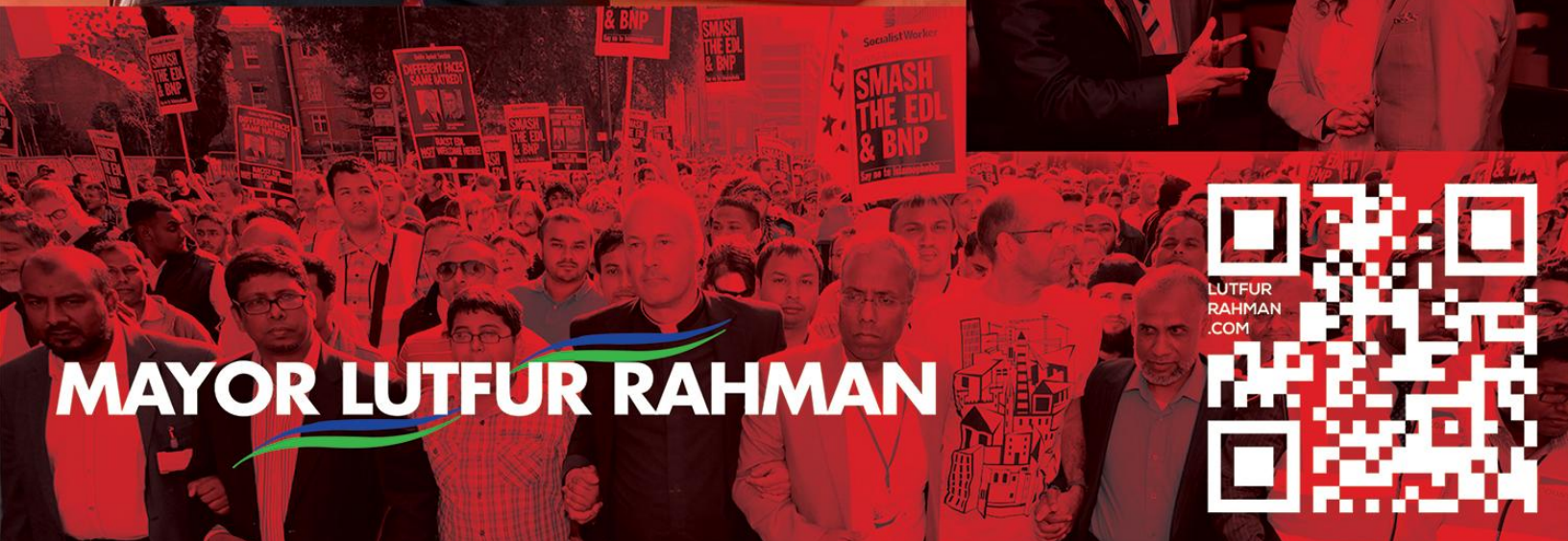


Manifesto 2014



Tower Hamlets First



MAYOR LUTFUR RAHMAN



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Housing and Regeneration

I pledge to:

Build 5,500 new affordable homes to meet the needs of all our residents

Under my leadership, Tower Hamlets has already delivered 4000 affordable homes, the most in the UK. I will work with house-builders and social landlords to more than double that number in the next four years.

Deliver the Whitechapel Vision leading to 3500 new homes including many family-sized and affordable homes as well as 5,000 jobs and 7 new public

With the arrival of Crossrail, Whitechapel has the chance to become one of London's commercial hubs. I'm going to ensure the project is delivered so that the needs of local residents come first.

Relocate the town hall to the Old Royal London Hospital building in Whitechapel, saving £6m a year and acting as a catalyst for growth for the area.

Tower Hamlets is one of very few councils that doesn't own its town hall. We've spent over £50m since Labour signed the lease in 1994. Instead I want to see the historic Royal London Hospital building preserved and a new town hall owned by you to be an asset for future generations.

Halve the number of residents with severe mobility needs on the housing waiting list

Residents with severe mobility needs should not be held back on the housing waiting list because of a lack of suitable accommodation. That's why I'm setting up a unique project to work with house-builders to increase the number of accessible homes.

Deliver a fair deal for leaseholders including a new Leaseholder Dispute Resolution Panel

Our last budget included an average 5 per cent reduction in leaseholder service charges and we are undertaking an external audit to ensure leaseholder service charges are fair and transparent. We will also set up a Leaseholder Dispute Resolution Panel to create an independent process to address specific disputes over bills and charges.

