

# Newlon News



Being part of Newlon.  
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## Welcome to the spring newsletter

In this edition you can read the regular update from the Residents' Forum, find out more about our Trust Newlon initiative, check out our handy bitesize guide to home contents insurance and read about our new Building Safety Team.



## mynewlon residents' portal

Since its launch the 'My Newlon' digital portal has proved to be a success with over 2,500 households actively using it on a regular basis. It allows residents to book a wide range of repairs whenever it is convenient for them. The success of the portal has helped to contribute to a 4% reduction in overall contact by phone or email in the past year.

Ben Roe, Newlon resident and regular My Newlon user explains why he uses the portal. "The My Newlon Portal is a great way of reporting repairs. I can see my outstanding status, my rent and what I'm paying. It is easy to sign up to and is available 24/7. It saves me time without having to call Newlon."

To sign up to the My Newlon portal just visit the website [www.newlon.org.uk](http://www.newlon.org.uk) and click on the 'mynewlon' button which you can find on the homepage. You will need your seven digit agreement reference or tenancy number to sign up. You can find these on any rent statements from Newlon. If you are the lead tenant and you are unable to locate your seven digit agreement reference or tenancy number, please contact the Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** and one of the team will assist you in recovering it.





**Lloyd Gale-Ward, Chair**

# Residents' Forum update from the Chair

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

February's Residents' Forum was another face to face meeting at Newlon House in Tottenham Hale. Having had a large number of online meetings in the past, it's now nice to have in-person meetings again. This time we were joined by Jodie Desai, who is the Assistant Director Operational and Strategic Asset Management, Frankie Malone who is the Contract Manager for Wates, Newlon's main responsive repairs contractor, and Newlon Board member Chris Cheshire, as well as three resident observers.

Jodie reported on the important work of recruiting a new repairs team with the view of improving the service to residents. Investigations are underway to improve timeliness of repairs as well as the quality of the overall service. As a result of some early findings new procedures have been introduced along with increased communications with residents.

Questions were raised around the quality of materials used and about the backlog of cyclical works (for example the replacement of kitchens, bathrooms and windows). Jodie informed members that priority was always given to compliance works such as fire remediation over more cosmetic projects. Residents responded by stating that communications and setting expectations was crucial as in some cases people have been waiting 10 years or more for cyclical works to be carried out within their homes. Jodie told the Forum that resident champions will be involved from beginning to end of future procurement activities.

The Forum was pleased to hear from Frankie Malone and her desire to improve the Wates repair service and its relationship with residents. She described herself as being the 'contract manager that cares' and this certainly came across in her presentation to us.

Emma Preston-Dunlop, Resident Involvement Manager, is ever-present at our meetings and carries out much of the important day-to-day resident engagement work along with Judith Perry.

Emma introduced the co-produced Resident Engagement Strategy 2022-26. Our recently elected Vice Chair, Ben stated that through his work in Newlon's Service Centre, he thought the impact of the resident engagement work Emma spoke of, was noticeable.

Another Ben, the Chair of the Residents Association at Ashburton Triangle, said that he had noticed a change over the last six months, and felt there was now a partner at Newlon to engage with.

Being involved with Newlon in numerous capacities, this is something I have felt in recent times too.

Questions were raised about the increase in rents. Board member Chris Cheshire said that it's a difficult issue, and the Board understands how much of an issue it (along with cost of living crisis) is for residents, and that it had been raised multiple times at Board meetings - and the final decision was not taken lightly.

Newlon's Hardship fund was praised and discussed. It currently gives in the region of £8,000 a month, and exists to help residents when they need one off funds for urgent food shopping, school uniforms, essential items of furniture and fuel payments. It is not only for people who are in receipt of benefits or in general needs housing but could also be used to help leaseholders and intermediate renters who are in need.

If you are concerned about, or are already experiencing financial difficulties you can contact Newlon to access advice, help and support. If you need to speak to someone about your financial situation, please email [financialinclusion@newlon.org](mailto:financialinclusion@newlon.org) or call **020 7613 8080**. We are here to help. If you have any questions about aspects of resident involvement please email [getinvolved@newlon.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@newlon.org.uk).

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## Extractor fans - a cheap and effective way to help with condensation

Condensation can often be a cause of damp and mould. To help reduce condensation many Newlon homes are fitted with extractor fans, especially in kitchen and bathroom areas. Extractor fans are really useful in helping to prevent damp, mould or condensation in homes.

We realise that you may be worried about the expense of using your extractor fan during the current cost of living crisis and high energy costs. Our specialist ventilation experts have advised us that even if electricity prices were to rise as high as 60 pence per kilowatt an hour a standard extractor fan would only cost around 50 pence a month or £6 a year to run even if used for quite long periods of time each day.

