

future

Camden New Journal

Saturday, January 7, 2030 The Community Wraparound @kentishtown #VisioningCamden2030 www.visioningcamden2030.com

A CLEAN SWEEP FOR CARBON-FREE CAMDEN

by ANNA WOODESON

THIS week Camden celebrates becoming the most energy-efficient borough in London with the retrofit of its last building. This massive, 10-year initiative, born out of the Covid recession, has brought all Camden properties close to achieving a zero-carbon rating.

More than a million buildings, including some 5,000 architecturally listed properties, have been improved by insulation, triple-glazing, ventilation and solar panels. Over 1,000 new jobs have been created and a retrofit army has been mobilised.

Emma Woodhouse, who oversaw the council operation, explains how the enormous challenge was met: “The start was tough, convincing people to overhaul their homes, but we had a real boost during the 2025 gas shortages. When the Camden start-up NotJustHotAir began

■ Turn to page 2



Picture Credit: Oscar Acland Burghley and Mum

Hot-Cross Boon

‘SHOW-me-the-Dough’ bakery and biscuit factory is proving an invaluable neighbour. Its biogas-powered ovens provide heating for the adjacent greenhouses of the King’s Cross vegetable growers. And now its new heat-exchanger offers a boost to the King’s Cross Pool. Like many public swimming pools, this had to close in the post-Covid recession, but free heating could help it reopen.

Toddlers bring joy to dementia care

A HAPPY time was had by all at the new dementia care and toddlers play group, set up at Swiss Cottage Library by psychologists from the Tavistock Well-Being Centre. The playgroups, located across the borough, are aimed at bringing back memories for those suffering from dementia by stimulating a recall of happier times. Eighty-four-year-old ex-taxi driver Bill, who has advanced dementia, was seen laughing with four-year-old Damien as they played with model cars.

Veggin’ out

WHEN pioneering social enterprise Vegbox celebrated its18th birthday this week, the crew pushed the boat out at its Regent’s Canal HQ with homemade cider produced from apples harvested from local street trees. Vegbox chair Ann Wong said of the co-operative’s growth: “When we started, we felt we were swimming against the tide. But these days everyone is eating food grown within the M25 hyperloop, and pesticides are a distant memory. "Ten per cent of our produce is grown in the borough of Camden. As well as our own greenhouses, almost every housing estate now has a thriving kitchen garden or vertical farm, so we buy some of their surplus. "Last year we converted the old Santander offices in Euston to a huge glasshouse for salad leaves. Now we’re buying the Shard. We’re bringing in 40,000 lettuce plants next month. It’s going to be the world’s tallest greenhouse!"



Picture by: Lorraine Walker-Smith



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north london

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Over the last 15 years we have supported over 100 schools, community centres and libraries installing solar panels and renewable heat.

Generating enough energy to power and warm thousands of buildings. We are now also supporting private homes and commercial buildings.

Together we are Powering Up North London

GRAND OPENING

New Bug Delicacies from Mr Larva Larva

Crawl on in: 115 Kentish Town Road, London NW5 2TJ

InstaGran!

A new social enterprise in which teenagers help the older generation learn computer skills.

Advance your social media skills to keep connected with your family and friends, stay in the loop with community groups and surf the web like a pro!

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SCAN ME

■ from page 1

manufacturing air-source heat pumps, using recycled metal from old gas boilers, we really increased our output.”

Asked what was the most inventive local initiative, Emma says: “When we ran out of insulation, Kentish Town City Farm, which had recently expanded across Camden, started providing sheep’s wool for the job.”

This energy initiative has brought health improvements, according to Dr James Caversham. “Many chest infections and breathing difficulties were related to our cold, damp homes.

But referrals for chest infections have been halved following the retrofitting.”

Local resident Gladys Hillmarton says: “My home is so comfortable now. And as for my bills... well, the government pays me because I make more energy than I use!”

As the win-win post-Covid initiative draws to a close, Camden can congratulate itself on achieving what was thought impossible 10 years ago.

