

2012 — 2017

The Camden plan

We want to make Camden a better borough — a place where everyone has a chance to succeed and where nobody gets left behind.

We're going to create a place that works — for everyone.

Our focus

We have developed five strategic objectives that will be our focus over the next five years, acting as the framework for this reform.

These are summarised here:

One **Providing democratic and strategic leadership fit for changing times**

We want to get closer to our communities, supporting them to be self-sustaining but also using our role as the democratically elected voice of Camden to influence national and London government and work with partners to unlock the borough's collective resources for the benefit of all.

Two **Developing new solutions with partners to reduce inequality**

Inequality has many dimensions. There are huge variations in health, education, housing and crime outcomes across the borough. These are long-term problems we have been grappling with for many years. However we recognise that with severely reduced resources we need to explore new solutions alongside our partners if we are to make a positive difference to people's lives.

Three **Creating conditions for and harnessing the benefits of economic growth**

Although Camden has a strong local economy we need to do all we can to continue to attract businesses, jobs and investment to the borough. We want to bridge the gap between the employment opportunities available in Camden and the increasing levels of unemployment, particularly amongst young people. We will work with the business and education sectors to help ensure residents are in the best position possible to gain employment.

Four **Investing in our communities to ensure sustainable neighbourhoods**

We should not underestimate the challenge of maintaining a strong and cohesive community in Camden. Being in the centre of a busy world city at a time when the public sector is downsizing creates some real issues that we need to respond to. We want communities across Camden to become more sustainable so that they can do more to help themselves and each other. Our investment in both the physical and social infrastructure will be critical to making Camden a better place to live.

Five **Delivering value for money services by getting it 'right first time'**

We want to make sure that services we provide are of a high standard and value for money, so everyone is satisfied and those that need support get it. We believe it is possible to improve customer service at the same time as continuing to reduce costs. If we deliver services that are 'right first time' then fewer resources are required to resolve the problems arising from getting it wrong.



Strategic objective two

Developing new solutions with partners to reduce inequality

Why it matters

Reducing all types of inequality is critical to delivering our ambition for Camden to be a place where everyone has a chance to succeed and where nobody gets left behind.

We are passionate that our key focus as a Council must be on tackling the longstanding problems that cause disadvantage in our community. These enduring problems have existed over generations despite the work and interventions of both the public and the voluntary sectors.

The Council has a strong record of innovation in public services which has never mattered more than now. Tackling these longstanding problems will require radical new solutions. This will mean working alongside the community and local partners, drawing on our strengths in this area but also thinking creatively about new ways of delivering solutions together.

What we have done so far

In responding to the financial challenges we have faced over the last two years we chose to protect our most vulnerable residents from the worst of the cuts, in services such as early years for example.

We have introduced new models of delivery with our funding to the voluntary and community sector, now shaped around promoting equality and cohesion and a separate innovation fund. For those services which have had their funding reduced, we have provided transitional funding for many community groups through the Camden people's fund.

The depth of our commitment to equality can be seen in our recently published equality objectives, our plans for an equality taskforce and the research we have commissioned into the impact of national government reform and local service change on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in Camden.



Our key focus as a council must be on tackling the longstanding problems that cause disadvantage in our community.

Our ambitions

Our aspiration is to make a significant difference to the levels of inequality in Camden through creative and innovative solutions. We do not accept the inevitability of the scarring effects of extreme income inequality on the wellbeing of the poorest households, especially on children. We want to work with families to keep children safe and free of crime. Our long-term goal is to eliminate child poverty in the borough.

We are also concerned about the striking health inequalities between those who live in Camden's wealthiest areas versus those who live in the most deprived areas. Our priority in tackling this will be to do all we can to help residents in our poorest wards to live longer. And we know poor quality housing can have a fundamental impact on people's health and wellbeing, so we believe that no-one should live in sub-standard housing. Ultimately we want to ensure that all households have the resources, financial or otherwise, to be resilient to the ups and downs of an uncertain economy.

Outcomes we are planning for 2017

By 2017 we will have delivered the following outcomes in our journey towards our longer-term aspirations for Camden:

- created new partnerships that mean that all of Camden is working towards a shared goal of fewer children living in poverty;
- reduced the number of families in Camden with complex needs;
- increased the life expectancy of people living in Camden's most deprived areas which will reduce the health inequality that currently exists;
- provided better homes for all council tenants through direct investment and estate regeneration;
- worked successfully with landlords to improve the standards of private rented accommodation.

We aim to make Camden a community where everyone has a chance to succeed and where nobody gets left behind.



