

Newlon News



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Newlon office Christmas and New Year closure

Our offices will close at 2pm on Monday, 24th December and reopen on Wednesday, 2nd January.

During this time our contractors will only provide emergency repairs.

Emergencies include total electricity loss and major leaks. In these instances our contractors will 'make safe' and may be able to do a full repair provided extensive works are not needed. If additional works need to be approved we cannot do this until we reopen.

If you have an emergency repair please phone 020 7613 8080, where a recorded message will direct you to the contractor providing emergency cover.

Please note that we will not be able to reply to any text messages or emails over the closure period.



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 performance.

At the last meeting:

- David Rankin, from Newlon's Enforcement team, gave an interesting talk about how Newlon deals with anti-social behaviour. He explained that the job is as much about managing expectations as dealing with serious issues. He started a discussion about cigarette and cannabis smoke and the Forum recommended a newsletter article, which can be found on page 9.
- The Forum gets an update every six months about how Newlon is performing in terms of handling complaints from residents. This time we heard that most complaints are about repairs, although these only comprise a small number of the repairs which are dealt with overall. One of our members is also on the Complaints Panel and working with Newlon to improve how they learn from complaints.
- Three of the Forum members attended training about digital engagement and used what they learned to bring forward ideas for refreshing the Newlon website, which have been passed on to the Communications team.
- The Forum were pleased to hear the latest news about the repairs satisfaction app that Newlon successfully piloted and have now rolled out. Some of their comments had been taken on board during its development and now all residents are asked about their satisfaction when a repair is completed. The Forum looks forward to hearing about the results at a future meeting.
- Graham Watts, Head of Resident Services, updated the Forum about the merger of the Resident Involvement and Community Services team into the new Resident Services team. The Forum were impressed by Newlon's commitment and vision for even greater resident influence in shaping Newlon's services.
- Newlon are changing their fixed term tenancies from two to three years, an idea welcomed by the Forum as it will give residents more stability in their homes.

If you would like to read more about our meetings you can find the minutes online at www.newlon.org.uk/residents/getting-involved/residents-forum.

Save energy - and money too

Need advice for saving energy and utility costs? Last year the Residents' Forum asked Newlon's Resident Services team to come up with some solutions to help vulnerable residents save energy and money on their utility bills.

So they came up with a programme where residents can consult with experts to help them save energy and find cheaper tariffs.

To learn more email community.services@newlon.org.uk or call 020 7033 4605.



Newlon's Resident Services team - here for you

Newlon's Community Services team and Resident Involvement team have now come together to form the new Resident Services team.

The new team will help provide high quality services to residents, assist those in need of financial or employment support and improve the communities where Newlon has homes.

The team is made up of:

- Community Services - which provides services to Newlon residents across areas of work including welfare benefits advice and financial inclusion, employment and community facilities.
- Resident Involvement - which will continue to work with residents through a range of informal and formal ways to get involved in order to ensure that Newlon provides excellent services to its residents.

You can contact the team by emailing community.services@newlon.org.uk or getinvolved@newlon.org.uk, or by calling 020 7033 4605



Looking for work or training?

Over the past two years, the Resident Services team has helped hundreds of residents to access training and employment opportunities. We are also proud that we actively employ our residents - who make up 10% of Newlon staff.

If you are interested in training, jobs or work placements, please get in touch with Paula on **020 7033 4605** or email community.services@newlon.org.uk.



David's employment journey

David registered for Newlon's employment programme in June 2017, when he was in part-time employment and studying for a postgraduate degree. His goal was to find employment in marketing or the media. Our Information, Advice and Guidance Officer, Paula, advised him to apply for a work placement at Newlon so he could gain experience and improve his CV.

David started his three month placement at Newlon at the end of June 2017. After the placement finished Paula helped David secure part-time work in a retail store. She then assisted him into a paid internship at a media company to further boost his experience.

This year she helped him get shortlisted for a role in Newlon's Service Centre. After a successful interview he was offered a six month fixed-term contract.

"Paula has been extremely supportive over the past couple of years," said David. "I am very satisfied with the help I have received from Newlon's employment programme, which has made a positive difference to my career."

David was a winner at the Newlon Star Awards, which you can read about on page 5.

