

Elections for the Mayor of London and London Assembly on 6 May 2021



Dear Mayoral candidates,
I support an
age-friendly London.
Will you?



On 6th May Londoners will vote for who they want to represent them in City Hall. The Mayor has powers and influence over issues that affect all our lives including transport, the environment and public spaces, housing and community support.

It is vital that Mayoral candidates and those seeking election to the London Assembly understand the contributions of older Londoners and both listen to and plan to address the challenges faced by people across the capital.

This Action Pack

To support more older Londoners to be heard this election Age UK London have produced this pack with five activities that organisations led by older Londoners do.

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If you have five minutes or less

Activity: Endorse the Age-friendly Mayoral Pledge

Add your name as an endorser of the four-point Pledge calling on candidates to commit to action to make London more age-friendly if elected. You can do this on behalf of your Forum, group or association. You can also do this as an individual. The Pledge asks candidates to:

1. Ensure actions undertaken to help London recover from the pandemic include older people.
2. Proactively drive forward the Age-friendly London programme.
3. Champion the contributions of older Londoners and
4. Stand up against ageism.

Endorse the Pledge at > bit.ly/AgeFriendlyMayor

The Pledge will be presented to candidates a week before the election and we want to be able to say to candidates that it has been endorsed by people in every Borough and the City of London.

Once you've endorsed the Pledge **please share it by email, Facebook or Twitter** with members of any Forums or community groups you may be part of. You can of course also share this with friends, neighbours colleagues and others.

Activity: Share key messages on Twitter or Facebook

Template tweets to copy and paste

- *An #AgeFriendlyLondon is a better London for everyone. I'm calling on the next Mayor to take action to make London more age-friendly.*
<https://bit.ly/AgeFriendlyMayor>
- *Hi [Insert twitter handle (see below) of a Mayoral candidate], An #AgeFriendlyLondon is a better London for everyone. Take a look @ageuklondon's Manifesto <http://bit.ly/AgeFriendlyManifesto>*

[You can also tweet candidates including @SadiqKhan @ShaunBaileyUK, @sianberry, @LuisaPorritt and others¹].

- *Hi [Insert twitter handle (see below) of a Mayoral candidate], will you help ensure older Londoners are not left behind in London's recovery? Please pledge to be an <https://bit.ly/AgeFriendlyMayor>*
- *Hi [Insert twitter handle (see below) of a Mayoral candidate], will you stand up against ageism and champion the contribution of older Londoners? Please pledge to be an <https://bit.ly/AgeFriendlyMayor>*

Template Facebook posts to copy and paste

- *I support an #AgeFriendlyLondon and am calling on Mayoral candidates to commit to supporting the Age-friendly London programme; ensuring older people are not left behind in London's recovery; championing the enormous contribution older people make to the city and standing up against ageism. You can endorse the Age-friendly Pledge here > <https://bit.ly/AgeFriendlyMayor>*
- *Older Londoners have been among the hardest hit by the pandemic. The next Mayor must take action to reduce social isolation, poverty among older people, digital exclusion and much more. We need an age-friendly recovery for an age-friendly London. Take a look at @AgeUKLondon's manifesto for the London election on 6th May. <http://bit.ly/AgeFriendlyManifesto>*

[Right click on the image to the right and select 'Save as picture' to save the image as an image file you can attach to any social media post.]



¹ A full list of candidates and their twitter handles can be found here: <https://www.londonelects.org.uk/im-voter/information-booklet>

If you have up to 15 minutes

Photo action: Share your Age-friendly selfie

We are keen to make a visual demonstration of support across the city for an age-friendly London.

When we present the Age-friendly Mayoral Pledge to candidates we would like to show them some photos of Londoners showing their support for an age-friendly London.



Age UK London staff, © Age UK London 1

To do this:

- **Step 1.** Please print the age-friendly action placard. You can find this on the next page of this pack. You can print on any size paper available to you and in either black and white or colour. To avoid printing additional pages please select to print page '5-5' only.
- **Step 2.** Take a 'selfie' of yourself holding the placard. You can ask someone to take a photo of you but if you are asking someone outside of your household please maintain social distancing.
- **Step 3.** Share your photo in one of these two ways.

Twitter or Facebook: If you are on Twitter or Facebook, please add your photo to a tweet or Facebook post with the following text:

"Dear Mayoral candidates, I support an #AgeFriendlyLondon. Will you?"

[We'll share photos on our @AgeUKLondon twitter account so please include the hashtag #AgeFriendlyLondon so we can find your photo].

Or

Send your photo as an email attachment to us by emailing campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk.

We will share photos emailed or tweeted with Mayoral candidates. So please only share photos if you are happy for them to be used in this way. No personal data will be shared with candidates or any third parties.

Please email campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk if you have any questions.

PLACARD OVERLEAF

Dear Mayoral candidates,
I support an

age-friendly London.
Will you?

