

Tragedy of Aalim, 5, who died in a world of his own

A five-year-old Plaistow boy who died in a fall from a tower block leapt from a window in the belief he could fly, owing to his autism and inability to assess risk an inquest has found.

Aalim Ahmed was killed instantly in the fall from his kitchen window on the 15th floor of Jacobs House in Plaistow on 16 May 2024.

Delivering his narrative verdict on the tragedy at East London Coroner's Court, assistant coroner Ian Wade said: "Aalim was an active five-year-old boy who suffered from a diagnosed condition called autism, such as to render him incapable of making reliable judgments about his personal safety and abilities."

There were contrasting accounts about the condition of the window presented at the inquest, and the assistant coroner said the window was "compromised" but he also said there was "no compelling reason why a landlord should've considered that placing this little boy on the 15th floor was inappropriate".

"It wasn't the fact that it was the 15th floor that was significant," he said, "what was significant was that the windows had become compromised."

Earlier, Aalim's mother Sahara Osman, had told the inquest that her son's death "could've been prevented" if Newham Council had addressed her concerns about windows in the flat. She said she didn't believe the flat was safe when it was offered as temporary accommodation in 2023, given its height and her son's suspected autism.

But the Council was exonerated from culpability by the inquest.

In a statement, Councillor John Gray, Newham's Deputy Mayor and Cabinet lead for housing said: "This was a tragic accident which resulted in the heartbreaking death of a young five-year-old child. Our thoughts continue to be with Aalim's family and friends during this incredibly difficult time."

He said the Council was grateful to the coroner for his thorough and fair hearing of the facts of this case.

In his narrative verdict the assistant coroner said the windows "were not used appropriately". He described how Aalim had woken up in the early hours of 16 May 2024 and went from his bedroom



Jacobs House in Plaistow, where five-year-old Aalim fell from the 15th floor onto railings, and inset, messages of sympathy at the time of his death



Police said flat was "clearly a loving environment for a child."

tion for "more appropriate housing" was included in his report, which he advised Aalim's parents to pass on to Newham's housing team.

In evidence to the court, reported by *Inside Housing*, Paul Kitson, Newham Council's Corporate Director of Housing said that the Council had no record of receiving Dr. Ahuja's letter confirming the formal diagnosis of autism. He said if the Council had received this it would have carried out another suitability assessment of the temporary accommodation.

He also said the family's months-long wait for repairs or maintenance to windows in the flat was "an unacceptable delay".

to the kitchen where he climbed on to a chair and then on to the windowsill of an insecure double turn and tilt window.

"He opened the window and in a naïve belief that he could fly or alternatively could come to no harm he leapt from the open window," said the assistant coroner.

Earlier, he described audio footage of the incident, which was played to the court, as "poignant and destabilising." He said the court was "faced with the horrifying prospect, but entirely supported by the evidence, that Aalim stepped out of the window" without realising it was a dangerous thing to do.

Detective inspector Jamie Humm giving evidence for the police told the court that

the flat was "clearly a loving environment for a child". He attended the scene on the morning of Aalim's death, and said there was "no evidence, not even a suspicion" of harm from a third party or a crime committed.

The inquest also heard written evidence from Dr Kumar-Ricky Ahuja, a specialist community paediatrician, who diagnosed Aalim with autism spectrum disorder in June 2023.

He said the parents had "specifically asked if I could make a recommendation to the housing team for more suitable housing" on the ground floor and with outdoor space.

Dr Ahuja added that a recommenda-

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Working together, the new politics of Newham

NICK CLARK

Local Democracy Reporter

Opposition parties can make a real difference in Newham now that Labour no longer has a majority on the council, their leaders have said.

Leaders of the Newham Independents and Green groups at the town hall say council pledges to extend free school meals and take action for Palestine are examples of what they can achieve.

Newham Independents leader Mehmood Mirza said: "It's not going to be an easy ride for the Labour Party."

Arshan Baskaran, leader of the Greens, said his group wouldn't set out to make life difficult for Labour, but would use its influence "to make sure that what gets done for residents is the right thing".

Local elections earlier this year left Labour with the largest number of councillors, and returned a Labour mayor in Newham – but without a majority for the first time since the council was created in the 1960s.

That means the Newham Independents and Greens can work together to win important decisions at meetings of all councillors.

In July the two opposition parties voted together on a Newham Independents proposal to look into giving free school meals to every secondary school pupil in the borough, while Labour councillors abstained.



Arshan Baskaran

The two groups also worked together to commit the council to investigate whether its pension fund is invested in companies "complicit" in Israel's occupation of Palestine.

They rejected a Labour caveat that the council should only divest its funds from those companies "if no harm is made to existing and future council pensioners".

Cllr Baskaran told the Local Democracy Reporting Service (LDRS): "We can get a lot done. I was very happy about the divestment motion, as well as the free school meals. That was a really important one for me".

He pointed that none of the three parties on the council can achieve anything without getting support from at least one of the two other groups.

Cllr Mirza said this meant the Newham Independents could "push" the Labour leadership to implement things they agree on, such as extended free parking.

He told the LDRS: "Labour's not going to get everything they want. They can only get things through where we have a common interest, such as parking.

"We will push them, and if they don't do it we'll expose them. If they don't deliver what they said, they're going to be in trouble".

However, Cllr Mirza admitted it could also be a challenge to get his own group to agree, having grown from a group of four councillors before the elections to 25 now.

He said: "It's difficult, it's not easy. Not everyone is on the same page, so we need to convince them."

Cllr Baskaran said the Greens would also use their position to influence what the council does.

He said: "No one group can pass anything without at least one other group supporting them. So while we are the smallest group we hold an equal amount of power as the Newham Independents."

He added: "I'm not going to stand in the way of anyone doing work that I think is good. But I will be scrutinising and holding to account".

HAVE YOUR SAY – LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@newhamvoices.co.uk

It's not the bikes we should worry about, it's the cars

Paul Clements writes in the August edition of *Newham Voices* about rogue pavement cyclists causing havoc in Maryland.

He notes that section 72 of the Highway Act 1835 is rarely enforced and vulnerable pedestrians are injured.

At the *Newham Voices* editorial meeting, where this article was commissioned, I was asked by the team whether I was going to condemn this illegality.

In fact, I regularly break this early Victorian statute when heading south away from the dedicated cycle lane on Centre Road.

Joining Woodgrange Road, where motorists and cyclists uneasily share the space, drivers frequently take the opportunity to scroll through their phones for a fix of "electric heroin." Remaining on the road—here and

across much of the Borough—means constant danger for cyclists.

Consider the statistics: according to the *Evening Standard*, 60–70 Londoners are killed annually by cars mounting the pavement. No-one is killed by a cyclist.

According to Imperial College, 1500–2,000 Londoners die each year as a result of air pollution caused by cars.

I would like a more recent piece of legislation to be enforced. We would all breathe easier if regulation 98 of the Road Vehicles (construction and use) 1986 Act was followed. This makes stationary engine idling an offence updated in 2002 to give local councils the power of enforcement.

Cyclists are not a threat to the majority in Newham who are not motorists, cars are.

– Simon Shaw, Stratford

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£24 million in cuts challenge for mental health support

AIDAN WHITE

People with mental health problems in Newham can expect changes in their NHS support as a result of a cash crisis facing the East London Foundation Trust (ELFT).

The Trust has to find savings of more than £24 million which could mean job losses among staff and changes in care provision for young people and adults with serious mental health issues.

One immediate casualty of the funding crisis is the closure of a specialist care ward at the trust's East Ham care centre, the Fothergill ward, which is due to shut its doors on 28 September.

The union Unite says there are plans to cut the workforce by five percent – 330 of the Trust's 6,000 workforce – but this is disputed by the Trust.

"The trust is doing everything it can to avoid any job losses," a spokesperson told *Newham Voices*. "If there are redundancies these will only be as a last resort but the risk at present is very low."

Nevertheless, the union says it is preparing to ballot its members at ELFT over potential strike action.

The Trust is planning changes in the delivery of key services such as child and adolescent mental health care, talking therapies, addiction support, help for adults undergoing a mental health crisis, and community programmes, including for ethnic minorities and poor people.



