

special

COVID-19

edition

**newham
mag**

Issue
421

July 2020

p3

**Mental health
support**

p6

**Become a health
champion**

p8

**Maintain social
distancing**

p15

**Libraries
re-open**

We are here to
**#Help
Newham**

**People at the Heart
of Everything We Do**


#HELPNEWHAM


Newham London

Contents

Mental health support	p3
Mayor's message	p4
Improving air quality	p5
Become a health champion	p6
Domestic violence	p7
Measures to reduce Covid-19 spread	p8
Voluntary sector delivers support	p10
Caring side of social work	p12
Help for businesses	p12
Democracy Commission	p14
Libraries re-open	p15
Summer activities for young	p16
Share your creativity	p17
Citizens discuss climate change	p19

SUPPORT WITH MONEY WORRIES

While the primary concern is health during the coronavirus pandemic, our financial wellbeing is also very important. If you have concerns about your financial situation, contact MoneyWorks, Newham Council's free, confidential service providing support to residents who may be struggling with the everyday costs of living.

The MoneyWorks office located in Stratford is closed due to the pandemic but is still providing a full service remotely. MoneyWorks can:

- Ensure you have access to all the help you need to pay bills including Council Tax and any rent arrears you may have
- Ensure you are getting any benefits you may be entitled to
- Support you with food bank and supermarket vouchers and energy vouchers
- Money management tips on how to spend smartly and save money
- Provide confidential and impartial debt advice, affordable and emergency loans (for items such as furniture and white goods, subject to eligibility criteria).

For more information on how the services MoneyWorks provides can help, visit www.newhammoneyworks.co.uk Contact MoneyWorks on 0208 430 2041 or via moneyworks@newham.gov.uk The phone lines and inboxes are monitored 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Find us online at www.newham.gov.uk/mag For information on all Newham Council services visit www.newham.gov.uk
@NewhamLondon www.facebook.com/newhamcouncil

If you do not receive the Newham Mag at home, or know someone who doesn't, please call 020 3373 1517, write to The Newham Mag, West Wing, 4th Floor, Newham Dockside, Dockside Road, London E16 2QU, or email newham.mag@newham.gov.uk

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Wasting less in lockdown

Newham residents are wasting less food since lockdown by following some simple tips, according to a recent survey by the Love Food Hate Waste campaign.

People said they have been throwing out 34 per cent less bread, potatoes, chicken and milk. The survey found people were using various different actions to help them waste less food.

They have been checking their cupboards and fridges to see exactly

what they need or taking photos of their contents, stopping them from buying items that they may already have. They have also been planning ahead for at least three dinners per week to help them cut waste.

This will make a big difference in the borough where half the rubbish in our bins is food waste. Not only is this a waste of money for you but it also means we have to spend more money on getting rid of waste. If residents waste less it means more money can be spent on other vital

services.

For more details, visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com and search "shopping". Tips on reducing waste are also available from Newham's Ecobot on social media. Follow the #NewhamRecycles tag.

In a four-week trial last year, Newham residents who followed some simple tips found they could save hundreds of pounds each year.

MAYOR RESUMES RESIDENTS' SURGERIES



Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz has resumed her residents' surgeries after they were suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Although she will still not be able to meet residents face-to-face, the appointments will happen via Zoom. They will be taking place between 10am and 12pm on 25 July, 12 and 26 September. You can book your appointment at www.newham.gov.uk/council/meet-mayor/1. The number of people that the Mayor can see during the two hours is limited, so you will need to book in advance. When filling out the form, please provide some details on what you would like to discuss. Zoom details will be sent to residents when an appointment has been confirmed.



Services to support good mental health and wellbeing

If you are struggling with your mental health and wellbeing during the current pandemic, it is important that you seek support.

For some residents, it may be enough to speak to family and friends. For those who may need to contact one of the many support services, here are a few available to Newham residents:

Newham Talking Therapies is open for business and are accepting new referrals. The service is available over the phone or via video, and resources to help you cope with coronavirus are available on their website. Call 0208 475 8080 or visit www.newhamtalkingtherapies.nhs.uk

Newham Mental Health Crisis Line is available Monday to Sunday and is open to all ages. A trained member of staff will assess your mental health needs and, if you need it, you will be offered a face to face assessment within four hours. In May there were 770 residents who

accessed support via the Crisis Line, the highest number recorded. Call 020 7771 5888 or visit www.elft.nhs.uk

Newham Together Café provides face-to-face care for residents who are struggling with their mental health. The service is open Monday to Thursday, 5pm to 9pm. Fridays and weekends it is open from 5pm to 11pm. Referrals to the café are made through the Newham Mental Health Crisis Line. Call 0207 771 5888.

