

**Camden actively tackles
injustice and inequality,
creating safe, strong
and open communities
where everyone can
contribute**



Camden's determination over the last four years to create safe, strong, and open communities where everyone can contribute has paid off. We wanted everyone to have a voice and we wanted no one to be left behind.

Camden's drive towards active participation has made the voice of our communities stronger. We now have communities where civil action and social action means everyone has an opportunity to influence change. And the Council plays a stronger community leadership role with all of its elected members representing the views of residents in their wards.

The Council has ensured the voices of people in Camden have shaped the borough's approach to climate justice and health and care integration through citizens assemblies. We put lived experience at the heart of council policy and service design and this has informed our bottom-up approach to developing the Camden Missions.

The Council and Camden's voluntary and community sector have come together to support wider civic society and innovation. In 2021 we established the We Make Camden Kit, which gives money and support to Camden residents and community groups who have great ideas for their communities. A diverse panel of Camden residents decide who receives funding and there are already many inspiring projects underway that demonstrate the capacity and potential of communities to make meaningful change. This initiative provides the framework for a deep partnership with our communities that will provide many practical benefits and opportunities that will help to support a thriving economy.

Investing in shared public spaces has brought people together to find new ways to hand over power and resources to Camden's communities. Much of the Council's work over the past few years has demonstrated the value of giving residents the opportunity to be active in their community and giving them a voice.

Our achievements



The Council has invested £3.2m each year in Camden's **voluntary and community sector**, and a further £1m per year in advice partners.

The Council has committed £1.5m to put new **digital infrastructure** in our libraries and have invested in new technology and equipment to support digital inclusion across Camden.



Camden Women's Forum has led independent research which informed recommendations to tackle gender inequality in the workplace and violence against women and girls. The Council has endorsed these recommendations and is taking steps to implement them.

The **Safer Camden Network** tested ways of working to develop community-led approaches to tackling youth and community safety, and created local approaches independently recognised as good practice.



Camden's **'community conversations'** programme has ensured the lived experience of residents continues to influence the development of our neighbourhood-based approach to community safety and tackling anti-social behaviour.

In 2019 Camden piloted the 'Think and Do' space in Kentish Town – a community space designed and run by residents in response to their desire for the Council to do more to enable community groups to work together – in this case to tackle the climate emergency. Think and Do has grown and spread across Camden – bringing people together for clothes swaps, community kitchens, growing gardens, education sessions, and a "library of things" for people to share and reuse household tools for building and repair work.

Our Number 19 neighbourhood space developed an empty building into a thriving space for people to test out ideas, projects, and events, working collaboratively with local groups, residents, and partners to build neighbourhoods that work for everyone. It hosted an array of inspirational changemakers including food cooperatives, a community kitchen and a student social entrepreneurship hub. It also hosted Camden's first community fridge and community laundrette.

Across Camden voluntary and community organisations have deep relationships with the communities they serve and deliver essential services. We are committed to learning from them and building on the stronger and more equal partnerships we built throughout the pandemic. This means taking a true partnership approach to solving the challenges we face in Camden that recognises their strength comes from their diversity and independence.

Actively tackling injustice and inequality sits at the heart of our shared vision for Camden. We identify ourselves proudly as a diverse community that is an open and welcoming borough. The pandemic revealed the depth of injustice and inequality that has been created by systemic racism, discrimination, and structural injustice. And it has shown how COVID-19 continues to disproportionately affect residents from Black, Asian, and other ethnic communities.

Camden is committed to being an anti-racist borough, which includes playing a leadership role to tackle structural injustice and inequality in all its forms – building equal foundations for all our citizens that provide a strong platform for everyone to participate in the social and economic life of our borough.

The pandemic not only highlighted the poverty and inequality, it deepened it. Tens of thousands of Camden residents can't afford food, heating and other essentials because of the structural barriers they face – the high cost of housing in Camden, lack of access to decent paid work and an inadequate welfare system. We are committed to using the levers we have locally to tackle poverty in our borough.

The pandemic also highlighted the importance of digital inclusion. Before COVID-19 it was already clear that digital inclusion was a major contributor to societal inequalities, and the pandemic has made tackling the digital divide even more pressing. With more of our lives moving online, and access to free Wi-Fi in public spaces becoming more difficult, households without adequate digital access are increasingly at risk of social and financial inclusion.

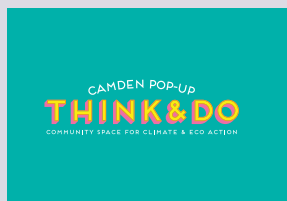


Our achievements



Camden Giving, in collaboration with the Council, established the We Make Camden Kit - which gives money and support to Camden residents and community groups who have great ideas for their communities - £160,000 of funding was made available in the first year.

A range of initiatives across the borough have helped bring communities together and aid community activism, like **Camden's Think and Do** space in Kentish Town, and the **Number 19** neighbourhood space.



Camden's Community Safety Partnership has supported the development of the Metropolitan Police Force's Trust and Transparency Plan, responding to resident concerns on the disproportionate use of police powers.

Digital inclusion and food poverty are areas we are focused on to build coalitions and take shared action, but we remain clear that to solve these issues we need to take on the root causes of poverty in Camden from housing to employment.

