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Issue 26: September/October 2023

Welcome to the 50 Steps newsletter

I hope you have had a lovely summer. Over the last few months, we have been busy preparing for the **refresh of our 50 Steps Strategy**, as we are coming



Adeola - PH Director

to the end of its three-year remit (2020-2023). The next version of the strategy will build on what has worked over the last three years and identify what more we hope to achieve.

We are developing a whole range of ways for people to be involved in the refresh process, including in-person and online sessions, and we are very keen to hear from you. We want to hear about what has gone well and what you think needs to be included in the new strategy. Read on to find out how you can get involved!

This edition of 50 Steps focuses on the fantastic work being done to achieve steps 41 and 42; to make **Newham smoke-free**; with the signing of the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control and our plans for the Quit Well Newham Stoptober campaign.

We also have updates on our work to **prevent suicide and tackle loneliness** in Newham as well as a number other health initiatives covering everything from blood pressure and ageing well, to breastfeeding and childhood immunisations. It's a bumper edition! As always, please do [get in touch](#) if you have a health initiative you would like to include in the 50 Steps newsletter.

Lastly, we saw with great sadness the devastating floods in Libya and the earthquake in Morocco over the last 10 days. If you or someone you know has been affected by these terrible events, you can call the [Newham Bereavement Service](#) on 020 7510 1081 / 020 7510 4268 or email nbs@mithn.org.uk.

Wishing you the best,

Adeola

Adeola Agbebiyi - Deputy Director of Public Health (interim)

Inside this issue you'll find:

- Spotlight on achieving a smoke-free Newham, including Stoptober 2023 activities
- 50 Steps Strategy refresh
- Mental health: suicide prevention activities and a new project tackling loneliness
- Early years: childhood vaccinations and National Breastfeeding Week
- Preparing for winter: winter vaccinations and support to pay energy bills
- More ways to stay healthy: Know Your Numbers Week, the upcoming Ageing Well Festival and a Well Newham update
- Autistic residents survey
- Reducing airport noise pollution
- Training opportunities: Cost of living and Social Welfare Alliance
- Updates from partners: Organ donation, mental health and sexual health

Spotlight on...

Our work towards a smoke-free Newham



As part of our commitment to making Newham tobacco-free by 2030 ([step 41](#)), we are pleased to announce that Newham Council has recently signed the **[Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control](#)**. The declaration outlines our active commitment to taking comprehensive action against the harms associated with smoking, as well as ensuring tobacco control is at the forefront of our public health work.

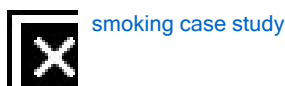
Smoking is the leading cause of preventable illness and premature death in the UK. In Newham, 10.7% of the adult population currently smoke (Adult smoking habits, [ONS 2022](#)). The declaration builds on the work we have been undertaking with the SmokeFree Alliance, which we set up in 2021.

Councillor Mumtaz Khan, Deputy Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care explained: “We will be using the Local Government Declaration to work closely with our SmokeFree Alliance to develop a local action plan for tobacco control over the next few months. By working with our partners, including the NHS, schools and volunteers, we will be able to achieve our wider smoke-free target outlined in the 50 Steps to a Healthier Newham strategy.”

The **Newham SmokeFree Alliance** is a partnership working group involving a wide range of stakeholders including NHS, education, voluntary, community and faith sector organisations. This group contributes to improving health, environmental and economic status of people in Newham through co-ordinated and sustained action against tobacco. The SmokeFree Alliance is working towards the Priority 10 target of becoming SmokeFree by 2030 through the development of a local tobacco control plan.

If you are working in this area and not already part of our Alliance, [please get in touch](#). We are very keen to hear your insights on our local tobacco control plan so we can work together to achieve a smoke-free Newham.

Stoptober 2023 activities



Stoptober takes place during the month of October each year and offers a fantastic opportunity to encourage smokers to quit with the help of specialist support. Following Stoptober in 2022 we saw a 58% increase in people signing up to our Quit Well Newham

support service!

Did you know smokers are up to four times more likely to quit with expert help and advice? Providing access to high quality support to quit smoking through our [Quit Well Newham service](#) and community pharmacies is an essential part of the work to become smoke-free by 2030.

Quit Well Newham provides residents with up to 12 weeks of free advice and support from a trained practitioner to quit smoking, and support is available in several languages. The service offers nicotine replacement therapy and regulated refillable vapes - adhering to MHRA guidance- to help smokers on their quit journey.