HeadStart: If you are aged ten to 16 you can years old, you can sign up to the Headstart Youth Panel. HeadStart also runs peer parenting courses for parents interested in learning new parenting skills. Visit www.headstartnewham.co.uk/get-involved/

For more information, including a list of services and tips on how to manage your mental health and wellbeing, visit www.newham.gov.uk/health-adult-social-care

Mayor's message

I hope you are keeping well and safe as more lockdown restrictions are loosened. While Newham was tragically hardest hit by the virus in the early days, following lockdown and the sacrifices you have all made, together with the courageous service of our key and frontline workers, we have seen the tide turn, but we are not done with this yet.

This week we discussed a report on the financial impact to the Council of dealing with Covid-19 in Newham, which is estimated at almost £61m. So far, we have received just £20.3m from the Government. While anything we get is welcome, it is well short of what's needed. That's why I continue to ask the Government for extra support in the form of a Covid-19 Deprivation Premium for those areas who have borne the brunt of the pain the pandemic unleashed.

Some councils face running out of money. Newham is not one of those. Thanks to our good work in March to agree a three-year Budget which offered stability and a clear framework to make residents' lives better, we are in a good place to begin the hard work on realigning and redefining our financial planning in line with our recovery from Covid-19.

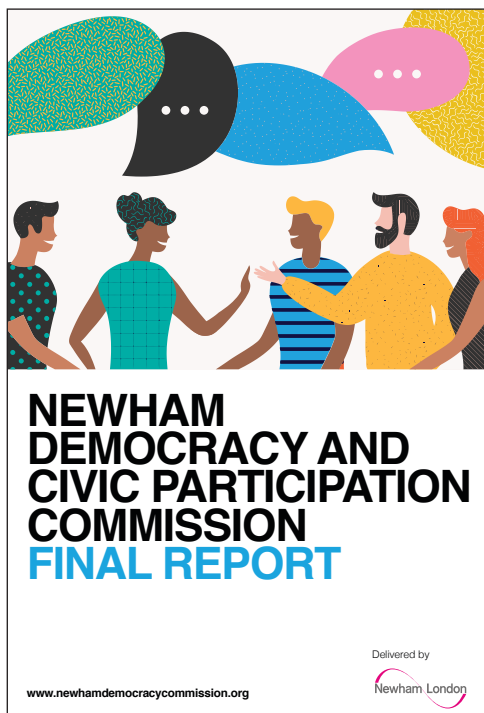
Whatever decisions we make, we will continue to address poverty and inequality through community wealth

building and inclusive economy strategies, keep young people safe, build much needed homes and tackle the worst levels of air pollution in the country. Our Climate Emergency Action Plan will also ensure that our plans are rooted in the commitment to make this a green recovery.

There have been concerns from local businesses about measures put in place to create more space on our high streets for the safety of residents. Creating more space to enable residents to shop at a safe social distance is a requirement placed on us by the Government to prevent local Covid-19 outbreaks. It is driven by a public health imperative to prevent the transmission of the virus and more deaths.

Earlier this month saw an important milestone in my pledge to create a new relationship between the Council and our residents. You can read about the independent Democracy and Civic Participation Commission report in this Newham Mag. It supports my commitment for Newham to become a beacon of participatory democracy.

Please continue to play your part in preventing the spread of Covid-19 by social distancing and wearing face coverings when travelling. Stay safe and let's all work together to act responsibly for the benefit of our community.



Mayor

Rokhsana

Fiaz

Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz OBE
Mayor@newham.gov.uk

 @rokhsanafiaz

 Rokhsana_Fiaz

 rokhsanafiaz



Refocusing on the climate emergency

Tackling the pandemic is an urgent priority for Newham Council but it has not lost sight of the pressing challenge of the Climate Emergency and building a sustainable future.

As part of its agenda to transform Newham into a beacon of participatory democracy, the Council established an independent Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change to help it develop its plans to mitigate climate change.

The Citizens' Assembly met in February 2020 and brought together 36 randomly selected local residents for three evenings and a weekend to develop recommendations in response to the question: "How can the Council and residents work together to reach the aspiration of being carbon zero by 2050 at

the latest?"

The Assembly's discussions resulted in a set of recommendations loosely based around six themes:

1. Raising awareness of the Climate Emergency, so that people are clear about what we all need to do.
2. Investing in technologies to create sustainable energy.
3. Make it easier for people to use cleaner, greener, healthier ways of getting around.
4. Reducing food waste and food miles and to aspire to recycle 100 per cent of waste.
5. Transforming the environment to produce a greener, more pleasant,

healthier place where people will want to live, work and settle.

6. The Council providing greater leadership and taking more responsibility for how residential homes and businesses become more energy efficient.

These recommendations were discussed at a meeting of the Council's Cabinet on 14 July and at Council on 16 July, and a wide-ranging climate emergency action plan was agreed, which took many of the Assembly's recommendations into account.

For the Citizens' Assembly's full report and the Cabinet and Council's proposed response and action plan, visit [Newham.gov.uk/cabinetmeetingjuly14](https://www.newham.gov.uk/cabinetmeetingjuly14)

You could be a Covid-19 health champion

The effects of coronavirus will be with us for some time. Lockdown restrictions are being lifted, but we still need to be doing everything we can to prevent a second wave of the virus in Newham. To do that we need people to help us spread the word about Government and health guidance, which is changing all the time.

