

Leader's Annual Report 2025/2026

Executive Summary

Camden is a borough of national and international economic significance. We are a major driver of the London and national economy, generating £35 billion annually and contributing 2% of the nation's GDP, home to 432,000 jobs and supporting a diverse mix of globally recognised institutions, innovative businesses, cultural organisations and local employers. From the Knowledge Quarter to our town centres and neighbourhood streets, Camden plays a vital role in London's growth and is a source of economic strength that benefits the rest of the UK.

Over the past year, my leadership has been focused on ensuring that this economic strength is harnessed deliberately and responsibly, so that growth creates good work, supports skills and progression, improves health and wellbeing, and strengthens communities. As with our four *We Make Camden* Missions, we know that meaningful change can only be delivered through collective effort, working with partners, employers and institutions across the borough.

The following report sets out the tireless work taking place across the council to deliver better outcomes for our residents and to make Camden a place where people can live, work and build a good life. Through our frontline services, including education, skills, employment support, early years and housing, we are laying the foundations for inclusive growth. We are creating safe, liveable neighbourhoods and equipping residents with the support and skills they need to thrive and access opportunity.

At the same time, we are aware of the challenge we must continue to address. Camden is a place where great affluence sits alongside deep deprivation. Too many residents still feel disconnected from the opportunities around them, and poverty remains unacceptably high, with 42% of residents living in poverty and child poverty rates close to 40%. Over the past year, I have listened to residents who see the success of major institutions and businesses in Camden but do not yet see a clear route to share in that success. This must change.

Guided by my Inclusive Economy statement of intent, which I bring to Cabinet alongside this report, we are thinking more ambitiously about the role of the council in shaping economic growth that truly benefits everyone in Camden. I see the council as a steward of inclusive growth - setting clear ambitions and expectations, and working with partners, neighbours and businesses to deliver them. By doing so, we will ensure that Camden's success is shared more fairly and that opportunity is accessible to all who live here.

Introduction

My second year as Leader marks a significant moment for Camden, reflecting both the strength of our delivery and the clarity of our ambition for the future. Recent inspection results confirming that *Camden is Outstanding* are a powerful recognition of the quality of our services, our leadership, and our culture of continuous improvement. They reflect the dedication of our workforce and partners, and our shared commitment to putting residents first - particularly those facing the greatest challenges.

My leadership journey has taken place against a challenging national backdrop. Economic pressures continue to place pressure on households, while councils across the country face sustained financial constraints arising from weaknesses in the nation's public finances inherited by the new government. Camden council has responded by maintaining financial stability and setting responsible budgets that protect essential services, prioritise prevention, and provide targeted support to residents most affected by rising costs. Our approach has balanced fiscal discipline with social responsibility and a clear sense of purpose, recognising that investment in early help, health, housing and employment is critical to long-term sustainability. You can read more about this approach in our Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) further down in the report.

The past year has also seen important organisational change, including the appointment of our Chief Executive, Jon Rowney, and the creation of our new directorate for Investment, Place and Opportunity, which focuses on our work on growth, house building and prosperity. This transition provides both continuity and renewed momentum as we look ahead - building on strong foundations while continuing to evolve how we lead, partner and deliver for Camden.

The achievements set out in this report, from housing, skills and inclusive growth to climate action and health equity, are not the work of any single team or organisation. They are the result of collective effort. I want to thank Cabinet colleagues, councillors, officers, and our partners across the NHS, voluntary and community sector, education institutions and businesses. Their commitment to collaboration, learning and improvement is what makes Camden the place it is today - and gives me confidence that, together, we can continue to build a fairer, healthier and more inclusive borough for everyone who calls Camden home.

Priorities for the Year Ahead

My core priority as Leader remains clear: to continue delivering excellent services for the people of Camden, and in the coming year to keep improving them in the face of sustained pressure and change. I am proud of the progress we have made, and of the way the Council, alongside our partners, has remained focused on what matters most to our residents.

Camden is outstanding. That was the verdict of independent inspections of our services for children, adults and youth justice. I am determined to maintain these levels of quality public services and to drive this level of performance across everything Camden does.

I will continue to mobilise a joined-up response to reducing inequality across Camden, with my focus on inclusive growth. This coming year, we will build on our inclusive growth statement of intent, using our powers and our voice to shape and steward economic growth in places such as the Knowledge Quarter, while ensuring residents benefit directly through employment, skills, apprenticeships and affordable workspace. We will work with businesses and institutions as partners, to build a local economy that works for everyone in our borough.

We will continue working with developers not only to deliver new homes, but to improve local facilities, public spaces and infrastructure. We will continue to press for the best possible outcomes for Camden residents as major social housing developments already underway in Kilburn, Crowndale and Godwin, Agar Grove and hostel building in Camden Road and Chester Road are completed, as construction in West Kentish Town and Camley Street gets started.

I'm committed to deepening and maturing our work with partners and anchor institutions. Over the last year, we have further strengthened the borough-wide networks that enable us to open up opportunities for Camden residents - whether through access to good jobs, skills and training, community spaces, or investment in local infrastructure. As we have seen time and again, Camden is at its strongest when we work together across sectors, neighbourhoods and organisations, and when we share responsibility for tackling the challenges we face. I will take the learnings and partner commitments from this year's Business Breakfast with the Prime Minister and the We Make Camden Summit, and push for further collaboration.

The cost of living will continue to be a significant challenge for many households over the year ahead. The Council will maintain a strong focus on financial resilience, alongside targeted support for residents most affected. We will continue to invest in welfare and benefits advice, support with energy costs, employment pathways and neighbourhood-based services, while protecting frontline provision wherever possible. Our approach will remain focused on combining immediate support with long-term prevention, recognising that tackling poverty requires sustained action and partnership working.

I am clear that special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) reform must improve outcomes for children and young people, not reduce support, and Camden will be a strong voice in shaping what comes next. We are preparing now to respond swiftly and confidently to the Government's proposals, building on our close work

with parents, schools and health partners to strengthen mainstream inclusion and ensure the system works for families as well as being sustainable.

Housing will remain one of our most pressing priorities. As a social landlord, we will build on the progress made to improve the quality and safety of our homes, including strengthening our response to damp and mould and delivering investment through our Housing Investment Strategy. Alongside this, we will continue to push for the delivery of genuinely affordable homes across the borough, recognising the far-reaching impact of the housing crisis on families, communities, schools and local businesses.

Community safety, cohesion and connectedness will remain central to our work in the coming year. Through a strong partnership approach, we will continue to focus on preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, reducing isolation and supporting community wellbeing. This will include deepening our work with residents, the voluntary and community sector, health partners and the police, and ensuring that our responses are rooted in local insight and lived experience.

The climate and ecological emergency will continue to shape our long-term priorities. Over the year ahead, we will build on existing momentum by further reducing emissions, expanding retrofit and energy efficiency programmes, enhancing our streets and green spaces, and embedding climate considerations across all areas of council decision-making. Our focus will be on delivering tangible benefits for residents while accelerating progress towards our climate commitments.

I am grateful to Cabinet colleagues, councillors, officers and partners for their continued commitment and collaboration. Looking ahead, by working together, learning from experience and remaining focused on our shared priorities, we are well placed to meet the challenges ahead and continue building a fairer, healthier and more inclusive Camden.

What we have achieved in the past year

Camden's Corporate Peer Challenge

In 2025 year, I was pleased to welcome a team of peers from local authorities across the country to Camden for our Corporate Peer Challenge. A team led by Cllr Peter Marland, Leader of Milton Keynes City Council, and Dawn Carter-MacDonald, Chief Executive of Hackney Council, visited Camden in November 2025 and I am grateful for the time and energy they invested in undertaking our Corporate Peer Challenge with diligence, care, and a commitment to understanding Camden.

The Corporate Peer Challenge programme is run by the Local Government Association (LGA) to support local authorities to continuously improve and ensure that residents are being served as well as possible. Camden's Peer Challenge Team spent a week in our borough reviewing information about the Council and the

borough; speaking with officers, members, and partners; and visiting public services, partner organisations, and places of interest in the community.

As a Council we have a long-standing commitment to learning and improving. Whilst we have achieved a lot since our successful Corporate Peer Challenge in 2019 which reflected on our participatory work with our communities and with partners, there is still much we can learn from other local authorities and partners. In this spirit, we asked that the Corporate Peer Challenge focus on supporting the further development of Camden's approach to inclusive economic growth. Camden is home to economic opportunities of national significance, including Euston and HS2, as well as a number of excellent services and initiatives. I am pleased that the Corporate Peer Challenge has been an opportunity for us to reflect on our approach and focus on the future.

During the week of the Corporate Peer Challenge, the Peer Challenge Team conducted 22 one-to-one interviews and 15 roundtable conversations with officers and members, went on seven visits to services and community locations across Camden, and conducted five focus groups with Council staff and representatives of partner organisations. In total, the Peer Challenge Team spoke with approximately 150 people in Camden.

The Peer Challenge Team's report recognises that Camden is a well-run and high performing Council, with a purpose and values-led culture that supports psychological safety among staff, good relationships between Members and officers, and productive partnerships between the Council and the wider local partnership. The report notes that Camden's model of relational practice is a key enabler of good decisions at a leadership and governance level and has improved outcomes for residents. While the report notes that Camden faces a financial challenge, it notes that planning for how the Council will address this challenge is robust and that there is a high level of assurance that Camden is equipped to respond well to the challenge. The report also notes that the Council could leverage its investment in data and insight to more effectively prioritise and target resources.

In response to our request for a specific focus on inclusive economic growth, I'm pleased that the Peer Challenge Team's report notes that the Council is in a positive position to unlock opportunities for residents and communities from growth initiatives such as the redevelopment of Euston that have national and international significance. The Peer Team's report recommends that as a Council we develop our approach to bottom-up and community-driven economic growth and resource our Capital Programme and regeneration ambitions in such a way that recognises their scale. I look forward to taking forward these recommendations to meet our ambitions for truly inclusive economic growth in Camden.

Community Cohesion

Over the past year Camden has continued to demonstrate strong civic leadership and a commitment to building safe, resilient and inclusive communities. In a period marked by global conflict, rising hate crime nationally and far-right activity across the UK, we have worked closely with our voluntary, community and faith organisations to provide reassurance, foster dialogue and strengthen trust. We've heard from residents, including asylum seekers, those with learning disabilities and LGBTQ+ community about how even when they have felt unsafe in the wider national context, they feel a sense of home and belonging in Camden. We remain clear that Camden is a borough that stands firmly against hate in all its forms, we see our diversity as a core strength and want our borough to be a place where people of all backgrounds feel safe and welcome.

