

GLA Civic and Democratic Participation Programme
April 2025 – March 2026



Evaluation Report

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The GLA Civic and Democratic Participation Programme community delivery partner



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This report is available on the GLA Democracy Hub: **registertovote.london**

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GLA Civic and Democratic Participation Programme

April 2025 – March 2026

Executive summary

The Greater London Authority (GLA) Civic and Democratic Participation programme began in 2019 with the pilot London Voter Registration Week (LVRW). Since then, it has evolved into a wide-ranging programme built on a distinctive model of co-design and co-delivery. It brings together a regional authority; statutory partners; a diverse civil-society coalition; and Londoners who are under-registered or under-represented. Through this approach, the programme has delivered campaigns and activities that have supported increases in voter registration, while addressing wider barriers to participation in London's democracy.

In 2025-26, the GLA brought together borough electoral services, civil-society organisations, educational institutions and partners from across the city to deliver the seventh LVRW; and the second London Democracy Week (LDW). This work falls within the GLA's statutory powers to promote social development. It also reflects the continued development and embedding of good practice in approaches to democratic participation, established through the programme.

As part of its community engagement activity in 2025-26, the programme produced and co-designed accessible resources, including videos, social media assets, posters and toolkits. These were distributed to London boroughs – as well as a coalition of civil-society organisations, education institutions, libraries and food banks – through both digital and in-person channels, to raise awareness. In parallel, a programme of pan-London events took place throughout the year, delivered across a mix of online and in-person formats.

Programme activity and resources are brought together on the [**GLA Democracy Hub**](#). This continues to be shaped by user research, following a comprehensive redesign last year.

Collectively, the GLA, its delivery partners and the wider coalition achieved the following in 2025-26:

- **9,674 Londoners** were engaged through in-person activity, alongside an estimated social media reach of **4.9 million** via delivery partners and the coalition.
- **86 in-person events** were delivered in a range of community settings, including education institutions, cultural festivals, community centres, university fairs and food

banks. Events were held **in every London borough** and reached Londoners from all target communities.

- **Almost 25,000 Londoners** registered to vote during LVRW 2025. This represents a **4 per cent increase** compared with the previous week; and an **8 per cent increase among young Londoners**.

The programme continues to operate within a challenging environment, characterised by rising levels of misinformation and disinformation¹; political polarisation²; and declining trust in political institutions and elected representatives³. At the same time, the Representation of the People Bill is making its way through parliament. If passed, this will trigger a series of reforms – most notably the extension of voting rights to those aged 16 and 17. The GLA's Civic and Democratic Participation Programme will build on established learning, partnerships and credibility to respond to the evolving context.

The programme sits within the GLA's Reducing Inequalities mandate. This reflects its contribution to ensuring that all Londoners are better able to have their voices heard in decisions that affect their lives, communities and the future of their city – both during elections and beyond.

Civic participation includes:

- The ability to start or sign petitions
- Taking part in peaceful, legal protest
- Being involved in community organising
- Volunteering



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Democratic participation includes:

- Registering to vote, if eligible
- Voting in local, regional and national elections
- Taking part in deliberative and participatory democracy
- Standing for elected office



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¹ Mis-disinformation review - GLA City Intelligence - March 2026.pdf

² UK's sense of division reaches new high as culture war tensions grow, study finds | King's College London

³ Trust and confidence in Britain's system of government at record low | National Centre for Social Research

Background

London continues to face structural inequalities in civic and democratic participation. While progress has been made in increasing voter registration in recent years, participation remains unequal across demographic groups, and many Londoners still feel disconnected from decision-making processes.

According to the Electoral Commission's report on the state of the electoral registers, London has one of the lowest voter-registration rates in England: 82 per cent of Londoners are registered, compared to 86 per cent across the rest of England (Electoral Commission, 2023).

The breakdown across different demographics also shows that certain groups are less likely to be registered to vote; and have lower awareness levels of voting information.

Research carried out by YouGov (GLA Datastore, January 2025) found the following:

- **82.9% of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Londoners are registered to vote, compared to 90.1% of White Londoners.** This breaks down as follows:
 - 82% of those who identify as Asian are registered to vote
 - 84.2% of those who identify as Black are registered to vote
 - 83.3% of those who identify as Mixed/Other are registered to vote.
- **62.3% of 18-24-year-olds are registered to vote**, compared to 96.6% for those 65 and over.
- 95.8% of those who own a home are registered to vote, compared to **82.4% of those privately renting and 85.6% of those socially renting.**
- **73.8% of those who were born outside the UK are registered to vote**, compared to 89.6% of those born in the UK.
- **Just under three in ten Londoners** (29 per cent) **thought that their education helped them to understand** very well or fairly well **how UK elections work.** The figure was higher amongst those aged 18-24 (43 per cent) than other age groups. This finding reinforces the need to co-produce and co-deliver (with partners) democratic education materials on political and media literacy.
- Awareness of the current legal voting age (18 in England, and therefore in London too) was 87 per cent. By contrast, **only 34 per cent of Londoners know that eligible voters can register to vote** in England (and thus in London) **at 16.**

Awareness that votes can only be cast at age 18 was lower among low-income Londoners, and Deaf and disabled Londoners.

Disparities in participation extend beyond registration and political literacy. Evidence from the Community Life Survey 2025 highlights persistent inequalities in civic participation (defined as activities such as contacting elected representatives; taking part in consultations or community decision-making; or engaging in campaigning and advocacy).

In the last 12 months:

- **24% of 16–24-year-olds in London reported engaging in civic participation** activities, compared to 39% of the rest of the population
- **38% of disabled Londoners reported engaging in civic participation** activities, compared to 44% of non-disabled people
- **31% of Londoners from ethnic minority backgrounds reported engaging in civic participation** activities, compared to 43% of White British groups.

This reinforces that structural inequalities in participation mirror those seen in voter registration: young people, disabled people and ethnically diverse communities are less likely to engage.

Alongside lower participation, there is evidence of a significant “participation gap” between interest in influence and perceived agency.