We want our communities to be safe and keeping everyone safe is a collective responsibility. Residents want to know their neighbours, feel safe and secure in their homes and on our streets. Important to this is actively preventing and tackling crime, such as drug dealing,

harassment, anti-social behaviour, and working with the Police and our communities to make our estates, streets and public spaces safe for everyone.

Our residents have told us they are concerned about violence against women and girls – whether this is domestic violence in the home, street harassment, or abuse online. Our residents have also told us about hate crimes. We believe Camden is No Place for Hate and no one should experience isolation, segregation, marginalisation, harmful practices, intolerance, hate, the denial of rights, prejudice, violence or terrorism.

We are determined to help to protect those most at risk of harm to help them stay safe and free from exploitation, and we do this working as part of a community of care where we look out for each other. We will work to actively address harm and risk in the contexts in which it occurs, prioritising people's welfare, wellbeing, independence, consent, and power for everyone.



How we can make change together

Community	• Challenge all forms of discrimination: systemic racism, ableism, gender-based discrimination and misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia • Use all our collective resources to tackle and address the systemic roots of disproportionality and inequality • Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the community
Partnerships	• Work together to recruit locally and diversify leadership • Work together to embed anti-racist practice at the heart of Camden organisations and their workforce strategies • Work together to continue to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, and find new ways to reduce violence towards women and girls
Council	Now and in the short term we will... • Ensure our public spaces, public buildings and Council-led developments reflect the shared history, culture and diversity of Camden • Continue to invest in the capacity and innovation of Camden's voluntary and community sector – supporting them to lead change in and with communities • Invest in services for victims and survivors of domestic abuse • Create ways for all Camden citizens to get involved in their community – as a volunteer, in designing services or in giving feedback on how we are doing ...and in the medium term we will • Use our planning and highways powers to shape public spaces to be safe, accessible, and welcoming for everyone – designing equality, connection, play and community into our streets, estates, and neighbourhoods

The change we want to see in the longer term

- Camden is an anti-racist borough, and all our services and partnerships address inequality and injustice
- No one in Camden experiences barriers, disadvantage, harassment, or violence because of racism or systemic inequality
- There is no place for domestic violence and abuse in Camden
- People can contribute to their communities and have a say in decisions about their lives and neighbourhoods in a range of ways, and strongly shape the way public services are delivered
- Camden's voluntary and community sector is resilient and responsive to resident needs, working with a range of partners to deliver innovative programmes that work closely with people to improve their lives

Achieving our ambition: Camden Challenge

Everyone in Camden can access and be part of a digital society

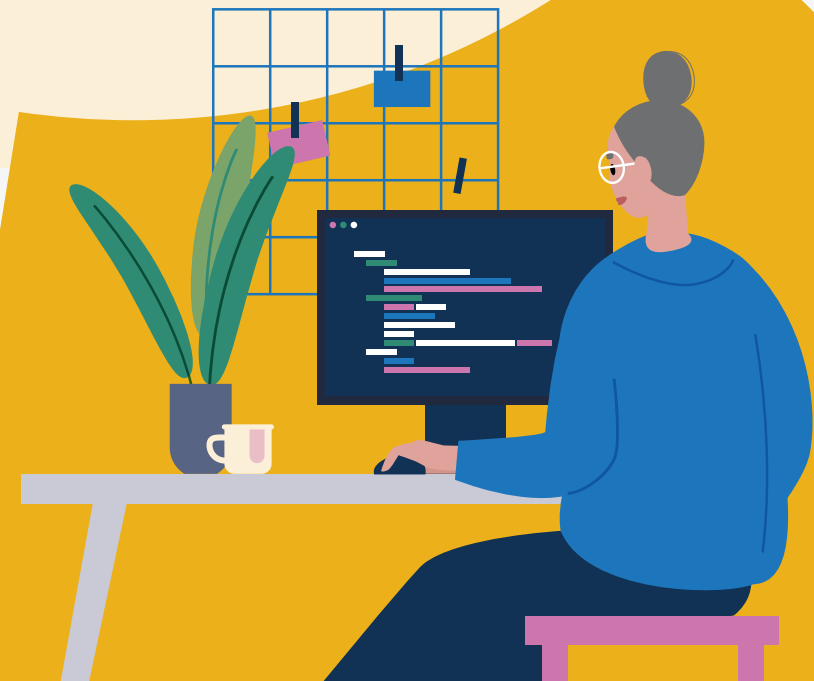
What if everyone in Camden had the tools, skills, and access to participate in the digital world – whether applying for jobs, paying bills, having a civic voice, communicating or being part of social networks.

Internet access is a basic human right and having digital skills – including the ability to use the internet and access to a computer or another digital device – is vital to get by. Without these things, it's difficult to do things that many of us take for granted – like staying in touch with loved ones, accessing online banking, booking a GP appointment or other healthcare services, or accessing work or education.

Before the pandemic, it was already clear that digital exclusion was a major contributor to inequalities, putting people at risk of social and financial exclusion. The pandemic brought this into sharp focus – with many children unable to access school lessons or elderly and vulnerable residents unable to connect with loved ones.

