

# REDBRIDGE**LIFE**

HELP US KEEP  
REDBRIDGE  
CLEAN AND TIDY



Page 8

NEW CAMPAIGN  
WILL KEEP WOMEN  
AND GIRLS SAFE  
FROM HARM



Page 18

NEW WEBSITE  
WILL HELP  
ADULTS FIND  
SUPPORT



Page 20

## Come and see how Hainault Forest is being transformed



Cllr Kam Rai, Deputy Leader of Redbridge Council, and Cllr Jas Athwal, Leader of Redbridge Council, with volunteers.



## Redbridge Council Pest Control

### What we do

- we offer advice to residents and businesses about how to get rid of insects or rodents
- we have effective treatments for certain types of pests and can help with identifying pests and information about what to do

### Pests we treat and cost

Rats / Mice*	£142.00
Cockroaches	£175.00
Bedbugs*	£243.00
Pharaoh Ants*	£189.00
Garden Ants*	£108.00
Wasps* 1 nest	£72.00
subsequent nests	£40.00
Fleas*	£150.00
Commercial premises starting from (non-food premises only)	£204.00

### Pest control officers will

- investigate the cause of infestations and recommend a treatment
- give you safety information, offer proofing advice and tell you roughly how long the treatment may take

Book an appointment online at [www.redbridge.gov.uk/book-it](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/book-it) or contact us on **020 8554 5000** (Monday to Friday 8.30am-6pm – except bank holidays when we are closed)

\* The charges for these services are reduced by 50% for Residential Owner Occupiers who are in receipt of 85% or more Council Tax Reduction

AMATEUR GARDENING COMPETITION

**FREE TO ENTER!**

# Redbridge in Bloom 2023

28TH EDITION

**CREATE A GARDEN FIT FOR A KING!**

This year, we will celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty, King Charles III. To mark this special occasion, we are encouraging the residents of Redbridge to get involved in our amateur gardening competition by creating a garden fit for the King!

Vision RCL is introducing a brand-new category for 2023, \*Best Sustainable Planet-Friendly Garden in honour of King Charles III, a staunch advocate for improving the environment.

### Categories:

- Best Front Garden
- Best Container Garden
- Best Public House
- Best Community Garden
- Best School Gardening Project
- Best Sustainable Planet-Friendly Garden \*NEW

Closing date for entries is **3 July**. To enter visit [visionrcl.org.uk/redbridgeinbloom](http://visionrcl.org.uk/redbridgeinbloom)



## HAVE YOUR SAY AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

All meetings will be available to view online and some of the meetings will be held in the Council Chamber. See our website for information and links to join.

### Council Meetings

Thursday 23 March **7.15pm**

To ask a question at a council meeting, please send a written notice of your question to the council questions mailbox at [councilquestions@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:councilquestions@redbridge.gov.uk)

### Cabinet Meetings

Tuesday 28 March **7.15pm**  
Tuesday 18 April **7.15pm**

### Scrutiny and Overview Committees

#### Overview Committee

Monday 27 March **7.15pm**  
Monday 17 April **7.15pm**  
Monday 22 May **7.15pm**

#### People Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 14 March **7.15pm**

#### Health Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 16 March **7.15pm**  
Monday 15 May **7.15pm**

#### Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 26 April **6pm**

#### External Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday 19 April **7.15pm**

### Committee Meetings

#### Planning Committee

Monday 24 April **7.15pm**  
Thursday 11 May **7.15pm**

#### Governance and Assurance Committee

Monday 20 March **7.15pm**

#### Health and Wellbeing Board

Monday 24 April **2.15pm**

#### Local Pension Board

Wednesday 19 April **5.30pm**

## Produced by Redbridge Council

The editor can be contacted via email at [redbridge.life@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:redbridge.life@redbridge.gov.uk)

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### Next issue out in June



# LEADER'S MESSAGE

## Welcome to the Spring edition of Redbridge Life

Dear neighbour,

As the weather brightens up and we head into spring I am feeling hopeful about the future.

The rising cost of living has increased pressure on us all, but despite the challenges we've been facing I have been so proud to see local communities coming together to support their neighbours through this difficult time. Our Council has also stepped up support in every way to help local people, including providing financial support, advice, and guidance on everything from bills to mental wellbeing. Visit our website for more information, at: <https://costofliving.redbridge.gov.uk/>

As well as impacting households bills, the rising cost of living has hit councils hard. This, coupled with over a decade of government funding cuts means that in Redbridge, we have had to make tough choices to keep vital services running. Despite rising costs and funding cuts, we remain committed to

balancing our budget, providing the best possible services and investing in key infrastructure like our schools and libraries. Read more about the 2023/34 Budget on page 14.

Although times have been tough, the people of Redbridge have shown impressive resilience, community spirit and care for our neighbours – all the things that make me so proud to live in our great borough.

After an incredibly challenging winter, there is much to look forward to in Redbridge. Our investment in Hainault Forest Country Park is coming to fruition with our new visitor centre and café set to open in April. Work is underway on our new leisure centre in Wanstead, and plans are coming together for the Lido in Valentines Park. You can read all about these exciting projects on page 15.

As we head into spring, I hope you will all take the opportunity of the lighter, longer days and better weather to visit our

beautiful local parks, where council investment means there's something for everyone to enjoy. Whether it's taking the kids to a newly renovated playground in Loxford, Ray Lodge or Clayhall Park, getting some exercise at one of our outdoor gyms, or just enjoying the fresh air at any one of our award-winning green spaces, there's something for everyone.

This May, we also have His Majesty The King's Coronation to look forward to, with street parties going ahead across the borough and of course, the extra Bank Holiday on Monday 8 May. There will be activities and events happening in Redbridge and across London so keep an eye out for updates on our council website.

Wishing you and your family a wonderful spring.



**Councillor Jas Athwal**  
Leader of Redbridge Council

## Burglaries fall 65 per cent following council and police partnership

Incidents of burglary in Redbridge have fallen by a staggering 65 per cent since 2018 following significant council investment and partnership working with police and local people.

After a spike in burglaries in 2018, Redbridge Council took urgent action, increasing the number of uniformed enforcement officers, improving street lighting and investing £1.5 million into CCTV and ANPR cameras tracking cars coming in and out of the borough.

The Council also supported multiple police operations directly targeting burglars and helped local people protect their homes with alarms, Smart Water systems and lighting.

In addition, new Enforcement Hubs in Ilford and Hainault and an expanded 25-officer town centre police team have helped tackle criminal behaviour and drive down burglaries in the borough.

**Cabinet Member for Crime, Safety and Community Cohesion, Cllr Khayer Chowdhury, said:**



"Everyone should feel safe in their own home, that's why we're continuing to work closely with the police to deter criminals and with our neighbours across Redbridge to help properly secure their properties.

"Together we can continue to drive down burglaries and keep our homes and vehicles safe from thieves."

Following a recommendation from the Redbridge Crime Commission 2021-2022, all victims of burglary now receive a visit from a police officer to discuss how their crime is being investigated.

To find out more about how to properly secure your home visit our website, at:

<https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/crime-and-public-safety/>

Always report crime to the police, at:

<https://www.met.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/> or by calling 101.

In an emergency always call 999.

# Schoolboy publishes storybooks to inspire environmental awareness

A Redbridge school student has penned a series of eco-minded books, two of which have already been published, to help inspire people to take care of the planet.

Henry Newman from Clore Tikva Primary School in Ilford, has been busy co-writing several children's books with his mum Natalie, about Lark the Shark – a loveable, friendly shark on a quest to rid the ocean of litter.

Following the success of their first book called 'Lark the Shark', which can be found in Redbridge libraries, the mother and son duo have gone on to write four more stories.

Each is themed around looking after the environment, and introduces children to different sea creatures including a baby orca who appears in the recently published title, 'Lark the Shark and Wonda the Whale'.

As well as environmental messages, the books also have an important point to make on diversity and inclusion.

Mum, Natalie, explains: "Lark wants to banish negative feelings about him being a shark by teaching children not to judge others by the way they look but on what they do."

Henry was just seven when he started to write the first book after being inspired by his school homework about pollution. Now aged 10, Henry is hoping his series of books will help promote environmental awareness to other children and inspire everyone to "do their bit for the environment".

The young author and avid recycler, said: "It's important we take care of the environment and look after our oceans to help protect the creatures living in them. I think there are lots of things people can try out to be kinder to the planet. Recycling is one, and so is using less plastic.



"Plastic litter can end up in our oceans, polluting them and causing a danger to sea life. I hope the stories my mum and I write inspire other children to become involved in activities that help take care of the environment."

Find out more on how Redbridge is tackling the climate emergency and how you can get involved, at: [www.redbridge.gov.uk/about-the-council/climate-change](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/about-the-council/climate-change)

Get tips and advice on reducing, re-using and recycling to help protect the environment, at: [www.redbridge.gov.uk/our-streets](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/our-streets)

## King's Coronation: let's get the party started

The Coronation ceremony for His Majesty King Charles III will take place on Saturday 6 May 2023, at Westminster Abbey. The Coronation will see people across the UK and the Commonwealth come together to celebrate.

