

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**



Leader's borough update

The Leader mentions measles outbreak in parts of the UK and reminds residents that measles can be extremely serious and in some cases life threatening. He urges parents to make sure that their children have had their free MMR vaccines.

He also lets residents know that over the coming weeks a number of walk-in clinics will be open where parents can take their children to get the vaccine and no appointments will be needed. He highlights that next Friday 23 February a big walk-in clinic will be taking place at Mayesbrook Sports Centre, where

parents can pop in with their children, get the job and enjoy free fun activities.

The Leader ends by letting residents know about our Inclusive Digital Zones based in Dagenham Library and the Barking Learning Centre, which help people with learning disabilities have better access to digital technology. He is encouraging people to pop in to use the resource as there are also digital champions available to guide people to use the equipment.



Schools Television Broadcast programme comes to Barking and Dagenham

Pupils from three local schools – Jo Richardson, Sydney Russell and Warren schools had the opportunity to produce and broadcast their own 'TV panel' show.

The initiative saw 30 pupils from the three schools work with a crew of broadcast engineers and TV production professionals from Crew Room Academy to bring a television live broadcasting project to the borough.

The initiative, led by the borough's Cultural Education Partnership work with

[Crew Room Academy](#), (a pioneering training and mentorship program for 13–21-year-olds that have been historically excluded and are looking to build a career in broadcasting) also includes tours of ITV Studios and every young person being given free access to online mentoring and careers advice through the Crew Room Academy digital hub.

The programme is the outcome of an 18-month partnership with Inspiring Futures which connects education, vocational pathways to the wider film studios development and work of Film LBBB (this work was funded by Film LBBB Make It Here and MBS Group).



Bringing London's historic wholesale markets to Dagenham Dock - have your say!

The City of London Corporation is moving forward with plans to relocate its historic Smithfield and Billingsgate markets to Dagenham Dock – a move which promises a vibrant new future for the markets, which offer one of London's largest and most diverse range of produce.

After receiving outline planning consent in March 2022, the next step is crucial. The City Corporation are bringing forward a Reserved Matters Application (RMA), addressing key details like access, appearance, and landscaping. They are keen to get the views of residents.

The City of London Corporation will be hosting a public exhibition in the borough to discuss the RMA on Tuesday 5 March, from 4pm to 8pm at: Three Sixty Workrooms, 36 – 48 Cambridge Road, Barking IG11 8NW.

This is an opportunity for residents to help shape the future of Dagenham Dock by creating a modern, sustainable food centre that benefits the whole community. Find out more at www.wholesalemarkets.co.uk



900 new homes coming to the borough

Be First, the council's regeneration company estimate they will hand over a further 900 completed homes by the end of the end of June this year in locations across the borough. 743 of these will be affordable.

This milestone will mean that Barking and Dagenham will continue to be one of

the largest affordable home builders in the country with one in five of all affordable homes in London being built in the borough.

The momentum will see affordable housing boosted right across the borough, in projects including the Gascoigne neighbourhood, Oxlow Lane, Padnall Lake and Thames Road.

Once handed over, the homes will be marketed and available to rent.



Be First (Regeneration) Ltd: Internal Audit Draft Report
Development H&S (including CDM) (2023/24)

Be First gets top rating for internal audit

In a recent Health and Safety internal audit, Be First was awarded a rating of Substantial Assurance for its policies and procedures and implementation through the projects it delivers, which is above the industry standard. The internal audit, which was carried out by Be First's Internal Auditors, Mazars, as part of the assurance programme to ensure that Be First has effective controls in place and that key risks are being effectively managed.

The audit considered different areas of potential risk such as: the management and reporting of health and safety issues, contractual responsibilities, reporting relating to CDM issues and the administration of development works. The

Substantial Assurance rating given showed the range of areas of good practice including that Be First staff were trained on the health & safety and CDM matters, contractors were appointed following a robust tender process and that contractor competencies for each individual appointed contractor were assessed.

As part of its innovation in health and safety, Be First carries out monthly site-based audits on health and safety. It sounds like a belt and braces approach but certainly goes a long way to ensuring there are less incidents on site.

The Substantial Assurance is the highest rating and reflects that there are only minor good practice recommendations. In this instance there was one minor recommendation, and the outcome is above industry standard.

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



Residents invited to tell us what they think about our parks

Our borough is one of the greenest in London with 28 parks and green spaces, covering over 463 hectares, which is equal to over 1,000 football pitches.

We want to know which of our parks and green spaces residents have been using and what they think of them; what they like or dislike and if they have any ideas on how we can improve them. We would also like to hear their ideas on how we can make them safer and welcoming for everyone.

The feedback from residents will help shape how our parks are managed, maintained and developed in the future and support applications for external funding to help bring even more improvements for everyone.

[Residents can have their say before the closing date on Sunday 31 March.](#)



**53% OF RESIDENTS SKIP
OR HAVE SMALLER
MEALS BECAUSE OF COSTS**



**IT'S NOT OKAY.
BUT IT IS OKAY TO REACH OUT FOR SUPPORT**

WWW.LBBD.GOV.UK/COST-LIVING-SUPPORT

We're still supporting residents with the cost of living

Now more than ever, some residents will be feeling the pinch with sky high energy prices and the cost of food and shopping.

That's why we're sharing easy ways for residents to access help if they need it - from benefits and low-cost loans, through to income maximisation and signposting them to food banks, warm spaces, and wellbeing support.

There's lots of help available and it's really important that we can all talk about

it.

Residents can take a look at the latest cost of living support guides which bring together the support we offer, alongside our partners in one place.

[View the Cost of Living Information Support Guides here.](#)

Residents can also drop into [Community Hubs](#) across the borough to access support face to face.