Safe and Strong Together

Our Safe and Strong Together campaign has provided a coordinated framework for promoting cohesion and supporting residents affected by national and international events. The campaign brings together work on celebrating Camden's diversity, promoting inclusion and reinforcing that there is no place for hate in our borough. It has offered practical guidance on recognising and reporting hate crime and has helped us to respond to significant national events with local impact, including the conflict in the Middle East and high-profile antisemitic and Islamophobic attacks elsewhere in the UK.

Responding to National and International Events

International and national events have had a direct and emotional impact on Camden residents, including the conflict in Gaza, far-right demonstrations across the UK, protests targeting asylum accommodation, the fatal antisemitic attack at Heaton Park Synagogue in Manchester; and Islamophobic arson attack on Peacehaven Mosque in East Sussex. The Council has worked closely with community and faith leaders to understand these impacts and provide visible reassurance.

Throughout the year this has included engagement calls, Community Safety Enforcement Officer patrols and visits to places of worship by senior civic and political leaders. These visits send a clear message of solidarity and help ensure that communities feel supported and safe. This work is supported by sustained year-round engagement with voluntary, community and faith organisations, ensuring open communication, shared priorities and rapid collaboration when tensions arise.

Interfaith Partnership and Dialogue

The Camden Interfaith Network continues to play a central role in strengthening dialogue and mutual understanding. More than 250 faith representatives have taken part in over 20 events this year, including interfaith coffee mornings, cultural celebrations, online briefings and joint volunteering activities. These create spaces

for connection and learning, helping to build trust and reinforce solidarity during challenging times.

Supporting Community Organisations

Our long-standing commitment to equality and diversity is embedded in We Make Camden and underpinned by significant investment in the voluntary and community sector through our £4.1 million per annum VCS Investment Programme.

This investment strengthens the voluntary and community sector as a foundation of cohesion. Through the Community Partner Fund, 38 organisations receive long-term support, helping them operate as trusted spaces where residents can connect, organise and belong. In its first year, these partners reached more than 140,000 residents and mobilised more than 2,400 volunteers.

Cohesion Fund

Launched in 2024, the Cohesion Fund provides £60,000 per year for community-led projects that bring people together across backgrounds and beliefs. In 2025, 15 projects were supported, including a collaborative Sukkot celebration, Somali cultural events and Arabic Language Day.

Celebrating Camden's Cultural Diversity

The Council continues to champion cultural events and awareness days in partnership with local organisations, from Somali Cultural Day and South Asian Heritage Month activities to civic commemorations such as Holocaust Memorial Day and Remembrance Sunday.

Financial Resilience and Cost of Living Support

Medium Term Financial Strategy

2025/26 is the third year of the Council's MTFs that was agreed in January 2023. Through this, we agreed to deliver £31.6m in savings across the General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to support our financial resilience and ability to set a balanced budget each year.

Given the severity of the financial pressures faced by councils over the last few years, a number of authorities have had to issue Section 114 notices (essentially a declaration of bankruptcy), with seven of these declarations since 2018. Furthermore, 30 councils are receiving additional support from central government in 2025/26 through the Exceptional Financial Support process, a vital mechanism in enabling those authorities to set balanced budgets.

Despite the significant pressures our Council has been facing from growing demand for services, we have not had to rely on Exceptional Financial Support. I'm proud that the Council's strong track record in delivering savings has supported our financial

resilience and has meant that we have been able to cope with the unprecedented rise in need for homelessness and children's services over the past two years.

Local Government Finance Settlement

December 2025 saw the first multi-year local government financial settlement in a decade. The settlement followed the Governments Fair Funding Review which was the first fundamental look at the relative needs for funding across local authorities since 2013.

As expected the fair funding review resulted in government resources being reallocated away from central London to other parts of the country. However, as a council we engaged with the consultation process, setting out our case on issues such as the need for greater weight to be given to housing costs when measuring relative deprivation, as well as the need for any changes to be brought in over a number of years with transitional protection for any local authorities facing a reduction in funding.

I'm glad to see our efforts to engage with government resulting in the provisional settlement protecting our Core Spending Power in cash terms over the next three years. The important work on our next MTFs has now begun. We recognise that we face a challenging financial position, but one we are confident we can address through the MTFs, to ensure the council remains financially resilient over the medium term.

The new local government financial settlement will bring more certainty to our finances, our ability to plan and to continue to support our residents over the medium term. Importantly, it also brings a commitment from government to address long standing Special Educational Needs (SEN) funding issues – taking the funding of SEND to central government from 2028 and removing the risk for local authorities such as use of deficits in the funding available for our special education services. The settlement also recognises the systemic issues facing social care and homelessness services, and shows a commitment to address these issues with reports on social care expected this year.

Council Tax

To support our financial resilience and our continued commitment to delivering excellent services to residents, in 2025/26 the Council made the decision to raise council tax by 4.99%, which included a 2% levy to help fund the cost of Adult Social Care. I'm proud to say that Camden continues to have one of the best Council Tax Support schemes in the country, with more than 16,000 households paying no council tax. We've taken a decision to invest c£33m into this scheme to directly support those facing the greatest financial hardship in our borough and we know that it has a tangible impact on people's lives here.

Cost of Living Support

Camden continues to provide substantial cash support to residents impacted by the Cost-of-Living Crisis, investing an additional £2 million alongside the

government-funded Household Support Fund (HSF), bringing the total amount of financial support available to residents to £4.7 million.

Crisis grants remain a key mechanism for residents to access financial support and between 1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025, £2,705,202 has been disbursed in 7,705 grants to residents in financial hardship.

In the past year, we have increased our focus on proactive financial support – using Council data and insight to identify groups who could benefit from grant support and providing this without the need for an application. For example through our holiday food support for low-income families, which offers support to all families in receipt of free school meals, as well as families claiming Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.

Another good example is our new maternity grants programme, developed in partnership with Family Hubs, Public Health, UCL, and Nesta. This is a pilot, where we use Camden and NHS data to identify eligible families. The council then contacts eligible families and offers a £500 unrestricted cash grant to use as they wish during pregnancy. I look forward to seeing the results of this pilot and to continuing to develop our work to make accessing support as easy as possible for those who need it.

Financial Resilience Support

2025 has been the first full operational year for Money Advice Camden, representing an intentional move to support families in crisis towards greater financial stability by bringing together cost of living grants programmes with access to advice delivered by in-house welfare rights and debt advisers.

Again, here we operate entirely proactively, identifying residents through triaging crisis-grant applications and using data. It means we can support residents who wouldn't ordinarily seek advice from the council and allows us to identify residents at risk of severe hardship earlier.

In the first year of operation (1 October 2024- 30th Sept 2025) Money Advice Camden has delivered 11 advice campaigns, worked on over 1170 advice cases, collectively delivering £885,722 in financial gains for residents through increasing their uptake of welfare benefits and discretionary awards, and by supporting residents to manage and reduce their debt. We also joined a Greater London Authority (GLA)-driven campaign to support Pension Credit uptake amongst low-income older residents – resulting in 221 new claims for Camden residents worth £1,025,314.

Support schemes and investment highlights

We have also made a number of other notable investments this year to support our residents and communities, to tackle homelessness and meet our decarbonisation targets. Some particular highlights are:

- Using the Household Support Fund (HSF), a central government grant, to help fund Holiday Food Vouchers in Camden. The scheme costs £2 million, fully funded by the HSF, and supports 9,000 households and 16,000 children.
- Investing £0.5m in more homelessness prevention officers, increasing the capacity of the team by 20% and buying back more ex-Right to Buy properties to increase social and temporary housing in the borough. In the past five years, through a range of acquisition programmes, we have bought back 347 ex-Right to Buy properties.
- Laying the foundation for future generations through the Camden Community Wealth Fund. We have recently agreed to make the first tranche of investments totalling £5m.
- We have agreed £11m to buy additional supported living facilities in the borough for children. This is capital investment to acquire residential properties for the provision of children's social care residential services and supported accommodation for care experienced young people aged 18-25. This investment will enable the delivery of two new children's residential homes.
- We bid successfully for £1.2m from the Department for Education for the development of additional accommodation for children with trauma caused complex needs. We have identified a property and are also investing a further £0.3m of council funding for this project.
- We have been successful in applying for a total of £6.5m in external grants to meet our decarbonisation targets across a number of projects - funding decarbonisation schemes to make buildings more thermally efficient, installation of heat pumps and improvements to existing systems.

We Make Camden and Our Missions

Camden's Missions

In March 2022, we published *We Make Camden* – our refreshed vision for the future of Camden. It was developed following conversations with residents, partners and community leaders and it highlights what we want to achieve together as a community, alongside practical ways we can make change together in the short, medium and long term.

Camden's Missions are long-term goals for the future of our borough which evolved from the work of Camden's Renewal Commission and came together through collaboration with our communities. By setting ourselves these goals around four complex issues facing our borough, we are working together in a different way – looking at the system of how we deliver for Camden and understanding our collective leverage to shape it differently so it can better serve our communities.

At the outset we identified four missions:

- By 2030, those holding positions of power in Camden are as diverse as our community – and the next generation is ready to follow.

- By 2030, Camden's estates and their neighbourhoods are healthy, sustainable and unlock creativity.
- By 2030, everyone eats well every day with nutritious, affordable, sustainable food.
- By 2025, every young person has access to economic opportunity that enables them to be safe and secure.

We have learnt a lot through our work this year, which will help us to shape our missions approach going forward. We have just published our fourth annual State of the Borough report, which reports on the data and insights we hold about our communities. This is part of our missions approach – to share with our partners and citizens what we know, so that we can work together to develop new solutions. This report also includes updates on the work of each of our We Make Camden missions, however, below I have also summarised some key areas of focus.

Updates on Missions

Our **Diversity Mission** was developed recognising that the outcomes for a good life are unequal for the diverse residents of Camden. The inequality is systemic and goes beyond just access to jobs or money. It's also about power. Our goal through this Mission is to make sure everyone in Camden has a real opportunity to influence decisions that affect their lives – which means making sure the people in charge of local organisations, including our own Council, reflect the diversity of our community.