The Coronation programme will include the procession and service at Westminster Abbey on Saturday 6 May, the 'Coronation Big Lunch' across the country on Sunday 7 May (with a concert taking place in Windsor in the evening), and 'The Big Help Out' community activity on the bank holiday, Monday 8 May.



### Council-led events

We will be sharing details via social media and Redbridge e-news about events that will take place to mark the King's Coronation. For more information about the Coronation, visit: [www.redbridge.gov.uk/coronation](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/coronation)

### Street parties

Residents in more than 50 streets have applied to hold a street party to mark the Coronation.

Once again, we have relaxed many of the usual rules and will not charge for road closures to celebrate this special occasion.



### The Coronation Big Lunch

The Big Lunch will encourage communities to come together, celebrate their connections and get to know each other better. It will bring the Coronation festivities into the heart of every community. For more information, visit: [www.edenprojectcommunities.com](http://www.edenprojectcommunities.com)

### The Big Help Out

The Big Help Out will provide an opportunity to reflect on the legacy of His Majesty's service and showcase the impact of volunteering within communities. For further information, visit: [www.royal.uk/coronation](http://www.royal.uk/coronation)

# Exciting plan will double the size of Fairlop Waters

With winter now firmly behind us, many of you will be planning fun days out with family and friends.

If that's the case, look no further than Fairlop Waters Country Park, one of London's hidden jewels and home to expansive green spaces, lakes, and a wide range of outdoor activities, including water sports and bouldering.

Last year, we announced exciting plans to preserve and expand Fairlop Waters by adding 250 acres of green space to the existing parkland over the coming years. That means there will be even more gorgeous green space to explore and enjoy in the future.

The Council has been actively working with communities to come up with ideas to make the most of the extra space.



Initial ideas have included an accessible adventure trail, wild swimming, and animal grazing. A masterplan outlining our plans for the expansion of Fairlop Waters will be presented to the Council's Cabinet for decisions this year.

Fairlop Waters is a brilliant destination for a day out at any time of year. There are accessible pathways for those who adore walking through the country park and a network of natural routes so you to get closer to wildlife. The large lake is a location for water sports such as sailing, rowing and windsurfing. There is also a bar and restaurant to relax in.

For more adventurous visitors, there is a climbing facility suitable for all ages, the largest boulder park in the UK, and a large natural play area for younger visitors.

The boulder park consists of nine boulders, which vary in height and shape to cater to all standards. They are all designed for solo climbing and are a great place to practice bouldering and traversing skills.



In the past year, we've introduced new accessible pathways, benches and improved signage to help people get the most out of their visit to Fairlop Waters.



**Cllr Kam Rai, Deputy Leader of Redbridge Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Leisure, and Culture, said:**

"Fairlop Waters is already a much-loved amenity with something for everyone to enjoy. Our masterplan, which doubles the size of the park, has been created with ideas from the local community and park users, and will make it an even better place to visit thanks to the additional space available. The future is exciting for Fairlop."

If you want to learn more about the expansion, please visit our dedicated engagement site 'Let's Talk Redbridge', at: <https://engage.redbridge.gov.uk> and search 'Our Future Fairlop'.

# Megamix is perfect for keeping boredom at bay this Easter

Vision RCL will be offering a variety of affordable taster sessions and workshops to children aged from five to 16 years during the school Easter holidays funded by Redbridge Council.



Vision RCL will be offering a variety of affordable taster sessions and workshops to children aged from five to 16 years during the school Easter holidays funded by Redbridge Council.

Activities will include 'swim for £1' at Fullwell Cross Leisure Centre, Loxford Leisure Centre and Mayfield Leisure Centre; or head to Kenneth More Theatre to enjoy a film for £1 too. Screenings will include 'Matilda: The Musical' and 'Minions: The Rise of Gru'. All children under eight need to be accompanied by an adult.

Redbridge libraries also have an exciting programme. Children can learn a new digital skill using Lego robots or get to grips with digital art and coding. There will also be fun workshops in arts and crafts, theatre, dance, and drama. All sessions will be inclusive. There will also be multi-sport sessions and adapted cycling that will be available for children with additional needs.

Advance booking is required. Swimming can only be booked seven days in advance, all other bookings now open. For more information, visit: [visionrcl.org.uk/megamix](https://visionrcl.org.uk/megamix)



# Transforming lives through adult education for 120 years



Redbridge Institute of Adult Education urges residents to 'Never stop learning'

Redbridge Institute of Adult Education is celebrating 120 years of transforming lives.

Whether you are looking to gain skills or qualifications, to re-train or boost your career, we offer a wide range of learning opportunities – and most of our courses are completely free, paid for by the Mayor of London.

We enrol thousands of adult learners each year onto our part-time courses in Ilford, Gants Hill and Hainault, which run in the daytime, evenings, weekends and online to give you flexibility to fit your learning around your work and life.

Redbridge Institute traces its history back to 1903, when the first formal adult education courses started to be offered across East London for men and women – in subjects including bookkeeping, arithmetic, French, shorthand, dressmaking, cookery and drawing.

## Principal of Redbridge Institute, William Pickford, explains:

"Our course offer has grown considerably 120 years later to cover all the skills you need for modern-day life.

"From confidence in numbers to counselling, cycle mechanics to creative arts, IT to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), whatever you study here, our goal is to help you transform your life."

Learner Mohammad Nawaz Jahaly has taken courses including IT, childcare and community interpreting since moving to Redbridge eight years ago, and he is committed to being a lifelong learner.



"Learning is important to society. I want to rekindle the flame of learning in people's hearts and minds, so no-one stops learning in life," he says.

"Redbridge Institute is open and welcoming to everybody, and the tutors help learners to do their courses flexibly, whatever their level."



## Sewing class at Redbridge Institute in the 1940s

Unfortunately, Mohammad has recently had to stop working after being diagnosed with diabetes. But even that is not stopping him from learning and he is challenging himself to reverse his condition.

A keen cyclist, he has signed up for Redbridge Institute's Cycle Mechanics course and plans to help out at a bike repair centre.

Rumeen Zaman left school in London before taking her A-levels. After marrying young, she moved to Bangladesh for 15 years, where she combined bringing up her children with working in a school.

## After moving back to London, her children remained her priority but, Rumeen explains:



"I wanted to do something for myself. I saw education as the route to success.

"I applied to study Early Years Education at Redbridge Institute, progressing from Level 2 to Level 3, gaining distinctions in both, and successfully obtaining GCSE maths.

"My tutor was supportive, giving my classmates and I the belief we could go on to university.

A university tutor was asked to visit us at the Institute to talk to us."

Three years later, Rumeen has graduated from Kingston University with a First-class BA (Hons) degree in Education and Leadership in Practice.

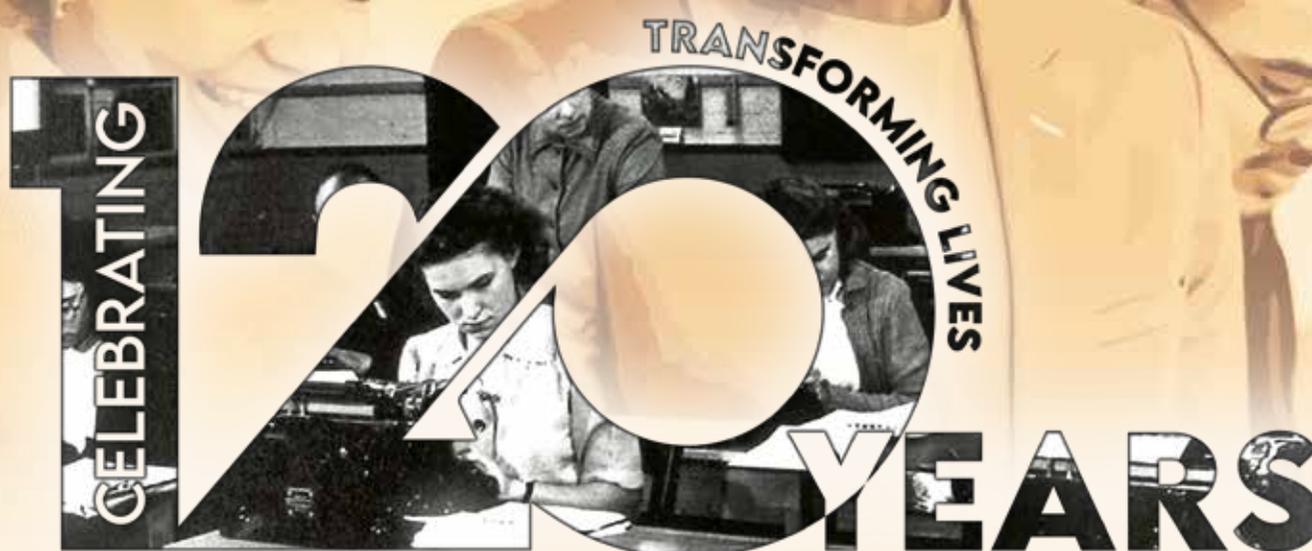
"It took perseverance and resilience, but at times I felt a force was pushing me forward to attain something," she says.

