

# Newlon News



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## Welcome to the summer newsletter

In this edition you can read the regular update from the Residents' Forum and the latest information about our Trust Newlon initiative. You can also check out our article on recycling and find out the results of our latest mystery shopping exercise.

## Neighbourly concern

If you have elderly or vulnerable neighbours please keep an eye out for them. It is very upsetting when people become so isolated that no one notices when they disappear. There have even been some cases in the news recently about people only being discovered months or even years after they have passed away. If you have any concerns about a neighbour you have not seen for a while please contact our Service Centre by emailing [customerservice@newlon.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@newlon.org.uk) (please ensure you title your email 'welfare concerns') or by phoning **020 7613 8080** and let us know the following information:

- **Details of neighbour** - address, name of neighbour if known, whether they live alone, go out regularly etc.
- **Concern** - when was the last time you saw them? How did they appear? Do they usually go away for long periods of time? Have they had more or less visitors?



**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.

June's Residents' Forum was a hybrid meeting from Newlon House in Hale Village. We were joined by the Housing Director - Sarah Shaw, Assistant Director People - Heather Bryson, Assistant Director of Housing - Matt Phillips, Repairs Manager - Hussein Ali and Head of Reactive and Planned Works - Chris Greatorex. Longstanding Board member Fred Angole, who is Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee also attended, as did Resident Involvement Manager - Emma Preston-Dunlop.

After agreeing the minutes of the previous meeting, Chris gave the forum an update on the planned works for 2023/24. Section 20 Notices (a notice of intention to carry out works) have been issued for 13 of Newlon's blocks. These works relate to internal decorations and flooring renewals. Works are due to start in August 2023. A tender process for nearly £4 million is underway to replace kitchens and bathrooms, these works are due to commence in July 2023. Going forward the Newlon team are also looking at extending the range of kitchen and bathroom options available to residents.

Hussein Ali gave a data-led update on responsive repairs. He explained that the team look for trends in the demand of repairs and also monitor the types of repairs as well as the frequency. Analysing this information can highlight if or when an alternative remedy is needed, rather than simply carrying out the same fix as before. He also shared some impressive work that the team have carried out which have reduced weekly contractor cancellations by nearly 80%. Improvements like this will go a long way in improving repairs satisfaction.

Emma Preston-Dunlop, informed us that there is a contracts register that collates whether residents have been involved, and in what capacity with the awarding of resident facing

services. Teams are also measuring the impact of the involvement - this approach will go some way in improving the quality of services residents pay for and receive.

The latest Mystery Shopper results were the lowest in recent months. Matt spoke about how improving these results and the general services residents receive, are a priority for his team. He explained that some of the performance issues were related to, but not exclusive to, staff shortages. He said that work has taken place to fill vacant roles and that we have appointed a new Head of Customer Service to help improve performance.

Fred Angole shared his 30 years of experience in housing and of his pride in being a Newlon Board member along with being Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. He was complimentary of the Forum meeting and of the quality of probing questions from residents.

Heather presented Reflections, Newlon's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) framework, which aims to ensure policies, procedures and practices reflect and promote good practice throughout the organisation for its staff and the services provided to residents. It was encouraging to see how diverse Newlon is and how it complements the residents it serves.

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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## Rent increases for October 2023

This year, due to increasing inflation and an increase in the consumer price index the government has made the decision to cap rent increases at 7% for social housing residents. This measure was put in place to address the challenges faced by renters and to provide some reassurance in these financially uncertain times. If you have a social rent tenancy with us, you will be used to your rent changing in October each year. This October 2023

your rent will not go up by 11% based on the consumer price index as in the past. The increase will not exceed 7%.

If you are on Housing Benefit or Universal Credit it is likely that your benefits will be reassessed and the increased amount will also be covered by your benefit. If you have any concerns or wish to discuss this change please email [income@newlon.org.uk](mailto:income@newlon.org.uk).

# Trust Newlon update



Trust Newlon is our approach for improving satisfaction with the services we provide and the quality of your homes. It was launched in July 2022.

Our Trust Newlon priorities are:

- Delivering reliable repairs.
- Being easy to deal with.
- Improving the places where you live.
- Supporting stable and lasting tenancies.

We are working very hard to deliver on these priorities. This has included introducing a new specialist team to manage complex repairs and issues with damp and mould and an improved approach to dealing with anti social-behaviour (ASB) hotspots.

