

GLA Voter ID awareness campaign – phase one (January - March 2023)

Evaluation Report

August 2023



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The GLA Voter ID public awareness campaign – phase one community delivery partner



The GLA Voter ID awareness grants programme – phase one delivery partner



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registertovote.london

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Voter ID public awareness campaign – phase one (January – March 2023)

Overview

In January 2023, in line with its statutory powers, the Greater London Authority (GLA) launched phase one of an unprecedented public awareness campaign to ensure every eligible Londoner can continue to access their civic and democratic rights.

Boroughs, civil society organisations and education institutions across the capital came together to support the impartial campaign which was designed to address the equalities impact of the Elections Act 2022, especially the introduction of mandatory photo ID to vote.

According to Electoral Commission and Cabinet Office analysis, and the GLA's "Survey of Londoners" [2021-2022, [GLA Datastore](#)], London already has one of the lowest voter registration rates across the UK.

- 70 per cent of 16-24-year-old Londoners are registered to vote, compared with 96 per cent of Londoners aged 65 and over
- 82 per cent of Londoners from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic background are registered, compared to 95 per cent of White British Londoners.
- 81 per cent of non-UK born Londoners are registered, compared to 91 per cent of UK-born Londoners. 88 per cent of social renters and 81 per cent of private renters are registered to vote, compared with 94 per cent of homeowners - occupiers.

GLA City Intelligence analysis and other reports also showed that:

- Half a million Londoners do not possess a passport [GLA City Intelligence analysis of the Census 2021, ward estimates]
- More than 2.6m Londoners do not have a full driving licence, with women less likely to have one [GLA City Intelligence, National Travel Survey, 2019]
- Only around one in five (18 per cent) of disabled Londoners would be able to present a Freedom Pass as ID [GLA City Intelligence, Taxicard and Freedom Pass usage statistics 2020 - 21, London Councils]

- 12 per cent of LGBTQI+ people do not own any usable photo ID, with nearly two in five trans people and more than one third of non-binary individuals having previously experienced problems getting their ID accepted [[Stonewall and LGBT Foundation: LGBTQ+ Voter ID Report, 2021](#)]
- An estimated 1.7m low-income adults across the UK are at risk of losing their democratic voice due to difficulties securing a photo ID [[Joseph Rowntree Foundation research, Feb 2022](#)].

Further research commissioned by the GLA and carried out by YouGov [[August 2022, GLA Datastore](#)] showed that:

- 61 per cent of Londoners were not aware of the forthcoming photo ID requirement in order to vote.
- The third who were aware is comprised of just 13 per cent who are aware of which forms of ID will be accepted and 20 per cent who were not.
- Black (30 per cent) and other / mixed Londoners were less aware (27 per cent) of the requirement, and Londoners born in the EU were slightly less likely to be aware than those born in the UK (34 per cent compared to 29 per cent).
- Londoners on lower household incomes (particularly those under £20k) were less likely to be aware – this was seen most strikingly by social grade, where 38 per cent ABC1 Londoners were aware compared to 25 per cent of C2DE Londoners.
- When asked what forms of ID respondents hold, polling revealed one in 10 Londoners (11 per cent) did not hold a form of approved photo voter ID specified in the Elections Act (2022).
- Close to 1 in 5 Londoners aged under 25 said that they did not hold an approved ID (19 per cent).

Hence, while being disproportionately impacted by the Covid 19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, these under-registered and under-represented Londoners were at further risk of being disenfranchised: young Londoners aged 18 to 25; Black, Asian, minority ethnic (BAME) Londoners, especially Black Londoners; migrant Londoners, especially EU Londoners; D/deaf and disabled Londoners; low-income Londoners; social and private renting, and homeless Londoners; LGBTQI+ Londoners, especially trans and non-binary Londoners; older Londoners (60+).

In phase one, the GLA and its broad coalition had an online reach of over 3 million and engaged over 143,000 under-registered and under-represented Londoners in communities.



Voter ID campaign – phase one – Reach

In view of this lack of awareness, existing barriers to civic and democratic participation among under-registered and under-represented communities and further insight from London's civil society, the GLA decided to build on the award – winning London Voter Registration Week (LVRW) model and its previous metrics. Hence, activity was delivered in partnership with Shout Out UK (SOUK) and had the support of members of the London Voter Registration Strategic Partnership (LVRSP), including the Electoral Commission and the London Association of Electoral Administrators, and a broad, pan-London civil society coalition of support.

