

---

# Estate regeneration in an increasingly political environment

---

18 NOVEMBER 2019  
INSIDE HOUSING COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE

Jenna Goldberg, Director  
Gabriel Abulafia, Director





# About LCA

LCA is an intelligence-led PR company, with four core services:



**Consultation  
& Planning Permission**

Effective community and political engagement to enable development for the public and private sectors.



**Placemaking  
& Media Relations**

Raising profile through integrated campaigns across traditional and social media.



**Corporate  
& Public Affairs**

Protecting and enhancing reputation and strengthening relationships with political, business and stakeholder audiences.



**Design for  
Print & Digital**

Creative, engaging and informative design across multiple platforms including print, web and video.

# LCA clients



# Our recent work with Councils and Housing Associations



## What we are covering today

1. The **politics** of housing, planning and development
2. Building trust in this environment
3. Delivering honest, robust and meaningful **communications** and **consultation**
4. What this means for **you**



# **Understanding the politics of housing, planning and development**

# A challenging context

## Supply/Demand

- Social rented housing especially in short supply due to RTB, chronic lack of funding.
- Lack of funding for transport and social infrastructure constraining housing development.

## Trust

- Relationship between developers and residents has soured.
- Relationship between social housing providers and tenants also often poor.
- Planning system and definitions of affordable housing widely distrusted.
- Negative perceptions of new housing development and estate regeneration.
- Internet / social media amplify and accelerate spread of misinformation.
- Planning inherently political – and upcoming elections will politicise even further.

## Complexity

- Housing costs remain high for residents – but not growing fast enough for investors.
- Existing housing stock, especially social housing, often ageing and in disrepair.
- Many social housing tenants have complex needs, besides financial.



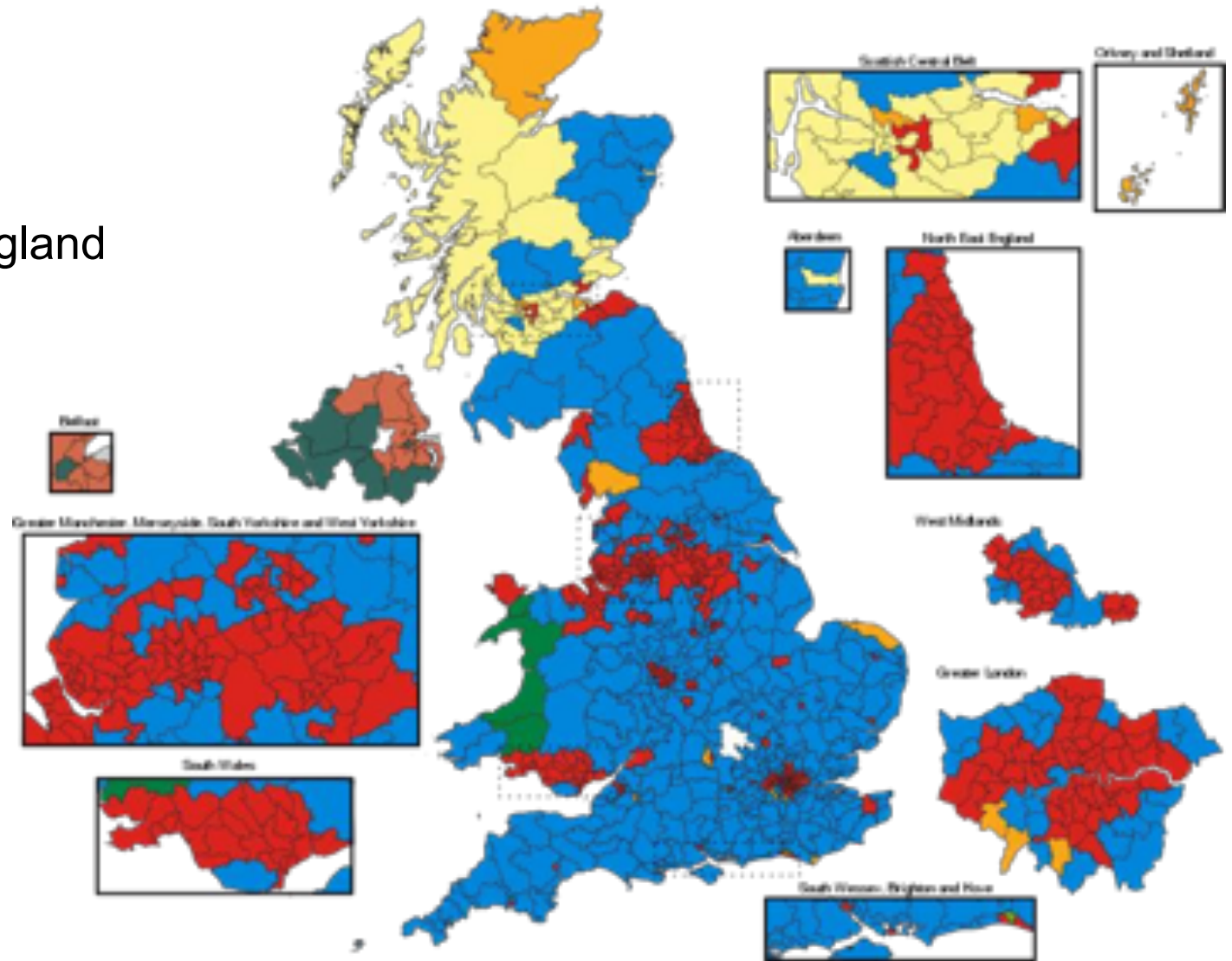
# The wider political context: Four elections in two years (at least)

