

Newlon News



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Update on form EWS1

Welcome to the autumn edition of Newlon news.

Very cautiously things are starting to reopen and that means that a number of the community-based activities we run are now starting to be available again.

These include activities such as the award-winning BILI wellbeing and fitness programme for women run at the Barnsbury Community Centre and the Gen Z youth group.

You can find out more about what we are currently able to offer inside. These services are usually available to all Newlon residents and often for the wider local community and our community spaces at Barnsbury and Limehouse are located within easy reach of public transport.

Office opening arrangements

At the time of writing our Head Office remains closed and the majority of our staff are continuing to work from home.

We are planning for more staff to be back in the office during the autumn, probably from October. Once we re-open, visiting the office is likely to be on an appointment only basis. We will also offer virtual appointments via Zoom or Teams. It is possible, but not decided at this stage, that we may require anyone visiting our Head Office to show proof of vaccination or evidence of a recent negative COVID-19 test.

The latest information on the impact of coronavirus on services can be found on our website at www.newlon.org.uk/residents/coronavirus-information-on-services, along with information on how we can provide support or signpost you to support services if you are struggling to cope. Information on how to contact us and office opening arrangements can be found at www.newlon.org.uk/contact-us.

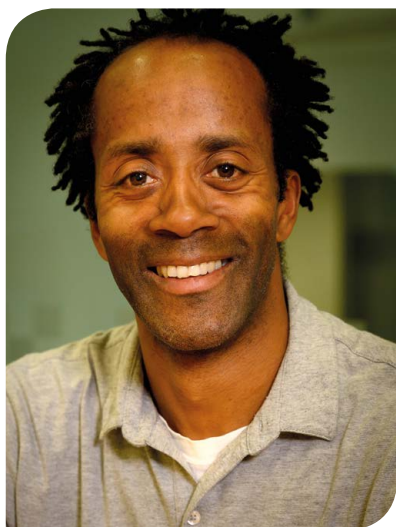
We will update our website as soon as there are any changes, so please check there for the latest information.



Follow us on Twitter
at [@NewlonHT](https://twitter.com/NewlonHT)

Residents' Forum

update from the Chair



Lloyd Gale-Ward, Chair

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

The Residents' Forum met via Zoom for our August meeting. Graham Watts, Head of Resident Services, presented a Social Value Report. The Resident Services team helps to identify and monitor social return to residents and measure social impact, using independent community insight specialists HACT to calculate social value. The team has secured £44,000 in donations for Newlon's hardship fund this year and £300,000 has been distributed over the last five years.

Heather Bryson, Assistant Director, People, presented a review of EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) actions at Newlon, because the EDI framework is up for review. Resident feedback is welcomed for this. The Think Tank approved stamp will be replacing the kite mark on all documents that involve residents in their creation, and this is a prime example.

Mystery shopping continues to have an impact with staff and teams taking past recommendations on board. Responsiveness has risen and this quarter was the second-best 2-ten performance since 2019. Keep at it, mystery shoppers! You are changing attitudes across the organisation. One area that is being worked on in particular is ownership of an issue if it cannot be solved immediately.

Bill Henderson, Housing Director, updated the Forum regarding a reduction in complaints times due to them being dealt with more quickly because of a change in internal processes at Newlon. This is a positive outcome for everyone.

Three residents attended the meeting as observers and were invited to join as provisional members of the Forum. If you are interested in joining the Residents' Forum, or have any questions about aspects of resident involvement please email getinvolved@newlon.org.uk.

Finally a reminder that if you are experiencing financial difficulties relating to, but not exclusive to, COVID-19 you can contact Newlon in order to access help and support.

Resident Services – here to help

Newlon's Resident Services team has been working hard to support residents in precarious employment and households receiving welfare benefits, as well as many of our most vulnerable residents.

You can find out more about the advice and support the team can provide and links for help at www.newlon.org.uk/resident-services-help.

You can also email community.services@newlon.org.uk or call 020 7033 4605 if you need additional support.

You can find up to date information and guidance on financial support for those affected by COVID-19 at www.newlon.org.uk/financial-support-coronavirus.





