

TRINTY SCHOOL ‘A LIFESAVER’

“THE SCHOOL is already a lifesaver,” says Lee Lewis, a parent of five children with autism, two of whom attend Trinity. “Anything that can improve it is a massive plus for the community of Barking and Dagenham. Building work has begun to make it even better!”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



INSIDE



P5 FROM TRAUMA COMES UNITY



P7 DAGENHAM WORKERS
CELEBRATE NEW RIGHTS AT WORK



P8 DAGENHAM'S UNITED
MORE THAN EVER

DAGENHAM MATTERS

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

NOT EVERYTHING'S PERFECT. We know that and so do you. The spiralling cost of living, exacerbated by foreign wars and a host of other issues, is causing families to struggle, making this a difficult and challenging time for many of us.

But it's how we deal with such times that becomes the hallmark of who we are. There are those, most prominently Reform UK, who want to use these difficult times to make divisions worse – and to create new divisions between us for the sake of narrow political advantage.

Farage has been playing this game for decades. Put simply, he is a grifter who stokes division for his own benefit. A snake-oil salesman who cares not one jot for the chaos he leaves behind.

There is, however, another way. A better way. And that is for communities to come together, working to make life easier, being determined to leave no-one behind, and being clear that scapegoating and racism are not the answer.

We are certain that the overwhelming majority of people in Dagenham reject the racism and hatred of Reform and want to live in harmony, peacefully with their neighbours. We hope this paper will give you a little insight into just how much good work is going on in Dagenham by local people determined to build a better future based on friendship and respect.

Let us together reject the politics of hate in May's elections and redouble our efforts to make our town a beacon of hope.

Scan here for a digital copy of your local HOPE not Hate paper



Email us:

campaigns@hopenothate.org.uk

WHERE TRUMP LEADS... FARAGE FOLLOWS

World would be a 'better place' if US took over Greenland, says Nigel Farage

Guardian, Jan 21, 2026

Nigel Farage says he's 'never wavered' in his support for Donald Trump

Independent, Sept 4, 2025

Farage hails Trump 'inspiration' at Reform UK rally

BBC, Feb 1, 2025

Photos: Cagge Skidmore

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump is increasingly dangerous and out of control.

Quite apart from the disastrous conflict with Iran, which is likely to lead to many civilian deaths, rising energy bills and a global depression, he wants to take over Greenland, has demanded that Canada becomes part of the United States and is demanding Ukraine surrender territory to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Closer to home, he is demanding that British supermarkets stock US-bred chlorinated chicken.

Any one of these policies and actions should cause our politicians to be nervous of Trump. But not Nigel Farage. The Reform UK leader cheers on Trump's madness.

Where Trump leads, Farage follows.

This alone should be enough to make you question the political judgement of Farage and Reform UK.

Britain is a proud, independent country. The last thing we need is for us to follow every mad act of Donald Trump.

HUMILIATED IN OFFICE

REFORM UK will make lots of promises in the forthcoming elections. If past experience is anything to go by, they will be lying to you and they will fail to deliver.

Last year, Reform UK took control of 10 councils around the country on the promise that they were different from the other parties. One year on, and their rule has been disastrous.

- The party's 2025 election leaflets promised council tax would either be frozen or cut, yet it is rising in every council under Reform's control.
- Reform's pledges to cut "woke waste" with an Elon Musk-inspired DOGE unit have also failed to materialise.

- Much-needed public services are being cut, including care homes in Derbyshire, a council-tax relief scheme in County Durham, and health-advice initiative in Lincolnshire.

- Promises to increase bin collections have not been met. In Lancashire, Reform councillors recommended rubbish be picked up every three weeks!

- One in ten Reform councillors elected last year have already quit, costing local council taxpayers tens of thousands in new elections.

It is easy to promise the world when you stand for election, but Reform UK have already failed to deliver on their promises when in power.

MORE PLAY IN THE PARK



THE PLAY RANGERS are now a familiar sight in Old Dagenham Park.

Their colourful van is always packed with sports equipment, play kit and refreshments – it's a guaranteed sign of fun activities to come. "So many kids in this area are at risk of exclusion, or vulnerable to gang activities," says John Wainaina, founder of Youth League UK. "Families simply cannot afford recreational activities or even basic play materials."

And so, the Play Rangers are there to provide free supervised after-school and Saturday play sessions at public parks and in open spaces. "We are currently targeting underused Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGA)," John says. "These courts are often places where local youth hang out but lack motivation and kit to actually use the spaces for sport. It's easy to get into trouble." John knows too that these are kids who could

really benefit from physical activity. "Football, basketball, tennis, running – these are all so good for fitness, mental health and companionship."