Therefore you can be confident that using your extractor fan is a cheap and effective way to help deal with condensation and reduce damp and mould.

### Let us help you with damp and mould

If you are experiencing problems with damp and mould please do not hesitate to contact us.

Please call our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080**, email [customerservice@newlon.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@newlon.org.uk) or you can report problems using the **My Newlon** portal.

If you have already reported an issue to us and you are still experiencing problems you can contact our damp and mould taskforce by emailing [dmtf@newlon.org.uk](mailto:dmtf@newlon.org.uk). Our complex repairs unit will then follow up to make sure that any issues are sorted out.

# Trust Newlon - empathy training

Trust Newlon is our approach for improving your satisfaction with the services we provide and the quality of your homes.

Trust Newlon focuses on four key areas:

- Making sure we are easy to deal with.
- Delivering reliable repairs.
- Improving the places where you live.
- Maintaining stable and lasting tenancies.



## You said:

We want Newlon staff to listen to our concerns and treat us with respect, showing empathy to the situations we find ourselves in and to communicate honestly but kindly with us.

You said

We listened

## We have:

Listened to what you have said about how Newlon communicates with you during phone calls, in face to face meetings and through emails and letters. We want all our staff to show kindness and empathy towards our residents and so we have started to create the culture change and behaviour change needed to deliver this.

We are pleased to report that all our staff have recently taken part in customer service and empathy training and following on from this, we are developing an empathy toolkit which we will review with residents and revisit with staff on a regular basis. We know that the words we use and the way we act have a powerful effect on our residents and we want to use this as part of changing our relationship with you in a positive way.

## Move to Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a benefit for working age people that replaces a number of existing benefits and tax credits. It is designed to support people who have a low (or no) income with their basic living expenses and housing costs.

### Which legacy benefits is it replacing?

Over a number of years the following benefits and tax credits, also known as 'legacy benefits', will be abolished as Universal Credit replaces them:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit

### Three ways to migrate onto Universal Credit

The government expects that all existing benefit and tax credit claimants will have migrated onto Universal Credit by the end of 2024.

#### Natural migration

As well as all new benefit claimants, people already on benefits who have a change of circumstance such as starting or leaving a job, or a partner leaving or joining the household, will have to claim Universal Credit. This is known as 'natural migration'.

#### Managed migration

Existing legacy claimants who do not have a change of circumstance will soon be sent a migration notice letter and will be asked to claim Universal Credit through a process known as managed migration. You will have three months to claim Universal Credit from the date of your migration notice letter. Claimants do not need to move to Universal Credit until they have received their migration notice letter.

If you have received a migration notice letter, you can find out more information on the gov.uk website:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/tax-credits-and-some-benefits-are-ending-claim-universal-credit](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tax-credits-and-some-benefits-are-ending-claim-universal-credit)

#### Voluntary migration

Any legacy benefit claimant can move to Universal Credit at any time they choose by voluntarily starting a new Universal Credit claim. This will cause the old benefits to end and there is no going back, so care must be taken when choosing this route.

Citizens advice can offer help and support if you are thinking about moving to Universal Credit:

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/before-you-apply/moving-to-universal-credit-from-other-benefits/](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/universal-credit/before-you-apply/moving-to-universal-credit-from-other-benefits/)

# Residents' Associations

**Ben Hopkins, Chair of Ashburton Triangle Residents' Association, explains the significance of Residents' Associations and how they can help to sort out issues that are important to you.**

Over the last year the Ashburton Triangle Residents' Association has worked with Newlon on a number of initiatives which are highlighting the new focus on resident engagement.

This includes simple things like having someone from the Resident Involvement team included in our meetings, who has then managed to put important and systemic issues in front of the right people in Newlon to resolve them quickly.

Other things that we have achieved in the last year have been saving thousands of pounds for leaseholders via a bulk lease extension with the help of Newlon's Resident Sales Team, working with the Service Charge team to identify and reduce wasteful service charge items, and working with the Estates team to get overgrown trees cut back to dramatically improve daylight in residents' flats.

A Residents' Association is rarely satisfied and there is still much to do, but it now feels like we are working with Newlon to achieve our goals, which makes things a lot easier.

**Judith, Newlon's Resident Involvement Officer, offers a further explanation.**

A Residents' Association can mean less inconsistency for residents - a united front for your queries where you can meet people who may be experiencing similar issues as you and feel that you can get things done better together. You get to know your neighbours too - it's not all about sorting out stressful things.