Involvement in action

Chris Lloyd from the Norton Folgate Community Group updates us on their AGM

On 30th July the Norton Folgate Community Group (NFCG) held its AGM for Newlon residents who live in Spitalfields.

It was great to meet local residents in person again after the last 18 months and we're very lucky to have Fora Spitalfields let us use their meeting space.

Spitalfields is a busy vibrant area of London with lots of development and active community groups that NFCG participate in.

Residents had very strong views on these developments and it's great to have everyone's feedback so that we can pass on the residents' issues.

Future projects were on the agenda, including the window cleaning of all tenants' flats which is funded by monies raised and donated to the group.

The residents' gardens at Phillip Blairman House and Folgate Street have also benefited from purchases by the residents group and these areas have proved to be so valuable during the lockdowns.

We recently received a grant from Newlon's Resident Services team. This will be used for the annual running cost of our group and to help us towards improving the communal garden space and any other one-off projects that we have.

RESIDENT
think
tank

**Interested
in getting
involved?**

We're looking for interested residents who can help us with designing, selecting and monitoring our services. This includes our procurement and hiring processes, Residents' Forum, Communications Panel, Mystery Shopping, Resident Inspections, our new Resident Think Tank, or other panels and groups helping with service improvement.

We're also helping to launch a new Residents' Group at the Barnsbury Estate. Please contact us if you are interested in joining.

What are the benefits of getting involved with us?

Here are some good reasons to take part in making Newlon better:

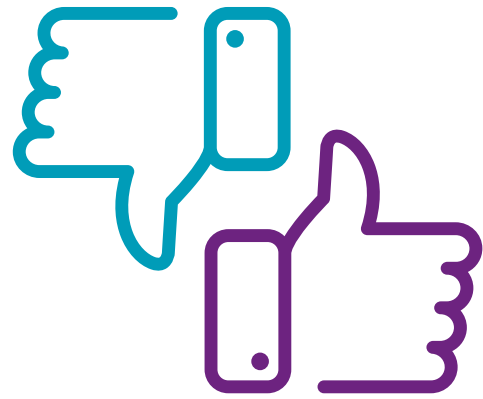
- You'll play a part in helping us improve how we look after residents' homes and have a greater say in your community.
- You'll meet other residents and make new friends.

If you're not sure what involvement might mean for you, you can chat about it with a team member who can help you decide.

Call us on **020 7613 8084** or **020 7033 4605**.
Or email us at **getinvolved@newlon.org.uk**.

Find out more online at
www.newlon.org.uk/residents/getting-involved.

Managing complaints better



We have recently made some further changes to the way we manage complaints to streamline our approach so that we can respond more effectively.

Earlier in the year we changed the way we handle stage 2 complaints – when someone is unhappy with the resolution of their initial complaint – to speed up complaint handling.

As part of this we changed from using a complaints panel to review stage 2 complaints as it was taking too long to arrange panels and delaying response times.

Following this change we initially moved to stage 2's being handled by our Quality team, with the involvement of a senior manager or director from the service area being complained about if needed.

From the 26th July we made a further change to this process and all stage 2 complaints are being managed by our Service Resolution Team, who now deal directly with responding to all complaints, with input from the director of the service being complained about where appropriate.

The Quality team are continuing to manage any stage 2 complaints received before 26th July.

Since this change has been introduced we have been responding to all stage complaints within target times.

You can find out more about our approach to complaints and how we comply with and self-assess against the Housing Ombudsman's code online at www.newlon.org.uk/residents/making-a-complaint.

Updates to policies and procedures

We have recently made changes to the following policies and procedures:

Unauthorised occupant and squatters – we have made minor updates which are unlikely to have any implications for residents.

Fixed term tenancy policy – we will now make checks for proof of residency for both 3 and 5 year tenancies.

Domestic violence – we have updated some of the language used and now refer to survivors not victims. We have included more references to recognising that men can be survivors and we have updated the referral process for those reporting to Newlon to ensure they receive support from external agencies so that we do not only manage any housing issues.

Compensation – we have amended the wording around when we refund people. All tenancy agreements state that rent should be paid weekly in advance. Where a resident's rent account is not showing one week's credit, as per the tenancy agreement, the compensation payment will be paid into the rent account. This applies to all residents unless the arrears are due to Housing Benefit being paid in arrears.



EWS1 update

Many Newlon Shared Owners and leaseholders will be aware that if you live in a building above 18 metres in height a lender may require a form EWS1 if you are trying to sell, re-mortgage or staircase your home.

An EWS1 is a standardised fire safety compliance certification introduced by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) in late 2019 in consultation with the Government. It is designed to ensure valuers and lenders follow consistent practices in relation to buildings that have been through intrusive fire safety inspections or could be required to be inspected in response to Government guidance issued following the Grenfell Tower fire.

An EWS1 form can only be completed and signed off by a suitably qualified fire safety engineer. There is a huge ongoing demand for EWS1 forms nationally and a shortage of appropriately qualified experts. Therefore it can take a lengthy period to obtain an EWS1 and the timescales are not directly in Newlon's control if one is required for one of our buildings.

In addition we are commissioning EWS1s on the basis of those buildings which could be considered as having the highest potential fire risk first, for example taller buildings with any kind of non-brick or non-masonry based external cladding.

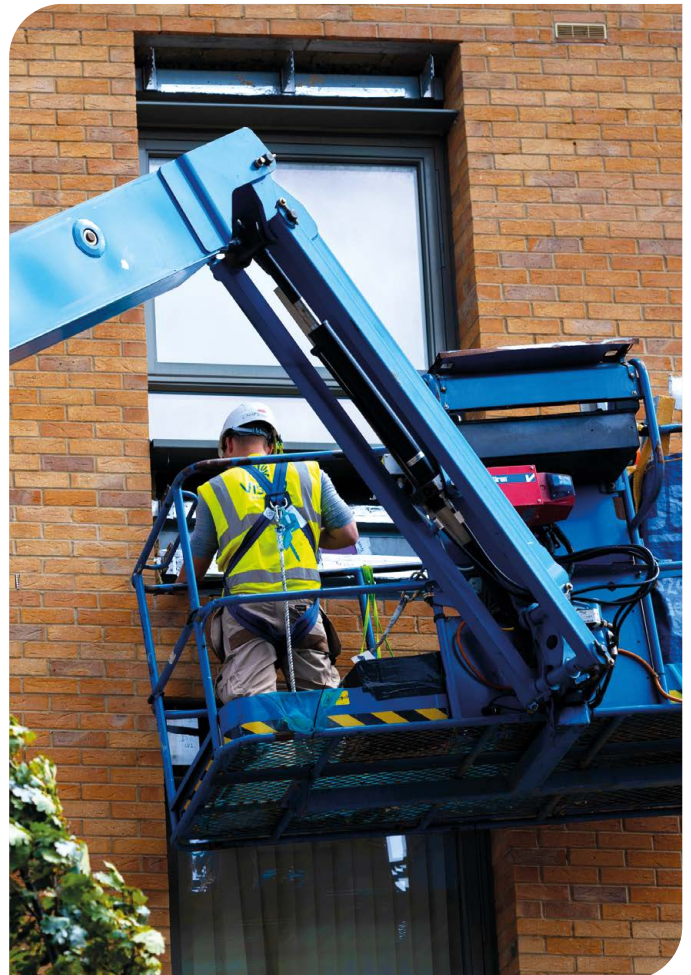
Despite the shortage of appropriately qualified specialists we are making progress with completing fire safety investigations and obtaining EWS1s for our buildings. When an EWS1 has been completed for a building we will contact residents and make this available via the Resident Sales team if you are in the process of trying to sell your home, re-mortgage or staircase. You do not need a copy if you are not involved in an active transaction.

Where an initial inspection has found that remedial works are required we are likely to receive a non-compliant EWS1. We would commission a new one and make this available to residents following the completion of any works. We would always update residents at affected blocks about this situation, but it is worth bearing in mind that if you request a copy of an EWS1 it could change over time.

Buildings below 18 metres

There continues to be some ambiguity about buildings below 18 metres and when or if they could need an EWS1.