Get answers to your benefits questions

Newlon's Resident Services team is committed to helping our residents access any benefits they are entitled to. Our specialist welfare benefits advisor has helped hundreds of residents claim over £200,000 in benefits, including housing benefit.

Our advisor can support residents to determine their entitlements, identify backdated benefits and follow up claims.

The team can also help with budgeting and money management skills, as well as giving advice on saving money on utility bills and reducing energy usage. We also have a programme to help residents get online to apply for benefits. If you are house-bound we are able to arrange a home visit.

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



Universal Credit rolls out in Hackney and Haringey

Universal credit (UC) is a benefit for working-age people, combining six benefits and merging them into one payment. It includes some of the benefits and tax credits you might be getting now such as housing benefit, child tax credits and jobseekers' allowance.

UC 'full service' has been rolled out across Hackney and Haringey. A full service requires you to claim UC using an online account. If you are living in either of these boroughs then a change in circumstances may require you to switch to UC.

If you are already claiming UC then you will be on what is known as UC 'live service'. If this is the case then you will have to transfer to UC full service.

You may receive a letter from the DWP or Job Centre informing you that you need to transfer to full service. It is important that you respond, because failure to act may lead to loss of payments.



If you have any further questions please speak to your Jobcentre, or contact Newlon's Income team on **020 7613 8050** or income@newlon.org.uk.



Get help with your energy bills with SHINE

If you or someone you know in your household are receiving means tested benefits including ESA or Child Tax Credits, are on a low income, or have a child under 5, then you may qualify for up to £140 off your electricity bills from your supplier with the SHINE programme.

They can also help with home energy visits, advice and more.

Call **0300 555 0195** to see if you are eligible, quoting 'Newlon'.

Please have an electricity bill and account number available when you call.



Newlon Star Awards ceremony a success

This year is Newlon's 50th anniversary and to celebrate we held our second ever Newlon Star Awards. The awards recognise the achievements of those residents who have been involved in improving services, supporting fellow residents and contributing to the communities where they live. They showcase what can be achieved through being involved and working together.

A ceremony and dinner were held at Tottenham Town Hall on 23rd November where the winners were presented with their awards. The event was hosted by the BBC radio presenter Dotun Adebayo and Newlon's Chair, Sarah Ebanja. Guests enjoyed a meal and live entertainment, including a performance by the Tottenham Community Choir.

Big congratulations to everyone who was nominated and a thank you to those who took the time to nominate their fellow residents. We received double the nominations from the last time we held the Awards, so anyone who was nominated

or shortlisted will have received significant support for their contribution to their local community or improving the way Newlon works with residents.

We hope the awards demonstrated the appreciation of fellow residents and Newlon staff members towards those who have shown such dedication.

And the winners are...

Resident of the Year - Lloyd Gale-Ward

Resident Group of the Year - North Folgate Community Group

Work Placement of the Year - David Lando

Outstanding Staff Contribution - Paula Williams

Outward Personal Achievement - James Garner

Lifetime Achievement - Wendy Jackson and Dave Cutter

If you want to get involved with Newlon then find out more at www.newlon.org.uk/residents/getting-involved, call us 020 7613 8084 or email getinvolved@newlon.org.uk.



Need space to host your party or event?

Thinking about hosting a party or event? Newlon provides special access to community facilities for our residents. We can connect you with community centres near you and we also have our own centres that you can access. This includes the recently refurbished Barnsbury Community 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.

Wates now available Saturdays

As many residents work and are not able to be at home during usual working hours, the Residents' Forum put forward a suggestion that when works are needed repairs should be able to take place in the evening or at weekends.

Newlon took this suggestion on board and responded by making some Saturday appointment slots available for our residents to help improve access and enhance our repairs service.



Rate our repairs performance on the day

When our repairs contractor, Wates, undertakes a repair for you then you may be asked to give feedback. At the end of the job the operative will give you a handheld device for you to rate the performance and the work. Please note, this feedback is completely anonymous - the operative will not be able to see what you have entered when you hand the device back to them.

Reviewing our policies

We regularly review our policies and procedures to ensure our services are as effective as possible. Here are just a couple of recent examples of where we have made changes:

- Compensation payments of over £50 will now always be made to a resident's bank account, unless they are in arrears.
- If a resident asks for permission for a flat sitter, then they will need to provide evidence for the reason why they need one. Additional criteria have also been introduced to check eligibility.
- There is a two-year limit for flat sitting for the duration of a tenancy.

