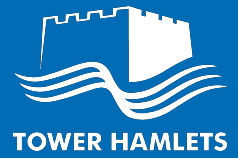


# Mid-2016 population estimates for Tower Hamlets



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The borough's population reached **304,900 in June 2016**. This is the first time the area's population has exceeded 300,000 since before the Second World War.



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



Between June 2015 and June 2016 alone, the borough gained 9,600 additional residents. That is equivalent to **more than one additional resident every hour**.



**International migration** has driven the majority of the borough's population growth in recent years.



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 30.6, and nearly half of our population is aged 20-39.



Tower Hamlets is now the **2nd most densely populated local authority in the country**, next to Islington.

## About this briefing

This briefing provides a summary of the mid-2016 population estimates published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) on 22 June 2017. These estimates provide the *usual resident population* of Tower Hamlets as at 30 June 2016. 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 12 months, regardless of their nationality. Students are considered residents at their term-time address. The usual resident population does *not* take into account 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 with certainty. International migration is particularly difficult to measure, and is a key factor in calculating the borough population. To emphasise that the figures in this briefing are *estimates* rather than precise measures, numbers have been rounded to the nearest 100, in line with ONS convention.

## Borough population

The population of Tower Hamlets was estimated to be 304,900 as at 30 June 2016.

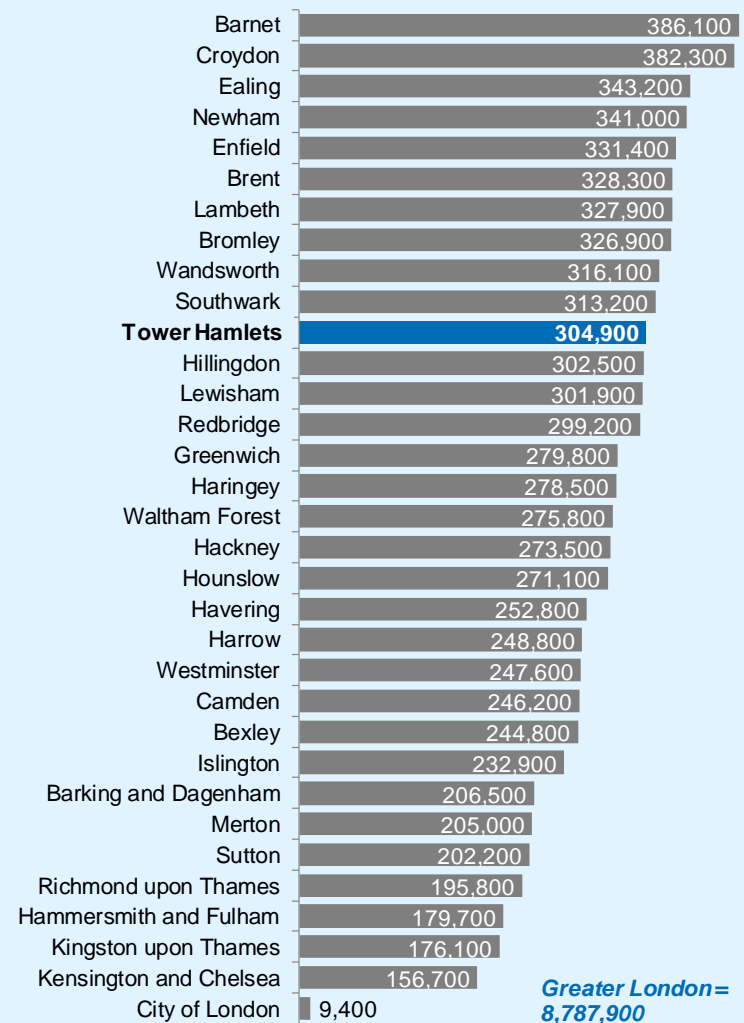
Figure 1 shows that in terms of population size, Tower Hamlets is ranked 11th largest out of the 33 local authority areas in London (32 boroughs and City). The borough previously ranked as the 14<sup>th</sup> largest London borough in mid-2015 – we surpassed Hillingdon, Lewisham, and Redbridge in the past year.

It is also the first time the area’s population has exceeded 300,000 since before the Second World War.