MORE VOLUNTEERS ON THE GROUND

The Rangers themselves work alongside young volunteers who are trained as Youth Sports Champions. They help reach their peers and motivate them through the programme. John is thrilled: he has seen the number of volunteers double in the last year.

"We also help maintain cleanliness and safety of the courts, parks and open places we work in," explains John. "And once a space is appreciated and safe, everyone can have fun together. It really is a win-win for everyone."

MANY MORE YEARS TO COME!

To top it off, the Youth League UK is celebrating 25 years of existence in 2026. "We go from strength to strength!" says John.

BOBBY BRILLIANT! PEOPLE POWER IN DAGENHAM

LAST YEAR, residents of Dagenham learned that the Metropolitan Police Service was planning to close the front counter of Dagenham Police Station. It was one of 18 set to go in London as a budget crisis loomed.

But people power won out! Thousands of you mobilised, joined the campaign to save the station and signed the petition created by Dagenham and Rainham MP Margaret Mullane.

Margaret also managed to secure the support of the Labour council.

Then, in September last year, the Met announced its reversal of the decision: the front counter will now stay open. Residents will still be able to report crime and talk to officers in person.

As Margaret said at the time: "This outcome is a testament to people power and the strength of the campaign highlighted just

how concerned local people in my constituency are about the levels of crime in the area. I want to put my thanks on record to everyone that supported the campaign, whether you were one of the 100 businesses who put up a poster, collected signatures on your street, did a video on social media, or simply added your name alongside 3000 others on the petition. This is what we can achieve when we work together."



JOIN THE FIGHT FOR QUEEN'S HOSPITAL

Margaret Mullane MP



Expand Queen's Hospital A&E

Inspired by the success of the campaign for Dagenham's Police Station, Margaret Mullane MP is starting a new one. She is calling for a £35 million capital investment to expand the Emergency Department (A&E) at Queen's Hospital. This will boost capacity, bring down waiting times, and ensure local people get the good-quality healthcare they deserve. Join her and sign the petition!

■ margaretmullane.co.uk/queens-petition

TRINTY 'A LIFESAVER' EXPANSION 'A PLUS'



SEN School development is on track for excellence

“THE SCHOOL is a lifesaver,” says Lee Lewis, a parent of five children with autism, two of whom attend Trinity currently. “But anything that can improve it is a massive plus for the community of Barking and Dagenham.”

Brilliantly for Lee, and all the other families attending, permission has been granted for a big extension project and building has already begun. The project involves a major redevelopment of the school’s facilities, creating a new, bespoke Living & Learning Centre

(LLC). This will address several challenges faced by the school, including the optimisation of space, ageing infrastructure, and improving transport and parking logistics.

“At the moment pick-up and drop-off can be very chaotic on the roads outside,” says Lee. “The new parking and traffic system alone will change the way local residents view the school. It will really help with community cohesion.” Teachers also have to use residence parking, which can

really clog up the streets during school hours.

The school currently has 310 pupils attending with a range of special education needs and disabilities, between the ages of 3-19.

This state-of-the-art facility will also provide a more suitable environment for pupils with complex needs. The redevelopment allows for improved facilities within the main school, such as mobility equipment storage and additional office space, and

includes new entrances and enhanced car park facilities.

Specialist care for SEN children often requires equipment and advanced knowledge. The new space will also allow much needed room for training. And of course increased capacity. “As a father of five SEN children I know how difficult it is to find the facilities required,” says Lee. “We have had to send siblings to different schools. Having more room for siblings will be a massive relief for parents. It will be a godsend.”

FROM TRAUMA COMES UNITY



WHEN JOCEY was rushed to intensive care in those early days of Covid, she thought she was going to die: “I literally couldn’t breathe. I was struggling to stay alive.” After five days in isolation, she was strong enough to pick up her phone and discovered the worst news possible. “I saw on social media that my father had actually died from Covid. I was all alone in that hospital room with no one to hug and cry with.”

But Jocey soon discovered that from great adversity, comes great strength. “I realised that we are all equal in grief. We are all affected by trauma, whatever background or heritage we have.” So began her role at the Church Elm Hub, supporting residents who have also faced significant life challenges.

By providing holistic well-being and mental health support, she and her team hope to build the resilience

and vital life skills people need in challenging situations.

Marie was one of the first people through the doors in 2023, suffering anxiety, health problems and an eating disorder. She has been back every week since and is now well enough to volunteer herself and help others.

And Marie is not alone: over 200 people come through the doors every week, from all walks of life. Some drop in for specific workshops, some drop in to chat to new friends. “We see people come in who need help and support and over time they start to help others,” says Jocey. “It’s a beautiful cycle”.

Also housed at The Church Elm Hub is the community food club and furniture warehouse.

■ **All are based in Dagenham Library, 1 Church Elm Lane, Dagenham. thechurchelmhub.org**

CALLING ALL B&D ENTREPRENEURS...

