



# We Make Camden: State of the Borough 2026

About this report

The 6 WMC  
ambitions

# How to navigate the document

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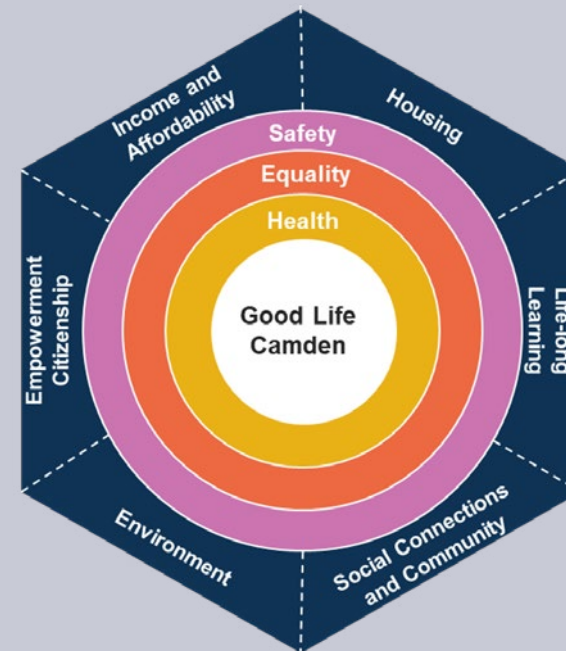
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In pulling together the data and evidence for the report, we started from the framework and looked for quantitative data that was available, preferably comparable across place and time. Mapping to the GLC framework also showed us where we have data gaps, whether for signals and measures (e.g. people feel safe in Camden) or in the breakdowns of averages (e.g. what is the experience of specific populations, like perceptions of safety of adults with learning disabilities).

Throughout the report, we have highlighted the relevant Good Life Camden signals where the data is presented.

**Look out for these**  **throughout the report, presenting the relevant Good Life Camden signal in each section.**



### Quantitative data

We have collated quantitative data mostly from trusted secondary sources, in order to allow a comparison across place (other boroughs, London, and nationally) and time (from 2010 where available). This helps us see whether what people in Camden experience is substantially different compared to previous years and to other places. Where possible we have also included breakdowns to smaller groups, such as ward level data, or ethnic groups. We have also considered the confidence levels and statistical significance where these were available and relevant. The data used in the report is available at [Open Data Camden](#) in spreadsheets which include the metadata and links to the sources.

**Comparison group:** throughout the report, we have referred to the 'inner London' for simplification. This group was selected based on demographic and geographic similarities, and consists of the inner London boroughs and neighbouring boroughs to Camden: Barnet, Brent, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster, Islington, Southwark, Newham, Hackney, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Greenwich, Haringey, and Lewisham. We also compare to the London and England averages where possible.

### Qualitative data

The qualitative data collected for the State of the Borough (SOTB) report was used to supplement quantitative insights and ensure that residents' lived experiences were meaningfully represented. To gather **primary data**, we worked with several voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations and services across the Council that maintain strong connections with residents and communities. We also collaborated

with a resident peer researcher who supported our data collection efforts. Depending on the nature of the event or setting, we tailored our methods of engagement, which included focus groups and one-to-one informal conversations at community festivals, local events, and other resident gatherings. Our aim was to diversify both *who* we heard from and *how* we gathered insights, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility in our approach.

Throughout this report, we have included demographic details alongside resident quotes to help contextualise lived experiences and ensure that a broad range of voices is represented. Providing demographic information was optional during engagement activities, and some residents chose not to share these details. As a result, demographic data is not available for every quote included in the report. Where residents did provide this information, we have noted age, gender, and the setting or event where the insight was gathered (for example, a focus group, community festival, or local engagement session). Where contributors did not provide demographic details for a particular question, this is shown as "NA".

**We are grateful to the residents who generously shared their experiences, to the peer researcher and organisations who helped us reach and engage with communities across Camden. Their contributions helped make this report richer and better reflect the diversity of perspectives and experiences.**

Alongside our primary data collection, we also collated **secondary data** by reaching out to services across Camden Council and asking them to share any relevant research, consultation or engagement data they had previously conducted. This included existing consultations, focus groups and surveys carried out over the past two years, as well as ongoing projects still in progress. Each submission was reviewed, and we extracted insights that were relevant and relatable to specific SOTB chapters.

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## Evidence shared by organisations

While most of the data used in this report is from mainstream secondary sources, such as the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the Greater London Authority and government departments, we recognise that our local organisations have a lot of accumulated knowledge and evidence about the experience of people in the borough. We want to ensure the voices of Camden residents are central to our understanding of the borough.

In August 2025, we invited partner organisations to contribute data they had collected on outcomes experienced by people in the borough. We have represented the data and reports that were shared with us throughout the report in 'learning from' sections. We are very grateful to the following organisations which have shared with us: [Cooperation Town](#), [The Caversham Group Practice](#), [Old Diorama Arts Centre](#), [Camden Carers](#), [Camden Giving](#), [Feast With Us](#), [Community Association for West Hampstead](#) and [British Land](#). **Look out for 'learning from' sections in this report.**

Figure 0.1: Map of organisations contributing to data collection across the borough



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[camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report](https://camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report)



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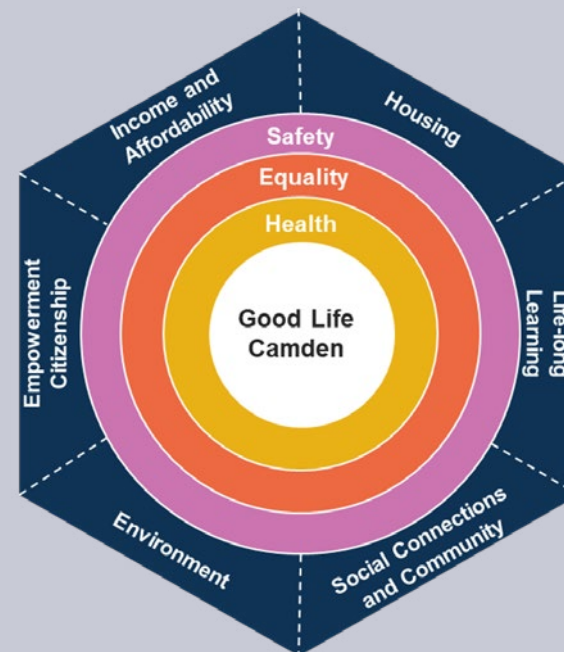
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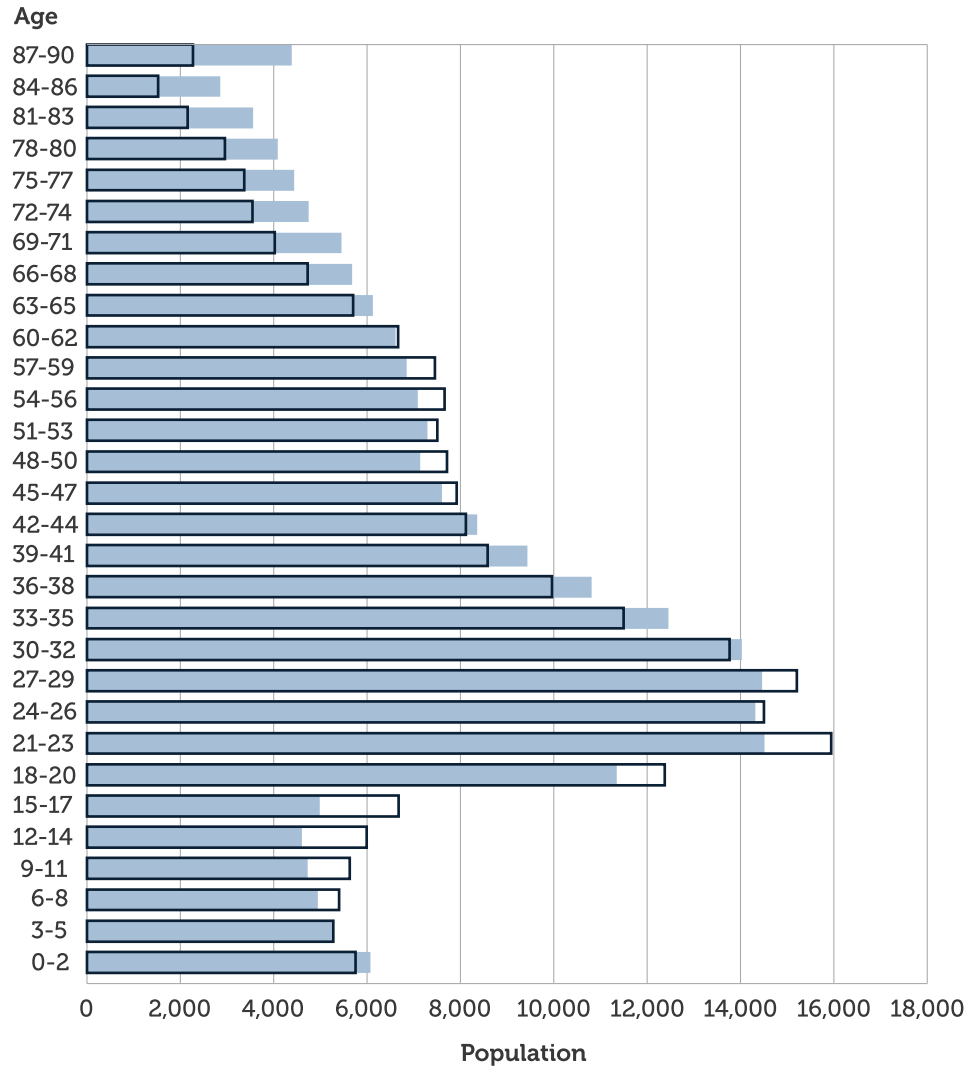
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# Key insights

## Camden population by age, across time

□ 2025 Population (Actual)   ■ 2050 Population (Predicted)



Camden's population is projected to grow from 219k to 224k in 2050, and the age profile is expected to change, with over 65s set to become a larger proportion of our borough, while the proportion of children will shrink. The statistics below reflect some of the drivers and consequences of this changing profile.



### Dependency ratio

The ratio of over 65s to working-age adults will rise from 16:100 to 23:100 by 2050.



### Housing affordability & tenure

High house prices & demand for social housing are factors in why currently 47% of 25-50 year olds rent privately, versus 13% of 50+ year olds.



### Student "bulge"

Camden's higher education institutions means we have a large, but transient, younger adult population, currently 30,738 students.



### Fertility rates

In Camden, 1.05 children are born per woman on average. Lower fertility drives the projection of fewer children and young people in 2050.

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Camden is a central London borough, almost 22 square kilometres in size – only about 1.4% of London by area but 9th highest in population density. It is home to internationally renowned institutions, a vibrant entertainment and nightlife scene, major transport hubs, and busy business and retail centres.

Camden is home to the Knowledge Quarter, bringing together organisations like Google, the Francis Crick Institute, the Wellcome Trust, and the British Library, alongside 11 higher education institutions. The student population is the third largest in London, with the highest share of student population in Bloomsbury (40%).

The rate of population churn, meaning the change in population from year to year with people moving in and out of the borough, is one of the highest in London. According to the Consumer Data Research Centre's Residential Mobility Index, 35% of households in Camden changed from 2010 to 2020, and 59% in the decade before that. Some of the transient nature of Camden's population is explained by the high share of students, but also an international workforce attracted by the global science and technology hubs.

Indeed, the Community Life survey (2023/24) shows that most Camden residents are happy to live in Camden. Almost 8 in 10 people in Camden said they were satisfied with their local area as a place to live, higher than the London average, and around 6 in 10 people agree that they would like to still be living in their local area in five years' time.<sup>1</sup>

## Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025

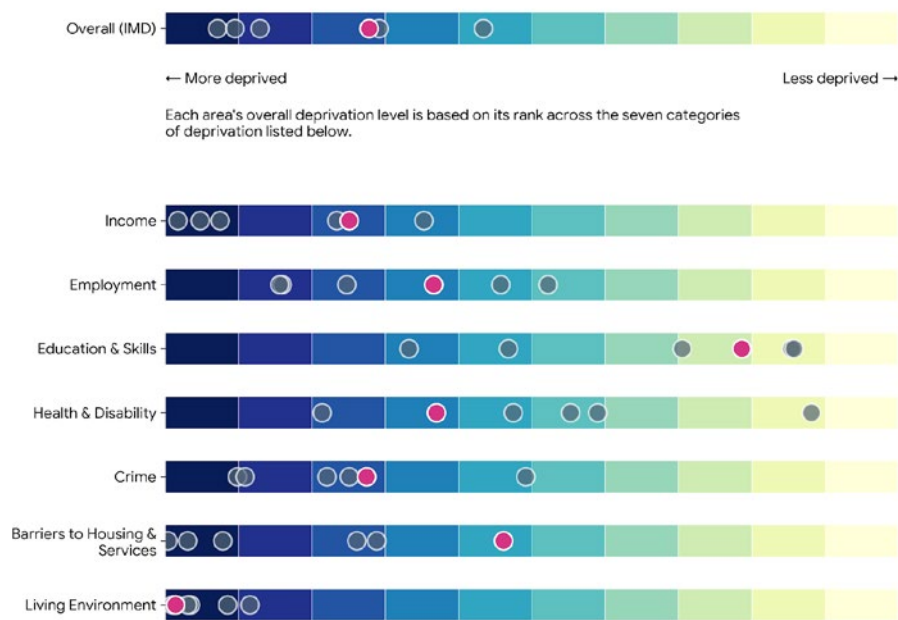
The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025 (IMD25)<sup>2</sup> is the UK Government's official measure of relative deprivation in England. It ranks every small neighbourhood (LSOA) based on seven types ("domains") of disadvantage – income, employment, education, health, crime, barriers to housing and services, and the quality of the local environment – and then combines these into an overall score. Income and employment carry the greatest weight, reflecting their central role in shaping disadvantage. This was last updated in 2019 and has just been released for 2025.

IMD25 provides a snapshot of relative deprivation rather than absolute poverty, enabling comparisons between areas rather than quantifying exact levels of hardship. In practice, IMD25 is widely used by government departments, local authorities, and public services to target funding, design social programmes, and prioritise interventions in health and education. Since the last release in 2019, IMD25 incorporates updated data sources and refined indicators to better capture challenges such as digital exclusion, housing affordability, and evolving crime trends.

On the overall IMD25 measure, Camden is more deprived than around two-thirds of local authorities in England. Within London, Camden sits roughly in the middle of the 33 boroughs. Looking at the individual domains, Camden's stand-out strength is education: on this domain it is in the fifth least deprived of English local authorities. It also looks relatively better than many London boroughs on "barriers to housing and services" (which mixes accessibility and some aspects of affordability), sitting around the middle of the national rankings.

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**Figure 0-1: Camden ranking in the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2025**



By contrast, Camden faces significant challenges in the quality of the living environment – things like housing conditions, overcrowding, air quality and other environmental factors. On this domain Camden is one of the most deprived local authorities in England and in the bottom few within London. Income deprivation and crime are also notable pressure points: Camden has a higher-than-average share of neighbourhoods with low incomes and higher crime risk when compared to both England as a whole and the London average. Health and employment deprivation in Camden sit around the middle nationally, but look more concerning when viewed against London, where averages are generally better. See further analysis on the [Camden JSNA](#) webpage.

A recent analysis by the GLA<sup>3</sup> showed that in London, the IMD25 shows that the share of relative deprivation is lower than in England: of the

almost 5,000 LSOAs in London there are 33 which are among the most deprived 5% across England, representing 0.7% of LSOAs in London, and 168 among the most deprived decile (10%), representing 3.4% of London LSOAs. In the IMD25, the income index changed from the previous IMD19 so that it now incorporates the after-housing-costs income not the before-housing-costs. This change, which is more appropriate for people living in a high housing cost environment, means that the number of people counted as facing income deprivation in London has almost doubled, from 1.1 million in 2019 to 2.2 million in 2025.<sup>4</sup>

### Who lives in Camden?

It is hard to confidently say exactly how many people actually live in Camden. The 2024 ONS estimate places it at about 217,000 people. However, these figures are based on the 2021 Census, which occurred during COVID restrictions – likely undercounting residents. Camden was one of just three London boroughs showing population decline, dropping 4.6% from 220,300 (2011) to 210,100 (2021), while London overall grew by 7.7%. The GLA population projections at the time for Camden were closer to 280,000, meaning the 2021 Census results were a drop of 70,000 from what we expected the population to be.

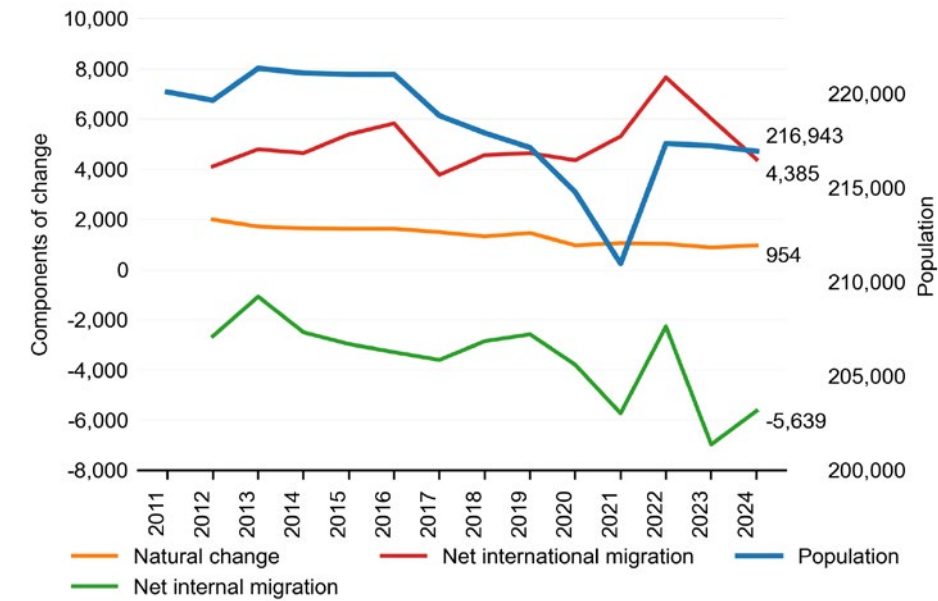
Other indicators suggest a larger population:

- GP registrations show about 260,000 people (2024) (although people don't update these regularly)
- Council tax properties increased from 103,000 to 113,000 since 2011 (while the number of households in the Census was estimated at around 93,000)
- Electoral roll numbers fluctuated between 152,000 and 146,000, but it may be affected by political changes and new voter ID requirements

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These conflicting data sources show why determining Camden’s exact population remains challenging. While we think there was an underestimation in the 2021 Census for the population of Camden, we do not know what the precise number should be. However, the Census remains an important source of data for understanding the makeup of Camden’s population as well as experienced outcomes, so we are confident in using these statistics throughout the report as they are the most reliable source available.

**Figure 0-2: Population change in Camden, 2011-2024**



Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011–2024

## Endnotes

- 1 Considering error margins, the Camden average may be the same as the London average.
- 2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2025/english-indices-of-deprivation-2025-statistical-release>
- 3 <https://data.london.gov.uk/blog/indices-of-deprivation-2025-an-exploratory-analysis/>
- 4 <https://www.onlondon.co.uk/richard-brown-londons-distinctive-patterns-of-deprivation/>

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Best start

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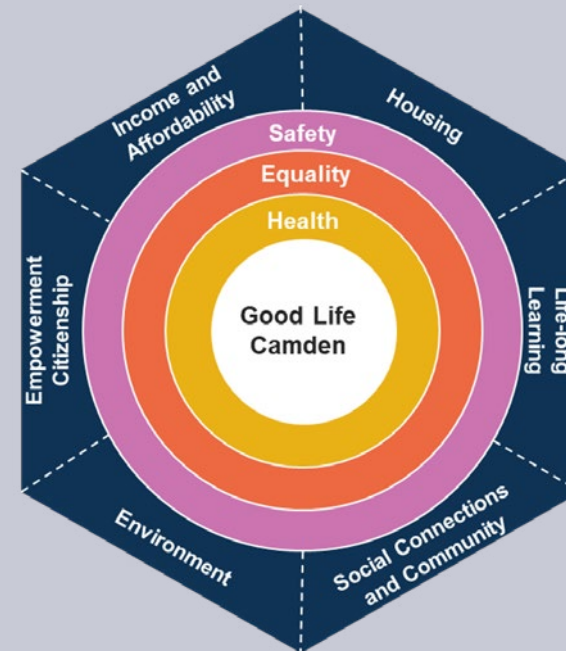
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# Best Start

## Camden is a borough where every child has the best start in life



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#### Income and affordability: a good life is affordable in Camden 6

In 2024, one in five children in Camden were living in relative poverty. After housing costs are considered, this rises to 2 in 5, and the rate of child poverty has been on the rise over the past 10 years 7

Participation (take up) in early years education is lower in Camden than London or England at 65%, although the quality of provision is high – 99% rated good or outstanding. Inner London is the most expensive area in London to send your child to nursery despite free hours entitlements 8

#### Safety - People are safe in their homes 9

Camden has a higher rate of children on Child Protection Plans (42.7 per 10,000) than both London and the national average. The rate of Children Looked After in Camden is lower than the national and London averages, at 56 per 10,000 9

In March 2024 there were 85 approved foster carers in Camden in 65 approved foster homes 10

In March 2024, there were 502 Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) known to services 11

#### Education and lifelong learning: Young people have good opportunities when they leave school 12

Children achieve good levels of educational attainment at Key Stage 2 (aged 11), less so at Key Stage 4 (aged 16) 12

In 2023/24, 90% of Key Stage 4 Camden pupils progressed to sustained education destinations 14

#### Education and lifelong learning: Schools are safe, inclusive and accessible 14

The persistent absence rate (missing more than 10% of school sessions) was 22% in Camden in 2024/25, double the pre-pandemic figure. Secondary school pupils in Camden were persistently absent more than all other Inner London boroughs and among the highest in the whole country 14

Camden had the lowest rate of suspensions in primary schools in 2023/24 across the comparison group with 94 suspensions, and no permanent exclusions. In secondary schools, suspensions were lower than the England rate but close to the London rate, with 1,074 suspensions and 25 permanent exclusions 16

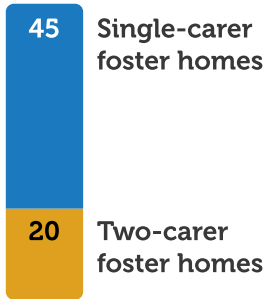
In 2025, there were 1,607 children who are Camden residents and had an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, and 1,181 pupils with EHC plans in Camden state-funded schools (not all of whom are also residents) 17

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## Key Insights

In March 2024

Camden had **65** approved foster homes



“ I’m part of the LGBT adoption network, which is supportive, but it mostly meets outside Camden. When it did meet here during the protests, it was powerful to feel solidarity in such a difficult moment.

”  
-65-74, Female

In 2024/2025

**1,607**

Camden children had an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)

“ I have an autistic child [...] I can’t work full time [...] We’re just living from check to paycheck and it’s very difficult, it is very difficult.

”  
-48, Female

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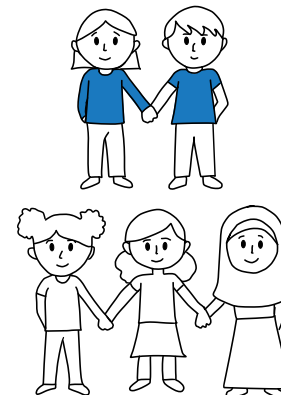
In March 2024

**502**

Care Experienced Young People were accessing a Camden service

In 2024,

**1 in 5** children in Camden were living in relative poverty; this doubles to **2 in 5**, once housing costs are included



In 2024/2025

Childcare for children aged 3-4 cost

**£11,600/yr**

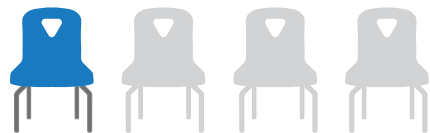
after free hours are applied

“ The cost of childcare, it’s the same as a mortgage.

”  
-27, Female

In 2024/2025

Over **1 in 4** secondary school pupils were persistently absent, the highest share in London



Childhood is a vital time that shapes future life outcomes. It builds the foundation for lifelong health and well-being. Early experiences such as education, healthcare, and social connections, strongly influence later development. When children grow up in positive conditions, they are more likely to achieve higher education, adopt healthier habits, and access greater social and economic opportunities as adults. This chapter presents the data and evidence that was available, as well as stories and lived experiences of residents in Camden relating to the Best Start theme. It covers the Good Life Camden themes of Income and Affordability, and Education and Lifelong Learning.

Good Life Camden 

## Income and affordability: a good life is affordable in Camden

Residents have highlighted the strengths that make Camden a positive place to raise a family, including high-quality healthcare, children’s services, community facilities and access to nature. One resident explained:

**“ I have grown up and live in [Camden] [...] It is a great place to raise a family as there is lots on offer from great hospitals, healthcare, children’s services, community centres and opportunities to connect with nature”**

(30, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

Another parent described how Camden’s early years support, community spaces and sense of belonging shaped her experience of raising a young child:

**“ In general I have had a good experience of living in Camden [...] I attended local antenatal classes which helped me to develop friendships and a sense of belonging [...] Camden has great facilities for parents and young children [...] I have always felt safe in Camden”**

(30, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

Despite these strengths, the rising cost of living has been placing considerable strain on families with children, often forcing them to make difficult choices about food and household expenses. During a focus group with parents of young children in the borough, one parent shared how rising costs shape everyday decisions:

**“ Bills are crazy [...] my special needs child is a picky eater [...] I buy on special offer. They have to be those certain ones. I usually go for the special offer [...] I eat his leftovers so I don’t waste money”**

(50, Female, Focus group at Harmond Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

Another parent highlighted the added pressure of managing health-related dietary restrictions, sharing,

**“ My son is gluten free [we] don’t have any support for gluten free and it’s double the price for gluten [...] it’s quite [a lot] more extra”**

(42, Female, Focus group at Harmond Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

These experiences reflect the wider challenges families face in balancing affordability with the specific needs of their children. Others describe a broader picture of hardship, noting how essential costs have surged. As one parent explained,

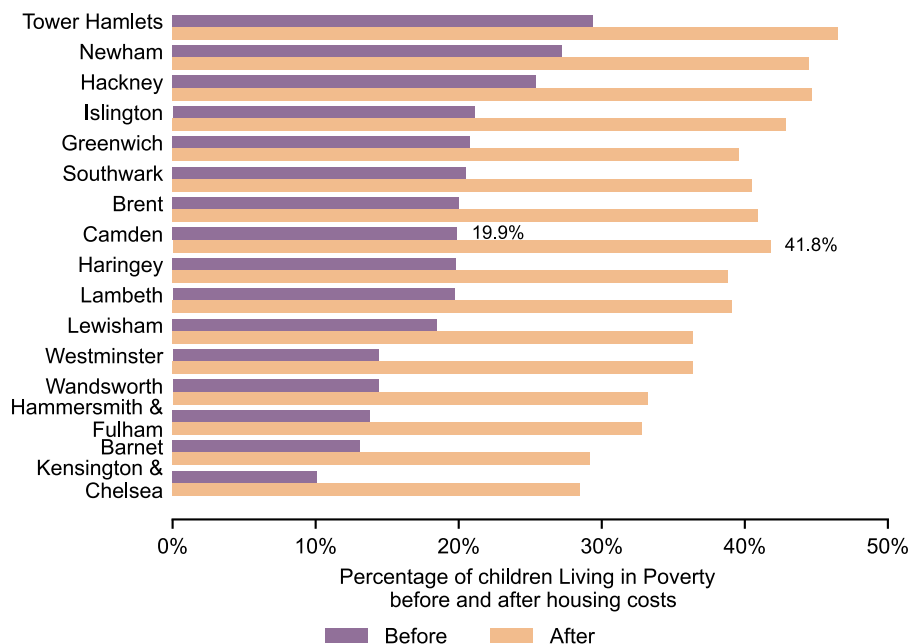
**“ It’s a very hard time for everyone because we see the poverty increased and a lot of people, homeless, children as well, people they cannot buy the same as before [...] You see the people that are very down and they need more support and the prices of food [have] changed very much”**

(48, Female, Focus group at Harmond Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

**In 2024, one in five children in Camden were living in relative poverty. After housing costs are considered, this rises to 2 in 5, and the rate of child poverty has been on the rise over the past 10 years**

**Figure 1.1: Percentage of children living in poverty, before and after housing costs**



Sources: Local indicators of child poverty, Loughborough University, 2023/2024; Children in low income families: local area statistics, DWP, 2024

Camden’s child poverty rate before housing costs (percentage of children in relative low-income families, defined as 60% of the median income) increased from 13% in 2015 to 20% in 2024, a rise of seven percentage points. This is higher than the London average of 17.8% but lower than the England average of 21.8%. However, when housing costs are also included, the poverty rates are doubled in Camden, from 20% before housing costs to 41.8% after housing costs. The poverty

rate after housing costs has been consistently on the rise in recent years, from 37% in 2014/15 to 42% in 2023/24, a change of five points. This puts Camden at the higher end of the comparison group, with Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham at the top end (46.5%, 44.7% and 44.5%) and Kensington and Chelsea and Barnet at the lower end of the scale with 28.5% and 29.2%.

Child poverty data is also evident in the eligibility for free school meals, which is linked to income benefit entitlement. In 2024/25, Camden reported 33.1% of pupils were eligible for free school meals, which is considerably higher than the London average of 22.6% and the England figure of 20.3%. Among London boroughs, Camden is in the upper range, with rates spanning from 19.0% in Barnet to 37.4% in Hackney. Over the past decade, Camden’s proportion has risen steadily from 20.4% in 2015/16 to 33.1% in 2024/25, with sharp increases after 2019/20.

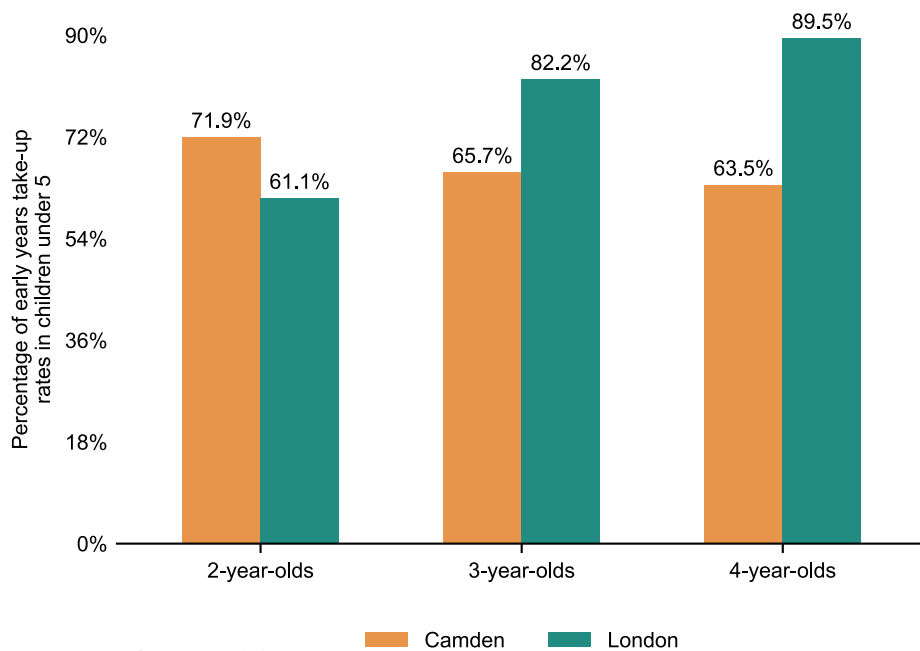
**Learning from: Raise Camden report on Child Health Equity**

In 2025, the [UCL Institute of Health Equity](#) published a report reviewing the underlying causes of inequalities in health for children and young people in Camden.<sup>1</sup> It found that there is a widening gap between children and young people in Camden, with the middle class largely leaving the borough, leaving the very rich and the very deprived. This is largely explained by the housing prices and the reduction in the value of the Local Housing Allowance, making the borough unaffordable for middle- and low-income workers. This inequality has an impact on children and young people, with over half of households with children living in at least one level of deprivation, with over 700 children living in severely overcrowded homes, around 600 children in temporary accommodation and some 40% of households with children in social housing have someone with a long-term health condition or disability. Lower fertility rates might also be affected by the rising cost of living in Camden. The report recommends tackling material deprivation, expanding affordable housing and improving health and care support in estates.

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

**Participation (take up) in early years education is lower in Camden than London or England at 65%, although the quality of provision is high – 99% of places rated good or outstanding. Inner London is the most expensive area in London to send your child to nursery despite free hours entitlements**

**Figure 1.2: Early years education uptake, 2, 3, and 4 years-olds, 2024**



Early years education provides important opportunities to learn and develop which have a significant impact later in life. Early learning paves the way for learning at school and throughout life, and what children learn in their first few years of life can have long-lasting effects on their success and health as children, teens, and adults.

The [Coram Childcare Survey 2025](#) shows that the cost of childcare in Inner London is the most expensive region in England. In Camden in

2024, nursery fees were £8 per hour, in line with the London average and slightly more expensive than the national average (£6 per hour for both age groups). Sending a two-year-old to nursery part-time (25 hours a week) can cost around £80 a week, equivalent to £5,840 per year even after working parent entitlements are applied.<sup>2</sup> Full-time childcare (50 hours a week) for three- and four-year-olds could cost £160 a week, or £11,600 a year, and for parents who are not eligible for free hours, the costs are much higher. In England, the introduction of new entitlements for working parents has substantially reduced the average cost of nursery places for under-twos and two-year-olds while costs for three- and four-year-olds have increased.<sup>3</sup>

For parents who are not eligible for free hours, the costs can shape major life decisions, as one parent noted:

**“The cost of childcare, it’s the same as a mortgage [...] people are choosing between working and going into childcare, versus working and buying property”**

(27, Female, Focus group at Harmood Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

For some parents, especially those caring for children with additional needs, the pressures are even more acute. As one parent explained:

**“I have an autistic child [...] I can’t work full time [...] We’re just living from paycheck to paycheck and it’s very difficult, it is very difficult”**

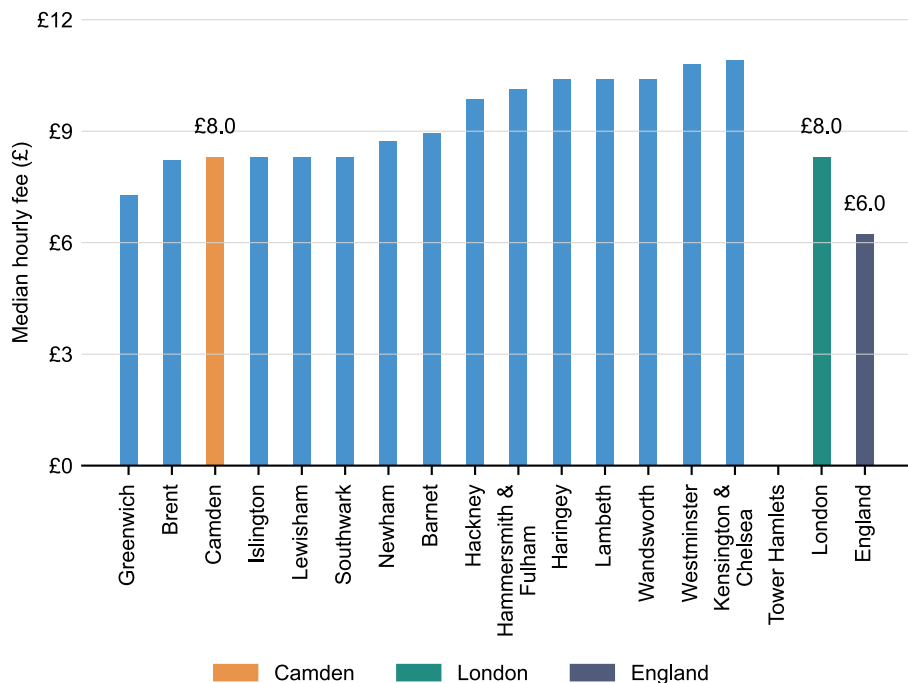
(48, Female, Focus group at Harmood Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

In Camden, the uptake of the free or subsidised provision of childcare has been comparatively lower to the London and England averages. For 2- to 4-year-olds, uptake has been falling since 2018, when it was 86%. By 2025, the overall uptake in Camden had dropped to 65%, which is much lower than the averages for London (88%) and England (96%). However, for 2-year-olds’ early education uptake, Camden performs better than average, with 72% taking up a place, higher than London (61%) and England (65%). It is the lower uptake among 3- and 4-year-olds that reduces the overall

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

average, with 66% of 3-year-olds in Camden in early years education, compared with 82% in London and 90% across England. For 4-year-olds, the uptake is 63%, again well below the London average of 95% and the England average of 89%.

**Figure 1.3: Early years median hourly fees, 2024**



Source: Department for Education, 2025

While uptake in early years education is relatively low in Camden, the quality of provision is high. Since 2018, Camden has consistently had a higher proportion of children in high quality early years education. In 2024, 99% of Camden’s early years settings, for 2-4 year old children entitled to 15 hours, were rated good or outstanding by Ofsted, exceeding the Inner London average (92.1%) and England average (92.4%). For children registered for the 30-hour entitlement, 98.1% of Camden’s early years settings were rated good or outstanding. This

is higher than both the Inner London average (93%) and the England average (95.0%).

Good Life Camden

**◆ Safety - People are safe in their homes**

**Camden has a higher rate of children on Child Protection Plans (42.7 per 10,000) than both London and the national average. The rate of Children Looked After in Camden is lower than the national and London averages, at 56 per 10,000**

The safeguarding of the most vulnerable children is one of the most important responsibilities of a local authority. Child Protection Plans are an intervention put in place by the local authority’s social care service to help keep children safe from harm and to support families.

At the end of March 2025 there were 155 children subject to a Child Protection Plan in Camden. That has reduced from a peak of 329 in 2019, a reduction of 49%. This means that for every 10,000 children in Camden, 42.7 had a child protection plan – slightly above the 2023/24 figures for Inner London (40.5) and National rates (41.6).

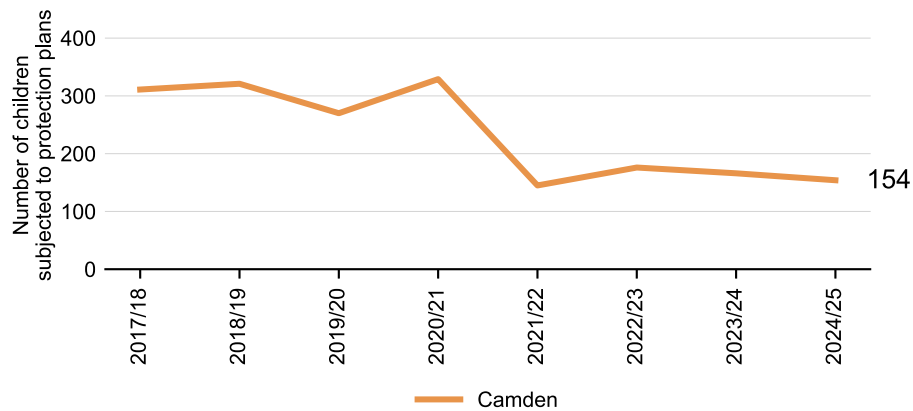
Sometimes local authority social care teams need to take children into care to prevent serious harm. At the end of March 2025, there were 205 Children Looked After (CLA) in Camden’s care. Since 2014, the number of CLA has remained relatively stable, between 185 and 220 children, despite a significant increase in unaccompanied asylum-seeking children becoming looked after during this period. The Camden CLA rate per 10,000 children at the end of March 2025 was 56, lower than the Inner London average (62) and national average rate (70).

At end of March 2025, more than a third (36%) of Camden CLA were aged 16+, though that has reduced from 46.5% in 2020/21. Although

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

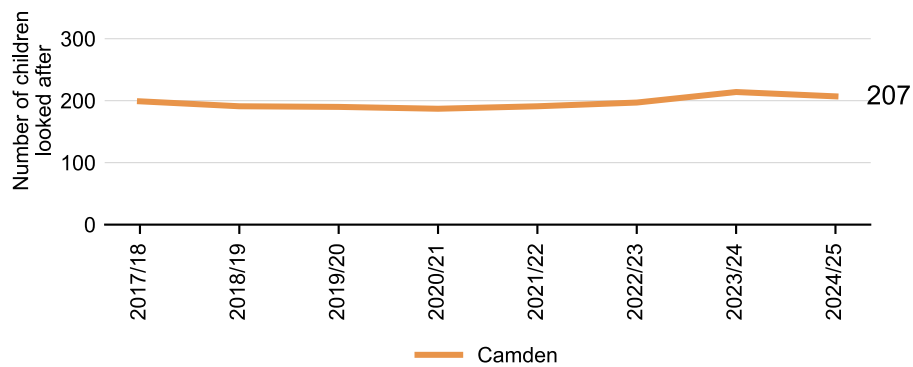
higher than the national average (27%), it is the same as the Inner London average (36%). In addition, there were 35 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children looked after by Camden (17% of Camden’s CLA cohort) at the end of March 2025. Due to the older cohort and trauma experienced by those children and young people, it means cases are becoming increasingly complex.

**Figure 1.4: Number of children with a Child Protection Plan, Camden**



Source: CSWW Monthly Scorecard

**Figure 1.5: Number of Children Looked After, Camden**



Source: CSWW Monthly Scorecard

**In March 2024 there were 85 approved foster carers in Camden in 65 approved foster homes**

When a child comes into care, it is often because they have faced difficult and distressing circumstances. Some may have lived through abuse or neglect, while others have experienced family illness, the breakdown of relationships, or the trauma of arriving in the UK alone, seeking safety and a fresh start. Most Camden children are cared for in-house, either in our children’s home, foster care, family and friends/ kinship care or Camden’s Young People’s Pathway.<sup>4</sup>

Fostering is far more than providing a child with somewhere to live; it is about providing vulnerable children with the stability, care, and understanding they need when they’re unable to live with their birth families. Whatever the reasons that bring them into care, every child deserves a safe, loving home where they can begin to heal and thrive.

Across the UK there is a shortage of foster carers and the number of mainstream fostering households continues to decrease, meaning many children have to wait for the safe and supportive home they desperately need.

In the latest data, in March 2024 there were 85 approved foster carers in Camden in 65 approved foster homes (45 households with one foster carer, 20 households with two carers e.g. foster parents). Of these, 15 placements are permanent, 40 are non-permanent and 5 are short break placements. 71% of Camden’s foster carers are over the age of 50; 47% are Black or Black British, and 29% are White.

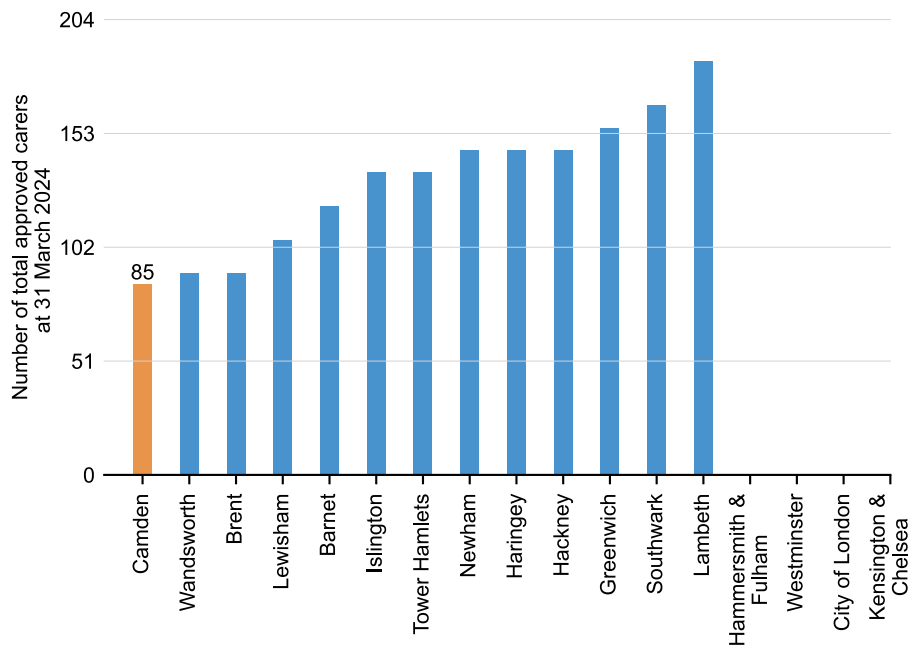
Of the foster households in Camden, 23% (15) of them are ‘friends and family’ foster carers (sometimes called kinship carers). This occurs when a child is placed in the care of a relative or close friend due to the inability of their parents to provide adequate care. Nationally, there has been a continued increase in family and friends fostering households, which now make up 21% of all active fostering households in England.

Camden also relies on external providers from Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) who are private or charitable organisations that work

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

alongside Local Authorities to provide foster placements, regulated by the same fostering standards as Local Authorities and are overseen by Ofsted. As of November 2024, there were 46 IFA placements in Camden.

**Figure 1.6: Number of approved foster carers, 2024**



Source: Ofsted, 2023/24

**In March 2024, there were 502 Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) known to services**

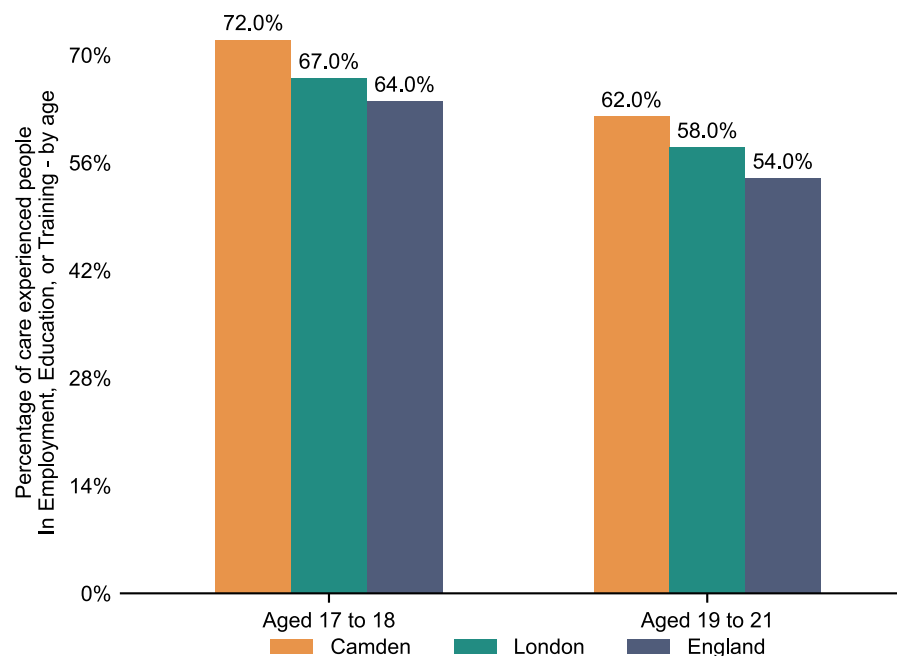
Care experienced young people (CEYP) are individuals aged over 16 who have been in the care of local authorities. This includes those who have lived in foster care, residential care, or other forms of care. The transition from care to independent living can be challenging, and care leavers often face unique difficulties compared to their peers who have not been in care. Local authorities are expected to stay in touch with care experienced young people and continue to have responsibilities

for them until they are 25, and care experienced young people have the right to various forms of support, including financial assistance, housing support, and access to education and training programs. In Camden support includes services such as housing, wi-fi and the care-leavers apprenticeship programme.

In March 2024, there were 502 CEYP in Camden who are accessing a service.<sup>5</sup> Of these, 272 were aged 17-21 years old, 64% (174) of them were in education, training and employment, 25% (68) were not, and for 11% (30) the information wasn't known at the time. 86% of them are in accommodation deemed as suitable.

Among the 230 young people aged 22-25, 43% (99) were in education, training or employment, while 22% (55) are not engaged in these activities and for 35% (81) the information was unknown. Overall, 64% of this age group are living in suitable accommodation.

**Figure 1.7: Care experienced young people in Employment, Education or Training, by age, 2024**



Source: Department for Education, 2024

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### Learning from: Camden Giving Youth Futures Fund

The Youth Futures Fund (YFF) follows the Future Changemakers programme and invests in long-term youth initiatives. It is funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Share Gift, individual donors, Labs and Autotrader. Learnings and reflections from this fund have highlighted that participatory approaches, such as youth advisory boards, peer-led reporting, and flexible, trust-based funding, are important parts of engagement and empowerment.

In the 2025 activity report, it records awarding 4 grants totalling £321,200 to St Mary's, Kings Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association (KCBNA), Coram's Fields, and Somali Youth Development Resource Centre (SYDRC). The report describes the actions and learnings from these organisations over the past year. These provide mental health support, mentoring, skills development, health and exercise and opportunities for leadership. They address systemic challenges including exclusion from education, harmful gender norms, racism, and unemployment, while also providing practical support such as counselling, employability workshops, and safe environments for personal growth. Consistent relationships with youth workers and long-term funding are highlighted as key factors in sustaining positive outcomes and building resilience among young people.

The report also highlights that funding insecurity, staff burnout, and the cost-of-living crisis, which are faced by the sector across London and nationally too, continue to threaten the stability of youth services. Young people and organisations call for multi-year, flexible funding, more support for staff wellbeing, and greater advocacy for youth spaces.

Good Life Camden ☺

## Education and lifelong learning: Young people have good opportunities when they leave school

### Children achieve good levels of educational attainment at Key Stage 2 (aged 11), less so at Key Stage 4 (aged 16)

*Please note – data is based on all state funded school pupils in Camden, not Camden residents. Some Camden school pupils live outside the borough, while some Camden residents go to school outside of the borough or to independent schools. 'All state funded' includes Local authority maintained, academies, free schools and state-funded special schools (including hospital schools).*

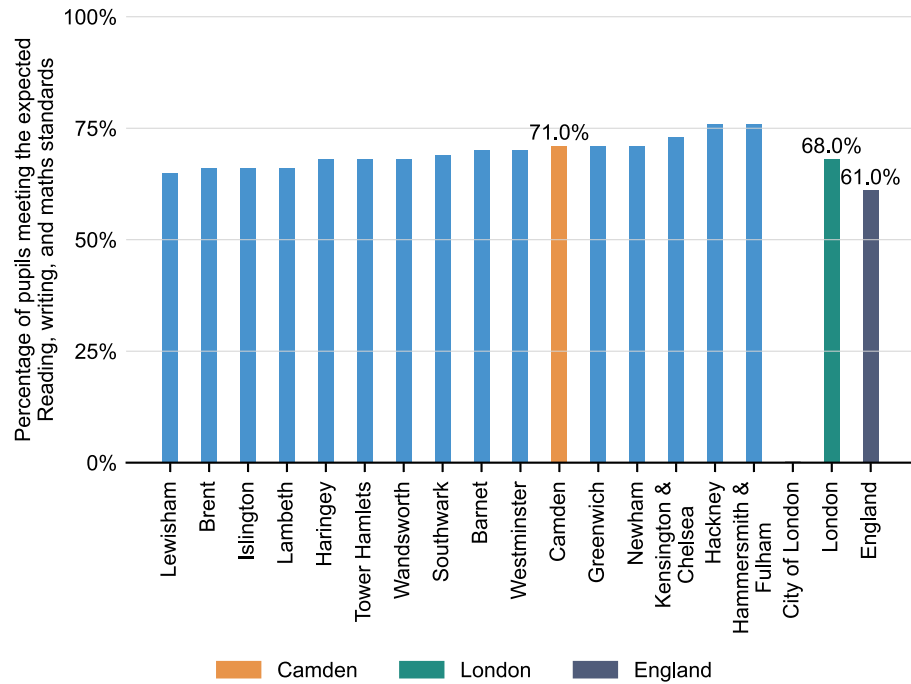
In 2025, at Key Stage 2 (KS2), the provisional<sup>6</sup> figure for pupils in state funded schools in Camden achieving the expected standard in combined reading, writing and maths is 71%, a slight decrease on 72% the previous year.<sup>7</sup> Still, this represents a higher proportion of pupils who met the expected standard at KS2 than the provisional averages for London (68%) and England (61%).