More info about retrofitting homes: Retrofitworks.co.uk www.enhabit.uk.com

Sign up for access

Camden Council will be running free British Sign Language Diploma courses next year as part of its AccessAble incentive to help wheelchair users, and people with visual or hearing impairments, to more easily use venues across the borough.

The scheme, which was launched in 2028, offers a 10% cut in business rates for firms that adapt their buildings and train staff. There has been broad take-up but some staff reported difficulties in supporting hearing-impaired customers.

In response, the council is providing free online sign language training for up to 10% of staff in AccessAble member companies and at least two staff members in small businesses.

Sign language tutor and project developer Sharon W said: “I hope as many businesses as possible take up the offer. If it is a success we may be able to continue the scheme into the future too!”

Contact Camden Council for more information on AccessAble Schemes.



Drawing by: Hester

Women lead the charge for ‘caring Camden’

by CROSSROADS WOMEN’S CENTRE

THE buzzer goes and a Crossroads Women’s Centre regular comes in on her solar scooter, grinning: “I love these things! With green Camden, the streets are ours.” Ramblers, cyclists, wheelchair users, babies in buggies, skaters... and buses – frequent, accessible, free.

The Centre is celebrating New Year 2030. Since climate emergency measures kicked in, women and girls have been at the forefront:

Lives Matter, Youth Strike for Climate and the Care Income Now! campaign, exclusions were banned, and youth clubs and mothers’ support groups reopened.



Picture by: Noemie

Care charges have been abolished, and an income paid to mothers

occupying the Council offices, camping in Whitehall, rejecting broken promises and delays.

We have little ones to worry about, and ageing parents. We lost so many during Covid-19, especially among communities of colour, that we refused to go back to poverty, racism, pollution, homelessness and cramped housing. We rebelled against deportations and social cleansing, and reclaimed empty buildings.

Schools have been transformed. After Black

and those who care for people, and the urban and rural environment. The effect was magical.

No more Department for Work and Pensions starving us into zerohours contracts or kids taken into ‘care’ if we asked for help, or the isolation of coping on our own or being parked in end-of-life institutions.

Dads, too, now spend more time with their kids. And young people have stopped killing each other – there are things to do and places to go.

Since stop and search was abolished - and rape, domestic violence and hate crimes prioritised -

the police have become more respectful and are more respected. Sex workers and asylum seekers can report violence without fear.

The work of caring for our communal spaces has only just begun, but allotments are multiplying and organic produce is everywhere.

Food banks have closed and there’s no need to beg, do ‘survival sex’, sleep rough or hide from immigration officers.

Camden won the Caring Borough of the Year Award! www.crossroads womens.net



Solar Powered Scooter – Saff

Camden wins NHS award for ‘green’ family planning

NHS contraception used to mean medication or minor surgery, writes Sarah Panzetta. The NHS website listed fertility awareness (natural family planning) and said it was up to 99% effective, but GPs didn’t recommend it and women had to pay or work things out for themselves.

Today, thanks to the Camden Fertility Awareness Service, women are routinely offered free support alongside other contraceptive options.

“I never thought it would work. Medical school taught us to dismiss fertility awareness,” said local GP Misha Broadhurst. “I’ve learned so much thanks to this project.”

Saima, 24, was referred by her doctor after experiencing migraines while on the pill. She said: “I was wary at first but the support of my GP and the specialist service has made all the difference. This isn’t just feeding information into an app and hoping the algorithm doesn’t make a mistake. It’s about really understanding what my body is telling me.”

Her partner, Frank also 24, added: “I used to feel worried and guilty about the impact

of the pill on Saima. It’s such a relief to have a method that means we can both do our bit to avoid pregnancy”.

The NHS Sustainability Awards judges said “This project has saved the NHS money, improved women’s lives and reduced our use of fossil fuels, which are the basis of most oral contraceptives. We’re delighted to see Camden showing such an imaginative and innovative approach to tackling the climate crisis.”

