YOUNG MAYOR 2015

Candidates’ Manifestos

Please read this carefully before casting your vote

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/YoungMayor
Fourteen people are standing to be your next Young Mayor. They have all gone through a tough training programme designed with the help of the outgoing Young Mayor’s team, in order to help them be able to represent you.

It is now down to you to vote and decide who represents Tower Hamlets young people's voices for the next two years. Your Young Mayor will be there to stand up for you locally, across London and nationally.

Over the past few years we have seen youth services increase in the borough where they've been cut elsewhere. This has allowed us to engage with and listen to more people like you. We continue to offer free activities for young people every school holiday and have some of the best equipment and resources dedicated to our young people. We're always keen to find out what we could be doing better.

Young people are our future, and that's why I'm committed to ensuring that we create opportunities in Tower Hamlets to help you grow and develop.

The Young Mayor’s position provides a serious platform for you to express any concerns or difficulties you face – and helps me and my team shape the services we offer in order to benefit you.

I encourage every young person living in Tower Hamlets to vote in the Young Mayor elections.

This not only allows you to exercise your democratic right to vote; but gives you the opportunity to make a difference and make your vote count. Read your candidates' manifestoes carefully, and decide for yourself which set of ideas most reflects your views.

Lutfur Rahman
Mayor of Tower Hamlets
What is the Young Mayor of Tower Hamlets?

The Young Mayor of Tower Hamlets represents young people across the borough and is elected every two years by young people who live, work or study in Tower Hamlets.

Over the past few years the Young Mayor elections have gained enormous momentum in engaging young people with local democracy and the world of politics in Tower Hamlets.

The Young Mayor works closely with two deputies and attends meetings with local councillors and decision makers. They also represent you at regional and national meetings.

Who can vote?

Anyone aged 11-17 who lives, works or attends a school in Tower Hamlets can vote. Young People not attending a Tower Hamlets school must register to vote by visiting www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/YoungMayor

When can I vote?

Voting takes place in every Tower Hamlets school on Wednesday 28 January 2015.

Early bird voting will begin on Monday 19 January 2015 through to Saturday 24 January 2015.

A full list of centres taking part and their opening times for the early bird voting can be found on the council’s website or at any youth centre.

If you attend a school in the borough and vote at one of the early bird centres, you will not be able to vote at your school on election day.

When does the count take place?

Counting of the votes will take place on Thursday 29 January 2015 and results will be announced that evening. We will publish the results on the council’s website and on the council’s Twitter page.
Who should I vote for?
Carefully read through this manifesto booklet and decide who you want to vote for. This is your chance to take part in local democracy and have a say in who represents you for the next two years.

How do I complete the ballot paper?
Once you have collected your ballot paper you will see a list of candidates standing in the elections.

Vote **ONCE (X)** in the square for your **FIRST CHOICE** candidate

Vote **ONCE (X)** in the circle for your **SECOND CHOICE** candidate

You cannot vote for the same candidate twice.

You do not have to vote for a second choice candidate but you must choose a first choice candidate in order for your ballot paper to be counted.

How do I become the next Young Mayor?
Anyone aged 14-17 who lives, works or studies in Tower Hamlets can be nominated to stand in the Young Mayor elections. The call for nominations opens around September every two years.

Who can I contact to find out more?
If you have any questions or concerns you can email Young.Mayor@towerhamlets.gov.uk or call 020 7364 3019.
Have you ever felt as if you have an opinion, something to say, something you want to change but as if though your opinion doesn't matter? I pledge to make a difference and have your opinion heard.

If you elect me as your young mayor I will work hard to make sure all young people have access to work experience and careers advice.

I will be a young mayor who is approachable and supportive.

For example, I will offer my support in order to start your own project or give advice you may need.

I will make sure your voice is heard. I promise to do my absolute hardest to achieve my pledges and bring you the best results.

I also understand what it is like for young people to be stereotyped as ‘reckless youths’ and want to change that view, abolish that stereotype and show that we are not the main cause of gang crime but we are the leaders of the futures.

So, in January make sure you vote for me because a vote for me is not just a vote for me but a vote for the voice amongst the young.

