

Minicab firm in planning row fears for its future

Council says it has traded without permission

by Melissa York
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A cab firm is threatened with closure because Newham Town Hall say it has been operating for more than a year without planning permission.

The news has hit the owner of West Ham Cars in Durban Road, George Hassan Qayan, hard. He says he employs about 30 people from drivers to front-of-house staff.

George, who lives with his wife and children in East Ham, said: "I worked very hard for that office and I have been running my business for about one year and five months.

Redecorate

"We are the only cab office within two miles of the station and when the trains stop late at night, where are people going to go?"

"They said the front of my shop looks messy but I am willing to redecorate it. They also said that I don't contribute anything to the local community but I get on well with all the other businesses in the area.

"I should have applied for planning straight away and I have



■ George Hassan Qayan outside his cab office in Durban Road

applied since. I've appealed but they are not interested."

A council spokesperson said: "We take breaches of planning regulations seriously.

"The council refused a planning application for a minicab business at 1c Durban Road in November 2010.

"The applicant appealed the decision and this was dismissed

by the Planning Inspectorate last April. The business has continued to operate without planning permission and we have received several complaints from residents regarding noise and traffic.

"We are preparing an enforcement notice against the owner seeking the unauthorised use to cease."

Two charities in the running for a £5,000 grant

Two Canning Town charities have been shortlisted for a cash boost of £5,000.

Peacock Gym Academy, in Caxton Street, was nominated for its Peer Mentoring Project which provides alternative edu-

cation for 14 to 19-year-olds.

Anchor House, in Barking Road, was put forward for its residents and community arts programme, which educates people who are homeless and vulnerable.

About 50 organisations that are situated along the Docklands Light Railway network applied for the grant from the Serco for Skills fund.

The winner will be announced in April.

You can now buy visitors parking permits online

Residents can buy visitor parking permits on the Internet with the launch of a new service by Newham Council.

People living in a resident

parking zone can order permits that are then sent to them in the post.

The maximum number of permits each household can buy is

40 cards per month, at a cost of between £20 and £200.

■ Go to www.newham.gov/parking for more information.

Schoolchildren learning how to make pancakes



■ Crepe Man joins youngsters at Westfield Stratford City

Youngsters flipped their way to success during a pancake tossing event at Westfield Stratford City last week.

Children from Earlham Primary School in Forest Gate

and Carpenter's Primary School in Stratford tried to master the art of making the treat.

They were joined by Crepe Man, a mascot from

Crepeaffaire, who made a special appearance at the event.

Activities, including face painting and balloon shaping, also kept the children entertained.

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