

Members' Briefing



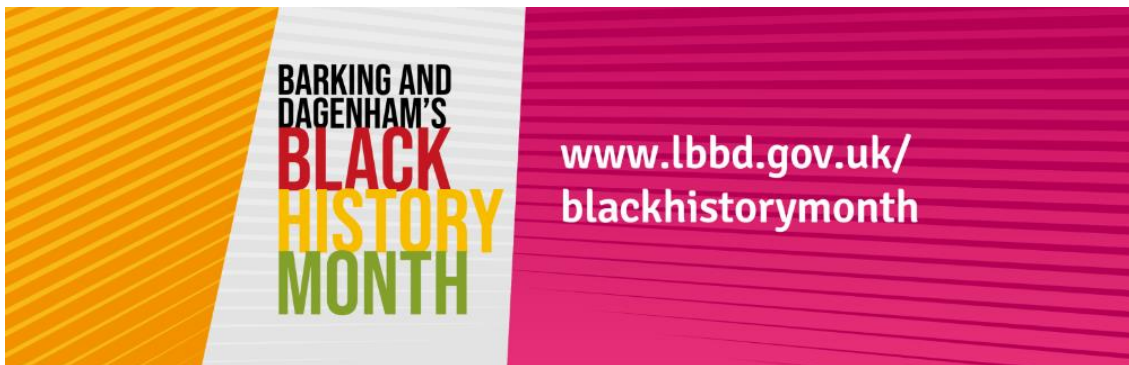
**Barking &
Dagenham**



Leader's borough update

In his video this week, the Leader mentions the great work our Trading Standards Officers have been doing to remove illegal vapes and cigarettes off the streets. They recently seized over 10,000 illegal products from local businesses.

He also welcomed the news that the Activate Volunteering Fund has launched where local organisations or groups can bid for up to £700 to use towards setting up a new volunteering activity.



Council to celebrate Black History Month

Black History Month returns this October, marking the annual celebration of the rich and diverse history of the black, African, and Caribbean community.

The celebrations kick-off later this month on Friday 29 September with a flag-raising event for Nigerian Independence Day before the Black History Month flag is raised on Monday 2 October. As well as marking Ugandan Independence Day on Monday 9 October.

There will also be children's workshops, as well as special tours of Eastbury Manor House, which will look at the colonial heritage of the 16th century Grade-I listed building.

A one-off Black History Month pop-up market will take place on Tuesday 31 October to showcase black-owned businesses and local community groups.

Throughout the month, residents will be able to read about inspirational people as part of the Council's Black History Month Hall of Fame, which will be shared online and through social media.

First celebrated in the UK in October 1987, the focus for this year's Black History Month will be on honouring the achievements of black women.

For more information visit www.lbbd.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/annual-events/black-history-month.



Resident's Survey 2023 - people who have received letters urged to respond

Every year the council conducts a resident's survey to find out what residents think about the council, its services and the local area.

The Residents Survey 2023 opened on 11 September and can be completed on the council's consultation and engagement website One Borough Voice.

To ensure statistical accuracy, we have a target sample size of 1,100 responses. We have sent letters to 6,000 households across the borough, selected at random, inviting them to respond. The response rate is still quite low so we are urging those residents who have received a letter to make

sure they complete the survey by 8 October.

Residents who have not received an invitation will also have an opportunity to provide feedback. We will be advertising the survey on our website, social media channels and in locations across the borough.

Once the survey closes, the results will be weighted to make it representative of the borough's demographics.

The detailed findings will be available from January 2024, and the results shared with all services to help make improvements and direct resources at the issues that matter the most to our residents. The information we gather will also identify where further consultation and engagement may be needed.

The results for previous year's surveys can be found on the Council's website [Council performance | London Borough of Barking and Dagenham \(lbbd.gov.uk\)](https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/council-performance).

We have also published a frequently asked questions page on the intranet to help you answer any questions residents may have [here](#).

For further information contact the Strategy Team at ce-strategy@lbbd.gov.uk.



Residents invited to find out about their next career step at a job fair

The council's JobShop will be hosting a Jobs Fair in partnership with Job Centre Plus on Wednesday 11 October at Dagenham Library, from 10.30am to 1pm.