I have spent my entire life living in Tower Hamlets so I understand what it is like for young people to live in one of the most deprived boroughs in London.
As young people do you want more? By living in Tower Hamlets, I know what needs to be improved. I will listen to what you have to say, I will stand up for you and I will do whatever it takes to make changes. So as young people if you want more vote for me.

I have strong debating skills and will fight for what I believe in. My goals are realistic and achievable which means the changes will take place sooner.

By voting for me I hope to make Tower Hamlets more active. I will enhance a student life by allowing them to focus on other aspects of their lives, not just school.

By organising more activities, clubs and competitions I will allow young people to do things they are passionate about and learn new talents.

I would also like to see a healthier Tower Hamlets. Mental wellbeing of young people is crucial as well as their physical wellbeing. That’s why I want to see more accessible gym facilities and better provisions for young people to attend counselling to help with difficulties such as stress and depression.

Finally Tower Hamlets should be proud of its multi-cultural community. That’s why I want to celebrate our unity with showcase events across the borough with food, performances and entertainment from all around the world.
I am a dedicated and reliable individual seeking change and hoping to create a legacy of future leaders through this role. I want to be your next Young Mayor.

I want to create more opportunities for young people to have a taste of the work world. I aim to work with local businesses to provide placements so that they can develop key skills and prepare for future challenges.

The number of jobless people fell by 146,000 to 2.02 million in September 2014. The Office for National Statistics also report that the number of people claiming Jobseeker’s Allowance fell by 33,600 to 1.01 million.

If you elected me as your Young Mayor I will work hard to make these numbers fall by providing the key skills for job interviews through placements and opportunities.

I want to get the youth involved with the community by holding local events. I aim to do this by creating and promoting local projects, with fun activities, in order to break the barriers between youth and adults. This will build a bridge of understanding.

Finally, I plan to hold a career fair and create opportunities to engage young people in positive activities and deter them from activities relating to violence and drugs.

We are powerful people with powerful solutions.

We are an asset – a crucial pool of talent and passion – it's about time it gets recognised.
I may seem like any other person you would find passing by on the street, but I can assure you I am the change and hope that you’ve been looking for.

I will help put the unity in our community. I believe that due to the lack of community cohesion a number of issues become apparent such as an increase in peer pressure or drug abuse.

If I am elected to represent you, as your next Young Mayor, I will organise events to tackle these issues. I will also organise fundraising activities and international residential dedicated to young people.

Do you feel like you’re being forced to make significant life changing choices about your future?

How can we make such impacting decisions when we still need to raise our hands in school for permission to go to the toilet?

Which is why if you vote for me as Young Mayor I will ensure that all Key Stage 4 students have access to a career advisor.

This is your future and I am your hope - don’t waste your vote.

As Young Mayor I pledge to create a website exclusive to the young people of Tower Hamlets. Here you’ll find employment opportunities and work experience placements.

I believe that we should be able to explore our options, so why shouldn’t we?

This is your vote, I am your hope. I have everything that you need, so don’t even think, just believe and vote for me.

Monsur Ali

CANDIDATES’ MANIFESTOS
Firstly, I would like to say thank you to those who voted for me in the last Young Mayor elections. To the people who didn’t voted for me, I am here again, dedicated to be your next Young Mayor.

Let’s get something straight, I’m no Robocop to stop crime instantly. I do however have a concept which will help tackle the issue. I will work with young people to get more voluntary and work experience as it’s just not about the grades you get but the experience you have too. This will allow more young people the chance to find work quicker.

I will work closely with Barclays LifeSkills in order to get young people into a range of sectors and gain new skills, for example skills in presenting or communicating. These skills will enable a young person to feel more confident and feel ready to present themselves in front of people.

I would work hard to get young people into a range of different opportunities, for example encouraging young people to join the Youth Council or Youth Opportunity Fund panel.

Finally, I would like to leave you with a quote I feel represents the views I stand for which is “if you don’t support each other, who is there to support us?”
Hey guys! I’m here to mix it up, I’m fed up of not experiencing changes being made in Tower Hamlets and it’s about time we actually make things happen. I am here to be your ideas, your voice, your Young Mayor.

Free gym: Everyone is aware of gang violence and postcode wars, it’s highly spoken upon but have you ever seen any change? Everyone is aware of health issues but has anything been done about it that affects you? Well you know what; I will prioritise and ensure that every young person in Tower Hamlets gets a free gym membership from ages 14-16! Tackling health issues and getting young people off streets.