Attainment 8 is the Key Stage 4 performance measure to assess the average academic achievement of secondary school students. It is calculated by adding together the scores from eight GCSE subjects. At Key Stage 4 (KS4),<sup>8</sup> provisional Attainment 8 average was 46.8 in 2025 in Camden's state funded schools, slightly lower than last year's figure of 47.9. Camden is ahead of the national average (45.9) but behind the London average (50.5). See the Inequalities chapter for more detail on these outcomes.

The provisional average result for pupils in Camden state funded schools achieving a grade 4 or above in English and maths at GCSEs is 62.8% in 2025, lower than both the average for England (64.5%) and London (70.3%).

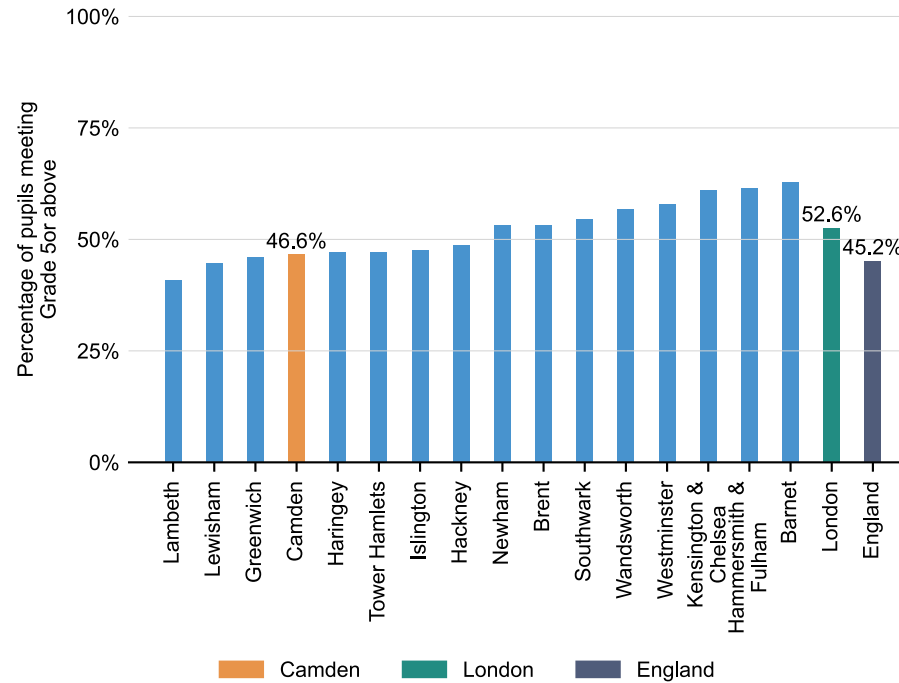
**The 6 WMC ambitions**

**Figure 1.8:** Percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and maths, Key Stage 2, 2024/25



Source: Department for Education, 2024/25 - provisional data

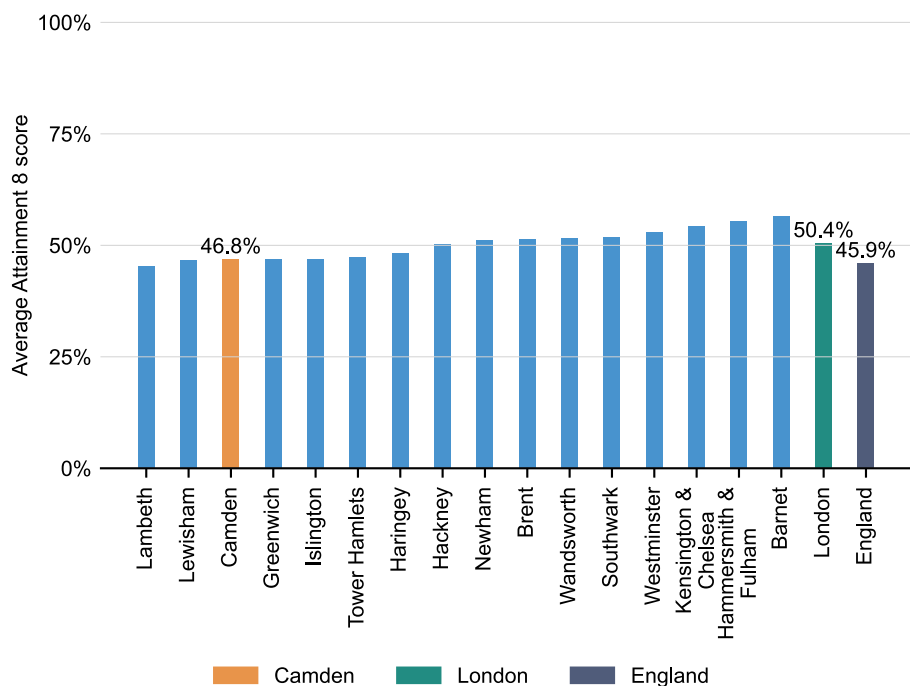
**Figure 1.9:** Percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in reading, writing and maths, Key Stage 4, 2024/25



Source: Department for Education, 2024/25 - provisional data

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**Figure 1.10: Attainment 8 score, average, 2024/25**



Source: Department for Education, 2024/25 - provisional data

**In 2023/24, 90% of Key Stage 4 Camden pupils progressed to sustained education destinations**

The latest data in this release covers students who left key stage 4 in 2022/23 and follows their destinations in 2023/24. After completing key stage 4 (after year 11), 91.3% of pupils from Camden mainstream schools progressed into further education, work, or apprenticeships.<sup>9</sup> This is a decrease from 95.4% last year, matching the national average (91.3%) but below the London average (92.9%) for 2023/24. Last year, Camden had the highest rate among the comparison group, this year, it ranks 6th. 90.1% of pupils went on to sustained education destinations

(continuous participation for at least six months), above the national average (85%), slightly below the London average (90.9%), and down from 94.5% last year.

Since all Camden secondary schools have sixth forms, a large proportion - 65% of pupils - continued into their school's own sixth form. This is much higher than both the national average (37%) and the London average (57%). As a result, fewer Camden students progressed to further education colleges (20%) or sixth form colleges (4.7%).

The importance of personalised support in helping young people navigate these transitions was highlighted by residents. One young person described how local services guided her during a critical stage in her education journey:

**“ CAMHS [Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services] has helped me a lot with my mental health. The social workers especially helped with choosing my college and education path”** (17, Female, Regent's Roots Festival).

This reflects the role that mental health support and trusted relationships can play in helping young people stay engaged with education and make informed choices about their future.

Good Life Camden ☺

**Education and lifelong learning: Schools are safe, inclusive and accessible**

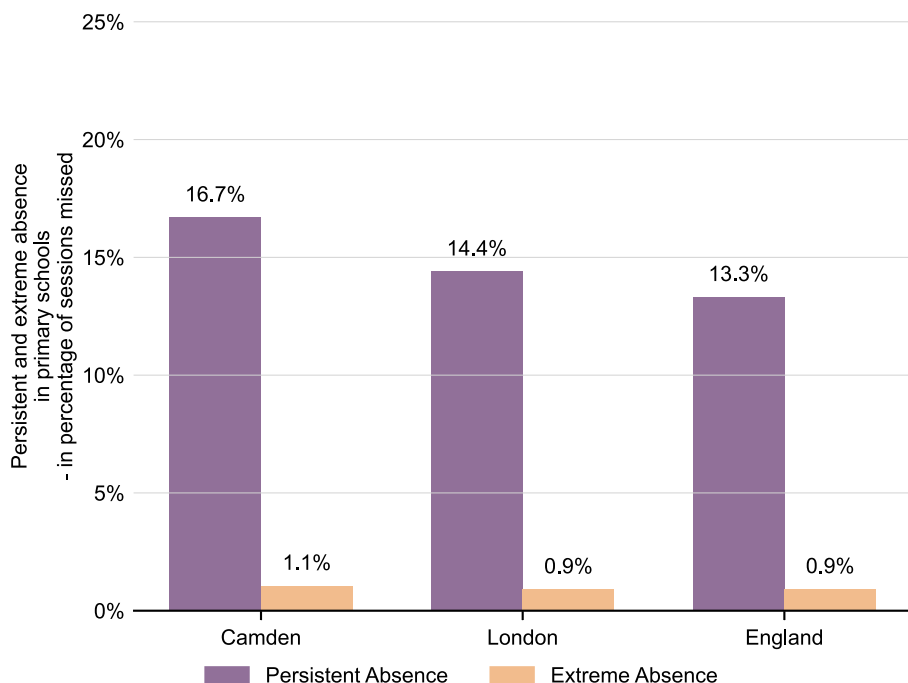
**The persistent absence rate (missing more than 10% of school sessions) was 22% in Camden in 2024/25, double the pre-pandemic figure. Secondary school pupils in Camden were persistently absent more than all other Inner London boroughs and among the highest in the whole country**

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

Missing school can lead to significant academic, social, and emotional consequences for pupils, particularly affecting their long-term success and well-being. Absence rates are linked to attainment, with pupils with lower educational attainment also missing school more often. It has been a challenge both locally in Camden, and nationally to recover school attendance to the levels seen before the COVID 19 pandemic.

Persistent absence from school is defined as attendance below 90% of sessions. The latest data for Autumn/Spring terms 2024/25 indicates that 1,391 primary school pupils in Camden were classified as being persistently absent. This represents 17% of Camden primary school pupils, higher than the London rate of 14% and the national rate of 13%.<sup>10</sup>

**Figure 1.11: Persistent and severe absence in primary schools, 2024/25**

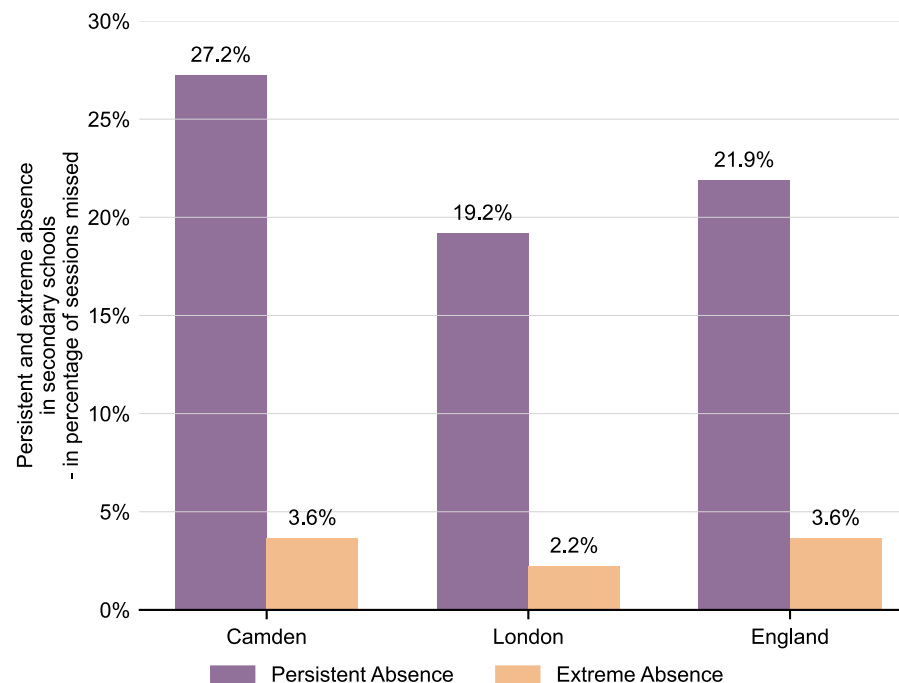


Source: Department for Education, 2024/25 - Autumn and Spring terms

For the same period, in secondary schools there were 2,056 Camden pupils persistently absent, which equates to 27%, the highest in all of London and among the highest in the whole country. England average rate was 22% and London 19%.

Overall, including pupils from primary, secondary and special school Camden's rate was 22%, higher than London's rate of 17% and the national rate of 18%. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic Camden's persistent absence rate was 11%, half what it is now.

**Figure 1.12: Persistent and severe absence in secondary schools, 2024/25**



Source: Department for Education, 2024/25 - Autumn and Spring terms

Severe absence is defined as when a pupil misses 50% or more of their possible school sessions. Such students may face significant challenges in their education and may require additional support. Similarly to

persistent absenteeism, Camden’s average is higher than the London and England averages, especially in secondary schools where Camden, at 3.6% is again the highest in London (London average is 2.2% and England average 3.2%).

**Camden had the lowest rate of suspensions in primary schools in 2023/24 across the comparison group with 94 suspensions, and no permanent exclusions. In secondary schools, suspensions were lower than the England rate but close to the London rate, with 1,074 suspensions and 25 permanent exclusions**

A pupil may be excluded from school behaviour that occurs either in or outside school, though this should only be as a last resort. Exclusion is considered appropriate only when the headteacher feels that if the pupil stayed in school, it would cause serious harm to the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

There are two types of exclusion - a fixed term (also known as a suspension) or permanent exclusion. A fixed period exclusion is where a child is temporarily removed from school. This is usually between one and three days, but can be up to 45 days in any one school year. A permanent exclusion is when the headteacher decides that the child should not return to that school at all.

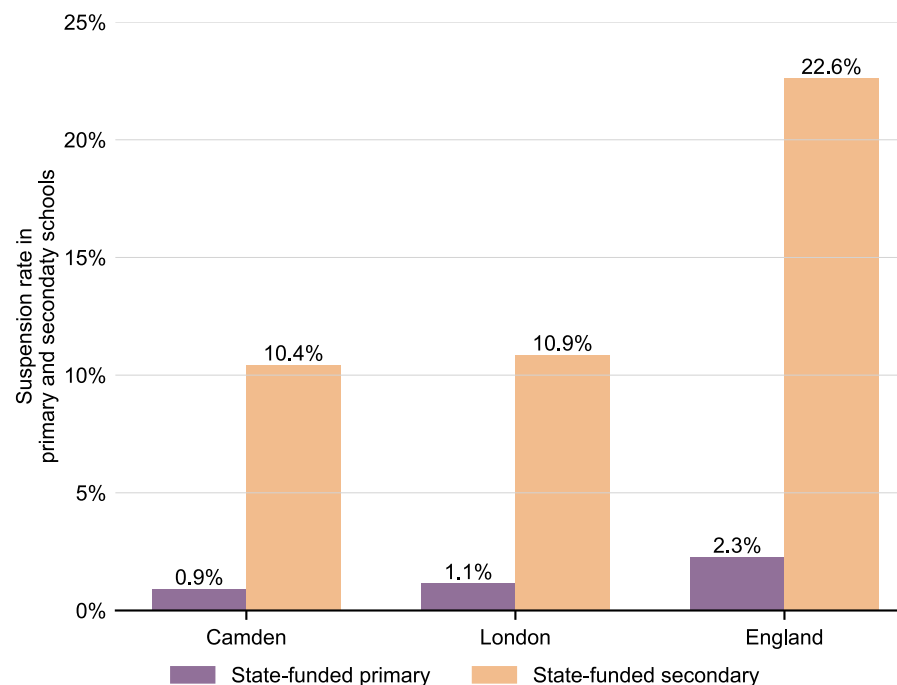
The latest release of data was for the academic year 2023/24. In Camden primary schools there were 94 suspensions in the year (a rate of 0.9 per 100 pupils). When comparing with other local authorities, Camden’s rate was one of the lowest in the comparison group, behind only Newham, and lower than London average, which had a suspension rate of 1.2 per 100 pupils, and also lower than the England average of 2.3 per 100. In addition, in 2023/24 Camden had zero primary permanent exclusions.

For secondary schools there were 1,074 fixed term suspensions in

Camden in 2023/24 at a rate of 10.4 per 100 pupils. This was just lower than the London rate (10.9) and much lower than the England rate (22.6 per 100 pupils). There were 25 permanent exclusions in Camden secondary schools (0.24) which is high when compared to London (0.14) but just lower than the England average (0.25).

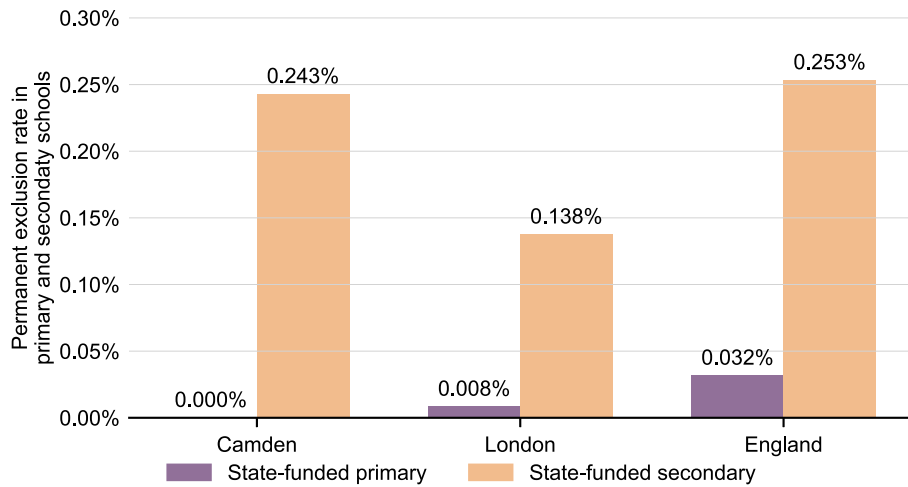
Overall, of children receiving any form of exclusion across primary and secondary school, there were more boys (62%) than girls (38%). There were more disadvantaged pupils (eligible for free school meals, FSM) (68%), than those that were not. Almost half, 48%, of those pupils had an Education, Health and Care (ECH) plan or Special Educational Needs (SEN) support. Pupils with mixed ethnicity (39%) and White (38%) made up the highest proportions of ethnic groups.

**Figure 1.13: School suspensions in primary and secondary schools, 2023/24**



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

**Figure 1.14:** School exclusions in primary and secondary schools, 2023/24



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

Young people and families have shared concerns about the wider environment, particularly the lack of accessible activities and support outside school hours.

As one resident shared:

**“As a young person it is difficult to find local and affordable leisure centres/activities. I usually end up going out of the borough to access cheaper leisure facilities”**

(26, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

Young people expressed similar concerns about affordability and limited local opportunities, noting that although Camden has many attractions, these are often too expensive to access regularly, and while opportunities for training and education exist, these are not always engaging.

**“We need more activities that are fun [...] youth clubs don’t offer anything special [...] they can offer educational activities to help teenagers stay away from crime”**

(15, Male, Camden Mela 2025).

These concerns were further echoed by adults in the community who highlighted the impact of reduced youth services and training opportunities.

**“For the youth, there are not enough resources [...] there needs to be a better offer of training and employment services”**

(43, Female, Pearly Sari at The People’s Museum).

**In 2025, there were 1,607 children who are Camden residents and had an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, and 1,181 pupils with EHC plans in Camden state-funded schools (not all of whom are also residents)**

An Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is a legal document which describes a child or young person’s special educational needs, the support they need, the outcomes they would like to achieve and the placement they should be in. The data on children with EHC plans in Camden is available both for children who are in Camden schools (but not necessarily residents) and children who are Camden residents (but not necessarily in Camden schools) and who have their plans provided by the local authority.

In January 2025, there were 4,605 children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in Camden state funded schools (nurseries, primaries, secondaries, special, pupil referral units (PRUs) and in alternative provision). Of those, 1,181 pupils had an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. Another 3,424 pupils were receiving Special Educational Needs (SEN) support in school (16.3%). This rate has increased significantly in the last 10 years, more so than the London

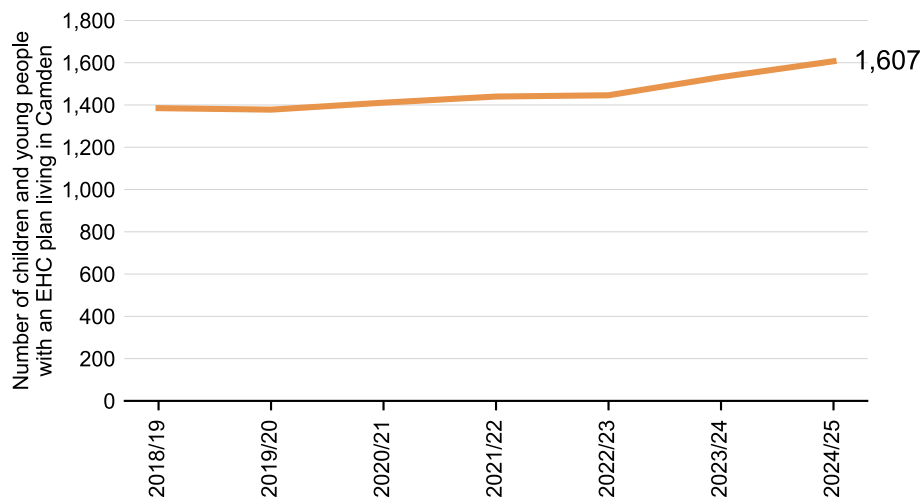
**The 6 WMC ambitions**

average (13.2%) and the England average (14.2%). See figure 1.16. Overall, pupils with EHC plans and pupils receiving SEN support made up 22% of the total number of the Camden school population.<sup>11</sup>

In January 2025, there were 1,607 children with EHC plans **living in Camden**, whether in Camden schools or others. Over the last decade there has been a steady increase in EHC plans in Camden. Some 70% of Camden children with EHC plans are boys, partially explained by the fact that girls are generally assessed later than boys. In terms of ethnic groups, 34% of Camden students with EHC plans are White, 20% are Asian or Asian British, 19% are Black or Black British, 13% of Mixed ethnicity and 13% other ethnicities or unclassified.<sup>12</sup>

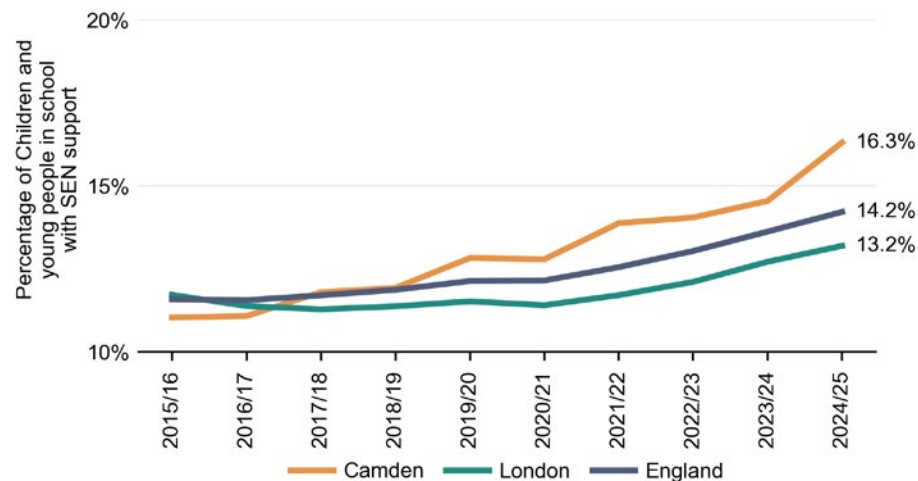
42% of Camden’s children with EHC plans have Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) recorded as the primary need. 16% have Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and 15% have Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. This is broadly in line with the rates seen within School Census data in London, though nationally the ASD rate is 33%.

**Figure 1.15: Rate of children with EHC plans**



Source: Department for Education, 2018/19-2024/25

**Figure 1.16: Rate of children in state-funded schools with SEN support, 2015-2025**



Source: Department for Education, 2015/16-2024/25

Parents of children with special needs face unique challenges that go beyond daily care, often requiring tailored support and affordable access to activities. One parent shared,

“ local youth workers encouraged me to do things out of the house and attend the Carers Partnership Board [...] My husband is visually impaired and my daughter is on the spectrum and I feel very supported by family and friends in the area”

(42, Female, Regent’s Roots Festival).

While community support is vital, cost remains a major barrier:

“ There should be extra support for parents with special needs kids [...] swimming £36 for 30 mins, football £120 [...] too expensive”

(48, Female, Focus group at Harmond Children’s Centre and Family Hub).

These experiences highlight people’s desire to access inclusive support that caters to children with additional needs.

## Endnotes

- 1 Raise Camden - Child Health Equity Data Audit, <https://www.instituteoftheequity.org/resources-reports/raise-camden---child-health-equity-data-audit>
- 2 From September 2024, all eligible working parents of children aged from nine months up to the age of three can get 15 hours free childcare and education for 38 weeks a year, as well as parents who are not working and receive certain benefits. All 3- and 4-year-olds in Camden can get 15 hours a week during term time, and some families are eligible for an extra 15 hours. As of September 2025, the criteria has changed again so that all eligible working parents of children under five in England can claim 30 hours free childcare (term time only). We will follow the update in the next State of the Borough Report.
- 3 <https://www.coram.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/ChildcareSurvey2025-1.pdf>
- 4 Corporate Parenting Report 2023/24 <https://camden.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s122670/Appendix%20-%20Corporate%20Parenting%20Service%20Annual%20Report%202023-24.pdf>
- 5 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions/2024>
- 6 These figures are provisional, and final results will be published in Dec 2025, though historically there is very little change in the overall figures.
- 7 Key Stage 2 (KS2) covers Years 3 to 6 of primary school for children aged 7 to 11, focusing on core academic subjects. The attainment scores are based on the national assessments known as SAT taken by pupils in year 6. [Key stage 2 attainment, Academic year 2024/25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)
- 8 Key Stage 4 (KS4) is a crucial stage in the UK education system where students typically aged 14 to 16 work towards national qualifications, primarily GCSEs. [Key stage 4 performance, Academic year 2024/25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)
- 9 [Key stage 4 destination measures, Academic year 2023/24 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)
- 10 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england/2024-25-autumn-and-spring-term>
- 11 [Special educational needs in England, Academic year 2024/25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)
- 12 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans/2025>

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[camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report](https://camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report)



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# How to navigate the document

## Best viewing experience

This document is best viewed downloaded on a laptop or desktop computer. The interactivity will not work as well on tablets, iPads and mobile phones. You will still be able to view, scroll through and use some functionality such as hyperlinks, however the main navigation buttons on the right may be less effective.

## Right hand navigation

The buttons on the right hand side take you to the different sections of the document. The 6 ambition sections each have their own contents for you to jump to a particular area with ease. Simply click on the button on the right to take you back to that section's contents. All other sections do not have a contents page.

## Endnotes

### Example:

In Camden in 2022, there were 6,389 children or 1 in 5 (19.8%) living in poverty, up from 13.5% in 2021.<sup>1</sup>

To go to the reference of a particular Endnote, click on the number at the end of the paragraph.

Click on the number in the Endnotes to take you back to the page which the reference number is on.

### Example:

- 1 Proportion of children living in low income households (60% of median income) before and after housing costs, Local indicators of child poverty, Centre for Research in Social Policy, Loughborough University for End Child Poverty (2022); Children in low income families: local area statistics, DWP (2022), <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2022>, [https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local\\_indicators\\_of\\_child\\_poverty\\_after\\_housing\\_costs\\_2021\\_22/23523453](https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local_indicators_of_child_poverty_after_housing_costs_2021_22/23523453).

Text which is in blue and underlined is an active link. This example is a URL hyperlink which will take you to a webpage. Others may open up another document or activate an email programme.

Home and next/  
previous page

Contents page

Overviews

These take  
you to  
individual  
webpages

List of chart and images

Click on this link to bring you  
back to this description of the  
Comparison Group.

# Good Life Camden

Camden’s State of the Borough report is published annually. It brings together data and evidence from quantitative and qualitative sources, and includes national level statistics, regional data, and locally collected data. It provides a **shared evidence base about the outcomes experienced by people in Camden**, and is intended for organisations, residents and the council to increase the understanding of people’s wellbeing in the borough. It is aligned to the structure of the [We Make Camden](#) vision for the borough, and uses the [Good Life Camden](#) framework to identify relevant data.

**A note on timings:** The 2026 report is published earlier than in previous years due to the local elections in May 2026. Due to the shorter timeline for producing the report, we did not include data that was not updated since the last report at the time of drafting.


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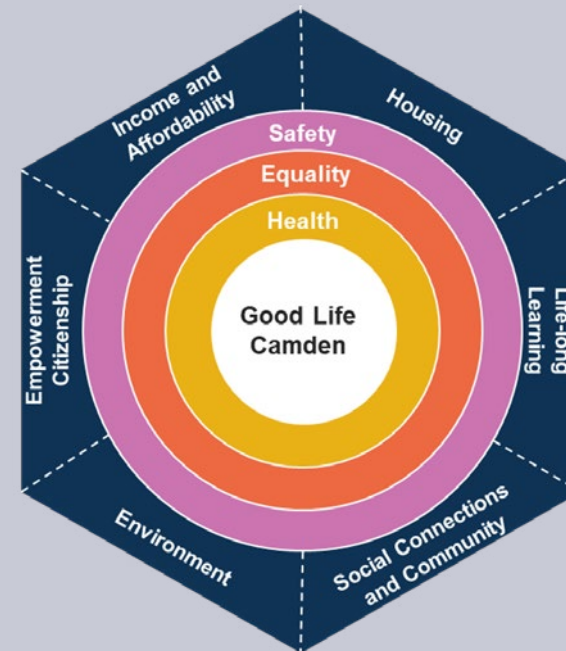
## Good Life Camden

The report focuses on the outcomes that are important for living a good life in Camden, based on the co-created [Good Life Camden](#) (GLC) framework. The GLC framework was developed with residents and staff in 2022. It breaks down the concept of living a good life into nine **themes**, which people told us are most important. These are: Safety, Equality, Health, Housing, Income and Affordability, Lifelong Learning, Social Connections and Community, and Environment. The themes of Safety, Health and Housing are identified as core cross-cutting themes. The framework also spells out the **signals** that tell us if we’re making progress against the different GLC themes (e.g. for Housing, a signal is that the quality of housing is high). The signals are underpinned by **measures**, which use data from a range of sources, such as official statistics or administrative data from schools, hospitals and transport.

In pulling together the data and evidence for the report, we started from the framework and looked for quantitative data that was available, preferably comparable across place and time. Mapping to the GLC framework also showed us where we have data gaps, whether for signals and measures (e.g. people feel safe in Camden) or in the breakdowns of averages (e.g. what is the experience of specific populations, like perceptions of safety of adults with learning disabilities).

Throughout the report, we have highlighted the relevant Good Life Camden signals where the data is presented.

**Look out for these**  **throughout the report, presenting the relevant Good Life Camden signal in each section.**



# Inclusive Local Economy

Camden's local economy should be strong, sustainable and inclusive – everyone should have a secure livelihood to support them to live a prosperous life



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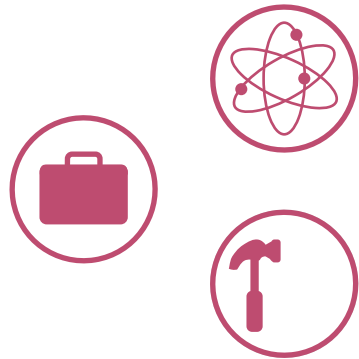
Camden has one of the largest shares of big businesses (over 250 employees) and small businesses in London	6
There were 442,000 jobs in Camden in 2023, reflecting a job density of 2.71 jobs per working age person	8
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## Key Insights

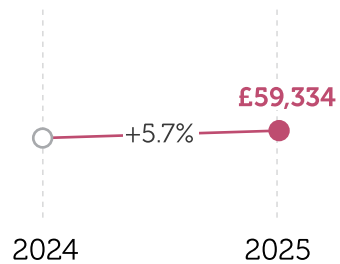
In 2023

There were 442,000 jobs in Camden: 2.5 jobs per every working age resident



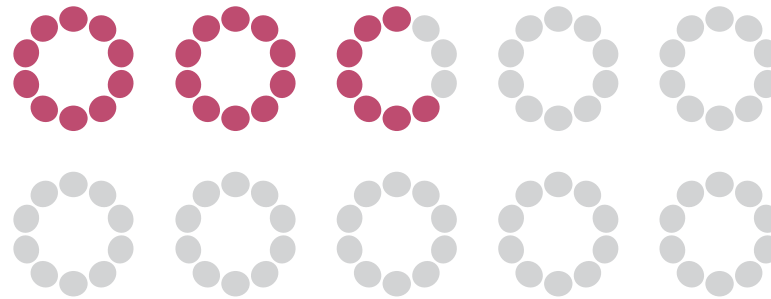
In 2025

The median household income in Camden was £59,334



In 2025

The largest industry sector is the Professional, Scientific and Technical category, with 10,995 businesses (27% of all businesses in Camden)



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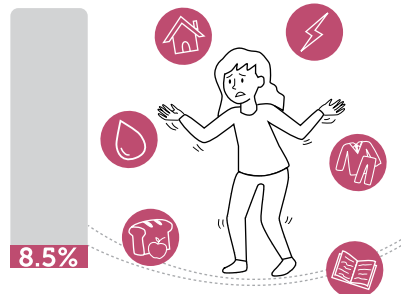
In 2024/2025

# 5%

of the Camden labour force was unemployed

In 2024

8.5% of employees were earning below the London Living Wage (£13.85/hour)



“

*I think [it] is so important to keeping the youth occupied and prepared for adult life and employment.*

”

-50+, Male

“

*Camden is a great place to live, there are lots of opportunities.*

”

-45, Female

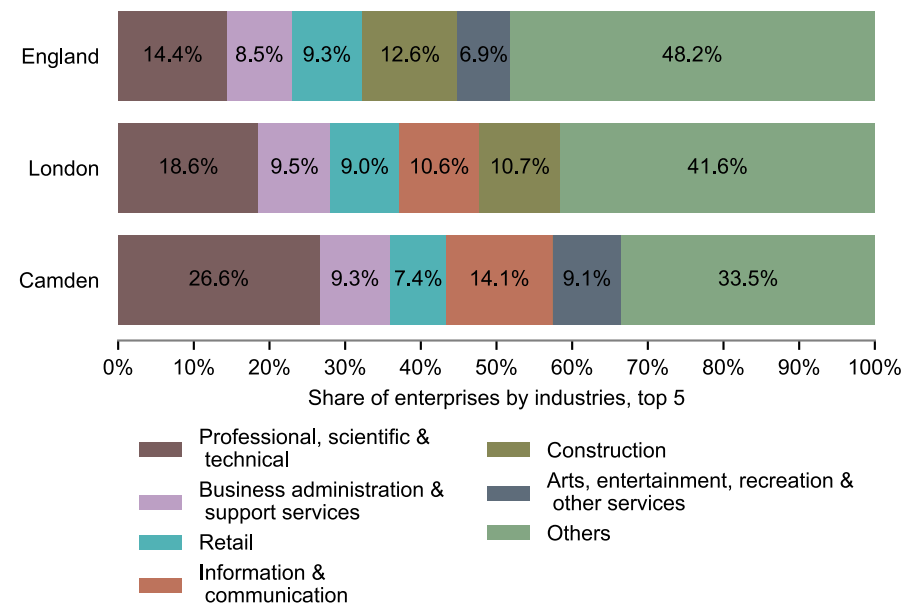
This chapter presents data relating to Camden’s role as a major economic hub and the opportunities and challenges this creates for residents and businesses. Camden has a rich and diverse business base, with over 41,000 enterprises across sectors and a particularly strong presence in professional, scientific and technical industries. It has a high concentration of large employers and one of the highest job densities in London, underlining its importance as an employment centre. However, some residents experience barriers in entering the workforce, and the employment rate is lower than in other parts of London. While incomes have been rising, there are still 18% of households with income below £30,000 a year, and 16% of households are out of work. For more data on youth employment and opportunities see the [Inequalities](#) chapter.

**Camden has one of the largest shares of big businesses (over 250 employees) and small businesses in London**

Camden has a diverse range of business industries across sectors, with a total of 41,260 businesses in 2025. The largest industry sector is the Professional, Scientific and Technical category, with 10,995 businesses, comprising 27% of all businesses in Camden. This is followed by the Information and Communication category, with 5,800 businesses (14% of total) and then Arts, Entertainment, Recreation & Other Services with 3,760 businesses, making up 9% of total.

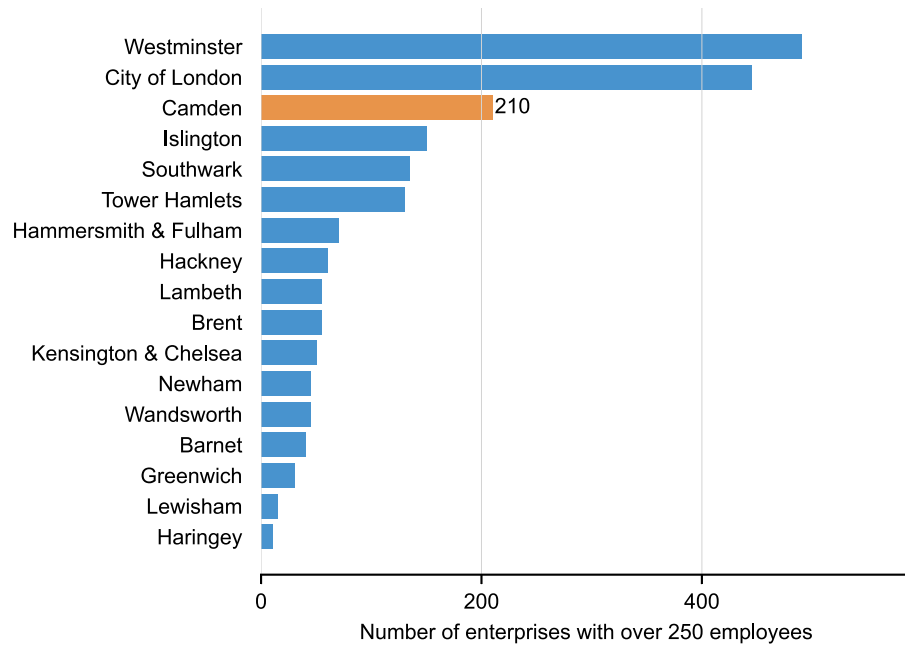
In 2025 there were 210 businesses in Camden with more than 250 employees, surpassed only by City of London (445 businesses) and Westminster (490 businesses) in the comparison group. That means that Camden makes up 8% of the total number of businesses with over 250 employees in London and 2% of the total in England. Camden also has a high number of businesses with fewer than 5 employees – 29,675, second only to Westminster in the comparison group, and making up 7% of the total in London.

**Figure 2.1: Share of enterprises by industries, top 5 for each area (Camden, London, England), 2025**



Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, 2025

Figure 2.2: Number of enterprises with over 250 employees, 2025



Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, 2025

**Learning from: British Land qualitative research in Regent’s Place**

Adam Irvanipour, a local resident at Regent’s Park Estate who completed a Sustainability & Development Internship at British Land in 2025, conducted qualitative research to explore the relationship between Regent’s Place and the local community, particularly focusing on young people and local businesses. The purpose was to identify what is working well, what is missing, and how developments (including the proposed Euston Tower project) could better serve local residents, workers, and visitors.

The research was conducted via semi-structured interviews with young residents from Regent’s Park Estate and fifteen local business owners across nearby streets. Trust-building methods and guided interviews were combined with a review of British Land’s social-value work in Camden.

The research found that businesses in the area serve a wide customer base, mainly residents, students, tourists, and NHS/HS2 workers. Concerns about development were mainly related to construction disruption, communication, safety, and impact on local infrastructure. In the case of Euston Tower specifically, the removal of ground-floor retail at Euston Tower, at least whilst the building undergoes redevelopment, shifts office-worker spending into the wider area, creating and opportunities for independents.

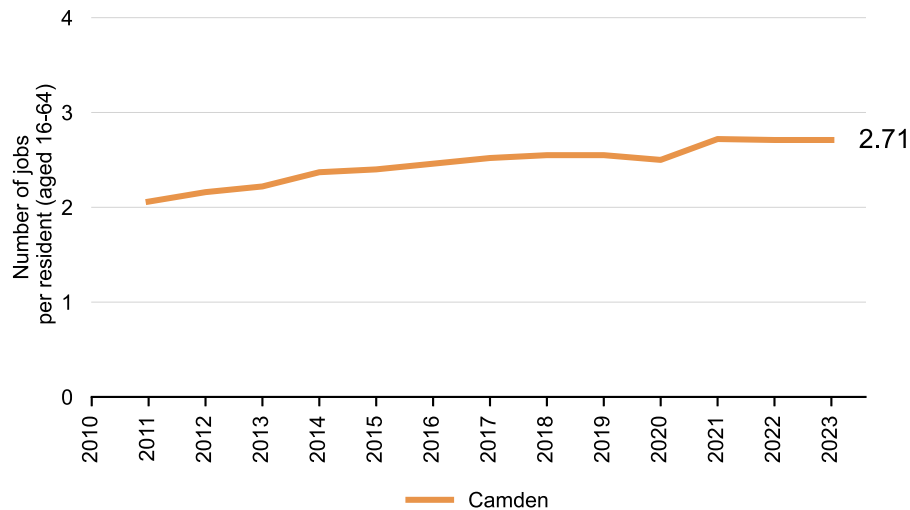
Adam’s research found that commercial areas risk alienating locals without good communication and support. Young people want safe, inclusive spaces and skill-building, while local businesses need clarity and resources. Continued investment in communication, youth engagement, and local economic resilience helps companies like British Land and other landlords make more inclusive and successful places.

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

**There were 442,000 jobs in Camden in 2023, reflecting a job density of 2.71 jobs per working age person**

Camden has seen steady growth in the number of jobs over the period from 2011 to 2023, rising from 331,000 in 2011 to 442,000 in 2023, an increase of around 33%, with a recovery following the dip during the pandemic. This growth is similar to the London trend. Across London, total jobs grew from 5.03 million in 2011 to 6.57 million in 2023, while England as a whole increased from 26.87 million to 31.56 million over the same period. In 2023, Camden ranks among the boroughs with the highest job counts outside Westminster (846,000) and the City of London (759,000).

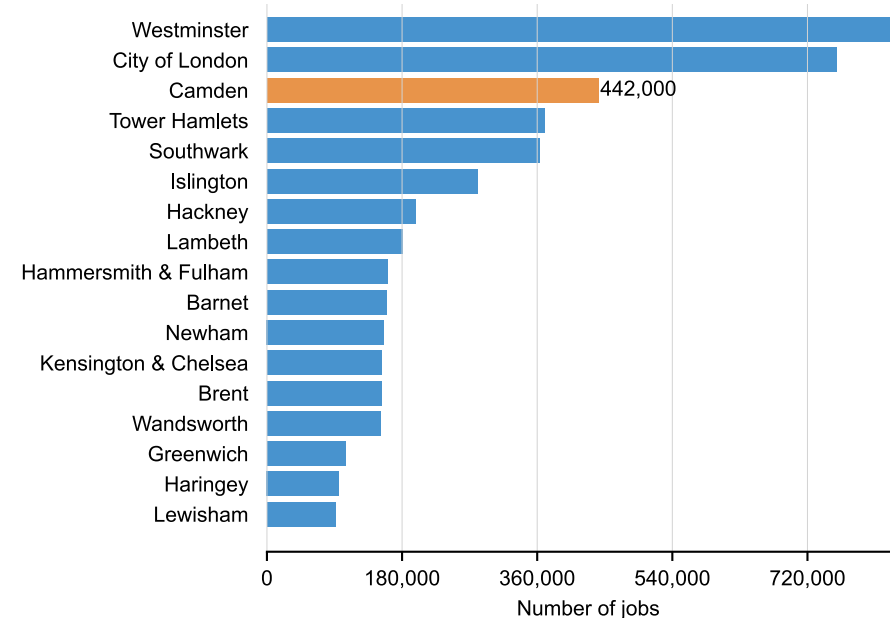
**Figure 2.3: Number of jobs per working-aged resident in Camden**



Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, 2025

Accordingly, Camden has one of the highest job densities among London boroughs, which has been consistently higher than both the London and England averages over the period from 2010 to 2023. Job density in Camden increased from 2.06 in 2010 to 2.71 in 2021 and remained stable at 2.71 through 2023.<sup>1</sup> Over the same time period, London’s job density rose from 0.86 in 2010 to 1.07 in 2023, while England’s increased from 0.77 to 0.87. Camden’s figures are more than double the London average and over three times the England average, reflecting its role as a major employment centre. Compared to the comparison group, Camden ranks just below Westminster, which has the highest job density after the City of London, rising from 4.16 in 2011 to 5.33 in 2023. Camden’s job density is higher than that of Islington (1.67), Southwark (1.53), Tower Hamlets (1.46), and Kensington and Chelsea (1.45), all of which have seen gradual increases but remain far below Camden’s level.

**Figure 2.4: Number of jobs**



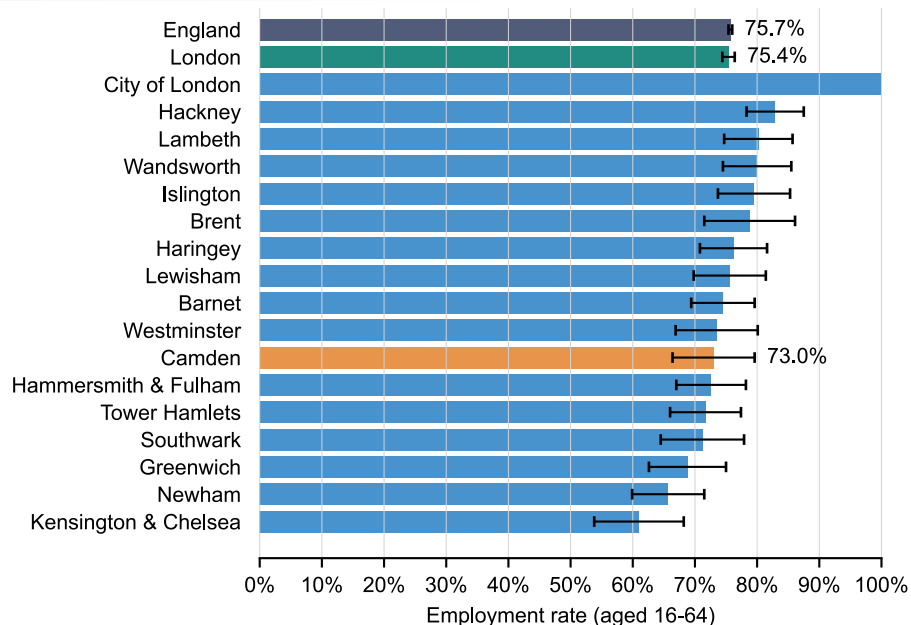
Source: Office for National Statistics, 2023

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**Around 3 in 4 people in Camden are in employment in 2024/25, fewer than in London and England, and unemployment is almost 5%, close to the London average but higher than England**

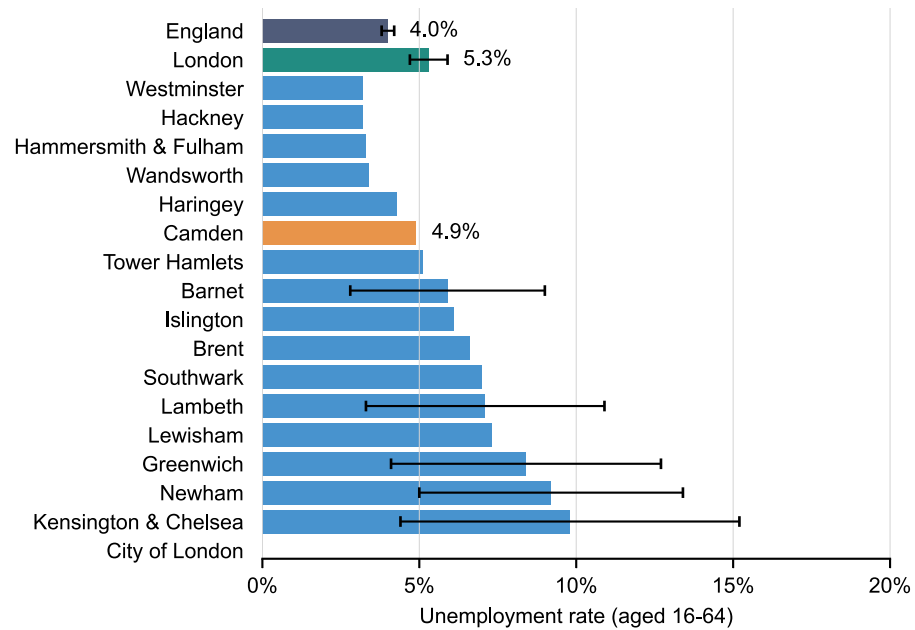
The employment rate in Camden has changed over time but is generally close to the London average, if below. In 2010/11 it was 67.1%, reaching 72.5% in 2019/20 and in 2024/25 it was 73%. Compared to London overall (75.4% in 2024/25) and England (75.7%), Camden is slightly below both but within a similar range. Across the comparison group there is variation: Wandsworth (80%), Hackney (82.9%), and Lambeth (80.2%) are notably higher, while Kensington and Chelsea (61%) and Newham (65.7%) are lower. The level of economic inactivity mirrors these figures, with 23.3% in 2024/25 in Camden, which is higher than both the London (20.4%) and England (21.2%) rates.

**Figure 2.5: Employment rate, 2024/25**



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2024/25  
Note: Error margins shown where available

**Figure 2.6: Unemployment rate, 2024/25**



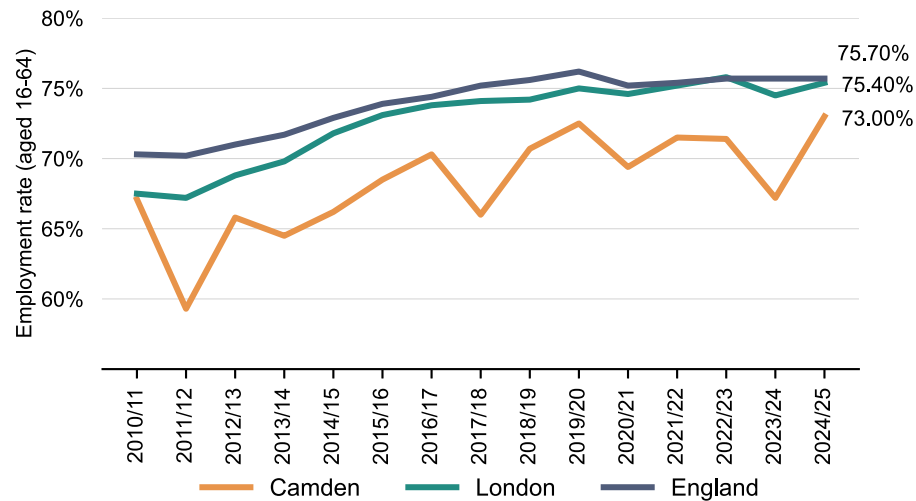
Source: Annual Population Survey, 2024/25  
Note: Error margins shown where available

However, for Camden and other boroughs the confidence intervals (a range of values that the true value is likely to fall in) need to be considered. Confidence intervals for the employment rate in Camden widened over time, from around  $\pm 4\%$  in early years to  $\pm 6.6-7\%$  recently, mostly due to changes in sampling rather than a structural change. This means the true employment rate could be several points higher or lower than the reported figure, making year-on-year changes less definitive. For example, Camden's 73% in 2024/25 could realistically range from about 66% to 80%, overlapping with other boroughs. In contrast, London and England have much narrower intervals ( $\pm 1\%$  and  $\pm 0.3\%$ ), so these estimates are more reliable. The widening intervals for borough-level data suggest caution when interpreting short-term changes; the apparent dip in Camden's employment rate in 2023/24 (67.2%) may reflect sampling errors.

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Unemployment in Camden has declined markedly over the same period, falling from 9.3% in 2010/11 to 3.9% in 2019/20, finally reaching 4.9% in 2024/25. This trend broadly aligns with London and England, which also saw reductions from 9% in 2010/11 to 5% in 2024/25 and 7.7% to 4% respectively. Camden's rates have generally remained close to the London average but higher than the England average, positioning it mid-range among the comparison group - typically lower than Newham and Tower Hamlets, but higher than boroughs like Wandsworth and Kensington & Chelsea. Similar caution should be taken when interpreting these figures due to wide confidence intervals, especially comparing across boroughs.