Residents will be able to speak to employers from a range of sectors including cleaning, construction, health and social care, childcare and hospitality.

There will also be live vacancies for people to apply for on the day plus professional advice and guidance. Residents will be able to meet and talk to employers, recruiters as well as training providers to find out what local jobs and training opportunities are available.

Residents can turn up on the day or email vacancies@lbbd.gov.uk to find out more.

Training updates for councillors

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

Borough News



Your Estate Your Call: residents invited to have their say on estate improvements

The second round of our 'Your Estate Your Call' project is inviting residents of Ibbscott, Highview House and John Burns Drive estates to have their say on improvements they'd like to see in their local area.

Each year, £600,000 is spent on estate improvements across the borough, of which £100,000 has been made available for residents to put forward their views on what they'd like to see this time around.

The funding can be used for one-off, physical changes to improve outdoor and communal areas, whether that's enhancing an existing space or creating new facilities. Residents get to choose anything from the installation of benches and flowerbeds to outdoor gyms, football goal posts and more.

Residents are invited to share their views by Monday 2 October at www.oneboroughvoice.lbbd.gov.uk/your-estate-your-call-2



The latest round of Neighbourhood Fund is now open!

The Neighbourhood Fund is a £150,000 funding opportunity for people to make a real difference in their local areas. The funding is open to community groups, charities and social enterprises in the borough to bid for grants of up to £10,000.

So far, over £1,000,000 has been awarded to 122 different local community projects across the borough.

As part of a newly introduced rule, applications are now welcome from groups working together as consortiums made up of multiple organisations, applying for a maximum of £10,000.

The new addition to the application criteria will be helpful for smaller or newly established organisations who do not meet the eligibility criteria on their own. The closing date for applications is Sunday 1 October at 5pm and groups and organisations can apply [here](#).



Cash up for grabs for local groups to increase volunteering opportunities

A one-off £7,000 funding pot has been set up to create more volunteering opportunities across Barking and Dagenham.

The Activate Volunteering Fund invites local organisations and groups to bid for up to £700 each to use towards an activity, scheme or event that relies on volunteers.

The fund is aimed at supporting initiatives of all sizes, from local litter-picking groups that needs supplies to something bigger.

Successful applicants will be able to access support for their projects from the council's large pool of volunteers.

The deadline for applications is Tuesday 3 October.

For more information visit <https://oneboroughvoice.lbbd.gov.uk/activate-volunteering>



Cost of living survey

We're asking residents how the cost of living is affecting them so that we can improve the support on offer in Barking and Dagenham.

The survey takes just three minutes and residents who take part could be in for a chance to win £500.

Please help us spread the word – [the survey can be found here.](#)

Residents are also reminded there's a range of cost of living support available online and through our Community Hubs.

Residents can get advice, help and support with the cost of living, including money, energy, food and wellbeing support [here.](#)

Around the council



Local people invited to train for a career in construction

Local residents are being offered the chance to train and get industry accredited qualifications in the construction industry.

The Barking Riverside Innovation in Construction Centre is offering residents the opportunity to train for CSCS courses. On completion, participants will be able to safely work in the construction industry.

Courses include a three-day Level 1 in Health and Safety in a Construction Environment; CSCS test and preparation ultimately leading to the award of a CSCS card. In addition, the service can also assist participants to acquire other construction industry related cards.

Interested residents can find out more by email at bric@lbbd.gov.uk or by telephone on 020 8227 2777 or 07977 017 133.



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

Over £100,000 in affordable loans have so far been handed out to borough residents through our partnership with Leeds Credit Union.

The partnership aims 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.

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 <https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/discretionary-hardship-support/discretionary-financial-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.

Local Government News

Do It London campaign extended

Last week, [Do It London](#), the multimedia campaign by the London HIV Prevention Programme (LHPP), marked Sexual Health Week 2023 by teaming up with Nathaniel Hall from Channel 4's *Its A Sin* and Joseph Mendez from BBC's *I Kissed A Boy*.

This year's theme was 'playing it safe' and Nathaniel Hall said: "With so many options, it's now easier than ever to prevent HIV transmissions and Sexual Health Week is the ideal time to find out how you can protect yourself."

