

Members' Briefing



**Barking &
Dagenham**



Leader's borough update

The Leader mentions the City of London's plans to move its historic wholesale markets to Dagenham Dock and is inviting residents and local businesses to come along to their public exhibition on 5 March to find out more.

He also lets residents know that as a council we want everyone to live in a safe and decent home and have launched our consultation on property licensing scheme for private rented homes.

The Leader ends by letting residents and landlords know about our proposals

for two new borough-wide licensing schemes to help us continue to improve standards and appeals to them to take part in the consultation.



Care worker found guilty of fraud and ordered to pay over £45,000

A Dagenham care worker has been found guilty in court of fraud by false representation and two other offences under the proceeds of Crime Act.

Mrs Ann Nelson, of Farm Road, Rainham, was yesterday 19 February, at Snaresbrook Crown Court sentenced to two years imprisonment (suspended), 15 rehabilitation days and 180 hours unpaid work. She was also ordered to pay £40,159.04 to Barking and Dagenham Council under the Proceeds of Crime Act, and costs of £4,597.

Mrs Nelson's crime came to light when staff from the council's social care

department received a safeguarding alert from the Royal London Hospital, which indicated the resident's carers had not been attending to his care needs despite timesheets submitted indicating otherwise.

On reviewing the alert, the council's Assurance Group opened an investigation to establish whether Ann Nelson, and two others, employed to provide care to the resident, had been providing services for which they were claiming and receiving payment.

The agreed care package required carers to visit four times a day – two of the visits require one carer, while the other two visits require two carers.

In order to receive payment for care provided, as part of a Direct Payment arrangement, carers are required to complete timesheets detailing the days and hours worked. The timesheets completed and signed in the names of Ann Nelson, and the two other named carers, were used to support claims for payments to the three carers for providing care services to the resident. The investigation revealed that the timesheets falsely represented the hours of care provided.

Late last year, Mrs Nelson appeared in court, where she pleaded guilty to one act of fraud by False Representation, and to two offences under the Proceeds of Crime Act where the council sought a Confiscation Order of £40159.04. Mrs Nelson has 56 days to pay the confiscation.

The council takes fraud seriously and if you would like to discuss any fraud or concerns you may have, please contact kevin.key@lbbd.gov.uk



Borough partners with A House of Brands

The latest addition to business in the borough, A House of brands opened in the Heathway Mall last week, bringing top brand clothing at a discount to residents with 10% of sales being reinvested in our food network.

Find out more [here](#).



Borough's youngsters invited to apply for the Colin Pond Bursaries for Higher Education

The Colin Pond Trust helps students from the borough to continue their studies at post-16 and fulfil their aspirations. Each year, the trust aims to award up to 10 bursaries, each of up to £500. Anyone over the age of 16 who is training/studying in further or higher education or who is about to start a course can apply.

Trustees particularly welcome applications from mature learners returning to education who have strong links to the borough.

For further information and to check their eligibility, visit [Colin Pond – A Founding Father | London Borough of Barking and Dagenham \(lbbd.gov.uk\)](https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/colin-pond)

The closing date for applications is 31 January 2024.



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 4 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

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 and groups encouraged to apply for Activate Volunteering Fund

The Activate Volunteering Fund returns for a second round, making a £7,000 funding pot available to local residents in a bid to create more volunteering opportunities across the borough.

Local organisations and groups are invited to bid for up to £700 each to use towards an activity, scheme or event that relies on volunteers. The fund supports initiatives of all sizes, from local litter-picking groups that need supplies to something bigger.

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

The first round saw local groups Bmoney Wise, Youth Spot Bar, JDS Striving for Excellence and Kingdom Builders access £2,800 of the £7,000 fund for initiatives including:

- Online classes for over 65s within the borough

- Support groups and activities for people living with anxiety and depression
- Skate Fest - an all-inclusive community-based activity
- Self-development classes and workshops.

The deadline for applications is Thursday 21 March. Residents can apply at <https://oneboroughvoice.lbbd.gov.uk/activate-volunteering>



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

**Cost of Living
Support**
Helping you through tough times

We are 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.