I'm proud that this year we have published the story of the Council's inclusion journey, seeking to share our work on equity, diversity, and inclusion, and articulate the impact that it has had on our organisation. Our latest employee experience survey highlights the achievements of this journey, including progress on feelings of inclusion and belonging among Camden's workforce, with 86% of staff feeling they belong in our organisation and 91% feeling treated fairly and with respect. We know there is also more to do and being transparent about this journey will enable us to engage partners in a wider conversation about inclusion, representation, and diversity among people in leadership positions in Camden.

The Community Wealth Fund is driving our Diversity Mission by putting residents at the heart of the decision-making process and investing in local organisations, so that the benefits of growth are invested in and redirected towards what the community needs. The first investment was made in February and by the end of March the fund will have paid out £1million of investments.

Through our We Make Camden Kit we are also working to support communities and empower residents to shape their local neighbourhoods and decisions. A participatory grant making program jointly delivered by the council, Camden Citizens, Camden Giving and Camden businesses, the We Make Camden Kit has distributed over £1 million in the borough across 492 grants, 58% of which were for citizen-led projects.

Of these citizens, 53% were leading a community project for the first time with the support of the kit.

Using Camden Council's Apprenticeship Levy, this year we have partnered with the University of Birmingham to launch a Level 7 Systems Thinking and Leadership apprenticeship, which gives a diverse cohort of 24 emerging voluntary and community sector leaders in Camden the chance to join fully funded. These unique degree apprenticeships combine academic study with practical experience, equipping apprentices to lead change within their organisations and beyond – and supporting the aims of our Diversity Mission through strengthening our voluntary and community sector and increasing leadership diversity across Camden institutions.

We have continued our ambitious work to engage the voices and opinions of our diverse borough and this year, in partnership with Demos and New Local, we launched a borough-wide conversation about care and support, with more than 1,000 Camden residents aged 16 or over taking part. This project is part of Britain's largest trial of digital democracy and our ambition is that it will teach us more about mass participation on complex topics, which will support the Diversity Mission's objective that more residents feel that they have a voice in decision-making.

Our **Estates Mission** is founded on the fact that where we live has a big impact on our health and wellbeing. We know that residents on our estates are particularly likely to have worse health outcomes than those in other neighbourhoods - one-third of Camden's residents live in social rented housing, and they are much more likely to report worse health than those in other tenure types. Only 73% of residents of social rented houses reported being in very good or good health – 20 percentage points below those who own with a mortgage or rent privately. Whilst Camden is in line with the national trend, through this mission we want to ensure that residents on our estates have the same levels of health and wellbeing as others in the borough.

This year we have continued our work to try to bring together primary care data with address data, to enable us to analyse how long-term health conditions and needs vary from estate to estate, helping us to build the detailed picture of health needs at an estate level that we need in order to make real change. Working with NHS partners we should soon have access to primary care data at an estate level, which we will test on two estates to begin with, before expanding the work.

A particular highlight of our many Estates Mission projects this year has been our work on the Peckwater Estate pitch. Through partnership working with Arsenal Football Club, Adidas, and the Kentish Town District Committee, the much-loved sports pitch at the Peckwater Estate has been refurbished. Once complete, children and young people will be able to enjoy free weekly Arsenal in the Community football sessions, giving them a safe, active, and fun space to connect. This shows the Council's partnerships working at its best and is a good example of how we can

change the daily experience of those living on our estates through thinking differently and coming together to make change.

Camden's **Food Mission** aims to transform the borough's food system into one that is inclusive, resilient, and sustainable. We want everyone in Camden to eat well every day, with nutritious, affordable, and sustainable food. To do this we have broken down our mission into the following outcomes:

- Residents are food secure and no longer need to rely on crisis food provision.
- Residents eat a healthy and balanced diet
- Food is a foundation of children's and young peoples' flourishing lives
- Camden's food system drives climate action, contributing to solutions for the environmental crisis

Over the past year, this Mission has grown in ambition, delivering a wide range of projects with partners across Camden, generating real energy and learning. We have also gained a really important insight through this Mission, which is that our project delivery alone cannot shift a complex food system. So we are now focusing energy on cultivating the enabling conditions for people in Camden to understand the food system and their role within it, and for innovation and community-led action to emerge. Our strategy is moving from "what we will do," to how we strengthen the field of actors who can shape Camden's food future with us.

Our partnerships work in this space is more important than ever and I'm pleased to see the success of the new community café located at our library in Pancras Square, run by our partner Lifeafterhummus. The café serves affordable, nutritious and sustainable food from Tuesday to Saturday as part of our Food Mission and will also employ young Camden people and those looking to get back into work. A new community food studio will also open soon at the O2 Centre, offering a space to celebrate food, culture, and connection. Supported by funding from the Council and free rent from Landsec, this initiative will help more residents access nutritious, affordable, and sustainable food. We have also launched our first Camden Challenge Prize this year as part of the Food Mission, which is a competition with a financial prize to help tackle food waste.

Camden's **Youth Mission** aims to ensure that young people in Camden can access good jobs, training, and pathways into work, that they have a voice in shaping the opportunities available in their borough and that Camden offers welcoming, supportive spaces where young people can access guidance, inspiration, and resources.

While 2025 was an important milestone, it wasn't an end point and as we pass the close of the first phase of the Youth Mission, this year we are taking stock of what

has been delivered, what young people have told us, and what this means for the next phase of the mission in 2026 and beyond. Our learning shows that some young people are still being left behind, so as we move forward we are continuing to work with partners across Camden, through opportunity centres like the Google AI Campus and the Euston Skills Centre, to focus on our young people and open access to good, future-focused jobs and opportunities. We remain committed to continually learning with children, young people, partners and communities - their insights, challenges and ideas are directly informing how this mission evolves.

This year we partnered with Khady's Dream, one of our Mission Ambassadors, to co-design and deliver engagement workshops with young people in Somers Town, Netherwood and through an online survey. Through these conversations, children and young people described Camden as a place full of opportunity yet one where opportunities can sometimes feel hard to find or reach. It became clear that they experience the Mission most strongly through relationships when someone believes in them, communicates clearly, and gives them the chance to try something new. These reflections are helping us to prioritise as we move into the next phase of this Mission. As we move forward we know that:

- The next phase must deepen inclusive participation, ensuring young people facing the greatest barriers are meaningfully involved
- We need to work on a sustainable, diverse funding model particularly as we look to scale youth-led innovation and long-term opportunities
- We must continue to nurture leadership that is not only about individual development but also about positive impact for others.
- The Youth Mission should continue to be shaped by Camden's strong youth services, education partnerships, neighbourhoods and culture of participation. The next phase must build on these strengths.

Over the past year, the Youth Mission has brought together Council teams and Camden's wider partnerships on a range of projects that have exemplified the power of collaboration. Camden Music Service has partnered with Universal Music Group to launch Sound Generation, a new initiative improving access to high-quality music education. The pilot, developed with music teachers from Camden schools, provides easy-to-use Key Stage 1 digital resources that support the delivery of music in the classroom. The programme aims to widen participation, especially for pupils who currently face barriers to engaging in music.

We have also launched a project with ambassador partners such as the British Museum and the Roundhouse to create sustainable internships for Camden's young people. In particular, these have focussed on priority groups – children and young people with an Educational Health Care Plan, care experienced children and young people, those who have been involved with the youth justice system, or face challenges with school attendance.

Through our Trailblazer Project, we have also worked with partners to deliver an individually tailored, education, employment and training programme for care experienced young people, including an offer of paid work placements. This is part of a wider 'test and learn' programme across central London which will aim to bring services together and try new approaches to support the Government's Youth Guarantee.

Inclusive Growth

This year I've been developing my work around inclusive growth in Camden, working with businesses and institutions to further embed programmes and projects that support the prosperity of everyone in the borough. Camden's prosperity means nothing if it isn't shared - there is huge wealth generated in this borough but it isn't doing enough to give our young people safe and flourishing childhoods, or helping families build their lives here. In Camden, there are over 440,000 jobs working in the borough between 41,000 businesses (210 of them large employers) and yet 8.5% of employees in 2024 were earning below the living wage. Camden Council will not stand by while inequality becomes a feature of our success. We want to redesign our local economy so it works for everyone.

The Council will be an active economic shaper - not a bystander - using our powers, partners and voice to demand better. An inclusive economy doesn't happen by accident, or if the public sector doesn't step in. We will set the standards and the direction - shaping development, influencing investment and insisting that every pound of value generated here delivers a return for our communities. This is co-operative local government in action.

Businesses and institutions in Camden need to step up as genuine partners and neighbours in our shared community. We celebrate responsible employers and investors, but we will also challenge those who extract value without giving back. We expect businesses, universities, and landowners to contribute to a borough where everyone can thrive.

We will champion the next generation of productive, mission-driven sectors. Camden will be the place where climate tech, health tech, life sciences, and civic innovation grow in ways that create real jobs and real value. At the same time, through our Community Wealth Fund we will nurture co-ops, mutuals, social enterprises and other community -owned models that embody Labour's co-operative tradition.

Camden's growth must be built on fairness - higher wages, affordable homes and real power for communities to shape change. For us, inclusive growth means raising living standards, tackling structural inequalities, and ensuring residents have a voice.

I was pleased to launch a statement of intent at a Camden Business Breakfast with the Prime Minister and MP for Holborn and St Pancras, Sir Keir Starmer, where business and institution leaders from Google, Blackrock, Universal Music amongst others pledged to support Camden’s apprenticeship and Community Wealth programmes.

We Make Camden Summits

Since my last Annual Report, the Council has held two of our annual We Make Camden Summits. On 22 May 2025 more than 200 Camden residents and a wide range of multi-sector partners came together at the British Library’s Knowledge Centre for our fourth annual We Make Camden Summit.

It was a powerful day of reflection, celebration, and collaboration – all focused on the progress we’ve made towards our shared We Make Camden Missions, and the incredible impact being made across the borough through community-led action. With powerful speeches including from the Prime Minister, it was a galvanising and inspiring day.

But we also talked about some of the biggest challenges facing our communities – like child health inequality, access to food, the climate crisis and social isolation. Together, we shared bold ideas for how we can tackle these challenges together and improve life for everyone who calls Camden home.

