

# So Why Tower Hamlets? This is Why.

by Esmerelda Weatherwax (September 2013)

So why Tower Hamlets?

That is the rhetorical question asked by one "Jo Makepeace" writing in [Gay Free Zone](#) the mosque declared that never again would they allow a homophobic speaker a platform.

Sadly this did not last long. A few objectionable speakers were sidelined to the Waterlily, the conference centre on Mile End Road. Then gradually they crept back into the mosque.

here in Andrew Gilligan's blog in The Telegraph.



This sort of atmosphere was the ideal breeding ground for the incidents that took place in the streets around the mosque in January.

Muslim Patrol

As reported by the [thus](#).

Planet Ivy publishing platform attempted to interview one Royal Barnes, who answered a request via the Muslim patrol youtube account but unconvincingly denied any involvement in the patrol, although he agreed with their initiative.

Terror Arrest

22nd November.

A fish rots from the head down

According to the 2011 census the population of Tower Hamlets is, overall, 35% Muslim which makes them the largest religious group. Ethnically they are mainly Bengali and Somali. Therefore it seems a little lacking in diversity for every member of the [East London Advertiser](#).

Officers from Tower Hamlets Council have been asking neighbouring boroughs how much

they spend on chauffeurs for Mayors – only to be told they never use them. Newham swiftly responded to inform its neighbouring local authority that its Mayor, Sir Robin Wales, did not use chauffeurs – unlike his counterpart Lutfur Rahman.

Newham's cabinet member for finance Cllr Lester Hudson put the request down to an attempt by Tower Hamlets Council to justify its expenditure on a £70 per day Mercedes for Mayor Rahman.

“We do not see it as appropriate for public money to be used to provide our Mayor with chauffeurs, limousines or to pay their associated costs,” he said. “Abusing freedom of information requests in this way means not only do Tower Hamlets residents pay to chauffeur Mayor Rahman around, they also pay for council officers who have been asked to defend the indefensible.”

[Omid Ahmid](#) just love a taxi ride.

Creativity really is her (Khan's) forte, there's no doubt about that. How else to explain a cab fare of £120.63 for a 1.5 mile trip from the Town Hall in Mulberry Place to Mile End Park on March 28 last year? As the Tories point out, the 277 bus would have taken her there directly...in 15 minutes. For £1.35.

The ELA again

Mayor of Tower Hamlets Lutfur Rahman has been accused of prioritising wards represented by his supporters in work to improve housing standards.

More than half of works completed under the government's Decent Homes Programme since the 2010 election have been carried out in areas mainly represented by Independent councillors supportive of the mayor, the opposition Labour group has warned.

In contrast, the number of homes to benefit from improvements in wards represented by Labour is far lower.

ELA at the end of July.

Muslim organisations received more than twice as much public cash as those representing any other religion in the first batch of grants for maintenance of places of worship, it has emerged.

Tower Hamlets Council had announced plans to stage an event at All Saints Church in

Stepney High Street today to mark the second round of grants for improvements to the borough's faith buildings. But a spokeswoman said only "a couple" of groups responded to invites sent out before the launch, prompting its cancellation.

Short notice of the event may have been to blame, she added.

A £2million cash pot was announced last year for improvements to places of worship. The first £595,000 was allocated to 43 organisations earlier this year – with Muslim groups receiving twice as much money as those representing any other religion. A further £1.3m is up for grabs when the second round of funding is eventually launched.

There are a lot more abuses of position and power detailed by Andrew Gilligan [Old Flo](#). Her proper name is Draped Seated Woman and she is a sculpture by the world renowned artist Henry Moore. She was sculpted in bronze just after the war inspired by the Blitz spirit, and until 1997, she sat outside a block of flats on the Stifford estate in Stepney. She was either given to the London County Council (LCC, the forerunner of the Greater London Authority) by Moore or sold to them at a nominal price, for the benefit of the people of London whose courage was her inspiration.

After the Stifford estate was demolished the statue went as a temporary measure to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. But now Lutfur Rahman wants her sold and the money raised put towards council spending. There are those who think she isn't his to sell. She belongs to us, the people of London (especially those of us whose east end grandmother was called Flo). Bromley Council has made a claim – based on the original gift/sale to the LCC, not any specific east End borough (Stepney, Bethnal Green or Poplar) as they were at that time.

