EVENTS CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF TOWER HAMLETS
Fifty years ago, the old Metropolitan Boroughs of Poplar, Stepney and Bethnal Green were merged together to form the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

In the past 50 years there have been some remarkable changes – in the borough’s population, economy and landscape.

To celebrate these changes, a new exhibition and series of events has been programmed to explore and highlight the achievements of the past half a century, hosted by Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives and the borough’s Idea Stores. We have a really rich and diverse history in Tower Hamlets. Over the past 50 years the borough has changed so much. This anniversary is the perfect opportunity for us to reflect on the huge achievements we’ve seen in this time. People from all backgrounds have made this borough what it is today. We recognise that each individual story from every resident is part of our unique and varied history – and we want to channel these different voices into our celebrations.

This is why we need you to help us commemorate 50 years of being a borough. We want you to send in your old photos and letters, or show us precisely what the borough means to you. Visit www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/50 for more information.
#50TH: HALF A CENTURY OF TOWER HAMLETS

Launch party
Wednesday, May 20, 5:30 - 7pm
Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives - (Ground Floor Entrance Hall and Education Room), 277 Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ

Join us for the launch of this fascinating exhibition -
RSVP by email: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk or telephone: 020 7364 1290.

#50TH: HALF A CENTURY OF TOWER HAMLETS

Exhibition
May 21 - August 6
Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives - (Ground Floor Entrance Hall), 277 Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ

A brand new exhibition about the history of the local authority drawn entirely from the collections of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives. Curated by our staff, it explores themes including political power, civic buildings and redevelopment.
#50TH: 
HALF A CENTURY OF TOWER HAMLETS

Exhibition tour
Thursday, May 21, 
10am - 12pm

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives - (Ground Floor Entrance Hall and Education Room)
277 Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ

A tour of the #50TH: Half a century of Tower Hamlets exhibition, for those attending Idea Store Chrisp Street’s weekly Prime Time group for the over 50s. After the tour, there will be an opportunity to explore additional related material from our collections.
FROM CABLE STREET TO BRICK LANE: A FILM BY HAZUAN HASHIM & PHIL MAXWELL

Film screening
Thursday, May 7, 6:30-8:30pm
Idea Store Watney Market, 260 Commercial Rd, London E1 2FB
‘From Cable Street to Brick Lane’ is a documentary that explores how different communities came together to fight racism and intolerance in the 1930s, 1970s and 1990s. The film focuses on the infamous Battle of Cable Street in 1936, when the East End’s Jewish population united with trade unionists and other groups to prevent Oswald Mosley’s Black Shirts from marching through their community. The film also focuses on the predominantly Muslim Bangladeshi community living in and around Brick Lane during the 1970s, who were subjected to similar racist attacks by organised fascist groups.

WHO SHOT THE SHERIFF - ROCK AGAINST RACISM DOCUMENTARY BY ALAN MILES

Film screening
Thursday, May 14, 6:30 - 8:30pm
Idea Store Watney Market, 260 Commercial Rd, London E1 2FB
‘Who Shot the Sheriff?’ tells the story of the Rock Against Racism (RAR) movement of the 1970s. During these days, music played a key part in mobilising opposition to racism and the National Front, and the film artfully draws parallels with the more recent anti-BNP campaigns. The film includes interviews with some of the artists and activists involved, in addition to rare archive footage from the punk and RAR era.
MY ART AND TOWER HAMLETS – AN EVENING WITH DAN JONES

Q&A session
Tuesday, May 19, 6:30 – 8:30pm
Idea Store Watney Market, 260 Commercial Rd, London E1 2FB

Join us for a Q&A session with Dan Jones, who for over forty years as a local resident, youth worker and activist, has captured life in the East End through his art. Dan Jones’ paintings feature local scenes, including the bustling Watney Market and Shadwell Basin, in addition to political demonstrations from East End history, such as the Poplar Rates Dispute and the Battle of Cable Street. Today, Dan works for Amnesty International, and continues to paint and pursue his lifelong passion for collecting rhymes.

Right: Protesting outside Whitechapel Library, 1994, (c) Nora Connolly.

TWENTY YEARS ON - HOW WE DEFEATED BEACKON

Film screening
Thursday, May 21, 6:30 – 8:30pm
Idea Store Watney Market, 260 Commercial Rd, London E1 2FB

An inspirational film which tells the story of how a local community organised a successful campaign to defeat the British National Party. Highlights the events on the Isle of Dogs after the election of Derek Beackon, the country’s first BNP councillor, in 1993.
**DRAW TOWER HAMLETS WITH DAN JONES**

*Family workshop*

Thursday, May 28, 2 - 3:30pm

Idea Store Watney Market, 260 Commercial Rd, London E1 2FB

Join us for a fun family workshop with artist Dan Jones. Using drawing and printmaking, we will recreate our favourite parts of the borough. Suitable for all ages.

