

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**



Leader's borough update

In his video this week, the Leader talks about the one-year anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine and the borough and country's continued solidarity with, and support for, the people of Ukraine.

The Leader also reminds residents of the thousands of Ukrainians who have been killed in the conflict and the millions forced from their homes including the more than 100 Ukrainian refugees who were welcomed by the borough.

He ends with a mention of the special flag raising which took place last Monday

and Friday's national minute's silence.



Children learn about virtual production techniques at Film LBBD event

Over 700 school children were taught virtual production skills and other aspects of film production by industry professionals during an interactive event, organised by Film Barking and Dagenham and Inspiring Futures (Barking & Dagenham Cultural Education Partnership).

Eye-catching displays, including a giant virtual production wall (LED screen), were some of the technologies demonstrated in real time to the youngsters.

The children also met industry practitioners from film-related businesses including lighting, postproduction, media make-up, and casting. Local businesses on hand to lend their expertise on the day include: Borthwick Casting, Bluebird Pictures, Final Checks Academy and Location 1.

The idea was to give the children an insight into the vast number of career paths available to them in this burgeoning industry.

The children also found out about local opportunities to train to work in film and TV, courtesy of the East London Institute of Technology at Barking & Dagenham College.

At the end of the day, parents were invited into a drop-in session where they took part in a careers Q&A with the industry professionals.



Know anyone who is looking for somewhere to live?

If so, why not encourage them to look at what Barking & Dagenham Reside have to offer. Check out the website bdreside.org where there is a range of 1, 2 and 3-bedroom homes starting from as low as £1,000 per calendar month.

Whether they are looking to rent at affordable rates or interested in shared ownership, residents can get in touch at enquiries@bdreside.co.uk

Training updates for councillors

This week we have included details of a Member's Briefing, and LGA and LGiU courses and events. For details on how to access the courses, please see the Members' Training section below.

Borough News



Supporting our residents through the cost of living crisis

As part of our efforts to support residents through the cost of living crisis, Cllr Saima Ashraf, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Leadership & Engagement, recently visited Kingsley Hall - one of our partners in the Cost of Living Alliance - to hear about the help and support they are providing to local people to help them through the crisis.

There's lots of other support available and residents can find out more by heading to our [Cost of Living webpage](#).



Borough marks one year anniversary of Russian invasion of Ukraine

A flag-raising ceremony was held by the council to mark the one-year anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Council staff, residents, and local dignitaries joined councillors outside Barking Town Hall on Monday 20 February for the service, which was hosted by Leader of the Council, Councillor Darren Rodwell.

The event was held ahead of the official anniversary as the council is participating in an initiative by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, to create a nationwide mosaic of pictures of nationwide support that was shown on Friday 24 February.



Kosovan Independence Day marked with flag raising!

Kosovan Independence was marked with a flag raising at outside Barking Town Hall on Friday 17 February.

Kosovo Independence Day is a national holiday observed on 17 February. The day commemorates the declaration of independence in 2008.

The event, organised by SHREPSA brought together councillors, staff and members of the community.

For more details about flag-raising events or to donate a flag, visit lbbd.gov.uk/flag-flying.



Local groups invited to help spend £10,000 on equality and diversity

The council is inviting local community groups to help spend a £10,000 pot of money to help promote social inclusion, celebrate diversity, and support equality across the borough.

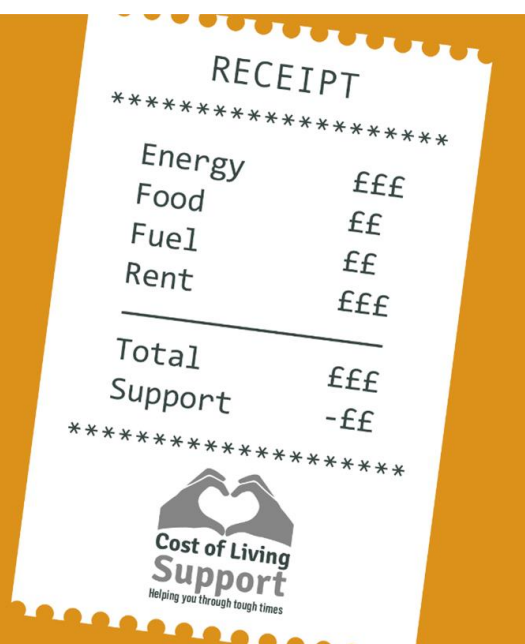
Our Equality and Diversity Community Fund, which was launched in 2019, offers charities and local groups the chance to apply for up to £500 for initiatives that provide opportunities for residents with protected characteristics.

