

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**



Leader's borough update

In his video this week, the Leader shares some fantastic news that A House for Artists in Barking picked up the prestigious Neave Brown Award for affordable housing at the recent RIBA Architecture Awards.

He adds that last Wednesday saw the start of National Care Leaver's Week which runs from 25 October to 1 November to celebrate the inspiring resilience and strength of our care leavers as they move into adulthood; and it was also a chance to show our appreciation for those who work tirelessly to support them.

The Leader praises for our Fostering Team who picked up a well-deserved win at the Fostering Network Awards. The team were praised for their dedication for setting up the Mockingbird programme which is now being used as a template for other boroughs.

He ends with an appeal for people to be respectful over the Halloween as not everyone would welcome knocks on their doors and invites residents who want a quiet Halloween that they can download a poster to stick on their window from our [website](#).



Local group launches Poppy Appeal campaign

Volunteers from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Elders Association in Barking have launched this year's Poppy Appeal campaign at Barking Town Hall.

The partnership with the Royal British Legion saw the group raise over £900,000 last year at Westminster and Liverpool Street stations and are aiming for a target of £1m this year.

The launch event was attended by Cllr Dominic Twomey, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Growth & Core Services, who was joined by former Mayor Peter Chand.



Residents invited to have their say on changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme

Residents are being invited to have their say on proposed changes to our working age Council Tax Support Scheme. The proposed changes include the

introduction of income bands, making it easier for residents to identify the discounts they are eligible for.

The proposals may result in changes to some of the amounts people receive. Any potential changes would take effect from 1 April 2024.

Residents can share their views by dropping into face-to-face support sessions at the Barking Learning Centre on Wednesday 1 November and Dagenham Learning Centre on Wednesday 8 November from 9.30am to 3.30pm or online at <https://oneboroughvoice.lbbd.gov.uk/cts-2024-25>

Residents who would like additional support to help them to complete the questionnaire can email benefits@lbbd.gov.uk with the subject 'CTS consultation'.

The consultation closes on Thursday 23 November.



Find out more about our borough

As a council, we are committed to using data to improve outcomes for our residents and the [Borough Data Explorer](#) is one of the tools we use to do this.

This exciting tool has seven years of data for themes such as employment, housing, safety, health and much more.

You can visit the Borough Data Explorer to compare our borough's performance to neighbouring London boroughs or to see how outcomes differ in different parts of the borough. Find out more [here](#).



Repairs surgeries for council tenants now open

Council tenants with existing or ongoing repairs in their homes can now speak to a member of the housing repairs team face to face at the Barking Learning Centre and Dagenham Library.

Repair surgeries will be open for appointments on the first and third week of every month between 9.30am and 3.30pm. The next repairs surgeries will take place on:

- Monday 6 November 2023, 9.30 to 3.30pm at Dagenham Library (Ground Floor Glass Pod)
- Monday 20 November 2023, 9.30 to 3.30pm at Barking Learning Centre (Meeting Pod 2)

Residents will be able to book 20 minute appointments via a [booking form which will be made available online.](#)

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



Join us to mark Remembrance Day

Remembrance Day gives us the opportunity to remember and pay our respects to those who have fallen in war. Across the weekend, there will be several events for you to join.

Friday 10 November – The Royal Naval Association will hold a Memorial Service at the Cross Keys War Memorial. Another wreath-laying service will take place at the Job Drain Memorial, Barking. Both events will take place at 10.45am.

Saturday 11 November – There will be a wreath-laying ceremony at the War Memorial on the corner of Heathway and Church Elm Lane at 10.30am.

Sunday 12 November – You can take part in the Remembrance Parade and Service at St. Margaret's Church, and a Remembrance Service at Dagenham Parish Church from 10.20am.

For full details of the Remembrance events taking place across the borough visit our [website here](#).



Equalities and Diversity Fund is back

Community organisations across the borough are being invited to apply for grants of up to £500 from our Equality and Diversity Community Fund.

