

REDBRIDGE **LIFE**

LOCAL
SUPPORT FOR
LIDO PLANS



Page 4

HELP SAVE
OUR BRIDGE



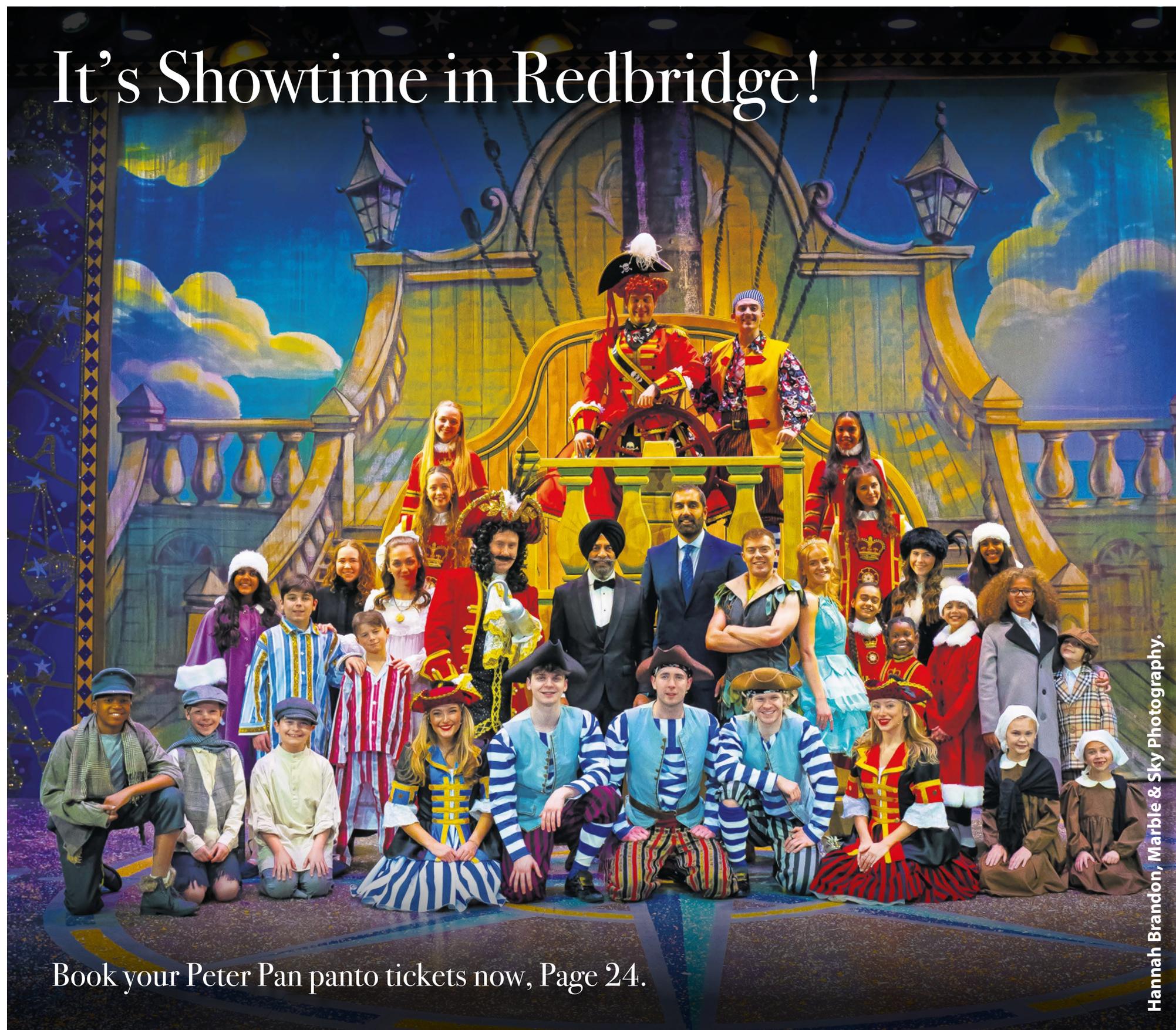
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SUPPORT IS
AVAILABLE
THIS WINTER



Page 12

It's Showtime in Redbridge!



Book your Peter Pan panto tickets now, Page 24.

Hannah Brandon, Marble & Sky Photography.

Christmas 2023 and New Year changes to bin collections

OUR STREETS
Help us create great streets and neighbourhoods



Due on	Collected on
Monday 25 December	Wednesday 27 December
Tuesday 26 December	Thursday 28 December
Wednesday 27 December	Friday 29 December
Thursday 28 December	Saturday 30 December
Friday 29 December	Tuesday 2 January
Monday 1 January	Wednesday 3 January
Tuesday 2 January	Thursday 4 January
Wednesday 3 January	Friday 5 January
Thursday 4 January	Saturday 6 January
Friday 5 January	Monday 8 January
Monday 8 January	Tuesday 9 January
Tuesday 9 January	Wednesday 10 January
Wednesday 10 January	Thursday 11 January
Thursday 11 January	Friday 12 January
Friday 12 January	Saturday 13 January
Monday 15 January - back to normal	



London Borough of
Redbridge

Customer Service opening times over Christmas and New year

Call centre opening hours

18-22 December	8am to 6pm
23-27 December	Closed
28-29 December	8am to 6pm
30 December-1 Jan	Closed
from 2 January 2024 opening times are 8am-6pm Monday to Friday	

Our face-to-face service at Lynton House will be open on the above dates during the hours of 9am to 4pm
www.redbridge.gov.uk/contact-us/
 For urgent enquiries call 020 8554 5000

HAVE YOUR SAY AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

All meetings will be held in person at the Town Hall, High Road, Ilford, IG1 1DD.
 Visit www.redbridge.gov.uk for information, agendas, and links to view online.

Council Meetings

Thursday 25 January **7.15pm**
 Thursday 29 February **7.15pm**
 Thursday 21 March **7.15pm**

For information on how to ask a question at meetings, please email councilquestions@redbridge.gov.uk and for additional public meeting dates, visit www.redbridge.gov.uk/about-the-council/public-meetings/

Cabinet Meetings

Thursday 21 December **7.15pm**
 Thursday 18 January **7.15pm**
 Thursday 15 February **7.15pm**
 Thursday 14 March **7.15pm**

Scrutiny Committees

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday 18 December **7.15pm**
 Thursday 11 January **7.15pm**
 Thursday 8 February **7.15pm**
 Thursday 7 March **7.15pm**

General Purposes Committee

Thursday 21 December **8pm**
 Thursday 15 February **8pm**

Licensing Committee

Tuesday 16 January **7.15pm**

Planning Committee

Tuesday 19 December **7.15pm**
 Monday 22 January **7.15pm**
 Monday 26 February **7.15pm**

Governance and Assurance Committee

Tuesday 30 January **7.15pm**
 Monday 4 March **7.15pm**

Pension Fund Committee

Friday 16 February **10.30am**

Local Pension Board

Tuesday 12 December **5.30pm**
 Wednesday 6 March **5.30pm**

Shareholder Reference Group

Tuesday 13 February **5pm**

Health and Wellbeing Board

Monday 26 February **10.15am**

For details about other scheduled Scrutiny or Policy Development Committee meetings, contact scrutiny@redbridge.gov.uk

Produced by Redbridge Council

The editor can be contacted via email, at redbridge.life@redbridge.gov.uk

London Borough of Redbridge, PO BOX No.2, Town Hall, 128-142 High Road, Ilford, IG1 1DD.

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Next issue out in March



LEADER'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the Winter edition of Redbridge Life

Dear neighbour,

As the year comes to a close, now is a good time for reflection, for gratitude, and for looking ahead.

2023 has been a busy year in Redbridge. We've put together plans for our new Valentines Park lido (P.4), completed the Hainault Forest restoration project (P.14), and supported thousands of local people through the cost of living crisis (P.12).

As a borough, we've come together to celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, the 120th year of our outstanding Redbridge Institute of Adult Education, and the opening of a world-class university medical school campus in Ilford.

As a council, we've delivered almost 100 homes for local families, supported the creation of a Community Grocery Store, and opened a brand new Engagement Hub – bringing vital services into the communities that need them most (P.20).

We've also worked closely with partners in the Police to keep our streets safe. This year alone, we've launched the #ThisHasToStop campaign, challenging sexist street harassment, delivered a new Community Protection Taskforce to crack down on antisocial behaviour, and begun work on a new Police Hub in Woodford.

We've also been working with the charity sector and business community to keep

our most vulnerable neighbours supported, and our high streets thriving.

Having lived in Seven Kings for over 53 years, I have been so grateful to see our neighbours come together through this challenging year, supporting one another, and remaining united in the face of adversity.