**Figure 2.7: Employment rate, 2010-2025**



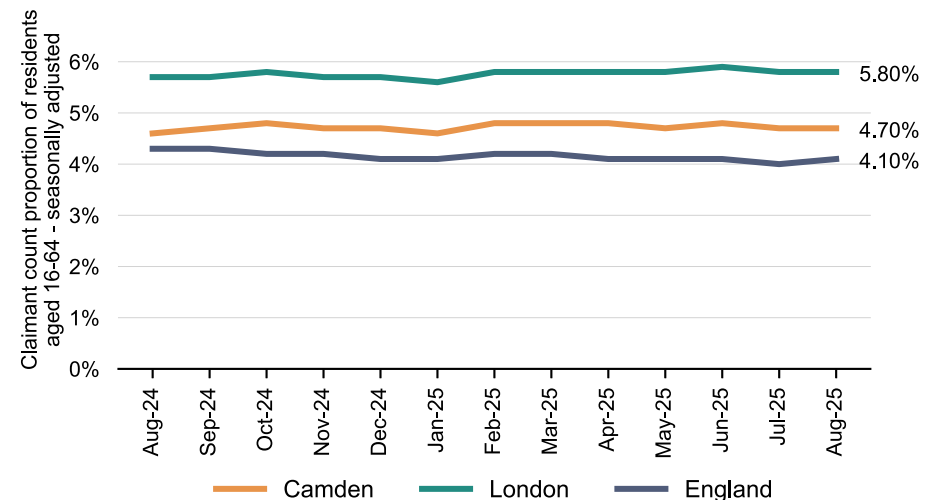
Source: Annual Population Survey, 2010/11-2024/25

**A higher share of working-aged people in Camden (4.7% of people aged 16-64) were claiming unemployment-related benefits in August 2025 compared to England (4.1%) but lower than the London rate of 5.8%.**

In the year from August 2024 to August 2025, the share of working aged people in Camden receiving unemployment related benefits was around 4.7% (from 4.6% to 4.8% each month). Across the comparison group, in August 2025, Newham had the highest rate with 8.2%, and City of London at 1.3% has the lowest, then Kensington and Chelsea with 3.5%. The rate in Camden is better than the London average of 5.8%, but still above the England average (4.1%), and 6<sup>th</sup> (lowest=better) in the comparison group.

Comparing the claimant count across genders shows a similar picture, with a similar rate of 4.7% for both females and males, as well across London boroughs, London and England.

**Figure 2.8: Proportion of working aged residents claiming unemployment benefits, Aug 2024-Aug 2025**



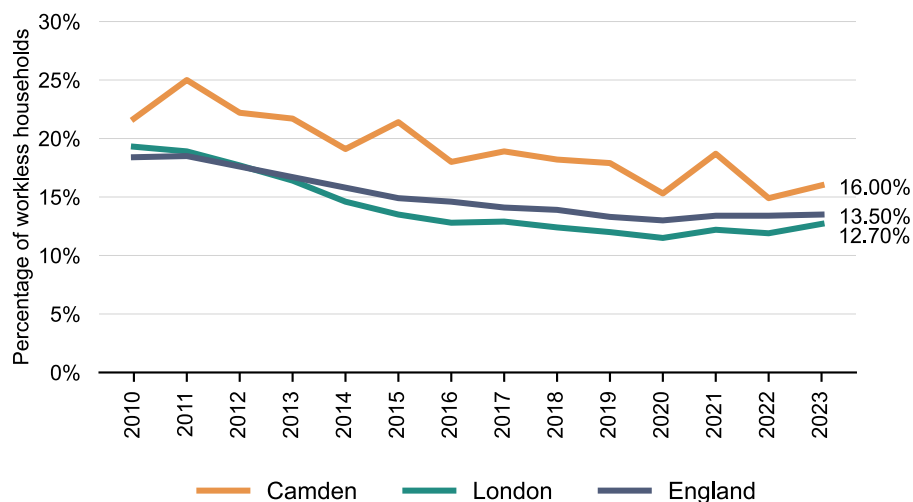
Source: Office for National Statistics, August 2024 - August 2025

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

**In 2023, 16% of households with working age adults did not have anyone in work (workless households)**

In Camden, the share of workless households has generally declined over the long term, though with some fluctuations. In 2010, 21.7% of households were workless, declining to 15.3% in 2020. However, there was an increase in 2021 to 18.7%, then down to 16% in 2023.<sup>2</sup> Camden’s recent figures remain above the London average of 12.7% in 2023 and England’s 13.5%.

**Figure 2.9: Workless households**



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2023

**Challenges and barriers to employment**

Despite Camden having a wealth of job opportunities, the borough faces a paradox: employment rates remain lower than many other parts of London. This is partly explained by the high share of students in further education, but there are still other residents who are out of

work. Residents recognise the abundance of roles but point to barriers that prevent full participation. As one resident at the Regent’s Roots Festival noted,

*“Camden is a great place to live, there are lots of opportunities” (NA).*

Others called for more inclusive and flexible options, particularly for older workers.

*“Given the ageing population you should have more opportunities for part-time work for older people. I’m 59 this year and an NHS worker, it’s a really tough job”*

(59, Female, SOTB general survey).

This perspective highlights the need for employment strategies that not only create jobs but also support wellbeing and adaptability.

Digital skills emerged as another critical barrier, particularly for women from ethnic minority communities. One Community Champion explained,

*“Women from ethnic minorities need more access to digital courses and training. Lack of digital training is a barrier to accessing key services for women from Bengali and Somali communities”*

(41, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

These insights underline that improving employment outcomes in Camden is not just about job availability, it requires skills development, flexible work arrangements, and community-led support to ensure everyone can benefit from the borough’s economic opportunities.

Similarly, a recent report from the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR)<sup>3</sup> investigated barriers to employment experienced by Bangladeshi and Pakistani women in London. It

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

found that they face significant barriers to employment, including discrimination, lack of professional networks, financial constraints, and challenges with language and recognising overseas qualifications. These issues are compounded by workplace cultures that may not accommodate religious or caring responsibilities, and by exclusion from networking opportunities.

The report highlights a preference for workplaces that are diverse, inclusive, and flexible - offering options like part-time or remote work, clear progression routes, mentorship, support for childcare, and respect for religious practices. Addressing these barriers and preferences is key to improving access to good work.

Good Life Camden [↗](#)

### Income and affordability: A good life is affordable in Camden

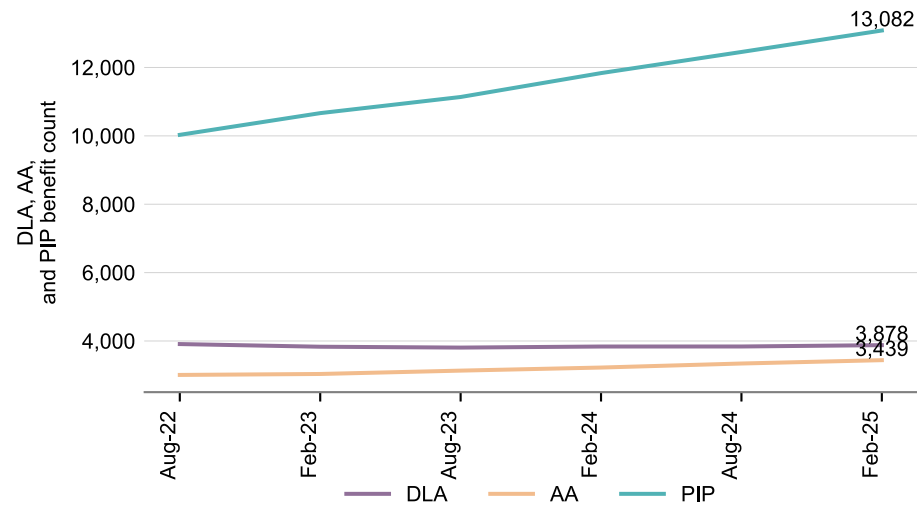
**In February 2025, 3,878 people in Camden were receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA), 3,439 received Attendance Allowance, and 13,082 received Personal Independent Payments (PIP)**

In London and England, the number of people claiming Disability Living Allowance has increased since February 2023, by almost 7% in London and 9% in England, but stayed stable in Camden.

However, Attendance Allowance in Camden has been on the rise, with 400 more recipients over the past few years representing a 13% rise, although this is a slower growth than in London (15.6%) and England (17.4%). Similarly, Personal Independent Payment recipients in Camden have also been on the rise over the last two years, with a rate of 9%,

compared to 12% in London and 10% in England. While there is a rise in these recipients, it is a slower growth in Camden compared to London and England.

**Figure 2.10: Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independent Payments, Attendance Allowance, benefits count in Camden, Aug 2022 – Feb 2025**



Source: Department for Work and Pensions, February 2022 - February 2025

### Learning from the Camden Carers action plan: the impact of caring responsibilities on employment and opportunities

Every day, carers step up to provide crucial, unpaid support, often without identifying themselves as carers, yet their impact is far reaching. In Camden, the 2021 Census revealed over 14,600 people in Camden identified as carers, with many balancing employment and caring responsibilities. Yet alongside this dedication, many face real challenges: poorer health, long-term illness and tough choices of reducing hours, changing jobs or leaving work altogether.

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Camden’s carers are diverse, and their needs vary too. Barriers like discrimination, financial strain, and digital exclusion can make life harder. These pressures mean that jobs can become less secure, finances tighten and health and wellbeing suffer, with many carers experiencing social isolation and reduced opportunities for personal development.

Camden’s [Carers Action Plan](#), co-created with carers, focuses on what matters most to carers: better access to information, mental health support, breaks from caring, and opportunities for education and employment. The Plan illustrates carers’ experiences through the following case studies, which describe some of the challenges they face. Names have been changed to protect carers’ anonymity.

**Sarah’s story:** Caring for her mother for over 14 years, Sarah found herself isolated from the workforce, struggling with low confidence, limited IT skills, and ongoing health challenges. With encouragement and tailored support, Sarah gradually rebuilt her confidence, applied for a local volunteering role, and began taking steps to improve her wellbeing. These changes marked the beginning of her journey back to independence and community involvement

**David’s story:** An experienced IT professional caring for his bedbound mother, David faced months of rejection and frustration. With expert advice, he refreshed his CV, refined his cover letters, and learned new strategies for approaching employers about flexible work. These changes led to a noticeable improvement in his job search responses, boosting his confidence and optimism as he continues his journey towards employment.

Good Life Camden ☺

## ◆ Income and affordability: People in Camden get paid fairly

**The median equivalised household income in Camden in 2025 was £52,048, almost 5% higher than the previous year, but 8.5% of employees in 2024 were earning below the living wage**

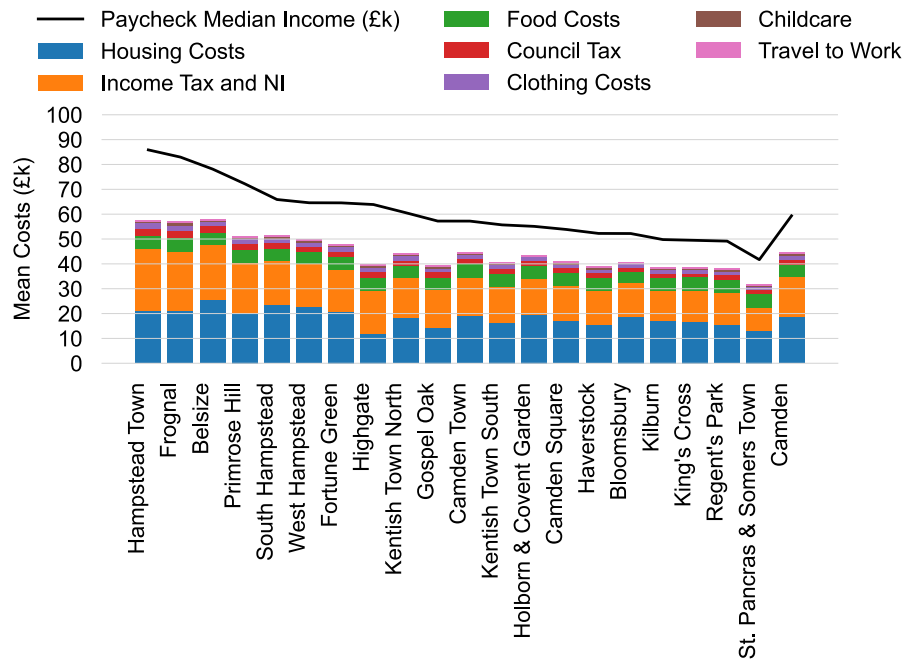
The median income from all sources<sup>4</sup> per equivalised household (equivalised means that it accounts for the size and composition of the household), in Camden in 2025 was £52,048, according to CACI Equivalised Paycheck data, an increase of 4.6% compared to the previous year. This was one of the highest incomes in London, higher than the London median of £46,835 and 6<sup>th</sup> in the comparison group, with City of London at the top of the scale with £61,901. The median income in the UK was £39,597, while the lowest in the comparison group was Newham with £37,614.

Data from CACI also shows how households spend this income across major cost categories, such as housing (mortgage, private rent and social rent), council tax, food, clothing, childcare, travel to work, income tax and national insurance payments. These are calculated for the households who have the relevant spend, meaning childcare only for households paying for childcare, rather than averaging across the whole population, but is not equivalised. Comparing essential annual spend categories with median post tax household income (black line) across Camden wards in 2025 shows that housing (around £12–£25k annually) and income tax and national insurance (around £9–£25k) dominate as the main spend. Food is the next big spend category (~£4–£6k) and council tax, travel, clothing and childcare are smaller but still significant.

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

Median income declines significantly from the affluent west and north of the borough (Hampstead Town, Frognal, and Belsize, at ~£75–£85k) toward central and southern areas (down to ~£42–£55k around Regent’s Park, King’s Cross, St Pancras & Somers Town), while for Camden overall it is close to ~£60k (£59,334). Despite high housing costs in the wealthier areas, the affordability margin (income minus essentials) is widest there because incomes are much higher than the essential costs. By contrast, in places like St Pancras & Somers Town and King’s Cross, incomes are lowest but the essential costs don’t reduce proportionately, squeezing budgets and leaving the thinner margins. Overall, looking at the income and the essential spending categories of households across Camden, it is clear that affordability is largely driven by income, despite the high housing costs.

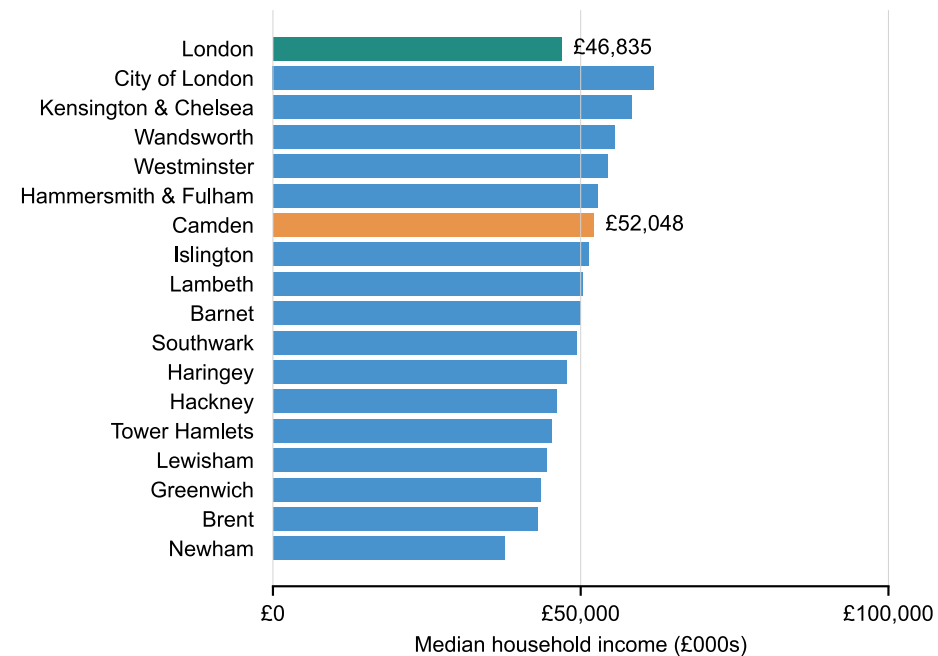
**Figure 2.11: Median household income and essential spend categories by ward & Camden, 2025**



Source: CACI - Paycheck Disposable Income, 2025

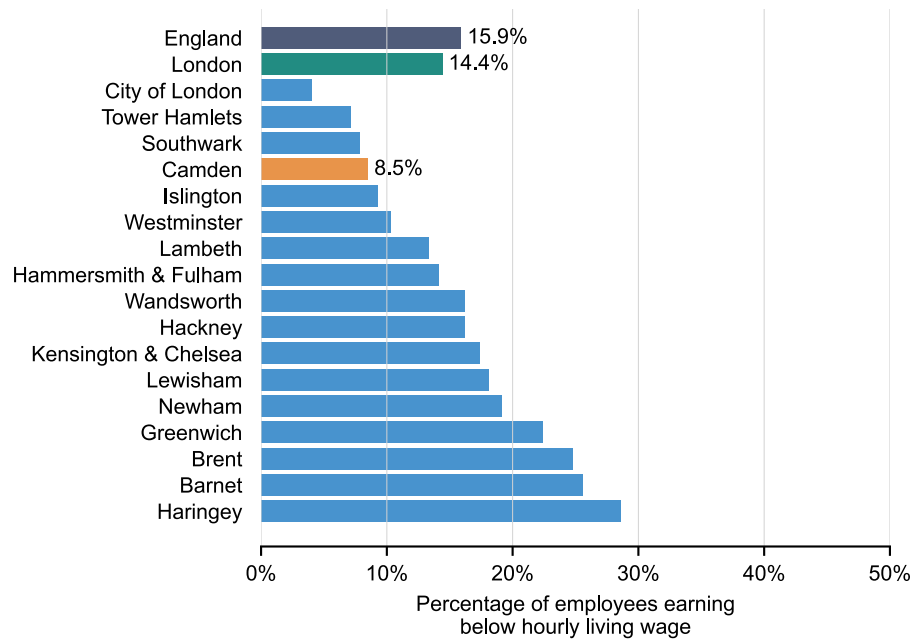
While household earnings are relatively high, there is still a considerable share of employees in Camden who earn below the living wage. Provisional data for 2024<sup>5</sup>, shows that 8.5% of employees in Camden were earning below the hourly living wage (£13.85 per hour in London in 2024/25). This was lower than the figure for London (14.4%) and England (15.9%). Across the comparison group, this was among the lowest in share of employees, with the highest share recorded in Haringey (28.6%) and the lowest in Tower Hamlets (7.1%).

**Figure 2.12: Median household income, 2025**



Source: CACI Paycheck Equivalised Income, 2025

Figure 2.13: Share of people earning below the living wage, 2024



Source: Office for National Statistics, 2024

While median earnings are relatively high in Camden, many residents are struggling to maintain living standards as the cost of living rises sharply. Everyday essentials have become prohibitively expensive for some households, forcing difficult choices. One resident explained,

**“ I go to the near supermarket, which happens to be an expensive supermarket. If you want to buy what is supposed to be healthy fruit and vegetables, it’s very expensive. So, we stop going on holiday [...] So definitely cost of living has had great impact”**  
(67, Female, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre),

Another added that

**“ The cost of living in Camden is at an all-time high” (62, Female, British, Camden Mela 2025).** For some, this means cutting back on heating: **“Sometimes I turn off the heating after 6 o’clock because the bills go up”** (67, Female, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre).

Others rely on community support to bridge the gap:

**“ Thank God for the community centre because sometimes you can access fruits and vegetable here. Sometimes we get the leftovers, which is actually quite helpful”**  
(67, Female, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre).

Residents also spoke about the steep rise in prices since the pandemic and the war in Ukraine:

**“ After lockdown, it wasn’t 10% more, 20% more, it’s 50% more. Oil price has gone up, in Asian households we use so much oil. I’ve been struggling financially since cost of living, so I believe this food co-op is a good thing, a good initiative for people.”**  
(50, Female, Focus group at Cooperation Town).

Even basic utilities are a source of stress:

**“ The Thames Water bill [...] since April it’s 40% higher. And it’s water, I need it. I can’t live without it.”**  
(71, Female, Focus group at Cooperation Town).

Beyond rising prices, residents expressed frustration with shrinking safety nets:

**“ Lots of cutbacks means we don’t get as much help”**  
(NA, Regent’s Roots Festival).

These accounts show that while Camden is a borough of prosperity for some, for others the rising costs are eroding security and wellbeing, making community-led initiatives and targeted interventions essential for resilience.

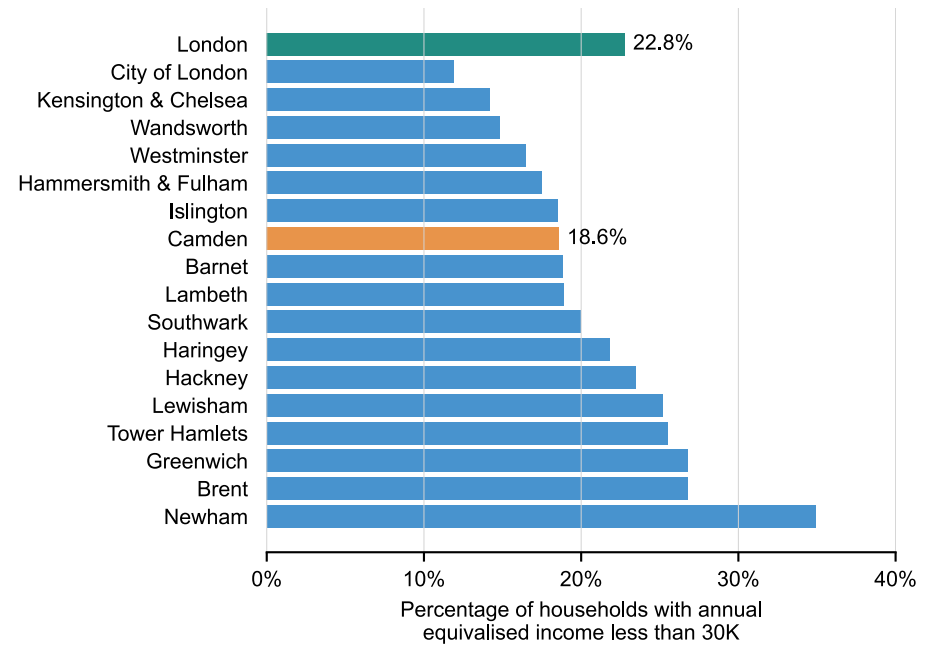
The 6 WMC ambitions

**In 2025, 18% of households had an annual equivalised income below £30,000, continuing a declining trend over the past 3 years**

In Camden, the share of households with an equivalised income (meaning accounting for the size and composition of the household) below £30,000 has declined steadily over the past three years. In 2023, 26.1% of households fell into this category, reducing to 21% in 2024 and further to 18.6% in 2025. Camden’s 2025 figure is lower than the London average of 22.8%. While Camden’s reduction is notable, similar patterns are observed across many boroughs, reflecting a broader trend of income growth. However, differences remain significant between boroughs, with areas such as Newham (34.9%) and Lewisham (25.2%) having greater shares of lower-income households. The lowest shares of low-income households in the comparison group, after City of London, are in Kensington and Chelsea (14.2%) and Wandsworth (14.8%).

A ward-level analysis of Camden shows a consistent decline in the proportion of low-income households (earning under £30,000) between 2023 and 2025. St Pancras & Somers Town, Camden’s most income-deprived ward, saw the largest improvement, with the share of low-income households falling from 50.7% in 2023 to 39.7% in 2024 and 34.6% in 2025, although it remained the most deprived ward throughout the period. Other wards also experienced notable progress. In Regent’s Park the share of low-income households declined from 38.1% in 2023 to 30.6% in 2024 and 26.8% in 2025, in King’s Cross it fell from 34.7% in 2023 to 24.1% in 2025 and in Kilburn from 33.1% in 2023 to 24.4% in 2025. Camden’s more affluent areas showed similar reductions in the share of low-income households (e.g. Belsize from 11.6% in 2023 to 8.7% in 2025, and Hampstead Town from 10.6% to 7.5%).

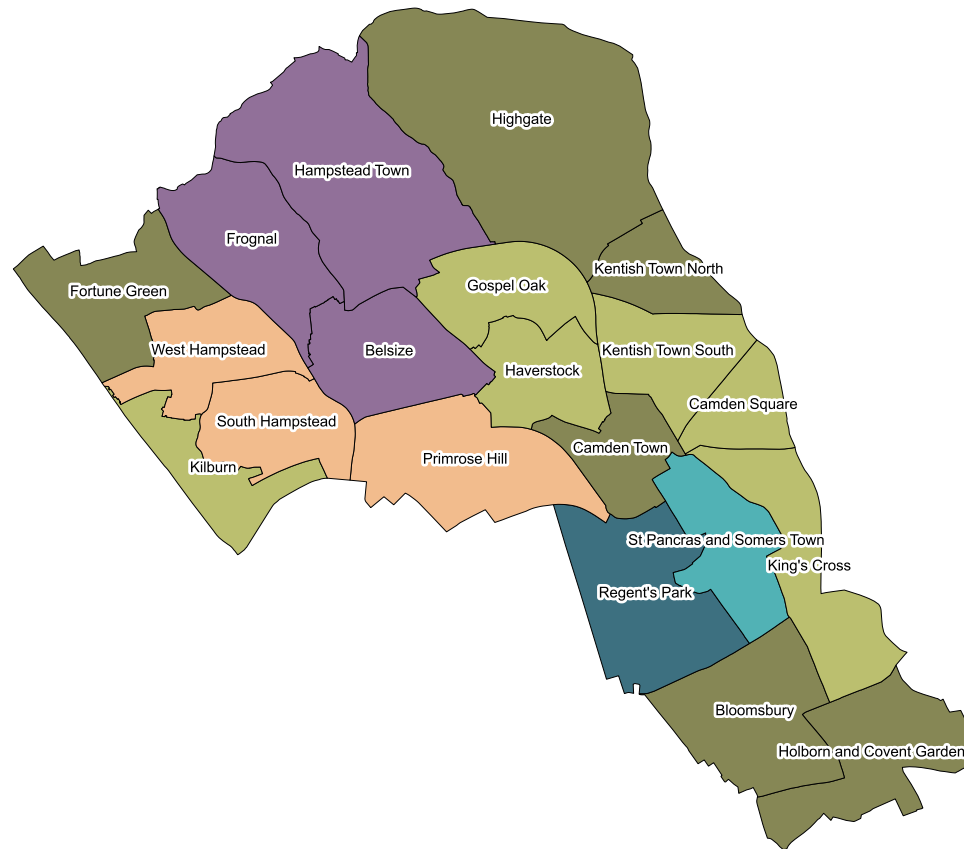
**Figure 2.14: Share of low-income households (below £30k) in 2025, comparison group**



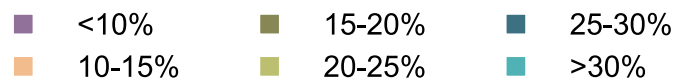
Source: CACI - Paycheck Equivalised Income, 2025

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

Figure 2.15: Share of households below £30k income, Camden wards, 2025



Share of households households below £30k equivalised income



Source: CACI - Paycheck Equivalised Income, 2025

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### Learning from: Camden Advice Network

The Camden Advice Network (CAN) is delivered by a range of voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations supporting residents by offering practical advice to help them navigate challenging life circumstances.

In the last financial year, CAN advised on 48,237 cases. With ongoing cost-of-living pressures, demand for advice on welfare benefits, legal support, and housing remained high, with 13,927 cases of welfare benefits advice, 13,872 cases of legal support, 6,041 cases of housing advice. The number of new clients accessing the network declined from 3,330 in Q1 to 2,391 in Q4, though overall demand for advice remained significant.

In the same time period, CAN supported residents to access the financial support they were entitled to, securing £11,219,925 in benefits and writing off £148,766 million in debt. Many residents used multiple services across the network, reflecting the complexity of their needs.

The residents supported by CAN were from diverse background, and consisted of: 47.7% White and 52.3% Black, Asian or mixed-heritage ethnicities, 38.9% declaring a disability, 58.4% female and 41.6% male, and 54.6% aged between 40 and 69.

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Good Life Camden 

**Education and lifelong learning:**

- ◆ People have opportunities to gain skills and go back into employment at any age
- ◆ Access to online and offline learning opportunities is for all ages, including those digitally excluded

**Two-thirds of Camden working age residents had level 4+ qualifications in 2024, higher than London and England. 5,310 people over 25 participated in further education in 2024/25, representing a rate higher than London and England**

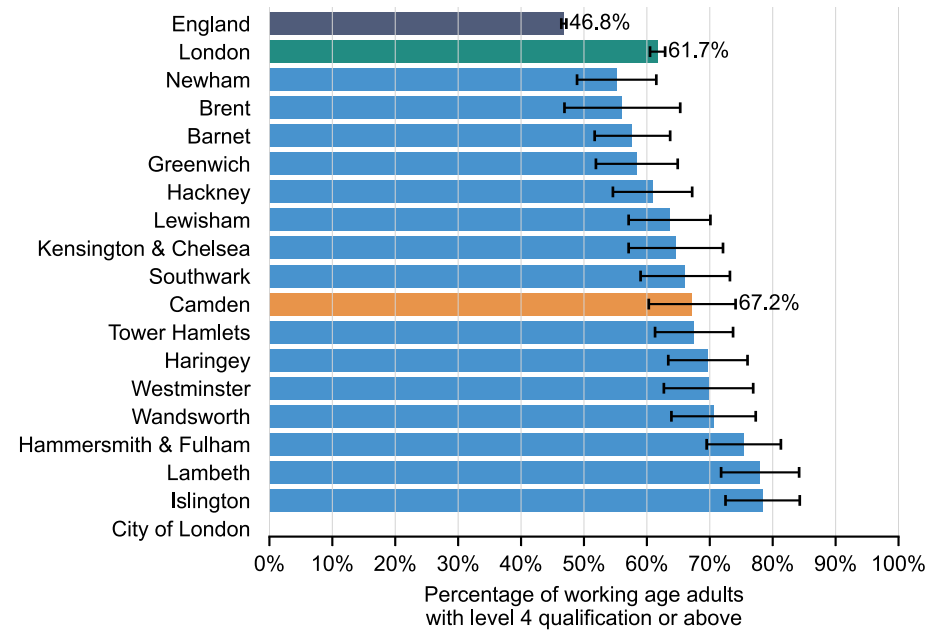
The proportion of working-age adults with Level 4 or higher qualifications in Camden has been consistently one of the highest in London, exceeding both London and England averages across the latest available three years. In 2024, 67.2% of Camden’s working-age population held such qualifications, down from 73% in 2024 but higher than the rate in 2023 of 63%. Despite this decline, Camden remains above London’s regional average of 61.7% and England’s 46.8% in 2024. However, interpretation of these figures should consider the confidence intervals, which range from  $\pm 6.6$  to  $\pm 7.0$  for Camden. These intervals indicate the potential margin of error around the reported percentages, meaning the true value could be several points higher or lower.

For example, Camden’s 2024 figure of 67.2% could realistically fall anywhere between roughly 60% and 74%, suggesting that while Camden is likely among the higher-performing boroughs, the actual figure as well as changes across time may be a result of the sampling variability rather than a definitive trend. This uncertainty underscores the importance of viewing these results as indicative rather than

absolute, and of monitoring longer-term patterns before drawing firm conclusions.

The 2021 Census figures, which are more reliable than the Annual Population Survey as it covers the whole population and not just a sample, showed that 57.3% of Camden residents had high level qualifications, and this was higher than both London (46.7%) and England (33.9%).

**Figure 2.16: Qualifications (level 4+), 2024**



Source: Annual Population Survey, 2024

The share of people age 25+ participating in further education and skills in Camden was 4,294 per 100,000 population in 2024/25 (the total number for Camden is 5,310). This put Camden 3<sup>rd</sup> across the comparison group, with Newham leading the group at 4,401 per 100,000, and Kensington and Chelsea at the other end with 2,648.

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

Camden is 21.3% higher than the rate in London and 36% higher than in England. The rate of adults participating in further education in 2024/25 was lower than in previous years both in London, England and across the comparison group.

Camden's relatively high share of residents with advanced qualifications reflects the multitudes of opportunities in the borough, with 11 further education institutions and a thriving Knowledge Quarter. This strength is echoed in the voices of residents who recognise the benefits of accessible opportunities, while also highlighting areas for improvement. As one attendee at Camden Mela 2025 shared:

**“ There is a strong feeling of inclusion in Camden as there are so many opportunities and plenty of diversity, however I do feel that there needs to be more accessible training opportunities for the youth [...] There is so much wealth in Camden and plenty of businesses that can create more opportunities for the youth.”**

(26, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

This sentiment underscores the need for educational pathways for younger generations.

Residents also emphasised the importance of adult learning and language support, which play a vital role in fostering inclusion and participation in the economy and society at large.

**“ There are also plenty of adult learning opportunities and it is fairly easy to sign up for ESOL [English for Speakers of Other Languages] classes,”**

noted a resident (50, Female) at Camden Mela 2025.

While another added:

**“ There needs to be more advertising to encourage women to join classes, like ESOL, this is very necessary”**

(52, Female, Pearly Sari at The People's Museum).

Beyond skills, education can be a lifeline for wellbeing, particularly for residents facing additional challenges such as navigating the asylum process. One participant described how learning became an emotional lifeline:

**“ There was a time that I was very depressed and I stopped my courses [...] [my teacher] called me and said why are you stopping the courses [...] my school was very helpful for my depression.”**

(38, Female, Focus group with asylum seekers living in Camden).

These reflections illustrate that learning opportunities are not only about qualifications - but they are also about empowerment, connection, and resilience, especially during periods of uncertainty.

## Endnotes

- 1 <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/jd>
- 2 <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/apsh1>
- 3 Turcatti, D., Stockland, K., and project team members (2025). Bengali and Pakistani women in good work: Barriers to Entry and Progression. NIESR: London <https://niesr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Bangladesh-Pakistani-Women-Good-Work-final.pdf?ver=5XieZuy8PXY6Alpa03Zg>
- 4 Household income includes all forms of income such as salaries, stipends, pensions, bonds and investments, and universal credit
- 5 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/numberandproportionofemployeejobswithhourlypaybelowthelivingwage>

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[camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report](https://camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report)



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# How to navigate the document

## Best viewing experience

This document is best viewed downloaded on a laptop or desktop computer. The interactivity will not work as well on tablets, iPads and mobile phones. You will still be able to view, scroll through and use some functionality such as hyperlinks, however the main navigation buttons on the right may be less effective.

## Right hand navigation

The buttons on the right hand side take you to the different sections of the document. The 6 ambition sections each have their own contents for you to jump to a particular area with ease. Simply click on the button on the right to take you back to that section's contents. All other sections do not have a contents page.

## Endnotes

### Example:

In Camden in 2022, there were 6,389 children or 1 in 5 (19.8%) living in poverty, up from 13.5% in 2021.<sup>1</sup>

To go to the reference of a particular Endnote, click on the number at the end of the paragraph.

Click on the number in the Endnotes to take you back to the page which the reference number is on.

### Example:

- 1 Proportion of children living in low income households (60% of median income) before and after housing costs, Local indicators of child poverty, Centre for Research in Social Policy, Loughborough University for End Child Poverty (2022); Children in low income families: local area statistics, DWP (2022), <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2022>, [https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local\\_indicators\\_of\\_child\\_poverty\\_after\\_housing\\_costs\\_2021\\_22/23523453](https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local_indicators_of_child_poverty_after_housing_costs_2021_22/23523453).

Text which is in blue and underlined is an active link. This example is a URL hyperlink which will take you to a webpage. Others may open up another document or activate an email programme.

**Comparison group:** throughout the report, we have referred to the 'Comparison group' for simplification. This group consists of the inner London boroughs and neighbouring boroughs to Camden: Barnet, Brent, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster, Islington, Southwark, Newham, Hackney, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Greenwich, Haringey, and Lewisham. We also compare to the London and England averages where possible.

List of chart and images  
Click on this link to bring you back to this description of the Comparison Group.

Home and next/previous page

Contents page

Overviews

These take you to individual webpages

The 6 WMC ambitions

# Good Life Camden

Camden’s State of the Borough report is published annually. It brings together data and evidence from quantitative and qualitative sources, and includes national level statistics, regional data, and locally collected data. It provides a **shared evidence base about the outcomes experienced by people in Camden**, and is intended for organisations, residents and the council to increase the understanding of people’s wellbeing in the borough. It is aligned to the structure of the [We Make Camden](#) vision for the borough, and uses the [Good Life Camden](#) framework to identify relevant data.

**A note on timings:** The 2026 report is published earlier than in previous years due to the local elections in May 2026. Due to the shorter timeline for producing the report, we did not include data that was not updated since the last report at the time of drafting.


**The 6 WMC ambitions**

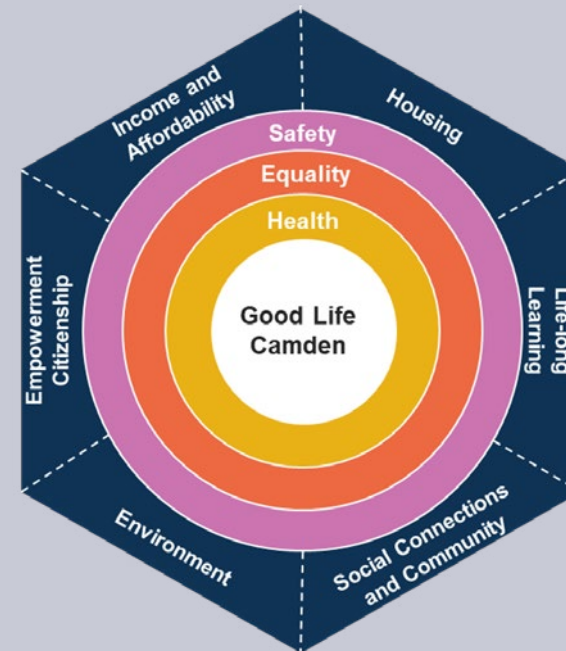
## Good Life Camden

The report focuses on the outcomes that are important for living a good life in Camden, based on the co-created [Good Life Camden](#) (GLC) framework. The GLC framework was developed with residents and staff in 2022. It breaks down the concept of living a good life into nine **themes**, which people told us are most important. These are: Safety, Equality, Health, Housing, Income and Affordability, Lifelong Learning, Social Connections and Community, and Environment. The themes of Safety, Health and Housing are identified as core cross-cutting themes. The framework also spells out the **signals** that tell us if we’re making progress against the different GLC themes (e.g. for Housing, a signal is that the quality of housing is high). The signals are underpinned by **measures**, which use data from a range of sources, such as official statistics or administrative data from schools, hospitals and transport.

In pulling together the data and evidence for the report, we started from the framework and looked for quantitative data that was available, preferably comparable across place and time. Mapping to the GLC framework also showed us where we have data gaps, whether for signals and measures (e.g. people feel safe in Camden) or in the breakdowns of averages (e.g. what is the experience of specific populations, like perceptions of safety of adults with learning disabilities).

Throughout the report, we have highlighted the relevant Good Life Camden signals where the data is presented.

**Look out for these**  **throughout the report, presenting the relevant Good Life Camden signal in each section.**



# Safe and Strong Communities

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



## Contents

### Social connections and community:

- People feel part of their neighbourhood, trust their neighbours and can ask them for help
- People interact with people from different communities and are tolerant and inclusive
- There are things to do and places to go to meet people and strengthen relationships **6**

Community Centres and Libraries act as connecting hubs for local communities **6**

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The rate of Hate Crime per 1,000 people in Camden was 4.3 in 2024/25, with only Westminster surpassing this rate **13**

### Safety: People are safe in their homes **14**

While the rate of domestic abuse offences in Camden is one of the lowest among London boroughs, violence against women and girls (VAWG) was recorded at 9.8% higher than the average for London boroughs in 2024 **14**

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## Key Insights

**37% of adults in Camden visited a library in the last year, the highest percentage in Inner London**



“  
*I enjoy attending local events and activities at my local community centres [...] however, as I am the main carer for my husband who is housebound, I don't have the time to go as often as I would like.*

*My husband and I live alone and I don't like being at home all the time, it can feel lonely. I like to go to the centres to talk to people, to do exercise classes and get help with filling out forms.*

”  
 -66, Female

**Crime rate is second highest in London at 173 offences per 1,000 residents**



**Theft is the largest category of crime in the borough**

“  
*I was walking down and just before I went there [...] two boys on a cycle grabbed a phone from somebody and ran off.*

”  
 -35, Female

“  
*I wouldn't get my phone out because it might just disappear out my hands.*

”  
 -82, Female

**The rate of Domestic Abuse is lower than other London boroughs, but Violence Against Women and Girls is 9.8% higher than the London average**

Camden

29 offences per 1,000 residents

London

26 offences per 1,000 residents

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**“ We’re quite lucky because it’s very diverse and it’s normal just to learn about someone else’s culture, speak to someone from a different background”**

(46, Female, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre).

Camden’s diversity is acknowledged as an asset by many residents and strengthens their sense of belonging, as one resident noted they:

**“ don’t feel like you are the only one, this is very important, because you can relate to everyone with some sort of things, religion, ethnicity or being a man, lots of things, it’s good to have this diversity”**

(34, Female, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre).

Many residents link this diversity directly to a sense of community and everyday connection. As one resident noted:

**“ I have been a Camden resident for 10 years and I feel like I belong to a community which is very diverse, there are residents from many different backgrounds, cultures and faiths”**

(NA, Female, Regent’s Roots Festival).

Another resident described how local spaces and relationships deepen this sense of belonging:

**“ Living in Camden for the past 10 years, it’s a friendly area to live in. Plenty of community centres, good relationships with neighbours – this all contributes to a sense of belonging to a community. Lots of parks/outdoor spaces to walk, sit and for children to play”**

(47, Female, Regent’s Roots Festival).

Through community organisations, festivals and local groups, diversity

becomes something people actively share and experience together.

Good Life Camden ☺

### Social connections and community:

- ◆ People feel part of their neighbourhood, trust their neighbours and can ask them for help
- ◆ People interact with people from different communities and are tolerant and inclusive
- ◆ There are things to do and places to go to meet people and strengthen relationships

### Community Centres and Libraries act as connecting hubs for local communities

Beyond the diverse community that people cherish in Camden, our shared public infrastructure, such as community centres and libraries, help strengthen and support the diverse communities.

These places bring people together through events and activities that are:

**“ Open to all demographics and [...] everyone is welcome”**

(61, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

They range from cultural and religious celebrations, such as:

**“ Easter or Eid, so I can meet other people from all walks of life”**

(64, Male, Regent’s Roots Festival), to other activities that cater to more specific needs.

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For example, one regular visitor described how vital these spaces are for carers:

**“ I am the main carer for my husband who is housebound, I don't have the time to go [to community centres] as often as I would like. My husband and I live alone and I don't like being at home all the time, it can feel lonely. I like to go to the centres to talk to people, to do exercise classes and get help with filling out forms”**

(66, Female, Regent's Roots Festival).

Community and voluntary sector organisations play a central role in sustaining social connections. For some residents, specific organisations have transformed how connected they feel:

**“ There is a good community in Camden, you can meet with different neighbours, it is very diverse. From the time I moved here, 30 years ago, it is a friendly place. The Third Age Project have really increased my sense of community in Camden”**

(70+, Female, Regent's Roots Festival). Others highlight how community centres offer both routine and relationships:

**“ This place [community centre] is wonderful for that. I've met so many friends [...] I come twice a week [...] I live on my own, but I'm never lonely”**

(82, Female, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre).

These spaces provide not only activities, but also the informal social infrastructure that helps people feel less isolated. They also act as bridges between residents, the council and other services.

One participant reflected that:

**“ There seems to be good conduits between Camden Council and third sector organisations. If you contact the council and they don't have something specific, they signpost you to the right voluntary group. And the reverse happens too. That pipeline is really important so people don't get lost”**

(34-44, Female, Focus group with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

Another noted that:

**“ Indirectly, through funding voluntary sector organisations, there's a lot of support [...] those services are crucial and heavily reliant on Camden's support. With all the pressures on councils, it's vital they keep backing these groups”**

(35-44, Male, Focus group with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

This underlines the importance of VCSEs as part of Camden's wider wellbeing system.

### Learning from: The Gospel Oak Living Room

The [Gospel Oak Living Room](#) (GOLR) programme is a community project hosted in five locations around Lismore Circus, Gospel Oak. It was initiated by local residents and organisers and runs as a partnership between Cooperation Town, three TRAs (Tenants and Residents Association) and St Martin's church. The GOLR offers neighbours a place to meet, socialise and build community links, while enjoying free freshly cooked meals. Meals are prepared daily by chefs from [Refugee Community Kitchen](#) and include fresh dishes from around the world. Many guests take food home to share with their families or eat later on. Outside of mealtimes, guests can enjoy

fresh fruit and healthy snacks. The project has had 13,000 visits since its inception in 2023.

The GOLR provides a safe space for anyone in the community to come and spend time without the need to sign up or pay. Guests share the issues that impact their lives - from housing problems to digital barriers, loneliness to lack of community facilities, personal mental health struggles to wider community challenges - and work together to find solutions. Past initiatives have included joining food co-operatives, a free community laundrette, Christmas meals, a free therapy project, a Menopause Cafe, art activities, and a rota to check in on elderly neighbours.

The Living Room is particularly popular with local guests over 65 as well as with young parents and pre-school children, bringing an inter-generational energy to the sessions. Guests who want to, can eat and play together in a calm, creative environment where everyone is able to join in. Many of the activities are informed by guests' interests and are co-designed with them.

Living Room guests had positive things to say about the programme, including:

**“ The Living Room is amazing – a cosy place to relax. The coordinators are helpful. Great environment. Place for everyone to come together.”**

Others said:

**“ I enjoy the company”, “Gets you out of the house”, “before I came to the Living Room, I was shy and did not speak to many people, other than my family. Coming to the Living Room has helped me come out of my shell and I am more social now”, “I discovered a whole community of people who support one another. We are able to talk about our problems while listening to other people.”**

However, not everyone feels equally connected. Some residents describe strong ties only with immediate neighbours and less with the wider community:

**“ We know our immediate neighbours, we are connected to them but not connected with the wider community”**

(40+, Female, Regent’s Roots Festival).

Local organisations often encounter people in exactly these situations:

**“ A lot of people who come to our groups are experiencing loneliness and isolation, partly because of a safety thing, but partly they don’t get the opportunity to get to know the neighbours anymore”**

(34-44, Female, Focus group with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

This suggests that while Camden’s community infrastructure is strong, there remain gaps in reach, awareness and confidence to participate.

A resident at Regent’s Roots Festival described the value of local community connections as well as the barriers she still faces in accessing support:

**“ I have been living in Camden for 14 years. I attend activities at my local community centres and feel supported by neighbours on the estate [...] it’s good for me to have people to talk to. It’s difficult to access services in the borough due to language and communication barriers”**

(63, Female, Regent’s Roots Festival).

For newer residents and people seeking asylum, community connections and VCSE activity are also a critical source of stability and welcome.

One asylum seeker explained how council-supported community projects changed her daily life:

**“I am in a community [...] every week I have an activity. It's like giving our life a life again, and [it's] joyful, it's changed everything. When staying in a room during the whole day, it's not easy, the four walls is not easy”.**

(38, Female, Focus group with asylum seekers living in Camden).

She further described how Community Champions made her feel supported:

**“We feel very like home, we do many activities and people include you to help them make a new project”.**

These experiences show how community infrastructure and VCSE partnerships can support safety, belonging and mental wellbeing for people who might otherwise be isolated.

### Learning from: The Community Association for West Hampstead

The [Community Association for West Hampstead](#) aims to enhance the lives, health, and well-being of local people, with a particular focus on those most in need, including younger and older individuals. It brings people together to create an enjoyable, inclusive and sustainable place to live.

In the summer of 2025, the Association ran a survey to help them understand what people value and the benefits they gain from attending the centre. They were also interested to learn what people want them to focus on in the future. 129 people responded, with just under half of the respondents being 60 years old or older, and 85%

of the respondents were female. Over 65% of respondents visit the centre weekly, demonstrating its strong role as a routine community hub. Their findings were:

- What people value: The centre is appreciated for its welcoming, inclusive atmosphere, opportunities for social connection, health and wellbeing benefits, creative outlets, and quality teaching. Its proximity and affordability also encourage people to take part.
- Benefits gained: Participants report improved physical health, mental wellbeing, reduced loneliness, and new skills, with social connections as the most crucial benefit.
- Future priorities: Highest demand for fitness, wellbeing, arts and crafts, learning and culture, and social gatherings. There is growing interest in programmes for children, teens and families, as well as some appetite for spiritual and environmental initiatives.

### In Camden, 37% of residents have visited a library in the last 12 months, one of the highest shares of residents visiting libraries

Traditionally, libraries are places to borrow books and access digital resources, but both local and national evidence suggest that local libraries act as neighbourhood spaces that encourage community cohesion and reduce isolation. A [recent UK-wide study](#) by Better Libraries<sup>1</sup> notes that almost one in five people (18%) say their local library has helped reduce loneliness, rising to 22% among those over 55, and 15% say they've made a new friend in a library, rising to 32% among 25–34-year-olds. A further 1 in 10 say they've found emotional support or a sense of belonging, rising to 23% in the millennial age group.

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

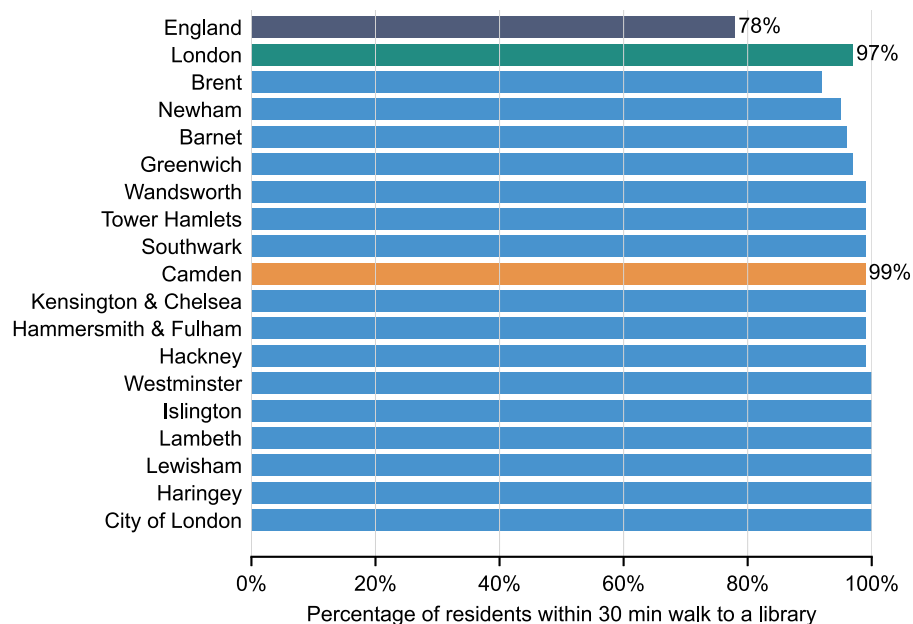
However, awareness of what libraries offer is not universal. One parent reflected:

**“ Some parents, they don’t know that your child can have a library card, and they can borrow books [...] and you can return them when you’re ready. I knew because I went to the library. So people should know, children [can] go [to a] library, you don’t need to buy books anymore”**

(34, Female, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre).

Camden has a total of 12 libraries (3 of which are community-run) ([as per Arts Council England data](#)) and almost all (99%) of Camden residents live within a 30-minute walk of their nearest library. These libraries hosted more than 2,793 events during 2024/25.

