

JULY

NEWSLETTER

July has arrived in full bloom and so has the buzz around Thames Life! As the sun turns up the heat, remember to stay cool, stay hydrated, and look out for one another, especially our older neighbours and young families. But don't let the heatwave slow you down because summer is too good to waste indoors. Just as the greenery around our hub is lush and thriving, so too is the spirit of our community. From resident-led workshops and skills training to social gatherings and so much more, there's something happening here for everyone. Come on in, get involved, and let's make this the best summer yet, together.

Recent Community Actions

Last week, we were thrilled to welcome MP Nesil to Barking Food Forest for a truly special visit! Here are some beautiful pictures capturing the day. It was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the incredible work being led by local residents and volunteers

who have transformed a restricted strip of land into a thriving green haven for the Barking Riverside community. The Food Forest is so much more than a community garden. It offers Forest School sessions for children, community gardening, and a welcoming space where people of all ages can connect with nature and each other. It also supports social prescribing, helping to boost physical and mental wellbeing while easing pressure on the NHS. We hope this visit helps shine a light on what this amazing team has built and brings the project one step closer to securing the funding needed for essential infrastructure like pavilions, toilets and shaded areas, so this inspiring space can welcome even more of our community for years to come.



A huge thank you to Susan Aitouaziz from Trades Union council for being our guest speaker and for the valuable insight she brought to the Housing Justice meeting hosted by The Ripple Effect.



This meeting saw residents, local campaigners and political representatives including Emma from the Green Party, discuss building support for the Residents' Charter. TUC offered to use its network including Barking Riverside union members to help strengthen alliances, coordinate support and present the Residents' charter to its wider committee. Discussions focused on housing safety, transparency, repairs, accountability, family-sized homes, service charges, temporary accommodation and creating stable communities. The group also explored working with the Fire Brigades Union, Unite construction workers, councillors, SHAC and the London Renters Union to strengthen campaigning, with agreed actions including further meetings, building partnerships and preparing for the TUC board meeting in September.

On that note SHAC (Social Housing Action Campaign) has published its blueprint for an independent, democratic national union run by and for tenants and residents. With tenants and residents currently outflanked by large, powerful corporate landlords with superior access to decision makers, this union aims to redress that power imbalance on a national scale. It is really worth looking into and getting behind if you can. Find out more here: shaction.org/a-national-housing-union

Friends of the Earth, BD chapter welcomed Geoffrey Juden for their monthly meeting. He is the Chairman of the East London Garden Society, a passionate and tireless advocate for urban green spaces who has been championing the environment in East London since founding the Society in 2011.

Geoffrey has also recently launched a brilliant new app, The Great Eastern Park Route (gepr.co.uk), a comprehensive guide to green spaces and nature across East London that we highly recommend checking out.



During the meeting, the deeply concerning plans to concretise footpath 47 was discussed. It is one of the

last remaining mudflats in London and a precious sanctuary for migratory birds and even seals. It was an inspiring and eye-opening session and we are grateful to Geoffrey for sharing his expertise and passion with our community. Here's a picture of residents protesting against the concretisation of the footpath from last year.



The Hockley Mews project is being wonderfully carried forward by community organiser and local councillor Marion Hull, and it is a truly beautiful initiative dedicated to supporting older people through activities that enhance their mental and physical wellbeing. From coffee with a copper and line dancing to gardening, chair yoga, bingo and so much more.



Upcoming events

A note on our monthly meetings: Due to the summer heat and practicalities, we are temporarily shifting most of the monthly meetings to an online platform. Please keep an eye on our socials for links and joining details.

Our meetings follow a structured monthly rhythm designed to cover the issues that matter most to our community. The first Wednesday of each month is our Planning Forum, the second hosts our Business or Creative Networking session, the third is the Friends of the Earth meeting where environmental campaigns across the borough are highlighted and discussed, and the fourth is dedicated to Housing Justice. Each session brings together eminent personalities, campaigners and specialists relevant to the topic, who offer insight, guidance and inspiration.

Keep an eye on our socials across Facebook, and Instagram for the online links.