Checking your identity to keep your data secure

Keeping your data secure is important to us. So if you contact our Service Centre, we will ask you some basic security questions including your name, address and contact details. This will ensure that we do not disclose personal data to a third party.

In addition, certain queries require us to carry out further checks. This includes tenancy management issues, rent queries, and requests for keys and fobs. In cases such as these you will be asked for your date of birth and when you last made a rent or service charge payment.



Events in your area



Canary Wharf Ice Rink

When? Until 16th February

Where? Canada Square Park, E14

Cost? From £9.95

The 1,200sqm Canary Wharf ice rink has returned to Canada Square Park, for 15 weeks of skating beneath twinkling lights, open 7 days a week. If you want to eat or drink then stay close to the action at the rink-side bar, or choose from the array of surrounding restaurants and bars.

www.icerinkcanarywharf.co.uk

A Christmas Carol

When? Until 5th January

Where? Chickenshed Theatre, N14

Cost? From £10

Chickenshed Theatre are retelling Charles Dickens's unforgettable story of Ebenezer Scrooge. They have updated, renewed and refreshed this heart-warming tale in an entirely brand new musical version, set in 1930s Britain. With a cast of over 200 people on stage for each performance, original music and stunning sets. Suitable for young and old.

www.chickenshed.org.uk

Camden Christmas Market

When? Weekends until 23rd December

Where? Greenland Road, NW1

Cost? Free

Christmas is taking over Camden Market and truly bringing the North Pole to their iconic market. Get in the Christmas spirit with choirs, alternative festival musical acts, traditional fairground games, and hourly snow flurries right by Camden Lock Place. Entry is free. You can also buy tickets for the grotto and gingerbread workshop.

www.camdenmarket.com

Christmas at Museum of London Docklands

When? 22nd-23rd December

Where? Museum of London Docklands, E14

Cost? Free drop-in

The Museum of London Docklands is holding a variety of Christmas themed events for young children, which you can drop in to for free. The 'Away at the Fair' interactive storytelling session transports you back in time to London's famous Frost Fairs, while 'Season's Greetings' gives the materials and inspiration for children to design their own Christmas cards.

www.museumoflondon.org.uk/museum-london-docklands

Sliders Curling

When? Until 22nd December

Where? Roof East, Stratford Car Park, Great Eastern Way, E15

Cost? £10

London's first ever curling spectacle has returned to Roof East. The roof is complete with a glowing neon theme. Also, lane-side hosts deliver yummy cocktails direct to the lanes, so sliders can fuel up as they curl for gold. Over 18s only. Book in advance.

www.roofeast.com

Let The People Sing

When? 22nd December, 3pm

Where? Forty Hall, Forty Hill, EN2

Cost? £10

Enfield Community Singers are back at the Forty Hall to perform in the beautiful Long Gallery. Celebrate Christmas with classic carols and popular seasonal songs including Silent Night, Ding Dong Merrily On High, Jingle Bells, Winter Wonderland and I Wish You a Merry Christmas. A bar serving mulled wine will be available before the concert starts and during the interval.

www.fortyhallestate.co.uk

Christmas at Columbia Road Flower Market

When? 19th December

Where? Columbia Road, E2

Cost? Free

The independent shops and artisan makers of one of London's most famous flower markets come together for a Christmas shopping evening with atmosphere. The exuberant carol singers from St Peters in Bethnal Green will also be there in full voice, as will local vicar Adam Atkinson, wheeled down the street on a piano singing carols.

www.columbiaroad.info



Make sure your smoke alarms are working



To help keep you safe it is important to make sure your smoke alarms work. Every week you should test them by pressing and holding down the test button on the alarm until you hear the alarm sound. Also regularly check that the LED on your alarms are constantly illuminated. You should also keep your alarms clean - wipe down with a clean, dry cloth. Do not paint the alarms under any circumstances.

Cyclical decorations programme

For our cyclical works programme for 2018/19 we identified the need to prioritise and invest in fire safety works to blocks and to also carry out additional electrical inspections across our housing. As a result the cyclical decorations programme has been moved back one year to allow for these fire safety works to be fully completed.