## Population growth

The population of Tower Hamlets has more than doubled in the past 30 years, rising from 150,200 in

Figure 1: Mid-2016 population estimates for London boroughs



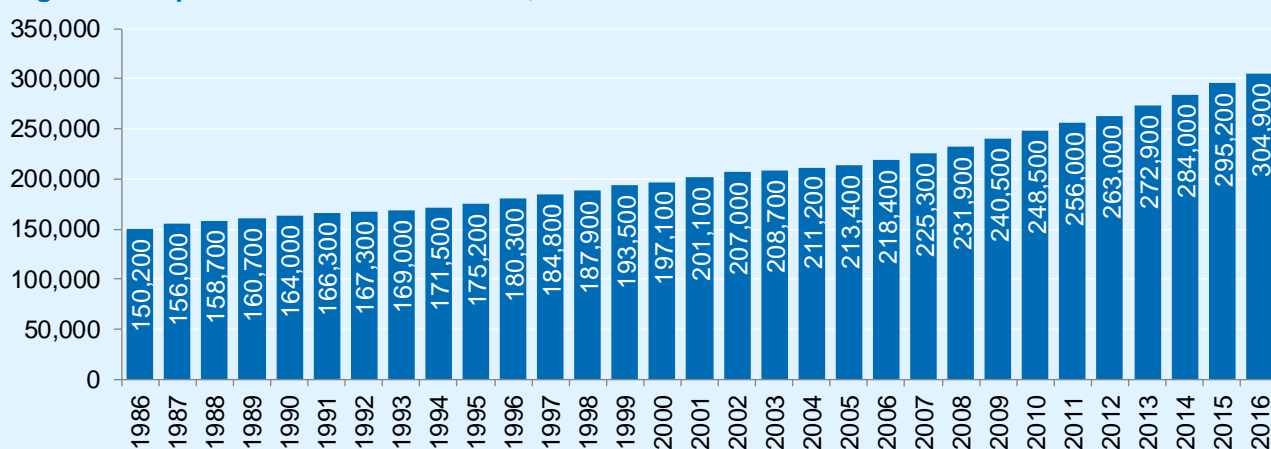
Source: ONS 2016 Mid-year Population Estimates

1986 to 304,900 in 2016 (see Figure 2). Growth has been particularly fast over the last decade. Between mid-2006 and mid-2016, the population grew by 86,500 residents – a 40% increase. This was the fastest population increase out of all 391 local authority areas in the UK, followed by a 32% increase in Newham and 30% in the City of London. The borough’s population growth rate (40%) was also more than double that in London as a whole (16%) and more than four times that in England (8%).

Between June 2015 and June 2016 alone, the borough gained an estimated 9,600 additional residents. That is equivalent to more than one additional resident every hour over the course of the year. It is a 3.3% increase – the second highest in the UK, next to the City of London (+7.3%).

For more detail on the borough’s population growth by age group, please see the Appendix.

**Figure 2: Population of Tower Hamlets, mid-1986 to mid-2016**



Source: ONS 2016 Mid-year Population Estimates

## Drivers of change

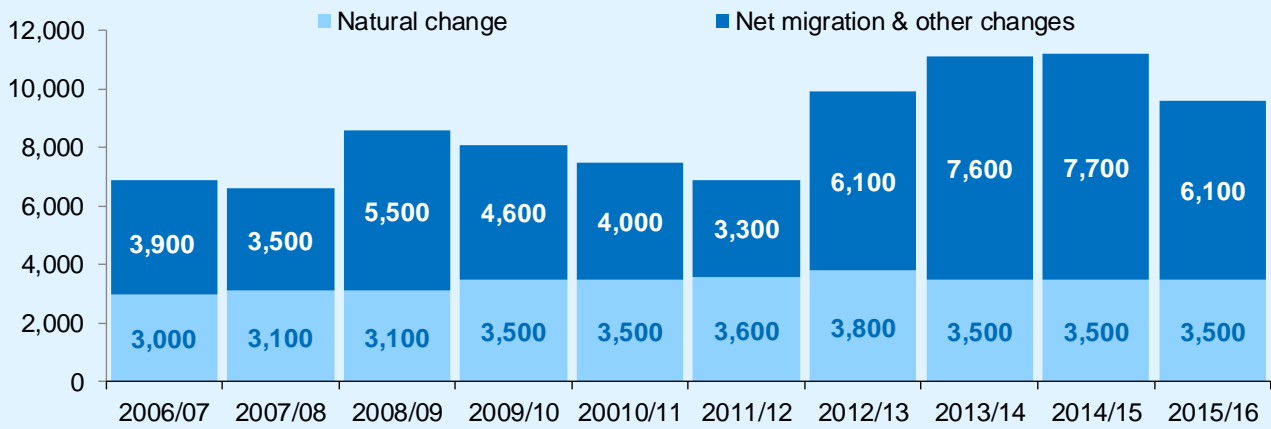
Two main factors drive population change: *natural change* – which is the excess of births over deaths; and *migration* – which is the net flow of population into and out of the borough. Migration flows include people moving between Tower Hamlets and the rest of the UK (internal migration) and people 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 3. Between June 2015 and June 2016, there were around 4,600 births and 1,100 deaths in the borough, which led to a population increase of 3,500 people. This is the same level of natural change that the borough saw in the two preceding years. Natural change accounted for around 36% of the borough’s annual population increase of 9,600 in 2015-16.