Recent initiatives have included work by our Enforcement, Estates and Building Services teams to provide new security doors at a number of our homes where above average levels of ASB have been reported.

Providing new security doors in these areas should help to reduce incidents of ASB and in turn help maintain the standard of communal areas and reduce the numbers of communal repairs needed.

The good news is that after the first year of Trust Newlon we are seeing some green shoots of improvement:

**63%** Satisfaction with the repairs service has increased from 57% to 63% over the last year.

**53%** Overall satisfaction with our services has increased from 48% to 53%.

**7.1%** The number of calls and emails to our Service Centre has reduced by 7.1%. This indicates that residents are finding us easier to deal with and that we are getting more things right first time, meaning you need to contact us less often.

**60%** The percentage of residents saying they find Newlon easy to deal with has increased from 54% to 60% over the last year.

**63%** Satisfaction that communal areas are well maintained has increased from 54% to 63%.

**70%** Use of the My Newlon residents' portal has increased by more than 70% over the past year.

**We continue to work hard on improving services so that our residents feel they can trust us to get things done. It is good news that after a year of Trust Newlon we are moving in the right direction.**

## Trust Newlon's commitment squares

Earlier in the year, all Newlon staff took part in customer service and empathy training. This was to address the **'being easy to deal with'** Trust Newlon objective and more specifically to ensure that all Newlon staff are **'delivering all services with respect, warmth and empathy'**.

Following on from this, every staff member made a personal commitment to improve the customer service they provide. Each commitment was placed onto a commitment square and we now have 155 colourful commitment squares displayed around the office.

They are there to inspire, remind and encourage our staff that they need to be **'Easy to deal with'** and that it is important to **'Deliver all services with respect, warmth and empathy'**. We want to continue to build the trust between ourselves and our residents.

The Newlon staff on the front cover are proudly showing some of the commitments that were made.



# Resident Involvement strands: mystery shopping

## What is mystery shopping?

Mystery shopping is a technique commonly used by retailers, market research and consumer watchdogs to measure the quality of customer service in real life (known as 'bricks and mortar') environments and to collect information about products and service delivery.

## Using it in housing - how does it work?

Most people have heard of the concept of mystery shopping but imagine it is people going into shops and testing out levels of customer service. In a housing context it isn't very different, and it is used to measure specific things. We plan realistic scenarios, recruit residents to contact us via email or telephone and test the responsiveness of different departments. We test our staff three times a year. All Mystery Shoppers are anonymous and our staff don't know when they are going to be tested.

This responsiveness isn't just about how quickly you get back to someone, although we do have our 2-ten standard to meet, which means we should provide an acknowledgement within two working days and a full response within 10 working days.

## Mystery shopping and Trust Newlon

We launched the Trust Newlon initiative in July 2022, with one of the key project streams being to rebuild trust with our residents. As a result, we thoroughly overhauled and reviewed the questions and scenarios. We wanted to provide a baseline for deliverables key to Trust Newlon, asking our Mystery Shoppers to review responses to see if they offered respect, warmth and empathy. This was alongside our existing questions around professionalism and whether residents felt valued



## How does Newlon learn from mystery shopping?

We use a very simple rating system - gold, silver and bronze.

-  **Gold:** Fully meets the 2-ten standard. A full response provided within 2 working days, or acknowledgement within 2 working days, followed by a full response within 10 working days.
-  **Silver:** Partially meets the 2-ten standard. Although no acknowledgement within initial 2 working days, a full response within 10 working days.
-  **Bronze:** Does not meet the 2-ten standard. Personal acknowledgement within 2 working days but no full response within 10 working days. Late acknowledgement or full response outside of 10 working days.
-  **No reply:** Does not meet the 2-ten standard.

Using this rating system means that we can track which departments are maintaining a good track record and which need encouragement and possibly intervention to do better. It allows staff to see where a weakness, such as a shared email box, can be addressed by embracing a culture of ownership.

Managers receive a report on their individual departments' performance, Senior Managers receive a full report, and reports are sent to the Residents' Forum and Residents' Service Committee. In a nutshell, this type of scrutiny undertaken by residents is taken seriously by Newlon; when it comes to learning from past performance 'mystery shopping' matters.

