the public interest.

Our politicians must be willing to challenge outdated thinking and be bold enough to imagine something better.

Green Street can be safer. It can be greener. It can be a place designed around people rather than vehicles. At Better Streets for Newham, we stand ready to support local leaders in making that vision a reality.

Going Dutch for road safety at Forest Gate danger spot

JONATHAN ROTHWELL

As part of the Romford Road cycleway scheme, there is a new design for the Woodgrange Road junction with Upton Lane junction, which aims to make this notorious danger spot much safer.

This junction will be Newham's first Dutch-style protected crossroads. Unlike conventional UK junctions which consist of little more than a painted rectangle for cycling, the Dutch junction design continues the protected cycleways across the junction itself.

Cycle paths run around the edge of the junction physically separated both from pedestrians and cars.

As with similar junctions in Leyton, Woodgrange Junction will have a simultaneous green for pedestrians and cyclists, while motor traffic waits on an all-red phase.

As long as people wait for the lights, there will be no risk of drivers cutting left

across cyclists' paths (as happened in 2018 at Woodgrange Junction, where a woman in her early 20s was hit and seriously hurt by a lorry driver turning left).

And because cyclists will have a safe space to wait, protected from traffic by a kerb, they are more likely to wait. Instead of giving cyclists a head-start, the new design will mean cyclists don't have to outrun traffic at all.

These layouts also make turning easier when cycling. To turn right, people cycle clockwise round the junction using the same cycle paths as people going straight on, with no need to squeeze across three lanes of traffic.

The new design also improves things for pedestrians. Unlike the current layout where you have to shuffle along narrow traffic islands, penned in by guardrail, the new design will have wide, straight-across crossings on all four arms.

Woodgrange Junction has a poor safety record for motor traffic, with 12 crashes

recorded between 2020 and 2024 alone. By reducing the number of lanes on approach, the new design should reduce dangerous swerving and merge movements—and the tighter corner radiuses will slow people down, meaning they turn at a safer speed.

Newham Cyclists are hoping these junctions become standard practice across the Borough as they have in neighbouring Waltham Forest. In January 2025, a man in his early 20s was hit and killed by a lorry driver while cycling at the unprotected Carpenters Road junction on Stratford High Street (*Newham Voices*, April 2025.) Adding Dutch-style physical protection for cycling there—and on other junctions on Stratford High Street, West Ham Lane, Barking Road, and East Ham High Street—will make this kind of tragedy considerably less likely.

Jonathan Rothwell is co-ordinator of Newham Cyclists, the local branch of London Cycling Campaign

Danger Zone: The Portway

Dr Matthew Carlile, Portway resident and Newham Councillor for Forest Gate North (Green Party)

We love living on Portway – it's close to West Ham park; it's a diverse community with friendly neighbours and plenty of small shops, schools and a leisure centre in walking distance; and great access to transport links via buses, Plaistow and Stratford stations.

A home should feel like a safe space.

One morning, around two years ago, we had been staying at a friend's house, and I turned my phone on to scores of worried messages: 'So sorry to hear about your house!' ...'are you ok?!' We rushed home to find that our living room had been smashed into a gaping, shadowy crater in the side of our home.

A Range Rover driver had been stopped by police and had sped off, lost control,

and swerved into our house. It ploughed through a wall and a tree and disintegrated into twisted metal and plastic. Dust was flushed into every crevice of the house. Huge chunks of concrete and pieces of car were found on the sofa and strewn down the corridor. The front room was knee deep in rubble, and the fire brigade had been forced to smash down the front door to look for survivors.

It took 18 months to get the insurers to pay builders to fix the damage. In that time we had no access to the front room. We didn't want to move out, as this is our home. My son goes to school nearby. He's autistic and doesn't like change. Our garden is here.

It looks lovely now the damage has been fixed. But the financial cost was astronomical. And more than that, every time my son sits on our replacement sofa, I worry that a car will plough through the

wall. We shouldn't feel frightened to sit in our own living room. And I have no confidence that this might not happen again.

Frances Vulliamy, resident near Portway

I've lived just off Portway for thirteen years. When we arrived, I thought it was just bad luck that our neighbours' front wall had been destroyed by a car. But I was wrong, it's not bad luck. Portway is an extremely dangerous road.

Soon after we moved in, the zebra crossing was smashed to pieces. Then a five vehicle head on collision. Then someone drove into a neighbour's living room. Then another front garden. Every few months there is an accident; every day cars speed over the crossing points; every night we hear racing vehicles.