Everyone in Camden is concerned that all these issues are widening existing inequalities – and we all agree that enabling everyone to have the tools, devices, spaces, and skills to fully participate in online life is a social justice issue.

Camden has a large and vibrant technology sector, with some of the world's biggest and most powerful companies calling Camden their home. They must contribute to helping us to tackle this issue.



Achieving our ambition: Camden Mission

By 2030, everyone eats well every day with nutritious, affordable, sustainable food

Over the past year we have been working together with partners and the community to understand what it would take to ensure that people in Camden have access to nutritious, affordable and sustainable food. We imagined what our life would be like if in 2030 every person in Camden ate well every day, with good quality, affordable food that is good for them and the planet.

What if everyone in Camden ate a healthy, nutritious, and sustainable meal every day? Where food supply chains are sustainable and create local opportunities? And where food nourishes us to lead long, healthy, and happy lives and helps sustain the planet?

We know that to do this we need to tackle the deep-rooted causes of food insecurity – by improving access to good quality work, housing, and decent pay. We know that for older people, disabled people and carers, food insecurity can be especially challenging.

A growing movement of people in Camden are working towards a future where everyone has dignified access to healthy and nutritious food every day. We want to create a future where food has a fundamental positive impact on everyone's wellbeing – and can do so long into the future.

Our mission achievements over the last year include:

- Camden is focused on improving the access and quality of food in Camden's primary, secondary and special schools. Cooperation Town is leading work in collaboration with the Council to set up food cooperatives to help residents access lower-cost groceries and food while making use of good quality, surplus food that might have gone to waste.
- Voluntary sector partners and the Council are also working together to develop a new approach to sharing data about what residents need help with. This will help make better-informed decisions and offer targeted services, including wrap-around support, to those experiencing food poverty.

**Camden communities
support good health,
wellbeing and connection
for everyone so that they
can start well, live well,
and age well**

In Camden, too many people are living in poor health for too many years of their lives and the gap in healthy life expectancy between the poorest and richest parts of the borough is too wide. Poorer residents are expected to die around 10 years earlier than those who are better off - this is unacceptable.

The pandemic has amplified existing health inequalities and had a damaging effect on our communities. People continue to feel the impact of COVID-19 and it continues to impact many people's mental health. Many of us have experienced periods of anxiety, depression, social isolation and trauma, while some also grieve for loved ones who have sadly lost their lives. Many people also had mental health conditions before the pandemic, which they are still living with. We know that this is a big challenge but we are committed to help everyone recover – both physically and mentally – from this most difficult time.

Our health and wellbeing is determined by a wide range of factors, including our lifestyle and behaviours, the communities we live in, and the experience and quality of our local services. It's also influenced by our education, housing conditions, local environment, and whether we have good quality well-paid jobs that we find fulfilling. People living in poverty often experience structural disadvantage in more than one of these areas, which impacts on their life chances and ultimately leads to poorer health and shorter lives.



Tackling these injustices and reducing the gap between our richest and poorest residents requires everyone to act differently, channelling our collective efforts to connect with residents deep in our most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and communities. This means working closely with our partners – including the NHS, healthcare professionals, our voluntary and community sector and many others. Together we are integrating health and care services so that no one has to explain their situation more than once, while encouraging healthy behaviours and working with local people to improve their local environment. In some cases, this will mean handing over power to those that are best placed to make the changes.

In Camden we want to make our borough the very best place to grow up, live a healthy life, and age well with dignity and independence. Everyone should be able to contribute to their community and lead a full and active life regardless of their age, ability, and social background. Our social care services are built on the principle that people are the experts in their own lives and that they have many of their own strengths and resources that, when nurtured, can help them to stay independent and live a good life. This sits alongside our focus on safeguarding and ensuring we provide the right support to those adults at risk of harm.



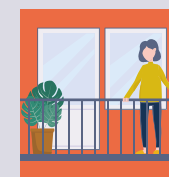
Our achievements



In 2019, Camden opened its **first Centre for Independent Living** at the Greenwood Centre, led by and for disabled people and run by Camden's voluntary sector.

The Council has built **38 new affordable extra care flats** with a range of shared facilities

at Charlie Ratchford Court for people with a range of care and support needs, to help enable them to maintain their independence for as long as possible.



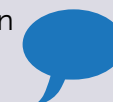
834 people have been **supported to live independently** in their homes through assistive technology.

1,168 children and parents have attended Camden's families for life and family kitchen programmes to learn about **cooking healthy food**.



4,271 people who live and work in Camden have been **supported to quit smoking**.

70 family group conferences have been held to support people to access care from family and friends and remain independent.



32 Camden residents have become **Community Champions**, helping to share health messages and promote health services to their neighbours and communities.



