

Newham Recorder

FREE INSIDE: UNIQUE GUIDE



OUR GIFT TO YOU TODAY!

And...

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THE HEARTBEAT OF NEWHAM

BENEFITS FRAUD COUPLE ARE JAILED

A COUPLE who fleeced the taxpayer out of millions of pounds in a massive benefits con have been jailed for a total of six years and nine months.

Illegal immigrant Saheed Ladega, 38, and his partner Oluwatosin Gbadebo, 35, used 26 fake identities to get away with the scam for nearly a decade.

They fraudulently claimed benefits for two homes despite living with their five children at their £400,000 gated mansion in Essex.

The pair then poured their ill-gotten gains into a property empire and sub-let them to more illegal immigrants.

As the money from illegal tenants and tax cons rolled in, they bought 11 more houses which were rented to genuine tenants paying thousands of pounds each week.

But their greed was still not satisfied and the couple invented fictitious identities, used false National Insurance numbers and fake pay and bank details to claim housing benefit at all 11 properties.

Ladega, who uses the name Daniel Cole among his many aliases, was deported from the UK to his native Nigeria in 1995. But he slipped back into the UK just a

year later with a false passport. Ladega was jailed for five years and three months while Gbadebo, who received 18 months for her lesser role, has leave to remain in the UK.

The couple were finally arrested in November 2006 after their fraud was uncovered by Newham and Waltham Forest councils.

Ladega had put down a deposit for the £400,000 family house in Chafford Hundred, Grays, Essex, in 2003, despite having no obvious means of support.

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Stark warning to our young...

EXCLUSIVE REPORT By TRACEY MULLINS

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EX-NEW YORK gangster Sergio Argueta delivered a powerful message in a bid to promote peace among our young people...and they listened intently.

There was no mistaking the concentration of the audience as the 29-year-old spoke to pupils at the launch of Breaking the Cycle at St Antony's Church, Forest Gate. It was an emotive follow-up to the Enough is Enough campaign launched by Newham Council, police, West Ham United and the Recorder.

That was designed to stop the killing on our streets.



● Powerful message...Sergio talks to a Newham pupil

And this latest programme features ex-gang members and police officers talking of their experiences. It has come to the UK for the first time, kicking off in Newham.

After starting in the US in response to the Columbine high school massacre, the programme will tour UK schools to show young people that violence is not the solution to their problems. Last year in London alone 27 teenagers were murdered...

...six with Newham connections.

Breaking the Cycle stresses honest communication and forgiveness as a way of resolving conflicts.

It was launched with two assemblies at the church – the first with more than 1,000 pupils from St Bonaventure's and the second with students from St Angela's Ursuline, both in Forest Gate. Superintendent Phil Morgan of Newham Police attended.

Two of ex-gang member Sergio's friends were killed in gang violence. As gang leader and in retaliation, he planned a drive-by shooting which led to his best friend going to prison for killing another man after they were jumped by members of a rival gang. Sergio realized his life had to change.

He has since achieved a Master's degree in social work and founded an organisation dedicated to educating young people

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● Former gangster Sergio is welcomed to St Bonaventure's



● Speakers getting their message across at St Bonaventure's