From an organisational perspective, a Residents' Association can have more impact than multiple individuals separately reporting the same thing and having one point of reference can mean the group voice has more clarity of purpose. You don't feel alone with your issue, and you can work with your neighbours to share skill sets and information to resolve things that are important to you. It can be a positive experience to find out that there is neighbourliness that you didn't know about, that there are people who live around you that want to get together to do things for their neighbourhood.

The first step is to find out if there's enough interest where you live. We can help you to put feelers out by doing a simple survey. Some people have the interest but are intimidated by what they think it entails or think that it takes a lot of time or organisation, or that it's difficult to set up. We can take you through the whole process, step by step, at your pace.

If you're interested in starting a Residents' Association or a more informal group you can get in touch with the Resident Involvement Team by emailing [getinvolved@newlon.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@newlon.org.uk) and they will send you a copy of the Residents' Associations and Groups Handbook, which is designed to answer your questions about what is required to set up and run one. The structure can vary enormously from quite formal with elected positions and regular meetings, to much more informal with no hierarchy and meetings as and when they are needed. There are pros and cons to both:



- Residents' Associations are widely recognised, have clear structures and responsibilities, regular meetings and a committee to drive the work of the association. Roles are clear, which can be helpful if you like or need structure. On the other hand, they can take time to set up and run and are process driven and rather less spontaneous, which some people don't like. Keeping residents involved can take effort and perseverance. As a Residents' Association you may be able to access funding to run projects and keep things ticking over, which is a positive.
- Informal residents' groups do need to have a set of rules known as terms of reference, though they take less time to set up and can agree task and/or location based coordinators instead of a committee. This does mean that there is no overall leader like a Chair and a recognised structure so there is less of a hierarchy, which some people prefer. They can be freeing with more energy, or it can lack cohesion and lead to inertia, it just depends on the people involved. People tend to come and go more with an informal group. The group can later develop into a Residents' Association, if it wants to.

Either way, they are a commitment, which should reflect the wider concerns and views of your neighbourhood and should not be used for voicing personal issues or complaints. It's really important to reflect where you live if you are thinking of setting up a group. Newlon won't offer you support or endorse you if you don't give everyone the opportunity to take part when you are setting up an association or group.

A Residents' Association or group is set up and run by residents to represent the views of people living in their block, estate or street(s) and to influence how things feel, look or are run. It brings together people who share common concerns, who work together to resolve them. Collectively, you can tackle your concerns more effectively by communicating and engaging with Newlon and other organisations in the community. Local councillors and agencies such as the police can also be more receptive to the concerns of a collective voice.

# Recycle your **bicycle**

Cycling has many benefits including improving your fitness and mood as well as helping to create a greener, healthier London. We love to see our residents embracing the joys of cycling, but if you don't want your bike anymore, please don't leave it in the bike racks taking up valuable space that others could use. There are plenty of ways that you can recycle your bicycle.

## What to do if your bicycle is in good condition

If you no longer want or need your bicycle, but it's in good condition, you could pass it on to friends or family, sell or give it away for free on sites such as Gumtree or Gively or donate it to a charity (see below).

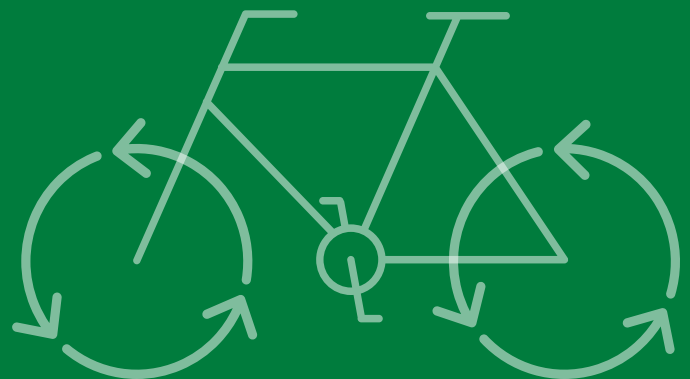
**The Bike Project** takes in secondhand bikes, refurbishes them and donates them to refugees and asylum seekers [thebikeproject.co.uk/donate-bike/](http://thebikeproject.co.uk/donate-bike/)

**Upcycle London** takes in secondhand bikes, refurbishes them and donates them to young ethnically diverse people [www.upcycledn.co.uk/donate-a-bike](http://www.upcycledn.co.uk/donate-a-bike)

**Halfords** takes in secondhand bikes, refurbishes them and donates them to rural communities in Africa [www.halfords.com/bikes/services-advice/re-cycle.html](http://www.halfords.com/bikes/services-advice/re-cycle.html)

## How to recycle a bicycle past its best

If your bike is beyond repair, you can recycle the metal parts. Many local recycling centres have a mixed metals recycling facility. You can find your nearest recycling centre by visiting [www.recyclenow.com/recycling-locator](http://www.recyclenow.com/recycling-locator)



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## Being part of Newlon

We are proud to employ residents as part of the Newlon workforce and are pleased that residents account for nearly 20% of our current team. We believe that empowering and enabling our residents to directly deliver and shape our services makes us a unique employer among housing associations.