Image: Vitaly Gariev/Unsplash

The Trust says it must implement savings of around 2 percent in its annual budget to balance its books.

The spokesperson said: "Like all NHS providers, we have a responsibility to live within our means so that we can continue to provide high-quality care to the communities we serve, now and in the future."

"We are working closely with our trade unions, colleagues and partners to identify the most effective and sustainable way to deliver the efficiencies required of us, while protecting the quality and safety of care."

Richard Munn, on behalf of the Unite trade union, earlier told *The Guardian*: "To

see cuts to any mental health service is unfathomable and unacceptable. Cutting mental health services will lead to exponentially greater costs to the public purse and lead to lives being destroyed."

A spokeswoman said that all NHS organisations like ELFT have been under pressure to identify efficiencies each year so that resources can be directed towards frontline care.

The spokesperson said: "We have worked with our place-based leadership teams to rethink how we provide our services. Savings opportunities were assessed through a clinically-led process considering patient safety, quality, statutory obli-

gations, demand, reduction in non-pay spend, workforce impacts and opportunities to reduce duplication or improve productivity."

The proposal for the Fothergill Ward at the East Ham Care Centre is to close the ward and re-provide care pathways in a community setting. A formal staff consultation concluded on 24 August with 28 September remaining the indicative implementation date for closure.

East Ham MP Sir Stephen Timms told *Newham Voices*: "There is a good deal of local concern about this. I visited Fothergill Ward last month and spoke to patients and staff, and have written to the Trust about their proposals. The three Newham MPs are in touch about what's happening".

The Trust has also been hit by a critical report from the national Care Quality Commission (CQC) which in July announced it had downgraded ELFT from "good" to "requires improvement".

In response, ELFT's Chief Nurse and Lead for Peer Support and Allied Health Professionals, Claire McKenna said: "The CQC report quite rightly, reflects the reality of the challenges of delivering high-quality care in an increasingly complex environment."

"Many of the themes identified by the CQC are not new to us, and we have already been making changes. We are committed to making improvements to strengthen the quality, safety and experience of care for all who use our services."

Why older people lose out in the digital world

PETER LANDMAN

The Newham Older Persons Reference Group held a special open meeting on digital exclusion on 20 August at the Highway Vineyard Church in Stratford.

Around 40 people joined the Older Persons Reference Group session facil-



©Centre for Ageing Better/Unsplash

itated by the Age UK Communications Officer Elliott Hills. This is a separate group holding forums every three months with newsletters and steering group meetings in between.

Paul Salt from the Hackney advocacy group *Choice in Hackney* gave the background of the social model of care for disabled people.

The Social Model treats disabled people as individuals, and focusses on society as not providing proper encouragement for disabled people to lead fulfilling lives.

He referred to the barriers of public and institutional attitudes, and lack of information on ways to integrate. He then went on to non-use of computers by elderly people, and detailed the main causes as:

- High costs of broadband and smart phones.
- Lack of confidence.
- Unease in giving out personal details.

- Websites not designed for the visually impaired.

Meanwhile there were more and more phone responses which advise people to go online in order to carry out everyday activities and functions.

But that was not so easy pointed out Martin Quinn, founder member of The Campaign for Cash, who said there was always a possibility of a technology breakdown in the banking system, and damage to an individual bank card.

Meanwhile more banks and ATMs are closing, and more shops are demanding card only payment. Some bank closures mean difficult longer journeys.

Martin stated that he was campaigning for legislation for cash payments to be allowed. email contact: **martin@campaignforcash.uk**

Age UK National is conducting a Digital Inclusion Campaign following consultation with a report expected in September.

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Ins and outs of the Borough with a friendliness problem

Simon Shaw on the news that Newham's population is shrinking and a new survey puts the Borough among Britain's least friendly places



London's population has shrunk as more than 400,000 people have quit the capital in a year to live in other regions of the country, according to new official figures.

More than 130,000 residents left London last year and Newham was the biggest loser with more than 16,000 residents deciding to quit the Borough according to new figures from the Office for National Statistics.

The figures suggest that poorer boroughs are haemorrhaging net-taxpaying middle-earners which will deepen the crisis on council-tax deficits.

It's a long way from the days when there was an optimistic oval sign everywhere in the Borough: 'Thank you for visiting Newham London – a place where people choose to live, work and stay'.

This has been replaced vacuously with: 'Newham – People at the heart of everything we do'. The switch came after Sir Robin's Wales 16-year tenure as mayor ended in 2018 and the then new Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz aimed to signal a fresh start.

The era of post-Olympic gentrification and attracting private developers was over in favour of public participation and resident welfare.

I have it on good authority that mayor Fiaz fumed if she saw Wales's pink logo being used rather than her favoured teal-coloured alternative. More tellingly the old slogan was simply not reflective of Newham's demographics, we are deemed an 'arrival' or 'escalator' borough.

Between 18 and 21 percent of the population churn annually.

We are a landing zone for students and young workers, here because they can get somewhere else quickly – to their place of work or their university – as we are a transport hub.

People also fail to live and stay here due to the nature of our housing stock; we are at the top of the league nationally for overcrowding with nearly 50 percent of homes privately rented on short tenancies.

Once families reach peak child rearing years, they seek more spacious homes with a garden in the eastern corridor out to Redbridge and beyond. This is having a profound impact on education.

Between 2019 and 2024 the total number of children in mainstream primary education dropped by 2297 with the trajectory ever downward. By the end of 2024 almost 24 percent of reception places were unfilled.

The most high-profile victim of this trend is the closure of Calverton School with just 207 on roll against a capacity of 420. Perhaps the old oval pink slogan

should be resurrected with the word 'Please' inserted before the 'live, work and stay'.

At the same time Newham finds itself at the lower end of rankings in a national friendliness survey.

The national index of the community life survey is a measure of how often people chat to neighbours, feel lonely, and their levels of participation in civic life.

The area named the least friendly in the survey in England was Barking and Dagenham. Newham came in at number 285 out of 296 boroughs covered.

The index is part of the National Conversation, a project that concludes in August which has captured what thousands of British people think unites and divides us.

These views will inform a report later this year by the Independent Commission on Community and Cohesion, which was set up to tackle what it describes as "the converging crises of social disconnection and division" in the UK.

Newham students make the grade

Sixth form students at two leading Newham schools have been celebrating their success after getting top marks in this year's end of year exams.

St Bonaventure's 6th Form students achieved success with a near 100 percent pass rate and two thirds of students getting A* to B while Brampton Manor Academy, with a cohort size of 407 students, achieved an average grade of A.

Brampton also announced that their students had received 35 offers of places at Oxford or Cambridge and that there had been 45 offers of students to study medicine, dentistry, or veterinary science at university.

Wayne Templeman, the 6th Form Director at St Bonaventure's, said: "Fantastic outcomes like these are the result of students putting in the work, teachers giving their time and expertise, and families supporting their young people throughout the two years." He said St Bonaventure had one of its best GCSE results in years with more than 30 percent of students achieving grades 7-9.

Next year, the school will celebrate its 150th anniversary. A programme of events will take place throughout the anniversary year, bringing together current students, staff, former students, families and the wider St Bonaventure's community to celebrate the school's history and look ahead to its future.

To be part of the celebration, please join their mailing list <https://www.stbons.org> also see <https://www.bramptonmanor.org>

Christmas pledge to end rough sleeping welcomed in Newham

Campaigners in Newham against the problem of homelessness have welcomed a nationwide drive to ensure everyone sleeping rough is offered support to move off the streets by Christmas.

The commitment, from the Prime Minister Andy Burnham, is backed by an additional £44.2 million investment to tackle rough sleeping and homelessness across England.

Your Place, the homelessness charity based in Newham, where currently one in 18 people are experiencing homelessness, among the highest levels in England, has welcomed the news and the pledge of the large support going to areas under the greatest pressures.

Your Place in Canning Town supports 153 people at any one time with safe accommodation and one-to-one support. Residents get access to special-



ist services including healthcare, immigration advice, social care and women's support organisations, helping them get the skills and confidence to live independently.

