

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives



Temporary Reading Room closure

5 June - 14 August 2023

As announced in our last newsletter, **the Reading Room will be closing temporarily over the summer** to facilitate building works.

The lighting in the room is being upgraded thanks to an investment by Tower Hamlets Council in a bespoke new lighting system. The existing light fittings date from the 1960s and are now obsolete. Many lights in the room are not functional, which leads to low visibility in the room, particularly in winter.

While the works take place, the Reading Room service needs to close temporarily for just over two months. Due to the high ceiling, a scaffold needs to be erected inside the room for contractors to work at height. Extra care is being taken to ensure there is no damage to this room's key feature, its decorative plasterwork ceiling, and the rest of the Grade 2 listed building.

This means that

- You will not be able to visit and use our collections for nine weeks from w/c 5 June
- Our ability to assist you via email/phone will be affected, as staff access to the collections will be restricted

The Exhibition Hall and Education Room will continue to operate as normal. We will be launching our next exhibition during this period - details coming soon - so rest assured you will still be able to get your local history fix while our Reading Room is inaccessible.

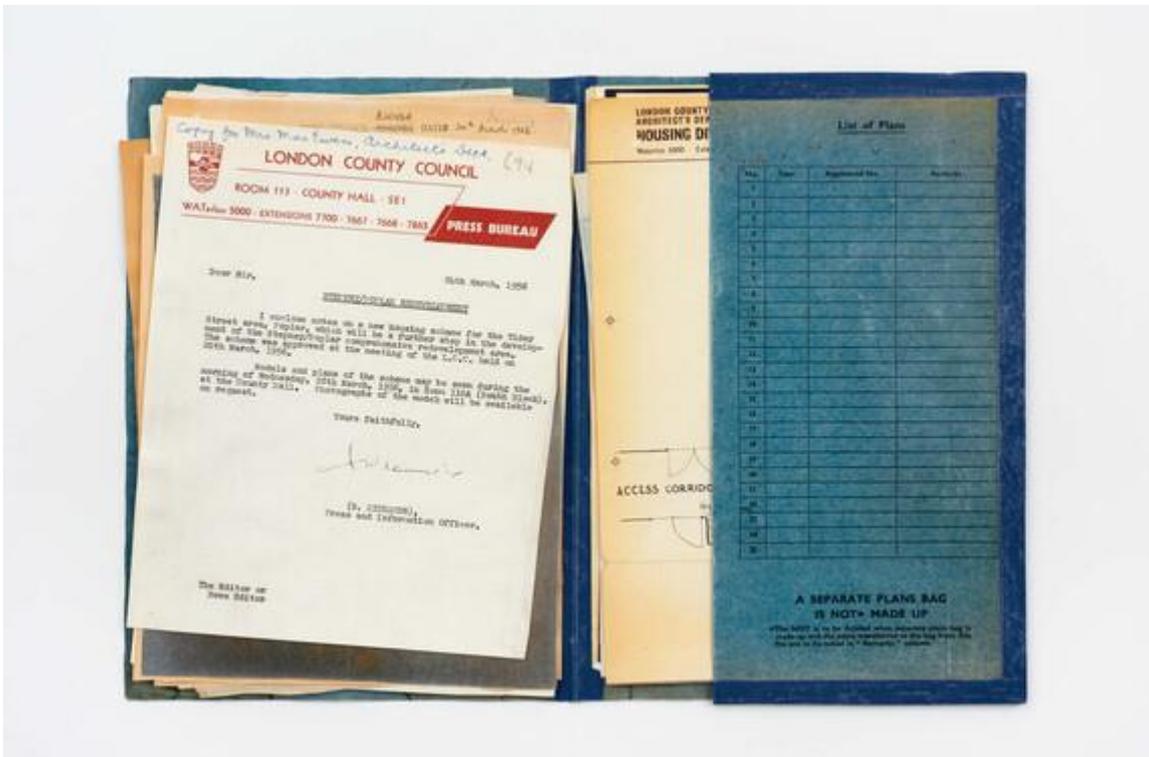
If everything goes according to schedule, we expect to reopen on **Tuesday 15 August**.

In the meantime we are looking forward to helping you in the month leading up to the closure. Our last day open to the public will be **Saturday 3 June**.



One of the outdated light fittings being replaced.

Our current exhibition by artist Maria Amidu



Lincoln Estate archive material, c. 1950s. Photo: Jonathan Bassett

living in fear of quicksand

Until Saturday 20 May

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives (THLHLA) in partnership with the Nunnery Gallery is delighted to be hosting *living in fear of quicksand* by artist [Maria Amidu](#) – an exhibition of new work and existing archive material. *living in fear of quicksand* is a solo exhibition taking place across two venues. It explores the fragmentary nature of memory in relation to a fragile experience of home.

In the work on display here at Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, the focus is placed on the architectural and social history of the Lincoln Estate in Bow Common, and the artist's brief place within it. Designed in the 1950s, the Estate includes Sleaford House – a 19-storey block of 90 maisonettes where the artist lived in the 1970s.

From among the extensive collections held here Maria has unearthed council correspondence, plans, drawings and newspaper cuttings about the Estate – material that has played an integral role in the development of the resulting artworks. A selection of these historic records is displayed alongside items from Maria's personal archive and accompanied by a timeline documenting the development of the Estate.

The exhibition continues a short bus ride away at the [Nunnery Gallery](#) in Bow with five new artworks including a print work, a text-based installation, a film piece, a sound work, and a bespoke paint colour.

The exhibition is on show until Saturday 20 May.

Contact us

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

Reading Room - Regular opening hours

- Tuesday 10.30am-4pm
- Wednesday 10.30am-4pm
- Thursday 10.30am-7pm

First and third Saturdays of every month:

- Saturday 10am-5pm

That's the following Saturdays coming up:

- Saturday 6 May
- Saturday 20 May
- Saturday 3 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.

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