**THE HISTORY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

*Archive talks*

Thursday, June 11, 6 - 7:30pm

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives - (Education Room), 277 Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ

David Luck, Senior Archivist at London Metropolitan Archives, will give a talk entitled ‘The Rise and Fall of the LCC: Central London Government 1889-1965’. Following this, Tower Hamlets Borough Archivist Malcolm Barr-Hamilton will talk on ‘The archival legacy of local government in Tower Hamlets from the 16th to the 21st centuries.’ Booking required: email: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk or telephone: 020 7364 1290.

**MUNICIPAL DREAMS AND CIVIC PRIDE: THE EARLY TOWN HALLS OF TOWER HAMLETS**

*Talk*

Saturday, June 20, 2 - 3pm

Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives - (Education Room), 277 Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ

In this talk John Boughton, author of the popular ‘Municipal Dreams’ blog, will discuss the
early town halls of Tower Hamlets. Booking required: email: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk or telephone: 020 7364 1290.

FLY A FLAG FOR POPLAR

Filmed screening
Sunday, June 21, 2:15 - 3:45pm
Idea Store Chrisp Street, 1 Vesey Path, East India Dock Road, London, E14 6BT

This film about Poplar in the 1970s was made by local residents and features items from our collections. It illustrates the day-to-day lives of Poplar’s residents in the context of the area’s rich history, including the emergence of the labour movement and the Poplar Rates Dispute.

POPLAR’S TOWN HALLS

Walk
Tuesday, June 23, 7pm
Meet at Poplar DLR station for a walk around Poplar and Bow.

Join Malcolm Barr-Hamilton, Borough Archivist at Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, on a guided walk around historic civic buildings in what was the old Metropolitan Borough of Poplar. Transport between Poplar and Bow will be by DLR at participants’ own expense. Booking required: email: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk or Telephone: 020 7364 1290.

The Drifters at Poplar Civic Theatre, within the town hall building on Bow Road, 1987.
IDEA STORE LEARNING: END OF YEAR PERFORMING ARTS SHOWS

*Show*

Friday, July 3 and Saturday, July 4, 7:30pm

Brady Arts Centre Theatre, 192-196 Hanbury Street, London E1 5HU

An evening of multicultural dance and music with students from Idea Store Learning. Come along and celebrate the diversity of our borough by watching a series of short dances from different cultures. Performances will include: Bollywood, African dance, Flamenco, Ballet, Belly Dancing, Contemporary Dance and many more!
CIVIC TOUR: THE FORMER BETHNAL GREEN TOWN HALL BUILDING

Tour
Monday, June 1, 11am - 12pm
Town Hall Hotel, Patriot Square, London E2 9NF

Join us for a tour of the Town Hall Hotel, former premises of the Bethnal Green Town Hall. This will be led by the hotel’s General Manager, Marie Baxter. To book, email: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk or telephone: 020 7364 1290.

CIVIC TOUR: THE FORMER VESTRY HALL OF MILE END OLD TOWN BUILDING

Tour
Monday, June 1, 2 - 3pm
Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives, 277 Bancroft Road, London E1 4DQ

Join us for a tour of the former Vestry Hall of Mile End Old Town. This will be led by Natasha Luck, Heritage Officer. The building has been the home of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives since 1965. To book, email: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk or telephone: 020 7364 1290.
CIVIC TOUR: THE FORMER LIMEHOUSE DISTRICT BOARD OF WORKS BUILDING

Tour
Saturday, July 4, 12 - 1pm
Half Moon Theatre, 43 White Horse Road, London E1 0ND
A rare chance to tour the former Limehouse District Board of Works building on White Horse Road, which was constructed between 1862 and 1864. The building has been home to the Half Moon Young People’s Theatre since 1994. Booking required: email: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk or telephone: 020 7364 1290.

CIVIC TOUR: THE FORMER LIMEHOUSE TOWN HALL BUILDING

Tour
Saturday, July 4, 2.30 - 3:30pm
Limehouse Town Hall building, Commercial Road, London E14 7HA
A chance to tour the Grade II Listed former Limehouse Town Hall on Commercial Road. Designed by A. & C. Harston in 1879, the building has seen a variety of other uses in its long history, including as the home of the National Museum of Labour History. It is currently in the process of being renovated for use as a community enterprise and heritage space. Booking required: email: localhistory@towerhamlets.gov.uk or telephone: 020 7364 1290.
All images taken from the collections of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives. Visit www.ideastore.co.uk for more details.

Front cover image: Staff at Mayfield House Laundry in Bethnal Green, with Tower Hamlets Mayor John Snooks, 1993.