Opportunities: I want every young person in Tower Hamlets to enhance their future prospects by having opportunities which will support and guide them towards their aspiration. It is due to this I want to provide summer internships and other opportunities for students to gain quality experience for their professional life.

I want to strive for better community cohesion. Every young person in this borough is equal and that’s important for unity.

They say actions speak louder than words; it’s simple to write 250+ words on change and leave it there but I ask you to give me a chance to take my words and put them into action. You have the power to make change. Believe me.

You know who to vote for if you want real change that will actually affect YOU.
I am a strong, responsible character who has young people’s best interest at heart. I have many skills that I would bring to the role to be a successful young mayor and role model to all youth in Tower Hamlets.

There is a lack of career guidance in Tower Hamlets and education support is one of the biggest issues surrounding youth; therefore if elected as your next young mayor, my aim is to change this.

I aim to provide students with career advice and guidance in order to support their career path and for them to get the right qualifications for college and university.

This will help young people decide on what GCSE’s they need to study to apply for certain college courses and what further education courses they need to study to apply for certain university courses.

If elected to represent you I hope to help students with personal, health and social matters relating to their career choices.

I pledge to help young people decide on a career path earlier on in their life, so they can create aims and goals for themselves. I also want to encourage more young people to go to university.

By voting for me I will help you achieve getting closer to the career you are truly passionate about. A vote for me will help you decide what career you’re passionate about.

In order to climb to the top you need preparation and support. Preparation and support is exactly what I will offer. Live for the present and build for the future.
Lies, lies and even more lies, well that isn't me and I’ll prove it to you if you vote for me.

Passionate, driven, friendly is all words that describe me, but what makes me stand out from the crowd is that I'm realistic.

Whatever I say, whatever I promise I'll make sure I deliver to you - the young people of Tower Hamlets.

If I am elected as your next Young Mayor I will offer more career guidance to young people. This will help you decide what GCSEs to choose, what college to attend and even what university is the best option for you.

I also pledge to provide more educational support targeting Key Stage 3 and 4 students the borough.

I will also recognise the hardworking young people of Tower Hamlets and reward them for achievements. As the saying goes "If you want to go fast, then go alone. If you want to go far, then go together" and by voting me as your next young mayor of Tower Hamlets we will go far.

You, the young people of Tower Hamlets, deserve the change. You, the young people of Tower Hamlets, deserve the voice. Finally, you, the young people of Tower Hamlets deserve to have your opinion heard.
Change is what I aim to do. I want to bring change to the lives of youths, change to their education and changes that let the voice of youth echo in the borough of Tower Hamlets.

I want to tackle the idea that we have running out of ideas to keep young people engaged. I will increase community and youth engagement by actively organising events with local youth centres and libraries.

I will work to engage young people with a range of activities including sports, music, drama and games.

Even though our GCSE results are above the national average I believe we can continue to improve these by introducing a peer mentoring scheme.

Ex-students will mentor Key Stage 4 students in order to achieve better grades. This will benefit the student and the mentor who will gain transferable experience.

If I am elected as your next Young Mayor I will develop a scheme which allows youths to interact with local organisations. Young people will be able to build relationships with business professionals through which they will be able to gain work experience.

The scheme will allow the young people to gain an insight into the world of work and give them the opportunities to explore their potential future careers.

Vote for me to make your voice the voice of the young people in Tower Hamlets.
I have lived in Tower Hamlets long enough to notice that young people could benefit from more opportunities to help shape their future.

I have spoken to many of you who have said the same thing to me and how you want to be given more opportunities. I am here to make this possible for you. If you vote for me I will make sure these changes are put in to place.

Those that are reading this, mine and your future is in your hands. If you want a change vote for me!

Together we can make a change in our borough. I hope to make big impact, this includes improving community cohesion, increase youth employment and reducing gang violence.

I promise the young people of Tower Hamlets that if I become the next Young Mayor I will make a number of changes. I have the passion and the drive to make sure the young people of Tower Hamlets are heard.

Vote for me as I am the voice for the unheard. Vote for me to really see changes in our borough. Vote for me as it’s the right thing to do.