There is still so much more planned locally, as part of our commitment to investing in our borough and making sure Redbridge is the best place to live, work and visit, so watch this space!

Have a wonderful Christmas.

Councillor Jas Athwal
Leader of Redbridge Council



Redbridge Council bringing Police Hub to Woodford

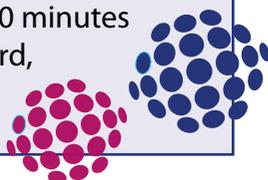
Redbridge Council, in partnership with the Metropolitan Police, is delivering a ground-breaking new Police Hub in Woodford, bringing Police back into local communities.



The new Woodford Police Hub will be home to at least 20 Police Officers working in partnership with council staff and Redbridge Housing Officers to prevent antisocial behaviour and support local people across the west of Redbridge.

Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams from Wanstead Park, Wanstead Village, South Woodford, Churchfields, Bridge, and Monkams will call the new Police Hub home, bringing them closer to their neighbourhoods and cutting down on travel time.

The new Police Hub will sit on the Orchard Estate in Woodford, within 10 minutes travel time of South Woodford, Wanstead, and Monkams.



Cllr Kam Rai, Deputy Leader of Redbridge Council, said



"Community policing keeps our streets safe, provides reassurance and empowers local people to develop good relationships with our Police Officers."

"As a council, we're innovating to deliver more for Redbridge. By working with partners in the Police and using council-owned spaces, like the offices in the Orchard Estate, we are bringing Police back into the communities they serve."



Deputy Leader Cllr Kam Rai with Borough Commander Chief Superintendent Stuart Bell and Police Officers.

Local lido plans receive overwhelming public support

Plans for Valentines lido move onto next stage after completed consultations.

More than 1,000 local people responded to Redbridge Council's proposals to build a new lido in Valentines Park, as part of an online and in-person consultation, and over 29,000 people visited the Let's Talk Redbridge engagement website to find out more about the scheme.

The Council ran several in-person events at Redbridge Central Library, as well as an online survey asking for local views on the proposed plans.

Following feedback from local people, stakeholders and partners, Redbridge Council has drawn up further designs and the official planning application process for the lido is now underway.

To view the designs, visit <https://engage.redbridge.gov.uk/valentines-lido>



Cllr Kam Rai, Deputy Leader of Redbridge Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Regeneration, said



"Our borough is a great place to live, work, and visit, and we're continuing to invest in leisure facilities so local families and visitors can access everything they need right on our doorstep.

"The new lido will provide a sustainable, fun, and social place for people to exercise in the great outdoors, while boosting our local economy and restoring the heritage of Valentines Park."



▲ Artist impression of the proposed new lido in Valentines Park.

You told us:

“

It would be a great addition to an already wonderful park.”

“

I think it's a brilliant idea. It will add to leisure facilities in Redbridge, become a further attraction to come to the Borough, and help boost the local economy.”

“

As a family of four with two young children, we couldn't be more excited. Communal spaces like this are so important.”



Urgent funding needed for Broadmead Road Bridge

Redbridge Council has written to the Government to seek urgent financial support to reopen Broadmead Road Bridge.

Join our campaign for vital funding to repair and reopen this critical transport link.

A major section of Broadmead Road in Woodford was closed to traffic in July 2023 due to significant structural defects reported following an inspection of the bridge. The road was immediately closed to prevent potential loss of life or serious injury.

Built in 1937, the bridge has served the area for almost a century and has reached the end of its life.

Broadmead Road will require extensive construction work and is expected to take a significant amount of time. Essential repairs to the bridge are expected to cost around £25 million, but could cost far more.



Having lost around 63 per cent of government funding since 2010, councils across the country are in an incredibly difficult financial position.

In Redbridge, the impact of government funding cuts and extra demand means we have around £230 million less to spend on public services every year. As a result, funding projects of this magnitude is not feasible within our budget. The Government must provide financial support to resolve the bridge defects and reopen this vital route in our borough.

In the meantime, structural engineers are conducting further surveys on the spans and legs of the bridge to establish the extent of the disrepair.

To find out more and sign our petition, visit <https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/have-your-say/broadmead-road-bridge/>



Key information

- The official diversionary route remains via the A406 to Chigwell Road or High Road, Woodford.
- We are monitoring roadworks in the Redbridge network area and reviewing future roadworks planned by utility companies.
- The bridge is open for pedestrian use.

Christmas recycling



Don't forget to use our recycling services for Christmas cards, cardboard boxes, paper wrapping (no glitter or foil wrap please) and more.



Worried you might have too much recycling? Our crews will happily take any extra recycling you have, and if you don't have enough recycling boxes, just place additional recycling in clear bags or cardboard boxes and leave it for collection as normal.

Christmas tree collection

Once the festivities are over, we'll collect real Christmas trees, for free, to recycle. To ensure collection, you must:

- Leave your tree at the boundary of your property by 6am on Monday 8 January.
- Remove all decorations.
- Ensure your tree is clearly visible.



We'll be collecting your tree anytime between 8 and 19 January, so please ensure your tree is placed at the boundary of your property by 6am on Monday 8 January to avoid missing collection. You do not need to book a council tree collection in advance.

Alternatively, you can take your Christmas tree and other items to Chigwell Road Reuse and Recycling Centre. Please just remember to check opening hours over the festive period, by visiting www.eastlondonwaste.gov.uk/chigwell-road

Local charity Haven House is also collecting and recycling Christmas trees from 13 January through to 25 January for a small donation that goes directly towards supporting their vital work.

Collections from Haven House must be pre-booked via the QR code, or on just-helping.org.uk/register-tree

For more information on Haven House, go to www.havenhouse.org.uk



Iford transforms into a Winter Wonderland

Thousands turn out to celebrate the festivities in Iford.

To usher in the festive season, Iford Business Improvement District (BID) created a Winter Wonderland in Iford Town Centre, with the annual spectacular Christmas Light switch on.

Crowds gathered on 25 November to witness an amazing talent show, indulge in delicious treats, and take part in an array of fun, family friendly activities, that got everyone into the holiday spirit.

As part of the celebrations, Iford town centre was taken over with fairground rides, fun assault courses, face painting, and of course, the man of the hour, Santa Claus, in his stunning grotto in the Iford Exchange.

The event included not one, but two breathtaking fireworks displays which lit up the sky and finished with a colourful confetti blast bang.

Council Leader Cllr Jas Athwal and Deputy Leader Cllr Kam Rai joined Redbridge Mayor Cllr Jyotsna Islam on stage to switch on the Christmas Lights, to the delight of the crowd.

Christmas Markets are continuing in Iford throughout the festive season, so why not visit and pick up a present or two?

The market is open 12pm – 6pm Thursday-Sunday, ending on 31 December.



Performers entertained the crowds.



Fireworks dazzled onlookers.

Local children bring Christmas cheer

Hundreds of Redbridge school children entered our competition to create the Council's Christmas card.

Earlier this season, Redbridge Council held a competition for local primary schools to create this year's council Christmas card.

We received lots of brilliant entries, and our judges had a tricky time selecting one, but we're delighted to share that Ivy Chinnery-Legg, age 5 from Wanstead Church School, won the competition. Congratulations Ivy!

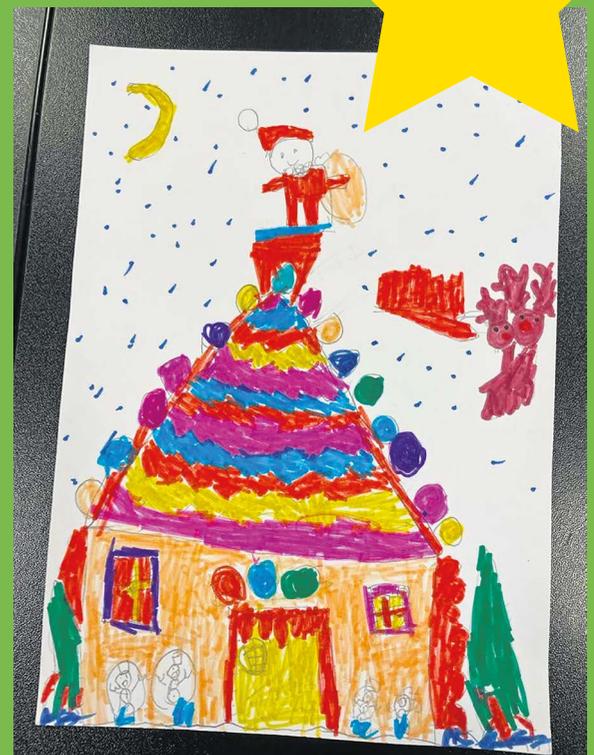
Abigail de Souza, age 7, from Coppice Primary School, and Lilianna Lally, age 6, from Parkhill Infants' School were both runners up for their wonderful Christmas designs.



