

# Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives



**Next Stop! Closing soon!**

**NEXT  
STOP**

**900 Years of  
Public Transport  
in Tower Hamlets**

**FREE ENTRY**

**Exhibition  
19 July 2025 - 21 February 2026**

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

The poster features a stylized map of Tower Hamlets with various transport modes highlighted in colored circles: a bicycle (green), a bus (purple), a horse-drawn carriage (red), a bridge (pink), a steam train (orange), a sailing ship (blue), and a tram (teal). A green circle with 'FREE ENTRY' is in the top right corner.

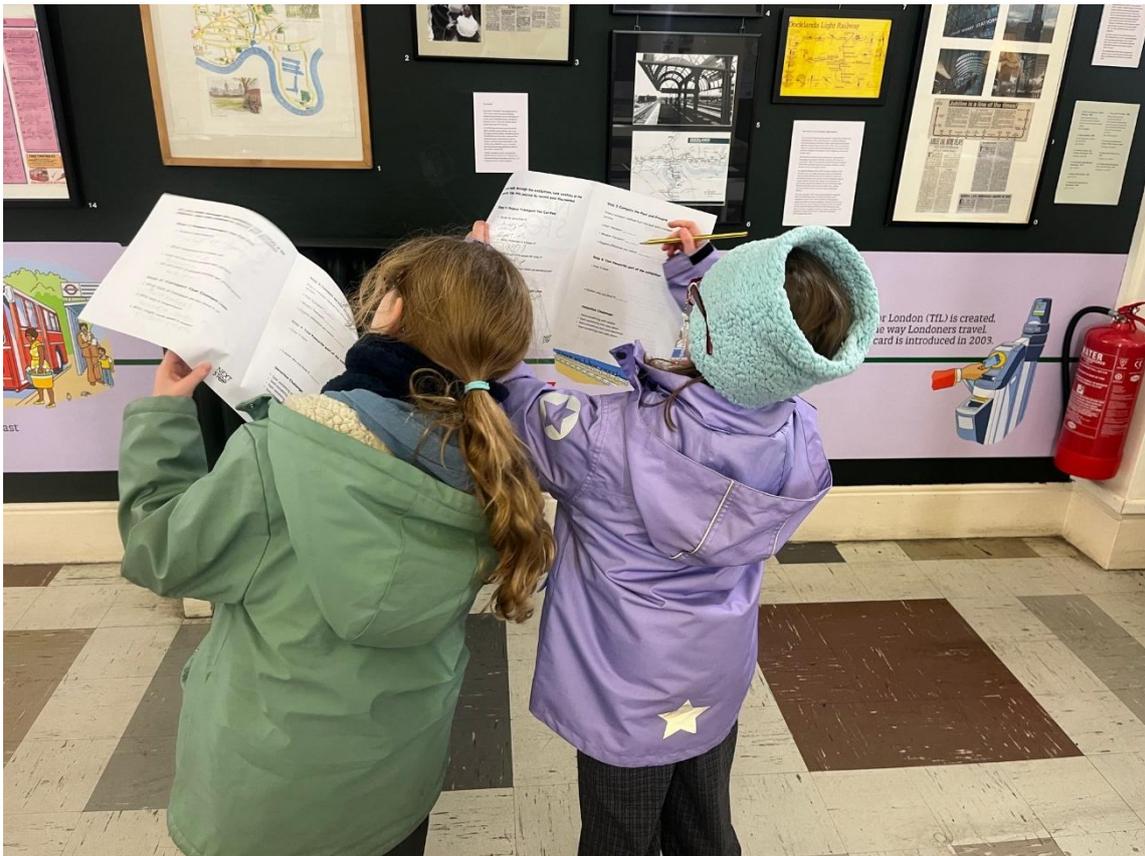
This is the final week of [Next Stop](#), our current exhibition which showcases 900 years of public transport history in Tower Hamlets. This is your last chance to check it out! Curated by Genova Messiah, Engagement & Learning Officer, the exhibition displays a wide

variety of items selected from our collections charting the history of transport in the East End - from omnibuses to Oyster cards.

It's half term this week - a reminder that this is a child-friendly exhibition with interactive activities and learning resources available to entertain the little ones.

