

REDBRIDGE LIFE

CYCLE SISTERS:
CYCLING,
CONNECTION AND
CONFIDENCE
page 10



COMMUNITY
HUB OPENS
ITS DOORS
page 11



SNACKTEMBER:
YOUNGSTERS
PREPARE
HEALTHY FOOD
page 16



Redbridge Photography Awards 2026: Winners revealed pages 6 and 7



Photo submitted by Callum Church, Redbridge Nature category



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Visit www.redbridge.gov.uk for information, agendas, and links to view online.

Council

Thursday 24 September **7pm**
Thursday 19 November **7pm**

Cabinet

Thursday 22 October **7pm**
Thursday 12 November **7pm**

Health and Care Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 17 November **7pm**

Planning Committee

Wednesday 14 October **7pm**
Tuesday 10 November **7pm**

Regeneration and Economic Development Committee

Thursday 15 October **7pm**

Clean and Green Committee

Wednesday 4 November **7pm**

Children and Education Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 3 November **7pm**

Children and Young People Committee

Thursday 26 November **7pm**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday 19 October **7pm**
Monday 9 November **7pm**

Governance and Assurance Committee

Monday 2 November **7pm**

General Purposes Committee

Thursday 22 October **8pm**

Safe Redbridge Committee

Thursday 5 November **7pm**

Health & Wellbeing Board

Monday 16 November **2.15pm**

External Scrutiny Committee

Monday 30 November **7pm**

Produced by Redbridge Council

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

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Next issue out in December



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Telephone: 020 8708 2465/2352 or

Email: democratic.services@redbridge.gov.uk or Scrutiny@redbridge.gov.uk

LEADER'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Redbridge Life

Dear neighbours,

Over the coming months, many people across the world will be marking Diwali, Bandi Chhor Divas and Yom Kippur. Here in Redbridge, these important occasions reflect the rich mix of faiths, cultures and traditions that make our borough such a special place.

I have always believed that our diversity, and the unity it creates, is one of Redbridge's greatest strengths. People from different faiths, cultures and backgrounds live alongside one another, learn from one another and come together to celebrate life's important moments. To everyone celebrating Diwali or Bandi Chhor Divas, I send my warmest wishes and hope you enjoy a peaceful and meaningful time with your loved ones. To our Jewish residents observing Yom Kippur, I hope this important and reflective day brings peace and renewal. One of the things I enjoy most as Leader is meeting residents at community events across the borough, and I look forward to seeing many of you over the coming months.

Another thing that makes Redbridge such a great place to live is the wide range of opportunities available to stay active, try something new and meet new people. That's why I'm delighted to see pickleball continuing to grow in popularity across the borough, with plans well underway to deliver some of the first public pickleball courts anywhere in the country.



Cllr Rai with the founder of Box Up Crime, Stephen Addison

I recently had the opportunity to join one of the coaching sessions and can see first-hand why the sport is proving so popular. Easy to learn and suitable for all ages and abilities, pickleball is a great way to keep fit, spend time with friends and meet new people.

I know many residents are keen to see progress at the Wanstead High School and Leisure Centre project, including the new pool. The project has been delayed by the insolvency of the original

contractor, but also by performance issues before that. I know this has been a source of real frustration for residents and, trust me, I share that frustration. The next steps for the project are hugely important. More than ever, we need to ensure the right contractor is in place so that these problems are not repeated and the project can move forward with confidence. I recently met with local residents' groups to discuss the project, and I am committed to ensuring they, and the wider community, have opportunities to receive updates and ask questions through a residents' forum as the project progresses.



Cllr Rai at the opening of Janice Mews community space

At Fullwell Cross Leisure Centre, progress continues in preparing for the major programme of works required to restore the centre. Competitive tenders have recently been evaluated and a further update will follow shortly to confirm the appointed contractor.

I'm pleased to say that works at Kenneth More Theatre and South Woodford Library are progressing. At Kenneth More Theatre, with work on the roof nearing completion, efforts are now focused on the internal refurbishment and we hope to be able to bring productions back by the end of the year. At South Woodford Library, major works have been completed and the building is moving towards reopening, bringing us much closer to welcoming residents back into this valued community space.

Investing in our buildings is important, but so too is investing in our young people. We already have some brilliant organisations and activities across the borough, from the Scouts and Cadets to boxing clubs, Frenford Clubs, Hainault Youth Club and Loxford Youth Club.

At the same time, we're taking a fresh look at the youth services and opportunities available across Redbridge to understand where the gaps are and what more we can provide. We want to reimagine our offer, ensuring young people have access to services, activities and support that reflect their



Cllr Rai with local young people at Rocket Padel

needs and aspirations today. If you're a parent, grandparent or carer, I'd encourage you to explore what's available locally and help shape the future of youth provision in our borough.

One of the highlights of recent weeks was attending the Redbridge Photography Awards. I was blown away by the standard of the entries and the way photographers captured the beauty and character of our borough. Congratulations to everyone who took part and shared their unique perspective on Redbridge.

The months ahead will also see many families enjoying Diwali celebrations and, later in the season, Bonfire Night. Fireworks can be a wonderful part of both occasions, bringing people together and creating lasting memories. We work closely with the London Fire Brigade to promote firework safety and encourage residents to attend organised public displays wherever possible. If you do choose to celebrate at home, please do so responsibly, follow the relevant safety guidance and be considerate of neighbours, pets and those who may find loud fireworks distressing.

Redbridge is a special place because of its people. The strength of our communities, our willingness to support one another and the pride we take in our borough are what make it such a wonderful place to call home. Whether you're trying a new sport, supporting a local youth group, enjoying our parks and open spaces or spending time with family and friends over the coming months, I hope you enjoy everything our borough has to offer, and I look forward to seeing many of you around the borough in the months ahead.

Councillor Kam Rai
Leader of Redbridge Council



Council steps in after Thames Water pipe burst leaves thousands without water

As thousands of homes lost water due to a Thames Water burst pipe, Council teams worked to support those affected

During some of the hottest weeks of the summer, more than 15,000 homes across Redbridge were left without water, low pressure or intermittent supplies after Thames Water pipes burst at three locations.

Despite the disruption caused, staff and volunteers across the council stepped up to support residents and help minimise the impact.

Council teams delivered thousands of litres of bottled water, checked on vulnerable households and provided additional supplies to the worst hit areas as well as care homes. Staff also helped out at bottled water distribution sites, provided traffic-management support to minimise the build-up of traffic so people could access water safely and quickly, and worked closely with residents to make sure their concerns were quickly passed to Thames Water.

Councillor Kam Rai, Leader of the Council, said, “We know how difficult this was for residents. Living without water is challenging at any time, but for this to happen during a summer heatwave made an already difficult situation especially hard for households.

“We’re proud of the way our council teams were able to respond quickly, efficiently and compassionately and we’re grateful for the community spirit shown by residents. This is what Redbridge is about – a borough that comes together, with council staff, councillors and residents supporting each other when it matters most.”



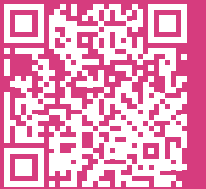
Councillors Sunny Brar, Vanisha Solanki and Daniel Morgan-Thomas supported staff in delivering water bottles to residents

Affected by the Thames Water burst pipes?

Residents who experience further leaks or supply issues should contact Thames Water on 0800 316 9800. Complaints and compensation claims should also be directed to Thames Water.

For more information, please visit:

www.thameswater.co.uk/help/after-an-incident-happens



£80m Broadmead Road Bridge bid submitted

Redbridge Council has submitted its bid to the Government’s Structures Fund to demolish and replace Broadmead Road Bridge. The council has also committed to making a substantial financial contribution towards the project. A decision is expected in the autumn.

The bid follows extensive technical work to understand the condition of the bridge and develop plans for its future, alongside a determined lobbying campaign to make the case for investment to Government, local MPs, TfL and other partners. The council has also secured support from local schools, neighbouring councils and others to strengthen the bid.

Councillor Kam Rai, speaking to ITV about the importance of getting the bridge back open



Councillor Kam Rai, Leader of Redbridge Council, said,

“This bid is about local people. We are determined to restore this important connection for residents, businesses and everyone who relies on it.

“I’d like to thank everyone affected by the closure for their continued patience and support. We know the impact this has had on daily life, and that is why we have worked hard and done everything we can to get to this important stage.

“If we secure this funding, there is still a huge amount of work ahead. Replacing the bridge will be one of the biggest infrastructure projects the borough has undertaken and it will take several years to complete. But it would give us the opportunity to deliver a permanent solution that reconnects communities. We are now calling on the Department for Transport to support our bid and help us deliver this vital project for local people as we cannot do this alone.”