All residents are warmly welcome to join, contribute and have their voices heard. Because we truly believe that we grow by growing together.



Residents Planning Forum

01/07/2026

Curzon Club,
Bastable Ave, Barking
IG11 0LG

7pm onwards

Microsoft Teams meeting details

Meeting ID: 372 524 537 630 62
Passcode: hD9HY3qZ



Join our residents planning forum online or in-person, a vital space for residents to discuss issues on housing decisions that affect their community.

Come, be a part of the second meeting of the incredible Resilience Network of our borough that is taking shape with the help of British Red Cross, council and the third sector organisations looking out for the wellbeing of the community.

BARKING & DAGENHAM RESILIENCE NETWORK

MONDAY 13 JULY 2026

1.00PM – 4.00PM

THE RIPPLE CENTRE, 121-125 RIPPLE ROAD,
BARKING, IG11 7FN

Join us to explore how communities can prepare, respond and support each other during challenges and emergencies.



SCAN TO REGISTER. ADMISSIONS FREE

LOCAL RISKS, PREPAREDNESS AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING | COMMUNITY STORIES AND EXPERIENCES |
INTERACTIVE DISCUSSIONS ON COMMUNITY STRENGTHS, COLLABORATION AND ACTION | BUILDING
STRONGER, MORE CONNECTED COMMUNITIES



**Barking &
Dagenham**

 **British Red Cross**

DCVS

**Thames
Life**
Community
Development
Trust



Summer Basketball Camp at Thamesview!

A fantastic opportunity for young people this August! LGA are running a Summer Basketball Camp at Thames View Junior School, Samuel Ferguson Place, Bastable Avenue, IG11 0TR across three weeks: 3rd–6th, 10th–13th and 17th–20th August, 10am–2pm. Children will enjoy professional coaching, fun team activities and challenges designed to build confidence, teamwork and physical fitness. As part of the HAF programme, all children receive a free healthy meal and snacks daily, and children on free school meals attend completely free. Don't miss out, get your little ones signed up!

Upcoming green events

Compost London

Thursday 21 July, 17:00–19:00 (in-person, venue TBA)

An opportunity to connect with fellow organisations, share learning and explore new partnerships while helping to build a stronger and more connected sector.

For more information and to register for this event, please email Compost London at info@compostlondon.org.uk.



You're invited

POLICY LAB

DOMESTIC GARDEN DEPAVING
POLICY IMPROVEMENT

For urban Climate Adaptation

Working together to turn evidence into an actionable policy that helps London's domestic gardens stay green, reduce flooding, restore biodiversity, and cool our city.

Green Gardens
stronger cities

LESS PAVING

Through a collaborative co-design workshop, together we will:

- EXPLORE the current policy and gaps
- ALIGN with climate resilience, SuDS and biodiversity goals
- CO-DESIGN practical planning and incentive solutions
- DEVELOP an actionable roadmap for scaling depaving initiatives

15 JULY 2026
9:30 - 15:00

Royal Docks Centre for Sustainability (RDSC), RD104
University of East London

Refreshments and lunch provided

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION
Your expertise can help shape policies and unlock the power of domestic gardens.

RSVP BY 1 JULY 2026
scan to register or email us

Questions? Contact: kcorada@uel.ac.uk

SRI
Sustainability Research Institute

University of East London



Policy Lab: Domestic Garden Depaving for Urban Climate Adaptation

The University of East London's Sustainability Research Institute is hosting a collaborative Policy Lab on 15 July 2026, 9:30am–3pm at the Royal Docks Centre for Sustainability, University of East London. The session brings together experts and practitioners to turn evidence into actionable policy that

keeps London's gardens green, reduces flooding, restores biodiversity and helps cool our city. Refreshments and lunch provided. RSVP by 1 July to kcorada@uel.ac.uk. A brilliant opportunity to help shape real change!

The power of the people is
greater than the people in
power.

Wael Ghonim

brighten your
day.

A quote or
two to

The greatness of a man is not in
how much wealth he acquires, but
in his integrity and his ability to
affect those around him positively.