At this Summit I launched the Raise Camden Taskforce to address child poverty and inequality in children’s health, in response to a [report](#) that the Council commissioned from the UCL Institute of Health Equity. I will update on the work that has followed through the Taskforce later on in this report.

The Council held its fifth annual Summit on 4th February this year, with an overarching focus on inclusive growth. We were joined by over 300 citizens and partners and launched our Climate Action Plan, opened our Community Wealth Fund Diversity Fund for applications and shared progress in our Camden STEAM pledge and 100 in 100 campaign to create employment opportunities for residents. The summit is a powerful reminder of what we can achieve when we work together.

Community Wealth Fund

Core to the Council’s vision for inclusive, sustainable, and innovative growth is our Community Wealth Fund (CWF). This is our £30M impact investment fund, set up to tackle the core challenge of shaping economic growth to deliver public value—creating opportunity, reducing inequality, and shaping the benefits of economic growth more equitably.

Grounded in principles of equity and community participation, we see our CWF as supporting residents to be co-creators of economic change in Camden. Over the

past year, we have been piloting two £2M funds—focused on our Youth Mission and Diversity Mission—using pioneering participatory models of democratic economic governance through our two resident panels.

These pilots aim to rebalance power and capital locally, ensuring Camden's economy involves and benefits all our communities. At the same time, we are showing leadership on inclusive growth at a national level, aligning ourselves with the GLA London Growth Plan and UK Government's Growth Mission.

Youth Pilot

The Youth pilot has empowered 15 young people (ages 16–26) from priority cohorts to design an investment strategy focused on inclusion, skills, and wellbeing. It opened for applications in July 2025, receiving almost 50 applications, requesting over £8m, from organisations based across London who were making an impact on young people in Camden.

The young people have screened the applications, designed the decision-making process for their investment panels and have been involved in due diligence work. With 20 organisations still moving through the pipeline, three organisations have been approved by the Youth Panel and will be set to receive loans totalling close to £800,000.

Diversity Pilot

The Diversity fund is a direct response to the fact that diverse entrepreneurs are systemically underfunded. It is mobilising over 500 residents and entrepreneurs—overrepresented in historically excluded groups—to shape investments in diverse businesses through the Diversity Panel, Camden's first-ever panel of this scale. The panel has guided investment priorities and will help decide which businesses receive investment. For 75% of participants, this is their first experience in a deliberative process.

Online and in-person sessions held during autumn 2025 generated the initial ideas and themes for the in-person panel. Following this, 50 randomly selected panellists met over three Saturdays to turn these ideas into an investment strategy. They learned about investment, reviewed online results, heard from entrepreneurs, and shared lived experiences before agreeing on a strategy focused on three impact areas: creative industries, local employment, and community-focused, inclusive businesses.

The Diversity Fund opened for applications this month (February 2026) and the panel will reconvene to help to screen applications, and then decide which businesses receive investment later in the year. We will have a wealth of learning from our two CWF pilots and I look forward to seeing how we shape the future of the fund as we head into the autumn and beyond.

Public Affairs and Engagement with Government

This year, I am pleased that the Council has maintained positive and productive engagement with ministers and central government. I see this engagement as one of my administration's responsibilities and a valuable means through which we can deliver for residents, and I have appreciated ministers' openness and willingness to engage in serious conversations about the issues that matter to Camden's communities.

This year the Council has invested substantial time and energy in engaging with national policy developments and ensuring that the Council's perspectives, which are informed by extensive experience and the voices of our communities, are heard by national policymakers. We have responded to government consultations and select committee enquiries on employment support reforms, drawing on our experience of providing the Good Work Camden service and the perspectives of people who access that service; council tax reform, drawing on our experience of administering council tax and the perspectives of residents who have to navigate the council tax system; and a high number of housing policy changes, which I know will matter deeply to Camden residents. Importantly, Camden Council submitted a robust response to the government's Fair Funding Review 2.0 consultation that highlighted issues with a proposed funding formula that would have significantly underestimated the level of funding required to deliver services for Camden's communities. I have been pleased to see the government reconsider these aspects of the Fair Funding Review 2.0 and produce a final position on local government funding that respects the principle that funding should be allocated in proportion to need and that better understands levels of need in places like Camden. We have shared best practice from our Camden Youth Mission to the Call for Evidence by the Rt Hon Alan Milburn investigating the drivers of a national increase in youth unemployment.

In exchange, it has been very positive to see interest from government in learning from Camden. This year we have hosted visits from ministers including the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the Minister of State for Social Security and Disability, the Minister of State for Rail, and the then-Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Energy Consumers as well as senior civil servants, to Camden services including our Family Hubs, Kentish Town Health Centre, and local decarbonisation and employment projects. It is my ambition that next year we have the opportunity to showcase more of our excellent local services to national policymakers.

The government's budget, published in November 2025, is a major milestone in the current parliament and will be highly consequential for Camden's communities. The government responded to calls from Camden and others in local government and civil society to scrap the two-child limit within Universal Credit from this April. This announcement is to be celebrated. There are at least 4,000 children in Camden living in households affected by the two-child limit, and according to the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) families are expected to see an increase in Universal Credit awards averaging £5,310 per year. This announcement will make a major

difference to the shared effort to tackle poverty in our borough. I have also welcomed budget announcements around new Neighbourhood Health Centres, apprenticeships, and Overnight Visitor Levies, and I look forward to working with the government, the Mayor of London, and others on the design and implementation of these policies.

Camden is well positioned and equipped to engage constructively with pan-London and central government in the next year on our local priorities. These include Euston and HS2, and we will continue to make the case for a locally-led development corporation that brings the voices of Camden residents to the regeneration of Euston and secures benefits for local communities, as set out in the Cabinet report on this subject that was brought to Cabinet in November 2025. It is my ambition that Camden continues to build productive relationships with the Mayor of London, GLA, London Councils and central government on this topic and others, including local government finance, the climate emergency, our model of inclusive economic growth, and opportunity for young people.

A significant focus for me over the next year be working with colleagues from across the country as a member of the LGA's Local Government Resources Committee. I am pleased to have the opportunity to work with colleagues on this important topic in the context of continued resource challenges across our sector, and I will seek to draw on learning from Camden's effective management of limited resources to achieve real, lasting, positive impact for local communities .

Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Youth Justice and Children's Services

In 2025, we reached a significant national milestone by achieving 'Outstanding' ratings across our Youth Justice Service, Children's Services, and Adult Social Care becoming the only local authority in England to receive 'Outstanding' ratings from all three major inspectorates. Our Youth Justice Service was rated 'Outstanding' for the second time by HM Inspectorate of Probation, recognising exceptional work with children and victims. This follows consecutive 'Outstanding' judgements from Ofsted for Children's Services and from the Care Quality Commission for Adult Social Care, positioning Camden as the only local authority in the country to hold the highest possible ratings across all three inspection regimes.

Inspectors highlighted a strong culture of care, innovation, and leadership, underpinned by effective partnership working across agencies. Adult Social Care was the first local authority in England to be rated 'Outstanding' under the CQC's new framework, with strengths identified in equity, governance, safe systems, and collaborative working. I'm delighted that these outcomes demonstrate Camden's sustained investment in high-quality services that support residents throughout their lives.

Children's Services were commended for outstanding early help, safeguarding practice, and support for care leavers, alongside a clear commitment to anti-racist and relational approaches. Ofsted recognised the impact of long-term investment in early intervention, strong responses to complex risks, and a consistent focus on children's voices and lived experience. Collectively, these achievements set a national benchmark for public services and reflect Camden's ongoing commitment to delivering excellent outcomes for children, families, and communities.

Improving Adult Health and Wellbeing

Camden continues to strengthen community connectedness and reduce isolation through a range of targeted initiatives. The Community Connectedness and Friendships Working Group, co-chaired by Health and Wellbeing and Voluntary Action Camden, has fostered stronger partnerships and aligned its work with wider borough initiatives. The *Camden, Together* campaign has reached over 3,000 online visitors, with a new student-focused strand piloted in collaboration with the University of London. Frontline staff have benefited from webinars that build confidence in supporting residents experiencing loneliness, while workshops have brought partners together to explore key issues and opportunities for collaboration.

Alongside tackling social isolation, Health and Wellbeing has launched targeted health campaigns to improve physical and mental wellbeing. In December, the *Know What You're Drinking* campaign encouraged people aged 45 to 65 to reflect on their alcohol consumption and adopt healthier habits, using practical tools such as the TryDry app, printed unit calculators, and calendars distributed across Camden libraries and directly to residents. Officers have also supported partners through a well-attended event on emerging drug trends, highlighting safer approaches for people using opiates, the benefits of providing safer smoking equipment, and innovative communications work from other cities. Attendees participated in naloxone training and shared ideas that will inform future work by the newly established Drug and Alcohol Partnership Group.

To further support the Health and Wellbeing Board's priorities, several harm reduction projects are planned for 2026. These include a drug checking service delivered by The Loop (pending Home Office approval), the distribution of harm reduction materials tailored to young people, women, and the LGBTQI community, and a training programme for night-time venues to help staff respond safely to drug-related incidents. Together, these initiatives demonstrate Camden's ongoing commitment to supporting residents' health, safety, and social wellbeing across the borough.

Community Safety

Antisocial Behaviour

We know that Antisocial Behaviour (ASB) continues to be a key concern for residents, businesses and visitors to our borough, cutting across a number of the Council's services such as Housing, Health and Wellbeing, Social Care and Environment.

Our data continues to highlight that some Housing Estates are disproportionately impacted by complex forms of ASB, which is why we have undertaken an ASB Review and developed a resident focused response to management of complex cases and a solution which joins services together and adopts a standardised approach to use of enforcement.

In 2024 we published a new ASB Policy and this year have developed a new ASB Procedure, setting out clearly how we manage cases and what residents can expect from us. I'm pleased to see several further successes stemming from the ASB review, which have already led to improvements for residents.

We've now implemented a single point of reporting, allowing officers to track cases through one pathway and creating a single source of ASB reporting data. We've invested in five new Antisocial Behaviour Officers and introduced a universal risk assessment tool, helping us to triage all cases appropriately.

Strengthening our partnership working has been a particularly important part of our ASB response this year. Our Mental Health Service has been brought in-house, which means we can work far more closely with other Council services. This is particularly significant, allowing us to directly shape and influence social care interventions where an adult with mental health needs is either perpetrating or experiencing ASB.