Rumeen now works as an Early Years Development Officer for a London council and plans to sign up for Redbridge Institute's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) course in Education and Training, which will help her to empower and support other people in her job.

For Mohammad, Rumeen and thousands of others, the opportunities available at Redbridge Institute have helped to ensure they never stop learning.

"Our course offer has grown considerably to cover all the skills you need for modern-day life. Whatever you study here, our goal is to help you transform your life."

**Principal of Redbridge Institute, William Pickford**



# Celebrating 120 years of adult education

**London's only Ofsted 'outstanding' local authority adult education provider**

Find out more about our range of qualifications, skills for life and personal development courses at Redbridge Institute of Adult Education. We have been offering courses to Redbridge residents for 120 years, and our current flexible courses in Ilford, Gants Hill, Hainault and online are designed to suit your lifestyle.

**Transform your life through learning.**

## Careers & Education Fair

Gearies Learning Centre, Gants Hill  
Wednesday 8 March, 11am – 2pm

Meet employers and attend workshops  
including improving your CV and  
interview techniques.

## Redbridge Institute Easter Roadshows

Monday 3 April – Friday 14 April

Meet our team and discover our learning  
opportunities in the town centres of:  
Ilford, Hainault, Goodmayes and Loxford.



Pre-register for the Careers & Education Fair to receive a free goodie bag on arrival, at: <https://tinyurl.com/2s9rn3xz> or scan the QR code.

Email: [enquiries@redbridge-iae.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@redbridge-iae.ac.uk)

Find out more: [redbridge-iae.ac.uk/120](http://redbridge-iae.ac.uk/120)

# Let's make Redbridge a place we're

Cleaner neighbourhoods help cultivate happier communities because the environment around us can play a big part in our emotional wellbeing.

Research backed by environmental charity 'Keep Britain Tidy' recorded a strong connection between emotional wellbeing and the cleanliness of neighbourhoods. People living in cleaner areas reported higher levels of happiness, lower levels of frustration, and were more likely to say they were proud of where they live.\*

But keeping our neighbourhoods clean isn't something that falls to a few – it rests with all of us. We all have a social responsibility to keep our borough clean, and we can all do our bit to make Redbridge a place we're proud to call home.

From getting rid of rubbish responsibly, to keeping our front gardens tidy – there are things we can all do to help keep our streets and neighbourhoods looking great and desirable to live in.

## Keep litter off the street

We have 1,123 public street bins in Redbridge, as well as bins in all our parks too, so there is no excuse to drop litter, including chewing gum and cigarette stubs. Make sure cigarettes are extinguished before you put them in a bin – many street bins have stubbing plates and ashtrays you can use. If you can't find a bin near you, always take your litter home for disposal.



## Dog fouling

As well as being unhygienic and unsightly, did you know dog mess can also cause blindness in humans? Another reason to ensure it's off our streets. Dog walkers can dispose of bagged dog mess in any public street litter bin in the borough, so don't forget to grab your waste bags when walking the dog. If you can't find a bin near you, take your dog waste home and put it in your household waste bin. There's no excuse to leave it behind.

## Responsible waste disposal

Last year we spent £350,000 on clearing fly-tipped rubbish dumped on our streets. This money could have been used to support other vital services in the borough if the fly-tips weren't there.

If you have rubbish that can't be recycled, or discarded in your household waste, there are other ways to dispose of it. Dumping rubbish on the street should never be an option. From our bulky waste collection service offering residents a free collection every year, to local re-use and recycling centres, find out how to get rid of your rubbish responsibly, at: [www.redbridge.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling)

## Untidy front gardens

Help keep your neighbourhood looking nice by keeping your front garden free of mess. Whilst a front garden may be private land, an untidy garden can make the whole street look unpleasant and have a detrimental effect on the local area, including attracting vermin.

\* Based on research commissioned by Kärcher in conjunction with Keep Britain Tidy.



# all proud to call home

Love where you live – take part in positive community action.



There are lots of green initiatives run across the borough to support local communities to play an active part in helping look after our neighbourhoods.

Last year, Ajeet Sahota from Goodmayes adopted seven tree pits on his street as part of the council's 'Adopt a Tree Pit' scheme. The 74-year-old got involved with the scheme after noticing his local tree pits were attracting litter and decided to brighten up the tree pit with flowers to discourage littering.

## Mr Sahota, said:

"I have really enjoyed looking after my tree pit. It has made the road cleaner, more colourful, and is making everyone happy. The whole street has been really supportive.

People often stop to talk to me, and even help, when I'm out watering and looking after the tree pit. I've been encouraging others to adopt their own tree pit. I think it's a really good scheme and I'm really happy to be a part of it."



Find out more on how you can make a difference to your neighbourhood, at:

<https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/our-streets/>

Last year we issued over

## 9,000 fines

for littering and over 250 fines for fly-tipping.

Chris Stone is a member of South Park Users Group. The group regularly litter-pick in and around South Park, in Ilford, and often fill between 20 to 25 sacks of rubbish from each session.



## Chris, said:

"Keeping the borough's streets and parks clean starts with each of us. One of the biggest gripes we have is people leaving food on the floor for the birds. I've seen all sorts of food items dumped in the park for the birds to eat, including spaghetti bolognese. The birds don't eat it and it just attracts vermin to the area, as well as making a huge mess on the ground. We also collect a lot of litter by the park fences where people have thrown it in from the street. It's disgraceful behaviour. The impact this type of littering has on our environment and community is absolutely devastating. The only way our parks and streets will stay clean is if we all take on that responsibility."

## Henry Newman, a 10-year-old Redbridge school student, said:

"We need to be kinder to our planet. Littering is bad for the environment and makes where we live or go to school look messy. It can also be a danger to animals and birds as they could get trapped or hurt by the litter on the floor. It's only by changing the way we behave, that we can start to make a difference."



Last year we spent a total of

## £5.196m

on street cleansing activities, which included clearing fly-tips, removing graffiti, and cleaning litter from the streets including gum, cigarette butts and dog mess.

Less litter and fly-tips on our streets would reduce this cost and allow that saving to be put towards other vital services for our communities.



## CLEANER Redbridge

## Elisabeth Stodel, from Clayhall, said:

"I don't think people realise the consequences of leaving dog poo on the streets and in the parks – as a new mum I have to dodge the mess with the pram and it means I can't relax and enjoy walks with my baby. If we do run over one, it means hosing the wheels down before the pram can come into the house when I'd much rather be looking after my baby. I really wish people would simply pick up their dog poo so we can all enjoy the lovely parks of Redbridge without constantly being on the lookout!"



## Rachel Southern, from Woodford, said: "I really wish people would stop fly-tipping, and instead use the facilities available in the borough to get rid of their rubbish properly. It

makes it hard to walk on the pavement when there are dumped items in your way, especially for children or people in wheelchairs. Every time someone leaves rubbish on the street or in our parks, it affects the whole community. It's such a selfish thing to do, and makes our borough look uncared for."



## Mizan Rahman, Chief Executive of Ekota Academy based in Goodmayes Park, said:

"We're nurturing future generations in Redbridge and encouraging children to be the best version of themselves, so it's important to set a good example. Every time you drop litter or leave your dog mess in the park, you're showing children in the park it's okay to do these things, and it's not. You can't complain about your parks and streets looking untidy if you're part of the problem."



# Are you looking after a child who is not your own?



- is the child under 16 (or 18 if they have a disability)?
- are you NOT the child's step parent, sibling, aunt, uncle or grandparent? This also includes host families to overseas students
- do you plan to have the child with you for more than 28 days?
- this is called '**private fostering**' and we must be LEGALLY notified to ensure the child is safe

Please contact Redbridge Children's Services

020 8708 3885 CPAT.Referrals@redbridge.gov.uk

or visit [www.redbridge.gov.uk/private-fostering](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/private-fostering) for more information

**ALSO RETURNING  
SUMMER 2023!**

**TASTER  
SESSIONS**

**AGES  
5 PLUS**

**REDBRIDGE  
HOLIDAY**

**MEGA  
MIX**



**CINEMA  
or SWIM  
for £1**



**1 - 14 APRIL 2023**

**Challenge yourself to try  
something new this Easter!**

We have a variety of activities for you to come and get involved with:

- adapted multi-sports & cycling
- digital workshops
- dance & theatre
- nature / bushcraft
- interactive library activities



Advanced booking required.  
[visionrcl.org.uk/megamix](http://visionrcl.org.uk/megamix)

# Fashion doesn't need to cost the earth

In the fightback against wasteful fashion, we have launched a new section on our website to support local people with reducing clothing waste in the borough.