In such a fast moving environment, it is vital that we get the latest information to as many of our residents as possible. That is why Newham Council is creating Covid-19 Health Champions, a new team of volunteers to keep all our communities up-to-date with the latest advice. We need champions from all age groups, neighbourhoods, ethnicities, employment sectors, faiths and special interest groups. We are particularly keen to hear from residents with second languages.

We will keep you informed about the latest advice and guidance so that you can help your family, friends or other community members make sense of the latest facts about the virus.

By having and sharing clear information, everyone can make informed choices. More than 200 people have signed up so far.

Covid-19 Health Champions are Newham residents and anyone in the community can become one. You might be the person that everyone knows and trusts. You might be someone who wants to help in whatever way you can- even if this is your first time. Together we can do all we can to make sure that everyone in Newham has the information they need to stay safe and healthy.



The poster is for Newham Council's Covid-19 Health Champions. It features the Newham London logo at the top left and a 'COVID-19 HEALTH CHAMPIONS' badge at the top right. The main heading is 'BECOME A CHAMPION' in large purple letters, followed by 'stopping the spread of COVID-19'. Below this are five icons with corresponding text: 1. A map of Newham: 'Do you want to help your community? Anyone living or working in Newham can get involved.' 2. Three people icons: 'Become a COVID-19 Health Champion Join our network of local people to help during the COVID-19 pandemic.' 3. A smartphone icon: 'Get live updates on COVID-19 Receive the latest information and government guidelines on how to stay safe and healthy.' 4. A speech bubble with a heart: 'Spread the word Share this information with your family, friends, work colleagues and the wider community.' 5. A virus icon with a slash: 'Help us to stop the virus Keeping our communities well informed will help minimise the risk of the virus spreading.' At the bottom, it provides contact information: 'CovidHealthChampions@newham.gov.uk', '020 3373 2777', and 'www.newham.gov.uk/CovidHealthChampions'. A large white heart icon is on the right side of the poster.

Become a Covid-19 Health Champion

- You sign up to be a Champion.
- We give Champions the latest information about Covid-19.
- Champions share this information with anyone in their community, however they want.
- Champions let us know what is and isn't working.

Thank you for your part in making this happen.

If you are interested in becoming a Covid-19 Health Champion, visit **CovidHealthChampions@newham.gov.uk** or call 020 3373 2777 **www.newham.gov.uk/CovidHealthChampions**

Dealing with domestic violence during lockdown

Although lockdown restrictions are now being relaxed, some people may have been, or are, spending time isolated at home with a partner or family member who is abusing them.

You may feel trapped and unable to get support from family and friends, or access professional advice and support if you are suffering this kind of domestic abuse.

If you or someone you know is affected by domestic abuse, help and support are available right now. Hestia provides domestic and sexual violence support services for men or women who have experienced domestic abuse and with support tailored for individuals and their particular circumstances.

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse isn't limited to physical violence - it can mean financial control, stopping you from going out, being able to access the internet, use or own a mobile phone, or from seeing and talking to friends and family members. It can leave you feeling isolated, vulnerable and without any control over your life or hope for the future.

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone regardless of who you are and it is important to remember that you are not alone.

If you, or someone you know, is suffering and need help related to domestic or sexual violence, call Newham Hestia on 0808

196 1482, visit <https://www.hestia.org/newham> or email InfoNewhamDSV@hestia.org

The phone line is staffed 24 hours a day to provide free and confidential advice.

If you are in immediate danger, call **999**.

If you are unable to speak due to living with the perpetrator you

can still call 999 and make a noise (a cough or tap) and press 55 when prompted to alert the police silently.



"Receiving regular phone calls [during lockdown] has given me the strength now to stay away from my abusive ex-partner."

"To know that I am not alone has saved my life."

"The service has helped me to move on with my life. I feel supported and I know that there is always someone there to help me and lift me up."

Social distancing measures and preventing second wave of Covid-19



Many of Newham's roads, high streets and shopping centres feature a series of changes introduced to limit the spread of the coronavirus and to encourage you to walk and cycle more.

They include the widening of pavements so shoppers can queue safely while maintaining social distancing, the introduction of temporary cycle lanes to encourage residents to cycle as well as the expansion of the healthy school streets schemes.

These measures are designed to ensure that as the lockdown eases and people return to their normal lives, going to work and shopping, they can do so safely. We want to encourage residents to avoid using public transport wherever possible to stop the spread of the coronavirus, and hopefully, a second wave of this disease. It also means that public transport can be left for essential workers and for those who can't get

to work or to the shops by walking or cycling.

Maintaining social distancing in shops, places of worship and work places and practising basic hand hygiene will be critical in reducing the spread of coronavirus and protecting against a possible second wave of the virus, while people travel around the borough. The advice is to maintain social distancing of two metres, but where that is not possible face coverings must be worn.