The charity developed The Harbour Project, a ground-breaking scheme providing long-term

homes and community-based support for people who have experienced years of homelessness and rough sleeping.

"We're incredibly encouraged by the Prime Minister's latest commitment to ending rough sleeping," said Amanda Dubarry, the charity's Chief Executive.

"We see first-hand the scale of demand for homelessness services and the complex challenges many people face when trying to rebuild their lives."

She highlighted the success of their 'everyone in' scheme during the Covid-19 pandemic, when many people were referred to Your Place for long-term support.

"We look forward to being a part of this solution and helping more people to recover, rebuild and regain independence," she said.

"This investment is an important step forward, but ending rough sleeping requires more than emergency accommodation. We urge the government to commit to Housing First services, like our Harbour Project, that provides people with a stable, long-term home and person-centred, community support to recover from years of homelessness and instability."

Dr Judi Love Award

The comedian, broadcaster and former University of East London alumna Judi Love has launched the Dr Judi Love Award worth £3,000 for UEL students from low-income backgrounds, single parents and carers wanting to pursue careers in social work, law, psychology and creative industries.

Judi said: "Education changed the direction of my life and I want this award to do that for somebody else."

Applications are open for the first cohort of Dr Judi Love Award recipients, for students beginning their studies at UEL in September 2026, with successful applicants announced later in the academic year.

www.uel.ac.uk

COMMUNITY NEWS ROUNDUP

By Neandra Etienne

Man charged with East Ham murder



©Neandra Etienne

In the early hours of Tuesday 18 August police were called to Bartholomew's Road, East Ham, where a man in his 40s was found in a vehicle with gunshot wounds. Despite the best efforts of officers and medical staff he died at the scene.

The victim was later named as Masum Miah, aged 42.

On Monday 24 August Sergiu Leahau, of no fixed address, was charged with the murder of Mr. Miah.

Detective Chief Inspector Dan Whitten, who is leading the investigation said: "Firstly, our thoughts remain with the friends and family of the man who has sadly died.

"We know this incident will

cause concern in the local area, and I want to reassure the community that my team and I are doing everything we can to determine what happened and trace those responsible. We are asking anyone with information, or who may have witnessed anything in the early hours of the morning, to please contact us. Any piece of information, no matter how small, could be vital to our investigation."

Anyone with information that may assist the investigation, is urged to contact police on 101, quoting **CAD797/18AUG**.

Alternatively, information can be provided anonymously via independent charity Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111** or **crimestoppers-uk.org**

Energy Minister visits community-owned solar energy project

Stratfor library welcomed visitors to its solar energy project. Department for Energy Security and Net Zero Minister Michael Shanks, London's Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy Mete Coban MBE, and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of the State in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Uma Kumaran MP visited the community-owned project. Community Energy Newham, with the support of Repowering London, installed solar panels on the library roof.

Ruth Chiat, Communities Programme Manager, Newham told *Newham Voices*: "Community energy helps Newham cut carbon, lower energy costs and empowers residents through local ownership, participation and shared benefits."

Energy Minister Michael Shanks told *Newham Voices*: "I

love coming to visit projects like this because you see communities who have come together to deliver an energy project that's helping local people and that's making money for the local community as well. But it's also generating renewable energy which we need as a country.

"As a government we want to support these kinds of projects to learn from what they have already done and invest in it even more right across the country." <https://www.repowering.org.uk>

Forest Gate rail work

Network Rail will carry out vital replacement work on four bridges in Forest Gate:

- Talbot Road E7 oDX, Stracey Road E7 oHG - 1 September
- Strode Road E7 oDU, Latimer Road E7 oLH - 28 September

The replacement work is due to be completed by late summer 2027.

24/7 helpline: 03457 11 41 41
networkrail.co.uk/contact-us

Transport Freedom

The Freedom Pass online portal will be unavailable from 5pm on 31 August until 9am on 15 September due to service upgrades.

Further information about applying for a Freedom Pass and moving from a 60+ Oyster card is available on the Freedom Pass website.

freedompass.org

Sisterhood summer

Young entrepreneur Anne Victoria Ramos, from Newham and founder of Lumikha Collective, recently completed Sisterhood Summer, an award-winning entrepreneurship programme for young women delivered by NatWest Thrive-backed entrepreneurship in partnership with Sisterhood.

Anne explained the inspiration behind Lumikha Collective: "Lumikha Collective is a creative social enterprise helping children discover confidence through arts, crafts and entrepreneurship."

"My inspiration came from participating in youth markets myself and seeing how much confidence they gave me during secondary school."

Sisterhood summer, now in its fifth year, supports ambitious young women aged 18-21 to develop business ideas tackling social and environmental challenges.

Since its launch, the programme has helped start 65 social-led businesses and reached young women across 27 UK cities.

Libraries to reopen

A Newham Council spokesperson provided *Newham Voices* with the following update on the opening of Green Street and Plaistow Libraries: "Newham Council is looking forward to opening both Green Street and Plaistow libraries later this year. Work is ongoing at both sites to ensure they are modern, welcoming, safe and accessible community spaces that local people deserve."

Benefits support at the supermarket

Iceland Foods Benefits Boost is a new initiative that helps older customers check and claim financial support that they may be entitled to and could be missing out on. The campaign

is backed by a £1.8 million commitment from the Rothesay Foundation which is funding the free and confidential benefits support service for Iceland customers aged 66 and over.

For more information, visit: **iceland.co.uk/benefits-boost**

To get in touch and access support, please call: 0330 053 2617

Foodbank returns

Newham District Foodbank's Ascension Church Centre on Baxter Road E16 will reopen after their summer closure on 2 September.

<https://newhamdistrict.foodbank.org.uk>

Mental health support at A and E

Newham University Hospital has been named as one of the hospitals that will be getting an NHS mental health facility dedicated for mental health patients in the A&E department. The facilities, which will help people in crisis and ease overcrowding in A&E departments, also includes extra community-based facilities.

bartshealth.nhs.uk/newham

Community support boost for Newham Bookshop

Plans for a massive rent hike that would have threatened the future of the much loved Newham Bookshop have been put on hold after community protests and an intervention by the Mayor.

The bookshop, which has been serving Newham residents and East London since 1978, was told that it faced a devastating 32 percent rent increase with £20k backdated and payment due immediately.

Thanks to support from the local community which included a petition, letters to local councilors, MPs, Mayor of Newham and press interviews Newham Bookshop met with the Mayor of Newham Forhad Hussain.

The Bookshop, which is run by a company with no shareholders and paying no dividends, and relies on a small staff and volunteers, says they are not in a position to afford the increase.

As a result of the meeting a spokesperson for Newham Bookshop said: "There will be no immediate rent increase."

Newham Bookshop Manager of 40 years Vivian Archer told *Newham Voices*: "We received

great support with more visitors than usual in August. It is really important to keep the pressure up, and of course sales."

Mayor of Newham Forhad Hussain told *Newham Voices*: "Newham Bookshop is important to our local communities. I met with representatives from the bookshop and paused all action relating to the lease, including the proposed rent increase, to give more time for meaningful discussions and joint planning."

"Together we agreed to come up with a fair plan that both protects the interests of Newham taxpayers and supports the long-term future of the bookshop."

"I understand that Newham Bookshop is far more than a business. It is a valued community asset that brings people together, promotes learning and creativity, and plays a unique role in supporting the rich diversity of our Borough." <https://www.newhambooks.co.uk>



Vivian Archer interviewed by ITV London ©Neandra Etienne

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Jamboree role for Dafydd

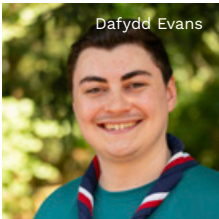
Dafydd Evans from Newham has been selected to represent the UK as part of a team delivering the World Scout Jamboree in Poland in 2027.

He will join Scouts from nearly every country in the world, helping to deliver a truly international experience of friendship across borders and sharing skills for life on a global stage.

Held every four years in a different country, the World Scout Jamboree is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for young people, aged between 14 and 17, in scouting. In 2027, more than 50,000 Scouts will gather to share experience of different cultures and explore the outdoors.

