

Tower Hamlets - radical actions then and now...



THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY

# NOTES ON THIS RESOURCE'S INTENTION AND USE

This resource is designed to raise awareness of

**THE BOROUGH'S RADICAL HERITAGE.**

It celebrates the people who have worked hard to make

**THE BOROUGH A SAFER, MORE WELCOMING  
AND EQUAL PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY.**

It pays respect to

**THE PEOPLE WHO CONTINUE TO  
LEAD OUR COMMUNITIES TOWARD  
A MORE EQUAL FUTURE.**

It reaches out to

**FUTURE ACTIVISTS AND LEADERS  
& CURRENT THINKERS & DREAMERS.**

It aims to inspire. It shares the radical actions  
of previous generations so that we can

**BUILD A BRAVE NEW FUTURE  
OF EQUALITY & RESPECT.**

A future that will be led by the young people of today.

It is dedicated to

**THE MEMORY OF ALTAB ALI**

whose murder in 1978 mobilised the Bengali community  
and changed the face of race relations in the borough.

Cover photograph  
by Rehan Jamil

The resource is divided into

## FOUR SECTIONS,

each followed by one or more

## LEARNING MISSIONS.

You may choose to engage with one or more of them.

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# INTRODUCTION

TOWER HAMLETS  
IS A  
VIBRANT  
MULTICULTURAL  
BOROUGH  
IN THE EAST END  
OF LONDON.

✘ Since 1986, the population has

**MORE THAN DOUBLED**

– making Tower Hamlets the fastest growing local authority in the UK.

\* It is one of the fastest growing populations in England with

**15 NEW RESIDENTS PER DAY.**

✘ Tower Hamlets remains the

**SECOND MOST DENSELY POPULATED**

local authority in the UK.

\* It has the

**YOUNGEST POPULATION**

in the UK.

Almost half of the residents **(47%)** are aged 20 to 39. This doesn't take into consideration young people aged 19 or under.

+

Tower Hamlets is ranked as the

**16<sup>TH</sup> MOST  
ETHNICALLY  
DIVERSE**

local authority in England.

This means that the mix of different ethnic group populations is amongst the highest in the country.

\* Tower Hamlets is home to the

## LARGEST BANGLADESHI POPULATION

in the country, making up **32%**  
of the population of the borough.

+ **43%** of the people currently living in Tower Hamlets  
were born outside the UK.

Residents born in Bangladesh are the

## SINGLE BIGGEST MIGRANT GROUP,

but the largest population growth in recent years was among

## EUROPEAN UNION NATIONALS.

x **137 DIFFERENT LANGUAGES**

are spoken in schools.

\* **38% OF RESIDENTS ARE MUSLIM**

– the highest proportion in the UK.

+ Tower Hamlets has the **SECOND HIGHEST RATE**

## OF RELIGIOUS HATE CRIMES

in London.

Today “Tower Hamlets is seen as emblematic of British multiculturalism”

Mayor, John Biggs describes it as

“A vibrant place built on a history of inclusion and a diversity of communities.”

## A CALL TO ACTION

Tower Hamlets (TH) is one of the most vibrantly diverse boroughs in the country. Nearly half of our residents come from minority ethnic communities with the **largest youth population in Europe**, and **largest Muslim population in England**. We are the only London borough to have had **3 terrorist incidents**, have the **second highest levels of hate crime in London** and one of the most deprived areas in the country. With this comes many challenges.

- ✘ How do we ensure that our borough can stand strong and together in a **POST-BREXIT BRITAIN?**
- \* How do we protect our hard-fought **HUMAN AND SOCIAL RIGHTS** for workers, women, minorities and poorer sections of our society?

✘ How do we ensure that  
**MINORITIES**  
**HAVE A VOICE?**

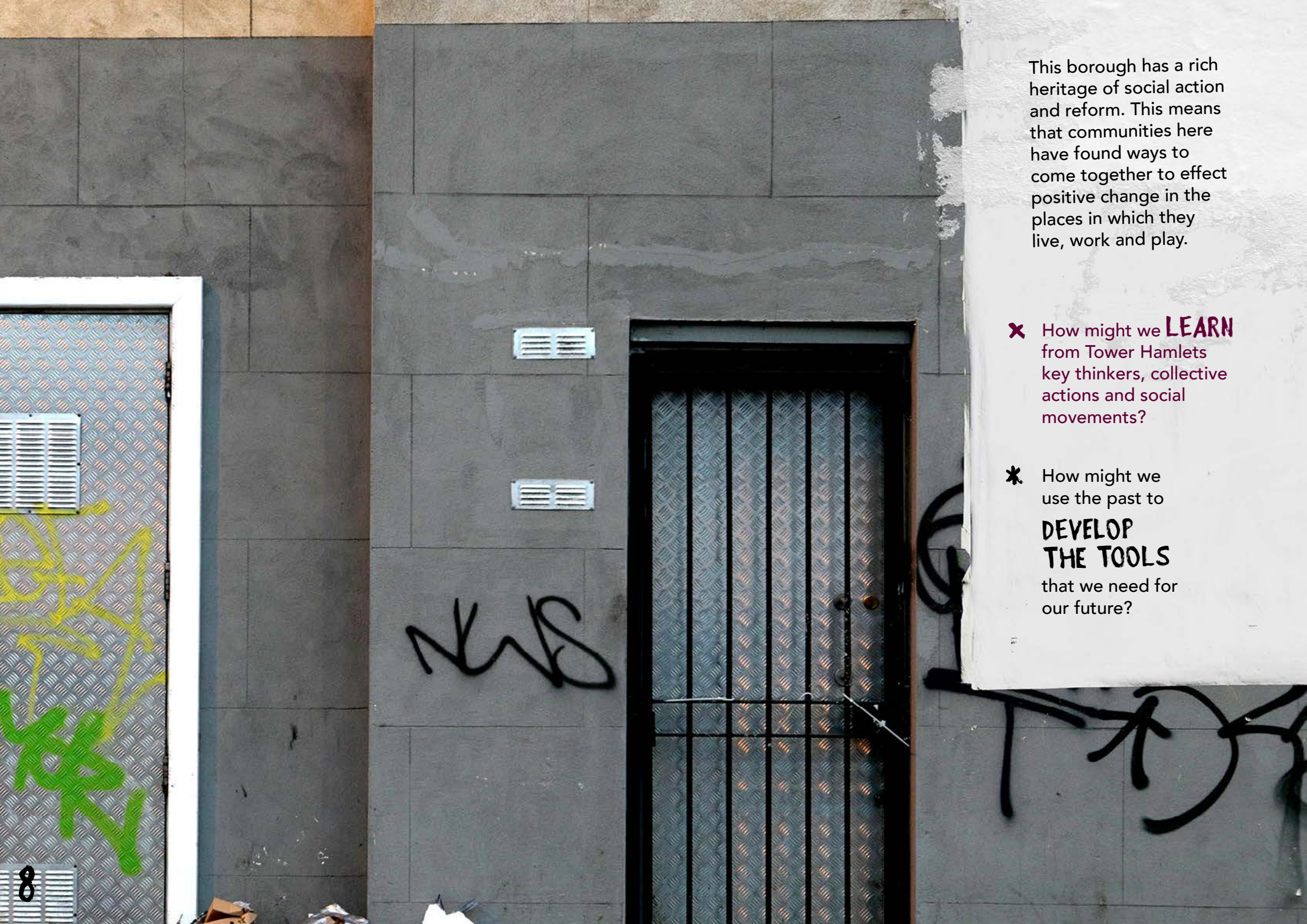
✘ In particular, how are  
**YOUNG PEOPLE**, who  
have a minority voice  
despite making up a major  
percentage of the borough,  
being heard?

\* How can we make our  
borough the  
**BEST POSSIBLE**  
**PLACE TO LIVE?**

It is a challenge which all will have  
to rise to.

“I want all  
Londoners to be in  
no doubt: London Is  
Open and no matter  
where you’re from,  
You will always  
belong here.”

Sadiq Khan,  
Mayor of London



This borough has a rich heritage of social action and reform. This means that communities here have found ways to come together to effect positive change in the places in which they live, work and play.

✘ How might we **LEARN** from Tower Hamlets key thinkers, collective actions and social movements?

\* How might we use the past to **DEVELOP THE TOOLS** that we need for our future?



“What counts in life is not the mere fact that we lived. It is the difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”

Nelson Mandela

“The hopes of the world rest on young people. Peace, social justice, tolerance – all this and more, today and tomorrow, depends on tapping into the power of youth.”

António Guterres,  
United Nations Secretary General

✕ How might we  
**MAKE A DIFFERENCE**  
for future generations living here?

\* How might you, as the leaders of tomorrow, learn from the past to make  
**THE FUTURE MORE EQUAL THAN TODAY?**

# KEY TERMS

## DEMOCRACY

A word from the Greek language, demokratia meaning rule by the people.

A kind of government. A democracy is a system where people are able to decide how their country or community should be run.

**EXAMPLE:** In the UK, the first ever [National Democracy Week](#) happened Monday 2 July 2018, marking the 90th anniversary of the 1928 Act of Law which gave women the same voting rights as men. Regardless of who we are or where we are from, we must work together to ensure that every member of society has an equal chance to participate in our democracy and to have their say.

## EQUALITY

Means that people have the same rights and opportunities regardless of what they look like or where they come from.

**EXAMPLE:** Even today, many groups of people in the world are fighting for equality and equal rights. In the UK we know that there is still a great need to make things more equal. [Girls Get Equal](#) is a campaign designed to fight for gender equality - that means that, regardless of how you identify on the gender spectrum, you should have the same rights and opportunities.

'Girls everywhere are undervalued, undermined and underestimated. But we're calling time on inequality. Until you can see and hear us equally in positions of power. In governments and parliaments. As CEOs and leaders. In our classrooms and our homes. Until we can live, love and lead without fear or discrimination, we will not be stopped. This is a movement for us all. This is how #GirlsGetEqual.'

## ACTIVIST

An activist is a person who campaigns for some kind of social change.

**EXAMPLE:** When you participate in a march protesting the closing of a neighbourhood library, you're an activist. Many of the driving forces of change in our communities today are young activists. These young people are standing up and banding together to better the world.

Greta Thunberg is a 16-year-old activist from Sweden, who launched the [school strike](#) for climate change movement and who supported huge protests by the group [Extinction Rebellion](#) in April 2019. You can hear her speak about the need for her actions [here](#).

## CIVIL RIGHTS

The rights you get as citizens of a particular nation.

Keeping people free from unequal treatment based on protected characteristics like race, gender and disability.

If an individual is discriminated against on the basis of a protected characteristic then their civil rights are not being upheld by virtue of citizenship in a particular nation or state.

In simplest terms, the difference between a human and civil right is why you have them. Human rights arise simply by being a human being. Civil rights, on the other hand, are the legal granting or protection of these rights.

**EXAMPLE:** Children need special rights because they need extra protection that adults don't. The United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child is an international document that sets out all of the rights that children have – a child is defined in the Convention as any person under the age of 18.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are universal, protecting everyone, both young and old.

Children and young people have many of the same rights as adults, for example the right to express their views, the right to be free from torture and inhuman and degrading treatment and the right to a private and family life.

## PROTEST

1: a complaint or objection against an idea, an act, or a way of doing things.

2: an event in which people gather to show disapproval of something.

**EXAMPLE:** In 2011, students travelled to London from as far away as Sunderland and Cornwall to protest against the scrapping of the Education Maintenance Allowance – a weekly payment for 16- to 18-year-olds from households with low incomes to encourage them to stay in education.

## MOBILISATION

The act of gathering together getting ready for action.

**EXAMPLE:** In February 2019, more than 10,000 young people mobilised to call for 'radical action' against climate change. In 60 towns and cities across the UK, young people got together to voice their frustration at the older generation's inaction on the environmental impact of climate change.

*Anna Taylor, 17* said the turnout had been overwhelming. "It goes some way to proving that young people aren't apathetic, we're passionate, articulate and we're ready to continue demonstrating the need for urgent and radical climate action."

*Matt Sourby, 18* said "This is our future and this is making a difference. The government has to listen. I feel incredibly powerful just being here."

## CIVIC PARTICIPATION

Describes the degree to which people involve themselves in their community in order to improve it.

There are many ways for young people to get involved in local, borough-wide or national decision-making processes. Ranging from volunteering with local community groups to being part of youth forums, councils or parliaments to raise awareness of the issues that concern them and helping to build healthy, safe and positive communities for us all to live in.

### EXAMPLES:

- The UK Youth Parliament provides opportunities for 11-18 year olds to use their elected voice to bring about social change through meaningful representation and campaigning. It has over 364 representatives (369 seats for elected Members of Youth Parliament, all aged 11-18).

All young people who live, work or study in Tower Hamlets can apply to be a part of the Youth Council, Young Mayor Programme and No Place for Hate Campaign. The Youth Council is a rolling programme which offers opportunities to take part in debates and forums about the community and young people. They also plan and deliver their own programmes raising awareness of issues that concern young people. The Young Mayors scheme invites the young people of Tower Hamlets to take part in and run for Young Mayor. Young people receive training and support to prepare their campaigns and learn how the local democratic process works.

Hopefully, this resource will inspire you towards civic participation

**BY STANDING UP FOR YOUR  
PERSONAL RIGHTS AND THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS,  
and to HELP CREATE A MORE EQUAL PLACE  
to live, work and play in the future.**

# POTTED HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF TOWER HAMLETS

We can learn a lot about the people who lived in our areas before us by looking at the buildings. Buildings that have historical importance can give us clues about the stories and experiences of people who are no longer here to share them in person and are not always obvious... there are probably examples all around you. Here is a map with four examples of buildings which tell us part of the story of how Tower Hamlets became such a rich multicultural area.

**DENNIS SEVERS HOUSE,  
18 FOLGATE STREET**

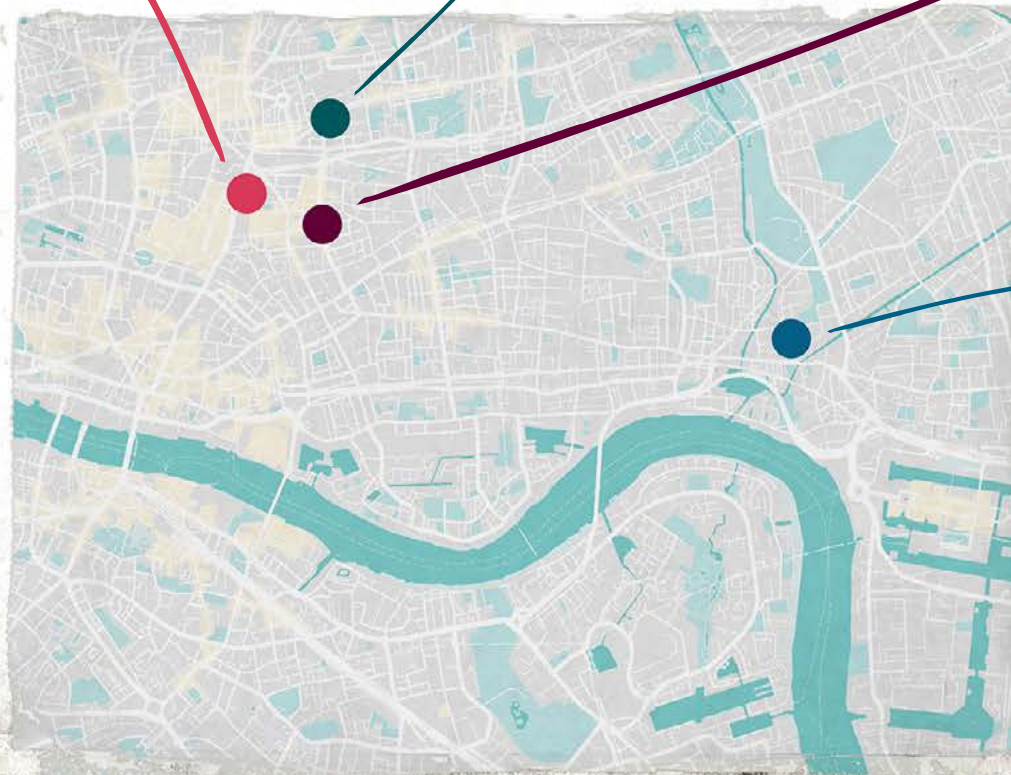
Protestant Huguenot refugees arrive in 1685

**BEIGEL BAKE,  
151 BRICK LANE**

Yiddish speaking Russian Jews arrive from 1880

**SHAHEED BHAVAN  
(MARTYRS HOUSE),  
39 FOURNIER STREET**

Bengali economic migrants arrive 1950s and 60s



**THE MISSION,  
747 COMMERCIAL ROAD**

The first substantial population of South Asians (in Britain) from 1614



# 1614

East India Company Dock was built in Blackwall in 1614. The first substantial population of South Asians in Britain were the lascars – sailors and ship engine room crews, many of whom came from the province of Sylhet at the northeast of modern day Bangladesh.

Bangladeshi migration included families emigrating to join their working husbands and fathers and new marriages and fuelled much of Tower Hamlets' population growth over the second half of the 20th century.

Opened in 1924. After the First World War, London was struggling to cope with thousands of homeless sailors: every night 16,000 seamen from all over the world would be let loose in the city looking for lodging and it seems that only three quarters of them would have any luck.

An appeal was started throughout the Empire, largely organised by women, to raise the necessary money to build this hostel, which would also stand as a memorial to the 12,000 merchant sailors who were killed in service during the First World War.

When opened in 1924 the hostel provided 205 clean and airy single cabins (as they were called) and by 1929 had provided beds for over a million sailors. With the decline of the London dockyards in the 60s and 70s, demand slowed down and eventually it became a hostel for the homeless which closed in 1985. In 1994, the building was sold off to a developer who converted it into 50 flats and renamed it [The Mission](#).

**THE MISSION,  
747 COMMERCIAL ROAD**



Photograph by Rehan Jamil

# 1685

A large community of Protestant Huguenot refugees arrived in Tower Hamlets, fleeing French persecution after the Edict of Nantes was revoked. This meant that the French King at the time, Louis XIV did away with the Reformed Churches of France, and forced Protestants to go underground or into exile in 1685.



**DENNIS SEVERS HOUSE,  
18 FOLGATE STREET**

Photograph by Rehan Jamil

The building is preserved and open to the public giving them an intimate portrait of the lives of Huguenot silk-weavers from 1724 to the dawn of the 20th Century. As you follow their fortunes through the generations, the sights, smells and sounds of the house take you into their lives. It was Dennis Severs' intention that as you enter his house it is as if you have passed through the surface of a painting, exploring with your senses and imagination a meticulously crafted 18th century world.

# 1880

Thousands of Yiddish speaking Russian Jews arrived from the 1880s. The Jewish population of the East End grew to over 100,000 by the turn of the 20th Century and the area was referred to as 'Little Jerusalem' by many.



BEIGEL BAKE, 159 BRICK LANE

Photograph by Rehan Jamil

Long before artisan coffee shops, vintage boutiques and curry houses populated Brick Lane, the area was home to a large Jewish community who arrived in Spitalfields in the late 19th century. Gradually, the community dispersed to north London but the beigel shops remain. Beigel Bake (the white one) and the Beigel Shop (the yellow one) are two of the last reminders of a time when the street signs were written in Yiddish. Over the years these bakeries have become a popular 24-hour source of doughy satisfaction.



# 1954



•  
•  
• **SHAHEED BHAVAN**  
**(MARTYRS HOUSE),**  
**39 FOURNIER STREET**

Photograph by Rehan Jamil

The name means 'Martyrs' House and it houses the largest Bengali community organisation in the UK today: [The Bangladesh Welfare Association](#).

It was originally built for the minister of the church in 1750 and was the base of Huguenot charitable work with the local poor. Jewish charities were based here at the end of the 19th century.

The Pakistan Welfare Association, formed in 1954, bought the building in the early 1960s and then, in 1971, when [Bangladesh broke away from Pakistan](#), its name was changed to the Bangladesh Welfare Association alongside local community leaders pledging their support for an independent Bangladesh.

By 1940, the community of Bengali residents in London had grown to around 300.

Then, in around 1956, the existing

community of seamen were joined by another 2-3000 adventurers.

Nawab Ali, who owned a coffee shop at 11 Settles Street, near the Labour Exchange, said 'they just used to show up with my name in a taxi – at one point, my wife went crazy – there were 35 of them living upstairs!' Later, Nawab Ali also had the Commonwealth Club, in Umberston Street, and a butcher's shop in Hessel Street, now run by his son. The first local halal butcher's opened as long ago as 1940: a sign that a Muslim community was settling into the area. The proprietor was Taslim Ali, who later became Imam of the East London Mosque. The family now runs the undertakers' service at Whitechapel's East London Mosque.

More information [here](#).

# MISSION ONE

Design a tour of your neighbourhood for someone who doesn't live there. Use the physical landscape (buildings, signs, shops) to tell the stories of the different people that have lived there before you.

ON THE JOURNEY BETWEEN  
YOUR HOME AND YOUR SCHOOL  
WHAT CAN YOU FIND OUT  
ABOUT THE HERITAGE OF  
YOUR AREA?

HOW MANY DIFFERENT  
CULTURES, LANGUAGES,  
FAITHS DO YOU SEE  
REPRESENTED IN THE  
BUILDINGS THAT YOU WALK  
PAST ON A DAILY BASIS?

Tower Hamlets - radical actions then and now...



# THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY

## SECTION TWO

### EQUALITY ACTIVISTS 19

Who are the people who have fought for your civil liberties?

Who has worked to make this borough a safer and more equal place?

What can we learn from their ideas and actions?

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# EQUALITY ACTIVISTS

#MOBILISATION  
#ACTIVISM #RIGHTS  
#COMMUNITY ORGANISING

\* WHO ARE THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE  
STOOD UP OR FOUGHT FOR YOUR  
CIVIL LIBERTIES?

+ WHO HAS WORKED TO MAKE  
THIS BOROUGH A SAFER AND  
MORE EQUAL PLACE?

x WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THEIR  
IDEAS AND ACTIONS?

“Never be afraid to raise your voice for honesty and truth and compassion against injustice and lying and greed. If people all over the world... would do this, it would change the earth.”

William Faulkner

## EQUALITY ACTIVISTS WORK TOWARDS A MORE EQUAL SOCIETY.

This means that they believe in

### EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL.

Their activism is designed to challenge and remove injustices, prejudices and discrimination, working towards a place where everyone's civil liberties and human rights are realised.


They believe that everybody, regardless of their age, race, class, sex, gender, sexuality or ability should be able to participate equally in the civil and political life of the country in which they live.

Tower Hamlets has a rich history of activism, inspired by the borough's multi-cultural identity.

There are many activists who have worked hard and tirelessly to influence the state of equality in the borough. Some of these activists are sadly no longer with us but we can still learn from their words and their actions. Amongst many, we acknowledge the strength, imagination, passion and impact of [Max Levitas](#), [Ken Leech](#), [Eva Armsby](#), [The Bishop of Stepney](#) and [Mala Sen](#).

There are also many activists who are still living and working in the borough today.

## FIVE OF THEM AGREED TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH YOU...



DOING  
NOTHING  
IS NOT AN  
OPTION

LET  
PEOPLE  
KNOW THE  
FACTS

QUESTION  
THOSE THAT  
ARE IN A  
POSITION OF  
POWER!

# DAN JONES

Dan Jones has lived and worked in Tower Hamlets for a long time. He moved into Tower Hamlets in 1967 and worked for Tower Hamlets Council from 1970 to 1987, as a youth and community worker in Shadwell and the Brick Lane area. He was involved in the trade union movement locally and was the secretary of the Trade Union Council. He struggled for the rights of ordinary Bengali people in and around Brick Lane. He has written, edited and illustrated a number of books and pamphlets and worked for Amnesty International UK as a campaigner and education officer for many years.

Original image by Rehan Jamil

# IN DAN'S WORDS...

✕ What action for equality have you been involved with in the past & most recently?

My siblings and I have been surrounded by activists and artists from a very early age; this has made me question everything that didn't seem right or fair!

From my attendance at the first Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament meeting on 17 February 1958, I went on to set up and work with CARD (Campaign Against Racial Discrimination) which was created in 1959 to recruit activists and campaign against racism and for race equality in Britain. From 1959 I was involved in the Boycott Movement – later Anti-Apartheid and was arrested in 1960 outside South Africa House protesting the Sharpeville Massacre.

That was the beginning of what has become a lifelong mission, supporting race relations organisations and initiatives that work to fight against racism in all of its forms.

Some of the other groups that I have been part of are:

- The Council of Citizens of Tower Hamlets - 1958
- East London Anti-Nazi League - 1977
- Altab Ali Memorial Foundation - 1978
- Tower Hamlets Committee Against Racial Attacks - 1978
- Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee - 1979
- Tower Hamlets Action for Racial Justice - 1980

I have also been involved in protest and direct actions to raise awareness of major incidents of racially motivated violence. This has involved organising meetings, planning actions, making leaflets and posters.

In the 70s there was a great need for these campaigns e.g, the racism fuelled violent murder of Michael Ferreira in Hackney 1978, the killing of Blair Peach in Southall 1979 and the Battle of Lewisham 1977.