When the most recent serious collision happened, I heard the screaming brakes and horrifying crunch of the car losing control and landing in a shop. I can only imagine how nightmarish it must have been for those neighbours directly involved.

I've been writing emails about Portway for years (and years). This time I couldn't. I did not want to hear, again, that my concerns had been noted... The End.

The local shopkeeper said to me "Start a petition. Everyone will sign it". So I did, hoping for 50 signatures. After a day it had more than 100. After two weeks it was 500.

I talk to people on Portway now and the trauma is real. People cannot understand why the issues are not addressed, are not even talked about. There are different views about cars, but absolutely no one can stand the speeding, racing and dangerous driving which endangers us all.

On Saturday 5 September there will be a march along Portway. It will be a chance to meet, share our experiences and support each other. I hope the Council will

see that we are people who love our community and living here. That's why we cannot accept another high speed Portway disaster. As things stand now, it's waiting to happen.

FACT FILE

- Official figures show that after five years of increasing road travel in Newham, the number of miles covered by traffic is falling.
- Almost 589 million miles were covered by drivers on the Borough's roads last year – around seven million miles less than the previous year.
- Road use fell dramatically in the Covid year of 2020–2021, but is now back at pre-pandemic levels.
- The signs are that traffic management systems and the Borough-wide 20 miles an hour limit are having an impact.
- The number of miles travelled by motor vehicles are around 15 million down on numbers from around 20 years ago.
- The reduced speed limit was introduced last year in response to data that shows between 2017 and 2022, there were 5,200 road collision casualties in the Borough, including 16 deaths and 598 serious injuries.
- The majority of these serious and fatal injuries occurred on roads with a 30mph limit.
- Reducing speed cuts the number of accidents, with every 1mph reduction in average speed reducing the number of collisions by up to 6 percent.
- The 20 mph initiative is part of the Mayor of London's Vision Zero strategy to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries on the capital's roads by 2041.
- Newham has the fourth lowest car ownership rate per head in the UK – 52 percent of households in the Borough do not own a car.
- Since 2019 around 50 schools and colleges in Newham have had safer school streets restrictions imposed on nearby roads adding to road safety. There is a map of the streets available at lbnewham.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=a05642ba34df-4c08925a62500e2604ea

Sources: Office of National Statistics, Newham Council



The threat from pavement cycling

PAUL CLEMENTS

John – a disabled Maryland resident in his 80s, who moved into the area the day England won the 1966 World Cup – was doing some shopping along the station parade when a cyclist riding at speed on the pavement crashed into him. The collision was so violent, John was thrown out of his electric wheelchair.

Dazed and unable to right himself, he was helped up off the ground by customers queuing for the wet-fish shop. As John dusted himself off – nothing broken, just a few cuts and bruises – members of the public remonstrated with the cyclist. But he simply rode off.

This shocking incident happened earlier this summer and highlights what I think is a growing but often overlooked Maryland problem.

Customers stepping out of the Turkish barbers, grocery shops and Caribbean restaurants along Leytonstone High Road, as well as the commuters leaving our Elizabeth Line station, will all have stories of near-misses with cyclists who treat our pavements like speedways.

For the avoidance of any doubt, it is against the law to ride a bicycle on the pavement under Section 72 of the Highway Act 1835 – a Victorian-era law intended for horse and carriage, but which also makes it illegal to "wilfully ride" on a footway

meant for pedestrians, unless it is marked as a shared-use route.

Riding a bike on the pavement can result in an on-the-spot fine. Under the Crime and Policing Act 2026, careless cycling – of the kind that saw John's wheelchair totalled – carries a nominal fine up to £1,000. But there's precious little enforcement.

I've never seen a police officer stop a law-breaking delivery rider in Maryland, or someone on a souped-up e-bike. By turning a blind eye to this nuisance behaviour, it gets worse, to the point that pavement cycling has effectively been decriminalised. This issue has now been taken up by the community through the recently-formed Maryland Ward Group.

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**NEWHAM
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Denmark Arms pub rent demand 'unrealistic'

AIDAN WHITE AND NICK CLARK
Local Democracy Reporter

Local campaigners have challenged claims that the closed Denmark Arms in East Ham has no future as a pub.

Earlier, property developer 311 Investments Ltd said there was "no way those premises will open as a public house" and claimed the vacant pub would be left "unloved, unused and going to decay" if the conversion into a mini-casino was not approved. Nevertheless, Newham Council turned down their plan in June.