Rough Sleeping

Levels of rough sleeping in London and nationally remain concerningly high. Data from the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) for 2024/25 show that 13,231 people slept rough in London, an increase from 11,993 in 2023/24. For Camden, these figures increased from 903 to 975.

We know that providing good quality housing leads to the most sustainable outcomes, leading to greater quality of life for individuals and reducing impact on communities. Putting this into action, Camden's Housing First service mobilised this year and is supporting 30 people with long term histories of rough sleeping to move into self-contained accommodation. This has included housing people who had been sleeping in dangerous encampments in Camden.

This year we have established a new approach to managing encampments across Camden, which includes the creation of a multi-agency strategic panel reporting into our ASB Steering Group and several site specific multi-disciplinary team meetings.

We have re-designed and invested in our new outreach service, as well as doing targeted work with a cohort of 35 individuals most at risk of fatality if they continue to

rough sleep. Building focused, multi-agency support around them has resulted in 22 being in accommodation as of November 2025.

Bringing all our hard work together, Camden's new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-30 was approved by Cabinet in December 2025 and its ambitious goals will allow us to further develop new ways of working and services to alleviate rough sleeping. I'm proud of our Council's response to supporting those sleeping rough on our streets and those impacted by rough sleeping and I'm pleased to see that the Mayor of London and national government have also published renewed strategies to reduce rough sleeping at regional and national levels.

Partnership working – West End Partnership and working with the police

Camden has a long and strong history of partnership working with the Metropolitan Police, and throughout the past year this relationship has continued to be both effective and constructive. Close collaboration between Neighbourhood Policing Teams and the Council remains central to our approach to community safety, and we are committed to building further on this partnership in the year ahead. During 2025, a number of priority areas saw particularly strong joint working between the Council and Central North policing teams.

Camden has continued to play a leading role in national programmes to tackle serious and organised crime. St Pancras and Somers Town was selected as Camden's location for the Home Office-led *Clear, Hold, Build* programme, with work commencing during 2025. The initial "Clear" phase has focused on enhanced police activity to disrupt criminal behaviour and improve safety, laying the foundations for longer-term community resilience and prevention. Camden is also recognised nationally for its work to tackle cuckooing, with continued partnership action this year helping to make a significant number of addresses safer and reducing the exploitation of vulnerable residents.

Town centres and high-footfall areas have remained a key focus for joint activity. The West End continues to experience high levels of crime, antisocial behaviour and drug-related activity, and in response Camden has re-established the West End Partnership with Westminster City Council and the Metropolitan Police. This partnership brings together local authority and policing partners from both boroughs to deliver coordinated responses to shared challenges. Camden Town has also remained a priority location, with the Council's Community Safety Enforcement Team working closely with the police Town Centre Team to support the pedestrianisation of Camden High Street and address retail crime, drug activity and antisocial behaviour. This work formed part of the Safer Streets Summer Town Centre Initiative and has continued through the winter period, maintaining a visible and consistent presence.

The Council has also worked closely with partners to manage large-scale events and respond to emerging risks. Following the decision by Royal Parks to close Primrose

Hill on New Year's Eve, detailed planning was undertaken throughout the year with the Metropolitan Police, British Transport Police, Transport for London, the London Ambulance Service and Royal Parks to ensure public safety. In response to high-profile terrorist incidents elsewhere during 2025, the Council and policing partners increased visible patrols and engagement in key locations and worked directly with faith communities to provide reassurance and support.

The launch of Phase 2 of the *New Met for London* programme towards the end of the year presents challenges and opportunities for local policing. While recognising the pressures facing our policing partners, Camden remains committed to working collaboratively to address these challenges and to ensuring our borough remains a safe place for all who live, work and visit here.

Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

This year we have strengthened our work to tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG), recognising this is not a single service issue but a cross-cutting challenge that we must tackle with a joined-up Council approach. Whether in our Housing, Children's, Community safety, Health, Education, Debt and financial resilience or Adults services, we know that tackling VAWG sits as a priority for the whole Council.

Our new Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2026–2029 articulates our ambition; to end violence against woman and girls through building safe, respectful and equitable communities. It brings our work together into a single, coherent, survivor centred programme of action. The strategy does not exist in a vacuum. It connects, strengthens and gives direction to significant work already underway across multiple Council services and partners, while setting clearer expectations across the piece and aligning our work around five shared priorities:

- **Prevention** - We prevent violence against women and girls, before it happens, in settings such as education and by addressing inequalities
- **Earlier identification** - We identify women and girls in need, and offer support, as early as possible
- **Support** – we ensure survivors of all ages, experiencing any form of violence against women and girls, can access essential support and advice when they need it, for as long as they need it
- **Holding those who harm to account** – we hold perpetrators to account and offer support to change their behaviour
- **Working in partnership** – we build strong partnerships to deliver a coordinated community response to end violence against women and girls

The draft strategy is out for public consultation this month (February 2026), adhering to the Council's principles of co-production with key stakeholders including survivor groups and VCS organisations. The draft will continue to be refined based on the

feedback we receive, ensuring we are well placed to formally launch the final version in the summer.

Whilst Camden historically has had a strong operational offer through Camden Safety Net, the Independent Domestic Abuse Service and the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference, we have been working to expand this offer across our organisation and with partners. This includes our dedicated VAWG service created in April 2025, which brings together both the operational and strategic components of our VAWG work. We have also made significant investment in our housing-led responses to domestic abuse, including training, policy development, and progress toward our first assessment for Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation. DAHA have awarded Camden Bronze, a fantastic achievement for our housing services. DAHA were impressed with our submission of documents, policies, procedures etc and our case audits. These gave a real opportunity to highlight great practice and to identify some learning points moving forward which we will build on to improve practice.

In addition to this, we have been working to identify and support children and young people affected by VAWG earlier, recognising them as not just witnesses but victims in their own right, and targeting preventative work in schools and youth settings.

This year we continue our Women's Safety in the Public Realm Action Plan, with initiatives such as the Camden Safety Bus, Women's Safety Walkabouts, training for night-time economy venues and campaigns such as "In Camden, We Call It Out", helping to drive forward our work to ensure that Camden is a borough where women and girls feel safe. The Council have also launched a new perpetrator service, Insight. The service is focused on people who have hurt or caused harm to someone they care about. Through regular sessions, a specialist will give non-judgemental support to help understand and reduce this behaviour.

Secure, safe and warm homes

Housing Revenue Account

A key focus of my leadership so far has been addressing the long-standing financial strain on Camden's housing budget. Decades of historic underfunding, years-long insufficient national support and the escalating cost of maintaining and upgrading our ageing housing stock have put considerable pressure on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), requiring us to take a strategic approach to balancing resources while ensuring residents receive the high standards of service they expect.

Camden's homes, many built before 1945 and located in conservation areas, require specialist investment to meet modern safety and quality standards, yet the income

generated from social rents continues to fall short of the resources needed. The gap between annual rental income (around £10,000 per home) and the cost of maintaining homes to regulatory standards (approximately £15,000 per home) has widened, compounded by national rent policies and increased regulatory requirements such as the Building Safety Act and Awaab's Law.

Despite these challenges, our priority is to ensure we are providing secure, safe, high-quality and affordable housing to our 22,000 tenant households. The Council has responded by launching a £670 million Housing Investment Strategy and implementing robust financial planning, but the scale of the challenge remains acute. Rising costs, inflation, and the need to address overcrowding and temporary accommodation continue to exert pressure on the HRA. Without significant government intervention and structural reform, the Council must focus on maximising the impact of every pound spent, balancing financial sustainability with the ambition to provide the high standards of service our residents expect and deserve.

Housing Transformation Programme

The Housing Transformation Programme, launched in 2024, represents Camden's most ambitious and comprehensive effort to ensure safe, warm, dry and secure council housing for our residents. This programme is a direct response to the unprecedented challenges facing social housing—rising costs, increased regulation, and the urgent need to improve the quality and safety of our homes. It is underpinned by our shared vision, We Make Camden, and is designed to ensure that every resident has access to a safe, warm, and high-quality home.

The programme is structured around six workstreams: Quality Homes, Housing Services, Resident-Centred Practice, Living Within Our Means, Data and Digital, and The Way We Work in Housing. Each workstream is led by senior officers and is focused on delivering tangible improvements for residents and staff. The approach is both strategic and relational—prioritising compliance with new regulatory standards, financial sustainability, and, above all, the lived experience of our tenants. Progress and achievements have included:

- **Quality Homes:** We have accelerated our internal stock condition surveys, now covering over 40% of homes. Our Housing Investment Strategy commits £670 million over five years to address decency, safety, and energy efficiency, with a focus on tackling non-decency rates (reduced from 9.1% to 7% in the past year) and investing in the homes that need it most.
- **Housing Services:** A major restructure has streamlined management and improved frontline capacity. New policies and performance frameworks are in place, and satisfaction with our approach to anti-social behaviour has increased by 25%. We have also filled 100 housing vacancies, ensuring a fully staffed, responsive service.

- **Resident-Centred:** We have launched a new Tenant Participation Model and established panels to co-design services, ensuring transparency and accountability. Our Vulnerability Policy, co-produced with residents, is setting new standards for inclusive, person-centred support.
- **Digital and Data:** Significant investment in digital tools—including a resident self-service portal and a new integrated case management system—will enable a single, reliable view of our homes and residents, supporting better decision-making and more joined-up services.
- **The Way We Work in Housing:** Following the restructure of our housing services, over 600 staff have participated in launch events and training, embedding a culture of empathy, responsiveness, and professionalism. A new practice model is being developed to ensure staff are equipped to deliver high-quality, relational support.

This coming year will see the completion of overdue fire risk actions, the rollout of integrated case management systems, and the delivery of our capital investment programme. By 2028, every tenanted home will have been visited as part of our Home Visiting Programme, and our digital transformation will be fully embedded. We are preparing for regulatory inspection and remain committed to continuous improvement, transparency, and partnership with our residents.

The Housing Transformation Programme is not a one-off project but a generational change journey. It is about building a sustainable, financially resilient housing service that delivers for Camden's communities—now and for decades to come. As Leader of the Council, my ambition is clear: to set the standard for social housing, ensuring every resident can thrive in a home and neighbourhood they are proud of.