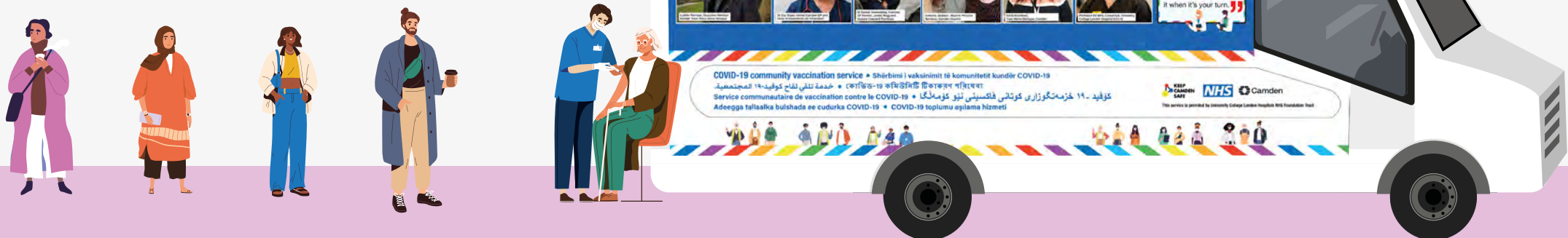
We also want to support good health across the whole population and make the healthiest choice the easiest choice. Whether it's by encouraging more people have healthy diets, to walk or cycle, or by providing better access to sports and physical activity, we want to create the conditions that support good health and wellbeing. This also means helping people find good work opportunities and more suitable housing for their families, as well as supporting older people make friends, build quality relationships, and avoid loneliness and social isolation.

The pandemic has shown us what can be achieved when we pull together to care and support for the people in our community. Together we have helped people access food and supported people to make the transition

back home after a stay in hospital. Our local health and care system has demonstrated an ability to adapt and come together with communities to create better outcomes for local people. We have also supported the NHS-led COVID-19 vaccine rollout – by supporting NHS-led vaccine pop-up events and launching a COVID-19 community vaccine bus for Camden in collaboration with the NHS to help everyone in our community to get vaccinated.

We have also listened to residents through the Camden Health and Care Citizens Assembly and embedded their expectations within our new Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

As we recover from the pandemic, the Council will build on this momentum, providing local leadership and ensuring residents' voices are at the heart of everything we do. Making real and lasting change will require a radical approach, focused on preventing ill health and tackling poverty - with individuals and communities, the NHS, voluntary sector, businesses and others all rallying to the cause.



Achieving our ambition: Camden Challenge

No one in Camden is socially isolated and without the means to connect to their community

How do we work across Camden to support meaningful connections, friendships, and a collective sense of belonging?

During the pandemic, we saw our communities coming together like never before – delivering food to neighbours who were shielding or self-isolating, checking in with each other and donating laptops and digital devices so people could keep in touch with loved ones. We have all been connected by our shared experience of COVID-19 and doing everything we can to protect each other.

But we were also separated – by lockdowns, by closed schools, universities, workplaces, places of worship, community centres and other community settings. At Camden's Health and Care Citizens Assembly, residents said that one of the most difficult parts of the pandemic was feeling separated from others – it exacerbated people's feelings and experiences of loneliness, and prevented them staying connected to their friends, family, and community.

Loneliness is an individual experience – but social isolation is a result of the ways in which we live as a community and a society. Some people and families are more likely to be isolated – by poverty, by disability and barriers to accessing services and opportunities, by physical and mental health, or by drug or alcohol issues. All these issues deepen existing inequalities and put more people at risk of harm. Being connected to a community, feeling a sense of belonging, being able to socialise and build friendships and relationships are critical to our individual and collective wellbeing.

Camden wants to reduce social isolation and the harm it causes while thinking about how we can create neighbourhoods, communities and places that support connection. We want Camden to be a place that actively welcomes everyone, helps people develop existing connections and build new ones, and sees and supports people who are lonely to find connection. We know we will need the networks, connections and ideas of everyone in Camden to ensure everyone belongs, feels welcome and part of our community.



How we can make change together

Community	• Support one another to feel part of the community and a sense of belonging, sharing information about local support, networks and services when needed. • Work together within our communities to tackle social isolation; supporting neighbours to build connections and friendships when desired. • Community Champions play a greater role within their communities to promote health and wellbeing, and encourage others get involved.
Partnerships	• Prioritise prevention and work to deliver services closer to home and within the community. • Support people to look after their own health, build on their personal strengths and actively engage in their local communities. • Support people who are furthest from the labour market, including disabled people and people with long-term health conditions, to gain good quality opportunities and employment – including in the health and care sector. • Take collective action to reduce social isolation and support people to build quality relationships and friendships in the community. • Make sure that all children are healthy and ready for school by age 5 and improve the take up of childhood immunisations across Camden.
Council	Now, and in the short term we will • Ensure accessibility and inclusion are at the heart of how we design and deliver services. • Ensure that everyone who needs support receives personalised care that builds on their own strengths and enables them to stay independent for longer. • Integrate health and care services in Camden so that no one has to explain their situation more than once. • Offer advice and support to residents experiencing poverty and debt, and aim to address the harm and risk caused by poverty. • Work to ensure that carers, both formal and informal, are connected to the community and get the support that they need. ...and in the medium term we will • Work with the health and care system to put health equity at the centre of all our services. • Support the health and wellbeing of our learning community through the ethos, curriculum, and practices of school life. • Focus our resources on preventing poor health for those who experience the highest levels of deprivation and disadvantage. 