How we will get there

We know that we won't be able to achieve all of our aspirations in the lifetime of this plan, but we can take action now to accelerate the change we want to see. We have set out below some new ways of working and new solutions that we will progress, in partnership, to enable us collectively to have the impact on inequality we aspire to.

New ways of working alongside individuals and families:

- developing a new integrated approach with partners to supporting families with complex needs more effectively in areas such as domestic violence;
- ensuring all children have the best start in life through early intervention programmes;
- creating accessible pathways to education, employment and training targeted at families with children in poverty;
- supporting workers on modest incomes to stay in work by ensuring the affordable housing and early years support they need for their children is available;
- delivering our better homes programme, investing in improving the standard of council homes in Camden.

New community-led approaches:

- developing personalised solutions and support for residents in need, and where possible enabling them to lead the problem-solving to achieve the outcomes they want;
- supporting all households to make use of the resources available to them, financial or otherwise, to be resilient to the ups and downs of an uncertain economy.

New sources of financing:

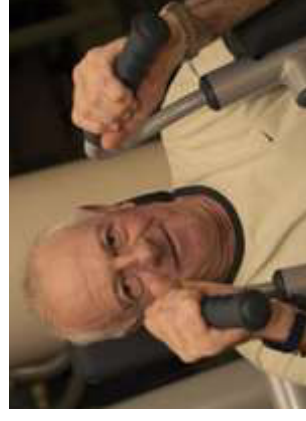
- exploring new sources of finance through social investment and new financing models such as community budgets, where we see real potential to achieve outcomes that we can't pursue through traditional models.

A new culture of innovation and creativity:

- working closely with local GPs, the voluntary and community sector and patient representatives to develop a new health and wellbeing strategy for Camden which will create the vehicle for implementing a new approach to service integration;
- exploring a new relationship and new business models with private landlords, for example to enable more affordable private rented accommodation in Camden.

Immediate next steps

- Our immediate plans include:**
- establishing an equality taskforce, with an independent chair and cross-party involvement, to explore structural and systemic reasons for all types of inequality, providing a fresh look at what influences inequality locally whilst recognising that regional and national factors are also inextricably linked to local outcomes;
 - carrying out innovative research into the cumulative impacts of public sector cuts on our communities to influence the future policy direction of the Council and national government;
 - developing our health and wellbeing strategy to set out our priorities and plans for tackling health inequality in Camden;
 - delivering a partnership-based project to better integrate and focus support to families with complex needs.



Questions

1. What do you think of our approach?
2. Do you have ideas of your own on how we can achieve our ambitions?
3. What type of role do you think local people, partners and businesses should play in helping to reduce disadvantage in Camden?
4. What do you view as the most important priorities for the Council to focus on in terms of inequality in Camden?
5. In which parts of the Council's work should we be more open to new ways of funding? These could include drawing social investment from philanthropists and businesses or developing ways of generating income from existing or new services.

Strategic objective three

Creating conditions for and harnessing the benefits of economic growth

Why it matters

Camden is like nowhere else in the world. We sit at the heart of the world's most vibrant city with a staggering variety of businesses choosing Camden as their base – ranging from the legal and financial sectors to music, digital and creative industries. This gives us a rare advantage in challenging economic times which we aim to use for the good of everyone.

We want to create the conditions for business success in Camden so that existing Camden-based businesses grow and we attract new businesses that we see flourish. We want to understand business needs better so that we can concentrate on developing the vocational skills of Camden residents so that they are more likely to be successful in gaining local employment. That way investment and growth can be for the benefit of everyone.

What we have done so far



In 2011 we set up the Camden business board to take a strategic lead on key economic issues and improve how the Council works with local businesses, recognising that they are the engines of economic growth. Through the board we began work on encouraging more apprenticeships and expanding corporate social responsibility in the borough. We have also been focusing on improving our services to businesses.

Our education commission has also been critical to progressing this agenda with its focus on 14 to 19 year olds and exploring what action needs to be taken to make Camden's schools the best in the country.

We sit at the heart of the world's most vibrant city with a staggering variety of businesses choosing Camden as their base.

Our ambitions

We want to create a platform for sustainable economic growth in Camden by promoting business success and fostering a strong partnership with business. We want residents to benefit from the employment opportunities this creates by better linking the efforts of the Council, schools and employers across Camden to provide residents with the vocational skills needed to gain employment.

We know that to succeed our children need to get off to the right start and therefore it is essential to ensure the level of our education provision, school places and standards are of the best quality. We aim to arrive at a position where all young people in Camden are either in education, employment or training. The future of our young people is one of our biggest concerns – we need to do all we can to get them into employment and we believe that effective partnership working is key to meeting this aspiration.