Migration has driven the majority of population growth in the borough recently, with more people moving into the borough than the number of people moving out. Migration has fluctuated from year to year (see Figure 3). Between June 2015 and June 2016, net migration was estimated to be 6,100, accounting for 64% of population growth over the

year. This was lower than the two preceding years, when net migration was 7,600-7,700 people.

**Figure 3: Components of population change in Tower Hamlets, mid-2006 to mid-2016**



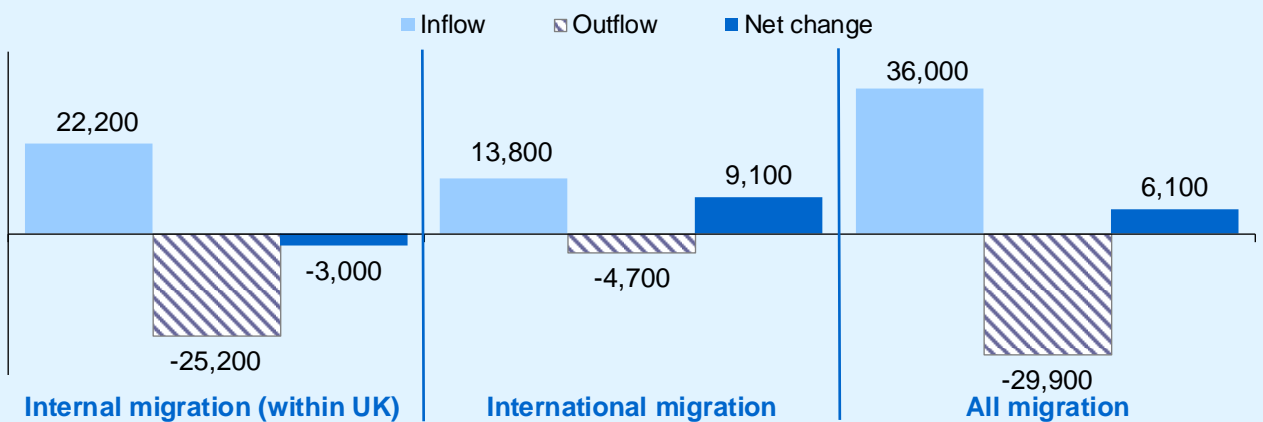
Source: ONS 2016 Mid-year Population Estimates, Table MYEB2 (components of change)

However, while *net* migration over the past year was 6,100 people, population flows into and out of the borough were substantially larger (see Figure 4). It is estimated that around 36,000 people moved into the borough and 29,900 moved out of the borough between June 2015 and June 2016.

Positive net migration is also driven entirely by international migration. Figure 4 shows that in 2015-16, 13,800 people moved into Tower Hamlets from abroad and 4,700 people left the borough to move abroad, resulting in net positive international migration of 9,100 people. On the other hand, more Tower Hamlets residents left the borough for other areas in the UK (-25,200) than came into the borough (+22,200), resulting in negative net internal migration over the year (-3,000).

It is important to note that this data covers the year leading up to the EU referendum. Any subsequent impacts that Brexit has had on migration are not yet reflected in the data.

**Figure 4: International and internal migration flows, Tower Hamlets, 2015-16**



Source: ONS 2016 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.

