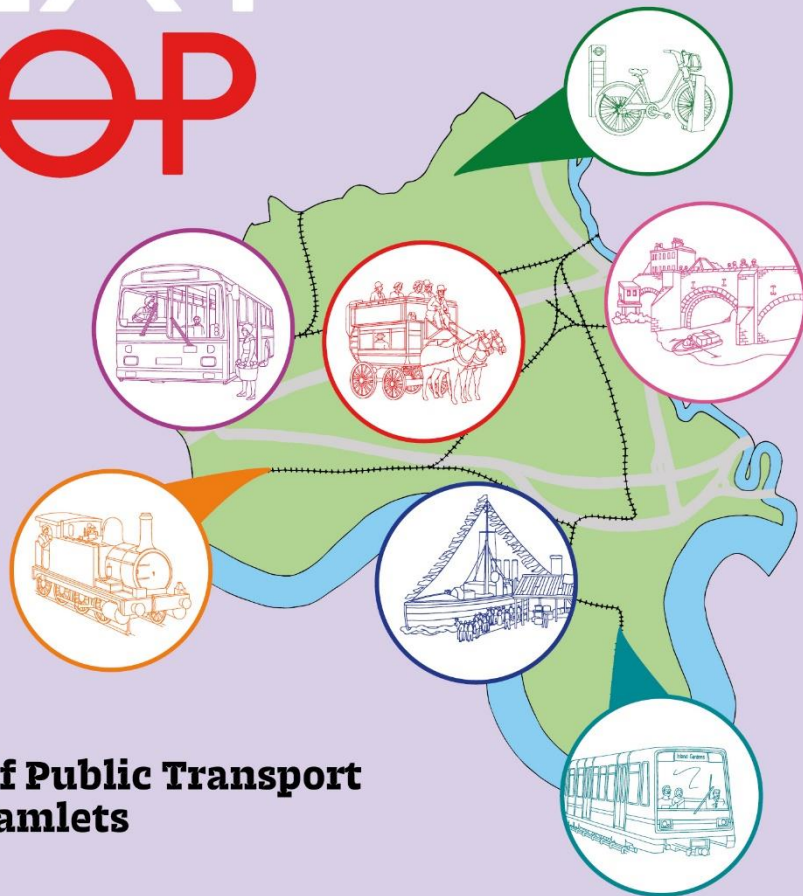


Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives



All aboard for our next exhibition

NEXT STOP



900 Years of Public Transport in Tower Hamlets

Exhibition | 19 July - 21 February 2026
Venue: Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

Launching next month, our new exhibition **Next Stop** explores the fascinating history of public transport in the East End over nine centuries. It spans the construction of the Bow Bridge in the 12th century, the opening of the Elizabeth Line in the 21st, and the Victorian innovations in steam and underground travel in between.

Showcasing over 100 unique items from the collections of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, the exhibition documents many changes and evolutions in public transport - tollgates, trolleybuses and trams included! The exhibition also features first-hand testimonies of people who have used or worked on different forms of public transport, past and present. Through newspaper cuttings, photographs, maps, oral history recordings and creative work, **Next Stop** aims to share both personal and archival knowledge about the history of public transport in the East End.