If you have 30 minutes

Activity: Email Assembly candidates standing in your local constituency

Across London candidates are campaigning to be elected to one of the 25 seats in the London Assembly. 14 Assembly seats will be taken up by Members representing one of 14 constituencies.

The fourteen constituencies are:

- **Barnet and Camden**
- **Bexley and Bromley**
- **Brent and Harrow**
- **City and East** (Barking and Dagenham, City of London, Newham and Tower Hamlets)
- **Croydon and Sutton**
- **Ealing and Hillingdon**
- **Enfield and Haringey**
- **Greenwich and Lewisham**
- **Havering and Redbridge**
- **Lambeth and Southwark**
- **Merton and Wandsworth**
- **North East** (Hackney, Islington and Waltham Forest)
- **South West** (Hounslow, Kingston and Richmond)
- **West Central** (Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster)

Members of the London Assembly act as the eyes and ears of Londoners at City Hall. Assembly Members hold the Mayor to account by examining Mayoral strategies and scrutinising decisions to make sure they are in the public interest. As well as questioning the Mayor directly, Assembly Members sit on a range of committees. They investigate issues of importance to Londoners such as transport, publish recommendations and make proposals to the Mayor.

In the next Mayoral term it is crucial that Assembly Members speak up for older Londoners and hold the Mayor to account to ensure older Londoners are meaningfully included in all decisions and strategies. This is why we're asking you to email candidates in your constituency.

There are 4 simple steps.

Step 1. Find out who your local candidates are by going to www.whocanivotefor.co.uk. Search with your postcode.

On the next page, click on the link: '*London Assembly elections (Constituencies): [Name of your constituency]*'.

Step 2. Selects the candidates you wish to email. An envelope symbol under the name of candidates will indicate that you can find an email address for them. Click on the 'Learn more' link and you will be taken to a webpage where you can find an email address for the majority of candidates.

If you cannot find an email address for a candidate or have any questions about this please email campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk.

Step 3. Email your candidates using the template email text below. You do not need to use all of the text but we would be grateful if you could include the bullet points under the title 'What you can do'.

If you are emailing on behalf of a local Forum or community group you may wish to include one or two sentences about your work. You could ask them to speak at a meeting if elected or meet with you so that they can learn more about supporting older people in the local area.

Step 4. Please email John at Age UK London (jmcgeachy@ageuklondon.org.uk) to let us know if you have contacted any candidates. We would be particularly grateful if you could share any responses received.

EMAILING LOCAL CANDIDATES: TEMPLATE TEXT

Dear _____,

I'm writing to you on behalf of **[INSERT NAME OF FORUM OR OTHER GROUP]** to ask you to be a champion for older Londoners if elected to the London Assembly.

If elected on 6th May you'll have a vital role in scrutinising the Mayor and ensuring older Londoners are meaningfully included in policy and practice. Most Mayoral candidates have indicated their support for continuing the Age-friendly London programme, which began in 2018. You will be able to hold the Mayor to account so that decisions truly improve the lives of older Londoners.

An ageing London is something to welcome

In the next nine years the number of Londoners over the age of 65 will increase by 30%. **Making London more age-friendly not only makes London significantly better for older people but makes the city more inclusive for everyone.**

The hardest hit but the pandemic

Older Londoners have also been among those hardest hit by the pandemic. Sadly too many older people have been bereaving while cut off from friends and family; faced barriers to engaging with vital community services; struggled to access food and essentials, and many have seen their physical and mental health decline.

Throughout the pandemic social isolation, anxiety, digital exclusion and barriers to accessing food were some of the biggest challenges facing Londoners supported by local Age UKs.

An Age-friendly recovery for an age-friendly city

Leading London's recovery will be a fundamental part of the next Mayoral term and your role as an Assembly Member will be crucial for ensuring recovery actions not only include older Londoners but have a tangibly positive impact on their lives.

Many of the challenges faced by older Londoners in the past year existed long before COVID-19. In London there are still nearly half a million people over the age of 50 that have never used the internet, 300,000 older Londoners provide unpaid care, 198,000 older Londoners can go for up to a month without visiting a friend or

being visited themselves. Sadly 25% of 18-34 year olds believe it is “normal” for older people to be unhappy and depressed.

What you can do

Before polling day

- Please take a look at [Age UK London's short Manifesto/](#).
- Look at the website of your [local Age UK](#) to find out more about their work or email jmcgeachy@ageuklondon.org.uk who can provide information on key areas.
- Ensure your campaign events are age-friendly and that you have opportunities to speak with older voters.

If you are elected

- Stand up alongside older Londoners: Use your voice in the Assembly to ensure Mayoral strategies, action plans and activities meaningfully include older Londoners and that good progress is made on the Age-friendly London programme.
- Ensure older Londoners are not left behind when it comes to action to help London recover from the pandemic.
- Contact your [local Age UK](#) to ask how you can support them as their Assembly Member.