## 2019

- **Local Elections**
  - 248 English councils
  - 6 directly elected mayors in England
  - 11 councils in NI
- **European Parliament Elections**
- **General Election**

## 2020

- **Local Elections**
  - 118 English councils
  - 8 directly elected mayors in England
  - 40 PCCs in England and Wales)



# National pressures: Brokenhouse and Jenvey

**Focus on increasing housing supply to new 300,000 homes a year by the mid 2020s, but...**

- Continued support for **Right to Buy** still eroding social housing stock
- Big emphasis on **“Building Beautiful”** to increase local support – but will it constrain supply?
- **More funding for affordable supply** (£4.8bn for London, +HRA cap raised), but is it enough?
- **Uncertainty about long-term funding for infrastructure and local government** (+PWLB rates increased).
- Much **moral support for modular**, but again – will it make a difference?
- A revolving door of housing ministers



# Regional pressures

- Higher **London Plan housing targets**.
- Assumption of **35-50% affordable**.
- Estate regeneration **ballots**.
- **Interventions** in planning decisions.
- **Social housebuilding**.
- Exploring “**rent controls**” and measures to utilise empty private homes.



# Local pressures: The 32 London Boroughs (+the City)

2010 Local Elections



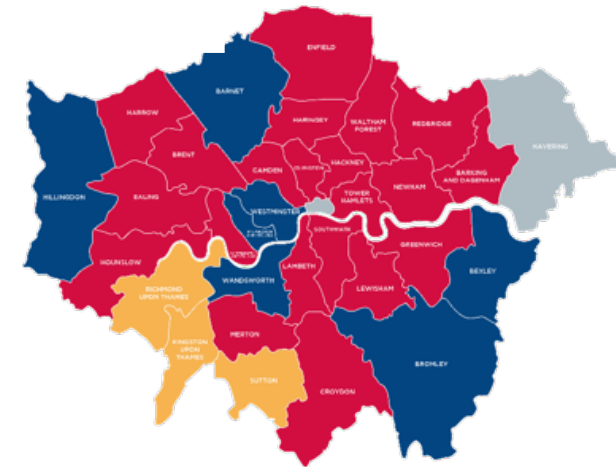
Labour.....	15
Conservative.....	10
NOC.....	4
Lib Dem.....	2
Tower Hamlets First.....	1