UK Scouts has selected a team of 600 volunteers from across the country to make this event happen. As part of an International Team, Dafydd will take on tasks such as running outdoor activities, supporting cultural exchanges and help deliver events celebrating global Scouting.

Dafydd said: "I went as a participant to the 23rd World Scout Jamboree in Japan in 2015. I'm looking forward to giving that same experience to another group of young people."



Luca takes to the skies after writing competition win

A pupil from New City Primary School has reached for the sky in a once-in-a-lifetime aviation experience. He was selected as one of the three national winners of the Brookie's Aviation Adventures National Writing Competition, organised by Brookfield Aviation.

Luca Chirita, aged 11, was chosen from more than 1,000 entries submitted by children aged 9 to 11 from schools across the United Kingdom.

His prize was an exclusive behind-the-scenes trip to London Oxford Airport.

The day gave Luca and his father an opportunity to experience aviation from a completely different perspective. They met the airport's Fire and Rescue Service, climbed aboard a specialist airport fire engine, handled firefighting equipment and learned about the vital role the team plays in keeping passengers and aircraft safe.

They also enjoyed a guided tour of the airport, visited air traffic control to see how aircraft movements are coordinated, explored the aircraft maintenance facilities where engineers explained how aircraft are inspected and maintained, and took the controls of a professional



Luca Chirita

flight simulator.

The highlight of the day came when Luca climbed aboard a light aircraft with an experienced instructor and took to

the skies above Oxfordshire. During the flight, he was given the opportunity to take the controls, giving him a truly unforgettable introduction to flying.

Advertorial

Newham College London Business student publishes first book

This summer, Ibrahim, 17, a Level 2 Business and GCSE Maths student at Newham College London's East Ham campus celebrated the publication of his first book: Mainstream Education: My Journey as an Autistic Boy.

He said, "As an autistic person, I found the transition to secondary school tough. I struggled in a new environment, overwhelmed by the experience of meeting so many new people. The lack of flexibility in school structure also made me feel uncomfortable."

Ibrahim discussed his experience with his mum who encouraged him to create a journal to help process his thoughts and emotions. It was then he felt inspired to write a book

and share his mainstream education experience.

"The process of writing my book took a year. I began writing it at the age of 16, pausing only to complete my GCSE maths and resits."

"I am proud of what I have achieved. The writing process has taught me that I'm resilient and willing to work hard for what I believe in."

"At college I enjoy the flexibility and support. Staff are very friendly and I can always ask them for help. Eventually I want to pursue my dream career in teaching. During Year 10 I completed a work experience placement at primary school and I really enjoyed it."

Here are some of Ibrahim's reflections from his book, which



he hopes will help other young people, their parents/carers and teachers going through a similar experience:

- The transition from primary to secondary school is huge - more support would help students cope with the transition.
- Students can thrive with the right support in place.
- For some students, the range of secondary school subjects is challenging - a reduced timetable would allow flexibility for a SEND child.

For more information about Newham College London's courses, visit www.newham.ac.uk



OUT AND ABOUT IN NEWHAM

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

TELEVISION

TV Personality and Broadcaster **Dani Dyer**, from Newham, will be returning to *Strictly Come Dancing 2026* when the live shows starts on 26 September. Dani had to withdraw from the show in 2025 due to an injury.

FAITH

The High Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Dominica, **Loreen Bannis-Roberts**, attended the Feast of St Isidore Service and Celebration of Kwéyol Culture, at St Antony's Catholic Church.

AWARDS

Crongton, starring local actor and broadcaster Kelle Bryan, won the award for Children's Programme at the **Royal Television Society Awards**. Philippa Dunne won Comedy Performance for her role in *Amandaland*, which was partly filmed in Forest Gate.

Newham-based artist, illustrator and creative entrepreneur **Ufuoma Urie** was awarded an honorary doctorate by University of the Arts London on behalf of the Design School at London College of Communication.

Ufuoma told *Newham Voices*: "Circumstances meant I couldn't attend my own graduation from UAL, so to be invited back to receive this award felt very full circle. Creativity isn't just what I do, it has carried me through difficult times, so it was an honour to address the young creatives starting their next chapter."



Ufuoma Urie at UAL Undergraduate Graduation for the Class of 2026 at Royal Festival Hall. ©UAL/Photograph In-press Photography Ltd.

BOOKS

Newham Bookshop is celebrating the publication of *Rebel Footprints* by David Rosenberg with an in conversation event hosted by Michael Rosen.

Tickets are available through the Newham Bookshop website.

16 September, Old Spotted Dog Clubhouse, Rear of 212 Upton Lane, E7 9NP
newhambooks.co.uk

EXHIBITION

Poet of the People, George Triggs: Sculpture of Benjamin Zephaniah co-curated by Ruth Millington and Hannah Payne

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm by appointment

19 August – 30 September, TM Lighting Gallery, 7 Cubitt Street, London, WC1X 0HF
tmlighting.com

The September Open exhibition at **Tower Gallery**, features a mix of local art and artists, but has no overriding theme. Artists are showing their recent works in any genre and theme of their choice.

Opening evening event on 10 September, 6–9pm.



Lydia Thornley with giant brickwork drawing

The exhibition is open from 3–7pm on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 11 September to 4 October. Free entry, no need to book!

Open House: Memorial Community Church, 3pm to 7pm on 12 and 18, September. Drop-In Sketching session 3.30–6pm on 19 September with artist in residence, Lydia Thornley who has been researching the history of the iconic building.

Open House free tickets are available from the Open House website
facebook.com/towergalleryplaistow

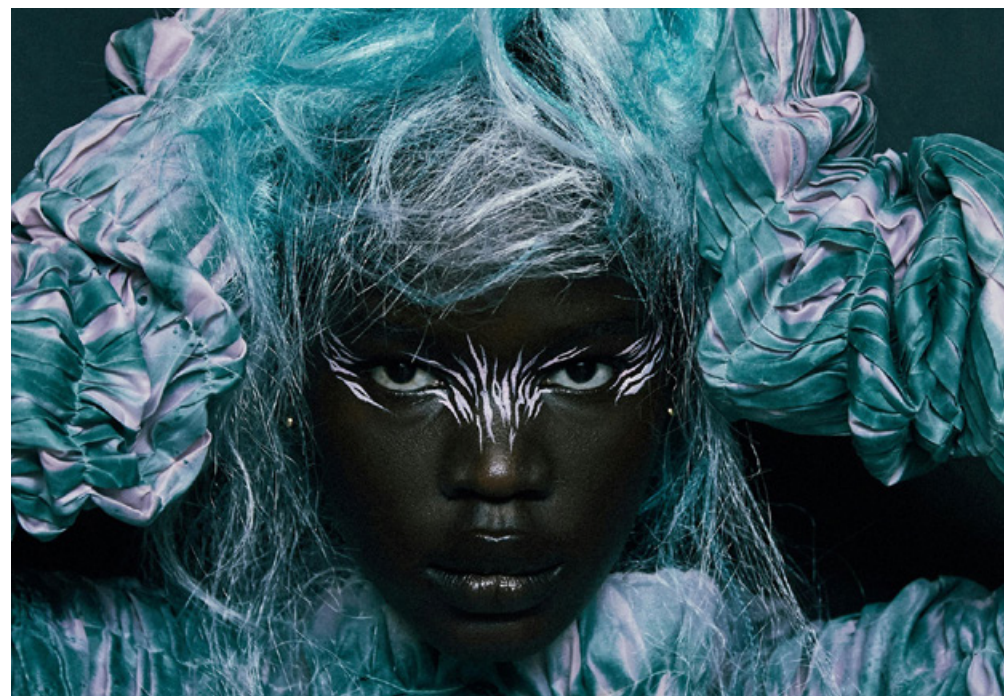
ART

Friends of Chandos Road Gardens will host four Art and Environment Co-creation Workshops on 4, 5, 11 and 12 September in partnership with Cleaner Greener East London.

Chandos Community Garden, 93 Colegrave Road, E15 1DZ
cleanergreener.london

MUSIC

Newham Voices was invited to **St Angela's Ursuline School Summer Concert**, which included a performance of Linda Lewis' song *This Time I'll Be Sweeter*, because Linda was a former student at the school.