In our latest exercise, 21 Mystery Shoppers took part in 56 email enquiries and six telephone enquiries. We achieved a 79% gold level but are aiming for 84% gold level at the next Mystery shop. Mystery Shoppers largely commented on how professional their interactions were with staff, and how respected they felt.

If you're interested in becoming a Mystery Shopper you can get more information by contacting Emma or Judith on [getinvolved@newlon.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@newlon.org.uk).

# mynewlon

## our successful online self-service portal



Since its launch the 'My Newlon' digital portal has proved to be a real success. As well as being recognised by the Digital Innovation Awards, it's also being actively used by many Newlon households on a regular basis. It's been developed to be easy to use with a straight forward sign in process and clear guidance when filling in the sections.

You can use it to do the following things at a time that is convenient to you:

1. Pay rent.
2. Check rent statements.
3. Find out about estate inspections (if you live on an estate or in a larger block).
4. Report anti-social behaviour issues.
5. Report routine repairs.
6. Book appointments directly with Newlon contractors.
7. Choose a time slot to suit you for repairs.
8. Check how jobs are progressing.
9. Access newsletters and annual reports.
10. Update your details.

If you want to become the next My Newlon portal user, just visit the website [www.newlon.org.uk](http://www.newlon.org.uk) and click on the 'mynewlon' button or go straight to [my.newlon.org.uk/signin](http://my.newlon.org.uk/signin).

You will need your seven digit agreement reference or tenancy number to sign up. You can find these on any rent statements or correspondence from Newlon. If you are the lead tenant and you are unable to locate any Newlon documents that contain your seven digit agreement reference or tenancy number, please contact the Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** and one of the team will assist in recovering it for you.

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## Spotlight on **noise complaints**

### You said:

We want to know what Newlon can do to about noise concerns that seems loud and intrusive but don't reach the statutory levels of noise nuisance to class them as anti-social behaviour (ASB).



### We have:

Listened to what you have said about noise and how it can sometimes seem loud and intrusive whilst you are going about your everyday lives but yet it doesn't reach the statutory levels of noise nuisance to be classed as ASB.

The recently published Housing Ombudsman's report called "Spotlight on noise complaints: Time to be heard" also includes recommendations for improving the way social landlords respond to reports of noise that do not reach the statutory levels of noise nuisance.

In response, we have developed a Noise Policy which focuses on treating noise as a general concern in the first instance and then as ASB if it turns out to be above the statutory noise level.

Many of the incidents that we receive about noise focus on household noise transference and so we have looked at what we can do as your landlord to reduce and manage this.

### Here are some of the things that we can do:

- Encourage residents to use diary sheets to understand whether the noise that they are reporting is ASB or household noise.
- Encourage residents to use The Noise App to provide noise recordings.
- Visit the resident where it is suggested the noise is coming from.
- Visit a property to make sure the appropriate flooring has been used so that there is adequate insulation to stop household noise transference.
- Request that rugs are used over laminate flooring.
- Install noise reducing mats under washing machines.
- Initiate mediation between neighbours.

If you wish to report a noise concern, please contact us by calling **020 7613 8080** or by emailing [customerservice@newlon.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@newlon.org.uk).

Please find the link to the Housing Ombudsman's report "Spotlight on noise complaints: Time to be heard" [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/about-us/corporate-information/publications/spotlight-on-reports/spotlight-on-noise-complaints/](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/about-us/corporate-information/publications/spotlight-on-reports/spotlight-on-noise-complaints/)

# Policy changes



## Noise Policy

This is a new stand-alone policy that we introduced following the Ombudsman's report on noise complaints. The report provided clear guidance on the need to have a new approach to managing noise. Our approach was previously to label any reports of noise as anti-social behaviour (ASB) but now the majority of noise issues are treated as noise and not ASB in the first instance.



## Parking Policy

We will now remove parking permits from those where there is evidence of ASB around their use of the car parking area.



## Pets Policy

Dogs are not to be left for more than four hours (if permission has been given to keep a dog) and other pets should not be left for more than 24 hours.



## Assignments Policy

The person being assigned a tenancy should not have an interest in another property. We have come across a number of applicants for succession and assignment who own another property.



## Void's Policy

All laminate flooring that has not been installed by Newlon in a purpose built block should be removed where the flooring is directly over another flat. Where the laminate is in good condition and it is not over another property then it can be gifted to the incoming resident.

