

**MEMBER QUESTION NO. 1**

**12 July 2023**

Question asked by: Councillor Royston

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Krupski

**Question**

In many of our parks and on many of our streets, we have old-fashioned lidless bins, which are frequently disturbed by animals and the weather, causing litter to spill out across the pavement, streets and beyond. What work is being done to review and assess where we have lidless bins, and to replace them with bins that are fit for purpose?

**Reply**

A programme is underway in our parks to replace existing litter bins with vermin proof bins (168 were installed as part of the Greening Fund project). Following this project a new bin design has been developed for deployment with smaller aperture sizes to further reduce the likelihood of mess caused by animals or wind. We are also trialling 'bird flaps' on some of the bins at Manor House Gardens in order to assess their effectiveness.

On the highway, we are undertaking research to develop new bin designs to prevent windblown litter and scavenging. Options also include recycling provision as part of the overall design.

**MEMBER QUESTION NO. 2**

**12 July 2023**

Question asked by: Councillor Bernards

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Brenda Dacres

**Question**

Do we have any civic events planned to celebrate the contribution of refugees and migrants to Lewisham?

**Reply**

During Refugee Week (19-25 June 2023), a number of events took place in the borough that celebrated the contribution of refugees and migrants, many of which were co-funded by Lewisham Council.

Lewisham Council, in collaboration with key partners, delivered an event to celebrate the 100 families which have now been resettled in the Borough through its resettlement scheme. Horniman Museum are also organising a Crossing Borders event on 8 July 2023, with activities and performances being delivered entirely by resettled families.

A number of events were also hosted across the borough to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of HMT Empire Windrush, including Windrush 75: The Lewisham Story, held in the Broadway Theatre.

### **MEMBER QUESTION NO. 3**

**12 July 2023**

Question asked by: Councillor Harding

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

#### **Question**

What are we doing to ensure children in Lewisham have access to activities and playgrounds?

#### **Reply**

I'm proud that we were elected in 2022 on a pledge to develop a groundbreaking Play Strategy, to support children's quality of life, well-being and development, and to create a new long-term investment programme to refurbish or replace all Lewisham's play areas.

Lewisham's Mayor and Cabinet approved a new Play Strategy in October 2022. This set out our ambition for all Lewisham children to have a variety of safe, accessible and well-maintained places for play within walking distance of their home. This will obviously require a long-term programme of improvement. Early steps include:

- an audit of local parks and playgrounds, and details of the current state of the Adventure Playgrounds.
- a plan to improve our five local Adventure Playgrounds, approved in June 2023. This includes a complete rebuild of the Dumps playground in Bellingham, as part of the project to expand Watergate School.
- The procurement process for the Adventure Playgrounds is due to begin in the summer, with a view to contracts being awarded by November 2023.

Lewisham Council also continues to invest in new children's play areas in our parks. This investment is funded via planning gain received from developers such as section 106 agreements and Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) as well as funding from other grant awarding bodies. Stakeholders are encouraged to influence the type of investment in these spaces via consultation with our parks friends' groups and others who have an interest in good quality accessible children's play facilities, such as families of children with special educational needs. With the money announced for Evelyn in 2021 (Evelyn Green £43k, Folkstone Gardens £80k and Sayes Court £30k) and the current round of Greening Fund and NCIL we will have delivered over £1.6m of play area improvement by the end of 2025.

**MEMBER QUESTION NO. 4**  
**12 July 2023**

Question asked by: Councillor Webley-Brown

Relevant Directorate: Community Services

Member to reply: Councillor Juliet Campbell

**Question**

How many refugee families have been resettled in Lewisham?

**Reply**

During refugee week in June, we welcomed our 100<sup>th</sup> family as part of our commitment to welcome 100 Afghan and Syrian refugees and as a result of the illegal invasion of Ukraine we have resettled over 400 Ukrainian nationals on the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. We are currently working on our reapplication to Borough of Sanctuary this year so we are able to continue our important work as the country's first Borough of Sanctuary.

**Homes For Ukraine scheme**

<b>Total No. of Guest arrivals from March 22 to June 23</b>	<b>Total departures from March 22 to June 23</b>	<b>Total remaining</b>
529	125	404

Below is a summary of individuals who have left the scheme and moved on to either settled accommodation, relocated out of borough or returned to the Ukraine. This is based on the figure above of 125.