The vision for phase one of the impartial campaign has built on the best practice and lessons learned from previous LVRWs and thus informed the below three workstreams.

SOUK and community partners activity

The GLA and SOUK have shared co-designed, accessible information packs with all borough councils and the broad civil society coalition to amplify across their online and offline channels and have run in-person and online events.

Key deliverables and activity included:

- Static and dynamic social media assets, provided with alt text and in community languages for accessibility
- Print information materials, to address digital inequality
- A Voter ID FAQ available in Easy Read, British Sign Language (BSL) and 10 community languages
- A Voter ID community film
- Key information animation for education partners
- In-person awareness raising community engagement events for EU Londoners and information stalls in education institutions

Marketing and communications activity

The GLA ran a pan-London marketing and communication campaign across relevant channels, including:

- A short information video that featured diverse Londoners to raise awareness of the list of accepted forms of photo ID to vote
- Social media assets focused on the photo ID format and the fact that more information on the voting system changes can be found on the GLA Democracy Hub
- Paid content in traditional and digital radio and community press to ensure reach at scale among London's most under-registered and under-represented communities who risk being disenfranchised.

Community grants programme activity

In mid-November 2022, the GLA launched a community grants programme aimed at organisations led by under-registered and under-represented communities to deliver impartial awareness raising activity in trusted settings, in their respective communities and across London.

Phase one funded nine equity-led civil society grantees to achieve:

- An increase in awareness among London’s under-registered and under-represented communities about changes to civic and democratic rights
- An increase in awareness among Londoners who do not have a photo Voter ID that they can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate
- An increase in support for the capacity and activity of London borough councils and civil society organisations, using assets created as part of the GLA-coordinated campaign, as they engage communities at risk of further disenfranchisement.

Awareness raising activity and support was delivered across London and reached all under-registered and under-represented target communities through in-person and online events, 1:1 support, newsletters and mailing lists, telephone calls, published articles in mainstream media and social media campaigns.

Across the three workstreams, this reach was facilitated by a few factors:

- **The coalition of support**

Building on the annual LVRW model, phase one of the Voter ID campaign brought together a pan-London coalition that was made up of education institutions (secondary schools, Sixth Forms, Colleges and Student Unions); faith and interfaith organisations of various sizes, including London-wide institutions and neighbourhood places of worship; community organisations, representing either individual ethnic minority and migrant communities or antiracist and advocacy groups; D/deaf and disabled – led organisations; organisations representing private renters or supporting homeless Londoners; LGBTQI+ -led organisations and many more.

- **The non-party political, impartial nature of the project**

As in previous years, phase one of the Voter ID campaign had the support of the regulator, the Electoral Commission, all the London boroughs and the London Assembly.

- **Building trust through collaboration**

The GLA Voter ID public awareness campaign community assets were created using the LVRW co-design and co-delivery model. Together with our community delivery partner, SOUK, we hosted workshops and focus groups to create co-designed and co-delivered activity and resources, including the GLA Media and Political Literacy materials, resources for D/deaf and disabled Londoners and in ten community languages. These can still be accessed on the GLA Democracy Hub [registertovote.london](https://www.registertovote.london) and were disseminated via statutory bodies, our broad coalition of civil society organisations and education institutions to reach disproportionately impacted communities in London.

Civil society organisations and education partners welcomed the return of in-person events and the ability of Londoners, who either were not familiar with their voting rights or felt disenfranchised, to ask questions, get support with voter registration applications and feel like democracy was coming to them.

“This is the first time I’ve ever heard about any of this. Before I didn’t know about the Greater London Authority, the boroughs or parish councils, or how they work. I think it’s really important that projects like these exist, where you go into schools and teach us how these systems work. It means that we can see how we can have an effect on society, not just by being heard, but also by making a tangible difference.”

– Year 13 student, Bridge Academy

Voter ID campaign – phase one – Impact

Working across the three workstreams, using co-designed content, and balancing pan-London and community channels, the first phase had the following impact.