The Creative Industries Festival 2026, hosted by the University of East London (UEL), is a programme of more than 30 free events that will examine how creativity can help shape healthier, more inclusive and sustainable careers and communities.

Events are free to attend, although booking is required for many sessions 2–5 September, UEL's Docklands campus and The Source in Stratford

For the full programme and to book is available on Eventbrite.

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

The concert also included performances from: The Trumpet Group, Guitar Ensemble, Year 7 Band, The Guys from Yesterday, St Angela's Orchestra, Gospel Choir, Youth Choir, Main School Choir and Chamber Choir.

Linda's Nubian Jak Community Trust blue plaque was unveiled by her family on her birthday in September 2023.

Grammy nominated **Tiana Major9**, from Newham, has been nominated in two categories for the 2026 Independent Music Award – Best Independent Track in association with Meta and Independent Breakthrough in Association with Amazon Music category.

The Awards ceremony is at London's Roundhouse on 22 September.

Tiana's album came out on 28 August.
tianamajor9.com

Live music will be performed in Endeavour Square, Stratford Cross on Wednesdays, 5pm – 7pm and Thursdays 12pm – 2pm until 16 September
stratfordcross.co.uk

Alfa Mist, from Newham, will be performing in Regent's Park as part of their Live Music Week on 24 September.

Alfa's new live album *Live at Real World Studios* is out on 25 September
alfamist.co.uk

EVENTS

Newham-born comedian **Victor Daniels'** one man show is in preparation for his Netflix pilot.

See him at Angel Comedy Club on 14 September from 9.30pm – 10.30pm. He will also be at Back Yard Comedy Club on 8 September from 7.30pm – 10pm.

instagram.com/comic_vic

Every year **Open House Festival** offers the opportunity to explore buildings, take part in tours and events for free.

Newham Open House events include: *Walking Tour Silvertown: A Sailor's Story*, a Drop in Open Day at City Hall, *Flavours of Royal Docks: Food, Architecture and Memory*, Drop In Sketching session with Lydia Thornley at Tower Gallery and a chance to explore English National Ballet's award-winning home.

The festival runs 12 – 20 September.
programme.openhouse.org.uk

The Music is Black Festival from East Bank Black to the Future is curated by FLOHIO, The Blues Project and Dannielle 'Rhimes' Lecointe.

12 and 13 September, Sadler's Wells East and Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.
queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk

Greenwich and Docklands International Festival programme of theatre, circus and dance celebrates London's spirit of resilience and community.

- 3 – 4 September, Queen's Market Square, Green Street, E13
- 5 September, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, Sadler's Wells East
festival.org

Newham u3a holds monthly talks, tea and coffee afternoons. Their talk will be on the Language of Humour.

3 September, 1.30pm, Clapton Community Football Clubhouse, Upton Lane.

Newham u3a 1 October talk event, at 1.30pm Clapton Community Football Clubhouse, will be 'Murky Water', Challenging an Unsustainable System.

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

Forest Gate Jumble Trail takes place on 20 September from 11am – 4pm.
[instagram.com/fgjumbletrail](https://www.instagram.com/fgjumbletrail)

Eastside Community Heritage Accreditation Celebration takes place on 9 September at The Tate Institute, 1 Wythes Road, E16 2DN

Free tickets for the event are available from Eventbrite.

[eastsidecommunityheritage.org](https://www.eastsidecommunityheritage.org)

Culture Within Newham is hosting the free immersive artwork experience Luminarium called 'ARBORIALIS' by Architects of Air.

ARBORIALIS, Central Park, East Ham, from 24–27 September. Timings: 24 and 25 September 2–6pm, 26 and 27 Sept 11am–6pm (subject to change).

Luminarium is presented by Culture Within Newham, and created by Architects of Air. It is part of the Architects of Air Connexus Tour, funded by Arts Council England.

[culturewithin.org.uk](https://www.culturewithin.org.uk)

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

Project focus on Stanley, Newham film studies pioneer

MARK GORMAN

Eighty years ago Stanley Reed, Newham's forgotten film pioneer who became Director of the British Film Institute, was the first teacher to integrate film studies into a UK school curriculum.

He recognised film as a 'massive social force', inspiring local teachers and pupils alike. Now a new project called "Film School" will work with Little Ilford school and Plaistow-based young people's charity *Ambition Aspire Achieve* to rekindle film in schools.

A documentary film will chart the pioneering role of local teachers and pupils in developing film studies. The Forest Gate-based arts organisation *Frames of Mind* will teach young people the skills to make and edit their own films, exploring the practical film-making methods first taught in local schools up to 80 years ago.

The story begins in September 1946 when a pioneering experiment began in two Stratford schools.

Every student at the twin technical schools for boys and girls in Water Lane, Stratford began a course of film studies, where films showing in local cinemas were discussed and analysed. In the second year



pupils got a chance to make their own short films.

It was a first for any British school. Never before had films been considered a suitable school subject. Yet it took hold across the country, becoming the forerunner of today's media studies courses.

The course was the brainchild of teacher Stanley Reed. From a working-class Plaistow family, after teacher training Stanley returned to start his career at Credon Road school, moving to Water Lane after the war.

He was a passionate film fan, believing that his pupils would get much more enjoyment out of the cinema if they learned to recognise which films were

worth watching. But he never imposed his own views, letting students make up their own minds after discussing the films they'd seen.

When he became Director of the British Film Institute he helped launch the careers of many British film-makers. He never forgot his East London roots, helping to promote a competition for school film-making, which in the early 1960s was regularly won by East Ham's Cornwell School, now called Little Ilford school.

Yet the legacy left by Stanley and his successors is largely forgotten today.

Some of the films made by local schools decades ago are preserved in Newham's archives. Others were located in a loft in Australia, and have been digitised. The project will use them in the documentary, and make them available, together with those made by today's young people, in the Newham Heritage Centre.

A Stanley Reed archive will be opened to the public so a chapter from Newham's past will be preserved while celebrating the creativity of today's young community.

People with memories of film studies and film-making at a local school are being asked to contact *Frames of Mind* at studio@framesofmind.uk.

Advertisement



Luminarium

Central Park
East Ham, E6 3AB

24 – 25 September, 2 – 6pm
26 – 27 September, 11am – 6pm

A walk-in immersive experience for all ages.
Lose yourself in this fully accessible encounter
with light and colour.

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now, or just
show up**



**Free
event**

Learn more at culturewithin.org.uk/projects/luminarium



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ENGLAND**



Architects of Air

Credit: Luminarium
(Arboreal) – Architects of Air –
created by Alan Parkinson

Luminarium is brought to you by Culture Within Newham, and created by Architects of Air. It is part of the Architects of Air Connexus Tour, funded by Arts Council England.

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National Dance Company Wales

Blue | Glas



24 - 26 Sep 26

DEEPFAKE

Jess & Morgs



1- 3 Oct 26

Dance Umbrella presents

THE HERD/LESS

Mamela Nyamza



8 - 10 Oct 26

Alleyne Dance

Far From Home



15 - 17 Oct 26

Fatherhood and Positive Masculinity: What does it mean to be a man?

Adrian de Leon, Trusts and Foundations Manager, Fight for Peace

In 2026, our society is struggling to answer this question, leading us to a series of 'commons'. Finding a common discourse is proving to be increasingly elusive, which leads to the lack of common understanding that is creating a vacuum filled by personalities and institutions that aren't driven by the common good.

Put together, this means that the crisis of masculinity isn't with masculinity itself, but with the lack of a common tolerance as to what we want masculinity to be. Masculinity should be a topic approached with open-mindedness and tolerance and as a recent first-time father, I firmly believe fatherhood can provide a framework.

Undeniably, being, or becoming, a man is fraught with uncertainty and tribulations. When I found that I was expecting a son, I found myself with the same questions, the same lack of confidence and anxiety towards my relationship with masculinity that I hear in the voices of the younger generation.



At Fight for Peace, our young men and boys are precisely the type of individuals that are most vulnerable to falling victim to the most toxic aspects of masculinity as prescribed by figures of the 'manosphere' such as Andrew Tate or HSTikkyTokk.