What you can do to support the bid

Help us make the case for restoring Broadmead Road Bridge by writing to your local MP and sharing how the closure has affected your daily life, journey times, or access to services.



Making Redbridge an even better place to grow up

Outstanding results, a new SEND school and dedicated support for families show Redbridge's commitment to helping every child thrive

Education continues to be one of Redbridge's greatest success stories, with our schools consistently ranked among the best performing not just in London, but across the country. This summer, students across the borough celebrated another year of outstanding GCSE and A Level results, reflecting years of hard work, determination and ambition.

There were big smiles across Redbridge as students collected their A Level and GCSE results, marking an important moment in their education. These achievements not only demonstrate the dedication of our young people, but also to the unwavering support of teachers, school staff and families. Congratulations to all students on their success and a big thank you to the teachers and support staff whose commitment helps young people achieve their potential year after year.



Students from Seven Kings School celebrating their GCSE results with ice cream



Hatton School's new site

New SEND school opens

More children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) will be able to learn closer to home thanks to the opening of a new specialist school in Park Avenue, Ilford.

Backed by an investment of £10.9m, the site has been completely transformed from an ageing and disused private school, into a purpose-designed learning environment where children with SEND can thrive.

Hatton School's existing school on Roding Lane South will continue to run as normal, with the new Park Avenue site increasing the school's capacity and helping to meet the growing need for specialist places across the borough.

Designed with pupils' needs at heart, the school provides bright, modern classrooms alongside specialist facilities that support learning, independence and wellbeing. With space for up to 88 pupils when fully occupied, the new school will provide more local children with the specialist support they need to build confidence, develop key skills and reach their full potential.

For more information, please visit:
www.hattonspecialschool.co.uk



Support for students and parents

While exam results are an important moment, education is about supporting young people at every stage of their journey. For students who may not have achieved the results they hoped for, or who remain unsure about their next steps, help is available through the Redbridge Connexions Team. The service provides careers information, advice and guidance on further education, apprenticeships, training and employment opportunities. Available to young people aged 15 to 19, and up to 25 for those with SEND, Connexions offers telephone, online and face to face support to help young people make informed decisions about their future.

For more information, please visit:
www.redbridge.gov.uk/young-people/connexions



Support is also available for parents of younger children

Through a range of early education and childcare programmes, eligible families can access funded childcare support, helping children get the best possible start while easing pressures on working parents.

For more information, please visit:
www.redbridge.gov.uk/adult-and-childrens-services/childrens-services/family-information-service



The results are in: Redbridge Photography Awards 2026 winners revealed

This year's competition attracted 593 incredible entries, making the judges' task tougher than ever

From stunning landscapes and local landmarks to beautiful wildlife, community champions and much-loved pets, this year's Redbridge Photography Awards once again showcased the incredible talent of photographers across the borough.

Hundreds of pictures were submitted across the competition's categories, with photographers capturing Redbridge's natural beauty, diversity and everyday moments. The standard of photography was exceptionally high, making the judging process one of the most challenging yet. Choosing the winning images and runners up from so many outstanding entries was no easy task.

Photographers competed across five categories: Redbridge Places, Redbridge Nature, Redbridge Heroes, Redbridge Pets and the Redbridge Young People's Award. Each submission offered a unique glimpse into life in Redbridge and highlighted the creativity and skill of our local community.

The winners were announced at a special awards ceremony at Apex School, recognising the talented photographers behind this year's remarkable entries. Congratulations to all the winners and runners up, and thank you to everyone who entered this year's competition.



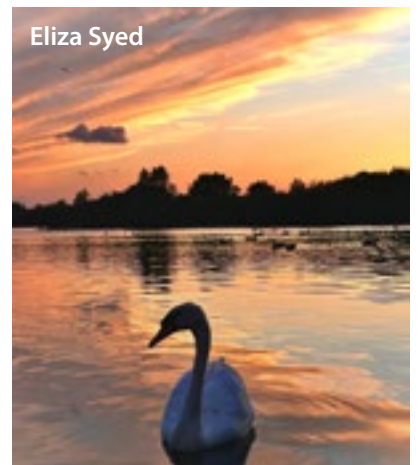
The winner of the **Redbridge Places** category is...



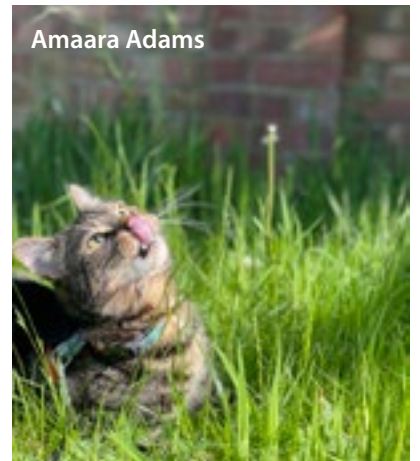
... **Sevin Kahveci**, who took a picture of the architecture of Fullwell Cross Library, mixed with passing traffic.

Runners up

Eliza Syed



Amaara Adams



See all runners up photos by visiting:
engage.redbridge.gov.uk/rpa-2026

The winner of the
Redbridge Young People's Award
 category is...



... **Niranjana Thiagarajan**, who took a picture of herself playing the veena.

The winner of the **Redbridge Heroes**
 category is...



... **Alan Simpson**, who took a picture of firefighters fighting a wildfire in Claybury Park.

The winner of the **Redbridge Pets**
 category is...



... **Anna Resner**, who took a picture of her neighbour's dog, Rheya, while walking through local woodland.

The winner of the **Redbridge Nature**
 category is...



... **Callum Church**, who took a picture of a grey heron at Valentines Park.

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100 Stalls in Three Days Market
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 9:00 am - 6:00 pm  20th, 21st & 22nd Nov
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**FREE
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PRIZES



Entries Open: Sep 8th - Oct 16th, 2026

 11:30 am - 7:30 pm  21st November
 Ilford Town Centre



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**Christmas
inILFORD**
*TALENT SHOW
2026*



PRIZES



Entries Open: Sep 8th - Oct 16th, 2026

 11:30 am - 7:30 pm  21st November
 Ilford Town Centre



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inILFORD**
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**Christmas
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2026**

**FREE
ENTRY**

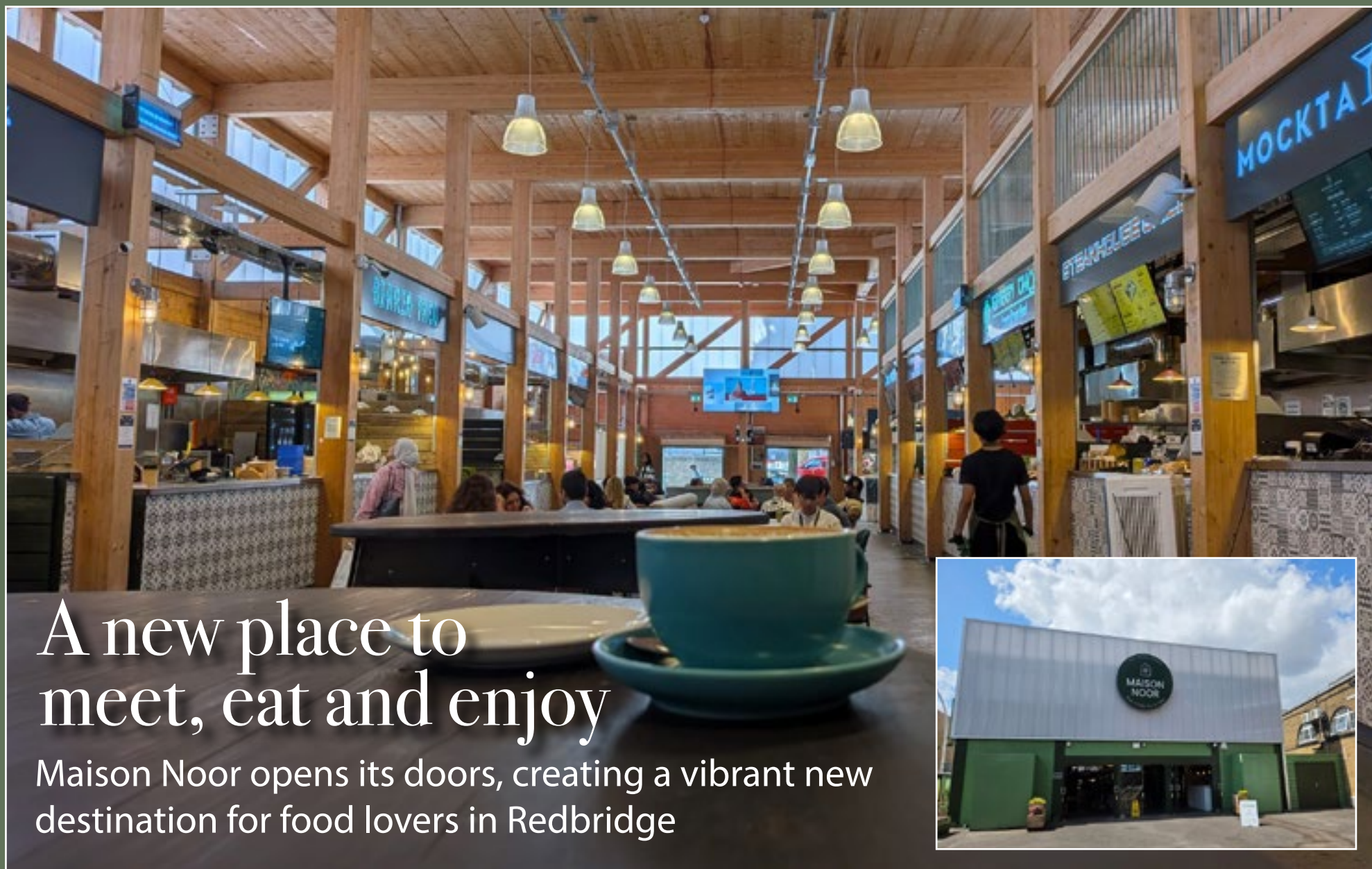
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FAIR RIDES | DRONE DISPLAY**