2014 Local Elections



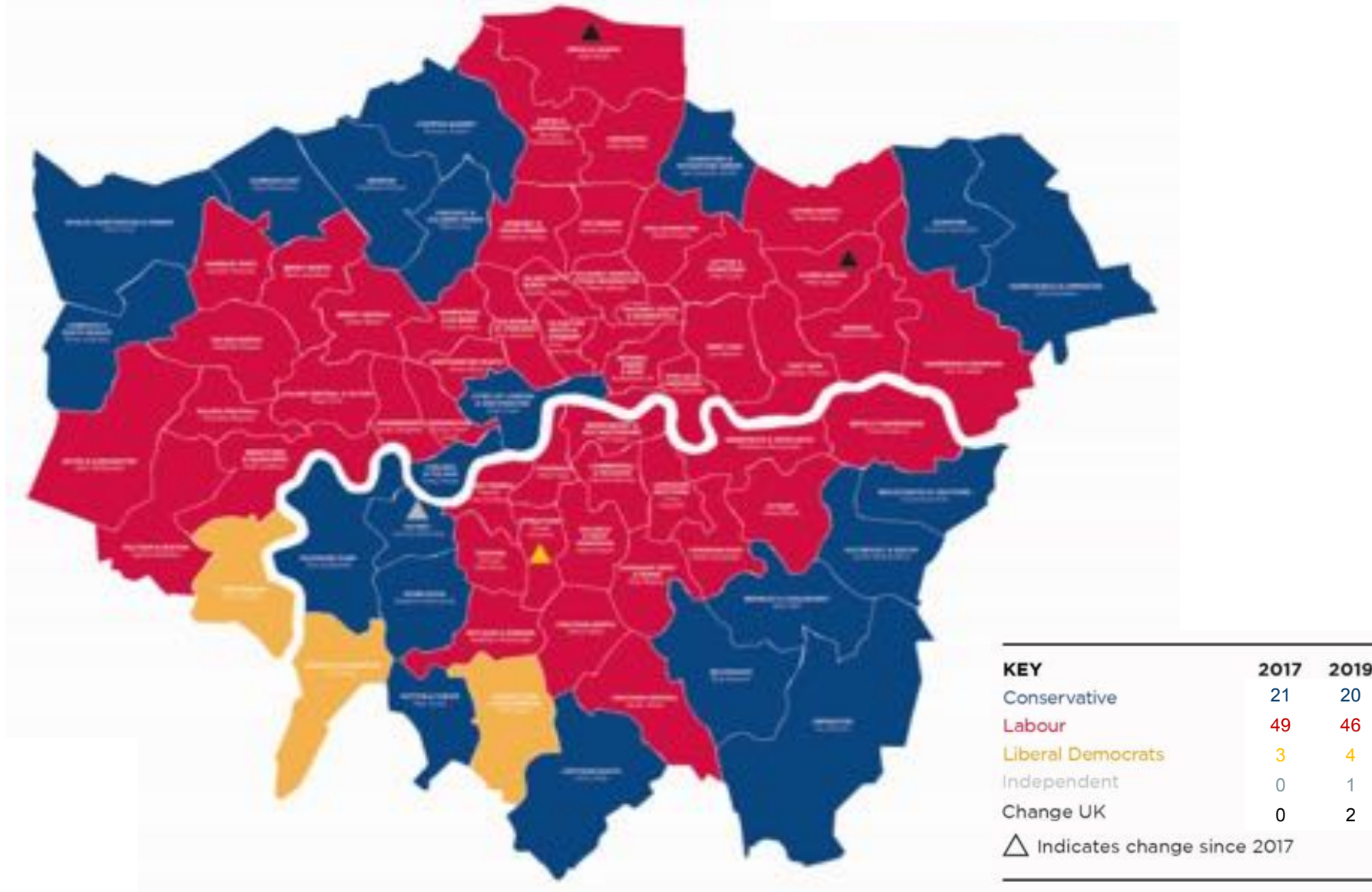
Labour.....	20
Conservative.....	9
Lib Dem.....	1
NOC.....	2

2018 Local Elections



Labour.....	21
Conservative.....	7
Lib Dem.....	3
NOC.....	1

# London's 73 Parliamentary constituencies at present



## Housing and the 2018 election: Housing as campaign issue

**Delivering the  
homes we need**

**Build 1,850 new Council and  
genuinely affordable homes**

**We will build the  
homes our  
community needs**

## “Regeneration” as a crime – and developers the culprits...



“

Regeneration is a much abused word. Too often what it really means is forced gentrification and social cleansing, as private developers move in and tenants and leaseholders are moved out.

”

*Jeremy Corbyn, 2017*

“

I've faced down developers who publicly lobbied against me getting the job

”