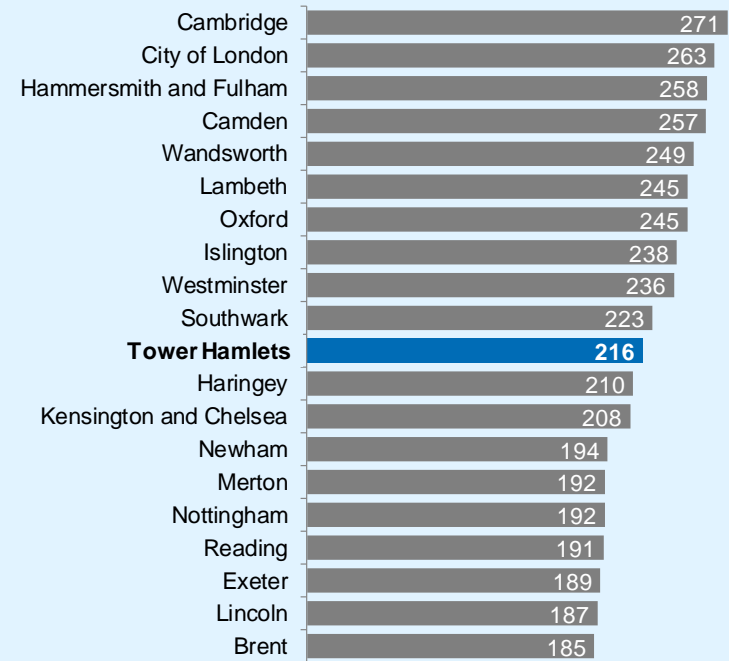
## Population turnover

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

The population turnover rate for Tower Hamlets between June 2015 and June 2016 was 216 per 1,000 population. The majority of population turnover comes from internal migration flows, which account for 72% of all flows.

Population turnover in Tower Hamlets ranks as the 11<sup>th</sup> highest out of 391 local authority areas in the UK (see figure 5). Other inner London boroughs and university towns, such as Oxford and Cambridge, also top the list of high population turnover areas.

Figure 5: Population turnover rate per 1,000 population in 2015-16, top 20 local authorities in the UK



Source: ONS 2016 Mid-year Population Estimates, Table MYEB2 (components of change)

## Gender and age

The gender split in Tower Hamlets is 52.2% male and 47.8% female. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> highest proportion of male residents in the UK, and is higher than the proportion of males relative to London (49.8%) and England (49.4%). It also gives the borough around 13,300 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 30.6 in mid-2016, compared with 34.8 in London, 39.8 in England and 40.0 in the UK.

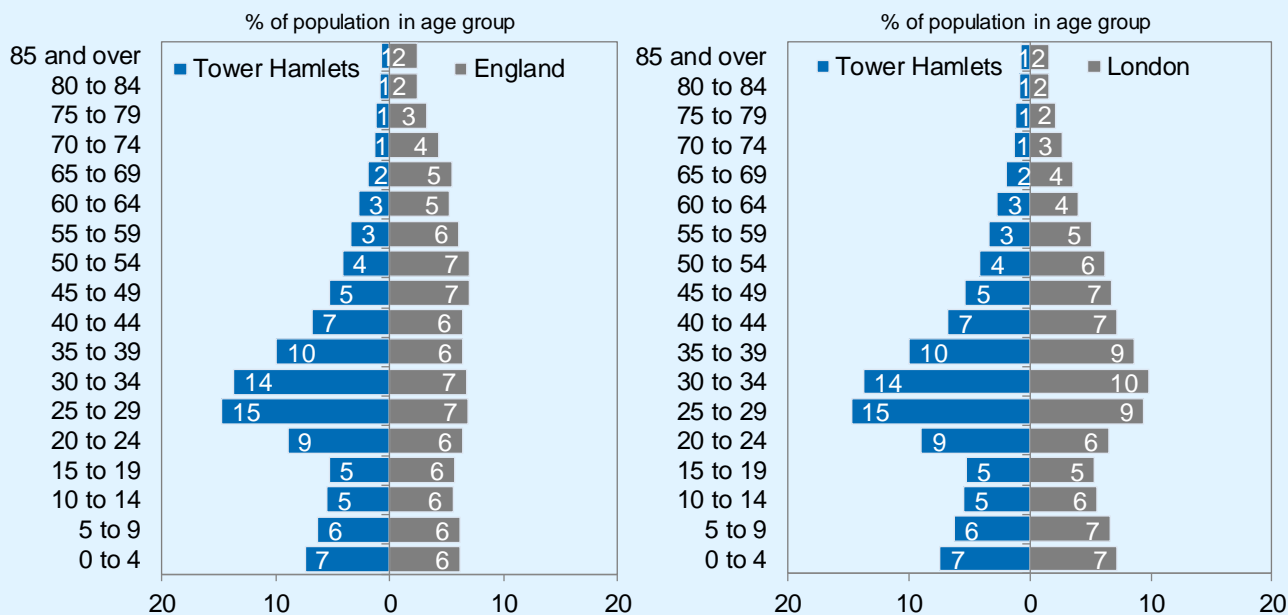
Figure 6 demonstrates the distinct age profile of the Tower Hamlets population in comparison to England and London as a whole. Almost half of all borough residents (47%) are aged 20-39, the highest proportion in the UK, and well above the London average (34%).