Metrics for the marketing and comms activity

- The social media ads over performed. We had 12.3 million impressions on Meta and a reach of 3.7 million.
- The selection of pan-London radio stations and community – specific radio stations had wide reach across our audiences. We had 40.8 million impacts and a reach of over 5 million
- On digital audio, listen-through-rate exceeded benchmark with 94 per cent listening to the whole ad and 1.3 million impressions

**The law has changed.
Make sure you have the
right photo ID to vote.**



UK, Commonwealth
or EEA passport



UK, Channel Islands or
EEA driving licence



Blue Badge
scheme card



Biometric
Immigration Document



National identity card
issued by an EEA state



Free photo travel pass like
Oyster 60+ or a Freedom Pass



PASS card issued by the National Proof of Age
Standards Scheme bearing the PASS hologram

**You will need one of
these approved
forms of photo ID.**







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**No photo ID? No problem.
You can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate.**



Grab your National Insurance number.



Find a recent digital photo of yourself, or take a new one.



Apply at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate>







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Metrics for the SOUK and coalition of support activity

- The Voter ID community film produced by SOUK had almost 350,000 views on Twitter alone and 22,000 on YouTube. The information Voter ID animation received almost 117,000 views on Twitter and 40,000 on YouTube.
- In total, through their organic posts and paid social media ads, SOUK had a reach of over 36 million, over 575,000 engagements and 6.5 million impressions.

Metrics for the community grants programme activity

- The nine grantees engaged with over 143,000 under-represented and under-registered Londoners via in-person and online events, newsletters and mailing lists, partner organisations' newsletters, telephone calls, and published articles - *not including social media*. This is significantly higher than expected; projects estimated that they would engage with approximately 58,500 under-represented individuals in total in their original grant applications.
- In total, almost 6,900 Londoners attended in-person awareness raising events funded by this grant programme and almost 5,900 attended online events.
- 144 in-person events took place across the capital and 21 online events engaged with a pan-London audience from the target, under-represented groups.

Grantees were asked to survey participants on their sense of belonging and readiness to vote as a result of taking part in the project activity.

- 49 per cent of participants surveyed said they felt an increased sense of belonging to their neighbourhood as a result of taking part in the project activity and 51 per cent said they felt an increased sense of belonging to London
- Eight of the nine projects reported that 60 per cent or more of participants surveyed felt ready to use their voice to vote, with six of the projects reporting 85 per cent or higher.

Metrics for the GLA Democracy Hub

- In March, there were over 100,000 unique page views on the GLA Democracy Hub.

Considerations for phase two of the Voter ID campaign

Building on lessons learned from phase one of the Voter ID campaign and from previous years, the following principles have been identified to inform the design and scope of phase two of the GLA Voter ID campaign in the financial year 2023/ 24:

- The need to maintain the cross-party political, impartial, non-election specific nature of the project, by continuing coordination and collaboration via the LVRSP, a broad, pan-London coalition of support and by using London Gov social media channels.
- The determination to enable equal participation and build community voice and representation in the project, by continuing to co-design resources and use focus groups with London's under-registered and under-represented communities at risk of disenfranchisement.
- The ability to continue producing an array of resources, including in community languages and for more social media platforms, keeping in mind the accessibility barriers of various target groups and the specific nature of various communication channels. Resources should continue to be information raising, as well as community and issue-specific, to inform Londoners of the need to register to vote as the first step to accessing democratic rights, the list of accepted forms of photo Voter ID and how to apply for the free Voter Authority Certificate.
- The need to review the GLA Political and Media Literacy resources and produce new ones, if required, to counter existing and emerging misinformation and disinformation trends around civic and democratic participation, and to address other voting system changes brought in by the Elections Act (2022), such as changes to proxy and postal voting.

Specifically, phase two of the Voter ID public awareness campaign should:

- Continue the GLA collaboration and coordination with the Electoral Commission and borough electoral services
- Build on lessons learned from phase one, and continue to be informed by GLA City Intelligence data, GLA-commissioned YouGov polling
- Use community insight in the co-design and development of resources and activities.