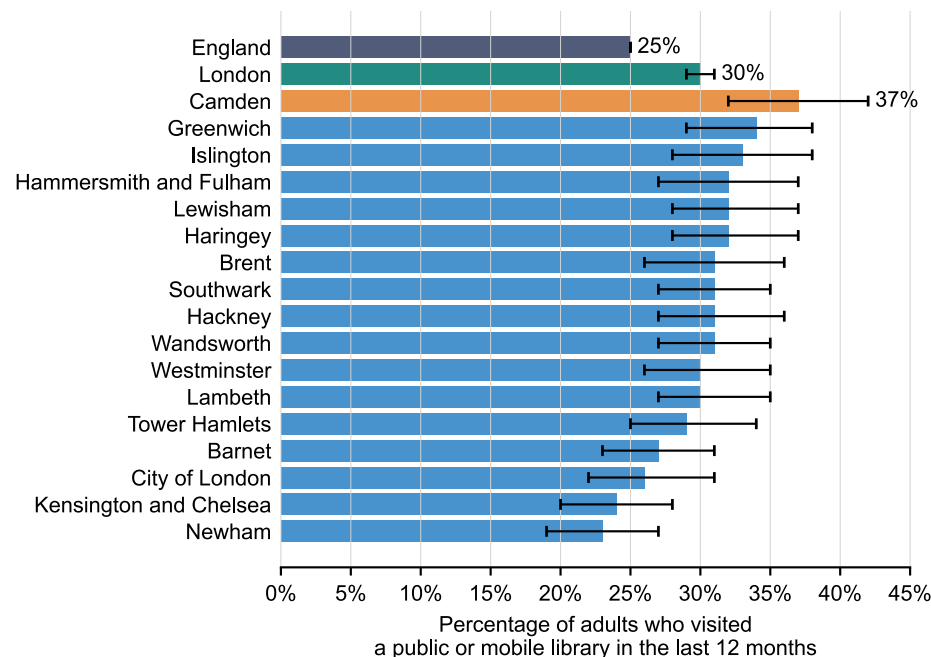
**Figure 3.1: Share of residents living within a 30-minute walk to a library**



Source: Office for National Statistics, 2024

In 2023/24, 37% of adults in Camden reported visiting a public library building or mobile library in the last 12 months.<sup>2</sup> This percentage is higher than any of the other inner London boroughs (ranging between 23% to 34%) and considerably higher than average for England (25%). However, the total number of physical visits to a library site in Camden (approximately 700,000 in 2023/23) is one of the lowest among the inner London boroughs, second only to Kensington and Chelsea (approximately 59,000). The physical visits have increased 15% in 2023/24 and a further increase of 8.5% to 942,757 in 2024/25.

**Figure 3.2: Percentage of adults who visited a public or mobile library in the last 12 months, 2023/24**



Source: Department for Culture, Media, and Sport 2023/24

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**Borough of sanctuary**

As part of a city with high levels of international migration and population churn, Camden’s population is always changing, including refugees and asylum seekers. In recent years, as part of the UK government’s Homes for Ukraine scheme, Camden residents have welcomed 1,024 Ukrainian refugees as guests in their homes. This peaked between July-November 2022 when an average of 610 Ukrainian guests were living in Camden, hosted across an average of 350 households. In the most recent 3-month period, Camden hosted an average of 135 Ukrainian guests each month, across an average of 90 households. Among guests who have moved on from the scheme, 50% have chosen to remain in the UK (this figure is as of May 2025). Camden is also resettling 120 households (97 Afghan households and 23 Ukrainian households) in 2025, as part of the government’s Local Authority Housing Fund, which has enabled delivery of additional affordable housing capacity without creating pressure elsewhere in our housing system.

Good Life Camden [↗](#)

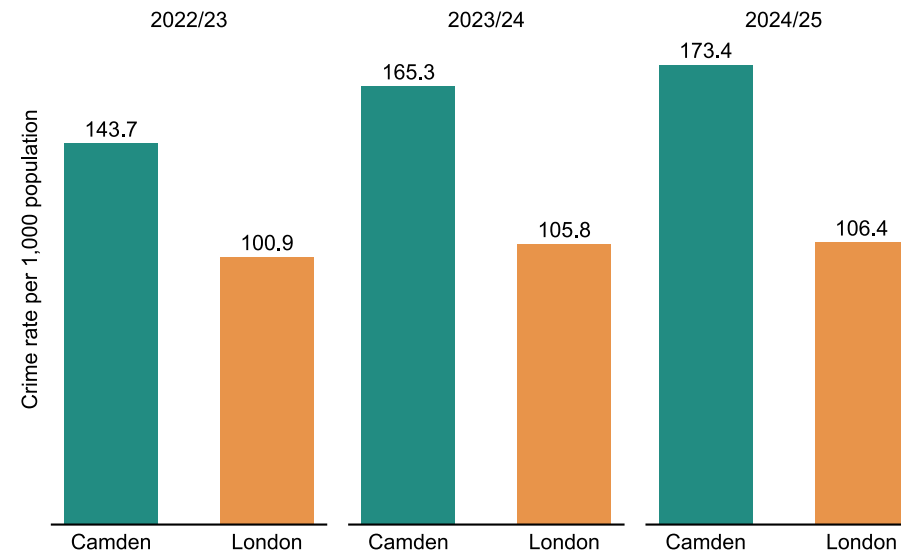
**Safety: Everyone in Camden feels safe**

**Among the London boroughs, crime rate in Camden continues to be one of the highest, second only to Westminster**

Camden is a busy inner London borough, with many entertainment, retail and transport venues bringing people from around the world. Unfortunately, these characteristics also attract criminal activity. Similar to previous years, the crime rate in Camden (173.4 per 1,000 population)

is the second highest in London, second only to Westminster (343.6) and significantly higher than the average for London (106.4). The year-on-year trajectory shows the rate of increase in the crime rate for the borough is higher than the average increase for London.

**Figure 3.3: Crime rate - offences per 1,000 population, 2022-2025**

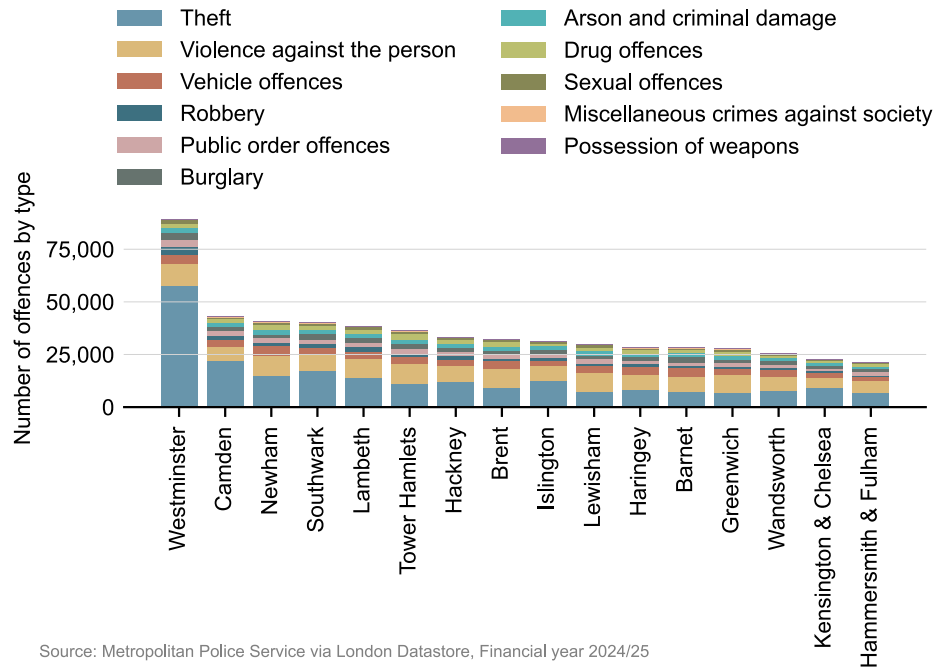


Source: Crime data dashboard - Metropolitan police, ONS Police Recorded Crime, Financial years 2022/23 – 2024/25

Like other London boroughs, theft is the largest category of crime offences in the borough. This also contributes significantly to the increase in crime rate with a year-on-year increase of more than 10%. This high rate is probably reflective of the high footfall around tourist attractions, transit hubs and night-time economy. The other two categories with a more than 10% increase are drug offences and sexual offences.

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Figure 3.4: Number of offences by type, 2024/25



Source: Metropolitan Police Service via London Datastore, Financial year 2024/25

How people feel about crime and safety in Camden corresponds to what the statistics show. Residents in different parts of the borough have shared concerns about safety, especially as crime rates are going up. They mention specific crimes like phones being stolen and knife attacks.

The main reasons for these worries are things people see around them, such as antisocial behaviour, drug use, gangs, homelessness, and not enough police presence or CCTV cameras on the streets. These issues affect different groups in different ways and can make it harder for people to move around freely.

For example, a parent said,

“ [I] don't let my children out in the area unsupervised as it is unsafe, there are kids on bikes roaming around, many rough sleepers, anti-social behaviours [...]. This makes me feel worried” (38, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

Some residents described how concerns about crime and safety directly affect their day-to-day lives and freedom of movement, particularly for families. One asylum-seeking parent explained,

“ I don't let my children go out alone. We have to go with them everywhere because we are afraid somebody will harm them” (46, Female, Focus group with asylum seekers living in Camden). She further commented on the constant sense of vigilance this creates:

“ All the time we have the fear somebody will snatch our bag [...] even when we take money from the bank, we are very careful”

Other residents describe witnessing criminal offences and the impact of the experiences and perceptions of personal safety:

“ I was walking down and just before I went there, I believe two boys on a cycle grabbed a phone from somebody and ran off” (35, Female, Focus group at Harmood Children's Centre and Family Hub)

“ I wouldn't get my phone out because it might just disappear out my hands.”

(82, Female, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre). Similarly, another woman noted that:

“ I remember those two women who were attacked on the bus in Camden, and it's always in the back of your mind that something like that could happen.”

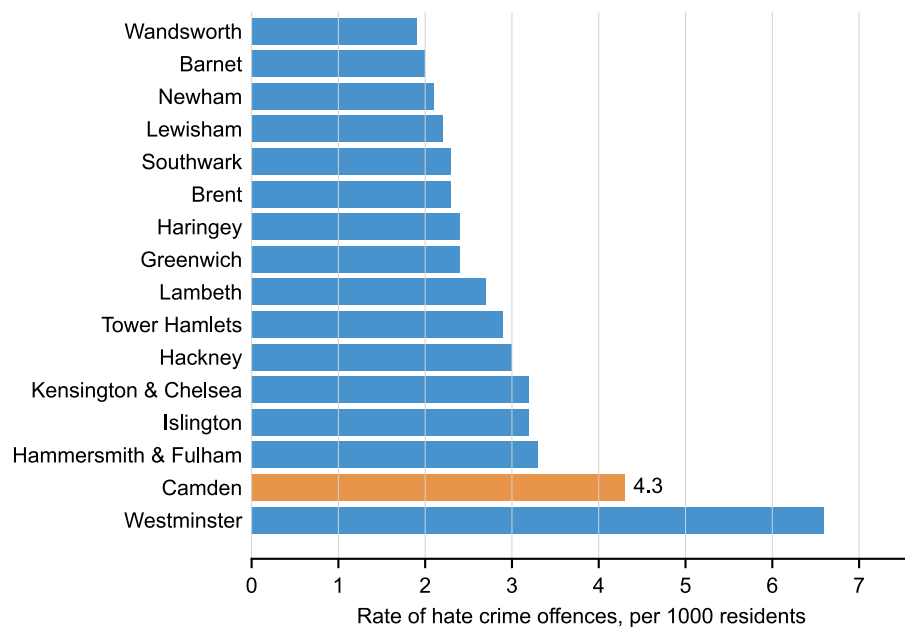
(65-74, Female, Focus group with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

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**The rate of Hate Crime per 1,000 people in Camden was 4.3 in 2024/25, with only Westminster surpassing this rate**

A hate crime is defined as any incident that is perceived by the victim or any other person to be racist, homophobic, transphobic or due to a person’s religion, belief, gender identity or disability. When a hate crime is recorded by police, it can have multiple flags added to it to identify the category of hate crime: racist, religious, transphobic, homophobic, Islamophobic disability hate and antisemitic. A single offence can have multiple flags, which means that the sum of flags (types of hate crime) will be more than the total number of offences, depending on how these were recorded.

**Figure 3.5: Hate crime offences per 1,000 population, total, 2024/25**



Source: Metropolitan Police Service via London Datastore, FY 2024/25

In Camden in 2024/25, there were 1,065 hate crime offences, a rate of 4.3 per 1,000 people, one of the highest rates in the comparison group and second only to Westminster, where a rate of 6.6 offences per 1,000 people was recorded. It is important to consider that the rates reflect the number of offences per 1,000 residents, but in areas where there are many visitors coming through for various reasons, the rate will be much higher (like in the case of total crime rates, where many of the theft offences are likely occur around busy areas such as the big stations and Camden Town, rather than experienced by local residents).

The number of flags associated with hate crimes for individual categories in Camden (excluding flags which could lead to double counting) were: 153 homophobic, 135 antisemitic, 48 Islamophobic, 25 transphobic and 18 disability hate crimes. Other flags recorded in Camden which could include double counting (i.e. a crime can be recorded as antisemitic, faith and racist) were: Racist and religious crime – 901, Racist crime – 754, Faith crime – 202.

As the methodology for recording hate crimes has changed, these figures are no longer comparable to previous years.

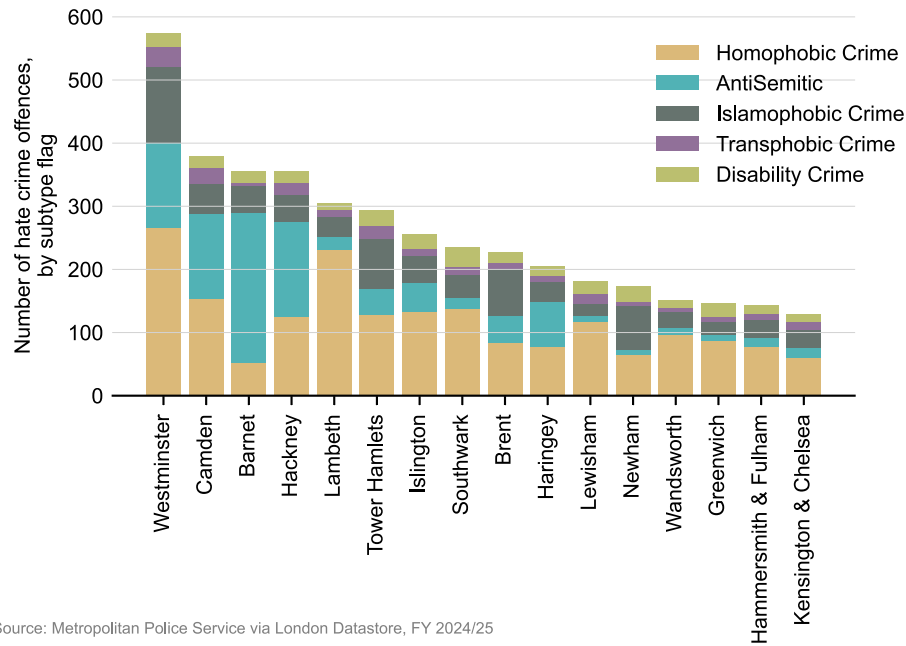
For some residents, recent events have revived older fears about racism and targeted hostility. One woman reflected:

*“ We experienced racism in 70s and then we were safe since the 80s. But now, just very recently what’s been happening in the recent weeks, it’s the first time I’m feeling very vulnerable when I go out and I keep telling my kids, they’re grown up now, please come home early”*

(50, Female, Focus group at Cooperation Town).

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Figure 3.6: Hate crime types (flags) recorded, 2024/25



Source: Metropolitan Police Service via London Datastore, FY 2024/25

Good Life Camden [↗](#)

### 📍 Safety: People are safe in their homes

**While the rate of domestic abuse offences in Camden is one of the lowest among London boroughs, violence against women and girls (VAWG) was recorded at 9.8% higher than the average for London boroughs in 2024**

Based on the findings from the London Violence Reduction Unit’s Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA)<sup>3</sup>, Camden is ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in London for incidents classified as ‘Rape’ and 6<sup>th</sup> for ‘Other sexual offences.’ The rate of domestic abuse in Camden stands at 7.2 per 1,000 people, with

the majority of victims being female according to the SNA, placing Camden among those with the lowest rates for this type of offence among London boroughs. However, the SNA notes the historic under-reporting of domestic abuse and sexual violence offences, estimated to be 26% under-reported as of 2014.

As part of its Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Needs Assessment, Camden Council identified a significantly higher rate of VAWG offences at 29 offences per 1,000 female residents. This is 9.8% higher than the average for London boroughs and is 11<sup>th</sup> highest across London. From 2020 to 2023, there was an 8.2% increase in VAWG offences in Camden, significantly above the rest of London, which saw a 5.7% increase.

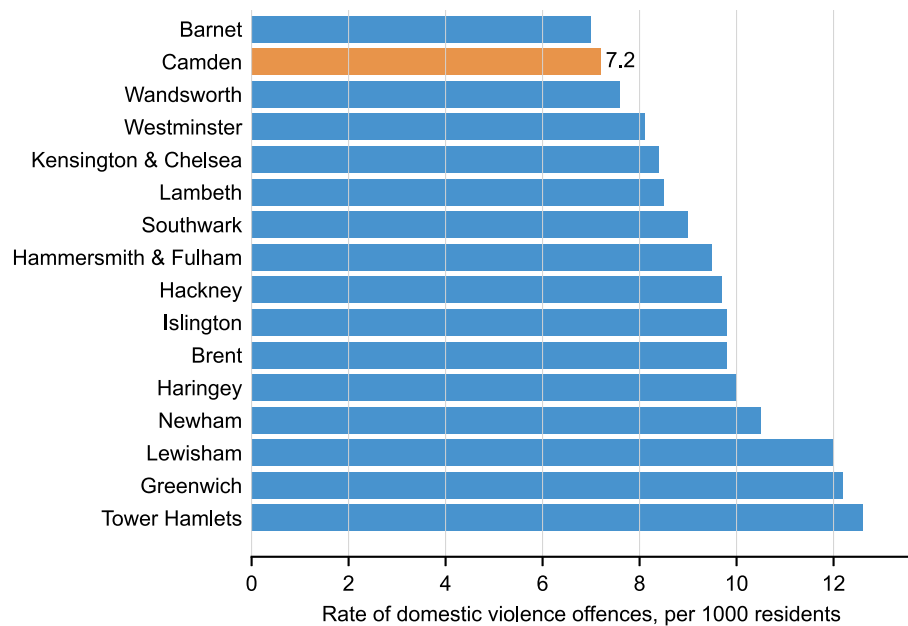
Domestic abuse which makes up 36% of all VAWG crimes, after which sexual violence (18%) and stalking and harassment (24%) contribute significantly to high VAWG rates in Camden. Compared with the London average, rates of sexual violence are approximately 40% higher, and rates of stalking and harassment are 18% higher. Like domestic abuse, under-reporting for these offences hinders the understanding of scale of other VAWG crimes too.

This prevalence of VAWG and domestic abuse has its imprint across council services. Roughly one in four cases for Adult Social Care safeguarding cases involving women were linked to Violence Against Women and Girls, one in five homelessness applications, and nearly two in five (a proportion that has more than doubled since 2019) housing register applications from women concern domestic abuse. This interaction between Domestic abuse and broader forms of VAWG and Camden’s housing pathways underscore the role of housing both as a pathway out of abuse and as a point where risk is identified and managed. The research on women in Camden’s Adult Pathway further highlights the acute vulnerability of those experiencing homelessness. Women in this pathway face some of the highest levels of VAWG in the borough: 80% had experienced violence within the past three

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

years, and more than half were subject to five or more types of abuse. It also reveals that the majority of women in Camden’s Adult Pathway are experiencing multiple disadvantage (co-occurring and mutually reinforcing experiences of disadvantage, i.e., substance use, mental health needs, homelessness and VAWG). Despite this, engagement with specialist VAWG services remains low. Only a small proportion of women had accessed specialist support, including from Camden Safety Net or multiple-disadvantage teams, even though women supported by DVA Navigators were experiencing, on average, over seven types of abuse. The insights underscore that VAWG/DVA is both a leading cause of homelessness, and also a consequence of it (risk of increased and repeat victimisation once homeless).

**Figure 3.7: Rate of domestic violence offences per 1,000 population**



Source: Metropolitan Police Service via London Datastore, FY 2024/25

Within Camden, the highest rates of VAWG offences are concentrated around Camden Town (73.4 per 1,000 female residents) and are marked as physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour and stalking and harassment, with the predominance being harassment. Several factors contribute to this high rate, including the night-time economy, major transport hubs and large tourist attractions. These factors contribute to this high rate but covers reporting by non-Camden residents as well.

**Learning from: Focus group with asylum seekers living in Camden**

In August 2025, Camden Council held a focus group with asylum seekers living in the borough, including participants who had been in the UK for between 11 months and two years and who had arrived from Mauritius, Azerbaijan, Iran and Pakistan. The discussion explored their early experiences of life in Camden. Participants described the borough as lively, diverse and culturally rich, helping many of them feel more at home in the UK, while also highlighting challenges around safety, stigma and navigating services. Camden’s diversity was especially valued, with one participant explaining,

*“ I feel connected in Camden [...] it’s not like I see only white people, I see Black people, Muslim, Indian [...] we are all in the community. I don’t feel like I am in a foreign country [...] I feel very connected quickly”*  
(38, Female).

Access to services also played an important role in shaping their experiences. Attendees praised Camden Council and local organisations for the support provided, saying,

*“ If we have any health issues, they solve [them] [...] we have access to GP, hospital, library [...] many events they manage*

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*[...] we feel like somebody is doing something for us, we are important for them"*

(46, Female).

Community connection emerged as another protective factor. Several participants described how community centres and local activities helped reduce isolation and offered structure and joy in daily life.

One attendee reflected on feeling included and heard:

*“ This community gave us the opportunity [...] they take care of our ideas”*

(38, Female).

A younger participant, however, noted that she sometimes struggled to find opportunities to socialise or take part in activities:

*“ I don't go to school in Camden, so I don't really have friends here. I like doing a lot of activity, like playing basketball or sports, but since I came here, I didn't really have the opportunity to do it, I don't have friends to ask about it”*

(19, Female).

Alongside these positives, some participants described challenges and anxieties connected to safety and stigma. Some spoke of feeling watched when entering the building they live in, with one saying,

*“ When I'm inside [the temporary accommodation], it's okay [...] but when I come back, it's like people watching who is an asylum seeker [...] that's very scary for me”*

(38, Female).

Others raised concerns about drug use and risks for children, saying that they did not feel safe:

*“ I don't let my children go alone”*

(46, Female).

Together, these insights show how asylum seekers experience Camden as both a welcoming and supportive place, while also facing challenges that shape their daily lives and sense of security.

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## Endnotes

- 1 [Better Libraries Data Shows Just How Much We Love Our Libraries - And The Value they Bring | LoveReading](#)
- 2 The official statistics consider both public library building and mobile libraries but there are no mobile libraries in Camden.
- 3 [Serious Violence in London, London's Violence Reduction Unit, April 2025](#)

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# How to navigate the document

## Best viewing experience

This document is best viewed downloaded on a laptop or desktop computer. The interactivity will not work as well on tablets, iPads and mobile phones. You will still be able to view, scroll through and use some functionality such as hyperlinks, however the main navigation buttons on the right may be less effective.

## Right hand navigation

The buttons on the right hand side take you to the different sections of the document. The 6 ambition sections each have their own contents for you to jump to a particular area with ease. Simply click on the button on the right to take you back to that section's contents. All other sections do not have a contents page.

## Endnotes

### Example:

In Camden in 2022, there were 6,389 children or 1 in 5 (19.8%) living in poverty, up from 13.5% in 2021.<sup>1</sup>

To go to the reference of a particular Endnote, click on the number at the end of the paragraph.

Click on the number in the Endnotes to take you back to the page which the reference number is on.

### Example:

- 1 Proportion of children living in low income households (60% of median income) before and after housing costs, Local indicators of child poverty, Centre for Research in Social Policy, Loughborough University for End Child Poverty (2022); Children in low income families: local area statistics, DWP (2022), <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2022>, [https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local\\_indicators\\_of\\_child\\_poverty\\_after\\_housing\\_costs\\_2021\\_22/23523453](https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local_indicators_of_child_poverty_after_housing_costs_2021_22/23523453).

Text which is in blue and underlined is an active link. This example is a URL hyperlink which will take you to a webpage. Others may open up another document or activate an email programme.

Home and next/  
previous page

Contents page

Overviews

These take  
you to  
individual  
webpages

List of chart and images

Click on this link to bring you  
back to this description of the  
Comparison Group.

# Good Life Camden

Camden’s State of the Borough report is published annually. It brings together data and evidence from quantitative and qualitative sources, and includes national level statistics, regional data, and locally collected data. It provides a **shared evidence base about the outcomes experienced by people in Camden**, and is intended for organisations, residents and the council to increase the understanding of people’s wellbeing in the borough. It is aligned to the structure of the [We Make Camden](#) vision for the borough, and uses the [Good Life Camden](#) framework to identify relevant data.

**A note on timings:** The 2026 report is published earlier than in previous years due to the local elections in May 2026. Due to the shorter timeline for producing the report, we did not include data that was not updated since the last report at the time of drafting.


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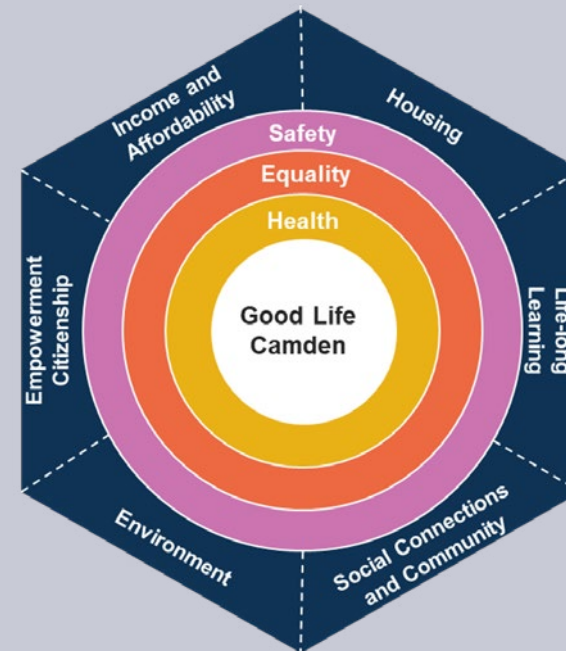
## Good Life Camden

The report focuses on the outcomes that are important for living a good life in Camden, based on the co-created [Good Life Camden](#) (GLC) framework. The GLC framework was developed with residents and staff in 2022. It breaks down the concept of living a good life into nine **themes**, which people told us are most important. These are: Safety, Equality, Health, Housing, Income and Affordability, Lifelong Learning, Social Connections and Community, and Environment. The themes of Safety, Health and Housing are identified as core cross-cutting themes. The framework also spells out the **signals** that tell us if we’re making progress against the different GLC themes (e.g. for Housing, a signal is that the quality of housing is high). The signals are underpinned by **measures**, which use data from a range of sources, such as official statistics or administrative data from schools, hospitals and transport.

In pulling together the data and evidence for the report, we started from the framework and looked for quantitative data that was available, preferably comparable across place and time. Mapping to the GLC framework also showed us where we have data gaps, whether for signals and measures (e.g. people feel safe in Camden) or in the breakdowns of averages (e.g. what is the experience of specific populations, like perceptions of safety of adults with learning disabilities).

Throughout the report, we have highlighted the relevant Good Life Camden signals where the data is presented.

**Look out for these**  **throughout the report, presenting the relevant Good Life Camden signal in each section.**



# Good Health and Wellbeing

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



## Contents

Nearly 4 out of 5 adults in Camden are physically active, and almost 2 out of 5 eat the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables per day. Overall, healthy behaviours are more common in Camden compared to other London Boroughs, although residents are keen for more opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating **6**

The number of new sexually transmitted diseases in Camden has declined in 2024 to 1,926 per 100,000 people, still higher than the London average of 1,368 **9**

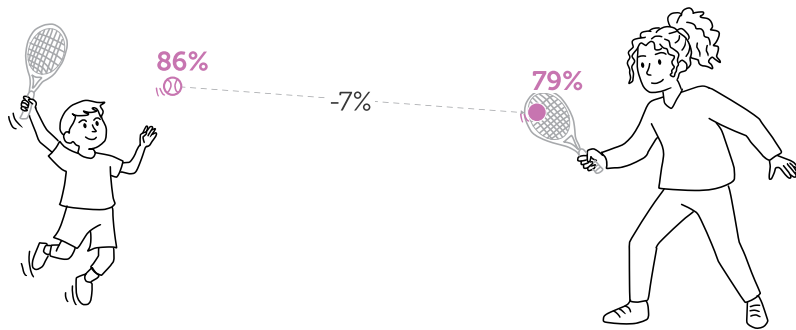
Access to healthcare services and community support is a mixed experience for residents, with some describing barriers to accessing healthcare, ranging from ability to use new digital tools, cultural and linguistic barriers, and physical access due to disability and transport **10**

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

## Key Insights

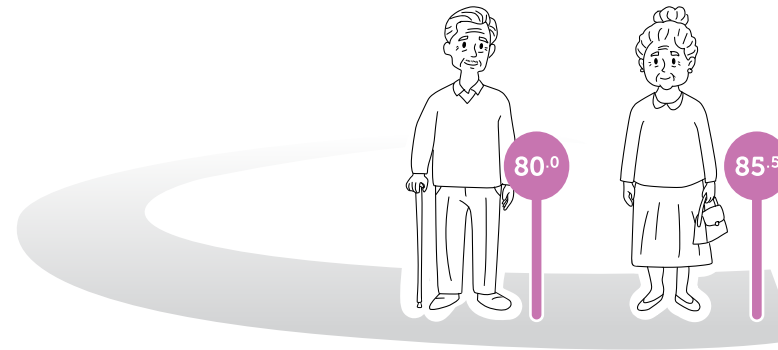
In 2025

86% of primary school students enjoyed taking part in sports or exercise. This decreases to 79% for secondary school students



In 2021-2023

Life expectancy at birth in Camden was 80 years for males and 85.5 years for females



In 2023/2024

78% of adults in Camden were physically active, an increase of 4.6%pt from last year

2023/2024

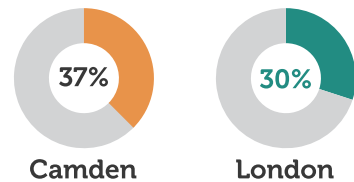


2022/2023



In 2023/2024

Only 37% of adults in Camden ate the recommended 5-a-day



“

Being part of a community has been good for my health, I enjoy doing things that distract me from the worries I face at home. I enjoy talking to people about things that make me happy and reliving happier memories from when I was young.

”

-64, Female

“

When you try to access health services here, it can be hard to get appointments. I know that's a national issue, but Camden's density makes it worse. On the flip side, we benefit from having more hospitals and services than many boroughs, including bigger sexual health clinics. So it's both: longer waits but more choice when you [...] get through.

”

-35-44, Female

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In the [State of the Borough 2025](#) report, data showed that life expectancy at birth in Camden was 80 years for males, similar to the England average, and 85.5 years for females, two years higher than the England average. It also showed that there is a significant gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas, with a difference of 13.5 years for men and 9.7 years for women. Camden is also the 5<sup>th</sup> most unequal by deprivation in male life expectancy at age 65 in England.

The increase in the percentage of babies with low birth weight, which is associated with adverse health outcomes, is a concern in Camden and London - in 2022, 3.2% of babies born in Camden had a low birth weight. Overall, while health data on average show relatively good outcomes, the impact of inequalities on physical and mental health is clear.

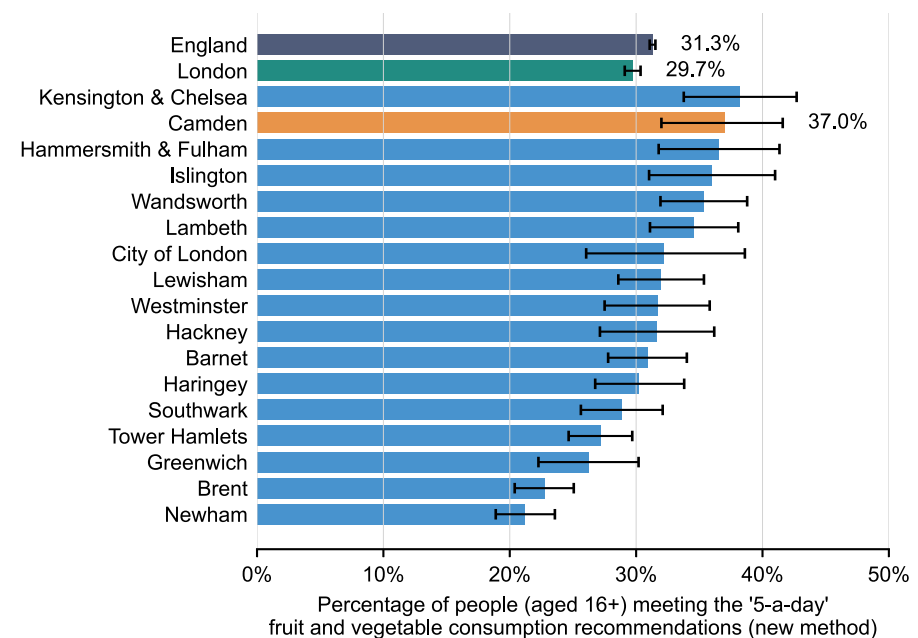
In this year's report, most datasets have not yet been updated, so this chapter is *limited to data on healthy behaviours*. However, more detailed data on health and wellbeing can be found on Camden's [JSNA Hub](#) (Joint Strategic Needs Assessment), which is an online resource that brings together evidence on health and wellbeing in the borough. It supports strategic decision-making by providing data, research, and analysis to identify local health needs, inform priorities, and guide commissioning of services. The Hub includes profiles, health needs assessments, JSNA chapters, briefings, data, and dashboards, making it a key tool for understanding population health trends and reducing inequalities.

**Nearly 4 out of 5 adults in Camden are physically active, and almost 2 out of 5 eat the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables per day. Overall, healthy behaviours are more common in Camden compared to other London Boroughs, although residents are keen for more opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating**

In 2023/24, 78% of adults in Camden were physically active - an increase of 4.6 percentage points from the previous year. However, there are significant inequalities in participation by age, gender, ethnicity and disabilities. This is higher than London, with 67%, and the highest across the comparison group and closest to Islington, with Brent and Newham at the other end of the group, with 58% and 61%, respectively.

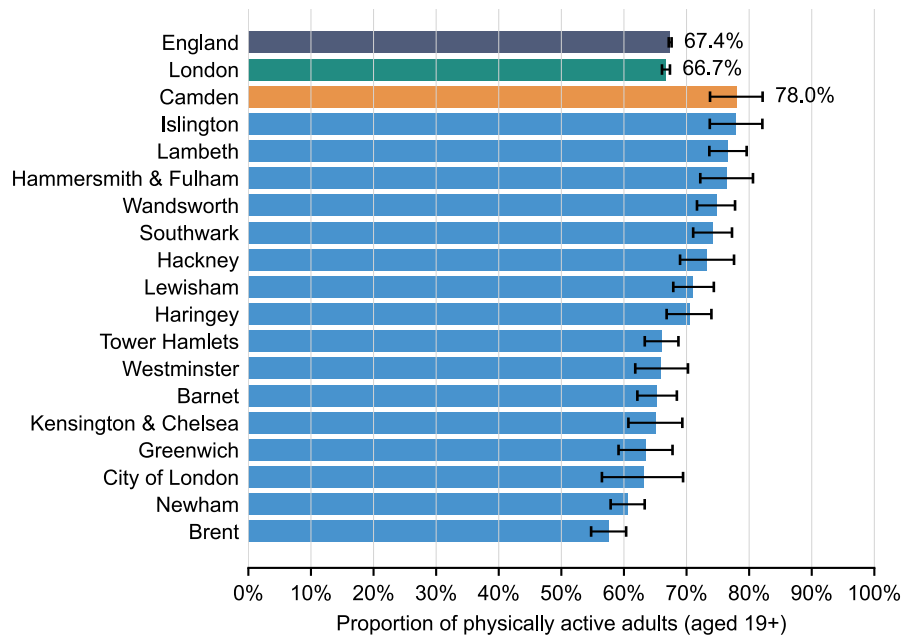
Eating the recommended 5-a-day is also more common in Camden compared to the comparison group, with 37% of adults reporting meeting the target in 2023/24. This is higher than the London average of 30%, and second only to Kensington and Chelsea (38%) across the comparison group, with Newham and Brent at the other end of the group (21% and 23% respectively). However, it is still far from the target for the whole population of eating 5-a-day.

**Figure 4.1: Percentage of people meeting the '5-a-day' fruit and vegetable recommendations (aged 16+)**



Sources: OHID, based on Sport England data, 2023/24  
 Note: Error margins shown where available

**Figure 4.2: Percentage of physically active adults, 2023/24**



Sources: OHID, based on Sport England data, 2023/24  
 Note: Error margins shown where available

While many residents express a strong desire to lead healthier lives, some people experience barriers that make this difficult. For some, cultural and social engagement plays a vital role in wellbeing. One resident shared how she runs regular workshops at The Euston Community Hub and organises creative activities like sewing, singing, and drumming through The Lotus Club to help women overcome health challenges. These initiatives not only encourage physical and mental wellbeing but also foster cultural pride and social connection. Such examples highlight the importance of community-led, culturally sensitive approaches to health.

One resident also emphasised how connection itself is a form of health support,

*“ Being part of a community has been good for my health, I enjoy doing things that distract me from the worries I face at home”*

(64, Female, Pearly Sari at The People’s Museum).

These experiences show how social connection can act as a protective factor for mental health, particularly for those managing stress and caring responsibilities. However, other residents spoke about feeling unsupported and unmotivated, despite wanting to improve their health. They mentioned multiple barriers to accessing healthy behaviours including costs, access and suitability of what was offered.

**Learning from: Camden school students’ healthy behaviours and perspectives**

In 2025, Camden state primary and secondary schools took part in the Health-Related Behaviour Questionnaire survey. There were 2,905 responses, with 1,105 returned from twenty primary settings and 1,800 from nine secondary settings. This questionnaire covers various topics, including wellbeing; physical health (nutrition and activity), safety, bullying and other topics.

Healthy eating was more common for primary students compared to secondary. Whilst 36.9% of primary students had 5 or more portions, only 26.6% of secondary students had the equivalent. Eating breakfast was also more common for primary school students, with 80% saying they had something to eat or drink at home before lessons that morning, compared to 56.7% of secondary school students.

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Enjoying taking part in physical activities was common across both primary and secondary schools, with 86.2% of primary school students and 79% of secondary school students saying they agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed taking part in sports or exercise. However, there are considerable gender gaps, with only 29% of secondary school girls responding that they strongly agree that they enjoy sports and physical activity, compared to 56% of boys.

Bullying was an experience that the majority of students in both primary (59.1%) and secondary (52.6%) said that they had experienced in the past. The main reason in both settings was the way they looked or size and weight. However, most students said they had not felt afraid of going to school due to bullying (primary 68.7% and secondary 74.9%).

Students were also asked whether they were happy with their life at the moment. 70.5% of primary school students and 57.8% of secondary school students said they were either very happy or quite happy with life. Similarly, 72% of primary school students compared to only 54.6% of secondary school students said they were either very happy or quite happy with their future. In both secondary and primary schools, the highest reason for being anxious or worried was 'Exams and tests' (84.3% and 92.2% of primary and secondary, respectively).

## 1 Nutrition

### Primary school pupils were more likely to eat healthy:

Pupils who had 5+ portions of fruit and veg the day before the survey

Primary pupils

36.9%

Secondary pupils

26.6%

Pupils who had something to eat or drink before lessons on the day of the survey

Primary pupils

80.0%

Secondary pupils

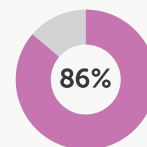
56.7%

## 2 Physical activity

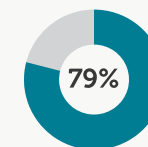
### Enjoying taking part in physical activities was common across both primary and secondary school pupils

Percentage (%) of pupils who agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoyed taking part in sports or exercise

Primary pupils



Secondary pupils



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### 3 Bullying

#### The majority of school pupils have experienced bullying

The majority of pupils have experienced bullying in the past...

Primary pupils

59.1%

Secondary pupils

52.6%

Most pupils said they had not felt afraid of going to school due to bullying

Primary pupils

68.7%

Secondary pupils

74.9%

### 4 Happiness

#### A higher share of primary school pupils - compared to secondary school pupils - said they were happy with life now and with their future

Percentage (%) of pupils who were very happy or quite happy with life at the moment

Primary pupils

70.5%

Secondary pupils

57.8%

Percentage (%) of pupils who were very happy or quite happy with their future

Primary pupils

72.0%

Secondary pupils

54.6%

### Learnings from: Caversham Group Practice and The Listening Space - Mind & Body exercise for people with ADHD

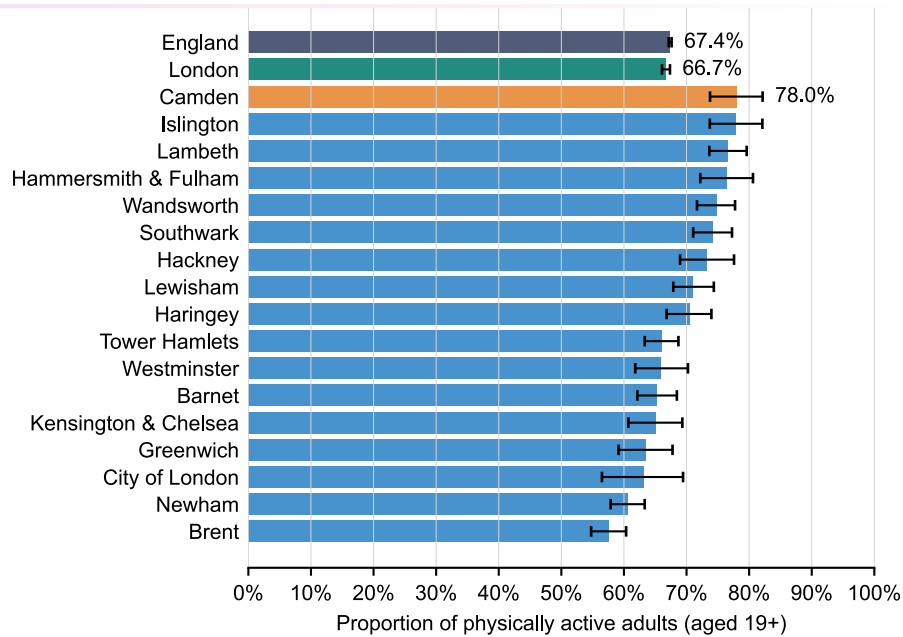
The Caversham Group Practice and The Listening Space trialled a short Mind & Body exercise programme specifically for people with ADHD or suspected ADHD, as part of the [River of Hope](#) programme of activities. Several themes emerged as part of the evaluation of the programme about the impact of living with ADHD. Attendees spoke of the impact of ADHD affects not only mental health (increasing risks of anxiety, depression, and even suicide) but also physical health, academic and occupational performance, social relationships, and overall quality of life. Some also reflected on feeling alone in their experiences, and the positive impact of joining the group and belonging to a community of peers with ADHD. The long waiting lists for ADHD diagnosis and support services, which are managed by the NHS, were also mentioned as a contributing factor to the sense of lack of support and isolation.

### The number of new sexually transmitted diseases in Camden has declined in 2024 to 1,926 per 100,000 people, still higher than the London average of 1,368

In 2024, there were 1,926 new diagnoses of sexually transmitted disease per 100,000 population, a decline from the previous value. This rate is higher than the rate for London and England. Camden is in the middle of the comparison group, with Barnet having the lowest rate and Lambeth the highest (812 and 3,257 per 100,000, respectively). More data on Sexual and Reproductive Health in Camden is available on the [JSNA hub](#).

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**Figure 4.3: Rate of new diagnoses of sexually transmitted disease per 100,000 population**



Sources: OHID, based on Sport England data, 2023/24  
 Note: Error margins shown where available

**Access to healthcare services and community support is a mixed experience for residents, with some describing barriers to accessing healthcare, ranging from ability to use new digital tools, cultural and linguistic barriers, and physical access due to disability and transport**

Experiences of healthcare as described by residents in Camden show a mixed picture of convenience and barriers. For some, digital tools like the NHS app make managing appointments and referrals easier:

*“ I love my GP, I use the NHS app [...] it helps me keep on top of appointments, referrals and updates which otherwise I would forget” (50–55, Female, Regent’s Roots Festival).*

Others, however, find online systems challenging:

*“ GP services have moved online which makes it difficult for me to access and I depend on my children to book my appointments” (64, Female, Pearly Sari at The People’s Museum).*

Long-standing relationships with GPs remain important, even when people move away:

*“ I’ve stayed with the same GP, 40 maybe nearly 50 years now. I even travel much further because I moved further away from the practice” (84, Male, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre).*

Barriers are often compounded by language, disability and transport issues. Bangladeshi residents highlight the need for culturally and linguistically tailored support:

*“ We need more Bangladeshi Community Champions [...] It would be useful to so many women from my community to have Bengali-speaking workshops on health and how to live healthy” (44, Female, Pearly Sari at The People’s Museum).*

While Camden’s density brings both benefits and drawbacks,

*“ It can be hard to get appointments [...] but we benefit from having more hospitals and services than many boroughs” (35–44, Female, Focus group with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden),*

community centres play a vital role in wellbeing:

*“ This centre is really a lifeline for us because my partner is disabled [...] we have free low cost activities [at our] our local community centre, without it we would be really struggling [...] we’re happier, we get more connected, we learn” (67, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre).*

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**Learning from: Focus Group with residents with learning difficulties**

In September 2025, Camden Council, with support from [Camden People First](#) and [Elfrida Rathbone Camden](#), held a focus group with five residents with learning difficulties, aged between 27 and 67, to better understand their everyday experiences of life in the borough. Residents described how important it is to stay connected and active through regular community activities. They spoke about the value of community centres and organised groups in fostering friendships and routine, noting:

**“ We have a Saturday club, we meet nearly every week”**  
(36, Male).

As one community representative explained, these gatherings offer

**“ an opportunity for everyone to come together and talk about things that are going on [...] a forum for people to support each other.”**

Safety, however, was a significant concern. Several participants spoke about feeling vulnerable when out alone. One resident said plainly,

**“ I’m safe if I’m with somebody,”** (67, Female) while another shared a distressing experience of hate crime:

**“ I was attacked by my neighbour [...] one of his friends was racist. They attacked me, cut my ear, very painful [...] it made me feel anxious, frustrated and angry”** (40+, Male).

Others described avoiding certain places, with one explaining,

**“ When the football’s on, they get drunk [...] it feels threatening to go out”** (42, Female).

Digital exclusion also shaped several residents’ experiences, with

online-only systems creating barriers to essential services. Despite these challenges, family and community remained essential sources of support. One participant described the comfort of routine:

**“ I go to my mum’s house [...] when I’m too stressed, I stay there two nights. I’ve got family supporting me”** (42, Female).

Participants expressed a clear desire for authorities to better understand and respond to the needs of people with learning disabilities. As one resident noted,

**“ Training the police would help a lot [...] they didn’t take me seriously enough [when reporting an incident]”** (40+, Male).

Another reflected on how past traumatic experiences shaped his ability to trust services, explaining,

**“ I can’t handle police [...] when I was young, I got sexually assaulted and the police didn’t even do nothing [...] it brings back bad memories”** (27, Male).

Overall, the group’s reflections show lives supported by community but challenged by safety concerns, digital exclusion, challenges with housing, and the ongoing sense of not always being fully understood.

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[camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report](https://camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report)



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# How to navigate the document

## Best viewing experience

This document is best viewed downloaded on a laptop or desktop computer. The interactivity will not work as well on tablets, iPads and mobile phones. You will still be able to view, scroll through and use some functionality such as hyperlinks, however the main navigation buttons on the right may be less effective.

## Right hand navigation

The buttons on the right hand side take you to the different sections of the document. The 6 ambition sections each have their own contents for you to jump to a particular area with ease. Simply click on the button on the right to take you back to that section's contents. All other sections do not have a contents page.

## Endnotes

### Example:

In Camden in 2022, there were 6,389 children or 1 in 5 (19.8%) living in poverty, up from 13.5% in 2021.<sup>1</sup>

To go to the reference of a particular Endnote, click on the number at the end of the paragraph.

Click on the number in the Endnotes to take you back to the page which the reference number is on.

### Example:

- 1 Proportion of children living in low income households (60% of median income) before and after housing costs, Local indicators of child poverty, Centre for Research in Social Policy, Loughborough University for End Child Poverty (2022); Children in low income families: local area statistics, DWP (2022), <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2022>, [https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local\\_indicators\\_of\\_child\\_poverty\\_after\\_housing\\_costs\\_2021\\_22/23523453](https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local_indicators_of_child_poverty_after_housing_costs_2021_22/23523453).

Text which is in blue and underlined is an active link. This example is a URL hyperlink which will take you to a webpage. Others may open up another document or activate an email programme.

**Comparison group:** throughout the report, we have referred to the 'Comparison group' for simplification.

This group consists of the inner London boroughs and neighbouring boroughs to Camden: Barnet, Brent, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster, Islington, Southwark, Newham, Hackney, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Greenwich, Haringey, and Lewisham. We also compare to the London and England averages where possible.

List of chart and images  
Click on this link to bring you back to this description of the Comparison Group.

Home and next/  
previous page

Contents page

Overviews

These take  
you to  
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# Good Life Camden

Camden’s State of the Borough report is published annually. It brings together data and evidence from quantitative and qualitative sources, and includes national level statistics, regional data, and locally collected data. It provides a **shared evidence base about the outcomes experienced by people in Camden**, and is intended for organisations, residents and the council to increase the understanding of people’s wellbeing in the borough. It is aligned to the structure of the [We Make Camden](#) vision for the borough, and uses the [Good Life Camden](#) framework to identify relevant data.

**A note on timings:** The 2026 report is published earlier than in previous years due to the local elections in May 2026. Due to the shorter timeline for producing the report, we did not include data that was not updated since the last report at the time of drafting.


**The 6 WMC ambitions**

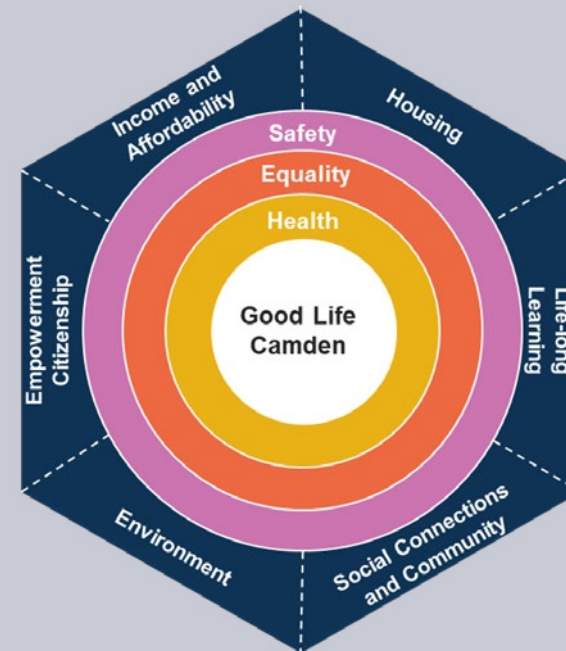
## Good Life Camden

The report focuses on the outcomes that are important for living a good life in Camden, based on the co-created [Good Life Camden](#) (GLC) framework. The GLC framework was developed with residents and staff in 2022. It breaks down the concept of living a good life into nine **themes**, which people told us are most important. These are: Safety, Equality, Health, Housing, Income and Affordability, Lifelong Learning, Social Connections and Community, and Environment. The themes of Safety, Health and Housing are identified as core cross-cutting themes. The framework also spells out the **signals** that tell us if we’re making progress against the different GLC themes (e.g. for Housing, a signal is that the quality of housing is high). The signals are underpinned by **measures**, which use data from a range of sources, such as official statistics or administrative data from schools, hospitals and transport.

In pulling together the data and evidence for the report, we started from the framework and looked for quantitative data that was available, preferably comparable across place and time. Mapping to the GLC framework also showed us where we have data gaps, whether for signals and measures (e.g. people feel safe in Camden) or in the breakdowns of averages (e.g. what is the experience of specific populations, like perceptions of safety of adults with learning disabilities).