The GROW 2026 fund is open!

THIS IS a one-of-a-kind investment fund for ambitious, purpose-led entrepreneurs who are ready to take their ventures to the next level with grant funding, coaching and social investment. In other words, investment in projects that can also make money back.

‘Barking and Dagenham Giving’ are searching for **10** ambitious people who are doing business in the borough to take part in their third round of this one-of-a-kind opportunity. This year, they are particularly keen to support **young entrepreneurs** (aged 18-25).

GROW brings together community-minded entrepreneurs to learn, share challenges, and build stronger businesses together. Successful applicants could receive:

- £10,000 grant (non-repayable) + access to £5-15,000 to get investment-ready
- Equity-free investment from £25,000
- Group learning and one-to-one coaching
- A supportive community of entrepreneurs to help you GROW
- A chance to pay it forward – all investment repayments will be reinvested back into the borough

This is a fund specifically for social impact and investment. In other words, the aim is that money is used to help communities while also making money back.

GROW 2026 seeks to break down barriers with residents of all cultures, ages, ethnicities, and genders. Anyone can apply, as long as you are creating something in this community.

■ **For more information: bdgiving.org.uk/grow-2026**



VOTE HOPE

**Help Stop Reform
UK in your area**

votehope.org



MORE SECURITY FOR FAMILIES RENTING IN DAGENHAM

THE UK’s Renters’ Rights Act 2025 – the most significant overhaul of private-renting laws in decades – has officially become law. For renters in Dagenham, where housing insecurity, rising rents and poor-quality accommodation have become pressing issues, the legislation promises a major shift.

WHAT THE NEW LAW DELIVERS

The Act introduces sweeping reforms aimed at giving tenants more stability and fairness. The biggest change is the end to “no-fault” evictions, preventing landlords from removing tenants without a reason. Rent increases are now limited, and bidding wars are banned. Landlords can no longer discriminate against tenants with children or pets.

Tenants also now have stronger rights to challenge unsafe or poor-quality housing, including dangerous hazards like damp and mould, setting a “Decent Homes Standard”. Implementation will be phased, with the abolition of Section 21 and conversion to periodic tenancies scheduled for May 2026. Other changes – including a national landlord database and strengthened enforcement – will follow later this year.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR DAGENHAM

Of the nearly 74,000 households in Dagenham, 24% are privately rented, and 31% are rented from social housing associations.

Local people have welcomed the reforms, emphasising that Dagenham has seen a rise in homelessness and housing instability linked to no-fault evictions. Families have been pushed into temporary accommodation, including B&Bs, after receiving short-notice eviction notices.

Many tenants have also been reluctant to report damp, mould, or unsafe living conditions for fear their landlord might retaliate with eviction. With Section 21 evictions ending, tenants will be able to speak up without risking their home.

More protections against unfair evictions, stricter rent rules, and better housing-quality standards could make renting safer and more secure for thousands of households.

Not everyone has been in favour of the changes that will give families much-deserved security in Dagenham. Three Reform UK MPs voted against the Bill, and Nigel Farage, the party’s leader, did not bother to turn up to vote.

For many in Dagenham, the Renters’ Rights Act offers long-awaited reform – a chance for families, low-income renters, and young people to enjoy greater security and fairness. If implemented effectively, the Act could reduce homelessness, improve living conditions, and provide a more balanced rental market. For Dagenham, it marks the beginning of a potentially transformative chapter – one that could redefine what it means to rent a home in the town.

THE NEW RULES

- **End to “no-fault” evictions:** Section 21 scrapped – landlords must give a valid reason.
- **Faster repairs – Awaab’s Law:** Legal deadlines to fix serious hazards.
- **Higher home standards:** Private rentals must meet the Decent Homes Standard.
- **Protection from eviction by rent-hike:** Stricter rules on increases and the right to challenge unfair rises.
- **No more rental bidding wars:** Rent can’t be pushed above the advertised price.
- **Fairer access to pets:** Requests must be reasonably considered.
- **New Ombudsman:** Free, faster complaint resolution – decisions landlords must follow.
- **No discrimination:** Bans against families or benefit claimants outlawed.
- **Fairer eviction rules:** Clearer grounds – more security for renters.
- **Tougher enforcement:** Councils given stronger powers to act on bad landlords

A PROUD HISTORY OF EQUALITY



THERE IS a proud history of fighting for employment rights in Dagenham. The 1968 and 1970 sewing machinists' strikes played a pivotal role in securing the Equal Pay Act of 1970.

Women at Ford's Dagenham plant refused to be considered "unskilled labour" when their male counterparts doing similar

jobs elsewhere in the factory were given a higher pay-grade.