The three elements of the GLA Voter ID and voter registration campaign – phase two are:

- A grants programme running from August 2023 to February 2024, with grants of between £25,000 and £50,000 available for equity-led community organisations to deliver targeted awareness raising in trusted community settings
- A community engagement workstream from mid-June until the end of February/ early March 2024, before awareness raising moves from London Gov channels to London Elects channels
- A marketing and communications workstream starting in August 2023 and comprising of pan-London and targeted activity, namely:
 - The use of outdoor display, radio and social media for impact and reach at scale, pan-London
 - The use of trusted voices, community media and grassroots outreach to bring information in local communities at risk of disenfranchisement



61% of Londoners are not aware of the new photo ID requirement in order to vote. Your voice matters, so find more info at:

<https://registertovote.london/>

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#NO VOTE NO VOICE

SOUK SHOUT OUT UK 

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**The law has changed.
Make sure you have the right photo ID to vote.**



Your body, your voice, your vote.

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#NO VOTE NO VOICE

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In their own words

Matteo Bergamini, CEO/ Founder, Shout Out UK: "We are living through one of the most significant changes in how we exercise our democratic right to vote in Britain's history, which makes Political Literacy and democratic awareness of how you register to vote, and then vote, more important now than ever before! This is why SOUK is teaming up with the Greater London Authority to ensure that all Londoners understand the changes coming and to ensure no one, no matter who they are, is excluded from our democracy."

Mihai Calin Bica, Campaigning and Policy Coordinator, Roma Support Group: "European Roma communities have made the UK their home for a few decades now. Despite that, we are still missing out on opportunities to contribute to the British democratic process. The Voter ID Awareness Campaign brings forward information on historical changes to the voting process. We are supporting this campaign as we are embarking on a new journey to empower Roma communities to have their voices heard in democratic processes and fully contribute to British society."

Rosie Trevill, Community & Communications Coordinator, Elect Her: "Elect Her are proud to support GLA and Shout Out UK in their campaign to address the introduction of photo Voter IDs. Eleven per cent of Londoners don't currently hold an approved form of photo voter ID. It is vital for our democracy that every citizen has a voice, and voting is the first step to becoming politically active. "

Jacky Peacock, Advice 4 Renters: "The average tenancy in the private sector is three to four years, and for the most vulnerable renters it's often less than that. It's not surprising then that private tenants are the least likely group to register to vote because they know they may well be living in a different area before the next elections. Yet, this is the group whose voice really needs to be heard... That's why we place a high priority on making renters aware of the importance of voting and encouraging them to get onto the electoral register."

Nazek Ramadan, Director, Migrant Voice: "Many migrants have been long-term residents and play active roles in UK society, both nationally and locally. Yet too many migrants are unable to have a voice and take part in one crucial mechanism of the UK democracy – voting. The new voter ID rules will disproportionately affect minorities, which includes migrants who can vote in UK elections. It's important for as many people as possible to be aware of the change so they can prepare and be able to vote at their next elections."

Rensa Gaunt, Communications and Media Officer, Inclusion London: "Inclusion London is supporting the Voter ID Awareness Campaign because it's vital that Deaf and Disabled Londoners are heard in our elections. Many people don't have photo ID, or don't know that they can use their Freedom Pass, Disabled Person's Bus Pass or Blue Badge photocard. We support the campaign to reach everyone in our communities and give them the support they need to be ready to vote."

Only 30% of Black Londoners know about the new requirement to show photo ID in order to vote.



Your voice matters, so get photo ID and get heard.

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Only 29% of EU Londoners know about the new requirement to show photo ID in order to vote.



Your voice matters, so get photo ID and get heard.

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Case studies

The nine equity – led phase one grantees delivered awareness raising activity and support across London. They reached all under-registered and under-represented target communities through in-person and online events, 1:1 support, newsletters and mailing lists, telephone calls, published articles in mainstream media and social media campaigns. Here are some of their stories.

British Deaf Association

Robin Ash, Equality and Rights Manager

The British Deaf Association (BDA) is the UK's leading membership organisation and registered charity led by Deaf people, for Deaf people. Their mission is to ensure a world in which the language, culture, community, diversity, and heritage of Deaf people in the UK is respected and fully protected, ensuring that Deaf people can participate and contribute as equal and valued citizens in the wider society.

There were 18 attendees at the Deafroots Wellbeing group session from multiple ethnic backgrounds and with additional support needs. Initially we showed them different types of photo ID that could be used for their photo Voter ID by visual demonstration.

What we quickly discovered was this group didn't understand what democracy itself meant. When we showed them pictures or when we demonstrated the different types of ID they understood what they were but didn't understand the purpose of ID. So, with this group, as they were further behind in terms of understanding any of the democratic process, we had to go back further and start the explanations at a more basic level.