Outcomes we are planning for 2017

By 2017 we will have delivered the following outcomes in our journey towards our longer-term aspirations for Camden:

- an increase in educational attainment to achieve our goal of having the country's best schools within a decade;
- increased the number of Camden residents and students gaining local employment based on the skills and vocational training they have gained;
- reduced unemployment in Camden, particularly amongst vulnerable and social groups where long-term problems with unemployment exist;
- increased the number of young people in education, employment or training in Camden;
- an increase in the number of Camden residents employed in new business developments in Camden.

We aim to arrive at a position where all young people in Camden are either in education, employment or training.



We will not deliver our aspirations alone and we want to see our partnership with businesses and the education sector work in real terms – with an understanding of what we can do for them and what they in turn can do for the community.

Camden 'working' for businesses:

- having a more strategic relationship through the Camden business board and a council that is responsive to the concerns of businesses;
- providing easy access to advice and information for new and existing Camden businesses;
- supporting and attracting local businesses to compete for Camden contracts whilst ensuring our practices are fair and transparent, and that we get value for money from our contracts;
- ensuring an economic legacy of the Olympic Games by attracting visitors back to Camden after 2012.

Businesses 'working' for Camden:

- facilitating a new relationship between employers and educational institutions across Camden that will enable us to collectively work better for Camden;
- partnership sponsorship of continuous improvement in education attainment levels in Camden schools, aiming for every school to have a nominated business partner and every large business taking on a Camden young person for training or employment;
- supporting career paths in Camden with an education and skills programme that is ambitious and flexible enough to adjust to changing employment markets;
- encouraging businesses to adopt the London Living Wage and positive employment practices all of which will benefit workers and get more people back into work;
- delivering a shared commitment to embrace the green agenda in the way local businesses operate and in our supply chain so that they minimise any negative impact on the environment;
- offer businesses opportunities for local social investment as a part of new ways to tackle inequality.

Increased employment of Camden residents:

- develop partnership programmes that promote education and training and offer apprenticeships;
- support Camden residents to gain from wider London employment opportunities through identifying the skills needed by London's growth industries in the future and ensuring that our residents can access training to develop them;
- seeking to increase access into work for women who historically have faced exclusion from the labour market, through the work of Camden's equality taskforce;
- work with business developers who come to Camden to seek opportunities to secure employment for the local community;
- promote Camden as an exemplar employer – recognising and promoting our role as a local employer by offering apprenticeships and employment opportunities to Camden residents.

Our immediate plans include:

- the launch of our business portal as a single point of contact for businesses as the beginning of a strong reputation as a Council that is 'open for business';
- the launch of our new partnership for educational excellence as the mechanism for shaping our aspirations for business to support positive education and employment outcomes in Camden;
- taking forward the business board's recent commitment to increase the number of local people employed by Camden businesses and improve work experience opportunities for all Camden's children, not just those with the right connections;
- exploring, alongside our partners, the employment opportunities for Camden residents at King's Cross Central as one of the largest development sites in Europe.

Questions

1. What do you think of our approach?
2. Do you have ideas of your own on how we can achieve our ambitions?
3. How can the Council best invest its resources to support employers in the employment of local people?
4. What role should businesses have in supporting the training needs and 'skilling up' of local young people?
5. In the context of increasing competition, what more could the Council do to encourage and support business creation and growth?
6. In aiming to make Camden the best place to be educated, what should be the focus of the new Camden partnership for educational excellence?



Strategic objective four

Investing in our communities to ensure sustainable neighbourhoods

Why it matters

As the public sector downsizes, communities across Camden need to become more sustainable so that they can do more to help themselves and each other, building on the support that local government is able to provide. Recognising that a community that does more for itself has less call on limited resources but more importantly is a better place to live.

Critical to communities in facing this challenge is that the Council provides facilities that are fit for the future and meet community needs. Community facilities, be they schools, housing or community centres, play an important role in shaping places and the communities that live there. If we get this right then we truly believe our communities will be strong and cohesive.

What we have done so far

Our community investment programme has begun over the last two years in response to the huge reductions in capital budgets from central government, and because the physical infrastructure of the borough is a priority for the Council.

Housing, schools, community facilities and community safety are critical to our communities. Our investments have ranged from funding additional police officers in Camden Town and our homes for older people programme, to our commitment to having a community centre in every community.

Our move away from area forums to area action groups and the introduction of our shaping services programme have offered the opportunity for the community to influence what happens in their area. And the Council and community have already started to come together to deliver services in a different way – with the transfer of Caversham children's centre to be run by the community and, in a first for local government, we've undertaken a similar transfer of three Camden libraries.



The Council and community have already started to come together to deliver services in a different way.