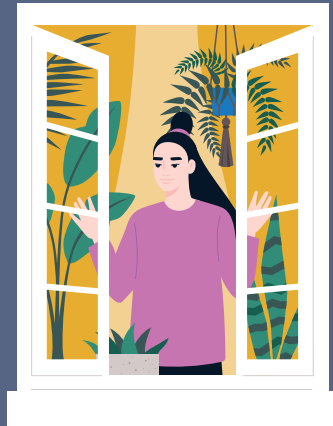
Throughout the report, we have highlighted the relevant Good Life Camden signals where the data is presented.

**Look out for these**  **throughout the report, presenting the relevant Good Life Camden signal in each section.**



# A Place to Call Home

Everyone in Camden should have a place they call home



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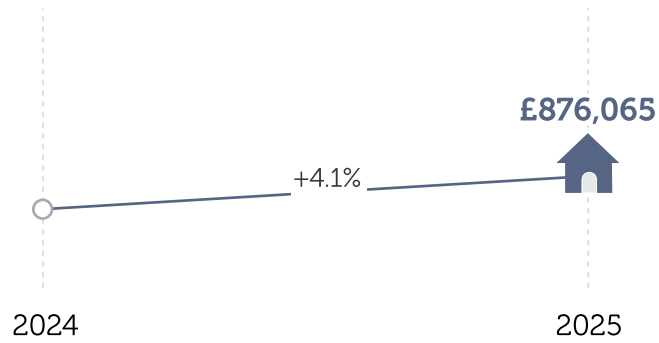
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## Key Insights

In 2025

Average house prices in Camden increased to **£876,065**



In March 2025

**1,014**

households were in Temporary Accommodation

“

*I want to live by where I call home [...] I've been here 15 years [...] but it's so difficult to achieve that goal [...] the goalposts keep moving.*

”

-35-44, Male

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In March 2025

There were **8,380** households on the waiting list for social housing



**+9.5%**  
since 2024

“

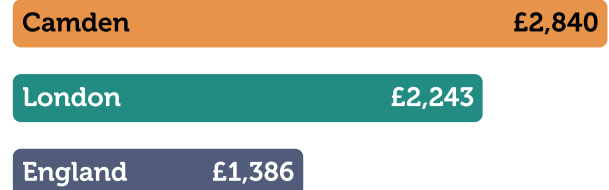
*My experience of homelessness is very difficult, the negative consequences of which my daughter and I are still experiencing; all this has affected our mental and physical health.*

”

-NA, Female

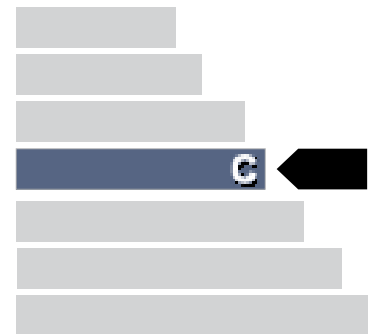
In March 2025

**£2,840** was the average monthly private rent in Camden



In 2024

Camden's housing energy efficiency rating was **C** — the same as the London average



Housing is essential to how residents experience life in Camden, it provides comfort and stability, as well as health, affordability and opportunities. Residents describe housing as one of the most important factors influencing whether they feel able to stay, thrive or put down roots in the borough. Many spoke about a deep sense of attachment to their homes and neighbourhoods, even while navigating rising costs, repairs issues and uncertainty about the future. One resident captured this connection clearly:

“*My home [...] is very unique to me [...] there is so much history in the architecture and the place itself*”

(74, Male, Camden Mela 2025).

Another shared,

“*I love my house, and it feels like a part of me. One of my favourite things in my life is to spend my days at home.*”

(48, Female, Neighbourhood Action Day - Holborn).

In previous State of the Borough reports, we presented the 2021 Census data on housing tenure, showing that it split almost equally across the 92,759 households in Camden, with around a third of residents owning their home (30%), renting privately (36%), or in social housing (34%). This is markedly different to the national split where 62% of people own their homes, 20% rent privately and 17% rent socially.

Camden is also one of London’s largest providers of social housing, with a stock of over 22,000 social rented homes and almost 10,000 leasehold homes. 41% of the Council’s social homes are studios and one-beds, 32% are two bedrooms, while 27% are larger family homes (3 bed+). 91% of social renters, 90% of private renters and 63% of homeowners live in a flat, while 33% of homeowners live in a terraced or semi-detached house.

Good Life Camden ☺

## 🏠 Housing: Homes are affordable

**House prices in Camden are amongst the highest in the UK, increasing in 2025 to £876,065 on average, meaning housing affordability is low**

House prices across England have risen consistently over the past two decades, around twice as fast as wages have, so housing affordability has deteriorated substantially. In June 2025, the average house price in Camden increased to £876,065 from £841,361 just 12 months earlier. Camden was one of six London boroughs from the comparison group that saw their average house prices rise in 2025, although prices continued to rise overall in London and in England.<sup>1</sup>

Camden is the third most expensive place to live in London, one and a half times more expensive compared to the London average house price (£575,205), and around three times as expensive compared to the average for England (£285,688). Since 2010, house prices have increased in Camden by 80%, while London has seen an 89% increase, and England has experienced a 62% rise.<sup>2</sup>

Housing affordability refers to the ability of individuals or households to afford suitable and adequate housing without experiencing excessive financial burden. The ONS defines a property as affordable if a household would spend the equivalent of 30% or less of their income on rent or mortgage repayments.

House affordability in Camden is among the lowest in the UK, meaning buying a house is extremely difficult for people with average incomes. Over the past decade, Camden’s house price to income ratio has remained relatively consistent - the average house in Camden costs almost 20 times the London median income (£43,190). This is a higher house price to income ratio than both London (13 times) and England (9 times) the UK median wage of £32,90.<sup>3</sup>

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For many households, these figures correspond to real and growing pressures. Several residents described feeling increasingly priced out of the borough they consider home. One long-term resident shared,

**“ I belong here, but the living costs in Camden are very expensive, so it’s driving me out”**

(NA, Regents Roots Festival).

Another explained the emotional strain:

**“ It’s so expensive to live where I call home [...] I’ve been here 15 years, it’s the longest I’ve lived anywhere, but financing is the problem. Salaries stay the same and house prices keep rising”**

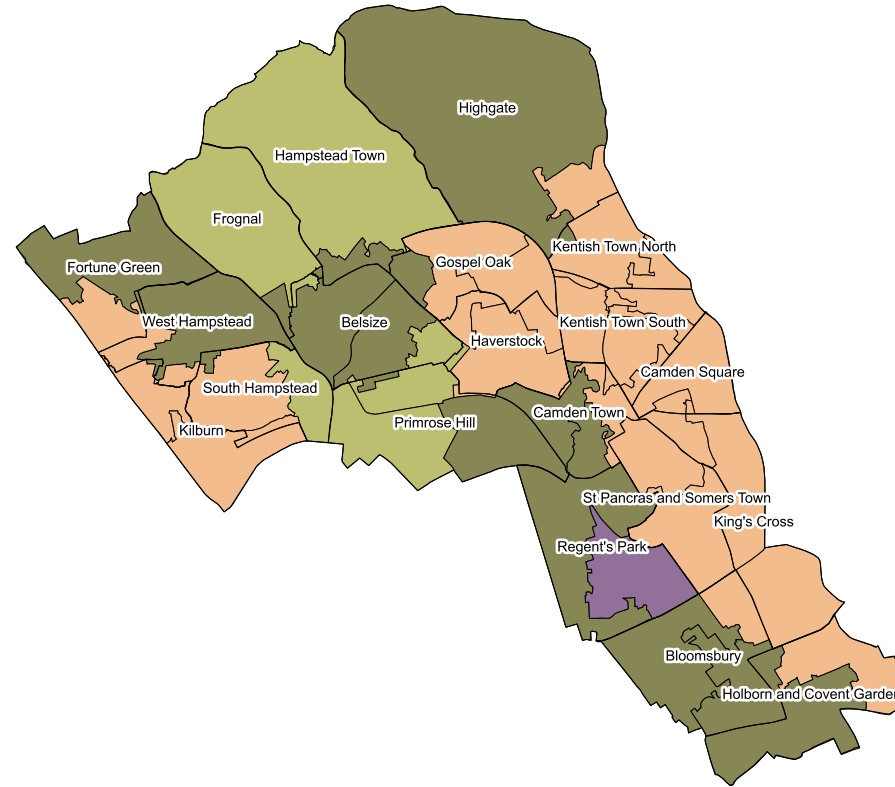
For residents on lower or single incomes, and even on average incomes, the dream of owning a home feels increasingly out of reach. The same resident went on to describe insecurity even outside home ownership, particularly within the rental and guardian sectors:

**“Mortgage will be much more expensive than my accommodation [...] but my housing security is fragile. [...] It’s difficult to plan for the future”**

(35-44, Male, Focus group with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

These experiences highlight how affordability pressures affect financial stability, as well as residents’ sense of long-term belonging.

**Figure 5.1: Median house prices at MSOA level, all dwellings, year ending March 2025 (map)**



Median house price at MSOA level - All dwellings, Year ending Mar 2025

■ <£500k   ■ £500k-£750k   ■ £750k-£1m   ■ £1m-£1.25m

Source: Office for National Statistics, HM Land Registry, 2025  
 Crown copyright and database rights 2025 OS AC0000849991

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

Figure 5.2: Median house prices by property type, 2023/24

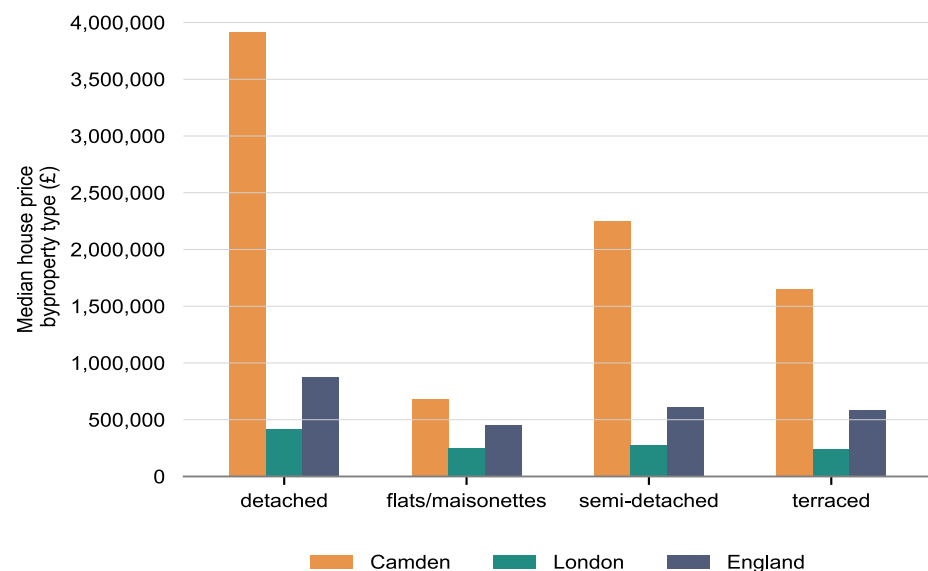
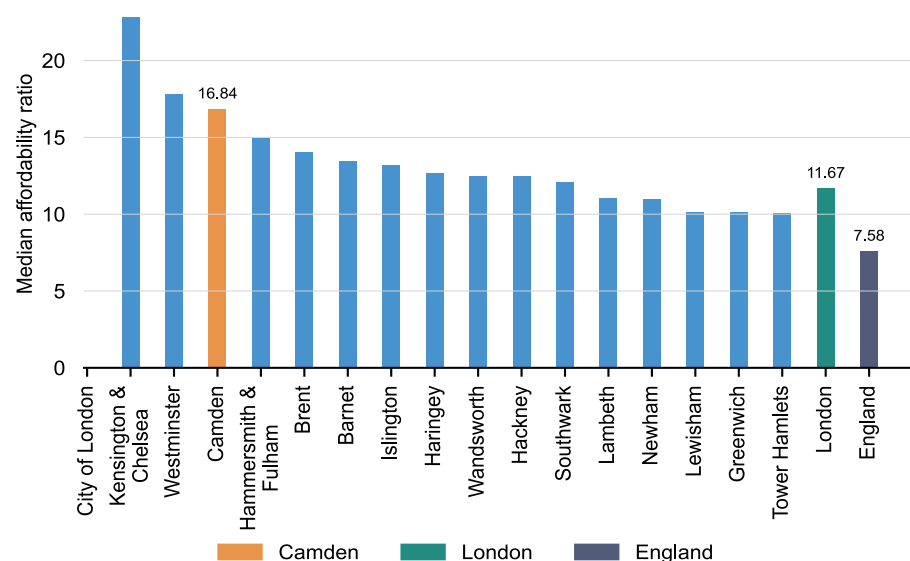


Figure 5.3: Median affordability ratio, 2024

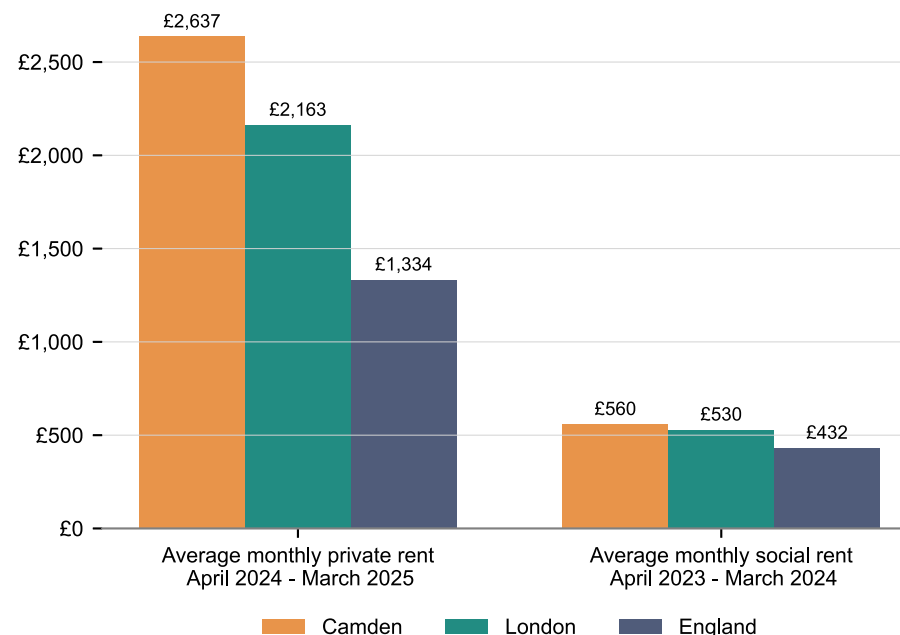


**Private renters in Camden pay more than half (52%) of their monthly household income towards their monthly rent**

Camden has a higher proportion of residents living in private rented housing (36% of households), compared to national figures. Monthly rents in the private rented sector in Camden are the third highest in the country, making Camden one of the least affordable places to rent in the UK.

The average monthly rent in the private rented sector in Camden was £2,637 in March 2025, which is £474 higher than the London average (£2,163) and more than twice the England average (£1,334).<sup>4</sup>

Figure 5.4: Median rent by sector, annual average 2024/25



Sources: Social rent - Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) 1996/97-2023/24, Private rent - Office for National Statistics, Price Index of Private Rents, 2014/15-2025/26

Note: The two datasets represent different time periods

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Source: Office of National Statistics, 2024

The ONS deems an area affordable if a private renting household spends less than 30% of its income on rent. A ratio calculated in 2024 found that Camden private renters were paying 51.7% their household earnings on rent per month.<sup>5</sup>

Social rent is government subsidised rent that is usually paid to local authorities or registered providers (RPs) of social housing. For tenants, rent is set by a government formula and it is significantly lower than in the private market. In 2025, in Camden a tenant in a RP property would pay an average of £605 a month (£577 in London and £467 in England).<sup>6</sup> In 2025, the average local authority rent was £560 a month in Camden, compared to £530 for London and £432 for England.<sup>7</sup>

Residents spoke about the pressure of high rents, noting that these costs affect not only their finances but also their day-to-day lives. One resident shared,

**“ it’s really hard to maintain [friendships] when going out or even socialising at home has become so extortionately expensive. Camden is an inner London borough, so the costs of eating out or even small things are higher than other places. That affects how often I can connect with people”**

(35-44, Female, Focus group with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

**In March 2025 there were 8,380 households on the waiting list for social housing, an increase of 9.5% from 2024**

In Camden, there were 8,380 households on the waiting list for social housing at the end of March 2025, an increase of 9.5% on the year before.<sup>8</sup> In 2016, due to changes in the Housing Allocations scheme, the number of households on the waiting list dropped to 2,930 but has since been steadily rising.

The term homelessness is often mistakenly thought to refer only to people sleeping rough. However, a person does not need to be living on the streets to be legally considered homeless. Increasing numbers of people are finding themselves without a stable home or at risk of losing one.

Local councils have a statutory duty to assist anyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness. Homelessness duty applies when the council determines that an individual is eligible for assistance, is unintentionally homeless, and falls within a defined priority need group. These groups include households with dependent children or a pregnant woman, individuals who are vulnerable due to factors such as mental illness, physical disability, or a history of being in care or custody, and those who must leave their home to escape violence or the threat of violence.

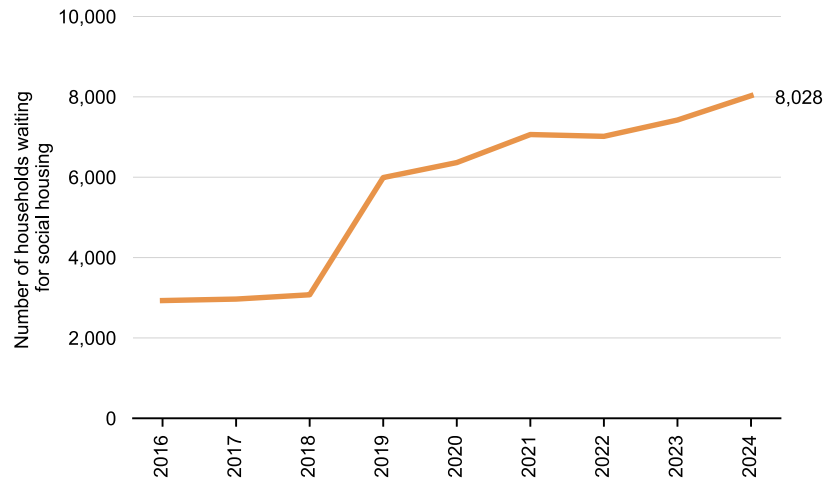
Residents navigating insecure housing reflected on how national systems to regulate private rents have changed over time and the impact that has had. One said,

**“ when I moved into Camden there was a system by which you had fair rents and there was somebody who came and check[ed] whether the increase in rent [...] would be adequate to your accommodation and your lodgings. That has now disappeared many years ago [...] that has priced out a lot of people from Camden. There is a lot of transience”**

(67, Female, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre).

In March 2025, there were 1,014 households in Camden in Temporary Accommodation, meaning they had been assessed as homeless and were owed a main homelessness duty and accommodated. This is almost twice as many as in March 2022, which was 540. Camden still has relatively lower numbers than other central London boroughs (Tower Hamlets had 3,132 households in temporary accommodation, Westminster had 4,449, Lambeth 4,623, at the end of June 2025), but the continued increase is a concern.<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 5.5: Housing waiting list, 2016-2025**



Sources: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018 to 2021) and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

**In 2024/25, 975 people were seen rough sleeping in the borough, an increase of 8% on the previous year**

Homelessness can arise for many reasons - including the rising cost of living, unaffordable rents, eviction, relationship breakdowns, domestic abuse, job loss, and mental health challenges, among others.

Camden’s central location and its proximity to major national and international transport hubs contribute to a high number of people sleeping rough in the borough. Camden consistently records some of the highest levels of rough sleeping in London - second only to Westminster.

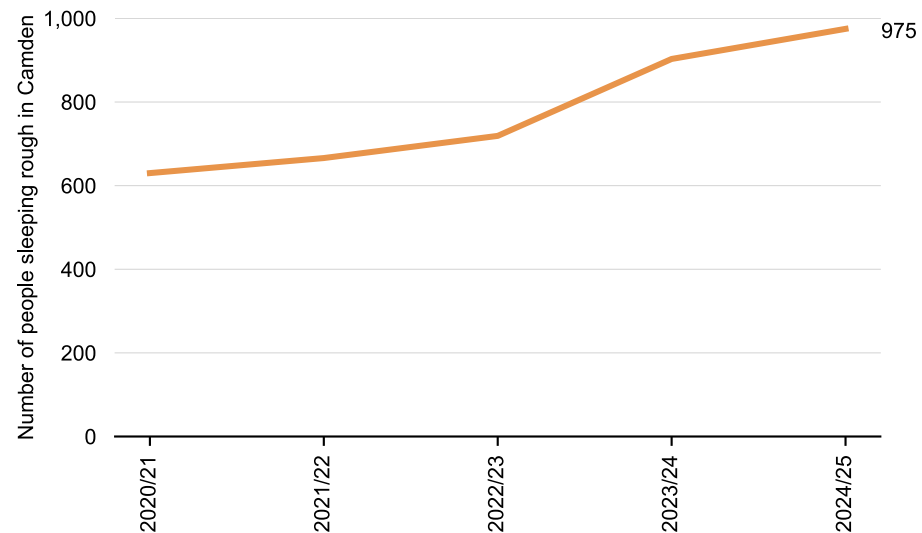
In the year April 2024 to March 2025, 975 people were seen rough sleeping in the borough, an 8% increase on the 903 rough sleepers in 2023/24. Of these, 53% had never slept rough before. 79% of rough sleepers are men; 46% of the rough sleepers were from the UK, 25%

from Europe, 16% from Africa and 7% from Asia. This means 54% were non-UK nationals who have limited recourse to public funds.

57% of the rough sleepers were White, 24% Black or Black British, 6% Asian or Asian British, 3% Mixed ethnicity, 5% Arab and 4% other ethnicities.

In Camden, during 2024/25, 319 people (33%) who were recorded as rough sleeping were provided with accommodation in the borough. Of these, 74% were placed in hubs, shelters, or other forms of emergency accommodation. This includes provision under the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP), which requires councils to offer accommodation to people sleeping rough when temperatures drop during the winter months. A further 21% were housed in temporary accommodation, mostly hostels, and 4% moved into longer-term housing in the private rented sector.

**Figure 5.6: Number of people sleeping rough in Camden, 2020-2025**



Source: Rough sleeping in London (CHAIN reports) - London Datastore (GLA), 202/2012-2024/2025

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In addition to these consistently high levels of rough sleeping and ongoing movement onto the streets, around half (49%) of people sleeping rough in Camden are identified as needing mental health support. A further 23% have support needs related to alcohol misuse, and 40% require help with drug dependency. When individuals experience multiple issues simultaneously, their needs often fall through the gaps between traditional support services.<sup>10</sup>

### Learning from: Peer research and photovoice (Camden Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025–2030)

As part of Camden’s development of the [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025–2030](#), the council partnered with residents through a peer-research approach to ensure that lived experience informed the consultation phase of the Strategy. Residents shared the emotional and practical challenges they face. One mother described,

“*my experience of homelessness is very difficult, the negative consequences of which my daughter and I are still experiencing; all this has affected our mental and physical health,*”

recalling how repeated moves left her daughter “*very traumatised.*”

Several residents highlighted the mental strain of instability, including the stress of moving between temporary accommodation and waiting for updates on housing or immigration applications. One explained,

“*Sometimes I’m really up, and sometimes I’m really, really down [...] Having someone to talk to would help [...] A bit of hope.*”

Another reflected,

“*This is why people fall through the cracks: because they’re exhausted. They just give up.*”

Positive relationships with staff and support organisations were described as vital:

“*The staff at this hostel actually care about you [...] My nurse brought me a voucher and card on my birthday. It made me choke up a bit.*”

Others emphasised the need for [trauma-informed approaches](#):

“*Decision-makers need to provide mental health support that addresses trauma [...] We need person-centred therapy.*”

Good Life Camden ☺

## 🏠 Housing: Quality of housing is high

**6% of the local authority housing stock and 15% of the Private Rented Sector housing were found to be non-decent, and the energy efficiency rating was C, like the London average**

Living in safe, decent housing is a basic human right. Poor housing conditions can have a serious impact on a person’s health, wellbeing, and opportunities for employment and education.

A home is considered *non-decent* if it fails to meet one or more key standards: not complying with basic legal health and safety requirements; not in a reasonable state of repair; lacks reasonably modern facilities and services; or it has inadequate insulation or heating.

There has been a steady reduction in the number of Council-owned homes that were classified as non-decent over the past 5 years or so, down to 1,388 homes in 2025 (6% of all Council homes). However, the English Housing Survey on Stock Condition from 2023 states that the proportion of non-decent homes in the Private Rented Sector in Camden is 15.2%, which is higher than the London average (12.4%) but lower than the national average (22.5%).<sup>11</sup>

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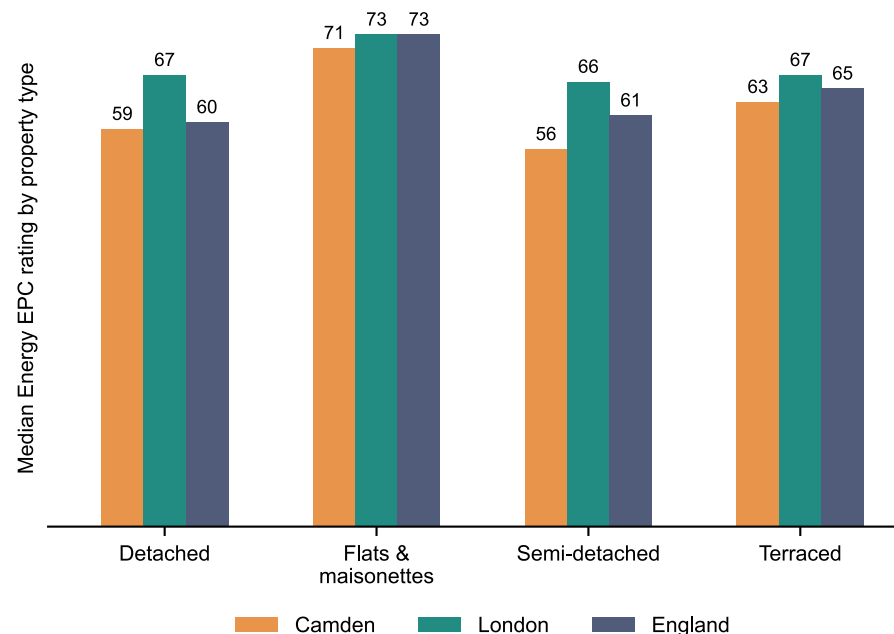
Poor housing conditions, particularly issues like damp and mould, can have significant consequences on health and wellbeing. The Stock Condition survey from 2023 records there were 2,161 (8.7%) of Camden council homes that were damp. In the private rented sector there were 750 (2.1%) homes with damp. Overall, out of 100,628 occupied homes in the borough, there were 3,116 (3.1%) that had problems with damp and mould.

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) indicate the energy efficiency of dwellings. They are based on data about a building’s energy features, like the building materials used, the heating systems, and the insulation. Domestic EPCs are banded from A to G, where A is the most energy efficient.

In 2024, Camden had an efficiency score of 70, which is graded a C (a score of 69-80), similar to the comparison group. London as a region was also graded a C, while England just misses out on a C and is graded a D (a score of 68).<sup>12</sup>

When energy efficiency grades broken down by tenure, Camden’s social housing scores highest with 70, just ahead of private rented on 69, so both are graded a C. Camden’s owner occupiers are graded a D (68). This is in line with London and England, where social housing is the most energy efficient and owner occupiers the least.

Figure 5.7: Median energy EPC rating by property type



Source: Open Data Communities and Valuation Office Agency, Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities, 2024

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## Endnotes

- 1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/uk-house-price-index-data-downloads-may-2025#download-the-data>
- 2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/uk-house-price-index-data-downloads-may-2025#download-the-data>
- 3 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/earningsandhoursworkedukregionbyagegroup>
- 4 [Private rent and house prices, UK - Office for National Statistics](#)
- 5 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/privaterentalaffordabilityengland>
- 6 [LARP\\_2025\\_Additional\\_Tables\\_FINAL\\_V1.0.xlsx](#)
- 7 <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/local-authority-average-rents/>
- 8 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/local-authority-housing-statistics-open-data>
- 9 [https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2F68ee42a2a8398380cb4ad058%2FStatutory\\_Homelessness\\_Detailed\\_Local\\_Authority\\_Data\\_202506.ods&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2F68ee42a2a8398380cb4ad058%2FStatutory_Homelessness_Detailed_Local_Authority_Data_202506.ods&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
- 10 [Rough sleeping in London \(CHAIN reports\) - London Datastore](#)
- 11 [English Housing Survey: local authority stock condition modelling - GOV.UK](#)
- 12 [Energy efficiency of housing in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)

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[camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report](https://camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report)



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# How to navigate the document

## Best viewing experience

This document is best viewed downloaded on a laptop or desktop computer. The interactivity will not work as well on tablets, iPads and mobile phones. You will still be able to view, scroll through and use some functionality such as hyperlinks, however the main navigation buttons on the right may be less effective.

## Right hand navigation

The buttons on the right hand side take you to the different sections of the document. The 6 ambition sections each have their own contents for you to jump to a particular area with ease. Simply click on the button on the right to take you back to that section's contents. All other sections do not have a contents page.

## Endnotes

### Example:

In Camden in 2022, there were 6,389 children or 1 in 5 (19.8%) living in poverty, up from 13.5% in 2021.<sup>1</sup>

To go to the reference of a particular Endnote, click on the number at the end of the paragraph.

Click on the number in the Endnotes to take you back to the page which the reference number is on.

### Example:

- 1 Proportion of children living in low income households (60% of median income) before and after housing costs, Local indicators of child poverty, Centre for Research in Social Policy, Loughborough University for End Child Poverty (2022); Children in low income families: local area statistics, DWP (2022), <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2022>, [https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local\\_indicators\\_of\\_child\\_poverty\\_after\\_housing\\_costs\\_2021\\_22/23523453](https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local_indicators_of_child_poverty_after_housing_costs_2021_22/23523453).

Text which is in blue and underlined is an active link. This example is a URL hyperlink which will take you to a webpage. Others may open up another document or activate an email programme.

**Comparison group:** throughout the report, we have referred to the 'Comparison group' for simplification. This group consists of the inner London boroughs and neighbouring boroughs to Camden: Barnet, Brent, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster, Islington, Southwark, Newham, Hackney, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Greenwich, Haringey, and Lewisham. We also compare to the London and England averages where possible.

List of chart and images  
Click on this link to bring you back to this description of the Comparison Group.

Home and next/  
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Overviews

These take  
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# Good Life Camden

Camden’s State of the Borough report is published annually. It brings together data and evidence from quantitative and qualitative sources, and includes national level statistics, regional data, and locally collected data. It provides a **shared evidence base about the outcomes experienced by people in Camden**, and is intended for organisations, residents and the council to increase the understanding of people’s wellbeing in the borough. It is aligned to the structure of the [We Make Camden](#) vision for the borough, and uses the [Good Life Camden](#) framework to identify relevant data.

**A note on timings:** The 2026 report is published earlier than in previous years due to the local elections in May 2026. Due to the shorter timeline for producing the report, we did not include data that was not updated since the last report at the time of drafting.


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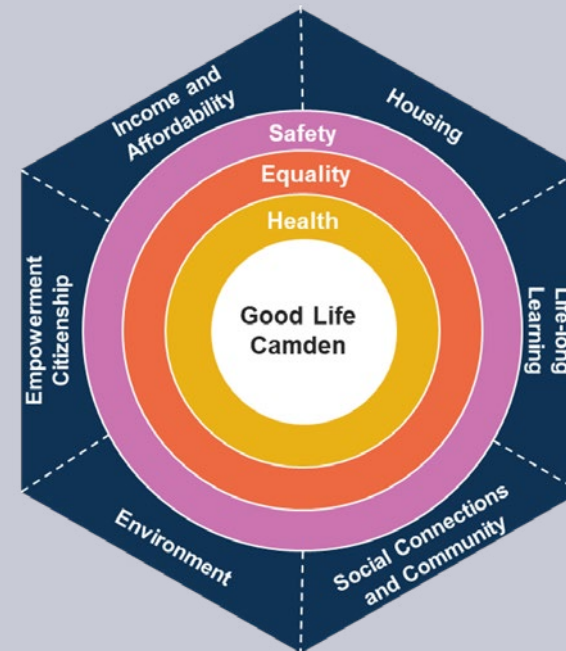
## Good Life Camden

The report focuses on the outcomes that are important for living a good life in Camden, based on the co-created [Good Life Camden](#) (GLC) framework. The GLC framework was developed with residents and staff in 2022. It breaks down the concept of living a good life into nine **themes**, which people told us are most important. These are: Safety, Equality, Health, Housing, Income and Affordability, Lifelong Learning, Social Connections and Community, and Environment. The themes of Safety, Health and Housing are identified as core cross-cutting themes. The framework also spells out the **signals** that tell us if we’re making progress against the different GLC themes (e.g. for Housing, a signal is that the quality of housing is high). The signals are underpinned by **measures**, which use data from a range of sources, such as official statistics or administrative data from schools, hospitals and transport.

In pulling together the data and evidence for the report, we started from the framework and looked for quantitative data that was available, preferably comparable across place and time. Mapping to the GLC framework also showed us where we have data gaps, whether for signals and measures (e.g. people feel safe in Camden) or in the breakdowns of averages (e.g. what is the experience of specific populations, like perceptions of safety of adults with learning disabilities).

Throughout the report, we have highlighted the relevant Good Life Camden signals where the data is presented.

**Look out for these**  **throughout the report, presenting the relevant Good Life Camden signal in each section.**



# Green, Clean and Sustainable

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



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## Key Insights

“

*Our favourite place to visit in Camden is Parliament Hill, as it is such a big and lovely park and there is so much to do. If you want to reconnect with nature, meet up with family and friends or even go to do some fitness, it's a good place to go to.*

”

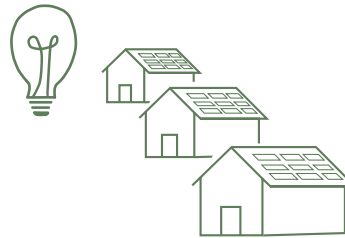
-Couple: 25, Female; 25, Male

A resident in Camden has, on average, 9.1 parks or green spaces within 1,000m of their home.



In 2023

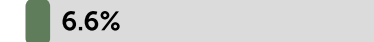
Camden produced 5,160Mwh (megawatt hours) of renewable energy from sources in the borough...



...enough to power about 1,911 homes for an entire year

Between 2018 and 2023, Air pollution-related deaths fell by 2.6%

2023



2018



In 2023/2024

On average, Camden households produced

**30%**  
less waste  
since 2010/2011

Almost 9 out of 10 trips were made using public transport, walking, or cycling



**9:1**

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This chapter explores the importance of clean and green environments in supporting the wellbeing of local communities. It highlights how well-maintained and accessible green spaces contribute to residents' sense of safety and encourage greater use, ultimately improving quality of life.

This chapter also examines active and sustainable travel choices, such as cycling and walking, and their impact on both health and environmental outcomes. By analysing local data and feedback, the chapter provides insight into how Camden compares with other boroughs in fostering a cleaner, greener, and healthier urban environment.

Residents expressed how green spaces help them feel connected and relaxed. A resident shared,

**“Hampstead Heath is my favourite place in Camden as it is my home, where I grew up and also a way to get away from the hustle and bustle of life”**

(36, Male, Camden Mela 2025).

In summary, Camden residents continue to use a variety of sustainable and active transport options, such as cycling, walking and public transport. Road safety remains good, with accident data showing Camden is safer than both the London average and comparator boroughs for pedestrians and cyclists. Air pollution levels and related mortality have continued to decline in line with national trends, although ozone levels are rising, likely due to warmer summers linked to climate change. Household waste volumes have reduced overall, with a slight increase in recycling rates in recent years. Renewable energy generation has grown, driven almost entirely by solar photovoltaic installations. Residents consistently value Camden's green spaces, emphasising the importance of good maintenance and safety.

Good Life Camden 

## Environment: People use clean modes of transport

Clean and active travel is an important factor in health and wellbeing outcomes for residents, as well as environmental outcomes like air quality. The more active and sustainable travel options are being utilised, the more we should expect to see positive impacts on other outcomes.

Some residents welcomed improvements made to Camden's streets and public realm:

**“Camden Council is a supportive council and through its work via public consultations, its public realm has improved - I have seen this through the introduction of wider pavements, bigger cycle lanes and improved air quality”**

(74, Male, Camden Mela 2025).

Others highlighted disruptions caused by large-scale development,

**“the only downside is the HS2 developments, they have been ongoing for a long time and will finish roughly around 2030. This development has caused daily disruptions as there are roadworks, bus stops have been moved and bus routes diverted and this makes going anywhere quite difficult”**

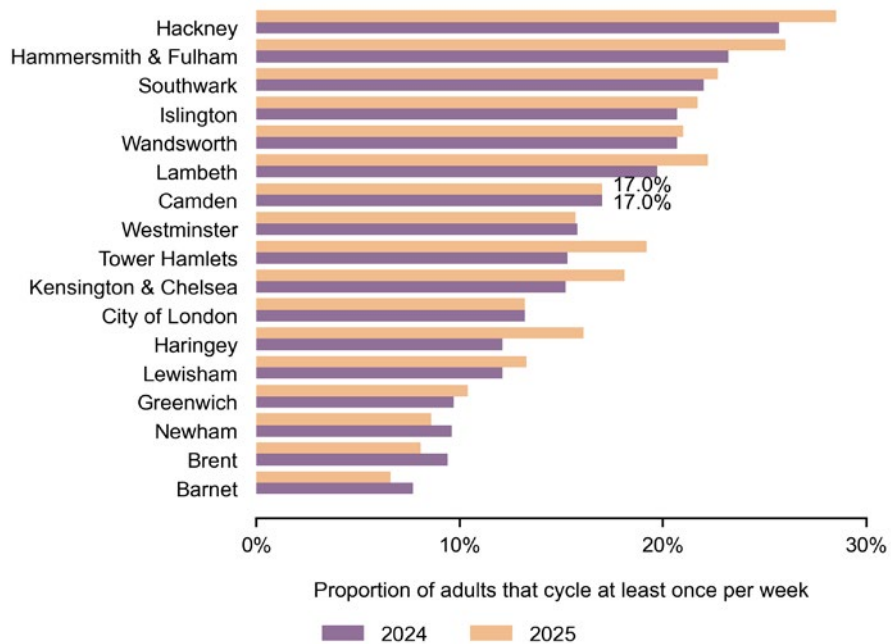
(NA, Camden Mela 2025).

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**17% of people cycle at least once per week**

The latest data (released 2025, for average of 21/22 and 22/23) shows that 17% of Camden adults cycled at least once per week. This is consistent with the previous reported period (average of 20/21 and 21/22) and ranks Camden 9th out of the 17 comparator boroughs. This is down from 7th in the previous period due to improvements made by both Tower Hamlets and Kensington and Chelsea. Camden was one of only six boroughs to remain static or show a decrease in the level of cycling between the two periods. 11 boroughs saw an increase, with the biggest coming in Haringey, Tower Hamlets and Kensington and Chelsea.

**Figure 6.1: Proportion of adults that cycle once per week**

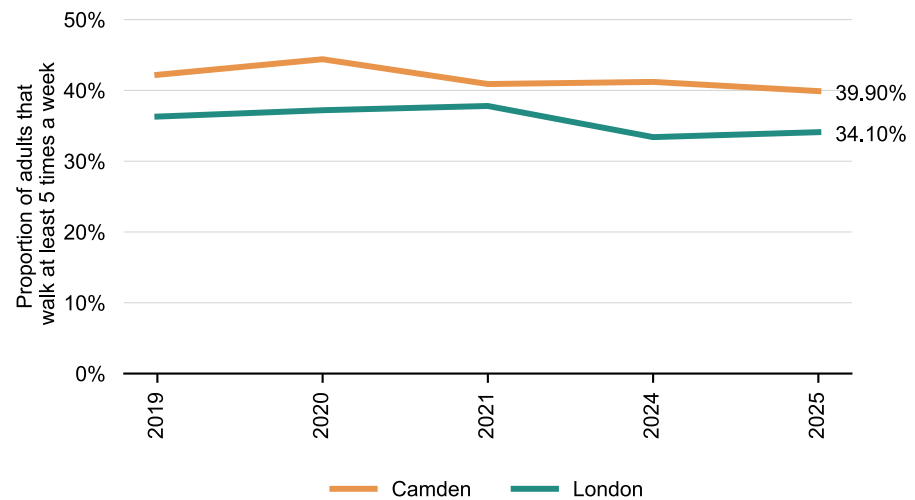


Source: Healthy Streets Scorecard, Sport England, Active Lives Survey, 2024-2025

**39.9% of adult residents walk at least five times a week (at least 10 minutes continuous walking)**

In Camden, 39.9% of adult residents reported walking at least five times a week (walking is defined as any continuous walk of at least 10 minutes. It includes walking for leisure, for travel, rambling and, or Nordic walking, and for wheelchair use, and excludes hiking, mountain and, or hill walking, and walking around shops). This is a decrease from the previous reported period of 1.3% points, and ranks Camden 6th out of the 17 comparator boroughs, and is above the Greater London average.

**Figure 6.2: Proportion of adults that walk at least 5 times a week**



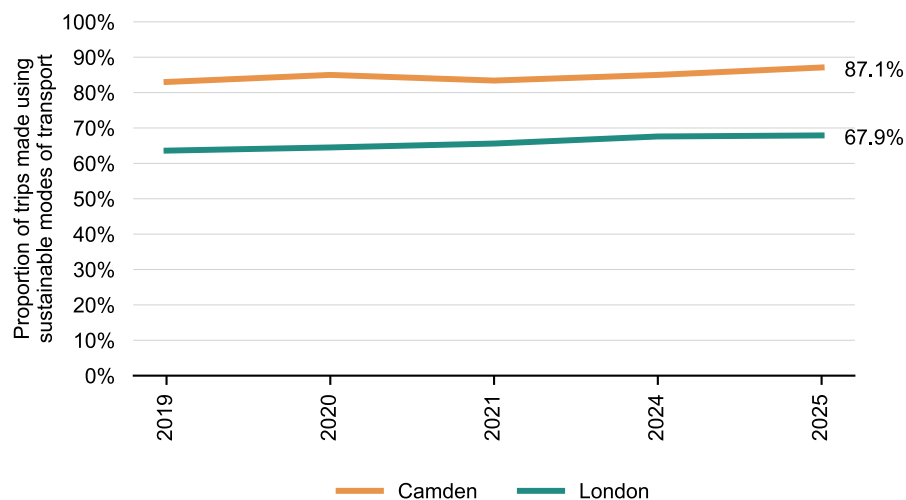
Source: Healthy Streets Scorecard, Sport England, Active Lives Survey, 2019-2025

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**Car ownership, usage and traffic volumes have all reduced in Camden, and 87.1% of trips were made using sustainable modes of transport**

The percentage of all Camden residents’ trips undertaken by car has reduced by a further percentage point in 2024/25, to 12%<sup>1</sup>. The number of cars owned by households in Camden has reduced by 21% in the last 7 years, from 55,102 in 2016 to 43,696 in 2023 - this reduction is double the rate observed in the borough with the second highest reduction (10% in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea).<sup>2</sup> Also, motor traffic volumes in the borough – measured across a network of “Screenline” count points – have reduced by a third in less than two decades.

**Figure 6.3: Proportion of trips made using sustainable modes of transport**



Source: Healthy Streets Scorecard, Sport England, Active Lives Survey, 2019-2025

In Camden, 87.1% of trips were made using sustainable modes of transport (e.g. public transport, walking or cycling). This is an increase of 2.1 percentage points on the previous period, and ranks Camden 2nd out of the comparison group, behind City of London. Camden has been consistently above the London average by at least 15 percentage points for the last 5 years. In general, Inner London boroughs do better than Outer London boroughs on this metric, due to a range of factors such as denser populations, lower car ownership and better public transport options.

**The rate of pedestrian serious and fatal casualties was 4.3 per 100,000 daily walking stages and 1.4 serious or fatal casualties per 100,000 daily cycling stages**

In 2025, in Camden, there were 4.3 serious or fatal casualties per 100,000 daily walking stages (for example: walking from home to bus stop would be a walking stage; then boarding the bus is a new stage of different transport mode, and then walking from the bus to your destination would be a second walking stage). This ranks Camden 4<sup>th</sup> out of the comparison group and below (better than) the London average.

Some residents raised concerns about behaviour on shared roads and pavements,

**“ My road is one way street, you get bikers, they’re not just young people, they are people with their children going on the pavement the wrong way up. Drivers, not just young people, older drivers don’t stop at the zebra crossing”**

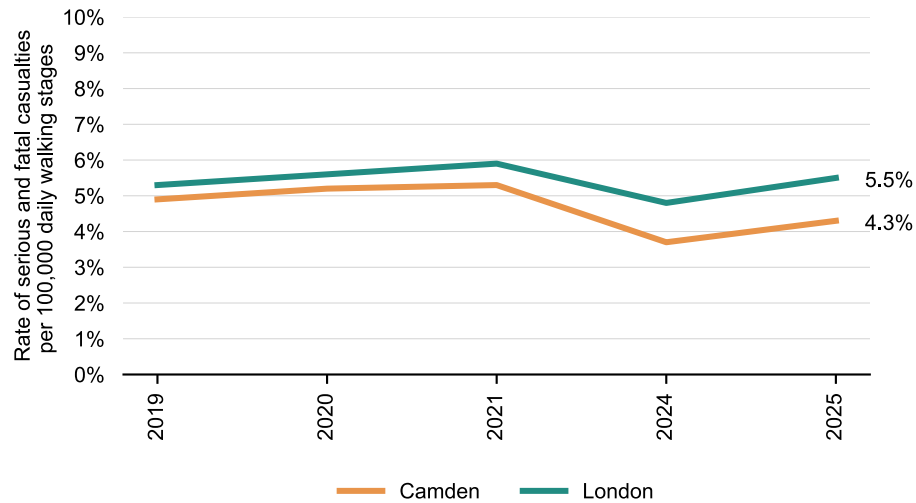
(67, Female, Focus group at Abbey Community Centre).

In Camden, there were 1.4 serious or fatal casualties per 100,000 daily cycling stages (a cycling stage being an individual trip to a destination by bike, riding to a shop, and then riding back, would be two stages).

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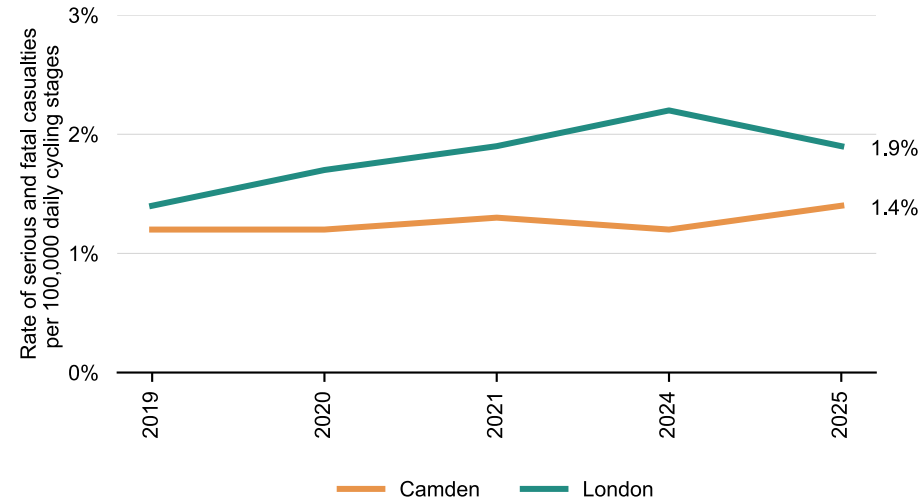
This is a slight increase of 0.2 from the previous reporting period but still ranks Camden 2nd out of the 17 comparator boroughs and below (better than) the London average.

**Figure 6.4:** Rate of serious and fatal casualties per 100,000 daily walking stages



Source: Healthy Streets Scorecard, Sport England, Active Lives Survey, 2019-2025

**Figure 6.5:** Rate of serious and fatal casualties per 100,000 daily cycling stages



Source: Healthy Streets Scorecard, Sport England, Active Lives Survey, 2019-2025

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Good Life Camden ☹️

## 🏠 Environment: Air quality improves across the whole borough

**| 6.6% of all adult deaths were attributable to air pollution**

Camden’s mortality rate due to pollution has followed a similar trajectory to comparator boroughs and the wider national trend. In 2023, data for Camden estimates 6.6% of all adult deaths were attributable to air pollution (i.e. fine particulate matter), ranking Camden 12th out of the 17 comparator boroughs. The level has decreased over the last 5 years however, down from 9.2% in 2018.

It should be noted that this measure is a statistically modelled estimate, rather than being based on real hospital data on cause of death, but it applies a consistent methodology across all areas and is therefore considered useful for comparison and long-term trends.

Residents linked air quality to ongoing construction, with one resident noting that:

“*That’s the reason why I got double glazing in my house [...]. You know you start coughing [with] all the fumes and pollution*” (67, Female, Focus group with residents who have learning difficulties).

**Ozone air pollution concentrations are increasing year-on-year with seasonal spikes corresponding to more frequent summer heatwaves**

Ozone air pollution in London is increasing over time, in contrast to the decline in nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) air pollution concentrations.

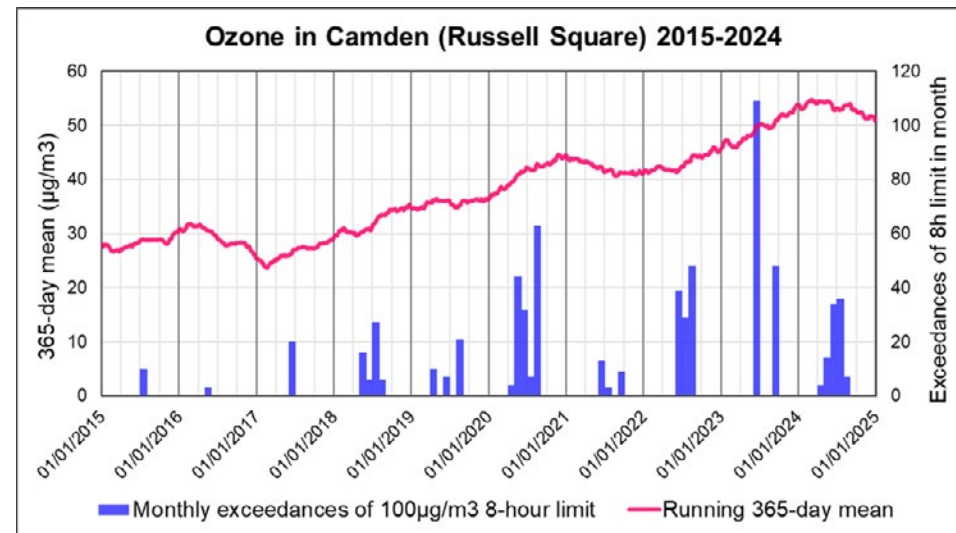
Higher in the atmosphere ozone helps to shield us from solar radiation, but at ground level it is an air pollutant and causes health damage as well as damage to plants and materials. Ozone is not emitted directly by human activities, but is produced by chemical reactions involving other gases and chemicals emitted from burning fossil fuels and from other processes.

It is important to look at both the long-term trend for ozone (measured as a rolling 365-day average concentration) and the changing frequency of short-term periods with especially high ozone concentrations (measured by the number of times per month the rolling eight-hour average ozone concentration exceeds 100µg/m<sup>3</sup>). Taken together, these metrics help to illustrate how our exposure to ozone air pollution

is changing over time whilst also understanding how our exposure to harmfully high concentrations is dominated by specific times of year, usually summer heatwaves.