When we asked people if they were confident to go and vote, the majority of the members put their hands up as they said they now know what Voter ID is and what they need to show... They wanted to ask lots of questions, clarify lots of points and they were very enthused by the information that we provided about democracy and photo Voter ID.

“I want more information sessions like this so I can ask questions and clarify points because you can't ask a question to a video.”

Event attendee, Newham, February 2023

“I prefer to see demonstrations. So actually, seeing what type of ID is accepted such as a passport or driving licence really helps me. Plus, for those that have visual issues this makes it clearer.”

Event attendee, Newham, February 2023



British Deaf Association community event



Bulgarian Centre for Social Integration community event

Bulgarian Centre for Social Integration and Culture

Nishan Dzhangozyan, Founder

The Voter ID Awareness Campaign of the Bulgarian Centre for Social Integration and Culture has aimed to inform the Bulgarian ethnic, the Bulgarian Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) and the wider Eastern European communities in London of the changes to election law, make them aware of their rights, encourage them to fully participate in democracy and get them ready to vote.

The programme was designed to reach the Bulgarian community, one of the largest London EU communities and one of the most vulnerable, via two different channels: delivering drop-in sessions in Bulgarian at different locations in Enfield, where most of the community is based, and via live-streaming events which were delivered with the support of the biggest Bulgarian newspapers in London.

Undoubtedly, the biggest impact was made by the series of live-streaming events in Bulgarian which were broadcast on six Facebook pages of the Bulgarian community in London, our own Facebook page and the Facebook pages of partner organisations, including the newspaper Budilnik.

Reaching out to ten of thousands of Londoners from a Bulgarian background in their mother tongue via social media was a very productive and cost-effective method to engage with a large group of voters. The campaign was very successful due to the joint efforts of many partner organisations and the diverse network of the Eastern European communities in London we reached out to.

Another very productive engagement technique was the drop-in sessions we delivered in Enfield in Bulgarian. Engaging in one-to-one sessions in their mother tongue with the most vulnerable, making them aware of their rights, encouraging them to exercise their rights and participate in the political process was possible only due to the direct contact and trust we had with the Bulgarian community.

Delivering a project on this scale has been a learning experience for us, but we will continue to do this important work. Encouraging a community who traditionally is under-represented to participate in democracy and make them aware of the changes in election law was a huge task. The great results were due to the joint efforts of the many partner organisations we worked with. Hence, we are happy to note that all our participants reported an increase in their feeling of belonging to their neighbourhood and to London, and an increased confidence in using their voice in civic and democratic life.

Coalition of Latin Americans in the UK (CLAUK)

The Coalition of Latin Americans in the UK (CLAUK) is made up of six Latin American-led partner organisations, including lead partner Indoamerican Refugee and Migrant Organisation (IRMO). IRMO is an organisation that works to enable the development, agency, and participation of Latin Americans and other Spanish and Portuguese speakers, by responding to both immediate needs and structural inequalities. They do this by offering high-quality information and advice services, opportunities for development and training and a platform to seek social and systemic change.

The *Voter ID campaign – Civic engagement of Latin American Londoners* project aimed to support Latin American Londoners who are under-represented and under-registered, by running in-person and online awareness raising activity in Spanish and Portuguese. They had an intersectional approach that aimed to increase understanding of democratic rights and how to exercise them, inform about the introduction of photo Voter ID and the changes to voting, and ensure eligible Latin American Londoners have acceptable forms of photo ID to vote, or help them apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate.

CLAUK's information sessions also reached groups who may not be currently eligible to vote, but who need support on their journey to social integration and full participation in civic and democratic life. This includes younger audiences (below voting age) and asylum seekers.

From January to March 2023, CLAUK produced 100 social media posts, 2,000 printed copies of their two informative leaflets, which were distributed throughout six London Boroughs (Camden, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Lambeth and Southwark) to shops and businesses in key community areas for Latin Americans. As well as three articles in community press: two online articles, by CLAUK and Prisma, and a feature in Express News UK printed in Spanish, with 10,000 copies distributed among consulates and embassies, underground stations, Latin businesses and organisations. They also held nine events, five of which were face-to-face, one hybrid and three online, with 170 Londoners in attendance.