<b>Type of accommodation</b>	<b>Individuals</b>
Rematched	23
PRS	67
Moved to Ukraine	30
TA	2
Moved to another country	3
Total	125

**MEMBER QUESTION NO. 5**

**12 July 2023**

Question asked by: Councillor Tam

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Krupski

**Question**

What measures have we taken this year reduce Lewisham's carbon emissions?

**Reply**

Mayor and Cabinet considered a report on 8 March 2023 setting out the Council's work to reduce Lewisham's carbon emissions. A further such update is planned for Mayor and Cabinet in March 2024, and in the lead up to this update it would also be expected to be discussed at Sustainable Development Scrutiny Committee.

The 8 March report can be found here:

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s108302/230308%20MandC%20CEAP%20FINAL.pdf>

<https://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/documents/s108303/230308%20CEAP%20Update%20143%20actions%20MandC%20FINAL.pdf>

## **MEMBER QUESTION NO. 6**

**12 July 2023**

Question asked by: Councillor Hayes

Relevant Directorate: Children and Young People

Member to reply: Councillor Barnham

### **Question**

What are we doing to tackle school hunger within the borough?

### **Reply**

It is chastening in an affluent modern country that we so often hear from teachers how concerned they are about the number of children going hungry at school. The scale of the cost of living crisis is obviously beyond the capacity of a single council to solve: central government needs to do more, not least because it is the mistakes of this current government that have placed so many families in difficulty.

Nevertheless, it is of course a priority for the Council to do all we can to make sure all children have access to healthy food. We tackle this in several ways:

- Encouraging and supporting families who qualify to apply for free school meals (FSM). In Summer 2022, 1,700 more children in Lewisham were claiming FSM than in Summer 2020.
- Since the Covid-19 pandemic, Lewisham schools have in school holidays distributed shopping vouchers (or hampers in some cases in the early days) to families whose children are eligible for FSM. This provides £15 per eligible child per week. In recent years we have chosen to use the Household Support Fund and its extensions to fund this.
- Sadly, hunger impacts more children than the limited number who qualify for FSM. So we announced earlier this year a £400,000 fund to ensure no child goes hungry at school. This money was distributed to schools directly for them to decide how best to spend it. This could include free breakfasts; provision of break-time snacks; top-ups to packed lunches, food parcels and meals for children not currently eligible for free school meals. All schools in the borough received the funding, with allocation of amounts dependent on the levels of need among the children that attended the school.

I'm very pleased that Lewisham's Mayor and Cabinet recently decided to extend this discretionary funding. Alongside the Mayor of London's grant for free school meals for all primary children, this should enable us to provide greater support for children of secondary age.

**MEMBER QUESTION NO. 7**

**12 July 2023**

Question asked by: Councillor Ingleby

Relevant Directorate: Housing, Regeneration and Public Realm

Member to reply: Councillor Sophie Davis

**Question**

In light of the upcoming Borough-wide introduction of Article 4, from January 2024, what is, or will there be an existing neighbourhood or ward density threshold factor or number of HMO's – and also exempt care accommodation – which forms a material consideration during the process of delegated Planning decisions taken for further creation of these types of property? Does the London Plan offer support and guidance here?

**Reply**

The London Plan at Policy H9 'Ensuring the best use of stock' states that "Boroughs should take account of the role of houses in multiple occupation in meeting local and strategic housing needs. Where they are of a reasonable standard they should generally be protected". The explanatory text at para 4.9.4 reiterates the importance of HMOs as part of London's housing stock.

The Council's draft Local Plan will begin to gain decision making weight as it progresses towards adoption in the latter part of 2023 meaning that the policies within it will begin to be used alongside the current local plan. Policy H08 'Housing with Shared Facilities (Houses in Multiple Occupation)' sets out criteria where shared housing will be permitted, and where they will be resisted including in areas of overconcentration. This is not set out in a ward by ward or neighbourhood basis as applications are considered on their individual merits and local impact.

The Article 4 restricts a change of use from C3 to C4. There may be circumstances where a property is used for supported care, this is known as C3(b) use class and is not defined by the Government as development, or a material change of use from Use Class C3 and therefore the article 4 nor any policies will apply to the creation of that type of use.