All buildings below 18 metres, usually six storeys in height or smaller, were initially outside the EWS1 programme. In some cases this did not stop lenders demanding them. To try and manage this issue, RICS in consultation with the Government, introduced the requirement for lenders to explicitly justify why then wanted an EWS1 for a building below 18 metres. In March of this year, following further consultation, they also updated the guidance to bring some 4-6 buildings into scope of the EWS1 scheme. This has impacted a small number of Newlon buildings, which initially did not require an EWS1.



In some cases we needed to take expert advice on whether or not a building was or was not covered by the scheme. You can find more information about the EWS1 scheme on the RICS website at www.rics.org/uk/news-insight/latest-news/fire-safety/cladding-qa. Key parts of this information are summarised on our website at www.newlon.org.uk/fire-safety.

In July, Robert Jenrick, then Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government announced in a speech that all buildings below 18 metres would be taken out of the scheme and would not require an EWS1. However, despite this announcement the Government has not rescinded the Consolidated Advice Note setting out the requirements for buildings below 18 metres in height. RICS have therefore stated that the position remains the same as in March until this step is taken by the Government.

We will update our website at www.newlon.org.uk/fire-safety if there are any further changes to this position.



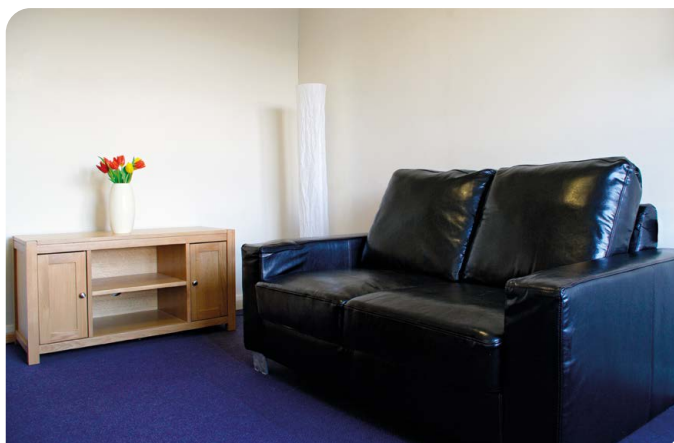
Refer a friend and **scoop £100**

New residents needed at 5-7 Hornsey Street

We have a few vacant homes in our Intermediate Rent block at 5-7 Hornsey Street, N7. We are currently offering a financial incentive of £100 to you if you refer a friend that leads to a new tenancy (this is only for people who are not already Newlon residents).

They must meet the criteria for Intermediate Rent which can be found along with the details of the flats currently available at www.newlonlettings.org.uk.

Once the person signs their tenancy we will pay you £100 as a thank you.



A bit more about 5-7 Hornsey Street

We have a range of one and two bedroom flats available to rent in this modern purpose-built block just three minutes' walk from Holloway Road tube station. The development is close to local shops and amenities with Upper Street only a 10 minute bus ride away.

Specification:

- Spacious unfurnished flats with carpets and window blinds throughout.
- Kitchen/diner with white goods provided, including fridge/freezer and cooker.
- We will arrange for a new washing machine to be installed upon letting.
- We accept joint tenancy sharers and families.
- The flats are let at 70% market rent, with priority for Key Workers.

To register interest, please visit www.newlonlettings.org.uk, call us on 020 7613 8080 or email lettings@newlon.org.uk.

Wellbeing programmes within our Community Spaces



Newlon's community centres have remained open throughout the pandemic on a limited basis. The nurseries continued with their services, providing an essential support for families in our communities. Although we had to pause some of our larger group services and use by private hirers to comply with the regulations, a number of these groups have returned including:

Family Art sessions – a programme aiming to help build creative skills and help develop life skills such as communication, confidence and awareness. Family Art workshops will be held until 15 December 2021, from 4:30-6:30pm. There are limited spaces so please register by calling or texting **07487 708 115** or emailing **admin@nairtfr3edom.com**.

Exercise classes (women only) – focusing on physical fitness, health and wellbeing of our residents, led by a professional instructor.

Islington Bangladesh Association (IBA) (women only) is offering free online exercise and fitness classes from yoga to aerobics. If you would like to take part please contact **syeda@ibal.org.uk** or call **07305 989 182**.