More info at www.nhs.uk/conditions /contraception/natural-family-planning

Study in progress

THE unveiling of the latest National Curriculum reveals how much has changed in the last 10 years. It acknowledges that contact with nature is good for mental health, with students encouraged to have inventive interaction with nature, including greenhouses, growing beds, soil science and outdoor theatre.

Most schools can now opt for a

holistic approach to learning, where progressive humanism has replaced the study of tyrants and conquest, and we acknowledge the mistakes of the past.

And the arts are back! Mastery of technology allows time for greater self-expression. Teachers are increasingly freed from targets and assessments, so can enjoy bringing out the best in their charges.

I have a vision

A vision where you and me are treated equally

Do you have avision

A vision to dare

A vision to speak

A vision to dream

where we all live in harmony with buildings and plants

A vision that green energy is not green energy

Just energy

Energy that we all use

To power our homes

We all have visions

But my vision if different

My vision is where no cars are to be seen

Where Creed does not matter

Because we are all humans

That homelessness is not a thing

Where we all live in harmony Together

And my vision may seen crazy

But it’s just a touch away

Joseph Choueka

‘We’re all co-ops now’

by HOUSING REPORTER

TENANTS this week held estate parties across the borough to celebrate the completion of an eight-year programme to hand over all of Camden’s council housing to resident-led co-operatives.

The transfer process followed widespread concern about the council’s housing management, including poor quality renovations (such as the notorious Chalcots estate), lack of consultation about redevelopment plans and use of maintenance contractors from far afield instead of local firms.

The process was rolled out one estate at a time and involved finance and management training for TRA’s, a council-wide Co-operative Housing Board and a mechanism for including people who had previously bought their council homes.

“Co-operative management has enabled us to make Camden a genuinely affordable place for families to live, with fuel costs reduced by insulating all homes and introducing renewable community energy programmes,” said Tabisha Robinson, one of the coordinators of Homes 4 Us (the umbrella body for Camden’s housing co-ops). “And overall maintenance costs



have fallen because residents are invested in working together on this.”

Homes 4 Us have also introduced community gardens and food-growing on most estates, and replaced the Council’s strategy of large-scale demolition with tenant-led estate redevelopment schemes, based on extending and adapting existing buildings to enlarge the social housing stock.

The tenant-led scheme at West Kentish

workspace for local businesses and activity space for the community, with more new homes above. Existing green space and planting has been enhanced to provide biodiverse habitats with hedgerows, allotments, green walls and roofs, all providing a green haven in West Kentish Town.
*Find out how to set up a housing co-op at www.ldn.coop/londons-co-ops/housing-co-ops

Town Estate made use of materials already on site to insulate and re-clad the existing blocks. Homes are now heated by electric air-source heat pumps and have been extended with an extra storey of prefabricated units, or combined, to create many more family-sized homes. Every flat now has access to a balcony or garden.

New infill buildings create protected courtyards, with space for play, relaxation and socialising. The ground floor of these buildings provides

Pledge to Mother Nature

हमारे पूरे सौर मंडल में केवल पृथ्वी एक मात्र गृह है जिस पर जीवन संभव है। एक ज़मिमेदार नागरिक होने के नाते, आये हम सब एक प्रण ले - हमारी धरती माँ की रक्षा, उसके वातावरण और उसकी अनेक प्रजातियों का संरक्षण। ये सभी संभव होगा जब हम सब इस की ओर अपना अपनायोगदान दें।

“In our entire solar system, life exists only on one planet - Earth. As responsible citizens, let’s us all take a pledge - to protect mother nature, preserve it’s environment and its various life forms. This is only possible when each one of makes a contribution”
Ekta from Hopscotch

E-Waste in borough down to zero!

CAMDEN repair activists celebrated the 13th International Repair Day by announcing that Camden has become the first local authority in Europe to achieve zero electronic waste this year, *writes Ugo Vallauri*.

Meanwhile the Council confirmed that, from next week, the former Regis Road recycling centre will become a repair and reuse hub, where professionals and volunteers will help residents restore otherwise unusable appliances to working order.

