



Camden Liberal Democrats Manifesto 2026

A Lib Dem Council Will...



Stand up for Camden residents - Fight funding cuts, protect vital services and give residents a stronger voice in local decisions.



Make our communities feel safe - Strengthen community safety, and address violence against women and girls.



Build a fair and inclusive place for all of us - Put people who need more care and support at the heart of decision making, make our borough more accessible, and reduce digital exclusion. Play a positive role as a Borough of Sanctuary.



Tackle the housing crisis - Take a stronger line with developers, improve Camden's failing housing repairs system, and do more to address the rising numbers of those sleeping rough on our streets.



Promote thriving high streets - Lead on keeping our high streets at the heart of our communities, invest in keeping them safe and clean, and encourage art and creativity.



Lead on climate action - Promote sustainability in the planning system, overhaul rubbish & recycling policies to keep our streets clean and reverse the fall in recycling rates. Take a joined-up approach to local transport improvements.

1. STAND UP FOR CAMDEN RESIDENTS

We will fight funding cuts, protect vital services and give residents a stronger voice in local decisions.

Labour councillors promised that a Labour government would mean proper funding for councils, but Camden is now facing a real-terms cut in its spending power over the next three years even if council tax is increased by the maximum allowable level each year (4.99%). A Labour council can't be trusted to stand up for Camden residents.

A Liberal Democrat council will fight funding cuts from central government and protect vital services, by collaborating with other local authorities, campaigning with London Councils and the Local Government Association.

We will also give the residents of Camden a stronger voice in decision-making. Too often council consultations feel like tick box exercises rather than genuine engagement with residents, leading to disillusionment and disengagement. This must change.

We will review best practice on consultation from across the country and also develop local transport masterplans with residents (see 'Sustainable Transport').

The Labour council has recently introduced changes to restrict residents' ability to participate in and protest at council meetings, such as banning placards and limiting who can make deputations.

We will remove undemocratic restrictions on public participation in council meetings and create new opportunities for residents to question those in power.

A Liberal Democrat council will also make the council more accessible by:

- » Exploring the development of a single Camden Council app, to make information more easily available, and as a single point of contact for reporting issues and responding to consultations.
- » Making Council documents more accessible by using plain English instead of technocratic language.
- » Ensuring all council services are accessible to those people who struggle to use online services, including the availability of a phone line staffed by trained council officers.



Councillors Tom Simon and Linda Chung standing up for Camden residents at Camden Town Hall

2.

MAKE OUR COMMUNITIES FEEL SAFE

We will strengthen community safety, and address violence against women and girls.

Tackling crime and Antisocial Behaviour (ASB)

Drug dealing in residential areas of Camden has increased hugely in the last few years, along with related crime, ASB and intimidation of residents. There has been a big rise in shoplifting. Theft of phones, theft of or from motor vehicles all remain problems as well.

Closures of police front counters by the Labour Mayor, reductions in neighbourhood policing capacity and a failure to prioritise community policing undermine efforts to make Camden safe.

The council has a key role to play in making our communities safe, through its own Community Safety Officers, by simple steps like ensuring street lighting is good quality, and by making sure council homes are not used as bases for illegal activity.

Liberal Democrat councillors have proposed big increases in the council's community safety teams in recent budget amendments, but these have been voted down by Labour.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- **Make community safety a top priority in Camden and boost the size of community safety teams and those supporting substance misusers.**
- **Ensure more visible patrols at peak times, especially after school hours and late evenings.**
- **Improve links to neighbourhood policing teams and work with police to revamp Safer Neighbourhood Team panels to improve transparency and communication.**
- **Pressure the Met Police to stop 'abstractions' (sending neighbourhood police officers on other assignments).**
- **Improve CCTV coverage in known hotspots, including with mobile cameras.**
- **Boost awareness of useful information for residents, such as the police-backed 'Secure by Design' website.**
- **Publicise information and support about common scams, particularly for vulnerable residents.**

Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

All residents should feel safe within the community. We will prioritise actions to stop Violence Against Women and Girls.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- **Ensure survivors of violence and abuse receive the care, protection, and support they need, creating a borough where everyone can live free from fear. We will build on existing work and responses to the council's recent VAWG consultation.**
- **Invest in prevention, building partnerships with schools, sports clubs, arts and community groups. Through education, youth engagement, and bystander training, we will challenge harmful behaviours and promote respectful, inclusive attitudes across Camden.**
- **Seek White Ribbon Accreditation. White Ribbon is a leading charity in the prevention of VAWG. Accreditation is a commitment made by workplaces to work towards transformational culture change in their staff culture, systems and communities.**



Councillor Janet Grauberg and candidate Patrick Stillman campaigning to clear up crime and ASB hotspot Billy Fury Way

3 BUILD A FAIR AND INCLUSIVE PLACE FOR ALL OF US

We will put people who need support at the heart of decision making, make our borough more accessible, and reduce digital exclusion. We will play a positive role as a Borough of Sanctuary.

Our diverse borough

The Liberal Democrats believe that the rich diversity of people in the Borough of Camden is a source of strength. We stand against division and hatred. Liberal Democrat Councillors have been proud to champion Camden's status as a Borough of Sanctuary, welcoming refugees from Ukraine, Afghanistan and other countries. We have called out the divisive language and actions of both the Labour and Conservative governments in recent times and stand adamantly opposed to Reform's agenda.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- Stand for a borough that is a welcoming place for refugees, immigrants and other visitors, reaffirming our status as a Borough of Sanctuary.
- Stand up to governments of any party that seek to undermine this position
- Support all our diverse communities against discrimination, hatred and violence. We are particularly concerned about the rising prevalence of antisemitism and Islamophobia.
- Pledge to remove any graffiti with hate speech within 24 hours of it being reported, and to promote ways of reporting.

Forging an Age and Disabled-Friendly Borough

We have also been proud to champion the idea of Camden as an Age and Disabled Friendly Borough, pushing for measures such as more public toilets, safer bus stops and action on A-boards and other street clutter that makes life difficult for blind and partially sighted people.

Last year the council passed a motion proposed by the Liberal Democrats, to become an Age and Disabled-Friendly Borough following World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines. Action by the Labour administration to fulfil the promise of that motion has been inadequate.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- Ensure Camden has a comprehensive network of publicly accessible toilets, by re-opening closed public toilets and working with businesses and other partners to enable access to facilities. We will promote awareness of the network through clear, visual guides and maps. There will be a specific council officer role responsible for this work.
- Increase support for blind and partially sighted people by growing the council's Sensory Team and providing more funding to VCS, with a particular focus on helping blind people with training, and support for enjoying life in London.
- Develop a 'walking audit' approach for significant transport and high street projects to help ensure they reflect the needs of older and disabled people.
- Remove unwelcome street clutter, such as illegally parked e-bikes and fly-tipping. Accelerate the council's project to remove A-boards.

- Deliver accessibility improvements, including step-free access, dropped kerbs, tactile paving, better crossings, seating and clear signage
- Review the safety of all Shared Use Bus Boarder (SUBB) bus stops and remove or upgrade the SUBB element where possible. Review the safety of all 'floating island' bus stops to ensure they meet the latest safety standards for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Restore visitor parking scratch cards for those residents who prefer them to the digital system.
- Improve Healthy School Streets schemes to meet the specific needs of the small minority of vulnerable residents who need to use taxis for hospital and other appointments.

Leadership in supporting children with SEND and their families

Liberal Democrats believe that every child has a right to education that enables them to develop their talents, abilities and personalities to their fullest potential.

Recent years have seen a growing number of children with special educational needs, including those who are neurodiverse, not thriving in mainstream schools, unable to secure the educational, health or therapy support they need, or only able to secure support after delays and much fighting by parents, carers or schools. Councils are also paying more, including in some cases for expensive out-of-borough places in private provision. This is a trend across the country, including in Camden.

The Government's recent consultation on SEN Reforms aims to improve this situation, but will take years to implement in full. There are steps the Council can take in the meantime, including to reassure parents about the changes that are planned.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- Work to ensure parents of children with special educational needs are kept informed about the changes envisaged by the Government's reform plans, and how it will affect their children.
- Explore the possibilities created by the closure of primary schools in Camden to develop additional provision for children with special educational needs, especially those who are neurodiverse and for whom large, noisy schools are not conducive to learning.



Councillors Judy Dixey and Matthew Kirk pushing for safer bus stops and crossings

4.