The fund allows local charities and community groups to play a bigger role in staging a range of events throughout the year.

The funding should be related to our Equality and Diversity Calendar, which involves everything from Christmas to LGBT+ History Month and national independence days. Residents and community groups can [view the full calendar and apply here](#).

These projects should promote social inclusion, celebrate diversity, and support equality through providing opportunities for people with protected characteristics.



Your Estate, Your Call - it's time for residents to vote!

Last month we asked residents for their ideas on how we could improve three housing estates in the borough: Ibscott, John Burns Drive and Highview House in Marks Gate.

We received 51 ideas in total and a shortlist has been prepared. Bin storage, cycle storage and improvements to a play park are among the ideas put forward by the community.

It's now time for residents to cast their vote and let us know which suggestions are their favourite.

[Voting closes on 10 November.](#)



Head is spinning – swivel chair dumper on the Wall of Shame

Chairs, speakers, cots and more all feature in the [latest jaw-dropping episode](#) of the [Wall of Shame](#).

Think you recognise someone featured on the show? Email grimecrime@lbbd.gov.uk

Around the council



Residents interested in a career in construction invited to get in touch

Residents interested in a career in the construction industry are being invited to get in touch with the Barking Riverside Innovation in Construction Centre (BRIC).

The BRIC training centre in Barking Riverside is offering construction training and qualifications plus brand-new test centre facilities where interested residents can book for their CITB Health, Safety and Environment tests. They will also be able to gain a Level 1 Health and Safety in Construction qualification.

On successful completion of the course, participants will gain the green CSCS labourer card which will allow them to work safely in the construction industry. Staff at the BRIC will also assist participants in gaining other industry related construction cards.

Residents can also save the date for a Construction Job Fair which takes place on Wednesday 15 November at the Bric Training Centre, Infrastructure Way, Off Choats Road, Gate A, IG11 0YN from 10am to 12 noon.

Residents can register to attend on the Eventbrite page at:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/construction-jobs-fair-tickets-740836139837?aff=ebdsshcopyurl&utm-campaign=&utm-content=&utm-medium=&utm-source=&utm-term=>

To find out more please contact bric@lbbd.gov.uk or telephone 020 8227 2777/07977 017133.

You can also visit the website at: www.lbbd.gov.uk/BRIC



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

Transformative local climate action projects showcased in Parliament

Climate change remains one of the biggest threats facing our communities and councils recognise the urgency and scale of the challenge, with over 300 declaring climate emergencies.

Last Tuesday, 24 October, London Councils, (represented by Cllr Kieron Williams, Chair of London Councils Transport and Environment Committee and Cllr Clem Kemhali, Vice Chair of the Transport and Environment Committee) attended a Back Local Climate Action drop-in session in Parliament alongside the Local Government Association, County Councils Network and District Councils Network.

Together they showcased some of the transformative local climate action projects that councils are leading and spoke to MPs and Members of the House of Lords about what local government needs from government to achieve net zero faster and more efficiently, in a way that delivers the greatest benefit to our communities.

[You can read more about London Councils' Climate Programme on their website here #BeTheSolution.](#)

LDN Inspire

A ground-breaking programme to join-up interventions for improving the health of Black Londoners is hosting a series of events throughout Black History Month to explore new ways to mobilise the community and improve health outcomes.

The development of LDN inspire involved working closely with the Black, Caribbean and African community and health professionals to amplify efforts against health disparities across the capital and to foster collaboration and best practice for the Black Caribbean & African communities.

[You can read more about the LDN Inspire programme and upcoming events here.](#)

LOTI Apprentice Hub

The London Office of Technology and Innovation (LOTI) helps London borough councils and the GLA use innovation and data technology to be high performing organisations, improve services, and tackle London's biggest challenges together.

LOTI's Apprentice Hub is a networking and professional development space for apprentices working in digital, data, technology and innovation – including exclusive workshops, events, career support and peer spaces.