Packed with information, advice and tips, the dedicated webpage highlights ways to reuse and recycle clothes, as well as how to dress for less, the eco-friendly way.

Head to [www.redbridge.gov.uk/our-streets/love-your-clothes](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/our-streets/love-your-clothes) to find out more.

We have also partnered with UK clothing charity TR Aid to offer a free, bookable, doorstep collection service for unwanted clothes. Donated items go to TR Aid's charity shop, who are dedicated to selling



pre-loved clothes with sales proceeds helping fund and resource social projects and activities aimed at tackling clothing waste.

To book a TR Aid clothing collection, go to: [www.traid.org.uk/redbridge-collections](http://www.traid.org.uk/redbridge-collections)

**CLEANER**  
Redbridge

## Chigwell Road Reuse and Recycling Centre

If you're having a spring clear out, did you know many items can be recycled or reused via the Chigwell Road Reuse and Recycling Centre? Don't forget to check opening hours over the bank holiday period, at:



## Food waste feeds climate change

Not only is food waste bad for the environment, it also costs you money.

**Did you know the average family of four can save just over £60 per month by reducing their food waste?**

There are many ways to cut back on food waste from portion planning, and freezing leftovers, to home composting. Head to our website for advice, tips and resources to help you get started, at: [www.redbridge.gov.uk/our-streets/love-food-hate-waste](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/our-streets/love-food-hate-waste)

# Green Garden Waste Collection

Our free fortnightly Green Garden Waste Collection service resumes in April, running from 3 April to 27 October. Find out which week your collection falls on, by checking: [www.redbridge.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling/garden-waste/](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling/garden-waste/)

- **Week 1 Garden Waste Collection:**  
3 April to 20 October
- **Week 2 Garden Waste Collection:**  
10 April to 27 October

From 3 April, to assist us in ensuring everyone receives a good service, please present your green garden waste for collection in **one of the following ways:**

- 5 open black sacks (garden waste must be visible)
- 2 reusable garden waste sacks
- 1 reusable garden waste sack and 2 open black sacks (garden waste must be visible).



# BANK HOLIDAY 2023 changes to bin collections



**OUR STREETS**  
Help us create great streets and neighbourhoods

## EASTER

Due on	Collected on
Friday 7 April	No change
Monday 10 April	Tuesday 11 April
Tuesday 11 April	Wednesday 12 April
Wednesday 12 April	Thursday 13 April
Thursday 13 April	Friday 14 April
Friday 14 April	Saturday 15 April

## MAY BANK HOLIDAY

Due on	Collected on
Monday 1 May	Monday 1 May (no change)
Tuesday 2 May	Tuesday 2 May (no change)
Wednesday 3 May	Wednesday 3 May (no change)
Thursday 4 May	Thursday 4 May (no change)
Friday 5 May	Friday 5 May (no change)

## BANK HOLIDAY for the coronation of King Charles III

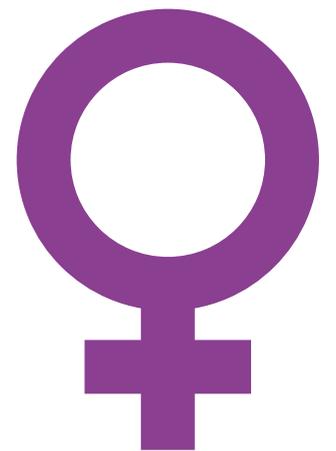
Due on	Collected on
Monday 8 May	Tuesday 9 May
Tuesday 9 May	Wednesday 10 May
Wednesday 10 May	Thursday 11 May
Thursday 11 May	Friday 12 May
Friday 12 May	Saturday 13 May

## END OF MAY BANK HOLIDAY

Due on	Collected on
Monday 29 May	Tuesday 30 May
Tuesday 30 May	Wednesday 31 May
Wednesday 31 May	Thursday 1 June
Thursday 1 June	Friday 2 June
Friday 2 June	Saturday 3 June

# Council leading way in supporting women in workplace

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



Wednesday 8 March marks International Women's Day, which celebrates women's achievements whilst calling for greater equality and a world free of stereotypes and discrimination.

This year's theme for International Women's Day is #EmbraceEquity where organisations are encouraged to eradicate the imbalances that disadvantage women in order to create equality.

Redbridge Council recognises that some circumstances such as caring responsibilities, domestic abuse, and menopause, statistically affect women more than men. Last year, our Human Resources team introduced three new policies to tackle these barriers and provide our female staff with the necessary support to give them an equal footing within the workplace.

The first policy is our Working Carers' Policy. Figures from the 2021 Census revealed that 58 per cent of unpaid carers are women. Our policy offers staff improved paid and unpaid leave, protected annual leave, and a system for agreeing time off for supportive arrangements. These changes have been introduced to help women balance the demands of work and their caring responsibilities.

The second policy is our Domestic Abuse Policy. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated that 2.4 million adults experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022, with 1.7 million women being sufferers. Our policy gives female staff access to Redbridge's Reach Out service, safety assessments, personal security devices and information. It also informs all our staff of the different types of domestic abuse so that everyone can recognise the signs and confidently support a colleague in need.

The council also signed the GMB trade union's 'Stop Domestic Abuse' charter (photograph above) to show our commitment to supporting any staff member experiencing domestic abuse, and that we have a zero-tolerance policy to violence of any kind.



**Front row (from left to right): Chief Executive, Claire Symonds, Leader of the Council, Cllr Jas Athwal, and Operational Director of Human Resources, Pay and Pensions, Lynn Lane. Back row (from left to right), Redbridge UNISON Schools Convenor, Carlene Rose, UNITE Regional Officer, Michelle Cook, and GMB Branch Secretary, Madeline Daley**

Finally, we introduced our Managing Menopause in the Workplace policy because one in four women consider leaving their jobs because of their menopausal symptoms. This policy offers flexibility, practical support, and advice, as well as clarity on the key stages of menopause, terminology, and the various types of menopausal symptoms.

All three policies give staff and managers a better understanding of the challenges many women may be facing and the tools to seek help and provide advice.

## Chief Executive, Claire Symonds, said:

"Launching these policies was a priority for me when I joined the council in May 2022. They raise awareness and provide practical and effective support. It's important to create a nurturing and safe working environment which is inclusive to all. We want to enable women to reach their full potential despite any challenging circumstances, and to equip all staff with the knowledge to help one another."

We hope to inspire organisations in the borough to embrace equity by following in our footsteps and offer the necessary information and support to their female staff.

Our Staff Women's Network works towards diversity, inclusion and equality. The network co-created the policies and led on staff events to raise awareness of the issues and the available support. They organised guest speakers such as Lauren Chiren, the Chief Executive Officer of Women of a Certain Stage, who spoke about how employers can support women experiencing menstruation and menopause at work.

This International Women's Day, the network will be hosting an event with Aanchal Women's Aid, who are working towards a domestic abuse free society.

## The senior sponsor of the Staff Women's Network, Pervinder Sandhu, said:

"We strive to champion our female colleagues and advocate for creating equal opportunities. Our involvement in the development of the policies and our events to promote them meant we have made challenging issues more manageable, and we've achieved an open, safe, and understanding working environment that ensures women are not disadvantaged."



# Empower a young child **Foster for Redbridge**

Imagine having the power to change a young person's life for the better.

The power to re-shape a future.

There are over 200 children in Redbridge who are unable to stay with their families each year. You could be the one to transform a life and provide the change that they need.

If you would like to know more about fostering for Redbridge Council:

Visit [www.redbridge.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/fostering)

Call us on 020 8708 6068

Email us [fostering@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@redbridge.gov.uk)



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# Redbridge Council *delivering more with less*

Despite record inflation and over a decade of Government austerity that saw settlement grant funding to London councils cut by an average of 63 per cent, Redbridge Council has once again set a balanced budget, continuing to deliver over 400 vital services and investing in key infrastructure like schools and libraries.

Hundreds of local people filled in our budget survey, letting us know what services matter most to you. We listened, and our 2023/24 Budget invests nearly £1.5 million into making Redbridge safer, £3.5 million into road and pavement resurfacing and £250,000 into a high street improvement fund – three of your top priorities.

The Government decide councils' (grant) settlement funding assessment based on the assumption that councils will raise council tax and the adult social care precept, effectively forcing councils to do so. However, everyone in Redbridge in receipt of local council tax reduction as of 1 March 2023 will be shielded in full from these increases for 2023/24.