 21st Nov
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(by Redbridge Town Hall
and Exchange Ilford)



SCAN ME



A new place to meet, eat and enjoy

Maison Noor opens its doors, creating a vibrant new destination for food lovers in Redbridge

Maison Noor opened in May this year. As the new food hall in Ilford, it brings together a growing collection of popular food brands under one roof, creating a destination where everyone can find something they'll enjoy. Families can share a meal, friends can catch up over coffee, sports fans can watch the action on big screens and food lovers can explore new flavours without travelling across London.

Step inside and it's immediately clear that this isn't a traditional food court. Comfortable banquette seating, cosy sofa areas and spacious dining zones create the feel of a large restaurant, with the added bonus of plenty of choice.

"We wanted to create somewhere people genuinely enjoy spending time," says co-founder Atif Amin. **"A place where families feel comfortable, where friends can get together and where visitors know they'll find great food and a welcoming atmosphere."**

That approach appears to be paying off. The venue has attracted strong crowds since opening, with visitors travelling from across east London to sample food from brands they already know, alongside new discoveries.

Some of the names will be familiar to foodies. Others are making their local debut. What links

them all is quality. Atif says hundreds of businesses have approached Maison Noor hoping to secure a space, but only a carefully chosen selection make the cut.

"There has to be a balance," he explains. **"We don't want lots of businesses doing exactly the same thing. The aim is to give people real choice and create a great overall experience."**

That means one group can sit down together and order completely different meals without anyone feeling short-changed. Someone might be craving dessert. Someone else might fancy coffee and cake. Another person might want something more substantial. Maison Noor makes it easy.

The venue is also becoming a popular place to watch major sporting events. Large screens have already drawn visitors for football matches and Wimbledon, creating a lively yet family friendly atmosphere.

There is more to come. A children's play area is due to open in the coming months, giving younger visitors somewhere to enjoy themselves while parents relax in their line of sight. New food brands are set to join the line-up, and plans are taking shape for an outdoor farmers' market featuring artisan producers and independent traders.

Longer term, the team hopes to add a mezzanine level that could welcome fashion, beauty and retail businesses, helping Maison Noor evolve into an even bigger destination.

For now, though, the focus is firmly on food, community and creating a great day out.

Ilford has long been known for its diversity, and Maison Noor reflects that spirit. It brings together established brands, ambitious entrepreneurs and visitors from all walks of life in one welcoming space.

So if you're looking for somewhere new to try this summer, Maison Noor is worth adding to your list. Just don't expect to settle on your order quickly. With so much choice on offer, choosing what to eat might be the hardest decision of all.

Exclusive offer for Redbridge Life readers:
Buy one mocktail and get a second for half price when you quote "Redbridge Life" at Mocktails by Maison Noor.

www.maison-noor.co.uk





Meet **Cycle Sisters**

The community helping women discover the joy of cycling

Building confidence, friendships and healthier lives, one ride at a time

For many women, getting on a bike can feel daunting. Whether it's a lack of confidence, not having anyone to ride with or concerns about safety, there can be many barriers to cycling. Cycle Sisters Redbridge is helping to change that by offering free women-only rides that encourage women of all backgrounds to enjoy cycling in a safe, supportive and welcoming environment.

Cycle Sisters has been active in Redbridge since 2020 and has grown from a small group of riders to more than 500 members across the borough. Over the past year, volunteers have led 55 group rides for women and girls. While the Redbridge group is one of the organisation's most active, it is part of a wider network of 10 groups across London, with more than 2,500 women taking part and over 100 trained volunteer Ride Leaders.

Founder Suraiya Rahman out for ride during a session



Founder Suraiya Rahman said the idea came from her own experience of returning to cycling after becoming a mother.

"I used to cycle as a child, but hadn't ridden a bike in years. When I decided to get back on one in my 30s, after having kids, I realised how hard it was to find a community that could support me on that journey.

"What began as a handful of us riding together in East London has grown into something so much bigger. I'm incredibly proud of the community we've built."

Cycle Sisters understands that Muslim women and women from ethnically diverse backgrounds can face additional barriers to cycling, from rarely seeing anyone who looks like them on a bike to balancing family responsibilities or worrying about discrimination. By providing women-led rides, trained volunteer leaders and bikes to borrow, the organisation creates a welcoming space where women can build confidence, make friends and enjoy the benefits of cycling together.



Pre-ride instructions being shared with new joiners

The impact reaches far beyond cycling. Since joining Cycle Sisters, 94% of participants say their physical health has improved and 90% report better mental health. Redbridge member Ghizalah said:

"Joining Cycle Sisters has completely changed the way I feel about cycling. As someone with rheumatoid arthritis, riding alone always felt daunting and unsafe. Being part of this all-female community has brought me confidence, strength and a real sense of belonging. It truly is more than just a cycling group – it really is a sisterhood."



Redbridge Volunteer Ride Leaders receiving the Community Champion Award at the Redbridge Mayor's Community Awards

The group's volunteers were recognised this year with the Community Champion Award at the Redbridge Mayor's Community Awards, celebrating their work helping women become healthier, more confident and better connected.

Cycle Sisters Redbridge offers free women-only rides every Tuesday and Saturday in Valentines Park for women aged 18 and over. Different routes cater for both beginners and more experienced cyclists, with free bikes available to borrow, so not owning a bike is never a barrier to taking part.

Suraiya encourages anyone who is unsure to give it a try:

"Don't wait. Come and give it a go – our friendly volunteers will be here to support you every step of the way."

For more information, please visit:
www.cyclesisters.org.uk



Transformed! Former storage facility turned into community space

£178,000 investment in Janice Mews creates modern facility for organisations that help bring our borough together

A new community hub has opened in Ilford, designed to support voluntary organisations and residents' groups that play such an important role in local life.

Created through an investment of £178,000, the hub has been transformed from a former council storage facility into a welcoming, accessible space where community groups can meet, deliver activities and continue the vital work they do for residents. Equipped with high-speed internet, ground-floor access and modern facilities, Janice Mews has been designed to give community groups access to modern, affordable facilities in a great location, allowing them to spend less time worrying about venues and more time doing what they do best: supporting residents and bringing people together.

The project is a direct response to feedback from local community groups. Many groups

told the Council that rising costs and a lack of affordable venues were making it difficult to continue their activities. Organisations such as One Place East, along with many other community-led groups, highlighted the challenges of finding suitable local spaces. We have listened to those concerns and taken action.

For the latest information on Janice Mews, including how to book, keep an eye on our website.



Councillor Kam Rai (centre left), with Councillor Sunny Brar, at the opening of Janice Mews

Councillor Kam Rai, Leader of Redbridge Council, said,

"I am delighted this new facility is now open. Along with investment into the building, this is also an investment in local people and in the organisations that support them every day. From boxing sessions and youth activities to advice services and community meetings, the hub will provide a permanent home for programmes and organisations that bring residents together and improve lives."



