

Newlon News



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Welcome to the Autumn edition of Newlon News.

Inside there is plenty of news and information we hope is of interest to you.

There are updates from our Resident Involvement and Community Services teams, reports of recent events and details of upcoming ones, as well as opportunities for getting involved in influencing the way Newlon is run.

One of our long term involved residents also tells us her story about the work she did with us.

Remember your ideas and thoughts on Newlon News are always welcome. Just email us at newsletters@newlon.org.uk to get in touch.

Residents' Forum

Martin Hughes, Chair, writes:

The Residents' Forum is a group of residents who meet every three months to look at Newlon's work and monitor the performance of their services.

- The Head of Repairs consulted us about a new initiative at Newlon - the completed repairs survey app. This asks residents to answer five questions, on the contractors' hand held device, immediately after they've had a repair done. We thought it was a great way to gain feedback and have also suggested that residents should be able to choose to answer these questions by email.
- The Head of Building Services came and discussed all the fire safety works that Newlon have recently undertaken. We suggested that staff in the Service Centre are trained on fire safety issues to assist in handling residents' queries.
- I reported back from the last Board meeting where the members were impressed at how Newlon had handled fire safety concerns after the Grenfell Tower fire.
- We talked a lot about complaints and identified what has improved since the new system started in 2014. We would like to see other improvements, such as reducing the number of stage two complaints.
- Benjamin Roe came to our last meeting and has now joined the Forum as a new member. We look forward to working with him.



Join the Forum

If you're good at thinking analytically and have ideas to improve services for all residents then we want to hear from you.

The Residents' Forum are looking for new members who live in Hackney or Islington and can bring new skills to the Forum. We are a friendly group who meet with the Housing Services Director every three months and discuss the issues that are important to residents.

Geraldine Grant, a Waltham Forest resident who joined last October, told us about her experience as a new member:

"When I attended my first Residents' Forum meeting I was made to feel very welcome. It is a great opportunity to learn more about the mechanics of the organisation and I have been very impressed by the level of care and attention given to Newlon's residents. I would recommend it to anyone interested in getting involved."

If you are interested or know another resident who would be then get in touch at getinvolved@newlon.org.uk or phone Karen from the Resident Involvement team on **020 7613 8084** to find out more.



Fire safety update

We want to reassure residents that we take fire safety extremely seriously. All our schemes have an up to date Fire Risk Assessment and meet current fire safety regulations and good practice. Over the last few years we have carried out a large programme of works to improve safety across our buildings. In addition all health and safety equipment in our homes is regularly inspected.

You can help support fire safety in your building by working with our Estates Team to ensure communal areas are free of possessions and rubbish.

If you have any concerns or queries about fire safety contact our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** or customerservice@newlon.org.uk.

We want your views

The Residents' Forum has an important role as they work with Newlon on behalf of residents to help improve services. But we also want to hear the views of all our residents - including you. You can provide your comments in the "My Newlon" section of our website.

Just go to www.newlon.org.uk/newlon. Any relevant comments posted online will be discussed at the Forum.



Getting involved: Ruth's Newlon story

For 17 years Newlon resident Ruth Cadby was involved in a wide range of positions where she had influence over and worked to improve Newlon's services. This included being a member of our Residents' Forum, the Scrutiny Panel and the Development Committee, as well as being a long term Board member.

Here she explains more about the roles she had, what she felt she gained from it and why she thinks other people should get involved too.

“ I first got involved with Newlon as I was both interested in housing and aware that I was living in an affordable place with services provided, so I wanted the opportunity to do something myself and contribute to the way Newlon is run.

I was on a number of panels and committees. Being on the Development Committee was a particular highlight as I was very interested in architecture. It enabled me to give my views on Newlon's developments and I felt I had quite an influence on techniques adopted. I loved being involved in the development of the head office.

As a member of the Newlon Board I attended Board weekends. Everyone there had a chance to contribute, so my involvement allowed managers at Newlon to really understand what residents thought. I felt I was effective - there was almost nothing I couldn't talk about.

What I most enjoyed about the involvement opportunities was getting to know people at Newlon. I like how open and transparent the organisation is. It enabled me to meet many interesting individuals and work closely with them. I helped change perceptions because it allowed me to demonstrate to staff that residents have things to say and want to contribute.

