

**‘Children should be able to go out without
their parents being scared about what might
happen to them’**

Jagadish, 11

Number 3
The London Borough of Newham
in Facts and Stats

WILL HOBSON

When reduced to a list of facts and statistics, the London Borough of Newham emerges as anything but average or ordinary

Population in 1997: 228,500 (the 'unofficial' population, however, is known to be much higher)

Newham has the highest birth-rate in London. (In 1997 the average birth-rate was 20.2 births per 1,000 residents, compared to 14.8 births per 1,000 in London as a whole)

1 in 3 households have an income of less than £141 a week (compared to 1 in 8 households in England and Wales)

Percentage of households earning £640 per week, or over: 7% (the smallest percentage in London)

The unemployment rate is more than twice the national average of 5.2%

A quarter of people of working age are long-term unemployed, ie for more than a year

Chances that someone under 25 is unemployed: 1 in 4

Percentage of local firms which employ between 1 and 10 employees: 81%

Percentage of firms which employ more than 200 employees: 1%

In March 1998, 10,897 people were unemployed and only 360 new

vacancies were advertised in the Job Centres

1 in 5 people aged 16 or over are claiming Income Support.
(Between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s, the number of people on Income Support increased by 93%)

Chances that a resident is under 15 years old: 1 in 4

Percentage of children who live in households with no wage earner: 35.2% (compared to 20.2% of children in London as a whole)

Percentage of households in which children are brought up by single parents: 10.5% (compared to a London average of 7.5%)

Percentage of first-time visitors to Community Links who are not claiming all the benefits they're entitled to: 50%

42% of primary school pupils and 44% of secondary school pupils are eligible for free school meals

Only half of secondary school pupils who are eligible for free school meals actually take advantage of them

Percentage of households with no car: 51.4% (compared to a national average of 30%)

Percentage of the weekly Job-seekers' Allowance that one would need to spend to buy a weekly bus pass: 24%

Food shopping in local shops costs on average 46% more than in a large superstore, yet the majority of people live at least

one bus ride away from the larger stores

Number of restaurants in the borough run by Idi Amin's fifth wife, Sarah K Amin: 1. (The S Restaurant in Upton Lane – at their wedding in Kampala in 1975 Yasser Arafat was the best man and the food alone was reputed to cost £2 million)

Percentage of residents who are owner-occupiers: 49.8% (compared to 57.2% in London as a whole)

It is still the cheapest borough for house prices in London. The average price for a property in Newham is £63,700, compared to a current average price of £140,000 for London as a whole. (But since its two-up-two-downs are among the few central London properties within the range of the average first-time buyer, and since it is close to the new Jubilee Line extension, parts of the borough – especially 'Stratford Village' – are undergoing a mini-boom. A two-bedroom terraced house in Tennyson Road, E15, cost £52,000 in 1996, £65,000 in January 1999 and £80,000 in July 1999)

Percentage of private houses which are deemed unfit for human habitation:15%

Number of families in the borough who are living in temporary accommodation: 2,100

East London boroughs have an estimated 20-40,000 homeless people

The three most overcrowded local authorities in England are all in East London – Tower Hamlets, Newham and Hackney

Percentage of residents who rent from the local authority: 30.76% (compared to 23.3% of residents in London as a whole)

Percentage of council tenants who are more than 13 weeks behind on their rent: 11.7%

Amount of Council Tax presently uncollected: £4.9 million

Number of summonses issued by the Council during the three years of the Poll Tax: 170,127; number of cases in which bailiffs were instructed: 57,041; number of arrest warrants issued: 2,259

Percentage of households which claim housing benefit: 40%

More than 1 in 5 households have no central heating

If half of all the households in the borough took up composting, 8,000 tonnes of waste would be diverted from landfill sites

Pensioners make up a smaller proportion of Newham's population than the London average but they are more likely:

- a) to be suffering from long-term debilitating illnesses (43% as opposed to 39.2% London-wide)
- b) not to have central heating (35.7% as opposed to 30.3% London-wide)
- c) either not to have a bathroom/shower, or inside WC, or to have to share one with someone else (12% as opposed to 4.2% London-wide)

Just under half of the population come from an ethnic minority group (compared to an average ethnic minority population London-wide of 24%)

Percentage of people moving into the borough in 1991 who were first-time migrants from overseas: 64% (compared to an average of 34% of people in other London boroughs)

Unemployment rate among the borough's ethnic minority groups: 30.1%

Number of languages used by callers to the East London and City Health Authority's language line in an average year: 37

Percentage of language needs which were met by advice and interpretation services in hospitals and primary healthcare services in East London: 35%

The mortality rate in the borough is 14% higher and the illness rate 27% higher than the national average

Rate at which people under 65 die from coronary heart disease: 59.1 per 1,000 (compared to 42 per 1,000 for England and Wales as a whole)

Percentage of mothers who make contact with health services in the first three months of pregnancy: 10%

7.5 children per every 1,000 live births die under the age of 1 (compared to 6.1 in England and Wales as a whole)

Chances that a child will be registered with one of the borough's 79 dental practices: 1 in 3

Newham has the highest rate of tuberculosis in England, and it is rising

Percentage of hospital in-patient stays attributable to mental disorders: 28%

Number of times, per head, the East London and City Health Authority prescribed medicine in 1997: 10.7 (compared to 8.7 per head in London as a whole)

In 1998 a Newham GP, Dr. Prasanta Bhowmik, was the first GP to receive the BMA's Sir James Cameron Award

Number of head-teachers in the borough's 87 schools replaced in the last six years: 20

Chances that a member of the teaching staff has been replaced in the last three years: 1 in 3

Although Newham, Hackney and Tower Hamlets took three of the bottom four places of 125 English education authorities in 1998, Newham is the borough which has shown the most improvement. In 1997, for the first time, more than a third of pupils gained five grade A to C passes at GCSE, as they did in 1998 – a 45% improvement on 1994. Moreover, only 3.2% leave school with no qualifications (compared to 6.6% nationally)

It has the highest number of per capita nursery education places in London: 4,488

It has the second lowest pupil exclusion rate in London. In 1997-98, 54 children (0.12% of the total pupil population) were permanently excluded from their schools

Three years ago, its pupil attendance rates were the sixth worst in

the country; now they are running at an average of 90%, the fourth best of all inner London authorities

Percentage of population with a higher education qualification: 9% (compared to 18% in London as a whole)

Crime in 1997/8 was 16% above the average for the Metropolitan Police District

Criminal damage and violence against a person occurred 28% more than the Metropolitan Police District average, and there was a 71% higher rate of robbery

Number of cases of residential burglary in 1997/8: 1,722

Number of CCTV cameras used to survey the performance of council dustmen: 159

Newham has the highest insurance premiums in England

In 1996/7 the parking department at Newham council made a net loss; in the same year, Westminster City council's parking department made a profit of £32.7 million

Number of hectares of urban parks and open spaces in the borough: 151

Number of hectares of derelict land – land which is so damaged by industrial or other development that it cannot be converted to beneficial use without treatment: 243

The Three Mills Heritage Centre, a group of 18th-century buildings

on the River Lea, contains Europe's largest tidal mill

Number of Vietnam war films shot on location in Newham: 1

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