Concrete evidence of investment

Redbridge's new state-of-the-art skatepark is helping residents stay active, healthy and connected

The sound of wheels rolling across smooth concrete, the clatter of a skateboard landing a new trick, bursts of laughter from friends cheering each other on and the buzz of people pushing themselves to try something new. A great skatepark is full of energy, excitement and community spirit, and that's exactly what you'll find at Hainault skatepark.

Hainault skatepark has quickly become a great place for people in Redbridge to have fun outdoors. It's open to skateboarders, scooter riders, BMX users and anyone else on wheels, and offers an exciting way to stay active, build confidence and spend time with friends.

Skating, scooting and riding can improve balance, co-ordination and fitness, while helping people develop resilience and confidence. Most importantly, it's great fun. This is why Redbridge Council invested £250,000 in replacing the ageing skatepark with a modern, high quality space that people can enjoy for years to come.

At a time when councils across the country have been forced to scale back or close leisure facilities due to lack of funding, Redbridge is continuing to invest in spaces that support healthy lifestyles and strengthen communities.

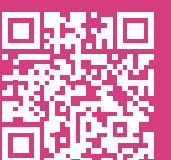
The skatepark also adds to the diverse range of sports, outdoor activities and places to visit across the borough, giving residents of all ages even more opportunities to get active, improve their wellbeing and enjoy the borough.

What makes the Hainault skatepark special is that it was developed in collaboration with local people, through meetings and an online survey. Residents helped build a skatepark that caters for all abilities, with features for beginners learning the basics and experienced riders looking for a challenge. The result is a welcoming, high-quality facility attracting visitors from across London. If you've never visited before, now is the perfect time to grab your wheels and give it a go.



The new skatepark has been a massive hit with users of all ages

For more information, and to see what other activities you can take part in, visit:
visionrcl.org.uk/leisure



Food waste collections coming from November

Join the 10,000 homes that are already receiving a food waste collection in Redbridge

The move is part of efforts to support local people to reduce food waste, improve recycling rates across the borough, and help tackle climate change.

Households under the service receive a small kitchen caddy for food waste, and a larger outdoor caddy to decant the kitchen caddy waste into. Both keep food odours in, and the larger outdoor caddy is lockable giving peace of mind that foxes and other creatures won't be able to get to the waste inside.

10,000 households across Redbridge are already benefiting from food waste collections. Collections are set to begin for all remaining houses during November and December this year. If you live in a flat you'll join the rollout separately over the winter.



Special food waste collection vehicles out and about in the borough

What should you do now in preparation?

Nothing yet. We're just giving you a heads up. You'll get a letter through the post between October and the first week of November, and it's after that all the action starts to happen.

The letter will tell you more about the service, when you will get your caddies and what to expect next. We'll keep you informed at every stage.

To check when your collections are due to start, head to:
my.redbridge.gov.uk/RecycleRefuse



A resident with their handy food waste collection caddy

Why is Redbridge Council introducing food waste collections?

- **Tackling the climate emergency:** Around 40% of the household waste collected in Redbridge is currently food waste and it has a negative impact on the environment by contributing to greenhouse gas emissions such as methane, which is 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide in creating global warming. By recycling more food waste, we can collectively, as a community, reduce the borough's carbon footprint.
- **Saving money:** Recycling food waste saves the council money that can be reinvested into other essential services for the community.
- **New legal requirements:** Under changes in government policy, councils are now required to collect food waste separately from other household waste. This ensures that food waste is sent to specialised processing facilities, to be converted into renewable energy and fertiliser.

Want to know more, including what does and doesn't go in to your food waste caddy? Head to:
www.redbridge.gov.uk/food-waste-collections

Karen, from Wanstead, who was in the first phase of the food waste collection service, said,

"It's wonderful to have a weekly food waste collection. The service is reliable and a great way to make use of food waste that I can't compost."

Councillor Jo Blackman, Cabinet Member for Environment and Neighbourhoods, said,

"Since launching the first phase of our food waste collection service in November 2025, we've seen fantastic results, with nearly 80% of the 10,000 participating households now regularly using their food caddy. So far, more than 400 tonnes of food waste have been collected and processed through anaerobic digestion, generating enough renewable energy to heat around 40 average UK homes for a year.

"These achievements show the real difference residents are making by recycling their food waste, and I'd like to thank everyone who has taken part so far."



OUR STREETS

Help us create great streets and neighbourhoods

Green Garden Waste collections will stop for the year from Autumn

Week 1 Collections end on Friday 16 October

Week 2 Collections end on Friday 23 October

Collections will resume again next spring.

Check your last collection date for 2026 at
www.redbridge.gov.uk/bins-waste-and-recycling/garden-waste



In the meantime, the borough's recycling
centre accepts green garden waste:

Chigwell Road Reuse and Recycling Centre
Chigwell Road, Woodford Bridge, IG8 8PP



Eco festival encourages students to take green action

Students from 11 secondary schools develop practical skills for a greener future

Our Youth Eco-Skills Festival proved to be a big hit once again! It brought together students from around the borough who are passionate about their local environment and gave them a platform to voice ideas and share green achievements.

Eleven local secondary schools took part in the interactive day long festival, with fun hands-on interactive workshops giving students the chance to boost their eco-skills, including learning to cook without waste.

Other workshops included an exploration into climate change through quizzes, activities, and discussion, and a repair session where students got to fix a games console and learn why repairing, instead of discarding broken items is an important way to reduce waste.



Student Gandhi taking part in the Cook Smart, Waste Less workshop

Feeling inspired from taking part in the 'Cook Smart, Waste Less' workshop, Gandhi a local student said,

"Learning how to cook without lots of waste is important because it's up to all of us to do what we can to preserve the world and look after it. I really enjoyed learning how to make chow mein, which is a great recipe for using up vegetables and meats you might have left in the fridge, so it doesn't go to waste. I picked up lots of great tips and skills from the chef which I can use. It was a great experience for us."



Students at Redbridge Eco Skills Festival 2026

Check out our video for a snapshot of the day and what the students had to say
www.instagram.com/reel/DakrLzwoeGw
or scan the QR code





"Now I have a purpose. I have gone from flatlining to being on a proper upward trajectory - most importantly, I am no longer standing still."

**Watch
Martin's
story**



Martin Lilley's life changed dramatically, after an accident left him with one eye and loss of a finger

A progressive bone condition affected his mobility and ability to work - forcing Martin to become homeless

"I came to Redbridge Institute because I wasn't ready for my rocking chair. Although my body could no longer do the manual work that I had done all my life, my brain was still active.

At first, I worried I was too old-fashioned for the modern world. Everything seemed to be done through computers, or long forms, and my work history did not look straightforward. Redbridge Institute helped me find a way forward.

Through the Institute, I completed an employability programme and shortly after started volunteering with St Francis Hospice. My two volunteering days are my favourite days - they give me a reason to get up, socialise with others and leave me with the feeling that I've done something worthwhile.

I have learned there is still a place in the modern world for someone like me. I am starting digital skills training next year because I want qualifications that show employers what I can do.

Six months ago, I was going nowhere. Now I have a purpose. I have gone from flatlining to being on a proper upward trajectory - most importantly, I am no longer standing still."



Ready for a job that makes a difference?

All of our courses are designed to get you into jobs with the exact skills employers are looking for.

Start learning today and take a step towards a new career.

- | | |
|--|---|
|  Digital Skills |  English |
|  ESOL |  Maths |
|  Early Years Childcare |  Teaching Assistant |



Call 020 8550 2398 or visit www.redbridge-iae.ac.uk



Let's max out our childhoods in Redbridge. Here's a list of ten fun and inspiring activities we think are great to try.

Can you challenge yourself to tick them all off before you're ten years old?

Watch this space! Redbridge Council will be supporting local people to have some of these fantastic experiences as we develop our Ten by Ten programme.

1

Learn to ride a bike

Did you know you can hire a bike at Redbridge Cycling Centre, and have a go on the track?



2

Learn to swim

We've got great pools in Redbridge. You may even venture a bit further and try out the Olympic Pool in Stratford!



Leisure centres

3

Learn to cook

Start off with something simple and as you grow in confidence, you will be cooking up a storm! Remember you can also get children's cookbooks out of the library.



Easy recipes

4

Try an instrument

You can try a new instrument, sometimes for free in Redbridge through the Redbridge Music Service. You could learn at school or privately, or if you already play then why not join an orchestra or ensemble?