## Fire safety

**The safety of our residents is paramount to us. Please see the latest guidance and advice regarding e-scooters, barbecues (BBQs) and candles.**

### E-scooters

You may have seen in the news, the increasing amount of fires caused by e-scooters and e-bikes as a result of the batteries overheating. The majority of these fires have happened in homes and they are often caused when charging batteries but sometimes fires from e-bikes and e-scooters can also occur when the batteries become hot and they are still being used.

Please do not attempt to modify or tamper with the battery and always follow the manufacturer's instructions when charging them. To reduce the risk of batteries overheating, allow them to cool down before attempting to re-charge. Batteries should also always be charged on hard flat surfaces where heat can disappear. Batteries can also pose a risk if they have been damaged, so try to ensure they are not getting knocked around while in use or while being carried. You should never leave the battery charging unattended or charge it while you are asleep. You should unplug your charger once it's finished charging and always use the correct charger for your batteries and buy any replacements from a reputable seller.

In 2021 Transport for London (TfL) banned e-scooters from London's transport network. This was due to a number of fires on the network involving these vehicles.

### BBQs

BBQs on balconies are a major fire risk and are not allowed.

Please be aware that BBQs can stay hot for hours, so be really careful moving them. They also give off carbon monoxide fumes for several hours after they go out, so don't bring them indoors with you.

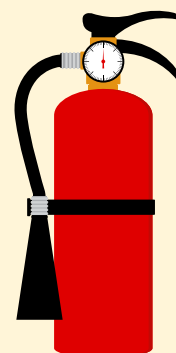
### Candles and naked flames

Some fires are started by candles, incense and oil burners. Please make sure these are safely put out before leaving the room, especially at night when there is a risk you could fall asleep.

Place these items on a flat, fire-resistant, stable surface away from flammable items like curtains, furniture and clothes. Where possible purchase LED, battery-operated candles as these will reduce the risk of fire starting.

### Updated website information on safety in the home and building safety

We have recently updated our online information about safety in the home on our website. Please visit [www.newlon.org.uk/safety](http://www.newlon.org.uk/safety) for more information.



# Housing fraud – subletting and Airbnb

We are acutely aware that there is a housing shortage in the areas that we have homes and so we want to make sure that our homes are occupied by genuine tenants with a right to be there. We know that Islington has over 15,000 people waiting to be housed, Haringey has over 11,000 and Tower Hamlets over 21,000!

That's why we want to put an end to unauthorised subletting. Unauthorised subletting, which is a criminal offence, is when a tenant rents all of their property to other people without permission. One way of subletting unlawfully is when tenants use Airbnb to rent out their Newlon home. People found guilty of subletting can face up to two years imprisonment along with a fine. But unauthorised subletting is not just a crime, it also prevents people in genuine need from enjoying a good quality home.

## How you can help

If you know or suspect that a Newlon property is occupied by someone other than the genuine tenant, please contact us so that our staff can investigate. All information you provide will be treated in confidence.

If you believe you are renting your property from someone other than Newlon, you must also contact us immediately.

Please be vigilant and if you suspect that subletting is happening in a Newlon home please email [asb@newlon.org.uk](mailto:asb@newlon.org.uk) to report it. The information you provide will be treated in the strictest of confidence.



# Step Forward

Newlon's Step Forward programme offers free career advice and guidance, access to training courses and employment opportunities.

Residents in all tenancies (Social Rent, Intermediate Rent, Shared Ownership and leaseholders) and at all levels of skill and experience can receive tailored support to help create and/or improve their CV, job application and interview skills.

## Spotlight on... job interviews and preparation

Preparing for interviews can greatly increase your chances of success. Here are some key steps to help you prepare effectively:

**Research the company:** Gain a thorough understanding of the company you're being interviewed by. Explore their website, mission, values, products/services, recent news, and any other relevant information.

**Understand the job role:** Review the job description in detail and identify the key skills, qualifications, and responsibilities required for the position. Think about how your own experience, skills, and achievements align with those requirements.

**Know yourself:** Reflect on your own professional experience, skills, strengths, and weaknesses. Prepare examples of your accomplishments, challenges you've overcome, and instances where you demonstrated key skills.