We're proud to be investing:

**£21 million**  
for school maintenance, expansion and improvements

**£29 million**  
to improve existing council homes

**£240,000**  
for a winter emergency pothole and gritting fund

**£125,000**  
Megamix affordable Easter and Summer activities for children

**£250,000**  
further investment into crime reduction measures

**£900,000**  
on flood prevention

**£3.5 million**  
for road and pavement resurfacing and repairs

**£100,000**  
for a business incentive scheme

**£14.4 million**  
for a Lido in Valentines Park, a world-class Rock-Climbing Centre, Wanstead Swimming pool and fantastic improvements to Fairlop Waters and Hainault Forest Country Park

**£224,000**  
Parkguard keeping our parks safe and welcoming

**£900,000**  
on highways maintenance

**Cllr Kam Rai,  
Deputy Leader  
of Redbridge  
Council and  
Cabinet Member  
for Finance,  
Leisure & Culture,  
said:**



“Redbridge is one of the lowest funded boroughs in London, and while we have been forced to make £236 million of savings because of Government austerity, we always rise to the challenge of keeping vital services running and investing in the things that matter most to our neighbours.

We’ve listened to local people and protected key services like weekly bin collections, libraries and building high quality council homes, while innovating to become one of the most cost-effective councils in the country.

We are continuing to invest in keeping Redbridge safe, expanding our network of Enforcement Hubs, continuing Parkguard patrols through our parks, improving our CCTV coverage, night time and noise enforcement, and our domestic violence support service.”

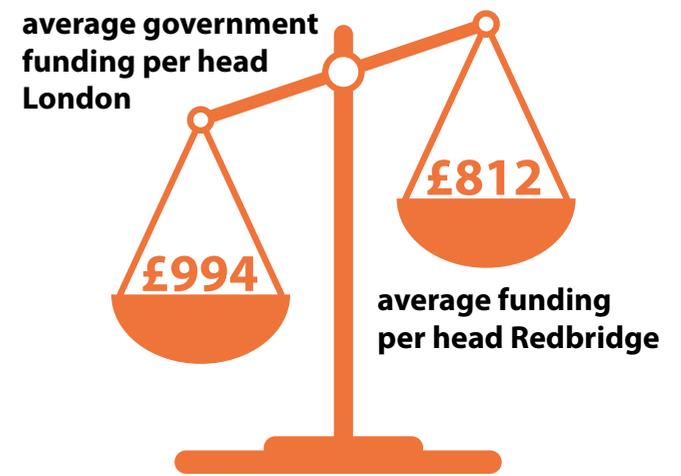
## Fighting for fair funding for Redbridge

The Government’s unfair funding formula means in Redbridge we receive £182 less per head than the London average, totalling £56.6 million less funding per year.

Hundreds of local people joined our campaign for fair funding, signing our open letter to the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak alongside Council Leader Cllr Jas Athwal. Unfortunately, our government grant settlement funding this year did not match inflation and so in real terms Redbridge Council’s budget has been cut once again.

Despite the challenges of reduced budgets and increased inflation, Redbridge Council is continuing to deliver over 400 vital services, support local people through the cost of living crisis and invest in key infrastructure.

We will keep fighting for Redbridge and the funding local people deserve. To join our campaign please visit our website, at: <https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/budget-202324/>



## Bringing outdoor swimming back to Valentines Park

Plans are underway to deliver a new Lido in Valentines Park.

In 1924, the original Valentines Park Lido opened up to keen swimmers from across London. The Lido, measuring 150ft by 50ft cost just £5,500 to build, was designed by architect H Shaw and attracted thousands of visitors every summer.

Sadly, due to cost pressures, the Lido was closed in 1995, but Redbridge Council has since announced exciting plans to restore the Lido, bringing back outdoor swimming to Redbridge.

Since the announcement, the old Lido site has been surveyed and a nearby site identified as suitable for the new pool. The next stage of the work to restore the Lido is concept design to see what the site could look like once built.

Soon, rather than jetting off on holiday to swim outdoors, local families will be able to spend their summers lazing by the outdoor pool right on their doorstep in Valentines Park.



## World-class climbing centre coming to Redbridge

Redbridge Council is working with businesses from across London to build a world-class rock climbing centre in Ley Street, serving the whole of the borough and beyond.

The aim is for the centre to be cost-neutral, with rent coming from the climbing centre operator, and offer a fantastic new fun activity for local families.

Climbing offers a unique combination of physical and mental health benefits. Regular climbing can improve stamina and works multiple muscle groups, both in the upper and lower body,

including your back, abdominal muscles, legs, shoulders, and arms.

Evidence shows that physical activity can also help improve mental wellbeing. Climbing can be particularly helpful as it involves intense concentration, helping to keep you focused, clear your mind and even build confidence and self-esteem.



# Helping you in tough times

## Speak to your bank about cost of living help

Banks have set up new services and tools to support their customers during this crisis. Redbridge Life spoke to one Ilford bank manager to find out how.



Ricky Kambo (pictured left), senior network manager from HSBC Bank, Ilford Market, has seen more residents visiting the bank struggling with the cost of living.

He advises residents to talk to their banks. Many have set up specialist teams or introduced new tools and support to help, so customers

avoid getting into arrears with their bills, getting heavy debts or risk losing their homes.

### Ricky, said:

"We are definitely noticing more customers visiting us in-branch. This ranges from customers who are looking to re-finance their existing debt with us, or customers that are just struggling with the rising costs of living and asking us how we can help. HSBC has a specialist financial wellbeing team that provides guidance and support on various topics. When you speak to them, they will send on your request to a specific department such as our financial support team where our colleagues will help you to find a solution to your problem."

HSBC has started financial wellbeing sessions that discuss budgeting, savings, credit history, credit scores and protection, as well as saving.

Customers are given access to knowledge, hints and tips on how to be in a better position with their finances, including ways to reduce bills. Some will also provide information on what support is provided by the Government and various charities.

Ricky added: "Existing customers that come into the branch can get a one-on-one meeting to re-arrange finances or reduce debt. We are here to listen and take the worry away. Non-customers are also welcome as we want to support anyone who needs it."

Ricky's advice to customers who are experiencing financial difficulties is to approach their banks for help as soon as possible before money problems get worse.

He said: "Come into the bank for a financial review. We will carry out a financial health check based on the answers to our questions. This will give us a guide to what support is available. For example, if a customer is struggling to repay a personal loan or generally unable to pay the bank its repayments for any product, we will refer this to our financial support team who will adjust the repayments to our products. This helps customers to manage their finances and still repay our loans, so best for both parties."

Other banks have set up website-based tools and apps to better understand income and outgoings, like subscription managers, which allow you to see all your subscriptions in one place and easily cancel those you don't want anymore.



**Did you get your cost of living directory with Redbridge Life?**

If not, please get in touch. Find out how on page 2.

## Community grocery store to open in Ilford

**A new community grocery store to help families struggling with rising food costs will soon open in Redbridge.**

Redbridge Council is teaming up with The Message Trust and City Gates Church in Clements Road to launch the store in Ilford.

Community Groceries are all about bridging the gap between supermarkets and foodbanks. Using surplus food fresh from local supermarkets, their groceries make the cost of the weekly shop more affordable. Members can come and shop for just £4 – saving up to £20 per shop – getting all the food they need for their family. In addition to groceries, members will receive support in cooking, financial management and guidance towards employment programmes.

All you need to bring is £5 for your annual membership fee and a couple of shopping bags to put your £4 shop in and then start shopping. It's as simple as that!

The Community Grocery store will be located in City Gates Church, 25-29 Clements Rd, Ilford, and open Monday to Friday from 9.30am – 4.30pm from 28 March.

### Useful weblinks for Redbridge banks are below:

**HSBC** [www.hsbc.co.uk](http://www.hsbc.co.uk) and search 'money worries'

**Natwest** [www.natwest.com](http://www.natwest.com) and search 'cost of living'

**Barclays** [www.barclays.co.uk/money-management](http://www.barclays.co.uk/money-management)

**Nationwide** [www.nationwide.co.uk/help/cost-of-living](http://www.nationwide.co.uk/help/cost-of-living)

Nationwide has a cost of living Helpline: 0800 030 4066, Monday to Friday, 9am – 4.30pm, Saturday 9am – 12pm

**TSB** [www.tsb.co.uk/personal](http://www.tsb.co.uk/personal) and search money worries

**Metro** [www.metrobankonline.co.uk/cost-of-living](http://www.metrobankonline.co.uk/cost-of-living)



# Support your community and learn new skills

## Helping others is a great way to learn new skills and build your confidence.

Volunteering is a great way to support your community or a cause you care about. There are lots of other benefits too, like learning new skills, meeting new people, building your confidence and improving your health and wellbeing. There's something for all ages and abilities, so get involved.

Redbridge Council for Voluntary Services (CVS) manages the Volunteer Centre in Redbridge. It can help you to find the right volunteering opportunity to suit your interests and the time you have available.