To see change, we have to make the right decision and that is to vote for me.

Sometimes it’s the smallest decisions that can change your life forever.
I am passionate about doing everything in my power to help people to help themselves.

Equality is very important to me, particularly when talking about people with disabilities. I want to tackle this as I have seen first-hand the discomfort people go through when interacting with disabled people.

People feel uncomfortable about those who are disabled and I believe this is because people are not educated enough.

I want to break down the barriers of inequality for people with disabilities so disabled young people grow up to feel like they belong to our community and are treated as equal.

I would also like to tackle the pressure on young people to achieve high grades at school. It is very intense. Based on my own experience and what others have told me I believe there is not enough support from schools to help young people cope with this pressure. For this reason I would like to increase the access young people have to counselling.

Often the work experience provided does not fit with the careers young people want to pursue.

This is one of the issues I would like to tackle on behalf of young people in Tower Hamlets – access to exciting and relevant work experience that leads to long term employment.

I can help if I am given this opportunity, as Young Mayor I will be dedicated to tackle important issues that YOU feel need changing.

Shafia Mannan

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I want to amend the impression people have of the youth in Tower Hamlets. I’ve never been the type to sit by and not express what I feel - neither should any of you.

Being unheard is a form of oppression. Being heard is a right. I am here to solely represent the youth and their wants and needs. I’m here as an ordinary girl and a resident of Tower Hamlets to support the youth. I’m here for you.

I hope to eliminate prejudice thoughts about the youth by tackling the causes of these opinions. For example, we will be running workshops, giving presentations in schools and other innovative methods to support young people.

I want to turn Tower Hamlets into a closer community. I hope to make the borough brighter, connected and lively which will reflect in all our lives.

We need our environment to stimulate us on a day to day basis and this will not just improve the lives of our youth but the borough as whole.

Finally I will provide young people with opportunities to prove themselves and make life more worthwhile.

Education is something we all seem to take for granted. We don’t know how lucky we are and how to utilise this luck in order to gain an upper hand in life. Everyone should endeavour for the best and nothing less.

I want to be of assistance to all of you so we, the youth get the best education wise and in every other aspect of life. All of this will only happen if I’m elected as your young mayor.
I’ve been in Youth Council for over a year and I’ve been involved in the Youth Opportunity Fund – a scheme designed to award grants of up to £3,500 to youth groups.

I am also part of the Legacy Youth Panel who are supporting the regeneration of parks in the area.

In my time as a Youth Councillor I have been able to hear about the key issues effecting young people in Tower Hamlets. These included concerns about passing exams, securing employment after leaving school or being able to walk home safely at night.

Our schools also offer so much and at times we may need a way to relieve some stress. I’ve been part of a stress release programme which enhances performance and makes you feel great.

There are many jobs and opportunities in Tower Hamlets for young people. As a young person all you need is one easy place to find this information. I pledge to create an online job centre for us youths – this will enable us to find the opportunities, experience and money we need to progress.

Every year we get more and more police officers but I would like to get the views of young people heard. I therefore think it’s very important that we create a youth safety board to allow young people to speak directly to our officers.

I stand to represent you on three main issues, stress and education, jobs and opportunities and your safety in Tower Hamlets.
You’ll never be younger than you are at this very moment, and that is power, not weakness. No one on earth can do what you do, in precisely the way that you do it.

I believe the education system is flawed; it has a very narrow perception on what is deemed ‘worthy’ of study. I find the rote routine of revision, exams, revision, and then more exams monotonous - it’s one of the worst ways possible to learn.

We are making progress, albeit slowly, to improve and broaden the possible routes a student can take without the stigma of not pursuing a typically academic route.

For this very reason, I aim to expand young people’s opportunities in non-traditional non-academic fields through a series of projects. This would include long-term immersive support rather than standard impersonal careers fairs.

I think the voices of young people are an incredibly powerful tool and we are often underestimated in what we can achieve.

Bridging the gap between the Young Mayor and the youth is a priority, and for that very reason, I hope to encourage more young people to participate in local politics by raising awareness about the opportunities that are available.

We need to work together to reach our potential.

I pledge to work extremely hard, not just for myself, but also for the youth of Tower Hamlets, because this is what they deserve.

I believe in the power of young people and I believe in us.