Cyclical decorations includes decoration of external painted surfaces to homes, decorations within communal hallways, stairwells, and also all pre-decoration repairs such as carpentry repairs to external timberwork, render and concrete surfaces.

We will update residents early next year about the new programme for 2019.



Isobel Place residents vote to reduce cleaning service - and cost

Residents at Isobel Place in Haringey have voted to reduce their cleaning service by half. As a result their service charges will be reduced to reflect this.

The residents' association there were instrumental in helping us consult their members in November about the changes. We were very pleased with the results as 76 people replied with a large proportion agreeing the 50% reduction.

Our next steps are to implement the change - from a six day to a three day a week service, due to take place next year.

We'll be closely monitoring from then to see how well it works and make sure the quality is kept to the same high standard.



Consultation about the cleaning service - your feedback

Thanks to everyone who filled in our cleaning survey. 185 of you took the time to tell us what you thought about your current cleaning service and how we could improve it.

- **56%** said that the **quality of the service** was most important to them.
- **90%** wanted **no change** to their cleaner's visits or less visits for less cost.

This feedback tells us that there is a split view from residents on quality and cost but that both are important to them.

In addition to the survey a dozen residents came to workshops to talk about their suggestions for improving our cleaning service - we appreciate their time.

We are using this feedback to shape the next cleaning contract, which will be in place in early 2019.

You can read the full consultation at www.newlon.org.uk/residents/consultation.

Congratulations to Jody from Hackney who won the £100 prize draw for taking part in the survey.



Newlon website revamp nears completion

As we've previously mentioned, we are revamping our website so it better reflects the changing needs of our residents. Our research has shown that a growing number of residents are using mobile devices, so the design will be more mobile friendly. It will also be easier to navigate to find the things that matter most to you.

The initial design phase is now complete and we are soon going to be entering testing phase, where a group of residents will look at the new site and make suggestions if they think there should be improvements.

After this is completed the website will be launched in the new year.

Remember cannabis is illegal - and the police can take action.

Newlon sometimes receive complaints of cannabis being smoked in our properties.

We would remind residents that cannabis remains an illegal substance and is categorised as a Class B drug by the Government. As a result the police can take action.

Depending on the circumstances this could be confiscation and advice, a formal warning, a penalty notice - or possible arrest. The penalty is likely to be most severe if an individual is growing or dealing in cannabis.

Newlon may also take action. If we decide the terms of your tenancy have been breached, this could impact whether or not you can remain in your home.

If you witness the smoking or dealing of cannabis then we recommend you contact the police in the first instance, as it is a criminal matter. However, you can also inform us by calling our Service Centre on 020 7613 8080. Your details will not be disclosed without your permission.



Waltham Forest 2019 - London's first borough of culture

2019 is an exciting year for Waltham Forest as backed by support and submissions from 15,000 residents it won the competition to be London's first ever 'borough of culture'.

There will be a range of exciting events, activities and volunteering opportunities open to residents of the borough and anyone living locally, which will attract people from across the world. These include large scale arts and performance events featuring internationally acclaimed artists, as well as locally organised street parties.

There are also opportunities for local artists and community groups to apply for funding to contribute to the programme of events.

Things will kick off with a three day launch event in January. To find out more go to: wfculture19.co.uk.

Residents' portal testing

We have nearly finished our new online portal, which will provide residents with a secure online space to carry out a wide range of services including making payments, checking rent statements, updating contact details and reporting communal repairs.

A group of residents came in to test the portal and we are using their feedback to make relevant improvements before rolling it out.



Government Green Paper – Newlon and residents respond

Newlon has reviewed the government Green Paper called 'A new deal for social housing', which was presented to Parliament in August and may be an early step towards changes to legislation.

The Green Paper focuses on five principles:

1. Ensuring homes are safe and decent.
2. Effective resolution of complaints.
3. Empowering residents and strengthening the regulator.
4. Tackling stigma against social housing tenants.
5. Expanding supply and supporting home ownership.

As part of the consultation Newlon set up an internal review panel to look at the contents of the Green Paper, gathered input from staff and, most importantly, sought feedback from residents.