Second wave of Covid-19

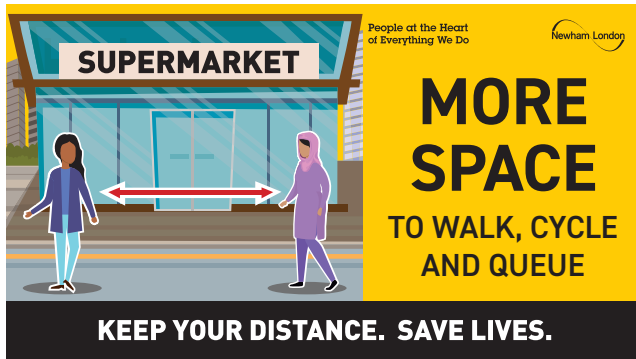
If there is either a second wave or localised clusters of infections, restrictions that have been relaxed could be re-imposed. In the unfortunate event of a second wave, libraries, community centres, non-essential shops would be closed and you will be asked to stay at home, or maintain two metre social distancing

if you need to go out for food or other essential supplies.

Our emphasis will be on taking measures to stop the spread of the infection by regular hand washing, social distancing, and the wearing of protective face coverings.

A key part of the Government's strategy in controlling the spread of the virus is the test and trace system, making it easier to monitor the spread of the disease and implement targeted, localised measures rather than imposing a national lockdown. If you test positive or have been in close contact with someone who has received a positive Covid-19 test, the system will contact you. It is very important that you participate in this call to help prevent the spread of coronavirus in Newham. You can find out more about what to expect and how to know you are speaking to the official system here: **www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works**

Get tested and isolate



Newham opened a Covid-19 test site at a car park in Hilda Road, East Ham, on 23 June. The site is open 8am to 8pm and you can book by calling the NHS's dedicated Covid-19 number, 119 or by visiting www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test

Anyone over the age of five, with symptoms, can book a test. Results from all tests are available within 24 hours to 72 hours. If you test positive you will be contacted by the NHS test and trace service.

The test centre in East Ham will help us to:

- Protect residents most at risk by giving them the opportunity to get tested locally if they have symptoms of coronavirus so they know if they need to self-isolate
- Reduce the spread of the infection
- Provide an accessible location for testing for local people who aren't able to travel to one of the other test centres.

You too can play your part

- If you have symptoms, get tested so you can't spread it
- Protect yourself and others by getting a test
- If you have a new cough, high temperature or a change in/loss of your sense of smell or taste, get yourself tested
- Help stop a second wave by following social distancing, face covering and hand hygiene guidance

If you need help to get tested, or need help to cope with

self-isolating for seven or 14 days please contact Covid-19 Helpline at 0207 473 9711 or covidhelp@community-links.org

People at the Heart of Everything We Do
Newham London

DO YOU HAVE CORONAVIRUS SYMPTOMS? GET TESTED & ISOLATE

Walk through testing is now available in East Ham for anyone over 5 years old with Coronavirus symptoms and is unable to use drive through testing facilities.

How: To book, visit www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test or call 119 between 7am-11pm (7 days a week)

If you need support with testing or isolating please contact **020 7473 9711 covidhelp@community-links.org** (11-7pm, 7 days a week)

THE MAIN SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

- A high temperature
- Or a new, continuous cough
- Or a loss or change in sense of taste or smell

If you have any of these symptoms, get yourself tested.

While you are waiting for your appointment or your test result, **you and everyone in your household must stay home** to prevent the spread of the infection.

Book a test: www.nhs.uk/ask-for-a-coronavirus-test or call 119

When attending the test centre you must wear a face covering and not travel by public transport.

www.newham.gov.uk/coronavirus

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE. SAVE LIVES.

Covid-19 heroes: the voluntary sector and volunteers

Newham Council set up #HelpNewham hubs where redeployed staff work with volunteers to ensure vulnerable residents have food and essential supplies. Voluntary and faith organisations across the borough have also played a vital part in making sure people have enough food, shopping, and other practical support.

More than 150 voluntary and faith organisations are working tirelessly to support thousands of residents with food deliveries, cooked meals, telephone befriending, form-filling or accessing various support services. The need for their services is growing week on week, with some food organisations seeing more than 700 people a day.



We would love to be able to mention everyone who has helped, but here are just some of the organisations who continue to step up to the plate.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Association Newham is delivering home-made face masks to GP surgeries and to Caramel Rock, a charity, and donating food to Newham FoodBank.

Trinity Community Centre is making befriending calls, supporting grieving families, and directing residents to other voluntary organisations, encouraging them to take advantage of the help and support available.

Bonny Downs Community Association runs an emergency relief hub to provide food for people who have no recourse to public funds and are unable to afford food. The association also runs virtual activities to combat isolation for elders, families and children.

Aston-Mansfield is delivering a children's and youth service to Newham's youngest residents. Two of its international volunteers have distributed food to families and children's activity packs for youngsters in the Manor Park area.

Newham Chinese Association collected and delivered more than 22,000 masks donated by the Huizhou Province of China to Newham Council's Public Health department for use by front line workers and for various community groups.