I have been involved in the Battle of Cable Street memorial events since 1976 and organised the Battle of Cable Street mural to be painted by Dave Binnington, Paul Butler, Ray Walker and Desmond Rochfort 1979 – 1983.



Dan Jones poster for Tower Hamlets Association for Racial Justice (1983), courtesy of Dan Jones' personal collection.



Dan Jones on Protest March from St Mary's Park to Downing Street © Tom Learmonth.

This photo shows Dan helping to marshal the demonstration that was lining up to march behind Altab Ali's hearse to Downing Street and Hyde Park in what was then St Mary's (or "Itchy") Park. Hundreds of protesters had been handed circular placards on sticks from the Anti-Nazi League with slogans like "Black and White, Unite and Fight", "Stop Racist Attacks", "NF - no fun". At the end of the mass meeting the heavens opened up with a tremendous deluge as you can see from the umbrellas. All the ANL placards immediately dissolved or were washed away leaving 500 + angry protesters brandishing sticks. I managed to collect hundreds of 'offensive weapons' with a pleading "lathi donobad", which translates as 'sticks - thank you'. We left all those sticks behind in the park in a big heap as we set off on the march and nobody was arrested.

- + How have the tools/strategies that you use to effect social change evolved since you first became woke & active\*?

I have no idea whether any of the many anti-racist campaigns that I have been involved in over the years have actually affected any social change. How could you ever prove or measure it? But I do hope it has been true, that they have made a difference.

One of the most important things that we have tried to do over the years is to provide **well-informed evidence**, spelled out simply. This means working with spoken and printed words and images to **let people know the facts** about bad things taking place in their community. **To tell the public what is wrong and why it's wrong, who is responsible and what should be done about it.**

- ✕ What do you think now about the state of equality in Tower Hamlets, London, the UK?

Having lived and worked here in the East End for over 50 years, I am aware that there are still **major differences of opportunity here** (although they are much less than they were). There is a huge difference in the treatment dealt out to, and experienced by citizens of different ethnic backgrounds, languages, faiths, cultures and genders here in Tower Hamlets.

These discriminatory processes occur in a number of fields including **opportunities in employment, housing, education, wages and being disproportionately on the receiving end of hate crime** for instance. I believe similar patterns are also experienced across London and probably the UK as well.

\*aware of issues concerning social & racial justice and working towards equality.



- \* What qualities and values do you think make someone an effective activist or advocate for equality?

An effective activist is one that has empathy for others, a strong belief in social justice and fights for equal rights for everyone, particularly those that are marginalised or oppressed across the world or locally in your community. Sometimes you may have to be challenging and confronting; most of the time, you will need to be equipped with the right words to question those that are in a position of power! This means looking at human history and saying this will not happen again on my watch.

- \* What message (call to action) would you like to share with young people, as the next generation of equality activists and change makers?

You are part of a generation where you dwell in multiple realities. This brings in new challenges and spaces to fight for equal rights.

If you see something that is not right or fair, call it out! Doing nothing is not an option. There are so many causes and problems in the world, choose something that you are passionate about concerning social and racial justice and work towards creating equality.

You may be walking a path that is lonely, a path that your peers may or may not agree with. Be patient, be brave and most importantly be caring.



Banner for Altab Ali Day using iconic No More Blood On The Streets image, designed by Dan Jones as the cover for his detailed report on racist violence in the East End of London for Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council in the Autumn of 1978, courtesy of Dan Jones' personal collection.



REACH  
ACROSS  
CULTURES

MAKE SURE  
THAT OUR  
STORIES  
AREN'T  
FORGOTTEN

# JULIE BEGUM

Nurjahan Julie Begum was born and brought up in Tower Hamlets. Since 1986 she has been working as a part-time youth worker and has been volunteering in the community since she was a teenager. After [Derek Beackon](#) of the [British National Party](#) was elected as councillor in Millwall by just eight votes in 1993, Julie collectively set up an activist movement called [Women Unite Against Racism](#). She is a founding member and Chairperson of the [Swadhinata Trust](#) - a London based secular Bengali community group that works to promote Bengali history and heritage amongst young people. She is also the author of [Bengali Language Movement](#), *The World In the East End* and the play, [The Altab Ali Story](#).

Original image by Rehan Jamil

# IN JULIE'S WORDS...

✕ What action for equality have you been involved with in the past & most recently?

In the early 1990s, the British National Party was active in Tower Hamlets and they successfully put up and got a BNP councillor elected in Millwall ward in the Isle of Dogs. I and a bunch of female friends were outraged like the rest of the community and felt we needed to do something a) for the existing anti-racist anti-fascist organisations to **take notice of the contribution of girls and women to the campaign/movement** and b) to **provide safe space** for girls and young women to get involved and contribute in ways that supported their contributions.

I was teaching/working at Tower Hamlets College at the time and we had an idea to invite girls and women to a conference there in Poplar to see if there was any interest from other girls and women. Over a 150 girls and women attended and we felt we had a mandate to take it further. So **we started meetings that were user friendly, provided crèche/ childcare and at times and places where girls and women could meet**, attending political rallies, demonstrations, providing speakers at these events and campaigning to get people (especially

women) registered to vote and providing escorts to polling stations at the next election, etc. **We concentrated on action in the lesser known and less media hyped areas of Tower Hamlets** to make sure they were included in the debates.

I was on the volunteer management committee of Nirmul Committee before I helped set up the Swadhinata Trust because there was an absence of educational resources that related to me as a young Bengali woman with questions about culture and heritage. I thought **if I have these questions then other Bengali young people would be asking similar questions**. The Swadhinata Trust was formed with like-minded Bengali and non-Bengalis who wanted to draw attention to the contributions of British Bengalis/ Bangladeshis to Great Britain. It was a way of drawing attention to a historic relationship between Britain and Bengali that dates back centuries, especially in a place like Tower Hamlets.



Julie Begum on Bethnal Green Road during an anti BNP demo in 1992 © Phil Maxwell

- + How have the tools/strategies that you use to effect social change evolved since you first became woke & active\*?

I have used my own unique and personal experiences to effect social change by providing an example of how a Bengali woman can engage with and stay active in her community.

As a school kid, I was inspired by Caroline Adams, who worked in youth and community development in Tower Hamlets, when I interviewed her for an English project I was doing at Morpeth School sixth form. I visited the Shejuti Club, which was based in Tower Hamlets School for Girls at the time and found a youth centre run by Jerry Deeks which was looking for youth workers - that's how I started getting involved in youth and community work. The rest is history; I worked in St Hilda's East Girls Club, the first to be set up in what used to be the bar in the basement downstairs with Ali Rusbridge, as well as numerous other projects.

\*aware of issues concerning social & racial justice and working towards equality.

- x What do you think now about the state of equality in Tower Hamlets, London, the UK?

The state of equality in Tower Hamlets is a changing landscape, depending on the political leadership and the way local people are enabled to engage with the democratic process in the borough. Most of the gains have come from local people campaigning and making sure the issues relating to equality remain at the heart of local government. Like from the Bengali community in 1970s that stood up and said enough is enough! To the racist attacks on local people. Writing the play 'The Altab Ali Story' is my contribution to the movement. As someone who has been profoundly affected by local incidents I wanted to make sure that our stories aren't forgotten. I am glad that the council woke up and made Altab Ali Day an official part of the borough's calendar of events in 2016 and that they support the local people commemorating Altab Ali every year on 4th May.



September 1993 Women Unite Against Racism Group prepare for a demonstration at Roger Dowley Court, one of WUAR members flat, © Kippa Matthews

\* What qualities and values do you think make someone an effective activist or advocate for equality?

The qualities and values that make an effective activist or an advocate for equality is (out) rage at injustice. I was angry at what I saw going on in the world around me, from what was happening in Palestine, to cuts in students grants, to racism in South Africa. These incidents of injustice fuelled my passion to do something so that I didn't feel too powerless in the face of such atrocities. I found solidarity and friendship in coming together with friends from different backgrounds to form alliances that could reach across cultures to form a resistance to oppression wherever we encountered it, on our doorstep or elsewhere in the world.

\* What message (call to action) would you like to share with young people, as the next generation of equality activists and change makers?

Find something you care about that doesn't just relate to you and your particular circumstances, find other people who also care about the same things. Think about what will make you feel better about living in this world. What human rights/standards should you be protecting? And why? Make equality a reality for all, not just for the privileged few.

It's easy to despise or judge those who just benefit from having power given to them because of the colour of their skin, sexuality or gender, but it's important to look beyond the privileges that the conditions of whiteness, class, heterosexuality or maleness can give you. It's possible to find allies anywhere and often in the most unlikely places. In order to affect real change we need to change everyone's lives, not just our own.



Campaign Against Racism & Fascism  
Magazine cover - edition 8  
© Bishopsgate Institute



# DAVID ROSENBERG

David Rosenberg's grandparents came to the East End as Jewish immigrants from the Tsarist Russian Empire in the 1900s. He is the founder of [East End Walks](#) which specialises in organising walks of London's radical social history, [especially in the East End](#) – an area in which successive waves of immigrants have helped make London what it is today. He is the author of [Battle for the East End: Jewish responses to fascism in the 1930s](#), which shares the history of the Battle of Cable Street, when more than 100,000 people, mainly from the local Jewish and Irish communities, came together to [stand up against The British Union of Fascists](#). He is also the author of [Rebel Footprints](#): a guide to uncovering London's radical history.

# IN DAVID'S WORDS...

✕ What action for equality have you been involved with in the past and most recently?

I started going on protests against racist and fascist groups when I was around 16 years old.

I grew up in a Jewish family and I learned about racism very young. Some of my family had fought Oswald Mosley's fascists in the 1930s at the Battle of Cable Street.

When I went to secondary school I experienced some anti-semitism. That knowledge, that experience, made me want to change things, to make things equal for everyone.

In the summer when I was taking my A-Levels, I saw terrible images on TV from another country where police were behaving very brutally towards school students. It was South Africa – a country whose laws discriminated against black people. People younger than me were bravely fighting back. That summer there was a school childrens' uprising in Soweto – a black township. One of my first political involvements was joining the Anti-Apartheid movement.

Later that same year a new movement was born here called "Rock Against Racism" using the power of music to

bring people together across ethnic divides around multicultural and anti-racist messages.

In 1978 I was with my friends among a crowd of 80,000 in Victoria Park at the first Rock Against Racism/Anti-Nazi League Carnival. Later that year I was at one in Brixton. I learned then that the fight for equality was not only difficult and tiring but it could be fun! I came back home with a placard that said "SMASH RACE HATE IN '78"

Ten years later I was working off Brick Lane for an organisation called the Runnymede Trust which was a research and information body concerned with racism and discrimination. We helped a lot of local community groups with information for their campaigns for equality.

These days I am still campaigning, but I also take people on guided walks of East End history where I tell people about the struggles for equality that took place around here!



1978, Protest paraphernalia from Rock Against Racism, from David Rosenberg's personal collection



17 November 2018 on the National Demonstration against Racism and Fascism - marching from Portland Place to Whitehall, from David Rosenberg's personal collection

+ How have the tools/strategies that you use to effect social change evolved since you first became woke & active\*?

When I was active in the 1970s and 80s we relied a lot on **the power of our words** – writing leaflets and pamphlets, slogans for placards and banners. Today we have so many more tools at our disposal for communicating quickly with strong images and getting our messages out there, but we are more atomised today. I remember **making things collectively, doing things together**. Looking back we were pretty creative DIY campaigners.

It is hard to imagine how we organised then without mobile phones – making arrangements sometimes a week in advance!

I knew by my late 20s/early 30s that tools for change were **not just about street protests and actions** but also involved much more **long-term work and 1:1 conversations**. I became a primary school teacher when I was 34 and worked in classrooms for 23 years. It was **the idea of fighting for a more equal society that made me want to become a teacher**. And I know, because I sometimes bump into ex-pupils, that those kids I taught learned a lot about equality/inequality and some of them are actively engaged with those struggles right now!

\*aware of issues concerning social & racial justice and working towards equality.

x What do you think now about the state of equality in Tower Hamlets, London, the UK?

In many ways the struggles of the 1970s and early 1980s to create better attitudes across ethnic and religious divides were successful, when you compare the terrible racist attacks of that period with far fewer incidents today. There is a more live-and-let-live attitude, more respect for each other. It is not at all cool to be racist now. Or sexist. And people are now more assertive about living their own lifestyles. But people are struggling in other ways. **The gap between haves and have-nots is widening in London and in the country**. Poverty affects the youngest and the oldest. And I know boroughs like Tower Hamlets have high rates of child poverty. Homelessness in London is on a far higher scale. We can work to give each other support in the community but change needs resources and that needs to be driven by a government that knows and understands. They need to wake up!



Procession of Battle of Cable street, marching on Cable Street towards St George's Town Hall, 9 October 2016, from David Rosenberg's personal collection



\* What qualities and values do you think make someone an effective activist or advocate for equality?

To be an effective activist for equality you need to feel someone else's pain as your own, see things through their eyes and be determined to bring about change. **You need to listen and learn from other people and be cooperative.** Be reflective. And also take time to relax. You can't just be constantly campaigning. At the age of 33 I learned to juggle. I wish I had done that earlier.

You also need patience – **battles are not won overnight.** And you need to recognise that you can't do it on your own. But together you can be effective. You need to never be satisfied with half measures. And you need to know that **every battle for equality that was won involved a struggle!**

x What message (call to action) would you like to share with young people, as the next generation of equality activists and change makers?

**Don't lose hope** when obstacles get in your way or things don't work out as you thought they would. **Stay angry in the face of injustice but channel that anger effectively.** You will be the ones with the most energy and enthusiasm for radical change towards equality but make sure you bear in mind that **making the world a better and more equal place means making it a better place for everyone,** black or white, old or young, male or female, gay or straight, able bodied or disabled. We will continue to battle as we can, but **we are also depending on you!**



KEEP YOUR  
EARS AND  
EYES OPEN

BE  
OUTSPOKEN  
AND  
ENERGETIC

ALWAYS  
LOOK TO  
DO THE  
RIGHT  
THING

## RAFIQUE ULLAH

Rafique Ullah began his activism whilst still in school, setting up [The Bangladesh Youth Front](#) with a group of friends in response to a personal experience of violence by racist thugs outside his school. Rafique helped to create the [Kobi Nazrul Centre](#) in Tower Hamlets, which promotes Bengali arts and supports projects that promote education and work towards a more equal society. He is also the chairperson of [Altab Ali Trust UK](#) which was set up to commemorate the murder of Altab Ali in 1978 and champion equal rights for the Bengali community in Tower Hamlets and beyond.

Original image by Rehan Jamil

\* What action for equality have you been involved with in the past and most recently?

I left my native country Bangladesh and arrived in England with my parents in 1972. On my first day at the school gate I was badly beaten up by racists. I was in shock, I couldn't speak a word of English and nobody came to my aid. I managed to get myself up and go home with a black eye, bruises and a white shirt painted red by the blood pouring from my nose. The incident wasn't reported to police. Similarly, others were unreported too. In my case, we didn't even think about reporting it, we didn't know what to do. From that moment onwards I knew there had to be a change. I returned to school the following week and stood my ground. This meant a few more bruises but no one picked on me after that.

This incident made me think of **doing something to stop anyone else getting attacked**. Quite early on I realised that Bangladeshi kids didn't have the same opportunities as the white kids and that many people's childhoods were being damaged or destroyed by racism. I was



Rafique Ullah, second to the right, at demo in 2017 in Altab Ali Park against Manchester bombing, from Rafique Ullah's personal collection.

constantly thinking of what we could do to improve our living standards? To improve our lives? How could we find a way that all children could learn and enjoy their education without being in fear?

In 1976 I formed a youth group with my friends called **Bangladesh Youth Front**. I was one of the youth activists who organised the protest demonstration on 14 May 1978, after the death of Altab Ali, who was murdered in a racially motivated attack on 4 May 1978.

I know now that I am a **lifelong community activist** and will continue to work and campaign for the benefit of the community.

I do this in many roles: I am the former chair of Tower Hamlets Law Centre; Founder chair BBC Community Centre (Holland estate); founder and General Secretary of Kobi Nazrul Centre; Chairperson of Altab Ali Trust UK.



1978, Brick Lane (Rafique Ullah wearing black shirt on the right) © Syd Shelton



- ✘ How have the tools/strategies that you use to effect social change evolved since you first became woke & active\*?

In 1976 we thought that coming together to form Bangladesh Youth Front would give us **more power to both fight against racism** and provide security and guidance for our community. We hired an office in Fashion Street and paid rent from our own pockets.

We worked to **mobilise the community** by organising demonstrations, picketing and protesting against wrong-doings of authorities. I became very active in organising anti-racist campaigns and also co-ordinating help groups. This meant supporting people who were campaigning for community facilities such as advice surgeries, outdoor sports activities and cultural programmes. It also meant setting up new organisations that were specifically designed to voice the rights of the community, such as tenants associations.

I campaigned along with other activists to: change the name of Spitalfields into Banglatown; transform St Mary Church Yard into Altab Ali Park; provide halal meals in schools; offer Bengali mother tongue classes; appoint interpreters; create Bengali street signs; rename the bus stop "Altab Ali Park" on Whitechapel Road (in 2019).

**I don't think the structure or process has changed for campaigning or lobbying**, just the medium it is delivered. Communication is much faster, too fast sometimes - causing fast spreading misinformation which is very dangerous. The **tablets and smart phones and ever-improving tech at our finger tips** mean we are all very connected. This makes the organisation of getting many people together much easier.

\*aware of issues concerning social & racial justice and working towards equality.

- ✚ What do you think now about the state of equality in Tower Hamlets, London, the UK?

In my view Tower Hamlets is completely different now. In the 1970s, when I first arrived in the borough, I witnessed the Bengali community living in fear. They were suffering discrimination and racial attacks, living in rundown sub-standard houses and not receiving proper medical care or other services from Tower Hamlets Council or the police. I felt then, and still do now, that this is because of the unspoken racism in both at that point.

Today there is a clear economic divide. The **Government's austerity cuts and new policies such as Universal Credit and Bedroom Tax have created a shift in the population of the borough**. Lots of young professionals with more money to spend are moving into the area and many families with less money are having to move out - it feels different!

Also, as an **advocate for young people** I believe there are not enough opportunities for young people.

We need to help them, to invest in their education and opportunities because they will be **our future activists**.

Overall Tower Hamlets is a much more equal place to live than before. But, if we come together, we can make it better still - a place of equal opportunity and a high quality of life for all.

- ✘ What qualities and values do you think make someone an effective activist or advocate for equality?

Every individual can be an activist provided that the person can 'put themselves in someone else's shoes' in order to understand the feeling of pain and suffering that are affecting families, communities and the future for all of us. One has to have patience to understand the issues and the impact they will have for the community. You have to think widely and inclusively for everyone. You have to be outspoken and energetic. To talk to your friends and neighbours and ask them to raise their voice alongside yours.

Allow others to take the lead if they are better than you, but don't disappear! Stay and support, be a good organiser for them. You need to keep your ears and eyes open to local and national issues and be ready to speak up to wrongdoing when it's needed.

- ✘ What message (call to action) would you like to share with young people, as the next generation of equality activists and change makers?

Take advantage of every opportunity you have!

Don't miss your school/college – many young people in the world do not have this basic human right.

Read extensively and beyond your comfort zone – there are many voices out there for you to learn from.

Always look to do the right thing even if this means being unpopular.

I will finish with a quote from renowned Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore from poem 'Ekla Cholo Re'

“If they not answer to your call walk alone, if they are afraid and cower mutely, facing the wall, O thou unlucky one, open your mind and speak out alone”.



29th March 2019 Protesting against Tommy Robinson and his racist group in a rally coordinated by Stand Up To Racism, from Rafique Ullah's personal collection.



FIGHT  
BACK!

ARGUE FOR  
WHAT YOU  
THINK IS  
RIGHT.

## FARRUKH DHONDY

Farrukh Dhondy is an Indian-born British writer, playwright, screenwriter and left-wing activist. He was involved with the Indian Workers' Association and later, in London, with the British Black Panthers who fought for political action on the fronts of education, housing, employment and equal treatment at work and offered militant opposition to all forms of racism.

He began his writing career whilst working on the British political magazine publication Race Today in 1970 and went on to become part of the team which published it – the Race Today Collective, which included other key race equality activists such as Darcus Howe and Linton Kwesi Johnson. In 1986 Farrukh created a film capturing Brick Lane in late 70s / 80s called King of the Ghetto.

Original image by Rehan Jamil

# IN FARRUKH'S WORDS...

## ✘ What action for equality have you been involved with in the past & most recently?

I came from India on a scholarship to Cambridge University to study Physics. Cambridge at the time, 1964, didn't have an immigrant population. There were foreign students from India and Pakistan – only one or two from East Pakistan which later became Bangladesh and very few from the West Indies and Africa. At university I followed political movements and the war in Vietnam to which the USA had sent troops to fight a population which wanted to have a communist government. Several of my Asian and West Indians friends and I thought that America was wrong to invade another country and try and say what sort of government the people should have. We demonstrated against the Americans in all sorts of ways. In debates, by writing in the university magazines and even going to anti-Americans in Vietnam demonstrations in London.

It was only after I finished my studies in Cambridge and came to London to live that I experienced a form of racism. When I tried to rent a bed-sit, I would be turned away. There were pubs which didn't serve Asians and Black people. My Asian friends and I wouldn't go out on nights when there were big football games because the football fans on several occasions assaulted anyone who wasn't white. I suffered this on several occasions – being beaten up by random rowdy, possibly drunk racists.

I was then offered a scholarship to study in Leicester. Again, me and my Indian girlfriend couldn't find a room to live in as the landlords who owned the properties didn't want Asians there. I was directed to the streets around Narborough Road in

Leicester where the Asian community lived and found a flat - one room and a yard to live in. On Fridays we could afford half a pint in the local pub which would, on pay day, fill up with Asian, mainly Punjabi workers who worked in factories in and around Leicester. My Bengali girlfriend, Mala Sen and I made friends with them and one week we helped them launch a strike and a protest against racist discrimination in a factory from which five of them had been sacked. The strike was successful and both Mala and I were asked to become honorary secretaries of the Leicester Indian Workers' Association. It was our first move into a political organisation in Britain.

Continued overleaf...

In finishing my studies and thesis in Leicester, Mala and I moved to London. In the early seventies we encountered the same sort of problems of racial discrimination in finding rooms, using pubs, random violence etc. By then we were determined that we had to join an organisation and 'fight back'! We soon joined the British Black Panther Movement which was an organisation of black and a minority of Asian members which was dedicated to the social, economic and political rights of the new communities of Britain.

To catalogue all our campaigns and achievements will take too long here, but I think we made a difference.

When the Black Panther Movement, for various reasons fell apart – as political organisations with different points of view do – we helped to found an activist magazine called Race Today.

One day at Race Today we got a call from Bangladeshi men in the East End who had a housing problem and they had heard that this magazine and its members could help them. We could and we did.

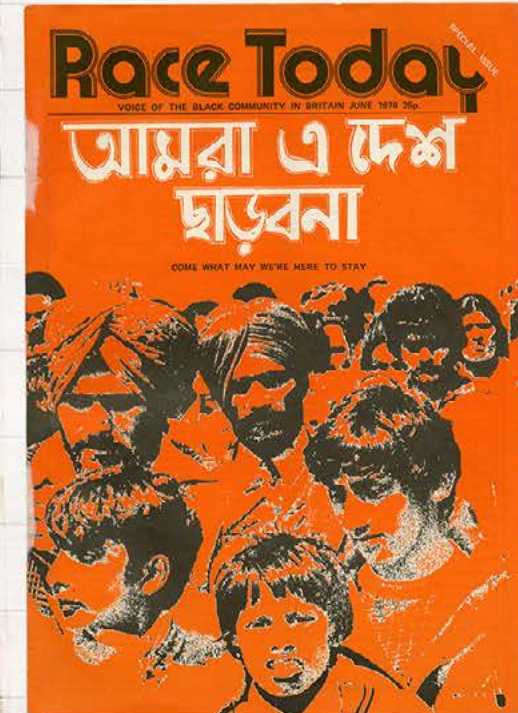
The new Bangladeshi community of the East End of London, still mostly living around Brick Lane, had two major problems. The first was that

people in the community were being attacked in their council houses and on the streets for no reason except that they were Asians. Altab Ali was the innocent victim of such a meaningless attack.

With a lot of young Bengali men of the time we determined to form squads which would gather every evening in Brick Lane and on the housing estates where isolated Bengali families lived and ensure that we were there to do what the police should have been doing.

The groups of these determined Bangladeshi youngsters did chase several of the racist gangs away and the random attacks of what at the time they called 'Paki-bashing' finally stopped.

The second big problem for the East End Bengali community was housing. Again the young Bengali men rallied round and we founded the Bengali Housing Action Group which believed in direct action. This direct action took the form of squatting the house which the Greater London Council had left empty. There were hundreds of these houses and BHAG squatted them for families who moved into them.



Race Today, 1978, Courtesy of Bishopsgate Institute



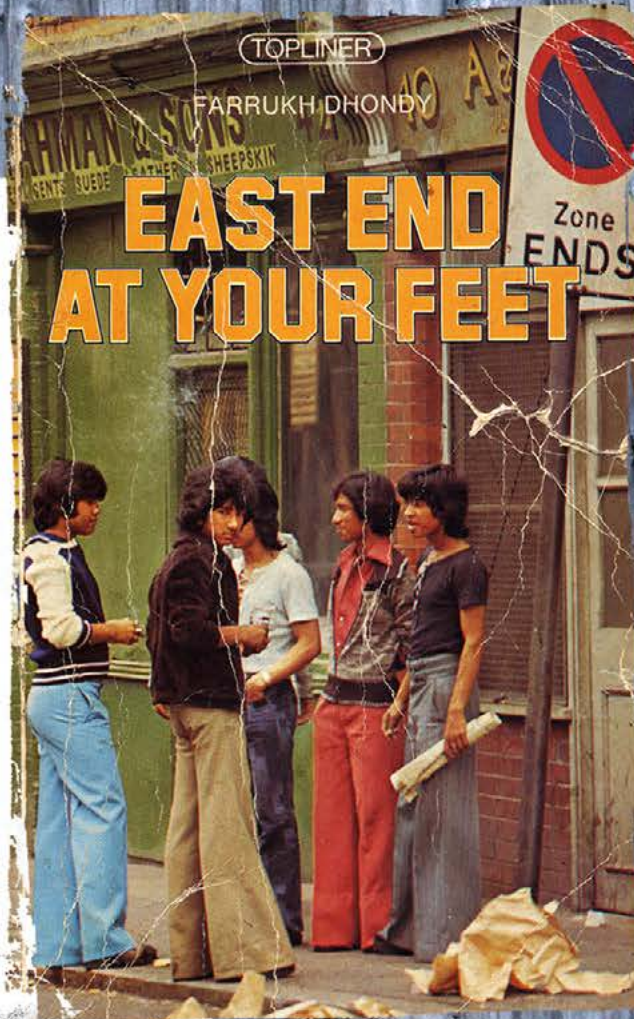
+ How have the tools/strategies that you use to effect social change evolved since you first became woke & active\*?

I think **times have changed**. When I was active through the sixties, seventies, eighties and nineties, there really was the feeling that Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, West Indians and Africans had a common cause. What has happened I think, since then is that communities of Britain, the Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Indians etc, have begun to see themselves as separate. In some instances this is a feeling of a religious divide, in others that the home countries don't get on so the immigrant communities of Britain must not.

Another difference is **young people from ethnic minorities have begun to form rival gangs. This is a vicious development.**

\*aware of issues concerning social & racial justice and working towards equality.

Farrukh Dhondy's  
book cover East  
End at Your Feet  
Published in 1976  
by Macmillan ©  
Farrukh Dhondy



✕ What message (call to action) would you like to share with young people, as the next generation of equality activists and change makers?

We all have a sense of justice and injustice. Think for yourself. **Argue for what you think is right. It will lead you to people who think the same.**

# GRASS



# ROOTS

VOL.1 NO.5

BLACK COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

5p

Editor A.KIMATHI

MONTHLY

## FIRE BOMBINGS OF BLACK HOMES SPREAD

Petrol bomb attacks on homes of Black people spread through Britain. Despite the fact that the police are supposed to have charged two West Pakistani boys on 14 counts of arson against Pakistani homes, reports are coming in of incidents in Moss-side, Manchester, Wolverhampton, Acton, Liverpool, Birmingham and East London.

Residents in Bradford expressed grave doubts about the authoritative allegation that there were no racial motives behind the bombings. They pointed out that not just Pakistani but also West Indian homes like that in Whitea View, Bradford, had been attacked. The Pakistani Association has set up vigilante patrols.

Five children have died in Bradford alone as a result of the fires. Many others have been seriously injured.

Four West Indian children died on October 14 when a fire burned down a house in Meadow Road, Moss side. The cause of the fire is said to be 'unknown'.

A fifteen month old child died in a first floor room in Alexandra Park Road, North London, on the same day.

On October 25th, three Jamaican children, Elaine Bailey, 13, Paullette Bailey 7 and Glen Bailey 5, died when their house in 70, Rectory Road, was burned down.

The Caribbean Overseas Association centre in Acton has been gutted by three fires within two weeks. The centre which was set up after 18 months of negotiations and at a cost of £5000, has been completely destroyed. The police stated that they are still investigating the incidents as possible arson.



CALLING ALL CARS! ARREST AND BRING IN THE FIRST PAKI YOU SEE! THAT'S AN ORDER!!

After a sudden burst of publicity the press and media have completely hushed up all news of recent incidents. It is believed that they are acting under Government instructions to play down news that is likely to cause racial conflict.

There is some evidence to support the theory that a right wing organisation may be behind this campaign of fire bombings. The fact that nobody has been seen at the scene of the incidents indicates that considerable planning has gone into these attacks.

Black organisations are considering setting up self defence patrols in areas that have been affected.

## Mangrove Nine Trial

The trial of the Mangrove nine has now dragged on for several weeks. Nine Blacks are facing charges of riot and affray. In addition, four face further charges of assault and six with possessing offensive weapons.

Seven brothers and two sisters were charged after violent clashes took place at a demonstration on August 9, 1970. The accused are: Frank Critchlow, owner of the Mangrove restaurant, Radford (Darcus) Howe, Althea Jones-Leacotts, Rhodan Gordon, manager of Backyard, A. Innis, Rudolf Kentish, Rupert Boyce, and Godofred Miller.

Then the nominal hearing took place at the Marylebone Magistrates last January, the magistrate David Wacher, threw out the charge of riot, contending that the evidence offered (chants of "Kill the pigs") did not justify it. In an unprecedented decision, the Director of Public Prosecutions, reintroduced the charge at the trial.

The first few days consisted of unsuccessful attempts to obtain an all black jury. After rejecting 63 jurors, a jury of ten whites and two blacks was chosen. Two of the defendants, Darcus and Althea Jones are defending themselves. Last week, Rhodan Gordon, sacked his counsel and took over his own defence. More defendants are likely to take this course.

In the course of the prosecution evidence, the police made a number of admissions. They admitted that in all the raids on the Mangrove restaurant, no drugs were found and no arrests were made. They admitted that policemen drew out their truncheons in the demo without waiting for orders from superior officers. And they conceded that the fighting was totally spontaneous after over two hours of peaceful marching.

### ★ STOP PRESS ★

Scotland Yard Officers visited B.L.F. several times in connection with contents of GRASSROOTS No.4.

Editorial Change: As from this issue Bro ADB KIMATHI WILL replace Bro A. JAMAL as Editor.

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# MISSION TWO: EQUALITIES MAP

## FIND OUT WHO IS WORKING TOWARDS EQUALITY IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

Work with a partner to design an Equality Map of your area.

Include anyone you know who is working towards making Tower Hamlets a safer and more equal borough.

**THINK ABOUT PEOPLE WHO  
ARE WORKING TO COMBAT  
RACISM, SEXISM, HOMOPHOBIA,  
ISLAMOPHOBIA, ANTI-SEMITISM,  
ABLEISM, AGEISM, FASCISM.**

## FIND OUT ABOUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR LOCAL AREA.

## DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE 'NO PLACE FOR HATE' CHAMPIONS?

Consider including young people, educators, community elders, community group leaders, campaigners, activists, carers, health workers, social workers, volunteers, voluntary organisations.

# MISSION THREE: DESIGN AN EQUALITY CAMPAIGN

Discuss as a group the inequalities which affect you or people you know in Tower Hamlets.

Agree on an inequality that feels the most important for you to challenge and combat as soon as possible.

**INSPIRED BY THE IDEAS AND TOOLS SHARED BY THE EQUALITY ACTIVISTS, DESIGN A CAMPAIGN TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT AN INEQUALITY AND GENERATE IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO COMBAT IT.**

**“We Are All Campaigners.**

All campaigners are trying to influence something or someone. For the purest example of a campaign, think about the child who wants sweets. They'll try everything - bargaining, cajoling, crying. Children are incredibly determined and creative in pursuing what they want. And these are probably the two most important qualities for effective campaigning.

Rather than being a fixed set of skills, campaigning is more a way of thinking and behaving. It is about being able to read and analyse a situation; who holds the power to give me what I want? What will it take to make them do what I want?”

Sue Tibballs, Chief Executive,  
Sheila McKechnie Foundation

## THINK ABOUT WHO THE CAMPAIGN IS DESIGNED TO AFFECT...

- Young people?
- Politicians? (central and/or local)
- Community leaders?
- Local residents?
- A particular group of people (i.e. local business owners, teachers, park managers)

## THINK ABOUT THE BEST TOOLS FOR REACHING THOSE PEOPLE...

- A catchy slogan? Tagline? What most effectively communicates the point of the campaign
- Appealing visuals/graphics that draw people's eyes?
- Placards/posters/stickers/t-shirts/hats?
- Social media (images, film, hashtags)?
- Gathering people in public space?
- Public meetings?
- High profile supporters? (celebrity, community leaders, politicians, cool local organisations)
- Local press/media coverage?

# CREATE A CAMPAIGN PLAN

Once your campaigns are designed you will work as a team to present them to the rest of the class, to persuade them that a) the campaign is needed and b) your campaign ideas will work.

## YOU CAN USE PHOTOGRAPHY, FILM, VISUAL OR GRAPHIC DESIGNS.

### YOU MUST INCLUDE:

1. A key message (what do you want to change?)
2. Your audience (who is the campaign designed to affect?)
3. At least 2 different campaign tools

### CONSIDER:

- How you know your campaign ideas will work?
- What previous campaigns have you researched to inform your plan?
- How have the Equalities Activists inspired your ideas?

Tower Hamlets - radical actions then and now...

# THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY



## SECTION THREE

### COLLECTIVE ACTION 46

What happens when people come together, with a shared goal, to effect changes in their communities?

How do people connect, across difference to realise a shared ambition?

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# COLLECTIVE ACTION

\* WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE  
COME TOGETHER, WITH A SHARED GOAL,  
TO EFFECT CHANGES  
IN THEIR COMMUNITIES?

+ HOW DO PEOPLE CONNECT  
ACROSS DIFFERENCE TO REALISE A  
SHARED AMBITION?

#PROTEST

#COLLECTIVE ACTION

#FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

#SOCIAL MOVEMENT

'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.'

Margaret Mead, Cultural Anthropologist (1901 -1978)

Tegan Tallulah, born 1993, calls for the greatest ever Collective Action – full article published [here](#).

“The last few months of 2018 and early 2019 have seen historic levels of climate activism and public attention. Something seems to have finally shifted.

One of the most inspiring things right now is the explosion of youth-led climate activism. From Extinction Rebellion that was recently holding mass protests in London to the Sunrise Movement and the Green New Deal to the School Strikes for Climate movement – it's in the air. And it's having an effect. The UK Parliament recently became the first in the world to declare a climate emergency.

In April 2019, Greta Thunberg was invited to speak at the European Parliament. Thousands of students from schools and universities strode out of lessons to protest inaction on climate change and try to force leaders into acting to protect our future.

The older generations have failed to get a handle on this global existential threat, and it's now time for us to start taking the reins.”

HOW HAVE PREVIOUS GENERATIONS IN TOWER HAMLETS COME TOGETHER TO CHALLENGE INEQUALITY AND WORK TOWARDS A COMMON GOAL?

TO RISE TO THE CHALLENGES THAT OUR GENERATION WILL FACE, WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE COLLECTIVE ACTIONS OF PREVIOUS GENERATIONS?



INCOMPLETE  
HISTORY OF  
COLLECTIVE  
ACTIONS  
AGAINST  
INEQUALITY

↓ 1936 BATTLE OF  
CABLE STREET

**ANTI-FACISTS ASSEMBLED TO BLOCK THE WAY  
OF THE BRITISH UNION OF FASCISTS DURING THE  
GREAT DEPRESSION.**

The Jewish community of London's East End mainly comprised of families that had arrived between 1881 and 1914. Many of these families settled in England after fleeing anti-semitism and racist persecution in Russia, Poland and many other Eastern European countries.

Throughout the 1920s, the UK had a boom time – there was a lot of investment in new business and a lot of money was made. But, following a big financial crisis in 1929, the 1930s looked very different and many trades were badly effected. Cabinet manufacturing and tailoring trades, the two trades most Jews were employed in were particularly affected. As dole queues grew, people were forced to work as "sweated labour", accepting miserably low wages for hideously long hours. The lack of employment meant that there were many people going for each job and that many were not able to earn enough to feed themselves and their families properly.

**THESE DESPERATE CONDITIONS MADE IT EASY FOR PEOPLE  
TO GET ANGRY AT THE SUCCESS OF OTHERS AND SOME  
NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES BLAMED THE JEWISH  
COMMUNITY FOR WORSENING CONDITIONS IN THE EAST END.**

## FASCIST EAST END MEETINGS.

The Editor, "East London Advertiser."

Sir.—I have seldom seen such nonsense as that put forward by the correspondent, who does not see fit to sign his name, in a letter to your issue of the 17th. He says that the Police Commissioner should not be complimented for banning the march of this movement, but that praise is due to the "working people" who prevented it. I see that he dignifies by the name "workers" the collection of Jews and Communists who gathered in the streets leading to the East End, on October 4th, and spent their time attacking policemen, with every weapon from iron bars to razors, with the result that over thirty policemen were injured, and one has lost his sight completely.

The real attitude of East End "workers" was demonstrated on October 14th and October 21st. On these dates Mosley held enormous and highly successful meetings at Bethnal Green, Limehouse and Shoreditch, at all of which there was no disorder, and all of which were very enthusiastic. Since there would have been opposition from the "workers," the meeting been held on October 4th, according to your correspondent, had it is interesting to note that these three meetings took place at the sites where the meetings had been banned on October 4th, and there was no disorder.

Yours, etc.,

M. COLLINS,

For the British Union of Fascists  
and National Socialists.

By 1936 the British Union of Fascists (BUF) had become the largest organised anti-semitic force in Britain. Oswald Mosley the leader of BUF capitalised on the anger felt during this time, now often referred to 'the Great Depression'. Mosley announced he would celebrate the fourth birthday of the BUF by staging a provocative march through Stepney, the heart of the Jewish East End, on 4 October 1936.

Anti-fascists assembled at Gardiner's Corner at Aldgate, blocking the gateway to the East End.

The crowd roared "They Shall Not Pass!" and "Down with Fascism!"

There was then no route left for the fascists to take and Sir Philip Game, the Commissioner of Police, told Mosley to march his troops west from Tower Hill and out of the area. Meanwhile anti-fascists marched to Victoria Park and celebrated a victory for the Jewish community, the people of the East End, and anti-fascists everywhere.

YOU CAN SEE VIDEO FOOTAGE  
OF THE BRITISH UNION OF  
FASCISTS AND THE ANTI-  
FASCISTS MEETING IN 1936 HERE.

← CLICK HERE!

East London Advertiser 31 Oct  
1936, Letter from BUF, Courtesy  
of Tower Hamlets Local History  
Library & Archives  
[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)

## East End's Black Sunday

# CROWD THROWS CHILD THROUGH WINDOW

DAILY HERALD  
12. 10. 36

## Men Slashed: Shops Wrecked:

### Car Burnt

## IRON BARS & HATCHETS USED IN RAID

MEN slashed with razors . . . half-a-mile of shop windows shattered . . . a car overturned and red . . . a man and a little girl hurled bodily through a shop-front . . .

*These were some of the things that happened in a second Sunday of terror in London's East End yesterday.*

It was one of the worst outbreaks of hooliganism that has been witnessed in London for some years. Fourteen arrests were made during the day.

Notwithstanding the events of last Sunday, the Communists held a demonstration at Victoria Park after marching from Tower Hill.

### Frenzy of

#### Destruction

Despite the appeals of the East End Mayors and the labour and trade unions leaders to "stay away" from the East End, thousands thronged the streets.

The march was orderly enough. It was while the demonstrators were in the park that trouble began. Police were all busy there when a sudden raid was made on Mile End-road.

A gang of 150 youths, shouting Fascist slogans, dashed along the road, smashing windows, scattering goods and wrecking stalls in a frenzy of destruction.

### Hail, Mosley:

#### Down With Yids"

For more than half a mile they tore along, wrecking every Jewish store they saw; shopkeepers crouched, terrified, behind their counters.

Mr. Samuel Jelen, a hairdresser, was hurled through window. "I went to the door of my shop," he said, "and immediately a crowd of 150 youths rushed towards

with a large piece of wood, and I was struck in the face.

"The crowd was shouting, 'Hail, Mosley,' and various slogans such as 'Down with the Yids.'

"Before I could get on to my feet I was seized by three or four of them, and they lifted me and hurled me through the window of Mr. Philip Levy's tailor's shop. The glass smashed around me and I was dazed.

"The crowd then picked up a little girl and hurled her after me. Luckily the girl fell on me, otherwise she might have been seriously injured.

"One or two of the crowd grabbed articles in the window and I saw one youth pull out a length of suiting.

### Sticks, Iron

#### Bars, Hatchets

"They then rushed to the corner of the street, where Mr. Levy's car was standing. They swarmed round the car, and in a moment had turned it over.

"They were armed with sticks, iron bars, hatchets and other weapons. They smashed up the car, and one of them broke the petrol tank. The petrol leaked out, and another man threw a match.

"The car went up in a blaze.

"In the meantime I had got out of the window. Somebody took hold of the little girl and carried her to safety.

"On the way back to my shop I saw shirts, caps, boots and all sorts of other articles taken from the windows strewn about the streets.

Mr. Silverman, proprietor of a drapery business, said: "Youths started to take clothes hanging in front of my shop. My wife tried to stop them but they flung stones at her."

Late last night large numbers of police were patrolling the district and other police were held in readiness in mobile vans in side streets.

It was with hundreds of banners and red flags that the anti-Fascist demonstration had formed at Tower Hill.

A wireless van gave instructions:

"This is to be an orderly march. There must be no disturbance. If there is any fighting to be done the police are here to do it. Nothing must discredit this march."

"Where Mosley could not pass we will," was the slogan of the demonstrators.

### Cries of

#### "Dirty Yids"

As the procession moved off, ex-Servicemen, wearing their medals and carrying Union Jacks, fell into line behind a band.

They marched through Royal Mint-street, into Cable-street—where a barricade was raised last Sunday—across Whitechapel-road and into Mile End-road.

In Grove-road, their reception became "mixed" for the first time. Groups,

mostly of girls of 16 and 17, shouted jibes.

At the corner of Green-street, Bethnal Green, where the Fascists have their local headquarters, the marshals again gave the warning: "Hold your ranks. Never mind what happens. Don't retaliate."

ranged hundreds of young men and women, shouting: "Up the Fascists. Dirty Yids."

Real trouble began at the gates of Victoria Park. Held back by a semi-circle of police, both mounted and on foot, a hostile crowd had climbed on to parapets and railings.

Slices of bacon and rotten apples rained on the vanguard of the procession.

"The Yids, the Yids, we've got to get rid of the Yids," was interspersed with "We are the Boys of the Bulldog Breed," and the singing of the National Anthem, with hands upraised in the Fascist salute.

After each verse the crowd, altogether spat on the marchers.

Half-way down the line, a group broke through the police and charged the procession. Police drew their batons, a brisk fight followed, in which several were "laid out." Three arrests were made.

Outside the gates, in the crowd, two men were attacked with razors. They had their faces and hands slashed, and were rushed to Bethnal Green Hospital.

The marchers formed a solid phalanx round two platforms. Marshals linked hands round the square to prevent any attempt to break the ranks.

But, on the fringes, skirmishes and fights were continually happening.

There would be a running fight with scores of mounted and foot police in pursuit. There was rarely any need for the police to draw batons; the disturbers scurried like rabbits. But several people were removed by ambulance.

After the meeting the red flags were collected and removed in a van by the organisers themselves.

Many of the banners, however, were retained.

In the dusk, the march back to Pitfield-street, Shoreditch, began.

As soon as the anti-Fascists left the park, trouble threatened. Grove-road, through which they were to pass, was blocked and, for about ten minutes, the march was held up while mounted police rode into the crowd, driving it on to the footway.

The crowd was preponderantly hostile. The singing of the 10,000 marchers was drowned in cat-calls and counter-singing.

### Iron Weapons

#### A Foot Long

Fireworks were flung. "Whizzbangs" ricocheted among the feet of the marchers, causing the horses of the mounted police to rear and back into the thronged ranks.

In Green-street, as the procession passed the Fascist headquarters, vio

Battle of Cable Street report, Daily Herald, 12 October 1936, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives [www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)


# BRITISH UNION'S BIGGEST WEEK: RED FLAG JEERED OUT OF EAST LONDON THE BLACKSHIRTS COME TO STAY : EAST LONDON SAYS BRITAIN FIRST !

MOSLEY SPEAKS  
NEXT WEDNESDAY  
HOXTON HOUSE  
SCHOOLS 8 O'CLOCK

AN  
OPEN AIR MEETING  
ASK STREET,  
SHOREDITCH  
at 9 O'CLOCK  
MOSLEY will speak  
at both

# BLACKSHIRT

THE PATRIOTIC WORKER'S PAPER



Registered at G.P.O.  
as a Newspaper

Price 1d.

BRITAIN  
IS  
AWAKE!

No. 182. Oct. 17 1936

## EAST LONDON FOR MOSLEY

### "THEY SHALL PASS" IS THE CRY OF THE WORKERS

#### UNBELIEVABLE SCENES OF ENTHUSIASM SAYS GEOFFREY DORMAN

THE Jews and Reds of East London, in their supreme folly, had tried to witness with awe against the British of East London on October 5. The result was a scene of such a nature that Mosley had sworn within a fortnight that he would return to the East of London. The day after on the night of Wednesday, October 14, East London turned out in its entirety thousands to witness the greatest Blackshirt march yet seen, and East London that night rang with the name of Mosley.

The Reds, with wringing throats, had said: "They shall not pass," predicting the great march of the French against the Germans in 1936.

On Wednesday night their beautiful words were rung back in their teeth as a host of workers and supporters of the British Union swept its way in triumph from Bethnal Green to Limehouse.

#### But they did Pass

I went to Victoria Park Square to see the famous Blackshirt speaker who will fight for us in the East London area. As we passed down Bethnal Green Road there was a scene. We were met with a line of men, women and children shouting: "Have you seen the Blackshirts? They are coming!" and shouting with a voice of steel in the night.

We went on to the famous headquarters of the Bethnal Green district in Green Street, and there a column of Blackshirts turned up behind the hand and marched on Green Street towards Victoria Park Square.

LIKE A DREAM

Below, starting I had just read a copy of this week's "Action" of how a man goes to sleep and dream that Fascism has come to power in England. To

tally all the while. When he climbed to the top of the tree he was cheered by the who for what seemed like five minutes before he could begin his speech.

Railway through his speech I climbed up on the top and looked at the crowd. Both ends of the Square were packed solid with people as far as I could see. There must have been twelve to fifteen thousand people there, and every one of them was shouting Mosley or cheer louder.

"Mosley cheer louder" with the situation that had arisen when on October 4 the Government had allowed an imported Red mob to terrorise the streets of East London and, by violence and attacks on the police, had dared to block the roads of London to Blackshirts.

"They tried to stop us," he said. "They said that we shall not pass, but you are seeing as it tonight that we shall pass. The little mob of the Government laughed at us at first and thought that we were shocked and how they are in coming back, as it were, from the gates. They tried to stop us but they are now trying to get our uniforms out of us though that could possibly stop us and prevent any final and inevitable triumph."

"BRITAIN BELONGS TO US"  
"Britain," he said, "belongs to us Britain and we are going to see that we get it back again."

As he finished his great speech the crowd cheered and cheered again and the applause was as loud as the roar of the sea. The crowd was so big that he had great difficulty in getting down from the top and having his way to the head of the column.

The police had ordered Capt. Duggan at the beginning that the march in Bethnal Green must not take place. When they learned that the whole of the great crowd would be following Mosley, they decided to go on that they withdraw their men and the march took place.

There were relatively few Blackshirts present. The crowd was composed almost entirely of the workers of East London and they cheered round him, shouting out: "Good old Mosley!"

I heard a man in the crowd loudly say to his friend: "Who are they coming?"

Continued on page 2, col. 2.



A British salute to Britain. The British Union Leader at the conclusion of the meeting.



The Prime Minister gives a salute to the British Union. We have endeavored to get the picture showing many more people than in other photographs of the day. There is no doubt that the photograph will show that there were an extraordinary number of people gathered to hear Mosley in Bethnal Green.

#### No Exaggeration

Many people may think that this account of the proceedings is an exaggeration due to the enthusiasm of the writer. I can assure them that this is not so.

If they are unwilling to believe it, I would ask them to reserve their judgment and go to themselves to East London next night of the week and see for themselves—G.D.



TO A MAN, WOMAN AND CHILDREN JOINING WELCOME MOSLEY

Copy of the 'Blackshirt The Patriotic Worker's Paper' dated October 17th 1936. © Museum of London

The 8 page 'Blackshirt' was the official newspaper of the British Union of Fascists led by Oswald Mosley. Published weekly it was sold for 1d to BUF supporters and members. The headline article of this edition refers to the Battle of Cable Street and offers a biased account of this event, suggesting a victory for the BUF where 'the Red Flag' was 'jeered out of East London'. In reality, however, the Battle of Cable Street was no such triumph for the BUF as anti-fascist groups succeeded in preventing the planned BUF march through the heart of London's Jewish East End.



DAILY HERALD  
12. X. 1936

A violent struggle with a demonstrator outside the Park. Note the photographer who sought the safety of the traffic lights.

Daily Herald Archive/National Science & Media Museum/Science & Society Picture Library 12 Oct 1936, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives [www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)



■ Cable Street veteran Max Levitas, 97, speaks at the anti-fascist demonstration

## Veteran Max recalls the Battle of Cable Street

A 97-year-old survivor of the Battle of Cable Street told anti-fascist demonstrators that the rally reminded him of the events of 1936.

Max Levitas urged the thousands of people gathered in Whitechapel's Altab Ali Park on Saturday to oppose the English Defence League.

He said that he was taken back to the infamous events of 77 years ago when the East End's Jewish community fought off Oswald Mosley's

'Blackshirt' fascists.

"This today is taking me back many, many years to the battle of Cable Street," Mr Levitas told the crowd.

"We started the fight against racism and fascism. I stand for socialism in this country to end fascism.

"Fascists will not march in the East End of London!"

The Battle of Cable Street saw a reported 100,000 people turn out to block a fascist march of between 2,000 and 3,000 from passing through the streets of east London.

# Anti-fascists vow to 'drive back' EDL

## Thousands hit streets to oppose the far right

by Robin de Peyer

[robin.depeyer@archant.co.uk](mailto:robin.depeyer@archant.co.uk)

Anti-fascist protesters claimed victory as thousands turned out to demonstrate against far right group the English Defence League (EDL) on Saturday.

Violence was largely avoided as a huge police presence of 3,000 officers kept anti-fascist campaigners separate from EDL demonstrators.

Organisers claimed more than 4,000 people turned out to oppose the EDL, while the number of far right demonstrators was estimated at 600.

Scuffles between protesters and police did break out when a splinter group left Unite Against Fascism's (UAF) main demonstration in Whitechapel's Altab Ali Park.

After marching down the closed off Whitechapel Road, the protesters - mainly dressed in black with scarves

covering their faces - ran towards Tower Bridge, where the EDL march was passing.

But they were met by a massive police presence in Commercial Road, where some were involved in altercations with officers as they were mainly prevented from getting anywhere near the far right demonstration.

### Separate

Once the EDL did reach Aldgate, police kept them separate from the thousands of peaceful opposition protesters gathered hundreds of metres away.

Speakers at the counter-demonstration included Tower Hamlets Mayor Lutfur Rahman and left-wing author Owen Jones.

Mr Jones told the crowd: "Wherever the menace of Islamophobia emerges, we must drive it back. Today this is our message to the EDL; we are one community.

"We will not rest until we drive this poison off the streets of this community."

Police stopped reporters entering the EDL rally in Aldgate, which was limited by Scotland Yard to 30 minutes.

The EDL was also prevented from following its original planned route towards Altab Ali Park and the East London Mosque.

At a High Court challenge on Friday, lawyers for the organisation said the EDL wanted to march in Tower Hamlets because they claimed it was subject to Sharia law, and that people had been assaulted for failing to comply.

The East London Mosque's chairman, Dr Muhammad Abdul Bari, dismissed the claims, inviting those with questions about Islam to visit the mosque.

Pictures and video at [eastlondonadvertiser.co.uk](http://eastlondonadvertiser.co.uk)

Dock street plaque – 2019  
photograph, Rehan Jamil



**CLICK HERE!**

[Watch highlights  
of the London  
Jewish Forum's  
commemorative  
event to mark the  
80th Anniversary of  
the Battle of Cable  
Street in 2016](#)



↓ 1978

ROCK  
AGAINST  
RACISM

On 30 April 1978, a crowd gathered in Victoria Park in London's East End. They had come from all over the country - 42 coaches from Glasgow, 15 from Sheffield, an entire trainload from Manchester - marching across London from Trafalgar Square to attend a special all-day concert headlined by Tom Robinson and the Clash. The day had been organised by 'Rock Against Racism',

A GRASSROOTS POLITICAL MOVEMENT THAT USED MUSIC TO CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE LOOMING ELECTORAL THREAT OF THE NATIONAL FRONT.

Rock Against Racism radicalised a generation. It showed that music could do more than just entertain: it could make a difference.

BY DEMONSTRATING THE POWER OF MUSIC TO EFFECT CHANGE IT INSPIRED LIVE AID AND ITS SUPPORTERS CLAIM IT HELPED DESTROY THE NATIONAL FRONT.

Read more on **THE YEAR ROCK FOUND THE POWER TO UNITE [HERE](#)**

←  
**CLICK  
HERE!**

And see more **IMAGES TAKEN BY THE MOVEMENT'S UNOFFICIAL DOCUMENTER SYD SHELTON [HERE](#)**

←  
**CLICK  
HERE!**



Anti Nazi League poster advertising rally and gig - April 30th 1978, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives [www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)





Rock Against Racism badge, courtesy of David Rosenberg's personal collection

Jubilee Street, Stepney, London 1977 RAR  
© Syd Shelton. Courtesy of the artist and Autograph ABP





The 100,000-strong crowd at the Rock Against Racism/Anti-Nazi League Carnival 1, at London's Victoria Park, 30 April 1978.

© Syd Shelton. Courtesy of the artist and Autograph ABP

The Anti-Nazi League (ANL) was founded in 1977 in response to the rise of the National Front, a Fascist party which promoted racial hatred and the compulsory repatriation of immigrants.

Between 1977 and 1979 some 750,000 ANL badges were sold. The badge features the ANL arrow emblem, a reference to the symbol used by anti-Nazi Social Democrats in Germany during the 1930s.

The ANL was closely associated with the Rock Against Racism movement which staged a concert at Victoria Park on 30 April 1978.

## We've got NF supporters in our school. I hate them.



L to R: Karen, Cathy, Lisa, Rosemarie

**THE LOUDEST** applause at the midday rally in Hackney on Black Solidarity Day was for the school students — black and white — who spoke.

And the largest contingent among the 150 or so gathered in front of the town hall were a dozen women students from Clapton School.

Three 4th Formers — Rosemarie, a West Indian, and Cathy and Karen, who are white — spoke to 'Socialist Challenge' about the experiences that led them to join the protest against racist violence and police harassment.

**Rosemarie:** I was chased by the National Front last week. I was going home from my boyfriend's and near London Fields someone shouted there was NF, so I had to climb over walls and things to get away.

Some of them were wearing arm bands saying NF, and they were shouting 'black bastards'. There's a few of the white boys who go around with coloured girls, so the Front were trying to get them as well.

Someone said they heard a gun go off, but I wasn't sure because I was crying and that. It's not safe for people to go out at night.

**Cathy:** The police do nothing about it, either. They pick people up for anything. They got my friend who's black and told him to take his hat off. He was just walking along.

They pulled his hat off and kicked him. They broke his toe and when he told them it was

broken they said 'So what, black bastard'. He came crying to us, the poor little sod.

**Karen:** Because we go around with black people we get called 'slag, tart, nigger lover' — we get it all the time.

I was over the lido in Victoria Park and this lifeguard went over to my friend and said 'Look at that slag there with all those niggers' — pointing at me. 'She needs a good slap'.

We go with black people because you're with them at school. It just happens. If they're born here, they're English — I think so.

**Rosemarie:** It's all lies about black people causing unemployment and bad housing. When they offered blacks jobs on the buses and that it was because whites wouldn't take them.

Some jobs they don't take you for because of your colour.

The racists degrade us. Some kids look at newspapers and

take up what other people say. They hear about Nazis and they copy it. It's just stupid.

**Karen:** We've got NF supporters in school and some of them wear badges. We get a lot from Hoxton.

**Cathy:** We don't talk to them much.

**Karen:** I hate them. In school we talk about racism in English.

**Rosemarie:** We talk about what people do to people and why they do it.

**Cathy:** And about programmes they have on the telly.

**Rosemarie:** Teachers gave out leaflets for today, about black and white unite and fight. But we had to hide them so the deputy head wouldn't find out.

One girl was reading the leaflet and the deputy head took it away and tore it up. She said: 'Don't read that in school. Wait until you get home.'

**Karen:** Most of the teachers are for us coming out today. Some of them will be on the march this evening. It's a good idea to strike; to show that we've got a group to fight against the Front. That it's not just individuals.

**Rosemarie:** If the police aren't going to do anything about the Front, then why can't we have a group to go round beating them up?



Paul Simon, The Clash, Rock Against Racism / Anti-Nazi League Carnival 1, Victoria Park, East London 30 April 1978. The Carnival line-up also included punk poet Patrick Fitzgerald, X-ray Spex, Steel Pulse and Tom Robinson Band © Syd Shelton. Courtesy of the artist and Autograph ABP

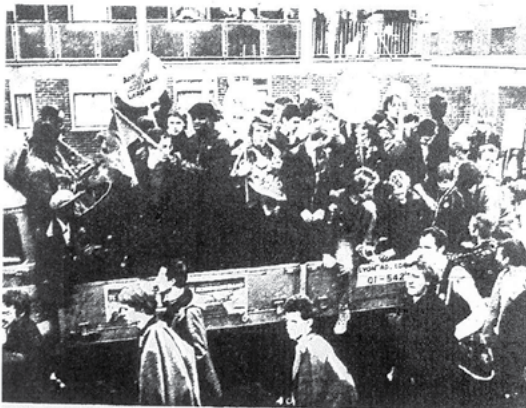
East London Advertiser 5 May 1978,  
 Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History  
 Library & Archives  
[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)



Giant model heads of National Front leaders were prominent.



Yah, that's better. Victoria Park lake had its uses for the foot-weary.



These youngsters took it easy on the march by hitching a ride with the steel band.

# SHOW OF STRENGTH!

WORDS: STEPHEN WALL PHOTOS: TONY BOCK

An enormous show of strength against racism took over East London on Saturday.

At least 80,000 people marched from Trafalgar Square to Victoria Park. Many more were already in the park for a free multi-racial concert and some estimates put the final crowd at 100,000.

The march was so big that when the leaders reached the Bow gate of the park the tail was just leaving Trafalgar Square four and a half miles away.

Organisers and police were staggered by the response. Only 20,000 were expected to turn out and one astonished policeman said: "I've never seen so many people in all my life."

## ENTERTAINED

The protest was organised by the Anti Nazi League, Rock Against Racism, Tower Hamlets Movement Against Racism and Fascism, Hackney Campaign Against Racism and Hackney Community Relations Council.

Top names were booked to appear on the main stage but the East London bodies fixed up the best of local talent to keep the fringe of the vast crowd entertained.

The procession moved off soon after 11 in the morning led by veterans of the Spanish Civil War and Cable Street. They were soon swamped by strangely-dressed punks who were intent on getting to the park first.

East London organisations were there in force - joined by delegations from as far as Scotland, Wales and the continent.

Banners were dominated by the yellow and red colours of the Anti Nazi League. The demonstration resembled a brightly-hued snake as it wound slowly through London.

## SORE THUMBS!

Police who had been robbed of their May day leave were generally in good humour. Those taking the official count with "clickometers" were complaining of sore thumbs, however.

There were nine arrests



The trees came in handy for those after a bird's eye view.

during the day, but Scotland Yard agreed that wasn't bad out of 80,000 people.

The end of the march finally arrived after five o'clock when the third group, Steel Pulse, were just finishing. They were followed by the final act, the Tom Robinson Band, who were given a tumultuous reception.

Those who could not bear the crush near the stage were treated to local groups, fire-eaters, clowns and about 50 stalls. Food and drink stands were under siege

throughout the afternoon.

The Anti Nazi League were delighted with the event. Press Officer Peter Hain said: "It far exceeded our wildest dreams. We hoped for 20,000 and most people thought we were being optimistic."

"It represents a watershed in the fight against racism and the lies of the National Front. Tens of thousands of non-politically motivated kids swelled the march. The Front claim to be making inroads in the schools, that has now been dramatically

reversed."

Bethnal Green and Bow MP Ian Mikardo, who took part in the protest, commented: "It was certainly the biggest political demonstration I've been on in my many years of political demonstrations."

"There were three important aspects. The very high proportion of young children, the fact that it seemed to bring in people from all walks of life and it was the most peaceful and happiest march I've ever been on."



Page 1,  
RAR article,  
Morning Star, 2  
May 1978, Courtesy  
of Tower Hamlets  
Local History  
Library & Archives  
[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)

As the march floods into Victoria Park, a dense crowd gathers with their Anti-Nazi League symbols, while behind banners are still arriving.

M.S.  
2.5.1978 ☆

Up on the stage, above, the comper was asking: "Why are we here?"

Loud and clear came the answer from thousands of throats: "We're all against the Front."

By PHILIP COHEN

A NEW GENERATION of anti-racists is now on the march and will take some stopping.

They showed by their massive presence in London at the weekend that they want nothing to do with the National Front or any other racist organisation.

Teenagers, young people from schools and colleges, teachers and public service workers, young unemployed, punks and rockers literally took over London streets to say: "Never again" in a carnival against the nazis.

Starting from a Trafalgar Square packed to overflowing for the joint Anti-Nazi League and Rock Against Racism rally, the long rambling march through the East End had swollen to over 80,000 by the time it reached Victoria Park, Hackney,

and expanded into a huge rock concert.

It was the young people of Britain taking over the mantle of anti-fascism. Singer Tom Robinson expressed their feeling when he told the rally: "The message of this carnival is 'hands off our people'. Black and white unite and fight together."

**SUNSHINE**

It didn't matter what colour your hair was or how many safety pins you had in your trousers, everyone enjoyed a day out in a peaceful event that must have profoundly depressed Messrs. Webster and Tyndall.

Those two particular gentlemen were there, together with their mentor Adolf Hitler, but only as huge effigies, symbolising opposition to the Front's poisonous message.

As the sun shone down, chords of punk and reggae

echoed out from the stage across a sea of thousands gathered in the park, some perched in trees, while everywhere were the circular symbols of the Anti-Nazi League, a red arrow on yellow.

At Trafalgar Square, Labour MP Audrey Wise said she was delighted to see so many young people together.

"Life is too short to fight each other. The Anti-Nazi League believes in a policy for life, enjoyment and music. The National Front believes in a policy of hate.

"We believe you don't look at your neighbours for scapegoats but at the problems all around it in society. We stand for the politics of friendship."

Actress Miriam Karlin recalled the horrors of the nazi concentration camps — "the sound of cattle-trucks rumbling in the night" — and added: "that is how Hitler started, in-

doctrinating the youth, and that is what the National Front is trying to do here. You have shown by your presence that they will not succeed."

League organiser Paul Holborow said: "This demonstration is British youth telling the fascists where to go. It is also a protest message to Margaret Thatcher and the Select Committee which wants to stop black immigration.

**EAST END**

"The nazis are going to meet their end. This is an activist campaign and we will not rest until we have rooted out the nazis from British politics."

East End Labour MP Ian Mikardo told the rally, armed with thousands of anti-racist placards and whistles: "We know all about fascism in the East End. We took them on in the '30s and pushed them out.

We are taking them on now and are pushing them out.

Indian Workers Association president Vishnu Sharma said people should not be fooled into thinking the National Front was a patriotic party. They were opposed to trade unions and democratic institutions as well as black people.

Unions — NUPE, NALGO and COHSE had banners there, together with several trades councils, the Communist Party executive and branches, the Morning Star, Anti-Nazi League banners from Wales and Scotland and the Socialist Workers Party.

One feature of the demonstration was that black organisations were not in evidence, and neither was any large group of black people, though many of them intermingled with the crowd.

Many present had travelled in coaches from all parts of the country including the North-

West and North-East.

The power of music for enjoyment of life was a major theme of the afternoon—an invitation to rock against racism.

A Caribbean steel band entertained the rally, while later in the park there was a whole succession of punk, reggae and rock—Tom Robinson band, Steel Pulse, the Clash, X-Ray Spex and other groups.

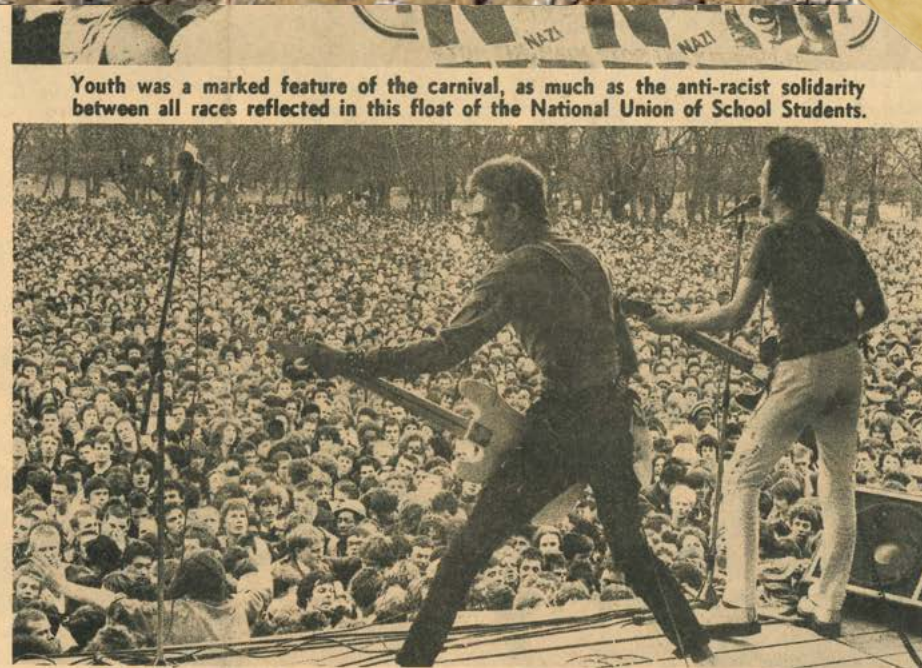
There were stalls from Bethnal Green Hospital workers fighting against closure, and Chile Solidarity and a huge rubber lilo for kids to jump around on to disco music.

At the park, the role of the police was restricted to directing traffic, though as the march moved through Hoxton in the East End, police with horses were massed in side streets to make sure that the few Front supporters who turned out were kept well clear.

Page 2, RAR article  
with 4 featured  
gig photographs,  
Morning Star,  
Courtesy of Tower  
Hamlets Local  
History Library  
& Archives  
[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)



and while the front of the demonstration was entering Victoria Park, people were galgar Square, to form a final park audience of 80,000 people.



Youth was a marked feature of the carnival, as much as the anti-racist solidarity between all races reflected in this float of the National Union of School Students.



How The Clash punk group saw its fans—undoubtedly the largest live audience for whom it has ever performed.

↓ 1978

## PROTESTS ABOUT THE MURDER OF ALTAB ALI

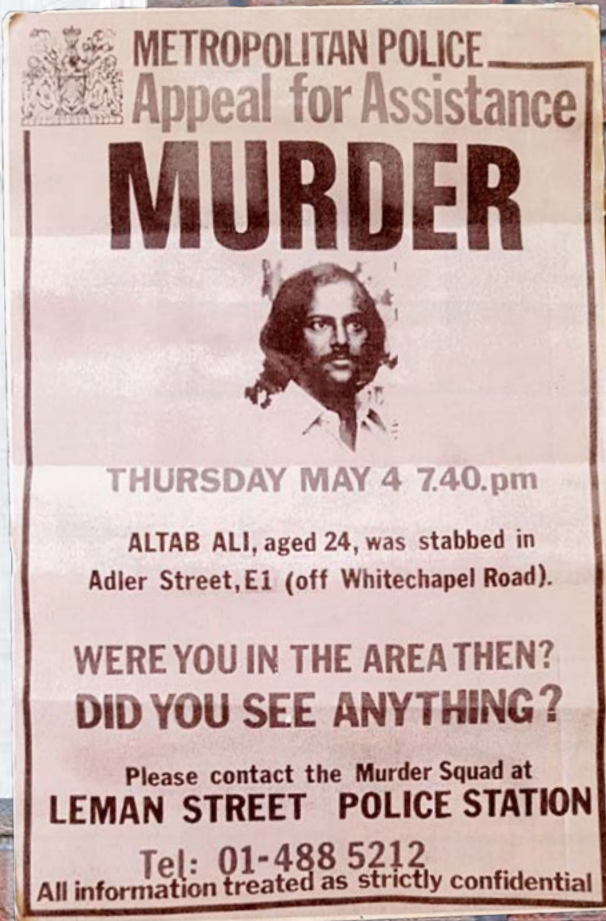
**ALTAB ALI WAS A 25-YEAR-OLD BENGALI WORKER MURDERED IN ADLER STREET, WHITECHAPEL ON 4TH MAY 1978 BY THREE TEENAGE BOYS.**

He was on his way from the small leather garments factory in Hanbury Street where he worked as a machinist, to his home in Wapping.


Altab Ali was the victim of a racist attack. Throughout the 1970s racist attacks on the Bengali community had increased. The murder took place on the night of the 1978 local elections where, in Tower Hamlets, the far right National Front Party was standing for election in 43 seats; far more than they ever had previously. Even though they did not get the number of votes they were aiming for, their involvement provoked a highly charged atmosphere in the local area.

**ALTAB ALI'S MURDER WAS THE WAKE UP CALL THAT RAISED PEOPLE'S AWARENESS ABOUT THE GENERAL LEVEL OF RACIST VIOLENCE IN THE EAST END,**

at that time common across the borough of Tower Hamlets and beyond. But Altab Ali's death marked a turning point. Ten days later, on 14 May, about 7,000 people marched from the site of his death to Hyde Park, to mourn his death in a spirit of resistance and to demand police protection. After a campaign of sit-down protests, the National Front, whose headquarters were not far from Brick Lane, were forced out of the area within the year. The local Bengali youth movement and the Anti-Nazi League were born out of the events of 1978 – and far-right extremists suffered a huge setback.



**METROPOLITAN POLICE**  
**Appeal for Assistance**  
**MURDER**



**THURSDAY MAY 4 7.40 pm**

ALTAB ALI, aged 24, was stabbed in  
Adler Street, E1 (off Whitechapel Road).

**WERE YOU IN THE AREA THEN?  
DID YOU SEE ANYTHING?**

Please contact the Murder Squad at  
**LEMAN STREET POLICE STATION**

Tel: 01-488 5212  
All information treated as strictly confidential

Copy of Metropolitan  
Police appeal for  
assistance poster, 1978 –  
© Copyright and courtesy  
of Paul Trevor

# Community under attack: Brick Lane 1978



Paul Trevor, a member of Fiat and the Half Moon Photography Workshop, talked to Camerawork. How did this set of pictures come about? Well, these pictures have been drawn from a much larger body of work that I've been doing for over five years now in my neighbourhood. All these photos were taken last year. They're not typical of my pictures as a whole but then, as most people know, last year wasn't

a typical year in the Brick Lane area. Most of these pictures illustrated a recent book called *Blood on the Streets* and I'm hoping that publishing them in Camerawork will draw people's attention to that book, which I very much want people to read. Do you regard yourself as a community photographer? No, I don't regard myself as somebody else's label. Let me just say that the pictures that I take in my

neighbourhood are for myself. It's a personal thing. If they're of interest to other people, that's fine. If they're of use to the local community that's even better. Like I said, it's a personal thing - a sort of visual diary. After a while a picture of the neighbourhood automatically begins to emerge, but I wouldn't claim that it represents the community. If anything, I suppose the pictures are about myself. So I don't know if that

makes me a community photographer or not, and it doesn't matter to me in the least. I'm not primarily interested in photography. I'm much more interested in people - you know taking pictures is simple, relationships aren't. And looking back on all my photographs I can see that they're about relationships. That's why I said that I don't think this set of pictures is very typical of what I've been doing.

Do you think that photographs can be used to improve race relations? It depends who is using them. That's why it's important for me to have control over how my pictures are used. *"Blood on the Streets"*, Bethnal Green and Stepney Trades Council. Available from: 2 Cable Street, London E1. Price £1 (+ 30p p+p)

Most Bengaleses in East London come from Sylhet, a rural and poverty stricken district in the north east of Bangladesh. The traditional image of the Bengaleses is one of a gentle and peaceful nature. The Bengaleses community in Tower Hamlets has carefully preserved many of the values and customs of Sylhet's village life.



Extreme right-wing political activity is not new in Brick Lane. In times of economic recession immigrants are blamed for high unemployment and other social ills of the area. In the Thirties it was Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists who attacked the Jews. In 1978 it is the National Front and the British Movement who have raised the violence of recent years against the Bengaleses to even greater proportions.



14th May. Thousands of Bengaleses march in pouring rain from Whitechapel to Hyde Park behind the coffin of Altab Ali. 25 year old Altab Ali, the first of three victims of racist murder in the East End during the year, was stabbed in the neck on the night of local council elections in which 41 NF candidates stood.



14th May. 10,000 Asians rally at Hyde Park and then go on to No. 10 Downing Street. This was one of the biggest demonstrations by Asians ever seen in Britain. Not a single word about it appeared in *The Daily Mail*, *The Daily Telegraph* or *The Daily Express*.



Like the Jewish immigrants before them, the majority of Bengaleses who work in Tower Hamlets are employed in the rag-trade - mainly in the lower level of pay and conditions. Some clothing workers may still be the breadwinners of large families back in Sylhet.



Growing up with violence. By June Brick Lane becomes the most heavily policed area in Britain outside Ulster.



The experience of life in East London leads many Bengaleses families to accept racial abuse and attack as a constant factor of everyday life.



Pelham Buildings, Spitalfields. Most of the Bengaleses families living in Pelham Buildings are squatters, having been subjected to violence and harassment in council flats elsewhere in the East End, and are seeking the protection that large numbers of fellow Bengaleses provide.



Victim of racial attack with his wife and brother-in-law. Abdul was knocked unconscious by a hail of rocks through his grocery shop window.



Police move on a gang of skinheads roaming in Spitalfields. On 11th June 150 white youths rampaged through Brick Lane shouting 'Kill the black bastards' and smashing the windows of Bengaleses shops and cars.



17th July. 8,000 Black workers go on a one-day strike against racial violence and intimidation. This was the first industrial action of its kind in Britain, but Fleet Street chose not to report it.



Member of the National Front selling *National Front News* at the top of Brick Lane. It is this sort of racist provocation, with police protection, that is the inflammatory factor threatening law and order in the area.



16th July. Thousands of anti-racists occupy the top of Brick Lane and prevent the National Front from selling their papers for the first time.



1st December. A response to symptoms: Home Secretary Merlyn Rees opens the Brick Lane police station, the only new public amenity in the area for years. The root causes of racism - unemployment, bad housing etc - remain.



20th August. Hackney and Tower Hamlets Defence Committee and the Anti-Nazi League organise a massive march through the East End. Young Bengaleses adopt a more aggressive stand than many of their elders and play a critical role in mobilising the community.



24th September. The National Front move their headquarters from Twickenham, Surrey to Shoreditch, alongside the Bengaleses community. Martin Webster addresses his followers.



Meeting in St Mary's Churchyard, Whitechapel where Altab Ali had been murdered. With the ineffectiveness of the Race Relations Acts and the failure of the forces of law and order to deal with continuing attacks and provocation, Bengaleses begin to call for the formation of self-defence groups.



# BRICK LANE & BEYOND:



AN INQUIRY INTO RACIAL STRIFE AND  
VIOLENCE IN TOWER HAMLETS

Pamphlets  
300.2  
Box 1



Socialist Challenge, 20 July 1978 - Message from East End Strike against Racism with image of Sunday sit down on Brick Lane, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)

## Socialist Challenge

Message from East End strike against racism is  
**'WE WANT YOU  
WITH US EVERY  
SUNDAY'**



The sit-down on Sunday that kept the fascists out of Brick Lane

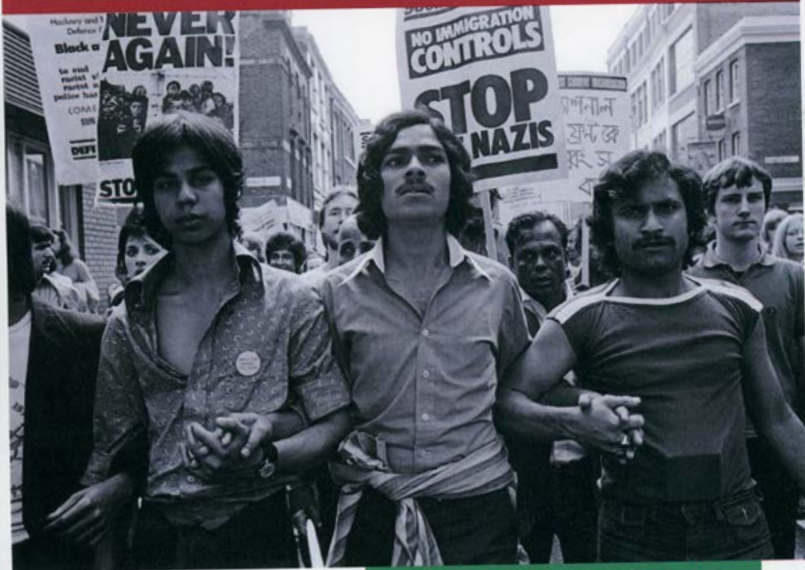
INSIDE: Eric Heffer, Bob Rowthorn, Alex Callinicos discuss Eurocommunism — p 7-10  
Roger Protz on 'The Limits of Media Liberalism' — p 15

Brick Lane and Beyond Pamphlet Equality and Human Rights Commission Front Cover, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives [www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)

# COMMEMORATING ALTAB ALI DAY 4 MAY

3002  
Box 2

## AGAINST RACISM AND FASCISM



**BRICK LANE, 20 AUGUST  
1978. DEMO BY TOWER  
HAMLETS DEFENCE  
COMMITTEE AND THE  
ANTI-NAZI LEAGUE.**

**UNITED**  
FIGHTING RACISM  
AND FASCISM



© PAUL TREVOR

Commemorating Altab Ali Day pamphlet  
by Altab Ali Foundation (Ref No LC7790),  
Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local  
History Library & Archives  
[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)



### Wall of silence

THE MASS media was true to form. The TV coverage showed Bengalis arguing amongst themselves. The papers underplayed the event.

The bulk of The Times report concentrated on Merlyn Ree's discussions with the Bangladesh High Commissioner! The Mirror did not mention the day's

events. Nor did the Sun and the Mail.

The Express had four tiny paragraphs on page 5 which described the police arrests as the eruption of 'racial clashes'.

The Morning Star was the only daily paper to have the story on its front page as the lead. Newline followed the rest of the dailies and led on the Heathrow 'security

measures'. It did have a centre-spread on Brick Lane, though, and the photographs were good.

Why this wall of silence by the bourgeois media? Because the lessons must not be spread. Blacks reading about these events might decide to imitate them.

So the self-censorship of the British media operates once again. But the message will spread. Through our papers and meetings and word of mouth.

Photo: ANDREW WILKINSON (Report)

Wall of Silence, 20 July 1978 Socialist  
Challenge, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets  
Local History Library & Archives  
[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)



1993

THE REVOLT  
OF THE ISLE  
OF DOGS

IN SEPTEMBER 1993, **BRITISH NATIONAL PARTY [BNP]** SUPPORTERS WENT ON A VIOLENT RAMPAGE DOWN BRICK LANE.

They smashed the windows of shops and restaurants – injuring several people.

One week later, Derek Beackon won the BNP's first ever council seat – on the Isle of Dogs.

It seemed that from nowhere, the Nazis were on the streets and in the council chamber. There was **shock and outrage** in the local community.

The day after the BNP won, council workers on the Isle of Dogs held an anti-racist strike in protest.

That Sunday the Anti-Nazi League called a protest to clear the BNP sale from its pitch.

Hundreds of local Bengali youth joined anti-fascist protesters. The BNP were chased from their sales pitch – they have never returned.

The final blow to the BNP was the Unite Against Racism demonstration in March 1994.

**OVER 40,000 PEOPLE MARCHED THROUGH TOWER HAMLETS SENDING A CLEAR MESSAGE TO THE BNP – YOU ARE NOT WELCOME HERE.**

A huge "Don't Vote Nazi" campaign organised on the Isle of Dogs ensured that Beackon and the BNP were defeated in the May 1994 council elections.

Derek Beackon, one time BNP councillor and BNP official holds racist newspaper at a rally in Bethnal Green called to try to raise racial tension in the area.  
Photograph © David Hoffman



Riot Police arrest an Anti-Nazi League protester at demonstration in East London 16.10.1993 when demonstrators tried to march on the BNP book store, © Alex MacNaughton, Impact photos, courtesy Bishopsgate Institute

Black reporter meets Beackon ++ He admits £100 fine ++ 'I am racist' ++ Thugs bang on window



RACE WINNER: Our man Kizzi meets neo-Nazi councillor Derek Beackon

# 'I'll buy you a pint whenever you like' BUT BNP CHIEF'S PALS TELL OUR MAN TO \*\*\*\* OFF

By KIZZI NKWOCHA  
**RACIST Derek Beackon put on his Mr Nice Guy act yesterday—and offered to buy a black man a pint.**  
I was the black man. And Mr Beackon did his best to be diplomatic when I asked what he thought of me.  
"You look like a nice chap," he said

as he celebrated being the first neo-Nazi to win a council seat in 15 years.  
"I'd have a drink with you, any time—yes, I'd go out with you."  
His affable overtures were marred by the reactions of his British National Party henchmen in a nearby pub. They booped on the windows, shouting: "\*\*\*\* off, you black bastard."  
And his supporters obviously had little time for the News of the World. When I told them which paper I represented, one of them described it as "that leftist rag."  
Despite these setbacks to good race relations, I asked Mr Beackon for a phone number so I could look him up.  
As photographers crowded round, I suggested they give the new councillor a chance to write the number down—in case any troublemakers heard it—as we were, after all, civilised people.  
Mr Beackon looked at me and said: "Are you? Well, YOU seem to be."  
The 46-year-old jobsite driver was elected by a seven-vote majority to represent Millwall on East London's Tower Hamlets council.  
The deprived area's Asian population is almost 40 per cent.  
It has a long history of racial tension—earlier this month, 17-year-old Asian Quadis Ali was beaten almost to death by eight whites. He was "stable" on a life-support machine yesterday.  
I asked Mr Beackon if he described himself as a racist.  
He replied: "If you mean, do I put my own people first, then yes. And by my own people, I mean white people."

"The British National Party said a lot I agree with. This was always a poor area but there was never the crime there today. And so much of it looks run-down."—GRAN AGED 82  
"Since Thursday's election, there has been an expectancy of trouble. It's as much my fault as anyone's because I didn't bother to vote against the BNP."—LOCAL LAD, 21  
"There are thousands of empty private homes and the council houses are so rundown. People need someone to blame and they are blaming the Asians."  
—BLACK RESIDENT  
would help only white residents and insisted he was ready to act for all his constituents.  
Asked to account for his change of heart, he said: "I didn't know I was going to be elected."  
Smartly-dressed, Mr Beackon admitted having a criminal record.  
He was fined £100 for obstruction during a pro-Nazi rally two years ago.  
"I was selling the British newspaper the British Nationalist when police told me to move on," he said. "I tried to argue and they nicked me."  
Will we be having that drink together? Alas, it looks like I'll be buying my own. When I rang his number, I got no reply. ● THE BNP have threatened to turn out in

CRISIS IN BRITAIN ++ CRISIS IN BRITAIN ++ CRISIS IN BRITAIN

Black reporter meets Beackon', News of the World article, 19 September 1993; Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives [www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)



Derek Beackon shares a cup of tea with a tearful Geraldine and Philip Johnson

# Eviction fury grows

THE BNP's Derek Beackon was accused of being an unfit councillor after he helped fight off the bailiffs outside the home of an illegal tenant.  
Cllr Beackon, who says the BNP stands for law and order, went on his first job as new councillor for Millwall, on Tuesday.  
He was supporting asthmatic Geraldine Johnson who had been told to leave a house in Thermopylae Gate by 12.30pm.  
But after the police, council officers and bailiffs turned up they went away empty handed and postponed the eviction indefinitely.  
Cllr Beackon told the Advertiser: "Gerry's family has lived on the Island for generations, but now the neighbourhood says it needs the place for a larger family whatever that means."

## Beackon 'not fit' for job on the Island

people can now judge him more clearly for what he is."  
A spokesman from Bow County Court refused to say why the eviction was postponed, but added: "There were many reasons why we decided to postpone the eviction. But it will go ahead."  
**SQUATTING**  
A spokeswoman for Isle of Dogs Neighbourhood said Geraldine, whose family have lived on the island 150 years, was squatting as she did not have the tenancy to her uncle's house, but had an offer of another home.

# Police escort to council meeting

NEW BNP councillor Derek Beackon was given a police escort as he went to his first ever council meeting this week.  
Officers staged a massive operation at the new town hall in Leamouth on Tuesday night after Beackon warned them he would be turning up.  
They outnumbered demonstrators by nearly two to one. About 25 Anti-Nazi League supporters turned up and nearly 40 from East London War Against Racism.  
But Beackon had no idea the demonstrators were chanting "You play the racist

game. Tower Hamlets Council you're to blame" and waving huge banners 200 yards from the chamber.  
He arrived with only two BNP mates after agreeing with the police an army of supporters were not "necessary". He was not impressed by the meeting inside where councillors decided to hand out an extra £10,000 to THREEC, the borough's Race Equality Council.  
When asked what he thought of the decision Beackon said: "What's THREEC? I don't know enough about it. I'll have to think about it."

He said later: "The meeting was a bit boring."  
"It was full of figures and petty bickering. I'm only an ordinary working class bloke and most of the councillors are middle class blokes, and for me it will take a little bit of understanding."  
Just before the 7pm start Beackon had been invited to sit with other councillors but he preferred to sit among the strictly controlled public gallery.  
Labour councillors who had threatened to boycott any meetings attended by Beackon decided to stay to give him as little publicity as possible.

As the meeting started a protester from ELWAR stood up and accused the whole council of being racist for introducing passport checks when handing out homes.  
Toby Adams, 31, of Amhurst Road, Hackney, was escorted out by the police after saying: "Tower Hamlets is responsible for this fiasco tonight. Getting to this meeting is like breaking into Fort Knox."  
"There were no arrests and no clashes between demonstrators outside, according to Limehouse's Supt Dave McDonald.

**OFFERED**  
"Someone has tipped me off they want it for an Asian family."  
But neighbourhood bosses say a white family with four kids already living on the Island has been offered the house. The family, an Isle of Dogs spokeswoman said, are next on the housing waiting list.  
Labour chief John Biggs blasted: "Cllr Beackon has shown that not only does he not know what he is talking about but also he has no interest in the Island and is only prepared to work for local people on his own nasty terms."  
**WASTE**  
"All he has done is to waste council money, prolong the agony for the family who needs this home and show his unfitness to be a councillor."  
"Perhaps his actions are useful though, because

# Bishop lays blame on Christians

THE Bishop of Stepney has blamed the BNP victory in Millwall on fellow Christians.  
He reckons Cllr Derek Beackon's supporters have succeeded in having "hundreds of individual conversations" about problems like housing - an area where Christians had failed.  
The Rt Rev Richard Chartres even declared it was easier for him to chat with Muslim youngsters than East End Christians.  
In a letter to Church of England worshippers in Tower Hamlets, he stated: "We should take every opportunity to make sure that the area continues to

Article about the election of, and public response to, Derek Beackon, East London Advertiser, 7 October 1993, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives [www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)

# WAKE UP WHITES!



Since the local Council elections in May 1994 the new Labour administration has put its full multi-racial machine into overdrive. LABOUR has 43 Councillors out of 50, and 15 of these are Asian - just under 35%. Between now and the next round of local elections there will be by-elections from time to time. In some of these elections LABOUR will certainly field more Asian candidates. That is why we say **WAKE UP WHITES!** If LABOUR get just 7 more Asian Councillors this will give them 22 - almost 52% of LABOUR seats. **THEY WILL THEN HAVE THE MAJORITY SAY IN TOWER HAMLETS.** Many Asian Councillors already hold positions of authority on the Council - for example Chair/Vice Chair of their departments. Our new Mayor is COUNCILLOR GHULAM MORTUZA OF SPITALFIELDS WARD, and control of the Council has been grabbed by the loony-left in alliance with Bengalis. Around Brick Lane whites are being told openly in the street not to enter the area. We ask you to consider - who do you trust to preserve our traditional way of life?

## ASIAN COUNCILLORS IN TOWER HAMLETS

1. Nooruddin Ahmed.....Holy Trinity
2. Joseph Ramanoop.....Holy Trinity
3. Ataur Rahman.....Spitalfields
4. Ghulam Mortuza.....Spitalfields
5. Syed Mizan.....Spitalfields
6. Ala Uddin.....St. Peter's
7. Sunahwar Ali.....Weavers
8. Mohammed Ali.....Weavers
9. Soyful Alom.....Limehouse
10. Mohammed Uddin.....St. Dunstan's
11. Abdus Shukur.....Shadwell
12. Pola Manzila Uddin.....Shadwell
13. Abdul Asad.....St. Katherine's
14. Rajan Uddin Jalal.....St. Katherine's
15. Bodrul Alom.....St. Mary's

## BRITISH NATIONAL PARTY

Printed & published by British National Party, PO Box 300, Emma Street, London E2 7BZ

Form 30 - BNP (1997) P. 27/1

## TOWER HAMLETS HALL OF SHAME

● Former Council leader JOHN BIGGS fought a desperate battle to keep his position, after a challenge from Asians and Councillors who are even more extreme left-wing than he is. This battle of egos went on for months until Biggs was thrown out, leaving the contestants little time to deal with the issues that affect you. Councillor RAJAN JALAL, one of the main leadership contenders, was suspended for months for his involvement in a hoax letter intended to discredit Biggs, thus enhancing his own leadership chances.

● Chairman of Housing, Councillor PHIL MAXWELL, has announced plans to knock two properties into one to house overcrowded families. He went on to say that "Every aspect of housing will be monitored in line with codes set out by the COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY". This will undoubtedly suit the many large Asian families - at the expense of two normal sized families.

● Former Council Leader JOHN BIGGS supported the scrapping of the SONS & DAUGHTERS housing scheme after the COMMISSION FOR RACIAL EQUALITY slammed it as being "racist". It is reassuring to know that this unselected quango is in a position to decide the policies of the Council you pay for.

● Chair of Social Services 'YVE AMOR has refused to give a toddlers' playgroup a grant of £1,700 because it was for CHRISTIANS, but at the same Committee meeting agreed to a grant of £12,000 for a BANGLADESHI MUMS AND TODDLERS GROUP. Not bad coming from a Council which says it supports equality for everyone in the borough!

● JULIA MAINWARING, Chair of Education, in commenting on a Tower Hamlets booklet detailing over 200 multicultural fiction titles said: "This list is particularly welcome in Tower Hamlets which is home to such an ethnically diverse population". As these people live in Britain why can't they read British books written in English? COUNCILLOR MAINWARING was recently shortlisted to stand as a Labour Parliamentary candidate in Cardiff North in Wales. Where do her priorities lie, with the people of Millwall or those of Wales?

● SYED MIZAN, Vice Chair of Planning & Environment, recently opposed plans for the development of 40 one- and two- bed flats on the Isle of Dogs. He said: "We want to see larger properties". So do many large Asian families in Tower Hamlets! So much for 1 bed flats for the island's 'homeless at home'!

## BRITISH NATIONAL PARTY



Find out more about the BNP by writing for information. Please fill in your name and address below and send it to us with 50p. In stamps to cover costs. Post to PO Box 300, Emma Street, London E2 7BZ

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

BNP election leaflet: 'Wake Up Whites', 1995, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives [www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)

This is Councillor Beakon's Britain, Today 1993, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives [www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)

# Councillor Beakon's Britain

TODAY 18/9/93



■ Community divisions

## How lucky to live in multicultural utopia

John Rush, Lilley Close, Wapping writes:

I had to laugh at last week's coverage in the ELA over anti-facist protesters turning out to demonstrate against the English Defence League (EDL).

The "extremists" of the UK congregated in Tower Hamlets to bore us rigid with the usual fables and, of course, all in the name of free speech.

The Battle of Cable Street rerun this most certainly was not. The loony left, incapable of garnering from the entire country any more than a couple of thousand deluded souls living in cuckoo land and proclaiming the old routine: you disagree with us then you're racist.

We endured two pages of the ELA given to these self-hating, grey cell-deprived people who are one of two things, mentally bankrupt or completely cloned copies of a little wooden chap with a friend named Jiminy Cricket.

There is no division they proclaimed, no sexism, no racism, no bigotry there is only Islamophobia, we are a completely united community anyone disagreeing with our goldfish bowl mentality is a bigot or racist.

Oh how lucky are we to exist in this multicultural heavenly utopia.

Then the same ELA, purveyor of such glorious news of a united community, in the same edition, gives a platform on the letters page to Shamsul Miah, a Muslim, telling how his religion has been hijacked by extremism,

forcing sexist and sectarian ideals on to the agenda.

Sad for Mr Miah that no one dares to voice concern about it because our politicians are living in denial.

Consider this, gay rights campaigner Peter Tatchell has no political aspirations in Tower Hamlets, he has been assaulted on numerous occasions fighting against racism and for equality.

He got battered trying to arrest Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, he got viciously assaulted fighting for gay rights in Russia. He, like everyone else, knows Tower Hamlets has a serious sectarian problem.

Then view the other side, Mayor Rahman and Labour's John Biggs, who both pander in silence.

Thatchell carried a placard at the EDL march which read: "Stop EDL and far-right Islamasists, no to ALL hate!"

He speaks for all the people of the East End regardless of race, creed or colour.

■ Bengali weddings

## Segregation goes on all the time here

Anne J Smith, Wapping writes: Shamsul Miah's letter about segregation at Bengali weddings came as no surprise to me because that sort of thing is going on all the time here.

It has been an issue with me that the Bengalis try to converse in Arabic when meeting on the bus for example, but, after a while, they struggle and slither back into their Bengali language.

This is where I could help them out because I lived in

Newham Recorder, Community Divisions, 2013, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives

[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)



Anti-racist-demo Brick Lane/ Bethnal Green Road, 1993 © Phil Maxwell

Footage of the violence on the street can be seen via a news report [here](#).

← CLICK HERE!

# ↓ 2011

## ENGLISH DEFENCE LEAGUE MARCH & ANTI-RACIST RALLY

Large crowds assembled in east London to oppose a demonstration by the far-right [English Defence League](#) on Saturday 3 September 2011. There were frequent angry confrontations. At one stage EDL members chanted "You're scum and you know you are" to foreign tourists, while an Asian man singled out for abuse shouted back: "I'm as English as you are".

Hundreds of residents and anti-fascist campaigners converged on Whitechapel Road close to the East London Mosque, a target for members of the EDL, amid a police presence of around 3,000 officers, some in riot gear. Muslims accuse the EDL of fostering hate against them through claims that a gradual "Islamisation" of Britain is taking place.

As he began his speech, the EDL's founder, Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, 28, who uses the name [Tommy Robinson](#), appeared to be led away by police. He was under court restrictions after being convicted of leading a fight at a football match in Luton that year.

More information [here](#)

## Racists who attempt to divide us 'shall not pass'

I am immensely proud of the way in which people in our borough joined together last weekend to make sure that the bigots and racists of the English Defence League did not march through Tower Hamlets.

It was hugely encouraging to see the rich diversity that is our community gather to hear speakers such as the 96-year-old veteran of Cable Street, Max Levitas.

He reminded us all of the powerful history of our borough and that the defeat of Oswald Mosley's Blackshirts in the 1930s by working people, many of them at that time Jewish immigrants, held very real lessons for all of us today.

The slogan "they shall not pass" was born then, and it was proudly on display again last Saturday.

The EDL decided to target Tower Hamlets not only



■ Lutfur Rahman

because of our large Bangladeshi and other ethnic minority communities, but also because they wished to exploit the terrible murder of drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich.

Sadly, some of the wild claims they used to encourage their supporters had been lifted directly from newspaper columns of prominent journalists in national newspapers.

“The EDL and their ilk with their message of hate and division will never be welcome

Such claims – invariably wrapped in a malevolent Islamophobia – have often been lazily repeated locally by many who should know better.

Fortunately, many national and local political, faith and community figures do know a whole lot better and were happy to lend their support to my successful campaign to stop the EDL from marching anywhere near

the East London Mosque. Nationally, the campaign was supported by former government ministers such as Clare Short and by trade union leaders such as Len McCluskey, general secretary of Unite.

United East End and United Against Fascism helped mobilise support from people across our borough and beyond. And it was good to see so many supporters from our churches, mosques and synagogues as well as from London Sikh temples and the LGBT community out on the streets.

I am as grateful to all of them, as I am to you, that once again we have showed that Tower Hamlets is united against racism.

The EDL and their ilk with their message of hate and division will never be welcome in our rich, diverse and united borough.

Racists who attempt to divide us 'shall not pass' Lutfur Rahman, East London Advertiser 2011, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives [www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)



# Keep EDL Out of the East End For anti-racists' right to march

**T**HE racist English Defence League (EDL) efforts to march through Tower Hamlets are an enormous provocation. They want to provoke anger amongst youth and workers in a borough with the highest percentage of Muslims in Britain.

The EDL has many right-wing extremists in its leadership, including former BNP members such as EDL leader Tommy Robinson. These right-wing thugs see the EDL as an opportunity to develop a street fighting force that could in the future be used against striking workers or young people protesting to defend their education, as well as to whip up racial divisions in our communities.

### EDL can be stopped

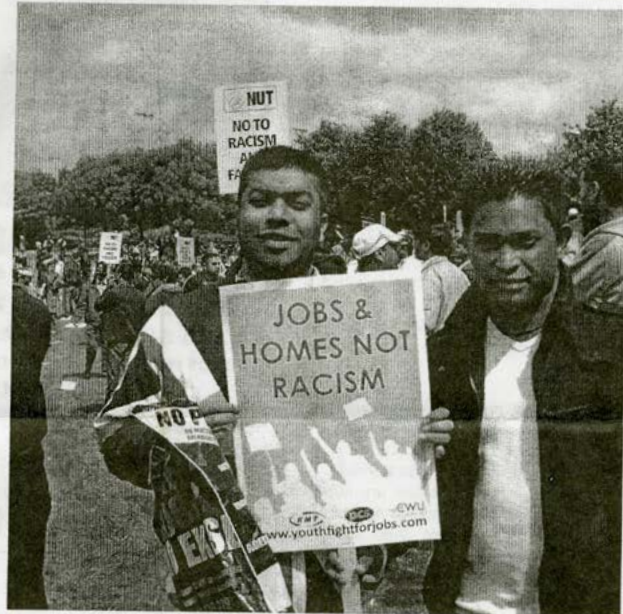
THE FAR-RIGHT has not been able to organise public activity in Tower Hamlets since 1993 when the BNP were driven out of Brick Lane. A determined campaign of local youth organised by Youth against Racism in Europe (YRE) among others saw them forced out of the area. The Socialist Party was also involved in this campaign.

Last year's 5,000+ strong demo, when the EDL were forced to cancel their march, gave just a glimpse of the huge opposition to the EDL in Tower Hamlets.

### Police bans or mass campaign?

Mayor Lutfur Rahman led a call for the EDL march to be banned by the government. As we warned, the police have now used this as a justification for the banning of all marches in Tower Hamlets and five other London boroughs over the next thirty days.

The ban did not keep the EDL out of Tower Hamlets as they still had the right to hold a 'static demonstration'. The police ban on the EDL demo in Leicester last year did not prevent their thugs from viciously attacking local people out shopping. In Leicester, the police, council leaders, and unfortunately some trade union leaders, urged anti-racists to stay at home. Fortunately many ignored this, and so the EDL were eventually chased



way by thousands of mainly Asian young people, together with trade unionists and socialists, who came out onto the streets to defend their communities.

The people of Tower Hamlets have continued to demand our right to mass, organised demonstration on 3 September. As we have argued, Mayor Rahman should be using his powers to mobilise real mass defence of the borough. He could have organised meetings on estates to explain the threat of the EDL and ask estates to elect defence committees. He could have recruited extra Community Safety Officers, elected by estate committees, appointed specifically for the day to support the defence of these estates.

### Working class unity to fight the cuts

THERE IS also a danger that, unless the campaign against the EDL is united with the campaign to stop the cuts, the EDL

could win some support in our borough. Tower Hamlets remains the third poorest area in the country. But the wealth of the richest people in the world passes through hands in Canary Wharf and we don't even see the crumbs.

The banks and big business and their friends in the mainstream political parties want working class people to pay for the massive economic crisis they have created. But there is no need for massive cuts and job losses. If the banks and major companies were nationalised and run democratically, we could end the speculation of the market and use the enormous wealth of big business to conduct a massive programme of public works to provide the much needed extra housing and jobs. A socialist plan of production could be developed across the country – and prepare the way for similar movements across the world.



Photograph of Smash the EDL and BNP protest placard, 3 September 2011 (Anti-Fascism March in Tower Hamlets)

©Rehan Jamil



Socialist Party Newsletter, 2011, Courtesy of Bishopsgate Institute

Image of EDL March, East London and Docklands Advertiser 11 September, 2013



#### THE EDL IS VIOLENT.

Its core supporters are members of football hooligan firms who have joined forces to form a racist street army.

EDL demonstrations have regularly descended into violence. EDL supporters have rampaged through town centres - such as Stoke-on-Trent and Dudley - attacking Asian and Black people, smashing windows of homes, shops and cars and attacking mosques and, in one case, a Hindu temple.

Three Asian men were beaten up during a recent EDL demo in Dagenham, with one suffering four fractures to his face. In Luton, Asian residents had their windows smashed and EDL graffiti daubed on their homes hours after an EDL demo.

#### THE EDL IS A DANGER TO US ALL.

It started by targeting the Muslim community, now it is increasingly aiming its violence at other traditional targets of fascism, physically attacking trade union demos, antiracist and socialist meetings and anti-cuts protestors as well as Black and Asian people.

EDL leader 'Tommy Robinson' has issued threats to school and college students protesting over tuition fees. EDL thugs have even invaded a trade union and community bookshop in Liverpool.



#### GET INVOLVED

The 'Sikhs Against the EDL' campaign offers a variety of volunteering opportunities as a powerful force for change, both for those who volunteer and for the wider community.

The choice of volunteering opportunities range from e-activism to field work with your local network.

E-mail: [movement@turbancampaign.com](mailto:movement@turbancampaign.com)  
Call: 0203-468-2734  
Twitter: @turbancampaign  
You can also find us on Facebook!

#### CAMPAIGNS OF INTEREST



Show Racism the Red Card

#### WEBSITES OF INTEREST

- [www.turbancampaign.com](http://www.turbancampaign.com)
- [www.uaf.org.uk](http://www.uaf.org.uk)
- [www.hopenothate.org.uk/hate-groups/edl](http://www.hopenothate.org.uk/hate-groups/edl)
- [www.fait-matters.org](http://www.fait-matters.org)
- [www.nus.org.uk/Campaigns/BlackStudents](http://www.nus.org.uk/Campaigns/BlackStudents)
- [www.lovemusichateracism.com](http://www.lovemusichateracism.com)

## 'Sikhs say NO to EDL'



(ABOVE: Sikh elder harassed in Dudley)

Sikhs Against EDL pamphlet 2011, Courtesy Bishopsgate Institute

#### SIKH COMMUNITY SPEAKS OUT

We, the Sikh community, are deeply concerned by the rise in fascism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and racism. The English Defence League (EDL) has organised events across the country, stirring up hatred, Islamophobia and racism - running riot in some cases and provoking violent attacks on Muslim, Black and Asian communities and on Mosques and Mandirs (Hindu temples).

Alongside this the British National Party (BNP) has received unprecedented electoral support for a fascist organisation in Britain.

They are using the old tactics of 'divide and rule' and are trying to divide the Asians by isolating the Muslim community. Furthermore, some misguided Sikh youth are letting themselves to be used by the EDL while a Sikh man disgracefully joined the BNP. These people are helping to spread mistrust within our communities and we whole heartedly condemn their actions.

At a time of economic crisis with mass unemployment and impending deep public spending cuts - if the racists are allowed to make any further gains then we all would suffer from grave consequences.

**"We urge all Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews and people of other faiths to come together to strongly condemn the actions of these racist organisations and unite to turn back this tide of hatred."**



(ABOVE: Luton counter-demonstration)

#### SIKHISM teaches that everyone has a right to live according to their beliefs and religion

The Sikh Gurus have defended, safeguarded, fought and sacrificed to uphold the rights of others no matter what their religion, caste, gender or race.

The message promoted by the Sikh Gurus is to allow all to live freely without undue interference and restrictions. This philosophy was vigorously defended by all the Sikh Gurus but came into sharp focus when the ninth Sikh master, *Guru Teg Behadur* choose to sacrifice his life in defence of the Kashmiri Hindus who were being persecuted by the Mughal government during that time.

#### ACTION REPORT

In November 2010 our group (Turban Campaign) signed a joint statement condemning the EDL. Little did we know at the time that our action would trigger off a national anti-EDL campaign within the Sikh community which would result in significant media coverage on the radio, in newspapers and on TV and would lead to the distribution of over 6,000 leaflets in a period of two months.

**"Never had I imagined that I would spend week after week for months on end campaigning against a fascist organisation. However, that is exactly what happened!"**

Since becoming 'active' and uniting under the banner 'Sikhs Against the EDL' we have had the opportunity to be involved with some high-level consulting work with the police service, engage in interfaith work, speak on campus to University Sikh societies and we have also been successful in informing vulnerable misled Sikh youth.

Our campaign was also present at the Vaisakhi celebrations and collected hundreds of signatures from the Sikh community condemning the EDL.



I believe that our efforts have been extremely important in delivering heavy blows to the EDL's propaganda campaign in which our community were being misrepresented.

We believe the most effective way to defeat racism and fascism is to campaign and mobilise against it. The EDL cannot be banned out of existence, it must be defeated by political campaigning to mobilise communities against the bigotry they promote and the hatred they incite.

by Varinder Singh, TurbanCampaign.com



**COUNCIL of MOSQUES**  
TOWER HAMLETS



**EAST LONDON MOSQUE**



**METROPOLITAN POLICE**

Working together for a safer London

Information for the community  
The Council of Mosques  
The East London Mosque  
&  
Metropolitan Police Service

[www.eastlondonmosque.org.uk](http://www.eastlondonmosque.org.uk)  
[www.councilofmosques.com](http://www.councilofmosques.com)  
[cms.met.police.uk/met/boroughs/tower\\_hamlets/index](http://cms.met.police.uk/met/boroughs/tower_hamlets/index)

**Saturday  
3rd  
September  
2011**

**The Council of  
Mosques  
The East London  
Mosque  
&  
Metropolitan  
Police Service**

Council of Mosques, East London Mosque and Metropolitan Police Pamphlet in preparation for Saturday September 3rd 2011, Part of the collection @ Bishopsgate Institute

**East London Mosque**

The East London Mosque has an excellent working relationship with the Metropolitan Police Service and continually work together to ensure the safety and security of the local community in Tower Hamlets.

Today, Saturday 3rd September 2011, certain groups may seek to undermine the excellent relationship that exists locally between the police and the Muslim community.

**Tower Hamlets Police**

To ensure today is a peaceful one, the Mosque and police have met in advance to agree a joint plan to provide reassurance to you, the community.

This agreed plan involves local police officers working with stewards from the Mosque to -

- Provide advice and information to reassure local people.
- Seek cooperation from everyone to maintain the peace and keep the Mosque and surrounding community safe and secure.
- Taking early joint action to reduce tension and misunderstandings.

**Council of Mosques**

The Metropolitan Police, the Council of Mosques and the East London Mosque are committed to making the day a safe and secure one, as we do at all other times.

An increased Police and Steward presence will be seen around the Mosque to support the plan.

Please ask a police officer or steward for further help or advice or any of the websites overleaf.

## On the terraces

WHEN bananas and abuse were hurled at leading West Ham player Bobby Barnes during a game when West Ham visited Newcastle, the Newcastle team manager Jack Charlton said: "I want our good fans to whistle or shout down these idiots, make them look the fools they are."

He added: "They want locking up." Newcastle Football Club are making it plain they do not want racists at their ground. Racist graffiti is being removed from the St James Park ground.

Asked about NF literature on sale at grounds, Jack Charlton replied: "We won't have it in the ground. Any of our fans who buy it can stay away from this ground. We don't want them. We want everyone welcome here — opposing fans, coloured people, everyone."

Why don't you get your supporters club to do something about this, too? **Contact Mongrel if you need any help.**

RACISTS and nazis have been involved in lots of trouble at the Leeds team's Elland Road ground for several years, taunting black players, chanting racist slogans and sieg heil saluting. It is even said the nazis have members in supporters clubs stirring things up. But the Leeds Football Club message to them is clear — SHUT UP!

Leeds manager Eddie Gray, a former Leeds player and Scottish International has said: "Racist chants upset every player on the field. Remember, a single voice only becomes a chant if you join in. Don't join in racist chants. Let your silence prove that you are a member of the United Elland Road family."

WE ARE: People, mainly from East London, who are sick of seeing Nazis stirring up trouble on our streets and estates and in our youth clubs, schools and football grounds. We believe: We can only get anywhere if we are united. That being divided by race keeps us all down. If you or your family have been the victim of a racist attack and want help in getting it stop-

ped, we can put you in touch with groups in your area who can give support. Or if you know of any such attacks or nuisance on your estate or at school where an attack has taken place, please write to us. If you support us and would like to distribute this paper, write or draw a cartoon contact:

MONGREL PO BOX 418, LONDON E1 ODB.

highly skilled black players Robert Johansson at Leeds and Clyde Best at West Ham.

Now a large number of clubs have black players like John Barnes of Watford who is also an England International, Arsenal's Viv Anderson, John Chedosis and Danny Thomas of Spurs, Remi Moses of Manchester United and Bobby Barnes of West Ham. Some have played for England and taken a key part in goal scoring.

Yet for some people, the contributions of black players to soccer are unwelcome. At a number of clubs, especially Leeds,



Viv Anderson

Chelsea, West Ham, Millwall and Newcastle, people have tried to stir up trouble amongst white fans against black players.

When Paul Canoville, a black player, joined Chelsea, some people ran a hate campaign against him. However Canoville's exciting performances as a winger were welcomed by Chelsea's real fans and the campaign against him collapsed.

## Here to stay

TOWER  
HAMLETS  
LIBRARIES

THE PAPERS nowadays talk as if our country is at war with the Afro-Caribbean, Asian, Phillipino, Vietnamese and other residents living here.

Every day, people can be heard talking on buses, tubes and trains, in pubs, youth clubs, churches, on the radio and tv about 'swamping', 'invasion', 'over-run'.

Other times it's about the 'British way of life' being changed by 'foreigners', 'immigrants' — or 'these people' taking over 'our jobs', houses and scrounging on the dole.

What's the truth?

For a start we must remember that millions of British people have travelled and settled in many countries of the world over the centuries.

In fact, the number of white Britons and their descendants living in other countries is four times the size of the current British population.

Are all these British people overseas (perhaps your own uncles, aunts, or

brothers, sisters and cousins) 'foreigners'? 'Immigrants'? Taking over jobs, houses, or scrounging on the dole?

Are the countries they're in being 'over-run' or 'swamped'?

Another way to look at the wallies who hate or attack people in this country because their skin is not white, is to remember the last 500 years of British history and Empire.

During those many years, black people in Africa, the Caribbean and Asia were made to become British subjects.

Many books have been written about the 'British Empire'. But only a handful show us how the people of those countries and their descendants were forced to work on British-owned plantations (tobacco, sugar, tea, coffee or cotton) and down British-owned mines (coal, gold, silver, copper) to feed, clothe and make Britain a wealthy country. It's the same now.

Their labour and taxes as black workers in this country have also helped to keep this country going and provide the services we need.

We could not drink tea or coffee, drive cars, wear clothes or do many other things every day without the ships coming from Africa, India and other parts of the world.

Why don't we ever hear about this in our papers, in the pub or club, or on the telly and radio?



Collection of Anti-Nazi badges from 1978-84 joined by EDL Free Zone badges from 2010, Courtesy of Bishopsgate Institute

Mongrel Pamphlet p8, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives  
[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)

# MISSION FOUR: ADD AN ENTRY TO THE TIMELINE

Add a recent entry to the timeline documenting a collective action that has taken place in Tower Hamlets since the millennium (2000).

Your entry for the Incomplete History of Collective Actions Against Inequality should be of a professional quality. It must be well-designed, easy to read and draw on well-researched source materials to bring the historical moment you have chosen to life for future learners.

## IT SHOULD INCLUDE:

- A key date
- An interesting title
- A descriptive paragraph which provides the reader with more information
- At least 3 different source materials evidencing that it happened and bringing the event to life
- If possible, your source materials should demonstrate different opinions or experiences of your collective action

## SOME TYPES OF SOURCE MATERIAL YOU MAY WANT TO LOOK FOR:

- Press Media – Journalistic reports or articles in the local or national press
- Film Footage – Found via YouTube or national archive searches
- Photographic documentation of the event (be sure to reference who the photographer is)

## FOR EACH OF YOUR SOURCE MATERIALS BE SURE TO INCLUDE:

- Where you found it (for example- what website or book or archive etc)
- Who took the photo/ wrote the article
- Which newspaper or television programme it was a part of
- What the date of the source material is
- Who has copyright for the material (this means who has ownership of the material)

## SOME USEFUL LINKS:

- [British Film Institute](#)
- [National Archives](#)
- [Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archives](#)
- [Bishopsgate Institute](#)
- [Museum of London](#)
- [Imperial War Museum](#)
- [Idea Store](#)
- [BBC Archives](#)

Please note that at the time of this resource being built [Autograph ABP](#) archive is being digitised and may be a great future place to look for source materials for your collective actions.

# MISSION FIVE:

## RESEARCH & DEVISE YOUR OWN 'LIVE' NEWS REPORT

Choose a collective action from the incomplete timeline which you think is the most powerful example of what can be achieved when people come together to make changes happen in their communities.

Research and then devise your own 'live' news report for the collective action.

### YOUR REPORT SHOULD INCLUDE, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

- At least three different sources
- At least one 'Live' interview with someone who is at the scene
- At least two different opinions about the action taken from your research.

Film your report and share it with the rest of your class once complete.

### EXTRA CHALLENGE:

Do your news report in the style of news broadcasting from that time. For example- if you pick the Protests that followed the murder of Altab Ali, your news report should follow the style and feel of a late 1970s news report. If you pick the Revolt of the Isle of Dogs, then your news report should follow the style and feel of an early 1990s news report.

Tower Hamlets - radical actions then and now...



# THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY

## SECTION FOUR

### POLITICS AND POWER 80

What power do you have to effect changes in your community?

Who makes decisions on your behalf about how things are run?

Do the people who make decisions represent the communities they are elected by?

**Community Organising:** 84

Grass Roots Power in Tower Hamlets

**Political Representation:** 96

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- **Mission Eight:** Power & Equalities Mural 116





UNAUTHORISED  
PARKING  
AT ANY TIME

# POLITICS & POWER

WHAT POWER DO YOU HAVE  
TO EFFECT CHANGES  
IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

WHO MAKES DECISIONS ON YOUR BEHALF  
ABOUT HOW THINGS ARE RUN?

#DEMOCRACY  
#REPRESENTATION  
#AGENCY  
#POWER

Asked to describe an average MP, most people will still probably imagine a privately-educated, straight, white man. But the make-up of the Commons is changing, with record-breaking strides being made in the 2017 general election. The vote delivered the most diverse House of Commons ever with

**A RISE IN THE NUMBER OF WOMEN, LGBT AND ETHNIC MINORITY MPS ELECTED.**

There has also been an increase in MPs who went to state school as well as a boost for disabled representation.

The general election of  
**1987 SAW THE FIRST EVER BLACK MPS VOTED INTO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.**

Fast forward 30 years and the 2017 result saw 52 ethnic minority MPs elected, says [think tank British Future](#).

They include Preet Gill, the [first female Sikh MP](#), shadow home secretary Diane Abbott\* and Manchester's first Muslim MP Afzal Khan.

[Operation Black Vote](#) said many more ethnic minority candidates won in non-urban areas which showed the UK was **“comfortable with its multicultural society.”**

Director Simon Woolley said:

**“More talented BME faces will help transform Parliament and inspire many more to believe that we all have a voice and a place in our society.”**

Steve Ballinger, Director of Communications for British Future, said:

**“It's got to be good for politics that gradually Parliament is getting closer to looking a bit more like the electorate that it serves.”<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> In 1987 four black and minority ethnic Labour MPs: Bernie Grant, \*Diane Abbott, Paul Boateng and Keith Vaz made history. It had been almost 60 years since a British Asian had been elected to parliament, and there had never been black MPs before. <sup>2</sup> From [BBC election news reporting 2017](#).



Photograph of "Sign of the Times" project by Bernadette Russell

So, with this in mind,

## IS BRITAIN BECOMING FAIRER?

We know that Tower Hamlets' population is the youngest population in the UK, almost half of the residents (47 per cent) are aged 20-39. We also know that it is ranked as the 16th most ethnically diverse local authority in England in terms of the mix of different ethnic group populations. More than two thirds of the residents belong to minority ethnic groups.

How do these key factors affect

## WHAT IT IS LIKE TO LIVE, WORK, STUDY OR PLAY IN THE BOROUGH?

As a young person living in a diverse, multi-cultural borough,

DO YOU FEEL THAT IT IS A PLACE IN WHICH EVERYONE FEELS EQUAL?

DO YOU THINK THAT THIS HAS CHANGED OVER THE LAST 50 YEARS?

# COMMUNITY ORGANISING: GRASS ROOTS POWER IN TOWER HAMLETS

The young people who were at the forefront of community activism during the 1970s and 1980s saw the importance of building links with activists outside their own community. Bengali activists reached out to other 'Asians', the Black community, and those from the White majority community including Jewish activists of the East End.

As Tower Hamlets' population has continued to evolve and change, other community members, inspired by the mobilisation of the Bengali community, have decided to come together to stand up for what they believe in.

**OVER THE LAST 40 YEARS THERE ARE MANY EXAMPLES  
OF PEOPLE CONNECTING ACROSS DIFFERENCES TO WORK  
TOGETHER IN CHALLENGING INEQUALITY**

and ultimately affecting positive change in the places they live, work, pray and play.

Often local, community-led actions feed into a wider national campaign.

**WHEN AN ISSUE IS FAR-REACHING, COMMUNITIES OFTEN JOIN  
TOGETHER TO MAKE THEIR VOICES LOUDER AND ULTIMATELY TO  
HAVE A BIGGER IMPACT.**

Here are some examples of how locally felt experiences of injustice, prejudice or discrimination have been echoed by people all over the country. This is how mass movements start; small and local growing into huge, driven campaigns with the power to impact on everyone's lives.

# 1978

## 7000 people walk Altab Ali's coffin to Downing Street

Ten days after Altab Ali's death, about 7,000 people marched behind his coffin through central London, calling on the government to address racism in east London. They marched to Hyde Park, Trafalgar Square and to Downing Street.

Shams Uddin recalls the chants of

**"BLACK AND WHITE, UNITE AND FIGHT"**

as the large crowd moved through the streets.

**"One of our community leaders told us that, if we killed racism from the political ground, it would automatically die on the streets, so we took Altab Ali's coffin to 10 Downing Street."**

Change was far from immediate. In June 1978, just a month after the murder, another Asian man named Ishaque Ali was killed in a racially motivated attack in Hackney. Not long after, the National Front moved its headquarters to Great Eastern Street, just a short walk from St Mary's Park.

This brought anti-racism groups and the National Front into tense conflict at nearby Bethnal Green, where skinheads would distribute their literature on Sundays.

**"When they came to Bethnal Green we knew we were very much in danger,"** said Mr Uddin.

Greater London and Essex Newspapers Street Fury over 'race' Slaying, 1978, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives [www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)



In response, **ANTI-RACISM CAMPAIGNERS ADOPTED NEW TACTICS.** According to Mr Ullah, groups of people would camp in the area overnight.

"When the National Front came down in the morning they had nowhere to stand or sell their literature."

"Racism was everywhere, not just in London," he added. "I think Bengalis in other towns like Bradford definitely felt inspired by how we had organised and how we were protecting ourselves."

Though the process was gradual, **FAR-RIGHT GROUPS LOST THEIR INFLUENCE IN EAST LONDON** over the following decade and violent attacks became less frequent.

"We weren't able to transform anything overnight, but by the 1990s the intensity and the violence had subsided," said Mr Ullah. "I think we were able to change the mind-set of the situation, in terms of how the police, councils and the government treated racism."

The protests after the murder of Mr Ali showed **A COMMUNITY NO LONGER WILLING TO SUFFER THE VIOLENCE OF RACISTS WITHOUT FIGHTING BACK.**



Protests at the Murder of Alitab Ali, 1978, Photographer Val Wilmer. Format Picture, Image Courtesy of Bishopsgate Institute

Commemorating Altab Ali Day Pamphlet, featuring image of the procession following Altab Ali's Coffin to Downing Street in 1978, Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives  
[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)

COMMEMORATING ALTAB ALI DAY - 4 MAY



Edited by Ansar Ahmed Ullah and Steve Silver  
 Contributions from Rajonuddin Jala, Julie Begum, Soyful Alom, Dan Jones, Upa Biswas and David Rosenberg  
 Photographs: © Paul Trevor  
 Thanks to UNISON for the financial assistance that made this publication possible  
 Cover photo: Brick Lane, 20 August 1978. Demo by Tower Hamlets Defence Committee and the Anti-Nazi League.