The change we want to see in the longer term

- Our neighbourhoods support and improve good population health, and our services come together to support wellbeing in our communities.
- Everyone in Camden eats well every day, with good quality food that is nutritious, affordable and sustainable.
- Everyone knows how to take charge of their own health and wellbeing, and be encouraged and supported to keep active, eat well and stay healthy .
- Everyone has access to the services they need to keep themselves well.
- Camden communities come together to tackle social isolation and improve connectedness.
- Everyone has access to the help they need to manage money and avoid debt.
- Older and disabled people are able to live fulfilling, connected and empowered lives.
- Our neighbourhoods support and improve good population health, and our services come together to support wellbeing in our communities.



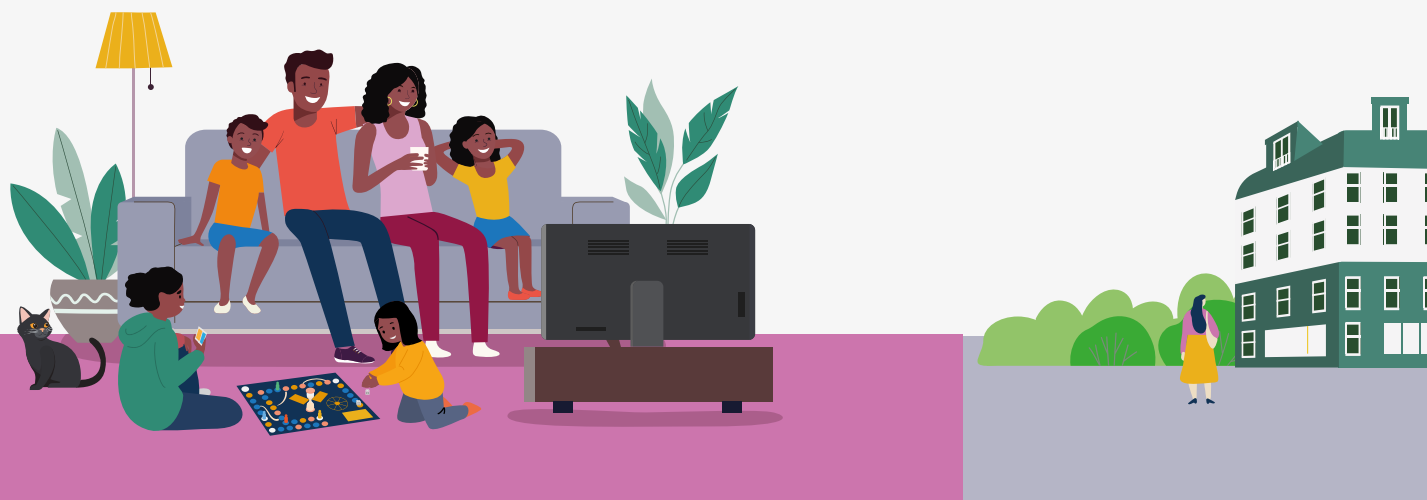
Everyone in Camden should have a place they call home



Housing is vitally important to nearly every aspect of people's lives. Since the start of the pandemic, many people have had to use their home to work, study, exercise, socialise and build a family. This has created pressure, particularly for big families or those living in shared accommodation. For some, home can be stressful, unsafe, cold, or crowded. Where you live can make or break your physical or mental health.

Everyone deserves a safe and affordable place they call home. However, housing in Camden is some of the most expensive to rent and buy in the UK, and there are not enough truly affordable homes for everyone. The shortage of decent and affordable housing of all types and tenure is forcing people to move out of Camden – and many people who've grown up here can't afford to stay when they come to start a family.

We are not building enough homes to meet the needs of our communities now and in the future, which increases housing costs for everyone. High housing costs mean people are more likely to get into debt, to cut back on essentials like food or heating, or to live in overcrowded or poor-quality homes. And housing benefit does not provide enough to meet the costs of having a decent home in Camden, putting people at risk of losing their homes at a time when they most need support.



Overcrowding, unstable housing and poor quality housing all have an impact on mental and physical health – and a disproportionate number of Camden families living in these conditions are from Black, Asian, or other ethnic communities. We also know how important it is to ensure that older people and those living with impairments have accessible and appropriate housing.

Camden residents facing discrimination or hardship are more likely to experience homelessness or sleep on our streets during their lifetime. This includes people with money or debt worries, those with long term health issues, people who identify as LGBTQ, people experiencing domestic abuse or people with drug or substance issues.

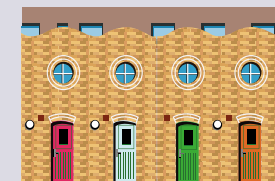
The experience of homelessness and rough sleeping is disempowering and isolating and puts people at risk of their health deteriorating further when they lose their support network – whether that be friends, family, colleagues, their GP or their local community. Homeless people – including those experiencing or at risk of rough sleeping – also face significant barriers to accessing support, services, and opportunities.



April 2018

The **Council has prevented** 633 families and 1,184 single people **from becoming homeless** since April 2018, and supported 492 families into settled private rented homes (as of October 2021).

Since 2018, Camden has **built 327 new homes** including 219 new Council homes through our Community Investment Programme.



TO LET

The Council has issued **2,982 licences to landlords** for Houses with Multiple Occupation (HMO) schemes, improving conditions for an estimated 11,828 tenants, and issued £1.6m in fines for rogue landlords since 2018.

