



Hello ...

Finally we're seeing the sunshine we've been promised for so long. A bit of summer and everyone feels like they should be on holiday. In these times of belt-tightening and money saving, if you can't get away to somewhere different, then this issue of More Hackney shows just how much you can do within your own home borough. There's lots of outdoor things that you might expect to do on holiday (though no beaches, yet) but also a number of indoor things. If you can't get on a train or a plane and travel off somewhere, there's loads of adventures you can have here. For many of us, summer and parties go together. It's also true that often parties, alcohol and stimulants go together, and we have a guide to help you if your use of alcohol and substances is getting a bit hard to handle. Enjoy yourselves!

Mark Brown, Editor

Holiday in Hackney

Jo Martin looks at making the most of Hackney's outdoor activities for your summer staycation



Did you know you can go dinghy sailing, climbing and horse riding around a nature reserve, all within the borough's boundaries? A "staycation" is when you stay close to home for your holiday rather than going away, and Hackney is heaving with great holiday activities like these.

Beach volleyball, BMX or basketball anyone? You may be surprised at the diverse range of sports facilities in Hackney's parks. There are also table tennis tables, cricket pitches, running tracks, rugby pitches, football pitches, a volleyball court and chess tables. Some of the activities need to be booked in advance, whilst others can be used for free at any time.

Hackney has four fabulous pools, including London Fields Lido, the capital's only heated 50m outdoor swimming pool, which played host to the USA Paralympic swimming team last year. And remember, if you're in receipt of welfare benefits like Employment & Support Allowance, you can swim absolutely free of charge (see our January issue, free to download from the website).

Want to get out and about on Hackney's waterways? There's something for everyone, from chugging along a canal going through pitch black tunnels and locks in a narrowboat to splashing about in a canoe or kayak. At the Laburnum Boat Club, south Hackney's community boat project, you

can drop in for canal barge trips, canoeing and kayaking on Wednesday evenings (£3) and Sunday mornings (£2). At the West Reservoir Centre (Stoke Newington), there's dinghy sailing, kayaking, canoeing and open water swimming. Lee Rowing Club (next to Springfield Park) runs a learn-to-row course in the summer and, if you have prior rowing experience, you can join the recreational rowing group (concessionary membership is available).

What about trying horse riding? Throughout the summer, you can go on a one-hour pony trekking experience at the Waterworks Nature Reserve (£25 per person or £80 for a group of 4). You can also take horse riding lessons at the Lee Valley Riding Centre (concessions are available).

Finally, if bad weather hits or you want a break from the heat, why not try indoor rock climbing at the Castle Climbing Centre (Stoke Newington)? It's the UK's most visited climbing centre. Taster sessions – which include abseiling down the inside of a 100 foot tower – start at £20 and climbing sessions are from £7. There's also a climbing wall at the Britannia Leisure Centre (south Hackney).

•**Pony trekking** at the Waterworks Nature Reserve, Lammas Road (off Lea Bridge Road), Leyton E10 7QB, 020 8988 7566, visitleevalley.org.uk/en/content/cms/nature/nature-reserve/waterworks-nature-reserve-midd/#pony-trekking

•**Tennis court bookings and courses**

- hackneycitytennisclubs.co.uk, @hackneytennis, 020 7241 2136

•**Laburnum Boat Club**, Laburnum Street E2 8BH, 020 7729 2915, laburnumboatclub.com

•**Lee Rowing Club**, The Boathouse, Spring Hill, Clapton E5 9BL, 020 8806 8282, learc.org.uk

•**London Fields Lido**, London Fields Westside, Hackney E8 3EU, better.org.uk/london-fields-lido

•**Sports pitches and courts** - hackney.gov.uk/sports-pitches-courts.htm

•**Lee Valley Riding Centre**, 71 Lea Bridge Road, Leyton E10 7QL, 020 8556 2629 - visitleevalley.org.uk/en/content/cms/outdoors/lee-valley-riding-centre/

