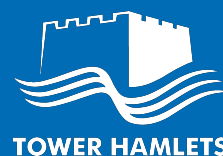


# Population Estimates Mid 2017 for Tower Hamlets



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The borough's population reached **308,000 in June 2017**.



Tower Hamlets' population **doubled in the past thirty years**, making the borough the fastest growing local authority in the UK.



Between June 2016 and June 2017 alone, the borough gained 7,000 (+2.3%) additional residents. That is equivalent to **20 additional residents every day in the past year**.



The reasons for population growth have been **equally** due to the net change of more births than deaths (**natural change**); and migration: more in-movers than out-movers (**net migration**).



In the past year, 36,000 people have moved into Tower Hamlets and 29,900 have moved out. This gives the borough the **11th highest population turnover rate in the country**.



The borough's population has the **4th youngest median age in the UK**, at 31.0, and nearly half of our population is aged 20-39.



Tower Hamlets remains the **second most densely populated local authority in the country**, after Islington.

## About this briefing

This briefing provides a summary of the mid-2017 population estimates published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 28 June 2018. These estimates provide the *usual resident population* of Tower Hamlets as at 30 June 2017. They help the council and partner organisations to understand our residents and to plan services to meet their needs.

The *usual resident population* includes all residents who have lived (or plan to live) in the borough for a period of at least a year, regardless of their nationality. Students are considered residents at their term-time address. The usual resident population excludes short-term visitors and migrants who may live in the borough for less than a year.

While the mid-year estimates provide the ‘official’ population of Tower Hamlets, it is important to note that the borough’s population is difficult to measure precisely. International migration is particularly difficult to measure accurately, and is a key factor affecting the borough’s population numbers. The figures in this briefing are *estimates* rather than precise measures, numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100, in line with ONS convention.

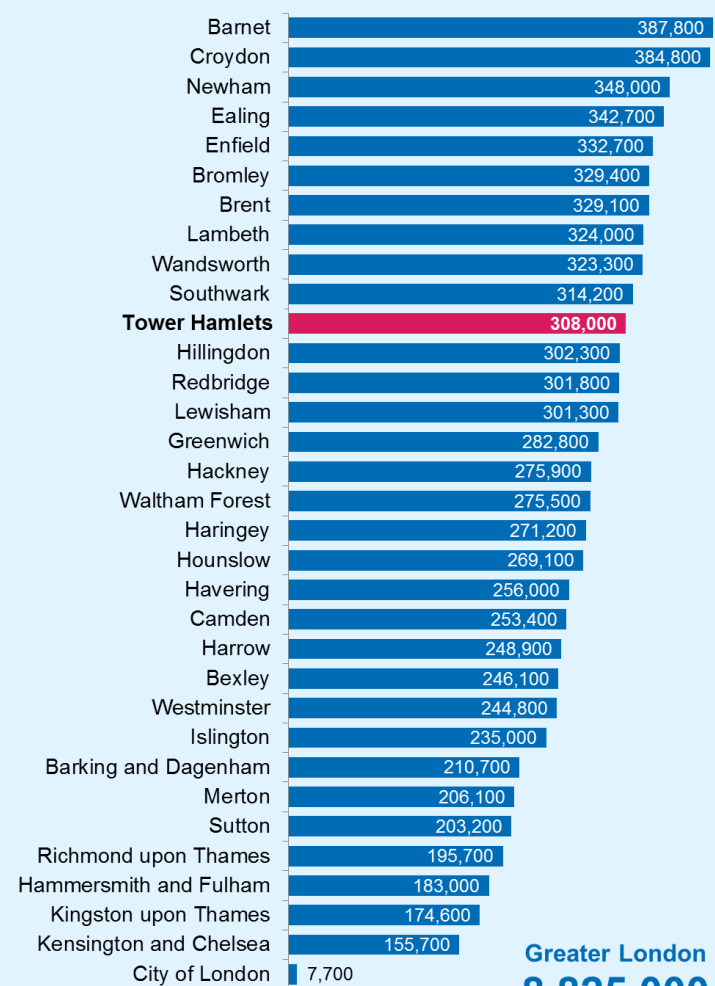
## Population estimates at 2017

The population of Tower Hamlets was estimated to be 308,000 as at 30 June 2017. In Figure 1, Tower Hamlets is ranked 11<sup>th</sup> largest out of the 33 London Boroughs (including The City of London). This ranking position is unchanged from 2016 with all other boroughs in a relatively stable position. Overall, Tower Hamlets’ population makes up 3.5% of Greater London’s population of 8.8 million.