**UNITED**  
 PLATFORM AGAINST RACISM  
 AND FASCISM  
 United Platform Against Racism And Fascism  
 c/o Bangladesh Welfare Association  
 Shaheed Bhavan  
 39 Fournier Street, London E1 6QE

**ALTAB ALI**  
 FOUNDATION  
 Altab Ali Foundation  
 c/o Bangladesh Welfare Association  
 Shaheed Bhavan  
 39 Fournier Street, London E1 6QE

ALTAB ALI DAY

COMMEMORATING ALTAB ALI DAY - 4 MAY

## INTRODUCTION

**PARK LANE,  
 LONDON W1,  
 14 MAY 1978.  
 PROCESSION  
 BEHIND  
 ALTAB ALI  
 COFFIN FROM  
 WHITECHAPEL  
 TO WHITEHALL.**  
 © PAUL TREVOR



COMMEMORATING  
**ALTAB ALI**  
 DAY ON 4 MAY

The annual celebration of Altab Ali Day on 4 May is an important event in the anti-racist and anti-fascist calendar. It gives us an opportunity to both reflect on the catalogue of racist murders that have taken place in Britain and also on the struggle against racism and fascism. For anti-racists, the East End of London has long been a site of resistance against racism and fascism. It was in the East End that Oswald Mosley's Blackshirt thugs whipped up hatred against Jewish people in the 1930s. But they did not get it all their own way. When they tried to march through the Jewish districts on 4 October 1936 they were prevented by a mass of anti-fascists who used the slogan "They Shall Not Pass". The fascists and race haters never really went away and decades later they remerged under the guise of the National Front (NF), terrorising Bengalis just as Mosley's mob had terrorised the Jewish immigrants that had once made their home there many years earlier. On 4 May 1978, Altab Ali, a young Bengali clothing worker, was

returning home from the factory when he was stabbed and murdered by racist thugs. It was the evening of the local elections. His death sent shockwaves through the Bengali community. This pamphlet outlines how a mass anti-racist movement was built in the wake of Altab Ali's death. It shows how the skinhead thugs of the NF were defeated in the summer of 1978 by the organised resistance of the Bengali community and its anti-racist allies. The events of that summer became known as the "Battle of Brick Lane 1978". Today's race haters may not sport the Blackshirt uniforms of Mosley's 1930s BUF, or the skinhead haircuts and boots of the NF thugs in the 1970s, but they still organise, playing on peoples fears and prejudices. They too have to be defeated. By telling the story of Altab Ali's murder, and of the anti-racist movement that was built in its wake, we hope that this pamphlet will inspire people to commemorate Altab Ali Day and oppose racism and fascism today in whatever new guise it emerges.

ALTAB ALI DAY 13

Discovering Britain -

**WALKING MAP**

Aldgate, Whitechapel  
 and Brick Lane, London

← CLICK HERE!

# 1990 Anti-Poll Tax Community Action

The campaign against the Poll Tax twenty years ago was a massive nationwide campaign. **"CAN'T PAY - WON'T PAY"** was the slogan of the thousands of Anti-Poll Tax Unions. There was a big campaign of non-payment in east London which organised meetings and supported people if they were summoned to court for non-payment or threatened by bailiffs. Militant was the principle organisation behind the mass non-payment campaign. The Anti-Poll Tax Unions took to the courts where around 20 million people were summoned. They were supported in the courts by Militant supporters and entire courts ground to a halt, Lawyers volunteered to take up appeals.

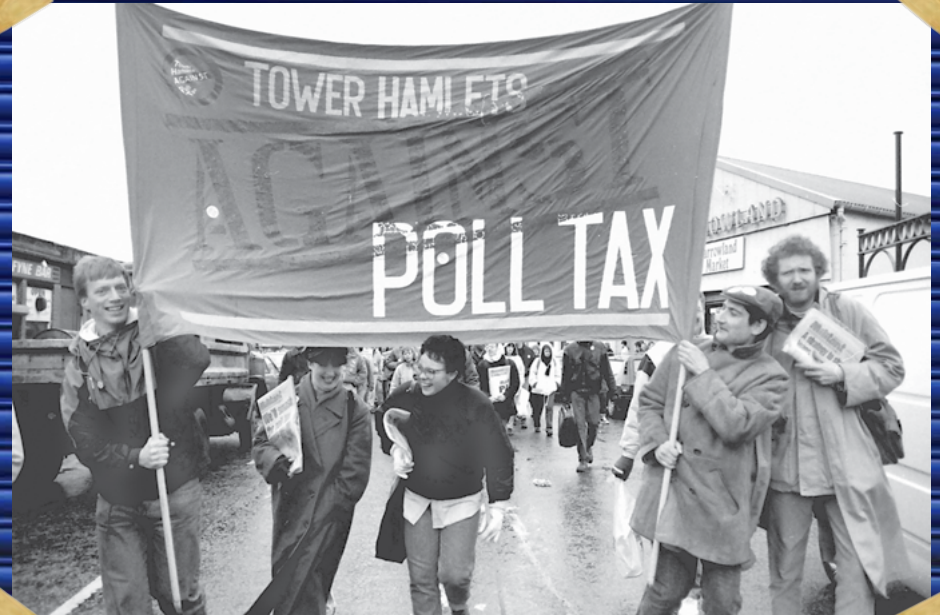


R.G Taylor



Children with a message.  
Chicksand estate, Tower  
Hamlets 1990 © Phil Maxwell

East London  
activists  
demonstrating in  
Glasgow, 1990  
© Philip Maxwell





## STOP THE POLL TAX!

TOWER HAMLETS AGAINST

THE POLL TAX [I/AVU/A/12/7]

## STOP THE POLL TAX!

IN TOWER HAMLETS THE POLL TAX WILL MEAN THAT ALMOST EVERYONE  
OVER 18 WILL PAY **£ 639** PER YEAR

IN KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA THE TAX WILL BE **£ 370**

HOUSEHOLD	AVERAGE RATE PER HOUSEHOLD 1987/88	TORY GOV. POLL TAX	INCREASE (WEEK)	INCREASE (YEAR)
2 ADULTS	£ 538	£ 1278	£ 14.23	£ 740
3 ADULTS	£ 538	£ 1917	£ 26.52	£ 1379
4 ADULTS	£ 538	£ 2556	£ 38.81	£ 2018
5 ADULTS	£ 538	£ 3195	£ 50.96	£ 2657

### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

I WANT TO JOIN T.H.A.P.T.

I ENCLOSE A DONATION OF £.....

Send to  
T.H.A.P.T. c/o Tower Hamlets TUC \* PHIL SEWELL  
CHAIRMAN  
The Davenant Centre, 179 Whitechapel Rd. London E1

[TH/9065]

## JUST 4 REASONS ... ... WHY YOU SHOULD OPPOSE THE POLL TAX:

- **IT IS UNFAIR.**  
THE VERY RICH WILL PAY LESS, WHILE  
PEOPLE ON MIDDLE AND LOW INCOMES  
WILL HAVE TO PAY A LOT MORE.
- **IT IS AN ATTACK UPON THE FAMILY.**  
BECAUSE THE POLL TAX IS CHARGED TO  
INDIVIDUALS AND NOT HOUSEHOLDERS  
IT WILL CREATE TENSIONS WITHIN FAMILIES,  
AND YOUNG AND OLD ALIKE MIGHT  
FIND THEMSELVES HOMELESS.
- **IT WILL REDUCE PRIVACY.**  
BECAUSE THE POLL TAX IS DIFFICULT TO COLLECT,  
IT WILL NEED AN ARMY OF SNOOPERS Prying  
INTO PEOPLE'S PRIVATE AFFAIRS.
- **IT IS INEFFICIENT.**  
A HUGE BUREAUCRACY WILL BE NEEDED,  
BECAUSE INSTEAD OF JUST ONE PERSON  
PER HOUSEHOLD PAYING, NEARLY EVERYONE  
OVER 18 WILL HAVE TO PAY.

ALL WELCOME !!  
T.H.A.P.T. MEETS AT 7.30 pm  
on the 1ST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH, at  
THE DAVENANT CENTRE, 179, WHITECHAPEL RD. E1

Local meetings were held on estates and **A GREAT FEELING OF SOLIDARITY WAS CREATED IN WORKING CLASS COMMUNITIES AGAINST THATCHER'S TAX.** Eventually the tax was defeated and substantial damage was inflicted on the government. **RARELY HAS A MASS CAMPAIGN PERMEATED SO DEEPLY INTO SOCIETY** with such an impact. The Pay No Poll Tax campaign demonstrated the potential power of solidarity against a repressive government. Read more [here](#).

Stop the Poll Tax posters, 1989  
Courtesy of Tower Hamlets Local  
History Library & Archives  
[www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history](http://www.ideastore.co.uk/local-history)

# 2003

## Tower Hamlets Interfaith Forum

Tower Hamlets Interfaith Forum (THIFF) was founded in 2003, building on the long history of diversity, solidarity and inclusion in the borough.

It started as a forum

**TO ENABLE LOCAL FAITH COMMUNITIES  
TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF  
LOCALISED DISCRIMINATION AND HATE CRIME,**  
and to collaborate on issues of shared concern through a  
greater understanding of one another.

The Forum aims

**TO ENABLE RELIGION AND BELIEF GROUPS  
AND COMMUNITIES TO PLAY A FULL ROLE  
IN SHAPING A BETTER FUTURE FOR THE  
BOROUGH.**

It does this by building on the unique legacies of solidarity,  
understanding and mutual respect between religion and  
belief groups and communities in our borough.

News > UK > Home News

### Brexit vote sees highest spike in religious and racial hate crimes ever recorded

**Exclusive:** Race and faith attacks reported across UK increase by highest rate on record since the referendum, Freedom of Information figures reveal

May Bulman | @maybulman | Friday 7 July 2017 12:00 |

118 shares | 742 comm

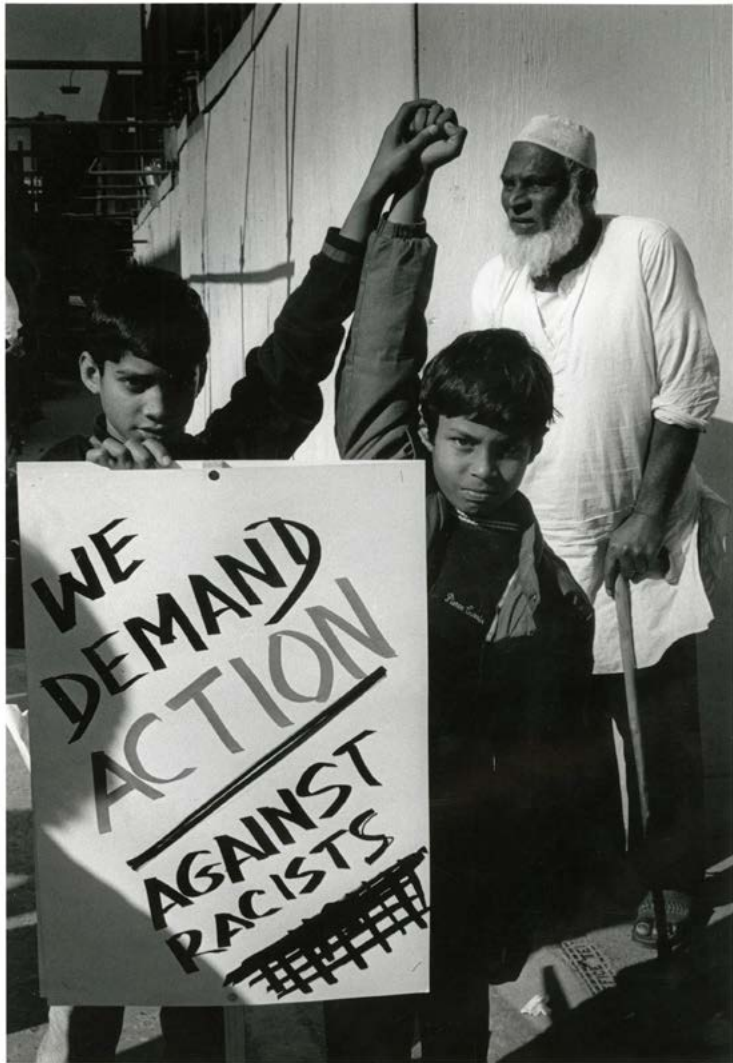


Like Click to follow  
The Independent



Reports of racial and religious hate crime surged by 23 per cent the year after Brexit: an unparalleled surge after four years of a progressively upwards trend (JUSTIN TALLIS/AFP/Getty Image)

'Brexit vote sees highest spike in religious and  
racial hate crimes ever recorded' by May Bulman  
© Independent, Friday 7 July 2017



Kings Cross Anti-Facist Demonstration, November 1987,  
Copyright photographer Philip Gordon/ Impact Photos,  
Courtesy of Bishopsgate Institute



Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) demonstration in London, Saturday 16 March 2019,  
© photographer Guy Smallman

THESE TWO PHOTOGRAPHS  
ARE 32 YEARS APART, IN THIS  
TIME WHAT HAS CHANGED?

# 2017 Stand Up to Racism National Conference

On 21 October 2017, the Stand Up to Racism national conference drew together over 1,300 anti-racist activists and was addressed by Diane Abbott MP, Talha Ahmad (Muslim Council of Britain), Moyra Samuels (Justice4Grenfell) and many more.

“A racist offensive is sweeping Europe, with governments and the right-wing media using migrants, refugees and Muslims as scapegoats for an economic crisis and wars they did not create.

The racist tide will only be driven back by anti-racists standing up and confronting it. From Germany to Greece to the USA, people who want a society free from racism are saying no more. People are taking to the streets in large numbers to oppose racism, Islamophobia, anti-semitism and to say migrants and refugees are welcome here.”

- Stand Up to Racism Campaign website

The clear and powerful message from the conference was that when we bring all these struggles together and fight as one, we can be more effective than we could possibly imagine.



“No to Islamophobia, No to War” Stop the War Coalition placard.

Placard used during a refugees welcome march in London, Britain March 19, 2016 - [www.stopwar.org.uk](http://www.stopwar.org.uk)

As well as hearing from Shadow Home Secretary Diane Abbott and other leading figures, over 1,300 people heard first-hand accounts of the horrific, avoidable disaster at [Grenfell](#) and its aftermath, people whose family members died in police custody, those who have borne the brunt of the rise in Islamophobic hate crime, and EU nationals whose rights are being threatened by the British government.

**THE NEED TO COMBAT THE GLOBAL RISE OF RACISM & THE FAR-RIGHT** was addressed, with leading anti-fascists from Germany, Austria and Greece reporting from the front-line and author [David Neiwert](#) analysing the new far-right mobilisations in the US emboldened by Trump's Islamophobia and racism.



Conference image, copyright Guy Smallman for [Stand Up To Racism](#)

# 2018 Stand Up to Racism March

On 17 March 2018 over 20,000 people marched through central London, Glasgow and Cardiff. Communities in Cardiff came together after fascist graffiti was daubed on the site of the assembly point.

The marches were

**A SHOW OF UNITY AGAINST THE RISE IN RACISM, ISLAMOPHOBIA AND ANTI-SEMITISM AND IN SUPPORT OF REFUGEE AND MIGRANT RIGHTS.**

In the wake of the 'Punish a Muslim' campaign which targeted Muslim MPs and households around the country, speakers demanded action from the government against Islamophobic hate crime and a pledge to stand up to Islamophobia on 3 April.

The March Against Racism, which marks United Nations International Anti-Racism Day, was part of a series of demonstrations taking place in cities across Europe including Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, Barcelona, Warsaw, Kraków, Frankfurt, Vienna, Copenhagen, Athens, Dublin and Istanbul.



Stand Up to Racism 17 March 2018 © photographer Guy Smallman



Together we showed unity in the face of racism. We will be back next year for another huge demonstration against all forms of racism. Unity is our strength so we cannot let racism divide us.

We are the majority and we will stand up to racism.

**CLICK HERE!**

See [Dianne Abott \(Shadow Home Secretary\)](#) addressing the [Stand Up To Racism Conference](#)



## NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION

# UNITED AGAINST RACISM & FASCISM

**SATURDAY  
16 MARCH**

Assemble 12 noon,  
Park Lane, London W1  
Lower end, near Hyde Park Corner

Organised by Stand Up To Racism.  
Supported by the TUC



- Stand up to Islamophobia & antisemitism
- Justice for Windrush – end the ‘hostile environment’
- Refugees welcome
- Defend migrant rights
- Black lives matter
- Leave or remain, don’t let the racists divide us
- Celebrate diversity

DEMO SUPPORTED BY:



Stand Up To Racism Poster

# POLITICAL REPRESENTATION: THE BATTLE FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY

## HOW IS TOWER HAMLETS DOING AT MAKING SURE THAT THE DECISION MAKERS REFLECT THE COMMUNITIES THEY REPRESENT?

In 2019, Tower Hamlets Council can boast the largest number of Bengali councilors in the country, with a total of 25 Bengali councillors. There are also three MPs in the House of Commons and one peer at the House of Lords of Bengali origin.

There is a Young Mayor who has real decision-making power and is able to represent the needs and ambitions of young people from across the borough.

The gender balance of councillors is becoming more equal with every election.

Gender and sexuality norms are being challenged both in communities and in mainstream media, ensuring that the people who we see on television programmes, magazine covers, films and adverts are starting to look more like us.



## **THINGS ARE CHANGING!**

Over the last 30 years people have fought hard for these changes.

In Tower Hamlets people have fought hard for minority voices to be heard, for every person living in the borough to feel like they have a right and a responsibility to have their opinion heard and to have real power in shaping the future of the place they live.

The power balance has been changed because of people coming together to challenge the way that things are and to register their dissatisfaction with things being unequal.

## **WE ARE NOT THERE YET.**

There are many people who feel that decisions are still being made for them rather than with them. There are many people who still feel under-appreciated, isolated and disconnected from the communities that they live in.

## **THIS MEANS THAT THERE IS WORK TO BE DONE BY THE NEXT GENERATION...**

Here are some examples of how people have come together to challenge the way things are done. To speak truth to the people who hold power and make decisions that affect everyone.

# 1980 Formation of Federation of Bangladeshi Youth Organisations

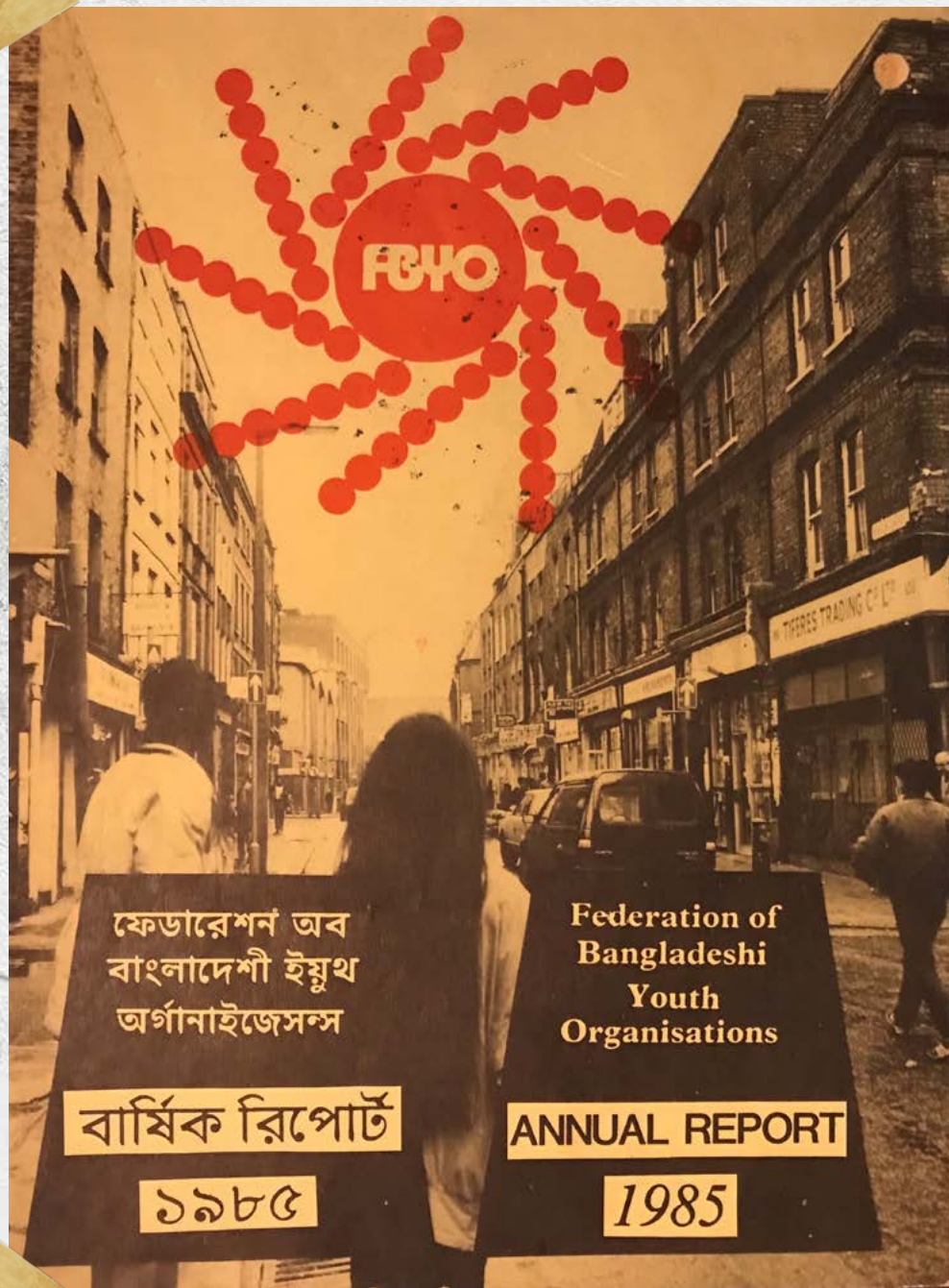
Following the racist murder of Altab Ali in 1978 **THE SECOND GENERATION BENGALI YOUTH WAS AT THE FOREFRONT OF ANTI-RACIST STREET PROTESTS.** The energy of these young people was consolidated by the formation in 1980 of the Federation Bangladeshi Youth Organisations (FBYO), an umbrella body which spearheaded campaigns for better housing, health and education, and the fight against racism. The Federation of Bangladeshi Youth Organisations was the first truly national campaigning organisation that represented Bengali interests locally and nationally.

Its young members **USED THE STRENGTH GAINED FROM BEING PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE LOCAL POLITICAL SYSTEM.** They also used the federation to get access to various funding streams that were channelled through the local council, the Greater London Authority and the local education authority.

The FBYO members saw the **IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING ALLIANCES** with activists outside the Bengali community, such as other Asians from Hackney, Newham, Camden and Southall, as well as with those from the White majority community, including Jewish East End activists.



Federation of Bangladeshi Youth Organisations participate in anti-racist march 1980, Photograph courtesy of Ansar Ullah's private collection.



FBYO Annual Report 1985  
Courtesy of Ansar Ullah's Private Collection

## INTRODUCTION

At the best of times giving leadership to an organisation as important as the Federation is a task fraught with many difficulties. The need to bring consensus in the important work for the community is great. There are issues on which activists and community organisations don't always have full agreement and it has been important for the FBYO to give a unified direction to the demands and priorities of the community in general and Bengali youths in particular.

The FBYO had a previous year of growth and functions as an effective voice for Bengali youth in the East End and indeed the whole of the country. I took charge of an organisation that was making a considerable impact in the fight against institutional and overt racism and was fostering unity between the Afro-Caribbeans, Chinese, Somali, Vietnamese and Bengali communities in the struggle against discrimination and injustice common to all these groups. This year has been about continuing the fundamental fight against racism as well as working for the greater unity within the Bengali community as well as between minority communities and anti-racist organisations.

The difficulties faced in this process have been considerable given the strength of institutional racism confronting us. Furthermore an alarming escalation of racial violence in estates and schools has taken place. Arson attacks have killed and maimed Asian families in various parts of London and Nazis of the NF have been trying to raise their ugly heads. Schools have been scenes of serious stabbings and beatings. Anti-racist groups have also been preparing themselves against the rising tide of racial violence. In this context the FBYO welcome and supports the Tower Hamlets Anti-Fascist Action and the Campaign Against Racism in Schools.

Homelessness has been on the rise in alarming proportions. In Tower Hamlets 700 families, almost all Bengali, are homeless at a huge cost of several millions of pounds. This, in spite of over 3500 empty properties in the borough and exacerbated by the gradual eastward move of city offices, taking away scarce land for potential public housing. The fight against homelessness has been waged for years. This struggle in Tower Hamlets got a boost from the Camden Occupation when homeless Bengali families and supporters occupied Camden Town Hall in the wake of the death of Mrs Karim and her two children.

FBYO and other groups from Tower Hamlets, particularly affiliated youth groups, all pooled resources and manpower to give full support to the demands of the Camden Homeless.. Tower Hamlets

Homeless Families Campaign, FBYO and others picketed in front of the Town Hall against its total lack of commitment to end the plight of homelessness by taking effective measures in consultation with the community.

Because of the growing pressures at present the Tower Hamlets Council is trying to undo the Homeless Campaign in tables about tackling some of the most urgent problems of homelessness, as well as developing a long-term strategy. This is some indication of the dire straits the Council finds itself in. The contradiction is that at this very time they are refusing to accord proper recognition and status to the Race and Housing Advisory Group and have downgraded the Race and Housing Action Team, thus considerably reducing its ability to fight racism in employment and service delivery in the Housing Department.

This year we agreed to meet with David Waddington, the Home Office Minister, to take up matters related to immigration, racial attacks and the Council's use of Section 11 money. We neither expected, nor got, much satisfaction from a minister who does not have the background or the sensitivity (not to mention the politics) to understand the basis of black struggle for justice. Given that he is a hard-line supporter of racist immigration policies and an apologist for the police, the only positive thing about the meeting was the signal given to Tower Hamlets on its appalling misuse of Section 11 money. It took a Tory Minister to tell a Labour council that it was obliged to *consult the public on such matters*.