Measles: Are you protected?

You need **2 doses** of the **MMR vaccine** for lifelong protection.

If you haven't had **both doses**, you could be at risk.

Contact your GP practice and book an appointment if you're not up to date.

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](#).

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

London finance officers issue call to extend Household Support Fund

Ahead of the Spring Budget on 6 March, the Society of London Treasurers (SLT) has written to the Chancellor of the Exchequer the Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP to urge the government to extend the Household Support Fund (HSF) into the 2024/25 financial year.

The SLT, which is the professional network for London local authorities' most senior finance officers, previously wrote to the government in December calling for the HSF to continue. With boroughs required to finalise their budgets by March, the treasurers reiterate the urgent need for clarifying whether the HSF will be extended, or if transitional funding will be available to help maintain local support services.

In their letter, President of the SLT, Clive Palfreyman, says: "Boroughs under severe financial strain will be challenged to fill the gaps cancelling the HSF would create." You can read the letter in full [here](#).

Potential Merits of a Register of Not in School Children

London Councils this week briefed London MPs ahead of a [Westminster Hall debate](#) on the potential merits of a register of not in school children (home educated children).

London Councils believes that the government should introduce and fund a duty for local authorities to maintain a register of children who are not registered at specified schools or being educated under s.19 arrangements. This should include a duty for parents to register their children when they elect to home educate them, alongside a brief summary of the guidance for parents in an easily digestible format.

[You can read London Councils' Parliamentary briefing in full here.](#)

Community Engagement

London boroughs are always looking for new and innovative ways to engage with their communities.

The [Supporting London Boroughs Engagement Project](#) is funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and is being led by London Councils, in collaboration with the London Community Engagement Network. The project aims to:

- Ensure that Londoners' voices are heard by the decision makers.
- Share community-led insights, especially from underrepresented groups such as people who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Work with residents on innovative community engagement projects and sharing this learning with all London boroughs.

The project will run until the summer, but we are already seeing some great outcomes, including for example, the setting up of the [Kingston Disability Network](#).

The GLA Community Engagement Team has also commissioned The Social Innovation Partnership (TSIP) to deliver a research project to map community engagement practice across London and highlight areas of innovative work.

The outputs from the research, including case studies, a practical toolkit to improve engagement practice, and a key insight document, [can be found here](#).

Stop and Search survey

The Metropolitan Police are seeking the views of Londoners on stop and search. They have launched a new survey that asks Londoners what they think about stop and search practices to help inform a charter between local communities and the Met.

The 32-question survey focuses on the public's perception of stop and search, personal experiences of the tactic, training for officers, and what could be done better.

It takes approximately 20 minutes and results will have a lasting impact on how the Met carries out the tactic to better police London. [You can complete the survey here](#).

This week's coverage in the national and regional media

BBC London, 22 February – [Barking: Health and Safety Executive looking at balcony flaws](#).

Evening Standard, Homes & Property, 22 February – [Here's what £300k buys you in every borough – from warehouse conversions to a smart Pocket Living Scheme](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

BBC London, 21 February – [BBC finds major flaws in £41m estate's balcony](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Evening Standard, 21 February – [Huge new techno festival 'High Lights' planned for east London park this summer](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Landlord Today, 21 February – [Licensing scheme fees based on landlord's past performance](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

City Matters, 19 February – [Sadiq Khan announces £15m funding package to help domestic abuse in capital](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

New London Architecture, 19 February – [Focus on health](#). Mentions Barking Riverside.

UK Construction News, 19 February – [Ford Dagenham site revamp to hit nearly 4,000 homes](#).

Government & Public Sector Journal, 17 February – [Tackling digital infrastructure deficits in South and East London](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

BNN Breaking, 17 February – [Beyond the capital: The rising trend of first-time buyers in London's home counties](#). Mentions Barking and Dagenham.

Media Releases

[Barking and Dagenham youth dive into the lens with innovative pilot project](#).
[Barking and Dagenham residents encouraged to apply for Activate Volunteering Fund](#).

[Barking and Dagenham Council launches consultation on the future of property licensing schemes in the borough](#).

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.

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