

A woman with curly hair, wearing a black dress with a large silver belt buckle, is singing into a microphone on stage. The background is dark with purple lighting.

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- School hunger – what is it and how are we helping?
- Our achievements as UK's first Borough of Sanctuary
- Young Mayor Jentai shares an update





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Message from the Mayor



Damien Egan,
 Mayor of
 Lewisham

Welcome to this issue of Lewisham Life – it’s packed with news and updates about things going on across our borough.

You can read an update on our exciting plans for Lewisham Town Centre, which are really taking shape after we successfully bid for funding to transform Lewisham Library and improve the market and surrounding areas. It’s going to make such a difference to the area, and you’ll start to notice work starting over the coming months.

During the summer holidays, I have been visiting the children who are enjoying our Holiday Activity and Food programme, where over 2,000 children in Lewisham benefit from free

activities and lunches. The programme is a vital lifeline to many families during the school holidays and it has been great to see so many smiling faces from the children and coaches on my visits.

We know that the cost of living crisis is still having a big impact on people’s lives. We’re doing everything we can to support residents during this difficult time and on page 24 you can find out about support that’s available, including advice drop-in sessions where you can find out about benefits, community food support and advice about energy bills.

In July, we welcomed our 100th refugee family to Lewisham, meeting our manifesto commitment to welcome 100 families from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. To celebrate this, the Council and partners hosted a celebration in Mountsfield Park during Refugee Week. I enjoyed joining lots of new Lewisham residents, and the brilliant local organisations that support them. You can read about our Borough of Sanctuary Work on page 18.

And finally from me, don’t forget to read the update from our Young Mayor, Jentai. He has been doing a brilliant job, representing young people and listening to their views – and he’s just launched a survey to get feedback from young people about his ideas, so please do take a look.



Damien Egan, Mayor of Lewisham



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Adult Learning Lewisham ALL TOGETHER WE FLOURISH



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Thames Water
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 (customer services)

0800 714614 (24-hour leakline)

Gas emergencies 0800 111 999

Starting secondary school next year

If you have a child about to go into Year 6, you will need to apply for a place for secondary school. The deadline for applications is Tuesday 31 October.

Sign up to receive weekly reminders, tips and advice by email about applying for a secondary school place. To sign up visit lewisham.gov.uk/secondaryadmissions



£1 tickets for Jack and The Beanstalk pantomime

Over 300 tickets priced at £1 will be available for the new production of Jack and The Beanstalk which takes the stage at Broadway Theatre this Christmas.

The initiative was announced by Joy Productions, co-producers of the pantomime, who are partnering with local community and faith groups to ensure the tickets are allocated to those who will benefit most. They are encouraging other local groups who are interested in the scheme to contact Helen Foster, their Head of Outreach, on hjfoster@hotmail.co.uk.

Julie Clare, Joy Productions' Lead Producer said:



"It's the groups already doing amazing work in the community who are best placed to know which families are in most need. So we're asking up to 83 groups to each nominate a family to be part of the scheme this year. And there are other group

discounts available as well." Further plans include a Talent Pipeline Scheme aimed at getting those from diverse and working class backgrounds into theatre, plus theatre days for primary school children from next September.

New homes for Deptford

A new 100% affordable housing development has been completed in Deptford, providing 56 new homes to help tackle the housing crisis.

1 Creekside is made up of 22 social homes and 34 shared ownership homes – the first shared ownership homes to be delivered by Lewisham Council.

Shared ownership is a form of affordable housing where buyers purchase an initial share of a property and pay rent on the remaining share. The scheme is aimed at residents who are trying to get onto the housing ladder, with priority given to people already living and working in Lewisham.



The 22 social homes have been rented out to families on the Council's housing waiting list, helping families out of temporary or overcrowded accommodation.

Measles on the rise – get vaccinated now

Measles cases are rising in England, particularly in London. Measles is more than just a rash and can lead to serious illness.



Now more than ever, it's important to ensure that you protect your children's health by getting them vaccinated.

The NHS offers safe and

effective routine vaccinations for measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) as well as for other illnesses such as polio, that can be serious and potentially life-threatening.

Our local NHS has lots of information including a useful timeline where you can see at which age immunisations are due.

Visit selondonics.org/childrenshealth or speak to your GP to help your children stay well and get protected.

Let's get Lewisham moving!

The Council has launched a new five-year plan to get more residents active. It's not just about traditional sporting activities it's about finding different ways of being active – from making the most of our award-winning parks, our well-equipped leisure centres and the wonderful community groups that we have right across our borough. lewisham.gov.uk/lets-get-lewisham-moving



Anyone for tennis?

Tennis court facilities in four Lewisham parks have officially reopened after a £280,000 renovation, jointly funded by Lewisham Council, LTA Tennis Foundation and the UK Government.

The courts at Chinbrook Meadows, Ladywell Fields (the

Catford Bridge station end), Hilly Fields and Telegraph Hill have undergone extensive improvements and offer a significant boost to sporting facilities in the borough, as well as increasing accessibility to tennis for all ages and experience.

Vote for your favourite local businesses

Lewisham's businesses make an outstanding contribution to the local economy and to our daily lives. We will be revealing the businesses that have made our shortlist in September and need your help to decide

the winners! There are 14 categories this year, across a variety of businesses, so there's plenty of opportunity to vote for your favourites.