Fire safety and building safety compliance

Since 2018/19, Camden has been delivering the Resident Safety Programme, established in direct response to the Hackitt Review and the Grenfell Inquiry's recommendations. Fire safety in council homes remains a top priority, with over £200 million of council resources invested to date, alongside an additional £100 million in secured grants for façade remediation. Major projects, such as the Chalcots Estate, are on track for completion, delivering an A1 fire-rated façade and enhanced thermal performance for residents. A major project is also now on site at the Birkenhead Estate which will see new the old insulation removed and new fire rated external wall insulation and render installed this year.

To meet the requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022, Camden has assembled a dedicated team preparing comprehensive building safety cases for all 188 tall buildings in our portfolio. We have committed £4.5 million annually in revenue funding to fulfil the obligations of both the Building Safety Act 2022 and the Fire

Safety Act 2021, and our Housing Investment Strategy allocates a further £70 million to address any works arising from these safety cases. This sustained investment and focus ensure that resident safety remains at the heart of our housing strategy. The Council has been proactive in developing its Building Safety Case reports, using risk management software to assess our tall buildings. To date 12 Building Safety Case reports have been submitted, and 5 Building Assessment Certificates have been received from the Building Safety Regulator – some of the first to be received nationwide.

Our work on compliance continues to be informed by the Housing Fire and Building Safety Panel which meets in public, is webcast and is co-chaired by a resident and an independent expert. The panel consists of tenants, leaseholders and councillors with representation from the London Fire Brigade. Over the last 12 months, the Panel met formally four times to discuss 18 reports on the Council's response to various fire safety matters across our stock and supported the Council in preparation of the Residential Personnel Emergency Plan Regulations (RPEEPS) which will come into force in April 2026. The Panel also received and discussed monthly updates on the Council's performance against the Voluntary Undertaking Action Plan on Fire Safety agreed with the Regulator of Social Housing. As always, their independent scrutiny and advice strengthens our commitment to transparency and best practice in fire safety.

Damp and mould response

Tackling damp and mould, particularly for tenants with vulnerabilities, has remained a key priority for Camden's housing and property services teams this year. I am pleased to report that through a coordinated, cross-council approach, we have made significant strides in responding to meeting regulatory requirements of Awaab's Law, with new operational teams, new reporting technology, and performance measures to ensure timely and safe repairs. Our preparations for Awaab's Law builds on our proactive approach to assessing and addressing damp and mould hazards over the past three years.

To specifically prepare for Awaab's Law, the Council brought in a new Rapid Response Team, to work alongside the damp and mould team, attend emergency cases and evaluate hazards within the housing stock. This has helped the Council quickly assess cases and make sure appropriate and prompt action is taken. Since Awaab's Law went live on 27 October 2025, the repairs service has attended and assessed 737 damp and mould cases, of these 408 were triaged and identified as emergency cases and attended to within 24 hours and mitigating actions taken.

Finally, the key to tackling damp and mould in the long term is through proactive asset management, and our new Housing Investment Strategy, approved in January

2025, will see £670m invested in Council homes, plus proactive management of homes that no longer provide good social housing for our residents.

Together, these actions demonstrate our unwavering commitment to keeping Camden residents safe and healthy in their homes and delivering lasting improvements to the quality of our housing stock.

The development of Euston and HS2

For many years, residents in Somers Town, the Regent's Park Estate and the wider Euston area have lived with the disruption caused by HS2 works. Over the past year, we have continued to press for a station development that delivers meaningful, lasting benefits for local people - including good jobs, genuinely affordable homes, high-quality open spaces and improved community facilities.

Locally Led Development Corporation

As Leader, I remain committed to ensuring that the significant investment at Euston is harnessed for the wider public good. The Council has been clear that a locally led development corporation (LLDC), working in close partnership with the community, offers the strongest route to achieving this.

In order to fully realise the significant opportunity at Euston, the Council has been working with the GLA, MHCLG and DfT to outline how a LLDC could be introduced at Euston and set this direction of travel out in a paper approved by Cabinet in November. Camden is uniquely placed to lever the best outcomes for the place through its relationship with the local community and businesses including the Knowledge Quarter anchors such as UCL. The LLDC structure being developed is being designed to ensure community voices are at its heart and Camden's strong participatory approach to engagement and decision making is reflected wherever possible.

The establishment of a locally led development corporation relies on new legislation being introduced by MHCLG which we anticipate later in 2026. At this point the Council will then consult on the key principles and potential boundary of the LLDC before considering responses and finalising the proposals before formal establishment.

The Council has been building a strong relationship with MHCLG for the past 2 years since the previous Government's intention to establish a Housing delivery Group to drive forward the delivery of 1000s of new homes in Euston. This work is helping to catalyse delivery of new and replacement homes on the northern part of Regents Park Estate and would be incorporated into a future LLDC.

We have continued to make the case for an approach that puts residents' voices at the heart of decision-making and ensures the long-term development of Euston reflects local priorities.

Euston Community Engagement and priorities

I continue to hold conversations with stakeholders and residents in order to ensure that the council learns fully from residents' experiences at Euston, and use this to influence future construction plans in a way that delivers for the people of Camden. Through the work of the Euston Housing Delivery Group (EHDG), the Council has been trying new approaches to engaging with the local community to understand priorities for housing delivery in the Euston area. Old Diorama Arts Centre (ODAC), working with Fitzrovia Youth in Action (FYA), Somers Town Community Association (STCA), Third Age Project and Hopscotch were awarded the contract to undertake creative community research based around three core questions of "What makes a good home?", "What makes a good neighbourhood", and "how do we work with the community going forward".

The research was conducted over the summer of 2025, including pop ups at Regents Roots and local events, specific creative workshops and targeted sessions, and the results gathered into both artwork and a report which were presented to residents as part of the newly established Euston Housing Community Forum. At the end of this deliberative process a Housing Pact will be created which will provide clear expectations of housing delivery in Euston and expectations and rules of engagement with the community.

Research identified issues with open space, safety, lack of trust of organisations working in the area and also issues with quality of life particularly due to issues with repairs of individual property which the Council will be working through collectively.

Camden are pressing for a coordinated and transparent approach to future community engagement by the new Euston Delivery Company alongside the potential new Euston Locally Led Development Corporation to provide clarity to the community, build trust and to minimise duplication. The findings of the Housing Pact work, and how we can work effectively with the community in decision making will inform the Council's approach to the design of future engagement and governance.

Employment and skills at Euston

We are planning to create a 10-year Education, Employment and Skills Plan for Euston to ensure an appropriately skilled and qualified local workforce pipeline to deliver the development of Euston and the immediate surrounding area. The plan will cover the whole spectrum from school to work and look beyond the opportunities from the construction phases of the station and railway to the housing and KQ-style development in the near vicinity. This is a great opportunity for Camden to support the Mayor of London's Growth Plan and Inclusive Talent Strategy by convening,

coordinating and committing a range of partners in a specific place to plan for growth and deliver benefits for London which come to more than the sum of its parts.

The Euston Employment and Skills plan will incorporate and coordinate the wide range of opportunities secured and to be secured via planning obligations, some examples of which include;

Belgrove House - Education space for local schools with STEAM based education programme, affordable workspace, 40 construction apprenticeships, 28 work placements, 5 end-user apprenticeships and 10 end-user work placements.

British Library Extension - Employment and training contribution £760,000, 1000 sqm of affordable workspace plus British Library will deliver an affordable incubator space, and ring-fenced work experience placements for Camden residents.

Euston Tower - £611,000 employment and training contribution, 80 construction apprenticeships, £600,000 towards 30 STEAM related construction apprenticeships, 45 STEAM related end-use apprenticeships, 50 work experience placements and 745 sqm of Enterprise Space at discount rents.

The Euston Skills Centre

The Council, in partnership with our resident training partner The College of North West London, continue to train over 200 people a year in construction skills at the Euston Skills Centre, and to broker apprenticeship and job opportunities across development sites through commitments secured via planning obligations.

Knowledge economy and inclusive growth

A key priority of mine as Leader is how Camden is driving inclusive economic growth - stewarding one of Europe's most significant innovation districts while ensuring residents of all ages and backgrounds can access the opportunities it creates. From the continued development of the Knowledge Quarter to our comprehensive employment, skills and youth programmes, the Council is focused on connecting growth to good work, long-term skills and better life chances for Camden residents.

The Knowledge Quarter – covering Kings Cross, Bloomsbury and Euston - is one of the most important innovation districts in Europe, with specialisms in health and life sciences and AI and machine learning, as well as screen industries. The Knowledge Quarter is one of the fastest growing parts of the London economy, adding significantly to Gross Value Added (GVA). Euston represents a significant opportunity to grow this further, potential for additional £41bn in GVA once complete. While its strength was well acknowledged in the 2018 Science and Innovation Audit that partners produced, the area is now the most mature of all London's innovation clusters and was recognised as such by the London Growth Plan which was published this year.

Camden and our partners have been stewarding the innovation district as a key place for growth in London and the UK – a dense, walkable neighbourhood, that has seen the different sector clusters grow and cross-pollinate, with research universities, institutes and hospitals, now joined by investors, corporate HQs, start-ups and growing companies.

As the innovation district grows and develops, there is an opportunity to build on these strengths. This year, Camden has been in dialogue with developers, investors, operators and SMEs in the Knowledge Quarter, to explore what makes an inclusive innovation district, and has also had a specific focus on affordable workspace in Life Science and Lab enabled development.

The Council has agreed a proposition with a group of key developers and institutions around convening to agree a vision for Life Sciences and AI in the area and co-investing in an ecosystem coordination function which would work to map the life sciences eco-system more clearly and build a regular programme of events and communications. I am pleased to confirm that delivery will start this year in 2026.

Employment and Skills Programmes

Good Work Camden

Good Work Camden (GWC) is the Council's employment support service. Neighbourhood-based job hub advisors work with residents, no matter what their employment status, to support them to improve their employment situation. GWC is a neighbourhood-based, relational and strengths-based service with no eligibility criteria. We work with people for as long as they need us and we value outcomes along the way, such as increased well-being and confidence and engagement in education and training.

The team provide one to one support but also a range of community-based employability workshops and training sessions. Good Work Camden also has an embedded benefits advice offer.

In 2025 our neighbourhood job hubs provided one to one advice to 429 people who went on to develop personal action plans and supported 353 people into work, self-employment or training. A further 189 people were supported into construction jobs through our Euston Skills Centre and 206 people have started apprenticeships.

