

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**



Leader's borough update

In his video this week, the Leader reminds residents to check out the council's Holiday Activity and Food Programme, which has lots of free fun activities.

He also welcomes the £4 million funding from TfL for road safety improvements, bus lanes, cycling infrastructure and much more to improve transport in the borough but adds that we will continue to lobby government for more funding for road and pavement repairs.

He invites residents to help us map out where they think new electric charging

points should be located in the borough by taking part in the Connected Kerbs consultation.

The Leader ends by wishing residents and their loved ones a very Happy Easter.



Who's who in the Council

At the bottom of this Briefing, we always ask you to suggest possible items for inclusion in future issues and ideas on how we can further improve it. We have since received a request from a Councillor who asked if we could include information about new senior members of staff and changes to the council's staff structure to keep you informed.

We have taken this suggestion on board and have made the current leadership structure available [here](#).



Eastbury Manor House reopens its doors with a collection of free Easter events

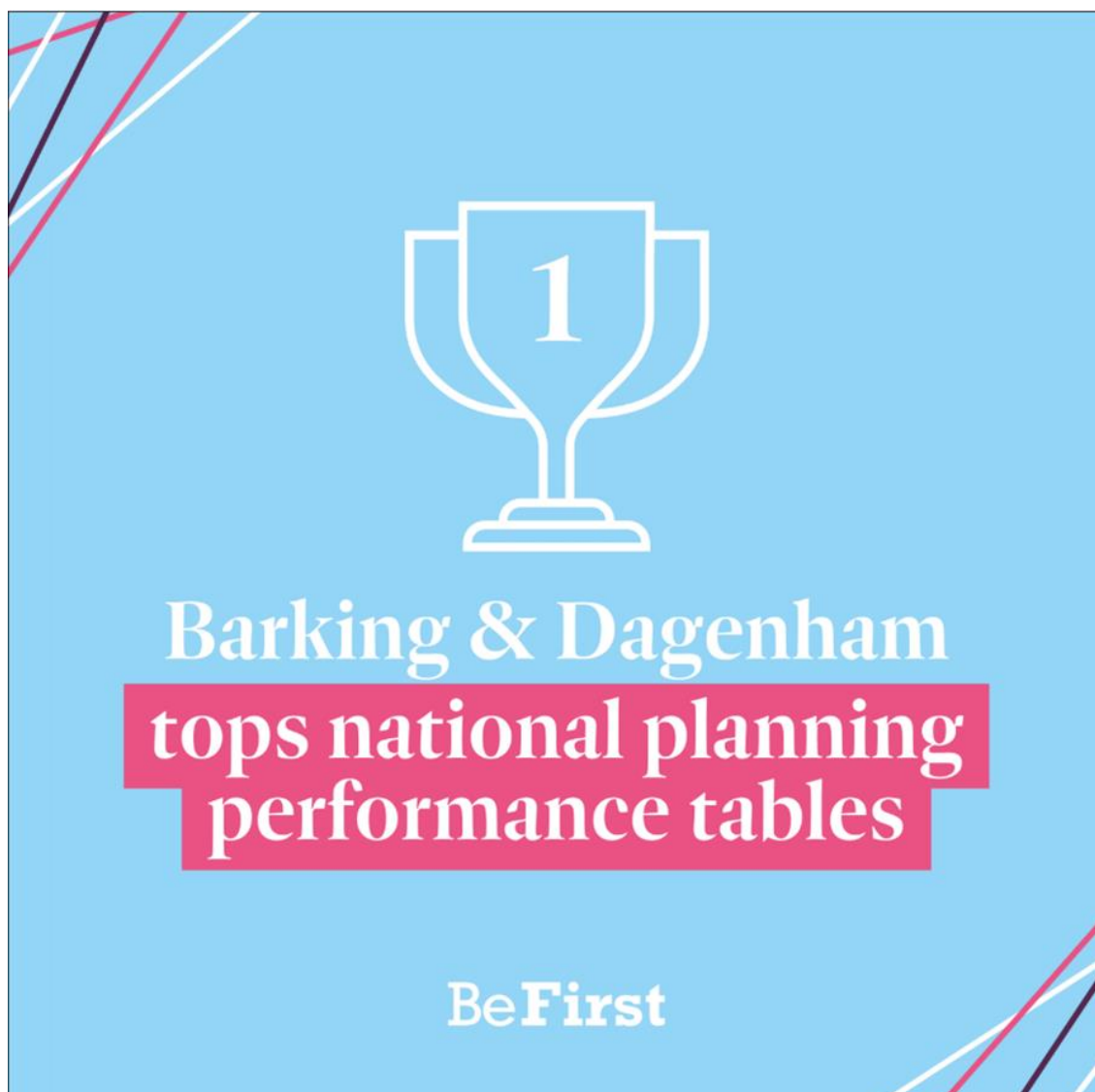
Eastbury Manor House reopened its doors last Wednesday 5 April, following a period of closure over the Winter for repairs and maintenance.