Go online to cast your vote lewisham.gov.uk/businessawards

Soak up local art at Deptford X

2023 marks 25 years of Deptford X, a free 10-day arts festival taking place from Friday 22 September – Sunday 1 October. The milestone will be celebrated with six new artist commissions, a parade for all ages including students from Deptford Green school and older people from over 60s art group, Meet Me at The Albany, exhibitions, open studios and more. For more information visit deptfordx.org

Worried about drugs or alcohol?

Did you know that free help and support is available for anyone in Lewisham who is worried about drugs or alcohol?

Our website has lots of information about the local support and treatment services available, from one-to-one support and family advice to detox and rehab options. Support is available to everyone, including through our dedicated young people's drug and alcohol service – Insight Lewisham.

Visit lewisham.gov.uk/drugs-alcohol or speak to your GP.



More cycle hangars will be installed

Sustainable Streets proposals approved

Proposals to create more sustainable streets in Deptford, Crofton Park and Catford have been approved, following consultation with local residents and businesses. The Sustainable Streets programme aims to reduce the number of

car journeys made in Lewisham and encourage more people to walk, cycle or use public transport, in order to reduce traffic and pollution and improve road safety.

New parking permit schemes, cycle hangars, street trees and EV

charging points will be installed on certain roads in these areas from October, with consultation on proposals for roads in Evelyn currently underway.

To find out more, go to lewisham.gov.uk/SustainableStreetsProgramme

Health alerts go digital

A new 'community virtual ward' service is supporting discharged hospital patients in Lewisham with their recovery at home.

The service is run by One Health Lewisham in partnership with Lewisham Hospital. Patients who are discharged from hospital are

provided with equipment that they or their carers can use at home to monitor and record their vital signs. These are monitored remotely by medical professionals, who can be promptly alerted to any potential issues that require medical support.

The technology allows

patients to be discharged from hospital safely, allowing in-patient care to be prioritised for those who need it while providing peace of mind to people recovering at home.

For more information visit onehealthlewisham.co.uk/community-virtual-ward

Lewisham Homes moves in house

Lewisham Council will start managing around 20,000 homes across the borough from October, which will include things like repairs, maintenance, improvements and rent and service charge collections.

These properties are currently looked after by Lewisham Homes, which is being brought in house to be managed by the Council. Tenants and leaseholders' rights will not change and rent levels and service charges will continue to be reviewed annually. Staff

from Lewisham Homes are moving over to the Council and will continue to deliver housing services.

By bringing services back under direct control of the Council, we can provide better value for money, for example, by avoiding doubling up on services that both the Council and Lewisham Homes provide and making it easier to access support from other Council services.

To find out more visit lewisham.gov.uk/housingfutures

Support for local business owners

BIPC Lewisham is a free service for local business owners and entrepreneurs, which is based at Catford Library and run as a partnership between Lewisham Council and the British Library's Business and IP Centre (BIPC).

If you're an entrepreneur based in Lewisham and you need help with things like trademarking or patenting, improving your practical skills, or would benefit from networking events, BIPC Lewisham can help. Visit lewisham.gov.uk/bipclewisham for more information.

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Youth club gets a makeover

Work is getting underway on the ambitious renovation of Riverside Youth Club in Deptford. The £1.2 million project will see the creation of a new state-of-the-art 3G football pitch and games

area, gym, indoor sports, kitchen, and flexible learning spaces for young people and the community.

The project is being delivered by Lewisham Council in partnership with Youth First and Millwall

Community Trust. We're delighted that young people have played a key role in shaping the plans, and they'll continue to be actively involved with the project, ahead of a planned opening in spring 2024.



Hop on board!

World Car Free Day is Friday 22 September, and residents across the borough will be enjoying a traffic-free road by holding a Play Street over the weekend of Friday 22 to Sunday 24 September.

The charity London Play is giving away free spacehoppers and other play equipment to residents who are keen to try out a play street on their road. Additionally, one lucky group of

neighbours will win an on-street go kart build and race workshop on the day. For more information visit londonplaystreets.org.uk

Is your road holding a Play Street? Share your World Car Free Day pics with us by tagging @LewishamCouncil on social media over the weekend.

If you are interested in your road becoming a Play Street, you can apply by visiting lewisham.gov.uk/play-streets

Discover a new skill

Whether you want to try something new or improve your existing skills, our adult learning service has over 700 courses to choose from.

You can learn a new language, improve your fitness learning yoga or Pilates, explore your creativity on a dark room photography or printmaking course, cook healthy food with your pre-schooler, or improve your English and maths on a free course.

Sign up for courses starting in September on our website, over the phone on 020 8314 5969, Monday–Friday 10am–4pm, or in person at one of our adult learning centres.

If you are thinking about retraining for a new career or want to develop a hobby, why not book an appointment with a career's information, advice and guidance officer who will be able to help you make the right choices.

Book an appointment by emailing adultlearning@lewisham.gov.uk or calling 020 8314 9196.

Find a course at: lewisham.gov.uk/find-a-course



Gold at the London Youth Games

Lewisham's young road cyclists triumphed over the rest of London's boroughs as they claimed gold at the London Youth Games' Finals Festival at Stratford's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.

