

Camden 2025

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Camden has a proud, rebellious spirit that throughout its history has seen communities come together to tackle problems, and to bring about real social change.

Camden 2025 sets out our vision for the borough in 2025, a place where everyone contributes to our shared goal of achieving a safe, fair, creative and active community.

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

Together, we will create a place that works for everyone, and where everybody has a voice.



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Creating our vision

To develop the Camden 2025 vision, we invited everyone who lives, works and studies in the borough to tell us what Camden as a place should be like in 2025, to anticipate future challenges, and to consider new and innovative ways to tackle some of our most difficult problems.



The result is a vision for the future that is deeply rooted in the values of the people of Camden, and builds strongly on the ambitions of the first Camden Plan, 2012 to 2017.

Together we will face stark challenges, from London's housing crisis, to Brexit and its aftermath. The money that Camden Council receives from central government has reduced by half since 2010. Other parts of the public sector, such as health, have seen 'real income' to support local people reduce as budgets have not kept up with rising demand.

We know many of our residents are under pressure from benefit changes, the high cost of housing and stagnating wages. The era of central government cuts looks set to continue with the council and our public sector partners projecting increased pressure on our services in years to come. These issues mean that we need to pull together in an unprecedented way.

To succeed, Camden 2025 must act as a call to action that inspires a new way of working, where Camden's people, the council and others come together to work differently to develop new solutions.



Community voices

Within Camden's communities there is a strong sense of activism and a powerful shared understanding that we are stronger when we work together. In developing our vision for Camden in 2025, we were determined to capture this strength, use it to make difficult decisions together, and talk honestly about competing interests and finite resources.

The results of this work have been beyond anything we expected and confirm that Camden's most important resource is the people who live and work here – our citizens.

As part of this approach a Citizens' Assembly was set up to help us to understand what the future of Camden should be like. This brought together around 70 residents,

broadly representative of the diversity and experience in the borough, over a period of three months to think hard about our future challenges.

There were also conversations in libraries, community centres, businesses and homes across Camden, and online, about what we wanted for our communities in 2025.

The way citizens, businesses and community partners have come together to create the Camden 2025 vision is a statement of intent for how we want to work in partnership in the future. We are not only working together to chart a way forward for the borough by agreeing a shared set of goals, but also building the relationships needed to deliver the changes people want.

To support the Camden 2025 vision, the council has developed a plan, covering the next four years (2018 to 2022), which sets out how it will deliver its services and spend its money in line with the ambitions set out in this document.

Our Camden Plan reflects the need to work differently but is also very clear about the value of local public services. There is a need to work differently, not to step away.

We are proud of how much we have in our borough – a family of schools, a voluntary sector rooted in our communities and a dynamic economy.

We know that to achieve real and enduring impact, we will need to find a common vision and work with our citizens in a spirit of shared endeavour. We invite every organisation in the borough to be part of this.

With the input and critical challenge from so many Camden citizens, we now have a set of bold ambitions for the future and a shared understanding of how we need to work together in a radically different way.

Our ambitions are realistic. They are grounded in citizens' understanding of the challenges the borough faces, and they provide a clear purpose and compass to guide us in uncertain times.

You can learn more about who we spoke to and what was said at camden.gov.uk/camden2025



Our 2025 ambitions

The conversations we had to develop Camden 2025 allowed citizens to talk about the challenges they believe our borough faces.



There is a lot we love about our borough. It is vibrant, creative and diverse. People care about each other and the community. We believe our diversity makes us stronger. We have a rich wealth of culture and heritage, outstanding green spaces and a strong sense of identity.

We are worried about rising inequality. We don't like that housing is becoming more and more expensive, and children growing up in Camden may not be able to afford to make their life here. We are deeply concerned about people sleeping on the streets and the number of people without secure

homes. We are worried that our communities will lose their spirit. We don't like that crime is going up, and many of us don't feel as safe as we would like to on our streets and estates. We want to see a greener borough where we don't have to worry about breathing in polluted air.

As a community we have huge aspirations for our young people. We want them to have access to all the culture and opportunity in Camden, but we are worried that for some young people that feels far away.

The world feels like an uncertain and unpredictable place at the moment. Things

are changing quickly and we don't want to see what is special about our borough disappear. Camden should stay a place that is proud to be open and diverse.

We don't want Camden to feel like a generic part of the city. We want our radical history, our rebellious spirit and our artistic heart to be part of our future.

There is real concern about Camden's identity and sense of place being fundamentally changed under the pressure of economic inequality and London's ongoing housing crisis. Our shared values of radicalism and openness

rest on a foundation of affordable housing that supports mixed communities.

Local public services, strongly valued by our citizens, help to create and maintain a clean, attractive and safe borough, and the resources we have for these will continue to be reduced. It is also the case that the consequences of Brexit

and the impact of HS2 will be felt for a generation and are of deep concern to local people.