•**Parks and green spaces list**, with links to each park's own web page - hackney.gov.uk/parks-green-spaces-and-play-areas.htm

•**Parks user groups** – 23 parks have their own user group - hackney.gov.uk/parks-user-group.htm

•**Parks newsletter** – for monthly updates on what's on in Hackney's parks, subscribe by emailing parks@hackney.gov.uk

•**West Reservoir Centre**, Green Lanes, Stoke Newington N4 2HA - better.org.uk/leisure/stoke-newington-west-reservoir-centre

•**The Castle Climbing Centre**, Green Lanes, Stoke Newington N4 2H, 020 8211 7000, castle-climbing.co.uk

•**Children** – list of play areas, adventure playgrounds and play streets - hackney.gov.uk/parks-play-areas.htm

•**More Hackney** – download previous issues (including the January issue with details of the free swimming scheme) free of charge from our website - MoreHackney.wordpress.com

Drink, mental

Our use of drink and drugs can mental wellbeing, says Kerry

Alcohol and other mind-altering drugs can be detrimental to our physical and mental health. For the one in four of us who are affected by an existing mental health problem, drugs and alcohol can be even more destructive. Ironically, those with a mental health condition are more likely to develop an addiction.

"Dual Diagnosis" is the name given to those people diagnosed with a mental health condition and a secondary diagnosis of addiction. Alcohol is the biggest problem, as we live in a boozy culture and it's our most popular and accessible choice for celebration, socialisation and unwinding. However, some people who are having problems with their mental health use alcohol and other non-prescription drugs as a way to self-medicate, be it chasing highs, blocking lows or filtering out unwanted symptoms. Whilst a drink or two can initially do the job, long term or binge drinking is likely to intensify symptoms and make people more unwell. We tend to forget that alcohol can be a depressant. Cannabis can induce paranoia. Cocaine can invoke unpleasant "come downs", which are a nasty collision of depression and anxiety.

It is important that services offer treatment packages that support both mental health and drug/alcohol problems.

drugs and health

have an impact on our Hudson

The Alcohol Recovery Centre (ARC) in Tudor Grove (south Hackney) works with people with a dual diagnosis. They are part of Lifeline, an organisation which offers treatment for drug users too. If the team believes someone needs more specialist help (for example, for acute mental health issues) they can be referred to the Specialist Alcohol Team at Homerton Hospital. ARC offers a self-referral system so people don't even have to go through your GP. There are also support groups for people with dual diagnosis as part of the Alcoholics Anonymous fellowship.

The stigma attached to both mental illness and addiction means people may be hesitant to ask for help. Experiencing problems with mental health or finding our use of drink or drugs is getting out of control is nothing to be ashamed about. The teams mentioned above are specially trained and have in depth experience. They will not judge or tell people off. They offer a path to recovery and mental well being. So if you or someone you know would benefit from their services, get in contact today. • ARC, 17-20 Tudor Grove, Hackney, E9 7QL / 020 8985 3757. Hours: Mon:11.30-5.30pm; Tue:10-8pm; Wed:10-8pm; Thur/Fri:10-5.30pm. Lifeline are at lifelineprojecthackney.com / 020 8985 3757

My continuing journey with Time to Change

Hackney resident Nikki Llewellyn has been sharing with More Hackney readers her experiences with national mental health anti-stigma campaign Time to Change. Nikki has been volunteering for Time to Change for two years, speaking in public about her experiences of mental ill-health

The week before World Mental Health Day last year, I found myself with a dilemma: I had been invited to attend two events! I could either travel to Liverpool with the Time to Change Village, where Time to Change (TTC) would set up tents and refreshments in an area and catch the attention of passersby to talk about mental health (I hadn't missed a single Village up until then); or I could attend a pledge signing (where organisations sign a pledge to say that they support the Time To Change campaign) at the headquarters of the Department of Health (DoH). Decisions, decisions ...

I chose the pledge event and gave a talk during a workshop for the first time. I told my story, explained how I was involved in the campaign and answered questions.