In the first weekend of July, 4,000 participants competed in the London Youth Games finals of athletics, tennis, BMX, swimming,

road cycling, basketball, volleyball, netball, hockey, aquathlon and table tennis.

The cycling success didn't end there, with Lewisham also winning an individual gold and a team silver in the BMX event.

In addition, Lewisham teams won silver in sailing and bronze in Aquathlon. Huge congratulations to everybody who took part!

A new cultural vision for Lewisham

We had a fantastic year as London Borough of Culture 2022. More than 435,000 people – of all ages and backgrounds – came together to celebrate everything that makes Lewisham a special and unique place. To build on that legacy, the Mayor and Cabinet have approved a new strategy which will ensure everybody has opportunities to access and benefit from culture – especially our children and young people.

Hear from Cllr James-J Walsh, Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Communication about why this is so important for the borough lewisham.gov.uk/newsandupdates

A big thank you to the litter pickers

Three young friends from John Ball Primary School, Sia Chawla, Emma Conway-Pinto, and Amaia Dunstan, have formed The Litter Committee to combat littering and promote cleaner communities. They noticed the litter in their local area and came together equipped with gloves, rubbish bags, and boundless enthusiasm, to clean litter from local roads and public spaces. Their efforts have resulted in reduced littering and increased community pride.

Thank you to Sia, Emma, and Amaia for their dedication. Their work highlights how motivated Lewisham's young people are to make positive changes to their environment.



Shaping Lewisham to 2030

As we look to the future, we are launching Lewisham 2030 which will set out our shared hopes and ambitions for the borough into the next decade.

We want you to have your say and help us understand what residents want to see happen in Lewisham. Join Lewisham's largest conversation and share your thoughts on the future of our borough.

We are working with partners across the borough and want to know your hopes for Lewisham in 2030. What should we focus on?

We know that we are faced with pressing challenges such as climate change, the cost-of-living crisis and inequality. By working together, we have a greater chance of tackling these challenges. To do this, we want to hear from as many people as possible, so please tell us your thoughts in our 10 minute survey.

At the end there are a few questions 'about you' that help us make sure we are hearing from a wide variety of people from across the borough.

The survey closes on Sunday 29 October and you can fill it out at lewisham.gov.uk/lewisham2030 or ask for a paper version at any of our libraries.



You can also find out more and complete the survey by scanning the QR code



Lewisham 365

Celebrating Lewisham's Black History this October and beyond.

Black History Month in the UK takes place every October, when communities across the country celebrate the contributions Black people have made to every aspect of British life. While this is an important landmark, in Lewisham we believe Black history should be championed all year round.

We established Black History Lewisham 365 in 2021 because we believe our Black African and Caribbean and diaspora communities are making history every day – through politics, culture, education, business, community activism and more. We also wanted to provide a platform for Black voices.

In the two years since the initiative started, we've worked hard to better understand and address some of the systemic inequalities Black communities face in many areas of their lives – in healthcare, in business and in the classroom.



The journey so far Arts and culture

London Borough of Culture 2022: We're proud to have championed Black creators and trailblazers as part of We Are Lewisham programme – from the poet Inua Ellams to the social activist Sybil Phoenix OBE, MBE; from choreographers Alleyne Dance to musician Dave Okumu.

Our businesses

The pandemic was tough for business owners but even more so for those from diverse backgrounds. In 2021, we were the first borough in the country to run a census of our local high streets to help us identify and address disparities for Black, Asian and other minoritised business owners.

We listened to our retailers and based on their feedback implemented a tailored support programme for Black entrepreneurs, alongside all the other business initiatives that were already available. This includes partnering with Kinaraa – a Black business support network – and launching the Black Business Forum as part of our BIPC Lewisham initiative.

The results of our second survey are due to be released later this September so watch this space.

Our schools

We want all of our young people to achieve their potential regardless of their ethnic background and we're pleased that all of our schools and colleges have signed a pledge to actively tackle race inequality. We are training school staff in racial literacy, and working on ways to ensure the school curriculum better reflects the diverse heritage of the community in Lewisham.

Healthcare

We launched the Birmingham and Lewisham African & Caribbean Health Inequalities Review (BLACHIR) in Parliament last autumn – a ground-breaking research project we undertook with Birmingham City Council to combat inequalities in healthcare for Black communities in Britain. It found disadvantages with housing, lack of green spaces, pollution issues, unemployment, crime and food and fuel poverty were all contributing to worse health outcomes for Black communities in Britain. The report gives seven key recommendations to focus on.