Philosophy discussions led by Dr Bill Thompson. Bill is a philosopher and architect who has lived on the Barnsbury Estate for over 30 years. Meetings will take place in the

Barnsbury Community Centre between 6 and 8pm on the second Friday of each month. To register, please email **bill@billthompson.info**.

Tutors United – Tutors United deliver confidence-boosting, attainment-raising tutorials to primary school pupils in years 4, 5 and 6 (ages 8-11). Spaces on the programme are limited so sign up now to secure your child's place. If your child doesn't receive a space straight away, they will be put onto the waiting list and you will be contacted when a space becomes available. To sign up, please fill in the online registration form at **<https://tutorsunited.org/register-your-child>** or email **lizzy.gribble@tutorsunited.org** if you have any questions.

Gardening – although the services were severely reduced during the lockdown periods we have continued to maintain gardening spaces at the Barnsbury Estate with the help of our local volunteers managed by Islington Bangladesh Association.

Youth Club (for Barnsbury Estate residents only) – creative youth club services for 11-19 years old, run by Gen Z.

All the services are free of charge to our Newlon Residents. If you want more information about our community centre wellbeing programmes contact the Resident Services team at **community.services@newlon.org.uk**.

Make a difference to your community by becoming a resident inspector



Why not help us by playing an important role in ensuring that your estate is clean, safe and an attractive place to live.

Resident inspectors:

- Carry out regular estate inspections with our estate inspectors.
- Support us by bringing any problems which affect the whole estate or block between inspections to our attention.
- Report issues such as antisocial behaviour and missed refuse collections.

Benefits of being a resident inspector:

- Getting free training.
- Developing core skills in team work and communication.
- Boosting your CV.

- A feeling of pride in your estate.
- Receiving gift vouchers as a thank you.

What do I need to become a resident inspector?

- Be 18 years or over.
- Be a Newlon resident or member of the household.
- Be able to take part in weekly inspections and provide feedback to us when requested.

We will be holding a training and information session in late October. If you are interested in applying to become a resident inspector this session will be a key step.

To apply, or if you would like to find out more, please contact the Resident Involvement team at **getinvolved@newlon.org.uk**.

Hello to Hafsa

The Community Services team are pleased to welcome Hafsa Abdullahi, who has joined us as our new Resident Services Support Officer. Hafsa replaces Patrick Fleischer-Annang, who many of you will have come into contact with, who has moved onto a new role.

We wish Patrick well and hope that many of you will get to know Hafsa going forward.

To contact Hafsa, or the team, call **020 7033 4605** or email community.services@newlon.org.uk



Image: cktravels.com

Filming at Newlon properties

From time to time we receive requests to film at locations where Newlon has housing. These vary from big budget films to magazine photoshoots. We once even received a request to shoot a student graduation film about a vampire on Broadwater Farm!

Where possible we try to support these activities, but there are several steps to go through before we can approve any requests.

We have to check whether any residents who could be impacted by the filming are happy for it to go ahead as filming can be quite disruptive, especially if it is a large-scale production.

We have to check as a minimum that the organisation doing the filming has appropriate insurance cover.

In some instances local authority permission to film can also be required.

Please note that individual residents and households cannot give permission to film and that any agreement always needs to be made with Newlon as the property freeholder.

Larger budget films often make donations or pay costs for filming and in these instances we always pass these to residents associations or into our residents' hardship fund. Where possible we will try to pass any benefits back to residents where the filming is taking place.

If you are approached about possible filming please contact our Service Centre by calling **020 7613 8080** in the first instance.

Changes to gas and electricity supply for communal areas

Following consultation with residents Newlon received a dispensation allowing us to tender for the provision of gas and electricity for communal areas for more than one year at a time. Our aim was to achieve good value for residents, reduce our environmental footprint and also to have certainty over costs to protect against price fluctuations.

Through working with Monarch, a specialist energy market broker, we have now signed a four year fixed price deal for the provision of gas and electric supply for services including heating and lighting in communal areas.