Now estate agent Claridges is advertising the ground floor to let at a price of £125,000 a year.

The Campaign to Protect the Denmark

Arms says there is insufficient evidence the building is unviable as a pub, and that the asking rent is not a realistic price as required by planning policy.

"Current live listings from Star Pubs (Heineken UK), one of the UK's largest pub landlords, show annual rents for London pub buildings ranging from £45,369 to £82,374 per annum," says the Campaign. "These are for entire pub buildings, not ground floor only."

And in their original report rejecting the casino plan Council officers said 311 Investments hadn't proved it wasn't possible for the Denmark Arms to remain as a pub.

Land Registry documents show the Denmark Arms' freeholder SPS

Developments Essex - owned by Wanstead-based Dalbir Singh Sanger - bought the building's freehold on 6 August 2025 for £1.5million.

In a letter to the Council Sanger said there had been "reduced market interest" in the pub, and that the 311 Investments' agreement to buy the ground floor lease was "the only serious approach we had received in relation to the property".

A Council spokesperson said the Council has been monitoring the site since February 2026, when initial concerns were raised regarding scaffolding at the property. They said a visit has been arranged to assess the full interior condition of the upper floors.

We have contacted 311 Investments and SPS Developments for comment.



SadlersWells
©Peter Molloy

Sadlers Wells East scoops architects' prize

Sadler's Wells East, designed by O'Donnell + Tuomey and situated on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Stratford as part of East Bank, has been awarded a prestigious National Award 2026 for Architecture, presented by the architects' professional body, RIBA.

Four years of LGBT togetherness

ROBERT ASHBY

Covid brought many problems into focus, one being the loneliness felt by many older people. Research also shows the extreme isolation endured by most older gay men, lesbians, bi and trans people.

Long-time Newham residents Philip Kee and Dr Bill Hopkinson were determined to help their community. They now happily celebrate the fourth anniversary of East London Seniors.

"Our research revealed that three-quarters of retired and single LGBT people experience significant loneliness," explains Bill. "Almost 80 percent have money worries and 40 percent have no

one to turn to if they need help."

Many LGBT seniors have few relatives, no close family and have become adrift from both the gay world and the wider local community.

"Our group provides social contact and support," says Philip. "We have at least one lunchtime gathering each week and a regular pub evening at the Forest Tavern."

The group has focused on happiness and well-being and is seen as a lifeline by many members.

"Some people come to us at times of despair and broken dreams, perhaps living with the challenges of cancer, diabetes, loss of mobility, loss of identity and status. Our group can provide belonging, connection and community."

Excursions and days out are a new addition to East London LGBT Seniors' programme: Margate, Leigh, city farms, picnics, museums — all suggested and led by people who attend the group.

Committee members have also been able to visit members in hospital and stay in touch with housebound friends by telephone.

"We welcome all LGBT people over 50 who can travel to East London," says Bill. "Current ages range from 55 to 85 but we are sure that hundreds of other isolated LGBT seniors might be happy to know our group."

To get in touch, please ring 07999066295 or email info@eastlondon seniors.lgbt

AWARDS IN BRIEF



Newham school awards

St Bonaventure's students Abdul Majid (Year 9), Luginton (Year 10) and Reuben (Year 12), have been recognised at the 2026 Brentwood Catholic Schools Good Citizenship Awards, held at the Cathedral Church of St Mary and St Helen in Essex, writes Neandra Etienne.

The awards recognise outstanding citizenship, compassion and service.

Entrepreneur of the Year Kartheek

Vt Akhila writes: Kartheek Kandhi, from India, won the Entrepreneur of the Year award 2026 at the University of East London Student and Partner Celebration in London. His innovative AI shoe concept redefines what a shoe can do and will launch in the coming months. Kartheek came to the UK as a student on a mission - to build something the world had not yet imagined.



Community tech founder recognised

Emmanuel Edem Umo (pictured above), founder of Mau Creative Hub, won the Young Pioneer category at the AbilityNet Tech4Good Awards 2026 for the positive use of technology. Umo visited a rural school in Nigeria with poor access to electricity. He brought laptops and a solar generator and delivered the pupils' first digital skills session.

www.maucreativehub.com

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Under the hammer for bringing river back to life

SIMON SHAW

Thanks to the Friends of the River Roding, I can once again water my potatoes from the Alders Brook. The cost, however, is that the dedicated volunteers who cleared the brook of rubbish were threatened with legal action — and even possible imprisonment — by the Environment Agency.