The next round of funding is now open for any equalities events – key dates include Easter (April), St George’s Day (April), Mental Health Awareness Week (May), Learning Disabilities Week (May), Carers Week (June), Windrush Day (June), Pride (June/July), Eid ul-Adha (July), and South Asian Heritage Month (July/August).

Interested groups can [apply here](#). Applications close at midnight on Tuesday, 28 February.

Around the council

Cost of Living Support



Giving residents a helping hand through the cost of living crisis

We've been sharing lots of ways residents can get help with money, food, energy, wellbeing and more.

If you know someone who could benefit from this support, please do help us spread the word. There's lots of information available online, or if they prefer, residents can speak to staff at one of our Community Hubs or partner buildings. They can also take a look at where these are located [here](#).

While we might not have the answer to everything, residents can reach out and we'll do our best to connect them to the support they might need.

And as temperatures continue to drop, residents are reminded that there are lots of [warm spaces](#) across the borough that they can visit so they don't have to put the heating on at home.

More information on the cost of living support available can be found at www.lbbd.gov.uk/cost-living-support

**Interest paid
on a £500 loan
over 39 weeks**

**Family
Loan**

£493.78



Pay Day Lender

£424.50



Doorstop Lender

£72.50



**Leeds Credit Union
Family Loan**

**For more information, please visit
BDmoney.co.uk/affordable-loans**



Residents invited to open a savings account today through Barking and Dagenham Money

The Council has partnered with Leeds Credit Union to bring more affordable loans options and saving accounts to residents through Barking and Dagenham Money (BD Money).

The aim is to help local people become more financially resilient, keep more money in their pockets and access appropriate services to meet their financial needs and ambitions. This is not-for-profit, with all benefits staying in the

community.

Since its launch earlier this month we've racked up hundreds of new members. For residents considering opening a savings account through BD Money, it's straight-forward, hassle-free and there's also a wide range of trusted, low-interest loans available.

More information can be found at www.BDMoney.co.uk



Help and support available for residents through the Household Support Scheme

Residents who may be struggling with their finances or to make ends meet are being encouraged to get in touch.

Funding is available to vulnerable residents to support them with essentials over the coming months.

Residents can [apply online](#) or email benefits@lbbd.gov.uk.

There are also [a number of other support services](#) including:

- Our Community Food Clubs which are free of charge and can provide £20 worth of food per week for a period of either three or six months at www.lbbd.gov.uk/community-food-clubs
- Our money and debt webpages provide an income and expenditure calculator and budgeting tools that will help people understand how much money they have coming in and how much is going out, helping them look at areas where they can make savings at www.lbbd.gov.uk/money-and-debt
- Residents who are worried about their finances and need help to tackle debt can now get advice and support from our local Barking and Dagenham Money website at: www.bdmoney.co.uk
- People struggling with increasing energy costs should contact their energy supplier about possible funds they may be entitled to, to help them through difficult periods. They can also access the Warm Homes Grant at www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme
- People with disabilities who aren't claiming specific disability benefits may be able to take advantage of a number of benefits available, including Personal Independence Payments, Disability Living Allowance (for children), and Universal Credit. For those caring for someone with disabilities they may be able to claim Carer's Allowance although this is means tested, at www.gov.uk/financial-help-disabled/disability-and-sickness-benefits
- People with a water meter who are experiencing financial difficulties may want to look into the Watersure scheme at www.ofwat.gov.uk/households/customer-assistance. Most water companies also have a fund to help those who are struggling, and it might be worth contacting their water provider.
- People who are out of work and looking to get into employment can get help and support from our Job Shops at www.lbbd.gov.uk/help-finding-work
- Anyone worried about a lack of skills can find courses and support on the Adult College website at <https://adultcollege.lbbd.gov.uk/>

- Residents who need help with emergency living expenses for food, fuel (gas and electric for customers who pay via a key meter), travel expenses and household appliances and/or clothing in exceptional circumstances can apply for help from our Hardship Fund (Individual Assistance Payment) at www.lbbd.gov.uk/hardship-and-covid-support-schemes.