Our residents work in roles across Newlon within a variety of departments such as the Service Centre, Finance, Lettings and Property Services. Our Service Resolution Team, who take a lead on our approach to learning from and responding to complaints, are all residents. In the past year we have significantly improved our performance in this area with a 6% reduction in stage 1 complaints and a 27% drop in complaints progressing to stage 2. We believe that being able to appreciate issues from a resident and organisational perspective has helped to deliver this improvement.

All the residents featured on the front cover are valued Newlon employees.

Ben, who works as a Service Centre Advisor, explains why working at Newlon is important to him.

"I thoroughly enjoy being a resident and working for Newlon as well. It empowers and motivates me to become a part of something very special. Belonging to such a great team and to see it from a residents' point of view, is a truly unique opportunity. I feel like I am helping to shape the future for Newlon and its residents."

# What is contents insurance?

Contents insurance is a type of home insurance. It covers loss or damage to all the things in your home that aren't part of the structure or building.

## How does contents insurance work? How is it different to buildings insurance?

Have you ever wondered what you would do if you lost your belongings and valuables to fire, theft or damage from flooding? That's what contents insurance is for - to provide financial protection if those things happen.

It covers all your personal belongings - anything not physically attached to the building - against the cost of loss or damage.

The other type is buildings insurance, which protects the structure of your house or the building you live in and its permanent fixtures. If you rent from us we are responsible for your buildings insurance. As a leaseholder or Shared Owner your buildings insurance is paid for through your service charges.

Contents insurance is optional, whereas if you have a mortgage there is a requirement to have buildings insurance. But insuring your possessions is generally a sensible idea, regardless of tenure. We strongly recommend you insure your belongings so that you are protected from a potentially expensive situation were the worst to happen.

If you're a Newlon resident and want your possessions to be insured, it's up to you to take out contents insurance. It isn't something Newlon covers.

## What does contents insurance cover?

Policies can vary in terms of what exactly they cover, but they usually include:

- clothing
- jewellery
- furniture
- electrical goods

You'll usually be covered against theft, fire and flood, but cover for accidental damage tends to be an optional extra.

'Personal possessions cover' can also be added for extra cost. This is sometimes referred to as an 'all-risks extension' and can cover items you take outside your home, including:

- laptops
- handbags
- cameras
- mobile phones/tablets
- jewellery

Most policies also have limits on the value of possessions they will cover. This will either be a single item limit (often around £1,500 per item) or a total amount for all of your valuables.



This means that you might need to pay extra for any particularly expensive items you want insured, such as jewellery and household audio visual equipment.

## What types of contents insurance are there?

There are three main types of policies available:

- 'Bedroom rated' - the insurer works out the amount of contents cover you need (the 'sum insured') based on the number of bedrooms you have.
- 'Sum insured' - you (not the insurer) have to calculate the amount of cover that you need.
- 'Unlimited sum insured' - all your contents are covered without limit, so you don't have to worry about being under-insured.

If you have a 'sum insured' policy and need to calculate the amount of cover you need, you have two main options:

One is to search online for a contents calculator, which most comparison sites offer. Or, you can list everything that you own and add up what it would cost to replace every item at today's prices.

Be aware that if you use a comparison site to shop around you might not be offered a choice - the site will ask you how much contents cover you want and will pick policies that offer this.

## Where can I buy contents insurance?

- Comparison websites - these are a good way to find cheap insurance that fits your needs.
- Direct from insurers - not all insurers are covered by comparison sites. Aviva, Zurich and Direct Line are among the big names that don't appear - and their products can only be bought directly.
- Insurance brokers - they can help you get the most suitable home insurance for your circumstances, particularly if you have complicated needs.

One provider of home contents insurance, specifically designed for social housing tenants is the **My Home Contents Insurance Scheme**. It can offer you insurance for the contents of your home including cover for items such as furniture, carpets, curtains, clothes, bedding, electrical items, jewellery, pictures and ornaments. It is provided by Thistle Insurance Services Ltd, one of the preferred suppliers of the National Housing Federation.

