

Civica Election Services helps Poplar HARCA gain strong turnout for regeneration ballot



Civica Election Services (CES) delivers the largest and most ambitious regeneration ballot to date, with a strong turnout providing a clear mandate for Poplar HARCA's regeneration proposal for the Teviot Estate in London.

The challenge

In July 2018, London Mayor Sadiq Khan introduced Section 8 of the GLA Capital Funding Guide, requiring resident ballots to be carried out for proposed major social housing estate regeneration schemes before they can receive City Hall funding. The ballot asks whether eligible residents agree with the estate regeneration proposal detailed in a formalised landlord offer document.

While they may share some characteristics, there is no simple way to define what constitutes a social housing estate. No estate is the same and each project has its own specific requirements and considerations.

In order to deliver their ambitious project, Poplar HARCA (Housing and Regeneration Community Association), appointed CES to plan and administer the resident ballot for the proposed regeneration of the Teviot Estate in Poplar, East London.

The solution

Uniquely placed to manage regeneration ballots, CES has been selected to administer every estate regeneration ballot in London since the new requirement was introduced.

The GLA guidance offers flexibility in the project approach, allowing us to create a unique project plan for each and every client. As a result, each estate

regeneration ballot in London administered by CES has been distinctly bespoke.

Working with the Residents' Steering Group to ensure the offer was what residents want for the future of their estate, Poplar HARCA's proposals for regenerating the Teviot included:

- ▶ 1,800–2,450 new homes
- ▶ New green and play spaces
- ▶ New shops
- ▶ Community and faith facilities
- ▶ Improved infrastructure

Largest, most ambitious regeneration ballot to date

Opened in 1972, the Teviot covers half a square mile and the ballot itself is the largest and most ambitious of the regeneration ballots to date.

With our expertise in the sector, we were able to advise Poplar HARCA on how to engage with their residents. Working closely with their dedicated Resident Empowerment team, Development and Communications teams and senior leadership, we were able to achieve meaningful engagement with the community and deliver a strong turnout with a clear mandate.

A strong partnership with Poplar HARCA combined with canvassing the requirements of the residents themselves at a Resident Steering Group meeting, enabled us to produce a bespoke strategy for the ballot designed to increase resident engagement and participation in the process.

Expertise & experience delivering results

Voting packs were hand delivered to eligible residents by a team of CES employees over a single day. The ballot packs contained a translation sheet in the predominant languages of the area.

Residents then had the option to return their vote by pre-paid post, online through a dedicated voting website, or in-person at one of three ballot boxes, manned by CES employees, positioned in strategic locations across the estate. All ballot papers included a map showing the location and opening times of the polling stations.

A visible presence of CES employees provided residents with the opportunity to ask questions about the independent administration of the ballot, as well as securely casting their vote just a stone's throw away from their front door. This gave residents absolute confidence in the impartiality of the ballot and added to the legitimacy of the result.

Strong turnout, clear mandate

Using CESvotes, our secure online voting platform, we were able to provide Poplar HARCA with daily non-voter lists - enabling targeted canvassing. This helped to encourage and increase turnout while avoiding undue irritation to those who had already voted. As return rates started to plateau, extra turnout services were employed to further engage residents - leading to a spike in turnout in the final days of the ballot.

The ballot concluded with residents giving a clear mandate to Poplar HARCA to proceed with the estate regeneration proposals - with a turnout of 81% and a positive majority of 86% of voters supporting the plans.

"Thank you to the CES team for all your help with the ballot. Really enjoyable experience from start to finish. We are obviously extremely pleased with the turnout and results and look forward to starting the next steps and continuing to work with the residents!"

Paul Dooley,
Director of Estate Regeneration, Poplar HARCA



With a clear mandate from an excellent turnout, Steve Stride, Chief Executive of Poplar HARCA, said: "The Teviot community is strong and close, and they have told us what they want for the future of their estate. There's still a lot of hard work to be done, and we are excited to continue to work with residents to realise their aspirations."

81%

turnout of eligible residents



86%

approval of Poplar HARCA's
regeneration proposals



Additional balloting services

In addition to our unique experience and expertise in planning and delivering Regeneration Ballot projects, CES can also provide balloting services for Large Stock Transfer Ballots, Tenant Management Organisations, Tenant Board Elections and TMO continuation ballots.

Speak to our experienced team about our full range of election services – call 020 8365 8909, email electionservices@civica.co.uk or make an online enquiry.