- While 55% of Londoners say it is important to feel they can influence decisions in their local area, only **28% believe they personally can influence those decisions.**
- Although both figures are higher than the UK average (50% and 20% respectively), the gap highlights a persistent challenge around political efficacy and trust.

While many Londoners demonstrate interest in how to participate, overall participation remains low. There is a continued need to build political efficacy, trust and meaningful opportunities for engagement – particularly among under-represented groups.

The GLA Civic and Democratic Participation Programme is informed by GLA City Intelligence data; GLA-commissioned YouGov polling; regular updates with the Electoral Commission and borough electoral services; and insight from communities themselves.

GLA Civic and Democratic Participation Programme

The GLA Civic and Democratic Participation programme aims to reduce democratic inequality in London by ensuring all Londoners – especially under-registered and under-represented communities – have the information, tools and confidence to take part in civic and democratic life.



The programme uses a unique delivery model of co-design and co-delivery between a regional authority, statutory bodies (all London borough electoral services and the Electoral Commission), and a broad pan-London coalition of civil-society and education partners. As such, it operates at scale across London.

The GLA Civic and Democratic Participation team has an ongoing collaboration with the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA). In the last few years, working with London AEA colleagues and our broad coalition, we've ensured London has had the biggest increase in voter registration rates across Great Britain. The latest Electoral Commission report into the 2022 annual canvass (**Electoral Commission**, 2023) shows London has had the biggest increase in voter registration rates among local authorities in England.

The programme is strictly non-partisan and politically impartial. All activity is focused on supporting informed participation, increasing understanding of democratic processes and institutions, and reducing barriers to engagement, rather than encouraging support for a particular party, candidate or policy position.

The year-round programme of work includes a combination of awareness raising, democratic education and voter registration to increase participation in London's democracy. There are two key GLA-coordinated event weeks:

- London Democracy Week (LDW), held annually in March
- London Voter Registration Week (LVRW), held annually in September

Ahead of these milestones in the campaign, the GLA and Shout Out UK (SOUK) share co-designed, accessible information packs with all borough councils and the broad civil-society coalition. This coalition is made up of hundreds of civil-society partners and supporters who share these resources across their online and offline channels, and help run in-person and online events. The campaign uses content co-designed with communities at risk of disenfranchisement, and balances pan-London and community-specific engagement. All the co-designed resources can be found on the GLA Democracy Hub at <https://registertovote.london>.

Alongside LVRW and LDW, the GLA Civic and Democratic Participation Programme delivers a programme of year-round engagement activity to support ongoing awareness raising and participation in London's democracy.

This activity combines high-reach digital communications with in-person engagement delivered across community settings, including education institutions, places of worship, community centres and public spaces. Delivery is undertaken in partnership with a pan-London civil-society coalition, enabling broad dissemination and targeted engagement with under-represented communities.

Activity is sustained throughout the year and strategically amplified during key moments, including UK Parliament Week and recognised community days, to maximise visibility and reach.

A core component of this work is the development and distribution of political and media literacy resources, designed to improve understanding of democratic processes and institutions, and to address barriers such as low awareness and exposure to misinformation. These resources are made available via the GLA Democracy Hub to support delivery by education providers and community partners.

Together, this approach supports a shift from campaign-led engagement to continuous participation, helping to build knowledge, trust and confidence among Londoners to engage in civic and democratic life beyond elections.

Key deliverables and activity in 2025-26 included:

- in-person community-engagement events to raise awareness among under-registered and under-represented Londoners; and information stalls in educational institutions
- co-designed static and dynamic social media resources, provided with alt text and in community languages, for accessibility
- explainer videos and short-form video content

- print information materials to address digital inequality, including distribution to foodbanks and libraries
- FAQ on democratic rights and key information on voting – available in Easy Read, British Sign Language (BSL) and 16 community languages
- an animation in BSL and 16 community languages.

Reach and impact

“I would like to express my gratitude for the excellent range of resources made available by your team and the consideration of community languages.” – **Community organisation**

The following figures represent our overall reach and impact (April 2025 – March 2026):

- Over 9,600 Londoners were engaged through **86 in-person events in various settings across London** (see a breakdown of activity in **Annex 1**). These events include those held with education institutions; community festivals; and workshops with coalition partners.
- At these events, **3,897 Londoners registered to vote on the spot**, or committed to register at home/later.
- The programme engaged with **21 libraries and 16 foodbanks** across the capital – sharing leaflets and posters for them to display in their venues.
- An estimated **4.9 million people** were reached via SOUK and partner amplified social media.
- **5 million impressions** on SOUK social media channels. Channels included Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube. Impressions on X and WhatsApp was organic only (content appeared naturally through the algorithm, not because of paid advertising) ⁴. There were almost 1,000 interactions with the GLA WhatsApp Democracy Chatbot.
- The GLA **#NoVoteNoVoice** WhatsApp channel drew over **1,100 followers**. This offers key information on civic and democratic rights, and on related calls to action.

⁴ Reach measures the number of unique people who have seen your content; impressions measure the total number of times your content was displayed, including repeat views by the same person).

- We maintained a coalition of over **300 members**, partners and supporters across civil-society and educational institutions.
- For the first time **we reached all 32 boroughs** through in-person activities, including delivering an educational activity in each borough.



Co-design

As part of the programme's co-design approach, a series of focus groups were conducted to inform the development and refinement of campaign resources. These were delivered at two stages of the programme: early-stage community focus groups (May-July 2025) and a later Peer Outreach Worker session (February 2026).

Community focus groups

Community focus groups were delivered between May and July 2025; these informed the development of campaign messaging and resources. Participants were recruited via trusted community and civil-society organisations that are part of the programme's coalition. These organisations shared invitations through their existing networks and member communities, enabling targeted recruitment of Londoners from key under-registered and under-represented groups. A total of 46 participants took part across four groups representing key target communities, including young Londoners; Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and migrant communities; older Londoners; and d/Deaf and disabled Londoners. The following findings came from these groups:

- **Awareness and knowledge** – across all groups, awareness of civic institutions and processes was low; this includes limited understanding of the GLA's role. Participants also demonstrated gaps in knowledge around voter eligibility, the registration process and voter ID requirements.