Targeted surveys were sent to residents, and groups of residents attended sessions and forums, including a government consultation event – which you can read more about below.



Our goal now is to help the government put in place a positive approach for both residents and social landlords in the years ahead.

To read more about the Green Paper, go to www.gov.uk/government/news/social-housing-green-paper-a-new-deal-for-social-housing.

Green Paper consultation event – a resident’s perspective

By Chris Lloyd, Newlon resident and Chair of Norton Folgate Community Group

In September a group of Newlon residents were invited to attend the government’s Social Housing Green Paper consultation event, hosted by Housing Minister Kit Malthouse. Over 100 people came along and all had the opportunity for some one-on-one time with the Minister, who seemed genuinely interested in discussing the issues raised.



During the event our group elected to discuss two key themes from the Green Paper: ensuring homes are safe and decent, and effective resolution of complaints. We felt these were important to Newlon residents and areas we had experience of.

Our first topic - ensuring homes are safe and decent - gave us the opportunity to voice our opinions on safety standards, especially the ideas about putting social housing safety standards in line with the private sector. Other proposals included energy performance targets and mandatory requirements for external noise, which can be a problem for many inner-city properties.

The second topic we discussed was effective resolution of complaints. This proved to be of real interest to the group, specifically the current complaints procedures and the role of the Housing Ombudsman. A number of us didn’t know the specific role of the Ombudsman and it was a real benefit to learn more about the current procedures and voice our opinions on the proposed changes.

Our group found this event to be a great opportunity to talk to residents from other social housing providers and hear about their experiences.

We hope our views and suggestions are taken on board by the government when the conclusions of the Green Paper consultation are made.

The secret history of our streets

We provide nearly 8,000 homes, ranging from new build developments to 18th century street properties. Many have fascinating histories. Here we continue our regular feature exploring some of them.



Cable Street, E1

Newlon has a number of properties in Cable Street in Tower Hamlets, including 19th century street properties and some more recently built blocks. The street starts close to the edge of the City of London and runs for one and a quarter miles through to Limehouse.

Cable Street started as a straight path along which ropes were created to supply the many ships that would anchor in the nearby Pool of London, between London Bridge, Wapping and Rotherhithe. Many other 'rope walks' can be seen on later maps of the area, showing how the demand for ropes grew as shipping increased.

Until Victorian times, the current Cable Street had different names for each of its sections, including Cable Street, Knock Fergus, New Road, Back Lane, Blue Gate Fields, Sun Tavern Fields, and Brook Street.

From Victorian times through to the 1950s, partly as a result of its proximity to the docks, Cable Street had a reputation for cheap lodgings, brothels, pubs and opium dens. Oscar Wilde and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle are both known to have frequented there.

The last known occasion in England when a stake was hammered through a sinner's heart at an official burial took place at the junction of Cable Street and Cannon Street Road in 1812. John Williams was found hanged in his cell, after being arrested as a suspect in the Ratcliff Highway murders. Local people went along with the claim that he had committed suicide, from guilt of the crimes. At the time suicide was still



considered sinful, justifying him being buried upside down with a stake through his heart. In August 1886 his skull was found when new gas mains were being laid and was on display for many years in The Crown and Dolphin pub opposite.

There are many nearby sites of interest including Wilton's Music Hall, a grade II listed Victorian Music Hall completed in 1859, but the area is most famous for 'the Battle of Cable Street,' a violent anti-fascist confrontation that took place on 4 October 1936. Communist, anarchist, Labour and Jewish groups joined with locals to resist a planned march through the East End by Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists. A bus was overturned and used as a barricade, Mosley's car was attacked with bricks, and there was some of the most violent hand-to-hand fighting ever seen in London. The march was eventually abandoned.

A large mural on St. George's Town Hall, next to Library Place, depicts scenes from the day. A red plaque at Cable Street's junction with Dock Street also commemorates the incident.

Kids' Quiz!

Below are six words which are all to do with Winter. See if you can unscramble them.

- 1) NATAS
- 2) LITSEN
- 3) EMNIC IPSE
- 4) LABUEB
- 5) NAMNOWS
- 6) ROLACS
- 7) REKSRACC
- 8) LISHEG



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 January 2019.**

All correct entries will go into a draw, and one lucky winner will get a £40 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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