



NEWHAM STEELBAND BLOCKORAMA

THE NEWHAM STEEL BAND HOSTED ITS FIRST STEEL BAND BLOCKORAMA IN THE NEW GILLETT SQUARE, BRADBURY STREET, DALSTON, EAST LONDON ON THE 10TH JUNE 2007. THE EVENT WAS HELD BETWEEN 1.00 -6.00 P.M. WITH FREE ENTRY. IT WAS SUPPORTED BY THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF STEELBANDS, NATIONAL LOTTERY, AWARDS FOR ALL, HACKNEY CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENTS, THE VORTEX AND FAST LONDON DESIGN SHOW.



➤ Gillett Square provides a quality public space of nearly 3,000 sq m of high quality open space at the heart of Dalston town centre. The project was selected in 2002 as one of the first ten open space projects within the Mayor of London's 100 public spaces programme. The site was formally launched on 10th November 2006 by the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone. Gillett Square is in close proximity to Kingsland High Street and provides both relief from the excessive pedestrian footfall on the main street and a flexible arena for cultural activity.

The Newham blockorama certainly filled the square with cultural activity. The ethnic food, steel band music, the colourful choreographed display of costumes by the Tropical Isles Mas

band coupled with the warm weather generated a Caribbean atmosphere that was fully enjoyed by all. The six steel bands in attendance filled the air with the sweet sounds of steel. Newham led by Nadine, Wilfred 'Freddy' Kirk led Woodbine, St John's Catholic and William Patten Schools were led by Kyron Akal whilst Skinner's Company School was directed by Alicia Brown with Chris Storey in charge of Haringey Young Musicians. All the bands were accompanied by young energetic flag wavers fervently waving their flags of all the Caribbean islands.

Congrats go out to Joel 'Tubbs' Mills of Metronomes and BAS Future Development Forum, Justin Russell, Captain of Mangrove, Justin 'Redz' Richardson and Wesley Joseph for their

percussive support of all the bands. Tubbs could be seen hustling from band to band with his percussive instrument, iron and iron board and was even seen playing the bass with Newham. Well done lads for your continued efforts in keeping the steel pan culture alive.

Event co-ordinators Felix Joseph and Marcia Brown did a wonderful job ensuring that the event flowed smoothly. The British Association of Steelbands sponsored awards and certificates for all the participating bands. These were presented by UK pan pioneers, Gerald Forsyth and Frank Rollock. A special achievement award was given to Woodbine steel band.

The general consensus from the audience was when will the next blockorama be?