I feel getting involved means you can help transform the way Newlon's services work, rather than just expecting them to be done a certain way. There is a learning curve but I feel that's a wonderful thing - finding out something new that you didn't know about. You are given a good insight into how the organisation works. Plus it is an opportunity to bring real change.

A very diverse group of people get involved. For instance the Residents' Forum has a lot of different people with varying views on how things should be done, who all get to have their say. It's something I was really pleased to be part of. ”



Compensation and refunds when in arrears

It is important that your rent account is not in arrears. Please be aware that we will not pay any refunds or compensation awarded to you if this is the case. If your account shows any arrears then any awards will be paid into your account to reduce them. Once you are in adequate credit then awards - or the remainder of an award following required deductions - can be sent to you.

Get together with your neighbours and have a **Big Lunch!**

Whether it is a small gathering in your garden or a large party in the middle of your street or estate, a 'Big Lunch' is a chance to get together with your neighbours for a day to celebrate your community and have fun. You can organise one for any date you fancy - and we can help you do it.

If you want to arrange a Big Lunch then the main things to consider are:

- Picking a date.
- Asking your fellow residents to volunteer to help.
- Deciding where to hold it.
- Advertising your event, such as putting up notices.
- Planning the food or asking residents to bring dishes to share.
- Thinking about any decorations.
- Getting support from local businesses.

We can help with the event by providing information and advice, communicating the event details to other residents and offering you up to £300 to purchase food, equipment and decorations.

If you want to organise a Big Lunch for your street or estate and would like assistance, contact **Karen Orr** on **020 7613 8084** or **getinvolved@newlon.org.uk**.



Tell us what you think about repairs and digital services

The Scrutiny Panel is a group of residents who look in detail at Newlon's services and performance and make suggestions to improve them. Newlon provides them with all the information they need to do this, such as performance data and the cost of delivering services.



They are very keen to hear your views, comments, thoughts, opinions and ideas about the two topics that they will be looking at this year:

- How Newlon and our repairs contractors communicate with residents and each other about repairs work.
- The digital services that Newlon are developing for residents, including the planned customer self service portal.

What you have to say will be part of the evidence that the Panel consider and will help them make recommendations to Newlon for service improvements. You can get in touch at **getinvolved@newlon.org.uk** or on **020 7613 8084**.

You said we did

Viewing times - late arrivals

Applicants viewing properties have asked for a grace period to allow for delays if they are running late. As a result Lettings Officers will now wait five minutes past the start of the viewing time before going into the property. They will also go back outside the property ten minutes later to check for latecomers.

Evening viewings

Applicants asked for the contact number of the Lettings Officer to be provided on invitation for viewings taking place after 5pm, when the Service Centre is closed, in case issues arise. As a result they now include work mobile numbers.

Improving computer security and WIFI connection

A resident asked for improved password security on the computers at Barnsbury Community Centre, which was implemented. We now issue passwords directly to residents upon their request, rather than having them openly displayed. Residents also asked for faster WIFI connections, which we arranged with our supplier.

Events in your area

Family Day: The Big Draw Festival

When? 15th October

Where? Keats House, NW3

Cost? Free

The Big Draw Festival takes place at Keats House in Hampstead this October, celebrating the power of drawing. Join in for family fun at a free, drop-in workshop led by artist Zoe Bates exploring this year's theme 'Living Lines'. Register your interest in advance on their website.

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/keats-house



The Apple Fair

When? 8th October

Where? Forty Hall Farm, EN1

Cost? Adult £5, child £2

Come to Forty Hill Farm for the annual Apple Day celebration, with old favourites like apple bobbing, apple pressing demos, our apple stall and other activities for young and old. With a variety of food and drinks on offer, and an appearance by Marvelo the Psychic Squirrel.

www.fortyhallfarm.org.uk/events/the-apple-fair.html

Handa's Surprise

When? 10th & 11th October

Where? Bernie Grant Arts Centre, N15

Cost? Adult £6, child £4

Travel to Kenya and follow in Handa's footsteps as she journeys to see her best friend Akeyo in the next village. Handa is taking seven delicious fruits as a surprise - but seven different animals have seven very different ideas. A blend of physical performance, puppetry and song, with audience participation. Ideal for ages 2-6.