Conversely, Tower Hamlets has proportionately fewer older residents compared with other areas: 9% of Tower Hamlets residents are aged 60 or over, compared with 16% 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 6: Age profiles of Tower Hamlets, England and London, mid-2016**



Source: ONS 2016 Mid-year Population Estimates

### Population density

The borough’s fast population growth has led to increasing population density in Tower Hamlets. In 2006, the borough had a population density of around 10,920 people per square kilometre and was the 4<sup>th</sup> most densely populated local authority in the UK. Ten years later in 2016, our population density was around 15,243 people per square kilometre, ranking Tower Hamlets as the 2<sup>nd</sup> most densely populated local authority in the country, next to Islington.

### Further information

This report was produced by the council’s Corporate Research Unit (CRU). 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 contact Lisa Stidle ([lisa.stidle@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:lisa.stidle@towerhamlets.gov.uk)) or the CRU team ([cru@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:cru@towerhamlets.gov.uk)).

Appendix: Population estimates for Tower Hamlets by age group, mid-2006 to mid-2016												
Age group	2006 (residents)	2007 (residents)	2008 (residents)	2009 (residents)	2010 (residents)	2011 (residents)	2012 (residents)	2013 (residents)	2014 (residents)	2015 (residents)	2016 (residents)	2006-16 (% change)
<b>Borough population</b>	<b>218,400</b>	<b>225,300</b>	<b>231,900</b>	<b>240,500</b>	<b>248,500</b>	<b>256,000</b>	<b>263,000</b>	<b>272,900</b>	<b>284,000</b>	<b>295,200</b>	<b>304,900</b>	<b>40%</b>
<b>Five year age bands</b>												
0 to 4	17,400	17,600	17,700	18,300	19,000	18,800	19,900	21,200	21,700	22,300	22,600	30%
5 to 9	13,700	13,900	14,100	14,700	15,200	15,700	16,400	17,000	17,700	18,600	19,100	39%
10 to 14	12,400	12,500	12,600	12,800	13,100	13,200	13,600	14,200	15,000	15,700	16,600	34%
15 to 19	15,700	15,400	14,800	14,500	14,300	14,200	14,100	14,100	14,900	15,600	16,100	3%
20 to 24	23,700	25,900	27,700	29,000	30,000	30,400	29,100	27,600	27,100	27,200	27,300	15%
25 to 29	30,500	32,400	34,300	36,500	38,600	41,000	42,200	43,700	44,600	45,000	44,900	47%
30 to 34	26,800	27,700	28,800	30,100	31,400	33,700	34,900	37,000	39,100	40,600	41,800	56%
35 to 39	18,400	19,000	19,600	20,600	21,500	22,000	23,300	24,800	26,400	28,500	30,300	65%
40 to 44	13,100	13,600	14,100	14,800	15,300	15,700	16,400	17,300	18,300	19,600	20,600	57%
45 to 49	10,400	10,600	11,000	11,400	11,700	12,000	12,500	13,300	14,200	15,200	16,200	56%
50 to 54	8,200	8,600	8,900	9,200	9,500	9,900	10,200	10,800	11,400	11,900	12,600	54%
55 to 59	6,500	6,700	6,900	7,200	7,500	7,900	8,300	8,800	9,300	9,800	10,300	58%
60 to 64	4,800	5,000	5,200	5,500	5,700	5,900	6,100	6,600	7,100	7,700	8,200	71%
65 to 69	4,900	4,700	4,400	4,300	4,200	4,200	4,500	4,900	5,200	5,600	5,900	20%
70 to 74	4,200	4,200	4,100	4,000	4,100	4,000	3,900	3,900	3,900	3,900	4,000	-5%
75 to 79	3,600	3,500	3,500	3,400	3,300	3,200	3,300	3,400	3,400	3,500	3,500	-3%
80 to 84	2,400	2,400	2,300	2,300	2,400	2,400	2,500	2,500	2,600	2,600	2,600	8%
85+	1,700	1,700	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,800	1,900	2,000	2,100	2,200	2,300	35%
<b>Client age groups</b>												
Early years (0 to 4)	17,400	17,600	17,700	18,300	19,000	18,800	19,900	21,200	21,700	22,300	22,600	30%
School age (5 to 18)	37,600	37,500	37,500	38,000	38,500	39,300	40,500	42,000	44,100	45,900	47,700	27%
Young adults (19 to 24)	27,900	30,100	31,700	33,000	34,100	34,300	32,600	31,000	30,600	31,100	31,400	13%
Working age (25 to 64)	118,700	123,600	128,800	135,300	141,300	148,000	154,000	162,100	170,500	178,300	184,900	56%
Pension age (65+)	16,800	16,400	16,100	15,800	15,700	15,600	16,000	16,600	17,100	17,700	18,300	9%

Source: ONS Mid-year population estimates, 2006 to 2016 via NOMIS

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.