## Population growth

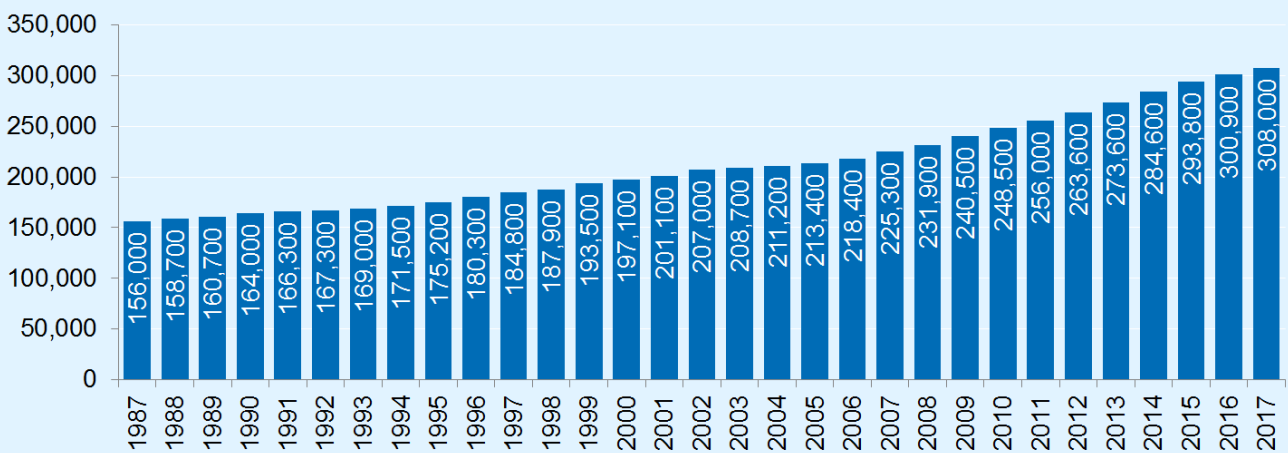
The population of Tower Hamlets has more than doubled in the past 30 years, rising from 156,000 in 1987 to the latest figure of 308,000 (Figure 2). Growth has been especially fast over the last decade: growing by 82,700 residents – a 33% increase. This was the fastest population growth among all the 391 UK local authorities, well ahead of the second highest growth in Newham (+26%) which is a seven percentage point lead.