**Practice common interview questions:** Familiarise yourself with common interview questions and practice answering them aloud. This will help you articulate your thoughts clearly and concisely.

**Prepare questions to ask:** Interviews often conclude with the interviewer asking if you have any questions. Prepare a list of thoughtful questions as this shows your interest in the position and provides an opportunity to gather important information.

**Dress professionally:** Choose appropriate clothing that aligns with the company culture. Dressing professionally helps create a positive impression and demonstrates your seriousness about the opportunity.

**Conduct mock interviews:** Enlist the help of a friend or family member to conduct mock interviews. Practice answering a variety of questions and receive feedback on your responses, body language, and overall presentation.

**Plan logistics:** Plan your journey in advance if the interview is in-person, ensuring you know the exact location and have any necessary documents or materials ready. If it's a virtual interview, ensure you have a stable internet connection, a quiet environment, and any required software or video conferencing platforms set up.

If you would like more information about our Step Forward programme, please contact our Information, Advice and Guidance Officer by emailing [financialinclusion@newlon.org.uk](mailto:financialinclusion@newlon.org.uk) or call **07879 555 565**.





# Recycling or wish-cycling

**By Jeannie Lowen, Newlon resident**

Confusion! My usual response when I go to our communal pink recycling bin. I'm not alone in this. What items do I see in there? Greasy pizza boxes, fish and chips bags, Nando's packaging and takeaways that often have bits of pizza, fish, chicken still inside! None of these items such as greasy packaging and food waste can be recycled.

Quite a lot of recycling is actually what is referred to as wish-cycling; things we would like or think can be recycled but can't be, which are placed in domestic recycling bins. Crisp packets, face masks, clothing, toys, small electrical items and a shower curtain? I even found half a packet of biscuits in there... I have no idea why! Let's be honest - recycling is a mess and leaves everyone bewildered.

My aim in tackling this subject is to give an optimistic overview of the potential of domestic recycling. If only we were better informed, we could encourage everyone to place the appropriate waste in the communal recycling bins, then all could be well. Unfortunately, there is little clarity around what can be recycled and what can't. Besides the various confusing recycling labels, each council has its own requirements. Recycling is not standardised and therefore it's made more complex.

Surprisingly, recyclable polystyrene, which is often left in consumer packaging, can't be recycled with our domestic collections. I didn't know wet cardboard can't be recycled, lots of people believe pizza boxes can, but they can't as they invariably have grease on them. Recycling can easily be contaminated by food and grease residue left on or in packaging and by non-recyclable waste such as dirty nappies and clothing items.

Recycle-more noted that "many people believe that dirty packaging isn't an issue and assume that their recycling is always collected, sorted, cleansed, and processed" at the recycling plant. The reality is that high levels of contamination on recyclable packaging, such as food residue, can mean that entire loads of recycling is sent to landfill or burnt.

It would be helpful to have a clear picture of what can and can't be put in the recycling bin so that we could discourage wish-cycling.

Tins, jars and plastic food containers should be washed. This is an easy thing to do with the washing up. We should also remove aluminium foil which can, if separated, be recycled and throw away the film from the plastic food containers as this film is not recyclable. It's easy to see why contamination of communal recycling is a huge issue!

One of the best materials to recycle are tins and metal lids - metal is one of the few things that is infinitely recyclable. It takes less energy to recycle metal than it does to make it from ore. However, I was disappointed to discover that plastic can only be recycled once or twice. Plastic is a low-grade recyclable material. This is shocking, as our society is so reliant on plastic products and plastic packaging and is probably one of the main components of our domestic waste.

One thing we could do as individuals is try to buy fruit and veg loose and not pre-packed, along with reusing plastic bags. Although, change really needs to be implemented further up the chain of production.

The present state of recycling might be confusing but there are legislative moves to improve matters. Companies need to reduce packaging and the production of wasteful materials. There is a call for the Right to Repair which would decrease the needless disposal of many technological items. Community projects sometimes run workshops which help people with repairs. I expect this to increase in future.

I am optimistic that as society becomes more aware, positive change will come.



# Free and low cost activities in your area



## Walthamstow-on-Sea: Beach Vibes

**When:** July 18th - 3rd September

**Time:** Various

**Where:** Big Penny Social, 1 Priestly Way, London, E17 6AL

**Cost:** Free - £2

Don't fancy sitting in traffic for hours, or crammed into a train with no air-conditioning?