Residents are now able to explore the heritage and history of the house, its gardens and café, and take advantage of a host of free, family friendly spring activities including:

- A series of Family Art Workshops throughout April including art and craft making sessions, spring themed pop-up collages suitable for ages 5yrs+ (up to 12yrs old). Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- Free family trails – self guided trails suitable for ages 5yrs+
- Free tours led by volunteers - visitors can learn about the history and heritage of Eastbury Manor House and the people who lived there over the centuries.

The House, gardens, café and shop are open to the public Wednesday to Friday, from 10am to 4pm, and Sundays 11am to 4pm.

For more information, including a programme of events, visit
www.eastburymanorhouse.org.uk



Council tops national planning performance tables

Barking and Dagenham has been ranked joint first in the country in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Planning

Performance Tables for on-time, non-major decisions. Every single non-major decision was made within eight weeks of the application being submitted.

We are one of three councils across the country to have achieved this feat.

The council also ranks joint first nationally for on-time major decisions, with every single major decision being made within the 13-week allocated period. Combined, this means that all planning applications submitted to the council are determined within the accepted timeframe. This means that developers who submit applications for large developments or individuals who submit applications for house extensions can be assured that the council will respond to their application in a timely manner.

Training updates for councillors

This week we have included details of a Member Briefing, 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 visited [HumDum](#) foodbank and non-profit restaurant to see the work they do and to hear about the help and support the council and its partners 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](#).



Council delivers food hampers to 1,000 families over the Easter school break

The council teamed up with Growing Communities' Better Food Shed, a not-for-profit organic fruit and vegetable wholesaler, to deliver 1,000 food hampers to support some of our local families who need it the most.

The food hampers are being delivered to children attending the [Barking and Dagenham Holiday Activity and Food programme](#), which is taking place in several locations across the borough during the Easter school break.

The activities are free for children and young people who are eligible for free school meals, and includes a healthy lunch – besides the food hampers packed with fresh, organic produce that the youngsters take home to their families.

Local volunteers helped BD Together and council staff pack up the hampers, which also included long shelf-life food items and a couple of easy and affordable recipes for families to try.

This project was piloted last Christmas, when 1,000 food hampers were delivered to children participating in the holiday activities provided over the winter school break.



Summer of Festivals Weekender celebrating the Coronation

Residents are being urged to mark their calendars for Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 May for our Summer of Festivals Weekender at Valence Park, Dagenham.

On Saturday, residents can join us from 11am to 5pm for a special [Coronation event](#) to honour His Majesty The King and Her Majesty The Queen Consort. We'll be screening the historic Coronation event, and residents can enjoy a picnic while soaking up the festival vibes.

On Sunday, from 1pm to 7pm, residents can enjoy the [One Borough Festival](#), where we're mixing in old favourites like the Steam and Cider Fair and

Roundhouse Music Festival. There will be classic cars, tribute acts, dance performances, family fun activities, food and drink stalls, and more.

The best part is it is all FREE entry.

Visit lbbd.gov.uk/coronation-day for information on the Coronation Day and lbbd.gov.uk/one-borough-festival for information on the One Borough Festival.

If anyone you know wants to exhibit or perform at these events, applications are now open, and forms can be found on the above weblinks.



Nominate now for the Borough Recognition Awards

If you think someone deserves a shout out for what they do for the local community – nominations for the Borough Recognition Awards are now open.