The Council has invested £28.8m in buying back 61 Council homes to **support homeless families** since 2019.



FIRE ALARM

The Council has invested £43m to deliver **fire safety works** in our buildings since 2019, and plan to spend a further £59.5m over the next 5 years.

To tackle these issues, homes need to be more than affordable. We want to work with private landlords, housing associations and housing cooperatives – to improve the quality and sustainability of housing. The right housing increases wellbeing and independence and enables people to connect with their neighbours, and get involved with the local community. Our homes are part of our neighbourhoods. Living in Camden means access to local jobs, good schools, green and open spaces, arts and culture.

The Council has built over 1,000 homes of all types and tenure over the last 10 years. This includes: the first council homes to be built in a generation, providing children with their own bedrooms and families with living space; private rented homes for public sector and key workers and families on middle incomes; new hostel accommodation providing homeless people with private and secure space; high quality homes for sale that enable residents to put down roots in our vibrant and diverse communities.

But we do not have enough money to build the additional housing we need in Camden. To achieve this, we need to work with developers, housing associations, landlords, the Greater London Assembly and Mayor of London, community land trusts and others to build new homes and invest in the homes we already have by making sure they are fit for the future.

Through our social housing, Camden Council plays a big part in the lives of our tenants, estates, and communities. Council homes are an important part of connecting us into the wider Camden community and to services and support. We understand the importance of investing in council homes – to make them warm, sustainable, secure, and accessible.

For Camden, providing council housing is more than just providing people with a home. We see our housing services as the gateway for people to thrive, forming a big part of a wider family of services that provide early help and support at the point when people need them. To do this our housing services need to be responsive, dealing with everyday issues like repairs, quickly and effectively, and integrating key services that shape residents' experiences of our estates and neighbourhoods.

The private rented sector, which is the most accessible type of housing for people earning average wages, can be insecure, expensive and of poor quality. While we do as much as we can to support private renters who are struggling with these issues, as a council, we only have limited powers to support private renters. We often receive limited information from tenants who are at risk of being evicted. Renting can be safe, secure, and high quality, and provide good homes for individuals and families where there is effective regulation and control of housing cost, quality, and the option to rent your home for the long term.



Achieving our ambition: Camden Challenge

Camden has enough decent, safe, warm, and family-friendly housing to support our communities

What would it look like if all Camden residents had access to housing that supports good health, enabling individuals and families to flourish?

Housing is an issue that touches every part of people's lives and too many people in Camden and across London do not have a safe, secure, and long term place to call home. Instead, families live in overcrowded homes, young people are "sofa surfing", renters are getting into debt because of increasing housing costs and too many people can't afford their dream of owning their own home. These issues mean that too many people are at-risk of or experiencing rough sleeping or other forms of homelessness like living in temporary accommodation.

There is a lack of affordable and well sized housing options in Camden. This is either forcing families to move elsewhere – which we believe is strongly impacting the decreasing number of babies being born here – or it means families are living in overcrowded conditions, which has a knock-on impact on health, wellbeing, education and so much more.

Many people also want to improve the sustainability of their home – whether that's to reduce their energy bills, to play their part in tackling the climate emergency or both.

We don't hold all the power though and many people and organisations have a role to play in creating a better housing system that supports people to be healthy and safe and supports families to flourish in Camden. This includes the developers who build, the government which holds the funding for new council housing and the powers to regulate the housing and planning system, housing associations, landlords and renters' unions.



How we can make change together

Community	- Camden's tenants' movement, communities, activists, and partners will campaign for change in the housing sector to secure more funding for councils to build more homes, and more funding for genuinely affordable and sustainable homes to be built by housing associations, community land trusts and others - Campaign to reform the welfare system so that benefits reflect the true cost of having a secure, decent, and safe home in Camden, as well as the cost of living - Campaign for funding for councils and homeowners to make homes warmer, well insulated and carbon neutral - Campaign for powers for councils and Government to regulate and control the private rented sector – its quality, affordability and stability	
Partnerships	- Encourage Camden-wide investment in retrofit and making our Camden homes sustainable - Work with housing associations, registered social landlords and housing cooperatives to ensure that social housing stock in Camden is of a good standard	
Council	Now and in the short term we will - Increase the supply of genuinely affordable, family-sized, and social rented homes by building as many as we can ourselves - Use all our powers to compel and facilitate more organisations to deliver more affordable, high-quality, family size housing in Camden - Focus our social housing resources to support those most in need in Camden, address overcrowding and improve people's health and wellbeing - Reduce rough sleeping by investing in homelessness prevention, outreach and a "housing first" model – continuing to buy back our council homes to house homeless residents	...and in the medium term we will - Support our estates to be at the heart of communities – supporting them to be hubs at the centre of networks of services, community groups and resident activity - Use our powers to license the private rented sector in Camden with a focus on holding landlords to account in providing safe, decent, and secure homes

The change we want to see in the longer term

- There is enough affordable housing to rent or to buy in Camden to meet the needs of our community
- All homes in Camden are safe, warm, and sustainable
- People and families renting homes have security and stability
- Homes are accessible and adaptable to meet people's needs, whether that is enabling people to raise a growing family, or grow older independently
- Nobody is sleeping on the streets in Camden



Achieving our ambition: Camden Mission

By 2030, Camden's estates and their neighbourhoods are healthy, sustainable and unlock creativity

Since the start of 2021, Camden's partners and communities have been working together to understand how we can ensure all of our homes, estates and neighbourhoods are healthy and sustainable. We started by imagining what our life would be like if the places we live helped to achieve our potential rather than acted as a barrier.