*James Murray, 2017*



┌ ...but it's not just private developers taking flak



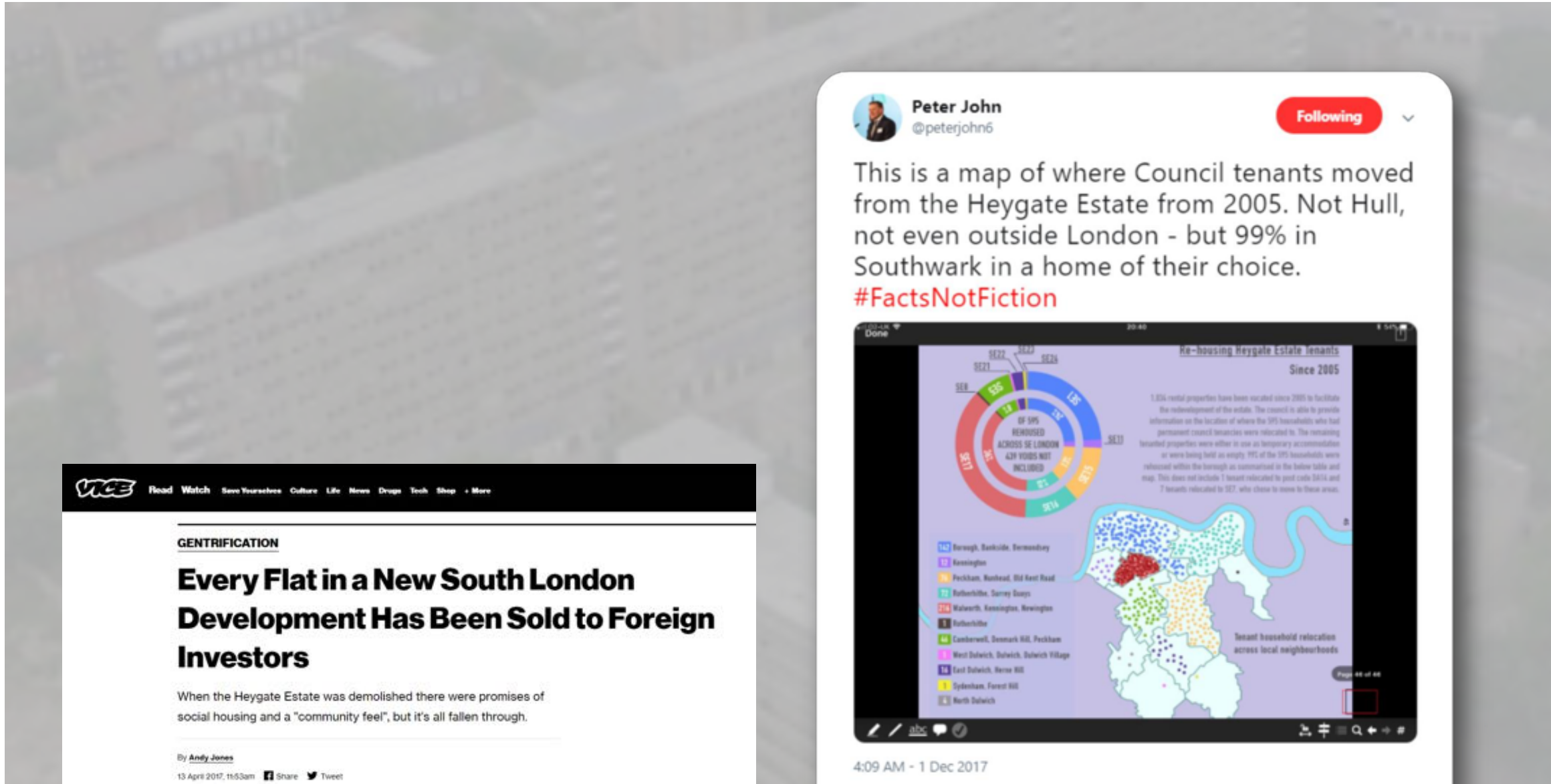
Ross Clark, 2015



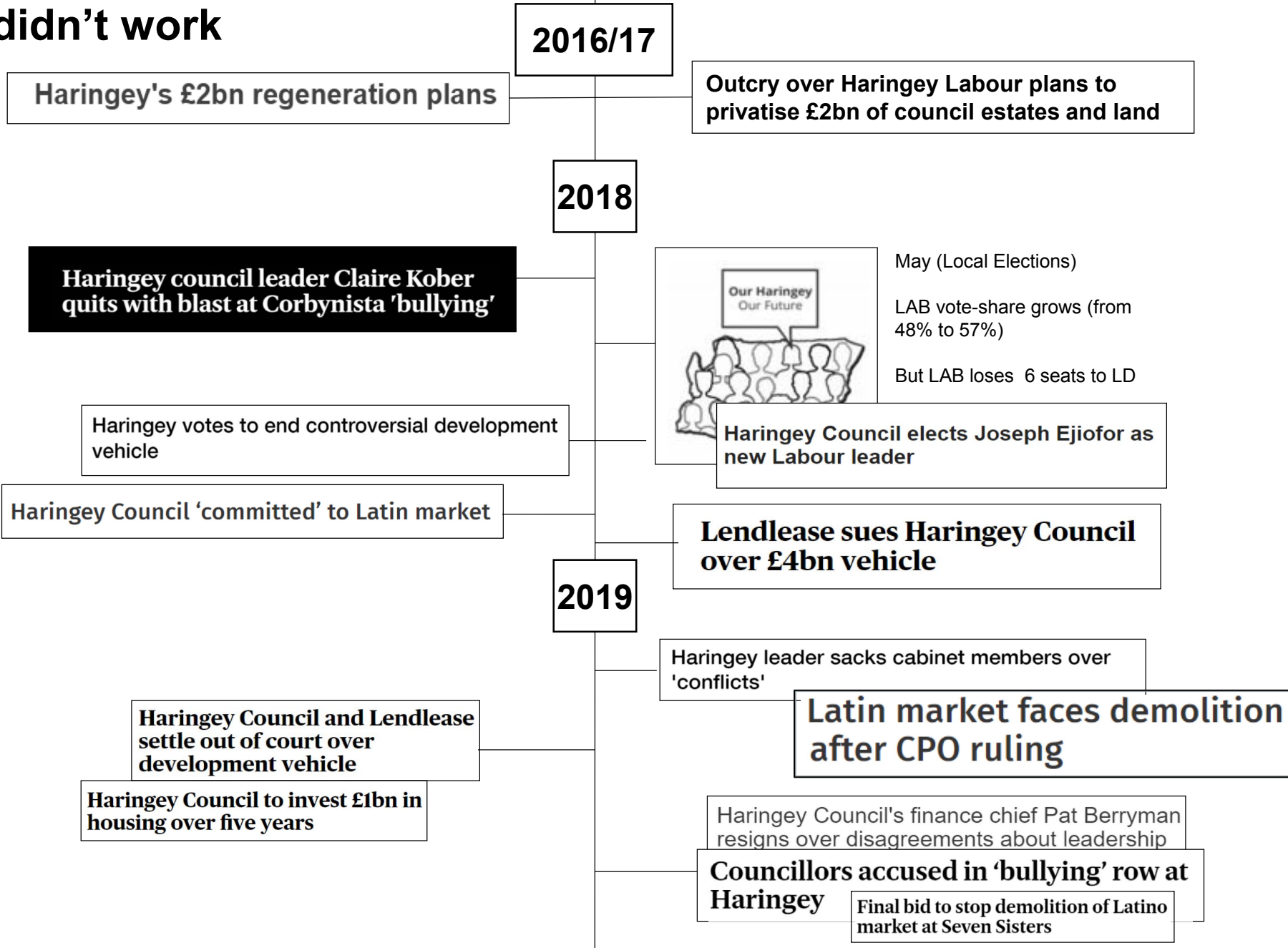
Kim Taylor Smith, 2018



# Southwark: Still answering for Heygate



# Haringey: Well, that didn't work



# Lambeth: Campaigners win battle for Cressingham?

**SAVE  
CRESSINGHAM**



**Save Cressingham Gardens**  
11 July

Wow! The first stage of Cressingham's Right to Transfer application has been approved by the secretary of state!! Next steps involve a ballot to seek resident approval, development of a business plan, and more!

Put simply, UK central government has approved residents' application to transfer all 306 homes on Cressingham Gardens Estate into a community-owned organisation outside of council control!!

Government documents outlining the decision here... [See more](#)



GOV.UK

The housing (right to transfer from a local authority landlord) (England) regulations 2013

169

22 comments 23 shares

# Hammersmith & Fulham: Earl's Court, the never-ending saga



Stephen Cowan     
@StephenCowan

Following

Delighted Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rt Hon John McDonnell MP found the time to view Capco's moribund Earls Court scheme. With such huge market and moral failures government needs to step in. Exactly what @LBHF are doing #CPOEarlsCourt



4:48 AM - 14 Oct 2019 from Hammersmith, London

33 Retweets 38 Likes



And it's not just in London...

## 'It's social cleansing, it's gentrification': Plans to improve the most deprived estate in Greater Manchester cause upset

Not everyone's happy about proposals to do something about it

Manchester  
Evening News