The annual GWC Jobs & Skills Event was held in May at the British Library, attracting over 300 local attendees. Employers such as The Crick, TFL, NHS, and Shaftesbury Theatre took part, offering panel discussions and one-to-one networking. A Networking Masterclass was hosted in advance by the Regent's Park Job Hub at the Last Word Café at the British Library. A number of job outcomes were confirmed following the event.

GWC includes specialist programming and brokerage with partners to reflect the opportunities in our economy:

- We are part of a three-borough partnership, with Islington and Hackney Councils delivering the LIFT programme which aims to establish more inclusive pathways into jobs in the creative, tech and scientific sectors.
- We have dedicated resources to support residents into the NHS and social care jobs, working in partnership with the North Central London Integrated Care Board.
- We are working on a new offer around hospitality with our partners at Kings Cross Recruit and Dominus Hospitality – a major hotel investor and developer.
- Alongside our universal offer, the GWC team delivers specialist support for some of our most disadvantaged residents including Disabled people and those with health conditions, refugees and asylum seekers and young people, especially those from our Youth Mission target cohorts

Camden Future Talent

At the Euston Skills Centre (ESC) the Council and our partners deliver construction and built environment skills and employment brokerage, including green skills. In 2025 the Euston Skills Centre the centre trained more than 200 people and delivered Groundwork and Civil Engineering Bootcamps supporting adults to gain sector-specific skills and fast-track to an interview with an employer.

In September, the ESC and HS2 launched Euston Skills Yard –a purpose-built outdoor training space on the Euston HS2 construction site that has been delivered in partnership with HS2, Skills People, and employers from HS2’s supply chain, including Mace Dragados, Mace and Wates. It will facilitate skills courses in civil engineering, groundworks, and construction operations. The courses have been co-designed with construction industry leaders to meet current skills shortages and workforce needs, with every participant guaranteed an interview for a job at the end of the course.

In 2025 the ESC also delivered a growing programme of after-school, careers-focused enrichment activities for young people as part of the Camden Education Strategy Opportunity Centres initiative. Through the Opportunity Centres programme, the centre has reached 188 young people to date.

Disability Job Hub and Work and Health

The Disability Job Hub team provide 1-1 support and are co-located in several locations within the community across the borough, including a regular presence at the Greenwood Centre. Advice includes CV, interview and job search support and also advice on reasonable adjustments, Access to Work applications and in-work support. The team offer benefits advice and often advocate for individual residents with employers.

In 2025 the Disability Job Hub delivered skills-for-work training for residents with Learning Disabilities, specialist Autism pathways to employment programmes and disability equality training for employers, as well as hosting a Reverse Jobs Fair for disabled residents to meet directly with employers. The team also arranged a number of supportive and paid work placement opportunities on behalf of individual residents.

The challenge of integrating health, disability and employment support provision remain critical and are at the heart of the 10 year NHS plan, the Get Britain Working White Paper and the Keep Britain Working review findings.

In Camden we are working closely with our partners in the NHS and with Central London Forward to ensure that the commissioned, sub-regional work and health programmes, Work Well and Connect to Work, are effectively integrated in Camden. We have established a local Work and Health Steering Group which brings together health and work providers to coordinate activity in our area, and our Public Health team have commissioned a GP lead to support this work and embed it in primary care.

Apprenticeships and Work Experience

Our youth mission talks directly to the objectives of delivering inclusive growth. It proposes that every young person has access to economic opportunity that enables them to be safe and secure. The Council has consolidated its universal offer, bringing services closer together and articulating the offer for young people and their families through a Youth Talent Guarantee.

The Camden Future Talent team work with other teams across the council to deliver this guarantee through brokerage of jobs, apprenticeships, internships and work experience.

This year 48 people have been supported into apprenticeships with a wide range of employers including the Council, the Francis Crick Institute, UCL, Lime, KPMS, PACE Camden and Koko.

The team have supported work experience for 21 people in 2025 – this is in addition to the year 12 STEAM work experience offer. Work experience was hosted by Council teams and also secured through our social value levers. Host organisations have included Lambert Smth Hampton, Arup, Archio, Bauer Media and AECOM

In April the Council welcomed a new cohort of 8 care-experienced interns who will be employed with us for 18 months.

In 2025 the Council launched 'Full Potential Camden', a Youth Guarantee Trailblazer funded by DWP/GLA. Via this programme we aim to secure increased education, employment and training outcomes for Camden care leavers. A small staff team, including a care-experienced Peer Advocate, have been appointed to support this

goal, working closely with Camden Leaving Care team, the Virtual School and Drive Forward Foundation. The Camden programme is part of a wider initiative across Central London managed by our Sub Regional Partnership, Central London Forward. A second year for the programme was announced by Liz Kendall, at the time Minister for Work and Pensions, at the Euston Skills Centre where she met a number of our programme participants. More than 50 young people are engaged in the programme and we've supported 14 into work and 23 into training.

Camden STEAM

Camden's STEAM initiative is dedicated to reaching every young person in the borough from early years to post-16 every year, inspiring young people with exciting employer encounters. With a network of over 60 businesses and more than 200 STEAM Ambassador volunteers, Camden STEAM aims to break down barriers, inspiring young people toward employment and connecting them into the talent pipeline with an emphasis on STEM and creativity.

In the 2024/25 academic year, 13,000 students took part in 20,000 employer encounters across Camden schools, facilitated by the STEAM programme and its network. Over 500 work experience placements were also mobilised across the STEAM partnership.

Camden students are now accessing the London AI Campus, which has been established as a collaboration between Google, Camden Learning and the council. It aims to inspire, inform and educate students and teachers in the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital skills.

Taken together, this work demonstrates Camden's commitment to inclusive growth in practice: shaping a globally significant innovation economy while investing in neighbourhood-based support, skills pathways and tailored employment programmes that ensure residents are not left behind. Through strong partnerships with employers, education providers, the NHS and the voluntary sector, we are creating a fairer local economy where opportunity is shared and every resident can fulfil their potential.

Tackling inequalities in Health and Wealth

Health Anchor Partnership Camden's Health Anchors programme, which we launched with the support of the Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, brings together life science, industry and academic partners to examine how we might address health and healthcare inequalities through non-traditional partnerships. In 2022, life expectancy at birth in Camden was 80 for males, similar to the London and England average, and 85 for females, two years higher than the England average. However, the gap in life expectancy between people living in the most and least deprived areas in Camden is 13.5 years for men and 9.6 years for women. Camden is the fortunate home of many medical and health institutions and in my leadership, I am committed

to utilising their power to benefit these residents of Camden. Through a series of roundtable events, we have formed a collaboration between Camden Council, AstraZeneca, GSK, MSD, and UCL. Our shared purpose is to address the health needs of our residents with greatest potential to benefit and whose needs may not currently be fully met. We know that the majority of these residents live in social housing, and we are therefore progressing this work as a key component of the estates mission.

Camden residents' rights and perspectives must come first. For this reason, we have committed to undertaking a deliberative process to form our partnership principles including use of data, citizen insights, topics and themes suitable for test and learn pilots. This agreement will ensure we have a solid foundation for a productive partnership, which carries the weight of an enduring commitment to work together. The agreement itself forms the spine on which we can hang a series of test and learn initiatives. We will draw into these initiatives, different partners, who have engaged in our roundtable events to date.

Raise Camden

In May 2025, we published the *Raise Camden Health Equity Data Audit Report*, which analysed available data to assess the state of health equity in the borough, particularly for children. The report identified significant inequalities driven by factors such as poverty, housing, education, community safety, access to health services, and data gaps, and made recommendations across six action areas: incomes and deprivation, housing, education, community and safety, data, and health. While Camden has a strong track record in preventing child poverty and delivers services recognised as outstanding by Ofsted, the report highlighted that inequalities remain deeply entrenched and cannot be addressed by any single organisation acting alone.

In response, we have developed *Raise Camden*, a strategic programme designed to mobilise collective action, drive innovation, and prevent inequalities from widening further. I was proud to announce I would be convening a Taskforce, chaired by Professor Sir Michael Marmot and I, at the We Make Camden Summit in May 2025. The Taskforce is bringing together local and national partners and subject matter experts to guide delivery, undertake focused deep dives into priority areas, and establish a Raise Camden innovation hub. This approach recognises that while the causes of health inequality are well understood, there is limited evidence about what works in practice - particularly non-fiscal interventions - and seeks to build that evidence locally.

A flagship element of Raise Camden is *Marmot Estates*, a hyper-local, estates-based "test and learn" approach to tackling health inequalities through co-designed and co-delivered interventions with residents. Camden will host the first Marmot Estates programme in the country, using the Marmot Principles to guide action aligned with We Make Camden ambitions. The programme will generate robust local

evidence, supported by an academic delivery partner, to understand the impact of neighbourhood-level interventions, inform system change, and create a toolkit that can be scaled across Camden's health neighbourhoods and beyond.

Together, Raise Camden and Marmot Estates represent a long-term commitment to evidence-led, collaborative action to ensure every Camden child has the best possible start in life and a healthier, fairer future.

Climate Agenda

Camden Climate Action Plan

Camden has demonstrated national leadership in tackling the climate crisis, delivering a bold, community-led programme that combines action on emissions, resilience, and fairness. Over the past five years, the Council has worked hand in hand with residents, businesses, and organisations to make Camden greener, more sustainable, and better prepared for climate impacts, while keeping people at the heart of decision-making.

The Climate Action Plan 2020–2025 set out an ambitious response to the climate crisis. Developed following the UK's first Citizens' Assembly on the Climate Crisis in 2019, the Plan reflected residents' priorities while recognising the limits of direct Council control and the importance of partnership working. Structured around four core themes -People, Places, Buildings, and Organisations - the Plan captured the breadth of action required to reduce emissions, strengthen climate resilience, and support a just transition. Delivery was underpinned by sustained community engagement and oversight, ensuring that climate action in Camden remained inclusive, transparent, and grounded in lived experience.

Annual Reviews tracked progress against key actions and performance indicators, highlighting successes, areas partly achieved, and emerging priorities. The final Annual Review will be published this year to coincide with the launch of the Climate Action Plan 2026–2030, providing continuity between the two programmes. Overall, the 2020–2025 Plan has achieved strong results, with 97.5% of actions delivered either fully or in part, demonstrating sustained momentum across all themes despite challenging external circumstances.

