# Idris Elba returns to Barking and Dagenham College to unveil MOBO paving stone



Idris Elba, the acclaimed actor known for his roles in “Luther” and “The Wire,” returned to Barking and Dagenham College to unveil a commemorative paving stone from the Mobo organisation, an initiative that recognises and celebrates influential figures in music and arts. The event, held on Friday, served as a poignant reminder of Elba’s roots and the significant role the college played in shaping his dreams and ambitions.

Speaking to students, Elba reflected on his journey from a hopeful young actor to an internationally recognized talent. "I was always thinking about what success might look like," he shared, recalling how the nature of the college provided him a “safe space” to explore his creativity. He emphasised the importance of such environments in nurturing artistic exploration, stating, “Every day I got to come back here, I got to dream bigger.” This space not only allowed him to practice but also to understand that the path to success involved both trials and triumphs.

The Paving The Way award, which includes Elba’s stone, is a tribute to cultural pioneers who have made significant contributions to black music and culture. Among previous recipients are notable figures such as Olympian Dame Jessica Ennis-Hill and comedian Sir Lenny Henry. This initiative by the Mobo organisation is key in highlighting the impact of talent in shaping the arts, something Elba passionately advocates for.

The unveiling was not just a celebration of past achievements but also a call to action for the current students, who had the opportunity to engage in a Q&A session with Elba. His presence at the college, particularly in the Idris Elba Studio—a professional film and TV facility named in his honour—demonstrated to students the tangible outcomes of perseverance and ambition. Elba’s commitment extends beyond acting as he is also known for his work as a DJ and for campaigning against knife crime, further enriching his narrative of engagement and empowerment.

Elba's heartfelt speech underscored the importance of educational institutions as catalysts for creativity, forming a foundation for young artists to express and refine their skills. His story resonates deeply, echoing the message that dreaming and striving can yield remarkable results—a sentiment central to the college’s mission of nurturing the next generation of talent.

By choosing Barking and Dagenham College as the location for his paving stone, Elba reaffirmed its vital role in his journey, transforming the event into a significant milestone not only for himself but also for the institution, which continues to inspire future generations to dream bigger and boldly pursue their ambitions.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/idris-elba-unveils-mobo-paving-stone-at-college-where-he-got-to-dream-bigger-43JX2GNGVBKQBG7KZQFIKD7IRA/), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-59149345)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/idris-elba-unveils-mobo-paving-stone-at-college-where-he-got-to-dream-bigger-43JX2GNGVBKQBG7KZQFIKD7IRA/), [[4]](https://www.standard.co.uk/showbiz/celebrity-news/idris-elba-mobo-paving-stone-barking-college-b1015428.html), [[5]](https://www.theguardian.com/film/2021/sep/21/idris-elba-mobo-paving-stone-london-college)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/idris-elba-unveils-mobo-paving-stone-at-college-where-he-got-to-dream-bigger-43JX2GNGVBKQBG7KZQFIKD7IRA/), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/showbiz/celebrity-news/idris-elba-mobo-paving-stone-barking-college-b1015428.html), [[6]](https://www.metro.co.uk/2021/09/19/idris-elba-unveils-mobo-stone-at-college-where-he-dreamed-bigger-15226043/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[7]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/news/idris-elba-mobo-award-paving-stone-college-b1935718.html)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/idris-elba-unveils-mobo-paving-stone-at-college-where-he-got-to-dream-bigger-43JX2GNGVBKQBG7KZQFIKD7IRA/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-59149345> - Idris Elba has gained fame through his roles in notable series like Luther and The Wire. Recently, he returned to Barking and Dagenham College, the institution that played a significant role in his artistic development. During the unveiling of a paving stone dedicated to him, he expressed how the college was instrumental in encouraging him to 'dream bigger', forming part of a broader initiative by the Mobo organisation to honour influential figures in music and arts. This event also showcased Elba's roots and his commitment to inspiring future talent.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/showbiz/celebrity-news/idris-elba-mobo-paving-stone-barking-college-b1015428.html> - At Barking and Dagenham College, Idris Elba unveiled a commemorative stone linked to the Mobo awards, reminding attendees of his educational journey. Elba highlighted the importance of the college as a space for creativity, reiterating how it provided him with a 'safe space' where he could explore his ambitions in film and music. This stone is a lasting tribute to his achievements and ups the visibility of the college's legacy in nurturing artistic talent.
4. <https://www.standard.co.uk/showbiz/celebrity-news/idris-elba-mobo-paving-stone-barking-college-b1015428.html> - In a heartfelt ceremony, Idris Elba celebrated his roots at Barking and Dagenham College while unveiling a Mobo paving stone. He expressed gratitude for the institution that allowed him to dream without limits. The Paving The Way award acknowledges individuals who have made significant contributions to black music and culture. Elba’s studio at the college symbolizes his journey and serves as an inspiration for aspiring artists, reinforcing the idea that perseverance leads to success in the arts.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2021/sep/21/idris-elba-mobo-paving-stone-london-college> - Idris Elba has been pivotal in the creative industry, and his recent unveiling of a Mobo paving stone at Barking and Dagenham College marked an important personal milestone. The award is part of a commendable initiative that acknowledges influential figures in the arts, underscoring the importance of spaces that encourage talent development. The event also allowed Elba to interact with students, further motivating them by sharing his journey from student to successful actor.
6. <https://www.metro.co.uk/2021/09/19/idris-elba-unveils-mobo-stone-at-college-where-he-dreamed-bigger-15226043/> - Idris Elba returned to Barking and Dagenham College for a special ceremony where he unveiled a Mobo paving stone celebrating his achievements. He reflected on how the college was essential to his development, providing a nurturing environment for creativity and exploration. The Mobo awards highlight cultural contributions, and Elba's connection to the college continues to inspire current students. His message resonates with the ambition to dream bigger and actively pursue one's dreams.
7. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/news/idris-elba-mobo-award-paving-stone-college-b1935718.html> - During an uplifting event, Idris Elba celebrated his legacy by unveiling a Mobo paving stone at Barking and Dagenham College. He expressed how central the college was to his artistic journey, highlighting it as a space that encouraged him to take risks. The Mobo initiative pays tribute to cultural pioneers, and Elba's presence at the college serves as an encouragement for future talent. Students were inspired by his story, emphasising how dreams can evolve through determination and education.