Support the London Living Rent campaign, create a landlord registration scheme and improve private sector housing

40 per cent of our residents live in private sector properties and the Government has failed to act to protect tenants from high rents, poor conditions and unsafe tenancies. I will encourage landlords to register with the council and push for landlords to sign up to the London Living Rent campaign

Hold a referendum on the future of Tower Hamlets Homes

The Council's Arm's Length Management Organisation, Tower Hamlets Homes, was created to deliver the £168m Decent Homes programme which will be fully delivered by 2015. Now is the time to let local residents decide the future of housing management in Tower Hamlets.

Keep all our council housing up to the Decent Homes Standard

The £168m Decent Homes programme will bring every council home in the borough up to the Decent Homes standard by 2015. However, some homes will fall into disrepair and dip below this standard. I pledge to keep up investment to ensure that all council homes remain at the Decent Homes standard.

Hold registered social landlords to account by supporting the Tenant's Federation's "Cards on the Table" campaign

Since the transfer of housing stock to Registered Social Landlords in 2008, some RSLs have failed to deliver for residents. I will work with the Tenant's Federation and RSLs to make sure residents are not let down by housing providers.

Cost of Living

I pledge to:

Fight all welfare changes that increase poverty

Changes to welfare like the "bedroom tax" and benefit cap are increasing poverty, homelessness and overcrowding in Tower Hamlets. I will work with the whole community to fight the government's attack on the most vulnerable and do everything I can to help with individual cases.

Support residents affected by welfare reforms

My administration has already created a £2.2m Preventing Homelessness Fund to help those affected by the housing benefit cap and replaced the Council Tax Benefit cut by the government, helping 25,000 residents on low incomes. I promise I keep supporting residents in the face of government cuts, providing dedicated welfare advice and employment support to those worst affected.

Continue to help residents reduce their energy bills with the Tower Hamlets Energy Co-Op

The Tower Hamlets Energy Co-Op is already saving residents who've signed up an average of over £100 on their energy bills. I will keep promoting the Co-Op to help even more local people cut their bills.

Create 1,000 more parking spaces over the next four years

I want to help residents and businesses with more flexible parking. My administration has already introduced the Car Free Zones Parking Scheme to

support overcrowded families to move into car free zones

Review all estate and off-street parking to ensure it is used efficiently and to create more spaces

Research shows that our estate and off-street parking isn't making the best use of the space available. I pledge to review every parking space in Tower Hamlets to make we improve existing parking and create new spaces wherever possible.

Use the powers granted under the Government's parking review to reduce yellow lines, create grace periods and more loading bays and short stay parking

Reduce the use of CCTV for issuing parking tickets

I know that the use of CCTV to issue parking tickets is unpopular and leads to a lot of mistakes. That's why I want to scale back tickets issued by cameras.

Schools and Young People

I pledge to:

Provide Free School Meals for all primary school children in the borough

Last year, my administration introduced free school meals for all reception and year 1 pupils. The scheme has since been adopted by the government, freeing up cash for us to extend free school meals to all Primary age pupils for the next two years. The scheme will start in September.

Keep pushing our GCSE and A-Level results above the national average

Since 2010 our GCSE and A-Level results have improved year on year and are now above the national average. Now I want to focus on making sure that those groups, such as white working class boys, who haven't done as well as others are not left behind.

Increase aspiration and educational achievement through the Mayor's Education Award for College students and the Mayor's University Grant for University students

We have helped more than 5,000 college students with the Mayor's Education Award of £400 a year and 400 university students with university grants of £1,500. Unlike other Mayoral candidates, I'm committed to keeping up funding for these projects to make sure access to funds is no barrier to education.

Oppose the transition of the borough's schools into academies

Our schools have been named as the best inner city schools in the world. That's because we've worked in close partnership with pupils, parents and teachers over the last 15 years and I don't want to change the system that's delivered that

transformation.

Expand our schools and increase the number of school places in local authority schools

Over the last few years we've delivered the £380m Building Schools for the Future programme and will have increased the number of school places in Tower Hamlets by 2,940 by September 2014. However, pressure on school places across London is growing. That's why my administration has laid the foundation for an extra 8,000 primary school places and 6,000 secondary school places by 2023.

Oppose re-privatisation of the youth service and keep up investment in youth clubs

In 2012, my administration de-privatised the youth service and gave it a £10m cash injection. Unlike other candidates, I'm promising to keep our youth service in public hands. I also want to put a career development advisor in every youth centre and bring in a Gangs Prevention Coordinator to keep our young people away from gang culture.

Community Safety

I pledge to:

Create a mobile police centre to residents can report crimes and raise concerns face-to-face with police officers

Due to cuts from the Conservative Mayor of London, 3 of the borough's police stations are under threat. This mobile station will ensure residents still have face-to-face contact with police despite the cuts.

