



# Young Mayor

## Sub-group achievements 2020

## Introduction and background

The Barking and Dagenham Young Mayor is supported by a sub-group of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum. The group work alongside the Young Mayor, supporting their fundraising efforts throughout the year.

This group was newly formed as lockdown began. The group had met just two times face to face, but the welcoming environment created by our returning members ensured new members were inducted quickly and work had already begun to choose a charity.

In 2020 Jessica Soares-Paim was elected to be the borough's 6<sup>th</sup> Young Mayor. Jessica was a clear favourite amongst her peers, securing their vote. Jessica delivered a confident and genuine speech demonstrating why she is perfect for the role.

During lockdown all sessions were conducted online, something everyone had to get used to, but worked really well.



## Choosing the Young Mayor's charity

In all previous years the Young Mayor, and their supporting sub-group, would conduct a public youth vote to ascertain which charity they would fundraise for. The group had started the process of brainstorming charities for their shortlist when lockdown began. In the absence of a full public vote, all BAD Youth Forum members were requested to vote. Following this process Refuge, domestic abuse charity, was chosen. The Young Mayor and her peers felt this was so important as they were aware of the truly devastating effects lockdown was having on survivors of domestic abuse and were informed of the increased need for Refuge's services during this difficult time.



## Understanding the need

In order to fully understand why it was so important to fundraise for Refuge, Service Managers from the charity were invited to attend a session and discuss the importance of Refuge's services. Young people were invited to ask questions, discuss how lockdown was affecting domestic abuse survivors, the increasing demand, and explore how the money they raised would make a difference.

## Fundraising during a global pandemic!

From the outset the group were aware of the difficulties they were likely to face when trying to fundraise. In order to support their efforts, the Young Mayor and supporting Youth Workers attended a (virtual) meeting with Refuge's Head of Events and Community Fundraising, Gabi Field. We learnt some useful tips from Gabi and some event ideas that might work in a virtual world. All of these ideas were taken to the group and planning began!

## Fundraising

A Just Giving page was set up early in the year, ensuring funds would go directly to Refuge. After long discussions the group set themselves a series of challenges.....

### Climbing Mount Everest (in our homes....on our stairs!!)

As a group we achieved 58,070 steps equating to 3871 flights of stairs, this is the equivalent of climbing the whole of Mount Everest!



### Our most delicious challenges:

The group decided to continue with personal challenges in order to raise funds. The young people's efforts were shared on the Just Giving page to show donators how hard they were working to raise money, the challenges were just for fun and were all young people's ideas!

**Baking challenge number 1 - create something that promotes Refuge visually (and is delicious!)**





Baking challenge number 2 - create an edible bear!



Decorate yourself with words related to domestic abuse sharing some of messages of hope, strength, solidarity and understanding.



And highlighting some of the devastating thoughts and feelings associated with domestic abuse...



**2.6 challenge:** for this challenge young people challenged themselves to do something in 26 seconds/minutes or walk 2.6 miles

How many items of clothes can I fold in 26 minutes....a lot!!



As a result of the young people's amazing efforts during lockdown, a total of £866 was raised. This was further boosted by our team in an end of year quiz where we won £100 towards a charity of our choice, generously donated by Erik Stein, bringing the total to £966

Understandably this is lower than the amounts the Forum has managed to raise in previous years due to the challenges of schools and young people being in lockdown. However, Forum members are determined to fundraise even more.

## **Future fundraising ideas**

With all young people now back in school, ALL schools in the borough have been contacted and requested to participate in a non-uniform day, we are hopeful some schools will support this fundraising attempt.

The Leader of the Council has kindly agreed to participate in a fundraising event, this will include an option for residents to vote for the Leader to do something embarrassing, the aim of this is to encourage people to donate. The event will start with a Leaders Live session on Facebook, where the Young Mayor will join the Leader to introduce the fundraising event. We are very thankful for the Leader's generous spirit in agreeing to this.

**A further update of funds raised will be available in February at the end of the Young Mayor's term.**

## Young Mayor events

At the start of the year, Jessica was invited to a range of events and many more were planned. These included UKON festival, Women's Empowerment Month Awards ceremony and the Junior Citizens Prize Giving ceremony. Unfortunately, lockdown meant she was unable to attend events in person, but Jessica has taken every opportunity to be involved in virtual events.

The full list of events Jessica has participated in includes:



- Attending the Women's Empowerment Month launch, where Jessica delivered a speech about her experiences as a young woman and what women's empowerment means to her
- Contributing to the Council's National Hate Crime Awareness Week video (screenshot below)
- Sending an introductory short film for the One Borough, One Love Festival
- Recorded a message for the UKON Carnival which was hosted online during the summer
- Met with the Leader of the

Council to discuss local issues and her work and has regular dates in the diary

- Will be chairing forthcoming Youth Engagement Meetings with the Leader and Cllr Mullane
- Participated in Domestic Abuse training with Monday group





**National Hate Crime  
Awareness Week 2020  
in Barking and Dagenham**