We would be happy to answer questions you may have and we hope that the remaining days of the campaign are a positive experience for you.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely,

[Your name and the name of the Forum or group you are emailing on behalf]

If you have an hour

Activity: Write a letter to your local newspaper

Focus on some issues but not others, political football and a noisy media environment mean there's a risk that the views of older Londoners receive limited coverage election. You can help to change that by contacting your local newspaper editor.

Reasons to contact your local newspaper

- You'll be telling a story that has had little coverage elsewhere.
- Editors will be interested in a story that gives a local and people-focused angle to election coverage.
- Your letter will raise the profile of your Forum or group and is an opportunity to highlight the great work you're doing, make useful contacts with local journalists, and gain new members.
- We can support you by providing contact details for your local press and statistics on the issue.

Top tips

Before sending your letter:

- Prepare your letter: Use the template overleaf to help you. All you need to do is update the parts highlighted in yellow.
- Do a little research: Many Forums have good relationships with their local paper. However, if you are sending in a letter for the first time a quick call, online research or looking through a previous edition will let you know where to send your letter.

There will usually be a newsdesk or news editor that you can contact. Details for most local papers can be found at: <http://www.localmediauk.org/> (to search for your local paper click on 'Services' then select 'A-Z Newsbrands').

- Know their deadlines: Newspapers work to tight deadlines so find out when these are and send your letter well in advance.
- Remember to follow up, journalists expect reminders.
- Ask us for help. We would be very happy to support you. Please email campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk

If your letter is published:

- Thank the editor.
- Keep an eye out for online comments or written responses to your letter. You may wish to reply.
- Share the coverage with your members and celebrate your good work.
- Remember to let us know and email us at campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk with any clippings or web links for any coverage you receive.

TEMPLATE LETTER TO THE EDITOR**City Hall needs to stand up for older Londoners**

To the Editor,

We are concerned that the needs and contributions of older Londoners have received little coverage in the run up to the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections on 6th May. **[INSERT NAME OF YOUR FORUM OR GROUP]** are trying to change this by contacting local candidates for the London Assembly to tell them why it is crucial that they stand up for older Londoners if elected.

Older Londoners make an enormous contribution to our city as community leaders, workers, volunteers, carers, customers, friends and neighbours. Through paid work alone, older Londoners contribute at least £47 billion to the capital's economy. Older Londoners are also different from their contemporaries in other parts of the county. They work longer into their lives, are more likely to rent their homes, less likely to own a car and sadly more likely to live in poverty.

Older Londoners have also been among those hardest hit by the pandemic. Too many older people have been bereaved while cut off from friends and family; faced barriers to engaging with vital community services; struggled to access food and essentials, and many have seen their physical and mental health decline.

These issues have been exacerbated but not caused by the pandemic. London has the UK's highest poverty rate for people of pensionable age (24%). This has been increasing and a huge rise in unemployment among Londoners in their 50s and 60s during the pandemic will have a knock on effect for years to come. Research has found that fewer than half (49%) of Londoners over the age of 65 have Basic Digital Skills and it is more and more difficult to access essential services if you are 'offline'.

London's social isolation crisis affected thousands of older Londoners before the pandemic with research finding 198,000 older people in London can go for a month without meeting up with a friend.

These are just a few reasons why older Londoners need a Mayor and Assembly Members willing to walk-the-walk when it comes to standing up for older people. An age-friendly London benefits everyone and a recovery for London will only be a good one if it is an age-friendly one.

[You may wish to include one or two sentences here about your Forum here and the work you do locally]

Yours sincerely,

[Your name and the name of your Forum or group]

- **Sources for statistics used**

'Economic contribution of older Londoner', Mayor of London , 2013 (<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/business-and-economy/business-and-economy-publications/economic-contribution-older>)

UK Poverty 2019/20, Joseph Rowntree Foundation , 2020, <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-2019-20>

Claimant count by age – Time series, Office for National Statistics 2020, https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/gor/2013265927/subreports/gor_cca_time_series/report.aspx

Ofcom (2018) Adults' Media Use and Attitudes Report, https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0011/113222/Adults-Media-Use-and-Attitudes-Report-2018.pdf

Research commissioned by Age UK, 2018, <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/london/about-us/news/articles/2018/122/198000-older-londoners-havent-met-up-with-a-friend-in-a-month/>

Further information

You can find **Age UK London's Election Manifesto** developed with support from partners, a **recording of the Older Londoners' Hustings** and **blogs** from candidates on our website. Please visit <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/london/projects-campaigns/london-elections-2021/>

If you have any questions please email campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk

Stronger together

Age UK London is pleased to be one of a number of organisations calling for the next Mayor to take concrete steps to improve the lives of older Londoners during this election. We believe we are stronger when we work together and Age UK London is proud to be a member of the **London Age-friendly Forum**.

We are delighted that our Manifesto is supported by three fantastic organisations, the **Greater London Forum for Older People**, **Opening Doors London** and **Positive Ageing in London**.