## Revised plans for Sheerwater Estate regeneration approved despite concerns over open space

Woking Borough Council first approved the plans in 2016, but now there have been some amendments

SurreyLive

┌ ...and it's not just in the UK

*To Save Public Housing, New York Warily Considers a New Approach: Tear Some Down*

A plan would replace two buildings in Chelsea with mixed-income private developments. Residents fear displacement.

**Politicians, tenant association president split on solution for Fulton Houses**

**Eyebrows Raised at Fulton Houses, as NYCHA Proposes Razing Buildings, Relocating Tenants**



# **Building trust in this environment**

# Times have changed





...and the industry is catching on



# Surveys underline that engagement and trust are lacking – but can be repaired!



- **49% do not trust private developers** to act in an honest way
- **36% do not even trust their local council** to make decisions in the best interest of their area
- **But** 72% said they would trust large-scale development more if local people were given more opportunity to influence the outcome



- **56% of the public have never engaged with the planning system.**
- **But** consulting residents meaningfully about a particular housing development could increase support for that scheme by roughly 10%.

*NB: These surveys do not ask respondents about housing associations specifically – and most other surveys group them with councils*

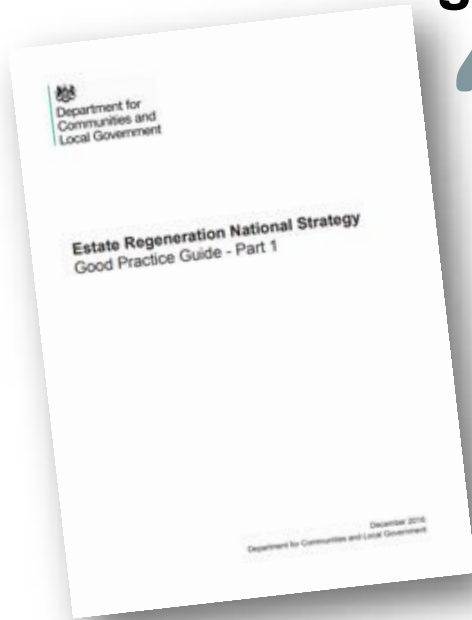


# **Delivering honest, robust and meaningful communications and consultation**

# Planning and development (in London)



# National and regional (and local) requirements apply



“ Successful estate regeneration projects **involve communities effectively and meaningfully** in the assessment, options, design and master planning process from inception to completion. ”