If you know someone who has gone above and beyond to make a positive impact on the lives of others, then we want to hear about them. These awards are an opportunity to recognise the hard work and dedication of those who make a real difference in our borough.

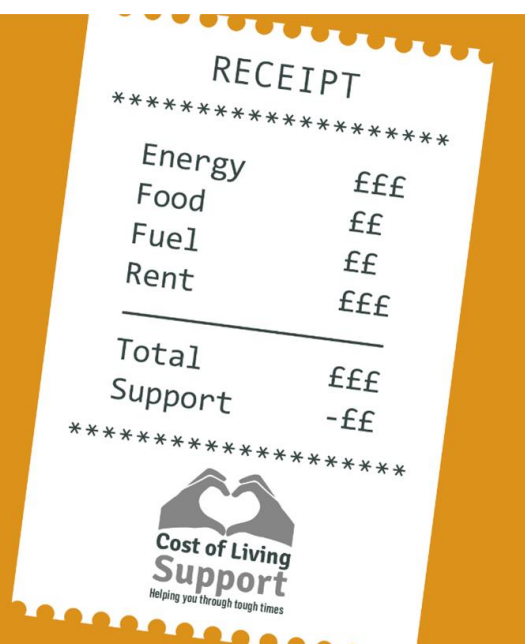
To nominate someone, simply visit our [website](#) and fill out the nomination form.

The deadline for nominations is Friday 28 April and the winners will be awarded at the annual Mayor Making event on Friday 19 May.

Let's celebrate the amazing people in our community and show them our appreciation for all that they do.

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

Right to Buy rules changes a ‘shot in the arm’ for council housing

London Councils has welcomed the new relaxation of restrictions on how local authorities use the money raised through Right to Buy sales.

The government has told councils they can retain 100% of Right to Buy receipts for 2022/23 and 2023/24. This marks a change from the previous rules on how local authorities could use the sales receipts, which saw much of the money returned to the Treasury rather than being available for building or buying replacement homes for homeless people in the community. The government has also declared a two-year freeze on capping the number of existing homes councils can purchase using Right to Buy receipts.

[London Councils’ Executive Member for Regeneration, Housing & Planning, Cllr Darren Rodwell](#), said: “These new flexibilities will provide a shot in the arm for borough’s housing ambitions. We’ve long called for an end to all restrictions on how boroughs can use Right to Buy sales receipts. It is crucial that every penny raised from council house sales is available locally for replacing those

homes.

“In the face of London’s worsening homelessness crisis, boroughs urgently need more resources for securing the affordable housing our communities are crying out for. The capital’s housing pressures are the most severe in the country. This intervention is welcome, but we will continue to work with ministers to ensure boroughs get the long-term policy and funding support required for ending the homelessness crisis altogether.”

Local government vital to unlocking investment and achieving net zero

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has published [Powering Up Britain](#), setting out the government’s policy plans to enhance energy security and deliver on our net zero commitments.

Responding to the plans, [London Councils Executive Member for Climate Change, Transport and Environment Mayor Philip Glanville](#), said: “While it is positive to see that the ‘Powering Up Britain’ strategy recognises the key role that local government is already playing in the national shared mission to reach net zero, including our ability to unlock private investment, it is crucial local government is recognised as a vital strategic partner to allow us do more. “London boroughs have long been calling for simplification of the net zero funding landscape, a key recommendation in [Chris Skidmore’s Net Zero Review](#). We welcome the desire to address this barrier in today’s response and stand ready to work with government to collaborate on an effective way to fund local net zero action at a fast pace. Local authorities also need a step change in the certainty and amount of funding that is available to speed up local net zero action.

“Climate change is happening now, and the impact is being felt by Londoners. Action to tackle it must be accelerated if we want to achieve our net zero goals, not just for some, but for all of London’s diverse communities.”

Ministerial meeting explores tech and digital collections for London

London Councils’ Digital Champion Mayor Philip Glanville and London Office of

Technology and Innovation (LOTI) Director Eddie Copeland met with [Minister for Tech and Digital Economy, and Minister for London, Paul Scully MP](#) to discuss how boroughs are using innovation, data and technology for the benefit of their communities.