# The Thistle Tenant Risks Team are here to help!

We understand the importance of being able to speak to one of our customer service team. That is why we offer a call back service.

For tenants, leaseholders and residents wishing to discuss home contents insurance, the cover available and payment methods, why not request a call back.

## How can you do this?

**Visit:** [www.thistlemyhome.co.uk/contact-us](http://www.thistlemyhome.co.uk/contact-us) complete the enquiry form and wait for one of our helpful Team to call you back.

**Email:** [myhome@thistleinsurance.co.uk](mailto:myhome@thistleinsurance.co.uk) leave your contact details and someone will call you at a convenient time.



**My Home Contents Insurance – making life a little easier!**

## Introducing the Building Safety Team

The Fire Safety Act (2022) and the Building Safety Act (2022) have created a range of new requirements as part of the Government's response to the Grenfell Tower tragedy to ensure that building owners are more directly engaged in managing the safety of their buildings and residents.

These requirements vary according to the height and type of building. For example, there are more new requirements for a building over 18 metres in height compared to a two storey house.

To help meet the requirements of the legislation Newlon has created a new Building Safety Team. This team is made up of four Building Safety Officers, two Building Safety Managers and our Head of Building Safety.

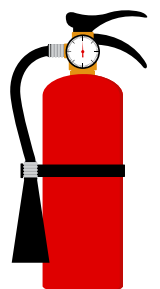
Each of our Building Safety Officers are responsible for overseeing safety for a number of our buildings over 11 metres (or at least five storeys) in height. There are more than 30 of these buildings and activities we need to carry out include regular front entrance door and communal fire door inspections, creating a building safety case, ensuring residents are aware of the fire strategy for their building, liaising with the London Fire Brigade and ensuring regular fire risk assessments are carried out.

The Building Safety Officers will be working on introducing themselves to residents at the buildings they oversee over the coming months and working with them to develop an

approach to engagement on safety for these buildings. Making sure residents have a direct say on how safety is managed and safety decisions are made for the buildings where they live is an important principle of the recent legislation and the Charter for Social Housing.

The team are also piloting some cutting edge digital technology including Twinnedit to help with our approach to building safety management. Twinnedit is an application which creates a digital twin of a building so that key partners such as the fire brigade can review a wide range of safety information virtually. This includes being able to take a virtual walk through of the building and being able to check where fire exits and safety equipment are located. It is planned that Twinnedit will also securely provide safety information for residents about the buildings where they live. We are piloting Twinnedit at one block and will update residents further once the pilot has been completed.

To coincide with the launch of the new team we are also rationalising the information about building and fire safety on our website and will be launching a new section called building safety. This will bring together information on fire safety and building safety with details about our Building Safety Team in one place.





# Wellbeing programmes at our Barnsbury Community Centre

The following wellbeing programmes for individuals and families take place at the Barnsbury Community Centre, N1 0FE. The Centre is easily accessible by public transport and the majority of activities are free or low cost and open to all Newlon residents.

- **Family art sessions** - this programme aims to build creative skills and to develop life skills such as communication, confidence and awareness. There are limited spaces so please register by calling or texting **07487 708 115** or by emailing **info@nairtfr3edom.com**. These family art sessions run twice a year for six classes at a time during May-June and Sept-Nov.
- **Exercise classes (women only)** - focusing on physical fitness, health and wellbeing of our residents, led by a professional instructor. Coffee and craft sessions are also available. Please email **juliet.vibert@gmx.com** or just turn up and register.

Day	Exercise Class	Coffee & craft sessions
Monday	10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	
Tuesday	10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Thursday	5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	

- **Islington Bangladesh Association (women only)** - is offering free exercise and fitness classes from yoga to aerobics. If you would like to take part please contact **asad@ibal.org.uk** or call **020 7713 8971**

Day	Time
Wednesday	10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Thursday	9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

- **Islington Bangladesh Association (men only)** - is offering free exercise and fitness classes including badminton. If you would like to take part please contact **asad@ibal.org.uk** or call **020 7833 2608** or **020 7833 0591**.

Day	Time
Thursday	11:00 a.m. - 13:00 p.m.

- **Tutors United** - this programme delivers confidence boosting, attainment raising online tutorials to all Newlon residents who are primary school pupils in school years 4, 5 and 6 (ages 8 - 11 years old). Online tutorials take place on Mondays during term time from 4 p.m. - 6 p.m. 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: **tutorsunited.org/register-your-child/** or email **malique.zephar@tutorsunited.org** if you have any questions.