5

Visit a forest

Hainault Forest is FREE to visit, and on our doorsteps, being just a short walk from Hainault station. Build a den, wander through the trees, and visit the farm while you're there.



8

Get a library card and borrow a book

We have 11 libraries in Redbridge, so find your local one, borrow up to 20 books for free, and disappear into another world!



9

Visit a farm

Furry and feathered friends are waiting to see you at Foxburrows Farm. Head on down and say hello to them.



10

Visit the seaside

As blessed as we are with some great places in Redbridge, we don't have a seaside! But you can get to one very quickly, Southend, Frinton and Holland-on-Sea are great places to start. Watch this space as we bring in support for families to have a fab day out at the seaside.



Find out more about the Ten by Ten programme in Redbridge, with more locations, sessions, classes, and support to get going on these activities near where you live.



Wrap stars! Redbridge children get creative in the kitchen

Making healthy food appealing to children can be a challenge, but a recent Snacktember event in Redbridge proved that healthy eating can be a real wrap star

Children rolled up their sleeves and got stuck into a hands-on food prep session, creating fresh wraps packed with colourful salad and tasty fillings. As they sliced, diced and wrapped up their creations, they learned practical kitchen skills and discovered that nutritious food doesn't have to cost a lot or take ages to prepare.



Students from Palmer Catholic Academy learnt how to make healthy wraps

The session was a recipe for success for children and parents, who also picked up plenty of food for thought. When children help prepare meals and snacks, they're often more willing to take a bite out of something new. By letting children choose ingredients and build their own creations, healthy eating can become less of a battle and more of a family activity.

Looking to give healthy habits a helping hand at home? Try keeping colourful fruit and vegetables within easy reach, involve children in choosing ingredients at the shops and let them take the lead in the kitchen. Whether they're wrapping,

rolling or mixing, children are more likely to tuck in when they've had a hand in making it.

You don't need to reinvent the meal wheel. Start with simple ideas such as wraps, veggie sticks, fruit kebabs or homemade dips. A little creativity can go a long way.

Why not take a leaf out of Snacktember's book and make your own wraps together this week? Let your children choose the fillings, crunch through a rainbow of vegetables and create a snack that's packed with flavour.



A young chef puts the final touches to a healthy and delicious treat

Thanks to initiatives like Snacktember, Redbridge children are learning that healthy food doesn't have to be hard to swallow. In fact, it's proving to be a wrap-tastic way to build healthy habits for life.



Young people taking part in the Let's Cook programme learned how to make healthy treats

Back to school: Is your child up to date with their vaccinations?

With Redbridge officially recognised as a UNICEF UK Child Friendly Community, helping children get the best start in life is one of our top priorities. As the new school term begins, it's the perfect time to tick off more than just uniforms and PE kits; making sure your child is up to date with their vaccinations is one of the simplest ways to protect your child and others around them from serious illness.

We've seen a rise in infections like Measles in recent years, which can spread quickly in school environments. Vaccinations help prevent outbreaks and keep classrooms safe.

Staying on schedule gives your child the best protection as they grow. Our Public Health team works with Vaccination UK to bring vaccination services directly to schools and community settings to ensure that children and young people who may otherwise miss scheduled vaccinations are still able to receive timely protection.

You can check your child's red book or speak to your GP if you think your child has missed a vaccine, it's never too late to catch up!



Staying up to date with vaccinations is easier with a plan. Simply scan the QR code or visit the website to download and print our vaccination checklist, then tick off each vaccination as it's completed.

www.redbridge.gov.uk/childhood-imms



For more information on childhood vaccinations and the vaccines recommended for your child, visit:

www.nhs.uk/vaccinations

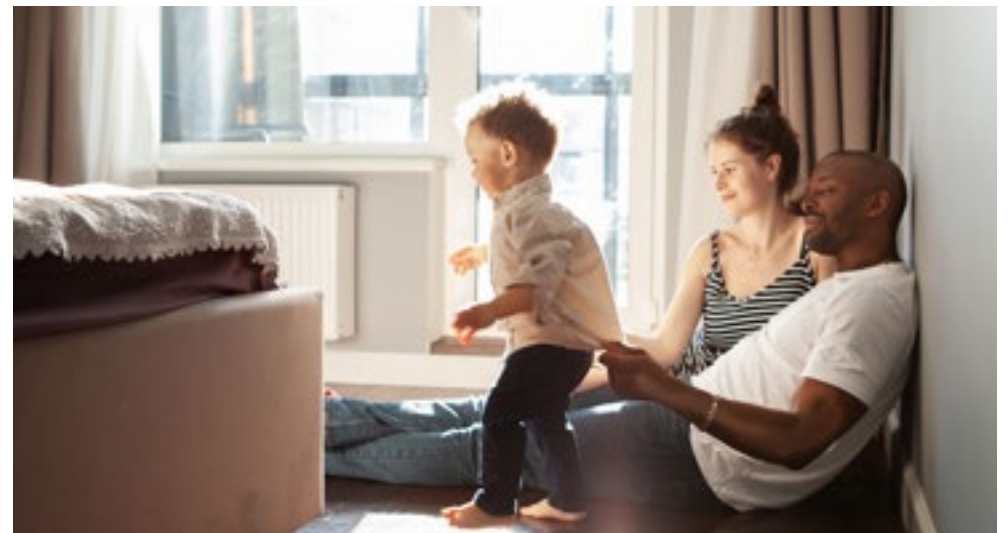
Giving parents a stronger voice

Once again Redbridge Council leads the way nationally on revolutionising children's social care

Redbridge is giving parents a stronger voice through a new parental advocacy service, helping families play a more active role in decisions that affect their children.

Trained independent advocates, available through the Family Help Service, can help parents understand Children's Services processes, prepare for meetings and communicate effectively with professionals. Advocates can explain information, answer questions and support parents to share their views with confidence.

The service aims to ensure families are informed, listened to and fully involved when important decisions are being made. Redbridge also offers advocacy support for children and young people, helping ensure their views are taken into account.



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



"We are changing how children's social care works in Redbridge. Families should not have to navigate complex systems or fight to be heard. By bringing services together, offering support earlier and introducing independent parental advocacy, we are building a service that is simpler, more responsive and focused on getting the best outcomes for children. Redbridge is leading the way nationally."

A parental advocate said, "Families often meet us at a difficult time in their lives. Our role is to help them understand what is happening, make sure they feel heard and give them the confidence to take part in important conversations about their children. When parents understand the process and feel supported, it can make a real difference for the whole family."

Standing with survivors in Redbridge

Domestic abuse affects people in every community, and in Redbridge we're committed to making sure anyone experiencing abuse can get confidential, practical support when they need it

SAFER
Redbridge

Our specialist Reach Out service is here for any resident who is experiencing domestic abuse, offering advice, safety planning and access to essential help in a crisis.

As part of this support, the team has created the Reach Out Shop – a dedicated space providing free essential items for individuals and their children. The shop is stocked with toiletries such as body wash, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste and sanitary towels, along with long life food items including cereal, pasta, rice, baby food and cereal bars. These items are often needed urgently by people who are experiencing or fleeing domestic abuse.

We're also launching a donation drive to help keep the shop stocked. If you're a local business or community group and would like to sponsor or partner with us, we'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch at Reachout@redbridge.gov.uk.

If you need support, or are worried about someone else, Reach Out is here to help. Call 0800 145 6410.



The Reach Out Shop is a vital lifeline for families who need support the most

Inside the rise of tech driven domestic abuse

Technology is increasingly being used as a tool for domestic abuse, and in Redbridge we're working to stay ahead of this growing and fast changing issue

Reach Out is at the forefront of tackling technology facilitated abuse. As part of our support offer, we provide practical technology help so survivors can stay safe, connected and in control during a crisis. We also work directly with people who have used technology to perpetrate abuse, with a dedicated session in the Open Up Perpetrator Programme focused on tech related behaviours and accountability.



Redbridge Council is working with academic partners to understand how technology is used to cause harm

Technology facilitated abuse can include:

- Tracking someone's location
- Limiting or controlling their access to devices
- Using cameras in the home to monitor them
- Hacking phones, laptops or online accounts
- Harassing or stalking on social media
- Using AI to generate abusive or fake images of a partner, ex partner or family member

Reach Out is also partnering with University College London (UCL) to better understand how perpetrators use technology to cause harm. This research is helping shape national thinking.

Reach Out's Head of Service, Emma Pattison, recently presented the team's work at both the European Conference for Tech Abuse and UCL's Tech Abuse Conference.

If you're experiencing tech abuse, or worried about someone else, Reach Out is here to help.

