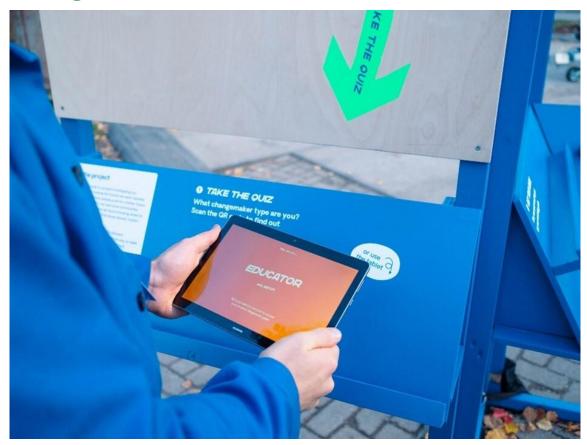# Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

Changemakers of East London

Thanks to an engagement grant from [The National Archives](#), Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives is collaborating with Studio Futurall to connect Tower Hamlets residents with archival material on the local history of changemaking. Educators, Activists, Organisers, Creators, Representatives... Tower Hamlets has a long and rich history of people making change and this project will inspire young people to follow in their footsteps.

🎆 Calling all 16-25 year olds in East London! 🎆

Are you passionate about making a difference in your local area? Do you want to connect with like-minded individuals and gain valuable historical research and design skills? Then join us for a series of workshops to uncover the history of famous changemakers from Tower Hamlets and to tell their stories with the world.

We are looking for young people to attend **two workshops**, and you will receive a £30 voucher if you come to both!

- **Friday 26 April, 2.00-4.30 pm** : Exploring the local history archives to learn about historic changemakers

- **Saturday 4 May, 1.00-4.00 pm** : Using design and creativity to tell the stories of the people that inspire us to the rest of the East London community.
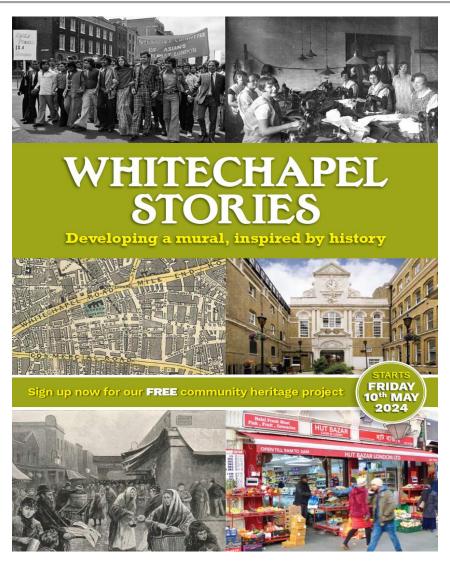
What's in it for you?

🔍 Connection to your local area and communities

👫 Meet other young people who share your interests and aspirations

🎨 Develop your historical research and design skills

📣 Have your work shared publicly

💼 Expand your professional network and make valuable connections

In addition, there will be interactive sessions where you can share your research in public spaces, making a real impact where it matters most.

You don't need any expertise to take part, just an interest in learning more about famous changemakers from your local area and a desire to contribute to positive change in East London.

Sign up now by emailing localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk to with the subject "Changemakers". Please share a few sentences of why you would like to take part. Spaces are limited, so reserve yours today!

Help create a new mural on Sidney Street

Whitechapel has a rich and varied history. The local streets, shops and landmark buildings all have their own stories. And diverse communities have made their home here. We are pleased to be supporting this new project, supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, whichs aim to research and gather some of Whitechapel's remarkable stories and use them to create a new heritage mural on Sidney Street in autumn 2024.

Over a series of eight weekly hands-on history workshops, guided walks, and online research sessions, participants will take a closer look at the neighbourhood. We'll use old maps, photographs, newspapers and other historical records to explore how Whitechapel has developed over the years.

Informed by this research, we'll work together to shape up ideas for the new Sidney Street mural, as well as an accompanying booklet and website. It's a chance to make your own mark on Whitechapel's history!

Who's it for?

The project is open to all Tower Hamlets residents. Whatever your interest in Whitechapel's communities and history, you'll get something out of this project. The workshops are pitched at a level that is accessible to all and everyone will be supported. If you're new to exploring local history, we'll give you a helping hand, and if you're more experienced, this will offer an interesting theme on which to hone your research skills.