Queen Mary College in Mile End Road has offered to home the statue in the public area of the University, and to insure her. Rahman maintained that the bronze content is an unacceptable and uninsurable security risk. The Museum of Docklands has made a similar offer, as have the Banking Gnomes of Canary Wharf. If she doesn't return to Tower Hamlets she must return to somewhere in London, not disappear into a private collection.

Outside the confines of the East London Mosque and the Town Hall

Lutfur Luvs Len

Lutfur Rahman and Len McCluskey head of the Unite Union, seem to have a bit of a bromance going.





It's costing Lutfur a lot of money and it isn't going on sweeties. Lutfur has given Unite £64,000 worth of funding to run a Unite Recruiting office Community centre in Shadwell in the old St George's Town Hall. That's the one with the Battle of Cable Street Mural on the side wall. Ted Jeory of the Express has the details [Yummy-Yummy](#). He has even got Abu Izadeen working behind the counter. The [London Evening Standard](#).

A London university could ban the sale of alcohol from parts of its campus because some students consider it to be "immoral". Malcolm Gillies, vice chancellor of London Metropolitan University (which has a campus in Whitechapel) said he was considering the move because a "high percentage" of his students see alcohol as "negative".

Speaking at the Association of University Administrators' annual conference, Professor Gillies said he was "not a great fan of alcohol on campus" and added that the issue was one of "cultural sensitivity". He said of alcohol: "It's a negative experience – in fact an immoral experience – for a high percentage of our students." Speaking to the Standard he said he was considering replacing one of the bars on campus with a coffee shop.

Then there is this from the [taken back into custody](#). However an application to a Judge resulted in his release with a condition which will allow him and Kev Carroll to attend the EDL event on the 7<sup>th</sup> September.

Opposition to the EDL demonstration of 7<sup>th</sup> September.

Tower Hamlet's Labour party will not be 'bashing the fash' on the 7<sup>th</sup>. They will be at a family barbeque.

Yum.

Yummy yummy even.

As I finalise this article (31st August) the representatives of Tower Hamlets Labour party say it is an evening barbeque so, of course, they will be on the streets during the afternoon. However they, or the newspaper, still seem very confused as to [Discussions with the police](#) about the route, destination etc are on-going. Because the Police did not immediately obey the Grand Vizier's order (unlike his his minions at the [ELA](#)).

Tower Hamlets Mayor Lutfur Rahman's office tonight confirmed the last ditch attempt to stop the march from going ahead as planned next Saturday (September 7).

Mayor Lutfur Rahman said: "I'm deeply disappointed that the police and the home secretary have failed to act, despite my formally requesting them to do so. Clearly they are not on the same page as the scores of prominent national and local figures who joined me in calling for a ban. I call upon them to see sense, but in the absence of an adequate response I intend to take this matter to the High Court."

press release from Lutfur this morning.

The Mayor of Tower Hamlets, Lutfur Rahman, announced today that the council is preparing for a judicial review of the Metropolitan Police's failure to exercise its power to apply to the Home Secretary for prohibition of the proposed racist march by the English Defence League (EDL) in Tower Hamlets on 7 September.

The Mayor said "We will not tolerate racist carpet-baggers being bussed in to stir up divisions in our diverse community."

A pre-action letter was issued by the council today, indicating that Judicial Review of the Metropolitan Police's decision will be sought in the High Court unless the Metropolitan Police Commissioner applies without delay to the Home Secretary for a prohibiting order under section 13 the Public Order Act 1986.

The Mayor has also demanded an urgent meeting with the Home Secretary and the Commissioner on Monday, to include the local MPs Jim Fitzpatrick and Rushanara Ali and London Assembly member John Biggs. Mayor Rahman has written to the MPs, urging them to join his demand for an urgent meeting to push for a ban.

Mayor Rahman concluded, "We need to get around the table and sort this out. Otherwise, lives and livelihoods, as well as our community cohesion, are at stake."

Interesting times.

other than from the Sun and the Mayor's website.

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