My journey then took me to Birmingham for another TTC Village, but with a twist: as well as being a volunteer and speaking to the public, I was also a "book" in the Human Library which sometimes travels with the Village. A Human Library is when people with stories to tell share them one-on-one with people who'd like to hear them, as if the person were a book that a visitor is taking off the shelf. I found that many people with whom I had brief conversations then wanted to



talk more in-depth with me. This was very rewarding.

After this event, I was asked to be a "human book" again at a smaller event in London, where things took an interesting turn for me. One of the conversations I had was with a gentleman who was not only interested in my story, but also in my job history. Initially I found this quite strange ... until he explained that he was the head of Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) for the boroughs of Barnet, Haringey and Enfield, and he wanted me to come and work for him!

In the space of a few weeks, I went from being a book titled 'Clinically Depressed and Unemployed', to being a volunteer team administrator for the Barnet IAPT team. •

Read more of Nikki's story at morehackney.wordpress.com and find out more about getting involved in Time to Change at time-to-change.org.uk

Listings - August 2013

Throughout August - *Nature Adventures Clissold Park* Summer Family Learning Course. Six FREE 'Nature Adventures' sessions on Monday and Thursday afternoons in August in Clissold Park. Aimed at primary aged children and their families. Try your hand at pond dipping, seed planting, honey tasting, bat spotting and more. Places are limited so booking is essential. Contact Lucy for more information: 020 8356 4600 Lucy.Gijsen@hackney.gov.uk / www.hackney.gov.uk/clissold-park

Saturday 11th - *Open Water Swimming Events* - West Reservoir Water Sports Centre, Stoke Newington. Open Water Swim Events are an opportunity to swim at the fantastic West Reservoir in London, providing a thrilling open water swim experience. The onsite cafe will be open during the events providing full English "power breakfast" to fuel you before and after the events. Capital Tri is a triathlon club and event provider that organises multi-sport events for athletes of all abilities. Information can be found at capitaltri.com For more details contact team@capitaltri.com / [facebook.com/CapitalTriUK](https://www.facebook.com/CapitalTriUK)

Sunday 25th - 12-6pm - *Victoria Park Bandstand* - The Bikini Beach Band - Surfnoir instrumentals; pop classics

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rewired via twanging guitars and pounding, primitive beats. Trashcat - Punk rock 'n' roll from Hackney. The Core Allstars - Bands, singers, rappers, poets, dj's and more spanning folk to reggae. FREE

Tuesday 27th - *Klub Katz 'n Dog open mic and special guests*. A chance to see Core Arts regulars, many who have experienced mental health difficulties, in performance. The Royal Sovereign, 64 Northwold Road, E5. Evening.

Community law shops service - Free legal advice sessions on a first-come, first-served basis. Central Library, E8 1GQ. Mondays, 2pm to 5pm. Contact: Miranda Grell - miranda@hclc.org.uk - 020 8985 5236 - hclc.org.uk

Open Now - *Centre for Better Health Artisan Bakery* - 13 Stean Street, Haggerston, E8 4ED - great choice of breads and pastries, prepared by people who have experience of mental health difficulty: betterhealthbakery.wordpress.com

Send us your listings - If you have ideas for mental health and wellbeing events, activities or opportunities in Hackney that could be included in More Hackney, email them to hello@socialspider.com

Deadline for September 2013 issue: August 16th 2013.

Would you like to help make this newsletter happen? More Hackney is produced by a small team of people and we'd like to have more! We need people to write articles, help work out how we're going to get the newsletter to people who want it, to research what Hackney has to offer and even people who'll be able to lay it out (fit all of the words on the printed page). We meet every Wednesday at 2pm-4pm at The Centre for Better Health, 1A Darnley Road, Hackney, E9 6QH. If you have or do experience mental health difficulties and fancy being involved in something to help people who've been - or are going through - similar, we'd love to meet you. Email us at hello@socialspider.com or call 020 8521 7956 for more information.



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