- **Barriers to participation** – participants identified multiple barriers to democratic participation. These include low awareness of how to register; language and accessibility challenges; practical constraints such as time and transport; and low trust in political institutions. Lower registration levels were evident among younger participants and Black, Asian, migrant and EU Londoners, reinforcing the need for targeted engagement.
- **Feedback on communications and design** – clear and visually engaging materials were consistently preferred. Participants responded less positively to text-heavy resources – highlighting the importance of simple language, strong visual design, and accessible formats.



Younger participants reported encountering information about voting and wider participation primarily through social media platforms. However, trust in these sources was relatively low across all groups. This emphasises the importance of working through trusted intermediaries such as schools, community organisations and civil-society partners, while ensuring we maintain a strong social media presence, with content co-designed with young people to build trust and engagement and provide a credible alternative to the mis and disinformation young people encounter online.

Findings from the community focus groups reinforced the need for clear, accessible and visually led communications, alongside targeted approaches to addressing persistent knowledge gaps and structural barriers to participation. Feedback from the focus group was used to inform the creation of campaign assets.

A further focus group with 10 Peer Outreach Workers⁵ was held in February 2026 to evaluate the voter registration toolkit and masterclass. Participants found the resources clear, practical and confidence-building for peer-led engagement. They also identified opportunities to strengthen the guidance, and to provide additional information on topics such as voter ID and voting methods.

London Voter Registration Week 2025



Delivered for the seventh year between 15 and 21 September 2025, LVRW contributed to an increase of voter-registration rates in London, particularly among young people. In the same period, rates across the UK dropped. The timing of LVRW in September is key. It's held during the electoral canvass period (the annual voter-registration process carried out by electoral services to publish the December electoral rolls); and at the start of the academic year, to maximise engagement with young people. LVRW is a well-established and effective democratic participation partnership model between a regional authority and a broad civil-society coalition, delivered in coordination with borough electoral services.

The seventh LVRW was delivered under the established #NoVoteNoVoice campaign. Ahead of the week, we shared a suite of digital, video and animation assets. While most resources were designed for online use, around a third supported offline amplification and

⁵ Peer Outreach Workers (POWs) are a group of young people (15-25) from across the capital, that help to influence City Hall's policies and programmes.

in-person events. All materials were co-designed through workshops with under-registered and under-represented Londoners; then refined through focus groups.

As in previous years, the LVRW 2025 resource pack – including print and social media assets, and suggested impartial copy – was shared with partners, and through a LVRW-specific newsletter. This resource pack contained:

- LVRW-specific launch materials, including static assets and launch animation with key voting information
- updated political literacy materials
- a new voter-registration toolkit for students to deliver their own peer-led activity
- social media and print materials available in 16 community languages, as well as in BSL and Easy Read formats.

All campaign assets are hosted on the GLA Democracy Hub (www.registertovote.london).

Public communications were delivered on SOUK channels; and through coordinated posts across @LDN_gov (London City Hall), Mayor of London, and London Assembly social media channels. These were further amplified by borough councils and partners through their own channels, and in-person engagement with education providers.

Reach and impact

The impact of LVRW is demonstrated in voter-registration data supplied by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, and analysed by the GLA City Intelligence team.

Key findings include the following:

- During LVRW 2025, **24,947 people registered to vote in London**. This is a 4 per cent increase from the week before, when no campaign activity took place. Across the whole of the UK during LVRW 2025, and in the week before, registrations increased by 2 per cent. So, registrations in London had increased by a larger proportion than across the UK.
- During LVRW 2025, **5,823 young people registered to vote in London**. This is an 8 per cent increase from the week before, when no campaign activity took place.

Note: The gov.uk registration portal collects age data, which is currently the only demographic breakdown available to us for analysis.

- The figures below show our reach during LVRW 2025 specifically (please note, this has been included in the overall ‘metrics for the SOUK and coalition of support activity’ - see page 7):
 - **Over 4,480 Londoners** were engaged through **34 in-person events** in various settings across London, including education institutions, community festivals and workshops with coalition partners.
 - **1,189 individuals registered to vote** on the spot or committed to register at home/later.
 - An estimated overall reach of **4.3 million** ⁶ through Shout Out UK’s **social media** channels and amplification by the wider coalition.
 - The social media channels of our delivery partner (SOUK) generated 3 million impressions (defined as the number of times an ad/post is displayed to a user).
 - The flagship LVRW animation, on who can register to vote and how, received a total of **751,156** views.
 - A student-tailored voter registration asset featured on the back cover of the *What’sOn Student Guide*; this is distributed to 150,000 students across London universities, with an **estimated readership of 250,000-300,000**.

“Thanks very much for coming into [our] school to engage with our sixth form. The students really enjoyed engaging with you and are now more aware of their democratic voice and the need to register to vote. Thanks for visiting us!” –**Teacher**

At the Table Toolkit launch event at City Hall

On 18 September 2025, during the seventh annual LVRW, we proudly launched the **At the Table toolkit** with The Politics Project at City Hall.

This was a vibrant and energising gathering – a day designed to showcase the toolkit, and to model the kind of inclusive, engaging and participatory spirit it promotes. The event brought together approximately 65 civil-society organisations, young people and practitioners, in a powerful moment for youth civic and democratic engagement across London.

⁶ According to analysis of Brand24 and paid activity figures from META ads manager.



The agenda for the day included:

- an expert panel discussion and Q&A on democratic education and youth participation, good practice and trends – held with Faith Forum for London, SOUK, Partnership for Young London, the London Youth Assembly and The Politics Project
- live interactive demonstrations on how to use the At the Table toolkit activities
- a workshop on designing a “Votes at 16” public-awareness campaign.

Inspired by insightful contributions from our panellists Angel Singh (Youth Engagement Officer – Partnership for Young London), Hugo Maxwell (Chair – London Youth Assembly), Matteo Bergamini (Founder/CEO – SOUK), Mustafa Field (Director – Faiths Forum for London) and Pip Sayers (Programme Manager – The Politics Project).