Residents can also contact our Homes and Money Hubs which are open for a drop in at Barking Learning Centre Community Hub and Dagenham Library Community Hub from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday or via email at: homesandmoneyhub@lbbd.gov.uk.



Jobs and training opportunities available from our Job Shops

Residents who need help and support to get into work can visit our Job Shops.

Jobs and training opportunities are advertised on the website every Monday,

and residents can register with the service by completing the [online form](#). They will then be contacted by a member of staff.

Alternatively, residents can contact the shops by telephone: Dagenham Job Shop – 020 8724 8877; Barking Job Shop – 020 8724 8870.

For details of jobs available every week, residents can visit www.lbbd.gov.uk/help-finding-work.

For more information about help and support, residents can visit the Barking and Dagenham Working Together campaign page at www.lbbd.gov.uk/working-together.

Local Government News

Apprenticeship Opportunities

At a time when increasing the number of apprenticeships is urgently needed to address both youth unemployment and London's skills gap, London Councils is bringing together London Leaders and Chief Executives as part of a collective action to boost recruitment of young and diverse apprentices.

Nationally, the number of under-19s starting apprenticeships fell by 53,900 between 2016 and 2022 (41%), while the number of 19–24 year-olds starting apprenticeships decreased by 47,530 (31%) over the same time. Boroughs are determined to play their part in helping to reverse this decline.

At a London Councils Apprenticeship Summit last week, Council Leaders and Chief Executives came together to showcase best practice in creating more apprenticeships, including the benefits they will bring to communities locally through wide-ranging recruitment opportunities.

[London Councils' Executive Member for Skills and Employment, Mayor](#)

[Rokhsana Fiaz](#), said: “Apprenticeships open up amazing opportunities to Londoners from diverse communities and walks of life.

“Local leaders across the capital are taking action to shift the dial so that we boost the number of young Londoners starting apprenticeships with London boroughs and our supply chains. Through greater collaboration, we hope to overcome the obstacles in our path and see the many rewards that come with investing in our young people.”

One of the many challenges boroughs face is the inflexibility of the apprenticeship levy. Mayor Fiaz said: “It is imperative that more is done to make it easier for employers to hire apprentices and help them realise their potential as they enter the workforce. There is growing evidence that government must work with employers to overhaul the apprenticeship levy so that more of it can be invested in upskilling Londoners for the jobs of today and tomorrow.”

LGC Awards shortlist announced

The Association of London Directors of Children’s Services sector-led improvement partnership, the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA), which is hosted at London Councils, has been shortlisted for an award in the Innovation category at this year’s LGC Awards.

Since its formation in 2019 the LIIA has taken forward an ambitious programme of work that addresses London’s collective challenges, including the Your Choice adolescent safeguarding programme and the London pledge, to help boroughs address rising costs associated with the agency social worker market.

London’s boroughs are well represented on this year’s shortlist, including (award categories in brackets): Lewisham (two nominations in the Campaign of the Year); Southwark (Children’s Services); Hackney and Newham (Community Involvement); Brent, Sutton and the South London Partnership (Digital Impact); Camden, Hammersmith & Fulham, Lambeth and Lewisham (Economic Support); Barnet; Hammersmith & Fulham and Lambeth (Future Places);

Greenwich and Westminster (Housing); Lewisham and Tower Hamlets (Innovation); Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Waltham Forest and Westminster (Large Team of the Year); Southwark (Small Team of the Year); Lewisham (Most Improved Council); Barnet and Newham (Public Health); Greenwich and Hackney (Private/Public Partnership); Enfield (Public/Public Partnership); Westminster (Technology).

[You can read the 2023 shortlist in full here.](#)

Lewisham confirm acting Chief Executive

Lewisham has confirmed that current Executive Director for Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm, Jennifer Daothong, will step up as Acting Chief Executive on 4 March 2023 when current Chief Executive Kim Wright leaves to take up her new post as Chief Executive at Brent Council.