The River Roding Trust, led by barrister Paul Powlesland, founder of Lawyers for Nature, is campaigning to save London’s third-largest river from what it sees as years of neglect by the Environment Agency.

My allotment in Manor Park is bordered by the Alders Brook, a tributary of the River Roding, which has its source within the land of the nearby City of London Cemetery.

Despite waiting lists of up to ten years for a plot, the site has effectively been abandoned by the Council. A Council spokesperson confirmed that the authority now carries out only “minimal maintenance” at Bridle Path Allotments, citing the site’s poor accessibility and lack of facilities compared with other allotment locations.



Last February, Powlesland and hundreds of volunteers removed around 200 bags of litter from the brook. Among the rubbish were abandoned firearms, hidden drugs and hundreds of used syringes. As a result of their efforts, I can now wade into the stream to collect water for my potatoes.

More importantly, wildlife has returned. Herons, egrets and many other bird species are now regularly seen along the brook. Birdwatchers on the bridle path

are always eager to point out species that I would otherwise miss.

The river’s guardians have transformed what was once a foul-smelling, silted-up rubbish dump into a flowing stream.

Powlesland believes that, in time, the water could become clean enough for people to bathe in. Where there was once muck and debris, there are now bulrushes, flag irises, dragonflies and shoals of fish. I even spotted a small snake in the water recently.

The Environment Agency initially threatened prosecution on the grounds that the work had been carried out without a permit. The Agency says it may still pursue enforcement action if work is undertaken without authorisation.

Powlesland has said he will ignore those threats unless he is granted a meeting with the Environment Agency’s chief executive and he accuses the Agency of pursuing an easy target while failing to tackle the estimated 750,000 litres of sewage that are illegally dumped into the River Roding each year.

Become the missing piece in a child’s life

Newham Council is recruiting new foster carers from different cultural backgrounds to address a desperate shortage of foster families.

There are currently more than 9,700 children who need a foster care placement in the UK and there is an estimated shortage of 6,000 foster carers.

The Council hopes families with diverse heritage will step up and become foster carers, particularly from the Bangladeshi communities, and those who identify as Black African, including those of Somali, Nigerian and Ghanaian heritage.

The Council will be working with residents, existing foster carers and community groups to help raise awareness, dispel any cultural myths and highlight the importance of tackling any mismatches.

Councillor Lakmini Shah, pictured, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Communities, said: “We are proud to be launching a campaign that speaks directly to every Newham adult, encouraging them to think

about fostering. We want to break barriers, tackle misconceptions and bring about behaviour change.

“We will be working with existing foster carers to help meet our overarching aim of increasing the number of successful fostering households in Newham. We want people from the Borough to recognise that they could indeed be the missing piece in a child’s life.”

Foster families can call on a range of support services provided by Newham Council, including a 24-hour specialist advice line.

families.newham.gov.uk/kb5/newham/directory/home.page



LOCAL NOTICES

Published 31st July 2026

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR’S LICENCE APPLICATION NOTICE

Voltloader Limited of The Coach House, Vicarage Lane, Hambledon, Waterlooville, England, PO7 4RP is applying for a Standard National Operator’s Licence to use **Tate & Lyle Sugars, Factory Rd, London E16 2EW** as an operating centre for 3 goods vehicles and 6 trailers.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE, within 21 days of the date of this publication. A copy of the representation should also be sent to the applicant at the address given above.

ADVERTISE YOUR LICENCE HERE

LICENSING ACT 2003 Application for a New Premises Licence

We NSF(UK) have applied to NEWHAM COUNCIL for a premises licences for **Newham Leisure Centre, 281 Prince Regent Lane, London E13 8S, United Kingdom** and use of **Terrace Mcmillon Stadium** so that the following licensable activities may be provided on the following days and hours:

Sports and Family Fun Day
Saturday 29th August 2026 from 12pm to 9pm for the activities listed below

- Indoor sporting events from 12:00-18:00
- Live music from 12:00-21:00
- Recorded music from 12:00-21:00
- Performances of dance from 12:00-21:00

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) 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 or via email, by no later than the **14th August 2026**

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.