The Plan placed a strong emphasis on resident and business engagement. Under the theme of People, residents and businesses have been active participants in climate action. The Business Climate Challenge, a £640,000 Government-funded programme, supported 130 small and medium-sized enterprises to improve energy efficiency, reduce emissions, and lower operating costs. The Climate Connectors programme linked businesses with community climate projects, generating over £98,000 for local sustainability initiatives and delivering more than 1,800 hours of

corporate volunteering. Camden's business climate network, the Camden Climate Alliance, has grown to over 350 members, strengthening collaboration and knowledge sharing across the borough.

The Plan also supported organisations to embed climate considerations into operational and strategic decision-making, reinforcing the principle that tackling the climate crisis is a shared responsibility. At the same time, significant investment in public spaces has promoted sustainable travel, enhanced biodiversity, and strengthened climate resilience. Notable projects included award-winning Sustainable Drainage Systems at Parliament Hill, Goldhurst Terrace rain gardens, and the addition of greenery equivalent to half a football pitch across the borough.

Looking ahead, the Climate Action Plan 2026–2030 will continue to embed this “golden thread” of engagement. Residents will remain central to decision-making, co-designing a plan that reflects lived experiences, priorities, and ideas, with particular attention to those most affected by climate impacts, including young people, residents in flood- and heat-prone areas, and those facing social, health, or economic vulnerabilities.

Emissions Reduction Progress

The Climate Action Plan has contributed to significant reductions in carbon emissions across Camden. Borough-wide CO₂e emissions have fallen by 52% since 2005, while the Council's own carbon footprint has been reduced by 64.5% since 2009. These results reflect the cumulative impact of energy efficiency improvements, sustainable transport investments, climate-resilient infrastructure, and community-led initiatives.

Sustainable transport has been another area of focus, with Camden expanding cycling infrastructure, installing 560 electric vehicle charging points, and increasing Healthy School Streets from four in 2019 to 32. These investments encourage active travel, reduce reliance on fossil fuels, and complement energy efficiency measures across the borough.

While this progress is substantial, Camden recognises that further action is required to meet long-term climate targets. The next Plan will build on these achievements, maintaining inclusive engagement, embedding climate considerations across all sectors, and targeting those most affected by climate impacts to ensure that Camden's transition to a low-carbon, resilient future is fair and effective.

Retrofit, Energy Security and Affordable Energy

The past few years have underlined the importance of energy security. Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine in 2022 exposed the risks of dependence on volatile fossil

fuel markets and reinforced the need for Camden to become more energy independent, secure and resilient. For us, energy security must go hand in hand with tackling the climate emergency and protecting residents from high and unpredictable energy bills.

Camden's ambition is clear: we want energy that is clean, affordable and, wherever possible, generated locally. Decarbonising our homes is central to this ambition, but it must be done in a way that works for residents - particularly in a borough with some of the oldest and hardest-to-treat housing stock in the country.

The Council owns around 33,000 homes, most of which are currently heated by gas. Around 12,000 homes are on ageing communal heating systems, and many of our pre-1919 properties - such as mansion blocks and street properties - are among the least energy efficient, due to solid wall construction. Fully retrofitting Camden's housing stock is a long-term challenge, with an estimated cost of at least £700 million, and requires a careful, phased and innovative approach.

Over the past year, we have moved from strategy into delivery. Camden has secured £13.4 million from the Government's Social Housing Fund Wave 3, enabling a Retrofit at Scale pilot covering up to 3,000 homes, with £4.3 million being drawn down in 2025/26. This marks a significant step forward in our ambition to deliver retrofit at pace and scale.

Survey work is now mobilising on the first blocks, which will see solar panels and battery storage installed, helping to cut emissions, reduce reliance on the grid, and lower residents' energy bills. Resident engagement for the first phase will begin in February, ensuring that residents are fully involved and supported as works get underway. Procurement activity is continuing in parallel, with a focus on learning lessons and identifying additional measures that can be incorporated into future phases of the programme.

Alongside this, Camden continues to pursue retrofit approaches that reduce both carbon and costs, while preparing homes for future heat decarbonisation. We are exploring alternatives to full heat electrification where appropriate, recognising that electrification can increase costs for residents if not supported by wider energy market reform.

Camden is also playing a leadership role beyond the borough. We are the lead authority for the Warmer Homes London consortium, established by London Councils to deliver £78 million of Social Housing Fund investment across London. Through this programme, Camden is helping other boroughs make homes warmer, greener and more affordable, starting with those residents most affected by fuel poverty.

This builds on a strong track record. Since 2019, Camden has shifted its focus from combined heat and power systems to broader decarbonisation and energy efficiency. Over 90% of council homes with cavity walls have now been insulated, works have been completed on 86 homes through earlier Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund rounds, with more in design, and major renewal works to communal heating systems are planned for estates such as Maiden Lane and Alexandra Estate, benefiting around 1,200 homes. Our corporate and schools energy efficiency programme has also reduced emissions by 64.5% since 2010.

Looking ahead, my priorities remain focused on three areas:

- Creating the conditions for affordable heat decarbonisation, including lobbying for electricity market reform to decouple electricity prices from gas
- Improving communal heat networks, benefiting the 12,000 homes currently reliant on them and preparing estates for future decarbonisation
- Addressing hard-to-treat homes, particularly pre-1919 properties, as part of our wider housing investment strategy

By combining practical delivery, innovative funding models and national advocacy, Camden is showing how local government can lead on retrofit and energy security - cutting bills, reducing emissions and building resilience for the long term.

Supporting Refugees in Camden

No place for hate: responding to anti migrant narratives

In the last year I saw how public fears and perceptions in respect to migrant communities have been inflamed by media reports of alleged criminal activity, illegal working, and identity fraud taking place at asylum hotels. The public narrative has been further polarised by far-right activists who have galvanised civil unrest at locations where migrant communities are housed.

I am proud that Camden is No Place for Hate and stands up to be Borough of sanctuary where traumatised refugee and asylum seekers, fleeing war and persecution can find sanctuary, rebuild their lives, and take positive decisions about their own future.

Camden's has a strong history of assimilating migrant communities over many decades and our response to these extremist narratives has been robust. During the civil unrest of August and September 2025, we stood together as a community and provided mutual support and reassurance at locations where asylum hotels are situated or where refugee communities are living, particularly during the build-up to the demonstration which took place on the 13th of September.

Camden Council strives for an open, honest, and constructive relationship with the Home Office and other strategic migration partners to ensure that asylum seekers are housed safely, receive the support they need and are treated with dignity. This

includes regular communication to address any concerns or impacts before they escalate.

Borough of Sanctuary: the journey so far

Camden is proud to be a Borough of Sanctuary. Our values are based on compassion and support for those in most need, and our communities have a strong history of supporting asylum seekers and refugees.

Since 2021 Camden has seen an influx of vulnerable refugees from Afghanistan and from Ukraine along with asylum seekers from a variety of countries. Our cross-cutting network of support has been able to help refugee households find stability, healing and growth while offering resettlement housing for eligible families in Camden. These households are now connecting with education and work opportunity and becoming part of our Camden story. The highlights of the last few years include:

- Since March 2022 Camden's residents have provided sanctuary to over 1000 Ukrainian refugees fleeing the war in their home country, through participation in the Homes For Ukraine community sponsorship scheme.
- Under the Camden Pledge, Afghan resettlement scheme, Camden has resettled around 100 Afghan households comprised of 350 individuals into long term homes in Camden. This complex programme has been largely funded through the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) without displacing local housing need.
- In the last 12 months we have helped over 1000 asylum seekers living temporarily in hotels in the borough to access Council and community resources, be safer and more secure.
- We have launched a Borough of Sanctuary forum with our community partners to increase our collective impact, while developing a Borough of Sanctuary grants programme to grow our VCS response.

Being a Borough of Sanctuary is about partnership and the art of the possible. However, it is not a new housing offer over and above our existing funded commitments. Our refugee resettlement programme is sustainable because we operate within the resources available, without displacing local need. Camden is one of the leading boroughs for Afghan resettlement in the UK and this is made possible through optimising grant income and notably, not creating additional pressure elsewhere in our housing system.

Developing our strategic response to supporting refugees

The refugee response has been largely funded through external grants. These funding streams are finite and will expire in the next few years. Part of our commitment to being a Borough of sanctuary is to ensure we are equipped with the refugee facing skills we need not just for today but for the years ahead. This means that we will embed the expertise we need into our core delivery and within our community hubs as we look ahead.

Strategic objectives 2026-2029:

- To be a borough of sanctuary for refugees arriving in or living in the borough; working with our community partners to create places of sanctuary, inclusion and dignity for refugees seeking to rebuild their lives and take positive steps about their own future.
- Speaking with one voice, as part of the Borough of Sanctuary network on the issues that matter nationally. Influencing government policy so that there are safe routes of entry, housing capacity, work opportunity and a culture of compassion and welcome for all refugees.
- Embedding refugee facing skills and expertise where they are needed in the Camden workforce, for the longer term, as part of our core delivery.
- Work with our lead refugee community partners to deliver tailored support for diverse refugee and asylum communities in Camden. Deliver a Borough of sanctuary grant programme which recognises the expertise available from our community partners and dovetails or augments the Council's own efforts.
- Continue to support the Homes for Ukraine community sponsorship programme through the current 36-month extension periods, while supporting families through the uncertainties which lie ahead.
- Build long term integrational support for the new Afghan communities resettling in Camden, promoting community cohesion and fulfilment so that families become part of the Camden story.
- Work with the Home Office and strategic migration partners to find new ways to deliver short stay homes for incoming refugees and asylum seekers which are safe and of a decent standard. Ensure that burdens are shared fairly across Local authority areas and homelessness risk is mitigated, wherever possible.
- Continue to build proportionate, responsive, and timely interventions which prevent homelessness and reduce rough sleeping among displaced refugees, asylum seekers, and former asylum seekers, within the resources available to the Council.
- Continue to rationalise the Cross Council refugee response so that we can sustain delivery within the resources available and align with the changing needs of refugee communities in Camden.

Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services

The Director of Finance has been consulted and his comments are contained within the body of the report.

Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

Legal have been consulted and there are no comments to add.

Environmental Implications

This report makes reference to a number of ongoing ambitious work programmes and strategies which contribute to the Council's efforts to improve air quality, increase biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions – all of which have a positive environmental impact and support our work to tackle the climate crisis and to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030.