▲ Winner Ivy Chinnery-Legg, age 5, Wanstead Church School.



▲ Runner up, Lilianna Lally, age 6, Parkhill Infants' School.



▲ Runner up, Abigail de Souza, age 7, Coppice Primary School.

Cllr Jas Athwal, Leader of Redbridge Council, said



"A huge thank you to all the local children who took part in our competition. Every entry was absolutely brilliant, it was so difficult to choose just one winner!

"Well done to Ivy from Wanstead Church School whose design took first place and will feature on our 2023 council Christmas card."

Help spruce up your street – adopt a tree pit today



CLEANER
Redbridge

Free wildflower seeds are available to help bring your street into bloom.

Redbridge's much loved 'Adopt a Tree Pit' is back, and for the first time, communities can team up to 'adopt' a whole street of tree pits to make their neighbourhood a 'Pollinator Pathway' for bees, birds, and other wildlife.

A Pollinator Pathway is a corridor of pesticide-free plants that connects different areas of habitat, encouraging pollinators such as bees to travel between them to access the food and shelter that they need.

By adopting a tree pit – or a whole street of tree pits under the Pollinator Pathway scheme – and planting wildflower seeds, you can create your very own mini garden on your doorstep and help local wildlife thrive.

Applications are now open for both 'Adopt a Tree Pit' and 'Pollinator Pathways' for 2024 and must be made by midnight on Sunday 31 December. For more details or to apply, visit <https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/our-streets/adopt-a-tree-pit-and-pollinator-pathways/>



Meet Redbridge's youngest litter picking hero

Three-year-old Tiago is keeping his neighbourhood tidy.



A local three-year-old, fed up with seeing people drop litter on the floor, has been helping clean up his neighbourhood and is hoping his actions inspire others to help keep the borough tidy.

Tiago Piccaro became the borough's youngest ever litter picker after noticing rubbish people had dropped in parks and on the street when out walking with his mum, Elisa.

"I've always made a point of telling Tiago it's wrong to throw your rubbish on the floor, but whenever we were out, he'd spot litter and would highlight the bad behaviour he was seeing around him" said Elisa.

Wanting to encourage Tiago's willingness to look after his local area, Elisa contacted the Council's neighbourhood team to borrow litter pickers.

Elisa continued "When I showed Tiago the Council litter pickers and explained what they do, he couldn't wait to start using them. He loved the idea of going out litter picking."

Speaking his mind about people littering, Tiago said "It's not very nice to throw things on the floor and make it messy. You must put rubbish in the bin."

The South Woodford duo went out weekly for several months, collecting a total of nearly 30 large bin bags worth of recyclable litter.

Among the rubbish, they found discarded were plastic drink bottles, glass beer bottles, tissue, food wrappers and containers, along with what Elisa described as "staggering amounts of single-use plastic waste".



Tiago with mum Elisa.

Speaking about people taking ownership of their neighbourhoods, Elisa said "If a child as young as Tiago can care about where he lives, we should all be able to. I hope his passion for keeping his neighbourhood clean and tidy inspires others. As a community, we all have a responsibility to look after the area we live in. It's our home. There are bins all over the place in the borough, and if you aren't near one, it's not hard to just take your rubbish home with you. When it comes to littering, the issue isn't there aren't enough street cleaners, or the Council isn't doing enough – the problem is the people dropping the litter in the first place. We need to hold ourselves accountable first."



Redbridge trials new, fast, low carbon **fix for potholes**



An innovative machine that can fix potholes in as little as two minutes was trialled by Redbridge Council recently to give road users a smoother journey.

The first of its kind to be deployed in the borough, the Injection Patcher carried out rapid pothole repairs using a pioneering technique known as Injection Spray Patching.

Not only is the process faster, enabling more pothole repairs in a day compared with conventional methods, it's also greener as there is no excavation, waste or heat involved – leaving a significantly lower carbon footprint on the borough.

On roads where the Injection Patcher was identified as suitable for use, the repairs were completed in just three steps, beginning with air pumped at speed into the pothole to remove dirt and debris.

Seconds later, the pothole was sprayed and coated with cold bitumen to cover and seal any cracks, followed by a final layer of aggregate applied at high speed – the whole repair taking just a couple of minutes to finish.

In a further boost for the borough's roads, the rapid repairs were carried out with minimal traffic disruption, often not even requiring road closures, with pothole fixes ready to be driven over almost immediately following repair.

The Injection Patcher machine, made by road repair specialists Velocity, notched up some impressive results with a record breaking 120 repairs in one day, and nearly 2,200 pothole repairs during the 12-week trial.

The trial worked alongside the Council's resurfacing programme and traditional pothole repairs being undertaken across the borough.

To report a pothole in the borough, go to www.redbridge.gov.uk/report-it/report-streets-and-highways/



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*	£156.00
Cockroaches	£192.00
Bedbugs*	£267.00
Pharaoh Ants*	£217.00
Garden Ants*	£119.00
Wasps* 1 nest	£75.00
subsequent nests	£40.00
Fleas*	£165.00
Commercial premises starting from	£224.00

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 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

These prices may be subject to change at the time of booking

CHARITY CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION

Leave the effort to us, we'll collect your real Christmas tree and recycle it locally!

Register from
15 Nov 2023

Trees collected
from 13 Jan
2024

Details of collection days will be communicated after confirmation of registration.



FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER YOUR TREE WITH A DONATION

just-helping.org.uk/register-tree

Kindly sponsored by
TIPPERHIRE
SELF DRIVE VEHICLE HIRE



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

JUSTHELPING

Haven House Children's Hospice will receive 90% of the net monies raised, the remaining 10% will be distributed to charities in the local community. Haven House Children's Hospice. Charity Number: 1044296. Just-Helping supports volunteers, businesses and charities to contribute to their community and the environment. Our national Christmas tree collection raises essential funds for hospices and communities.

REDBRIDGE REWIND

Exploring the Rich History of our Borough

A history of charity at Christmas in Redbridge.

Our borough gets into the festive spirit each year with celebrations across Redbridge, including Christmas tree light switch on events and visits to Santa's grotto. As well as celebrating, our local communities come together to support one another and give to those in need.

In recent years, local groups and the Mayor of Redbridge have organised charity drives for Redbridge Food Bank and the Salvation Army Christmas Present Appeal, but our borough has a long history of giving over Christmas.

Walter Stevens first started the Santa Claus Christmas Distribution Fund in 1894 while living in Stoke Newington. The fund asked for donations of toys, money, clothing, and food to be donated for poor and underprivileged children. Donations were delivered in parcels and distributed on Christmas Eve. In its first year, 310 parcels were delivered, rising to 1,710 parcels the following year. Children would wake up to toys including dolls, skipping ropes, skittles, tin trumpets, marbles, and slate pencils on Christmas morning.



MR. WALTER H. STEVENS,
Hon. Secretary.

In 1900, Stevens moved to Balfour Road in Ilford and that year, the Fund delivered 2,951 parcels on Christmas Eve to children across London.

By 1905, the Fund had expanded so much that Stevens' new house in Seven Kings was full to the brim with parcels. A hall was built in Durban Road, minutes away from Stevens' house, to store the growing numbers of donated presents. Stevens later became a Councillor, serving Seven Kings ward from 1912 to 1926.



Stevens held annual bazaars for the Fund at Ilford Town Hall. Items from the bazaars can be viewed at The Redbridge Museum.



The Fund continued to grow every year and even received donations from The Royal Family, with Her Majesty Queen Alexandra donating in 1905, and Her Majesty Queen Mary donating in 1913.

By 1912, the Fund was delivering over 10,000 parcels across London.



After the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, donations dropped significantly. By Christmas 1917, just over 2,000 parcels were delivered. Unfortunately, it is not known if the Fund continued following the war. However, we do know that Walter Stevens continued his charitable work, helping to create the Committee of the War Memorial Fund. Stevens died in 1938 in King George Hospital. A section of the hospital bears his name and is part of the War Memorial Gardens.

If you're looking to support people in need this winter, there are lots of local charities looking for donations and volunteers.

You can find out more by visiting the following websites:

Redbridge Foodbank www.trusselltrust.org/get-involved/ways-to-give/

Malachi Place hostel <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/thesalvationarmychristmas-2023-278>

Information source: Dr Colin Runeckles, a member of Ilford Historical Society.

CALLING ALL LANDLORDS!