Through the project, they reached approximately 87,300 Latin American Londoners, improving their knowledge of their democratic rights and empowering them to use their voices. To respond to challenges around attendance at in-person events, they offered the option to join the event remotely, which enabled more Latin American Londoners to take part. One attendee said:

“I have never voted, and I didn't know about this. This change is a wake-up call on how I can use my right to vote in a way that is beneficial to our community.”

Event attendee



CLAUK community event



Disability Action Haringey community event

Disability Action Haringey

Phil Stevens, CEO

Disability Action Haringey created awareness raising activity for the GLA Voter ID campaign amongst the D/deaf and disabled communities of Haringey and Islington through multiple tailored delivery methods. This was best demonstrated when engaging with members of the St John's Deaf Community Centre in Manor House.

Two British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters and a video with BSL overlay were used to ensure that the information was not only appropriately imparted, but that we could ensure understanding among attendees, and provide the necessary one-to-one support needed for those wishing to apply for appropriate photo ID to vote in person.

The response from the community was amazing and demonstrated full engagement and crucial feedback. As an organisation, we also benefitted from feedback regarding the speed of BSL interpretation on videos and how to reach out and engage with deaf residents who don't regularly interact with the wider deaf community and therefore are more isolated from crucial information.

We were able to assess current levels of approved photo ID ownership and subsequently help individuals to apply for the most appropriate photo ID from the options available to them. Attendees appreciated the increase in their awareness in terms of when elections would be taking place and where to cast their votes, in addition to the new photo ID requirements to vote in person.

The GLA Voter ID Awareness Campaign galvanised interest in voting and prompted a renewed interest in the election of political candidates. Londoners from every sector of the community were encouraged to debate what was needed at a local level and across neighbouring borders, and we as an organisation were able to impartially inform, learn from and support the communities which we serve to access their democratic rights. We look forward to maintaining and developing the new relationships that we have built through the process.

“At your recent presentation re Voter ID you mentioned you may be able to help Haringey residents get ID if they don't have a passport, driving licence or freedom pass. I wonder if you could help one of our trainees Mxxxxx to get ID. Mxxxxx has just been offered a job and so also needs ID fairly urgently as part of his right to work proof”.

Email from session lead following an event with young Londoners

Henna Asian Women's Group

The project *Voting is a Voice* was delivered by Henna Asian Women's Group (HAWG) to raise awareness of the voting system changes and the freedom to choose who to vote for, without influence from others. The project engaged South Asian women in Barnet, Camden, City of Westminster and Harrow, the majority of whom were low-income, private or social renters.

HAWG raised awareness about the new Voter ID requirements online and offline, sharing information via social media, including short videos in multiple South Asian languages, which were promoted through their partner networks. They also printed flyers in different languages that were distributed via their networks and handed out by volunteers. They hosted face-to-face drop-in sessions and online and offline workshops. People were able to attend sessions that suited them in a familiar, local and welcoming environment, including over a cup of tea – an ideal backdrop to ask questions and learn more about the campaign.

HAWG encouraged and empowered women to use their democratic rights and to make decisions about their quality of life and their community.

They helped people to fill out Voter Authority Certificate applications and ran 'Forms on Friday' sessions each week to help people with their applications. These sessions ran throughout the day in different community languages, such as Bengali, Urdu, Hindi, Gujarati and Pashto. Being able to communicate with participants in their native language helped to overcome barriers surrounding trust and levels of political literacy.

"We were honest in appreciating their concerns, feelings and fears of yet another barrier to their democratic rights [...] We built and gained trust and respect with communities meaning that those who had reservations about completing the voter registration form, told us they would think about it, do it themselves through the channels we advised or would contact us for support."

Henna Asian Women's Group volunteer

"I got help with voter registration online and HAWG staff were very friendly and helpful. I have my photo ID ready to vote."

Project participant

"I didn't know about Voter Photo ID and Henna Asian Women explained to me in my own language. I know I have to take original copy of my passport and not photocopy."