Visit the centre's website to find out more. Here are some long-term opportunities they are offering now:

### Forest Farm Peace Garden

#### Role: Supported Ecotherapy Volunteers

People who are interested in improving their mental wellbeing are encouraged to volunteer as part of the Forest Farm Peace Garden therapeutic gardening programme. Volunteers will help tend the beautiful two-acre community garden by sowing seeds and harvesting fruit, vegetables and herbs.

### Citizen Advice Redbridge

#### Role: Volunteer Adviser

Volunteers will be required to complete an introduction to Citizens Advice and extensive training for the role. Volunteers will support clients to take action to resolve their problems. This might include writing letters, making phone calls, or referring clients to other organisations. They will also learn about a range of issues such as benefits, debt, employment and housing.

It also promotes one-off opportunities, such as:

### The Moonwalk London Volunteers

#### Role: Multiple

This charity recruits hundreds of volunteers to make the Moonwalk a safe and enjoyable event; looking after walkers as they pound the streets of London overnight.

There are also other opportunities where no regular commitment is needed and do not require any formal recruitment process such as:

### Hainault Forest Conservation Days

Just turn up at the venue to help out. Activity sessions are led by a community forest ranger who supervises, providing advice and support when needed.

### Something for all ages

The CVS also has opportunities for older people such as a Redbridge pensioners forum volunteer co-ordinator and various retail opportunities for younger people aged 16 and over, such as roles with St Francis Hospice, Haven House Children's Hospice, various hospital roles, as well as online mentoring and befriending roles for those who cannot travel.

Browse all the opportunities online or get in touch.

## Managing your money with Redbridge Institute

Redbridge Institute has set up free workshops to help residents get smart with their money.

When you sign up for a two-hour workshop, you will get tips and tricks to save money whilst efficiently managing your household budget.

The sessions take place between 10am – 12pm at Redbridge Central Library, in Ilford High Road, on:

**Tuesday 21 March 2023**

**Tuesday 25 April 2023**

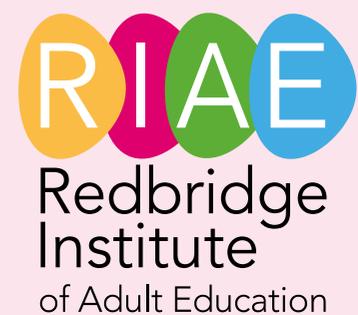
**Friday 28 April 2023**

**Tuesday 2 May 2023**

**Friday 5 May 2023**

**Tuesday 9 May 2023**

Register your place by emailing:  
[multiplyproject@redbridge-iae.ac.uk](mailto:multiplyproject@redbridge-iae.ac.uk)



### Interested in volunteering?

Call us, on: **020 8514 9624**  
Email: [volunteering@redbridgecvs.net](mailto:volunteering@redbridgecvs.net)  
Visit our website, at:  
<https://volunteering.redbridgecvs.net>



### Interested in becoming a volunteer and want to get some free training?

There is a great introductory course you can do called 'Volunteering as a Pathway to Employment'.

#### It takes place on:

15 March 2023  
Between 10am – 1pm  
RCVS, 2nd Floor,  
103 Cranbrook Road,  
Ilford, IG1 4PU

Register by visiting:  
[www.redbridgecvs.net](http://www.redbridgecvs.net)



# The message is clear...

# ThisHasToStop

**Redbridge will not tolerate the harassment of women and girls. Our new campaign ThisHasToStop will drive that message home across the borough.**

Redbridge Council has launched a three-year plan to transform the day-to-day experiences of women and girls.

Residents will have already noticed increased police on our streets and improvements to areas where women have told us they feel unsafe. But over the coming months, men who abuse women will be under the spotlight as ThisHasToStop takes the message to every corner of our borough.

In recent years, too many women in Redbridge have suffered at the hands of violent men, from the appalling murder of Zara Aleena, to the everyday micro-aggressions that leave women and girls feeling fearful on our streets.

**Cllr Khayer Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Crime, Safety and Community Cohesion, said:**



“There is no place for abuse in our borough. The council will be working with partners to challenge the men who use unacceptable behaviour to harm and disrespect women.”

ThisHasToStop builds on the previous work of the independent Community Crime Commission, which was held in 2021-2022. A group of local people were invited by the Council to review criminal activity across the borough, setting out their recommendations for cutting crime and to improve lives locally.

Improving the safety of women and girls was one of the Commission’s top priorities and the Council is determined to deliver on this objective.

Since then, lots of work has been going on behind the scenes. In November 2022, the Council launched a new manifesto for women and girls and new powers mean that on-street sexism is now an enforceable offence. Work is underway to create better street environments, with lighting and maintenance in areas where women report feeling unsafe.

The goal of ThisHasToStop is no less than to make Redbridge a place where there is ‘No place for abuse’ – and where all women and girls can live safely and thrive. As the year goes on, more interventions will be rolled out to make the borough safer and take the message directly where it’s needed – challenging violence and everyday sexism, wherever it occurs.

The initiative, which will be delivered across council departments and in partnership with schools, community groups and businesses, will highlight the ways in which we can all help create a safer borough and the serious consequences for those who flout the law.



## London Mayor hears Redbridge crime concerns

The Mayor of London has visited Redbridge twice recently to learn more about safety improvements in the borough. On his most recent visit he was accompanied by Met Commissioner, Sir Mark Rowley, and heard more about local priorities around women’s safety and street crime.



**Council Leader, Jas Athwal, said:**

“This visit was a great opportunity to show the new Met Commissioner and the Mayor of London around Ilford and share the work we are doing to make the town centre safer”.



# THIS HAS TO STOP

**SAFER**  
Redbridge

## Man fined for cat calling

**Redbridge Council has become the first borough in the country to fine a man for abusing a woman on the street.**

Offences such as cat calling, unwanted attention or touching carry a £100 fine. If offenders don't pay, or the case goes to court, then the fine can increase to £1,000.

A new Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) has created a safety net around some of the locations where women have reported abusive behaviour.

From now on, any man who harasses a woman in the street can expect to be fined.

In December, a man in Ilford was fined £100 for sexual harassment using these powers.

He was caught as part of a special covert operation in Ilford Town Centre, involving council enforcement officers.



**Cllr Saima Ahmed, Women's Champion at Redbridge Council, said:**

"Cat calling is completely unacceptable and has no place in our society, but unfortunately far too many women and girls have experienced it.

Redbridge Council is working in partnership with the police to stop and fine men who sexually harass women in local public spaces. We're tackling public sexual harassment head-on, and are proud to be the first London borough to use public space protection orders to tackle it."



# Sexist street harassment is now an offence.



# Ace news: LTA Tennis Foundation serves up funding to refurbish courts



Work will start this month on a project that will give a new lease of life to tennis courts across the borough.

At the end of 2022, Redbridge Council secured £424,000 to refurbish tennis courts in 10 parks.

The project is part of a nationwide investment of £30 million by the LTA Tennis Foundation and the Government to refurbish public tennis courts across Great Britain and open up the sport to more people.

Courts in a poor or unplayable condition will be brought back to life for the benefit of communities with improved court accessibility, new gate-access technology and booking systems.

Alongside this investment, Redbridge Council, Vision RCL and NTA will also work with the LTA to deliver a range of activities across the park sites.

This will include weekly organised free park tennis sessions for all ages, playing levels and experience, where equipment is provided. Local tennis leagues will also provide friendly, sociable opportunities to get active through local competition.

Tennis facilities will be improved at Valentines Park, Goodmayes Park, Clayhall Park, Elmhurst Gardens, Ray Park, South Park, Loxford Park, Seven Kings Park and Barley Lane Rec, whilst Barkingside Rec will also be available to book online, including via the LTA website, making it far easier to find and book a court or activity.

Look out for an exciting announcement in the next edition of Redbridge Life about improvements we'll be making to cricket pitches in the borough.



**Cllr Kam Rai, Deputy Leader of Redbridge Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, Leisure, and Culture, said:**

“We’re very excited to receive this funding and the significant improvements it will help make to our park tennis courts. Tennis is a sport that gains in popularity every year, so it’s important that we have good local facilities where people can go and enjoy a good game of tennis.

“It will also help those children and young people who have dreams of becoming the next Emma Raducanu or Andy Murray.”



Want to find out about support and help for adults in Redbridge?

## Support and help for adults in Redbridge

We are launching a new website to support and help residents in Redbridge. Visit: [www.redbridge.gov.uk/adultcare](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/adultcare)

Many people find getting adult social care and support daunting. This site makes it simple, clear, and easy to understand. Our aim is to help people stay active, healthy and independent in their own homes for as long as possible by getting access to the right services.

The new website gives you the right information and advice to make your own choices about care to decide what works best for you.

Redbridge Council has built this website with the support of service users who have told us how they would like it to look and function. The site is easy to use and offers accessible and up-to-date information, plus a community directory with more than 400 national and local organisations offering advice and services on health, wellbeing, social activities and more.

If you are an older person, a carer, have a physical or learning disability, a sensory impairment, or mental health needs, the website will be able to signpost you and give you advice.