www.berniegrantcentre.co.uk

Big Fun Run 2017 @ Victoria Park

When? 29th October

Where? Victoria Park, E9

Cost? Adult £12.99, child £10.99

Run for fitness, charity or fun. The event isn't timed and is all about runners getting together with friends and family, doing something healthy, raising money for a worthwhile cause and enjoying the great outdoors. All ages welcome. Book in advance via the website.

www.bigfunrun.com/victoria-park

Pumpkin Plod

When? 29th October

Where? Haven House Children's Hospice, IG8

Cost? Adult £8, child £5

The family friendly Pumpkin Plod at Haven House returns this October with a choice of a 2k or 5k forest sponsored walk on Halloween themed routes, with tricks or treats along the way. Register your interest and find out more on their website.

www.havenhouse.org.uk/event/halloween-pumpkin-plod17

Little Shed of Horrors

When? 31st October

Where? Chickenshed Theatre, N14

Cost? £10

Live spooky music from the Chickenshed Youth Band and terrifying Halloween surprises, followed by a screening of Little Shop of Horrors (Certificate PG, 1hr 43 mins, plus 20 mins interval). Fancy dress is highly encouraged. Buy tickets in advance.

www.chickenshed.org.uk/little-shed-horrors

Hackney City Farm

When? Daily, except Mondays

Where? 1a Goldsmiths Row, E2

Cost? Free (donations appreciated)

Hackney City Farm has a range of farmyard animals including goats, sheep, chickens and donkeys as well as some small animals such as rabbits and guinea pigs. Various activities also take place. Entrance is free, but donations are very much welcome. See their website for full details.

www.hackneycityfarm.co.uk

Barnsbury Estate news

Barnsbury Community Centre

Jays Street, Islington, N1 0FE

Most activities are free and open to everyone in and around Barnsbury. Contact **020 7833 2525** to find out more.



What?	When?
SkyWay Youth Club	Mondays, 5-7pm
Barnsbury Improved Lifestyle Initiative for women	Mondays & Tuesdays, 10am-11am and Thursdays, 5pm-6pm
Salsa in the Cally (Salsa classes)	Tuesdays, 7pm-9pm
BiteSize Tuition	Saturdays, 10am-12pm, 1pm-3pm and 3.30pm-5.30pm
Tiddley Tots Nursery	Weekdays, 8am-6pm
Computer room	Weekdays, all day*
Yoga	Wednesdays, 1pm-2.10pm

*The computer room at Barnsbury is available every day for Newlon residents to get online for free, depending on availability. Come to the Barnsbury office for access.

SkyWay Youth Club

SkyWay works with young people to offer practical and emotional support through health and wellbeing activities, food and cooking sessions, holiday programmes - including trips and outings - and leadership projects.

They offer services to dozens of enthusiastic young people in groups aged 7-15 and 16+. The SkyWay team are positive and supportive and bring a fun and exciting energy to the programme.

Activities at Barnsbury take place every Monday, with additional ad-hoc activities during school holidays. Please note dates may occasionally change during term time, so always contact first before turning up to avoid disappointment.

Tutors United

This tutoring programme is led by trained university students and is aimed at year 5 and year 6 pupils. The lessons alternate weekly between English and maths.

In English topics include mystery writing, persuasive writing and reports, ensuring pupils can write different forms of text while using correct spelling, punctuation and grammar.

In maths pupils will cover key number skills including fractions, percentages and mental arithmetic, to help move them to the next level and prepare for SATs.

Tailored lesson feedback will be emailed to parents by 5pm the next working day, informing them of their child's progress.



BiteSize Tuition

BiteSize Tuition provides high quality maths and computer programming lessons at affordable prices. Lessons are delivered by highly qualified tutors with extensive experience and a passion for teaching.

They use the best teaching materials, fully aligned to the national curriculum in England - a unique blend of printed and online material with plenty of opportunities to practice.

The maths element covers Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and GCSE, while coding is targeted at ages 7 and above.

Find out more about SkyWay, Tutors United, BiteSize Tuition and other activities by emailing community.services@newlon.org.uk or calling **020 7033 4605**.