The long-term increase is thought to be the result of the decline in NO<sub>2</sub> in London (which reacts with ozone, suppressing ozone concentrations) and also because of increasingly frequent and more extreme summer heatwaves, which provide the ideal conditions needed for the chemical reaction that forms ozone. The combination of heat and higher concentrations of air pollution exacerbate health hazards, especially for vulnerable people. Camden’s air quality and climate programmes will help to build public awareness about the actions that can be taken to reduce exposure and health risks related to ozone air pollution and heat.

**Figure 6.6:** Rolling 365-day average ozone concentration and count of monthly breaches of 8-hour rolling limit



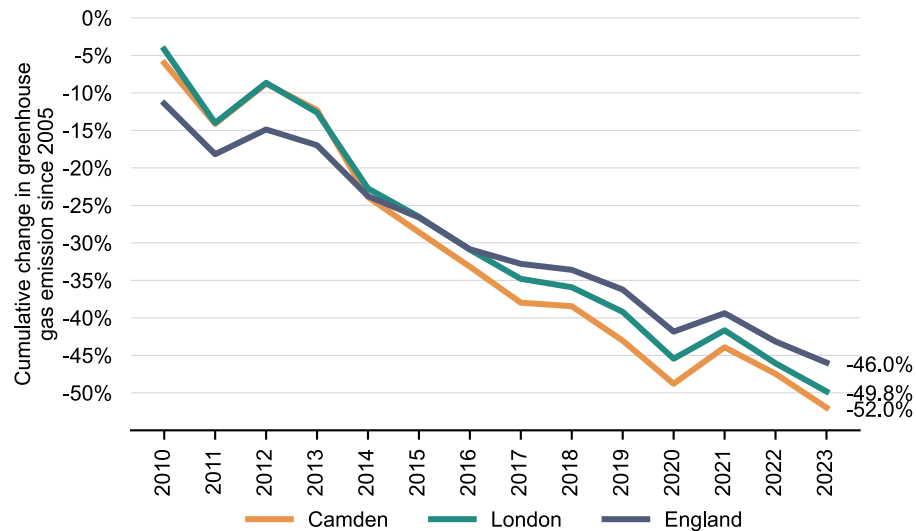
Good Life Camden 

## Environment: Camden becomes net zero

**There has been a continued decline in greenhouse gas emissions**

Borough-wide CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have decreased by 52% against a 2005 baseline. Figure 6.7 illustrates the trend compared to London and England.

**Figure 6.7: Cumulative change in greenhouse gas emissions since 2005**



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2010-2023

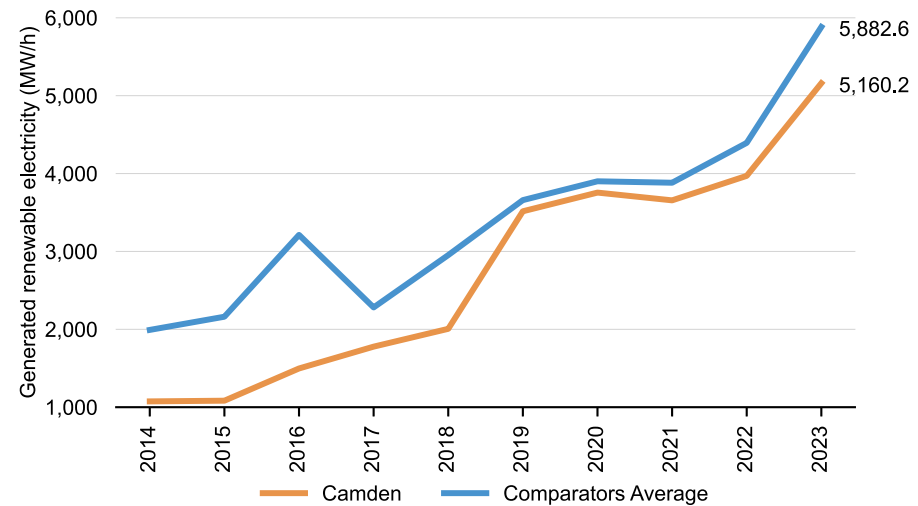
In the reporting year 2024/25, Camden Council's greenhouse gas emissions stood at 11,785 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent). The Council's carbon footprint covers operational energy use from its own estate and operations, as well as some emissions from energy

used in schools, council corporate buildings, leisure centres, hostels, fleet and street lighting. Through the delivery of Council's Carbon Management Plan, the Council exceeded its target of a 40% reduction in emissions by 2020 in 2018/19 and has reduced emissions by 64.7% in 2024/25 when compared to a 2009/10 baseline.<sup>3</sup>

**In 2023, Camden produced 5,160Mwh (megawatt hours) of renewable energy, up from 1,074Mwh in 2014**

In 2023, Camden produced 5,160Mwh (megawatt hours) of renewable energy from renewable sources located in the borough. There has been a steady increase in energy generated from renewable sources locally over the last 10 years, up from 1,074Mwh in 2014.

**Figure 6.8: Generated renewable electricity (Mw/h, average excluding Newham)**



Source: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2014-2023

Note: Comparators average calculated without Newham values

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Renewable sources can include solar, wind, biomass and other forms of energy generation. In Camden, our renewable energy generation comes from solar photovoltaic sources.

There are huge disparities between London boroughs in terms of energy generated from renewables, reflecting the different geographical attributes of each borough. For instance, the peak capacity in 2018 for Newham, driven by sewage gas and biomass generation, was 150,694Mwh, compared to only 606Mwh in Kensington and Chelsea from solar photovoltaic.

In Figure 6.8 we see a consistent upward trend for the average of the comparison group (excluding Newham),<sup>4</sup> very closely aligned to Camden’s trajectory over the last decade.

Good Life Camden [↪](#)

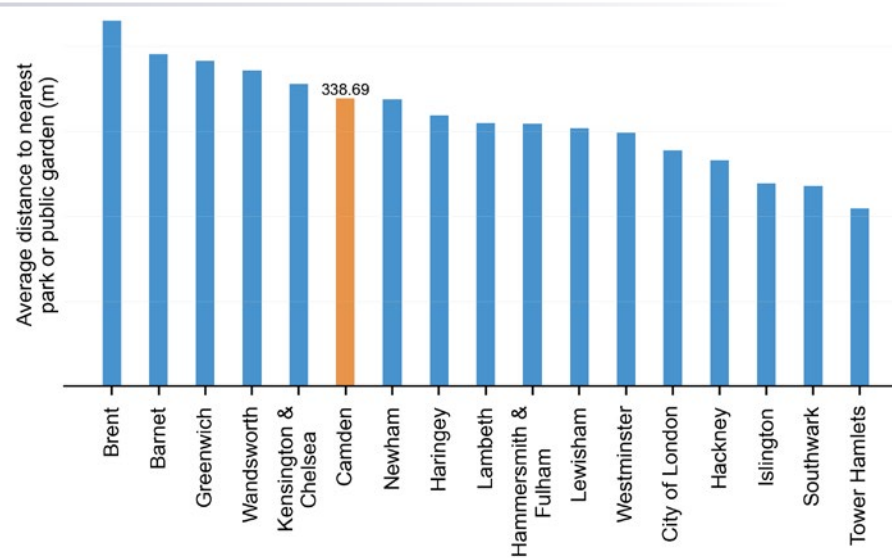
## Environment: Camden’s green spaces and parks serve the needs of its diverse communities

**Camden residents enjoy access to a large number of parks and green spaces, though the average distance to the nearest one is higher than most of our comparison group**

A resident in Camden has, on average, 9.1 parks or green spaces within 1000m of their home. Camden ranks 5<sup>th</sup> out of its comparator boroughs on this metric. Tower Hamlets has the most parks within 1000m of residents, on average, at 12.0, and Brent the lowest, with 2.8.

However, despite the large number of parks and green spaces, comparatively, the average distance to the nearest park is 339 metres in Camden, which ranks Camden 12<sup>th</sup> out of our comparator boroughs.

Figure 6.9: Average distance to nearest park or public garden



Source: Office for National Statistics, 2020

Residents highlighted how green spaces contribute to their quality of life, but also how access, maintenance and a sense of safety shape the extent to which these spaces can be enjoyed. Many families described parks as vital places for play, socialising and community-building. As one resident put it,

*“ I live in Camden NW1 and for my children it’s great as there are lots of outdoor parks and activities, so they are always making new friends and learning about their local community”*  
(50, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

At the same time, the ability to enjoy these spaces depends heavily on how safe and well-maintained they feel. One resident said,

*“ there are many green spaces in the area which is great for kids but I am aware of crime so I tend to be cautious, otherwise I feel safe using the green spaces”*  
(26, Female, Regent’s Roots Festival).

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Concerns about upkeep sometimes affected perceptions of safety and cleanliness as well. Residents also described barriers that limit how fully green spaces can be used, especially by families. Some pointed to gaps in programming and amenities:

““ There are green spaces that are not used as much, there could be more activities for families during the summer. There are limited access to water jets – we only have two and most of the time they are switched off”

(38, Female, Regent’s Roots Festival).

Others raised concerns about playground design:

““ It would be good to have more parks in Camden. More playgrounds and toys everyone can access would be helpful. It’s either too babyish or too grown up, there is not much for the 4–10 year old range”

(NA, Female, Regent’s Roots Festival).

Residents also described the perception that access to green spaces has been reduced with the area becoming more built up with new developments.

These views highlight that although people in Camden have high proximity to green spaces, they also value the safety, maintenance and overall welcoming feeling in those spaces.

### Learning from: In Her Place - Camley Street Young Researchers Project

As part of an eight-week paid programme over Summer 2025, seven local young women and nonbinary people conducted research into their gendered experiences of Camley Street. This work was made possible through [Social Place](#), who held the community relationships and played a leading role in driving the engagement. The researchers

used walking audits, photography, mapping, filmmaking, creative writing, and zine-making to explore how the street feels and functions for gender-diverse people. Their work highlighted how “blind spots,” “poor, broken, or obscured lighting,” “narrow pavements,” and “sense[s] of entrapment” shape feelings of safety and access along the street.

The researchers noted that some sections felt “dodgy, dirty and purposeless,” “eerie and sketchy,” or like “a place you’d only really use to practise driving.” In contrast, small pockets of greenery or well-maintained areas elicited responses such as “I love this view!” and “Could more of Camley Street feel like this?”.

The researchers expressed concerns about inequality in the public realm, observing that “all the nice green spaces and lighting are within private properties... the posh people get nicer things.” They also described how signage, poor visibility, and hostile underpasses made it difficult to feel safe or welcome: “How am I meant to cross?”, “The contrast between how lovely the bridge and how horrible the underpass is, is shocking!”, and “The fences are making me feel that I can’t be here.” Their proposals focused on creating a safer, more inclusive, and more inviting environment, emphasising “warm lighting,” “creative social seating,” “welcoming signage,” and designs that enable people to feel “enveloped in nature” and “like I - and the wider community - belong here”.

The findings from the Camley Street Young Researchers have been shared directly with the Camley Street Community Investment Programme team, including the appointed architects and landscape architects, and have informed the proposed long-term design submitted through the planning application. As the project moves forward, the research is being used to inform consideration of safety, inclusion, accessibility, lighting, greening, and wayfinding across both interim measures and future public realm proposals for Camley Street.

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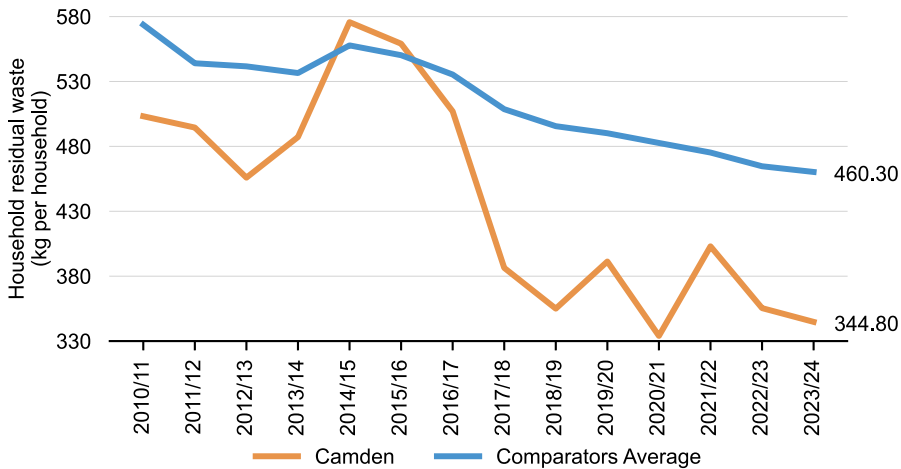
### Cleanliness and waste

**Camden households produced on average 344.8 kilograms of waste in 2023/24, and 29.1% was recycled**

In 2023/24 Camden households produced on average 344.8 kilograms of waste, a reduction of c.150kg per household compared to 2010/11. This ranks Camden 5th out of 17 comparator boroughs, and below (i.e. better than) the average for the group.<sup>5</sup>

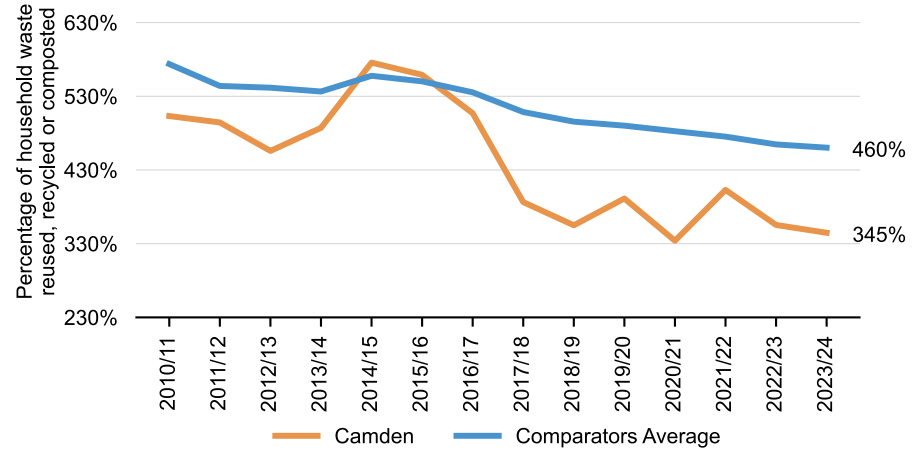
This reduction in household waste has been achieved despite an overall decrease in the percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted. In 2023/24, 29.1% of household waste was recycled in Camden, in line with the average for the comparator group, and ranking Camden 5th out of the 17 comparator boroughs. The rate of recycling was slightly higher in 2010/11 at 32.2%, but dropped as low as 24.8% in 2015/16.

**Figure 6.10: Household residual waste (kg per household)**



Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2010/11–2023/24

**Figure 6.11: Percentage of waste reused, recycled or composted**



Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2010/11–2023/24

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## Endnotes

- 1 <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/travel-in-london-reports>
- 2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/vehicle-licensing-statistics-data-tables>
- 3 <https://www.camden.gov.uk/carbon-reduction-programme>
- 4 Newham is significant outlier in the dataset for our comparison group due to its unique generation capacity from sewage gas and biomass. Excluding it helps us see the broader trend in the comparator group.
- 5 The average is calculated from the total amount of waste collected divided by the number of households in each borough.

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[camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report](https://camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report)



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# We Make Camden: State of the Borough 2026

## Inequalities

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# How to navigate the document

## Best viewing experience

This document is best viewed downloaded on a laptop or desktop computer. The interactivity will not work as well on tablets, iPads and mobile phones. You will still be able to view, scroll through and use some functionality such as hyperlinks, however the main navigation buttons on the right may be less effective.

## Right hand navigation

The buttons on the right hand side take you to the different sections of the document. The 6 ambition sections each have their own contents for you to jump to a particular area with ease. Simply click on the button on the right to take you back to that section's contents. All other sections do not have a contents page.

## Endnotes

### Example:

In Camden in 2022, there were 6,389 children or 1 in 5 (19.8%) living in poverty, up from 13.5% in 2021.<sup>1</sup>

To go to the reference of a particular Endnote, click on the number at the end of the paragraph.

Click on the number in the Endnotes to take you back to the page which the reference number is on.

### Example:

- 1 Proportion of children living in low income households (60% of median income) before and after housing costs, Local indicators of child poverty, Centre for Research in Social Policy, Loughborough University for End Child Poverty (2022); Children in low income families: local area statistics, DWP (2022), <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2022>, [https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local\\_indicators\\_of\\_child\\_poverty\\_after\\_housing\\_costs\\_2021\\_22/23523453](https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local_indicators_of_child_poverty_after_housing_costs_2021_22/23523453).

Text which is in blue and underlined is an active link. This example is a URL hyperlink which will take you to a webpage. Others may open up another document or activate an email programme.

**Comparison group:** throughout the report, we have referred to the 'Comparison group' for simplification. This group consists of the inner London boroughs and neighbouring boroughs to Camden: Barnet, Brent, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster, Islington, Southwark, Newham, Hackney, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Greenwich, Haringey, and Lewisham. We also compare to the London and England averages where possible.

List of chart and images  
Click on this link to bring you back to this description of the Comparison Group.

Home and next/previous page

Contents page

Overviews

These take you to individual webpages

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# Good Life Camden

Camden’s State of the Borough report is published annually. It brings together data and evidence from quantitative and qualitative sources, and includes national level statistics, regional data, and locally collected data. It provides a **shared evidence base about the outcomes experienced by people in Camden**, and is intended for organisations, residents and the council to increase the understanding of people’s wellbeing in the borough. It is aligned to the structure of the [We Make Camden](#) vision for the borough, and uses the [Good Life Camden](#) framework to identify relevant data.

**A note on timings:** The 2026 report is published earlier than in previous years due to the local elections in May 2026. Due to the shorter timeline for producing the report, we did not include data that was not updated since the last report at the time of drafting.


**The 6 WMC ambitions**

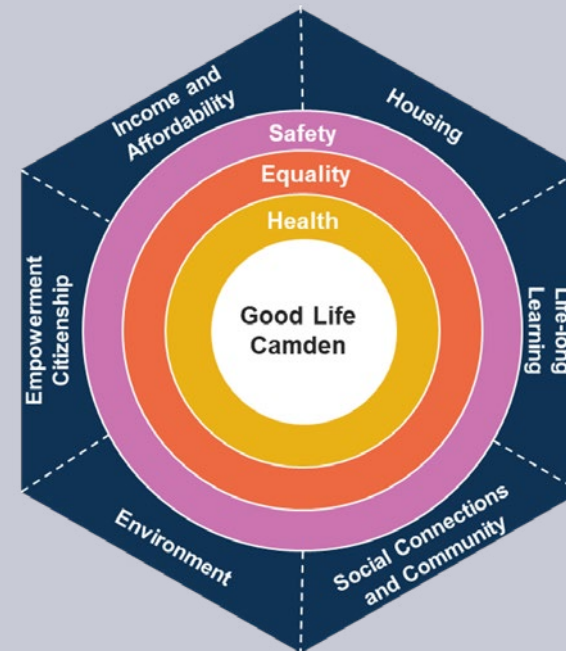
## Good Life Camden

The report focuses on the outcomes that are important for living a good life in Camden, based on the co-created [Good Life Camden](#) (GLC) framework. The GLC framework was developed with residents and staff in 2022. It breaks down the concept of living a good life into nine **themes**, which people told us are most important. These are: Safety, Equality, Health, Housing, Income and Affordability, Lifelong Learning, Social Connections and Community, and Environment. The themes of Safety, Health and Housing are identified as core cross-cutting themes. The framework also spells out the **signals** that tell us if we’re making progress against the different GLC themes (e.g. for Housing, a signal is that the quality of housing is high). The signals are underpinned by **measures**, which use data from a range of sources, such as official statistics or administrative data from schools, hospitals and transport.

In pulling together the data and evidence for the report, we started from the framework and looked for quantitative data that was available, preferably comparable across place and time. Mapping to the GLC framework also showed us where we have data gaps, whether for signals and measures (e.g. people feel safe in Camden) or in the breakdowns of averages (e.g. what is the experience of specific populations, like perceptions of safety of adults with learning disabilities).

Throughout the report, we have highlighted the relevant Good Life Camden signals where the data is presented.

**Look out for these**  **throughout the report, presenting the relevant Good Life Camden signal in each section.**



# Inequalities



## Contents

In 2025, around 1,045 young people (18–24-year-olds) were claiming unemployment benefits in Camden. **7**

In 2024, 1.8% of 16–17-year-olds were not in education, employment or training (NEET), higher than the London average but lower than England **7**

While overall attainment at KS4 (Attainment 8 score) is better than England but worse than the London averages, Camden girls outperform their peers significantly more than in other boroughs **8**

Key stage 4 attainment 8 score varies across ethnic backgrounds, with White pupils the highest performing group in Camden and achieving higher than their peers in London and England, while Black pupils had the lowest attainment in Camden and Asian, Other, Mixed and Black pupils perform below the London and England averages **9**

Disadvantaged pupils underperform in KS4 compared to other pupils (Attainment 8 score 40.9), although they do better than their disadvantaged peers nationally (England score 34.7) **10**

School absence is relatively high in Camden, but that changes across ethnic groups, with Black and Asian pupils having the lowest severe absence rates in secondary schools. Severe absence rates are close to the London rates in Camden for boys and girls, but lower than the England rates **10**

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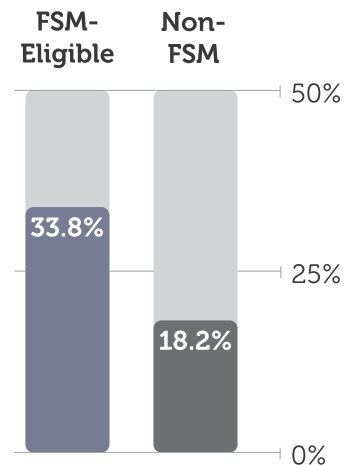
## Key Insights

“  
It's a borough of contrast [...] you notice it more here.  
”

-65-74 years old, Female

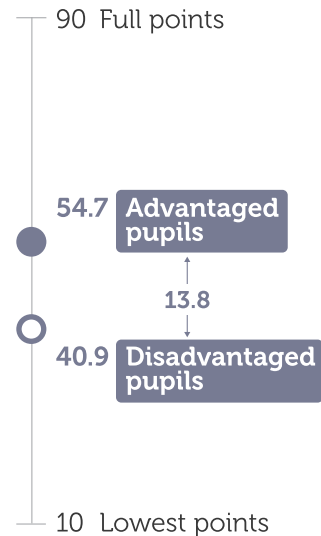
In 2023/2024

**34% of secondary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) were persistently absent, almost double the rate of their non-FSM peers**



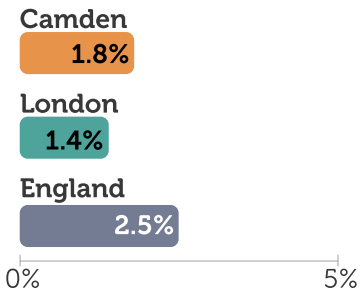
In 2023/2024

**Disadvantaged pupils achieved lower GCSE outcomes, scoring 13.8 points less on average on Attainment 8**



In 2024

**1.8% of 16-17 year olds were NEET (not in education, employment, or training)**



**1,045**

**young people (aged 18-24) were claiming unemployment benefits in Camden**

“  
Local youth workers encouraged me to do things out of the house and attend the Carers Partnership Board [...] My husband is visually impaired and my daughter is on the spectrum and I feel very supported by family and friends in the area.  
”

-42, Female

“  
There should be extra support for parents with special needs kids [...] swimming £36 for 30 mins, football £120 [...] too expensive.  
”

-48, Female

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Camden is a diverse borough in inner London, with home to people from all over the world, where different ethnicities, religions and socioeconomic backgrounds live together. It is also a place of deep material inequalities, with some of the most expensive properties in the UK alongside one of the biggest percentage of social housing in London. The borough's contrasts in wealth are striking. One resident reflected,

**“ Areas of Hampstead where wealth is in your face and some of the more deprived parts, it can be quite jarring [...] the difference is becoming more prevalent [...] richer are richer, and poorer are poorer”**

(35-44 , Male, Focus group discussion with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

For long-term residents, these disparities stand out:

**“ It's a borough of contrast [...] you notice it more here”**

(65-74, Female, Focus group discussion with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

These reflections show Camden as both vibrant and diverse, yet marked by visible inequalities that shape daily life.

While Camden is celebrated for its diversity, residents describe a mixed experience of inclusion and inequality. One noted,

**“ Cromer Street was not as diverse [...] whereas on Gray's Inn Road there are people from various backgrounds and it feels more inclusive”**

(26, Female, Camden Mela 2025).

Experiences of inequality have also been described by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning (LGBTQ+) residents describing exclusion and safety concerns in everyday life:

**“ I've noticed [...] in secondary schools [...] LGBT bullying is going on with kids. That'll make you think twice about being open [...] young people seem more negative now than before”**

(35-44, Female, Focus group discussion with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden).

Telling this story through quantitative data is challenging. We have limited data about inequalities in Camden, especially when looking at the differences across groups and identities. Ideally, we would want the data to describe how the outcomes described in previous chapters might be experienced by different people, for example safety and community connections across different ages, or health across sexes. Previous State of the Borough reports ([2024](#), [2025](#)) have reviewed data from the 2021 Census, presenting differences across groups in outcomes such as education, employment, caring responsibilities, housing, health and disabilities for different ethnicities, genders and age groups.

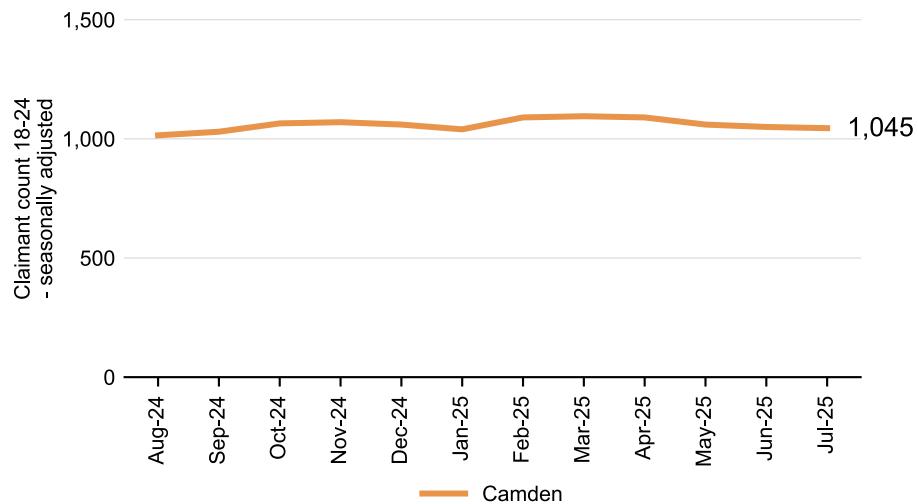
In this report, we have taken a detailed look at available statistics about education and employment for young people, as these are drivers of inclusive growth. The data show that Camden's young people face a complex landscape of opportunity and challenge. While the borough's diversity is a strength, material and social inequalities are deeply felt, especially among disadvantaged and minority groups. Barriers to opportunity are evident in education, employment and access to support, with gaps for those with special needs, from lower-income backgrounds, and among ethnic groups. It is important to mention here that the school data presented is for pupils of Camden state schools, and include out-of-borough pupils while also not including the Camden residents who attend independent schools.

**In 2025, around 1,045 young people (18–24-year-olds) were claiming unemployment benefits in Camden.**

Youth unemployment is a serious concern and different from overall unemployment, which can be temporary and part of changes in a lifelong career. When young people aren't working or training, it limits their opportunities. They have less money to spend, fewer chances to build skills, and little influence to improve their lives. They miss out on the opportunities to build up their experience and understanding of the job market.

Between August 2024 and July 2025, the number of 18–24-year-olds in Camden claiming unemployment benefits increased slightly, from 1,015 to 1,045, a change of about 3%. This contrasts with London overall, which rose by 10.4%, and England, which saw an increase of 6.9%. Camden's figures remained relatively stable compared to the more pronounced growth seen at the London and national levels.

**Figure 7.1: Claimant count, 18–24-year-olds**



Source: Office for National Statistics, August 2024 - August 2025

While data for Camden's youth employment rate for 2024–25 estimated at 55.5% according to the Annual Population Survey,<sup>1</sup> it is caveated by a very wide confidence interval of  $\pm 18.2$  percentage points, giving a range from 37.3% to 73.7%. This means the true value could be significantly lower or higher than 55%, reflecting high uncertainty. By comparison, London's rate of 42.3% has a narrower interval ( $\pm 3.2$ ), and England's 50.4% is even more precise ( $\pm 1.0$ ). When interpreting the data for Camden, it is important to consider that the large confidence intervals mean the figures may not be statistically significant.

**In 2024, 1.8% of 16–17-year-olds were not in education, employment or training (NEET), higher than the London average but lower than England**

Young people (16-17 year olds) who are not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) are in a crucial time in their life, missing out on both skill-building and work experience, which means starting adult life from a disadvantaged position with lower education and income. It can have a long-lasting negative impact on job prospects, earnings, and even on physical and mental health. This makes it harder for them to join the labour market and society.

In 2024, Camden recorded 1.83% of 16–17 year olds as not in education, employment or training (NEET). This is higher than the London average of 1.4% but below the England figure of 2.5%. Among the comparison group, Camden is in the mid-to-upper range, with rates varying from 0% in the City of London to 2.71% in Westminster. Over time, Camden's NEET rate has fluctuated: it fell from 1.42% in 2019 to 1.17% in 2022, before rising again to 1.83% in 2024. This indicates a recent upward trend following earlier improvements.

**The 6 WMC ambitions**

**Figure 7.2: Percentage of 16–17-year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEETs)**



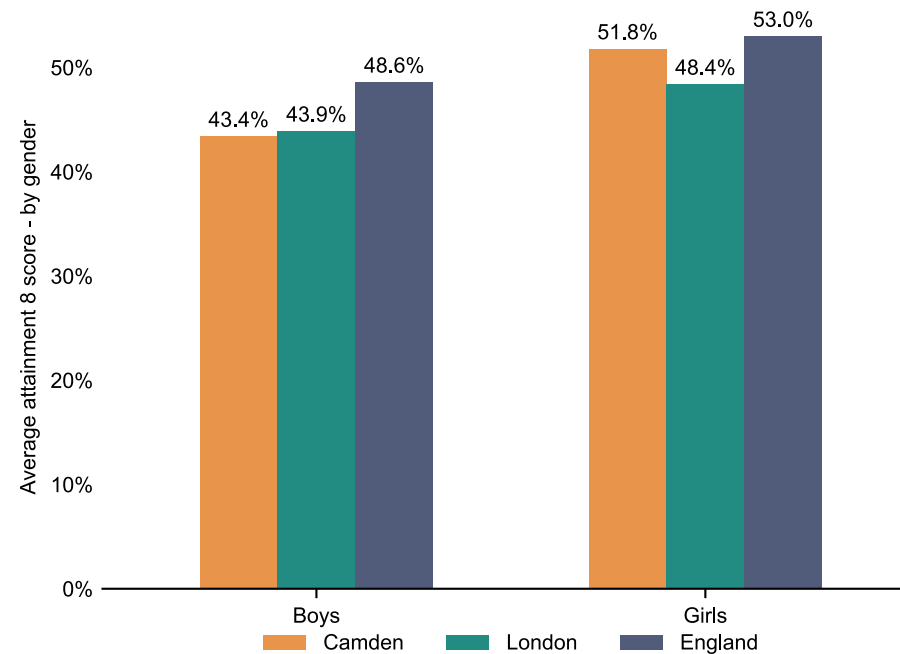
Source: Department for Education, 2024

**While overall attainment at KS4 (Attainment 8 score) is better than England but worse than the London averages, Camden girls outperform their peers significantly more than in other boroughs**

Attainment 8 is a way of measuring how well pupils do in key stage 4, which they usually finish when they are 16 years old. It is a score that adds together the results across 8 GCSE subjects. While Attainment 8 measures the average GCSE scores across eight subjects, the Progress 8 score shows how much progress pupils make compared to others with similar starting points.

In 2025, the provisional Attainment 8 score (an average across 8 GCSEs) for pupils in Camden’s state funded schools was 46.8, slightly lower than in 2023/24 (47.9).<sup>2</sup> Camden is ahead of the national average (45.9) but just slightly behind the London average (50.4). However, when the Attainment 8 scores for different groups is examined, it reveals inequalities across different groups.

**Figure 7.3: Attainment 8 score, by gender**



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

Camden’s Attainment 8 results by gender show strong performance for girls, consistently above England averages although below the London average, from 52.7 in 2018/19, to 51.8 in 2023/24, while in the same year girls in London averaged 53, and in England 48.2. Boys in Camden have been consistently close to the average for England boys but well below boys in London, with the latest scores at 43.4 in

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2023/24, compared to 43.7 in England and 48.6 in London. The gender attainment gap was 8.4 points in 2023/24, the largest among the comparison group and nearly double the national and London averages of around 4.5 points, although lower than the 10-point gap that was in 2018/19.

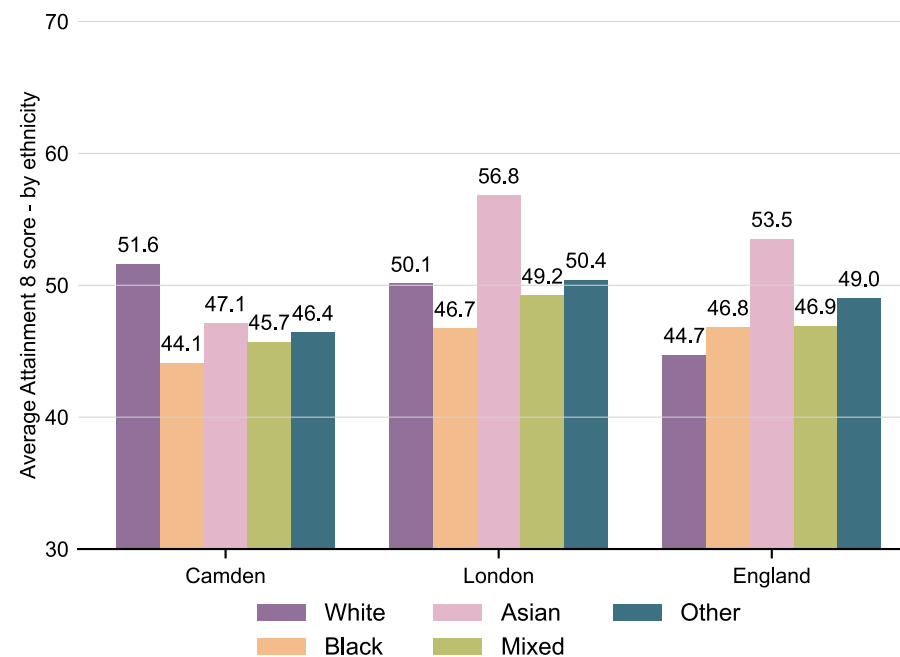
Progress 8 tells a different story: in 2018/19 it was 0.09 (a score above 0 means better than national averages), but then dropped to -0.14 in 2023/24, indicating less progress than expected, while London overall improved to 0.29. This recent decline contrasts with the generally positive trend seen across many London boroughs, where scores continued to rise post 2021/22.

**Key stage 4 attainment 8 score varies across ethnic backgrounds, with White pupils the highest performing group in Camden and achieving higher than their peers in London and England, while Black pupils had the lowest attainment in Camden and Asian, Other, Mixed and Black pupils perform below the London and England averages**

Camden’s Attainment 8 scores show differences across major ethnic groups and over time. In 2023/24, White pupils performed the highest with scores of 51.6, close to their pre-pandemic score (51.3 in 2018/19). White students in Camden scored above the London (50.1) and England (44.7) scores. Black students in Camden, who performed the lowest in 2023/24 scored 44.1 (and 44.9 in 2018/19), lower compared to London (46.7) and in England (46.5). Asian pupils in Camden scored 47.1 in 2023/24 and also below London (53.5) and England (56.8) averages for this group, Mixed (45.7) and Other (46.4) ethnicities in Camden had small changes over time, generally staying below London and England averages.

Compared to London and England, Camden tends to perform lower for most major ethnic groups, particularly Asian pupils, who outperform White pupils in most other boroughs and in London and England. Borough-level comparison places Camden in the lower half of London boroughs for overall attainment, with boroughs such as Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, and Hammersmith and Fulham consistently achieving higher averages. However, gaps are different in England, with White pupils having the lowest scores and Asian pupils with the highest, while in London, Asians are still the highest performing group, but Black pupils are the poorest performing group.

**Figure 7.4: Attainment 8 score by major ethnicity groups, Camden, London and England**



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

**Disadvantaged pupils underperform in KS4 compared to other pupils (Attainment 8 score 40.9), although they do better than their disadvantaged peers nationally (England score 34.7)**

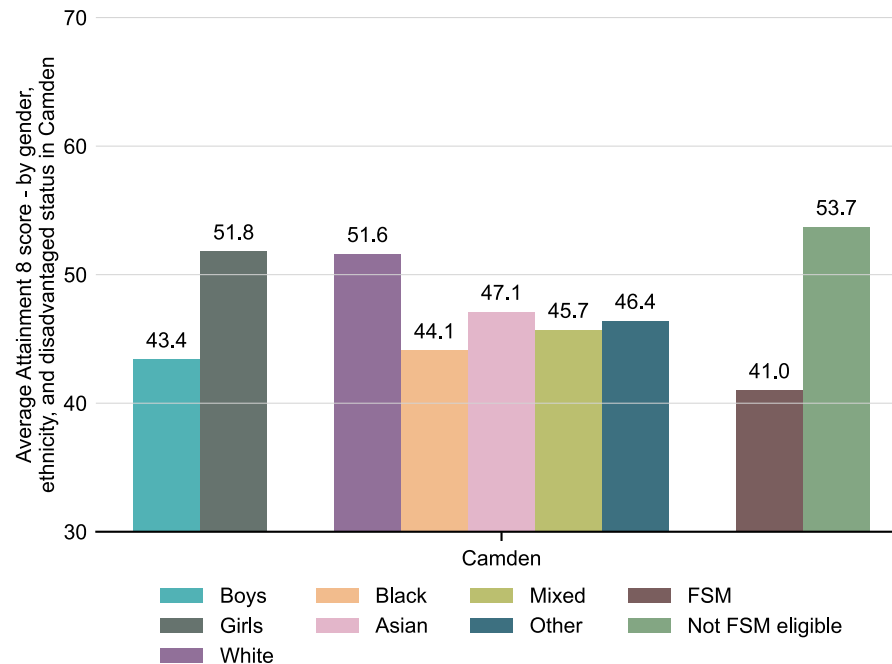
The Department for Education defines disadvantaged pupils as pupils who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) at any point during the previous 6 years, along with any adopted children, looked-after-children and children with parents in the armed services. In the national statistics, disadvantaged pupils achieve lower levels of attainment at all stages.

Camden’s data shows a consistent attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers, alongside overall declines since the pandemic. In 2018/19, disadvantaged pupils averaged 43.1 in Camden, compared to 55.4 for all others, a gap of 12.3 points. After Covid-19, scores fell for both groups, but most sharply for disadvantaged pupils, dropping to 40.9 in 2023/24 compared to 54.7 for other pupils, widening the gap to 13.8 points.

Compared to London and England, Camden mirrors the broader pattern: disadvantaged pupils consistently score lower, and gaps have widened slightly since the pandemic years. While Camden’s gap is smaller than Barnet’s (16.1) or Wandsworth’s (16.5), it remains above the London average of 13.0 and close to the national average of 15.4.

Attainment 8 scores for pupils with SEN in Camden have remained in the lower 30s in the last couple of years, 31.7 in 2023/24, while scores for pupils without SEN are in the mid-50s, 52.2 in 2023/24. The attainment gap between these groups in Camden was 20.5 points in 2023/24, slightly below London (22.5) and England (22.0) averages. The gap has narrowed modestly in recent years, and Camden ranks mid-range among London boroughs for equity, with gaps smaller than those in Barnet and Hammersmith & Fulham but larger than in Southwark and Haringey.

**Figure 7.5: Attainment 8 score, by sex, Free School Meals and major ethnicity groups**



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

**School absence is relatively high in Camden, but that changes across ethnic groups, with Black and Asian pupils having the lowest severe absence rates in secondary schools. Severe absence rates are close to the London rates in Camden for boys and girls, but lower than the England rates**

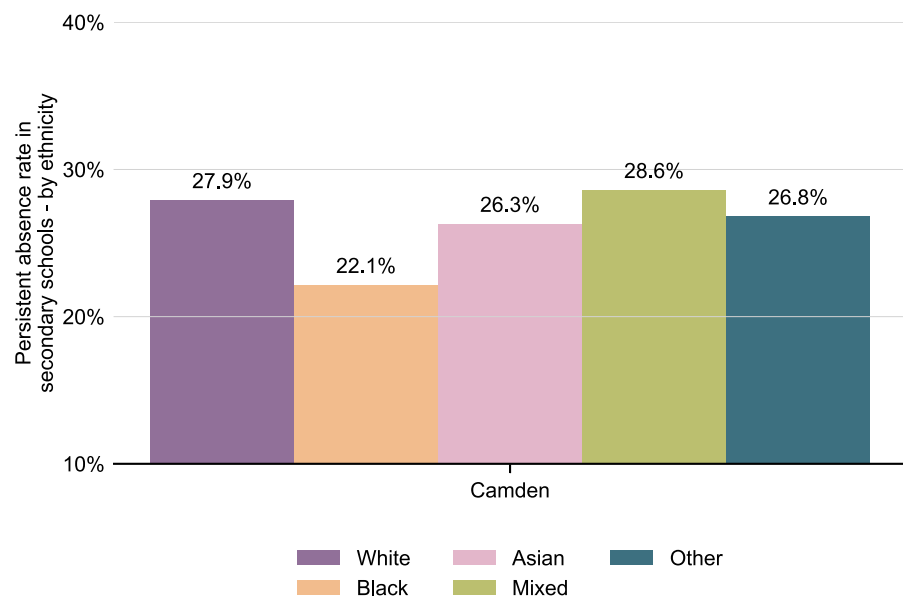
Persistent absence from school is defined as absence of 10% of sessions, and severe absence is defined as 50% of sessions. Overall, including pupils from primary, secondary and special school Camden’s

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rate of persistent absence in 2023/24 was 22%, higher than London’s rate of 18% and the national rate of 20%. Severe absence was also higher in Camden compared to London but lower than England, at 1.75% in Camden whereas it is 1.52% in London and 2.3% in England.

In secondary schools in Camden, where persistent and severe absence rates are higher than in primary schools, absence rates vary by ethnicity. For severe absence (missing 50% of sessions), ‘Other’ (3.54%) and ‘Unclassified’ (4.38%) ethnicities have a notably higher severe absence rate compared to most groups, while Asian pupils have the lowest rate (1.31%). For persistent absence, there are higher rates for Mixed (28.6%) and Asian (26.3%) pupils compared to London averages (25.5% and 16.7% respectively) and England averages (27.5% and 19.2%).

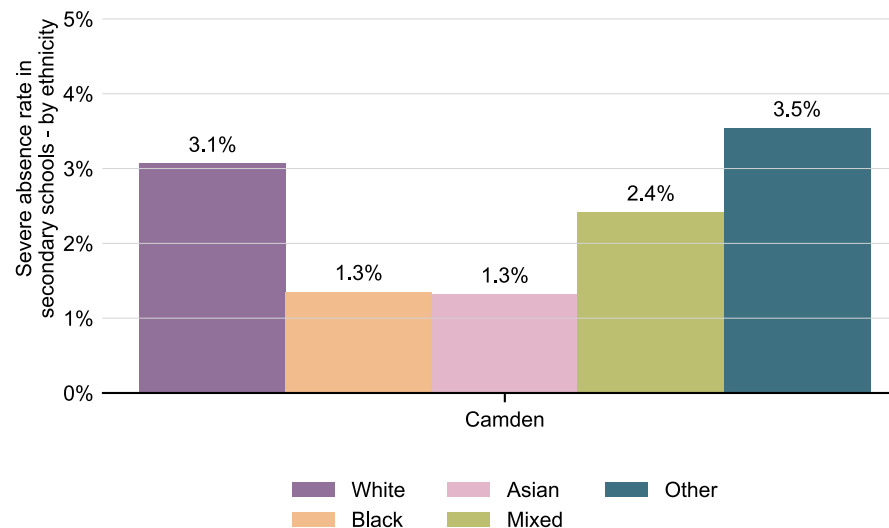
**Figure 7.6: Persistent absence rates, secondary schools, by major ethnicity groups**



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

Overall, Camden’s persistent absence rates are above London averages for most ethnicities and close to or slightly above England levels, particularly for Asian pupils. Borough comparison places Camden among those with higher overall absence, similar to Islington and Newham, while boroughs like Wandsworth and Hammersmith & Fulham report lower averages.

**Figure 7.7: Severe absence rates, secondary schools, by major ethnicity groups**



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

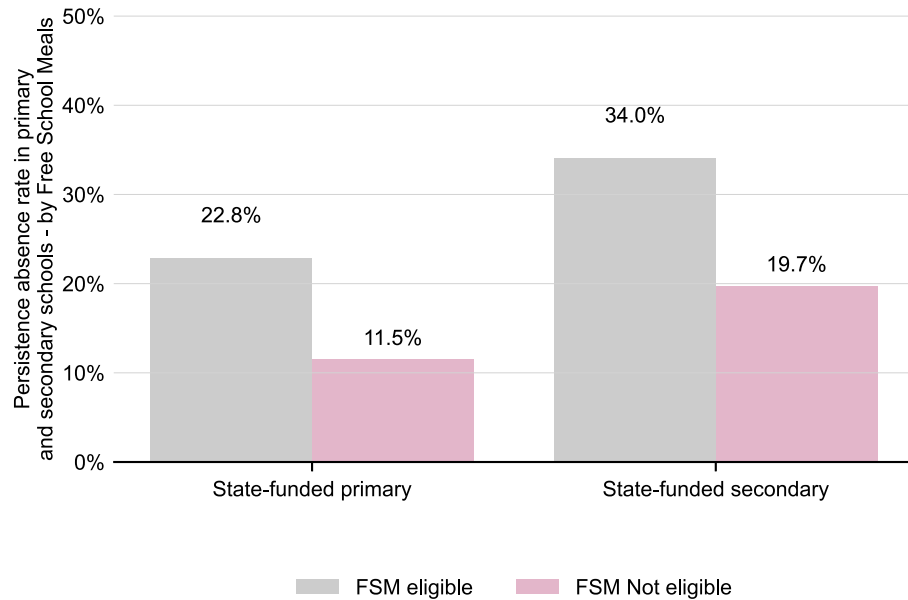
Absence rates are higher in Camden for both boys and girls when compared to London and England, particularly in secondary schools and for the persistent absence. Boys generally had slightly higher rates than girls in both primary and secondary schools.

For persistent absence (missing 10% of sessions), Camden shows 24.8% for girls in secondary schools and 28.5% for boys, above London averages (girls: 22.3%, boys: 20.6%) and England (girls: 26.8%, boys: 24.3%). At primary level, rates in Camden are 16.4% for girls and 17.8% for boys, again higher than London and England.

Severe absence rates (missing 50% of sessions) are 2.6% for girls in secondary schools and 2.3% for boys, slightly higher than London (girls: 2.4%, boys: 2%) but below England (girls: 4.2%, boys: 3.5%). Primary school severe absence rates are lower overall, at 0.8% for girls and 0.9% for boys.

Absence rates for pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) are higher than for those not eligible across all measures. For primary schools in Camden, severe absence is 0.5% for FSM pupils compared to 0.1% for non-FSM, and persistent absence is 23% vs 11%. In secondary schools, severe absence is 2.5% vs 1.6%, while persistent absence rises sharply to 34% for FSM pupils compared to 19.7% for non-FSM.

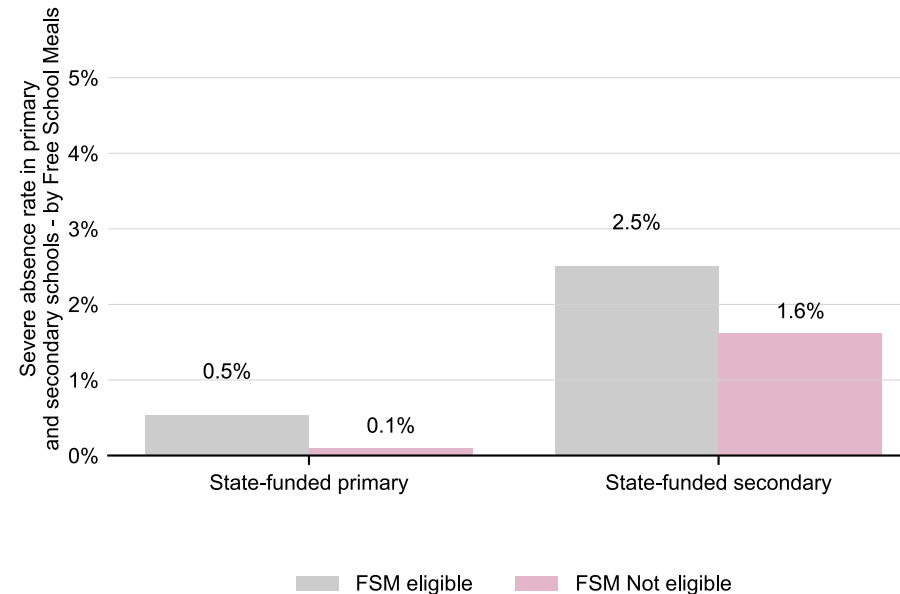
**Figure 7.8: Persistent absence rate, by Free School Meals eligibility, secondary and primary schools, 2023/24**



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

In secondary schools, persistent absence in London (31.56% for FSM pupils and 15.84% for non-FSM pupils) and England (42.54% and 18.31% respectively) follows a similar pattern to Camden, though rates for FSM pupils are slightly higher. The gap between FSM and non-FSM pupils in Camden is notable, particularly in secondary schools, where FSM pupils are almost twice as likely to have persistent absence. Overall, Camden aligns with national and London trends of higher absence among FSM pupils, but its secondary FSM absence is above both benchmarks.

**Figure 7.9: Severe absence rate, by Free School Meals eligibility, secondary and primary schools, 2023/24**



Source: Department for Education, 2023/24

## Endnotes

- 1 According to the Annual Population Survey, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lad/1778385166/report.aspx?town=camden>
- 2 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/key-stage-4-performance/2024-25>

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[camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report](https://camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report)



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We Make Camden:  
**State of the Borough 2026**

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# We Make Camden: **State of the Missions 2026**



# How to navigate the document

## Best viewing experience

This document is best viewed downloaded on a laptop or desktop computer. The interactivity will not work as well on tablets, iPads and mobile phones. You will still be able to view, scroll through and use some functionality such as hyperlinks, however the main navigation buttons on the right may be less effective.

## Right hand navigation

The buttons on the right hand side take you to the different sections of the document. The 6 ambition sections each have their own contents for you to jump to a particular area with ease. Simply click on the button on the right to take you back to that section's contents. All other sections do not have a contents page.

## Endnotes

### Example:

In Camden in 2022, there were 6,389 children or 1 in 5 (19.8%) living in poverty, up from 13.5% in 2021.<sup>1</sup>

To go to the reference of a particular Endnote, click on the number at the end of the paragraph.

Click on the number in the Endnotes to take you back to the page which the reference number is on.

### Example:

- 1 Proportion of children living in low income households (60% of median income) before and after housing costs, Local indicators of child poverty, Centre for Research in Social Policy, Loughborough University for End Child Poverty (2022); Children in low income families: local area statistics, DWP (2022), <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2022>, [https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local\\_indicators\\_of\\_child\\_poverty\\_after\\_housing\\_costs\\_2021\\_22/23523453](https://repository.lboro.ac.uk/articles/report/Local_indicators_of_child_poverty_after_housing_costs_2021_22/23523453).

Text which is in blue and underlined is an active link. This example is a URL hyperlink which will take you to a webpage. Others may open up another document or activate an email programme.

**Comparison group:** throughout the report, we have referred to the 'Comparison group' for simplification. This group consists of the inner London boroughs and neighbouring boroughs to Camden: Barnet, Brent, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster, Islington, Southwark, Newham, Hackney, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, City of London, Greenwich, Haringey, and Lewisham. We also compare to the London and England averages where possible.