Project participant



Henna Asian Women's Group community event



LGBT Hero community event

LGBT HERO

Justin Mahboubian-Jones, Community Engagement Manager

Unquestionably, the highlight of the *Don't Lose Your Vote* campaign has been diving into the community and holding drop-in sessions at events across London. Of particular note, was our event at SheHerTheyThem, a community-building social initiative for queer women & gender diverse people in East London. We were given an enthusiastic and warm welcome as we delivered vital information about the changes to voting rights to a group of people who will be most impacted by those changes. Banners, flyers, and a swathe of other materials can only do so much; our extremely knowledgeable engagement officer was there as part of the community, speaking to the community. It's not easy to have a conversation about legislation in a busy room, but people were clearly keen to talk anyway. We knew, from this early event, that we were on the right track: trans and gender nonconforming people want to know how they can preserve their democratic rights.

Beyond our drop-ins, we had workshops we delivered to the leaders and frontline staff in the LGBTQ+ sector. They represented the concerns of the community and communicated how trans and young people are feeling. To our great satisfaction, we were able to provide them with specific advice about the Elections Act and how they can support the queer people in their care. The impact of this kind of work isn't quantifiable through metrics or viewing stats, but its value is clear: they had questions, we had the answers; and they can make a direct difference as trusted figures in the lives of vulnerable people.

Like all projects, the Don't Lose Your Vote campaign has been a learning experience. Our community is strong in unison, but reaching the most vulnerable, and those most in need of our advice is still challenging. Many young queer and trans Londoners have switched off from traditional online communications due to the ongoing culture war which has focused its ire on gender nonconforming people. Our responsibility to reach these increasingly disenfranchised groups is greater than ever, and that means that we need to go to them. The swathe of inequalities facing trans people must not be allowed to deepen and include an inequality of information. In the future, we will undoubtedly investigate more ways to develop further direct connections with on-the-ground and grassroots organisations.

One particular person we helped was at our event held at the LGBTQ+ Community Centre. A young Trans person told us they didn't intend to vote as they saw no point in the process. After chatting about the legislation, their right to privacy at polling stations, and the idea of their voice not being heard, they decided they would register to vote and make sure they had the correct ID, as this would mean that they at least had the option.

"Very necessary to make sure the queer community can vote and are taken into account."

Ian Howley, LGBT Hero CEO

The Romanian and Eastern European Hub (RoEE Hub)

Adina Maglan, CEO and Co-Founder

During phase one of the GLA Voter ID grants programme, the Romanian & Eastern European Hub (RoEE Hub) aimed to raise awareness and increase understanding among Londoners from under-registered and under-represented communities about the changes to their civic and democratic rights, specifically amongst Romanian, Romanian Roma and other Eastern European Londoners.

RoEE Hub reached over 8,000 under-represented individuals through a variety of methods, including in person and online events, outreach, partnership work, social media, digital and physical leaflets and ongoing case work. The outreach and display at the Romanian consulate was particularly successful, engaging over 3,000 individuals.

RoEE Hub's ability to provide key messages in the native languages of their audience and to use culturally correct terminology and accessible vocabulary has facilitated communication and built trust. In fact, organising family-friendly events was a great way for gathering people and providing such important and impartial information, due to the relaxed atmosphere.

RoEE Hub has found that delivering this project highlighted how issues surrounding the representation and participation of the Romanian community are intertwined with wider issues of integration into UK civic and cultural life, encountering prejudice, barriers accessing services, and women's rights and voice. As such, whilst running this project, RoEE Hub sought to link up numerous enquiries in relation to, for example EU Settlement Scheme applications, access to benefits, access to healthcare and more, to provide a full support package.

M attended one of the outreach sessions in Barnet. She is in her 70s, originally from Romania and has lived in London for 15 years. She is registered to vote and has a valid Romanian passport, as well as Settled Status. At the end of the session, she asked us who she should vote for as she wants to vote, is registered and has the necessary documents. However, whenever there are elections, no one tells her what each candidate or party has to offer. She doesn't speak English and does not follow the local news. She asked: "What does democracy mean, apart from being able to vote for whomever you want?". This case proves the need for democratic and political literacy and specific education for migrants from a similar background, with lived experience under totalitarian regimes, where democracies are still young and such options are difficult and confusing.

As a result of this project, RoEE Hub have strengthened relationships with delivery partners and the wider community, which will increase the influence and capacity of their work in the future.