Some key themes emerged from the discussion:

- **Participation as ongoing.** Discussions explored democratic participation as a continuous process built on long-term relationships, not just engagement during elections. Sustained, year-round activity is essential to building trust and confidence.
- **Young people care but lack meaningful engagement opportunities.** Young people are informed and motivated – but often feel they lack accessible, meaningful ways to influence decisions. Perceived apathy is more about limited opportunities than lack of interest.
- **Trust, representation and belonging are key barriers.** Low trust in institutions, particularly among marginalised groups, limits engagement. Trusted messengers, representation and inclusive spaces are critical to helping young people feel they belong.

- **Building hope requires agency and real pathways to change.** A sense of powerlessness can be addressed through stronger political and digital literacy; clearer understanding of decision-making structures; and opportunities for direct engagement with decision-makers.
- **Inclusive, co-produced and creative approaches are essential.** Effective engagement requires ongoing co-production; tailored approaches for diverse groups; and delivery through accessible, peer-led and innovative formats, supported by appropriate resources and infrastructure.

The panel reflections demonstrated the importance of, and need for, the At the Table toolkit, which was developed by The Politics Project with funding from the GLA Democratic Participation Grant (Phase 3). It is full of games and activities, co-designed with young people, to spark conversations about politics and democracy in informal youth settings, with young people who may feel disconnected or disengaged from how they can use their voice to be heard on issues that matter to them.

Through the activities, young people are encouraged to:

- connect their lived experiences to politics and democratic processes
- recognise their power and agency
- build trust with elected representatives and democratic institutions.

Hattie Andrews (Director), Fatema Delair (Programme Lead) and Pip Sayers (Programme Manager) introduced the toolkit, and led the attendees in taster activities – Walk this Way and Moments of Change. City Hall was brought to life by the opportunity to learn through play, and a vibrant demonstration of how everyone can get involved in conversations about democracy.

The closing workshop brought together the insights from the panel, At the Table toolkit discussions and partners to co-design principles for a potential public awareness campaign targeting 14-17-year-olds. This is in the context of the government's plans to extend voting rights to those aged 16 and 17. Discussions centred on how to effectively engage young people, build trust, and increase relevance of democratic participation. The following approaches were mentioned:

- **Youth-centred and empowering messaging.** Participants emphasised the importance of clear, jargon-free messaging that links voting to issues young people care about (e.g. housing, environment). Campaigns should be co-produced with diverse young people, including those who are less engaged; and focus on personal agency and future impact.

- **Multi-channel, youth-relevant communications.** Participants agreed that a blended approach is needed:
 - **Online:** prioritise short-form video content (e.g. TikTok, Instagram) using relatable storytelling and trusted influencers, alongside efforts to build media literacy.
 - **Offline:** use schools, youth settings and community spaces, supported by creative formats and peer-led outreach, to extend reach.
- **Trusted voices and partnerships** – trust is critical. Engagement should be led by peers, youth workers, educators, and community organisations, alongside credible influencers and public figures. Cross-sector and cross-party collaboration can help humanise politics and broaden appeal.
- **Enabling infrastructure and support** – effective delivery requires investment in training, sustainable funding, and strong partnerships with schools and institutions. Campaigns should create inclusive, youth-friendly spaces; and include incentives, feedback mechanisms and youth-led evaluation.

“Thanks again for inviting us to be part of such a meaningful session. I am looking forward to seeing your findings.” – **Civil-society organisation/coalition partner**

Overall, the workshop highlighted that successful engagement on Votes at 16 will depend on **co-production with young people; trusted messengers; and sustained, multi-channel approaches**. These must be supported by adequate resources and infrastructure.

These principles will be taken forward into future planning, design and delivery of a GLA Votes at 16 public-awareness campaign.

This event was part of a wider programme of work previously funded by the GLA to promote democratic engagement. The Democratic Participation grant project delivery was completed in July 2025 learnings from across that programme are captured in the 2024-2025 evaluation report.

“It was really refreshing to see the work being put in to not just engage young people politically but equipping them to exercise their democratic rights.” – **Young People’s Action Group member**



London Democracy Week 2026

LDW took place, for the second time, from 9-15 March 2026. It highlighted the many ways Londoners can get involved in civic and democratic life – from hyper-local neighbourhood initiatives to citywide and national participation. Options range from volunteering as a magistrate and participating in local projects, to responding to consultations and engaging with elected representatives.

Research from the **Community Life Survey** 2025 shows only 45 per cent of Londoners took part in at least one civic activity in 2024-25. While that's above the national average, it still means that fewer than half of Londoners actively participated.

LDW's goal is to ensure all Londoners have the confidence, awareness and opportunity to participate – while removing the barriers that disproportionately affect underrepresented groups. Young people in particular remain less likely to be heard in decision-making, making them central to this work.

Building on the LVRW model, we worked with our community delivery partner, SOUK, to develop co-designed resources on civic and democratic participation – as well as key information on the upcoming local elections in London.