Figure 1: Population Estimates (Mid 2017) - London Boroughs



Source: ONS 2017 Mid-year Population Estimates

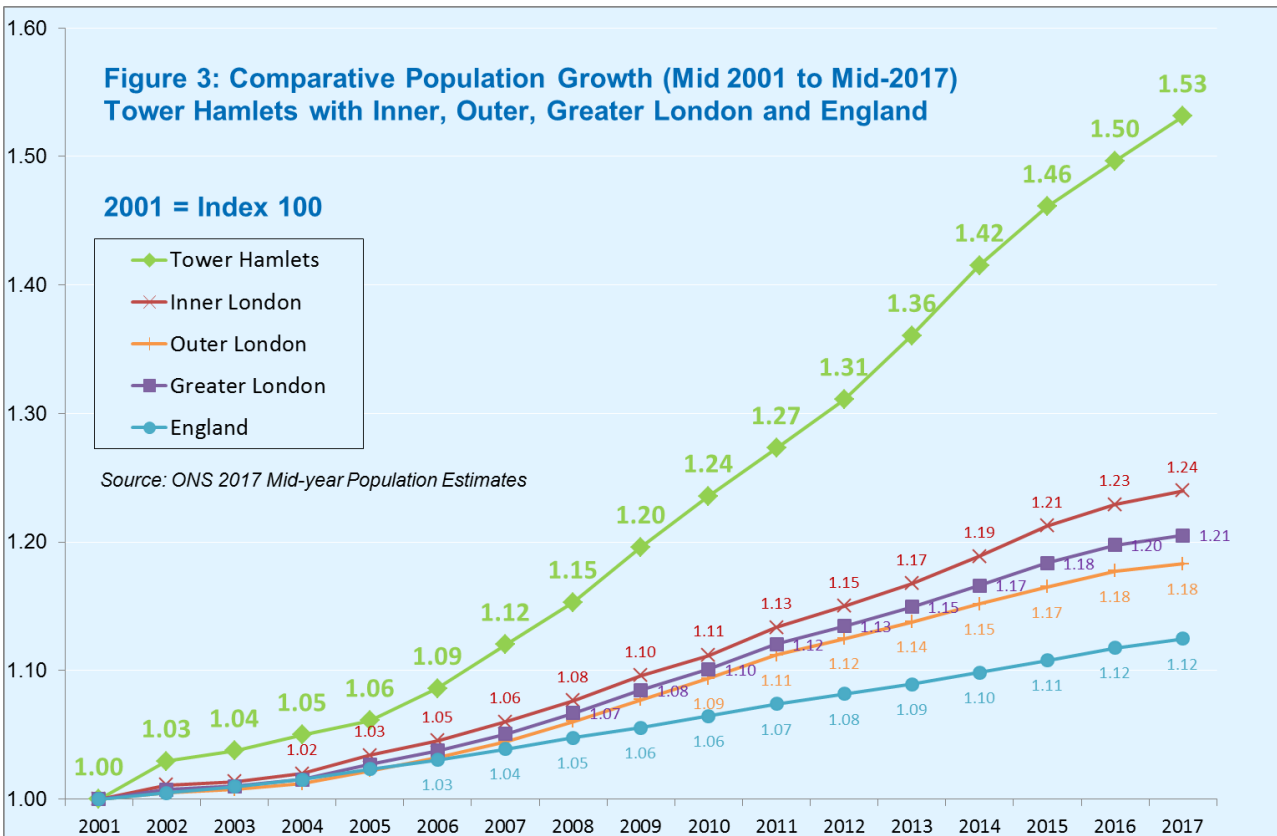
Figure 2: Population Estimates (Mid 1987 to Mid-2017) - Tower Hamlets



Source: ONS 2017 Mid-year Population Estimates

Between June 2016 and June 2017 alone, the borough gained an estimated 7,000 additional residents. That is equivalent to 20 additional residents every day over the year. This 2.3% increase is the third highest in the UK, next to the City of London (+5.6%) and Forest Heath (+3.1%)<sup>1</sup>.

Figure 3: Comparative Population Growth (Mid 2001 to Mid-2017) Tower Hamlets with Inner, Outer, Greater London and England



Source: ONS 2017 Mid-year Population Estimates

Figure 3 shows the index of comparative population growth since 2001. Index numbers are a useful way of expressing time-series data comparing respective growth (or decline) for different areas. An index number reflects trends compared with a base value, in this case

<sup>1</sup> Forest Heath's growth was due to "special populations" reflecting administrative data showing increases in the number of US air forces personnel and their dependents.

an index number of 100 at 2001. The index number is then expressed as 100 times the ratio to the base value. Tower Hamlets’ indexed population growth rate at 2017 (+53%) has more than doubled compared to Greater London (+21%) and more than four times England’s growth rate (+12%).

