

## FOREST GATE » IN FOCUS

Covering Forest Gate  
North and South

### Hello from Councillor Kay Scoresby

Hello and welcome to the first issue of the year. I hope you had a nice break. In Focus is back in full force and as always packed with all your local news.

Our Private Finance Initiative project to upgrade council rented homes is full steam ahead bringing benefits to everyone, and don't forget to join us in Forest Lane Park on Sunday 31 January to celebrate the reopening of the park.

Check out the new Art in the Window Wall and find out how you can get involved in joining our creative community.

There's plenty more going on this month, read inside to find out more.

**Community lead councillor,  
Kay Scoresby**



# Housing improvements benefit everyone



(fourth left) Cllrs Akbar Chaudhary and (far right) Shama Ahmad look over the plans to improve the environment at a consultation event in Durning Hall

**Last year, In Focus reported that council tenants were benefiting from a massive housing improvement package which will see around one thousand council rented properties being refurbished.**

Newham Council's 20-year £174m Private Finance Initiative (PFI) is working to ensure that properties in Forest Gate are being brought up to the Government's Decent Homes Standard (read more on pg 2).

Most of the money is being used to refurbish the rented council homes which are dotted throughout Forest Gate. Three million of the total £174m is being used towards environmental improvements including tackling anti-social behaviour and cleaning up the area. This will benefit not only council tenants but the entire community.

Residents have influenced improvements following a council consultation. Security, refuse and storage and landscaping were identified as priority areas. Residents also highlighted areas where high

galvanised metal gates and railings and extra lighting needs to be installed.

The council will work closely with partners including the Safer Neighbourhoods Team and Swan Housing Group to improve security by tackling crime and anti-social behaviour.

Landscaping improvements include tidying up overgrown areas, improving pavements and making the area tidier. In areas where there are blocks of apartments, such as the Chatsworth Estate, there will be a map to tell you where you are. Forest Gate North ward councillor Shama Ahmad said: "I welcome these improvements which will mean we will all benefit from a cleaner, greener and safer Forest Gate."

**Work will begin at the end of this month and will be completed in early 2012.**

## RECYCLE YOUR UNWANTED CLOTHES FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Last year we increased our recycling rates from 15 to 20 per cent. Let's improve on that figure for 2010 and continue recycling, reusing and reducing.

To help you, the council have installed 16 new textile recycling banks so you can recycle unwanted clothes and shoes while helping a good cause. There are now 32 banks across the borough.

You can recycle everything from t-shirts to saris, school uniforms to shoes or even accessories like belts. Your unwanted clothes are sorted, graded and sent to other parts of the world where they are reused. Many go to the most deprived countries in the developing world.

Your nearest textile recycling bank is located on:

- Glenparke Road

**For a full list of all 32 textiles recycling banks visit [www.newham.gov.uk](http://www.newham.gov.uk) and search for recycling.**

## ROADWORKS UPDATE

Work to make streets brighter and pavements, kerbs and roads better may have been hampered by the weather but the council's £24m Environmental Improvement Project continues.

Improvement work has been completed on part of Vicarage Lane, between Romford Road and Govier Close; the remaining stretch to Portway is anticipated to begin in March. Disraeli Road is also complete with improvements including renewal of street lighting, pavements and kerbs, and reconstruction and resurfacing of the road.

Other roads up for improvement in February are Forest Lane and Clova Road. The second bit of Station Road between Leonard Road and Forest Street will also be resurfaced early this year.

**Keep reading your In Focus for updates.**

Proud tenant Julia Davies (second right) with her '100th home' bouquet of flowers with Cllr Kay Scoresby (right) and representatives from Swan Housing Group and Higgins Construction



## Hundredth home refurbished

Newham Council's Private Finance Initiative (PFI) to improve 1,000 properties in Forest Gate has reached an important milestone in meeting the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

Mrs Davis was presented with a bouquet of flowers when her home was the 100th property to be refurbished as part of a 20 year £174m contract signed by Newham Council and Swan Housing in February last year. The scheme will see 900 rented properties

and 400 leasehold properties brought up to the Government's Decent Homes Standard by 2012. Homes will be fitted with new kitchens, bathrooms, windows and heating systems.