“ The Mayor believes that for estate regeneration to be a success **there must be resident support for proposals**, based on full and transparent consultation from the very start of the process, and meaningful ongoing involvement of those affected. ”



# How communities understand and accept change



# Approach to consultation





# **Starting the conversation – building trust from the outset**



# 1) First contact



## 2) Clarity

1. Simple, clear language
2. Be clear about the challenge
3. How they can expect to be engaged
4. And, most importantly, they are in control



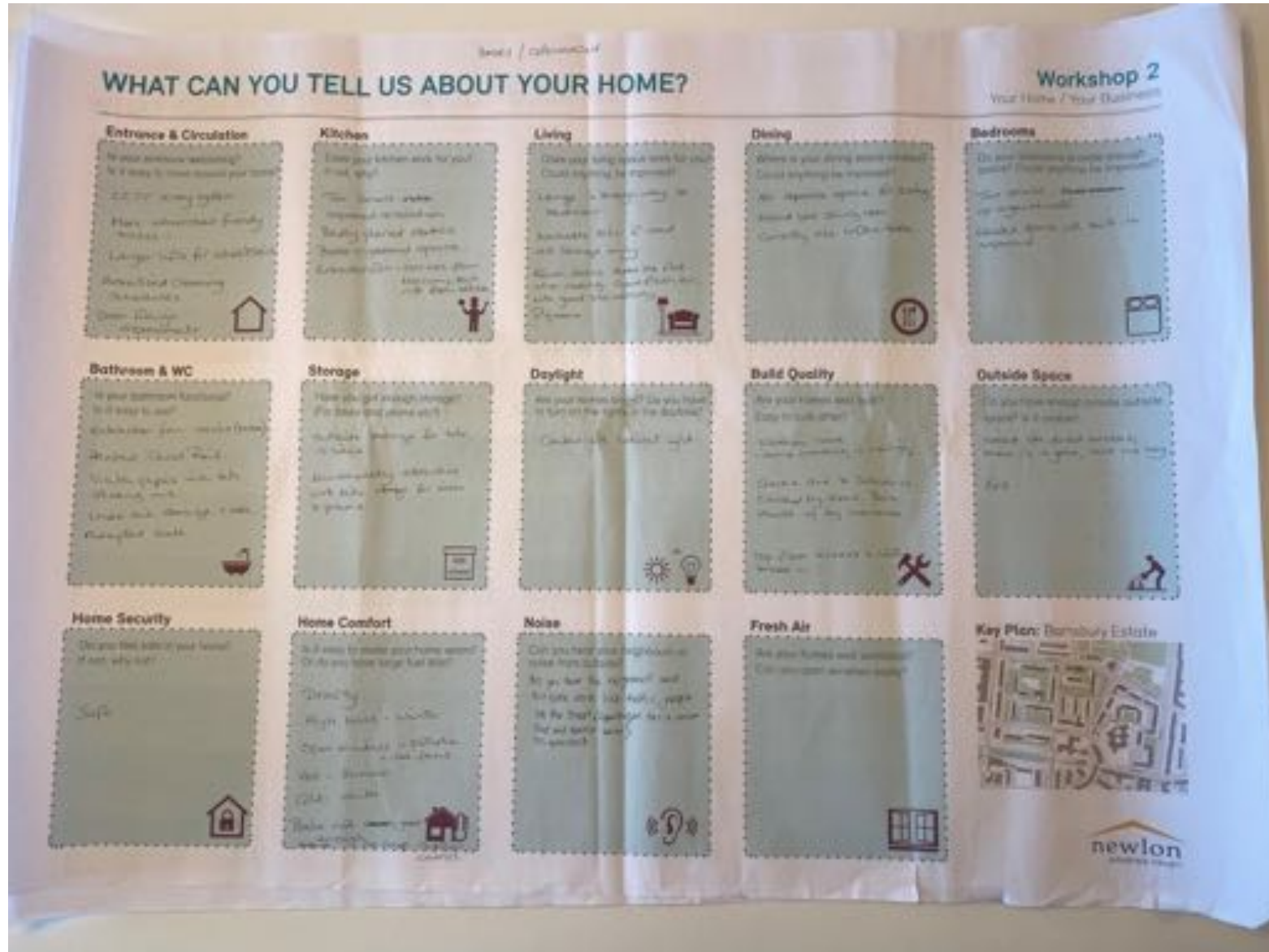
### **3) Have your systems ready**

- 1. Queries about maintenance and day-to-day management**
- 2. English as a second language**
- 3. People with disabilities**
- 4. Other hard-to-reach groups**



# Developing the conversation

# Start with the home and estate environment



# Developing the conversation

1. **Online**
  - i. Reach out to the silent majority
2. **Estate walkabouts**
3. **Home visits**
4. **Under-21s**
5. **Regular updates sent to all estate households**
6. **One-to-one**
  - i. Build good quality working relationships
  - ii. Making sure that the team responds quickly to maintenance queries