London boroughs have agreed to extend the vital work being done by Do It London for a further three years, until March 2027.

London Councils' Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care, Cllr Nesil Caliskan, said: "Sexual Health Week is an opportunity to underline the vital importance of HIV prevention in London and it's fantastic to have Joseph and Nathaniel's support for Do It London."

"So much great work is being done by London boroughs to prevent HIV in our communities, tackle the stigma surrounding having an HIV diagnosis and ensure diagnoses occur at the earliest possible stage. This is having a significant impact - between 2015 and 2021 new diagnoses in London fell by 66%."

To see more about the work done across Sexual Health Week, take a look at Do It London's social media.

Conference event: London's role in national devolution agenda

London Councils will be hosting events at all three of the upcoming major political party conferences.

Next week we will be at the Liberal Democrat Party Conference in Bournemouth to discuss what's next for the devolution agenda and how London can lead the way.

Attendees are welcome to join us on Monday 25 September, 11.30-12.30 in the Bayview Suite 2, Bournemouth International Centre. A light lunch and refreshments will be provided.

Speakers at the event will include:

Cllr Gareth Roberts, Vice Chair of London Councils and Leader of the London Borough of Richmond
Caroline Pidgeon MBE, Assembly Member, London Assembly
Cllr Bridget Smith, Leader, South Cambridgeshire District Council
Sonika Sidhu, Principal Policy Adviser, Local Government Association
Akash Paun, Programme Director – Devolution, Institute for Government

AI guidance for local authorities

Over the summer of 2023, the [London Office of Technology and Innovation](#) (LOTI) has been working with its members and partners to create guidance for local authorities on the topic of Generative AI (GenAI).

There are four new resources available online, including one-pagers for local authority leaders and staff, a State of Play report and a guidance for CIOs produced with Faculty AI. [You can find them all on the LOTI website here.](#)

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

LondonWorld, 21 September – [More than 1,500 safeguarding concerns about vulnerable adult in Barking and Dagenham](#)

Coventry Telegraph, 21 September – [Three local councils have 'worst debt problems than Birmingham Council'](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham

MyLondon, 20 September – [The London boroughs that saw the most bus cuts ahead of ULEZ expansion](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham

Property Reporter, 20 September – [What are the easiest and hardest places to currently get planning permission](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham

Property118, 19 September – [England's biggest social housing providers ignore official complaint warnings](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham

Housing Executive Magazine, 19 September – [Ombudsman records highest level of non-compliance](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham

Inside Housing, 19 September – [Ombudsman data shows failure to comply with complaint handling orders at record high](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham

Local Government News, 19 September – [Record non-compliance in landlords' complaint handling](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

The Guardian, 19 September – [England's big social housing landlords ignoring official complaint warnings](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Metalocus, 18 September – [A vertical and sustainable industrial building. Industria by Howard Tompkins](#). Mentions Barking Riverside.

Media Releases

[Landlord found guilty of the same offence several years later
Court orders man to fork out over £500 for fence found to be too high](#)
[Celebrating Black History Month 2023 in Barking and Dagenham](#)
[Four thousand year-old cutting-edge technology in Dagenham](#)

Members' Training

Training from the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU)

The LGiU are offering the following sessions:

Scrutiny: Wednesday 27 September, 9.30am to 11.30am (Online)

Asking questions and actively listening is, of course, a crucial skill for elected members. But this is most intensely highlighted when it comes to scrutiny, probing, and questioning in a local authority. This engaging training will keep you on the edge of your seat in anticipation while providing comprehensive tools and frameworks to implement moving forward.

Managing casework: Thursday 28 September, 9.30am to 12.30pm (Online)

Sustainably carrying out multiple roles and working with a variety of people requires resilience and a healthy work-life balance.

Personal resilience is about maintaining a sense of well-being, being mentally strong, effectively meeting different demands and performing at one's best on behalf of individuals, and communities as well as being an effective leader. This is a very practical seminar that will provide each participant with methods and helpful ideas to manage the pressures they face and enable them to be able to maximise the positive aspects of being an elected member.

Training from Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA are offering the following session:

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 von.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.