- **Gardening** - we have continued to maintain gardening spaces at the Barnsbury Estate with help from our local volunteers managed by Islington Bangladesh Association. For more information email **asad@ibal.org.uk** or call **020 7713 8971**.



# Rent arrears support from the Income Team

**Jeannie Lowen** Newlon resident

I recently spent two days on an interview panel with two members of the Income Team; it was a rewarding experience. I had the opportunity to gain some insight into how Newlon supports residents facing financial problems. This can lead to potential rent arrear issues. I discovered that the focus is on helping residents remain in their homes.

One of the panel has worked with the Income Team at Newlon for over 20 years and during that time she believes that she has evolved as an individual. She told me that she has been on a personal journey from thinking that attaining an eviction was a positive outcome to the situation, to now finding solutions that help residents sustain a tenancy. It has been a 180-degree change. One of her colleagues observed that, "If I have to evict someone, then I've failed." And that is very much the attitude of the department.

From my short time on the panel I got the strong impression that the focus is on compassionate understanding, with the aim of helping tenants remain in their homes and in finding workable solutions.

Communication is key and if you are struggling, the first people you should reach out to are the Income Team. The officers are here to prevent situations from getting to the stage where losing the tenancy becomes necessary.

One of my neighbours shared with me the positive experience he had with an Income Officer after falling into arrears between jobs. He found them very approachable and noted that they do listen to you and try to understand the situation and help find achievable solutions. The Income Team understand how stressful it is to be in debt.

If you are having financial difficulties always let them know what is going on. Keep them updated and they can try and renegotiate rent repayments. The neighbour was surprised how helpful they were.

My neighbour stressed how important it is to talk to the Income Team. Communication is the first step en route to resolving rent arrears. We all know how easy it is to ignore issues and distract ourselves rather than face up to very difficult situations. But the earlier problems are dealt with the less painful and unmanageable they become.

Rent arrears are the biggest problem facing those seeking advice with debt. There are several places to seek help with debt such as **StepChange.org** which is a debt charity that provides free expert advice. Shelter and Citizens Advice are other services that can provide further assistance. If you are falling into arrears, the best place to start is Newlon's Income Team as they will know what help is available and offer support.

As for my fascinating couple of days on the interview panel: The successful candidate had a deep understanding of the cycle of debt, eviction and homelessness which ultimately leads to the requirement of rehousing. They were acutely aware that there is a need to prevent that cycle. This candidate will be a great fit for the team in the role as a new Income Officer.

The team do everything they can to help and are acutely aware that the cost-of-living crisis is having a substantial impact on residents. If you are having problems, the Income Team's aim is to find solutions to sustain your tenancy; they are here to help you and seek to treat everyone with fairness, understanding and equality.

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## Trouble paying your rent?

If you are struggling to pay your rent or service charges please contact us as soon as possible so we can agree a payment plan. The sooner you contact us the easier it will be for us to help you. Please contact us on **020 7613 8080** or **0800 316 7989**. You can also email **income@newlon.org.uk** or arrange to come into to our office by appointment to discuss your circumstances.

Newlon has signed up to the National Housing Federation's pledge not to evict anyone as a result of financial hardship, provided they contact us to arrange to get their payments back on track if they are in arrears. We will work with any residents struggling to pay their rent to set up manageable repayment arrangements where needed.

# Free and low cost events in your area spring 2023



Credit: James Newton

## Illuminated River

**When:** Until 2031  
**Where:** The River Thames  
**Time:** Every evening/night  
**Cost:** Free

Illuminated River is a long-term art installation transforming the Thames at night with an orchestrated series of light works that span nine bridges in central London. Its subtly moving sequences of LED light symbolically unify the Thames bridges, drawing inspiration from the spirit and history of the river and from the architectural and engineering heritage of its bridges. At 3.2 miles in length, Illuminated River spans from London to Lambeth bridges, making it the longest public art commission in the world. It was completed in April 2021 and will last at least 10 years.

[illuminatedriver.london/](http://illuminatedriver.london/)

## Hackney City Farm

**When:** Daily, closed Mondays except bank holidays  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**Where:** 1a Goldsmiths Row, London E2 8QA  
**Cost:** Free (donations welcome)

Hackney City Farm gives children and grown-ups the opportunity to get up close to a range of farmyard animals. See, smell and plant vegetables and other food plants. Learn new skills to live a healthier, happier life with a lower environmental impact.