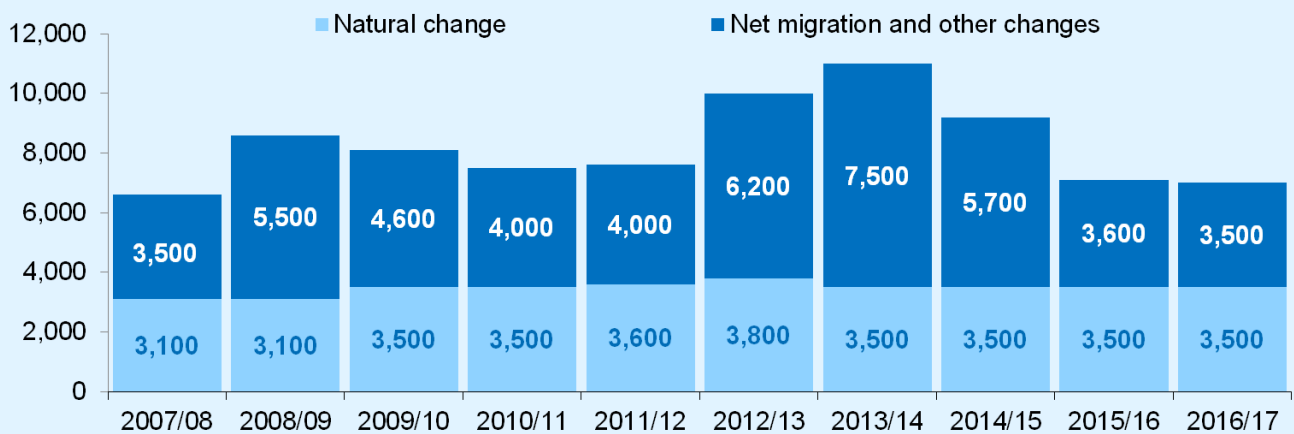
### Drivers of change

Two main factors drive population change: *natural change* – which is the excess of births over deaths; and *migration* – which is the net flow of population into and out of the borough. Migration flows include people moving between Tower Hamlets and the rest of the UK (internal migration) and people moving between Tower Hamlets and the rest of the world (international migration).

The level of natural change in the borough has remained relatively stable for the past decade, as shown in Figure 4. Between June 2016 and June 2017, there were around 4,600 births and 1,100 deaths in the borough, which led to a population increase of 3,500 people. Natural change accounted for around half of the borough’s annual population increase of 7,000 in 2017-18.

Net migration has fluctuated from year to year (see Figure 3). In the last year, net migration was estimated to be +3,500, accounting for the other half of the annual population growth. This is a stable level over the last couple of years, falling from a peak during 2013 to 2014 when net migration added 7,500 residents to the borough.

**Figure 4: Components of Population Change - Mid 2007 to Mid 2017 - Tower Hamlets,**



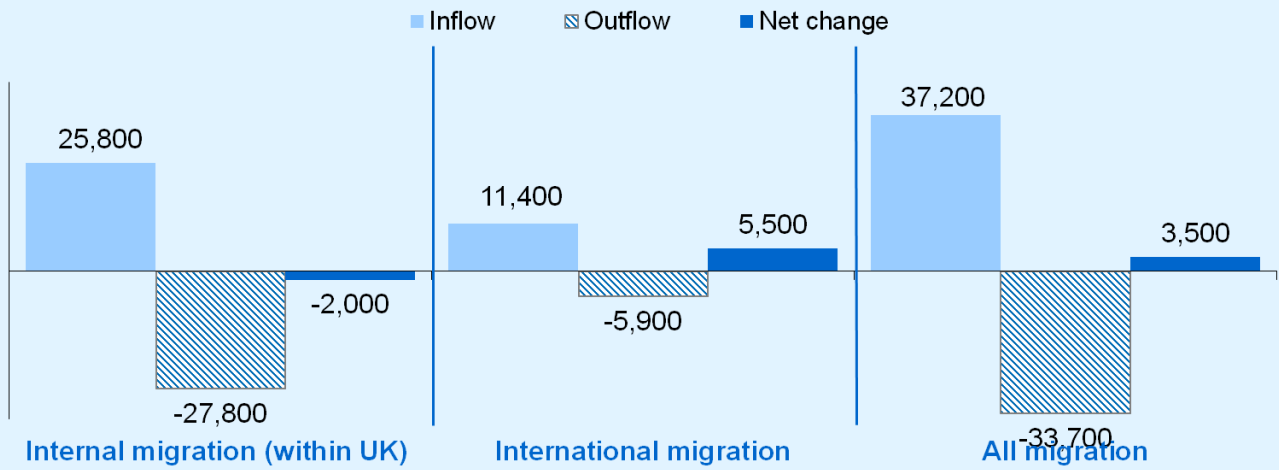
Source: ONS 2017 Mid-year Population Estimates, Table MYEB2 (components of change)

However, while *net* migration over the past year was 3,500 people, this masks total (*gross*) population flows into and out of the borough - which were substantially larger (see Figure 5). It is estimated that around 37,200 people moved into the borough and 33,700 moved out of the borough between June 2016 and June 2017.

Positive net migration is driven entirely by international migration. Figure 5 shows that in 2016-17, 11,400 people moved into Tower Hamlets from abroad and 5,900 emigrated, resulting in net positive international migration of 5,500 residents. On the other hand, more Tower Hamlets residents left the borough for other areas in the UK (-27,800 people) than came into the borough (+25,800 residents), resulting in a net loss (-2,000 people) due to

internal migration over the year. It is important to note that this data covers the year immediately following the EU referendum (23 June 2016). Any impact that Brexit has had on migration flows may not yet be fully reflected in the data.