LICENSING ACT 2003 Application for a Variation of a Premises Licence

I Mr Imtiaz Jehangir have applied to NEWHAM COUNCIL to Vary the premises licence for **ZU’s 83 Green Street, Forest Gate, London E7 8JF** so that the following licensable activities may be provided on the following days and hours:

Provision of Late Night Refreshment

- Mon-Sun 23:00-05:00

Newham Council’s Licensing Register is kept at the office of the Licensing Team, East Ham Town Hall, Barking Road, London E6 2RP, (open from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday), 020 3373 1925, 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 or via email, by no later than the **27th August 2026**.

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 Council’s 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.

LICENSING ACT 2003 Application for a New Premises Licence

I/We The Chillies Kitchen PVT LTD have applied to NEWHAM COUNCIL for a premises licence for **The Chillies, Shop No. 4, 274–276 Neville Road, Upton Park, London E7 9QN** so that the following licensable activities may be provided on the following days and hours:

Late Night Refreshment (Indoor & Outdoor)

- Monday – Sunday: 23:00 – 04:00

Newham Council’s Licensing Register is kept at the office of the Licensing Team, East Ham Town Hall, Barking Road, East Ham, E6 2RP (open 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday), 020 3373 1925, 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 **25 August 2026**.

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 Council’s 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.

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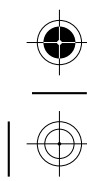
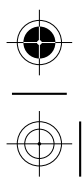
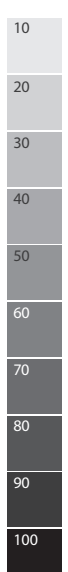
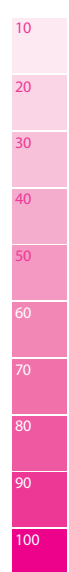
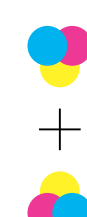
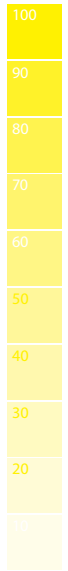
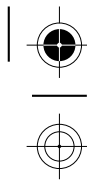
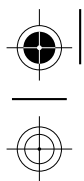
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SOMETHING'S BREWING



Phil Mellows on the role of the pub in keeping the kids happy during the holidays

School's out for the summer and parents face their big challenge. What on earth do you do with the children?

My advice is, go down the pub. True, that's my advice for tackling all of life's knotty problems, but the great thing about the pub is that it entertains adults along with the kids. If you can persuade your offspring to demand a trip to the local for lunch you can say "well, okay then" while privately punching the air like you've just scored a goal at the world cup.

Of course, it has to be the right sort of pub, and if the sun keeps shining, you'll want to be in a family-friendly beer garden. That narrows your options considerably in this part of London, but we do have a couple of crackers conveniently bordering Wanstead Flats, where you can almost feel like you're out in the country.

According to the Campaign for Real Ale's guide, Greene King's Golden Fleece in Manor Park is "handy for the crematoriums", but hopefully that won't be necessary. The leafy garden out back has a dedicated family zone and plenty of comfortable seating. There's an unusually extensive children's menu, too.

Down the road in Forest Gate, Remarkable Pubs' Holly Tree has arguably one of the most exciting beer gardens in the country thanks to a miniature train that runs around the perimeter with free



Holly Tree Pub, image via Facebook

rides for the kids. It's well set up for all fresco dining, too, with booths to accommodate small groups, and it boasts one of the best beer ranges in the area.

Elsewhere, to the south of the Borough Fuller's Windjammer is a modern riverside pub within sight of the Thames Barrier. It has a sprawling beer terrace at the front with lots of space for everyone and another good kids' menu.

But what if it rains? The Bat & Ball by Stratford's Westfield centre could be a good daytime option for your older children at least, a giant venue with table-tennis tables, pool, shuffleboard and darts, and a food menu focused on pizzas, burgers, hotdogs and wings.

And should you find yourself enjoying the trip out as much as the kids, just don't let them know. They may not want to go back.

Summer special in North Woolwich

Residents from across Newham came together on 24 June for St John's Community Centre's annual summer party, in North Woolwich. The event was supported by Argenta by Guinness Homes. St John's is run by volunteers and plays an important role bringing people together with its community gardening initiatives, a food hub, a lending library, walking groups, a chatty café and donation programmes for clothing, toys and household items.