However, the most striking thing that came through in conversations with our citizens is the sense of optimism and the desire to meet future challenges head on. The overriding sense of Camden is of a place that is mixed, open and optimistic.

It is a place where people come together and get things done. It is a place where everyone should have a chance to succeed.

We want Camden to be a place where nobody is left behind. From childhood to old age, we want everyone who lives in Camden to have secure housing and the opportunity to play a full part in community life.

Whether renting or buying, homes should be affordable and secure



Call to action one

In 2025

Everyone in Camden should have a place they call home.

Mixed, integrated communities are part of the borough's sense of place, and good homes where people can afford to live are the basis of this.

We are clear that the London housing crisis threatens Camden's social mix and this threat should be regarded as a call to action to everyone with the power to make a difference, however small.

We must use all of our skill, innovation and leadership to increase the number of new homes, and rally partners to the shared endeavour of doing all we can to meet this challenge.

Everyone in Camden should have a place they call home.

- Whether renting or buying, homes should be affordable and secure
- Homes should be safe, warm and free from damp
- Homes should be accessible and flexible to meet people's needs, whether that is someone growing older or a growing family
- Nobody should be sleeping on the streets.



Call to action two

In 2025

Growth in Camden should be strong and inclusive – everyone should be able to access the work that is right for them.

Camden is at the centre of a global economy. The borough's highly skilled workforce, transport links, amenities and vibrant high streets have made it a destination of choice for some of the most dynamic businesses in the world.

However, too many local residents are not benefiting from the growth they see around them, and are unable to gain a strong foothold in the London jobs market.

We need to continue to support our schools to equip our young people with all the skills and qualifications that they will need in the 21st century.

The cost of living in Camden is high, and in many cases wages have stagnated or jobs haven't paid enough, meaning an increasing number of our local people are in work but still living in poverty. For others, the London labour market doesn't work at all, lacking the

flexibility and adaptability to enable them to balance work with caring commitments, health conditions or disabilities.

Parents in particular face barriers to getting into rewarding work, with high childcare costs and rigid job design meaning people have trouble getting into work, or have to take a job below their level of skill and experience. Too often the public investment designed to support residents into employment does not work as well as it should.

Too many local residents are not benefiting from the growth they see around them





Citizens are passionate about Camden being a fair place, where everyone has the opportunity to improve their lives, and the lives of their children, and contribute to their community. Work that pays well and supports the wellbeing of individuals and their families is the basis for this.

This requires change, but also for our economy to continue to grow, and there are major threats on the horizon. The impact of the vote to leave the European Union will be a shock to a local economy that looks out to the continent.

The council and others will need to work with local businesses and major organisations to understand what they need to continue to grow.

Our people and businesses are creative and energetic. We need to ensure that we are making the most of our assets: world-class universities, high-achieving schools, a culture of entrepreneurship, and a stock of major businesses in high-growth sectors.

While much of this is a London and national challenge and our direct control is limited, we should not shrink from the challenge.

Together we need to create the conditions for growth to take place, but also to challenge ourselves to make sure that growth is inclusive and nobody is left behind.

Call to action two

Growth in Camden should be strong and inclusive – everyone should be able to access the work that is right for them.

- Jobs in Camden should pay what people need to live in the borough – to meet the costs of living, allow people to save for emergencies and plan for the future
- People's jobs should be flexible enough to support their wider commitments, whether that is caring for and supporting a family, learning and training, or contributing to their communities
- Jobs should recognise and nurture the talents and skills of each individual, and give people a path to development and progression
- People should expect to learn for as long as they work
- People should be paid the same for the same work
- We need to make Camden the best place in London to do business, with the infrastructure that business needs to grow
- Businesses and their employees should be part of our community and contribute to our vision for Camden in 2025.

Call to action three

In 2025

Camden should be safe, strong and open, and everyone should be able to contribute to their community.

Camden has a proud history of fighting for equality and progress. You can walk our streets and see testament to LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) and gender equality struggles, the anti-apartheid movement, and more.

This rich heritage of artistic, cultural and social expression is linked to our values. Camden is a place in which everyone can access opportunity and can help shape their community, regardless of their background. Our wide range of civic networks and organisations demonstrates this legacy of social activism is being continued.

However, there are threats to our communities. Successive economic crises have concentrated both advantage and disadvantage.

There are people living in our communities who feel left out in the discussion of Camden's success: young people without a sense of what the future holds for them, people who can't access employment or volunteering because of mental or physical disability, women whose lives are blighted by domestic violence and abuse and people of all ages who are experiencing loneliness and isolation.

Crime is beginning to rise nationally and in London, and the fear and mistrust this promotes reduces individual and community wellbeing.