Bob Marley

In other news

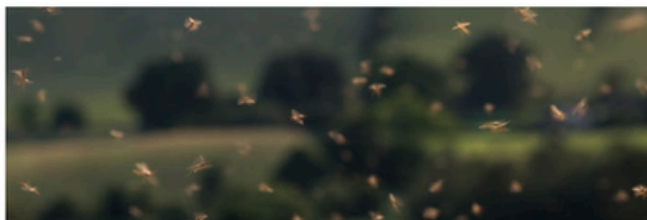
≡ COUNTRY LIVING HOMES WELLBEING TRAVEL CL REWARDS CL MARKETPLACE CL COLLECTIONS SUBSCRIBE

Flying Ant Day 2026 is coming — here's when to expect swarms and how to get rid of them

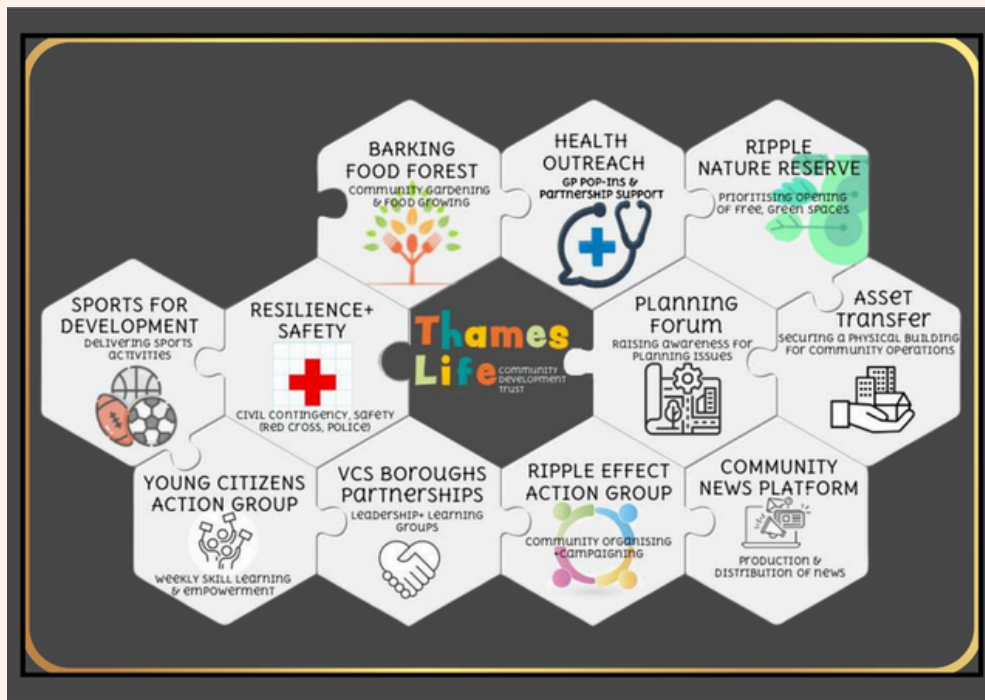
Don't let flying ants ruin your summer gathering

BY [LISA JOYNER](#) UPDATED: 18 JUNE 2026

🔖 SAVE ARTICLE



Flying ants suddenly appear on warm, humid summer days as winged males and young queens leave their nests for a mass mating flight, often called "Flying Ant Day"—though it actually happens over several days or weeks. After mating, the males die, while the queens shed their wings and start new colonies, making the swarms an important part of the ecosystem.



Nothing changes without honest, independent and unbiased insight, which is why we do things differently. Everything we do is shaped by the Thames Life Resident Charter, meaning our research stands apart from developers, is clear about its intentions, and welcomes all perspectives, including challenge and disagreement. These are not PR exercises. They are genuine conversations, driven by residents, for residents. Our latest round of engagement has now wrapped up, and we will be sharing findings over the coming months.

If you want to have your say in a safe, independent space, we would love to hear from you. Reach out to us directly at info@thames-life.org.

Because real change begins with truly listening.

That's it from us!

Hasta la vista till next month.

Until then, keep being the change that you want to see in society.

**Thames
Life**