NHS

**Measles cases
are rising in London**

**Make sure your child
is up to date with
their MMR vaccinations**

The poster features a blue background. In the top right corner is the NHS logo. The main headline is split into two dark blue boxes with white text. Below the headline is an illustration of a woman with long dark hair sitting on a yellow sofa, talking to a young girl who is holding a teddy bear. To the right of the illustration is the text 'Make sure your child is up to date with their MMR vaccinations'.

Residents urged to make sure their children get the MMR vaccine

Residents may have seen in the news recently that there have been outbreaks of measles in the West Midlands and areas of London.

Sadly, the current outbreak of measles is not surprising given the low take up of the MMR vaccine over recent years and it spreads easily between people who have not been vaccinated.

Measles can be extremely serious, even life-threatening and the best way for residents to protect their children is the MMR vaccine and it is free of charge.

Any resident whose child, regardless of their age, has missed one or both doses of the MMR vaccine, need to make sure they have the vaccine as soon as possible.

They can find out how to get their child vaccinated [here](#).



Clean up needed - vacuum cleaner chucked in latest Wall of Shame

The [Wall of Shame returns](#) with more selfish fly-tippers caught on camera. Know or recognise anyone featured? If so, email grimecrime@lbbd.gov.uk now!

You can watch more episodes [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 £200,000 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

Local Government Settlement still leaves a large shortfall in London

The [Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024/25](#), confirmed by the Government last week, will leave a funding shortfall of at least £400 million in the capital, London Councils has warned.

London Councils' analysis highlights that, despite a 5.5% real terms increase in their core spending power in the settlement, boroughs will continue to grapple with an "enormous" funding gap due to service pressures and costs – as outlined in London Councils' [consultation response to the Local Government Finance Settlement here](#).

[Deputy Chair of London Councils, Cllr Claire Holland](#), said: "Boroughs will continue to face a bleak financial outlook for the foreseeable future.

"Massive pressures on local services, skyrocketing costs, and years on inadequate funding have left town hall finances teetering on a cliff edge.

"It is in no one's interest for a council to find itself in a Section 114 situation. Londoners want stability for their local services. We will continue to urge

ministers to increase funding support and to work with us in making the local government finance system fairer and more sustainable.”

London Councils is calling for the Spring Budget on 6 March to address the financial pressures facing boroughs, including: the continuation of the Household Support Fund (currently due to end in March); housing and homelessness funding; and reform the broken local government finance system, so funding better reflects need, boroughs have greater certainty through longer-term funding settlements, and more devolved funding to reduce reliance on council tax.

Boroughs respond to government planning proposals

London Councils has responded to the government’s [proposed changes to planning rules](#), including a ‘brownfield presumption’.

[London Councils’ Executive Member for Regeneration, Housing and Planning, Cllr Darren Rodwell](#), said: “Boroughs are strongly pro-housing growth and doing everything they can to turbocharge building the new homes that Londoners desperately need.

“Although the planning system certainly needs to support building as much as possible, the system itself is not the core problem. London has a pipeline of 289,000 potential new homes that have received planning permission but have not yet been built due to other reasons.

“There are several key factors holding back housebuilding in London, including insufficient capital funding and infrastructure investment, as well as construction skills shortages.

“We remain as committed as ever to working in partnership with all levels of government on increasing housebuilding in the capital.”

Black Health Inequalities Summit

The [London Inspire Programme](#) will host a summit on 25 March exploring

collaboration to improving the health of Black Londoners. Speakers will include: Health Adviser to the Mayor of London, Professor Kevin Fenton CBE; Director of the National Healthcare Inequalities Improvement Programme at NHS England, Professor Bola Owa; and NHS Race and Health Observatory Professor Habib Naqvi.

The Summit will take place at the Royal Society of Medicine and [registrations are open now](#).

The London Inspire Programme is a co-designed programme developed from public consultation following the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and its disproportionate impact on Black people. The programme seeks to raise awareness and promote targeted health interventions aimed at health inequalities faced by Black people in London.

Freedom Pass renewals

Freedom Pass holders whose passes are due to expire on 31 March will have recently received a renewal letter.

For those who have received a letter, they are advised to renew as soon as possible to ensure they get their updated card in good time.

They can also renew their passes quickly and easily online at www.freedompass.org/renewal

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

The Guardian, 15 February - [London Overground: new names and colours for six lines revealed](#). Mentions Barking Riverside.

3FM, 14 February – [Social housing: Councils demand action to bolster affordable accommodation](#). Mentions Cllr Darren Rodwell.

Show House, 14 February – [Weston Homes to launch £315 million of new residential developments across London and the South East](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Housing Digital, 14 February – [Housing Digital Innovation Awards 2024: And the winners are ...](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham Reside.

Tourism International, 14 February – [London City Airport contributes over £250k in local community work in the past year](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 14 February – [London house prices: only five boroughs have seen property prices increase – is yours one of them?](#) Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Projin News, 13 February – [Khan pressured to review contracts after balcony collapse](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Business Motoring, 13 February – Drivers pay the price as the number of parking fines rockets. Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

LocalGov, 12 February – [Council chiefs call for powers to fight pavement parking 'scourge'](#). Mentions Cllr Darren Rodwell.

New York Times, 11 February – [I visited 'Barcelona upon Thames' near London and this is what it's really like](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Media Releases

[New Town Culture announces a new direction – including a new space for women's stories and the community](#).

[Dagenham dumper fined over £1,000 for fly-tipping](#).

[East London letting agent fined thousands in court.](#)

[Chadwell Heath man found guilty in court for dumping rubbish is fly-tipping hotspot.](#)

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.