Create safer streets by maintaining our partnership police force, improving lighting and increasing CCTV

Since 2010, my administration has funded 55 extra police officers at a cost of £2.2m. I pledge to keep up funding for these officers as well as investing in new CCTV and ensuring all new developments have the best possible lighting and security features.

Tackle anti-social behaviour by increasing the number of THEOs and creating joint task forces with the police to target hotspots

We've invested £2m in 40 new THEOs and four Anti-Social Behaviour Boards so that local people can be actively involved in tackling ASB on their streets and estates.

Take more drug dealers off our streets and push the police to tackle organised crime

Our "Dealer-a-day" strategy has exceeded its targets with over 1,230 drug dealers arrested last year and £187,384 of drugs seized. I want to step that up,

as well as improving partnership with the police to tackle organised crime like drugs and prostitution rackets.

Tackle violence against women by increasing investment in victim support and encouraging reporting

My administration has invested over £2m in delivering our new Violence against Women and Girls Strategy and supporting victims of domestic abuse. I promise to keep the focus on improving prevention, education, reporting and victim support so that women and girls do not live in fear.

Keep up our zero tolerance of hate crime policy

Tower Hamlets is no place for hate. I will continue to ensure that this message is spread widely and that any victims of hate crime are supported by increasing the number of places hate crimes can be reported and assisting our Ward Forums and Community Champions to push the One Tower Hamlets agenda and tackle all forms of discrimination.

Older People

I pledge to:

Continue to provide free Homecare

Tower Hamlets is the only UK Council to provide free Home Care for our elderly residents at a cost of £17m a year. I promise I will keep this vital service free at the point of use.

Tackle loneliness and reduce isolation amongst older residents with lunch clubs and tea dances

Lunch clubs provide a vital service for our older residents, not just providing a hot meal but also a place to socialise and access support services. This year over 500 residents enjoyed our Tea Dance. I pledge to increase funding to lunch clubs and hold 4 tea dances each year.

Create better support services by integrating council social care with the NHS

With so many government reforms to social services and the NHS, residents can miss out on the support they deserve. Bringing health and social care services together means residents will get better care from the council and the NHS.

Create better care at home to help residents stay out of hospital

We know that people want to stay in their homes as long as possible. To help residents get the care they need on their own terms, I'll increase investment in reablement and our groundbreaking telecare service.

Environment and Public Realm

I pledge to:

Make our borough greener

We've already planted 900 trees and I pledge to plant an extra 2,000 as well as increasing the number of estate allotments and planting projects.

Tackle air pollution by cutting CO2 emissions from council vehicles and making the whole borough a "no idling zone"

Up recycling rates

Our recycling rates have improved year on year and are now up to 28 per cent. I pledge to keep working with residents and our waste management contractor to increase our recycling rates even further.

Protect and invest in parks including £3m for Bartlett Park

My administration has invested £12m in renovating Victoria Park, £1m on Altab Ali Park and fought to protect King Edward Memorial Park. I promise to ensure a better park is built on the KEMP site once works are finished and to invest £3m in refurbishing Bartlett Park

Increase the number and quality of play spaces for children

I will ensure that playground improvements feature in all our major park investments and I will start a "play streets" project in Tower Hamlets to help residents close of residential streets for play sessions.

20mph zone to Improve road safety

I want to make our residential streets 20mph zones to reduce accidents and injuries. This has been tried in other boroughs and found to be very effective at reducing accidents without increasing congestion.

Cycling investment

My administration has already invested £200,000 in cycling improvements including new cycle routes and bike racks and £186,000 to fill all potholes in the borough. I will continue to offer free cycle training to all adults and children in the borough and work with cycling groups to make sure Tower Hamlets is the most cycle friendly borough in London.

Arts, Heritage, Leisure and Culture

Deliver new libraries

While other boroughs have been closing libraries, we have opened a new £4.5m Idea Store in Watney Market and I pledge to create a new Ideas Store for Bethnal Green.

Deliver new youth and leisure facilities

My administration has begun the £36m renovation of Poplar Baths and Dame Collet House Youth Centre, I promise to deliver these projects on time and on budget.

Safeguard our heritage

My administration has invested £255,000 in renovating Bancroft Library; we have provided £100,000 for the Bethnal Green Tube Disaster Memorial and safeguarded all the borough's war memorials as well as creating 7 new People's Plaques to celebrate local heroes. I promise to keep protecting historic buildings across Tower Hamlets.

Develop a new arts centre accessible to the whole community

As part of the new civic centre/town hall in Whitechapel I will deliver a new arts and cultural centre that meets the needs of the whole community.