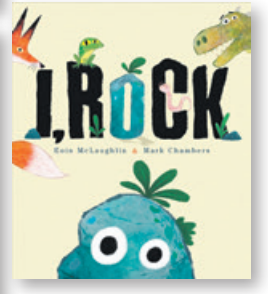
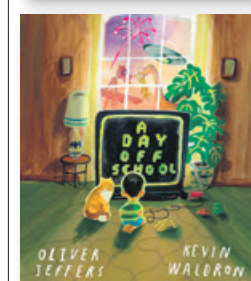
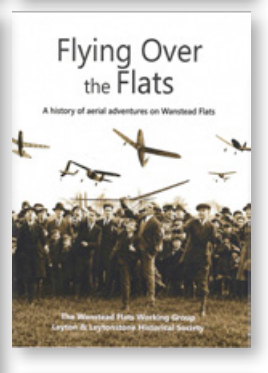
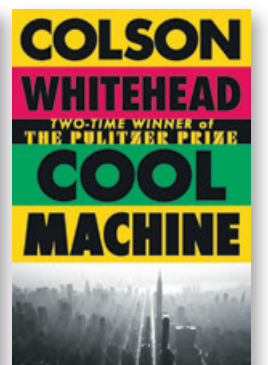
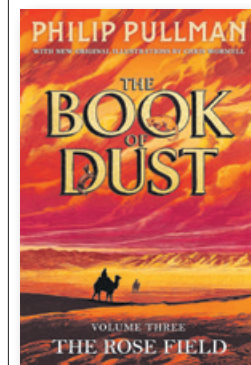


Good reads in Newham

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

- **Flying Over the Flats: The history of aerial adventures on Wanstead Flats**
By Wanstead Flats Working Group, Leyton & Leytonstone Historical Society
- **Story of a Murder: The Wives, the Mistress and Doctor Crippen**
By Hallie Rubenhold
- **Cool Machine**
By Colson Whitehead
- **A Day Off School**
By Oliver Jeffers
(Illustrated by Kevin Waldron)
- **I, Rock**
By Eoin McLaughlin
(Illustrated by Mark Chambers)
- **The Rose Field: Book of Dust series**
By Philip Pullman
(Illustrated by Christopher Wormell)

– Compiled by David Ceen, Newham Bookshop



A world of music in the park

CHARLOTTE COOK

Friends of West Ham Park

Sunday 12 July saw ParkFest '26 – the Friends of West Ham Park's annual community event. And we have our amazing musicians to thank for making it such a fantastic success.

After an introduction from not one pair of Pearly Kings and Queens but two! – from Forest Gate and Stratford – the event was kicked off by the fabulous Samba4Fun, led by Stephen Henfrey. And with those enriching rhythms of Salvador, Bahia and Brazilian, this was drumming in the company of friends you just haven't met yet!

It was super to have Steve Russell back again, an amazing guitar player, and the writer of an anthem/ode to West Ham Park.

Another newbie (to us at least) was Xine, who originally trained at the Conservatoire of Marseille. Thanks to the Workhouse and the Foresters, it was fabulous to have such a variety of musical styles to entertain us on a sunny Sunday.

We were also very pleased to welcome some younger performers this

year: our first dancer in Vanesa Ivanva Dimitrova, The Originals (who started as a school band), and solo performer Michael Trumble.

And of course, old faithfuls such as Forest Voices, the Dog Jammers, Lakehouse Bell, and Funk Crawl. Special

thanks to Andy for his sterling work at the controls!

It was such a success that plans are in hand for ParkFest '27. Donations to support the event can be made at: [gofund.me/fdc6038f](https://www.gofund.me/fdc6038f) and people interested in playing next year should let us know.



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For full details or to request a copy, visit: newhambooks.co.uk

SPORTS SHORTS

Compiled by Neandra Etienne



London Pulse player
Liv ©Hayley Bavin

2026 Commonwealth Games – 23 July – 2 August, Glasgow

London Pulse Netball players Liv, Funmi and Hali have been selected to represent the England Netball squad and Alicia has been named as a reserve. London Pulse Netball, based at the Copper Box Arena in Stratford, competes in the Netball Super league.

Athletes from Newham and Essex Beagles representing Team England: Jade O'Dowda, Aleeya Sibbons and Nethaneel Mitchell-Blake from Newham.

Olympic, 2 x World and Commonwealth Champion Christine Ohuruogu, from Newham, will be co-commentating at the games for talkSPORT.

Charitable social enterprise and work-er-owned co-op GLL announced that 3234

athletes from across the UK will benefit from the 2026 intake of its GLL Sport Foundation (GSF).

Fifty five of the athletes are from Newham and they will receive a combined total of £42,300 worth of support.