TACKLE THE HOUSING CRISIS

We will take a stronger line with developers, improve Camden’s failing housing repairs system, and do more to address the rising numbers of those sleeping rough on our streets.

Under Labour the housing crisis has deepened, homelessness and rough sleeping have increased, and housing repairs has been a constant problem. In 2023 the Regulator for Social Housing issued a judgement against the Council because of fire-safety failings. In 2025, the Housing Ombudsman carried out a Special Investigation into failings in Camden Council’s housing repair service. The Liberal Democrats called for Extraordinary Meetings of the Council to debate how to respond these issues.

We will deliver affordable homes

Private sector property is increasingly unaffordable for most people. Social housing waiting lists keep growing. Too many people live in overcrowded conditions.

The Labour administration has been poor at getting good deals from developers for Camden residents. With the O2 Centre and 100 Avenue Road, it has allowed plans that fall well short of its own targets on affordable housing, while also failing to provide needed transport improvements and community spaces.

We need to be creative to get delivery of homes quicker, that provide the right outcomes for local communities, while protecting and encouraging family accommodation. This is both in terms of social homes and in the private sector.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- » **Set up a task force to make the most of existing council homes, to review best practice and take action on (1) void turn-arounds and (2) under-occupation.**
- » **Create a new planning policy on new homes to resist them being marketed for overseas sales before local residents get the opportunity to buy.**
- » **Implement policies to limit the conversion of family homes into small flats.**
- » **Review the effectiveness and focus of the council’s Community Investment Programme to ensure it is delivering the new homes that Camden needs, and value for money.**
- » **Work with the Local Government Association and London Councils to campaign for changes to rules that limit councils’ ability to borrow to invest in new homes, and to gain access to low interest loans from the National Housing Bank.**
- » **Review and simplify the rules around Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), for both landlords and residents to ensure safe accommodation without stifling supply through red tape.**
- » **Boost the council’s work supporting private renters.**

We will keep council homes in good condition

The Labour council’s approach to maintaining its housing stock is too reactive, with the result being that many residents live in homes that are in poor condition.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- » Set up a task force to review and take action on problems with communal heating systems, maintenance and renewals. This includes looking forward through stock conditions and exploring sustainable options such as heat pumps and solar panels. Resident involvement and best practice would be at the heart of the process, through transparency and engagement.
- » Ensure the council has a complete register of its housing stock which enables it to understand the condition of its homes.
- » Put contractors who fail to provide good service on notice, follow through on penalties for poor performance.
- » Ensure accountability and transparency in the repairs service.
- » Ensure all residents are aware of their rights, particularly changes under the Renters’ Rights Act and Awaab’s Law.
- » Expand the provision of Library of Things for self-repairs.
- » Strengthen the council’s role in supporting tenants in Housing Association homes.

We will help people who are homeless or sleeping rough

Both homelessness, where people have no settled home, and rough sleeping have risen a great deal in the last few years. Both of these have a huge impact on quality of life. These increases are partly due to national circumstances, but also failings of policy locally. Poor planning and delivery left inadequate emergency accommodation for five years, exacerbating the problems.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- » Sell the under-used Crowndale Centre to provide funds to boost the Temporary Accommodation Purchasing Programme (TAPP) to provide additional homes to reduce homelessness.
- » Increase funding for temporary accommodation teams to help prevent homelessness and to oversee the quality of accommodation.
- » Set up an independent review of the council’s rough sleeping strategy and approach, to ensure that it has a clear and humane approach to assisting people off the streets. This would avoid further repeats of the Huntley Street fiasco of November 2023.



Candidate Laurence Lodge standing up for residents in social housing

5.

PROMOTE THRIVING HIGH STREETS

We will lead on keeping our high streets at the heart of our communities, invest in keeping them safe and clean, and encourage art and creativity.

