

NEWHAM INDEPENDENTS PARTY



**Newham
Independents**

**Fairness, Stability
and Practical
Change for
Newham**

2026



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Foreword from the Party Leader

CLLR. MEHMOOD MIRZA

Newham stands at a crossroads shaped by structural pressures that extend far beyond any single administration: rising housing costs, widening inequality, demographic change, and the long shadow of national fiscal constraints. Over the past decade, local government has been required to do more with less, often forcing difficult trade-offs between financial sustainability and social justice.

This manifesto is grounded in a simple premise: public policy must restore balance between residents' daily realities and the way local decisions are made. Rather than presenting isolated pledges, the Newham Independents propose a coherent framework built around three principles:



HOUSEHOLD RESILIENCE

easing the everyday financial pressures residents face.



ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC SERVICES

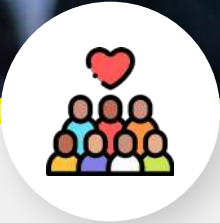
ensuring council policies are practical and usable.



CIVIC INCLUSION

Recognising the full diversity of Newham's communities in how services are designed.

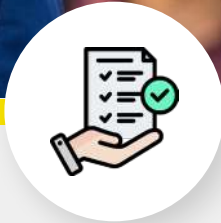
MIRZA
FOR NEWHAM



Newham is one of the most diverse boroughs in Europe, but diversity alone does not guarantee fairness. Policy must respond to lived experience: families navigating rising living costs, young people needing opportunity, small traders facing regulatory burdens, and communities seeking recognition within local infrastructure.



The measures proposed here are not ideological abstractions. They are grounded in local government finance, statutory duties, and measurable outcomes. Each policy recognises that public resources are finite and that good governance requires transparency about trade-offs, opportunity costs, and implementation risks.



This manifesto therefore aims to move beyond political slogans and instead offer practical, accountable interventions – policies that can be costed, scrutinised, and delivered within the realities of municipal governance.

OUR POLICY FRAMEWORK

1

Supporting Household Finances



FREE FIRST RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMIT

The Newham Independents propose introducing a free first parking permit for households.

POLICY RATIONALE:

Parking costs form part of the cumulative financial pressure on residents. Removing the cost of the first permit recognises that many households rely on a vehicle for work, caring responsibilities, or accessibility needs.

Expected Outcomes

- Reduced cost burden for residents.
- Simplified parking policy structure.
- Increased transparency around council revenue from subsequent permits.

Implementation Considerations

- Clear eligibility criteria to prevent misuse.
- Monitoring of potential revenue reductions.
- Digital administration to reduce operational costs.





COUNCIL TAX FREEZE

A one-year freeze on council tax is proposed.

POLICY RATIONALE:

Household budgets remain under strain from inflation and rising living costs. A freeze provides short-term stability while longer-term structural reforms are explored.

Expected Outcomes

- Immediate financial certainty for residents.
- Signal of fiscal restraint within the council.

Key Considerations

- Identification of efficiency savings or alternative income sources.
- Assessment of impacts on service delivery.

Education & Young People



UNIVERSAL FREE SCHOOL MEALS FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Extend free school meals to all secondary school children within the borough.

POLICY RATIONALE:

Universal provision reduces stigma, supports educational attainment, and ensures consistent nutritional access.

Expected Outcomes

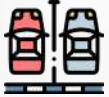
- Improved concentration and attendance.
- Reduced administrative complexity compared with means-tested models.

Implementation Considerations

- Collaboration with schools and catering providers.
- Phased rollout to manage budget impact.



Fair & Practical Parking Reform



ABOLITION OF EMISSIONS-BASED PARKING CHARGES

Remove emissions-linked differentials within parking permits.

POLICY RATIONALE:

While environmental objectives remain important, emissions-based charges can disproportionately affect residents unable to upgrade vehicles due to financial constraints.

Expected Outcomes


- Greater policy simplicity.
- Reduced perception of punitive charging structures.

Implementation Considerations

- Alignment with borough-wide environmental strategies.
- Review of alternative sustainability measures.



TWO HOURS' FREE PARKING FOR NEWHAM PERMIT HOLDERS

 Introduce limited free short-stay parking for residents.

POLICY RATIONALE:

Local high streets depend on accessible parking. Short free periods can support local commerce while maintaining turnover.

Expected Outcomes

- Increased footfall for local businesses.
- More flexible access for residents running daily errands.

Implementation Considerations

- Digital enforcement systems.
- Evaluation of potential congestion impacts.



Cleaner Neighbourhoods & Public Services



FREE BULKY WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE

Provide a no-charge bulky waste collection for residents.

POLICY RATIONALE:

Fly-tipping remains a persistent issue. Removing cost barriers encourages legal disposal and supports cleaner streets.

Expected Outcomes

- Reduction in environmental crime.
- Improved public realm and resident satisfaction.

Implementation Considerations

- Booking system to manage demand.
- Capacity planning for waste services.



Inclusion & Community Infrastructure



DEDICATED MUSLIM BURIAL GROUND PROVISION

Develop a dedicated burial space that meets Islamic burial requirements within the borough.

POLICY RATIONALE:

Newham's population includes a significant Muslim community whose burial needs are not fully met locally. Providing appropriate provision reflects inclusive civic planning.



Expected Outcomes

- Reduced need for families to travel outside the borough during times of bereavement.
- Recognition of cultural and faith-based requirements within public services.

Implementation Considerations

- Land identification and planning permissions.
- Engagement with faith leaders and community organisations.
- Compliance with environmental and burial regulations.

OUR APPROACH TO FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



The Newham Independents recognise that each policy carries financial implications.

IMPLEMENTATION WOULD REQUIRE:



Transparent costing exercises



Assessment of foregone income



Identification of efficiency measures



Ongoing monitoring of service impacts

Policy decisions must balance social benefit with long-term sustainability. Every proposal within this manifesto is therefore designed to be subject to scrutiny and revision through formal budget processes.





A DIFFERENT MODEL OF LOCAL LEADERSHIP



THE NEWHAM INDEPENDENTS' APPROACH CENTRES ON:



**EVIDENCE-LED
POLICYMAKING**



**CLEAR COMMUNICATION
WITH RESIDENTS**



**POLICIES ROOTED IN EVERYDAY
EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN
ABSTRACT TARGETS**

This manifesto outlines a framework for practical change — one that recognises the borough's diversity, economic challenges, and shared aspirations for stability and fairness

NEWHAM INDEPENDENTS PARTY




Newham

Independents



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