

# NEW ARRIVALS MYTH BUSTING FACTS

## EAST SIDE CONSORTIUM

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This pamphlet is intended to provide you with some information on new arrivals to dispel the myths and highlight the role new arrivals play in the life of the country and our local areas.

Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest are boroughs that are becoming increasingly diverse.

Some new arrivals from non European community countries such as Africa/Asia, Eastern Europe, including the Roma Community have newly settled across these three boroughs.

By giving some general facts and busting a few of the common myths about new arrivals in their local areas as well as nationally, this pamphlet aims to provide information that will support increased understanding and learning between the different communities in these boroughs.

This pamphlet is intended to be read and distributed in these local areas to promote increased understanding between communities.



## **New arrivals are taking all our housing**

It is seen by some people in the settled communities in certain local areas, that the increase in new arrivals from inner London and those entering the UK were receiving priority for housing. which would otherwise be available to locals. Also concerns that new arrivals are allocated housing as a priority because of larger families. Homeless people placed in certain boroughs are perceived as living in social accommodation is also a misconception and the *minority* that do claim social housing face the same issues and may find they have even more difficulty

There is also an issue of perception relating to former council houses sold under right to buy. Local people simply see new arrivals entering what they think are council homes when in fact many of these are housing that were once council homes that are now being rented privately. In reality any increase in right to buy property causes a shrinking in the amount of social housing. A decrease in the building of social housing and increase in right to buy housing over the years has contributed to very long waiting lists for social housing, which can increase tensions. Housing is an issue that affects both new arrival and settled communities.

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## **New arrivals do not want to fit in**

In certain areas new arrivals are considered to be the main perpetrators of street litter, fly tipping and the main source of anti-social behavior and therefore perceived as being unwilling to integrate. It should be recognised that these are not new problems, or ones associated mainly with new arrivals. However the main barriers to integration is the inability to communicate in English and lack of cultural understanding between both communities. Both of these issues affect migrants ability to seek help and advice on matters affecting their lives and a 'barrier' to integrate with the host community. Generally there are a lack of opportunities for different communities to meet and interact with each other. These factors as well as discrimination prevent most new arrivals who are desperate to fit in.

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## **New arrivals hang around on the streets**

Some new arrivals live in houses in multiple occupancy (HMOs). New arrivals often do not have much money and also have no accommodation history, which results in high demand for low quality accommodation and plenty of opportunity for exploitation by unscrupulous landlords. As a result overcrowding can occur, when this happens in some local areas occupants may sit outside the property when socialising. Also in some communities people gather to make decisions about their community often in public places such as parks and in reality have no intention to be intimidating- but are often perceived as such by local residents. However the truth is that most new arrivals do not hang on the streets.

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## New arrivals are not interested in working

It is a misconception that new arrivals do not want to work. Many new arrivals are skilled workers and many are professionals. However new arrivals fill jobs in many sectors where there are experiencing major problems filling job vacancies due to skill shortages such as nurses and doctors in the NHS, fruit pickers in agriculture, food processing, and in hospitality. Also new arrivals do many so called 'dirty jobs' that secure British residents do not want to do.

It is found that migrant workers are subjected to illegal charges for being found work, received non payment for hours worked, excessive working days and poor accommodation which is linked to the job provided. The truth is that new arrivals tend to have a strong work ethic and want to support themselves.

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## New arrivals are draining the State

Some new arrivals have no recourse to public funds and are also not allowed to work in the UK, for example Asylum Seekers. However they are keen to work but because they are not allowed to work they are forced to rely on specific support set just at 70% of income support but meanwhile even do voluntary work whilst they are waiting for a decision.

On the other hand there are also new arrivals that have no recourse to public funds but are allowed to work, for example from the A8 Eastern European countries, non- EU new arrivals from south east Asia and Africa on the points based scheme.

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## New arrivals increase crime

Police representatives in certain areas have stated that increased inward migration has resulted in diversity in the types of crimes committed. These crimes are often done by a *small minority* of the new arrival community, just in the same way that *every* community has a small criminal element. The truth is, the vast majority of new arrivals are law abiding citizens (source: Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO)). Quite often it is most likely the case that it is the new arrivals who are the victims of crime. They often feel unable to **report** incidents of racial harassment or violence because of a fear of repercussions. Women new arrivals and even some men say they do not go out at night because they fear abuse and harassment.

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## EAST SIDE CONSORTIUM

The aims of East Side Consortium are:

to work towards the elimination of racial, religious and other forms of discrimination.

To promote equal opportunity & good relations. We provide:

Help & support for people who are victims of harassment or discrimination, advice & training on Equality issues.

Myth busting facts on new arrivals

Funded by EHRC

East Side Consortium consists of three organizations working in partnership:

Barking & Dagenham Racial Equality Council,  
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### New arrivals do not contribute to UK Economy

New arrivals make a huge contribution to the UK economy, paying 2.5 billion more in tax each year than they take out in services. In fact the fiscal contribution from new arrival workers has increased year on year and boosted economic growth. We must not forget that the taxes and national insurance contributions paid by migrant workers into our UK economy provides **more resources** to fund our public services. In addition Britain's low birth rate means that new arrival/ migrant workers keep Britain's 'working population' age stable and ensure the increasing number of pensions for our 'aging population' can be financed.

Also the presence of migrant workers on relatively low wages has also helped keep mortgage rates low, acting as a deflationary pressure, helping the Bank of England keep interest rates down (Guardian 9 Feb 06).

A good example of this was when 'The Bank of England's had slashed interest rates to the lowest level since Winston Churchill was Prime minister' ( Daily Telegraph 08).

Therefore new arrivals contribution has even helped to protect the UK economy even during times of recession.

The truth is some sectors would collapse if *migrant workers* were removed overnight.