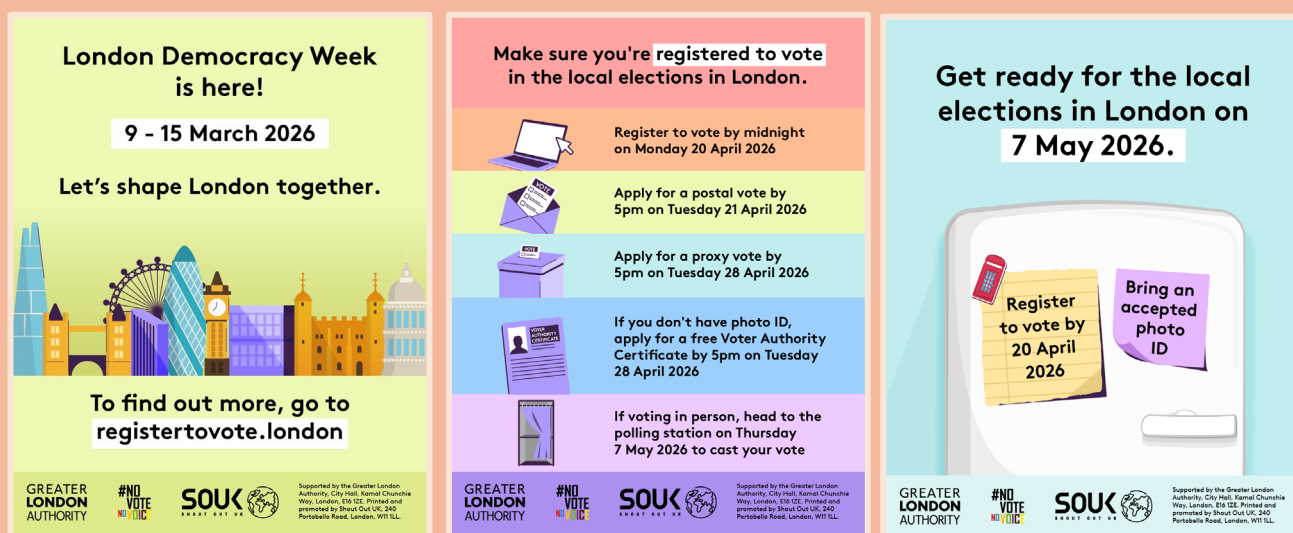
A resource pack was shared with partners, including:

- LDW-specific launch materials

- key dates and reminder information for the local elections
- a bite-sized video on the LDW 2026 theme, 'Shaping London Together'.

With support from our coalition, we shared:

- static assets and short videos for social media
- print materials such as posters and flyers
- political literacy resources, supporting understanding of how decisions are made at local, regional and national levels; and how you can engage with your elected representatives.



LDW was delivered with a broad coalition to disseminate information, as widely as possible, to London's under-registered and under-represented communities.

To ensure accessibility and reach, our resource offer was available in 16 of London's most widely spoken community languages, as well as BSL.

Throughout the week, SOUK and the GLA:

- ran a digital campaign, supported and amplified by our coalition partners
- delivered voter registration stalls, assemblies and workshops in nine educational institutions across London

- engaged Londoners directly – through in-person activities and our first virtual assembly – on their rights, their power, and the many ways they can take part in shaping the city

Reach and impact

“Thank you so much for organising our wonderful assembly! [Facilitator] was brilliant and the students found it really useful. Many of my tutor group have been talking about registering to vote this week.” – **Teacher**

- This workstream had the following reach and impact (please note: these figures are included in the overall ‘metrics for the SOUK and coalition of support activity’ - see page 8):
 - Over 1,000 Londoners were engaged through eight in-person events, and one virtual assembly, in educational settings across London – including colleges and higher education institutions.
 - 593 individuals registered to vote on the spot or committed to registering later.
 - Over 500,000 individuals were reached, across 1 million impressions, via SOUK paid and organic social media activity.

Shaping London Together event at City Hall

On Tuesday 10 March 2026, the GLA Community Engagement Team welcomed nearly 100 civil-society organisations, funders, academics and partners to City Hall for the Shaping London Together event.



The team and partners shared powerful examples of how participation is driving real change in London's communities. Throughout the event, we explored some key questions:

- How can we collectively support a stronger, more inclusive democracy in London?
- How can we ensure community voices and lived experience insight informs meaningful, accessible programmes and projects across the GLA?
- How do we embed engagement in civic life and democracy within our everyday work?

The day combined presentations, panels and interactive sessions, with a strong emphasis on real-world examples and practical application. Sessions included an overview of how the GLA works and where decisions are made; supporting greater political literacy among attendees; and contributions from Peer Outreach Workers, a group of young people from across the capital, that help to influence and inform City Hall programmes and policies - demonstrating youth-led engagement in practice.

Key takeaways from youth-focussed panel discussion with Peer Outreach Workers and GLA Public Liason Unit include the following

- **Young people are engaged, but need stronger representation and visibility.** Young people are aware of political issues, and want to engage – but need more visibility of decision-makers, and clearer representation, to feel their participation matters.
- **Co-creation and meaningful opportunities drive engagement.** Youth-led approaches, such as peer outreach and co-designed projects, were highlighted as effective ways to ensure young people can shape decisions and feel their contributions have impact.
- **Safe, in-person spaces enable open dialogue.** Face-to-face spaces were identified as essential for discussion and debate – particularly given concerns about social media as a hostile environment for sharing opinions.

Participants also explored what meaningful community engagement looks like in London, drawing on insights from across the Community Engagement team and the Civic and Democratic Participation programme. This included a dedicated session on barriers and opportunities for participation: our community delivery partner (SOUK) and past grantees shared learning from their work with under-represented communities, alongside interactive discussions on how these insights can inform future engagement and awareness-raising. The past grantees that took part in this session were:

- Age UK East London
- Coalition of Latin Americans in the UK
- Disability Action Haringey
- Empowering Deaf Society
- Faiths Forum for London
- Kosovar Albanian Youth Against Violence
- LGBT HERO
- Romanian Culture and Charity Together
- The Politics Project
- Voice4Change England.



Key takeaways from reflections for the session include the following:

- **Trust and familiarity are central to engagement:** People are more likely to engage in democratic participation when activities take place in trusted spaces, and are facilitated by individuals from within their communities.
- **Political literacy enables participation:** Understanding how democracy works, including roles, processes and rights is a key driver of engagement – particularly for young people and underrepresented groups.
- **Tailored, culturally relevant approaches are essential:** Different communities face different barriers, including language, culture and past experiences of democracy. This requires targeted and locally adapted engagement methods.

- **Representation and relatability increase engagement:** Participants highlighted the importance of representation and delivering engagement through relatable formats, including interactive methods such as games and peer-led activities.
- **Awareness of rights and processes remains a key gap:** Many individuals lack awareness of voter registration, voter ID and participation routes, highlighting the need for clear, accessible information and early education (e.g. through schools).