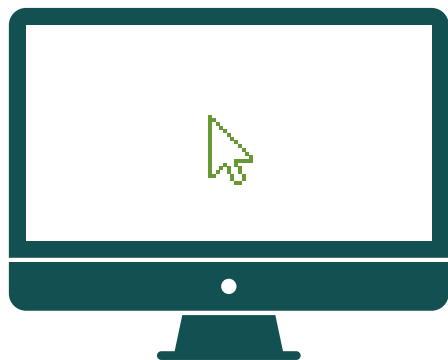
Initially this will mean an increase in service charge costs for most residents. However, this deal was based on specialist insight about energy markets over time and was signed before the recent much publicised hikes in gas prices.

Therefore over the four year period the costs will remain stable. Given the recent turmoil in energy markets this should represent good long-term value and reasonable rates for residents.

The deal we have brokered is with large-scale suppliers and therefore should be secure for the four year period. Following feedback from residents during consultation the electricity is all sourced from 100% renewable provision.

mynewlon

the quick and convenient way to access services



Our online self-service portal 'My Newlon' allows you to report issues, pay rent and download statements at a time that is convenient for you. If you live on an estate or in one of our larger blocks, you'll also be able to find information about your building, including recent estate inspections.

Residents using the portal to report and make enquiries have helped us to manage the transition from office-based to home-based working during the pandemic period, by reducing the pressure on calls or emails.

You can access My Newlon via the homepage of our website at www.newlon.org.uk or going to <https://my.newlon.org.uk>.

Airbnb – not allowed



From time to time we find out that residents have been using their homes for Airbnb or other short-term rental schemes.

We need to remind all residents, even 100% leaseholders, that you are not allowed to use your homes for this purpose and that you would be in contravention of the terms of your tenancy or your lease.

If we become aware that this is happening we will need to investigate and take appropriate enforcement action.



Decarbonisation and the Energy Performance Certificate

Jeannie Lowen
Newlon resident



We had an EPC survey recently. I decided to find out what this means and try to understand the various issues that it involves. What is a net zero target and what does it mean practically for Newlon residents?

The Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is an energy efficiency rating for buildings. It ranges on a scale of A to G, the A rating being the most energy efficient. You might have seen energy ratings on new electrical equipment, such as a fridge with a big letter A+ sticker on it. The survey provides a similar rating for buildings. The aim is that through better energy performance, this will help alleviate climate change and contribute towards the Government's Net Zero 2050 goals. From a practical point of view this will mean reducing heat loss in our homes with high levels of insulation and over time installing more efficient heating systems.

Net Zero 2050 aims to achieve a balance between the greenhouse gases – primarily carbon dioxide (CO₂) – that are going into the air and the amount of greenhouse gasses being removed from the atmosphere. If we can cut these emissions and can remove them from the atmosphere, then we will begin to lessen the effects of climate change.

To clarify what CO₂ is: some living things such as humans breathe it out and it's a by-product of burning fossil fuels. These processes increase the amount of CO₂ in the air. Ways of decreasing the amount of CO₂ in the air include the process whereby green plant life converts carbon dioxide and water into nutrients via photosynthesis. CO₂ also dissolves in sea water.

Regarding decarbonising housing stock, as yet the legislation on precisely how this is to be achieved is not in place, only a stated provision by government to achieve the net zero target by 2050.

Retrofitting homes will take time. Contractors and the relevant manufacturing companies are only in the early stages of being in a position to fulfil these requirements. However, the sooner we get started the easier it will be. When replacements are being installed it would be more efficient and more cost effective to include upgrades at the same time. For example, if a roof is being replaced, higher levels of insulation could be installed alongside. In the Netherlands, contractors have industrialised the scale of retrofitting. This saves on costs and is more efficient. Implementing these changes in the private sector is an even bigger challenge because it's not as regulated as the social housing sector.

Recent scientific research seems to indicate that our planet is warming faster than we had thought. To tackle the biodiversity and climate crisis we will need to protect at least half of the planet's lands and seas by the disturbingly impending date of 2030. We may feel small and ineffective against the immensity of this crisis. However, each individual can contribute to real change by numerous small acts which collectively can transform our societies. The EPC is one of these small steps that the housing sector is embarking on.