Stop flytipping in our borough or you will be fined

Those who dump rubbish illegally are being shown zero tolerance by our enforcement teams

This summer, our hardworking Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers have been showing zero tolerance to crime by cracking down on those who dump rubbish, fly-tip on our streets, or turn front gardens into eyesores with piles of junk. Behind the scenes, they've been busy tackling selfish individuals who disrespect our borough and spoil the places we all share.



Here's a snapshot of recent enforcement activity

Untidy front garden Seven Kings

During a proactive patrol, an officer spotted an untidy front garden in Colenso Road and issued the residents with a formal notice to clear the area.



Untidy front garden Ilford

Officers carrying out proactive work in Empress Avenue issued a Community Protection Warning to the residents of this property, requiring them to clear long standing waste from the front garden.



Fly-tip

Aldbrough Hall Nature Reserve

A Waltham Forest property firm and its two directors have been successfully prosecuted after a large-scale fly-tip was discovered at Aldbrough Hall Nature Reserve in Redbridge. RCGY Prop Ltd, based in, Leyton, and its directors Hasan Yaman and Ruhui Chowdhury, were jointly fined more than £20,000 following a Redbridge Council led prosecution after waste linked to the company was found dumped at the popular wildlife site on Painters Road, Ilford.



Councillor Sunny Brar, Cabinet Member for Enforcement, Community Safety and Cohesion, said,

"Keeping our streets clean is a team effort. Together, we're protecting the places where we live, work and raise our families. There is no need to fly-tip - it's completely unacceptable. We collect bulky and green garden waste for free, so there is zero excuse for dumping rubbish on our streets. We also have a recycling centre in Redbridge where you can dispose of items free of charge. Additionally, we continue to offer weekly bin and recycling collections.

"We are continuing to crack down on the selfish minority who fly-tip and use our neighbourhoods as dumping grounds. We will seek to prosecute and fine those responsible and you can help by sending us evidence of fly-tipping. Our dedicated enforcement teams are actively pursuing offenders, and anyone caught dumping waste illegally can expect to face enforcement action, fines, and prosecution."



So far in 2026, we've issued **435** Fixed Penalty Notices for fly-tipping offences - with fines of **£1,000**

Reporting fly-tips

Reporting fly-tips is easy. You can do it online through the Report It page www.redbridge.gov.uk/report-it or via the Love Clean Streets App.



New businesses in the borough **making their mark**

Local businesses create jobs and make our borough a vibrant place to live. Here's how three local businesses are helping put our borough on the map



Fleurie Bloom Bar

Launched in May 2025, Fleurie Bloom Bar is proof that beautiful things can grow from life's most difficult moments.

After the birth of her daughter, owner Afsah Hussain found comfort in flowers following a challenging birth experience. Encouraged by her husband, who taught her the art of floristry, she turned a newfound passion into a thriving business.

Today, Fleurie Bloom Bar creates bespoke bouquets for birthdays, graduations, weddings and other special occasions. The business also hosts hands-on floral workshops and offers a unique Bloom Bar available to hire for events.

Afsah says: "Running a business in Redbridge has been wonderful. The community and our neighbours have been incredibly supportive from the very beginning."

One of her proudest moments was helping Esme, who is blind, create and wrap her own bouquet at Fleurie Bloom Bar's first workshop. "Her reaction and everything I learnt from her is something I'll always hold in my heart."

Special offer for Redbridge Life readers:

Enjoy 15% off your order (valid for 12 months) or a free two-hour Bloom Bar hire for your event.

For more information, please visit:

www.instagram.com/fleuriebloombar

HS Mini Mentors

Launched as a business in December 2025, HS Mini Mentors grew from a simple idea: children sharing their skills with other children.

What began as free origami workshops at Redbridge Library's Lab Central, led by young founder Sameer, has since developed into a creative community business run by Rabiya Tehseen and her children, Hafsa and Sameer.

Today, HS Mini Mentors delivers origami, upcycled crafts and creative workshops across Redbridge, with plans to introduce more STEM activities soon. Every session includes free fruit to encourage healthy eating and a free book for each child to

take home, helping inspire a love of reading alongside creativity.

Rabiya says: "My children absolutely love delivering the sessions. They love making friends, sharing their creativity with other children and seeing kids teach kids different skills. The fact they are recognised and appreciated for their ideas, efforts and work is what motivates me to take this venture even further."

Special offer for Redbridge Life readers:

Enjoy 25% off any workshop booking when sessions resume in the coming weeks.

For information, please visit:

www.hsminimentors.co.uk



Lowlu

Launched in July 2026, Lowlu Ilford brings the benefits of traditional Finnish sauna and cold plunge therapy to Redbridge. Located inside Rocket Padel Ilford, the business was founded by Tom after he returned to the UK from Finland, where he experienced first-hand the positive impact regular sauna sessions can have on both physical and mental wellbeing.

Today, Lowlu Ilford offers shared and private sauna and cold plunge sessions, featuring two traditional Finnish saunas and a choice of cold plunge pools. The business is committed to making the experience welcoming to everyone, including offering male-only and female-

only sessions to help people feel comfortable trying something new.

Tom says: "I want people from every background to feel sauna is for them. Seeing someone leave with the biggest grin on their face, saying they've never felt more rejuvenated or relaxed, makes it all worthwhile."

One of Tom's ambitions is to help more people across Redbridge discover the health and social benefits of sauna culture without travelling to other parts of London.

Special offer for Redbridge Life readers:

Enjoy 50% off your first session using the code ILFORDPAPER50 when booking online.

Find out more at **[lowlu.com/locations/ilford](https://www.lowlu.com/locations/ilford)**

Build your future with **Work Redbridge**

Residents across Redbridge are continuing to benefit from free, practical employment support designed to help people build confidence, gain new skills and move closer to work

Work Redbridge's short "Careers In" training programmes delivered in partnership with Redbridge Institute, offer unemployed residents the chance to explore new sectors and develop recognised skills in areas including construction, health and social care and business administration.

These courses provide industry relevant training alongside personalised support from employment specialists. Participants can meet local employers, access live vacancies and receive help with CV writing, job applications and interview preparation. The programmes are designed to give residents the tools, knowledge and motivation needed to take the next step towards employment, apprenticeships or further training.

One resident who has benefited from support from Work Redbridge is Aleeha, who recently secured a role as an Attendance Officer at a local school. With tailored guidance from her Work Redbridge Adviser, she strengthened her application, prepared for interview and successfully secured the position.

Reflecting on her experience, Aleeha said,

"The staff are welcoming and supportive, and no two days are the same. It has been a fantastic opportunity to learn new skills and gain a greater understanding of how the school operates. I'm extremely grateful to my Employment Advisor for all the support they provided throughout the recruitment process and during my time with Work Redbridge."

If you're ready to explore new opportunities, Work Redbridge would love to hear from you. Contact workredbridge@redbridge.gov.uk or visit www.redbridge.gov.uk/workredbridge



Aleeha has benefited from personalised support from Work Redbridge

**WOOD BURNERS.
IT'S SCARY WHAT THEY'RE
DOING TO PUBLIC HEALTH.**

Wood burners. Careless not cosy.

To find out more visit:
woodburning.london

Step Back into 1920s Redbridge

Explore how a decade of change transformed the borough forever in Redbridge Museum's new exhibition

This autumn, Redbridge Museum will take you on a journey back to 1920s Redbridge. A century ago, an exciting new world emerged after the horrors of the First World War.

Mass media, motor cars, the growth of suburbs, jazz age fashion, the beginning of a welfare state, and political and economic uncertainty marked this turbulent decade.

Located on the first floor of Redbridge Central Library in Ilford, the exhibition takes the visitor on a journey through this extraordinary decade using fascinating objects, historic photographs, archives, and the voices of local people.

The exhibition marks the key changes and additions to the borough during the decade

New attractions such as Ilford's Super Cinema and the Palais de Danse opened, where local people could have a grand night out.

1922



Ilford Super Cinema opened in **1922** just opposite Ilford station.



1920s evening dress from the collections of Redbridge Museum.



Valentines Park open-air swimming pool.

1924

Valentines Park open-air swimming pool opened.

Winston Churchill became MP for Woodford and Wanstead in the same year that the suffragette and campaigner Sylvia Pankhurst moved to Woodford Green.

Your guide to a Redbridge Autumn packed with fun

Autumn in Redbridge is packed with ways to get out, try something new and enjoy time with family and friends. With community events in local parks, theatre shows, comedy, live music and family performances, there's plenty to fill your diary.