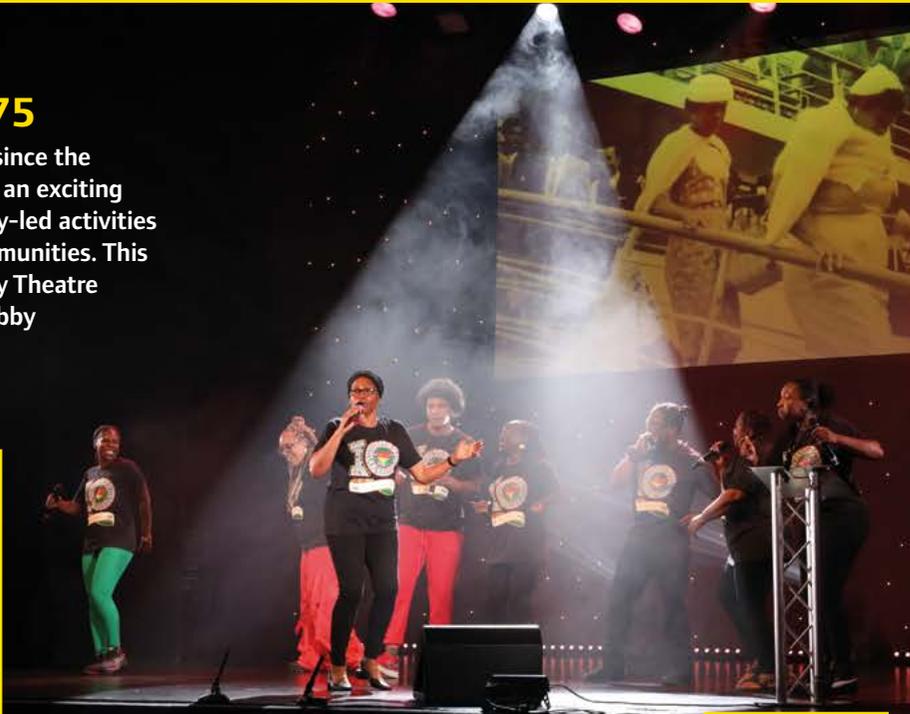
Windrush Day at Hillview Community Services ➤

Celebrating Windrush 75

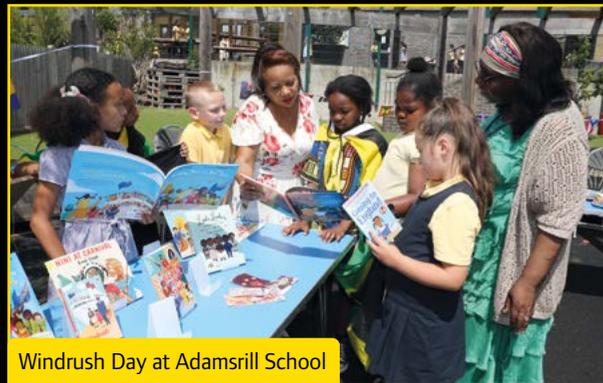
In June we commemorated 75 years since the arrival of HMT Empire Windrush with an exciting programme of Council and community-led activities to honour our African Caribbean communities. This included a flagship event at Broadway Theatre on Thursday 22 June featuring the Abby Asabea, Lola Oh and Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust Choir.



Abby Asabea



The Reggae Choir



Windrush Day at Adamsrill School



Special award

Arthur Torrington CBE, Director and Co-Founder of the Windrush Foundation and Equiano Society, was awarded a Mayoral Special Recognition award at the Broadway Theatre in June for his tireless work championing the history and experiences of Caribbean people in Britain.

Black History Month – October 2023

The theme for this year's national Black History Month campaign is 'Saluting Our Sisters' honouring the crucial role that Black women have played in shaping history, inspiring change, and building communities.

Lewisham will be marking the month with a variety of events across the borough including Oliver Samuels and the Reggae Choir who'll both be performing at Broadway Theatre.

We are also pleased to have funded a number of community-led projects meaning residents can come together to celebrate on their own terms. We'll be updating the Council's website when details become available so please keep checking.

Celebrate with Sydenham School

On Thursday 2 November from 6.30pm, to mark the end of Black History Month 2023, Sydenham School PTA are hosting an event for students, their families and the wider community to celebrate 75 years of Windrush, the NHS and more!

Inspiring speakers will share insights across the arts, business, the NHS and wider public sector, providing passionate first-hand accounts of their lived experiences.

For more information and tickets, visit sydenham-school-pta.org

Find out more

Read about our year-round commitment to supporting Lewisham's Black communities lewisham.gov.uk/bhl365



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- 12th, 14th, 19th, 21st, 26th, and 28th September
 - 10th and 12th October
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*June 2023 SIAMS inspection report: An EXCELLENT school. Top 20% of all schools in England

Celebrating sanctuary

Lewisham has a history of supporting sanctuary seekers and we are proud to have been recognised as the UK's first Borough of Sanctuary. We welcome those fleeing violence and persecution in their own countries and protect the rights of all migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees.



Celebrating our 100th resettled refugee family

On Tuesday 20 June it was World Refugee Day, and some of Lewisham's refugee families attended a celebratory picnic in Mountsfield Park. It was an opportunity to celebrate the 100th refugee family resettled in Lewisham. There was amazing food provided by local charity Plateful Cafe, facepainting, giant bubbles and community music provided by Give a Song.

We work with our partners, the Refugee Council, Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network and through the Lewisham Migration Forum to support sanctuary seekers in the borough. In addition to our

policy of resettling vulnerable refugee families from Syria, Afghanistan and other areas of conflict, we are also committed to providing the best standards of care to unaccompanied child asylum seekers. When newcomers are supported in rebuilding their lives, the entire community benefits. We are proud of local voluntary organisations, businesses and individuals who have been working together to welcome people seeking sanctuary in Lewisham.