If you are an apprentice working in digital, data, technology and innovation [you can sign up here](#) to join the Apprentice Hub and get updates from LOTI on their work supporting apprentices.

If you work with apprentices and would like to find out more, you can get in touch with [LOTI's Skills & Talent Manager, Edi Whitehead](#).

Parking and traffic consultation

The London Parking and Traffic Enforcement Penalty Charges Consultation closed on Monday 23 October.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the consultation. More than 2,000 responses have been received and London Councils will be reviewing the responses over the coming weeks before reporting on the findings of the consultation to the [Transport and Environment Committee \(TEC\)](#).

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

[The Guardian, 27 October](#) – [Councils in England paying £1.7bn a year to house people in temporary homes](#). Mentions Cllr Darren Rodwell.

BBC London, 27 October – [Met Police: Victims of crime to get more support](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Mail Online, 24 October – [Disgusting moment fishmonger repeatedly throws frozen seafood down on to the pavement outside East London shop as council launch food hygiene investigation](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Room 151, 23 October - [£16bn of LGPS capital invested in fossil fuels](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Architecture Ironmongery Journal, 23 October – [Building Beauty Awards announces finalists for Britain's most beautiful new buildings](#). Mentions Barking Riverside Station.

London Connected, 21 October – [Moving east: L&Q brings London living rent homes to Barking Riverside](#).

Evening Standard, 20 October – [Man hit with plank of wood in homophobic attack in east London](#). Mentions Chadwell Heath.

Media Releases

[Property owner ordered to pay £60,000 for illegal conversion.](#)

[Cigarette costs Dagenham smoker over £500.](#)

[East London council launches inclusive Digital Zones to bridge digital access.](#)

Members' Training

Training from the Local Government Information Unit (LGiU)

The LGiU are offering the following sessions:

[Communicating in a crisis](#): Tuesday 14 November, 9.30am to 12.30pm
(Online)

Crisis in local government is not new and often they can happen when you least expect them. This practical workshop will help you respond when a crisis strikes — particularly through your council's communications team.

Key outcomes:

- Awareness of the reputational risks for your organisation
- Understand what to expect when crisis strikes
- Create your own crisis communications plan

[Managing Casework](#): Tuesday 28 November, 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.

Budget setting: Thursday 7 December, 9.30am to 12.30pm (Online)

Dive into financial planning and budgeting, particularly when organisations are still grappling with the effects of the pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

Key outcomes:

- Understand the immediate and potentially ongoing financial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis on the council's finances.
- Understand the financial planning and control process at a typical local council.
- Appraise and evaluate how councillors can most effectively influence budget and spending decisions.

Training from London Councils

London Councils are offering the following session:

Building age-friendly communities: Empowering and connecting older residents - Wednesday 8 November, 1 to 1.45pm (Online)

How can we support our older residents to feel safer, more welcome and connected to their local community and provide them with a stronger voice in the way decisions are made? Join us to learn about the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities and how Newham Council is embracing this initiative to transform into an age-friendly borough.

Training from the Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA are offering the following sessions:

Learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews: Discrimination and Discriminatory Abuse: Wednesday 1 November, 2 to 4pm

This webinar is the third in a series of events that takes forward learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews and is supported by Partners in Care and Health. Speakers at this webinar will provide insights into different areas of discrimination and discriminatory abuse from a safeguarding adults' perspective. Safeguarding Adults Reviews and the process of undertaking them, help to identify the multiple and complex issues and challenges in this area of practice.

Finance without numbers – An introduction to local government finance:

Thursday 2 November, 6.00pm to 7.30pm

This virtual event is for newly elected members or those just looking for a refresh. The event will provide an overview of local government finance without any numbers - focussing instead on roles and responsibilities, key terminology and processes. It will give you an understanding of both what you need to be aware of in your role and what you need to understand about your authority's role. The session will cover:

- Members' role in finance
- How finance decisions are made
- Some key financial issues and terminology

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, across 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.