**Figure 5: Internal and International Migration Flows - 2016-17 - Tower Hamlets**



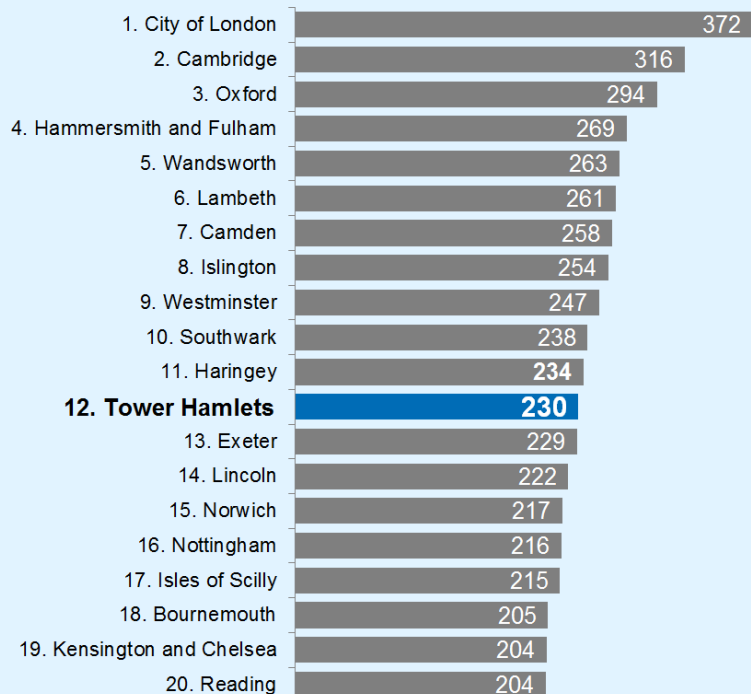
Source: ONS 2017 Mid-Year Population Estimates, Table MYEB2 (components of change)  
 Note: All calculations have been made using unrounded figures and may differ from calculations using rounded figures shown in chart.

### Population turnover

Relative to other areas, Tower Hamlets has high levels of population mobility. This can be captured by the population Turnover Rate, which expresses the total volume of population flows (in and out of an area) relative to the size of its resident population, and is expressed on a standardised per 1,000 population basis.

The population turnover rate for Tower Hamlets between June 2016 and June 2017 was 230 per 1,000 population. The majority of population turnover comes from internal migration flows, which accounts for 72% of all flows.

**Figure 6: Population Turnover Rate (per 1,000 population in 2017) - Top 20 Local Authorities in the UK**



Source: ONS 2017 Mid-Year Population Estimates, Table MYEB3 (components of change)

Population turnover in Tower Hamlets ranks as the 12<sup>th</sup> highest out of 391 local authority areas in the UK (see Figure 6). Other Inner London boroughs and university towns, such as Oxford and Cambridge, also top the list of high population turnover areas.

## Gender and age

The gender split in Tower Hamlets is 52.1% male and 47.9% female. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> highest proportion of male residents in the UK, and is higher than the proportion of males in London (49.8%) and England (49.4%). In numbers, the borough has around 12,900 more male residents than it has female residents.

Consistent with its high levels of population mobility, Tower Hamlets has a relatively young population. In terms of median age, Tower Hamlets has the 4<sup>th</sup> youngest population of all the local authorities in the UK. The median age in the borough was 31.0 years old in mid-2017, compared with 35.1 years in London (4.1 years older), 39.8 years in England (8.8 years older) and 40.1 years in the UK (9.1 years older).