Don't worry, a day at the beach is closer (and cheaper) than you think; at Big Penny Social you can get full classic British seaside resort vibes without leaving London.

Welcome to Walthamstow-on-Sea. You can bask in the sun, sit in a deckchair and twiddle your toes in the sand, sip on a cold beer or frozen cocktail, enjoy a classic 99 ice cream, or sit down with some fish and chips on the beach - all seagull-free and on your doorstep.

[www.bigpennysocial.co.uk/whats-on/beach-vibes](http://www.bigpennysocial.co.uk/whats-on/beach-vibes)

## In The Neighbourhood Festival

**When:** August 20th - 23rd

**Time:** Various

**Where:** Victoria Park, Grove Rd, London E3 5TB

**Cost:** Free

Get an early start to the Bank Holiday weekend with this four-day freebie in Victoria Park.

In collaboration with Tower Hamlets Council, the local community, businesses, organisations and suppliers, In the Neighbourhood will host an exciting programme of free activities and entertainment.

There's street food, free outdoor cinema, live music, theatre, family fun, sports activities and loads more. Check out their website for updates.

[www.allpointseastfestival.com/in-the-neighbourhood/](http://www.allpointseastfestival.com/in-the-neighbourhood/)

## Summer Screens

**When:** Daily until 24th August

**Time:** Various

**Where:** Canada Square Park & Cabot Square, Canary Wharf, London, E14

**Cost:** Free

Bring a blanket and picnic (or grab something from one of the local shops and restaurants) and settle down to watch a movie or your favourite sporting event at Summer Screens, Canary Wharf. There are two screens, one in Canada Square Park and one in Cabot Square.

For more details, check out the screening listings on the website.

[www.canarywharf.com/whats-on/summer-screens/](http://www.canarywharf.com/whats-on/summer-screens/)

## The Great River Race

**When:** 16th September

**Time:** 10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

**Where:** River Thames London Docklands to Richmond

**Cost:** Free

Not to be confused with the 'great race' between Oxford and Cambridge rowing crews. This traditional boat race sees a great flotilla of oar-powered craft take to the Thames for a semi-competitive marathon race from London Docklands to Richmond.

Any bridge upstream from the Docklands will afford a good view of the competing boats. Most of the craft will proceed upstream at a leisurely pace, so there may be hours between the leaders and the stragglers.

For a list of the best viewing spots, check the official site.

[www.greatriverrace.org.uk/](http://www.greatriverrace.org.uk/)

This is just part of a huge programme of events this September from the Totally Thames Festival. Check out the official site for more details

[www.thamesfestivaltrust.org/artistic-programme/totally-thames/](http://www.thamesfestivaltrust.org/artistic-programme/totally-thames/)

## London Fields Lido

**When:** Everyday

**Time:** 6:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**Where:** London Fields West Side, Hackney, London, E8 3EU

**Cost:** From £1.50 - £5.70

Outdoor swimming can be a chilly affair, but London Fields Lido hits the jackpot by being heated to a very clement 25°C all year round. It boasts a 50 metre long pool that is floodlit for late sessions and additional facilities such as a café as well as a large sundeck and sunbathing area. It is one of London's best known and busiest outdoor pools and slots fill up quickly. Find out more and book in advance by visiting their website.

[www.better.org.uk/leisure-centre/london/hackney/london-fields-lido](http://www.better.org.uk/leisure-centre/london/hackney/london-fields-lido)



# Community wellbeing activities

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 September-November.
- **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**.

- **Exercise classes (women only)** - focusing on the 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.

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** - residents who are interested in maintaining the flower beds can register their interest by contacting the Barnsbury Office on **020 7833 2525**. Once residents have received confirmation from the office, they can make use the flowerbeds but will need to provide their own seeds and tools.

# The secret history of our streets

## Barnard Park, Islington

Newlon Housing Trust provides over 8,300 homes across north and east London, ranging from new build high rise homes to 18th century street properties. Many of our properties, or the areas where they are built, have fascinating histories.



Barnard Park 1965 - Friends of Barnard Park

The Barnsbury Estate in Islington, where we have 600 homes, borders Barnard Park. Here we take a look at its history and its claim to be the birthplace of one of the most famous cricket clubs in the world.