Next Stop has been our most well-attended exhibition since The Women's Hall suffragettes exhibition in 2018. Over 90 people attended last week's closing event, an illustrated talk with transport historian Jim Connor. Thanks to all who have been spreading the word.

Please note: the exhibition and Reading Room will be closing at 4pm, an hour earlier than usual on Saturday 21 February, the last day of the exhibition.



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## Temporary closure for stocktake

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**Monday 23 February - Friday 6 March**

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives is temporarily CLOSED from next week for a stocktake. Our annual closure periods are extremely valuable for staff to tackle complex collections management tasks which can't be addressed while we are running the Reading Room service.

We apologise for the inconvenience this may cause our readers. A limited email enquiry service will be operating. Our first day back open to the public will be **Saturday 7 March**.

During the closure, we will also be changing over exhibitions. Next up is **Communities of Liberation: African peoples in London's East End | 1567 - 1802**. This is an expanded and enhanced version of [the display that was on show at Tower Hamlets Town Hall](#) last spring. More information coming in the next newsletter but please save the date for the exhibition launch: Thursday 26 March, 6.00pm.

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## **Visit to East London Central Synagogue**

We were privileged and grateful to be invited to visit the synagogue on Nelson Street, Whitechapel, which was recently put up for sale. Thanks to Alan Dein and synagogue president Leon Silver for contacting us so that we can help ensure that the historical records of the synagogue are transferred to Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives for permanent preservation and future public access. The records surveyed onsite include marriage registers, membership records, diaries and ephemera.



The synagogue has been closed since 2020 when a partial roof collapse rendered it unsafe. We also took many photographs of the building to be preserved alongside its archives.

The building began life in 1923 as Nelson Street Synagogue, and is the last surviving purpose-built synagogue in Tower Hamlets. About twenty neighbouring synagogues were amalgamated with it over the years, leading to it being renamed East London Central Synagogue. Some of the records we are taking in originate from other synagogues including Jubilee Street and Great Garden Street.

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# Women's History Month

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March is Women's History Month and a lot is happening!

## **Women & the Regent's Canal**

**Thursday 12 March | 6.00-7.30pm**

Venue: Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, Education Room

We are delighted to welcome local historian Carolyn Clark who will present stories and images of women's lives, both on and living by the eastern reach of the Regent's Canal. Carolyn runs the Regent's Canal Heritage projects, working with Laburnum Boat Club in Hackney and Tower Hamlets, and the Young Actors Theatre in Islington. She is the author of 'The East End Canal Tales', 'Tales of Old Ford, Bow', 'The Lower Clapton Tales' and 'The Shoreditch Tales'. She lives by the Hertford Union Canal in Bow.

[Book your free place here!](#)

## **The Women's Library @ 100**

**Thursday 12 March | 5.00-8.00pm**

Venue: LSE Library, 10 Portugal Street, WC2A 2HD

This year, the LSE Library is celebrating the centenary of The Women's Library, the UK's oldest and largest book, archive, and museum collection, which documents the history of feminism, campaigning, and activism from the late 19th century to the present day. This special event will include a drinks reception with an opportunity to meet with the curators of the exhibition [The Women's Library at 100: Celebrating a Century of Collections](#), alongside representatives from fellow research and archives institutions, including The National Archives, The London Archives, London Museum, East End Women's Museum and Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives. Stop by anytime between 5–8 pm to see the exhibition, pick up our special edition zine, and meet others interested in feminist history, archives, and activism. [Book your free place here!](#)

## **Threads of Liberation**

**Wednesday 25 March | 5.30-8.30pm**

Venue: G.47, Mile End Library, Queen Mary University of London, E1 4NS

Later in the month we will be co-facilitating an event at the Centre for Public Engagement at Queen Mary, University of London focussed on women's liberation in East London, past present and future. At this workshop you will be able to view materials from both Queen Mary and Tower Hamlets Archives, and reflect on what liberation means to you through a Nakshi kantha embroidery workshop with Oitij-jo Collective. Connect with others passionate about gender equity and women's justice in