Celebrate the Festival of the Dead



Join the **Festival of the Dead events** inspired by global traditions where families remember their deceased loved ones with music and beautifully decorated sugar skulls. Visit **Redbridge Central Library** and **Wanstead Library** for creative workshops, stories and more on **Thursday 29** and **Friday 30 October**.

Family days out



Keep younger residents entertained with **Go Grandad, Go!** on **26 September** at **Ken Aston Square** and **On Your Bike Baffo** on **1 November** at the **Lovegrove Theatre**. The festive season brings **Elf Jr** on **18 December**, a Christmas favourite for all ages.

Nights at the theatre



The **Lovegrove Theatre** has a packed programme this season. Highlights include:

- **Desi Central** **19 September**
- **The Stranger** **25 September**
- **Jukebox Jive** **10 October**
- **Preet Singh – First Class** **7 November**
- **Strangers in a Strange Land** **8 November**
- **School of Rock** **12 November**
- **Mums' Night Out Comedy** **4 December**
- **Celtic Christmas** **6 December**

Take time for yourself



The **Community Wellness Event** on **20 October** at **Redbridge Central Library** offers activities, advice and support to help residents stay active and connected.

Look ahead to Christmas



There will be **Christmas lights switch on events** in town centres across Redbridge, throughout the season, including in **Hainault**, **Fullwell Cross**, **Ilford**, **Wanstead** and at **Valentines Mansion**, and the **Ilford Christmas showdown** will take place on **21 November 2026**. Pop it in your diary and max out your winter!



For full event details and the latest listings, visit visionrcl.org.uk/events/



The Eastern Avenue opened, which led to historic farmland being sold off to build thousands of new houses in Redbridge, Clayhall, Gants Hill, Newbury Park, and Barkingside.

1925



Eastern Avenue and new housing in about **1928** - see how little traffic there is!

Excited crowds waiting for the Duke and Duchess of York on Ilford Borough Charter Day, 21 October **1926**.



1926

Ilford was granted borough status to mark the district's growth, with huge celebrations and a visit by the future King George VI.

Ilford Central Library opened. The original building is still there! Now occupied by SPACE Studios, towards the back of Redbridge Town Hall on Oakfield Road. The original Central Library closed when the current Central Library in Clements Road opened in 1986.

1927



Central Library in **1930**.

Come and discover how our modern world was made. **Redbridge in the 1920s** on the 1st Floor in Redbridge Central Library, from October 2026 to August 2027.



Visit Redbridge Museum's website for the opening date of the exhibition and opening times for the museum

www.visionrcl.org.uk/museum

Pioneering green tech drives down emissions

We became the first London borough to use a pioneering new eco-cement, combined with other innovative green technology, to complete a highways project that has saved 75 tonnes of carbon – the same as driving around the world 11 times

The low carbon initiatives were adopted by our innovative Highways Team for a project on Heathcote Avenue, in Clayhall.

The team combined resurfacing works with the installation of rain gardens, which is a flood alleviation scheme, to help reduce flood risks in the area and create smoother roads and footways for local people.

The eco-project was the first of its kind in the borough to bring several carbon saving measures together under one scheme, and used a combination of ground-breaking eco-materials, and technology including the first ever use of 'EVO zero' cement in London.

Created by Heidelberg, the new greener cement has near zero carbon in their material thanks to carbon capture technology.

Highways and construction works can be very carbon intensive, but our Highways Team continue to champion and incorporate greener methods to help reduce carbon emissions and tackle the climate emergency.



Works on Heathcote Avenue, in Clayhall



Heathcote Avenue after roadworks were complete

Check out our video on the project www.instagram.com/reel/DYUMe2ToY_2 or scan the QR code





Festival of the Dead

THURSDAY 29 OCTOBER (WANSTEAD)
FRIDAY 30 OCTOBER (ILFORD)

Join Redbridge Culture & Libraries for a **vibrant celebration** of life & death in this **family friendly** arts festival inspired by festivals and traditions from around the world.



Black History Month

OCTOBER | VARIOUS LOCATIONS

Redbridge Libraries have curated an **inclusive programme** for all ages, celebrating Black achievements, personal stories, family histories, and the rich heritage of African and Caribbean communities.

Redbridge Creates Youth Theatre Company Presents



Book by Thomas Meehan and Bob Martin

Music by Matthew Sklar

Lyrics by Chad Beguelin

Based upon the New Line Cinema film
written by David Berenbaum.

Elf Jr

FRIDAY 18 - THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER
AT REDBRIDGE DRAMA CENTRE

Get ready for a magical Christmas adventure as Buddy, a human raised as an elf at the North Pole, discovers the truth about who he really is!

Can this big-hearted elf bring his new family together - and remind New York of the true spirit of Christmas?



Christmas Light Switch On

EVENTS START FROM 4PM*

Wanstead

Friday 20 November

Ilford

Saturday 21 November

Valentines Mansion

Sunday 22 November

Hainault

Tuesday 24 November

Fullwell Cross

Thursday 26 November

Seven Kings

Friday 27 November



Visit our website to find out more
vrcl.uk/kids-events

*Times may vary for each location. Check the Vision website for more details.



London Borough of
Redbridge



A familiar face for those living outside of the Borough

Meet the officer helping families settle into a new community

Everyone deserves a safe place to call home.

But with rising homelessness, a shortage of affordable housing and increasing financial pressures on councils across London, finding suitable accommodation within borough boundaries is becoming more difficult.



Natalie, Redbridge's Housing Officer in Canterbury, supports families living in temporary accommodation

Like many London councils, Redbridge is facing growing demand for housing and temporary accommodation. To ensure families have somewhere safe and suitable to stay while they wait for a permanent home, some households are accommodated outside the borough.

For some Redbridge families, that means moving into temporary accommodation in Canterbury. Leaving behind familiar surroundings can be a daunting experience, particularly for families adjusting to a new area while balancing work, school and everyday life. That's where Natalie comes in.



Natalie provides practical support, local knowledge and a familiar point of contact for families in temporary accommodation

As a Housing Officer, Natalie is one of the first people they meet. She hands over the keys, helps residents settle in and remains a familiar point of contact long after they move in. From arranging repairs and signposting support services to helping families settle into a new area, she provides practical support and a familiar face when it's needed most.

Whether she's welcoming a new family, helping a resident access local support or working with partner organisations to resolve an issue, no two days are ever the same.

For Natalie, the role is as much about building relationships as it is about solving problems. Being based locally means she can regularly visit residents, understand the challenges they're facing and help connect them with the right support. Sometimes, a quick conversation or check-in can be just as important as resolving a housing issue.



Natalie is there when residents need support

When families arrive, Natalie helps them get connected with local schools, healthcare and community services. She says one of the best things about Canterbury is the support network residents have built around each other.

"It's important for people to know that this is a community," she says. "There are 200 families here. People are friends, people help each other out and there's a big support network."

Over the years, neighbours have formed friendships, shared advice and supported each other through some of life's most challenging moments, creating a community that extends far beyond simply living in the same place.



Natalie regularly visits the estate, helping residents access support and stay connected with local services

While every family's circumstances are different, Natalie says people are often looking for the same thing: stability, reassurance and somewhere they can feel comfortable. Seeing residents gain confidence, settle into a routine and become part of the local community is what makes the role so rewarding.

For all the practical support her role involves, Natalie says there's one thing that matters most

"I think the best part is that people feel like it's their home."

Helping residents stay independent at home:

Beverly and Alf's story

A simple adaptation helping one Redbridge couple stay independent and connected to their community

For Beverly and Alf Richards, Redbridge has been home for more than 40 years and they consider it a place shaped by strong relationships and a real sense of belonging.

"When we moved in, in 1982, we wanted somewhere to live, and this house was the one that we found," Alf explains. Over time, it became much more than that. **"We have a street party every year. It makes you feel homely, comfortable. It's the best street I've ever lived on. I wouldn't move anywhere else."**

For Beverly, it's the people that stand out most. "People talk to you," she says.

That connection to the community inspired the couple to set up the Kevin Richards Foundation in memory of their son. Through the foundation, they have created a space where older residents and those at risk of isolation can come together, share meals and take part in activities.