For more information about our Borough of Sanctuary work and how to get involved, visit our website lewisham.gov.uk/sanctuary



“ In Lewisham, we celebrate and promote the welcome contribution of people seeking sanctuary in our borough and prove that diverse communities like ours can be both happy and cohesive.”

CLlr Juliet Campbell, Cabinet Member for Communities, Refugees and Wellbeing



“ We enjoyed celebrating World Refugee Day in Lewisham. I've been here since March 2022. Lewisham has a good community of people, there are lovely people here. Lewisham for me means hope and a bright future.”

Abdul, Lewisham resident



What can we do in our community?

We've asked people seeking sanctuary in Lewisham about the simple acts that community members have done that made them feel welcome:

Welcome newcomers, whether it's at work, in the neighbourhood or at the school gate. Offer to add new families to a parent WhatsApp group, extend a lunch invite to a new colleague or greet your new neighbour. "People reaching out to me really helped – I made a big effort to be more outgoing."

Consider organising a community event, big or small like a BBQ or a picnic in the park. "Shortly after we arrived, our neighbours organised a BBQ and invited us along. It made such a difference!"

Slow down a little when talking to someone who is learning the language, simplify what you say and repeat words when you need to. "A little patience with the language barriers goes a long way!"

Offer to help someone navigate the systems that are new to them. "I really appreciated when people showed me where to go for help and support."

Support local organisations that help migrants and refugees such as Action for Refugees in Lewisham and Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network. "People at this charity stand up for me and encourage me. They give me a listening ear and help me find solutions."

Get involved – take the Sanctuary Pledge

If you are an individual or an organisation, please pledge your support to asylum, migrants and refugees in Lewisham by signing our Borough of Sanctuary pledge. Once you have pledged your support, we will keep you updated about our Sanctuary programme via a regular newsletter. We will also send you details of Sanctuary events in Lewisham and a digital pack to help you share information on social media channels. Take the Pledge lewisham.gov.uk/sanctuary



Focus on school hunger

One of our Young Advisors Yasmina Bez spoke to Cllr Amanda de Ryk, Cabinet Member for Finance & Strategy and Cllr Chris Barnham, Cabinet Member for Children & Young People, to understand more about the food hunger issue, and how it is affecting children here in Lewisham.

Yasmina:
What does school hunger mean?

Cllr de Ryk: School hunger means children and young people not having enough to eat. And I think we are now seeing families having to make difficult choices between what they spend their money on, like heating, clothing or food.

Cllr Barnham: I've been really surprised and a bit shocked when I visited primary schools recently, how often children are talking about the cost of living crisis. They know the phrase and they know things are difficult.

Why is this happening in Lewisham?

Cllr Barnham: It's not just happening in Lewisham, it's a problem all over London and indeed the country. We are in a position where many people haven't had a pay rise for a very long time and prices have gone up, that means the money people have got is worth less.

Cllr de Ryk: As well as inflation we have a number of families who are earning low wages, and that means when you have global



Cllr Amanda de Ryk and Cllr Chris Barnham with Yasmina Bez

“ There are others going hungry, who don't have much in their lunchbox ”

shocks like the war in Ukraine, those families and individuals are much more vulnerable to situations that might push prices up.

How many young people are struggling with school hunger in Lewisham?

Cllr Barnham: One in four pupils in Lewisham qualifies for free school meals. But schools tell us that as well as those children who get free school meals, there are others going hungry, who don't have much in their

“ We allocated around £500,000 for the first half of the year directly to schools to address this issue ”

lunchbox and who can't afford to pay for their lunch. There's over 10,000 children who qualify for free school meals. So there are many more than that number experiencing school hunger in some way.

What are our schools doing to address this?

Cllr de Ryk: We allocated around £500,000 for the first half of the year directly to schools to address this issue. It was important that they could use the money in the way they felt was the best. Some have set up breakfast clubs, some are giving food parcels and creating food banks, others have free after school clubs teaching cooking skills etc. The biggest use of that money from what I've seen is paying for those who don't qualify for free school meals but are missing their dinner.

We have made more money available to give to schools for the autumn term, so this extra support can continue.

All our schools have been giving children who qualify for free school meals vouchers so that they can carry on getting food in the holidays as well as getting a meal at school.

One bit of good news is that the Mayor of London is giving us money so that from September all children in primary school will get a free hot dinner and that's great. This means that schools might be able to use the money we allocate them in other ways such as free breakfasts.

Find out more

Yasmina is a member of the Young Advisors, the group of young people who work directly with the Young Mayor of Lewisham. Yasmina is also a member of UK Youth Parliament, who are currently running Food for Learning: the Campaign for Universal Free School Meals. Find out more and support the campaign at www.byc.org.uk/uk-youth-parliament To find out more about becoming a Young Advisor email katy.brown@lewisham.gov.uk

Make a donation

Bank of Things: Unit 19 Lewisham Shopping Centre lewishamlocal.com/lewisham-bank-of-things

See page 24 for more information and how to make a donation at The Lewisham Food bank.

Are there any ways that residents can help support children and young people who are struggling with school hunger?

Cllr Barnham: I think most people probably don't realise the scale of the difficulty that some families are facing and if they did, maybe they would want to take some action. If nothing else, it would be good for people to write to their MP or the Prime Minister and ask, how can it be right in a country like ours in the 21st century that children are going hungry at school? We must have a better way.