Dynamic flow yoga

Held at Barnsbury every Wednesday lunchtime, this class will tone your body, improve your flexibility and help you feel more relaxed. All welcome, whether beginner or experienced. You pay for a block of ten-week classes, which works out at only £7 per session. You can try a class before committing to the block. For more information email gnmyoga@gmail.com or call **020 3353 4744**.

Gardening at Barnsbury

Local residents from the Barnsbury Estate, the Islington Bangladeshi Association and other volunteers are really digging in to create a great green space. From pumpkins to green peppers and herbs, the garden is growing good things.

They are working with Aspire, a social enterprise, and their garden experts to enhance the allotments and garden space at Barnsbury and behind Stamford House.

In addition partnerships with local social enterprises and community organisations will ensure that the space is well-maintained and vibrant.

If you are interested in getting involved or securing your own allotment then please contact us by emailing community.services@newlon.org.uk or calling **020 7033 4605**.



Salsa in the Cally

Salsa in the Cally is a fresh, new exciting weekly evening social event held at Barnsbury each Tuesday. It is aimed at all levels, from absolute beginners who have never done Salsa before and maybe claim to have two-left feet, to more experienced dancers.

Whether you are just starting out, an improver or advanced – or you just want to get involved in some social dancing – then come and join.

The beginners class is free. Other levels are £7.

Free refreshments and mini snacks are included. Everyone is welcome, regardless of age or size, and no partner is needed.

To get involved please contact the Community Services team on **020 7033 4605** or email community.services@newlon.org.uk.



Need space to host your party or event?

We have recently refurbished the halls in the Barnsbury Centre. Please contact us concerning spaces and availability. Note that we have maintained special prices for Newlon residents of up to 50% off.

Find out more by emailing community.services@newlon.org.uk or calling **020 7033 4605**.

Step Forward into Employment



step forward

Step Forward is the Newlon's in-house employment support programme that can help Newlon residents to stay ahead of the competition and find work.

This programme provides employment support, valuable work experience and will open up routes to a range of careers. By the end of the programme we aim to get residents to a position where they can successfully find work. Not only that, they will also receive a £50 voucher if they find employment within six months of registration.

Another exciting part of Step Forward is the new work placement and apprenticeship scheme. Having a CV with the right experience is what employers look for most, and that's where this programme can help. We know many residents looking for work have the skills employers want, but just need the opportunity to prove it.

The type and range of placements vary, but we're developing the opportunities available so people can get the experience that best matches their aspirations. It's also flexible, as each placement is designed to fit around residents' existing commitments.

The programme is open to all Newlon residents.

If you are interested get in touch with Paula on **020 7033 4605**.

Case Study: Building futures

Andretta, a Newlon resident, has successfully completed the Building Futures programme in Hackney.

This two week programme ran from 22nd May - 2nd June and was very successful in helping 16 unemployed local residents.

The candidates gained hands-on experience in plumbing and joinery and were supported through a BTEC Level 1 in Construction. They also trained for and had exams booked for them to obtain their CSCS card, which will enable them to work within the sector.

Those enrolled were taken on a site visit to a live residential construction site in Hoxton. They also took part in mock interviews with Wates Building Services and other contractors in order to build skills and confidence.

It is a great taster course if you are interested in learning a mechanical trade. My enthusiasm grew as the course progressed and I forged new friendships, something I'd not expected.

Andretta,
Newlon resident
and Building Futures candidate



Do you need help with claiming benefits?

Our Community Services team helps Newlon residents claim thousands of pounds in benefits they are entitled to. Our highly-skilled in-house Welfare Benefits Advisor can work with you to examine the benefits you are eligible for, including backdated benefits, and will support you to make your claim and follow it up.

For more information on this free service, please contact **Noori** on **020 7033 4605** or email community.services@newlon.org.uk.

Another successful Hale Village Summer Festival



On 22nd July the annual Hale Village Summer Festival took place, which once again was a great success, bringing the community together.

Many local residents attended to enjoy the atmosphere. There was music, food and drink, book stalls, arts and crafts, and other family friendly fun. Newlon took part in the planning and provided information on the day about our services.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back for another successful festival in 2018.