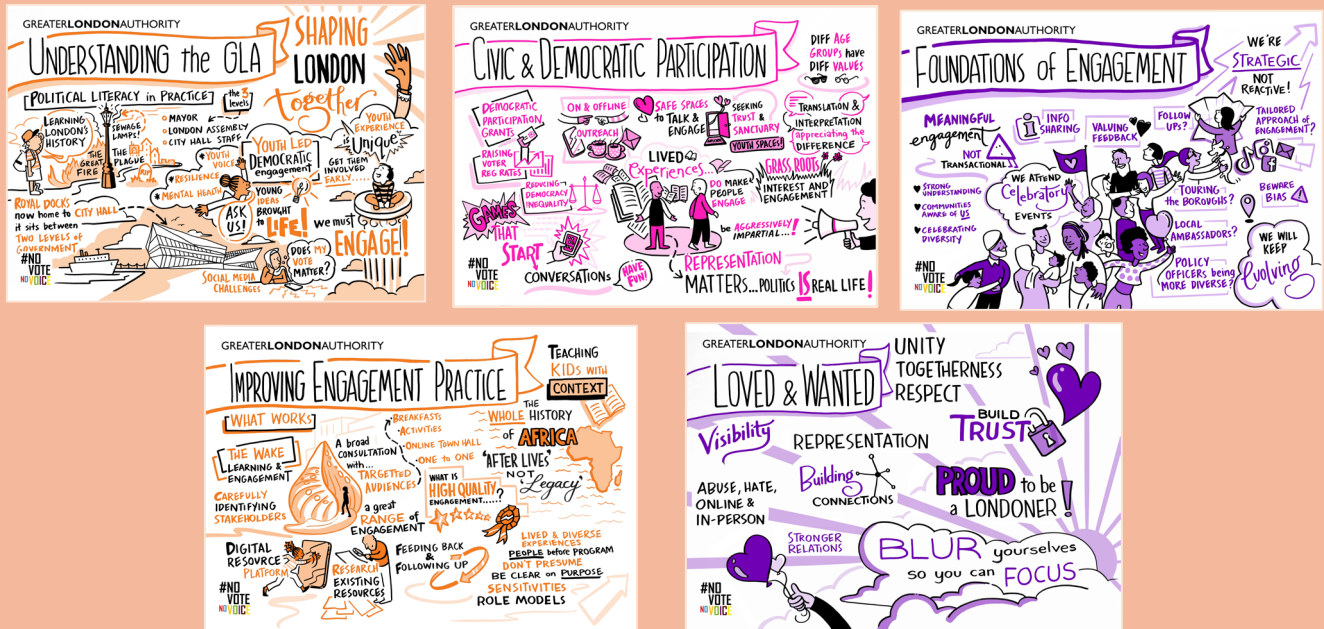
A strength of the event was its **interactive and participatory design**. Engagement moments were embedded throughout the day, including table discussions, live Q&A and collaborative workshop activity. These created opportunities for attendees to share lived experience; reflect on their own practice; and contribute directly to shaping future GLA engagement approaches.

Several cross-cutting themes emerged from discussions:

- Closing the feedback loop is essential – communities need to see how their contributions shape decisions.
- Culturally relevant and sensitive messaging helps ensure communications resonate with London's diverse communities.
- Recognising the diversity within communities is vital; there is no one-size-fits-all approach to engagement.
- It is vital to continue working with and for communities, in collaboration with trusted voices and spaces.
- Face-to-face interaction with young people remains crucial, particularly for meaningful dialogue and debate.

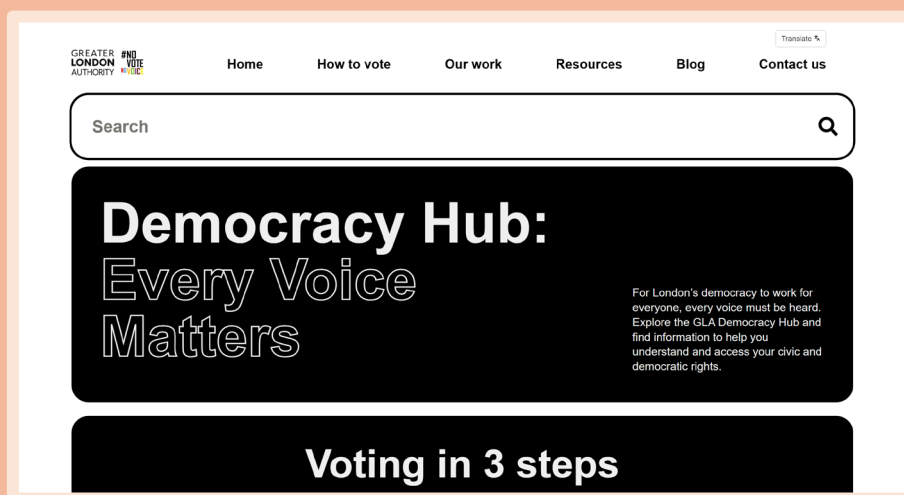
The event highlighted the incredible work already taking place across the capital – and invited everyone in the room to imagine what more can be achieved together. People who joined on the day formed new connections, exchanged lived experiences and learned from one another. This captured the spirit of the week: bringing people together to shape London's future.

“It was an incredible event in which we truly expanded our knowledge of campaigns, developed our insights, and we cannot wait for the opportunity to work with you again in the future.” – **Civil-society organisation/coalition partner**



GLA Democracy Hub

The GLA Democracy Hub is a trusted, accessible and secure source of information and resources on civic and democratic rights. It provides clear guidance on who can vote; how to vote; and ways to have your say in London's democracy beyond voting. It also offers a comprehensive library of digital and print campaign materials and educational resources.



The Hub also showcases the reach and impact of the Civic and Democratic Participation programme, highlighting good practice and lessons learned.

User research and learning

In October 2025, user research tested the improvements made to the Democracy Hub after it transitioned from WordPress to Drupal and joined the GLA's digital estate. The research included 11 moderated usability sessions, with a mix of general public users and professionals working in civil-society organisations. These sessions were designed to assess how effectively the Hub supports diverse audiences – including those with lower digital confidence and additional accessibility needs.