Visit [www.redbridge.gov.uk/adultcare](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/adultcare) to explore:

- What care and support needs you have and what support you could get.
- Services and equipment that could help you live at home for longer.
- Whether you are eligible for financial support from Redbridge Council.
- How to ask for care and support if you need it.

# Re-connect with magnificent Hainault Forest

**HEALTHY**  
Redbridge

Phase one of a project to restore and revitalise Hainault Forest will open on 1 April.

The first phase of a £7 million project to transform Hainault Forest Country Park has been completed, and people in Redbridge are being invited to come and see it for themselves at a special launch event on 1 April.

In 2019, Hainault Forest was awarded National Lottery Heritage funding alongside grants from Redbridge Council and the The Mayor of London to revitalise Hainault Forest.



More than £7 million has been invested to re-develop this magnificent landscape, including transforming the derelict Victorian barns, refreshing the visitor experience at the farm, safeguarding the site's ecology and natural habitats, and developing an extensive programme of activities and volunteering opportunities to connect visitors to the magic of the forest.

As part of the new visitor complex, the Woodland Trust is opening its very first visitor centre, providing a warm welcome to all those wanting to discover what the forest has to offer.

We have also installed a new Changing Places toilet thanks to funding from that organisation.

This is a larger accessible toilet for severely disabled people, with equipment such as hoists, curtains, adult-sized changing benches and space for carers.

More activities will also be available throughout the Easter Holidays, please visit: [www.visionrcl.org.uk/hainault-forest](http://www.visionrcl.org.uk/hainault-forest)

Phase two of the project, including new play facilities, will take place later this year.



Come along to Hainault Forest on **1 April between 10am and 4pm** and discover new visitor facilities, including:

Woodland Trust Visitor Centre

Local Craft Workshop Providers

Interactive Interpretation Centre

Foxburrows Barn – Venue Hire; small Weddings, Conferences, Meetings

1856 cafe

Take part in our family-friendly activities that will be available throughout the day:

- Woodland Detectives
- Guided Walks with Rangers
- Forest Explorers
- Nature Trail
- Adult Bushcraft
- Wellbeing taster sessions
- Volunteering at Orchards
- Information stall on volunteering and event opportunities at the forest

\*Free entry  
\*Car parking charges apply

\*Advance booking and charges apply to some activities. For more information, go to: [visionrcl.org.uk/hainaultforestlaunch](http://visionrcl.org.uk/hainaultforestlaunch)

# Discover what's on at your local library

Redbridge libraries offer a wide range of events for everyone to enjoy. Come along and take a look.

## Tech Ilford 2023 Saturday 17 June

Tech Ilford is back on Saturday 17 June where Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths (STEAM) will take centre stage at Redbridge Central Library and its surroundings. This year, discover a world of innovation with workshops wearable technology, virtual and augmented reality and artificial intelligence. All activities will be free and suitable for all members of the family. Visit: [visionrcl.org.uk/techilford](http://visionrcl.org.uk/techilford)

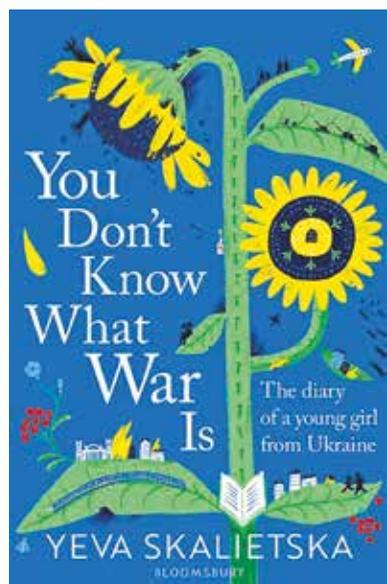


## Refugee Week



Refugee Week is an annual festival which celebrates the courage and creativity of people seeking safety. The theme for this year is 'compassion'. To mark the valuable contribution the refugee community makes to Redbridge, the library service will be hosting special book displays and events, including a book chat on Wednesday 21 June from 3pm at Redbridge Central Library to discuss 'You Don't Know What War Is' by Yeva Skalietska and other related books.

Everyone is invited. Find out more, at: [visionrcl.org.uk/refugeeweek](http://visionrcl.org.uk/refugeeweek)



## Fabula Festival – a celebration of books and culture in and around your local library

Redbridge's annual Fabula Festival is a unique celebration of Redbridge libraries and their power to transform lives through books and cultural activities.

Join Redbridge libraries this summer for a lively programme of performances, author events, workshops, children's events and specially commissioned arts projects, showcasing the very best in literature, drama, dance, art and technology. There's something for all ages and interests.

A kids takeover day at Redbridge Central Library in Ilford on Saturday 15 July will see the library bursting at the seams with a day of free family friendly activities and the launch of our Fabula reading challenge where you get to set your own reading target.



The challenge is open to anyone aged three years and upwards and encourages reading for pleasure throughout the summer months and beyond. All participants will receive a certificate and be entered into a special prize draw.

If you are aged 14 years and over and would like to volunteer with the library service, then look out for the various opportunities available this summer. Visit: [visionrcl.org.uk/fabula](http://visionrcl.org.uk/fabula)

## Library opening hours

Local people in Redbridge have backed plans to change library opening hours so they are available at times when most people have more leisure time, like evenings and weekends.

Redbridge Central Library in Ilford joins Seven Kings, South Woodford, and Woodford Green libraries in opening on Sundays, and some branch libraries are now open for longer on Saturdays, giving residents even more opportunities to enjoy library services and events at weekends. Visit: [visionrcl.org.uk/libraries](http://visionrcl.org.uk/libraries)



# Let's talk affordable homes

A new digital tool has been launched to keep people up-to-date with the council's ambitious Affordable Homes Programme.

The project aims to build 600 new homes by 2024, using £20 million in funding from the Greater London Authority's (GLA) 'Building Homes for London' pot.

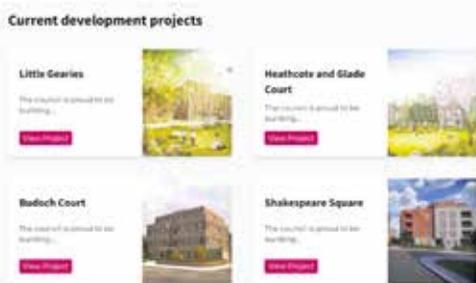
Many of those new homes are being built in place of, or near to existing properties in Barkingside, Fullwell, Mayfield, Fairlop, South Woodford and Newbury.

The new 'Affordable Homes Engagement Hub', which is part of the Let's Talk Redbridge website, will provide a digital one-stop-shop, with information about every scheme, dates for building work, regular updates and contacts.

Residents can also see diagrams of schemes and post feedback and suggestions on an 'ideas wall'.

This space will be monitored and we will respond regularly to comments made.

There will also be consultations, surveys and polls to gather views.



Visit the Affordable Homes Programme Hub, at: <https://engage.redbridge.gov.uk/hub-page/affordable-homes-programme>

**Cllr Vanisha Solanki, Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness, said:**



"Our new Affordable Homes Engagement Hub allows residents to keep abreast with the programme whilst providing them with a voice so their views can be heard. With a range of different features already in place, we expect the hub to continue to evolve over the coming months, making it a vital contributor to the overall success of the programme itself."

Whilst the benefits of the project are clear for our residents in need of a new home, we recognise that living near to a building site for a prolonged period can, for some people, take its toll on their mental wellbeing.

In partnership with the council's Public Health team, we've developed a mental wellbeing toolkit for those impacted.

**Cllr Solanki, added:**

"We want to help ensure those living on or next to construction sites are fully supported with relevant information and services to help make lives easier whilst we undertake essential building work as part of the programme. We hope residents find the toolkit both useful and informative."

To download the toolkit, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/25kb7m72>



## Help us decide local housing plans

It's not too late to help us shape our housing priorities for the next five years.

Redbridge Council is undertaking a listening exercise to help shape our next housing strategy. This is an opportunity for you to have your say across key areas including:

- Our approach to the development of new homes
- The improvement of existing homes
- The support for those in acute housing need, including those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

To complete the survey, visit: <https://engage.redbridge.gov.uk/housing-strategy> before midnight 13 March 2023.

## Our new online repairs portal is now live

Redbridge Council's new housing repairs reporting system is now live and can be used by all tenants to book issues directly with our contractor Mears. The new system will allow you to arrange repairs to your property at a time convenient to you.

Once you've booked your appointment you will receive confirmation and a text message the day before the appointment to confirm that it is still suitable.

Later this year we will be adding more options and new features, allowing both tenants and leaseholders to report repairs on their estate or in communal areas.

To use the portal, visit our main housing page, on: [www.redbridge.gov.uk/housing](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/housing) and select the tab 'Report a council housing repair'.