Cllr de Ryk: We have a fantastic donation hub that is just for young people called the Bank of Things. This is based at Lewisham Shopping Centre and is run by our Young Advisors and Lewisham Local. They accept all sorts of donations and have recently opened a community fridge for young people who need food.

How we're tackling food injustice

The cost of living crisis is causing people to experience food injustice – meaning they struggle to access affordable, nutritious and healthy food. Cllr Juliet Campbell, Cabinet Member for Communities, Refugees and Wellbeing explains how we're working with partners to tackle this head-on.



Nearly a quarter of the way through the 21st Century, it's unbelievable that many families in the UK are struggling to put food on the table.

An increase in the cost of living has resulted in more and more people

facing a struggle to afford food and fuel. For some, it's a difficult choice between eating and heating.

One local organisation that is working on the front line to help people in difficulty is Rastafari Movement UK (RM-UK Wellbeing). It delivers nutritious and culturally appropriate food to people who might otherwise struggle to feed themselves and their families. "We're seeing more people from a range of different backgrounds who need support", says founder Stella Headley, "and many of them have never used a food bank before."

RM-UK Wellbeing is just one of the truly fantastic voluntary organisations in our borough who have gone the extra mile to put food on people's plates during difficult times. However,



they too are feeling the pinch, squeezed ever more tightly by rising running costs, reduced donations and increased demand.

This isn't acceptable. While acknowledging that there are national factors that are outside our direct control, we have an opportunity to mount a local response that can make a real difference. That's why, together with community and voluntary organisations and other partners across the borough, we're doing what we can to ensure that fewer people experience food injustice.

We're doing this in several ways:



“ This work is important – but it's also a joy seeing the difference it can make ”

think you can help, or would just like to know more, please email FoodJusticeActionPlan@lewisham.gov.uk.

Direct financial support for food giving projects

We've teamed up with Lewisham Local to establish the Food Justice Community Grants Fund. The Council has provided £100,000 for the fund which supports projects and organisations that either provide emergency food, such as food banks, or help improve access to nutritious and healthy foods. Earlier this summer we announced funding for 19 projects that are playing a vital role in supporting vulnerable residents.

Addressing food injustice will be a difficult challenge. There is so much excellent work already happening and with new energy, focus and direction we can take real and meaningful steps towards ending hunger and supporting our most vulnerable residents.

I'll leave the last word to Stella from RM-UK Wellbeing, who explains why this is so

important. "It's about giving people their dignity and helping them to have the strength to deal with the other challenges that life throws their way. This work is important – but it's also a joy seeing the difference it can make."

Read more about our Food Justice Action Plan at lewisham.gov.uk/food-justice

A plan to combat food injustice

Together with Lewisham Local and a diverse range of partner organisations across the borough, we're implementing a new Food Justice Action Plan. The new plan sets out a number of short, medium and long-term actions to tackle food injustice.

This includes:

- Connecting market traders with organisations that can redistribute surplus food
- A repair or replacement service for residents who can't afford to replace kitchen appliances
- Developing community food growing spaces
- Teaching energy efficient cooking skills to residents
- Providing opportunities for communities to eat and share food together

We've only recently launched our Food Justice Action Plan and are on a journey to implement it. If you'd like to be involved,



How to get help

We know that the cost of living crisis isn't going away and we want to make sure that people know where and how to get help.

There is a lot of information on our website, from food support, to help with finding a job, learning new skills, help with paying bills, or coping with money worries. Visit lewisham.gov.uk/support for all the advice you can access.

However, we know not everyone is online, or they would prefer to talk to someone face-to-face. We will be working with our partners to set up regular advice drop-in sessions and monthly roadshows, that will begin at the end of September.

What will these look like?

The locations of regular advice drop-ins haven't been decided yet but will cover the borough across the week and will be delivered by our community advice partners. They've already started in 999 Club on Wednesdays from 10am-2pm and Downham Foodbank will also offer sessions.

The monthly cost of living roadshows will bring our voluntary and community partners together to promote specialist services that can help support you during the cost of living crisis; for example, with information on benefits, advice on your energy bills, accessing community food support and others.

While we aren't quite ready to release locations and times we recommend popping into your local library to find out more, or you can ask your local councillor. If you are on social media, make sure you follow us, or you can visit our website lewisham.gov.uk/support



How can I help?

Lewisham Foodbank has been operating since October 2012 and is the Mayor's charity of the year. The foodbank works by providing a week's worth of nutritionally balanced emergency food and support to local people who are referred to them in crisis.

You can support Lewisham Foodbank in a number of ways – by donating food, money or your time.

Visit lewishamfoodbank.org.uk to learn more.



nearly
£3m
across
149
local
projects



Kilmorie's new playground

Community funding

It's been over a year since we announced over £3 million of investment through our Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy Fund (NCIL) to fund 149 local projects in Lewisham.

NCIL is a sum of money that councils charge large private developers and Lewisham is one of the first councils to give residents the chance to choose what small projects the money goes towards.

Over the next few issues we'll be sharing some of the wonderful community projects we've been able to support with the NCIL fund.