The research found that the Hub is widely perceived as clear, approachable and trustworthy, with users valuing its plain English content and official GLA branding. However, it also identified a few usability and content challenges that limited the user experience.

This included difficulty locating key information – particularly voter eligibility, challenges navigating the “Resources” section, and inconsistencies in the visibility of accessibility features.

Differences in user needs were also evident. Professionals valued the Hub as a tool for sharing materials, while members of the public were more focused on finding straightforward, task-based information, and often found resource-heavy content confusing or overwhelming.

The findings also highlighted gaps in content and engagement, including a lack of clear pathways for existing voters, limited localised information, and the absence of a compelling narrative on why participation matters.

Overall, the research reinforced the importance of prioritising clear navigation, accessible design and user-led content to support participation across a diverse audience.

Improvements implemented

Insights from the research informed a focused programme of improvements to reduce barriers, strengthen accessibility and improve usability.

Specifically, actions taken have:

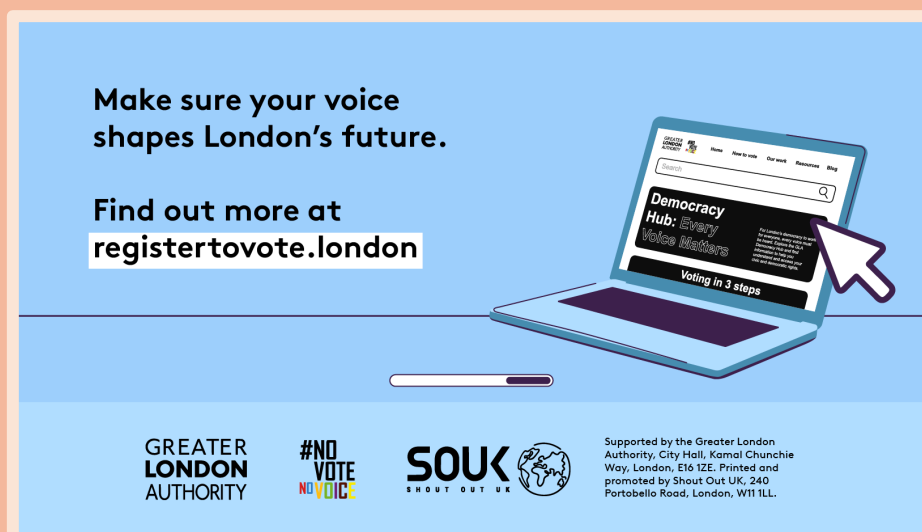
- **improved accessibility** by adding a translation tool link to the top of the site and collating accessible resources in one place

- **provided clearer information and pathways** on voter eligibility and the impact of voting, addressing a key barrier to participation
- **improved resource navigation** through new functionality, including resource previews, links to related content, grouped “collections” and pre-filtered lists
- **enhanced user support and localisation** through clearer contact information, and the integration of a postcode lookup tool to provide local electoral information
- **expanded content on participation**, including dedicated “Why vote” and “wider participation” pages, alongside links to opportunities such as volunteering as a magistrate, in response to user and stakeholder feedback.

Reach and usage

Since April 2025, the Hub has received over 12,000 views from more than 1,300 unique users. There was a clear peak in activity during LVRW 2025.

This figure does not reflect total usage, as Google Analytics cannot capture all visitors due to cookie opt-outs. Across the reporting period, the most visited pages were the site search and resource pages. This suggests strong user demand for accessible information and materials.



Future considerations

The GLA Civic and Democratic Participation programme will build on learning from previous phases while refining its focus on inclusive, insight-led delivery. Grounded in principles of accessibility, representation and impartiality, the programme will continue to centre co-design and co-delivery in developing civic and democratic participation activity.

This approach will underpin delivery of the eighth annual LVRW (14-20 September 2026), the third LDW (March 2027), and a strengthened programme of year-round engagement.

Over the next year, the programme will prioritise:

- strengthening collaboration and coordination with the Electoral Commission and borough electoral services to support delivery across London
- deepening its use of data and insight, including GLA City Intelligence and GLA-commissioned YouGov polling, to target activity more effectively
- building and strengthening the pan-London coalition of civil-society organisations and education institutions to co-deliver the programme
- embedding community insight throughout, ensuring Londoners' lived experience directly shapes the design and delivery of all resources and activities
- increasing levels of democratic education, particularly among under-registered and underrepresented communities.
- raising awareness of civic and democratic rights, including changes to electoral law arising from the Representation of the People Bill.

The programme 2026-27 will include:

- the eighth LVRW (14-20 September 2026)
- the third LDW (March 2027)
- ongoing collaboration with the GLA community delivery partner and our broad, pan-London coalition of support, to amplify GLA messaging and disseminate information resources (part of our annual community engagement workstream)
- preparation for Votes at 16 and other democratic reforms.

The Representation of the People Bill is currently progressing through Parliament. A key provision is the extension of voting rights to those aged 16 and 17. Over the coming year, we'll be preparing to respond to democratic reform – including monitoring key

developments, such as the extension of voting rights to those aged 16 and 17; changes to accepted forms of photo voter ID; and any steps towards automated voter registration.

We will continue to raise awareness of, and increase access to, civic and democratic rights – supporting Londoners to navigate the democratic reform and explore how they can take part in shaping their city, beyond voting.

Alongside this, we will review how we continue to deliver our statutory role in collaboration with strategic stakeholders and our wider civil-society coalition.

To find out more, or to get in touch with the GLA Civic and Democratic Participation team, you can contact us at democracy@london.gov.uk.