The GSF supports athletes through financial bursaries, access to physical rehabilitation and mental wellbeing support. All athletes are also given access to over 250 sport and leisure facilities across the UK operated by GLL under its "BETTER" brand.

Newham GSF is sending two sponsored athletes to the Commonwealth Games – 100m Sprint Hurdler Emma Nwofor and 4 x 100m Relay Runner Jonah Efoloko.

gllsportfoundation.org

Free Newham Parks Tennis Open Day is available for all abilities with coaching taster sessions for children and adults.

All equipment is provided. 9 August from 9am – 12pm, Plashet Park, E6 1DQ
plashet.newhamparkstennis.org.uk

Clapton CFC team's debut in the Men's FA Cup will be a home game against Benfleet on 8 August when the extra preliminary round starts.

Clapton CFC women's first team friendlies and season dates are available on the website: claptoncfc.co.uk

The purpose of the two-day community football tournament, organised by **Plaistow Parkside Lions Community Youth Empowerment Project**, is to bring young people, football teams and

the wider community together through football, teamwork, respect, discipline and positive community engagement.

Members of the public, families and supporters are warmly welcome to attend.

9 and 10 August, gates will open from 10am, and the event will run until 5pm on both days, West Ham Memorial Park.

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

East Ham based **APSA FC**, founded in 1993, will compete in the Essex Alliance Premier Division for the 2026/27 season, marking the club's first senior campaign since leaving the Essex Senior League following the 2015/16 season.

In August they will train at Powerleague Newham on Wednesdays.

APSA FC Under-12 Girls have been crowned champions at the 4v4 World Cup Tournament, representing England.

An APSA Foundation spokesperson said: "To bring the trophy home is a brilliant achievement and one they should all be proud of."



APSA Foundation

Relegated **West Ham United** are scheduled to play Portsmouth at home in the first round of the EFL Carabao Cup on 8 August. The club's first Championship match is on 16 August against Burnley and their first home match at the London Stadium is on 22 August against Charlton.

whufc.com

London Stadium's Grounds Team was awarded the Premier League Grounds Team of the Year for the second consecutive season.

london-stadium.com

Newham-based **SHADE Youth FC** delivers workshops, mentoring sessions and youth activities designed to support the wider wellbeing of young people in the area. For more information contact the team through social media or email at community@theshade.org

GLL, the charitable social enterprise operating 'Better' leisure centres in partnership with **Newham Council**, has announced the second year of its Physical Activity Inclusion Fund in Newham.

Clubs, charities and organisations that encourage participation in sports, can



apply for grants of up to £5,000 to support projects that improve physical activity levels and enhance social well-being.

The fund is now open for online applications and will close on 16 August. Successful applicants will be notified within eight weeks.

better.org.uk/newham-paif

Liverpool and England player **Rio Ngu-moha**, from Newham, has been short-listed for the PFA Young Player of the Year award for 2025-2026. The winner is scheduled to be announced at the PFA Awards on 25 August

Aston Villa player Ezri Konsa, from Newham, scored during England's 6-4 win against France on 18 July. The win secured England's third place at the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

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



Lee takes to the sky for solidarity

After hearing that a close family member was diagnosed with a rapidly progressing form of cancer, Lee Robinson, who works in West Ham, felt a call to help by doing something completely out of his comfort zone. Lee, pictured, took on a skydive

to raise money for ten-year-old Huxley, who is battling a rare form of leukaemia. With more than £50,000 raised to date, Lee decided to take part in a skydive to raise funds quickly. To support Lee and his family see <https://gofund.me/d29192819>

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Kevin, the mighty mouse who roared



Mickey Ambrose pays tribute to the football legend and national treasure Kevin Keegan



Before David Beckham and Cristiano Ronaldo there was Kevin Keegan, the first English superstar who transcended football. He was on everyone's television as well as in their kitchen and bathroom cupboards, throughout the 1970s.

He made us laugh and smile with the Honey Monster for Sugar Puffs and we all loved the chemistry with Henry Cooper when they 'splashed Brut all over'.

He wore Patrick Football Boots and promoted Mitre Footballs as well as championing the Green Cross Code, teaching children road safety in 1976.

King Kev was the advertiser's favourite. He was everywhere. However, if anyone doubted his sporting fitness and dedication, then they should have watched *Superstars*, when athletes from different sports competed against each other through to a grand final. Although Kevin did not make it to the final, he showed how tough he was in 1976, getting back

on his bike after a nasty crash.

