

Politics Matters

by Mayor of Newham,
Sir Robin Wales



China's £1bn deal brings the Royal Docks full circle

Life sometimes comes full circle and that is what is happening with the Royal Docks where our vision of the future is about to become reality.

At their height, the docks employed 20,000 people and were a hub for trade with countries from around the world. Soon they will return to life as a centre for 21st century entrepreneurs.

Our announcement with ABP of a £1 billion business district in the docks will create at least 20,000 jobs, forge trade links with China and secure billions of pounds of investment. It is the biggest single investment made by China in the UK and proves Newham is emerging as a world-class business destination.

With land for development, world-class transport and digital infrastructure, and a young workforce, the borough is ideally placed to accommodate much of London's eastwards growth.

Home to London City Airport, the University of East London, the ExCeL centre, the Siemens Crystal, Emirates Airline cable car and now this partnership with ABP, Newham has proven that we are committed to working with partners and investors to unlock the area's potential.

Regeneration means nothing if it does not transform the lives of local people. We have learned lessons from the Canary Wharf development which left the community locked out. The benefits this deal brings for residents cannot be overstated. It will provide thousands of jobs and enhance the waterfront for people to enjoy.

Newham will work with ABP and its UK development partner, Stanhope, to ensure that as many of these jobs as possible are accessible to residents. Our Workplace jobs brokerage scheme is ideally placed to ensure this happens.

Future generations of residents already have a headstart. At Kingsford Community School in Beckton there is the first Confucius Classroom in London where pupils learn Mandarin as a business language.

We have made a commitment to ABP that we will work hard to make this a reality; everyone involved wants to progress quickly. This, with the proposed International India Centre development at UEL means that Newham is once again the first port of call for Asia.

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