

On May the 3rd all 32 London boroughs will elect their local Councillors.

Capital Letters will be issued every week until the elections and each edition will highlight a key borough and provide the latest news and analysis.



Newham Council

Newham set to elect Britain's first directly elected female BAME Mayor

Last week, Rokhsama Fiaz was selected as the Labour candidate to be Mayor of Newham, beating the incumbent Sir Robin Wales 861 votes to 503. Fiaz achieved her landslide victory - in what was the first all member vote to select a Labour candidate in Newham for 23 years - with a slogan that said: "It's time for change". She won support from across the local party, including West Ham MP Lyn Brown and senior local Councillors.

For the last 16 years, Sir Robin Wales has served as one of only four directly elected Mayors in London. There is no doubt that Rokhsama will be elected - in the last two elections Labour won a clean sweep of all 60 Councillors in Newham.

Who is Rokhsama Fiaz?

Fiaz was born and bred in Newham - the daughter of Pakistani immigrants who moved to London in the 1960's. Prior to her four years as a Newham Councillor, where she chaired the Scrutiny Committee, she worked as the executive director of a national charity tackling anti-Semitism and Islamophobia and as the CEO of an international UNESCO supported charity promoting interfaith and global citizenship.

In a change of style, she has promised a more "inclusive approach" to decision making, that involves the community. Two of her more interesting commitments are ensuring that 50% of new homes built by developers are "at social rents and owned by the council" and a pledge to hold a referendum on the continuation of the directly elected Mayoral system itself.

Newham Snapshot

Current
composition



60 other 0

Best Labour
result: 2014



60 other 0

Worst Labour
result: 1968



30 other 30

What will happen on May 3rd

Rokhsana Fiaz will be the new Mayor. Even if Sir Robin Wales was to make an ill-judged attempt to run as an independent, the strength of the local Labour vote will see Newham elect Britain's first female BAME Mayor.