Since February 2009, 155 kitchens and 158 bathrooms have been replaced. Swan Housing Group, the council's private sector partner in the project, will manage and maintain the properties over the next year, while the council remains the landlord owning the properties and settling the rents.

## Forest Gate festival raffle winners

Shoppers turned out in their droves to snap up a raffle ticket to raise money for this year's Forest Gate Festival.

Around £250 was raised through the raffle which was organised by the Forest Gate Festival members and the council. Tickets were sold in local shops, with the winners announced last month at The Gate library.



(l-r) Cllrs Kay Scoresby and Akbar Chaudhary, Sandra Wright, Tim Smith, Sally Rogers and Cllr Winston Vaughan help draw the raffle winners at The Gate Library

Community lead councillor Kay Scoresby said: "Thanks to all the businesses who generously donated prizes for the raffle. And don't forget to keep shopping smart by shopping local."

The winners were: Mr Whitehead (hairdryer – Debron Cosmetics), Bryne Leman (£25 Smallholders voucher), Sarah Kahn, (Henry Hoover – Newbury Radios), Edith Chapman (£30 – Bagharia Sports) Mr BC Brown (£50 voucher – Barry's Meat Market) and Jack Chinnick (£50 voucher – Barry's Meat Market).

**Find out how you can get involved in this coming year's Forest Gate Festival by coming along to a meeting on Tuesday 2 March at 7.30pm in Durning Hall, Earlham Grove, E7.**

# GO UNDERGROUND WITH WINDOW WALL ART



(l-r) Students (l-r) Donna Brugnoli, Sahara Indris, Ragiev Wade and Nilab Folad join Hazel Goldman (second left), Martin Griffiths (centre) and Cllrs Kay Scoresby, Winston Vaughan and Shama Ahmad at the unveiling of the new art boxes

Students from Forest Gate Community School are bringing the underground overground as part of Earlham Grove's window wall mural.

Window wall is a community project started by Forest Gate councillors early last year with the help of local groups and businesses to bring communities together and beautify the area. Every three months locals come together to create different themed-art for the 19 plastic boxes in the window wall.

Costain, Thames Water's

contractors, who have been digging tunnels underneath Forest Gate to take away water that cause the sewers to flood, worked with students from Forest Gate Community School to create the new art for the boxes.

Year ten product design students and staff from the secondary school worked with local artist, Hazel Goldman from Free Form Arts Trust and Martin Griffiths of Costain to explore the world under their feet through photography, text, models

and sculptures.

Forest Gate south ward councillor Winston Vaughan said: "The window wall is all about bringing our community together through a creative forum. It's open to everyone, so if you're interested get in touch."

**If you would like to get involved why not come along to a workshop on Saturday 30 January in the Woodgrange Baptist Church. Phone Shabana on 020 3373 1267 for more information.**

## Celebrate the new look Forest Lane Park



Come along and celebrate the reopening of the revamped Forest Lane Park on Sunday 31 January from 11am-3pm.

Following the launch of the main play area in November last year, the natural play area (by the lake) has now been completed and to mark the occasion the council is organising a mini-play day with activities for all the family.

Enjoy a fun day out and see the park in a new light. Follow the totem poles which act as markers for the nature trail, check out the new natural play equipment, like the slides on mounds, clamber onto the viewing platform for a bird's eye view of the revamped park or discover your local feathered friends by taking part in the Big Garden Birdwatch.

The event is also your chance to have your say on the council's action plan to identify areas where wildlife needs to be protected; find out more on the day.

**Forest Lane Park grand reopening, Sunday 31 January, 11am-3pm, Forest Lane Park, Magpie Close, E7**

## BADMINTON THRILLS AND SPILLS

Calling all badminton enthusiasts! Newham Council is running an inter-community forum competition that will see the best players in the borough in action at a prestigious grand final.



Cllr Akbar Chaudhary with last year's young Forest Gate players

The knock-out tournaments are mixed for boys and girls aged eight-11 and single sex for young people aged 12-16. Youngsters take to the court from 2-5pm and adults from 6-9pm on Wednesday 17 February at the Carpenters and Docklands Centre, Gibbins Road, E15.

The group winners of those tournaments will then go forward to represent Forest Gate in the grand final at Newham Leisure Centre in Prince Regent Lane on Sunday 21 February.

It's free to enter and to register email [lisa.brivati@newham.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.brivati@newham.gov.uk) or turn up on the day of the tournament. Finalists will receive a t-shirt and medal.