New Early Years playground at Kilmorie

Last year Kilmorie Primary school won a NCIL bid to fund the complete renovation of their Early Years outside play area. The Early Years Outstanding Outdoor Spaces project was partly funded by an NCIL bid that the school won, along with fundraising.

The beautiful new play area now includes a tree house, built sandpit, a raised garden area and a ramp. Mayor Damien Egan opened the garden and the first people to enter were children who attend the nursery school who roared with excitement when he cut the ribbon!

And there's more...

Other projects supported through this programme include upgrades to playgrounds across the borough, an inclusive hub for young people at the Grove Park Youth Club and repairs and renovations at Stanstead Lodge Senior Club – a real variety of projects! You can read more about them at lewisham.gov.uk/ncil

Jan's Secret Garden opens at Stillness

Local NCIL funding helped to create a garden at Stillness Junior School, named after Jan Docker, a much-loved member of staff who died during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cllr Chris Barnham, came to open the garden which has vegetable patches, a pond, tunnels and a bridge! The garden creates some much needed green space in the playground.

A new chapter

Things are moving ahead with the Lewisham town centre improvement programme and we can now share some key dates on what's happening.

After successfully bidding for money from the Government's Levelling Up Fund, we are investing £24m to help revitalise the town centre. This is made up of £19m of funding from the Government, and £5m of additional funding from the Council.

What is the money being spent on?

The money will be spent on refurbishing Lewisham Library, rejuvenating Lewisham Market and improving the high street. This investment will help to boost the local economy, provide new jobs and create a nicer town centre for people to enjoy.

What's the plan for Lewisham Library?

Lewisham Library will be renovated to create a new Culture and Business Hub and safeguard the future of this vital local service. As well as the books and study space you would expect, the refurbished library will include a new community space, as well as flexible office space, meeting rooms, a workspace for local businesses, a new café and more hospitality space.

Does this mean the library will close?

Yes, it does mean we will have to close the library temporarily while works take place.

We will be closing the library on Saturday 16 September.

Can I be involved?

Stay in touch by signing up to our newsletter, or visit our website lewisham.gov.uk/LewishamTC

Marianna, Library Officer, Lewisham Library



When is it expected to reopen?

In early 2026.

What's happening to the services offered there?

Some of the services will be relocated so they will still be accessible, just in different locations across the borough, but we have tried to keep them as close as possible.

- Archives and Local History Service will be relocated to level one of Catford Library.
- Click and collect services will operate out of Glass Mill Leisure Centre.
- The Home Library Service will carry on as usual.

What's the closest library?

Deptford Lounge, Catford Library and Manor House Community Library. All Lewisham Libraries can be found on our website lewisham.gov.uk/libraries



Learn more about food waste recycling lewisham.gov.uk/foodwaste

For those in blocks of flats without food waste recycling, we're working on making it available to you. Watch this space!

Step up to the plate

From your plate to power: our campaign to boost food waste recycling and cut emissions.

You may have spotted our street advertisements, posters or social media posts sharing the benefits of food waste recycling in the borough. They are part of a campaign to boost recycling rates and reduce carbon emissions in Lewisham.

7,000 tonnes of food waste is already collected for recycling annually. These collections go through anaerobic digestion, converting it into fertiliser and renewable energy used to power homes. Food waste has the potential to provide a significant amount of energy – just one lorry load of food waste can power over 20,000 TVs for an hour.

The campaign is part of Lewisham's aim to become a net-zero borough by 2030. We're working towards a greener future by making it easier to recycle and improving our services. Through partnerships with local organisations, we've already enrolled 45 primary schools in our food waste recycling program. This means that

How to recycle your food waste

1. Line your kitchen caddy with compostable liners, clear bags or newspaper. No need to buy special bags!
2. Put your leftover, unwanted or out-of-date food in your kitchen caddy.
3. When your caddy is full, tie the liner, or wrap your waste in newspaper, and put it in your outside food waste bin.
4. Keep the lid of your food bin locked to keep out foxes and other pests.
5. We will collect your food waste every week on your collection day.

even leftovers from school meals play a part in reducing carbon emissions.

By empowering residents to recycle food waste, we are cutting carbon emissions and saving money that can be redirected to Council services and support more people.

Funding and flags

News of what is going on in some of our parks this autumn.

Lewisham awarded two more Green Flag Awards

Lewisham's parks and green spaces have been awarded their highest-ever number of 23 Green Flags, the award given to the very best green spaces around the world.

The latest park to be given a prestigious Green Flag Award is Forster Memorial Park. A Green Flag Community Award has been given to St Mary's Church Yard which is managed by Lewisham Council with the help of the parish community and includes the wonderful Therapeutic Garden.

We've successfully retained all our existing Green Flags in the borough. Huge thanks to our Council parks team, our partners Glendale and our many Friends and community groups.

Read more about our parks and green spaces lewisham.gov.uk/green-flag-awards



Exciting improvements happening soon at Beckenham Place Park!