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

Property Wire, 22 February – [Co-location set to deliver 30,000 new homes across London](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 22 February – [London and UK's divorce hotspots revealed: new data shows how many marriages and partnerships breakup](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Express, 21 February – [DWP Household Support Fund: How much will your area get in cost of living support?](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

BBC News, 21 February – [City of London markets run into sheep trouble](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

LBC Radio, 21 February – [Residents terrified by naked prowler targeting homes in east London](#). Mentions Dagenham.

Property Reporter, 21 February – [Majority of major housing applications in the capital approved following London elections](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Time Out, 21 February – [A TikTokker has created a map of new London boroughs – with hilarious results](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 20 February – [Property millionaires club grows as another 10,000 London homes receive seven-figure valuations last year](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Business News, 20 February – [House prices rose by just £14 last month as the Bank of England eased demand](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Insider Media Limited, 20 February – [Leeds Credit Union opens new HQ](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Media Releases

[Council calls on parents and carers to help shape services.](#)

[New Wayfinder scheme launched to support Barking and Dagenham's small businesses.](#)

[Plans for new Community Diagnostic Centre at Barking Community Hospital given Council endorsement.](#)

Members' Training

Member Briefing

The next Member Briefing will take place on Tuesday 28 February at 7pm online via Teams and will focus on the Zero Carbon Roadmap and Climate Change Action Plan.

Training from the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU)

The LGiU are offering the following training:

Speed Reading – Tuesday 21 March, 10am to 3pm (online)

Learn fun ways to train your brain to remember lots of information and understand specific techniques to improve your ability to process and absorb written information using different reading techniques.

Project Management – Thursday 23 March, 10am to 3pm (online)

From large, intimidating workloads to the multitudes of smaller tasks that we face daily, projects are part of both our work and personal lives. Set yourself up for success with helpful tools like key questions to ask and a simple project framework to apply to the work currently on your docket. Fight, overwhelm and improve your communication skills in this interactive online session.

Training from the Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA are offering the following sessions:

Sustainability in council services – Show and Tell – Thursday 16 March, 10.30am to 12 noon.

The LGA has commissioned the Zero Carbon Britain team at the Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) to undertake an exciting project to develop draft route maps for councils across England to understand how to embed sustainability across some service areas, through an Innovation Lab.

The lab consisted of a series of workshops bringing together voices from across councils to contribute expertise in how service areas and operations work in reality. Participants were from all levels, from officers to senior management and CEOs. This approach enables a whole system understanding of councils to inform the outputs of the lab.

In this webinar, funded by Government, we will be hearing from the CAT team, as well as some of the lab's participants, about how they found the experience and what the next steps are for the project. There will also be ample time for questions and feedback from attendees.

Annual Public Health Conference 2023 - Tuesday 21 March to Thursday 23 March 2023, 9.30am to 1pm

This key annual public health conference will offer delegates the opportunity to hear from leading experts on the very latest thinking in national public health policy issues, as well as gaining insights from those delivering on the ground. It will provide a much-needed opportunity for the public health community to come together, share learning, take stock and plan for the future.

Over three half-day virtual sessions, delegates will be able to put their questions and comments to a line-up of speakers and will have the opportunity to participate in sessions sharing good practice from local areas and to discuss issues that matter to them.

One to One Development Sessions

The LGA are offering councillors the opportunity to have one-to-one development conversations with one of the Leadership Academy Facilitators. This will be available to councillors in leadership positions for the next three months. These sessions are not political and will be provided by tutors from the LGA's Leadership Academy programme who a number of councillors might have met from participation on the programmes. They will be focussed on helping councillors adapt their personal leadership style through three structured coaching calls. For more information, please contact Leanna McPherson at: leanna.mcpherson@lbbd.gov.uk

If you are interested in joining any or all of these courses, please email: leanna.mcpherson@lbbd.gov.uk or lois.taylor@lbbd.gov.uk

The LGA also offers help for new Councillors via the New Councillor Hub, which can be found [here](#).

And finally...

The Members' Briefing is intended to keep you up to date with what is going on in the council, in the borough and in the world of local government. Please let us have your suggestions on items for inclusion in future bulletins and any feedback you may have on how it can be improved.