As many of my readers know, I have been blessed with football friendships, getting to know many great players over the years, from Pele to Ray Wilkins, Gary Lineker and Ian Wright among them.

Kevin is one I recall with much affection. I met him more than 20 years ago when I asked him to join a charity 7-a-side celebrity football match at Royal Ascot. It was a football match on the lawns of Ascot on a raceday where my TV ALLSTARS team consisting of actors from *Eastenders*, *The Bill*, Hunter and Rhino from the original *Gladiators* show took on former jockeys led by my good friend and former champion jump jockey John Francome. Kevin agreed and also coached some children from a local school. His love of horses was second to none.

Keegan had the most remarkable of careers. He burst onto the British football scene when he signed for Bill Shankly at Liverpool in May 1971 and immediately

became a firm fans favourite, earning the nickname 'Might Mouse'.

His partnership with John Toshack was so remarkable that pundits wondered whether they had a telepathic connection. As obituaries confirm, this was actually tested on the television show *Kick Off* in 1974.

The two players were seated back-to-back. One would hold up a card or paddle showing a specific colour, shape, or number, and the other had to guess what it was without looking. Toshack astounded



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viewers and hosts alike by getting an impossible ten out of ten correct, while Keegan completely failed when it was his turn to guess.

John later admitted that it wasn't telepathy at all. He could clearly see the reflection of Keegan's cards in the glass lens of the studio television camera pointing directly at him. He kept the joke going for nearly two hours!

Keegan's famous encounter against Bobby Moore's West Ham United at Anfield

happened a few months after his debut on 4 December 1971. Keegan was nervous before the match and Shankly knew this. He pulled Kevin to one-side: "Son, I have just seen Bobby Moore. He looks terrible, he has bags under his eyes and is limping. He must have been in a nightclub all night".

An enthused Keegan ran Bobby Moore ragged the whole match and scored the winning goal. Classic Shankly, he knew how to lift a player.

Kevin's time at Liverpool saw no fewer than nine major trophies from 1971 to 1977, including three First Division Championships, an FA Cup, two Charity Shields, two UEFA Cups and Liverpool's first ever European Cup.

He first became England captain in 1976 and later managed the England national team from February 1999 to October 2000. He was capped 63 times, 31 matches as captain and scoring 21 goals.

He passed away surrounded by his family on 20 July. He will be deeply missed. Despite his terminal cancer diagnosis he was a fighter for other professionals. He supported John Stiles, the son of '66 World Cup hero Nobby Stiles, and his *Families for Justice Dementia Campaign* group. I met Kevin at the FFJ event in Parliament, just a few months before he died.

He would have been among the millions who watched England's World Cup journey and their remarkable 6-4 win in the third place match against France.

The World Cup was memorable, of course, for the politics and allegations of corruption at FIFA which annoyed me, along with the crass behaviour of Donald Trump. However, the football at times was a thing of beauty and poetry, and the way fans came together was heart-warming. It showed what internationalism is all about.

As Kevin looks down, he will be with us hoping for a win in 2028 when we host the Euros across the British Isles, by which time we will be singing 62 years of hurt.

Rest In Peace King Kev - Always Remembered.

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

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West Ham fans named the worst-behaved

A new study has revealed that football fans in England and Wales were on their worst behaviour in the past decade by the end of the 2024/25 season, and West Ham fans were the worst behaved of all.

The thumbs down for Hammers' fans was reached because of the total number of football banning orders in place against them up to June 2025.

The study, by crypto casino Winna, ranked 127 clubs in England and Wales by the number of banning orders against their fans. The latest data from the Home Office on football banning orders, arrests, and other police actions was used, and this covered all football seasons between 2014 and 2025.

A football banning order prevents individuals from attending regulated foot-

ball matches in the UK, and can require individuals to report to police stations or surrender their passports to prevent attendance at matches outside the UK.

West Ham United fans held more than one out of every nine of the Premier League's 954 banning orders, and had more than double the average of 47.7 banning orders for Premier League fanbases in 2024/25. West Ham fans also had 39 new football banning orders issued in the 2024/25 season, the most of any fanbase.

In the Championship it was Millwall fans who were the worst-behaved and the seventh-worst-behaved overall.

Paul Mertens, head of Winna, said: "It is probably the police's worst nightmare to have West Ham and Millwall in the same league next season. The two teams have one of the fiercest rivalries in the country."

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