Community pharmacies across Newham also offer up to 12 weeks of stop smoking support for residents. Residents can find their nearest pharmacy on the [NHS website](#).

Shahajahan (picture), a Newham resident who was supported by Quit Well Newham said:

"My clothes no longer smell of cigarettes, I can taste food better; I noticed after I stopped smoking my smell and taste improved. Quit Well Newham is an excellent service; it was easy to access and receiving free stop smoking medications was really helpful. If I had any concerns, Shajue was readily available for appointments."

To help smokers find the support available this Stoptober, we will have information, as well as posters and leaflets available to download from the Well Newham website. So [watch this space!](#)

50 Steps Strategy refresh



50 steps refresh2

50 Steps to a Healthier Newham is our Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2020-2023 and, as we are coming to the end of its three-year remit, it is time to refresh it and **develop our next iteration of 50 Steps**. The core aim remains the same: improving health and reducing health inequalities in Newham.

The next version of the strategy will build on what has worked over the last three years and identify what we want to achieve next. We are already including things we have learned from the past few years, what partners have been telling us and what residents have said. It's always good to hear more – and test what we've done with what we've heard. So if you live or work in Newham, or if you run an organisation, business or group in the borough, we want to hear from you!

Over the next few months there will be a number of ways to get involved in person and online. We will be sending out a special edition of this newsletter to let you know

about all of these opportunities, so keep an eye out!

Mental health updates...

Suicide prevention activities



suicide prevention

During the week leading up to this year's World Suicide Prevention Day (Sunday 10 September), we worked with partners to host a number of workshops and coffee mornings to provide vital support and resources to many residents struggling with mental health issues.

There can often be warning signs before a person takes their own life and if we know how best to support people, **everyone can play a role in saving lives**. We are encouraging everyone, including individuals and those who work with residents, to take up the **free,**

online training that is available. Courses vary from 20 minutes upwards. The aim is to equip everyone with the knowledge and skills to know what to do if a loved one, colleague, resident or stranger is feeling suicidal.

Suicide prevention is a key priority for Newham Council and are committed to supporting people in our communities that are struggling. Visit the [Well Newham website](#) for more information about suicide prevention or to get help if you are struggling with how you are feeling. Residents can also call the 24 hour mental health crisis helpline on 0800 073 0066.

We would like to say **a big thank you** to all the partners who supported and ran the suicide prevention events, including the Newham African Initiative Development (NAID), the Pan African Women Association (Pawa), Heal Together, Royal Docks Learning & Activity Centre, Morgan Sindall and the Brave Project – to name just a few!

Project tackling loneliness in Newham



men sheds

To tackle loneliness and social isolation in Newham, our colleagues in the Community Neighbourhood Link Worker team have launched three fantastic pilot projects this month: **Chatty Benches, Chatty Cafés and Men in Sheds** (pictured). Part of the 'Be Connected' programme, these initiatives aim to encourage residents who

are experiencing loneliness or isolation to seek connections within spaces they feel most comfortable.

It is hoped the action will also inspire people to support others within their community, by simply taking the time to stop and connect. So far, more than 30 businesses and organisations have all pledged their support to tackle loneliness in the borough!

Figures show one in five adults in the borough feel lonely 'often' or 'always' – that is more than 70,000 people. ([Loneliness rates, ONS 2021](#)) Although loneliness is not always visible, it forms a significant part of many people's lives; some people can go for days, weeks or even months without speaking to another person.

To find out more about the Be Connected programme and how to get involved visit www.newham.gov.uk/BeConnected

Early years...

Childhood vaccinations reminder



childhood imms

Getting children vaccinated is the most important thing we can do to protect them against serious disease, especially at a time when measles cases are rising in London.

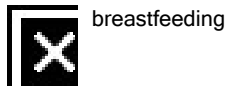
Parents and carers can refer to their child's health record (red book) or contact their GP to make sure they are up to date. **It is never too late for a child to catch-up** on any immunisations they might have missed. All vaccinations are free, and a schedule of the UK's routine childhood immunisations can be viewed on the

[NHS website](#).

The next vaccine that will be offered in schools is the flu vaccine. This will be provided to all school aged children (Reception to Year 11) for free, by [Vaccination UK](#). Please encourage parents/carers to sign the [consent form](#) over the coming months.