Yet, this vulnerability isn't deterministic; we provide a safe space for young people to develop a positive and authentic self. Through free access to boxing and martial art sessions, embedded with personal development training, participants

build positive relationships with male staff that offer consistent and asset-based support. For many of these young people, our coaches are the father figures missing in their lives.

Coaches as father figures embody positive masculinity because they show-up consistently and provide guidance that is unafraid of vulnerability. They not only drive athletes across the country for competitions but also put an arm around the shoulders of those who need it and display an empathy that defies the 'macho culture' of the combat sports ecosystem.

Positive fatherhood is championing the inclusion of young women and girls, those living with disabilities or from the LGBTQIA+ community, and calling out excluding behaviour. Positive fatherhood is witnessed every day in the gym, when coaches set the same standards across the board and reward all efforts regardless of ability. Being a witness to this coach-young person relationship has taught me that positive masculinity, like fatherhood, is the championing of a strong authentic self.

Fight for Peace runs a weekly personal development space called Man Talk which provides a safe space for young men and boys to discuss what it means to be a man, the challenges they face, and how to overcome them in a non-judgemental environment. Join them for sessions on Wednesday evenings: 5.30-7pm, free and open to 14-25 year olds.

Theresa loves jet-setting, but Newham is home

CHRIS EK

Theresa Marx, a self-taught young fashion photographer, found her home in Newham in 2022 amid her high-flying career, and loves returning here after each shoot.

She came to London in 2008 with a fashion design dream. She remembers being in serious trouble at six years-old,

having cut her mum's skirt to make a Barbie dress.

Theresa qualified with a fashion degree from Central St Martin's, having interned in Paris for the likes of Chanel and Chloé.

Camerawork became her hobby after delving into photography to create her portfolio, and appearing on social media.

One day, *InStyle* magazine called her to do a shoot. Words like 'digital operator'

and 'HDMI 745' were thrown at her, but she was quick to Google them and took on the challenge.

She learned much from watching her assistants, at first pretending to understand the terminology. She remembers feeling like a fraud, overwhelmed, but her work was excellent and the commercial work has kept coming.

Having worked with Ellie Goulding and Greta Bellamacina, and shot for *Vogue*, Selfridges, Swarovski and Netflix, she loves nothing more than if the client is someone her grandma knows. 'That's important to me. I love my grandma.'

Her shoots have taken her from Mexico to Sicily, the French Camargue and Hollywood (photographing diamonds worth £15 million), but she's always happy to come back to Newham:

"Peaceful - it's London without the hectic buzz - a community," she says. "For the first time I have neighbours in my phonebook. I can cut my roses and feel good about myself."

Theresa is also one of the founders of Project 213A, a bespoke furniture/home accessories business set up during Covid when the photo shoots dried up. While operations are in Portugal, HQ is Newham.



Photoshoot at the Stahl House Hollywood. Image courtesy Theresa Marx

Once a month
not enough?



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Hitting the right note on AI

Young people campaign for police officers in schools

ANASTASIA GLAGOLEVA

A play, *The Great Falsification* by writer and director Sasha Ramm, was performed at the Stratford Youth Zone in July with a message for young people about the use of Artificial Intelligence.

Ramm, who is currently studying for a Master's in Theatre Directing at the University of East London, explained what inspired the project: "I've read a lot about the cases when young people got hurt because of seeing generative bots as their friends. They shared secrets and their problems with AI, never coming back to real people. These stories didn't have a happy ending, so I wanted to help younger people escape this confusion."

As part of her degree, Ramm has been working with one of Newham's primary schools, using workshops and surveys to explore children's relationship with AI. "Young people use AI every day; their parents, on



the contrary, don't trust the technology. I understand them. However, they are more concerned about AI helping with homework than AI becoming their child's only companion. I'm aiming at bringing the generations together."

At just twenty minutes long, *The Great Falsification* remains playful, energetic and highly interactive, keeping its young audience engaged from beginning to end. Judging by the children's enthusiastic reactions, its message lands exactly where it should.

Across Newham, many young people feel unsafe. Youth violence is a significant concern, with social pressures and the influence of gang culture leaving some young people vulnerable to exploitation and criminal activity.

Knife crime continues to have a devastating impact, while issues such as poor lighting, isolated streets and limited adult supervision also contribute to young people feeling at greater risk.

Alongside these concerns, many young people don't trust the police, with a fear of being unfairly stopped or profiled.

Safer Schools Officers historically played a vital role in bridging this gap. They built positive relationships with students, provided early intervention, supported safeguarding and became trusted adults within the school community.

The Metropolitan Police decided to scrap the role in May 2025, but a Neighbourhood Watch Network consultation has found that more than 75 percent of young people support a police presence in schools.

Members of The East London Citizens Organisation Enrichment Group at St Bonaventure's Sixth Form College have campaigned this year to improve youth safety through three clear 'asks'.

The first demand is to reinstate Safer Schools Officers across East London.

Secondly, the group is seeking more structured opportunities for young people and police officers to engage positively outside moments of crisis.

Thirdly, the group wants senior police officers to meet with them at least three times a year to review progress

Climate emergency briefing in Forest Gate

There will be a community screening of a film on the climate and nature crisis at The Gate Library in Forest Gate on 19 September, between 5-7 pm.

The film, *The People's Emergency Briefing*, will provide insights for an invited audience of local MPs, councillors, faith groups, schools and the wider community into the scale of the environmental crisis and to discuss its impact locally.

This is part of a wider programme of screenings taking

place across the UK, designed to help communities understand the climate and nature crisis and discuss what it means locally. The event will include a short facilitated discussion afterwards.

Plenty of background material is available on the National Emergency Briefing website <https://www.nebriefing.org/>, including recent coverage in national media <https://www.nebriefing.org/media>. <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/ec07/2331161>

LOCAL NOTICES

Published 28th August 2026

LICENSING ACT 2003

Application for a Premises Licence

I Michael Abel have applied to NEWHAM COUNCIL for a premises licence for **Dee Quilox Lounge & Bar 272 Barking Road, East Ham, London E6 3BA** so that the following licensable activities may be provided on the following days and hours:

Late night refreshment

• Sunday – Wednesday from 23:00 – 00:00 Hrs

• Thursday – Saturday from 23:00 – 01:00 Hrs.

Sale of alcohol (off & on)

• Sunday – Wednesday from 11:00 – 00:00 Hrs

• Thursday – Saturday from 23:00 – 01:00 Hrs.

Recorded Music/Performance Of Dance

• Sunday – Wednesday from 23:00 – 00:00 Hrs

• Thursday – Saturday from 23:00 – 01:00 Hrs

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 the **21/09/2026**.

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 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 New Premises Licence

Larissa Augusta Pereira have applied to NEWHAM COUNCIL for a premises licences for **Brazilian Roots, Unit 13 Stratford Centre, Market Village E15 1XQ** so that the following licensable activities may be provided on the following days and hours:

Supply of alcohol

• Monday to Saturday 10:00 – 18:30

• Sunday 11:00 am – 16:00

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 **11th September 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 Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that Maxim Rubanet has applied to Newham Council for a Premises Licence in respect of the premises at **29 Western Gateway Royal Docks London E16 1FA**.

The proposed licensable activity is:

• Sale of alcohol

The proposed days and hours of licensable activity are:

• Monday to Sunday: 8:00 am to 8:00 pm

Representations in relation to this application must be submitted by **30 September 2026**.

All representations must be made in writing to: Licensing Team
London Borough of Newham
East Ham Town Hall
328 Barking Road
East Ham
London
E6 2RP
or by email to licensing@newham.gov.uk

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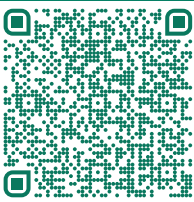
You'll combine classroom learning with real-world experience, spending at least 45 days on an industry placement where you can put your skills into practice, build your professional network and gain the confidence and experience to stand out. Through our employer network, you'll connect with leading organisations, learn from industry professionals and develop the skills and experience to shape your future. Some of our partners include Amazon, Barts Health NHS Trust, Coca-Cola, Kier, Morgan Hunt and Riney.