The strikes brought the American factory to its knees: after all, you can't sell cars without seat covers, and no one else knew how to make them. A settlement was negotiated, but more importantly, the strike

inspired others. After passing of the Equal Pay Act, employers – for the first time – had to treat men and women equally in their pay and conditions.

The New Employment Rights Bill follows in the footsteps of all those brilliant men and women who campaigned for workers' rights.

DAGENHAM WORKERS CELEBRATE NEW RIGHTS AT WORK

WORKERS ACROSS Dagenham are celebrating a new law that gives them increased protection at work. The Employment Rights Bill, which passed last year, will give all workers greater rights and protections at work.

This comes after new polling that shows the majority of people in Dagenham believe that workers are not treated fairly and that they should be entitled to greater protection and rights.

The Employment Rights Bill represents the biggest shake-up in workers' rights for a decade and it signals a decisive break from the Tories' race to the bottom on employment standards that has done so much damage to our living standards and productivity.

By tackling the scourge of zero-hours contracts and fire and rehire, delivering day-one rights to statutory sick pay, and boosting family-friendly and flexible working, the Bill offers the biggest upgrade to workers' rights for a generation. Everyone needs a job they can build a life on.

As well as clamping down on bad bosses, the Bill will also give workers a stronger voice at work. And crucially, it will make it easier for workers to benefit from union representation.

REFORM OPPOSE NEW RULES

The five (at the time) Reform MPs did not support these new rules.

In fact, Reform want to reduce workers' rights even further.

When they say that they are on the side of ordinary working people, remember, they failed to back better conditions and rights at work.

DAGENHAM & RAINHAM VOTERS AGREE!

- Making sure the minimum wage is a real living wage that people can live on: **80%** agree, **20%** disagree
- Ensure all workers have the right to sick pay, paid from the first day of sickness: **69%** agree, **31%** disagree
- After 12 weeks on a zero-hours contract, workers will have to be offered a guaranteed-hours contract based on the hours they have been working: **68%** agree, **32%** disagree

THE NEW RULES

- Ban zero-hours contracts by offering all workers a contract that reflects their normal hours of work and compensation for cancelled shifts
- Ensure all workers have the right to sick pay, paid from the first day of sickness
- Extend statutory sick pay to all workers, including the lowest paid
- Ensure all workers are protected from being unfairly sacked after six months in a job (at the moment workers have to wait two years for this protection)
- Make it easier for people to have flexibility in their patterns and hours of work
- A right to parental leave from day one of employment
- Establishing the Fair Work Agency to ensure people get their rights





DAGENHAM'S UNITED MORE THAN EVER

VOLUNTEERS SAVE THE DAY FOR THE KIDS!

“TIMES ARE HARD,” says Jim Beaumont, Club Chairman of Dagenham United. “Many families are struggling. We knew we had to do something to help.” With the resourcefulness and spirit typical of East London, Dagenham United have achieved something of a miracle.

Despite costs ever-rising, they have not added a penny to the prices families pay for the weekly kids’ football for five years! “The weekly subs are the same now as they were before Covid.”

Jim is grateful to the team’s treasurer, Clare Beaumont, for her hard work, but also acknowledges the dedication of

all the volunteers: “We could not do it without them.” The club has approximately 200 volunteers, giving an estimated 50,000 hours of time over a year. “It’s incredible”.

This is just one of the reasons the club has so many kids coming through their gates every week: 460 at the last count, across 24 teams. The club is very proud of The Mini Kickers and Wild Cats groups. “We are quite unique as a club because we really focus on our youth sides. The growth of the club depends on new kids coming through.”

An exciting development has seen the mini sides start using the



all-weather pitch at the brand new Bobby Moore Sports Hub at

Parsloes Park. “Considering the weather we’ve had this year,” said Jim. “That was life-saver.”

And just to prove how important the kids are to The Daggers, they are about to launch a youth council. From April, kids will start to have real input into decisions made about their club. You can see why the club’s united!

dagenhamunitedfc.co.uk

THE STATS SAY IT ALL... Dagenham United share some fascinating facts.

People who volunteer

- Are 8% happier than those who who don’t.
- Have 8% more confidence than those who don’t.
- Have 9% higher satisfaction with their lives.
- Are 15% more connected to their local community.

CHALLENGING HATE, BUILDING COMMUNITIES



HOPE not hate is Britain’s leading anti-fascist and anti-racist organisation. We believe in the good in people, and that given the option, people will always choose HOPE over hate.

We want to build a Dagenham that is free from hate.

A Dagenham where young people can grow up with a decent future.

A Dagenham where people can be proud of who they are and communities that are strong and proud.

If you want to help us build that future, then please join us and together we can make HOPE not hate grow in Dagenham.

For more information, visit: hopenothate.org.uk