[hacknecityfarm.co.uk/](http://hacknecityfarm.co.uk/)

## Ride London FreeCycle 2023

**When:** Sunday 28th May  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
**Where:** St Paul's Cathedral, Trafalgar Square, St. James's Park  
**Cost:** Free

As part of the Ride London festival's tenth anniversary, get on your bike and see London's top sights, free from traffic, on an eight-mile circuit which can be entered at any point. The route starts and ends on the corner of Green Park and St James's Park, though anyone is welcome to join at any point during the ride. The route includes views of Lincoln's Inn Fields, Aldwych, South Bank, St Paul's Cathedral, Buckingham Palace and Waterloo Bridge. [ridelondon.co.uk/our-rides/ridelondon-freecycle](http://ridelondon.co.uk/our-rides/ridelondon-freecycle)

## Covent Garden May Fayre and Puppet Festival

**When:** Sunday May 14th  
**Where:** St Paul's Church, Covent Garden  
**Time:** 11:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
**Cost:** Free

The Covent Garden May Fayre & Puppet Festival, which has been running since 1976, is a celebration of the puppet Mr. Punch, who has been entertaining Londoners since the 17th century. Punch and Judy will be joined by other wooden (and human) friends, including a brass band procession, workshops, clowns, folk music and refreshments. The event begins with a neighbourhood procession at 11:00 a.m. followed by a church service led by Mr. Punch at noon and more performances from 12.30 p.m. onwards. [alternativearts.org.uk/events/covent-garden-may-fayre-puppet-festival](http://alternativearts.org.uk/events/covent-garden-may-fayre-puppet-festival)

## Black-owned Hackney night market

**When:** April 28th - 30th, May 26th - 27th, June 23rd - 25th, July 28th - 30th, August 25th - 26th, September 15th - 17th, October 5th - 8th  
**Time:** Fridays 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.  
Saturdays and Sundays 12 noon - 6:00 p.m.  
**Where:** Bohemia Place Market, Bohemia Place, Hackney Central, E8 1DU  
**Cost:** Free to visit

Visit the Black-owned Hackney night market on various dates throughout the spring and summer for the best vegan and non-vegan eats in town, including mouth-watering street food from London's top Black-owned vendors. You'll also find a wide range of sustainably-made clothing, gifts, skincare products and much more from talented Black artisans. There'll be refreshing cocktails, rum punch, craft beer, and many more delicious beverages to enjoy whilst listening to music from DJs inside & outside The Hackney Social.

[bohemiaplacemarket.com/welcome](http://bohemiaplacemarket.com/welcome)

## Minigolf at Canary Wharf

**When:** Every day until 30th September  
**Time:** 12 noon - 6:00 p.m.  
**Where:** Canary Wharf, London  
**Cost:** Free

Artists Craig Redman & Karl Maier, famous for their fun, bold and colourful designs, will be livening up Montgomery Square with their funky, design-led minigolf course featuring a neon orange jump ramp, pink and yellow chequered bridge and pop art inspired dotted obstacles. It's free to play and works on a first come, first served basis, so you may have to queue if it's busy.

[canarywharf.com/whats-on/minigolf](http://canarywharf.com/whats-on/minigolf)

## Summer season at Shakespeare's Globe 2023

**When:** Various dates from April 27th - October 29th  
**Time:** Various  
**Where:** Shakespeare's Globe, 21 New Globe Walk, London SE1 9DT  
**Cost:** From £5

Shakespeare's Globe is without fail one of the cultural highlights of summer in London. It's a rare chance to experience Shakespearean performances out in the open, as they were intended to be seen. The raucous audience atmosphere of olden days is encouraged, particularly at The Midnight Matinees, making for a night of truly immersive theatre. This season includes some of Shakespeare's most iconic works, including A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Comedy of Errors and As You Like It.

[www.shakespearesglobe.com/](http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/)



# Secret History

## Newlon at 55

# 55

On February 13th 2023, Newlon celebrated its 55th birthday. Here you can read some background about what has changed over that period, both for us and for the area where we began.

### Our story

Back in Hackney in 1968, things weren't that different than today. There was a chronic shortage of affordable housing, massive waiting lists and the widespread spectre of homelessness. Action needed to be taken. Philip Blairman and colleagues from the New London Synagogue decided to set up a housing association to help local people find decent and affordable homes.

Newlon was first conceived in 1967 and formally came into being as an Industrial and Provident Society on 13th February 1968. We bought our first two homes in Amhurst Road and Evering Road in Hackney in August 1968. They were refurbished and converted into flats to let at affordable rents and the first residents had moved in by December 1968. Both homes were bought for a total of £10,500. By contrast if the house in Evering Road was sold today it would sell for over £2 million.

Newlon quickly expanded, moving to our first offices at 1 Stamford Hill and appointing a full-time manager. Fast forward to 2023 and we now have over 200 employees with nearly 20% of those being residents. We believe that having such a high proportion of staff as residents makes us a unique employer among housing associations.