List of chart and images  
Click on this link to bring you to this description of the Comparison Group.

Home and next/  
previous page

How to navigate

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# We Make Camden Missions

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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, 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.



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

## | What is the State of the Missions?

The State of the Missions is our annual public account of We Make Camden missions. Building on the wider context set out in the State of the Borough report, this report is the culmination of our annual learning cycle, consolidating our reflections and learnings from mission activity. In this report, we think about our learning across three levels:

**Individual projects** – A mission project is any intervention or activity in the borough that contributes towards our mission goals. Each of these projects is about delivering outcomes but also serves as an experiment to test our assumptions about the mission.

**Individual Missions** – Each mission comprises a portfolio of projects, which collectively contribute towards the change we want to see. At a mission level, we bring together the learning from individual projects and from other data sources to help us make good choices about where to prioritise resources next.

**Strategy** – Across the whole strategy, we want to continually improve our missions' way of working, through reflection on our own missions and by learning from other mission-oriented organisations and external evidence of what works.

The learning loops (Fig 8.1 on the next page) illustrate the iterative learning at each level and their interconnectedness - how individual projects should inform our missions, and how learning in our missions should inform our strategy as a whole<sup>1</sup>.

In each mission's section, we have relied on quantitative data from secondary sources, qualitative insights from our primary data collection, and learning from our partners in the borough. The tapestry of insights shared in this section has been shaped by the coverage of these data sources. However, given the cross-sectoral and emerging nature of missions, we often do not have data or recognised indicators for the outcomes pertinent to our missions. These data gaps limit our ability to share a true state of the missions and, in the day-to-day, to navigate towards reaching the missions. These gaps are a key consideration in our research and data collection activities and remain a high priority in the coming year.

## Collective Sensemaking

This report is a testament to our evolving practices to evidence and learning in missions. This year, inspired [by UNDP](#) methodology, each of the missions brought together a sample of their projects across different teams and partners. The projects shared their learnings in a pre-structured format, which encouraged both learning for the projects and synthesis of the takeaways for broader mission. The structure also encouraged learning from this project level to feed into learning at the mission level. These learnings also sit at the heart of this year's State of the Missions report.

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### Mission section structure:

**| Why is this a mission**

A brief explanation of the problem and our motivation for tackling it

**| Mission level learning**

What we think we've discovered about solving that problem from the work we've been doing

**| Project level learning**

**Individual projects**

A summary of what we have learned from an individual project or intervention

**Practice exploration**

Summary of learning that has informed our thinking about how we deliver missions

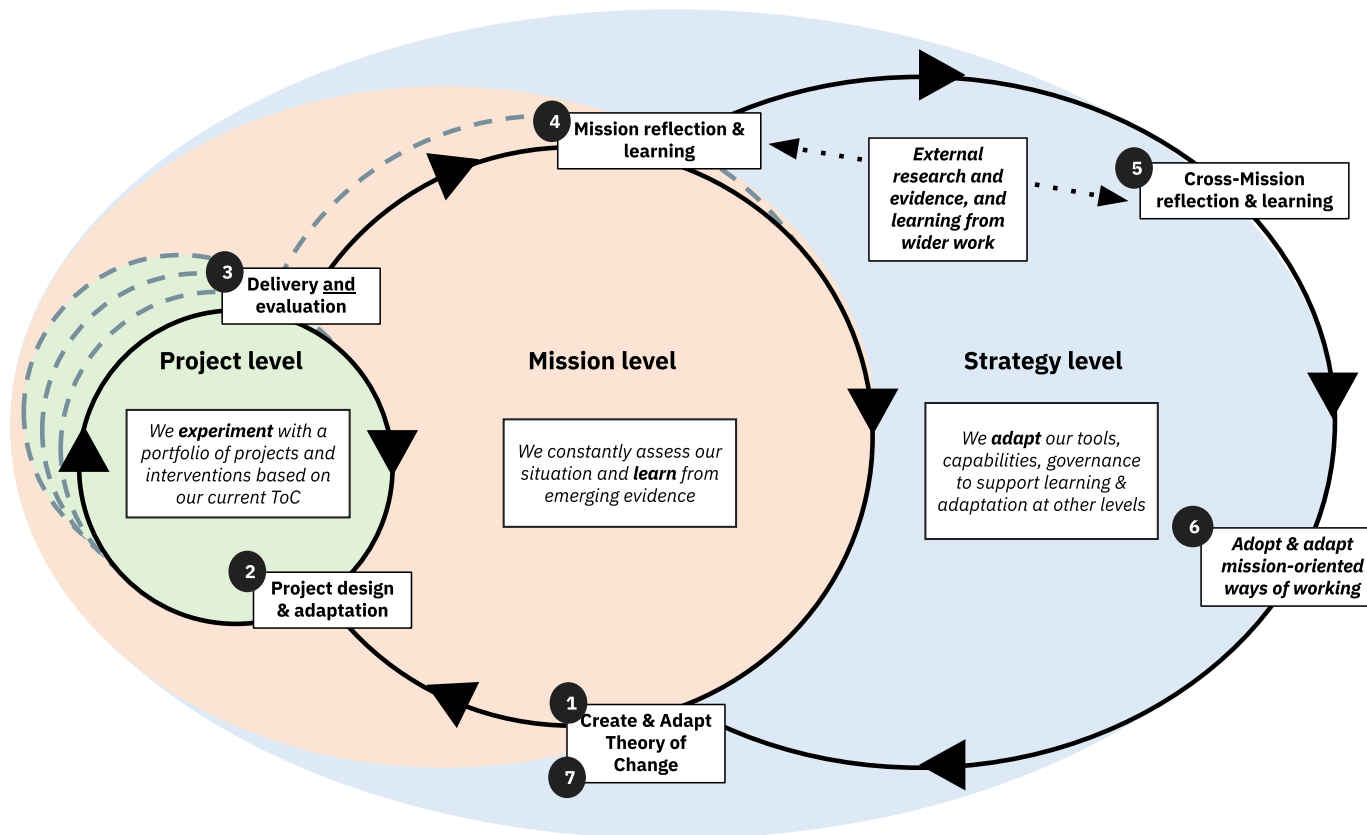
**Learning from**

Learning shared by external partners

**| Our priorities for the coming year**

What each mission plans to focus on next year

Figure 8.1: Mission learning framework



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## | Mission-oriented strategy

This year, we share our learning from working in a mission-oriented way. We start with a summary of our learnings below and have included callouts in each mission chapter to highlight specific examples. Look out for the 'Practice Exploration' boxes if you are a missions practitioner.

Missions are inherently about looking at the system, and understanding our collective leverage to shape it. Here, we are capturing the things missions have taught us about re-orienting the organisation for mission delivery.

### Setting the conditions for change

This year, driven in particular by learning from our Food Mission, we have deepened our understanding of what it means to take a genuinely strategic, mission-oriented approach.

Early in the food mission, there was a focus on building momentum through flagship projects, shared ambitions and a compelling narrative. This was an important part of building partnerships and activity around the mission and demonstrating what was possible. As we have listened, tested and learned across the borough, we want strategic progress to be defined by both initiatives delivered, and by the strength of the system that holds them.

Three insights have shaped the food mission's evolution this year, and will inform how we develop our overall mission approach in the coming years:

#### **1. Missions should prioritise enabling conditions, not just activities**

We now recognise that the real strategic levers are not projects themselves, but the conditions that allow people and organisations to act - shared purpose, trust, confidence, the ability to collaborate, and the capacity of partners to shape and influence the system.

#### **2. Missions should distribute agency, not centralise control**

Traditional strategies often rely on the Council or another organisation defining the problem, setting the agenda and directing the work. This approach cannot shift a whole system. Instead, we learned that missions must invite and enable, helping others understand the system they operate in, locate their role within it and take action.

#### **3. Missions should build systemic capacity to continuously learn and adapt, not driven by linear delivery of outputs**

We learned that progress is often visible in shifts in culture, relationships, confidence and alignment. This insight led us to build a more dynamic governance model for the food mission supported by a refreshed theory of change / mission map and new approaches to understanding progress, to capture how the system is becoming more capable over time.

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## Changing the way we work

These principles – prioritizing the enabling conditions, distributing agency, and building systemic capacity to learn and adapt – influences the way we work inside the Council:

### Bringing actors across mission system together

Working with others in the borough helps us to deepen our collective problem solving, build greater momentum, and imagine new approaches to delivery and finance. We have learnt that this requires us to be more relational and community-driven than the traditional approach to corporate partnerships ([Practice Exploration: Developing Partnership working on estates](#); Estates Mission), and our ambition is not just partner, but co-own the missions with organizations in the borough. ([Practice Exploration: Camden Food Partnership](#); Food Mission). This will further help us learn how to make it easier for organisations to work in partnership with the council across missions.

### Reimagining financing for achieving missions

Funding is one of the key levers available to the council and well-resourced institutions in the borough. We continually work together to redirect these resources towards the goals of the missions.

In trying a few different funding models, we have learnt that,

- Creating bespoke funding delivery mechanisms such as the We Make Camden Kit enables us to align community activities with mission goals ([Practice Exploration: We Make Camden Kit and other grants](#); Youth Mission)
- Our Missions require us to think deeply about how our policies and processes can support us doing different work with different partners ([Practice Exploration: Community Wealth Fund](#); Diversity Mission)
- Missions don't rely solely on traditional programmatic financing, they are test beds for creative resource sharing ([Practice Exploration: 5 Pancras Square Library Café](#); Food Mission)

- Co-financing with partners can enable them to contribute directly to resident outcomes; but there is more work to ensure that we've got the enabling conditions right

This year, we are exploring how we can further our work with partners and make better use of social value agreements, as well as how we can orient funding to further diversify the levers we are using to make change.

### Adaptive governance of missions for long-term change

Our missions sit outside of traditional political cycles – this is essential for long-term change that missions aim to achieve. It requires us to put a governance structure around missions that, and which enables the right people to come together and make decisions at the right time. Beyond decision-making, we also want mission governance to be sufficiently different to traditional governance in its emphasis on enabling conditions (and not just activities), iterative learning (and not just delivery) and distributed agency (and not single point of accountability).

As we have embedded this long-term view in our organisational practice, we have learnt that,

- Work within missions can require us to distribute power in new ways and think differently about leadership and accountability ([Practice Exploration: Responding to Climate Risks](#); Estates Mission)
- When setting up project-level governance, it's important to think about how we can take a multidisciplinary approach from the outset ([Practice Exploration: Challenge Prize](#); Food Mission)

In the coming year, we would like to explore how we might use our governance to better surface areas of shared interest early, so we can unlock shared momentum across missions.

### Working across organisational silos

Since setting our missions, we have invested in capabilities which enable us to deliver on cross-cutting ambitions – like specialist teams within the Council, focusing on partnerships and participation, which have provided the foundation for our relational missions’ way of working.

In discovering the capabilities for missions, we have learned that:

- We are capable of more together than in isolation – partnership working enables us to extend our capabilities, balancing the strengths of our community with our skills as a Council ([Practice Exploration: Story Trail](#); Estates Mission)
- We can invest in capabilities outside the council to grow and future-proof the skills held in our community ([Practice Exploration: Systems Thinking and Leadership course for future leaders in the voluntary sector](#); Diversity Mission)
- We could broaden our use of different policy levers further in coming years, influencing other organizational policies ([Practice Exploration: Climate Action Plan 2026-2030](#); Food Mission)
- There are specific capabilities which we are lacking, and which are impeding project delivery ([Practice Exploration: Delivering Estate courtyard projects](#); Estates Mission)

In the coming year, we would like to explore more how we can mature our understanding of the skills needed to practice missions, build capacity in those areas, and leverage our diverse strengths intentionally when planning projects.

# Our Diversity Mission

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



## | Why is this a Mission?

In Camden, we take pride in the diversity of our borough. However, we understand that the outcomes for a good life are unequal for the diverse residents of Camden. This inequality is systemic and goes beyond just access to jobs or money. It's also about power. Some people have more say than others, and that's not right.

We want to change that.

Our goal is to make sure everyone in Camden has a real opportunity to influence decisions that affect their lives. This means making sure the people in charge of local organisations, including Camden Council, reflect the diversity of our community. We want to see more people from diverse backgrounds taking up leadership roles and participating in decision-making forums.

We're also focused on the future.

We're working with schools and other educational programs to give young people the skills and confidence they need to become leaders. We want to help them develop their talents and create opportunities for them to be a future leader.

We are also working to support the next generation of entrepreneurs, recognising that local businesses play important leadership and empowerment roles in Camden.

Ultimately, we want to build a Camden where everyone has a voice and a chance to lead, now and in the future.

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## | Mission-level learning

This year the mission has focused on building relationships across Council teams and with partners, and on gaining momentum in priority areas.

At a **Mission level**, a set of emerging insights will help to inform our mission journey going forwards and shape the portfolio of mission-aligned activity.

The first relates to **participation**. For residents, there is a sense of empowerment in being part of a collective:

“*I’m part of the LGBT adoption network, which is supportive, but it mostly meets outside Camden. When it did meet here during the protests, it was powerful to feel solidarity in such a difficult moment.*”

(65-74,F, Focus group discussion with representatives of the LGBTQ+ community in Camden)

A number of initiatives are opening up power structures and amplifying civic voices by embedding participatory approaches and supporting the further development of our participation practice. While participation is foundational to mission-oriented working, careful attention to representativeness, inclusion, and accessibility is essential. We are very active in creating infrastructure and opportunities for participation, but must identify specific measures of success to learn about the suitability of various forms of participation for engaging diverse communities.

The second insight relates to **financing**. This year, we have launched projects that draw on a wide range of funding sources, both within and external to the Council. We are already seeing the importance of seeking opportunities from a diverse range of financing options. This will be a key area of focus as we seek to sustain and scale successful projects.

The third relates to leadership values. Several projects seek not just to promote representation in leadership positions, but to ensure that leadership is exercised in line with values of inclusion, anti-racism, and community connection. The Future Camden Fund supports small businesses with a strong social value ethos, while the Future Leaders project focuses on anti-discrimination and inclusion in its leadership programme for school pupils. The Diversity Mission will benefit from retaining this focus on the purpose and impact of inclusive leadership as well as representative leadership.

At a Strategy level, the mission has generated lessons for Camden’s overall missions approach.

Firstly, context matters. The Mission has a strong focus on citizen participation and community empowerment because it builds on innovative participation practice in Camden and benefits from capacity within the Council to build participatory approaches into projects. The mission has been developed in a way that reflects a Camden-specific interpretation of participation and power sharing. Recognising that missions are shaped by their context is a precondition for working with the strengths of the local system.

Secondly, unexplored value exists in connecting mission-aligned activity. The Diversity Mission shares areas of interest with the Youth Mission, notably the education system and how young people are equipped to succeed, and so there will be value in the missions working together as a system. Similarly, within the Diversity Mission there are opportunities for projects to complement each other, such as the Future Camden Fund and the Community Wealth Fund, which could play joined-up roles within an established business support and growth system. In the next year the Diversity Mission will look at how it can ensure that its portfolio operates as an integrated system.

Thirdly, there is widely applicable learning about mission financing. As noted above, the diverse range of funding sources that Diversity Mission projects draw on points towards the importance of exploring the full

range of potential funding sources. There will be value in the missions exploring, how to formalise and build the practice of securing financing for mission-aligned projects.

### | Project level learning

The section below highlights a selection of **projects and initiatives** that are in delivery and from which we can draw learning that will help to shape the mission going forward and Camden’s approach to missions in general:

## Camden’s Inclusion Journey

This year, Camden published the story of the [Council’s inclusion journey](#). The story seeks to share the Council’s 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.

For the Council, publication of this document opens the door to important conversations about how we might do more. Being transparent about our inclusion journey is a necessary enabler for the Council to engage partners in a wider conversation about inclusion, representation, and diversity among people in leadership positions in Camden.

We believe that everyone across Camden has a role to play in making the borough a more diverse, inclusive and representative place to live and work. Our inclusion story is therefore aimed at organisations, businesses, charities, institutions and groups of all shapes and sizes across the borough who are looking to learn from others or engage in a

conversation about inclusion. It highlights that we are on a journey, and while we are proud of our achievements we know that we have further to go.

### Practice Exploration: Systems Thinking and Leadership course for future leaders in the voluntary sector

Using Camden Council’s Apprenticeship Levy, we partnered with the University of Birmingham to launch a Level 7 Systems Thinking and Leadership (Leadership and Management) apprenticeship for a diverse cohort of 24 emerging voluntary and community sector leaders in Camden. Starting in August 2025 and running for two years, the programme responds to known challenges in workforce development, retention and leadership succession, and supports the Diversity Mission by strengthening VCSEs and increasing leadership diversity across Camden institutions. We also introduced a bursary to remove barriers to access, with early feedback indicating it has been critical for learners’ participation.

Early learning shows strong appetite for structured development, and we want to build on this by exploring further capability-building opportunities for partners (e.g. evaluation skills) and the levers available to resource them.

Priorities for next year

- Leverage our and partners’ strengths more tactically when planning projects
- Identify and build additional capabilities where we are not currently resourced

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## Who Cares? A Camden conversation about adult social care

This year, in partnership with Demos and New Local, Camden Council 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, which has been grant funded through Waves – a €1 million project to develop and test new AI-powered digital methods to improve local democracy by making it easier, quicker and cheaper to gather views, discuss issues and reach consensus.

The ambition is that the project will yield learning 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. The project team have identified learning around the technology being both a catalyst for engagement at scale and a challenge in terms of inclusion, user experience, and data ethics. There is also emerging learning around the trade-offs that may need to be considered if the Waves model is to be mainstreamed into local policy development or increased in scale so that it offers more opportunity for civic engagement.

### Practice Exploration: Community Wealth Fund

We are piloting Camden's Community Wealth Fund (CWF), investing £2 million in local businesses and organisations that create opportunities for young people and increase diversity in positions of power. A 1,000-strong Diversity Panel of people who live, work or study in Camden will shape the Fund's eligibility criteria, investment strategy and investment decisions ahead of applications opening in 2026. Designing this model drew on Scottish Government participatory research guidance, including

paying expenses and compensating people for their time, but the unprecedented scale exposed that our existing payment mechanisms were not fit for purpose. The team worked across the council—particularly with procurement and finance—to test new approaches and support executives to agree risk tolerance, highlighting both the value of cross-council collaboration and the challenge of setting new precedents without a clear guide. An early finding is that 750 panel members have not previously taken part in similar civic engagement, demonstrating the potential to reach beyond "usual" participants, strengthen relationships, clarify shared principles, and advance the Diversity Mission's ambition to open-up power structures and amplify civic voice in local decision-making.

## Future Camden Fund

The Future Camden Fund (FCF) is the council's programme of finance and business support for socially impactful early-stage businesses that are either based in Camden or have a strong connection to the borough. It was launched in 2022 and is a blended repayable finance and grant fund. So far it has awarded £282,000 to seven businesses, including five grants and three loans.

The FCF seeks to support minority-led businesses, who, statistically speaking, face more barriers to funding<sup>2</sup>. While no entrepreneurs are excluded based on their characteristics, the strategy to promote the FCF supports its engagement with entrepreneurs from under-represented communities. In this way, the FCF works towards the Diversity Mission objective to support the next generation of diverse entrepreneurs.

To date, 53% of businesses that have been supported are female-founded or led, 21% of entrepreneurs have a disability; and 63% are Black, Asian, or from another ethnic minority. Additionally, the project team has also found that an offer of culturally competent business

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ambitions**

support has been a success, having delivered over 85 hours of 1:1 consultancy time to 16 businesses.

## Future Leaders

Future Leaders is a free, year-long leadership programme that aims to help young people build confidence, gain real-world skills, and make a positive impact in their communities. The programme, delivered by Future Leaders UK, features developmental workshops, a guest speaker series, mentoring, visits, and local projects.

By working in schools through Future Leaders UK, we are learning about how school-based models of leadership skills delivery compare with other models, and we are establishing a basis for further engagement with local schools about the role that they can play in working towards the Diversity Mission.

Last year, 100 year-12 pupils participated: 96% felt more prepared to take up positions of power in Camden in future, 98% felt their educational aspirations had been significantly raised, and 91% felt more empowered to advocate for equality and diversity in Camden.

### | Our priorities for the coming year

We will seek to build a movement to advocate for inclusive recruitment, development, and leadership practices among organisations and institutions in Camden, with a view to ensuring that a greater number of organisations share data about their workforces and have support to increase the extent to which their leaderships are representative of Camden's communities.

We will develop a place-based approach to amplifying civic voices by working alongside initiatives in Camden neighbourhoods including Kentish Town, Kilburn, and Euston. We will do this while learning from the ongoing mass participation pilots, integrating lessons into our

participation practice, and seeking to continue engaging the people currently involved in the mass participation pilots

We will deepen our engagement with schools in Camden, with a view to ensuring that our partnership is delivering to equip the next generation of leaders with the skills they need.

We will establish a more detailed understanding of entrepreneurial diversity in Camden, with a view to designing targeted initiatives that reach the communities that face the most barriers to establishing and leading successful businesses.

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ambitions**

# Our Estates Mission

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

## | Why is this a Mission?

Where we live has a big impact on our health and wellbeing. We know that there is a big difference in health between our neighbourhoods, and residents on our estates are particularly likely to have worse health outcomes than others. We want to reduce that gap, so that by 2030, residents on our estates have the same levels of health and wellbeing as others in the borough.

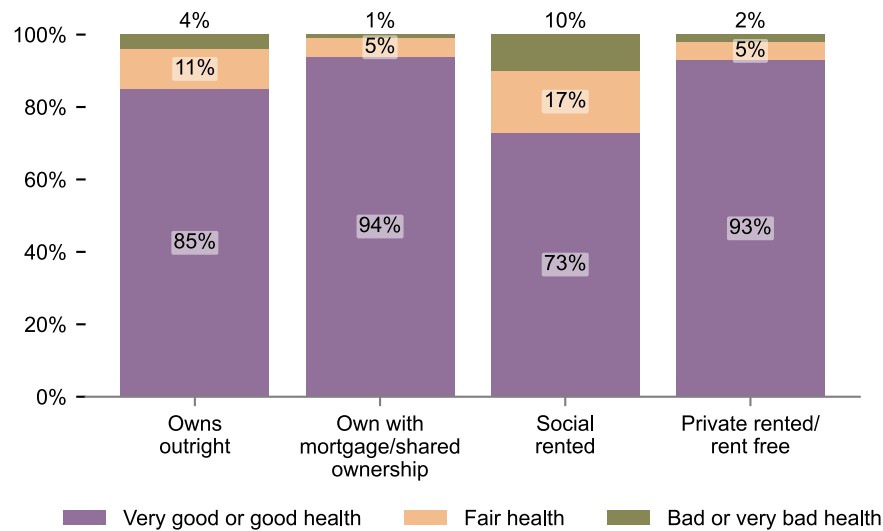
One-third of Camden's residents live in social rented housing, and they are much more likely to report worse health than those in other tenure types. Only 73% of residents of social rented homes reported being in very good or good health – 20 percentage points below those who own with a mortgage or rent privately, and over 10 percentage points below those who own outright (who tend to be older). Camden is in line with the national trend – 10% of social renters report being in bad or very bad health here, compared to 11% across the UK.

Additionally, 15% of Camden residents living in social rented homes reported having a long-term health condition or disability that limits their daily activities in some way, compared to 2% in private rented and 1% who own their properties. ([ONS, 2021](#)). We also know that council tenants are much more likely than other tenure types, including private renters, to face deprivation in multiple dimensions (across health, education, employment, household).<sup>3</sup>

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**Figure 10.1: Health outcomes by housing tenure, 2021 Census**



Source: ONS - Census, 2021

- Worked with Arsenal in the Community to upgrade the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Peckwater Estate
- Worked with Openstead to quantify climate risks on Webheath Estate, and develop an approach to better understanding climate risks across our property portfolio
- Kicked off a programme of work to explore the social determinants of health at an estate level with the Institute of Health Equity
- Opened applications for a programme supporting community led regeneration and placemaking with Footwork Trust
- Run a series of resident engagement sessions at Hunter House around the design of a new courtyard with a student placement team from Central Saint Martin
- Launched a Public Health and Urban Design officer working group to identify opportunities to improve health and wellbeing through changes to the built environment

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### Bringing together health and housing data at the estate level

We don't have a detailed picture of health needs at an estate level – but we are working on this by trying to bring together primary care data with address data. This would enable us, to analyse how long-term health conditions and needs vary from estate to estate. This work has involved significant relationships and trust building with NHS partners, as well as working through multiple governance processes. We are now well aligned, and should soon have access to primary care data at an estate level. We will test this on two estates to begin with, and then expand the dataset to include others. This approach will enable us to validate the usefulness of the dataset and make changes before rolling it out across the borough.

### Mission level learning

In the State of the Missions 2025, the priorities we set for the year were:

- Creating new civic spaces in our neighbourhoods through our Neighbourhood Spaces programme
- Extending and strengthening our community champions programme.
- Bringing together our public health and urban design teams.
- Deepening our understanding of our priority estates by creating a portrait of an estate.
- Connecting health and housing data, working with NHS colleagues.

As well as working on those priorities, over the last year the Council has:

## Understanding the climate risks on our estates

Our estates face significant and increasing climate risks (especially flooding and heat) that we could do more to mitigate. Analysis from projects on two estates provides an example – but these risks are not unique to these estates.

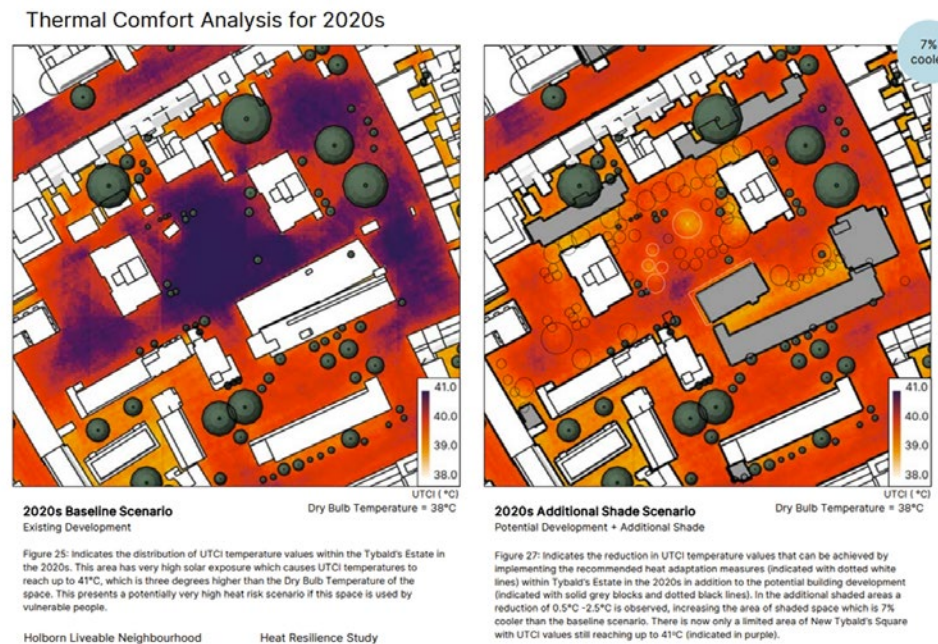
Based on hydraulic modelling by Openstead, on Webheath Estate we face £2.4m over 10 years; a variety of Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SUDS) could reduce this by 50%. Some SUDS may develop sites that are already green spaces, to provide greater flood protection.

**Figure 10.2:** Example intervention on Webheath Estate to improve flood resilience (source: Openstead)



On Tybald’s Estate, by the end of the 2020s we can expect temperatures of up to 38 degrees; by the 2050s, up to 42 degrees. Additional shading could improve thermal comfort by 5-7%. Prolonged exposure to such heat presents significant health risks; this is compounded by the vulnerabilities many estate residents face.

**Figure 10.3:** Thermal Comfort on Tybald’s Estate in the 2020s; baseline vs additional shade (source: Shade UK)



These projects raise questions. Although we are beginning to better understand the climate risks from flooding and heat, we do not yet understand the health impacts. Given the demographics on different estates, where do these climate risks pose the most significant health risks? What would be the most effective mitigations?

We lack a borough wide evidence base on these risks – with insight coming from two pilot projects looking at specific estates. We want to know – how do these risks vary across the borough? Which estates should we prioritise for flooding and heat risk preventative work?

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**Practice Exploration: Responding to climate risks**

Our estates (and our wider property portfolio) face significant risk from climate hazards (flooding and heat in particular) over the next 10-20 years, but ownership of that risk is fragmented and funding to mitigate that risk (such as installing flood risk mitigation such as sustainable urban drainage or shade) is limited.

The Council’s new Climate Action Plan 2026-30 will be considered by Cabinet in December and introduces a new focus on climate resilience which builds on our statutory Flood Risk Management Strategy. Through our work with Openstead to develop a pilot product that analyses expected climate risk at an estate level, we have found that there are a range of interested stakeholders (e.g. finance, housing, property green spaces, transport), but the risk has no clear organisational ownership.

**Learning From: Regents Roots Festival**

The Regent’s Roots Festival led by Old Diorama Arts Centre (ODAC) is an annual community and arts festival on the Regent’s Park Estate in Camden. Developed collaboratively with residents and partner organisations, the festival attracts over 1,000 attendees each year and provides insights into community sentiment.

A survey (with 400+ responses) on the day of the festival highlighted the festival’s role in strengthening local relationships and belonging. Consistent with previous years, 68.5% of attendees met someone new, 85% reported increased feelings of connections and 81% suggested enhanced perceptions of safety and social atmosphere. This highlights tangible benefits for the participants and residents as well as the role of place-based events in promoting a sense of belonging and connection, a key ambition of mission.

**Developing community capabilities in shaping their local area**

A key element of the Mission’s theory of change empowering residents and communities to shape their local area. One takeaway from the sensemaking workshops was that projects focus on developing capabilities grounded in place.

One version of this is building residents’ capabilities. The Story Trail project (see Practice Exploration below) employed Neighbourhood Curators; we have run an accredited course to support residents to develop fundable climate projects; the Vacant Spaces project included elements of community building; and the People and Places programme is building the capacity of 15 ‘local social innovators’ with a vision to transform their estate or neighbourhood.

A complementary approach is embedding professional capacity in place. This has been most evident in our community champions programme, which has 5 community activators working on specific estates, one per each of our neighbourhoods.

Whichever approach projects take, the key learning is: to empower residents, developing new capabilities, rooted in place, is critical.

**Practice Exploration: Story Trail**

Missions are a shared endeavour, where we all have a role to play. One thing we are learning is how we can leverage our strengths to support others and complement theirs

In 2025, Old Diorama Arts Centre launched the Regent’s Park Estate Story Trail, a resident-led public art trail. The trail consists of 28 artworks across 12 site-specific installations, including alternative street signage and manhole covers.

**What have we learned?** This ambitious project challenged the Council’s planning processes, due to its scale, which cut across multiple teams’ remits

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The Story Trail underlines the importance of partnership working, where skills can complement one-another. ODAC brought trusted community relationships and agility; combining the Council’s expertise in negotiation, regulation, safeguarding and risk management enabled the project to go ahead. The project was led by community champions. Beyond acting as a catalyst for belongingness, story trail empowered and built capacity of residents to shape their local area – a key ambition of estates mission

While learning is a core component of our missions practice, we also learned that the evaluation requirements for a project like this can stretch the capacity of our partners. Looking ahead, how can we build on our relational approach to further develop the capabilities and capacity we need to achieve our missions?

### | Project level learning

What have we learnt about the operational delivery of projects within the Estates Mission?

### Vacant spaces

**The resident design panel for the Hilgrove pilot site has been really successful** with residents feeling a sense of ownership of the project. Members of the group have applied to the People and Place programme to support their bid as a community led operator of the future Hilgrove site.

**Low interest in a commercially allocated pilot site** has stalled delivery of one community focused site. A cross-funding model (where commercial revenue subsidises capital works on a community site) is therefore unlikely to be feasible.

**We have seen high levels of interest from VCS organisations to take on sites.** Some indicated they may be able to raise capital investment

through donors or external funds specifically open to VCS organisations (and not others, such as the council). This could open up a new delivery approach where sites are assigned to VCS organisations to raise capital.

### Neighbourhood spaces

**The delivery of community “meanwhile-use” programme requires more staffing resource** than currently available from Camden Council. This has led to reducing scope of work to deliver core areas.

**Demand for space is very high**, in particular creative/messy workspace and community storage. The project team are constantly having to refer people to external partners where space is often short-term/ meanwhile.

**There is a strong appetite for cultural programming** and dedicated culture space in Kentish Town where several spaces have closed in recent years.

**“Action groups” (sub-groups of the broader Kentish Town Commons network, coming together around a specific theme) are working well** and leading to interesting projects, but may require dedicated funding to work on a long-term basis. Action groups are predominantly made up of VCS organisations rather than individual residents as work schedules rarely align. We are developing a dedicated resident action group that can be facilitated to suit resident’s needs and build individuals’ capacity.

**The “Kentish Town Commons” community stewardship group has been slow to establish.** Interest is strong, and a diverse group has formed, but more training is required. As we increasingly ask residents to take leadership roles within pieces of work, we need to recognise that extra support will be critical.

**Project capital costs are hard to control with current construction industry market conditions.** Camden Council has been generally supportive to help secure additional capital, but further delays or market changes may weaken business case.

**Business model viability requires continuous review** to ensure project will be appealing to external operator. For future sites it would be beneficial to consider how/if we can grow our own operator in the borough.

## Community champions

This year, Camden’s community champions programme expanded from three to five projects.

**Recruitment to the coordinator posts has been challenging for some of the projects** – despite increasing the budget for each project, two have found the recruitment of coordinators a challenge. Existing coordinators have also reflected that the high costs of living in London, have made them reflect whether their roles are sustainable.

**Finding space to deliver activities and events is a challenge** - some of the projects do not have a local base on their target estates and find it challenging and expensive to find local community spaces. This is because of a lack of available, local spaces and high rental costs.

**Confidence and a sense of empowerment has grown** amongst community champions particularly, and also amongst engaged residents, through skill sharing, leadership opportunities, and community participation, as evidenced by our evaluation of the programme last year.

**Community connections continue to be strengthened on target estates** – coordinators continue to report that residents are reporting stronger feelings of connection and belonging, through attending champions events.

One resident reflected on the personal impact of this, sharing that,

“*being part of a community has been good for my health, I enjoy doing things that distract me from the worries I face at home. I enjoy talking to people about things that make me happy and reliving happier memories from when I was young*”

(64, Female, Pearly Sari at The People’s Museum).

## Participatory Budgeting

During the pilot we engaged with tenants and residents of the Hilgrove Estate in a comprehensive process to determine how a portion of their estate’s service budget would be spent over two years. The core engagement methods included the recruitment of a representative working group, co-design workshops, and an estate-wide vote. The primary objective was to test a system that gives residents the community power to shape their area through decision-making on public money expenditure.

Key learning included that:

**Service budgets within housing are too difficult to work with.** HRA budgets are restricted by existing contractual arrangements and the requirements around recharges to leaseholders for service charges. Unrestricted funding, such as Local CIL, may be a better source of funds.

**The costs of facilitation and process management are too high to operate at an estate level** – participatory budgeting might work better at a cluster or neighbourhood level. Some resident goals (such as changing the grounds maintenance contract or recruiting a resident caretaker) are difficult to achieve.

### Practice Exploration: Delivering Estate courtyard projects

There have been numerous capital projects in Estate ‘courtyards’ - i.e. the outside, semi-public spaces on our Estates - launched or delivered. This includes landscaping work at Denyer House and Hunter House, the Peckwater MUGA, and the No More Ball Games campaign at Hilgrove Estate. We refer to these as ‘courtyard projects’ below.

Our hypothesis is that these (relatively) small projects will be an area of increasing interest and activity because they present a relatively low-cost option for improving life for residents on estates, they are a great focal point for resident engagement, and there is overlap with both the food mission's goal of supporting more food growing and the climate team's goal of increasing green space on our estates.

However, there are a number of barriers to scaling up the delivery of these projects.

**The process for approving landscaping work on our Estates is not fully clear.** Working on Estate courtyards is inherently complex because the land is 'owned' by one Council service and managed and maintained by another, but neither are responsible for delivering improvements to the courtyards. Projects such as Denyer House have been seen as 'one-offs' and we haven't clarified who should be responsible for approving designs and giving permission for work to continue. We need to decide whether this kind of project remains ad hoc and bespoke, or can be streamlined into new or existing shared planning and decision making processes.

**We lack responsive project management capacity for capital delivery.** There are multiple teams that have the capability to project manage capital delivery, but, for good reasons, projects are planned a long time in advance, and officer time is allocated according to the information the division has at a particular point in time. Projects that are initiated outside those divisions sometimes find it difficult to fit into these pre-existing delivery pipelines. Ensuring courtyard projects budget for delivery costs could be part of the solution, but due to their being resident-led and dependent on less certain funding, it is difficult to allocate officer time in advance. We could explore whether there is enough

demand for dedicated role to project manage the less predictable, responsive work that arises off the back of resident-driven improvement work.

**Courtyard projects do not currently have strategic, long term, predictable funding.** These projects are often funded from a patchwork of sources, which can take time to assemble and confirm. The lack of predictable funding means that it is difficult to create a coherent workplan that prioritises estate courtyards based on need, especially as funding often come from Local CIL to work on specific estates. A solution to this could be to allocate a slice of strategic CIL to estate courtyard projects. Camden receives ~£7-9m in CIL per year; an allocation of ~£250k per year would enable us to deliver 4-5 courtyard improvement projects without adding officer capacity.

### Practice Exploration: Developing Partnership working on estates

#### Partnerships as a catalyst for narrowing Camden's health gaps

Partnerships will play an increasingly central role in how Camden addresses the persistent health and opportunity gaps faced by residents living on our estates. A key priority for the year ahead is the deepening of the Health Anchor Partnership, which will focus on running deliberative engagement sessions with estate residents to understand what they want and expect from the Council's relationship with major life sciences companies. Through this deliberative process, residents will help shape the principles that guide Camden's public-private partnerships, AstraZeneca and MSD, ensuring that industry expertise and investment are directed

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towards community priorities and the goal of reducing the health inequality gap.

As this has developed, progress has taken longer than first anticipated due to volatility in the national and global life sciences environment, including recent decisions by major pharmaceutical firms to pause or scale back UK investment. Establishing a genuinely resident-led partnership model based on trust, accountability and shared power has also required more groundwork than traditional corporate engagement, which typically prioritises institution-led, short-term activity over community-defined outcomes.

This participatory approach sits alongside wider work with Camden's anchor institutions and corporate partners. The collaboration with Arsenal and adidas on regenerating a community pitch at the Peckwater Estate illustrates how large corporations can contribute directly to youth provision, physical activity and local belonging. Similarly, partnerships with the Francis Crick Institute, Central Saint Martins and ZSL will expand access to science engagement, creative health programmes, environmental initiatives and routes into learning and employment. In the year ahead, a more joined-up partnership landscape will give residents clearer and more visible benefits, with corporate, civic and cultural anchors working in alignment with local priorities.

### **People-powered change as bedrock of partnerships**

Partnerships enable Camden to deliver more than statutory services can achieve alone. As frontline services continue to operate under pressure, public-private and civic partnerships will bring specialist expertise, facilities, volunteers and investment into the borough. This will help expand preventative health activity and strengthen the neighbourhood networks that underpin long-term wellbeing.

A key focus for the year ahead is embedding resident and community voices as a non-negotiable element of how Camden works with industry and other large institutions. Rather than viewing public-private partnerships as technical or transactional arrangements, Camden will move towards a model where corporate involvement is guided by community-defined principles, expectations and accountability. Residents will shape what responsible corporate participation looks like on estates, what benefits they expect to see, and how the wider value of industry involvement should be measured. This approach will help ensure that partnerships – whether with life sciences organisations, research bodies, cultural institutions or technology firms – deliver tangible outcomes that contribute to reducing health inequalities in ways residents can recognise, influence and trust.

### **| Our priorities for the coming year**

There are a number of projects that we have kicked off, that we will continue to deliver. They include:

- Community champions
- Renovating the neighbourhood space at 2 Prince of Wales Road
- Refurbishing the vacant space at Hilgrove into a community space
- Delivering the courtyard improvement projects at Hunter House

Over the course of the year we have been developing a number of projects that will be launching in 2026. These include:

- Marmot Estates, in partnership with the Institute for Health Equity. This will take a hyper local approach to understanding the social determinants of health, working closely with residents on two Estates to understand their priorities

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- People and Place: Camden, in partnership with Footwork Trust. This will support 10 projects led by 'local social innovators' with a vision to transform their estate or neighbourhood. The programme will provide a small grant of £5k, as well as one to one expert mentorship, peer support, and connection to the wider movement of community asset development across the UK.
- 107 Kingsgate, as part of the Neighbourhood Spaces project. This will work closely with community members to develop the plan for the transformation of the historic 107 Kingsgate Community Centre

Beyond individual projects, we are keen to embed some of our learning into new policies, changing the conditions for future work that the council undertakes. Priorities here include:

- Developing a policy around heat mapping for regeneration work on estates (and carrying our borough wide research on heat risk on estates)
- Developing a strategic approach to delivering courtyard improvement work, and finding long term, consistent funding

As noted above, partnerships are core to the way we want to deliver the mission. We are focussing on:

- Working with health anchors to define and deliver joint work coming out of the deliberative engagement sessions
- Developing a stronger mission partnership network with community centres, many of whom already work closely with nearby estates in a place leadership role
- There is significant opportunity to reorient some of our services to better align with the Estates mission through progressive and strategic procurement. In particular, there is an opportunity to work the adult social care commissioning team to explore possibilities to align our Homecare service with the Estates Mission

We know that for this mission to be a success, we have to radically improve our Estate level intelligence; we currently struggle to disaggregate most outcomes based on housing tenure or hyperlocal area. Two significant pieces of work to address this include:

- Building a health and housing dataset. We are continuing to work closely with NHS colleagues to combine health and housing data, which will enable us to see the prevalence of different long term health conditions at the estate level for the first time.
- Creating a 'Portrait of an estate' tool. This will enable us to bring together different data sources connected to a single estate easily and quickly, enabling us to make smarter decisions about where to work with different programmes, and to contact the right people when working on an estate.

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# Our Food Mission

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



## | Why is this a Mission?

The Camden 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

Food insecurity is not just a question of access and affordability, it is a systemic challenge. The ongoing cost of living crisis, climate-driven environmental events, geopolitical shifts, and volatile food prices are reshaping how reliably and sustainably food reaches people.

The food system spans regulation, production, processing, purchasing, and consumption. Its structure influences dietary choices, yet many groups still face inconsistent access to affordable, sustainable, and nutritious food.

While Camden does not produce the food it consumes, we can influence how food is sourced, distributed, and accessed, ensuring it is nutritious, affordable, and sustainable.

We know that poor nutrition contributes to long-term health conditions, which affect residents' quality of life and place significant pressure on health and social care services. Moreover, for every £1 spent on food, another £1 is generated in hidden social costs, including environmental and health impacts.<sup>4</sup>

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Among Camden's school children, the poor nutrition starts early. The latest Health-Related Behaviours Questionnaire (also known as 'the schools survey') has found that only 26.6% of secondary and 36.9% of primary pupils hit the 5aday fruit & veg target yesterday. Additionally, 35.4% of secondary students had skipped breakfast on the day of the survey.

Food production, distribution, consumption, and waste form an environmental cycle that both affects, and is affected by, our ability to produce food sustainably. Addressing these interconnected challenges requires a whole-system approach that examines infrastructure gaps, outdated policies, and systemic inequalities. This approach recognises the essential links between food, climate, energy, and health systems.

The Food Mission is not just about tackling food poverty; it's about building a borough where collaboration thrives, agency is shared, and every actor can contribute meaningfully to a better food future for Camden.

### | Mission level learning

Over the past year, the Food Mission has grown in both ambition and clarity. We have delivered a wide range of projects with partners across Camden, generating real energy and learning. But our most important insight is that project delivery alone cannot shift a complex food system. Projects matter they are the starting points for change, building relationships, confidence and shared understanding. But they only create lasting impact when they strengthen the conditions that allow collaboration, agency and innovation to take root.

This realisation has transformed how we see our role. The Food Mission is evolving from a project facilitator to a mission-led capacity builder. We are now focused on cultivating the enabling conditions that help people understand the food system, locate their role within it, and act

with confidence. Trust, relationships, shared purpose and adaptive ways of working have proven just as important as any single intervention.

Our long-term plan identifies five pathways to transformation. These are: shifting markets through policy, regulation and lobbying; strengthening demand-side initiatives such as co-ops and food hubs; fostering food culture and innovation; leveraging collective action across sectors; and building shared intelligence grounded in data and lived experience.

These efforts sit within Camden Council's long-term commitment of £700,000 per year for seven years to food system transformation. This includes up to £200,000 per year for mission-oriented partnership projects and £100,000 per year for seven years to strengthen advice provision in food aid settings, supporting neighbourhood-level collaboration and local capacity.

### Practice Exploration: Camden Food Partnership (CFP)

Camden Food Partnership is not simply a convening space but a vital piece of system infrastructure. When the Partnership acts as a focal point for alignment and shared stewardship, the whole mission moves more coherently. In areas where collaboration has been strongest, we have seen shared problem-solving and collective momentum.

We have developed a seven-year Partnership Plan to guide the long-term growth of the CFP. The plan positions the Partnership as a structure that connects people, policies and resources to create lasting structural change. Our vision is clear: a borough where good food is accessible to all, where local businesses thrive, and where food culture reflects the diversity of our communities. This is not about isolated projects; it is about building a system that works for everyone.

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A significant step forward has been the launch of the Food Partnership Catalyst Fund, through which we welcomed our first Catalyst Partners: Cooperation Town, Lifeafterhummus and FEAST With Us. Catalyst Partners share the mission’s ambitions and strengthen the infrastructure of the local food system. Each receives £50,000 per year for two years, with potential support for up to seven years. These organisations do not just deliver projects, they create the conditions for others to act, innovate and contribute to borough-wide change.

To complement this, we have rebuilt the Camden Food Partnership Steering Group, which reconvened this year with a broader membership, bringing together community organisations, local institutions, businesses, academics and the Council. The Steering Group provides strategic guidance, strengthens alignment and supports the development of an independent, resilient Partnership.

**Camden’s Healthy Weight Acceleration Plan (HWAP)** launched in March 2024 to support people of all ages to reach and maintain a healthy weight. The plan works across sectors and departments to develop whole system working and targeted support. It brings together partners from a range of sectors, including Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations, NHS, Schools, and departments across the council. The HWAP has a shared focus with the Food Mission on addressing nutrition and healthy food but the HWAP also focuses on other health behaviours. The Plan was recognised regionally as good practice this year.

Three key learnings from the first year of the HWAP are specifically relevant to the Food Mission:

1. The need to **focus on nutrition and healthy weight in the early years**. The Plan builds on action in Camden which has contributed to year-on-year reductions in overweight levels for children at school entry. We know that having a healthy weight at the age of 6

is a strong predictor for a healthy weight at the age of 18, so further action is needed during the early years and at school.

2. **Tailored interventions are needed to support different communities in Camden**, with a focus on ensuring that information and services are appropriate and culturally relevant for different demographic and community groups. A pilot project with the Kings Cross Brunswick Neighbourhood Association successfully supported Bangladeshi women to benefit from the borough wide weight management service, and findings from focus groups with resident champions this year highlighted the need for very tailored behavioural communications that reach into communities, alongside general information sharing through organisation channels.
3. **Front line workers value and need training** to support the nutrition and healthy weight needs of residents. This training focuses on both increasing their confidence and their competence to enable effective help within their ongoing relationships with residents. Training is not always available, so Health and Wellbeing developed a new training module for adult social care staff to enable better nutritional support after hospital discharge when older people return to their homes.

### Practice Exploration: Climate Action Plan 2026-2030

This system shift is also reflected in Camden’s new **Climate Action Plan 2026-2030**. Developed through a five-month, deeply inclusive engagement process, the plan places community voice and lived experience at its core, echoing the principles of the Food Mission. Residents identified food growing, food waste, and local food resilience as key areas for action amongst others, signalling a growing appetite for practical, community-led solutions. As a result, food now features prominently across two of the Plan’s seven priorities, including the local circular economy and greening and growing. The Plan adopts a shared-endeavour approach, reinforcing our shift toward enabling conditions and partnership-driven action across Camden’s neighbourhoods.

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## | Project level learning

Over the past year, the Food Mission has collaborated with council teams and borough-wide partners to deliver a diverse portfolio of projects and initiatives. These efforts have demonstrated the power of partnership in driving tangible outcomes and building momentum for change.

The mission has begun to organise projects by the broader “tactic” we are testing e.g. our school food projects, from the breakfast programme to free break time fruit and veg, are part of our testing the tactic of *increasing access to and uptake of healthy food at school* as a means to deliver mission outcomes.

Below is a summary of some of the key insights across our tactics and projects:

### Increasing access to and uptake of healthy food at school

Supporting children to eat healthily at school - particularly secondary school - is a challenge. On average only 61% of eligible secondary pupils had a school meal on census day (ranging from 47.3% to 76% across schools). The 2025 Health Related Behaviours Questionnaire shows only 23% of secondary pupils eat a school breakfast 2–3 times a week, and 10% daily.

Since 2023, Magic Breakfast has delivered the **Camden School Breakfast Programme** expanding from 9 schools in 2022 to the 25 most deprived Camden schools in 2025. 3,089 pupils now receiving a free breakfast daily, compared to just 587 in 2022, a step change in tackling morning hunger. Magic Breakfast is trialling innovative methods, such as Grab & Go stations at school gates, which have been a success at La Sainte Union, now achieving 43% uptake, the highest among Camden secondary schools. Magic Breakfast’s adaptive approach has helped several schools to address hunger at the start of the day, particularly in primary schools where uptake can reach 97% of pupils.

The mission is testing procurement power, and working in partnership, to improve secondary school food. **The new school meals contract**, introduced in April 2025, includes specific requirements to improve uptake and pupil experience of free school meals. Initiatives such as taster sessions will allow pupils to influence menu planning based on real feedback rather than past preferences, aiming to make school meals more appealing and inclusive.

In response to a previous FSM Test and Learn Project we co-designed **a universal free fruit and vegetable offer** across all Camden secondary schools to address breaktime hunger. Feedback from pupils and staff has been overwhelmingly positive, with many noting the scheme helps bridge the mid-morning hunger gap. Schools have also begun experimenting themed or cultural days to encourage pupils to try a wider variety of fruit and vegetables. These innovations highlight the value of working closely with pupils and schools to co-create solutions.

### Work with schools to ensure curriculum support learning about healthy eating

Schools are not just places for children to eat healthy food, but also a great opportunity for them to learn about the food system and practical hands-on food growing and cooking skills. However, barriers remain such as limited infrastructure and low confidence among staff. Cooking and food education is a compulsory part of the national curriculum up to Key Stage 3, yet many Camden schools struggle to deliver it due to limited space, equipment, and staff confidence.

Camden Council is working in partnership with two primary schools - Brecknock and Richard Cobden - to **integrate food growing into school life**. The three-phase programme includes assessment, tailored recommendations, implementation, and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training for teachers alongside student workshops.

**To support active, hands-on food education**, Camden has also been delivering and exploring a number of other projects, including: a feasibility study into the creation of a dedicated cooking site within a

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local school, open to bookings by other schools; practical cooking sessions for staff in one primary school; combined Food in Schools networks with Design & Technology networks to increase reach; and offering £200 grants to nine primary schools for basic cooking equipment.

### Unlock opportunities for food growing in underused spaces, provide residents access to food growing spaces and encourage their participation in local food growing initiatives

**The Food Growing Programme** is designed to make food growing more accessible and inclusive for Camden residents. Rather than focusing solely on creating new spaces, a key element of long-term success lies in strengthening and extending the reach of existing community gardens. To achieve this, test and learn projects have been launched to engage diverse stakeholders and form active local networks and working groups. These groups will not only support the development of new and existing growing spaces but also connect closely with the Camden Food Partnership, ensuring that the educational side of food growing becomes a core part of the borough's collaborative food system.

**Mill Lane Community Garden** is a new food-growing space located in Mill Lane Open Space. Co-designed with local partners, Mill Lane Garden Centre and Emmanuel Church of England Primary School the project builds on previous learnings from creating food-growing spaces in parks and aims to establish a replicable partnership model for future initiatives.