Following last year’s ban on sales of

throwaway, unrepairable consumer products, Camden has begun to create jobs in the repair industry to replace those lost in retail; many recruits come from weekly repair clubs and Restart Parties that sprang up in local schools some years ago.

Their newly skilled-up offspring inspired parents and the whole community to rethink their relationship with consumer goods: buying less and making sure that all products are repaired and reused as much as possible.

*More info about the right to repair at The Restart Project www.therestartproject.org

Letter to the Editor

I FINALLY did it. I left the house wearing a dress. I thought there would be outrage, horror but honestly no one cared and nothing happened in the slightest. Recently far more people have finally come to terms with the truth. Clothes don’t have a gender. After all, in the end they are just fabric.

Written by: Imo

What if... this really was what the CNJ looked like in 2030



Picture by: Basmala Khaled

WHAT if... we found new solutions to the problems that have rocked us in 2020.

What if... we were all living in communities that were healthier, quieter, more sustainable, friendlier, safer, and welcoming to people of all ages, colours and creeds?

This special 4-page ‘Camden Future Journal’ newspaper is a glimpse of a bright tomorrow – but the content is based on things that are happening today.

The content was chosen from over 350 competition entries, including from some

of the borough’s youngest and oldest residents. All entries can be seen by scanning this QR code or at www.visioningcamden2030.com. An exhibition of articles and pictures submitted will tour the borough in 2021.

We hope you’ve enjoyed reading this optimistic vision of Camden 2030 and are inspired to start making it come true. Or maybe you have your own ideas?

Either way, you can be sure that there are people across our communities who are keen to work with you to turn Camden into a thriving place for all, while caring for our shared planet. Tomorrow can start today if we come together to

make the change we want to see. Join us at VisioningCamden2030@gmail.com
[@Tkentishtown](https://twitter.com/Tkentishtown), [@CamdenFoE](https://twitter.com/CamdenFoE), [@ThinkDoCamden](https://twitter.com/ThinkDoCamden), [@CECamden](https://twitter.com/CECamden), [@AlaraCereals](https://twitter.com/AlaraCereals), [@PowerUpNLdn](https://twitter.com/PowerUpNLdn) [@ktvegbox](https://twitter.com/ktvegbox)

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SCAN ME

People’s budget funds young talent

by DEE SEARLE

CAMDEN’S 2030 Citizens Assembly has earmarked youth start-up businesses to receive the bulk of next year’s People’s Budget.

Other recipients include high-tech community food growing for people with disabilities, car-free-Friday and a pilot project to wash and reuse glassware rather than sending it to energy-guzzling recycling or landfill.

The funding, worth 5% of the council’s annual budget, comes from Camden’s ‘participatory budgeting’ process in which local groups submit proposals to the Citizens Assembly for decisions.

The Citizens Assembly was first held in 2019 to guide the council’s response to climate and ecological emergency and has since developed into a permanent feature of Camden’s democracy, with membership renewed each year by random selection from the borough’s residents.

Participatory budgeting is used by thousands of cities around the world - from Bangalore to Barcelona - to give

communities a say in how local services are prioritised, but Britain was slow in coming to the party, said Camden’s Cabinet Member for Finance, Mandy Moneypenny.

“That’s why Camden decided to seize the initiative and give our trailblazing Citizens Assembly process a real say over how the council spends part of its budget,” she explained. “We’ve been amazed by the quality of suggestions from community groups and the detailed analysis provided by the Assembly.”

Previous People’s Budget projects include apprenticeships in the arts for Camden schoolchildren and Castlehaven Creatives, the now internationally renowned fashion house providing award-winning designs based on locally produced and reclaimed materials.

“Funding from the People’s Budget enabled me to buy my first sewing machine while I was still at school,” said Rishi Kanus, Managing Director of Castlehaven Creatives.

“I now employ 50 local people of all ages and we are constantly developing and engaging more people in sustainable fashion.”