Selective Licensing Scheme

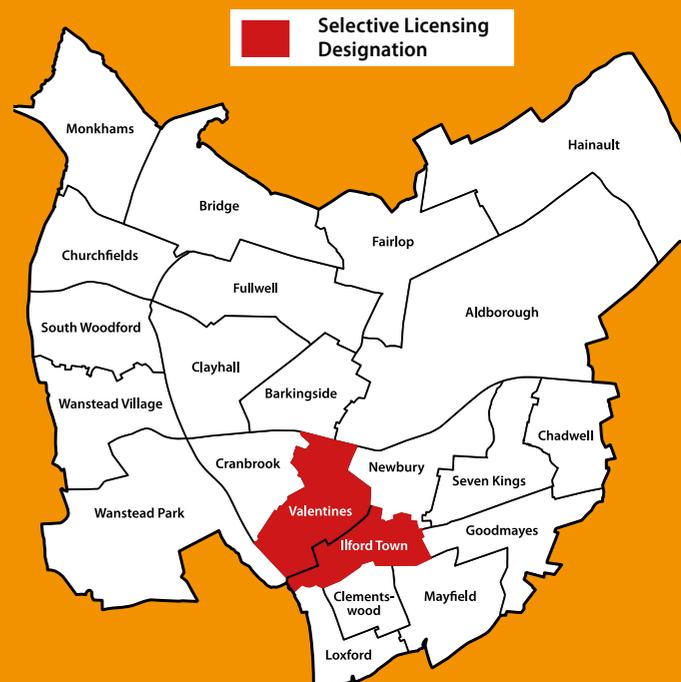
Redbridge Council approved a new five-year selective property licensing scheme in the **Iford Town and Valentines** ward areas, known as Scheme 3. This is a legal requirement from the **1 November 2023 to 31 October 2028**.

If you already have a selective licence for a property in these wards and it is still in date, it will remain in force until the expiry date printed on the licence.

To find out more information and check whether your rental property needs a selective licence, visit www.redbridge.gov.uk/housing/private-rentals

The introduction of this new scheme comes after a full consultation. Overall, it was found that there are significant issues with poor housing conditions and anti-social behaviour persisting within private rented properties in the borough, which the licences have been brought in to address.

Those who do not get the correct property licence could receive a civil penalty of up to **£30,000** or could be prosecuted in Court, where the fine is **UNLIMITED**. Not having a licence may prevent you from evicting tenants using the 'Section 21' process, and the tenant may be able to claim back up to 12 months' rent via a rent repayment order. The Council will normally seek to publish any prosecutions, enforcement, or legal action in the press and within publicly accessible government intelligence databases. It may also result in an order banning a person or company from operating as a landlord or agent.



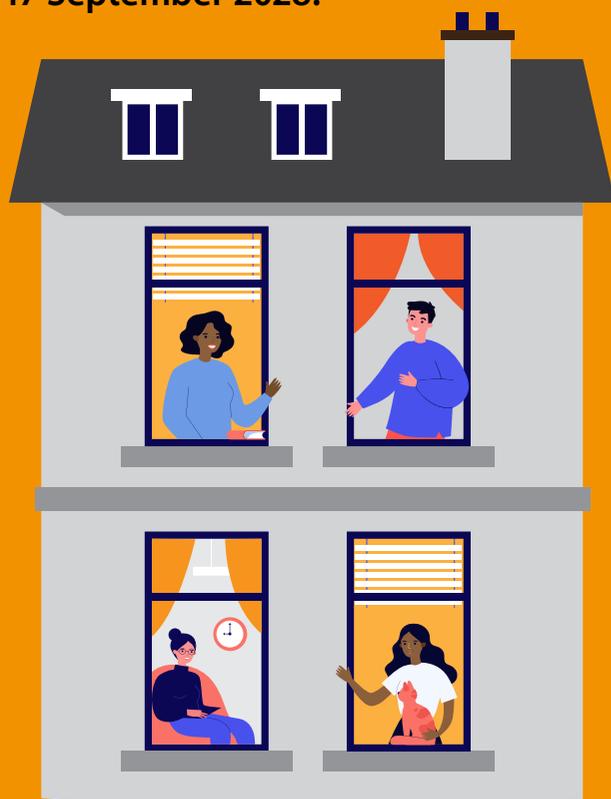
The London Borough of Redbridge Selective Licensing Scheme (Iford Town and Valentines Wards) 2023

Scan the QR code to see the public notice



Additional HMO Licensing Scheme

Redbridge Council approved a new five-year Additional Licensing scheme for small houses in multiple occupation (HMO) across the whole borough. Additional HMO property licensing is now a legal requirement. The regulation came in on **18 September 2023, and will remain until 17 September 2028**.



This means that any property which is rented to three or four occupiers, forming two or more households that share (or lack) a toilet, personal washing facilities or cooking facilities, needs to have an HMO licence.

This includes certain converted blocks of flats (known as Section 257 HMOs), but only where all accommodation units are privately rented, and the building and accommodation units are in the same ownership or control. This includes buildings within mixed use developments or above non-residential premises.

The introduction of this new HMO licensing scheme comes after a full public consultation. It was found that there are significant issues such as poor housing conditions, ineffective management, crime, and anti-social behaviour persisting within HMOs in the borough, which the licensing scheme will address.

For more information on whether your rental property needs an additional HMO licence, visit www.redbridge.gov.uk/housing/private-rentals

Scan the QR code to see the public notice



Cost of living support this winter

At this time of year, costs can creep up on us, and it is very easy to overspend or to get into debt. Help is available.

It's no longer just festivities that are putting pressure on our tightening budgets this time of year. With rising heating costs and food prices, many people are finding the winter months challenging.

There is support available for you, and your family, so please don't worry alone. Visit our cost of living website, at <https://costofliving.redbridge.gov.uk/>



Beware of debt

At this time of year, it is easy to slip into debt, and unfortunately, it is always so much harder to get back on budget.

There are budgeting tools that can help you manage your money and help you put enough aside to cover your bills.

 <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/budget-planner>



Illegal money lending

Loan sharks are illegal lenders who often target people who need to borrow money and can't access it from legal sources. They might seem friendly at first, but borrowing from them is never a good idea – even if you feel you have no other options.

Anyone lending money must be authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority. You can check on their website.

 <https://register.fca.org.uk>

If you've already borrowed from a loan shark, the important thing to remember is you haven't broken the law and there is help available.

 www.stoploansharks.co.uk

 **Stop Loan Sharks (24/7)**
on 0300 555 2222

Financial support checker

Could you be eligible for financial support that you're not currently receiving? Check and find out online. It could make that little bit of difference this winter.

 <https://costofliving.redbridge.gov.uk/welfare-benefits-advice/>

Holiday Activities and Food (HAF programme)



The Holiday Activities and Food programme provides free meals and fun activities for eligible children during the holidays, and can be found in a number of locations, mainly in schools across the borough.

We will be open during the Christmas holidays, so please book your place.

 <https://find.redbridge.gov.uk/haf>

Support with energy bills

With rising energy bills, it is important to understand your heating controls. You could consider using timers, switching off appliances when they're not in use, and finding out whether you're eligible for discounts on energy.

If you're falling behind with your energy bills and finding it difficult to pay, the best thing to do is contact your supplier as soon as possible.

Our Household Support Fund can also help with energy bills.

 <https://costofliving.redbridge.gov.uk/household-support-fund/>



Warm spaces

If you're struggling with heating and your home isn't warm, there are places across Redbridge where you are very welcome. Some have activities and some are quiet spaces. Please come along and you will find them warm, friendly, and dry places to be.

 <https://costofliving.redbridge.gov.uk/community-living-rooms/>

In debt and need help?

If you're worried about debts or have missed payments, advice is available. Please seek help early. You can get free independent help and advice from agencies, including the National Debtline.

Payplan

 <https://costofliving.redbridge.gov.uk/debt-and-money-advice/>

 **National Debtline 0800 808 4000**

 **Payplan 0800 280 2816**

Work Redbridge

If you are long-term unemployed and need some advice on getting back into work, our qualified advisors can offer free support.

 <https://costofliving.redbridge.gov.uk/help-finding-a-job/>



Samaritans

The Samaritans are here for you, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you are feeling worried about money, or anxious in general, please do reach out for help. You are not alone.

 **116 123**

 www.samaritans.org



DID YOU KNOW?

We wanted to shine a light on some of the people who are dedicated to making our borough a better place.

Do say 'hi' if you see them when they're out and about.

You probably see council teams out collecting your bins and tending to the trees, flowers and grass in our parks, but did you know Redbridge Council provides over 400 other services?

Which of these services did you know we provided?

Did you know... we help people live independently at Oakfield Lodge, Ilford?

"When people come to live at Oakfield Lodge, we give support with medication, cooking and staying well. This means family members can focus on spending quality time with their loved ones instead of having a to-do list of appointment bookings and checking in to make sure they're alright" said Cassandra Christie, Operations Manager.