When and where?

The project runs on eight Fridays, from 10am – 1pm, starting on Friday 10 May and ending on Friday 28 June 2024. Sessions take place at various locations: at Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives, an IT suite at Queen Mary University, and on local guided walks. When you sign up, you'll receive full joining instructions.

Project leaders

Jane Austin is Secretary of John's Place Tenants' and Residents' Association in Whitechapel. She has worked for many years in community and adult education, and as a volunteer working with refugees.
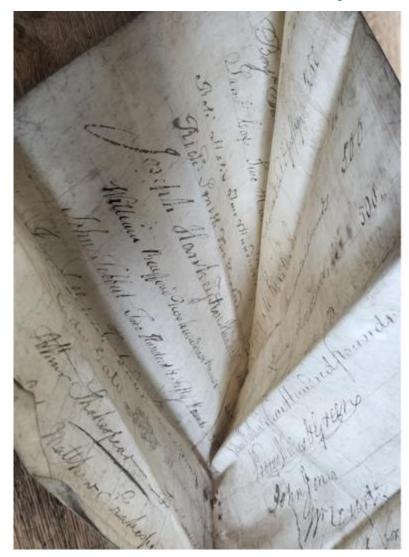
Graham Barker is a walk guide with a keen interest in East End history. He manages the Tower Hamlets health walk programme, and has led pop-up community projects including Victorian Footprints and History on the Doorstep.

Richard Wiltshire is Archives Manager at Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives, responsible for the vast collection of historical resources they hold at Bancroft Road. **Sanjida Alam** and **Genova Messiah** – Heritage Officers (Learning and Participation) – will provide additional support.

To book your place:

Email graham@walkeast.org or call Graham on 0791 922 1806

Our current exhibition and upcoming events

What We Have Become is a group exhibition including painting and drawing, photography, collage, film and sculpture, responding to Stuart Hall's idea of cultural identity being formed from "points of deep significant difference".

The artists' work explores the impacts of silence and erasure in archival records created and kept by the British state about people of colour – for example, the destruction of Home Office immigration records which caused the Windrush Scandal – and how the violence implicit in the destruction of archival records may be reproduced as a rupture in the sense of self, identity and belonging.

Casting the exhibition as a space of healing and reconciliation, the artists evoke new narratives emphasising the contributions, resilience and rich cultural heritage of communities of colour, with the histories of Black and Asian Britons retold on their own terms.

The exhibiting artists are **Holly Graham**, **Rudy Loewe**, **Diensen Pamben**, **Kelly Wu** and **Basil Olton**.

A range of events are being organised to explore the themes of the exhibition.

Creative workshop

Saturday 20 April | 11am-1pm | Workshop

As part of the What We Have Become events programme, all are welcome to attend this creative textile workshop. Using memory and examples of archival textiles from the Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives collection, costume and set designer **Veronika Seifert** will lead a collage workshop with text, texture, sculpture and imagination.

All ages welcome (children to be accompanied by adults). Limited capacity of 15 participants - book here to reserve your place!

Archival breaks, gaps and silences

Thursday 16 May | 6.30 - 8.00pm | Online talk

Utilising the archive as a mode of expression and social document, this online panel discussion with all of the participating artists will explore the gaps within the archive that invite us to engage critically with the silenced voices and obscured histories that underpin its very existence and its relationship to artistic practice. Based on the writings of Stuart Hall and his essay 'Constituting the Archive', the panel will discuss how the archive has influenced their work and the connection between memory and meaning.

No booking is required - visit our website for the Zoom link nearer the time.

Contact us

- Email us: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk
- Visit our website: http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history
- Phone (answered during Reading Room opening hours only): 020 7364 1290

Reading Room opening hours

- Tuesday 10.00am-4.30pm
- Wednesday 10.00am-4.30pm
- Thursday 10.00am-7.00pm

First and third Saturdays of every month:

- Saturday 10.00am-5.00pm

That's the following Saturdays coming up:

- Saturday 20 April
- Saturday 4 May
- Saturday 18 May
- Saturday 1 June

Exhibition opening times are: 10am-5pm Monday-Friday, plus the Saturdays and Thursday evenings noted above. On Monday and Friday lunchtimes, the exhibition will be closed for lunch between 1 and 2pm.

Stay Connected with Idea Store on social media: