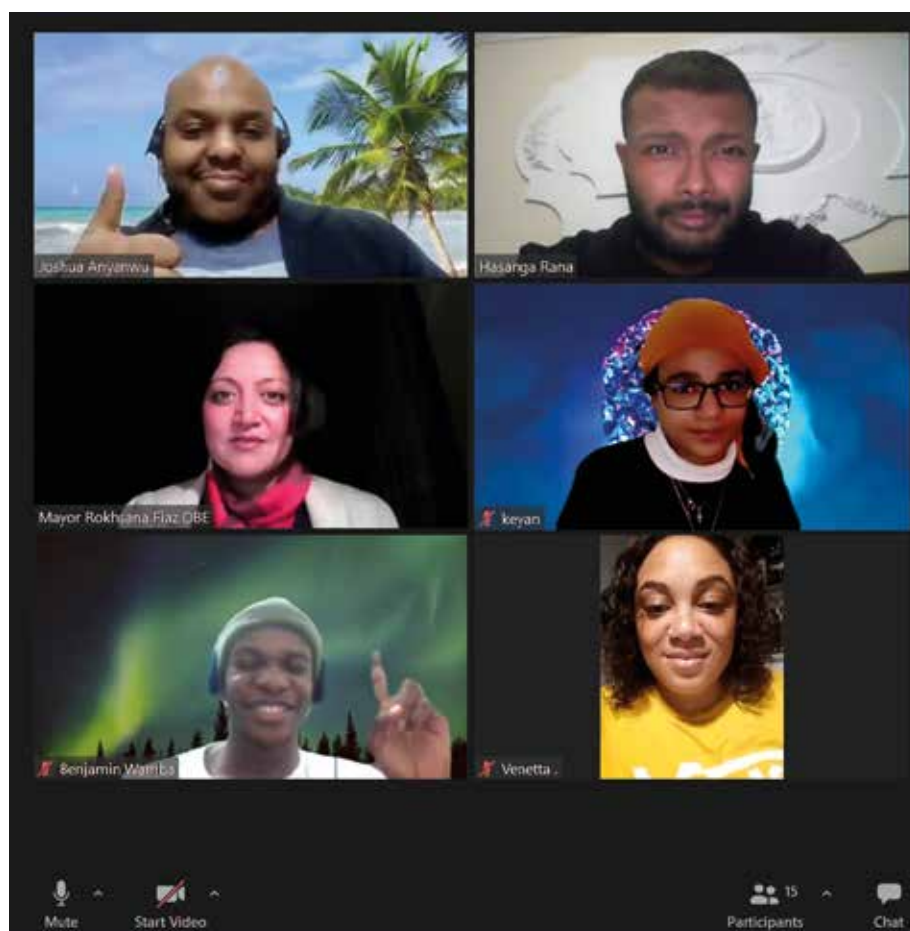


2021 NEWHAM YEAR OF THE YOUNG PERSON

WE ARE
NEWHAM.



Young People 'grill' the Mayor!



Mayor Rokhsana joined eight Newham young people in what was a very candid and friendly zoom interview - there were no formalities. In fact, by the third question, many of the young interviewers were referring to Newham's Mayor as 'Rokhs', and by the end of the session, Rokhs and the young people were planning a Social Action project to support women, the group had been invited to meet with Cabinet Members and Council Officers to discuss the Newham Sports Strategy, and the Mayor had agreed to join some of the group, in a game of basketball, once lockdown lifts!

Oh! And of course there were all the young people's questions that the Mayor answered. These were wide-ranging including Rokhs's early years, her motivation to become Mayor, her experience as a Muslim woman in a position of leadership, dealing with discrimination, whether our Mayor feels she's meeting her goals, the Mayor's thoughts on mental health, and insight to how our Mayor de-stresses from the role. The interview ended with the Mayor's thoughts on Newham's Year of Young Person 2021. We have selected three questions and will serialise this interview in future Newham Recorder editions, so keep reading, to learn more.

Question: What memorable experiences did you have in your younger years that could inspire us, on our own journey?

Mayor's response: "There are couple of really vivid memories I had growing up in Newham. One was the magic of learning but not necessarily formal learning in school, but the learning I gained from going to the local library, during the summer. I used to be a book nerd and that helped my imagination. I think reading is beneficial to young people and especially given the challenges we're all facing with Covid-19 and lockdown and all the restrictions. Books and other forms of information mediums can help create different worlds and they helped me navigate and understand what was going on around me.

I would also say having opportunities opened to me by trusting adults who saw my ambitions and potential and gave me the opportunity to try and do things. One of the things I did at 15 was to run a summer youth club for a women's group my mum was involved in. I had to work with adults to develop a 6-week playgroup programme – that was interesting. It makes me think how my experience back then relate to what we are doing here at the Council – providing opportunities, co-designing and co-producing things with young people and allowing young voices to shape what it is we do.

Question: What is your main source of motivation that allows you to work as hard as you do?

Mayor's response: I remember as a young girl accompanying my mother to the Council, and the Officer reducing her to tears. The impact of watching my mother being diminished by someone in power really, really upset me and made me feel angry. For me what drives me in my position now, is making sure no one has that experience, and it really saddens me that those things still happen. I'm still fighting to make sure those occurrences, reduce, reduce, reduce, until they become no more. That is a reason why I work hard, it's a duty I feel to make Newham better, and it's a duty to fulfil the promises I made and I don't like promising things I can't deliver.

Question: What hopes do you have for the Year of Young People 2021.

Mayor's response: Do you know the biggest hope I have is that we can change the narrative about our young people and how they are perceived and bring them to the surface. I'd like for the voices of young people to really become amplified and prominent and for people to really get that building a Newham that will enable our young people to reach and achieve their best, is everyone's business – instead of turning a blind eye or shrugging their shoulders and saying 'I'm not interested or its not my business'. That's my hope.

To Benjamin, Samuel, Keb, Laiba, Fatima, Keyan, Shan and Irshad – you know who you are - a huge thank you. Journalists in the making!



Young People's Hopes

Thanks to Andy Lewis, Deputy Head at St Bonaventure's Catholic Secondary School in Forest Gate, who helped us mobilise the 'one-word' thoughts and feelings of 389 students in response to the question: 'Hope for my life means...', and in the word cloud above, this is what they told us!

Join Us

Newham Council wishes to thank the Newham Recorder for partnering with us during The Year of the Young Person 2021, helping us shine a light on the brilliance of all our children and young people throughout the next twelve months. There are plenty of opportunities for businesses and partners to be involved throughout the year ahead, and for further information, then get in touch with us by contacting yoyp@newham.gov.uk

Newham Year of the Young Person 2021

For the first time ever, 2021 has been designated the Year of the Young Person by Newham Council, as it launches a vibrant programme of events and activities to give a platform to the incredible young people across the borough. As part of the Mayor's ambition to make Newham the best place for a child and young people to grow up and thrive, the Council will be providing a variety of opportunities for young people to **celebrate** their contribution to the borough.

Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz said "I'm really excited about our first ever Year of the Young Person to celebrate the brilliance of all our children and young people in Newham. It's been a hard time for them all since the start of the pandemic, as they have been dealing with the disruption of Covid-19 with remote learning online, not going to school or seeing their friends and recreating their daily experiences away from school, their friends and living with the challenge of Covid-19. I'm encouraging all Newham residents and businesses to do all they can to ensure that our young people feel appreciated and recognised by all of us by embracing what they will showcase during 2021".

Newham has the highest number of young people anywhere in the country, with 36.5 percent of our population under 24 years-old. The Newham Year of the Young Person during 2021 is all about exploring new ways of involving young people in everything that we do in the Council and in the community. Through offering opportunities, developing collaborations and initiating a wide array of exciting actions, the year is all about showcasing their talents, widening their experiences and opening up pathways for them to explore and thrive. We want Newham to become the best place for a young person to grow up, and the Year of the Young Person 2021 is a demonstration of our commitment to that. Throughout the year, a co-produced programme of projects and activities will be rolled-out to motivate and inspire.

“ Councillor Carleene Lee-Phakoe said “We don't want to separate young people from our conversations, but turn up the volume of their voices, embrace their interests to participate and ensure they are fully represented in all aspects of their community.” ”

Anything is possible!

A message from Geeta Subramaniam-Mooney, Newham's Children and Young People's Commissioner

Here at the Council, the health, wellbeing and happiness of all our children and young people in Newham is paramount. That's why all of us need to play an active role, and have both an individual and collective responsibility, in making Newham the best place for our children to grow up, be supported and inspired, as well as secure. We know the past year has been especially challenging for our young people, who will have experienced so many emotions about a year that has changed their lives in ways they could never have imagined before. Important life milestones, which have been delayed or missed because of Covid-19, will have impacted their wellbeing, dismantled their connections with others and disrupted their learning; but as Newham Council's first ever Children and Young People's Commissioner here in Newham, my message to every Newham young person is this: **you matter, know that anything is possible and we will do all we can to support you to achieve your ambitions and help you thrive. We are ambitious for each and every one of you, because you are the future of our borough, the change makers and the leaders and we want to help you reach your possibilities and new heights.**
@GeetaSM @Children1stLBN

'You've got to see it, to be it' - investing in our Youth Zones

As part of Mayor Rokhsana Fiaz's commitment to invest in our young people, the Council's ambition is to make sure that all the borough's young people have access to the best youth services in London. That's why over the past 18 months, the Youth Empowerment services, has made significant investments in its Youth Zone expansion programme. Working in partnership with the voluntary sector in Newham, the Council has opened three new Youth Zones in East Ham, North Woolwich and Silvertown, as well as in Plaistow. We are also increasing our borough-wide inclusive offer for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities through an expanded programme of support, activities and opportunities so that they are not left out. To complete the Mayor's ambition to double Newham's Youth Zones, this Spring we will be opening the flagship Stratford Circus Youth Zone, dedicated to empowering young people through culture and the creative arts. An eclectic and wide ranging array of enriching activities including art, music, singing, dancing and drama will be on offer; as well as support with school work, skills and career advice, health and wellbeing advice and much more.

Stratford Youth Zone's motto is 'You've got to see it, to be it', and our dedicated youth workers will be working with Newham's most exciting arts, cultural and creative organisations; as well as artists and educational providers to give young people opportunities to find out, learn and develop their creative skills.

Studio space for emerging young artists, aged 18 to 30 years-old, as well as dance groups (or troops!), music producers or playwrights will be available. Our application process will launch this summer, so watch this space or follow us on Twitter @stratfordyouthzone1bn. For information on your Youth Zones including our up to date details of digital and in person activities, visit our website here: <https://padlet.com/YESLBN/YESProgramme>

Youth Empowerment Fund



Newham's Youth Empowerment Fund has been established to provide practical assistance to support every resident under 25, living in low-income households. The small grants awarded seek to support young people's aspirations, help keep them safe, remove barriers to success and encourage long-term prosperity so that Newham can become **the best place for a young person to grow up**. Small assistance grants ranging between £100 to £2,500 will be made available to enable young people to overcome financial barriers that inhibit their economic progression, for example: providing clothing for interviews, software packages or hardware to support learning, bursaries, training, kit, equipment, travel allowance and so forth. Overcoming some barriers requires financial assistance, but other young people may require a different kind of support. Therefore, Newham Council and its partners will also offer help through buddying, coaching, information, advice and guidance. The grant will be launched in the coming weeks so keep an eye out in the Newham Recorder or at www.newham.gov.uk/yoyp

Kickstart Work Opportunities

KICKSTART SCHEME

If you're a young person aged between 16 and 24 years, and on Universal Credit, you are eligible to apply for a six-month paid work placement with the London Borough of Newham. The Kickstart scheme is designed to provide opportunities for young people to take part in quality work placements that will help them gain valuable experience, develop skills and support employment future job opportunities. Young people will be offered a wide range of work placements available across the Council for 25 hours a week, which will include a bespoke training and support package. All young people on the programme will be paid a London Living Wage. To find out more, simply get in touch with us by emailing: KickStartNewham@newham.gov.uk.

Participate

Passionate about an issue? Want to see positive changes in the borough? Are you aged between 9-25 years old? If that's you, there are loads of voluntary and paid opportunities to get involved and participate in shaping the future of Newham! From working with trailblazing immersive technology entrepreneurs, local universities and the Council, there a load of things you can get involved in, including:

• Climate Emergency Youth Assembly

On 22 February, Newham young people will be working with Environmental Control Officers to launch a campaign to improve air quality. Then in spring,

we'll be holding a Climate Emergency Youth Assembly. If you want to be a part of seeing change in Newham, follow our socials for information about signing up, or get in touch with us through email yoyp@newham.gov.uk

• Volunteering

2020 showed us the power and importance of volunteering. So in 2021, we aim to increase our volunteering offer to young people. We will open up new opportunities and pathways, explore new areas for volunteering linking to young people's passions and interests and increase our young volunteers in environments that support their skills development and future prospects. We have signed up over 100 young people to our Duke of Edinburgh Award and we're expecting many will complete their programme in 2021. Want to find out about the benefits of gaining independence; increasing confidence; or giving back to the community, get in touch by email: dofe@newham.gov.uk

• The Young People Speak

Every two weeks we run youth voice sessions - The People Speak, and their pop-up talk show Talkaoke. Conversations are a journey from one unexpected subject to another - topical, funny, deep, out-there, or all of the above. Talkaoke gives young people a chance to hear ideas and to generate and discover new ones. If you want to take part contact yoyp@newham.gov.uk.

• Become a Young Health Champion

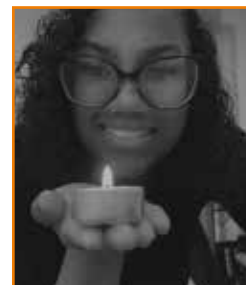


Could you be a Young Health Champion?

Young Health Champions programme was designed by and for young people including Newham residents, Irshad, Youssef, Neo and Luis who stated, "As champions, we play a key role in influencing decision makers. It's a way for us, as young people, to participate in a borough wide strategy." Volunteers will have access to training and can become a qualified Young Health Champion. To join, you just need to be studying or living in Newham, aged 10 to 25 years, and passionate about helping your community. For more information or to register your interest email us at: younghealthchampion@newham.gov.uk

• Creating Services Creatively for Young People

What should services for young people look like? That's the question young people, staff and local illustrator Ada Jusic will be using as inspiration for a new mural on our Newham streets. Working together, they'll be creating illustrations that tell the story of why help for young people is so important. Keep your eyes peeled for more information!



• Holocaust Memorial Day - 27 January, 2021

Lily Naidu, a regular attendee of Newham Youth Zones and recent volunteer at Newham's Food Hubs will light a commemorative candle at Newham's online Holocaust Memorial Day. The theme for 2021 is 'Be the light in the darkness' for which Lily stated, "The Holocaust...must always be remembered and will always remain relevant."

• Newham Student SACRE

Interested in moral and religious issues? Passionate about learning from different backgrounds and cultures? Want to develop your leadership and communication skills? Newham Student SACRE is a young people's group (Years 8/9) who will get together in 2021 to work on a project to develop their skills on teaching religion and worldviews. To get involved contact claire.clinton@rematters.co.uk

• What's Your Story?

National Storytelling Week 30 January -06 February

Did you know that young people can join one of 10 Newham Libraries for free gaining access to books, DVDs, CDs, Computers, Wi-fi and a range of activities such as author events, digital and science activities. This coming week is National Storytelling Week and we want to hear Newham's young people's stories in 150 words or less. Young People are invited to write their story or the story of a young Newham person they know. Who knows, your piece might be published in the Newham Recorder. To join in, send your autobiography or biography to yoyp@newham.gov.uk Meanwhile, visit newham.gov.uk/libraries to be literally inspired!

• Peer Champion Taskforce - Get Involved

The Peer Champions Taskforce (PCT) is a new programme aimed at tackling the spread of fake news and misinformation that is affecting the mental health of our young people. We are creating a series of interactive workshops where young people can express their views on a range of topics (i.e. social media, Covid-19 myths, hate crime) whilst developing critical thinking skills, raising awareness of available support and increasing self-confidence. Members will be responsible for co-producing an action plan to help Newham Council better support young people online. Please email pct@newham.gov.uk if you would like to get involved.

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