Did you know... we have helped create 27 play streets in Redbridge?

Play streets are closed to cars for a few hours a month, enabling neighbours, children and families to play together.

Rayla Begum, East Play Street Lead, says "It was heart-warming to see neighbours who had lived on the street for decades coming out and talking to each other, as well as newcomers. I have high hopes for the beautiful, amazing relationships these play streets will create, and I'm looking forward to the many more positive community projects it will lead to".

Did you know... we have helped more than 1,800 households with the cost of living this year?

Georgina Ritson, Project Administrator, said "Someone came to us for financial advice, because they had no washing machine, we identified that a significant portion of their money was being spent at the laundrette, which then impacted the food they could buy. I was so pleased to be able to show them how they could get a contribution towards the cost of a washing machine and a cooker, and now, using the Community Grocery store in Ilford, they can cook cheaper nutritious meals at home."

Did you know... we have helped deter children from criminal gangs to keep them safe?

Our child protection teams have used virtual reality films as a tool to start conversations about exploitation, and how certain behaviour can place children at risk of being exploited. This approach will help them recognise the signs in the future and protect themselves.

Samuel, 17, said "Watching this film, I can see the risks involved and it is not as glamorous as I thought. I feel sorry for the character... one thing led to another and before he knew it, he was in a county lines trap house."



Street Cleansing

Ben, from the Street Cleansing team, said "It has always been rewarding to see the difference our work makes to the streets. From pavement washing to graffiti removal, it's all part of our role to help keep the streets looking neat and tidy."

We have many more dedicated staff who work tirelessly to help local people. Have a look at our website for more stories about our other services and how they impact our communities, at www.redbridge.gov.uk/did-you-know

Hainault Forest restoration project complete

Partnership working delivers £7m restoration.

This autumn saw the official completion of the award-winning Hainault Forest restoration project, which Redbridge Council delivered in partnership with Vision RCL, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Mayor's Fund at the Greater London Authority and the Garfield Weston Foundation.

To preserve the forest for future generations, Redbridge Council teamed up with partners to deliver a £7 million restoration project, which included a complete renovation of the Victorian barns, and the creation of a new visitor hub, with an event space, a café, artist workshops and a Woodland Trust visitor centre.

A new woodland-inspired children's playground was also created, complete with Redbridge's biggest slide. Our beloved Foxburrows Farm benefitted from new paths, barns and animal habitats for a family of Shetland ponies, alpacas, geese and rabbits who joined the existing farm animals.



Cllr Jas Athwal, Leader of Redbridge Council, said



"Historic Hainault Forest is much loved by communities across our borough, which is why we've invested, alongside our partners, to restore the Victorian barns, improve the landscaping and create a perfect family day out in the heart of Hainault."



Cllr Jas Athwal and Cllr Kam Rai join Deputy Mayor Cllr Saira Jamil and local school children officially opening Hainault Forest.

National Cricket Board stumps up £800,000 to improve cricket in Redbridge

Cricket in Redbridge will get a massive boost due to £800,000 funding to improve playing facilities in the borough.

The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) provided the funding to help ensure the sport becomes accessible and inclusive to everyone in Redbridge. The borough is a real hotbed of cricket, with an estimated 7,000 people, including men, women and children, playing the game.

We're also fortunate to have some homegrown players from Redbridge who have played professionally. A prime example is Nasser Hussain, who lived in Ilford and went on to captain England between 1999 and 2003. It was in our borough where Nasser honed his cricket skills.

A large portion of the investment will go towards helping improve cricket pitches in our parks. We have installed seven non-turf pitches in locations across the borough, and work will take place over three years to improve the quality of cricket pitches. The funding will also extend to providing new sprinkler systems to pitches and installing hybrid pitches.

Cllr Kam Rai, Deputy Leader of Redbridge Council, said



"Cricket has always been a popular sport in our borough, and you can see how much people enjoy playing the game when you visit one of our amazing parks at the weekend or throughout the summer.

"We're thankful to the ECB for this funding that will deliver massive improvements to facilities across the borough. We also hope it encourages the next generation of cricket players to participate. Who knows, we may have a future Nasser Hussain, Joe Root or Nat Sciver-Brunt in our midst."



▲ Work is underway to improve cricket facilities at Clayhall Park.

Have you had your flu and Covid-19 vaccines? **It's not too late.**

HEALTHY
Redbridge

We all want to stay well throughout the winter, so make sure your vaccinations are up to date.

During winter, Covid-19 and the flu circulate as we spend more time indoors. The NHS is offering free Covid-19 and flu vaccines to eligible people this winter.

Your GP will have been in touch if you are eligible for these vaccines for free, but do get in touch with your GP if you:

- Are aged 65 or over (including those who will be 65 by 31 March 2024)
- Have certain health conditions or a learning disability
- Are pregnant
- Live with someone who has a weakened immune system
- Are a carer
- Are a frontline health or social care worker
- Live in a care home

If you are not eligible for a free flu vaccine you can book a jab at your local pharmacy for around £20.

Most children can have the children's flu vaccine, usually given via a nasal spray. This includes children who were aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2023, school-aged children (Reception to Year 11), and children with certain health conditions. Parents of school-aged children will have had an offer of their children having the flu vaccine at school.

More information on the vaccines, eligibility criteria, and how to book, is available on the NHS website, at www.nhs.uk/seasonalvaccinations

Take care and stay well this winter.



Cllr Mark Santos,
Cabinet Member for
Adult Social Care and
Health, said



"Vaccinations are our best protection against the flu and Covid-19. For some people, particularly those over 65 and those with pre-existing conditions, there is a higher risk of developing serious illnesses such as bronchitis or pneumonia after contracting the flu or Covid-19. This can be life-threatening, and getting the flu and Covid-19 at the same time can be particularly dangerous.

"Make sure you get your vaccinations to stay safe and well this winter."

Are you feeling low and would benefit for some 'me' time?
Do you need support to be more active?
Are you looking to improve your wellbeing?
Would you like to try something new or re-try an activity?

Active Body Healthy Mind

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the above, come and get involved. From September 2023 - July 2024, you can find a full programme of activities in various locations across Redbridge

- Booking required
- 19+
- Taster sessions
- FREE

➔ **To view the event timetable and find out more about this project**
Visit: visionrcl.org.uk/activebodyhealthymind
Email: active.redbridge@visionrcl.org.uk

Managed by Vision Redbridge Culture & Leisure

**12 WEEKS TO BE A HAPPIER
AND HEALTHIER FAMILY!**

Free, fun family focused healthy lifestyle course for 4-11 year olds and their families.

During the 12 week programme you will receive healthy eating advice and behaviour change support along with the option of doing fun physical activity suitable for the whole family.

The Active Stars team will be there to answer your questions and help you find a way forward for positive long-term change.

You can meet other families and work together as a team to support each other – as well as the opportunity to win prizes to support your healthy journey!

Let's help you create long-term healthy habits for your family to help you feel great and live your best life!

For more information:

Visit: visionrcl.org.uk/activestars | Email: activestars@visionrcl.org.uk



Support our local businesses

Our high streets provide everything we need right on our doorstep.

From butchers to barbers, and fishmongers to fruit stalls, whatever you need you're sure to find it on our buzzing high streets. Local businesses are the heartbeat of our local economy, providing important services and goods for local people.

Our council is running a business incentive scheme to support local entrepreneurs. Businesses that meet the new criteria could receive a grant of up to £5,000 as an incentive to open, relocate or expand an existing business in the borough.



To apply, simply fill out an application form on the Council website, at www.redbridge.gov.uk/business/business-advice-and-support/business-incentive-scheme/

Wanstead Works

Asha owns a newly-opened co-working and events space located on Wanstead High Street, above Luppolo Pizza. The space provides flexible workspaces for people who require a quieter and more professional environment. There are rolling contracts available for customers who attend more than three days per week, or a flexible drop-in membership for those with a more ad-hoc schedule.

Asha said

"Work-life balance is becoming increasingly blurred. We provide a solution for those wanting a professional environment to work from, without the hassle of travel.

"East London becomes Essex, so the leafy village vibe is evident, but you are never very far away from connecting with the rest of London, through the A406, A12, M11 link, and, of course, the Central Line. This helps when booking our space for conferences, workshops, and events, and makes our space appealing to even those from outside the area."



▲ Users can either find a space to work or to host events.

Cakes & Bakes

Cakes & Bakes, Barkingside, specialise in making eggless fresh cream cakes for all occasions and celebrations. They produce cakes iced with butter or fondant icing, alongside a choice of other treats and desserts in a range of designs, flavours and sizes.