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- Therapy Teams (Health)
- Electrical Installation
- Electrical and Electronic Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Digital Production, Design & Development
- Media, Broadcast & Production

Enrolment Dates

Tue 01 September	10am - 6:30pm
Wed 02 September	10am - 6:30pm
Thur 03 September	10am - 6:30pm
Fri 04 September	10am - 4pm
Sat 05 September	10am - 1pm



Scan here or visit
waltham.ac.uk/enrolment
for more dates, times
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SOMETHING'S BREWING



It's a new pub but with a mighty history – and it has the support of a West Ham legend as Phil Mellows discovers

It's another hot day in Plaistow and the windows of the Buccaneer are thrown wide to let the air in. The air, though, is determined not to budge. A few drinkers cling to the bar gulping cold lager, and a family arrives, three generations, and orders pizza. Newham's newest pub is up and running.

You might know it better as the Britannia, a legendary venue around here, especially among West Ham fans. At one point it was owned by Frank Lampard senior, then it fell into decline, eventually closing its doors in 2019. A developer converted the upper floors into flats but offered the former pub on the ground floor to his friend, Rishi Sharma Bhagi.

Rishi had run bars and clubs before taking a job with Newham Council, and he jumped at the opportunity to save the



Britannia. As I reported last summer, it was due to reopen by Christmas. In the end it was July. But Rishi makes no apologies. "I'm a perfectionist," he says.

"I wanted to do something to bring the local community together, and I fell in love with the history of this place. The Britannia was named after a ship owned

by the East India Company."

He wanted to keep the name, but feared it had bad associations. After West Ham stars such as Lampard, Bobby Moore and Geoff Hurst adopted it as their local in the 1960s, the notorious Inter City Firm fan-gang claimed it for a headquarters.

"We had to tell people this is something new," explains Rishi. "A buccaneer was a licensed pirate, so that seemed to fit!"

And that's not the only change. The pub is doing food for the first time, an exotic variety of pizzas that reflect this multi-cultural area, influenced by Punjabi, Delhi and Chinese as well as Italian cuisine, cooked fresh from an open kitchen.

Rishi believes "pubs have forgotten to evolve", and he's delighted that Lampard senior has "given his blessing" to the changes.

"There's such a community feel in this area, there are people who've been living here 50 or 60 years. The Buccaneer has to be a community pub first, amalgamating the old with the new."

Unusually for these times, the pub is open from midday to midnight, seven days a week. Which means you've plenty of opportunity to find out what it's like for yourselves.

Kinship and the carers who need support

Kinship carers in Newham such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and older siblings raising children—are encouraged to come forward for support through a programme now open locally.

Kinship Connected is a national programme offering up to six months of free, one-to-one support for carers who are looking after a child when parents are unable to care for them.

Delivered in Newham as part of a national research trial, the programme connects carers with a dedicated Kinship Navigator who provides tailored practical and emotional support. This includes help accessing services such as education, benefits, housing, and legal advice.

Although working closely alongside local services, Kinship Navigators operate independently. This helps families feel more comfortable engaging with support and supports the development of positive and collaborative relationships with services.

Kinship carers play a vital role in keeping children within their families and out of the care system. However, many carers may not always be aware of the support available to them.

Yewande Showunmi, Kinship Navigator supporting families in Newham, said: "Kinship carers are doing an incredible job raising children, often with little support. This programme offers a valuable opportunity for carers in Newham to receive tailored, one-to-one support.

"We would really encourage anyone caring for a child who is not their own to come forward and explore what support is available."

Contact: kinship.org.uk/kinship-connected-expression-of-interest/



Good reads in Newham

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

- **Doom Painting**
A.K. Blakemore
- **The Castle: Adventures in a World of Unravelling Men** (signed copies available)
By Jon Ronson
- **The Art of Opposition: On Hope, Resilience and Creative Expression Beyond the Mainstream** (signed copies available)
By Courttia Newland
- **Cat School: Odd Cat out!**
By Rose Robbins
- **India, Incredible India**
By Jasbinder Bilan (Illustrated by Nina Chakrabarti)
- **Esme Pepper**
By Jacqueline Wilson (Illustrated by Rachael Dean)

– Compiled by David Ceen, Newham Bookshop



A flag we can all be proud of

LYNDSAY JONES

Friends of West Ham Park

Are you so used to seeing the Green Flag flying above the lawn near the main gate of West Ham Park that you hardly notice it? If so, that is a real shame. This flag, awarded annually, is an international symbol of quality for publicly accessible green spaces and parks.

Every park which joins the award scheme is judged on a range of categories, and must score highly on all of them to gain, and keep, its flag. These categories include: being welcoming and accessible to all; helping people to feel safe and secure; high standards of environmental management and maintenance; working to increase biodiversity and protect the environment.

It is also important for the park to

be involved with the local community, which is where the Friends of West Ham Park come in, with our community events like the recent ParkFest 26, the ever popular Newham's Biggest Leaf Pile, and our Bat and Birdwatching and Stargazing sessions.

West Ham Park gained its first Green Flag in 2001 and has proudly maintained the high standards needed to keep the flag ever since.

This is a great credit to the Park Managers and to the Park Rangers, who you will all know as they move around the park in the little buggies or on foot. It is the presence of these Rangers that many of you have told us is the reason that you choose to visit this park and feel safe there.

So three cheers for our beautiful park and its great staff. Let's keep the Green Flag flying!



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

SPORTS SHORTS

Compiled by Neandra Etienne



2026 Commonwealth Games Glasgow
Congratulations to **East London Phoenix** players Lea Smith and Jodie Waite for winning the silver medal in the 3x3 Wheelchair Basketball tournament with Team Scotland.

Congratulations also to **Newham and Essex Beagles** athlete Jade O'Dowda for winning silver in the Women's Heptathlon event with Team England.

TV Presenter and Paralympic Medalist **Ade Adepitan**, who grew up in Newham, was a reporter and courtside presenter.

The big transfer news as the new season kicks off is that **Ezri Konsa**, who attended Cumberland School and is from Newham, and starred in the England World Cup run this summer, is back in London. He was a key player for Aston Villa, but has now signed for Premier League Champions Arsenal in a £51 million transfer deal.

He may also feature in the England team for its UEFA Nations League fixtures. They are in League A, Group A3 and their first game is on 26 September against the 2026 FIFA World Cup champions Spain. They then play Czechia on 29 Sept.



Grassroots, voluntary and not-for-profit clubs can apply for the **Football Foundation's Lionesses 'HERE to Play' fund**. The grant, which is funded by The National Lottery, is open until 30 September 2026.

footballfoundation.org.uk

The **London Lions Women** have announced the return of Deborah Somoye, who will enter her second season with the club ahead of the 2026-27 Super League Basketball Women (SLBW) campaign.

London Lions pre-season tournament features clubs from Lithuania, France and Poland on 10-11 September, Copper Box Arena Stratford.

The London Lions 2026-27 Super League Basketball (SLB) schedule, with the new campaign, is set to tip off on 18 September. thelondonlions.com

London Transport's new temporary exhibition *Between the Lines* spotlights The London Underground Football League.

The league, which celebrates its 30th year in 2026, has FA-certified officials and includes London's 11 Tube lines teams and the British Transport Police, the Overground and the Elizabeth line.

The exhibition will screen an edited preview from a new documentary film, commissioned by the Museum, which follows the Jubilee line FC team through one of the most important seasons in their history. Visitors will be able to watch the full documentary by scanning a QR code within the display.

The exhibition was created as part of London Transport Museum's Documentary Curator programme, funded by Arts Council England.

The *Between the Lines* exhibition is expected to remain open until the end of the year.

Football city: London and the beautiful game Panel discussion + Q&A, 10 September, 6.30pm - 7.45pm
ltmuseum.co.uk

Eleven Sports Media and London Stadium partnership with **Bloomsbury Football Foundation** will fully fund 11 bursaries for young refugees and asylum seekers to benefit from free football sessions, which include boots, kits and travel.



Members of the **East London Filipino Social Club's Library Ladies** took part in their first community Just Play Football session at West Ham United Foundation's The Foundry in August.

The session was designed to give the group an accessible and welcoming opportunity to enjoy football together.