Camden's high streets and town centres are the beating heart of our communities, places people feel proud of, return to again and again, and recognise as uniquely ours. From Hampstead Town to Camden High Street, from Belsize Village to West Hampstead and Kilburn, our centres support local jobs, culture, health and community life. We will protect and revitalise our high streets as places for the community, by the community. Inclusive, vibrant and resilient spaces that serve residents, businesses and visitors alike by supporting them to be:

Economically strong and locally rooted

We want high streets that feel alive throughout the day and evening, seven days a week, where independent businesses, creative enterprises and social uses can thrive side by side. We will:

- Pressure to TfL to tackle problems on Finchley Road, which is dirty, noisy, and neglected. Traffic throughflow is prioritised over the interests of residents and businesses. The underpass is a hotspot for rough-sleeping and drug-related anti-social behaviour, and there is pedestrian congestion due to the coach stops to Luton and Stansted Airports.
- Help local people into skilled work in local town centres, including support for Connect to Work, SEND internships and apprenticeships and meaningful jobs for young residents.
- Bring empty shops back into use, including through High Street Rental Auctions where appropriate, supporting small businesses, studios, performance spaces, exhibitions, pop-ups and start-ups.

Welcoming, inclusive and accessible

Our high streets should be places where everyone feels comfortable spending time, whatever their age, background or mobility. We will:

- Encourage essential services, such as GP surgeries, diagnostic centres and social care facilities, to be located in or close to high streets, either permanently or as pop-up spaces, where they are easiest to access.
- Use council-owned buildings to create community hubs, combining cultural, educational, leisure and small-scale commercial activity. These can meet local needs, such as a post office, library or banking hub. They can be warm spaces and help tackle loneliness.
- Make 'Fix My Street' work reliably, so that residents will know that problems they have reported will get repaired.
- Develop a strategic approach for improving public safety, accessibility and toilet provision, using Community Infrastructure Levy funds and other grants.

Cultural, social and full of life

Our High Streets are not just places to shop, they are places to meet, celebrate and belong. We will:

- Develop a local high streets partnerships model, to bring together Business Improvement Districts, accommodation providers, cultural organisations, landlords, community groups and residents to shape the future of each centre.
- Work with partners to deliver local festivals, performances, markets and cultural events, from farmers' markets to craft and community events.

- Invest in the infrastructure that makes events in town centres possible - power, storage in open spaces.
- Encourage public art, creative interventions and storytelling that celebrate local identity and champion local artists to make places people are proud to share.
- Liberalise the council's approach to busking, which is one of the most expensive and restrictive in the UK and undermines Camden's reputation as a centre of music and free expression.
- Keep the council's Statement of Licensing Policy under review to ensure it strikes the right balance in the light of changing economic circumstances.
- Continue to support the rights of reasonable practice for musicians and to protect music venues, including by embedding the Agent of Change principle. We will continue to seek to put music at the heart of our communities and rich cultural life.

Clean, green and future-ready

We will design high streets for the future, tackling climate change while improving day-to-day quality of life. We will:

- Cut pollution and support clean transport, including walking, cycling and better public transport links, and address vehicle idling through fines and education.
- Reduce congestion and emissions through freight consolidation and last-mile delivery solutions, limiting large vehicle intrusion.
- Increase greenery and shade, improving resilience to heat and extreme weather.

Clean, safe and well-maintained

People and businesses thrive where streets feel safe, welcoming and well cared for. We will:

- Improve cleaning schedules for high streets, tackling the perception of a slow decline.
- Tackle anti-social behaviour through investment in community safety officers, partnership working and smart design.
- Enable the creative use of approaches such murals, pop-ups and active uses to bring life to underused spaces.



(L to R) Candidate Pranay Hariharan, Parliamentary Spokesperson Katie Mansfield, Councillor Nancy Jirira and candidate Will Coles enjoying a street festival in Fortune Green

LEAD ON CLIMATE ACTION

We will promote sustainability in the planning system, overhaul rubbish & recycling policies to keep our streets clean and reverse the fall in recycling rates. We will take a joined-up approach to local transport improvements.

Climate change

The Council unanimously declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. Since then, there has been work by the council that should be commended, but opportunities to go further have been missed and there is a lack of transparency about the effectiveness of the council's work at reducing its own carbon footprint. A Liberal Democrat-run council would present data that clearly shows what we have achieved and what more there is to do. We will also address:

Nature recovery and urban greening by:

- Launching a Camden Rewilding Fund to support community-led greening projects, including wildflower corridors, pocket parks, and biodiversity-friendly planting.
- Planting thousands of new trees across the borough, prioritising areas with poor air quality and low canopy cover.
- Supporting local wildlife by encouraging the installation of bird boxes, bug hotels, and hedgehog highways in public and private spaces.