Health

I pledge to:

Protect residents through changes to the NHS

Through the borough's Health and Wellbeing Board I will fight to ensure that patients views are central to our decision-making and have access to the best possible services both from the NHS and the Council.

Build more GP surgeries

I will help to reduce GP waiting lists by using planning gains money from developments to provide more health facilities. I will also support GPs to open longer on evenings and weekends.

Step up the fight against diabetes and heart disease

Diabetes and heart disease are two of the borough's biggest killers. I will roll out a network of Diabetes and heart disease screening sessions across Tower Hamlets.

Improve mental health support

In 2012 I signed the Time to Change Pledge to reduce stigma around mental

health. I pledge to build on this by rolling out a mental health programme for children at schools and to work closely with families and teachers to improve the mental health, academic attainment and life chances of our young people.

Jobs and the Local Economy

I pledge to:

Create a new Integrated Employment Centre

There are lots of different organisations and agencies, including the Council and Job Centre Plus working to help local people into employment. I want all these to be brought together so local residents have a one-stop solution to finding work.

Create 20,000 new sustainable jobs

With the huge opportunities for growth in Tower Hamlets, I want to make sure local people find long-term employment to increase their life chances.

Create 8,000 new apprenticeships at the London Living Wage

Under my leadership Tower Hamlets was the first council to bring in the London Living Wage. I want to put an end to “internship” culture by making sure that all training is economically viable for our young people.

Train 14,000 residents

Training and education are the best ways to empower local people to break the cycle of poverty. I will push for residents of all ages to have access to best-quality training available.

Set up WiFi zones and help more residents get online

Last year our Fairness Commission said WiFi zones were a great way to boost the local economy and I agree, that’s why we’ll be working with big IT providers to set up free and low-cost WiFi in locations across Tower Hamlets.

Provide additional support for women to get into employment

Our women into work scheme will train up to 100 women to provide social and health care, helping create jobs and addressing a need in our community for more carers.

Double the number of apprenticeships at the council for disabled residents from 10 to 20 each year

I believe disability should be no barrier to achievement. That’s why I’m doubling the number of apprenticeships for disabled people at the council.

Make big business work for local residents with the “Tower Hamlets Works” business charter and section 106 agreements

Canary Wharf is home to some of the world’s largest companies and we need to make sure they are working for the whole community. The charter will formalise the work we already do to encourage big business to deliver local jobs, apprenticeships and work experience as well as to use local firms in their supply chains.

Ensure that 50 per cent of all council contracts are with local businesses

Since 2012, my administration has ensured that the £445m the Council spends on outside contracts provides community benefits including jobs, training and supplier opportunities. I want to extend this to all contracts over £25,000 and aim to ensure that by 2018 50 per cent of all our contracts are with local businesses.

Develop low-cost work spaces as part of the Whitechapel Vision and create new business start-up and development grants

Entrepreneurship is part of the culture of the East End. I want to make sure start-ups are not priced out of the market by securing low-cost business spaces and giving grants and development support to our next generation of innovators.

Bring in a legal code for leasing business premises

I will protect small business from rent hikes and unfair practices by using the Sustainable Communities Act to create a legal code for leasing business premises

Develop a “Healthy High Streets” policy

To ensure our planning, licensing and landlord powers are used to encourage business and discourage betting shops, pay-day loan companies and unhealthy fast food outlets.

Invest in the infrastructure of our markets and reduce the number of empty pitches

I pledge to give our markets a new lease of life by helping more local people to set up market stalls and by investing in infrastructure to give stallholders and residents the best possible experience.

One Tower Hamlets

I pledge to:

Establish an “Every Voice Matters” strategy

To ensure that the concerns of residents from all backgrounds including our LGBT community, disabled residents and all the borough’s different faiths and ethnicities are heard.

Refresh all our strategies around diversity and cohesion

Because Tower Hamlets is changing so fast I promise to keep looking at our strategies to ensure that the council is more effective than ever at tackling prejudice and discrimination.

Celebrate our diversity with a community event every month

I'm proud of our diversity and I want to increase understanding across cultures with a free community event once a month to celebrate the holidays, festivals and historic commemorations of all our communities.

Create a World Food Day event

To celebrate the many different cultures that thrive in the borough as well as encouraging the local catering industry.

Create a Mayor's Award to commemorate living local heroes.

The people's plaques introduced by my administration celebrate historic figures, but I want to see living local heroes celebrated for their ongoing contribution to the community.

Deliver a multi-faith burial ground

To cut down the cost for grieving relatives burying loved ones.