The event was also supported by Jada Ali, Essex County FA Intern, and Jane Alexander, Priority Places Just Play Coach in Dagenham.

Community groups interested in getting involved in a future local taster session are encouraged to contact the Essex County FA website.

essexfa.com



Plasht Park Bowls Club has been successful this year by reaching two County group finals and an afternoon league final. They stand a chance of winning other leagues too.

The heat-waves forced many bowls matches to be played at a later date so they have Ilford and District League matches every weekend in September. The season finishes on 30 September.

Plasht Park Bowls Club has been maintaining its green since May. Cliff Dye, President Plasht Park Bowls Club, told *Newham Voices*: "It's proved to be a hard job but we have bowlers who are dedicated to the job by giving up their time to make the green a good, playable surface. It's a hard job because none of them have experience in lawn care but they are learning as they go."



Vaseem Khan, who was born in Newham, is one of the founders and an opening batsman for Redbridge Cricket Club.

Vaseem is also the author of the Malabar House crime series and the Q series. redbridgecricketclub.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 about joining SHADE Youth FC contact the team directly through social media or email at community@theshade.org

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

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The pressure is already on Nuño



A view from the press box as Mickey Ambrose assesses West Ham's poor start to a season in the Championship League



Charlton maintained their perfect start to the Championship season with a 2-1 victory at West Ham in a pulsating London derby in front of a record 62,000 crowd at the London Stadium, the highest ever in Championship history.

Critics say it piled more pressure on the Hammers manager, Nuno Espírito Santo, but in my opinion its still early days with only two Championship games in.

In a first half the Hammers would want to forget Lloyd Jones and Tyreece Campbell put Charlton 2-0 ahead with well taken goals. Although the stats showed West Ham had 65 percent of possession they could not find a cutting edge to trouble a resilient and well drilled Charlton defence, something Charlton manager Nathan Jones alluded to

at the after match press conference.

"We had a lot of possession and tried to break them, which is not easy," said the West Ham manager. And I agree especially when Charlton had ten men behind the ball but that is their prerogative, the onus was on the home side to find that pass that could slice through the Charlton rearguard but it rarely happened.

Charlton were magnificent throughout the game and their 8,000 travelling fans loved it, at times outplaying West Ham on the pitch and out-singing them too, so full credit to the Addicks.

West Ham gave debuts to Arne Engels and Joe Piroe but it was the loan signing Piroe from Leeds who marked his first appearance for the home side with a goal that set up a frantic finish where West Ham

piled on the pressure in the dying minutes.

Taty Castellanos then missed a stoppage-time penalty for West Ham that would have salvaged a point.

West Ham have not won their past ten derbies, losing nine of them, but Hammers head coach Nuno defended the decision for Castellanos to take the spot-kick instead of Jarrod Bowen.

"We trust Taty to take the penalties. Of course, I feel under pressure. West Ham is pressure every day – it is a big club. You see that with 62,000 fans in the stands and we let them down. We are going to repeat, repeat and repeat in training, in the final third, to create situations that allow us to score," said Nuno.

I have to mention the magnificent performance from Charlton's goalkeeper Arthur Okonkwo; he delivered a stand-out performance on his Charlton Athletic debut, producing eight crucial saves.

The 24-year-old goalkeeper was named Man of the Match after playing a key role in protecting Charlton's lead and frustrating West Ham's attacking players.

Okonkwo's performance was particu-

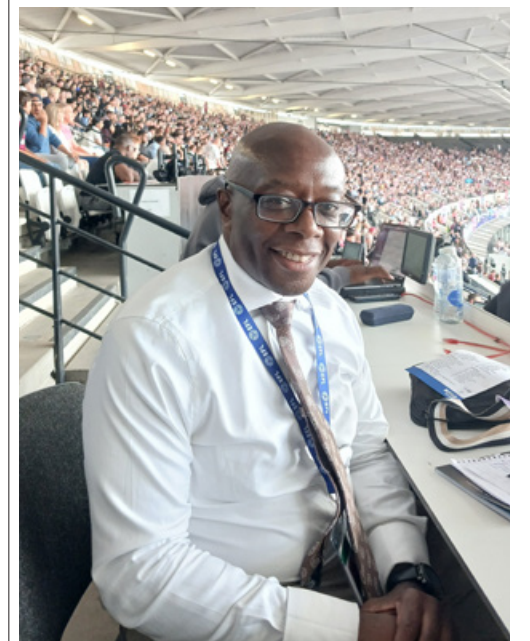
larly impressive considering he had only joined Charlton two days before the match.

West Ham have signed Newham born Divine Mukasa.

The skilful attacking midfielder arrives on a season-long loan from Manchester City, reuniting him with the Club where he spent a decade as a schoolboy.

After a successful loan spell in the EFL Championship with Leicester City in the second half of 2025/26, the teenager is happy to be back in East London and looking to play his part in West Ham's challenge for promotion back to the Premier League.

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



Mickey reports from the press box

Words matter in the case of Jason Arday

In my opinion by Mickey Ambrose

The core issue of the Jason Arday tragedy is not about his academic qualifications, or his life story and experiences. It is about how we treat each other.

We see that humanity every day in Newham, which is so diverse in cultures and full of tolerance. But for Jason Arday there was precious little tolerance. Indeed, this was another case of the media hounding an innocent and vulnerable man, who was not guilty of any crimes.

He killed himself in the midst of a racist and frenzied online campaign, reinforced by sensational and unethical media coverage.

Despite their promises to do better after the Leveson Inquiry, some news media were back to their worst. They failed to see the human side of this story: a shy and respectful Cambridge Professor, a young man, who had overcome his neurodivergence at an early age, to reach remarkable heights in his appointment as the youngest Black professor at Cambridge University, one of the world's most prestigious centres of learning.

He was a pathfinder, whose achievements could inspire others, from the BAME community and the youngsters from the inner

city. He showed that the glittering prizes of Cambridge were not beyond their grasp.

But there is something about the worst of Fleet Street journalism when it seems that some editors smell blood and they stop pursuing the story and go after the person.

It becomes a witchhunt. There was little coverage of the mental health of Jason, his autism, and the suicidal risks associated with this illness, there was an absence of restraint in the use of language or approach to the coverage of



Jason Arday by ConiferousForest19 is licensed under CC BY 4.0

a vulnerable 41-year-old married man with two small children.

Supporters noted how the press weaponised his academic citation errors, turning them into attacks on his character and completely ignoring the impact of autistic processing on what he studied, wrote and lectured.

The relentless press coverage and hate campaign did not stop after Jason reluctantly resigned, to protect those that he loved.

After his death, prominent figures such as Professor Sir Simon Baron-Cohen condemned the media. Sir Simon noted how Jason had experienced a level of relentless humiliation and ridicule that no person could reasonably be expected to endure.

Other colleagues have publicly described the journalistic onslaught as a "public lynching" and a "brutal takedown, rooted in institutional racism".

The death of Jason Arday must change something. Self-regulation of the media must be set to a far higher standard, there must be more humanity in reporting, editors must consider the impact of their reporting on vulnerable people especially those with families.

The Leveson report concluded that the "British press had repeatedly acted with a reckless disregard for human life and

mental vulnerability". This was a damning verdict 14 years ago, but nothing has changed.

It is the latest in many cases where media have broken their promises to change. The Arday case is a reminder of what happened with Dr David Kelly, in 2003 and Caroline Flack in 2020. Each died tragically in the midst of being hounded by the media.

But no journalist or social media user in the UK has ever been jailed or held to account for the death or suicide of a person, they have pursued. While British courts increasingly prosecute partners, stalkers, and members of the public for manslaughter or coercive control following a victim's suicide, these laws have never been criminally applied to mainstream journalists, editors, or paparazzi.

Journalists have the right to ask legitimate questions and hold public figures to account in the name of press freedom, but Jason Arday deserved more respect, kindness and common decency. Journalists must draw a line when dealing with people who are vulnerable, and avoid causing them intolerable mental damage and harm to their family and children.

Words matter and it is time that we all chose them far more carefully, and responsibly.

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- Every penny of income from *Newham Voices* helps us deliver more journalism in Newham
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