There are a number of free resources that you can use to promote MMR vaccinations among the communities that you work with. These include [posters](#), a [flyer](#), and [a general leaflet about measles, mumps and rubella \(MMR\)](#). As explained by these resources, the correct, complete doses of vaccinations are needed to be fully protected.

Breastfeeding Awareness Week



National Breastfeeding Week is this week (18-24 September) and focuses on the theme: 'Everyone has a part to play in helping mums to breastfeed'.

If you work with new parents or carers, please help spread the word about all of the [support available](#) in Newham. We have a dedicated **baby feeding helpline** which provides skilled help and support on feeding babies or toddlers up to three years.

Parents or carers can call or text the helpline seven days a week on 07534 249 611 or email baby.feeding@newham.gov.uk for help with breastfeeding, bottle feeding, mixed feeding, introducing solids and breastfeeding while returning to work.

Download this useful [leaflet on baby feeding](#) which covers all the support in Newham.

Preparing for winter...

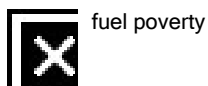
Winter Vaccinations

With winter around the corner, it's important to be protected against winter illnesses by getting vaccinated against flu and COVID-19. People who are at high risk from these illnesses are able to get **free vaccines between September and December 2023**. The best way to protect yourselves, and those around you, is to get vaccinated as early as possible.

The adult eligibility groups for flu vaccines and COVID-19 boosters are the same this year: people in care homes for older people, the clinically vulnerable, those aged 65 and over, health and social care staff, and carers.

The flu vaccine is also offered to children aged 2-3 years old and those in school (years reception to year 11). Some children will be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine if they are at high risk from the virus.

For more details and eligibility [visit our COVID webpage](#) and [flu webpage](#).



Support to pay energy bills

As we head into autumn and temperatures start to drop, we want to let residents know about all of the free support they can get to stay warm. We have teamed up

with the Cadent Foundation and the Renewal programme to bring Groundworks Green Doctors support to residents. There is lots of free support including:

- Advice on saving energy and water
- Reducing energy bills
- Accessing financial support
- Installing renewables and more

If you talk to residents with any concerns about staying warm, please [share this leaflet](#) and direct them to [this webpage](#) for more information.

Please also spread the word about becoming a **Community Energy Champion!**

Our Community Energy Advisors will be trained to give advice on how to: save energy, reduce bills, and stay warm in Newham. Apply and find out more on the Renewal Programme website. <https://www.renewalprogramme.org.uk/stay-warm-in-newham/>

More ways to stay healthy...

Well Newham update



We have been setting up the [Well Newham Hubs](#) in our libraries over the summer and are pleased to report that our advisors have already helped refer and signpost 160 residents to much-needed support for their health and wellbeing.

The Well Newham Hubs are staffed by advisors offering face-to-face support and advice to residents on health and wellbeing services available, as well as personalised wellbeing action plans to help residents achieve their health goals. You can find our locations on the Well Newham website (please note the schedule changes fortnightly).

We've also been adding lots more information to the Well Newham website. Check out all the **new pages on the Well Newham website** including:

- [Family Health](#) - containing a range of themed pages for children, young people and families.
- [Welcome Newham](#) - with advice on health support for asylum seekers and people with no recourse to public funds.
- Under About the NHS, there are now pages on [Dentists](#) and [Opticians](#).

- The [Well Newham Partners](#) section has resources for professionals and information on training and funding opportunities for professionals in Newham.

We also have lots of [upcoming health and wellbeing events](#) listed on the Well Newham website so please share with your networks and let us know about any events you are holding.

Know Your Numbers week activities



blood pressure

For this year's Know Your Numbers week (4-10 September), we raised awareness of the importance of getting your blood pressure checked, particularly for those with diabetes. This is part of our work to achieve [steps 17 and 18](#) of the 50 Steps Strategy.

To improve access to blood pressure checks, we worked with Newham Health Collaborative to offer free health and blood pressure checks to residents at two pop-up events at East Ham and Stratford libraries, enabling 45 residents to get checked. Xyla and Nutrition Kitchen were also there to talk

to residents about weight management and healthy eating/cooking support available.

You can [download our infographic](#) explaining ways to reduce blood pressure and share with residents and your networks, as well as watch this [informative video](#) explaining how to get a blood pressure checks, by local GP, Dr Tamara Hibbert.

High blood pressure rarely has noticeable symptoms, which is why it's so important to get checked, and people who have diabetes are more likely to have high blood pressure.

There are many ways to get your blood pressure checked all year round. Visit the [Well Newham website](#) to find out more.