Today we have around 8,350 homes across north and east London. This includes 700 homes with our care and support partner Outward, who work with more than 1,000 adults and employ over 400 people.

In recent years, Newlon has also provided a significant amount of Shared Ownership homes, helping people take their first step to home ownership.

We have delivered ground-breaking regeneration schemes at Arsenal and Hale Village and restored an iconic Edwardian Town Hall in Tottenham. Recently we have concluded an extensive consultation with Barnsbury residents and the local community on the transformation of the 650 homes on the Barnsbury Estate. The transformation will see the provision of greener, energy efficient homes, a once in a generation opportunity to resolve overcrowding, 135 new affordable homes, new green space and world class outdoor exercise facilities.

A recent success has been the introduction of our 'My Newlon' digital portal with 2,500 households actively using it since its launch. It has enabled residents to book repairs, pay rent and update their details whenever it is convenient to them.

With resident engagement now more important than ever, we are pleased that the recently launched Residents' Think Tank has proved to be an innovative way for residents to get involved with decisions that will affect them. We have more than 200 residents that we can call upon from light touch involvement to being heavily involved at a strategic level.

### So what is Hackney's housing situation like in 2023?

55 years after we were founded, the average price to buy a property in Hackney is over £700,000, with average private rents over £2,800 a month, leaving the area unaffordable for many.

These prices reinforce the need for more affordable housing in London. This is where housing associations like Newlon continue to play a key role.



Amhurst Road



Evering Road

# Nutley Edge **the perfect place for a peaceful break**

Nutley Edge is a beautiful rural property overlooking the stunning landscape of the Ashdown Forest, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It offers some of the most picturesque holiday cottages in East Sussex.

Originally a working farm, the buildings were converted into self-catering holiday cottages in 2011 and opened to the public soon after. Nutley Edge is the perfect destination for couples, families or groups looking to 'get away from it all' and enjoy the peace and quiet of the East Sussex countryside. It's located just an hour from London by train and is easy to get to by car.

Nutley Edge belongs to Outward, a charity that supports vulnerable people in north and east London, and is part of the Newlon Group. All profits from Nutley Edge go to providing better care and support for Outward's residents, so your stay will be benefiting some of London's most vulnerable people.

You can pick from twelve well equipped cottages that sleep up to four people, and you also have the option of staying in a 17th century farmhouse, which sleeps up to eight. Some of the cottages have wheelchair access and all are pet friendly.

Alternatively, you may wish to stay in one of Nutley Edge's two new glamping tents. Each four metre bell tent is furnished to provide you with a cosy, slightly luxurious glamping experience. Situated in the lower paddock, the glamping area is fenced off for your privacy with views facing over our ancient gill wood and wildlife pond. Kitted out with a double bed and two single camping mats with sleeping bags, as well as compostable toilet, shared kitchen area and individual fire pits, they comfortably sleep four people.



A Nutley Edge visitor explains the positive impact of spending some time there:

"We visited Nutley Edge because we wanted a relaxing and peaceful getaway. It was easy to get to by car and I was very impressed with the spacious cottage that we stayed in. It was well equipped for a self-catering stay, spotless and everything was in perfect working order.

We loved the beautiful views and the quiet of the countryside that surrounded us. Whilst we were there, we went for leisurely walks and were lucky enough to see some lambs being born. Every evening we enjoyed a barbeque in our private outdoor area, whilst again enjoying the spectacular views directly from our cottage. We left Nutley Edge feeling refreshed and energised. For us it was important that we made time to escape city life and enjoy what the countryside had to offer. We would definitely return and with good rates for Newlon residents, it makes it very affordable too."

Nutley Edge can also cater for larger groups. So if you are celebrating a birthday or wedding anniversary and are looking for a venue with large capacity then it could be ideal. There are good rates for Newlon residents.

To learn more about Nutley Edge and book your stay please visit their website at [www.nutleyedge.org.uk](http://www.nutleyedge.org.uk) or call **01825 712 377**.

## Visiting our Head Office

Newlon has a hybrid working approach which means that the majority of staff members are spending part of the week working from home and part of the time in the office.

Please only visit the Head Office if you have an appointment. It means that the member of staff you need to see will be in the office on that day rather than working from home.

Please do not come to Newlon House unless you have a pre-arranged appointment.

If you are due to attend an in-person event at our office, please reschedule if you develop any cold, flu or COVID symptoms. We can arrange to carry out appointments through video conferencing such as Zoom.

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:newsletters@newlon.org.uk).

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