The meeting was an opportunity to explore with government how we can use data and tech to improve London's public services and tackle some of London's most pressing challenges. [You can read more about LOTI and its current projects here.](#)

New councillor reception

More than 150 councillors from all parties who were elected in the May 2022 borough elections gathered at the Guildhall Art Gallery two weeks ago to meet each other and London Councils Chair Cllr Georgia Gould, Vice Chair Chris Hayward and London Mayor Sadiq Khan.

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

Landlord Today, 6 April – [Huge fine after landlord runs illegal HMO](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 5 April – [London's biggest regeneration zones: thousands of new homes planned for 'micro towns' from Brent Cross to Barking](#).

Tech Today News, 5 April – [Exclusive: Don't get the elderly to use parking apps: Gove advocates for local authorities to keep meters](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Love Money, 5 April – [Opinion: Delaying State Pension age increase helps no one](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, Homes & Property, 5 April – [London rents fall slightly in slow spring but warnings of further price spikes ahead](#). Mentions Barking and

Dagenham.

On London, 3 April – [London Councils welcome Right to Buy rules change as ‘shot in the arm’](#). Mentions Cllr Darren Rodwell.

The Guardian, 3 April – [Capita blames cyber-attack for outage as company races to restore IT system](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Daily UK News, 3 April – [More councils banish pay and display machines for hated cashless alternatives](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

City A.M., 3 April – [The London boroughs with the lowest property prices: Where is the cheapest place to buy in London in 2023?](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

BBC News, 2 April – [ULEZ: Fewer electric car street charging points outside zone](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

The Guardian, 31 March – [Failed IT systems at Capita fuels fears of cyber-attack on crucial NHS provider](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Kids in Museums, 30 March – [10 best museums in London for kids – according to families](#). Mentions Valence House Museum.

Media Releases

[Eastbury Manor House reopens with a collection of free Easter events](#).

[Barking & Dagenham tops national planning performance tables](#).

[East London council gets stuck into removing chewing gum litter!](#)

[Rogue landlord found guilty in court](#).

Members' Training

Training from the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU)

The LGiU are offering the following training:

Strategic thinking – Wednesday 26 April, 10am to 3pm (Online via Zoom)
Creative, strategic thinking is massively important to a politically led and fast-changing organisation. That's why the LGiU are taking you beyond the buzzwords and confusing jargon to focus on how to think strategically and apply that mindset to a coherent vision for your organisation's future. Get the tools you need to influence your team and implement your plans in this highly interactive training.

Training from the Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA are offering the following sessions:

Biodiversity and nature recovery show and tell - Thursday 20 April, 10.30am to 12noon (Online)

As councils look to tackle their net zero targets, it is important to remember that there is an ecological crisis happening as well and responses to both are intrinsically linked. A key consideration of councils is looking to the Environment Act to see what is now required of them. Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Biodiversity Net Gain, protected sites and species are just a handful of new requirements that councils now need to act on.

In this webinar, funded by Government, we will hear from a range of councils about their approaches and experiences delivering biodiversity and nature recovery activities to date. These form part of a set of case studies showcasing approaches and experience drawn from across the country which will be launched at the event by the Planning Advisory Service.

Progress on children and young people's mental health policy in England
Thursday 18 May, 2pm to 3.30pm (Online)

A range of policies such as the 2017 Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Green Paper, the NHS Long-Term Plan, and post COVID-19 recovery, have been announced regarding children's mental health in England over the past decade. However, the scale of children's mental health needs remains of real concern to councils, schools, families and young people themselves, particularly given the impact of the pandemic, school closures and the current cost of living crisis. Children's mental health has also been highlighted in recent announcements including the Family Hubs and Best Start for Life, Schools White Paper and Special Educational Needs Green Paper. The Government is currently developing a strategy for mental health (all-age).

The Centre for Mental Health and the Children and Young People Mental Health Coalition (CYPMHC) have been commissioned by the LGA to produce a report exploring these policy approaches, announcements and steps taken to tackle the rising demand in children's mental health. It looks at the progress that has been made and what else needs to happen to ensure that central government, local government, NHS and wider partners are able to tackle children's mental health needs in England. This webinar will explore the outcomes of this report.

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 email yon.edomi@lbbd.gov.uk if you have any suggestions on items for inclusion in future bulletins and any feedback you may have on how it can be improved.