If we can achieve these goals we will have a more stable eco-system, a cleaner environment, warmer homes, greener spaces and better habitats for humans and wildlife.



The secret history of our streets

Enfield's great green spaces and hidden historic gems

The pandemic has reminded us all how important access to green space is for our mental and physical wellbeing.

This is also an important consideration of the social housing White Paper, which focuses on wellbeing and quality of life for residents. Although it may not always feel like it London is one of the world's greenest cities with over 35,000 acres of public parks, woodlands and gardens.

Luckily for our Enfield residents some of the most impressive of these green spaces as well as some hidden historical gems are right on their doorstep. These places are easy enough to reach for our residents in other boroughs.

Tucked away in the north of the borough is an extensive green zone stretching from Capel Manor to Forty Hall, which includes over 360 acres of green space and feels a million miles from the hustle and bustle of the city.

Capel Manor

Capel Manor is a beautiful Georgian house set amongst 30 acres of picturesque gardens. The estate features 60 colourful gardens as well as a zoo, a horticultural college, an enchanted Fairy Forest and a holly maze!

The college is London's only specialist environmental college, offering a diverse range of full and part-time courses in further and higher education for young people and adults.

In 2018 the college celebrated its 50th anniversary and won Gold at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show.

Myddelton House and gardens

Strategically situated at the midway point between Capel Manor and Forty Hall is Myddelton House and gardens.

Myddelton House was saved from disrepair with Heritage Lottery funding in 2011 and restored to tell the story of the E A Bowles, the famous botanist who lived in the house for all of his life. The house is now the HQ of the Lea Valley Authority.

The grounds are open to the public all year round and feature eight acres of stunning botanical gardens. The gardens are beautiful in each season and provide a home for a host of rare and unusual plants as well as some lost London treasures, including a small surviving part of the medieval London Bridge and the Enfield Market Cross.

Forty Hall

South of Myddelton House is Forty Hall, a Grade 1 Listed Jacobean Manor House set amidst an idyllic landscape.

Built by former Lord Mayor of London, Sir Nicholas Rainton in 1632 Forty Hall which stands at what was the boundary of London plays an important part in understanding the growth of the capital and the life and times of the merchant classes. The Hall features unique architecture and stunning period rooms.

The 273 acre estate is a rare example of an intact 18th century landscape, with an ornamental lake, medieval fishing ponds and streams, a walled garden, pleasure grounds, Georgian and Victorian flora and fauna, lakes, lawns, and meadows. The Estate is so extensive it even includes a working farm affiliated with Capel Manor College.

These three beautiful and varied green spaces are located close to each other and hold a range of activities and events for all ages throughout the year. Why not start the autumn by exploring one of these lovely locations.

You can find out more at:

www.capelmanorgardens.co.uk
www.visitleevalley.org.uk/gardens-and-heritage/myddelton-house-gardens
www.fortyhallestate.co.uk

Video doorbells and data protection your responsibilities

You may not be aware of this but if you have installed a video doorbell you could be required to comply with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Under certain circumstances you could be classed as a data controller and be responsible for ensuring any recorded data is regularly deleted. You could also be required to respond to requests from others for the data you hold.

The rules relate to 'domestic CCTV systems' which include video surveillance equipment mounted or fixed on your home. It can therefore include cameras fitted to doorbells.

If a video doorbell system is set up so it only captures images within the boundary of your private domestic property (including your garden if you have one), the data protection laws will not apply to you.

However, if it captures images of people outside the boundary of your private property - for example, in neighbouring homes or gardens, shared spaces such as communal hallways, or on the street, then the rules will apply to you.

This does not mean you are breaking the law. But it does mean that, as the CCTV user, you are a data controller. So you will need to comply with your legal obligations under the data protection laws.



One specific example of how this could affect you is that if someone believes they have been captured on your equipment they could make a request, known as a subject access request for the personal data you hold about them, including identifiable images. They can ask you verbally or in writing and you must respond within one month and give them a copy of the data.

For detailed information please visit the information commissioner's website <https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/domestic-cctv-systems-guidance-for-people-using-cctv>.

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 newsletters@newlon.org.uk

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