The association set up a production line operating from home with one of its elderly volunteers contacting members and co-ordinating the packaging and delivery of the masks to elderly residents as well as hospitals and other community settings.



Volunteering across the borough

Daniell Hambrook, Faith Johnson and Muhammad Uddin are among hundreds of dedicated volunteers who have been busy giving back to the Newham community, building new friendships and connecting with like-minded people to make a difference to the lives who are shielding, need food or other help.

Daniell volunteers with the NHS and The Community: See a Need, Fill a Need campaign. She said: "I personally volunteer because I have had times of trouble and people have helped me. It makes me feel really good to be part of an amazing team, and an amazing borough whose focus is on helping each other."

Faith has recruited other volunteers with sewing machines to make scrubs and masks for use in the community. She said: "Volunteering gives me a sense of pride, a sense of joy to be able to contribute no matter how small or large."

Muhammad has been volunteering in Newham for several years because it gives him the opportunity to meet different people, give back to the community and build up skills and experiences outside his job. During the pandemic he has worked with children and young people, and provided food for the homeless.

He said: "I want to give back to the community. It's really really important for me to give something back because I have gained so much from being a part of this community in Newham."

Recognising volunteers

Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz paid tribute to volunteers like Muhammad, Faith and Daniell, during National Volunteer Week, 1-7 June, while the Council celebrated the contributions of hundreds of people who have given up so many hours supporting others.

The Council via activeNewham has also launched the #HelpNewham Skills Bank, to support small businesses and voluntary organisations through these challenging times by matching them with the professional skills of volunteers in areas such as IT, accountancy, book-keeping, law, HR, and marketing and communications.

A volunteering strategy for the future

The current positive impact of different types of volunteering during the pandemic will be considered by a working group which plans to publish a volunteering strategy later this year. The working group, set up before the pandemic, comprises current volunteers, representatives from the voluntary sector, activeNewham and the Council. It met regularly to develop a volunteering strategy for implementing a framework to support volunteers, recognise their learning and development and highlight routes into employment or volunteer related activity.

If you are interested in volunteering, call 020 3770 4444 or email volunteers@activenewham.org.uk



Helping you on your way home

The Covid-19 pandemic has meant many of us have changed and adapted the way we work so that we can respond to the challenges brought on by the virus.

Among them are a team of social workers based at Newham University Hospital in Plaistow who are part of the Integrated Discharge Hub set up in March in just days in response to the pandemic. Their role has involved working in partnership with colleagues from several other organisations to ensure that patients discharged from hospital return to the community with the appropriate support and healthcare they need. The hub has facilitated the discharge of more than 900 patients since it was set up, some of whom were treated for Covid-19.

Margaret Alih, a social worker based at the hospital since 2006,

is part of the integrated discharge team which includes colleagues from Newham Council, the East London Foundation Trust's community health team, Enabled Living Healthcare (ELH), Newham Hospital Discharge Team, Ward Therapists and Age UK. The service operates from 8am to 8pm, seven days a week.

Margaret said: "To facilitate hospital discharge, my responsibilities amongst others, are undertaking care and support assessments, working in partnership with patients, carers and families, liaising with the multidisciplinary team to ensure a safe discharge. Part of my role is to ensure appropriate support is in place, for example, care packages, interim placements and providing information advice and guidance.

"As a Hospital Team, we believe that the new ways of working is

benefiting patients and their families. Our assessments are person centred which allows patients and family to express their views while also facilitating a quick but safe discharge. Our ethos is that the patient should be at the heart of the decision making process and the Integrated Discharge Hub allows patients and families one voice and avoids them having to speak with multiple professionals before they receive the services they need."

The work of the integrated discharge hub means the team can arrange for equipment, medication and essential healthcare support to be provided once the patient is home, even before they leave the hospital.

For more information, call the Access to Adult Social Care Team on **020 8430 2000** Option 2 or Textphone: 18001 **020 8430 2000**

Support for small businesses



Newham Council has supported businesses during the coronavirus pandemic with more than £58.6million in grants as part of the Small Business Relief Grant and Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Grant.

Many have received valuable information on the grant scheme and other loans available from the Government from our Newham Business Desk. Three webinars with local businesses and partners, including the Stratford Bid and Newham Chamber of Commerce, provided advice and support on reopening after lockdown.

As restrictions were lifted and businesses reopened, the Council sent toolkits to businesses to help them prepare for reopening. The toolkits included information on keeping customers and staff safe, ensuring their premises are Covid-19 secure and posters reminding people to keep their distance.

The Council has also developed a discretionary grant scheme for businesses not eligible for the Small Business Grant Fund or the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund.

Applications are open to small businesses in multi-tenanted properties and from market traders who have experienced significant financial hardship since 11 March due to Covid-19. The discretionary grants are available to:

- Small businesses in multi-tenanted properties, excluding those who pay their rent on an hourly or daily basis. Grant amount: £5,000.
- Permanent market traders and other retailers not separately assessed for business rates and who have a pitch/unit which carries regular rental and other property charges. Grant amount: up to £3,000.