We know that life can be different depending on where you live in Camden. This includes how our surroundings make us feel, our sense of connection to our neighbours and our local area, the services we access, how we travel around, our ability to meet others and the opportunities available to us.

This difference was highlighted by COVID-19 and raised the challenge: what would it look like if our homes, neighbourhoods and estates enabled us all to live happy, healthy, fulfilling and sustainable lives, no matter where we live in Camden?

The place we call home should help us live our lives and how these places are designed, managed and lived in should reflect that. This means the look and feel of estates should inspire and uplift everyone and bring a sense of pride and community. Their management and how services are delivered should be shaped by and respond to the needs and priorities of those who live there. And life on estates should

provide opportunities– a sense of belonging and connection, with spaces inside and outside for creativity, learning and activity.

The challenge for Camden is how we can build and develop healthier and sustainable communities that supports everyone to achieve the best in life, without being held back. We want all our neighbourhoods to support everyone to be healthy, to achieve their wellbeing and self-fulfilment and collectively, to meet and exceed our climate action goals.

Our Mission achievements over the last year include:

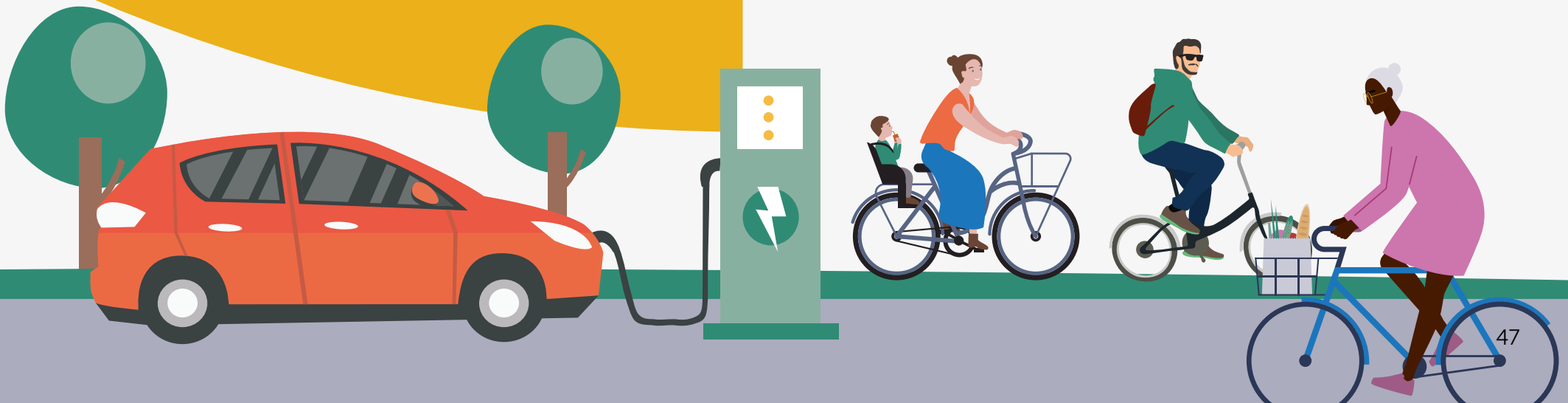
- Exploring opportunities for more local participation with residents, thinking about community spaces and bringing underused spaces back to life. These initial areas of focus are providing the essential infrastructure that will help us to achieve the mission's objectives over the medium to long term.
- Examples of emerging projects include: Camden's first Participatory Budgeting pilot at Hilgrove Estate, resident-led co-design of public space at Denyer House, estate assemblies, and a new programme to bring the Council, partners and community together to revitalise and bring under-loved spaces back into use.

Camden should be a
green, clean, vibrant,
accessible and sustainable
place with everyone
empowered to contribute
to tackling the climate
emergency

Camden is a unique place. People feel a deep sense of pride walking around Camden and want to preserve the borough's identity as a place of creativity, diversity, and opportunity. But everyone is deeply concerned about the climate emergency and the impact it's having on all of our lives, including the toxic air that threatens everyone's health and wellbeing and extreme weather, which impacts the liveability of Camden.

We are proud of Camden's public spaces and want to ensure that they support the health and wellbeing of everyone who uses them. That means everyone working together to keep them clean, safe and accessible. It also means being tough on those who disrupt our streets with fly tipping and making sure council services are responsive in keeping our streets clean. We will work with the community and local businesses to trial new ways to increase recycling and improve the cleanliness of our streets.

Our parks and open spaces are especially important for everyone's health and wellbeing because they provide a place to exercise, socialise and reflect. Trees, plants and greenery help to keep our air clean, cool our neighborhoods down and help to tackle the climate emergency.



Our achievements



Camden held the UK's first **Citizens Assembly** on the climate emergency. Their recommendations shaped Camden's Climate Action Plan, which launched in April 2019.