### History

Barnard Park is one of Islington's largest green spaces covering nine acres of land and is a valuable resource for local residents.

Before 1800 and like much of Islington, the area now occupied by Barnard Park was originally pastures. It was a place for the inhabitants of London to come for a day out and enjoy the fresh air and wide open spaces.

Housing was eventually built on and around the site of the current Barnard Park area including the 1936 red brick built Barnsbury Estate (Old Barnsbury as we now know it).

During the Second World War, particularly in the Blitz era of 1940/1941, much of the north part of the current Barnard Park area was bombed due to its close proximity to Kings Cross Station - a strategic target for the Nazi's. Many homes were destroyed and lives were lost.

Following on from this, the site remained an area of rubble, damaged buildings and temporary

prefabricated houses until clearance began more than twenty years later in the late 1960s.

The park was developed in two stages. In 1967, the north section was opened to the public in what was first known as Barnsbury Park.

Then in 1975 the south section was opened to complete the present nine acre site. This new extended section contained a paddling pool as well as an amphitheatre.

Barnsbury Park was quickly renamed Barnard Park in a tribute to the former mayor and long serving Councillor George Barnard, who dedicated much of his life to improving Islington's recreational facilities.

### Cricket

The Barnard Park area also claims to be associated with the birthplace of one of the most significant cricket clubs in the world - the Marylebone Cricket Club.

An area of the present Barnard Park used to be called White Conduit Field and this was briefly the home of the White Conduit Club (WCC), a gentleman's cricketing club. During the 1780s the bowler, Thomas Lord, took the WCC to new grounds in Marylebone and gave it a new name, the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC).

In 1788 the MCC laid down a code of laws for cricket, requiring the wickets to be pitched 22 yards apart and detailing how players could be given out. Its laws were adopted throughout the game and the club today remains the custodian and arbiter of laws relating to cricket around the world. In 1814 the MCC moved up the road to a new rural ground in St John's Wood, now named Lord's, which remains its home to this day.

### The future of Barnard Park

The park is now home to an adventure playground, additional children's playground with a water play feature and a large Redgra pitch (think clay and gravel) for football, softball and other sports. It is also a popular venue for training and running.

An application for major improvements in Barnard Park has recently been approved by the planning committee of Islington Council. The improvements will include a 9-a-side Astroturf sports pitch, a flat grassed area for recreation, a hub building, much improved all-weather paths and biodiverse planting including a traditional orchard.

The plan will hopefully transform the park and will provide an attractive, updated outdoor space for the local community to enjoy.



Barnard Park adventure playground



Old Barnsbury

# How to make a **complaint**

We aim to provide all our residents with a quality service and to get things right first time. Therefore if something has gone wrong for you, please tell us about it so that we can put it right as simply and as quickly as possible.

If you are unhappy with the services we provide, you can make a complaint in the following ways:

- Email us at **[serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk](mailto:serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk)**.
- Fill in our online complaints form at **[www.newlon.org.uk/residents/making-complaint/complaint](http://www.newlon.org.uk/residents/making-complaint/complaint)**.
- Call our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** and tell them that you wish to make a complaint.
- Visit us in person at Newlon House or any of our other offices. If you wish to visit Newlon House please make an appointment by calling our Service Centre on **020 7613 8080** or e-mail **[serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk](mailto:serviceresolution@newlon.org.uk)**.

If you have a complaint about your neighbours rather than our services then this is treated as anti-social behaviour (ASB). As a result you will need to report it the ASB team. You can find details about how to do this on our anti-social behaviour page **[www.newlon.org.uk/residents/anti-social-behaviour/](http://www.newlon.org.uk/residents/anti-social-behaviour/)**.

## Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman Service (**[housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://housing-ombudsman.org.uk)**) can offer support to residents making a complaint but will only consider complaints that have been through Newlon's stage 1 and stage 2 complaints process.

We have completed a self-assessment form which demonstrates our compliance with the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code.

## Related documents

You can find our Complaints leaflet, Complaints Policy, Complaints Procedure and self-assessment with the Housing Ombudsman's complaint handling code by visiting the complaints page on our website **[www.newlon.org.uk/residents/making-a-complaint](http://www.newlon.org.uk/residents/making-a-complaint)**.



## 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.

## 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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