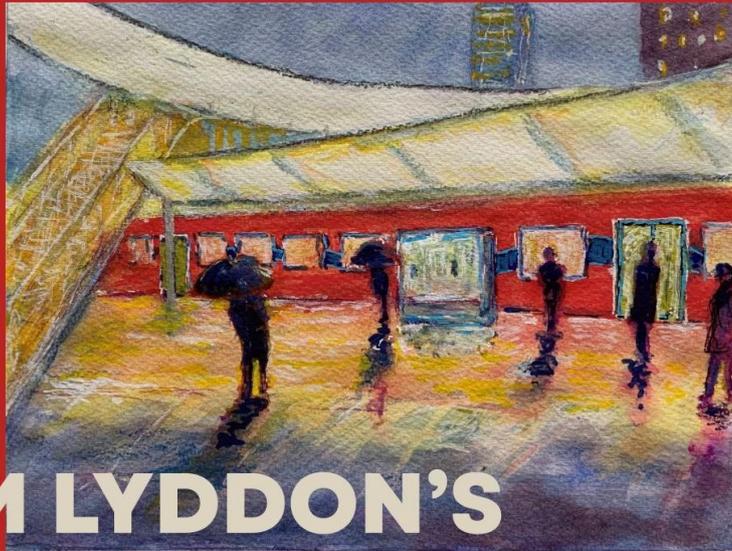
East London. This event is free and open to people of all genders. [Book your free place here!](#)

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## Art exhibition on show

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01 Dec 2025 - 27 Mar 2026



## TOM LYDDON'S CITYSCAPES

**Art exhibition | until 27 March**

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

We are pleased to be hosting a small exhibition of local artist **Tom Lyddon's** paintings and prints which we received into our collections recently. Tom is a long-time resident of Poplar who was a black cab driver from 1976 until his retirement in 2012. He is also a student of [Idea Store Learning's](#) Visual Arts classes.

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## Parent and Baby East End History Club

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**Friday 6 March | 10.00am-11.30am**

Venue: Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, Education Room

Come along to our regular monthly Parent/Carers & Under 5s meet up, and explore historical records on the famous East End. A chance to meet other parents, enjoy a cuppa and look through our unique collection of maps, photographs, newspapers, pamphlets and

much more. A range of toys available for children ages 0-5 with a mini brunch and refreshments including tea & coffee. No booking required. Just drop-in! NB: this will be going ahead despite our stocktake closure.

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## News from our friends

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**Four Corners** have opened a brilliant new exhibition, which we are supporting. [Joyce Edwards: A Story of Squatters](#) opened last week at the gallery on Roman Road. It is a unique photographic portrait of Bethnal Green's squats during the 1970s. Check out the events programme and make sure to visit before it closes on 21 March.

**Stairway to Heaven** is holding a memorial service to mark the 83rd anniversary of the Bethnal Green Tube Disaster on Sunday 8 March. It will take place at 2pm at St. John on Bethnal Green church. Following the service wreaths and flowers will be laid on the memorial across the road, and tea/coffee & cakes will be on sale. All are welcome. For more information please ring 07732 460444 or visit [facebook.com/bethnalgreenmemorial](https://facebook.com/bethnalgreenmemorial).

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## Tribute to Rebecca Rudall

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Staff here and across the Idea Store and library service are shocked and deeply saddened by the news that our colleague Rebecca Rudall passed away last week at St Joseph's Hospice. Rebecca had retired at the end of December after an astonishing 40 years of service in the Tower Hamlets library service.

Becky was the proud daughter of [artist Paul Rudall](#). She worked in the lending library here at Bancroft Road during the 1990s, often providing lunch cover in the local history Reading Room. When the Idea Store project started she grabbed the opportunity to take part in modernising and extending the borough's library service, becoming a Team Leader at Idea Store Whitechapel when it first opened in 2005. Residents of the Isle of Dogs may recognise her from Idea Store Canary Wharf where she spent the last fifteen plus years of her storied career as a public servant.

Rebecca was always passionate about our work here at Local History, championing the value of our collections at the sites she worked at, and organising local history events in branch libraries. She was one of the driving forces behind the annual Writeidea Festival and a natural on (prelapsarian) Twitter. We extend our sincere condolences to all of her friends, colleagues, neighbours and family members. She will be greatly missed.

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# Get in touch with us!

- Email us: [localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto: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 February (closing at 4pm)
- Saturday 7 March
- Saturday 21 March

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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