Camden made a decision to commit to achieving the World Health Organisation's **air quality targets**.



More businesses joined Camden's Climate Change Alliance, and it launched the Camden Climate Pledge, which commits businesses to working towards **net zero carbon emissions** by 2030.



Camden has developed its first ever **Biodiversity Strategy**.



The Council has switched corporate and school buildings to **100% renewable energy**, and 90% of streetlamps have been switched to energy efficient LEDs.



More council resources have been invested into **tackling fly-tipping** across the borough.



Camden has added **170 new cycle hangars**.



The council has invested in **planting extra trees** across the borough, increasing the annual programme from 400 to 600 new trees a year in 2021/22.



Camden has introduced **27 Healthy School Streets**, 112 Low Traffic Streets in our neighbourhoods and trebled the length of the cycle lane network.

Our Biodiversity Strategy 'Making space for nature in Camden' sets out a vision for how we will make Camden a place where nature thrives. It is the first part of an ecological plan for the borough in response to the declaration of a climate emergency. We will achieve this by establishing a local Nature Recovery Network and a new Action Plan, which will be developed and delivered in collaboration with organisations across Camden in a Camden Nature Partnership.

We need to adapt to meet the climate challenge that faces us, work to address the causes of the climate emergency and work toward becoming a net-zero Camden. We must also ensure that we are supporting and protecting those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change because we know that the climate emergency is disproportionately affecting residents living in poverty – including the impact of pollution on peoples' health and the increasing cost of energy bills.

So many people in Camden – including businesses, residents, and communities – are committed to working together to achieve net zero carbon emissions in Camden by 2030. That means supporting people who live, work, study and visit Camden to actively contribute to tackling the climate emergency in all aspects of their life. It means ensuring that all of Camden's buildings are energy efficient, comfortable and fit-for-purpose for a zero carbon future.



It means minimising waste and maximising recycling – shifting the borough towards a ‘circular economy’, which means encouraging everyone to reuse, recycle and repair as many things as possible – from washing machines and kettles to clothes and furniture. It means considering how we can adapt public spaces to encourage and enable health and sustainable travel options – like walking and cycling. And we want to ensure that businesses, anchor institutions and partners are operating responsibly and embedding the need to tackle the climate emergency throughout their operations. That includes supporting our high streets and markets – making the most sustainable choice the easiest and best for our local economy.

We want to enable and support this community energy, and ensure that businesses, anchor institutions and partners are playing their part in changing the way we live, travel, work and spend. Together, we need to ensure that we shape and manage the future of Camden to be a place that is greener, cleaner, healthier, and happier. We want everyone in Camden to commit to improving our shared environment, ensuring that everyone knows how they can contribute, and that even a seemingly small contribution can make a big difference – like taking a reusable bag shopping instead of picking up plastic bags.



Achieving our ambition: Camden Challenge

Camden's local economy tackles the climate emergency

What would it look like if Camden used its leverage in the local economy to confront the scale and depth of the global climate challenge?

We want everyone who contributes to our economy – including employers, workers, jobseekers, anchor institutions and our wider communities – to help shape and direct our thriving local economy in a way that contributes to our ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030 while continuing to support good work and equal opportunities.

The climate emergency is also a justice issue – poor air quality and extreme weather events will cause the most harm to the most disadvantaged. Together, we must ensure that changes we make to our communities and our economy are shaped by everyone and do not risk making existing inequalities worse.

And we want to do this in a way that integrates environmental health, social equity and thriving businesses to benefit everyone – now and in the future.



How we can make change together

Community	• Play our part in tackling the climate emergency and supporting a fair transition to a low or no carbon economy that doesn't widen existing inequalities • Progress grassroots community activity that works to mitigate and adapt to the climate emergency and support Camden transitioning to a low and no carbon economy
Partnerships	• Organisations in Camden will embed tackling the climate emergency throughout their operations, building on Camden's Clean Air Initiatives • Support sustainable consuming through our markets and high streets – reusing, recycling and repairing • Invest in art and creativity in our public spaces
Council	Now and in the short term we will • Make it easy for our residents to reuse, recycle and repair goods • Continue to invest in active travel – and continuing to improve public spaces to encourage more people to walk and cycle, and to make our streets more accessible • Invest in our parks, streets, and open spaces as places for socialising and improving health and wellbeing • Be a low waste borough with communities and individuals recycling waste, reusing more products, recycling more materials, and working with businesses to reduce the use of packaging and plastic • Invest in tackling fly-tipping across Camden ...and in the medium term we will • Look for opportunities to re-wild and green Camden, restoring land to its natural state and planting more trees and plants to support biodiversity • Support our schools to teach children and young people about sustainability, building on our schools' Climate Charter • Meet the World Health Organisation's air quality targets

The change we want to see in the longer term

- No one experiences poor health because of the air that they breathe in Camden
- Walking, cycling and public transport are accessible to everyone and the best way to get around Camden
- Building and development contributes to making Camden open, accessible, and attractive for everyone
- Camden is the most sustainable borough in London, leading the way with a 'circular economy' that focuses on reusing, recycling and repairing
- Our parks and open spaces are exciting, welcoming, and safe, providing places for people to exercise, improve their health and wellbeing, and by providing a place for families and communities to come together