Upcoming Ageing Well Festival



ageing well festival

Residents are invited to attend Newham's Ageing Well Festival! The festival is free to attend and will take place on **Sunday 8 October at Newham Town Hall**. The festival celebrates a year since the launch of the Newham Ageing Well Strategy and aims to improve the health and wellbeing

of residents aged 50+, as well as reducing health inequalities in the borough.

Residents will enjoy music, an international food court, local taster activities such as glass painting, salsa, virtual reality headsets, as well as information stalls on advanced planning, healthy lifestyles, money management, sexual health, Trading Standards and more!

For more information [visit our Ageing Well pages](#).

Autistic Residents Survey

As part of shaping the first [All-age Autism Strategy](#) in Newham we want to hear from autistic people to find out about their support needs and their experiences of services so far. There are two surveys out now, one for adults and another for children and young people. Please share and promote these surveys with residents:

- [Autistic Adults Residents Survey](#)
- [Autistic Children and Young People Survey](#)

Reducing airport noise pollution

London City Airport recently submitted a planning application, which would increase early morning and Saturday flights, as well as passenger numbers.

Newham Council has refused the application on the grounds that it would result in a new material noise impact (in the areas around the airport), leading to significant harm to residents because increased noise is detrimental to the health and quality of life.

The airport has lodged an appeal and the council is encouraging residents to submit objections to the changes to protect local people from greater noise pollution.

Please let residents know, especially those living near the airport. The deadline for submissions from residents is 28 Sept.

For more information and details of how to object - [visit our website](#).

Training opportunities

Cost of Living Champions training



cost of living champions

We are holding a number of training sessions for Cost

of Living Champions over the next few months as we head into winter. The next session on **Friday 29 September, 10:00-11:30** is on Coping with the Rising Cost of Living and will cover:

- How to access grants and schemes available, including eligibility criteria
- Benefit and income maximisation
- How to refer residents to access food support and different types of support available
- Energy and utility bill saving tips

[Sign up for the training](#) and you can also [find out more about becoming a Cost of Living Champion](#).

We have also created a [Help is Here campaign toolkit](#) containing promotional assets for anyone whose organisation is helping residents navigate the rising cost of living. You can download, personalise and share these materials to promote your cost of living support and resources.

Social Welfare Alliance training

Are you a frontline worker or do you work closely with residents? The Social Welfare Alliance offers **FREE** training for anyone who has regular conversations with residents who have a range of social welfare issues. The online sessions are delivered by expert tutors and cover a wide range of topics.

Upcoming training includes (and is not limited to):

- Domestic Abuse Awareness (21 September)
- Youth Vaping (27 September, 11 October)
- Suicide Awareness & Prevention Training (11 October)

View all dates and times and the [full programme on our council website](#).

News from our partners



organ donation

Organ donation project

[Newham Community Project](#) has partnered with NHS Blood Transfusion for their 'Gateway to Life' initiative. Gateway to Life aims to **dispel misconceptions surrounding organ donation**, prevalent in some communities.

The shortage of donors from Black, Asian, and mixed heritage backgrounds has resulted in prolonged waiting times for organ transplants and often fatal consequences, despite a significant presence on the national transplant waiting list.

'Gateway to Life' is dedicated to encouraging more individuals from Newham's diverse population to understand and resolve the barriers to people donating organs. The project will offer a range of educational activities, including workshops, focus groups, and events throughout the year to engage and inform the community.

For more information and to get involved with the project, please contact Rozina Iqbal at support@newhamcommunityproject.org / 07535652755.

Good Thinking service and resources

Good Thinking is an online service that helps Londoners look after **their mental health and wellbeing** in a way that works for them.

You can find all sorts of support, advice and resources online to help with your mental health, including quizzes, podcasts, free apps and workbooks.

Visit the [Good Thinking website](#) to start your journey today.

NHS C-Card scheme

The NHS North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) has launched the C-Card scheme which allows young people, aged 25 and under, to quickly and easily get **free condoms**. People can get up to 24 condoms each month from various locations, including local pharmacies, community organisations and youth centres. All they have to do is sign up for the scheme at any C-Card providing venue, including pharmacies and local sexual health clinics such as [SHINE](#).

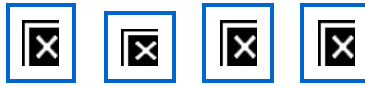
For more information on sexual health services in Newham [visit the Well Newham website](#).

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