The Romanian and East European Hub event at the Romanian Consulate



The Traveller Movement community event

The Traveller Movement

Yvonne MacNamara, CEO

The project sought to improve awareness of voter ID requirements amongst Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities in London, and to encourage voter registration and electoral participation amongst these communities. Voter ID workshops were delivered in Greenwich, Ealing and Harrow; with the project also being promoted at other Traveller Movement events organised for separate projects.

Events held in Greenwich and Harrow both took place in the homes of GRT community members who are current or former volunteers for the charity, who invited friends and families to their homes for informal information sessions. This approach allowed us to connect with community members who may have been unlikely to attend a more 'formal' event held at, e.g. a community hall or the TM offices. Events taking place in a familiar venue allowed for a participatory format, with attendees asking questions and seeking guidance throughout the duration of events.

Materials and resources which clarified misconceptions about voter registration, the open register, and the electoral and non-electoral benefits of registering to vote generated the most engagement, and attendees reported an increased understanding of how to register to vote and the reasons for doing so.

Over the project, we were pleasantly surprised to find out that many people from GRT backgrounds possess an accepted photo ID, including those who are resident on Traveller sites, as well as those in bricks and mortar accommodation. While many still do not know about the changes to voting rights or some might need further support to get photo Voter ID, detachment from/ indifference to electoral politics appears to be the biggest barrier to democratic participation. TM had anticipated this disillusionment and apathy and has created materials to counter this, but will promote this aspect of the project even more heavily in the future.

Some participants do not possess birth certificates or national insurance numbers, creating significant barriers in both registering to vote and in acquiring a free Voter Authority Certificate. In future, TM would create specific resources and copy to support this group of people who require specific and bespoke support in obtaining such documentation.

"I always thought I wasn't able to vote because I'm from Ireland...like, voting is for British people only, isn't it? I suppose I am British in a way, I've always lived here, but that's not my actual citizenship so I never got involved with politics or anything like that. I don't know whether I'll vote in the future, but I will definitely register now I know that I can."

"That's the biggest thing [that I've learnt today], the requirement for voter ID... I had no idea about the ID thing. Luckily, I've got a driver's licence... worry about how many people don't know. If I didn't know and I'm someone that votes and that...what hope have other people got? It's worrying."

Participants at information sessions

Voice4Change England

Sharmin Shajahan, Deputy Director

The project *Your Vote, Your Voice* raised awareness and increased understanding about the changes requiring photo identification to vote and encouraging under-registered and under-represented groups from Black and Minoritised Ethnic (BME) communities in London to register to vote and fulfilling their civic and democratic rights.

In particular, we engaged with hard-to-reach groups who have barriers to access and understand information, such as, elderly migrant communities whose first language is not English, people from Deaf communities, Asian communities and Orthodox Jewish community who do not have internet and TV at home.

The *Your Vote, Your Voice* Awareness Campaign workshop and video was launched on 14 March 2023 and two weeks of intensive workshops and social media campaign took place in London. Six face-to-face workshops in different boroughs and 2 online workshops with attendees from across London reaching directly to 389 attendees.

Our campaign awareness workshop with video, social media and print media campaign were well received and our members and grantees in London requested more workshops, reflecting the need for more awareness raising.

A significant moment was at the launch of our campaign workshop and video that included very engaging discussions and feedback:

“I think coming here today was really good, simply because I didn’t know about this new legislation about voter ID, so it’s created a lot of self-awareness. I can go back to my beneficiaries, and I can go back to my community and share what I’ve learned today so that they know what’s expected of them and they don’t lose their right to vote”.

Lola Owolabi, Director, Proud to Be Me

All the workshops highlighted that most participants were not aware of the changes about Voter ID and about the different types of accepted photo ID and none of the attendees in any of the workshops knew about the free Voter Authority certificates.

We gave out a survey at the end of the workshops and those who filled it in responded that after taking part in the workshop, 89 per cent of people had an increased sense of belonging to their neighbourhood; 80 per cent felt increased sense of belonging to London and 89 per cent felt ready to use their voice to vote.

“Very useful and informative. With the resources provided we will share this message and spread awareness”.

Survey feedback from project participant



Voice for Change England community event



SOUK school event on Political Literacy

Other formats and languages

For other formats, please contact us at the address below or via the GLA Democracy Hub:

Greater London Authority
City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way,
London, E16 1ZE

[registertovote.london](https://www.registertovote.london)

You will need to supply your name, your postal address and state the format you require.