Established in 2010, Cakes & Bakes provides support to local schools and businesses in the area.

Owner and Manager, Kaji, said

"There are huge opportunities, support and potential to start and grow a business in Redbridge. The area is a prime location with a strong network and diverse community, enabling businesses to have friendly customers and buyers, and such a thriving economy. We are happy to have a business in a vibrant high street location."



▲ Just some of the many cakes on offer at Cakes & Bakes.



▲ FG Barbers recently opened its new branch on Ilford High Road.

FG Barbers

FG Barbers is a newly-opened barbershop on Ilford High Road, following a more established branch in Seven Kings.

Whether it be a shave, a trim, or a hot towel facial, FG barbers has you covered, with both walk in and appointment options available for customers. The shop prides itself on being reliable and professional, with comfortable and friendly surroundings.

Farman, Manager, and owner of both branches, said

"The key to running a business is to always be friendly and polite, with a smile. A lot of our customers are like family, so we know them by first name. Redbridge has a very diverse community which is why I believe it's the perfect place to start and open a new business."

Annual award ceremony recognises local entrepreneurs

Two new awards recognise what Redbridge does best.

The 2023 Ilford Business Awards unfolded in a magnificent display of talent and achievement, marking a significant milestone in celebrating the best of Redbridge businesses. With over 250 guests in attendance, the November event was an unforgettable evening of glitz, glamour, and recognition.

Redbridge is home to over 14,000 businesses, many of them small and locally owned. Our local businesses boost the local economy and ensure everything we need remains right on our doorstep.

To celebrate local business, the Ilford Business Improvement District (BID) hosted an annual awards ceremony, this year featuring 20 awards categories, highlighting excellence across industries. From innovative new businesses to high street favourites, each nominee

demonstrated an exceptional calibre that characterises the Redbridge business community.

One of the evening's notable highlights was the introduction of two new award categories, the Cost of Living Award, and Arts and Culture Award.

The new Cost of Living Award was presented to the Ilford Community Grocery by Deputy Leader Cllr Kam Rai.



Our 2023 Ilford Business Award winners include:

1. Vijay's Virasat Restaurant: Best Hospitality Business
2. Kings and Queens Luxury Interiors: Best in Customer Service
3. Dezin Studios: Best New Business
4. Rhythmic Care UK: Employer of the Year
5. Royal Nawaab: Ilford Business of the Year
6. RB Services: Independent Business of the Year
7. Space Ilford: Redbridge Art and Culture Award
8. Mont Rose College: Redbridge Business of the Year
9. Ilford Community Grocery: Redbridge Cost of Living Award
10. London Borough of Redbridge – This Has to Stop: Redbridge Beacon Award

◀ **Beacon Award winners, Redbridge Council's Community Safety Team.**



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info@tclreuse.org.uk**



SCAN ME



You are not alone. Reach Out for advice and support.

Domestic abuse can involve physical violence like hitting, or strangling, but coercive and controlling behaviours are also forms of domestic abuse.

If someone is trying to make you feel inferior, isolate you from friends, family, or other support networks, or take away your independence by stopping you working or controlling your finances, this is domestic abuse.

Coercive behaviour involves a pattern of threatening, humiliating, or intimidating someone, to exert control in a relationship. The perpetrator may use a number of tactics to control every aspect of the victim's life. This is domestic abuse.

Abuse can affect a survivor's physical, emotional, psychological, social, sexual and financial health and well-being.

2.4 million people
experience domestic abuse every year

1.7 million women
experience domestic abuse every year

700,000 men
experience domestic abuse every year

1 in 4 women
will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime

1 in 6 men
will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime

Signs of coercive control:

- **Taking control over aspects of your everyday life**, such as where you can go, who you can see, what you can wear and when you can sleep.
- **Depriving you of basic needs**, such as food, water, and heat.
- **Criticism and verbal abuse**, such as shouting, mocking, name-calling.
- **Disrespecting and humiliating you**, such as putting you down in front of others; telling you are worthless and a bad parent.
- **Controlling your finances**, such as taking money from your purse without asking, giving you allowance, demanding receipts.
- **Isolating you from friends and family**, such as monitoring your phone calls and use of social media.
- **Depriving you access to support services**, such as medical services.
- **Using pressure-tactics**, such as threatening to withhold money, disconnecting the phone and internet, taking away or destroying your mobile, tablet or laptop, taking the car away, taking the children away, threatening to report you to the Police, social services or the mental health team, threatening or attempting self-harm and suicide, withholding or pressuring you to use drugs or other substances, lying to your friends and family about you, telling you that you have no choice in any decisions.



He threatened to break my phone. He didn't want me speaking to my friends or family."



I was often scared, sometimes confused by the changing moods. I'm tired of walking on eggshells all the time."



He used to put me down in front of other people. It made me feel worthless."



I didn't have a bank card. He had control of all the money."

Keep burglars at bay this winter

Keep your home safe and secure.

Christmas is often a time when houses are left unattended as we visit family to celebrate the holiday period.

It's really important to take steps to deter burglars from your home while you are out.



Help keep your home safe by following these helpful tips:

- Always lock (or double lock) your doors and windows before leaving the house and before going to bed.
- Dispose of all present boxes and packaging carefully.
- In the evening leave a light or TV on before leaving home so it looks like someone is inside.
- Set your burglar alarm, and invest in a smart doorbell.
- Burglars can hide behind tall hedges, allowing them to reach your home unseen by others, so keep them trimmed low if you can.
- Install security lights around your house to prevent dark spots.

SAFER
Redbridge

Cllr Khayer Chowdhury,
Cabinet Member for
Enforcement and
Community Safety, said



"We need to work together to defeat burglars and car criminals. The Council is providing CCTV and ANPR support to the Police to intercept criminals. You can support our efforts by deterring criminals from your cars and homes."

Please report crime by calling the Metropolitan Police on 101 or via their website, at www.met.police.uk/ro/report/



In an emergency always call 999.

Find out more, at www.met.police.uk/burglary

Neighbourhood Policing in Woodford

We caught up with Daniel Green, who leads the Safer Neighbourhood Teams in Woodford.

Sergeant Green loves the strong sense of community in Woodford, as he explains

"It's always nice to attend our local community events; they are well attended. You certainly get a strong sense of community spirit in Woodford. It has been nice to meet people at some of our local events, such as Cuppa with a Copper and Street Briefings."

Like most areas, Woodford does have its issues with crime. Motor vehicle theft is one of the main things that keeps Daniel and his colleagues busy, "We tend to find that a lot of stolen vehicles end up in Woodford. Quite often, they are stolen from somewhere else in the borough and left for about a week to see if there's any tracking capabilities on the vehicle. The thieves then return to the location to see if the vehicle has been moved. We've made good progress by working with National Crime Agency colleagues to identify prolific offenders and conducting motor-vehicle operations locally."

Police Officers always have a good story to tell, particularly when asked about the strangest thing they have encountered. Daniel doesn't disappoint,

"We had one afternoon where a flock of geese landed in Woodford High Road, which caused a bit of traffic chaos. We managed to herd them somehow and move them on."

Daniel smiles when he says, "It's all in a day's work."



▲ **Cllr Khayer Chowdhury, Cabinet Member for Enforcement and Community Safety.**

Keep your car safe by following Metropolitan Police advice:

- Park in a well-lit area
- Always lock your car
- Remove valuables
- Use a steering lock
- Have an immobiliser installed
- Invest in a signal-blocking pouch if you have a key fob
- Install CCTV at your property
- Install a motion sensor

◀ **Acting Police Sergeant Daniel Green.**

New Engagement Hub opens in Ilford

The Ilford Lane Hub will provide council services to people right in the heart of our community.



Redbridge Council recently set up shop in the heart of one of our busiest high streets and most deprived areas, where we will provide struggling local people with a range of council services, including cost of living support and access to local Police.

The new Ilford Engagement Hub is part of our groundbreaking approach to decentralising local government, providing vital services right in the centre of communities that need them most.

The Ilford Engagement Hub will be joined by Engagement Hubs in Hainault and Chadwell, bringing vital council services directly into three of the most deprived areas of Redbridge.

The new Ilford Engagement Hub opened on Ilford Lane in November. Through the Hub, people can access Anti-Poverty team sessions, Redbridge Parents and Families Information, Support Services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and Metropolitan Police Safer Neighbourhoods teams. Our local ward councillors will also host regular surgeries in the Engagement Hubs.

With the cost of living crisis, the new Engagement Hub comes at a crucial time when people need access to council services more than ever.

The Leader of Redbridge Council, Cllr Jas Athwal, said



“Local people are struggling with the rising cost of living and so, despite government budget cuts, councils are having to step up and provide more support than ever.