Sustainable homes and energy by:

- Requiring all new developments to include solar panels and battery storage as standard, helping to decarbonise Camden's energy grid.
- Promoting the use of retrofitting over demolition in the planning system, particularly for larger developments. Under Labour, major developments in Camden have received planning permission while paying lip service to retrofitting.
- Championing retrofitting of existing homes with insulation, heat pumps, and solar where feasible, supported by local advice and funding schemes.
- Reducing flood risk by creating mechanisms for residents to highlight areas that regularly flood and where the existing drainage system is not sufficient. We will work with Thames Water to find solutions, and ensure residents have all the information and support they need.

Zero Waste Camden

A constant complaint from residents is about rubbish on our streets, particularly high streets. Fly-tipping is a frequent problem. At the same time, the council's recycling rates remain stagnant and lower than many other London boroughs.

- Continue to promote the 'Belsize bin' to tackle waste from flats above shops and learn more about how it could work better, in terms of design, placements and communication with residents.
- Overhaul the approach to clearing seasonal issues, such as leaves and snow/ice, so that residents can report problems more easily and find out information about when their streets are due to be tackled.
- Review the council's approach to recycling, looking at best practice from Liberal Democrat-run councils which top national ratings for recycling.
- Boost recycling education and enforcement, ensuring residents have the tools and knowledge to recycle effectively. Ensure letting agents are supported to provide this information.

Sustainable Transport

The council is doing a lot of work on how road and pavement space is used, including bike lanes, EV charging infrastructure, dockless bike hire bays, secure bike hangars, changes to bus stops and more. Some of this has been welcome, but other parts have been poorly thought through. Consultation processes have proved to be inadequate for the scale and nature of some of the work, sometimes only paying lip-service to residents' views.



South Hampstead Lib Dem candidates Tara Copeland, Laurence Lodge and Pranay Hariharan, West Hampstead Candidate Aarti Wadhvani, Lib Dem Leader Sir Ed Davey and Fortune Green candidate Farrell Monk cleaning up the local community

LEAD ON CLIMATE ACTION

Continued

A Liberal Democrat council will overhaul the way the council consults on transport schemes to provide a local medium-term strategy for each ward. We will also make improvements for:

Dockless bike hire and e-scooters by:

- Being robust with e-bike and e-scooter companies such as Lime and Human Forest, ensuring compliance with rules about not over-filling bays or servicing at night in residential areas.
- Reviewing plans to increase the number of bays to ensure they are in locations that limit the impact on residential streets, using the revamped approach to consultation highlighted above.

Cycling by:

- Continuing the expansion of the number of on-street secure bike hangars to meet the high demand, using the revamped approach to consultation highlighted above.
- Reviewing the use of existing hangars to reduce the blocking of spaces by bicycles that are not in use.
- Continuing the expansion of cycle lanes in Camden to encourage the take up of cycling as a cleaner and healthier form of transportation, using the revamped approach to consultation highlighted above.

Motorbikes by:

- Ensuring that Camden Council recognises the role that powered two wheelers play in London's transport ecosystem.
- Reversing the imposition of charging for parking in solo motorcycle bays and allowing households to have a car and a motorbike.
- Lowering the rate of Resident Parking Permits for motorcycles, to reflect the smaller impact than cars that motorcycles have on kerb space.
- Engaging with motorcyclists to better understand safety hotspots.

Electric vehicles by:

- Continuing to develop Camden's electric vehicle charging infrastructure, with a particular focus on innovative and low-cost solutions such as cable gully charging and Trojan power portals
- Maximise the opportunities for residents to charge electric vehicles using lower-cost domestic electricity.
- Promote community electric car sharing schemes, in the light of the void left by Zipcar withdrawing from the UK.

The 603 bus by:

- Continuing to support the community campaign for improvements to the capacity and timings of this important service.
- Pushing TfL and the Mayor of London to take action.

We will also mitigate the impact on congestion of strategic infrastructure projects, such as by HS2 and Thames Water. We will create a 'traffic troubleshooter' post at the council to better coordinate works and communicate with residents and businesses.



Candidate Aimery de Malet Roquefort walking his dog on Hampstead Heath



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