ANNEX 1: In person activity

Programme activity outside of key weeks

Name	Date	Borough	Event type
Vaisakhi in the East	12 April 2025	Redbridge	Stall
Brit Bangla Heritage Fest	19 April 2025	Tower Hamlets	Stall
Mercato Metropolitano	20 April 2025	Southwark	Stall
Easter at Hayashen	20 April 2025	Ealing	Stall

Polish Festival	10 May 2025	Hounslow	Stall
Trinity Lewisham School	12 May 2025	Lewisham	Workshop
Africa Heritage Day - SACCO	24 May 2025	Sutton	Stall
Taste of the Caribbean	07 June 2025	Hammersmith and Fulham	Stall
Turing House School	20 June 2025	Richmond upon Thames	Workshop
Hounslow Desi Mela	21 June 2025	Hounslow	Stall
Ilford County High School	01 July 2025	Redbridge	Stall
Disability Festival in the Park	23 July 2025	Redbridge	Stall
Kenya and Friends in the Park 2025	26 July 2025	Ealing	Stall
Guyana Family Sports and Fun Day 2025	27 July 2025	Croydon	Stall
Akwasidae Festival 2025	10 August 2025	Southwark	Stall
Interfaith Wellbeing Festival	25 August 2025	Westminster	Stall
West London Queer Project's 5th Birthday Street Party	31 August 2025	Hounslow	Stall
Royal College of Arts - Fresher's Fair	12 September 2025	Westminster	Stall
Harvest & Heritage Polish Day in Perivale	13 September 2025	Ealing	Stall
Goldsmiths SU - Play On Fair	21 October 2025	Lewisham	Stall
Beal High School	21 November 2025	Redbridge	Assembly
Harris Clapham Sixth Form	03 December 2025	Lambeth	Assembly
International Migrants Day Cultural Hangout Festival	18 December 2025	Westminster	Stall
Ernest Bevin Academy	22 January 2026	Wandsworth	Assembly
Brunel University London Welcome Back Fair / Refreshers Fair	22 January 2026	Hillingdon	Stall
William Morris Sixth Form	23 January 2026	Hammersmith and Fulham	Assembly
EfA ESOL Fair - Tower Hamlets	05 February 2026	Tower Hamlets	Stall
London LGBTQ+ Community Centre event	07 February 2026	Southwark	Stall

Hackney Foodbank	10 February 2026	Hackney	Stall
National Student Pride 2026	14 February 2026	Westminster	Stall
Vietnamese Family Partnership - Lunar New Year event	15 February 2026	Lewisham	Stall
Kingston University Spring Careers Festival	26 February 2026	Kingston upon Thames	Stall
Hornsey Foodbank event	05 March 2026	Haringey	Stall
The Big Student Lock in Fest	07 March 2026	Islington	Stall
Rangotsav - Holi in Kingston	07 March 2026	Kingston upon Thames	Stall
Bromley foodbank - Penge Centre	23 March 2026	Bromley	Stall
Kingston College	24 March 2026	Kingston upon Thames	Stall

London Voter Registration Week 2025

Name	Date	Borough	Event type
Featherstone High School	15 September	Ealing	Stall
Newman Catholic College	15 September	Brent	Workshop
Richmond Upon Thames College	15 September	Richmond upon Thames	Stall
Stanmore College	15 September	Harrow	Assembly + stall
Stoke Newington Sixth Form	15 September	Hackney	Stall
The Park College	15 September	Southwark	Workshop
Capel Manor College - Crystal Palace campus	16 September	Bromley	Stall
Capital City College - Angel	15 September	Islington	Stall (Fresher's Fair)
Capital City College, Tottenham	16 September	Haringey	Stall (Fresher's Fair)
Hatchend High School	16 September	Harrow	Stall + assembly
JCoSS	16 September	Barnet	Assembly

Middlesex University	16 September	Barnet	Stall
UCL - Bloomsbury campus	16 September	Camden	Stall
Ursuline High	16 September	Merton	Stall
Capital City College - Finsbury Park Centre	17 September	Islington	Stall
Caterham High School	17 September	Redbridge	Assembly
Chislehurst and Sidcup Grammar School	17 September	Bexley	Assembly
Chiswick school	17 September	Hounslow	Workshop
Eastbury Community School	17 September	Barking and Dagenham	Assembly
Harris Clapham Sixth form	17 September	Lambeth	Assembly
The Bridge	17 September	Havering	Workshop
UCL East	17 September	Newham	Stall
Westminster University	17 September	Westminster	Stall
Barnet and Southgate College - Southgate Campus	18 September	Enfield	Stall
Capel Manor College - Mottingham campus	18 September	Greenwich	Stall
Morley College - Chelsea Centre	18 September	Kensington and Chelsea	Stall
Queen Mary's University	18 September	Tower Hamlets	Stall
Ricards Lodge	18 September	Merton	Stall
Saint Francis Xavier Sixth Form College	18 September	Wandsworth	Stall
Waltham Forest College	18 September	Waltham Forest	Stall
Capel Manor College - Enfield Campus	19 September	Enfield	Stall
Eastlea Community School	19 September	Newham	Assembly

Greenwich University	19 September	Greenwich	Stall
Haberdashers Hatcham	19 September	Lewisham	Assembly
Uxbridge College	19 September	Hillingdon	Stall
Freshers Festival London	20 September	Islington	Stall

UK Parliament Week 2025

Name	Date	Borough	Event type
Barnet and Southgate College - Barnet Campus	24 November	Barnet	Stall
Capel Manor College - Gunnersbury Park Campus	24 November	Hounslow	Workshop
Wilson's School	24 November	Sutton	Assembly
Heston Community School	25 November	Hounslow	Workshop
Sir George Monoux Sixth Form College	25 November	Waltham Forest	Assembly
Wimbledon College	25 November	Merton	Assembly x2

London Democracy Week 2026

Name	Date	Borough	Event type
Alpertown Community School	9 March	Brent	Workshop
Langley Park School for Boys	9 March	Bromley	Assembly
Harris Invictus Academy	11 March	Croydon	Assembly + workshop
Nower Hill High School	11 March	Harrow	Assembly
Riverside Secondary School	11 March	Barking and Dagenham	Assembly
St Thomas The Apostle School and Sixth Form College	11 March	Southwark	Workshop
Nonsuch High School for Girls	12 March	Sutton	Assembly
Queen Elizabeth's Girls' School	12 March	Barnet	Stall
Townley Grammar School	12 March	Bexley	Assembly (virtual)



GLA Democracy Hub registertovote.london