Come to our free mutual exchange event

Tottenham Town Hall, Saturday 18th November.

Are you thinking about moving home? Whether you are looking to live in a different area, need more space or want to downsize, the most effective way to move to another social housing home is by swapping with another resident through a mutual exchange.

More Newlon residents move each year through carrying out a mutual exchange than through any other means.

To help promote mutual exchange, showcase the options available and make the process simple to understand we will be hosting a major free mutual exchange event at Tottenham Town Hall, N15 4RY, from 12-4 pm on Saturday 18th November.

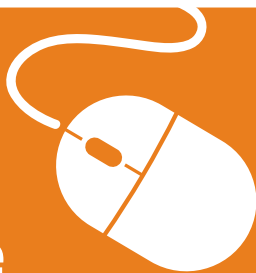
The event is free to attend and will include sessions on how to find, organise and manage an exchange from experts at HomeSwapper and MoveMaker.

Along with Newlon there will be representatives from a number of other housing associations showcasing the homes their residents have available for exchange. In addition there will be other residents interested in the possibility of exchanging in attendance.

There will also be refreshments.

So if you're thinking about moving then this is the event for you.

Improve your skills with free training



We offer or can signpost our residents to a range of training courses and opportunities, many of them free. These include elearning courses in everything from improving communication skills to mastering Microsoft Excel. There are also opportunities offline – such as workshops to improve your gardening skills and support for young people. We can offer both advice in what to choose and help you get signed up. Find out more at www.newlon.org.uk/training.

Knowledge Base Articles – behind the scenes of customer service

Just as we place a high value on getting repairs right first time we aim to provide the correct response for residents' enquiries whenever they contact us.

To help achieve this we use technology to its full advantage. Whenever there is a query that one of our Service Centre Advisers cannot answer they ask for a Knowledge Base Article (KBA) to be created.

KBAs are the supporting information we use in Dynamics 365, our customer service software, to help Service Centre staff and teams across Newlon to have the information at their fingertips to answer a wide range of enquiries.

Each KBA provides an easy to reference answer or the background information needed to respond to residents' enquiries. If a Service Centre Adviser does not know the answer to a query immediately, they can check the KBA in real time.

KBAs are updated regularly or created whenever an adviser cannot answer a query, so they are kept up to date as services change. More importantly they reflect the actual questions residents ask us.

We now have nearly 200 KBAs covering subjects ranging from buildings insurance and fire safety to what needs to happen if a tenant is in prison.

We also use KBAs to update and support the information on the Knowledge Base of frequently asked questions, which you can find on our website at www.newlon.org.uk/knowledge-base.

We think this approach is really working, with independent surveying showing satisfaction with the helpfulness of staff and queries being answered first time have both increased over the past year, along with 40% more people using the Knowledge Base on our website.

Digital and self-service

We are investing in developing more digital and self-service customer service options so residents can make service requests at times that suit them, or without needing to contact us. We are currently in the initial phases of tendering for a new customer self service portal.

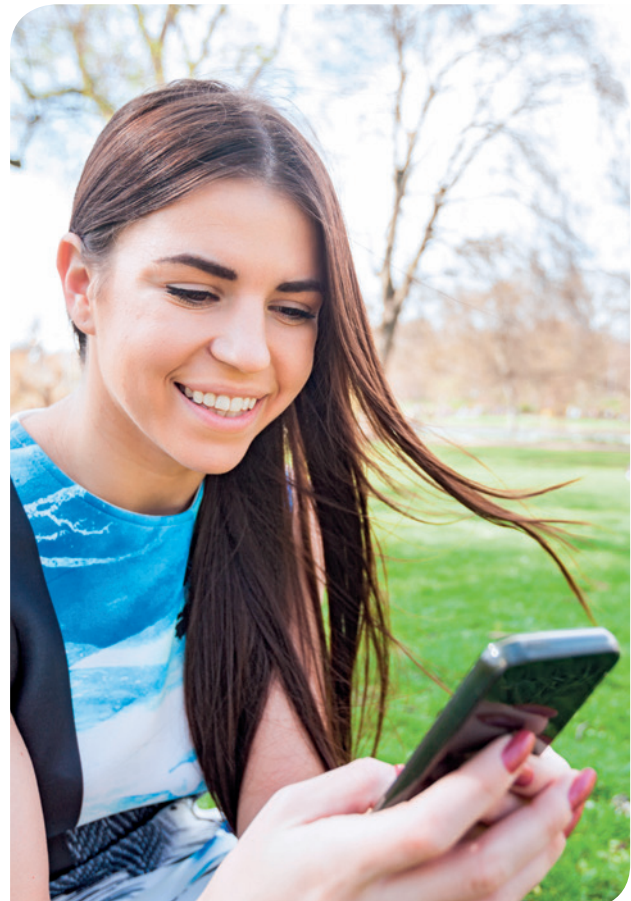
In the meantime here are some handy things you can already do online:

- Report repairs at www.newlon.org.uk/contact-us/repairs.
- Get answers to common queries from our website via the Knowledge Base at www.newlon.org.uk/knowledge-base.
- Pay rent or service charges using the allpay app or by text at www.newlon.org.uk/residents/paying-your-rent.
- Give your opinions through our online residents' forum at www.newlon.org.uk/newlon.

Making service charges easy to understand

We are constantly looking at ways for information on service charges to be improved and so with the help of our Readers' Panel we revised the Service Charge Glossary of Terms. This document can be referred to when you look over your service charge statement as it explains some of the key terms used.

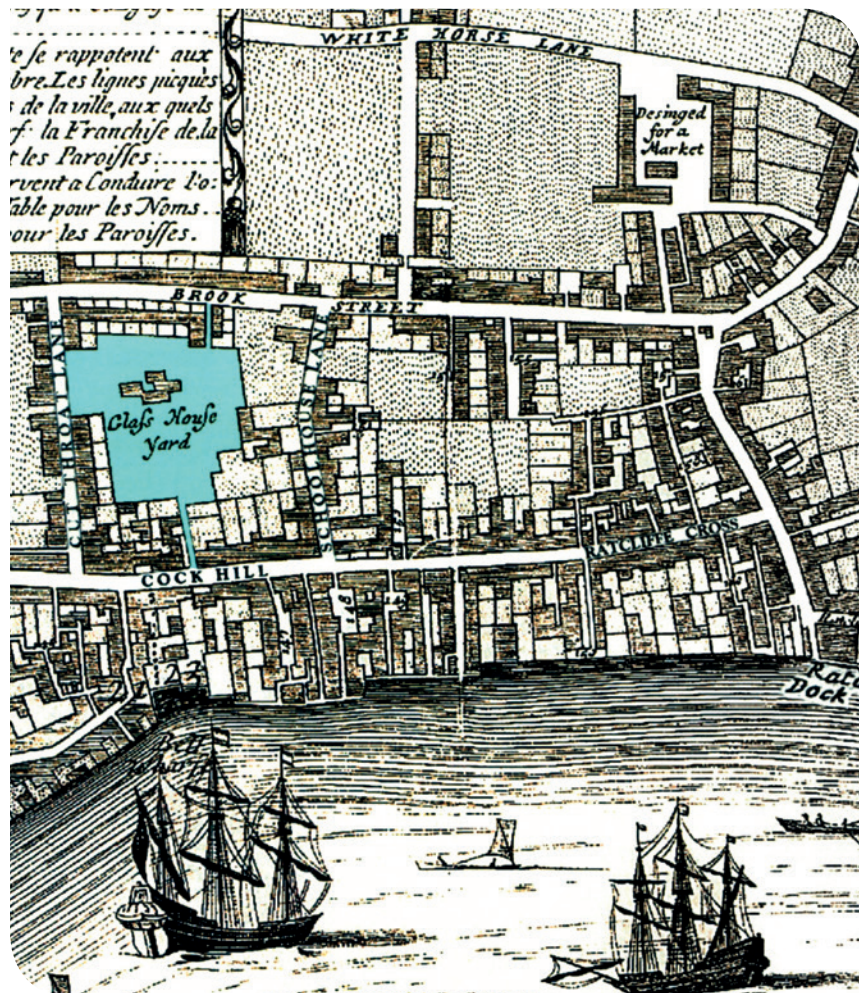
You can find the Glossary of Terms at www.newlon.org.uk/residents/service-charges.