Due to the limited resources allocated by the Government, not all eligible businesses that apply will be successful. We have attempted to maximise our relatively small allocation (£2.88m) to meet local economic challenges, while staying within Government guidelines. So far we have distributed £921,852. Applications are considered on a first come, first served basis. Applications were still open as the Newham Mag went to press.

To see if your business is eligible, visit www.newham.gov.uk/Businesssupportcovid19 and click on the emergency rates relief and grants section, or contact Newham Business Desk on 020 3373 7373, or email newhambusinessdesk@newham.gov.uk

POEM

Lockdown by Adyaan Masud Khan

Lockdown has been an interesting experience,
I've had to show a lot of resilience.
Seeing family members through a screen,
Talking about the importance of hygiene.

It's very important to wash your hands,
Especially after playing with sand.
As we wave goodbye to the germs,
Because we don't want coronavirus to return.

I've very much enjoyed baking cakes,
As well as kneading dough and cutting different shapes.
The best bit has been doing the tasting,
Instead of all the waiting.

I can see people outside standing two metres apart,
Too much panic buying from the very start.
If only the world can work together,
We can fight this virus wherever.

One day when social distancing comes to an end,
I'm very excited for family weekends.
We are united in this pandemic,
We salute you, NHS, carers and paramedics.

Power to the people

The way Newham is governed should change to give its people a greater say in the way Newham Council operates.

That's the recommendation of an independent report setting out future options for increasing the role of residents in decision-making.

The Democracy and Civic Participation Commission was set up last year to provide independent expert advice on increasing resident participation and engagement.

The report was welcomed by the Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz, who said: "For too long the way this Council worked had damaged residents' trust in the way they were governed, in its politicians and in the way decisions were made about services and the future of the borough. My manifesto commitment was a bold vision for Newham to become a beacon of participatory democracy."

The Commission examined both the Council's current Directly Elected Mayor model and alternatives, and also explored how local residents could become more engaged and involved in local-decision making.

Professor Nick Pearce, Director

of the Institute for Policy Research and Professor of Public Policy at the University of Bath, chaired the Commission, and its members included leading academics, campaigners and democracy advocates.

Mayor Fiaz said: "We welcome the Commission's independent report and are grateful to Professor Nick Pearce and members of the Commission for their work."

"Genuine resident participation and engagement will be central to how we take this forward and transform how we work. Participation and engagement requires effort and the building of community skills and capacity, and we know that we still have much to do to overcome a long legacy of low trust and confidence in the Council."

A two-term mayoral limit and England's first permanent citizens' assembly are among the changes that could be made. The Mayor also reiterated her determination to hold a referendum on the Directly Elected Mayor model.

She said: "Taking forward our participatory democracy agenda

will require engagement and co-production with residents, and is not something that can be achieved overnight. We look forward to hearing residents' and councillors' feedback on the report as it gets digested across the borough in the coming weeks."

Professor Pearce said: "Newham has suffered a high number of cases of coronavirus, and tragically it has taken the lives of many residents. But Newham has also seen a flowering of community support and mutual aid in response to the crisis, and its public services have risen resolutely to the challenge too. All of this gives us hope that the capacities exist in abundance in Newham to take forward the recommendations in this report for the strengthening of democracy and civic participation in the borough with a series of innovative reforms."

A detailed action plan on taking forward the Council's participatory democracy agenda will be published in the autumn.

To see the Commission's report visit:
**[www.newhamdemocracy
commission.org](http://www.newhamdemocracycommission.org)**



Professor Pearce with Commission members Fahmida Rahman, Kush Kanodia, Elke Loeffler, Carl Miller, and Kenny Imafidon

Libraries re-open their doors



Our libraries were closed in March following the Government's guidelines on measures introduced to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

Now, with the gradual easing of some of those restrictions, Newham's libraries reopened on 13 July in a phased manner in line with Government guidelines.

In the first phase you can now order items online or on the phone and collect them from the entrance of your library. You are also now able to book some time to use a library computer (45 minutes). To pre-book your session call 020 3373 3371. Once in the library you will be asked to observe social distancing

for the safety of both staff and visitors. There are no toilet facilities available.

This will be followed by a grab and go service where you will have access to a small area of the library for new books/best sellers and pre-order.

In the next phase you will be able to access more of the library space and you will be able to browse books following a one-way system but without sitting down or studying.

Other events and activities will resume when it is safe to do so and in line with government guidance around indoor activities.

The Summer Reading Challenge, which was launched online in June, for children aged four to 11, will now

run in our libraries from 27 July. We'll also be launching an improved Home Library Service, delivering books and audiobooks to residents who are shielding or cannot visit in person.

Despite the closure of library buildings since March, staff are and have continued to provide a variety of online and e-services including online membership, online learning opportunities and a range of eBooks, eAudiobooks, eComics, eNewspapers & eMagazines and information resources. A series of weekly bedtime stories on Twitter have been attracting 500 views every week.