# Do you have space in your heart and room in your home? Then become a foster carer

Foster Care Fortnight (15-28 May) celebrates the crucial role played by these special people. We need foster carers from all walks of life to support children going through a difficult moment in their lives. Can you help?



Redbridge Council's Fostering service will be organising opportunities for you to find out more during Foster Care Fortnight. Visit: [www.redbridge.gov.uk/fostering](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/fostering) for details.

## Giving children a stable place to call home is key for Geraldine

Geraldine Roseberry has been caring for Redbridge children for over 23 years.

In that time, more than 100 children and young children have found a safe and secure place at her Newbury Park home.

As part of Fostering Fortnight, the mum-of-one is keen to share her experiences and recommend fostering to others.

"There is a deep satisfaction in supporting a child who is going through a difficult time. You have to do it from your heart; that must be your main motivation for fostering. For me, it's about giving children a stable place to come and be themselves, and to be a champion for their needs," she said.

Geraldine became interested in fostering after visiting an event and speaking to another carer. She said: "I asked lots of questions and it wasn't right for me at the time, but Redbridge Council kept in touch and later on, I reconsidered. My daughter and I talked it through and decided

the time was right to start our fostering journey. We haven't looked back."

After many years of fostering, Geraldine often bumps into people she's cared for when she's out and about. "It's funny, I'll be walking around the shops and someone will come up to me smiling and say: 'I thought it was you.' It's always lovely to hear how they're getting on with their lives. It's great they still remember you. They don't forget and that means you've done a good job because they had a positive experience," she said.

While she admits fostering can be challenging, and not all her placements have been successful, the vast majority are. She puts that down to being open and honest about expectations from the beginning. She said: "I have three rules in the house. They're very simple and it means everyone knows where they stand from the beginning. You have to set your boundaries. Like all children, some will try to push it, but we talk about it, and I'm open to compromise in some circumstances and I'll negotiate. Listening is very important."

In addition to active listening skills, Geraldine thinks the most important qualities a foster carer

## Fantastic foster carers thanked

Fantastic foster carers have been celebrated at our annual awards ceremony.

The council handed out 21 awards to foster carers in recognition of varying years of service (5, 10, 15, 20 and 30 years' service respectively).

The event was attended by the Leader of Redbridge Council, Cllr Jas Athwal, Redbridge Mayor, Cllr Thavathuray Jeyaranjan, Chief Executive Claire Symonds, and staff from our fostering service.

can have are being open-minded and to accept that not all children will like you, especially at the beginning of a placement. "You can't take things to heart. It can be a little bit tough but you have to remember the child is lashing out because they're angry or scared. With time, they see that you're on their side, and that you want to help them. But you do need an abundance of patience."

There's plenty of support available to Redbridge foster carers via their children's social worker and informal groups. Redbridge foster carers have a WhatsApp group where they can get advice from each other very quickly when it's needed.

She talks fondly about one of her former placements. The young person was with her since the age of nine and recently left her home to read physiotherapy at university. "I spoke to her recently and she told me she was in a routine of getting up early and going to bed early. I said to her 'you don't have to go to bed early anymore, you're an adult' but she said she preferred it that way. Instilling routines and nurturing her motivation to succeed has set her in good stead, and I'm so happy for her."

# Parents invited to have a voice in **shaping and improving services**

Redbridge parents of children with special educational needs, or a physical or learning disability, are being invited to join a special forum that works with statutory organisations to shape and improve services.

Empowering Parents Together (EPT) is dedicated to empowering and supporting parents of Redbridge children and young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) to have the best possible outcomes.

EPT was re-launched in October 2019 with a nine-member committee of passionate and dedicated individuals. All work carried out by the committee and its parent representatives is voluntary. They dedicate their time, their professional expertise, and their lived experience of disability to create positive change.

#### **Sharula Kangle, co-chair of EPT said:**

“Being a parent of children with special educational needs, or a disability, can often feel isolating and a lonely journey. EPT provides a safe space for parents to come and express their concerns and find a support network among like-minded individuals. We provide advice as well as signposting.”

#### **Co-chair, Parveen Mahal, added:**

“We welcome parent carers to come and join EPT. We organise workshops, coffee mornings and wellbeing events. We often ask professionals and specialists to come along and talk to parents. We also organise training for parents who might want help with a specific aspect of caring for their child, like sleeping or toileting.”

The forum’s aim is to work in co-production with education, health, and social care services but it is entirely independent of Redbridge Council and is solely the voice of parent carers in this borough.

Membership to EPT is free, and professionals are welcome to join as associate members.

The Department for Education funds EPT with a small grant each year, and it is part of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF) which have nearly 100,000 members across the country.



*Working together today, Improving their tomorrows*



To join for free or find out more, visit:

**[www.empoweringparentstogether.org.uk](http://www.empoweringparentstogether.org.uk)**

**Telephone:** 07486 880 799

**Email:** [info@empoweringparentstogether.org.uk](mailto:info@empoweringparentstogether.org.uk)

## **New hub** will be centrepiece of community thanks to local people

Residents have helped Redbridge Council design a new Community Hub in Seven Kings.

An impressive 1,250 residents have fed into the creation of a new state-of-the-art Community Hub in High Road, Seven Kings.

Local people from Chadwell, Goodmayes, Mayfield, Newbury and Seven Kings have been shaping the Hub which will have a library, children’s and young people’s facilities, GP facilities and a range of council services and community activities for families and residents.

Residents have been getting involved in co-design processes, events, ideas for change, surveys and a special design process involving under 16s.

#### **What’s next?**

The next step is to finalise proposals for the scheme to take in to planning. Watch out for further opportunities to shape how the Hub will run.



# Tackling rogue landlords in Redbridge

Are you operating a rental property or HMO without a property licence?

Landlords are reminded to take their legal responsibilities seriously. As well as making sure you have a property licence in place if you need one, you also need to keep up to date, and comply with all the relevant regulations.

Landlord responsibilities fall under a variety of legislation which include The Housing Act 2004, Housing and Planning Act 2016, Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, and more recent regulations under the Electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020 and the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2019 and comply with The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006.

The Council has powers to issue hefty fines of up to £30,000 as an alternative to prosecution for non-compliance with legal responsibilities. If you are found guilty, your details will appear on the Rogue Landlord Database register and you could be deemed not fit and proper to obtain a property licence.

Check whether your rental property needs a licence  
[www.redbridge.gov.uk](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk) search 'Apply for a property licence'

**LICENCE ONLINE  
AVOID THE FINE.**



## YOUR COUNCIL NEEDS YOUR HELP

Are you aware of an unlicensed rental property in your street?

Check whether the property has a licence:  
[www.redbridge.gov.uk](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk) search licensed property or scan the QR code.

The Council can help. We have powers to tackle issues like unlicensed properties, anti-social behaviour, dumping of rubbish, and poor property conditions. If you are concerned about a rental property, report it via [www.redbridge.gov.uk/report-it](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/report-it)

Everyone has the right to live in a healthy and safe home. Tenants who live **IN UNLICENSED** premises can also use a rent repayment order to claim back rent payments from your landlord.

Unlicensed rental property? See it, Say it, Report it  
**CRACKING DOWN ON ROGUE LANDLORDS**



## JUSTICE FOR TENANTS

Do you know if the property you are renting has a licence?

Tenants can now claim back up to 12 months rent from a landlord for an unlicensed property via a Rent Repayment Order (RRO).

Contact them at:  
[info@justicefortenants.org](mailto:info@justicefortenants.org)



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[www.visionrcl.org.uk/ROA](http://www.visionrcl.org.uk/ROA)



Scan with  
your phone

Photo © Nick White



Join us for our next **VIRTUAL**  
Redbridge Landlord Forum

Thursday 27 April 2023  
From 7pm to 8.30pm

- increase awareness of legislation, policy and procedures
- access training and information
- come and discuss your concerns with experts



Are you complying with your legal requirements for rented properties in Redbridge?  
Want to know more about housing enforcement?  
Unsure about your responsibilities as a landlord?

To reserve your place please e-mail  
[prslicensing@redbridge.gov.uk](mailto:prslicensing@redbridge.gov.uk) or visit  
[www.redbridge.gov.uk/housing/private-rentals/](http://www.redbridge.gov.uk/housing/private-rentals/)

[www.parnhamfunfairs.co.uk](http://www.parnhamfunfairs.co.uk)

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# REDBRIDGE FABULA FESTIVAL

A celebration of books and culture in and around your local library!

Join Redbridge Libraries this summer for a lively programme of author & illustrator events, performances and creative workshops in literature, music, drama, dance and technology. There's something for everyone!

**New for 2023** - Take part in the Fabula reading challenge where YOU get to set your own reading targets. Launching on Saturday 15 July, the challenge will run throughout the summer holidays. All participants will receive a certificate and be entered into a prize draw.

For further information visit  
[www.visionrcl.org.uk/fabula](http://www.visionrcl.org.uk/fabula)




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