# Work towards solutions

## 1. Regular workshops

- i. Phase 2 (4 workshops):  
Work through solutions that are based on their feedback

## 2. Continue online engagement

## 3. Continue one-to-one engagement




# Approach to political engagement

1. **Start early:** It will be important to bring key politicians on the journey with us and meet with them before constituents approach them with queries and questions
2. **Build trust through robust briefings:** Ensure they understand the scheme and equip them to answer any questions from constituents
3. **Agree broad approach to consultation:** Outline and agree our consultation programme
4. **Secure their buy-in:** Their support will be key throughout the process
5. **Report back:** Regular updates will give them confidence




# Successful estate regeneration ballots in London 2018-2019

## 8. South Kilburn Estate



Eligible	1,000+
In favour	84%
Turnout	84%

## 1. Westthorpe Gardens and Mills Grove




Eligible	108
In favour	75%
Turnout	66%

## 7. Douglas Bader Park



Eligible	[?]
In favour	74.5%
Turnout	90.5%

## 2. High Lane




Eligible	[?]
In favour	90%
Turnout	57%

## 3. Camberwell Estates




Eligible	148
In favour	87%
Turnout	67%

## 6. Teviot Estate




Eligible	617
In favour	86%
Turnout	81%

## 4. Brookhill Close

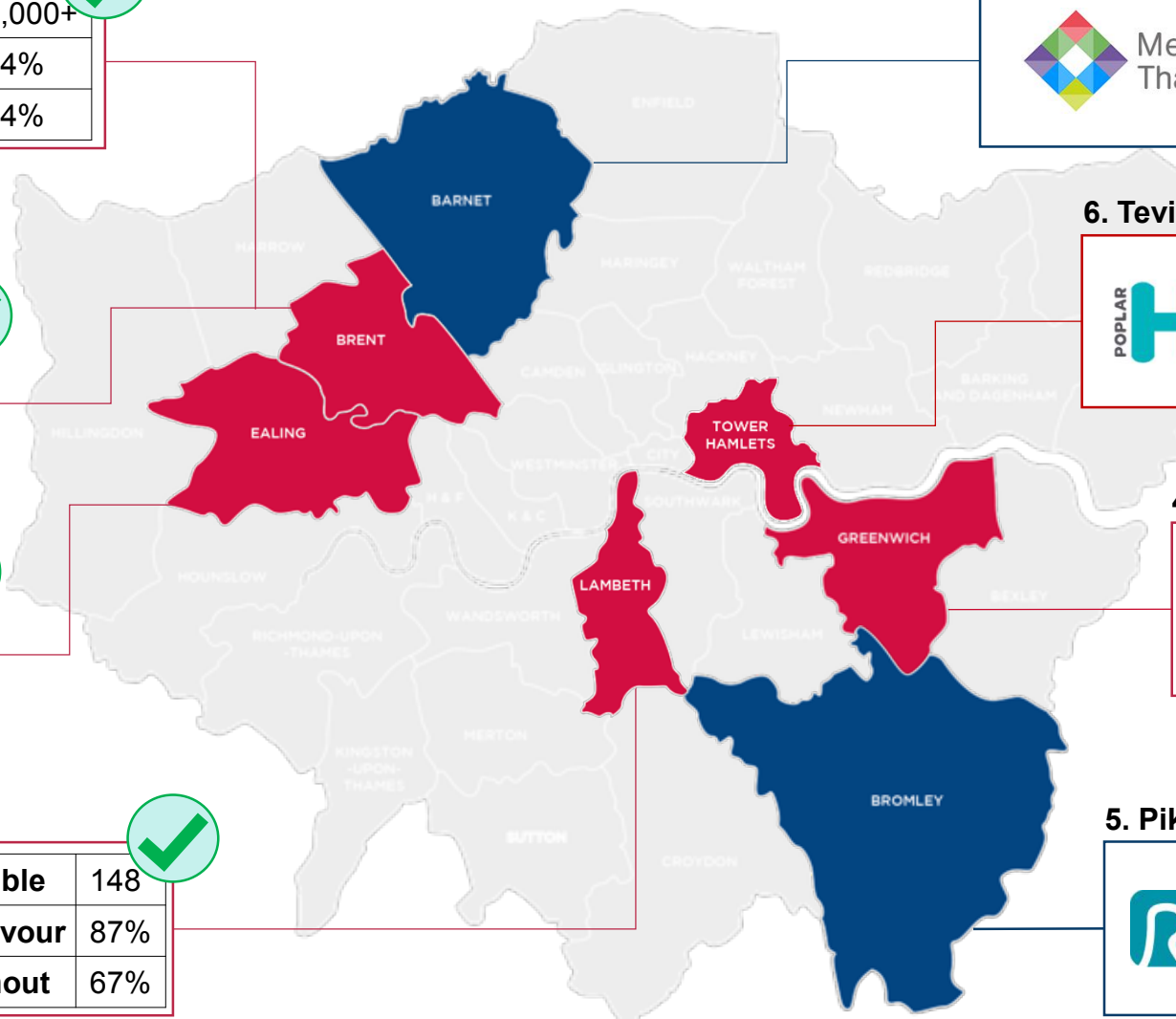


Eligible	99
In favour	87%
Turnout	86%

## 5. Pike Close



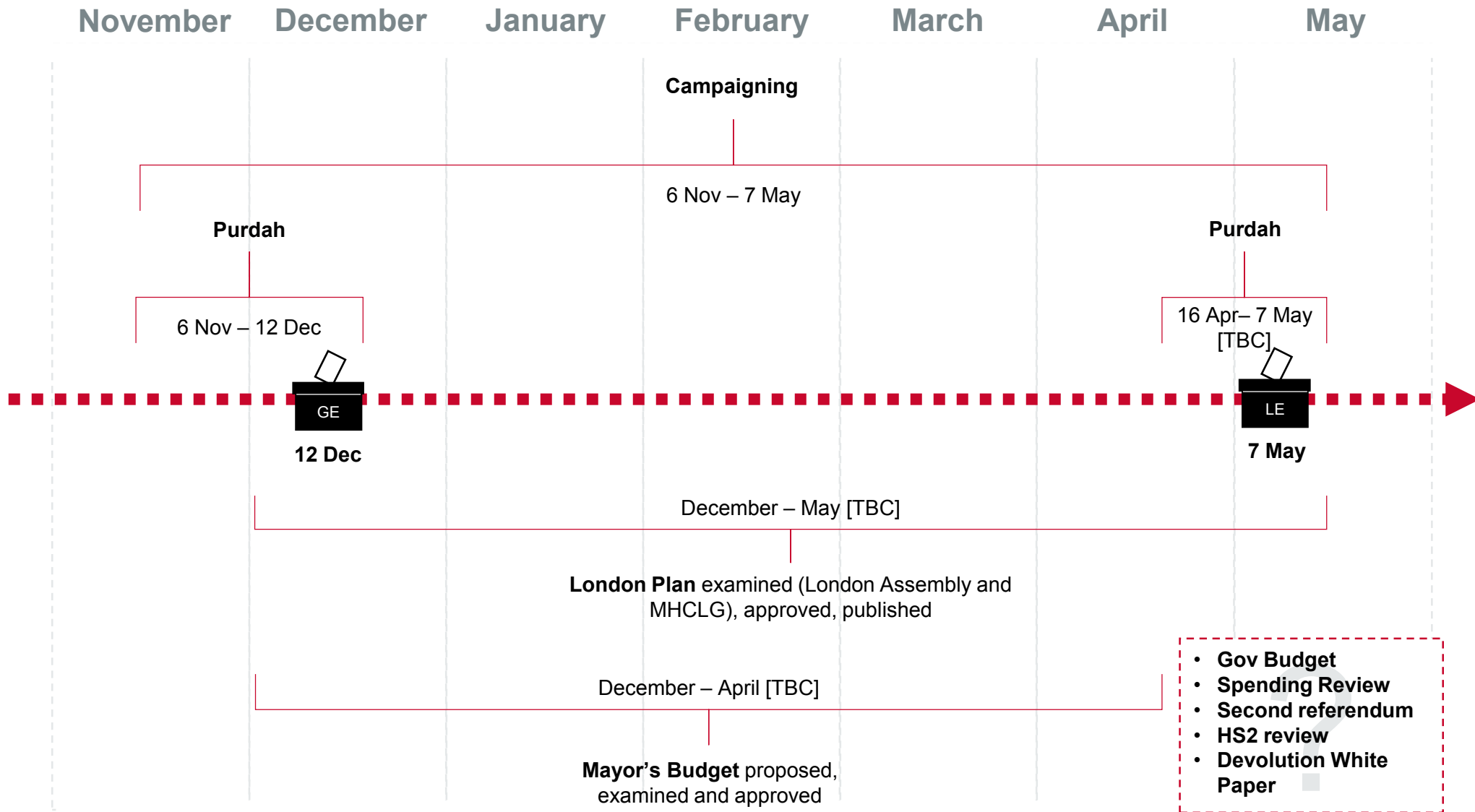
Eligible	86
In favour	89.5%
Turnout	82%





# In conclusion

# Timing is everything, particularly at the moment



# You need to be plugged in and genuine at all levels

- Planning is getting more political
- Election cycles - local, regional and national - can have an impact so timing is important
- Intelligence - each borough is different, understand the politics and monitor changes; the tide can change
- Know the area - get under the skin at a hyper-local level
- Community engagement - don't just do it, mean it!

---

**Any  
Questions?**