The **Southfleet Community Garden** transforms a large disused space in St Silas Estate, previously associated with anti-social behaviour, into a vibrant community food-growing hub. Co-designed with the local Tenants and Residents Association (TRA), the project aims to turn the underused area into a shared resource that fosters community cohesion and wellbeing.

We have introduced **local seedbanks in Camden libraries** to make food growing more accessible. Residents can collect seeds for free, grow vegetables, and return harvested seeds to replenish the seedbank. Libraries offer significant potential to engage children, young people, and adults in food growing, and seedbanks act as a gateway to deeper involvement, sparking educational and creative activities. A key partnership with OmVed Gardens Seed Saving Network has been instrumental in providing initial seed stock and practical guidance for growing and seed-saving, and they have delivered seed saving workshops, talks and seed swap sessions at the Camden Grower's Food Network.

These projects have reinforced a key insight: that local partners act as anchor institutions, creating the conditions for wider collaboration. When schools, voluntary sector organisations, and community groups connect through these anchors, they form networks that extend beyond a single project.

#### Practice Exploration: 5 Pancras Square library café

Through Camden's Food Mission and in partnership with Camden Libraries, and Lifeafterhummus Community Benefit Society, an underused space at 5 Pancras Square has been transformed into a community café. Using surplus food collected by volunteers (including local residents and Somers Town businesses), meals are cooked in the Lifeafterhummus kitchen and served as nutritious, affordable plant-based food—tackling food waste while building community connection, employability, skills and confidence.

The café has been enabled through blended partner funding, shared resources and the advantages of the 5 Pancras Square site (including existing security and infrastructure, allowing safe cash payments). Supported by partners including North London Waste Authority and ReLondon, the project demonstrates the value of community-led innovation and cross-council collaboration,

and how food can act as a connector for longer-term systemic change. As ReLondon’s Lamia Sbiti notes:

“*Too much perfectly edible food gets wasted in London, while many people cannot afford proper meals. Lifeafterhummus’ mission to bridge this gap is highly important.*”

**What we’ve learned and our priorities for next year:** deliver our missions requires creativity, flexible networked delivery, and scaling the enabling conditions for this way of working—working with partners to fund projects, making better use of social value agreements, and orienting funding to use a more diverse range of policy levers.

### Practice Exploration: Challenge Prize

In 2025, Camden launched its first-ever Challenge Prize: a recurring innovation competition designed to generate bold solutions to complex problems, with the inaugural prize advancing the Food Mission by tackling food waste in the Hospitality and Food Service sector. The challenge invited individuals, startups, chefs and organisations to respond to three briefs—reducing surplus creation, embedding waste reduction as a daily workplace habit, and managing inedible food waste—and selected four finalists (LimeTrack, From Fork to Field, Carbontrac and ZeroWasteOS) to receive funding and support to prototype and scale, with a winner set to receive additional funding to launch or expand in Camden.

Designing and delivering the Prize was complex, with limited internal precedent, and required collaboration across Strategy and Design, Digital, Communications and Legal. A “just-in-

time” approach to bringing in specialist teams often clashed with established processes, reducing agility and sometimes requiring workarounds—highlighting the importance of building a multidisciplinary project team from the start. The work also showed that innovation needs deliberate outreach and relationship-building: existing partnerships were stronger around food redistribution, so the team relied on personal networks and cold outreach to engage new stakeholders, and used creative communications to secure judges, test-bed partners and experts on a limited budget.

**What have we learned?** “We need to define the problem space before moving to solutions and get the right people involved from the start. We need to make sign-off processes clearer.”

**Priorities for next year:** “We need to better connect projects and participating groups, reduce internal barriers to approving innovative work, and clarify governance and sign-off procedures.”

### Make community assets open for local use

This ‘test and learn’ project is a partnership between the [O2 Centre](#), [Carib Eats](#) and Camden’s Food Mission to create **a community food studio** in the heart of Finchley Road, a space designed to bring people together around nutritious, affordable, and sustainable food. Supported by seed funding from Camden Council and rent-free space from [Landsec](#), the O2 Centre Landlord, this initiative is a powerful example of cross-sector collaboration, where corporate partners and community organisations work in new ways to deliver social impact.

For residents, the studio will become a community asset, a place to connect, learn, and share skills through food. For the O2 Centre, it activates a vacant space and strengthens local connections. The

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vision includes community wealth building through social enterprise, employability opportunities, and innovation in food projects that inspire future initiatives. At the launch event, 48 attendees included residents, 20 community groups and 7 businesses, with 15 community partners expressing an interest in partnership projects.

O2 Centre Director Ant Foran said:

“*The O2 Centre has been at the heart of the community for over 25 years. It is in our DNA to support initiatives like this. Camden’s Food Mission is something we’re incredibly passionate about and we want this future space to be a genuine community asset. A place to encourage young people come and spend time in, where everyone feels welcome.*”

**The Borough of Sanctuary Food Hub** is Camden’s first co-designed kitchen space for people seeking asylum and local residents. Developed through a year-long collaboration between Camden Council’s Food Mission, the Refugee Communities Team, UCL, FEAST With Us, STCA, and local architects, the hub opened during Refugee Week 2025 with a shared community meal. It transformed a café into a welcoming space where people can cook, eat, and connect.

Food insecurity among asylum seekers is shaped by systemic barriers, not just financial hardship. [By designing with asylum seekers rather than for them](#), the hub promotes dignity, inclusion, and agency. It reflects Camden’s Borough of Sanctuary commitment and the Food Mission’s goal of creating enabling conditions for systemic change.

Co-production builds trust and relevance but requires time and flexibility. Cross-sector collaboration is complex yet essential, and resilience is critical when facing challenges such as participant relocation and funding constraints. Despite these hurdles, creativity and shared commitment made the hub a success. Food is a lever for inclusion and systemic change, reinforcing Camden’s mission to create a food system that works for everyone.

## Expanding and investing in financial wellbeing training / Additional advice capacity within food settings via Camden Advice Network

Following a successful pilot in 2021, Camden is investing £220,000 in a three-year **Financial Wellbeing programme** delivered by Citizens Advice Camden. This forms a core part of the Food Mission’s Money First approach and Camden’s wider financial inclusion agenda. The project builds financial confidence and resilience by embedding advice and education within council services and voluntary sector networks. It equips residents and volunteers to manage benefits, debt, and household budgets, creating a culture of early intervention and shared financial understanding. By integrating this model into food-focused community spaces, the programme aims to reduce reliance on emergency food support and strengthen long-term household stability.

Financial insecurity is a root cause of food poverty. Tackling it requires preventative advice and systemic integration, not just crisis support. The project links financial wellbeing with employment pathways through Good Work Camden and expands access by embedding advice in trusted community settings.

We are learning that multi-year investment is critical to shift from reactive to preventative approaches. Embedding financial advice within food systems builds trust and creates new opportunities for early intervention. Strengthening collaboration with partners such as Trussell Trust food banks is a priority for the next phase, ensuring advice reaches high-footfall sites and deepens integration at the neighbourhood level.

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### Learning From: Feast With Us

Feast With Us (FEAST) is focused on supporting anyone experiencing food insecurity while using an intersectional approach to improve nutrition, reduce food waste and build a lasting community. In a 2024 survey (129 responses) of participants across nine hostels and community centres in Camden and Islington, UCL researchers tried to understand food security, nutritional impact, and user experience.

Food insecurity remains widespread, especially in hostels. Many participants reported skipping meals, reducing portion sizes, or going full days without food. Across nearly all venues, users report feeling well-nourished after meals, reporting improvements in their well-being and physical health. The meals are generally more nutritious and include more fruits and vegetables than what users might otherwise eat. The Community centre, Queen’s Crescent Community Association, have reported FEAST meals acting as social anchors. These learnings reaffirm our thinking in the food mission as activating community spaces around shared meals, which continues to be an important lever to change the food system in the borough.

### | Our priorities for the coming year

For long term sustainability, food growing must be embedded into policy. We want to trial a **Right to Grow** to understand how Camden can support food growing in the long term.

To strengthen and extend the impact of Camden’s existing community gardens, we are **exploring the creation of a Roots to Neighbourhoods fund**. The fund would build on the skills, knowledge, and relationships

that community growers already hold, enabling them to work with residents to expand community food growing spaces on Camden-owned land.

In 2026, the Food Mission will develop scalable, school-led models that strengthen family engagement, improve food literacy, and enhance community resilience. **Building on Rhyl Kitchen Classroom’s initiatives**, we will capture, refine, and transfer effective practices such as shared cooking, community meal provision, food growing, and accredited learning, into a framework that other schools can adopt.

**ASC services.** At two of Camden’s Extra Care services, **we are planning to run a pilot with a partner VCS organisation to cook a lunchtime meal for the residents of the service, as well as opening the doors to the local community to attend as a drop-in lunch club.**

- To strengthen Camden’s food infrastructure and create conditions for a market-shaping approach, we have identified the development of **a Camden Food Hub** as a core priority. The Food Hub will serve as a collaborative platform that helps partners optimise logistics, reduce food waste, and enable joint working across the system. It will also enable collective buying and shared resourcing, supporting partners to influence local food markets and grow community-led food initiatives with greater scale and coherence.
- In 2026 **we will expand an integrated, neighbourhood-based support model** that strengthens Camden’s Money First approach and addresses structural drivers of poverty and economic exclusion. Building on existing delivery, we will work with partners to scale a coordinated offer that further embeds advice, employment support, and mental health provision within food settings, ensuring residents can access multiple forms of help in one trusted location. This will enhance caseworker capability and partnerships to deliver, personalised interventions, enabling residents to progress from food poverty and problem debt towards long-term financial resilience.

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- In 2026, the Food Mission and Healthy Weight programme will work with **Camden's markets and street traders** to shape local food environments that make healthier choices easier. By strengthening access to affordable, nutritious food in our markets and neighbourhoods, we will help tackle growing health and economic inequalities
- 2026 is a pivotal year for **the Camden Food Partnership** as we move from participation to co-design. Our focus is to activate the partnership by strengthening shared governance, clarifying strategic direction, and testing collaborative approaches that build confidence and momentum. We will consolidate the role of Catalyst Partners as drivers of system change, supporting new co-ops, activating community kitchens, and enabling others to lead within local food environments. Our Steering Group of community leaders, businesses, and academics will guide progress, champion collaborative working, and shape partner-led engagement, including participatory events, training, and cultural food celebrations.
- A key emphasis for 2026 is **supporting neighbourhood-level networks** such as One Kilburn and Kentish Town Connects. Strengthening these groups will unlock shared resources, improve referrals, and expand peer learning, helping residents access more coordinated support. We will grow community power, expanding networks of active citizens who have voice and agency to act. Through We Make Camden Kit funding and partnerships like Castlehaven, we will support resident-led innovation, food growing, community harvesting, and knowledge sharing.

# Our Youth Mission

By 2025, every young person has access to economic opportunity that enables them to be safe and secure



## | Why is this a Mission?

**What if we lived in a borough where every young person has access to opportunities that make them safe and secure? Where their talents and ambitions translate into secure employment or entrepreneurialism, and where they form a wide network of relationships that support them to grow and develop into their adult life?**

Camden is striving to be a borough where every young person, whatever their background, can access the opportunities they need to feel safe, secure, and able to succeed in the long term. This mission is grounded in the understanding that meaningful change requires collective effort. At the heart of our approach is co-production, bringing together young people, businesses, schools, public services, and community organisations as equal partners across three broad outcomes:

- Young people can access good jobs, training, and pathways into work.
- Young people have a voice in shaping their opportunities.
- Camden offers welcoming, supportive spaces where young people can access guidance, inspiration, and resources.

Camden is a borough of opportunity, with strong public services, a thriving business ecosystem, and a vibrant community sector. Yet entrenched inequality continues to limit access for many young people. The Youth Mission was established to address these inequities, recognising the lasting impact of the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, and long-term underinvestment in youth services and education.

We know there is no 'one size fits all' solution. Alongside universal provision, the Mission focuses on young people who face the greatest barriers to entering employment or training. In 2024, 1.8% of 16–17-year-olds were not in education, employment or training (NEET), higher than the London average but lower than England. Learning from

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our work so far has highlighted five priority groups whose children and young people needs are most complex:

- care-experienced young people (507 in 2024/25)
- in the Youth Justice System, (61 in 2024/25)
- young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan, (1680 in 2024/25 and 273 in receipt of Exceptional Needs Grants)
- school non-attenders (16% in primary schools and in 26% secondary schools are persistently absent 2024/25)
- disabled children and young people (578 disabled children and young people aged 0-25 in 2024/25)

We need to respond to an evolving set of circumstances: a shifting labour market, changing government policy and funding, and the diverse ambitions of young people themselves. To succeed, the Mission must remain flexible, testing and learning to ensure these priority cohorts can build sustainable futures.

Meeting these challenges requires a long-term approach that unites stakeholders across sectors in a coordinated effort to deliver real, sustained change. This is not just a response to immediate pressures; it is a generational commitment. That is why we had set an interim target of 2025 to demonstrate measurable progress, while keeping our broader vision for the Mission's goals in 2030 firmly in sight.

### | Mission level learning

As we approach the end of 2025 and the first phase of the Youth Mission, 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. This reflection process is a central part of how we work, continually learning with children, young people,

partners and communities so that our mission remains grounded, ambitious and youth-led.

This year's activity has been shaped by a commitment to co-production. Across Camden, we have been working alongside children and young people to understand how opportunities, relationships and spaces in the borough are experienced day-to-day. Their insights, challenges and ideas are directly informing how the mission evolves.

### How we listened and learned

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.

Young people may not have heard of the "Youth Mission", but they recognised the staff, spaces and programmes they encounter every day. Their message was clear: the Mission is experienced most strongly through relationships when someone believes in them, communicates clearly, and gives them the chance to try something new.

Young people told us:

“It feels like Camden actually cares about us not all councils do.”

“Sometimes the opportunities feel hidden.”

“I want to do more, but things like travel make it harder.”

They spoke about the confidence they have gained, the mentors and youth workers who supported them at difficult moments, and opportunities that helped shift their sense of what's possible. They also highlighted what needs to improve: clearer pathways, personalised support, better communication, and a stronger offer for young people who are currently not connected to services.

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Across the engagement, young people said they want:

- opportunities that feel reachable
- supportive adults they can trust
- safe, representative spaces with relatable role models
- pathways aligned to their aspirations, including entrepreneurship
- communication that is simple, timely and youth-centred

These reflections are shaping our understanding of what the Youth Mission must prioritise as we transition into its next phase:

### Youth participation and agency

We have made progress in creating spaces for young people to influence decisions, co-design initiatives, and contribute to community life. The learning from this year suggests that the next phase must deepen inclusive participation, ensuring young people facing the greatest barriers are meaningfully involved.

### Sustainable resourcing and investment

Projects this year drew on a wider mix of funding streams. This has reinforced the need for a sustainable, diverse funding model particularly as we look to scale youth-led innovation and long-term opportunities.

### Values-led youth leadership

Young people are stepping into leadership roles rooted in equity, collaboration and community. The mission will continue nurturing leadership that is not only about individual development but also about positive impact for others.

### Practice Exploration: We Make Camden kit and other grants

Grant making to citizens and VCSE organisations is an important systems lever used to catalyse mission activities in the borough. With varying grant sizes, We Make Camden - Kit (< £2k), Growth Grant (£2 - 5k) and Project fund (£5 - 20k) - they are helping create strong local momentum.

Since the inception of missions, and for the first four cohorts of the We Make Camden Kit, a participatory grant making program jointly delivered by Camden Citizens, Camden Council, Camden Giving and Camden businesses, has distributed over £1 million in the borough across 492 grants, 58% were for citizen-led projects. Of the citizens, 53% led a community project for the first time with the support of the kit. This is part of the participatory approach across the four missions which aims to empower residents and communities to shape their local neighbourhoods and decisions.

In a recent evaluation of the We Make Camden kit, the positive impact on wellbeing and confidence of participants, especially among young leaders, stood out. The resident panellists, who help decide the grant allocation also report a similar wellbeing and confidence boost as one of them shared,

**“ I used to think I wouldn't be able to change the community with one voice but after Camden Giving I believe that we can all make a change slowly but surely, if we do it together”.**

Within We Make Camden's grantmaking framework, the successful projects who either already are or go on to register as organisations have further opportunities to grow. The growth grant, also delivered as a participatory grant by Camden Giving,

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supports existing WMC kit projects based on their track record. In the year 4, 27% of the grants (i.e. 35 out of 127) were awarded to successful WMC kit grantees to continue their projects in the borough. Similarly, the We Make Camden project fund, a separate fund administered by Camden Council with grant size between £5-20k, also received interest from past WMC kit grantees and supported 13 kit grantees and 2 growth fund grantees. These funds collectively provide a locus for continued community action in the borough and contribute to learning about what missions mean to our residents given their agility to stay responsive to local needs in the borough.

### | Project level learning

The following section highlights learning from a selection of ongoing projects and initiatives. These insights will inform the continued development of the Youth Mission and contribute to Camden’s broader approach to delivering mission-driven work across the borough.

### Our Universal Offer

Camden STEAM has delivered its most impactful year to date, with a strong focus on supporting the Youth Mission priority cohorts. Over **13,000 unique students** engaged in high-quality STEAM activities across Camden, with nearly **20,000 student engagements** enabled through the partnership. The number of participating schools almost doubled from **26 to 51**, strengthening reach into priority communities. More than **500 work experience** placements were mobilised, providing meaningful routes into employment for young people facing the greatest barriers. The programme is now supported by **73 STEAM** pledge partners and over **200 STEAM ambassadors**, with **114**

**companies** delivering activities in Camden, helping to widen access, raise aspirations and improve economic opportunity for young people most in need.

STEAM Work Experience student

**“ I enjoyed listening to professionals talk about their journey, making me realise that there is much more you can achieve outside of your education. The best thing was also meeting new people, interacting with them and spending time the whole week. The team project helped me build confidence and learn how to use time and being organised. I also made good connection between my teammates.’**

– Google placement, aged 17

The Connexions service plays a vital role in supporting Camden’s young people to navigate education, training, and employment pathways. Through personalised guidance and targeted outreach, the service ensures that young people can access the opportunities they need to succeed. In 2025, the Connexions community team worked with **420** young people, providing **2044** individual contacts, while the schools team supported approximately **1,300** young people across the borough. Through this targeted, person-centred approach, the Connexions Service continues to empower Camden’s young people, ensuring they can confidently pursue their aspirations and contribute to a thriving community. The September Guarantee which ensures that every **16- and 17-year-old** has an offer of education, training, or employment—stood at **98.7% in 2025 and 2024, up from 98.4% in 2023**.

The Camden Young Talent Guarantee is our innovative investment to connect every 16- to 24-year-old in Camden with meaningful employment opportunities. This initiative ensures that young people have access to the support, skills, and experiences they need to achieve long-term success:

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- Every young person is offered work experience during post-16 education to build real-world skills and industry insights.
- In **2024/25, this support helped 440** young people secure work, training, or self employment.
  - One-to-one careers guidance is available through local advisors, providing tailored advice and guidance on navigating long-term employment options.
  - In **2024/25, 137** young people started apprenticeships
  - **Over 300** young people underwent construction training at the Euston Skills Centre, equipping health services, housing advice, and financial support when needed. them for careers in the growing infrastructure sector.

### Youth Justice Service – Paid Work Experience

Camden’s Paid Work Experience (PWE) programme provides flexible, London Living Wage employment for children known to the Youth Justice Service, supporting them to re-engage with education, training and employment while reducing the risk of reoffending. Since 2020, **22** young people have taken part across 10 local employers, the majority (16) of whom were NEET (not in education, employment or training) at the point of referral.

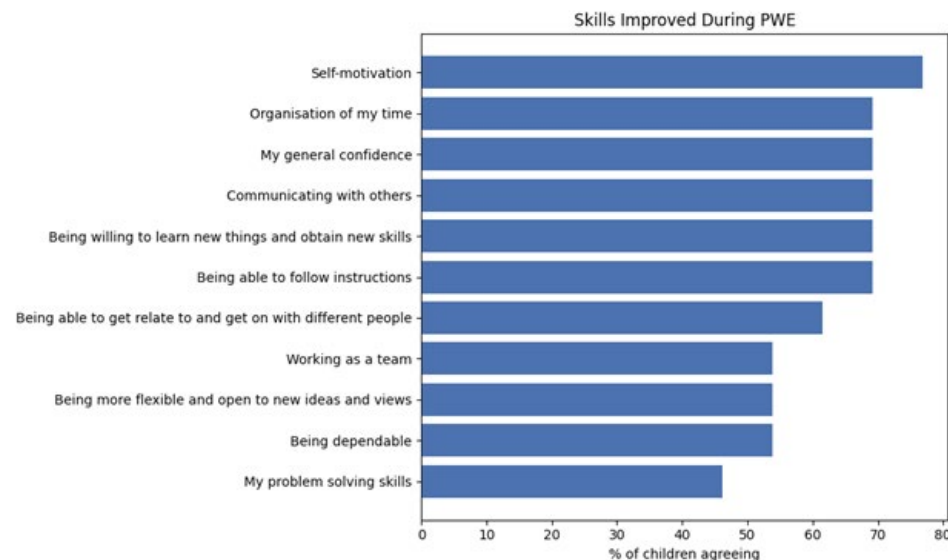
The programme has delivered strong outcomes. By April 2025, NEET numbers had reduced from **16 to 3 young people**—an 81% reduction. All children who were in college or at risk of becoming NEET maintained an education, training or employment destination, giving the programme a 100% ETE retention rate for this group. Global Majority young people also benefitted strongly, with **100% engaged in ETE**, helping to counter wider labour-market inequalities.

The intervention shows early evidence of reducing offending. Only one young person reoffended within 12 months of starting their placement, producing a **4.8% reoffending rate**, compared with the most recent Camden rate of 50% and the national rate of 32.5%. Notably, no child

committed theft or robbery after entering PWE, despite one-third having previous convictions for acquisitive crime.

Children reported significant improvements in confidence and work readiness. Average self-ratings increased from **2.84 to 4.13**, with **92%** describing themselves as “very ready” for work. Feedback highlights increased motivation, positive identity development and a sense of belonging—key components of the Child First approach.

**Figure 12.1: Skills improved during Paid Work Experience (PWE)**



A major learning theme is the **value of flexibility**. Tailored hours, phased starts and on-site pastoral support allowed children with complex needs, SEND or trauma histories to participate successfully in environments they would otherwise struggle to access. This adaptability was central to sustained engagement.

Limitations include incomplete historical data, limited tracking of placement duration, and very low participation from girls (2 of 22),

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indicating the need for wider vocational options. Strengthening follow-up support and improving data systems would further enhance impact and help quantify cost-effectiveness.

Overall, Camden’s PWE programme demonstrates that **paid, flexible and relational employment opportunities can significantly improve life chances for highly vulnerable children**—raising ETE engagement, reducing offending and supporting the development of a positive pro-social identity.

### Head Start into Higher Education Programme – Camden Virtual School x ICET

Care-experienced young people (CEYP) continue to face some of the most entrenched barriers to higher education, **with only around 15% progressing to university by age 19, compared with 47% of their peers**. Camden’s Head Start into Higher Education programme was designed in response to this inequity, recognising that existing support for CEYP is inconsistent, fragmented, and rarely grounded in long-term relational practice. Funded through a **seven-year investment** from the Inner Circle Educational Trust (ICET) and delivered in partnership with the Camden Virtual School (CVS), the programme currently supports **30 CEYP** who demonstrate academic potential at Levels 2 and 3. Each young person is matched with the Educational Navigator (EN), a relational role that provides continuity, personalised guidance and support across key transition points. Young people were selected using clear attainment criteria at KS4 and post-16, recognising that participants would enter at different educational stages rather than as a single representative cohort.

An independent evaluation led by the University of Birmingham and National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) is assessing the programme through a mixed-methods, co-created approach. Early findings reinforce the importance of holistic, consistent and stigma-aware support, alongside flexible pathways that recognise

that success for CEYP may include, but is not limited to, access to higher education.

Compared to the national picture, Camden’s CEYP are significantly more likely to be Black (around eight times more likely), Asian (two and a half times more likely), over the age of 16, and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (three times more likely). These insights show that Camden’s CEYP cohort looks very different from the national picture and faces distinct contexts and challenges.

Learning from Year One points toward strengthening cohort identity, introducing individual support plans, and planning for long-term continuity of the EN role. These insights will inform the next evaluation phases, which will track individual educational journeys and compare outcomes with broader CEYP populations.

### Camden Primary Schools Career Day

The Camden Primary Schools Careers Day 2025 engaged over **200 Year 4 pupils from 22 schools**, including Robson House and Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children, with **20 employer partners across STEAM industries** such as healthcare, creative industries, construction, logistics, and public service. The event at the British Library offered interactive workshops, employer-led stalls, and hands-on activities, designed to broaden horizons, spark curiosity, and connect classroom learning to real-world careers for children in Camden.

Throughout the Careers Day, pupils connected activities directly to school subjects such as maths, science, design technology, and computing. Hands-on experiences from robot dogs from University College London’s Computer Science department and exploring 3D-printed bones to building structures and engaging in creative workshops enhanced problem-solving, teamwork, and confidence. One pupil reflected,

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“*The robot dog was amazing – I want to make one,*” highlighting how interactive activities sparked curiosity and potential career aspirations.

Teachers noted increased ambition and engagement, particularly in STEAM subjects, and pupils demonstrated leadership by sharing their learning with peers when they returned to their schools. Employers reported that pupils’ thoughtful questions and enthusiasm exceeded expectations. As one partner noted,

“*Designing a hands-on activity for this age group was a fun challenge – they absolutely loved it,*” emphasising the value of early outreach and interactive engagement.

The event demonstrates that early, interactive exposure to careers inspires curiosity, builds confidence, and connects classroom learning to real-world possibilities. Lessons from the day will inform future initiatives to strengthen social mobility, broaden pupils’ horizons, and embed early careers learning across Camden’s primary schools.

## Camden Future Talent

Camden Future Talent delivers inclusive pathways into education, employment and training for young people, working across Council services and with a wide range of local partners. In 2024/25, the team worked with over 60 Council services and external employers, including schools, cultural institutions, FE and HE providers, and employers such as the Francis Crick Institute, the University of London, Lime e-bikes and Working Men’s College.

Originally focused on apprenticeships, the team has expanded its offer to include internships, structured work experience and enhanced employment support for **16–24 year olds**.

The team operates as a single point of contact for young people and families, handling enquiries, with clear referral routes to specialist

support where needed. This includes new targeted provision for care-experienced young people aged 17–25 through a new government-funded project, Full Potential Camden, which has already registered over 80 young people. The programme provides one-to-one employment and training support, confidence building, wellbeing and mentoring, employability training, and access to work experience, apprenticeships and job opportunities.

In 2024/25, the team delivered work experience placements for eligible young people aged 18+, ranging from one-week tasters to three-month placements. For those needing additional support, Camden Future Talent provides ongoing employment support, achieving **84% completion rates and 68% of those involved progressing into employment**, apprenticeships or further education or training.

Alongside delivery, the team plays a strategic role in embedding inclusive recruitment, expanding placement opportunities and strengthening progression routes across the borough, supporting the Youth Mission and Inclusive Economy priorities to improve long-term outcomes for young people.

### | Priorities for the coming year

This section outlines our priorities and milestones for 2026–2030, whilst still reflecting on our journey, achievements, and progress through 2025.

#### **Place-based support and opportunity for all young people**

The Youth Mission will take a consistent, place-based approach across Camden to ensure children and young people have equitable access to opportunities, support and influence wherever they live in the borough. We will continue to work alongside existing youth and community activity across the borough, strengthening local infrastructure while sharing learning across the borough. This approach will ensure that local strengths shape delivery.

**The 6 WMC  
ambitions**

### **Youth voice and participation**

We will continue to embed meaningful participation at every level, ensuring children and young people are supported to shape decisions that affect their lives and communities. Participation will be inclusive, accessible and rooted in neighbourhoods, with clear pathways for young people to move from involvement to leadership.

### **Strong systems around young people**

The Youth Mission will continue to build on the strong partnerships already in place, strengthening joined-up systems that create real opportunities children and young people from our priority and universal cohorts. Our Mission Ambassadors including Khady's Dream, the British Museum and the Roundhouse will continue to champion the mission, model inclusive practice, and open up pathways into participation, leadership and work. Working alongside schools, neighbourhood organisations and institutions, we will deepen collaboration, share learning and ensure support around young people is connected, accessible and rooted in place.

**The 6 WMC  
ambitions**

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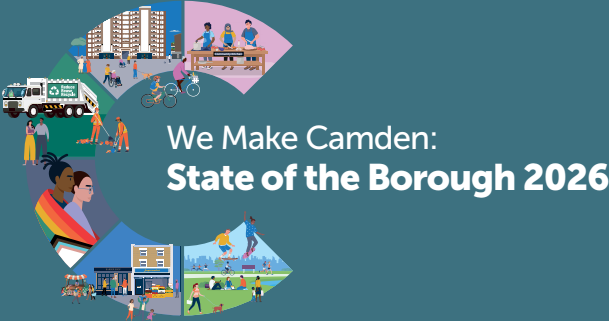
**The 6 WMC  
ambitions**

## Endnotes

- 1 <https://medium.com/@changebydesign/making-the-map-navigational-learning-in-missions-81f77838dd1e>
- 2 <https://www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/small-business-access-to-finance/small-business-access-to-finance>
- 3 State of the Borough, 2024 <https://www.camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-report>
- 4 <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/86/html/>



<https://www.camden.gov.uk/state-of-the-borough-we-make-camden-missions>





# We Make Camden: State of the Borough 2026 Summary

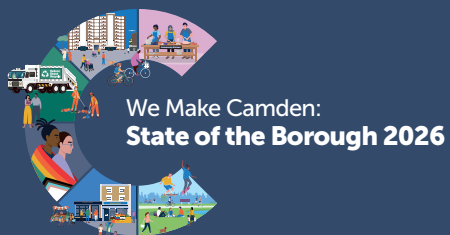
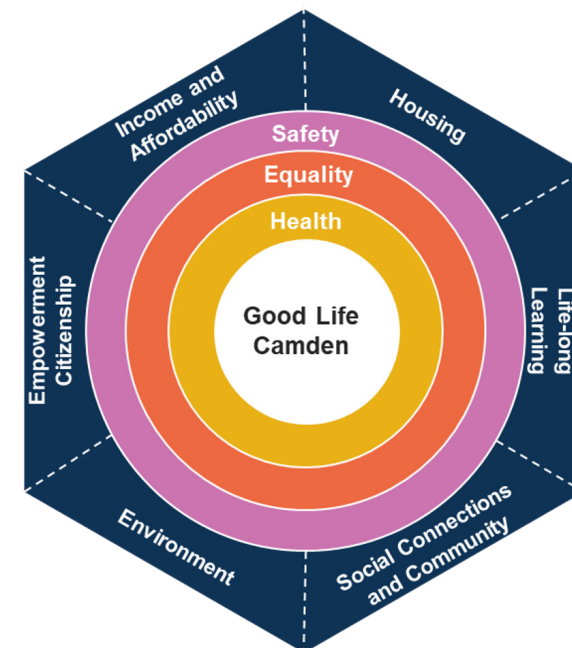
## About the State of the Borough report

Camden's State of the Borough report is published annually. It brings together data and evidence from quantitative and qualitative sources, and includes national level statistics, regional data, and locally collected data.

It provides a **shared evidence base about the outcomes experienced by people in Camden**, and is intended for organisations, residents and the council to increase the understanding of people's wellbeing in the borough. It is aligned to the structure of the [We Make Camden](#) vision for the borough, and uses the [Good Life Camden framework](#) to identify relevant data.

A note on timings: The 2026 report is published earlier than in previous years due to the local elections in May 2026. Due to the shorter timeline for producing the report, we did not include data that was not updated since the last report at the time of drafting.

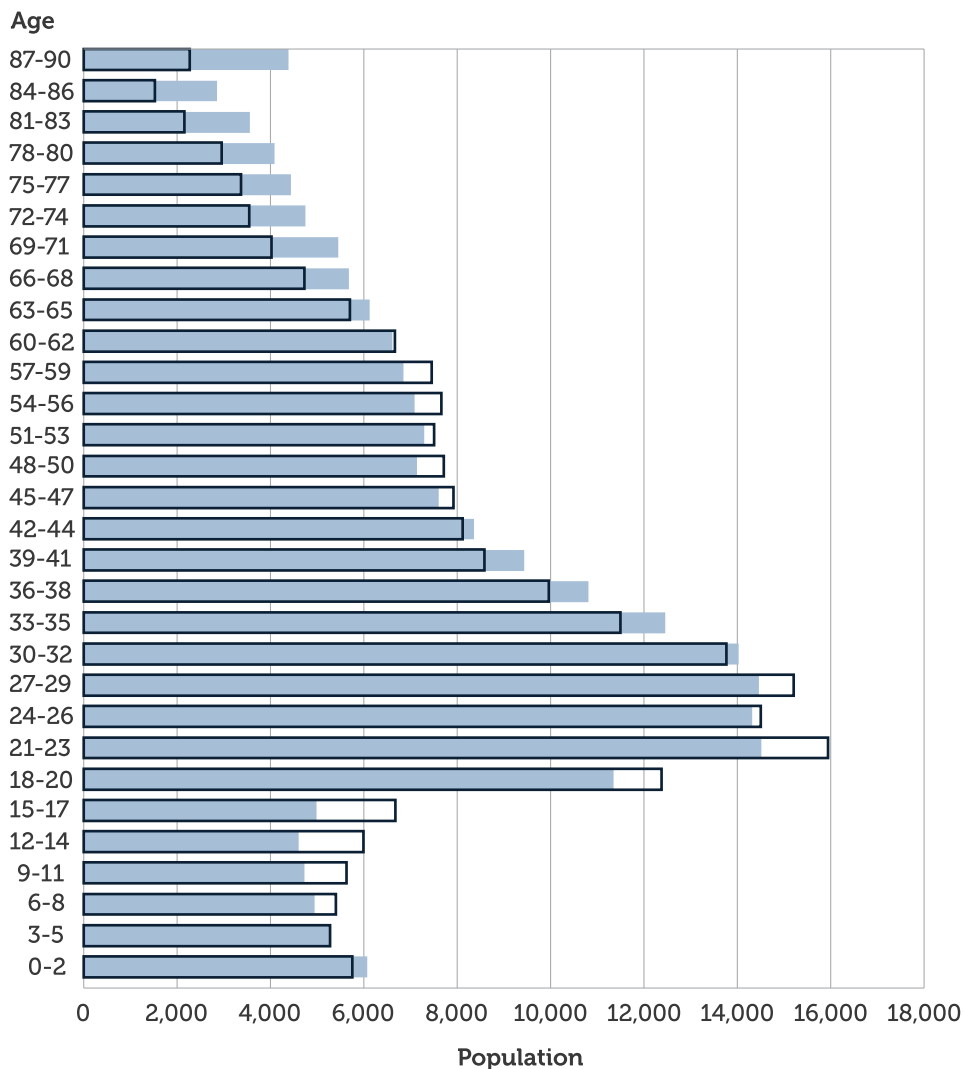
To read the State of the Borough report go to



## Key Insights

### Camden population by age, across time

□ 2025 Population (Actual)   ■ 2050 Population (Predicted)



Camden's population is projected to grow from 219k to 224k in 2050, and the age profile is expected to change, with over 65s set to become a larger proportion of our borough, while the proportion of children will shrink. The statistics below reflect some of the drivers and consequences of this changing profile.



#### Dependency ratio

The ratio of over 65s to working-age adults will rise from 16:100 to 23:100 by 2050.



#### Housing affordability & tenure

High house prices & demand for social housing are factors in why currently 47% of 25-50 year olds rent privately, versus 13% of 50+ year olds.



#### Student "bulge"

Camden's higher education institutions means we have a large, but transient, younger adult population, currently 30,738 students.

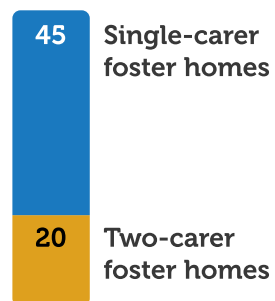


#### Fertility rates

In Camden, 1.05 children are born per woman on average. Lower fertility drives the projection of fewer children and young people in 2050.

## Key Insights

In March 2024  
**Camden had 65 approved foster homes**



“  
 I’m part of the LGBT adoption network, which is supportive, but it mostly meets outside Camden. When it did meet here during the protests, it was powerful to feel solidarity in such a difficult moment.  
 ”

-65-74, Female

In 2024/2025

**1,607**

**Camden children had an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)**

“  
 I have an autistic child [...] I can’t work full time [...] We’re just living from check to paycheck and it’s very difficult, it is very difficult.  
 ”

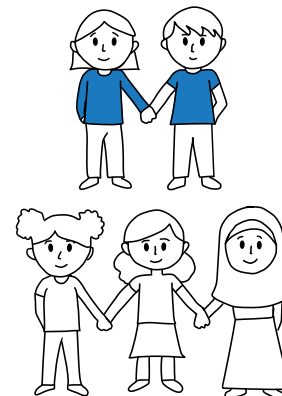
-48, Female

In March 2024

**502**

**Care Experienced Young People were accessing a Camden service**

In 2024,  
**1 in 5 children in Camden were living in relative poverty; this doubles to 2 in 5, once housing costs are included**



In 2024/2025  
**Childcare for children aged 3-4 cost**

**£11,600/yr**

**after free hours are applied**

In 2024/2025

**Over 1 in 4 secondary school pupils were persistently absent, the highest share in London**



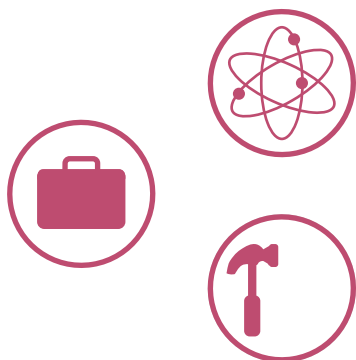
“  
 The cost of childcare, it’s the same as a mortgage.  
 ”

-27, Female

## Key Insights

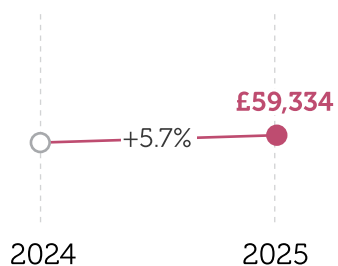
In 2023

There were 442,000 jobs in Camden: 2.5 jobs per every working age resident



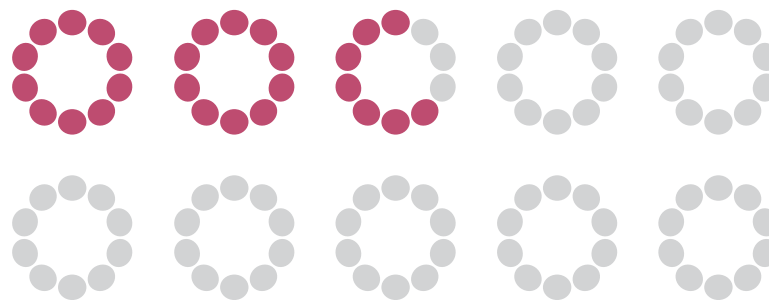
In 2025

The median household income in Camden was £59,334



In 2025

The largest industry sector is the Professional, Scientific and Technical category, with 10,995 businesses (27% of all businesses in Camden)



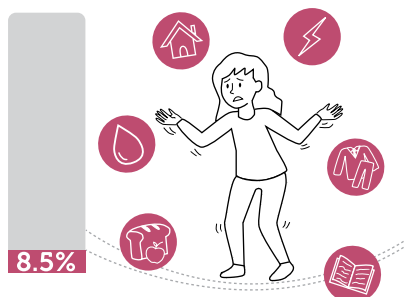
In 2024/2025

# 5%

of the Camden labour force was unemployed

In 2024

8.5% of employees were earning below the London Living Wage (£13.85/hour)



“

*I think [it] is so important to keeping the youth occupied and prepared for adult life and employment.*

”

-50+, Male

“

*Camden is a great place to live, there are lots of opportunities.*

”

-45, Female

## Key Insights

**37% of adults in Camden visited a library in the last year, the highest percentage in Inner London**



“  
*I enjoy attending local events and activities at my local community centres [...] however, as I am the main carer for my husband who is housebound, I don't have the time to go as often as I would like.*

*My husband and I live alone and I don't like being at home all the time, it can feel lonely. I like to go to the centres to talk to people, to do exercise classes and get help with filling out forms.*

”  
-66, Female

**Crime rate is second highest in London at 173 offences per 1,000 residents**



**Theft is the largest category of crime in the borough**

“  
*I was walking down and just before I went there [...] two boys on a cycle grabbed a phone from somebody and ran off.*

”  
-35, Female

“  
*I wouldn't get my phone out because it might just disappear out my hands.*

”  
-82, Female

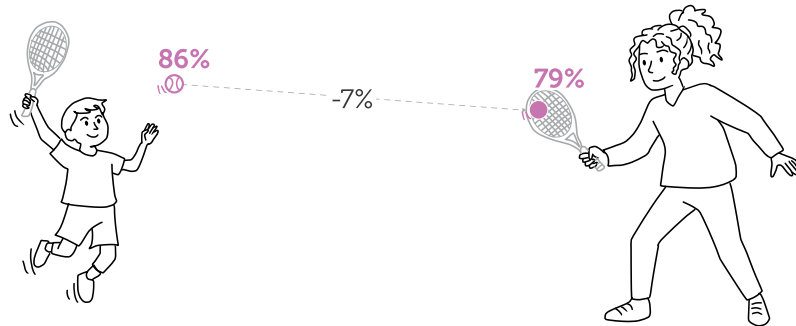
**The rate of Domestic Abuse is lower than other London boroughs, but Violence Against Women and Girls is 9.8% higher than the London average**



## Key Insights

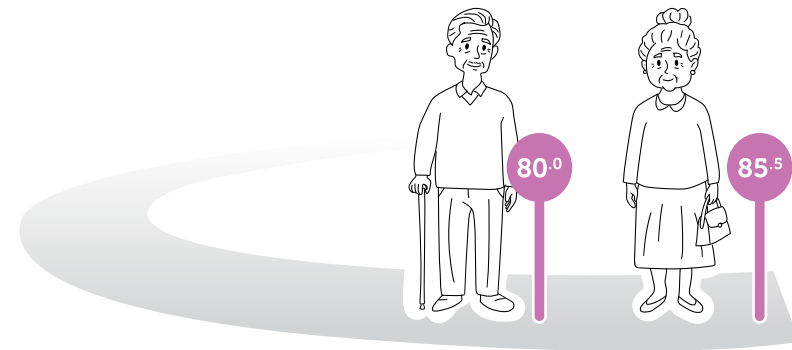
In 2025

**86% of primary school students enjoyed taking part in sports or exercise. This decreases to 79% for secondary school students**



In 2021-2023

**Life expectancy at birth in Camden was 80 years for males and 85.5 years for females**



In 2023/2024

**78% of adults in Camden were physically active, an increase of 4.6%pt from last year**

2023/2024

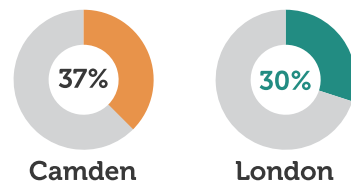


2022/2023



In 2023/2024

**Only 37% of adults in Camden ate the recommended 5-a-day**



“

*Being part of a community has been good for my health, I enjoy doing things that distract me from the worries I face at home. I enjoy talking to people about things that make me happy and reliving happier memories from when I was young.*

”

-64, Female

“

*When you try to access health services here, it can be hard to get appointments. I know that's a national issue, but Camden's density makes it worse. On the flip side, we benefit from having more hospitals and services than many boroughs, including bigger sexual health clinics. So it's both: longer waits but more choice when you [...] get through.*

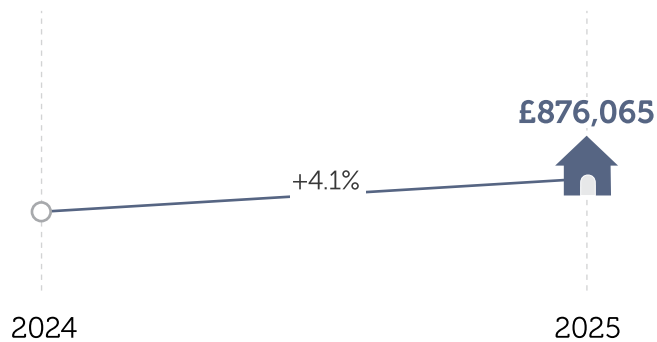
”

-35-44, Female

## Key Insights

In 2025

**Average house prices in Camden increased to £876,065**



In March 2025

**1,014**

**households were in Temporary Accommodation**

“

*I want to live by where I call home [...] I've been here 15 years [...] but it's so difficult to achieve that goal [...] the goalposts keep moving.*

”

-35-44, Male

In March 2025

**There were 8,380 households on the waiting list for social housing**



**+9.5%**  
since 2024

“

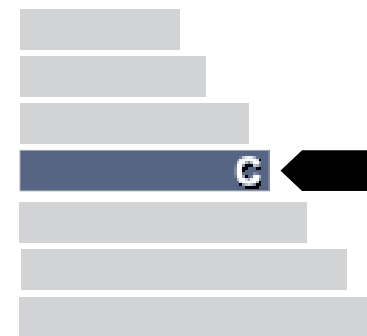
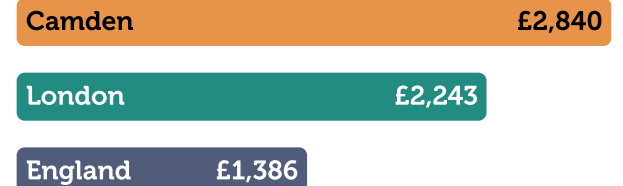
*My experience of homelessness is very difficult, the negative consequences of which my daughter and I are still experiencing; all this has affected our mental and physical health.*

”

-NA, Female

In March 2025

**£2,840 was the average monthly private rent in Camden**



In 2024

**Camden's housing energy efficiency rating was C – the same as the London average**

## Key Insights

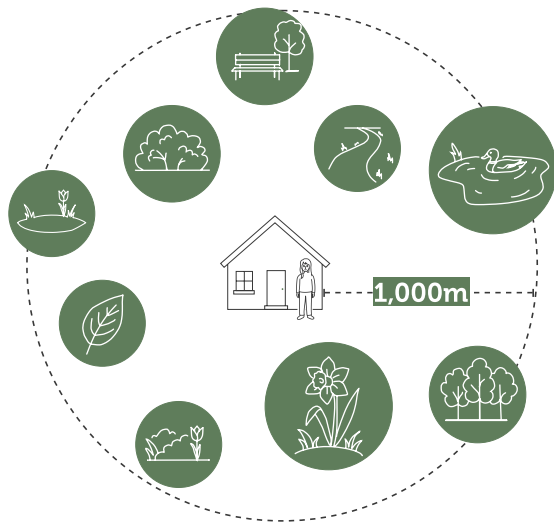
“

*Our favourite place to visit in Camden is Parliament Hill, as it is such a big and lovely park and there is so much to do. If you want to reconnect with nature, meet up with family and friends or even go to do some fitness, it's a good place to go to.*

”

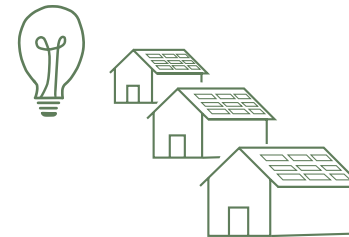
-Couple: 25, Female; 25, Male

**A resident in Camden has, on average, 9.1 parks or green spaces within 1,000m of their home.**



In 2023

**Camden produced 5,160Mwh (megawatt hours) of renewable energy from sources in the borough...**



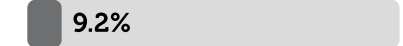
**...enough to power about 1,911 homes for an entire year**

Between 2018 and 2023, **Air pollution-related deaths fell by 2.6%**

2023



2018



In 2023/2024

**On average, Camden households produced**

**30% less waste since 2010/2011**

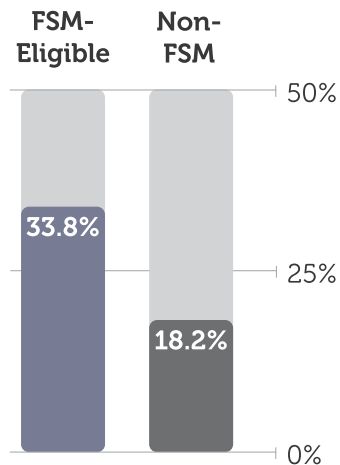
**Almost 9 out of 10 trips were made using public transport, walking, or cycling**



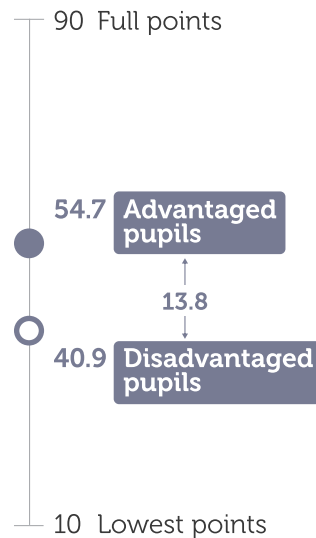
## Key Insights

“  
It's a borough of contrast [...] you notice it more here.  
”  
-65-74 years old, Female

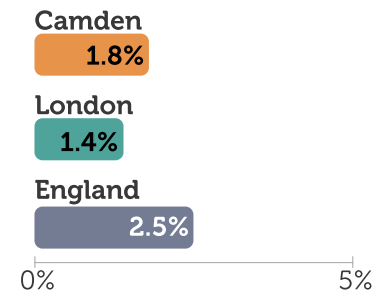
In 2023/2024  
**34% of secondary school pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) were persistently absent, almost double the rate of their non-FSM peers**



In 2023/2024  
**Disadvantaged pupils achieved lower GCSE outcomes, scoring 13.8 points less on average on Attainment 8**



In 2024  
**1.8% of 16-17 year olds were NEET (not in education, employment, or training)**



# 1,045

young people (aged 18-24) were claiming unemployment benefits in Camden

“  
There should be extra support for parents with special needs kids [...] swimming £36 for 30 mins, football £120 [...] too expensive.  
”

-48, Female

“  
Local youth workers encouraged me to do things out of the house and attend the Carers Partnership Board [...] My husband is visually impaired and my daughter is on the spectrum and I feel very supported by family and friends in the area.  
”

-42, Female

# 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.

We framed these long-term goals as our We Make Camden 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 2025, every young person has access to economic opportunity that enables them to be safe and secure.



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

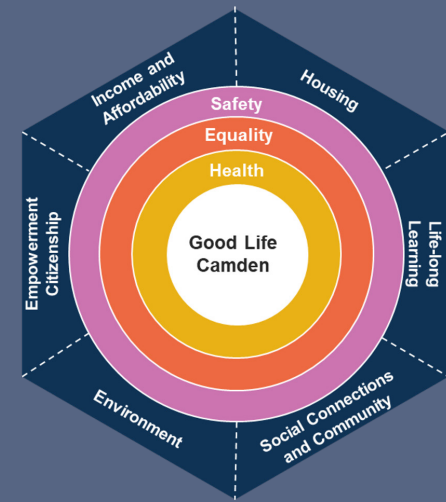


By 2030, Camden's **estates and their neighbourhoods** are healthy, sustainable and unlock creativity.

# Missions

The State of the Borough report includes a State of the Mission chapter for each of the four missions. These are an essential part of an annual learning and reflection process, and a public account of the progress we can see across the missions, what we have learnt and what we need to know and do to continue to move towards these ambitious goals.

In these chapters, we have relied on quantitative data from secondary sources, qualitative insights from our primary data collection, and learning from our partners in the borough. The tapestry of insights shared has been shaped by the availability of these data sources.



To read the State of the Borough report go to



For more information about Good Life Camden visit  
[www.wemakecamden.org.uk/good-life-camden](http://www.wemakecamden.org.uk/good-life-camden)





We Make Camden:  
**State of the Borough 2026**