“We’re innovating to deliver more with less government funding, by decentralising our services, we can bring our neighbours the support they need – right on their own doorstep.

“Our new Engagement Hubs are about providing council services right in the heart of our communities where people need them most. Ilford Lane is a vibrant and buzzing community, providing the perfect location for our new Hub.”

Since August 2022, Redbridge Council has directly supported more than 18,750 local people through the rising cost of living by providing:

- **2,500 awards** for energy, food and household essentials.
- **4,472 pensioners** with energy support and advice.
- **800 single vulnerable adults** with energy bills support and advice.
- **10,500 children** with Free School Meals outside of term time.
- **100 households in crisis** with financial support for energy and essentials.
- **400 local people** with debt support.



The Hub will be open at least 40 hours a week, mainly during the working week. However, it will also be open during some evenings and weekends to accommodate the shift patterns of the Metropolitan Police and Safer Neighbourhood teams.



Upgraded Loxford Youth Centre officially opens

The new centre boasts a music studio, an outdoor gym, and a production kitchen.

In October, the Leader of Redbridge Council, Cllr Jas Athwal and Redbridge Mayor, Cllr Jyotsna Islam, officially opened the newly-renovated Constance Bridgeman Youth Centre in Loxford.

Following a complete refurbishment, the centre is now home to a music studio, classrooms, a multi-use games area, an outdoor gym, and a production kitchen.

As well as offering space and facilities for young people to use in the evenings, the centre is now an educational hub with classrooms in use by local students throughout the day. The centre will also be open at weekends soon.

By co-locating education provision and youth services in one space, the Council was able to create a brand new youth hub with education funding; a similar scheme is being considered for Wanstead Youth Centre.

As part of plans to create a Loxford youth hub, Redbridge Council opened a new Sensory Playground for younger children earlier this year on the site of the Constance Bridgeman Youth Centre.



▲ Redbridge Mayor, Cllr Jyotsna Islam, officially opened the new Youth Centre in October.

Cllr Lloyd Duddridge, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education, said



"Every young person in Redbridge deserves access to quality education and youth services to give them the best possible start in life.

"We're innovating so we can deliver improved services despite losing 63 per cent of our government funding since 2010. By bringing education provision and youth services together in one building, we can upgrade our youth centres and make sure everyone in Redbridge has access to education."



Looking for a fresh start or a new career? Why not try Redbridge Institute for Adult Education



Redbridge Institute, based in Gants Hill, enrolls around 4,000 adult learners every year, and offered local resident, Pradeep Suthakar, a lifeline when she needed it most.

Newbury Park resident Pradeep Suthakar explains the enormous loss she felt after her dad passed away, bringing her own future into sharp focus.



"I just didn't know what to do, I was so lost. I eventually came to realise that if I wanted to widen my employment prospects, I would need more qualifications. I turned to Redbridge Institute for help."

After speaking to staff at the Institute, Pradeep made the decision to enrol onto a Maths Level 2 course.

"Having returned to studying after 20 years away, I was naturally very nervous and anxious. I had no idea what to expect. When enrolment day came, I was pleasantly surprised, the staff were so friendly and helpful, and the institute was clearly well organised and efficiently run, I felt at ease straight away.

"I really regret not returning to education years ago. I love the energy at Redbridge Institute and wish I had enrolled years ago. Particularly as, prior to moving to Newbury Park, I had lived in Gants Hill, opposite the road that the Institute is on. I just couldn't be happier here."

Pradeep is looking forward to her next challenge, completing a Level 3 Teaching Assistant Diploma, with a view to working in schools.

For courses starting in January, please visit www.redbridge-iae.ac.uk or simply email enquiries@redbridge-iae.ac.uk or call 020 8550 2398

Redbridge Home Improvement and Disability Adaptation Grants

A new grant policy, agreed in July this year, has increased the budget available for a number of grants, and has expanded grant conditions. This means, for people with disabilities or with specified health and safety needs, more support could be available.

If you need modifications to be carried out on your property to improve your access to it, or to improve your quality of life within it, check the criteria on our website (details below). You can apply online for a number of these grants.



More information on grants and application process, please visit our website www.redbridge.gov.uk search 'home improvement grants' or email us at: HomeImprovementTeam@redbridge.gov.uk

For enquiries about Empty Property Grant, please email at empty.homes@redbridge.gov.uk

SUMMARY OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE:

1. Mandatory Disability Grant:

- Funding Maximum: Up to £30,000
- Strict referral criteria apply
- Means tested for adults; non-means test for children

OBJECTIVE:

Assist disabled individuals in remaining independent in their own homes

2. Independent Living Grant (Discretionary):

- Funding Maximum: Up to £19,000
- Non-means tested
- Strict referral criteria apply

OBJECTIVE:

Provide a streamlined process for adaptations posing health and safety risks, enabling disabled individuals to continue living at home with assistive technology

3. Relocation Grant (Discretionary):

- Funding Maximum: Up to £10,000
- Non-means tested

OBJECTIVE:

Support disabled individuals in promptly moving from unsuitable or costly homes for necessary work

4. Home Renovation Grant (Discretionary):

- Funding Maximum: Up to £15,000
- Available for owner occupiers
- Means tested

OBJECTIVE:

Offer financial assistance for essential repairs in properties posing significant health and safety risks

5. Safe and Secure Grant (Discretionary):

- Funding Maximum: Up to £5,000
- Non-means tested
- Additional terms and conditions apply

OBJECTIVE:

Improve home security for victims of crime, ensuring safety and enabling them to stay in their homes

6. Empty Property Grant (Discretionary):

- Funding Maximum: Up to 50% of eligible works (maximum limit based on bedrooms)
- Property must be empty for over six months
- Additional terms and conditions apply

OBJECTIVE:

Restore and bring vacant properties back into use



Delivering affordable homes for local families

Programme remains on track to deliver 600 new homes by 2024.

The Affordable Homes Programme is part of Redbridge Council's commitment to providing high-quality, affordable council homes for local people.

We are building 600 new homes by 2024 on existing council-owned sites across the borough, supported by Greater London Authority grants.

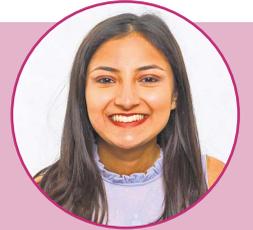
Due to years of underbuilding and dwindling council house stock as a result of Right to Buy, Redbridge currently has among the lowest number of council houses in London. On average, a local family must wait 13 years for a property.

To help address this housing crisis, the Council is building a mixture of one, two, three and four-bedroom homes across Redbridge.

Now approaching its final year, the Affordable Homes programme remains on track to be delivered on time and within budget, despite significant challenges with the rising cost of building materials, and reductions in government funding.



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



"The current housing crisis has meant the Affordable Homes Programme is needed now more than ever. Building new properties will help to transform the lives of local families, providing somewhere they can call home."



◀ **The newly completed Norman Road development in Ilford boasts six new affordable homes.**

Supporting people sleeping rough this Christmas

The cold winter months can be dangerous for anyone who is sleeping rough. Redbridge Council is here to help.

Traditionally, Christmas is a time of celebration and festive cheer. However, for people sleeping rough, it can be particularly difficult as the nights get longer and colder.

Throughout the year, Redbridge Council provides numerous avenues of support for those sleeping rough, so if you see someone in need, please make a report via Streetlink so we can help make sure they get the help they need.

Help is available for people sleeping rough, including:

- Support finding emergency places to stay.
- Support with a wide range of health needs.
- Support to find suitable longer-term accommodation.
- Support to move towards gaining independence.

Cllr Kam Rai, Deputy Leader of Redbridge Council, said



"Nobody should ever have to sleep rough, especially during the winter.

Our council is trying its best to help where we can. If you see someone sleeping outside, please make an urgent report."



▲ Malachi Place shelter opened in 2021.

If you see or know of someone sleeping rough, you can help them by making a report through the national www.streetlink.org.uk website or by calling StreetLink on **0300 500 0914**.

Streetlink will arrange access to local services and support.

You can also contact the Council's housing service team at housing.options@redbridge.gov.uk who will refer the details to the local outreach service.

If you believe someone sleeping rough is in danger, please call 999.

For more information please visit our website, at <https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/housing/housing-advice-and-options/get-help-if-you-or-someone-else-is-sleeping-rough/>

There's lots to do in Redbridge this winter

There are plenty of fun activities taking place across the borough this winter to get everyone into the festive spirit.

Pick your favourite Christmas tree

We have seven Christmas trees lighting up our borough this December. Enjoy a family day out and visit our trees while you cross off your Christmas shopping list.



Join the adventure to Neverland

Get ready for a two-hour action-packed panto that will transport the whole family from Ilford's Kenneth More Theatre to Neverland.