Over £3million of funding has been secured to make a number of improvements to the east side of Beckenham Place Park (BPP) and works will be starting soon. These will include:

- New and enhanced inclusive play, recreation, health and wellbeing opportunities including new activity and cycling trails, new footpaths and a new outdoor gym, playground and multi-use game area. There will also be a new park café opportunity with accessible toilets.
- Increased biodiversity and rewilding including new planting and landscaping.
- Significant flood and climate resilience benefits, reducing flood risk and improving the river corridor.
- Increased volunteering and training. There will be times over the next few



months when areas within BPP will need to be closed temporarily for these improvement works. For updates about the east side and to sign up to the BPP newsletter, please visit beckenhamplacepark.com/news

Get them checked

Breast cancer screening saves thousands of lives every year. Despite this, not enough women in Lewisham are attending their screening appointments. We spoke to local health professionals to find out more.

Breast cancer screening is one of the main types of cancer screening for adults in England. A mammogram (breast x-ray) can detect cancer at an early stage before there are symptoms, when treatment is more likely to be successful.

Every three years, women aged between 50 and 70 will receive an invitation through the post to book an appointment. The NHS has made it easier for people to attend screening by offering early appointments for people who work during the day as well as weekend slots.

Unfortunately, not enough women in Lewisham are attending their screening appointments and screening rates in the borough are among some of the lowest in London. This means that women in Lewisham are less likely to be diagnosed and treated at an early stage.

"We know that people are busy, but it's important for women to prioritise screening" says Tracey Blancke, Programme Manager at South East London Breast Screening Service.

Cllr Juliet Campbell, Lewisham's cabinet member for Communities, Refugees & Wellbeing, agrees: "One in seven women will develop breast cancer in their lifetime. The vast majority of women who attend screening will get a clean bill of health, however in the small minority of cases where cancer is found, early detection means that treatment is much more likely to be successful."

Some women are understandably nervous or uncomfortable about attending a screening appointment. Screening services have worked hard to make the experience as comfortable as possible. "All staff at the screening appointment will be female-only and will carefully explain step-by-step what they're doing and what to expect", says Tracey Blancke, "and the screening itself only takes a few moments".

Lewisham GP Esther Appleby recently attended her screening appointment and described the experience as "far easier than I expected". "It was less uncomfortable than a tight blood pressure cuff", she says, "and far less painful than eyebrow threading!".

While life can be busy and demanding, it's important that all women aged 50-70 put screening at the top of their to-do lists. "Breast screening saves lives", Tracey reminds us, "and the next life it saves might just be yours."

Anyone registered with a GP as female will be invited for NHS breast screening every 3 years between the ages of 50 and 70. You'll get a letter in the post inviting you.



For more information visit the London Breast Screening website: london-breastscreening.org.uk

“Wa Gwan Lewisham” – an update from your Young Mayor!

Wa Gwan Lewisham it's your Young Mayor, Jentai “Jen-Tay” Gen-One and I'm here with an update about what I've been doing recently to make the borough a better place!

I've been attending lots of events and meetings and featuring in a few interviews and videos with different organisations and people in and around Lewisham.

This included meeting with rapper Koder. Hailing from Brockley, Koder is a musical chameleon turned mogul who now balances a thriving music career with his creative agency, Undeniable. Through Undeniable, Koder works with some of the biggest brands in the world enabling them to have a more local perspective. I'm excited to work with Koder and to bring the vibes to Lewisham!

I've also met with the Lewisham Music team, and attended a recent Lewisham Strategic Partnership meeting. I also gave out an award at the Lewisham Staff Awards and judged the Jack Petchy Speak Out Challenge for Lewisham. And more!

As well as that, the team and I have been working very hard on fulfilling my manifesto points which we have made great progress on!

We've been talking to already established BMX clubs and Beckenham Place Park to figure out what we want for our BMX Track.

About the Young Mayor

Lewisham has one of the longest-established young mayor programmes in the country. The Young Mayor is elected by young people and provides a focus and a channel for young people's views to be heard by decision makers.



Follow the Young Mayor on social media
Instagram @lewisham_young_mayor
Twitter @lewishamYCP.

With the radio station, we're planning to work with a handful of organisations including Lewisham Music to get some radio training for young people while we work on bringing about the station.

For getting young people into business we've spoken with the business team at the Council to get an in-school competition up and running that you'll hear about very soon.

And by completing all of this we will be changing the narratives of the young people in our borough!

To help get these ideas further and to also let us know what more we can do, please fill out our survey, by scanning the QR code. Tell us what you think and how we can improve our ideas!



SCAN ME



Lewisham's directly elected Mayor, Damien Egan, represents the whole borough. Contact him at damien.egan@lewisham.gov.uk

Please check beforehand whether your Councillor is holding in person surgeries. Visit lewisham.gov.uk/mayorandcouncil or call 020 8314 6000 and ask for 'operator'.

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CALLING LEWISHAM CHANGE MAKERS



- ? Do you have an idea which could make a positive difference to your community?
- ? Do you need support and training to help make that idea come to life?

If so, you could apply for one of 20 free places on the Lewisham Changemakers course for social entrepreneurs.

WHEN:

Sat 23rd Sept and then Wednesday evenings for 8 weeks.

WHERE:

Hatcham House,
367, Queens Road
New Cross SE14



Scan for more info and to apply

www.face.work/changemakers



This free course covers:

- ✓ Developing a sustainable business plan
- ✓ Income and fundraising options
- ✓ Clarifying your 'Theory of Change'
- ✓ Growing effective partnerships
- ✓ Marketing and knowing your customers
- ✓ Links to a network of changemakers