Our ambitions

Our aspiration is to deliver a modern fit-for-purpose range of community facilities for Camden that recognises times change and the provision of services needs to change too. We believe that if we can work with the community we can deliver facilities to meet many different needs that are sustainable, highly valued and well used. These facilities will bring the community together.

Alongside investment in physical infrastructure we also want to invest in the social infrastructure of Camden. We want to work with the voluntary sector and communities themselves to establish self-sustaining community outcomes through supporting volunteering and building capacity in the community. Our investment will also support the community to tackle the environmental challenges we face.

Another essential prerequisite for a community to thrive is that its residents are safe and just as importantly feel safe. This includes our older and more vulnerable residents who we want to be able to live within the community making it a community for everyone. We want to make Camden stand out as a borough where more people feel safe than any other part of London.



We believe that if we can work with the community we can deliver facilities to meet many different needs that are sustainable, highly valued and well used.

Outcomes we are planning for 2017

By 2017 we will have delivered the following outcomes in our journey towards our longer-term aspirations for Camden:

- as a result of the community investment programme we will have invested £117 million to improve 57 school buildings – helping to ensure Camden has enough school places;
- the programme will also have enabled us to invest £119 million in housing, creating over 2,000 new homes with more new Council and social housing so that residents can access affordable and decent housing in the borough;
- with investment also made in delivering community centres that are fit for the 21st century and a centre for independent living and other purpose built adult social care facilities at Greenwood Place;
- delivered a personalised approach to social care support for our older, disabled and vulnerable residents that enable them to live safely and receive the support that is right for their needs;
- an improvement in health outcomes across the borough and reduced interventions by agencies;
- a 27% carbon reduction across the borough;
- an increased level of trust within the community;
- reduced levels of crime, particularly violent crime.

How we will get there

Key to delivering these aspirations will be our relationship with partners and the community as a whole.

Investing in our places, investing in our people:

- prioritising our investment in those places that need it the most through our community investment programme with a focus on improving the physical condition of our school buildings, providing new social housing that will enable communities at serious risk from the changes to housing and welfare reforms to stay in Camden and enhancing community facilities in areas where changes are planned;
- recognising, as part of our community investment programme, the importance of working alongside communities to ensure that taxpayers' assets are developed with the long-term interests of local people in mind;
- enabling residents to reduce the cost of their homes by increasing their energy efficiency;
- supporting neighbourhood plans which harness the energy of the community to shape growth in their areas;
- working in partnership at a local level to develop and implement solutions that really make a difference at minimal cost by making better use of the wealth of community assets that exist across the borough.

Ensuring Camden is a safe place for everyone:

- reducing anti-social behaviour which can slowly erode residents' sense of safety and using our planning and licensing functions to maintain a night-time economy that is safe and vibrant;
- giving residents more support to influence community safety services, for example through our community auditor scheme;
- making sure our public spaces are safe and well used, through our approaches to street presence and urban design;
- exploring opportunities to develop restorative justice and community payback further to support communities to feel safer, whilst retaining a clear focus on tackling youth violence.

Creating communities for the future – now:

- working with communities and the voluntary and community sector to establish self-sustaining community outcomes;
- helping people to help themselves through supporting volunteering and building capacity in the community, both financially with funding to voluntary organisations but also ensuring that all council services recognise and promote the value of voluntary action;
- encouraging more residents to take 'green' action either independently or through a local community or group;
- leading by example in promoting the Council's programme of work for carbon reduction on our own estate – from council homes to Camden schools. And working with local businesses to ensure they are making an active contribution towards our long-term target of a 40% carbon reduction in Camden by 2020;
- ensuring all council services contribute to the health outcomes we are working to achieve, particularly in areas such as fuel poverty, air quality and road safety;
- promoting opportunities for the community to run services where it makes sense.

Immediate next steps

Our immediate plans include:

- conversations with every community to inform the community investment programme on an area basis;
- exploring with our partners the opportunities for a more prominent restorative justice programme in Camden;
- engaging communities in designing services to tackle the issues that affect them most;
- commissioning the most sustainable council building of its type in the country complete with leisure facilities that will be in use from 2014 as part of the Kings Cross Central development.

Questions

1. What do you think of our approach?
2. Do you have ideas of your own on how we can achieve our ambitions?
3. What can the Council best do to help people make the right choices to live healthier lifestyles?
4. What more should we be doing to ensure Camden remains an affordable place to live for everyone?
5. What is the most important thing the Council could do to encourage residents and businesses to behave in more environmentally friendly ways?
6. The Council is redeveloping or selling old land and buildings to fund improvements to schools, housing and community facilities. What do you feel the priorities should be for this money in your area?