Join Peter Pan, the Lost Boys, and Tinkerbell as they have a swashbuckling battle against Captain Hook, his hilarious sidekick, Smee, and the rest of the crew.

Be prepared for amazing special effects, barrels of laughter, outstanding costumes, and some fairy dust!

This year's panto will be full of fun, magic, and catchy music. Don't delay – book your tickets now, by visiting <https://visionrcl.org.uk/event/peter-pan/>

Performances run until Sunday 7 January 2024.



Join Redbridge Libraries for some Christmas fun

Come along to Redbridge Central Library this December for some family festive fun, from 10am to 6pm every day until Saturday 23 December.

Some of Santa's elves have gotten a little lost in our library and we want to make sure they're not getting up to too much mischief. Join our fun elf trail to find the elves on the shelves.

There's plenty of Christmas art and craft workshops to get creative. Decorate a bauble or Christmas stocking, craft your own Christmas tree or create a special pop-up card for a loved one. If you really want to get stuck in, sign up to our Christmas themed slime workshop.

Don't leave the library without writing the most important letter of year and posting it in our special post box. We'll make sure it gets to Lapland.

Most events are free and do not require booking, but please check our website for all the details, at <https://visionrcl.org.uk/events/christmas-fun-in-redbridge/>

Elections and voting

Want to have your say? Make sure you've registered to vote.

Q When is the next election?

A The next scheduled election is the Greater London Authority election, where the Mayor of London and London Assembly will be elected. This will take place on Thursday 2 May 2024.

Q When should I register to vote?

A You can register to vote at any time, but to be able to vote in an election, you must have registered at least 12 working days before polling day.

Q How can I register to vote?

A You can apply to register to vote easily online by visiting www.gov.uk/register-to-vote or by calling the Electoral Services office on **020 8708 7171**.

Please ensure you have your National Insurance number to hand.

Q I'd like to vote by post. How do I do that?

A If you want to vote by post, you can apply online by visiting www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote. Or, if you prefer, an application form can be posted to you. Please call the Electoral Services office on **020 8708 7171**.

If you're registered to vote by post, shortly before an election, you will receive a postal voting pack through the post, which will include your ballot paper. You will need to complete it at home and return it by post.

Q How do I find my polling station?

A Your poll card will give the address of your allocated polling station. You will not be able to vote at any other polling station.

You can also check your polling station, at <https://wheredoivote.co.uk>

Do I need to bring ID?

Yes. You must bring photo ID with you to be able to vote.

Forms of accepted photo ID include:

- Passport
- Driving licence (including provisional licence)
- Blue Badge
- Certain concessionary travel cards
- Identity card with PASS mark (Proof of Age Standards Scheme)
- Biometric Immigration Document
- Defence identity card
- Certain national identity cards

Further information on voter ID can be found at electoralcommission.org.uk/voterID

Q If I do not have any accepted forms of photo ID, how do I vote?

A If you do not have any of the accepted photo ID documents, you will need to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate. This is a free photographic identification document specifically for the purposes of voting.

You can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate by visiting www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate or you can call the Electoral Services office on **020 8708 7171** and an application will be sent to you.

Q What can I do now to ensure I am ready to vote?

A It is a good idea to prepare well in advance of an election, so check the below steps and make sure you are ready to vote when the time comes:

- Register to vote if you are not yet on the electoral register, at your current address.
- Apply for a postal vote, if you would like one instead of visiting a polling station on polling day.
- Make sure you have accepted photo ID, or apply for a Voter Authority Certificate.



Register to vote, check your details are correct, or update them if you have moved house, at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote or by scanning the QR code ▶



Experience ELHAP magic with your child

Local charity ELHAP facilitates adventure and nature play opportunities for children and young people with disabilities and complex care needs, whilst providing vital respite for their families and carers.

Every Life Has a Purpose (ELHAP) is a magical and unique Redbridge charity. ELHAP have been hosting nature play opportunities for children and young people with disabilities since 1976. Each year, they facilitate over 6,000 visits and directly support 300 families. Assisted by an amazing team of playworkers, each child's support needs are met and opportunities for imaginative fun are endless.

ELHAP is one of Redbridge Mayor Cllr Jyotsna Islam's chosen charities that she is supporting during her Mayoral term.

ELHAP's five-acre woodland setting in Woodford Bridge is home to an ancient orchard, a nature reserve, and the largest specialist adventure playground in the country.

Parents describe ELHAP as a 'lifeline'. Families can enjoy vital respite whilst their children benefit from being physically active outdoors. The sessions help to build resilience, confidence, and self-esteem, whilst providing opportunities to socialise and develop important friendships. Being part of the ELHAP community creates a genuine sense of belonging and acceptance, where children and young people with disabilities have the freedom to be themselves and thrive.

Experience ELHAP magic with your child by joining the 'Stay and Play' sessions, which are open to any family who has a child with a disability, and lives in Redbridge or Waltham Forest. Parents must supervise their child at all times. Siblings are welcome too. For more information and to register, please visit www.elhap.org.uk/stay-and-play



Demand for these services is at an all-time high. Help provide more playscheme sessions to the children and families who need them most by making a donation, taking on a fundraising challenge or by volunteering. Visit www.elhap.org.uk for more information.

Contact ELHAP by telephone on **020 8550 2636** or email info@elhap.org.uk



Make a difference through our Community Seed Fund

If you're a non-profit group or organisation with a brilliant idea that can help our local community, then get ready to place a bid for our Community Seed Fund which launched last month.

Redbridge Council is looking for new ideas that help deliver services 'The Redbridge Way' and address the following priorities set out in the Council's Redbridge Plan:

- Safe and Healthy
- Homes and Neighbourhood
- Jobs and Skills
- Clean and Green

For more information on The Redbridge Way and our council's priorities, you can read the Redbridge Plan online, via <https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/about-the-council/redbridge-plan/>

Any non-profit group or organisation who meet the following criteria can make an application:

- Your income in the last financial year (or average per annum over the last three years) must not exceed £100,000. Applications are particularly

encouraged if your income did not exceed £50,000.

- All the funding applied for must benefit the London Borough of Redbridge.

Applications for up to a maximum of £3,000 will remain open until 31 March 2024, unless the £50,000 total is exhausted beforehand. So if you want to make a positive difference in your neighbourhood, make sure you apply sooner rather than later!



▲ Make a difference to your local community.

Applications will be reviewed monthly, allowing grants to be distributed into the community quickly.

Further details about the Community Seed Fund, including instructions on how to apply, can be found at <https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/about-the-council/voluntary-sector-grants/>



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 300 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/fosteringlife

Call us on 020 8708 6068

Email us fostering@redbridge.gov.uk



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

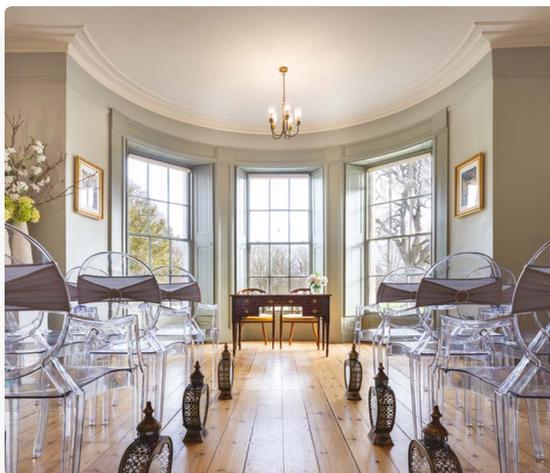
Please contact Redbridge Children's Services

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

or visit www.redbridge.gov.uk/private-fostering for more information



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A new round of Redbridge Go Green Grants launched in December 2023



Eligibility

- Your property will need to have an Energy Performance Certificate rating of D, E, F or G. If you do not currently have an EPC certificate registered to your property this will be completed for you at the time of survey.
- Household income of £30,000 or under.
- Owner occupiers, landlords and tenants are eligible for funding. In the case of a rental property, the income eligibility applies to the existing tenant and not the landlord. The landlord must have an assured shorthold tenancy agreement in place with an existing tenant to be eligible for the grant.



Please note applications will be considered on a first come, first serve basis

The scheme can offer the following measures.

- Cavity wall insulation
- Underfloor insulation
- Loft insulation
- Solar panels
- Heating and temperature controls
- Hot water cylinders (replacement or insulation)
- Glazing

This is not an exhaustive list and will depend on the recommendations made by our surveyors.

If measures selected are above the maximum threshold of £4,500 the difference will need paid for in advance of the works commencing.

▶ To make an application please visit www.redbridge.gov.uk/housing/private-rentals/go-green