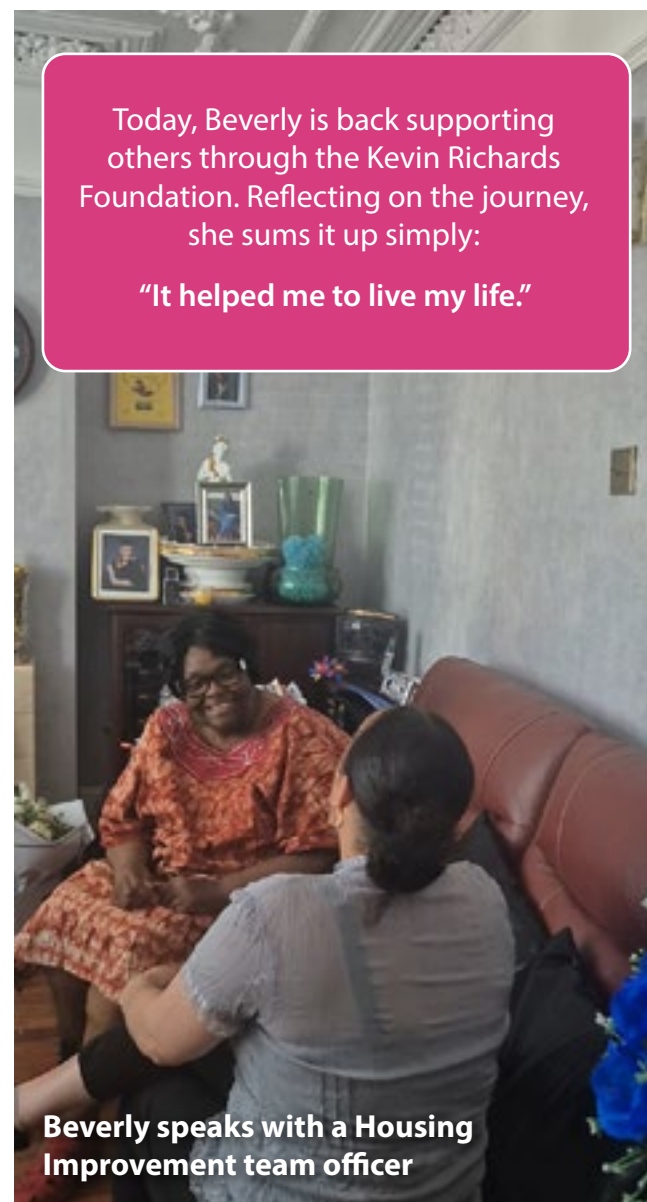
"I started the centre to get people out of the house. They come, enjoy a cooked meal, take part in activities, and connect with others. I really enjoy doing it," Beverly says.

However, when Beverly began experiencing mobility difficulties, everyday life at home became increasingly challenging. Bathing safely was a constant concern.

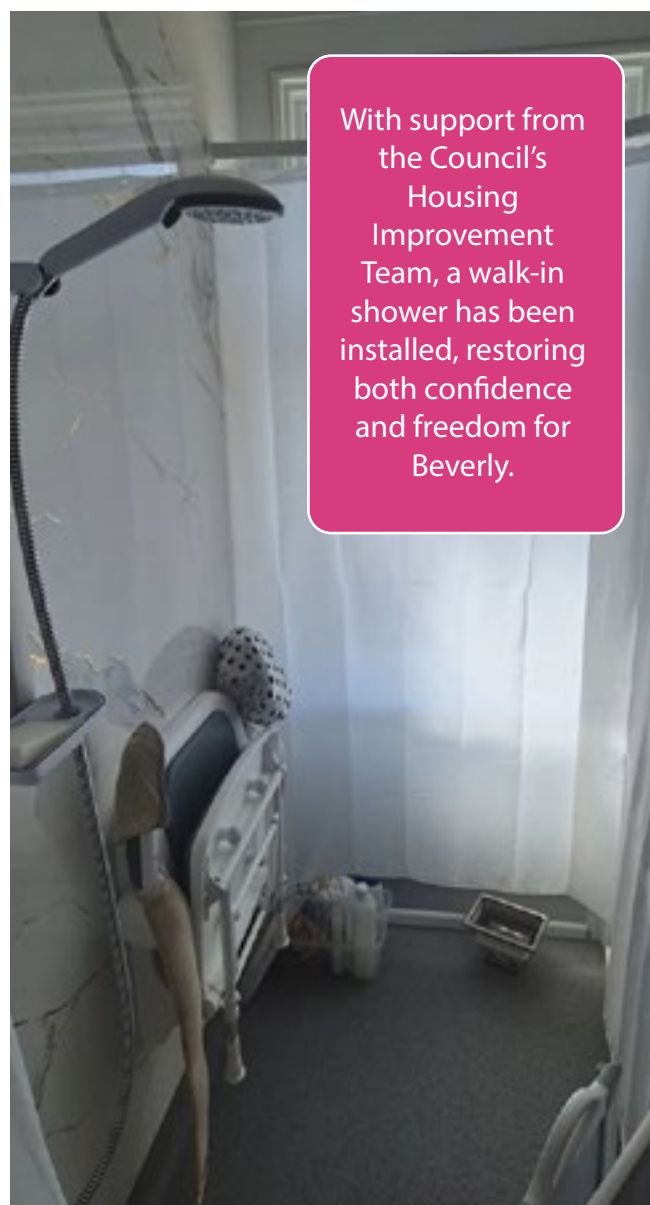
Losing that independence had a wider impact. She was no longer able to run the centre, something that deeply affected her. **"I felt really bad I had to close [the foundation]. I was not supporting the community anymore."**

Today, Beverly is back supporting others through the Kevin Richards Foundation. Reflecting on the journey, she sums it up simply:

"It helped me to live my life."



Beverly speaks with a Housing Improvement team officer



With support from the Council's Housing Improvement Team, a walk-in shower has been installed, restoring both confidence and freedom for Beverly.



Mr Richards loves the community they have around them

With support from the Council's Housing Improvement Team, Beverly received a home improvement grant to install a walk-in shower. The change was immediate.

For Beverly, it restored both confidence and freedom. **"The same day they left, I had a shower, which was brilliant. It's like miracle... I don't have to wait on my husband... I just walk in... best thing since sliced bread."**

More importantly, it enabled her to reconnect with the community work she loves. **"It helps me to get back into the community, go out and enjoy life more - it's made a big difference in my life."**

Learn more about the home improvement grants and eligibility by visiting www.redbridge.gov.uk/home-improvement or scan the QR code



More than 1000 new trees to take root in Redbridge thanks to green funding boost

Local communities can look forward to greener streets, parks and neighbourhoods after Redbridge Council was awarded £375,270 from the Mayor of London's Green Roots Fund to support an ambitious tree planting programme across the borough

Over the next two years, the programme will see more than 1,000 trees planted locally to create greener landscapes, improve air quality, and boost biodiversity, as well as to provide more shade, reduce urban heat, and absorb more rainwater to help manage flood risks.

We'll be working closely with the Woodland Trust, who have a local presence at Hainault Forest.

Using a mapping system known as Tree Equity Score UK, which was co-developed by the Woodland Trust to show urban tree coverage across the UK - we'll ensure new trees are planted in parts of the borough that would benefit most from increased canopy cover and access to green spaces.

If you're interested in getting involved, keep an eye out on our website for information about community planting events and volunteering opportunities, and help us create a lasting legacy for future generations.

You can follow our progress on www.redbridge.gov.uk/tree-planting or send a letter requesting further information to: Tree planting, London Borough of Redbridge, The WREN Office, Ley Street Depot, 531 Ley Street, Ilford, IG2 7QZ



Image: WTML/Helen Pugh

Better homes this autumn

New protections and stronger enforcement are helping to improve housing standards across Redbridge

Everyone deserves a home that is safe, secure and well managed. New housing reforms are raising standards across the country, while Redbridge is stepping up work locally to improve housing conditions and protect renters.

For council tenants, Awaab's Law means landlords must deal with serious hazards such as damp and mould more quickly. It is important that every landlord has a responsibility to provide safe homes, and the Council is continuing to strengthen its own services to meet these higher standards.

For private renters, the Renters' Right Act brings stronger protections and

greater security. These national changes support and strengthen work already taking place in Redbridge to improve housing standards and tackle poor practice.

To make sure residents benefit from these changes, the Council has increased housing enforcement resources by 50%, adding 13 new officers and creating a dedicated Renters' Rights Action team. This means more inspections, quicker investigations and faster action when problems are reported. More than 4000 inspections are expected to take place by April 2029, helping officers find issues and sooner and improve conditions for residents.



We have many great landlords that set the standard for what good housing looks like and our focus is on ensuring that every home in the

borough is fit for our residents. That's why we'll only take action against the landlords and letting agents who fail to meet their legal requirements.

Scan the QR code to learn more about your rights and how to report poor conditions.

www.redbridge.gov.uk/housing/renter-s-rights-act-for-tenants



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