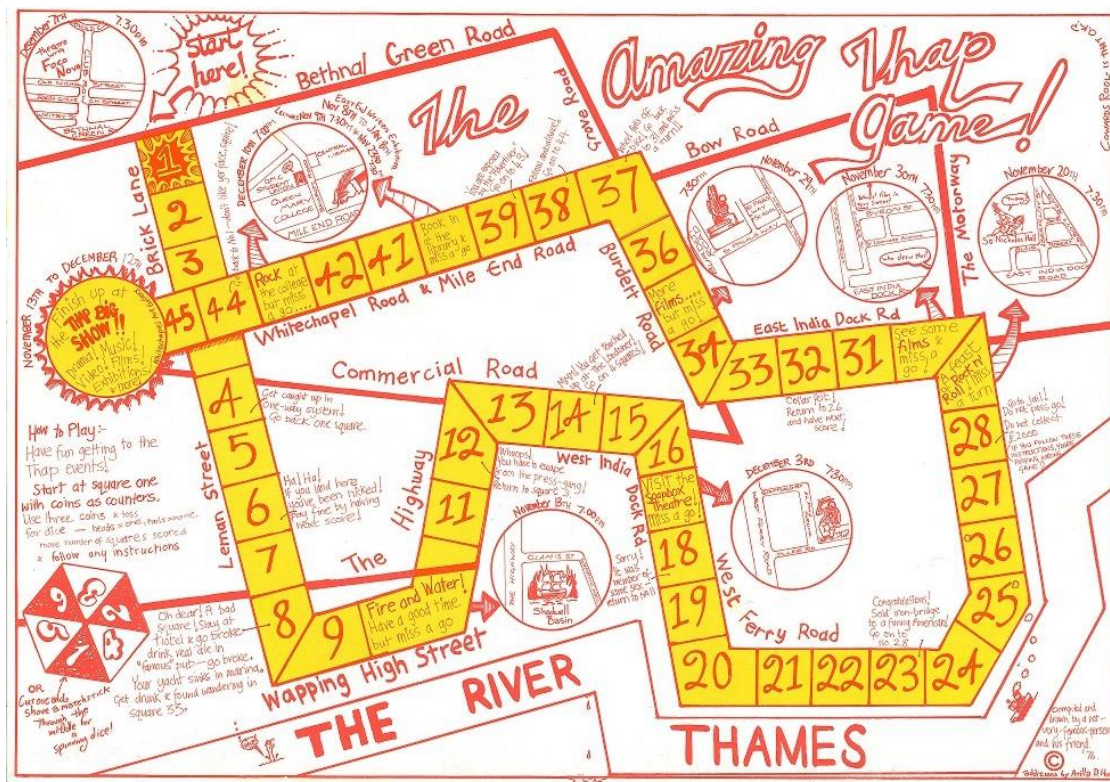
This is the first exhibition we have curated that is designed for both adults and children. An illustrated timeline, interactive games and artwork by local school pupils are all included in the exhibition, so the whole family can be entertained on their visit.

The lead curator of this exhibition is **Genova Messiah, Engagement and Learning Officer**. Thanks to staff and community partners who have supported her to bring this epic feat together.

Events programme

Launch event | Saturday 19 July | 2.00-4.00pm
Venue: Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

[Book your free place here](#) for the family friendly launch event, with arts and crafts, snacks and speeches! The full events programme will be announced next month, but families please save the date for the first creative activity.....



Family Workshop | Thursday 31 July | 2.30-4.00pm
Venue: Idea Store Whitechapel

Next Stop takes a trip to Whitechapel as we host a creative workshop for families! Turn your everyday public transport journeys into a **board game adventure**. Together, you'll design game boards, create, invent and come up with playful challenges inspired by your travel journeys and experiences on buses, trains, or any way you get around the borough.

A great way to get creative, share stories, and take home your very own game. Booking link coming soon - follow us on Eventbrite or social media for further details. Adults must be accompanied by a child.

Report from Island History open day

Last month we were pleased to attend the [Friends of Island History Trust](#) Open Day at St John's Community Centre, Glengall Grove. THLHLA staff brought along photographs from the Island History Trust image collection which we preserve here on Bancroft Road.

FolHT open days are always busy occasions with many former residents flocking back to the island to catch up and reminisce. Over one hundred people came to visit our stall and browse the Island History Trust photo collection.



Pam Devonshire (pictured on the right) found herself in one of the photographs of Harbinger School in 1954/5!

The next Friends of Island History Trust Open Day is on 18 October - we will be there.

Historic Limehouse seen through AI

Exhibition | 29 May - 22 August 2025

Venue: Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, first floor landing

Now on display is **Archive of Weird Memories**, an evolving display by artist **Tan Wang-Ward**. Drawing on materials from the collections, Tan amplifies echoes of everyday life in and around historic Limehouse.

Using generative AI and interactive installations, the space outside the Reading Room transforms into a living "memory lane," where past and present collide, overlap, and reshape each other. The exhibition reflects on how we remember — and what we forget — and asks what it takes to keep imagining alternative futures.

Check back soon for an event which Tan is organising! [Read more about the project on her website.](#)



Archive
of

Weird Memories

an evolving display of works by artist Tan Wang-Ward

We are chuffed to announce that **Richard Wiltshire**, Archives Manager at Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, has been awarded an MBE for services to Heritage. For over 20 years Richard has worked tirelessly to capture and preserve London's history and share it with the public - in his professional roles at two London local authorities and in his own time as a trustee of the Business Archives Council (BAC) and as archivist of the London Gay Symphony Orchestra.