There has been consistent following-up on Health, Housing and Social Services, which are detailed in later parts of the report. The fight against racism—which is the basis to getting appropriate and relevant services for all black people—is our fundamental struggle. No matter what the difficulties within and out our organisation and community, we must be able to recognise and differentiate our allies from those who work against us, knowingly or otherwise.

We must also be vigilant about the opportunist and careerist elements within our own ranks, who will trade the collective for personal, political or financial gain.

The FBYO will continue to grow in strength and experience and, with the help of its members and workers, to lead the struggle for Bengali/Black equality in East London and play a crucial role in the fight for social justice in Britain.

'The youth groups formed their Federation of Bangladeshi Youth Organisations (FBYO) in 1980 and successfully negotiated with the Greater London Council (GLC) in establishing the Race and Housing Advisory Team (RHAT) which made a significant contribution towards fighting fascism on the housing estates.

Anti-racist activities also brought the groups, mainly youth groups, together but primarily with other white groups such as the Anti-Nazi League, Socialist Workers Party, Labour Party, and the Trades Council.

The FBYO fought racist attacks and harassment and demonstrated against racism and fascism with the help and support of many indigenous groups during the late seventies, early eighties ... Most Bangladeshi organisations supported and joined in the campaign."

From Bangladeshi Community Organisation in East London by Mohammad Ali Asghar



# 1982

The first  
Bengalis  
elected  
to Tower  
Hamlets  
Council

29

30

Voting form  
from 1982  
Tower Hamlets  
Council  
Elections,  
Courtesy of  
Swadhinata  
Trust



## TOWER HAMLETS BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTIONS 1982

SPITALFIELDS WARD 6TH MAY (THURSDAY)

**VOTE FOR**  
PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE  
**SUPPORTED**  
INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES



MUHAMMAD NURUL  
HUQUE

6	<b>HUQUE</b>	MUHAMMAD NURUL	TEACHER INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE	X
7	<b>ISLAM</b>	SYED NURUL	COMMUNITY WORKER	X

### WE STAND FOR

1. Decent Housing for all.
2. Quick repairs.
3. A clean Spitalfields.
4. Lower Rent and Rates.
5. End of unauthorised parking.
6. Effective Education and Training.
7. Recreational facilities.
8. Full employment.
9. Local people should run their own affairs.
10. A true multi-racial society.
11. Decentralisation of Borough Council Administrative Powers.



SYED NURUL  
ISLAM

### AN APPEAL

Dear friends,

We have painfully observed that nobody cares for the local working class people of Spitalfields. We, the working class people, have been exploited too much and for too long both by the bureaucrats and politicians. The local working class people, whether black or white, have been deprived of any access to the decision making process. In fact we are completely powerless to mould our destiny. Unemployment, housing problems, endless delay in repair works, rubbish, smell etc. have made us sick.  
So we have decided to fight the ensuing Borough Council elections.

PUBLISHED BY-PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE, M.N.HUQUE & S.N. ISLAM, SUPPORTED BY  
BANGLADESH WEL FARE ASSOCIATION, FBYO, BYF, PYO, BYL, BYM, BYA, YMO, OYO, UTTORON  
SMS, NARI SOMITY AND MANY OTHERS, 140 CANNON STREET ROAD, LONDON - E.1.

Nurul Haque, an independent candidate from Spitalfields, became a councillor in 1982, defeating a Labour candidate. He was the first Bengali to be elected to the council.

This was followed by Ashik Ali, a Labour candidate, who became a councillor in St Katharine's ward.

# 1993 Women Unite Against Racism – supporting women to use their vote

Women Unite Against Racism was set up after Derek Beackon of the British National Party was elected as councillor in Millwall by just eight votes in 1993. In order to counteract the promise of future British National Party Councillors representing their communities, they

**WORKED HARD TO SUPPORT WOMEN FROM ACROSS THE BOROUGH TO HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO GET OUT AND USE THEIR VOTE.**



Women Unite Against Racism at anti-racist demo, London 1994, photograph by Peter Aukell/Impact Photography Studio, Courtesy of Bishopsgate Institute

Julie Begum reflects on how bringing women into the protest movement enabled them to 'disrupt' any potential violence.

**“Our aim was to create a women’s presence in the male-dominated protest movement.**

**At many of the anti-racist protests, the police had dogs and officers on horseback and I remember the police wanted to set the dogs on the young men. So we women got in front to protect them and the police had to stop because we were women. I think it’s important not to give in to the sense of tension and excitement in these situations – we tried to keep everyone calm and peaceful.”**

Information about voting was translated into many different languages and delivered face to face by women to other women. This changed the way that people felt about voting, making them think that their voices mattered.

# PLEASE VOTE

on May 5th 1994

Every Vote Counts in the Council Elections.  
On 16th September 1993 a BNP councillor was elected by only 7 votes.  
We know some people were intimidated from using their vote.  
Do you need help to get to the polling station on May 5th 1994?

Please return this form to Women Unite Against Racism P.O. Box 3068 Whitechapel E1.  
Tel: 071 729 3500 (Answer Phone), If you would like the following help on May 5th 1994

Transport  All Women Transport  A Female Escort  A Male Escort   
Please Check what you need

Name: .....  
Address: .....  
Tel: .....

অনুগ্রহ করে ৫ই মে ১৯৯৪ এর নির্বাচনে

# ভোট দিন

প্রতিটি ভোটেই মূল্য আছে। ১৬ই সেপ্টেম্বর ১৯৯৩ এর স্থানীয় কাউন্সিল নির্বাচনে একজন বি এন পি কাউন্সিলর মাত্র ৭ ভোটে জয়লাভ করে। আমরা জানি কিছু লোককে ভীতি প্রদর্শন করা হয়েছে যেন তারা ভোট দিতে না পারে। ৫ই মে নির্বাচনের দিনে পোলিং স্টেশনে যাওয়ার জন্য আপনার কি সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন?

অনুগ্রহ করে এই ফর্মটি এই ঠিকানার কেবল পার্টন: Women Unite Against Racism PO Box: 3068  
Whitechapel E1 Tel: 071-729 3500 (আনসারফোন)। ৫ই মে ১৯৯৪তে আপনি কি নিচের কোন একটি সাহায্য চান?  
যেটা চান, তাতে টিক চিহ্ন দিন।

পরিবহন  শুধুমাত্র মহিলাদের জন্য পরিবহন  একজন মহিলা এসকর্ট  একজন পুরুষ এসকর্ট

(অনুগ্রহ করে নাম ও ঠিকানা ইংরেজীতে লিখুন)

নাম: .....  
ঠিকানা: .....  
টেলিফোন: .....

Images courtesy of Julie Begum's personal collection

# FADLAN COD BIXI

Bisha May 5 teeda 1994

Cod Kasta ee laga bixiyo Doorashooyinka koonsalka qiima ayuu ku fadhiiyaa.  
16 kii bishii September 1993 Koonsaler BNP ah ayaa lagu doortay 7 Cod oo qura. Waanu ogsoonahay in dadka qaarkii laga bajiyeey in ay isticmaalaan xaqooda cod bixinta. Ma u baahan tahay in lagaa caawiyo sidii aad ku legi lahayd xarunta codbixinta taariikhdu marka ay tahay 5 ta May 1994?

Fadlan foomkaan ku celi Women Unite Against Racism P.O. Box 3068 Whitechapel E1. Tel: 071 729 3500 (Answer Phone), Haddii aad doonaysid caawimaada hoos ku qoran 5ta May 1994.

Fadlan sax (✓) ku dhig waxa aad dooneysid.

Gaadiid  Gaadiid dumar  Qof lab ah oo  Qof dhedig ah   
keliya ah ku soo wada oo ku soo wada

Name: .....  
Address: .....  
Tel: .....

# 請 投票

1994年5月5日

在地方政府選舉中每一票都會被計算。  
在1993年9月16日，一位英國國家黨 (BNP) 議員，只以7票勝出。  
我們知道部份人士是受到威迫下去行使他們的投票權。  
在1994年5月5日，你是否需要幫助去投票站？

請寄回這表格到: Women Unite Against Racism P.O. Box 3068 Whitechapel E1 Tel: 071-729 3500 電話錄音  
(Answer Phone) 若你希望在1994年5月5日得到以下的幫助。

交通工具  全婦女交通工具  女仕護送服務  男仕護送服務   
(請用英文填寫) 請「✓」你需要的

姓名: .....  
地址: .....  
電話: .....

THE EXPERIENCE OF A TOWER HAMLETS  
ANTI-RACIST, ANTI-FASCIST ACTION GROUP  
SEPTEMBER 1993 - MARCH 1995

**WOMEN UNITE  
AGAINST RACISM**



**RACISM -  
What about Us**

Women's response to Racism

Images  
courtesy of  
Julie Begum's  
personal  
collection

## PROGRAMME

5pm INTRODUCTION

### PART ONE

#### SPEAKERS:-

The policies, myths & facts about the BNP  
Women's experiences of Racism  
Support for Women  
Housing & Racism

5.40pm ROUND-UP

5.45pm BREAK

### PART TWO

6pm WORKSHOPS:-

- a) Political Action
- b) Support Action
- c) Workshop in Bengali language
- d) Workshop in Somali language

6.40pm FEEDBACK ON ACTION POINTS

6.55pm ROUND-UP & SIGNING UP

- Are you unsure what the BNP really stand for?
- Confused about housing issues in Tower Hamlets?
- Want to protest against racism but unclear about all the anti-racist groups and who to support?
- Fed up with the dominance of all the protests by boys and men?

### SO WERE WE!

That's why a group of women living and working in Tower Hamlets decided to set up this evening of debate and action. We hope it will help us all to sort out the facts from the myths and come up with a WOMEN'S AGENDA OF ANTI-RACIST ACTION AND SUPPORT.

It doesn't matter how old or young you are or what background you are from, as girls or women we ALL have a part to play in challenging the racism we see around us.

- DISABILITY ACCESS
- STALLS
- CRECHE
- REFRESHMENTS
- TRANSPORT HOME

**ALL WOMEN & GIRLS WELCOME**



# 2007 Jahid Ahmed is the first Young Mayor in Tower Hamlets

Jahid Ahmed was elected in January 2007. The young mayoral election saw the biggest ever voter turnout in the borough - **4,268 YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 11-18 VOTED** in schools and youth centres.

Since then the Young Mayor and the two Deputy Young Mayors have carried real responsibilities, taking forward the views of young people in the borough to adult decision-makers. This means that young people in the borough have an **ELECTED LOCAL VOICE THAT CAN REPRESENT THEM NOT JUST LOCALLY, BUT ALSO, THROUGH THE UK YOUTH PARLIAMENT, ON A NATIONAL STAGE.**

The role of Young Mayor helps to **INCREASE THE ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN YOUNG PEOPLE AND ELECTED MEMBERS.**

They also **HAVE REAL POWER TO INFLUENCE COUNCIL DECISION-MAKING:** contributing to Cabinet decisions affecting young people, supporting the Leader's Advisory Board and adding comments to committee reports.

In carrying out their role well, the Young Mayor and Deputy Young Mayors regularly **CONSULT OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT ISSUES AFFECTING THEM IN TOWER HAMLETS.** They feed back to young people what they and the Council have done.



Copy from Greater London Authority  
Report on the Young Mayor:

**“When compared with local and national government elections the turnout of young people at these elections is relatively high. For example, young voter turnout for the Youth Mayor election in Tower Hamlets was 50% compared with just 25% of adult registered voter turnout for the Mayoral elections in 2010”.**

**“Last year we had a female Bangladeshi Young Mayor. So that was a real first for us.”**



(Stakeholder, Tower Hamlets, interview)

## Young Mayor of Tower Hamlets

### Meet the final 12 candidates hoping to win your vote

The 12 young men and women campaigning for your vote this year have each written manifestos outlining their pledges to you, the voters.

You can find out more about each of them below:

 <b>Vivian Akinremi</b> <a href="#">Read Vivian's manifesto</a>	 <b>Jaami Barry</b> <a href="#">Read Jaami's manifesto</a>	 <b>Ahmed Duale</b> <a href="#">Read Ahmed's manifesto</a>
 <b>Fairoz Faria</b> <a href="#">Read Fairoz' manifesto</a>	 <b>Juliann Gaskin</b> <a href="#">Read Juliann's manifesto</a>	 <b>Nadia Hussein</b> <a href="#">Read Nadia's manifesto</a>
 <b>Daawood Islam</b> <a href="#">Read Daawood's manifesto</a>	 <b>Saihan Islam</b> <a href="#">Read Saihan's manifesto</a>	 <b>Carlotta Joffe</b> <a href="#">Read Carlotta's manifesto</a>
 <b>Inga Karlinska</b> <a href="#">Read Inga's manifesto</a>	 <b>Muhsin Mahmud</b> <a href="#">Read Muhsin's manifesto</a>	 <b>Umayya Rahman</b> <a href="#">Read Umayya's manifesto</a>

Screengrab from Tower Hamlets Young Mayor page, April 2019.

However, some expressed concerns that despite this successful engagement there might be an under representation of young white British people in the London schemes. For instance one stakeholder expressed that the 'white working class are a challenging group to engage with'

**I worry a bit about the engagement of white working class but I worry about the engagement of white working class on everything. We haven't had a white Young Mayor and I would be delighted if we did have one.**

(Stakeholder, Tower Hamlets, interview)

**"It's a great honour to be elected as the Young Mayor of the borough where I grew up and live. I will do my best to serve the young people of Tower Hamlets and ensure that their views are part of shaping future council services."**

- Jaami Barry, the newly elected Young Mayor quoted in Bangla Mirror, The first English weekly for Brit Bangladeshis, April 2019

# 2010

## First Bengali MP elected (Rushanara Ali)

**RUSHANARA GREW UP IN TOWER HAMLETS  
AND ATTENDED MULBERRY SCHOOL AND TOWER  
HAMLETS COLLEGE.**

She was the first in her family to go to university and studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Oxford University. Until her resignation from Labour's front bench in September 2014 over her decision to abstain on the vote on airstrikes in Iraq, Rushanara served as Shadow Minister for Education and Young People, and between October 2010 and October 2013, as Shadow Minister for International Development.

Prior to her election in May 2010, she was Associate Director of the [Young Foundation](#), where she co-founded [UpRising](#), a national leadership development and employability charity which has helped thousands of young people develop their campaigning and leadership skills. Rushanara recently co-founded [One Million Mentors](#), a national online platform to recruit, train and deploy one million mentors to organisations working with young people. Rushanara was also one of the members of the Home Office Working Group on Preventing Extremism established after the 7/7 London bombings.



Rushanara Ali, photograph by Rehan Jamil

CLICK HERE!



[Rushanara Ali speaking on Woman's Hour January 2018 about equal opportunities at work](#)

[Speaking at MP's Question Time about the case of Shamima Begum, a Tower Hamlets school girl, who is currently trying to return to the UK after leaving to support ISIS](#)

CLICK HERE!



# 2018

## Tower Hamlets launch their EU citizens Brexit Toolkit

On public service vehicles and advertising poster sites across the borough, Tower Hamlets Council has invested in public information to calm fears and **SHOW SOLIDARITY TO EU CITIZENS LIVING IN THE BOROUGH.** The slogan 'Are you one of the 41,000 EU citizens who live in Tower Hamlets? This is your home too' was designed **TO REASSURE PEOPLE, IN A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY THAT THEY BELONG AND ARE VALUED MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.** It also aimed to let people know that there support available to help them through any challenges they face as a direct result of Brexit.



Tower Hamlets Mayor John Biggs with one of the newly created public information posters, 2018, Image courtesy of London Borough of Tower Hamlets



Amina Ali addresses London Borough Tower Hamlets Brexit Commission, 2018, Image courtesy of London Borough of Tower Hamlets.



'In Tower Hamlets, we overwhelmingly voted to stay in the EU. 67% of our residents believed we are better off in, something I wholeheartedly agree with. The days and months following the referendum result saw a rise in hate crime, particularly targeting EU nationals and other groups. But Tower Hamlets has a long history of welcoming people from across the world.

While we didn't vote for Brexit, we intend to prepare as best we can and take advantage of every opportunity. The East End has a proud legacy of adapting to change and demonstrating its resilience in the face of great upheaval.

We are one of the fastest growing local authority areas in the country with one of the youngest populations. More than 41,000 non-UK EU citizens who will see their legal status change as a result of Brexit have made their home in Tower Hamlets.'

- Cllr Amina Ali Cabinet Member for Culture, Art and Brexit for the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, 18 February 2019, [Left Foot Forward](#)

In addition to the official messaging provided by the council, street artists have made sure that their messages about the EU referendum and Brexit politics are all over the borough.



Street art images from Shoreditch and Brick Lane area, as photographed February 2019

# MISSION SIX: DEBATE CHALLENGE

## WHAT IS A DEBATE?

A debate is a formal type of argument that has a structure.

In a debate you argue a point of view as part of a 'motion' or topic.

Debating has a very long tradition. WW2 Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, was a great debater who once said that

**'JAW JAW IS BETTER  
THAN WAR WAR'.**

A debate is based around a suggestion or 'motion' relating to an idea or opinion. People who are arguing to support the motion are called the 'proposers' and people arguing against the motion are the 'opposers'. The debate is chaired by a 'speaker', who reads out the motion.

An example of a motion is:  
Children should be allowed to leave school at 14.



**YOUR MISSION IS TO HOST A DEBATE, INFORMED BY THE POLITICS AND POWER MICRO COLLECTIONS, ON THE FOLLOWING MOTIONS:**

1. It is easy to find out about who represents you and/or your family in a) central government? b) local government?
2. The people that make decisions on our behalf are the right people?
3. We need to make 'Diversity the new normal'?
4. Young people are best placed to make our communities stronger, more connected and able to speak truth to power?

You must choose a speaker and groups of proposers and opposers for each motion.

Both groups then research the best way to evidence their point of view using the People and Power micro collections and digital links.

# RULES FOR YOUR DEBATE

## YOU MUST HAVE:

- A 'speaker' who introduces the motion and then acts as a moderator
- A team of proposers who will all present their response to the motion and evidence the reason they have developed that point of view
- One team of opposers who will all present their response to the motion and evidence the reason they have developed that point of view
- Vote to decide the winner of the motion

If you are going to be a proposer or an opposer of a motion, it is important that you listen well to the contributions of others. This is so that you are able to do the following:

- Summarise what has already been said
- Build on what has been said with new points
- Counter points made by the opposition with your own points

# MISSION SEVEN: BREXIT COLLECTION

The vote to take the United Kingdom out of the European Union was a political referendum in 2016 in which all UK citizens over the age of 18 were asked to vote on whether the UK should remain part of the European Union or choose to no longer be part of it. Inspired by the micro collections in this section 'Political Representation' and 'Community Organising' – research and curate your own collection about the great Brexit debate.

## THIS COULD INVOLVE:

- How different people reacted to the outcome of the vote
- Young people's opinions on the outcome
- Collective actions that have been inspired by this moment of historical significance
- Your personal opinions and those of your peers about what Brexit means for you
- Information from the council about what support is available for people with concerns about how Brexit will impact on their lives

## THINK ABOUT...

Collecting a variety of different 'source materials' including:

- Ephemera (items which are meant to be temporary like badges, stickers, pamphlets etc):
- Print media
- Photographs
- Documentation of personal stories and experiences
- Film and video footage available online

Your collection should involve materials that are available in local archives and/or heritage collections in addition to online resources and items that you may be able to find in hard copy today around your local area.

## THINK ABOUT...

How you will display your collection.

- This may be an exhibition board at school
- A public information board in your area (talk to your local community centres, libraries, sport centres etc)
- An online collection

## THINK ABOUT...

Making your collection as appealing as possible for future pupils. Imagine someone your age, discovering it in 20 years time.

- How do they feel about your collection?
- What does it teach them about this moment of historical significance?

# MISSION EIGHT: POWER MURAL

Inspired by all of the materials in this resource, and those which you may have sourced independently as part of the earlier 7 missions, design a Power Mural for your school.

## YOUR MURAL SHOULD

1. Celebrate the radical heritage of this borough
2. Introduce people to key people and events which you think are inspiring
3. Make people think about what they can do today to stand up for equality

## IT SHOULD FEATURE:

- Significant historical moments
- Inspirational activists working for equality
- Quotes or actions which have inspired you
- Essential vocabulary needed to discuss power, representation, collective actions and community organising in your borough

Here is an image of the Battle of Cable Street mural, to help inspire your design:



Photograph by  
Rehan Jamil

WHAT DO  
I DO NOW?

# WHAT CAN YOU AND YOUR SCHOOL DO TO SUPPORT THE NO PLACE FOR HATE CAMPAIGN?

We have created the No Place for Hate Campaign (NPFH) to share our vision of creating a safe and cohesive borough free from all forms of hate.

Tower Hamlets is constantly in the national media, such as the BBC, due to right-wing activities and political issues and so a positive campaign that is supported by the Mayor and all politicians and professionals alike is key to providing public assurances for unity.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets is an inner city borough with a long history of racism and far-right extremism. This includes often being the gathering ground for National Front, Black Shirts, Brick Lane Riots, English Defence League, Britain First, Sharia Patrol and has recently seen an increase in other forms of hate crime such as homophobic hate crime.

Often **WE HAVE PIONEERED HATE CRIME PROJECTS** which have been used as a benchmark and supportive borough across London such as producing the first Hate Crime Manual, Hate Crime Champions Project and a local government Campaign and No Place for Hate Pledge.

The **NO PLACE FOR HATE** campaign provides training to the community to help tackle hate crime, supporting victims, raising awareness of the impact of discrimination and aiding the prosecution of perpetrators.

It also calls on residents to pledge to do their bit.

**A TOTAL OF 2,864 PEOPLE AND 142 ORGANISATIONS HAVE ALREADY PLEDGED TO:**

\* Do their best

**TO COMBAT PREJUDICE**

and to stop those who, because of hate or ignorance, would hurt anyone or violate their dignity.

+ Try at all times

**TO BE AWARE OF THEIR OWN PREJUDICES**

and seek to gain understanding of those who they perceive as being different from themselves.

x **SPEAK OUT**

against all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

\* **REACH OUT TO SUPPORT**

those who are targets of hate.

+ Think about specific ways their community can

**PROMOTE RESPECT FOR ALL PEOPLE  
AND MAKE TOWER HAMLETS**

**NO PLACE FOR HATE.**



25

John Biggs, Mayor of Tower Hamlets, said:

“Our community spirit and diversity are some of our biggest strengths.

I would urge everyone to sign up to our No Place for Hate pledge campaign and help stamp out all forms of prejudice.”

You can make your personal pledge **HERE**

  
  
**CLICK HERE!**

YOUR COMMUNITY  
NEEDS YOU!

~~ISLAMOPHOBIA~~

~~FASCISM~~

~~RACISM~~

~~SEXISM~~



~~ABLEISM~~

~~AGEISM~~

~~HOMOPHOBIA~~

~~ANTI-SEMITISM~~

TOWER HAMLETS HAS A  
RICH AND DIVERSE HERITAGE  
COLLECTION WHICH YOU  
ARE INVITED TO USE.

Here are some of the links below:

[LONDON BOROUGH TOWER  
HAMLETS ARCHIVES](#)

[BISHOPSGATE INSTITUTE](#)

[AUTOGRAPH ABP](#)

[FOUR CORNERS](#)

There are also major national  
collections held close by at:

[NATIONAL ARCHIVES](#)

[MUSEUM OF LONDON](#)

[BRITISH LIBRARY](#)

**THIS RESOURCE WAS  
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**IT WAS DEVELOPED IN  
RESPONSE TO THE  
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES  
OF LOCAL ACTIVISTS:**

Julie Begum  
Farrukh Dhondy  
Dan Jones  
David Rosenberg  
Rafique Ullah

**INSPIRED BY:**

Beautiful Trouble - a toolbox for revolution

**WITH THANKS TO:**

Stefan Dickers - Library  
and Archives Manager at  
Bishopsgate Institute  
Ali Eisa - Public Programme  
Manager at Autograph ABP  
Tamsin Bookey & Halima  
Khanom - Tower Hamlets  
Local History Library &  
Archives  
Elizabeth Lynch  
Altab Ali Foundation

**IT WAS DEVELOPED  
IN RESPONSE TO  
IDEAS FROM:**

Student consultants at  
George Green School,  
supported by Jane  
O'Sullivan, Enrichment  
Manager - Engagement.

**PHOTOGRAPHS AND  
IMAGES PROVIDED BY:**

Phil Gordon  
David Hoffman  
Rehan Jamil - background  
image & photos  
Tom Learmonth  
Kippa Matthews  
and Lesley Baron  
Phil Maxwell  
Alex MacNaughton  
Bernadette Russell  
Syd Shelton  
Guy Smallman  
Paul Trevor  
Val Wilmer

News of the World  
No Place for Hate  
Race Today  
Socialist Party  
Stand Up to Racism  
Stop the War  
Swadhinata Trust  
The Independent  
Tower Hamlets Local  
History Library & Archives  
Young Mayor's Office

"NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL  
GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL,  
COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN  
CHANGE THE WORLD; INDEED,  
IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT  
EVER HAS"

MARGARET MEAD