So dust off those shuttlecocks and limber up for a fun, free community forum event for all ages and abilities.

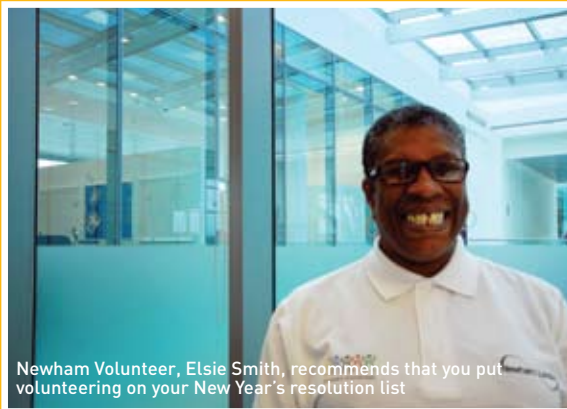
# SPOTLIGHT ON... NEWHAM VOLUNTEERS

**If you're looking for inspiration for your New Year's resolution list, then why not put something back into your community while gaining a whole range of skills by becoming a Newham Volunteer.**

Newham Volunteers were set up by the council in 2004 to get local people involved in their community through volunteering at different council events. The council also needed an army of trained volunteers to help out at the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and act as ambassadors for their community.

Since then more than 4,000 people have signed up to the programme, which continues to grow. Local resident and volunteer of four years, Elsie Smith, 61, explains: "I became a volunteer because I had been unemployed for a bit and I wanted to stay active. I get pleasure out of helping people and playing my part in the community.

"My advice to people is that volunteering can open the



Newham Volunteer, Elsie Smith, recommends that you put volunteering on your New Year's resolution list

floodgates. "If you're unemployed it will boost your morale and put you back on track, and it looks good on your CV."

So how do you become a volunteer? It's easy peasy! Fill out a registration form. You can get one by visiting [www.newham.gov.uk/volunteering](http://www.newham.gov.uk/volunteering) or calling 020 8430 3598. You will complete a compulsory welcome workshop which arms you with all the skills you need to get started. You will then receive newsletters, emails and text messages which will keep you in the know about all upcoming events.

**For more information on Newham Volunteers phone 020 8430 2000 or email [volunteers@newham.gov.uk](mailto:volunteers@newham.gov.uk)**

## WHAT'S ON FOREST GATE

### Mayor's Question Time

Tuesday 16 February  
6.30-7.30pm  
Field Community Centre  
147 Station Road, E7

### Forest Gate Festival meeting

Tuesday 2 February, 8-9pm  
Durning Hall  
Earlham Grove, E7

### Window wall art making workshop

Saturday 30 January  
Woodgrange Baptist Church  
Woodgrange Road, E7  
Phone Shabana on 020 3373 1267 for times

**For even more things to do check out the What's On in Newham calendar, where you'll find listings for more than 6,000 events.**

**Have a look for yourself at [www.newham.gov.uk/whatson](http://www.newham.gov.uk/whatson)**

**If your group has an activity to promote please contact us on 020 3373 2684 or email [infocus@newham.gov.uk](mailto:infocus@newham.gov.uk)**

## MEET YOUR LOCAL COUNCILLOR

**Councillors out and about:** If you would like a councillor to visit your community organisation, school, place of worship, meeting or event please call 020 3373 1267 or email [shabana.qadir@newham.gov.uk](mailto:shabana.qadir@newham.gov.uk)



Shama Ahmad



Paul Brickell



Michael Nicholas



Akbar Chaudhary



Judith Garfield



Winston Vaughan

### Forest Gate North Ward

Every Saturday (alternating)  
10.30 - 11.30am  
Durning Hall  
Earlham Grove  
Forest Gate E7

### Forest Gate South Ward

Every Saturday (alternating, except bank holiday weekends)  
10.30 - 11.30am  
The Gate 4 - 20 Woodgrange Road  
Forest Gate E7

**Need to talk to Mayor Sir Robin Wales?** Being an elected Mayor, Sir Robin is directly accountable to you. Look out for Question Time times and dates in the Newham Mag, visit [www.newham.gov.uk/mayor](http://www.newham.gov.uk/mayor) or call 020 3373 0437.