As a [member of the BAC Crisis Management Team](#) Richard has stepped in to secure the archives of historic British businesses which have gone into administration, such as Debenhams and Thomas Cook. These important company archives are now preserved for the future in public collections.

As a senior archivist at [The London Archives](#) (formerly London Metropolitan Archives), Richard oversaw the deposit of historic archives from Standard Chartered Bank, the exhibition centres at Earls Court and Kensington Olympia and Whitechapel Bell Foundry, among many others. He also worked closely with the founders of the Huntley collection (radical publishers Bogle-L'Ouverture) and rukus! Black LGBTQ+ archive.



Richard joined Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives in April 2020 during the pandemic – not the easiest time to start a new job! His role has lead responsibility for managing our collections and overseeing the Reading Room service, and he has brought about countless improvements in that time. We can confirm he is a delight to work with as well as being a selfless and energetic archive rescuer.

Huge congratulations to Richard on his award which is thoroughly deserved. The archives sector is in his debt, as are thousands of Londoners past and present who may be

unaware that their histories will be preserved and accessible long into the future thanks to his many careful interventions.

Closing soon - the Brady Clubs

Last day! Closing Saturday 21 June

Venue: Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

This week is your last chance to see [The Brady Clubs: A Legacy for the Future](#) - an immersive exhibition that explores the immense impact of youth provision on both the individuals concerned and society at large. The Brady Club's legacy stands as testament to the profound impact such initiatives can have and serves as an appeal to government, policymakers, community leaders, and the public to recognise the indispensable role of youth services in shaping positive life trajectories.

Throughout the exhibition, visitors are given the opportunity to engage with the Brady Club experience: through digital links to podcasts and stories, by listening to music, playing games, dressing up, and sitting in the canteen environment to read youth-generated Club magazines and examine Brady Club holiday albums.



Parent/Carer & Under 5s Session

Friday 4 July | 10.00-11.30am | Drop in, no booking required

Venue: Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

Come along to our regular Parent & Under 5's version of East End History Club, where those looking after small children get together and explore historical records on the famous East End.

These regular monthly sessions are a chance to meet other parents, enjoy a cuppa and look through our unique collection of maps, photographs, newspapers, pamphlets and much more with your little ones. Toys will be available for children ages 0-5 with a mini kiddies' brunch and refreshments including tea & coffee.

It takes place on the first Friday of the month during term-time.

News from our friends

Pride Badge making workshop

Monday 23 June | Idea Store Whitechapel | 3.00-4.00pm

This Pride month, design your own Pride badge inspired by themes of identity, love, visibility, and acceptance, and the Pride events held in Victoria Park in the 1990s. Whether you are part of the LGBTQ+ community or an ally, this is a chance to celebrate queerness, what Pride means to you and commemorate gay rights and inclusion. All materials provided or bring your own designs. Drop in - no need to book.

From Sylhet to Spitalfields

Thursday 17 July | Hackney Museum | 6.30-7.45pm

Discover how the Bengali squatters movement in 1970s east London relates to anti-racist struggles today with Dr Shabna Begum. [Book your place here.](#)

**Historic England - Local Heritage Hubs**

Historic England have created a new web resource for people to explore the listed buildings and monuments in different local areas. [Here is the one for our borough - check it out!](#)

Fire safety update

Following a recent detailed fire risk assessment of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, some changes have been made to the layout of the first floor landing where our temporary exhibition space, books for sale and noticeboard are located. This is the primary escape route from the Reading Room so all potentially flammable items have been relocated further away from the stairs.

Unfortunately it has been confirmed by the fire risk assesment that the **secondary means of escape from the first floor is not accessible for disabled people**. A planned refurbishment is intended to address this but until that takes place, we are implementing additional management procedures to ensure that disabled people can be evacuated safely from the first floor.

If you have any access needs - specifically but not limited to mobility impairments - please contact us ahead of your visit for further information. We sincerely apologise for the inconvenience.

Get in touch with 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 (late opening)

First and third Saturdays of every month:

- Saturday 10.00am-5.00pm

That's the following Saturdays coming up:

- Saturday 21 June
- Saturday 5 July
- Saturday 19 August
- Saturday 2 August

- Saturday 16 August

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.



TOWER HAMLETS



Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, 277 Bancroft Road,
London E1 4DQ

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