

From Councillor Andrew Wood

Reporting back



Dear resident,

Two thirds of the people who receive this letter won't be voting in the local elections on the 3rd May (if we repeat turn out at the last local election in May 2014). Many of you I assume either do not realise you can vote or do not know why you should vote locally. So, I thought it might be useful to lay out in this letter and the attached leaflet some of the things I have done as your local Councillor since I was elected in May 2014. I hope it will persuade you to vote as Canary Wharf ward had the lowest turnout of any ward in Tower Hamlets in 2014. First a reminder of how much money Tower Hamlets Council actually spends, it is a lot more than most people realise and shows why you need Councillors to review and audit what the Mayor of Tower Hamlets does with your money:

	Total spend including schools & housing benefit	Direct Council spend
Cost per household	£11,022	£2,810
Cost per person	£4,464	£1,138
Total cost 2017/18	£1,329,241,000	£338,896,000

As you can see they spend a lot more money than what they receive in Council tax. The rest comes from central government grants, business rates and other income.

Communication

Many of you live in tower blocks where it is difficult enough to talk to your neighbours and despite employing 22 full time communications staff the Council are not very good at communicating so I have spent a lot of my time on social media to try and fill the information gap:

Facebook: I set up & administer, the "Canary Wharf & Isle of Dogs Residents" Facebook group, which now has 10,400 members, it is the go to place to find out what is happening locally so please join

Twitter: you can find me at @andrewwood17 – I have written 2,080 tweets in four years

Nextdoor.co.uk: I was very active on Streetlife and now on its replacement Nextdoor

Website: my website is at www.cllrandrewwood.com, you can find more information about me there

Email: I have sent 4,351 emails from my main cllrandrewwood@gmail.com account and received 16,305 emails in four years. Plus, more from my Andrew.wood@towerhamlets.gov.uk account.

If you google my name 'Andrew Wood Tower Hamlets' you can see what else I have done

What powers do Councillors have?

In May 2010 residents of Tower Hamlets voted in a referendum to have an Executive Mayor model of government in Tower Hamlets, first Lutfur Rahman & now John Biggs. That means that Councillors no longer have any power except in Committee or if delegated to them by the Mayor. Our job is to:

- Hold the Mayor & his administration to account
- To make decisions in committees like Planning, Pensions and Licensing
- To scrutinise the actions of the Council in committees like Audit and Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Helping residents by raising issues with Tower Hamlets Council & social landlords

- Anything else we can do to make our wards better for our residents

Contrary to what people will tell you, we have no national or international powers.

Local elections Thursday 3rd May 2018

On the 3rd May we will have two elections:

- Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets
- Ward Councillors (2 in Canary Wharf ward)

In Tower Hamlets, we currently have the following political distribution:

Mayor of London	Labour	2 Members of Parliament	Both Labour
Mayor of Tower Hamlets	Labour	GLA Assembly Member	Labour

Of the forty-five Councillors - 24 were elected as Labour in 2014, 13 elected as Labour in 2010 but later defected to Lutfur Rahman, 3 others were elected as independents or with Lutfur Rahman

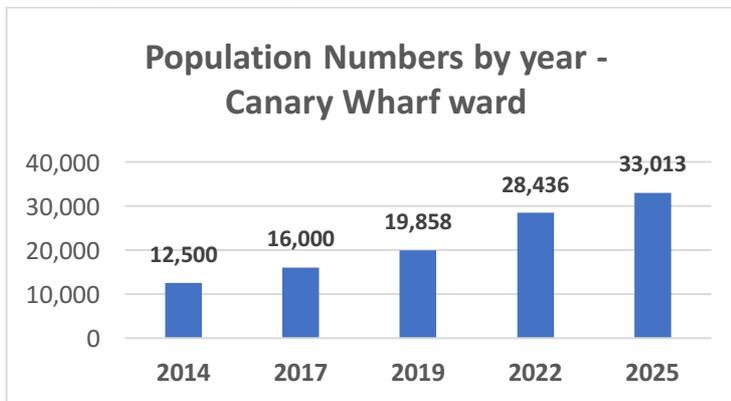
There are only five Conservative Councillors in Tower Hamlets including Cllr Peter Golds & myself

The main political decision on the 3rd May in Canary Wharf ward will be:

1. Does this become an all Labour Borough or not?
2. Do you vote on national or local issues? The leaflet outlines some of the local issues I work on

Introducing Tom Randall & Dr Anwara Ali MBE

When I was elected in 2014 the population of the ward was 12,500 people, it is now around 16,000 and the Council forecast it to go to 28,436 people by the date of the next election in May 2022. There are two Councillors for the ward who are supposed to support about 6,000-7,000 people each. But by March 2025 we will need to support 16,500 people each, twice as many as other Councillors in slower growth areas. This is a huge amount of work for what are meant to be part time roles. This is why Tom Randall has been picked as my running mate on the 3rd May, you need the hardest working people working as a team together. Dr Anwara Ali MBE is the Conservative Mayoral candidate on the 3rd May.



This is also why I spend so much time on planning related issues.

Not going to be in Tower Hamlets on the 3rd May?

If you got this letter it means you are on the electoral register and can vote (even if you are an EU or Commonwealth citizen). But if you are going to be away on the 3rd May you can vote by proxy or by post. You can register to do both here www.gov.uk/voting-in-the-uk

It has been a great pleasure being your Councillor for the last four years but there are a number of things I still have left to do as regards children's services, education, crime, ASB & planning so I hope you choose to elect Tom & I as your local Councillors so that we can continue the work,

Andrew Wood

Andrew Wood, Councillor Canary Wharf ward