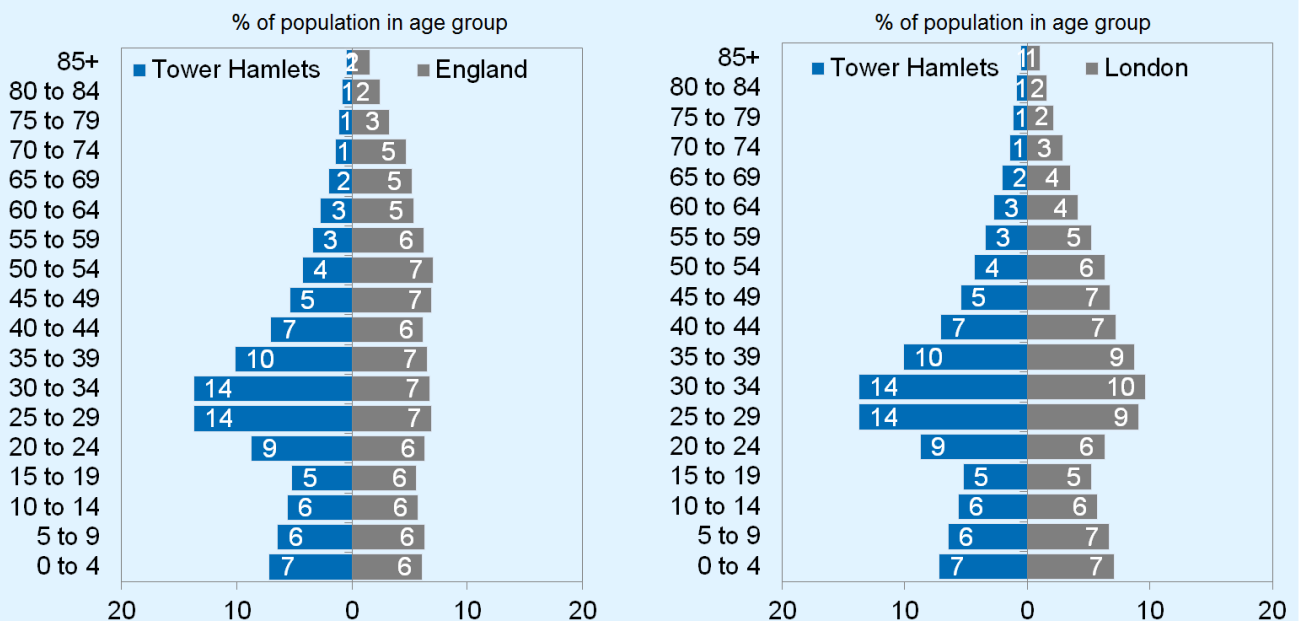
Figure 7 demonstrates the distinct age profile of the Tower Hamlets population in comparison to England and London as a whole. Almost half of all borough residents (46%) are aged 20-39, the highest proportion in the UK, and well above the London average (34%).

Conversely, Tower Hamlets has proportionately fewer older residents compared with other areas: 9% of Tower Hamlets residents are aged 60 or over, compared with 15% in London and 23% in England. Tower Hamlets has the lowest proportion of over 60s out of the 391 local authorities in the UK.

The proportion of children aged under 16 in the borough population is 20% - similar to that in London and in England (20% and 19% respectively).

A more detailed table of the borough’s population by age group can be found in the Appendix.

**Figure 7: Age Profiles of Tower Hamlets, England and London, mid-2017**



Source: ONS 2017 Mid-Year Population Estimates

## Population density

Tower Hamlet's fast population growth has led to rapidly increasing population density in the borough. In 2007, the borough had a population density of around 11,263 people per square kilometre (km<sup>2</sup>) and was the fourth most densely populated local authority in the UK. Ten years later in 2017, our population density increased to 15,564 people per km<sup>2</sup> (an increase of 4,301 persons per km<sup>2</sup>). This ranks Tower Hamlets as the second most densely populated local authority in the country, after Islington (15,818 persons per km<sup>2</sup>).

## ONS population estimate revisions (2012 to 2016)

Along with the mid 2017 population estimate release, ONS announced retrospective revisions to population estimates from 2012 to 2016. Improved distribution of emigration estimates (incorporating a wider range of administrative and survey data) *increased* Tower Hamlets' estimated population modestly (+900 residents) over the three years 2012 to 2014). Further improvements to the 2015 and 2016 estimates incorporated previously unavailable data to better distinguish students, workers and other international in-migrants. This had the effect of *reducing* the borough's population estimates by -1,400 residents (-0.5%) and -4,000 residents (-1.3%) for 2015 and 2016 respectively. While these improvements meant the large majority of Local Authorities had revisions of less than 1%, Tower Hamlets' 2016 revision (of -1.3%) is notable - but in line with other London Boroughs and areas with high student numbers (Cambridge and Oxford) as these changes were driven by improved international in-migrant data.