Registering births, deaths and marriages

Birth registrations

With the easing of some lockdown restrictions, we have resumed birth registrations but there is a backlog so we are contacting all new parents.

If you have had a baby since mid-May, visit www.newham.gov.uk/births-deaths-marriages to book an appointment. If you had a baby before mid-May, email us directly at register.office@newham.gov.uk

When you come to East Ham Town Hall, please be on time, and because social distancing is still in place, do not bring your baby with you. Only one parent needs to come, unless the parents are unmarried, in which case both must attend so they can be

included on the child's birth certificate.

If you do not speak English, you can either bring an interpreter with you or ask them to support you over the phone. To ensure both your and the safety of our staff, please wear a face covering and be sure to bring your own pen. There are no toilet facilities at the town hall.

Marriage registrations

All ceremonies (marriage and civil partnerships) booked in July will take place. Where booked ceremonies have not taken place, we will make contact with couples to offer a refund or to rebook their ceremony. We are not taking any bookings for marriages or civil partnership ceremonies

until cancelled bookings have been honoured.

Should there be a second wave of the coronavirus, previous restrictions will come into force and birth registrations and all ceremonies will be suspended.

Registering a death

Do not arrive at the Town Hall unless you have an appointment. Residents are reminded that the current arrangements for registering deaths by phone will continue. There is no need to attend in person.

For any queries, including urgent matters, contact our registrations staff directly at register.office@newham.gov.uk

Summer activities for young people

School holidays are almost here and Newham Council is partnering with agencies working with children and young people to offer a raft of activities across the borough during the summer.

There will be an exciting and varied programme of activities, events and opportunities, for all age groups and abilities, seven days a week. Beginning on 21 July, they will take place at parks, other open spaces, the docks area, all in a safe, socially-distanced way, as well as virtual online spaces.

This coordinated offer is aimed at all aged under 25 and their families. Some activities will be targeted at vulnerable children and young people, some of whom may have Special Educational Needs, be at risk of being drawn into concerning behaviour or those who may have struggled during lockdown.

There will be something for everyone whether it be roller-skating, baby gym, or football coaching in a park, creating arts and music or completing a reading challenge, having discussions and debates to support personal development and growth or enjoying a family outing. It will all be free, enjoyable and lots of fun.

A digital map is being created to help everyone to find out where their favourite activity is taking place or to get ideas about trying something new in their area.

All sessions will follow the Government guidelines on social distancing where appropriate.

If you are interested in joining in the fun, visit www.newham.gov.uk/children-families/activities-young-people-newham/1

UPDATE FOR PARENTS WITH SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

With more children returning to school over the past month, head teachers and governors have worked very hard to ensure the right protective measures are in place. They have been following guidance issued by the Department for Education and Public Health and will continue to do so as they plan and prepare to meet the government's requirements for September when children are due to return to school for the new academic year. Visit www.newham.gov.uk for the latest information.

Children in lockdown



Zara, Adan and Hadi

BEDTIME STORIES

Three young siblings from East Ham believe the children of NHS staff should also be recognised as little heroes and have recorded a series of bedtime stories for them. Zara, aged eight, Hadi, aged six and their younger sister Adan, aged three, have recorded a bedtime story every day for 30 days.

Zara said: "When everyone talks about NHS staff who are indeed our national heroes, we thought that there are some little heroes as well; they are NHS staff children. Probably they may be having a hard time as their mum or dad are fighting at the front line. We thought one way to help them is to record a bedtime story every day for the next 30 days and dedicate them to these little heroes."

Their father Obaid Shah, said his daughter loves bedtime stories and came up with the idea of recording them after hearing about NHS staff in the news. He said: "I am quite impressed with them because they have kept it up for quite a long time. They are quite dedicated. Even now, they are so used to it that they want to keep doing it."

To see the children's stories, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=M9r_Qw-sb80&feature=emb_logo

For the latest information on essential services, visit www.newham.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-service-disruptions-updates/1

Newham's creativity is unlocked

Creative Newham residents can now share their talents with the rest of the borough through a series of community broadcasts being posted online.

The online videos, featuring residents of all ages, are part of Newham Council's new arts, culture and heritage programme called Newham Unlocked. The broadcasts, which began on 25 June, allow residents to showcase their talents through clips filmed on their phones or tablet devices. They capture the spirit of Newham's creative community behind closed doors during these challenging times.

If you need some encouragement to take part then go online to see our culture icons and community hosts take to the stage! The first broadcast included contributions from TV's *Peaky Blinders* star, writer and poet Benjamin Zephaniah; Frances Vulliamy,

painter and sculptor; Joy-Caron Canter, photographer and illustrator; Cary Rajinder Sawhney, filmmaker, and Ashantay Miller, photographer.

The Council has been working with arts organisation UP Projects to create the broadcasts from people's submitted content. If you want to showcase a cooking demonstration, play an instrument, sing a song or read a poem, send in your video to give everyone a glimpse of what Newham has been creating behind closed doors.