We know local people value a sense of community

We know local people value a sense of community – residents want to know their neighbours and feel safe and secure in their homes and on their streets. They want to be able to identify meaningful ways to contribute to their community, and they want to feel a sense of belonging to a place whose values align with their own.

Our schools are a vital part of Camden's community. They have a crucial role to play in ensuring our children get the best start in life, keeping children safe and supporting families. We will continue the proud tradition of a strong partnership amongst schools, along with the council and with the communities they are part of.

Call to action three

Camden should be safe, strong and open, and everyone should be able to contribute to their community.

- No one in Camden should experience isolation, exclusion, harassment or violence as a result of disadvantage or prejudice
- Our community spaces, whether children's and community centres, libraries, play streets or parks, should encourage interaction and engagement between neighbours, and people with different experiences and backgrounds
- Domestic violence and abuse should have no place in Camden
- People should be able to contribute to their communities in a range of ways and strongly shape the way public services are delivered – opportunities to do this should be flexible and responsive to individual expertise and interests
- Camden's voluntary and community sector will be resilient and responsive to resident need, working with a range of partners to deliver innovative programmes that work closely with people to improve their lives
- Children should be given the best start in life, with the opportunity to develop all their capabilities.

Call to action four

In 2025

Camden should be a clean, vibrant and sustainable place.

Camden is a unique place. In places it is built up, part of a global metropolis. Elsewhere it has quiet residential streets, village greens, and wide open parks and heaths.

People feel a deep sense of pride walking around Camden and want to preserve the identity of the borough, creating streets and places that are welcoming and accessible to everyone.



People feel a deep sense of pride walking around Camden



We want everyone in Camden to commit to improving our shared environment

Conversations around Camden in 2025 showed that there is real concern over things that threaten this, notably the toxic nature of London's air and its consequences for people's health, as well as the liveability of the city.

Together, we need to ensure that the way we shape and manage the borough makes Camden a place that is cleaner, healthier, and happier.

This means the creation of environments that promote active travel, physical activity and healthy choices.

It means that our borough should be a place where it is as easy as possible to walk and cycle, that has high-quality parks and open spaces that are welcoming and safe, and where it is easy for everyone to recycle more.

We want everyone in Camden to commit to improving our shared environment, ensuring that everyone knows how they can make a contribution, however small.

Call to action four

Camden should be a clean, vibrant, sustainable place.

- No one in Camden should experience poor health as a result of the air they breathe
- Walking, cycling and public transport will be the best way to get around the borough
- Building and development in the borough should contribute to making Camden open, accessible and attractive for everyone
- We will be the most sustainable borough in London, recycling more of our waste, and working with businesses to reduce the use of packaging and plastic
- Our parks and open spaces will be exciting, welcoming and safe, providing places for people to be physically active, and families and communities to gather.

Call to action five

In 2025

Everyone in Camden should be able to live a healthy, independent life.

Good health helps people to live a full and rewarding life. It is more than an absence of disease and illness – it is about physical, mental and social wellbeing. Access to high-quality services that support people when they are ill is vital.

But so much of what makes a difference is about wider factors, such as the housing people live in, how easy it is to make good choices about diet and exercise, and the financial security and wellbeing that rewarding work provides.

We know that Camden is an unequal place, and the difference in healthy life expectancy

between different parts of the borough is unacceptable.

Creating the conditions that support good health, from good quality housing and walkable neighbourhoods, to the attitudes and confidence that help people take charge of their own wellbeing, is something that no one organisation can do on its own.

To make real change will take a radical approach, focused on preventing ill health, and with individuals and communities, as well as public agencies, businesses and others rallying to this cause.



To make real change will take a radical approach

Everyone in Camden should be able to live a healthy, independent life.

- Everyone should know how to take charge of their own health and wellbeing, and be encouraged and supported to keep active, eat well and stay healthy
- Everyone should be able to access the services they need to keep themselves well
- No one should experience discrimination or be made to feel ashamed or isolated because of a mental health problem
- No one should be lonely or isolated – everyone should feel connected to their community and able to ask for help and support when they need it
- Older and disabled people should be able to live independently for as long as possible.



Camden 2025 is a call to action

We know that achieving the vision is beyond the grasp of any one organisation.

Developing the vision is only the first step. Making a real impact will involve changing individual and organisational behaviours, and require creativity, ambition and expertise.

We will need to radically change the way we work together and we know that this will take time, hard work and leadership.

There is an opportunity to try out new tools for collaborating, bringing together citizens, businesses and others to test how we can use data, information and technology to help us get under the skin of problems.

We will not be afraid to take risks and experiment, recognising this is the key to learning and getting it right.

This new and innovative way of working together is a further expression of our proud history and shared values – radical, progressive and open. It is the only way we will deliver on our ambition to make Camden a place where everyone has a chance to succeed, where nobody gets left behind and where everybody has a voice.

To find out more visit camden.gov.uk/camden2025