## Further information

This report was produced by the council's Intelligence & Performance Service. Our research provides timely and in-depth analysis about Tower Hamlets and can be found on the [Borough Statistics pages](#) of the council's website.

You can access the mid-year estimates data on the [ONS website](#).

For more information about this briefing, please email the [Intelligence & Performance Service](#).

**Appendix: Population Estimates for Tower Hamlets by Age Groups, Mid-2007 to Mid-2017**

Age Groups	2007 (residents)	2008 (residents)	2009 (residents)	2010 (residents)	2011 (residents)	2012 (residents)	2013 (residents)	2014 (residents)	2015 (residents)	2016 (residents)	2017 (residents)	2007-2017 (% change)
<b>Borough Population</b>	<b>225,300</b>	<b>231,900</b>	<b>240,500</b>	<b>248,500</b>	<b>256,000</b>	<b>263,600</b>	<b>273,600</b>	<b>284,600</b>	<b>293,800</b>	<b>300,900</b>	<b>308,000</b>	<b>37%</b>
<b>Five Year Age Bands</b>												
0 to 4	17,600	17,700	18,300	19,000	18,800	19,900	21,200	21,800	22,100	22,300	22,200	26%
5 to 9	13,900	14,100	14,700	15,200	15,700	16,400	17,000	17,700	18,500	19,000	19,900	43%
10 to 14	12,500	12,600	12,800	13,100	13,200	13,600	14,200	15,000	15,700	16,500	17,300	38%
15 to 19	15,400	14,800	14,500	14,300	14,200	14,200	14,300	15,000	15,500	15,900	16,100	5%
20 to 24	25,900	27,700	29,000	30,000	30,400	29,300	27,800	27,300	27,100	26,600	26,900	4%
25 to 29	32,400	34,300	36,500	38,600	41,000	42,400	43,900	44,900	44,700	44,100	42,300	31%
30 to 34	27,700	28,800	30,100	31,400	33,700	34,900	37,000	39,100	40,400	41,400	42,300	53%
35 to 39	19,000	19,600	20,600	21,500	22,000	23,300	24,800	26,500	28,300	29,800	31,100	64%
40 to 44	13,600	14,100	14,800	15,300	15,700	16,500	17,300	18,300	19,500	20,400	21,700	60%
45 to 49	10,600	11,000	11,400	11,700	12,000	12,500	13,300	14,200	15,100	16,000	16,700	58%
50 to 54	8,600	8,900	9,200	9,500	9,900	10,200	10,700	11,400	11,900	12,500	13,300	55%
55 to 59	6,700	6,900	7,200	7,500	7,900	8,300	8,800	9,300	9,800	10,200	10,600	58%
60 to 64	5,000	5,200	5,500	5,700	5,900	6,100	6,600	7,100	7,600	8,100	8,500	70%
65 to 69	4,700	4,400	4,300	4,200	4,200	4,500	4,900	5,200	5,600	5,800	6,200	32%
70 to 74	4,200	4,100	4,000	4,100	4,000	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	4,000	4,300	2%
75 to 79	3,500	3,500	3,400	3,300	3,200	3,300	3,400	3,400	3,500	3,500	3,500	0%
80 to 84	2,400	2,300	2,300	2,400	2,400	2,500	2,500	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,600	8%
85 to 89	1,200	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,500	1,600	1,600	33%
90+	500	500	500	500	500	600	700	700	700	700	800	60%
<b>Client Age Groups</b>												
Early years (0 to 4)	17,600	17,700	18,300	19,000	18,800	19,900	21,200	21,800	22,100	22,300	22,200	26%
School age (5 to 18)	37,500	37,500	38,000	38,500	39,300	40,600	42,100	44,100	45,800	47,400	49,400	32%
Young adults (19 to 24)	30,100	31,700	33,000	34,100	34,300	32,800	31,300	30,900	30,900	30,600	30,800	2%
Working age (25 to 64)	123,600	128,800	135,300	141,300	148,000	154,300	162,400	170,800	177,300	182,500	186,500	51%
Pension age (65+)	16,400	16,100	15,800	15,700	15,600	16,000	16,600	17,100	17,700	18,200	19,100	16%

Source: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates, 2007 to 2017 (Revised)

Note: Population counts have been rounded to the nearest 100, so the sum of all age bands may not sum to the total borough population. Percentages have been calculated based on unrounded figures.