

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**



Leaders borough update

In his video this week, the Leader mentions all things Christmas and reminded residents about last Saturday's Barking Mad About Christmas event – where families enjoyed live performances, workshops, entertainment and children received free gifts from Santa.

He also mentions the free Christmas Market at Valence House on Saturday 9 December where residents can pick up special presents for all the family and

enjoy festive food and drink while supporting local community stall holders. Children will also get the chance to meet animals from Gemma's Christmas fair.



Council lauds Supreme Court ruling on illegal encampments.

The Supreme Court confirmed on Wednesday 29 November, that courts can grant local councils 'newcomer injunctions' which prevents 'unidentified and unknown' people from setting up unauthorised camps within specific areas in a ruling described as a "judgement of national importance."

Last week's judgement means the council can continue to seek and enforce injunctions against 'persons unknown' including those who are 'newcomers' (including those not party to the proceedings at the time the injunction was made).

The council's Legal Services represented four of the local authorities involved and very well done to them.



Council welcomes reopening of Dagenham Police Station

The council has welcomed the reopening of Dagenham Police Station following its temporary closure for refurbishment.

Following refurbishment and after a prolonged closure, the Police Station in Dagenham is now open to the public 24 hours a day and will be providing a front counter service for residents.

The front counter service at Barking Learning Centre will remain open Monday to Friday from 10am to 5pm.

Dagenham Police Station is located at 561 Rainham Road South, RM10 7TU.



Borough continues 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence

Saturday 25 November saw the start of 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence, the global campaign that aims to end violence against women and girls.

Throughout the 16 Days, residents have been joining in the conversations. Their thoughts and opinions are critical, and we are keen to hear them. Only by all of us working together can we eliminate violence against women and girls.

Any resident, their family member or friend who is in need of support can please head to our [website](#).

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



Council marks Albanian Independence with a flag raising ceremony

Members of the Shpresa Programme were joined by councillors and staff at an event to mark Albanian Independence Day last Tuesday, 28 November.

The event, which included a flag raising also saw members of the Albanian community put on a wonderful display of music and dance.

VENUE HIRE

Are you looking for a meeting room, conference, training or event facilities in Barking and Dagenham?

If you need to hire a room for a quick meeting or a day long event we have the perfect space for you.



OUR FACILITIES OFFER:

- ✓ Large spacious meeting and training rooms
- ✓ SMART Whiteboards
- ✓ High quality digital projectors
- ✓ Multiple computer workstations
- ✓ A range of well equipped classrooms
- ✓ Wi-Fi connection
- ✓ Disability access to all areas
- ✓ Day, evening and weekend hire
- ✓ Single or multiple bookings
- ✓ Excellent transport links

Our venues can be hired for:

- Interviews
- Corporate & Community Events
- Worship Meetings



CONTACT US
020 8270 4722



Email for booking enquiries:
adultcollegebookings@lbbd.gov.uk

Hall and meeting spaces for hire at the Ripple centre

Residents and community groups looking for a space to meet or have events need look no further than the [Ripple Centre](#) in Barking.

Facilities on offer include spacious meeting and training rooms, wi-fi connections, projectors, digital access, excellent transport links and available evenings and weekends.

To find out more, telephone 0208 270 4722 or email adultcollegebookings@lbbd.gov.uk



Valence House Christmas Market returns

Residents are being invited to come along to the FREE Christmas Market at Valence House on Saturday 9 December from 11am to 5pm.

Visitors can pick up special presents for all the family and enjoy festive food and drinks while supporting local community stallholders.

There will also be a chance to meet Father Christmas in his grotto and receive a special gift (£3.50 per child and people must book in advance).

Visitors can also meet animals from Gemma's Christmas farm come rain or shine. Residents can find out more [here](#).

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.

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

London Councils' Autumn Statement response

London Councils has responded to the government's Autumn Statement delivered on 22 November, warning that it leaves boroughs facing massive financial pressures and many struggling to balance their budgets this year.

[Cllr Claire Holland, Acting Chair of London Councils](#), said: "After years of campaigning for an increase in Local Housing Allowance, we welcome the decision to end the freeze. Boosting LHA is essential for helping low-income Londoners pay their rent and avoid homelessness. This is good news for London renters and for boroughs' hard pressed homelessness services.

"But with one in 50 Londoners currently homeless and living in temporary accommodation arranged by their local borough, the housing crisis remains a critical risk to town hall budgets. Enormous and growing pressures can also be seen across other vital services, especially adult and children's social care.

“We will keep pushing for more funding support in the face of these on-going challenges, as well as the long-term reforms to local government finance that are crucial for sustaining London’s local services in the years to come.”

You can read the full briefing on London Councils’ [website](#).

Borough creates woodland to reduce flooding risk

Enfield Council is using natural solutions to reduce the risk of flooding in the borough, transforming 80 hectares of land into new woodlands. The Enfield Chase Woodland Creation area, equivalent to more than 100 football pitches, includes ponds fitted with sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). These encourage a natural water filtering process, using non plastic material and allowing the soil to soak up and hold more water.

[Cllr Rick Jewell, Enfield Council’s Cabinet Member for Environment](#) said:

“Enfield is committed to finding proactive solutions to be ready for flooding challenges when they arise in the borough.

“The rewilding flood management project will bolster the natural wetland ecosystem not only providing flood defences but encouraging local biodiversity to grow and thrive.”

By-election result

A by-election took place in the Plaistow North ward in Newham on Thursday 23 November. The by-election was won by Sophia Naqvi (Independent). [You can read the result in full on Newham’s website here](#).

This week’s coverage in the national and regional media

Inquest, 30 November – [Inquest of Armanih Lewis-Daniel](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Jamaican Gleaner, 30 November – [Portmore to benefit from school for the disabled](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Local Government Lawyer, 29 November – [Courts can grant ‘newcomer injunctions’ aimed at stopping unauthorised encampments but only “when there is a compelling need”](#): [Supreme Court](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Construction.co.uk, 29 November – [Construction work begins on townhouses in Barking Riverside](#).

PA Consulting, 29 November – [Demos launches Future Public Services Taskforce; PA Consulting joins the Advisory Board](#). Mentions Chris Naylor.

Property Wire, 27 November – [Bellway starts work on townhouses at Barking Riverside development](#).

Ethical Marketing News, 27 November – [Social investment fund tackling inequality backed by Macquarie Group Foundation and BD Giving](#). Mentions [Barking and Dagenham](#).

Evening Standard, 26 November – [Giedrius Vasiljevas: Daughter of man shot dead by police in east London launches fundraiser in memory of ‘caring’ father](#). Mentions Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 24 November – [London must become the best place in the world for investment](#). Mentions Barking Riverside.

Local Government Lawyer, 24 November – [Supreme Court to rule next week in test case on local authority land and injunctions against unidentified newcomers](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Media Releases

[Council Leader welcomes reopening of Dagenham East Police Station.](#)
[Barking and Dagenham Council signs up to UNISON's anti-racism Charter.](#)
[Weaver's Quarter – Bouygues to conduct checks and repairs.](#)

Members' Training

Training from the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU)

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 the Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA are offering the following sessions:

Data and managing council performance – free introductory training for councillors - Friday 1 March 2024, 10am to 12.30pm

This introductory training session will focus on data and the role it plays in managing council performance. The programme which has been developed in association with King's College London has been designed for councillors.

The session will cover the following topics:

- what is data?
- common ways in which data is analysed and presented
- key questions to ask of our data
- performance management – measuring what matters.

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 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.

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