The secret history of our streets

Newlon Housing Trust provides nearly 8,000 homes across north and east London, ranging from new build high rise homes to 18th century street properties.

Many of our properties, or the areas where they are built, have fascinating histories. Sometimes this can be sensed from the name of a block or a development, or sometimes it can be obscure. Almost everywhere that we have built new homes has involved redeveloping a previously used site with a long history. In this new regular feature we explore the histories of some of our developments.



Glasshouse Fields

As the name suggests, Glasshouse Fields - a mixed tenure development of 200 homes situated between Shadwell and Limehouse in east London - has a history of glassmaking.

What may be more surprising is that this history goes all the way back to 1580, when the first instance of glass making was recorded at this site. William Morgan's 1682 map of Ratcliffe (shown above), then a parish hamlet by the Thames, clearly shows the glassworks at the current location of our homes.

At one side of the glassworks stood Cut Throat Lane, a reference to the historic character of the area which was filled with warehouses, sailors' dosshouses, taverns and a myriad of professions relating to the docks and shipbuilding. Sadly it didn't enjoy a reputation for honesty. Cut Throat Lane was later renamed Love Lane!

The glassworks, along with hundreds of nearby homes and warehouses, were destroyed in a major fire in 1794, dubbed the second fire of London, which began at a nearby barge builders.

The site was rebuilt and went through a series of owners before being taken over by T&W Ide in 1860. Thomas Ide, who had previously worked at the famous St. Gobain glass factory in France, would later go on to invent the manufacturing process for bending glass, producing curved sheet glass for the first time.

This was not the end of troubles for the site which, being at the heart of docklands, suffered two direct hits from incendiary bombs during World War 2, as well as five large fires.

Once again the glassworks were restored and between 1969 and 1972 bullet proof glass was one of the major sellers, promoted by popular monthly demonstrations. However, by the later part of the 20th century the site had fallen into decline and was eventually sold for redevelopment as housing.

Glasshouse Fields was also located close to the events of the infamous Ratcliffe Highway murders, in which seven people were murdered on two separate attacks in a 12 day period in December 1811. There was no apparent motive for the crimes, which were never formally solved. The disorganised nature of the investigation and the widespread public concern were influential in starting moves to set up the Metropolitan Police as a unified, professional force to police London.

David C Watts' book 'A History of Glassmaking in London' includes a detailed section on Glasshouse Fields, which we used as a reference for this article.

If you would like to know about the history of the building where you live or have an interesting story about your development then let us know. Get in touch at newsletters@newlon.org.uk.

Kids' Quiz!

Below are 5 words which are all to do with Autumn. See if you can unscramble them.

- 1) WORCESCAR
- 2) NEWLOHALE
- 3) VATSHER
- 4) SAVEEL
- 5) FRONBIE

Please email your answers to kieran.hurley@newlon.org.uk, with the words **Kids' Quiz** in the title, along with your name, age and full address. Or post them to **Newlon Kids' Quiz, Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk, Hale Village, N17 9FE.**

You can only enter the quiz if you are aged 11 or under. Answers must be received by **31st October 2017.**

All correct entries will go into a draw, and one lucky winner will get a £20 voucher which can be used at a range of high street stores.



Be environmentally friendly by getting your newsletters digitally

We can send our newsletters digitally to your email address. This is both faster and more environmentally friendly. If you want to receive them digitally rather than in hard copy then please get in touch at newsletters@newlon.org.uk.



Write for your newsletter

Do you have an idea for an article for this newsletter? We welcome articles from residents of all ages. If we publish it we will send you £20 in vouchers of your choice! Send your article idea to kieran.hurley@newlon.org.uk, or post it to **Kieran Hurley, Newlon Housing Trust, 4 Daneland Walk, Hale Village, London, N17 9FE.**

Newlon House, 4 Daneland Walk, Hale Village, London, N17 9FE
Telephone: 020 7613 8080

Email (general enquiries): customerservice@newlon.org.uk
Email (repairs): repairs@newlon.org.uk
www.newlon.org.uk

Newlon Housing Trust is a charitable Housing Association

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