The different clips will be edited together and broadcast at

www.newhamunlockedbroadcasts.org and posted on Newham Council's Twitter feed @newhamlondon, Facebook site and other social media channels. Video clips from residents can be submitted through the website.

Fire safety in your home

Although some lockdown restrictions have been relaxed many people are still spending a lot more time than normal in their homes. Newham Council is urging all its residents to take extra precautions to stay safe at home.

The warning comes in the wake of a fire at Ferrier Point, in Forty Acre Lane, Canning Town, on the evening of 22 June. Eight fire engines and around 60 firefighters went to the block to deal with the fire in a 12th floor flat. Newham Council removed Aluminium Composite Material cladding from the block last year.

Five people were treated on the scene and one person was taken to hospital suffering from smoke inhalation. Fire investigators believe the fire was caused by smoking materials. One flat suffered fire damage and two others were affected by smoke.

FIRE SAFETY TIPS:

- Don't smoke in bed, and avoid smoking on arm chairs and sofas
- Take extra care if you're tired, taking prescription drugs or been drinking alcohol
- Use ashtrays that can't tip over and stub cigarettes out properly
- Don't balance cigars or cigarettes on the edge of an ashtray, or anything else – they can tip and fall as they burn away and start a fire

For detailed advice on fire safety in the home, visit www.london-fire.gov.uk/safety/coronavirus/



Newham London

TRY BEFORE YOU BIKE

The flexible bike scheme that will get you cycling!

Simple and affordable, the Try Before You Bike scheme is available to all Newham residents and anyone living, working or studying in the borough. Just choose your new bike and accessories using the helpful online tools and the bike will be delivered to you. You will also receive

a free cycle skills session to boost your confidence.

- Rent a bike, delivered to your door, for £20/month
- Try out different bikes
- No commitment, buy when you are ready
- Discounts available
- Bike delivered directly to

your door with a free cycle skills session to increase your confidence

- Range of accessories to try out
- Maintenance and theft cover available for peace of mind
- Free delivery and collection.

No deposit. No fees

To sign up visit: <https://www.peddlemywheels.com/try-before-you-bike>

Helping Newham breathe easier



Improvements in air quality during lockdown have shown us the positive impact of fewer cars on our roads. Now, although some restrictions have been relaxed, it's vital that we maintain and build on and sustain the improvements to the quality of air that we breathe.

At one point there was a 40 per cent reduction in road traffic due to Covid-19 lockdown, and a corresponding 50 per cent reduction in noxious NO2 pollution in our busiest roads – an incredible achievement and one that we are determined to build on. We also need to prepare in case there is a second wave of the virus, as some restrictions are relaxed, so more walking and cycling will be critical to allow more people to travel safely and efficiently in our borough.

That's why the Council has introduced measures on our high streets to enable residents to shop at a safe social distance to prevent local Covid-19 outbreaks. Statutory guidance published by the Government requires all councils to take measures to reallocate road space to people walking and cycling. This is to encourage active travel and to enable social distancing because of the significant reductions in public transport capacity. More than 50 per cent of Newham households don't own a car, and for them additional capacity to be able to walk and cycle is especially important as public transport becomes constrained.

We're also working to help Newham breathe easier through proposals to introduce new emissions-based charging for parking permits. The proposals, which opened for formal consultation on 8 July, are aimed at encouraging residents to switch towards less polluting vehicles and to encourage more local trips to be made by sustainable modes of transport, like walking and cycling. To find out more, visit www.newham.gov.uk/parkingconsultation

By the end of this year the Council plans to plant an additional 1,000 new trees as part of the London Mayor's commitment to increase the Capital's existing tree canopy cover by 10 per cent by 2050. This follows on from 8,000 saplings the Council planted in autumn 2019.

In 2019 we launched the Newham Climate Now agenda in response to the global climate and health emergency. This included the Healthy School Streets pilot project at five schools, which involves streets around schools being closed to traffic during drop-off and pick-up times to cut the air pollution that is harming our children. Although it was suspended at the beginning of lockdown the schools involved will re-implement the scheme when they re-open. Additional schools are set to introduce similar traffic calming schemes.

For more information on air quality in Newham, visit www.newham.gov.uk/public-health-safety/air-quality-newham/1

KEEP YOUR DISTANCE. SAVE LIVES.

NEWHAM
UNLOCKED

COMMUNITY
BROADCASTS

TUNE IN & UNLOCK YOUR CREATIVITY

From 18 June until 6 August

This summer we are shining a light on creative talent in Newham by launching a community broadcast series. Do you sing, bake, dance or draw? We want to hear from you!

Film yourself showing us something you have created recently and tell us:

1. What does creativity mean to you?
2. How has creativity helped you during this challenging time?

newhamunlockedbroadcasts.org

Newham Unlocked Community Broadcasts are curated by UP Projects for London Borough of Newham
Community Broadcasts are filmed and produced by Maël Hénaff

Design by HATO



**People at the Heart
of Everything We Do**