YOUR VIEW:

The COVID trees

I FEEL so hopeful as I walk around Camden past the many Covid Trees, which were planted between 2021 and 2025. Each one marks the passing of someone who had made their life in Camden. All kinds of plots in surprising places were found, prepared and planted. Says Harvey Flinder, who

launched the project: ‘We knew it would be better to plant in groups because, just like us, most trees prosper in communities. They nurture and support one another. Lonely trees separated from each other fair no better than lonely people’
And we’re still planting trees! For your free bare-root tree: Camdenforest2025.wordpress.com

Kentish Town’s sustainable cooking school

IT’S good to cycle and turn into Kentish Town Road without tasting fumes, tyre fragments and dirt that all those vehicles used to spit into the air, *writes Sheila Hayman*.

The cycle lane is bordered by a patchwork of plants. I can smell the Kentish Town Kitchen from fifty yards – another benefit of ending motor traffic. The Blustons shop was the perfect place for it, with its big front windows allowing views of the

demonstration chefs. The real work, and fun, is in the kitchens in the back where Crossroads women are helping Year 7s from the Forest Secondary School make their own lunches. My job today is linking menu suggestions from Year 11s with vocational options such as measuring carbon footprints and sourcing menus from the local area, including from vertical farms.

What we learnt in the Twenty-Twenties

We learnt to be humble.
We abandoned our cars.
We dimmed all the lights
and we looked for the stars.

We planted a forest
our streets became farms
and by dint of these efforts
we learnt to be calm.

We grew vertical meadows
green pathways to run
and we managed to harvest
the wind and the sun.

Then surely but slowly
in spite of the din
there was more in the compost
than there was in the bin.

We learnt to be thrifty
and buy things that last
and now we’ve made plastic
a thing of the past.

We learnt how to knit
and we learnt how to mend.
and our throwaway culture
just slid to an end.

We learnt our survival
meant meaningful change
now we all get our clothes
from the fashion exchange.

We get our spare parts
from our library of things
and deep in our forest
wild birds flap their wings.

Mary Dickens



Painting by: J.Huntesmith

CAMDEN in Bloom this week celebrated beating strong competition to scoop the coveted First Prize in ‘The Great British Rake Off 2030’. Judges were particularly impressed by the borough’s many stunning wildflower meadows.

The leader of Camden Council, said: “Back in 2021, when I was Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden, I took the decision to phase out the use of glyphosate and other herbicides and pesticides. With the assistance of ‘Pesticide Free Cities’, we successfully switched to non-toxic mechanical weed control, at the same time investing in an intensive programme of rewilding Camden.”

Hazel Greene, who spearheaded the long campaign to ban glyphosate,

The Great British Rake Off

said: “Congratulations to ‘Camden in Bloom’ on a well-deserved result. Not only does the borough look beautiful these days, but our beekeepers have never been busier, and Camden’s honey, like our beer before it, is exported far and wide.”

The rewilding programme and Camden’s comprehensive low-traffic neighbourhood policy have together propelled the borough from the bottom to the top of the ‘Healthy Air Quality’ (HAQ) chart.

Other London boroughs are now emulating Camden’s rewilding policy; a remarkable turnaround for Camden’s environment in under a decade.
*Pesticide Action Network campaigns to ban harmful chemicals
www.pan-uk.org/pesticide-free

WHAT'S ON AT YOUR COMMUNITY HIGH STREET HUB:

Somers Town Repair, Share and Care Hub

Monday: Know your electronics: our experts are on hand to help you learn and repair.

Tuesday: All things wood: Wobbly chair leg? Drawers jammed? We'll help you fix it. (Cargo-bike pick up for bulky items)

Wednesday: Food sharing. Made too much?

Or just proud of your recipes? Bring, share and chat.

Thursday: Translation: Need something translating?

Friday: Story sharing. From our childhood and our

ancestors: from imagination and lived experience.

Camden Town Swap Shop

(Only clean and in good condition, please)

Monday: Children's clothing

Tuesday: Men's clothing

Wednesday: Women's clothing

Thursday: Household items

Friday: Children's toys

Saturday: Books of all kinds.



Picture by: Theo Putz