

Panel Recommendations	Council Responses
THEME: FOOD	
<p>1. That the Council in conjunction with schools and Camden Learning consider very carefully the framework of renegotiating the school meals contract, taking into account the Council's leverage for moving towards a healthier diet for schoolchildren and embedding the principles of the circular economy into that procurement contract.</p>	<p>The procurement of the next school meals contract is being progressed - likely duration 3 years. The degree to which circular economy objectives can be accommodated will be dictated by market capacity to adapt standard ways of working and any impact on the price per meal which is a direct pass through to schools / parents. In the medium term the Council is looking to develop an in house school meals service and this objective can be examined as part of this.</p>
<p>2. That the excellent work suggested by Camden's healthy eating agenda be linked to food waste issues, creating both health and environmental improvements for residents.</p>	<p>Sustainable food and food waste is key objective of the Camden Food mission. The food mission is working with partners such as Lifeafterhummus to trail new ways to measure food waste in Camden and model to working with businesses to reduce food waste and to redistribute surplus food</p>
<p>3. That Camden should make use of existing campaigns to drive home the point of how bad food waste is for the environment, whilst also providing tips on how best to store and prepare food.</p>	<p>The Food Mission has made £700k available to drive the food agenda in the borough. one of the main outcomes of this funding is to support the development of a strong Camden food partnership. Communication and campaigning will be a big part of this food partnership agenda. The main three themes the partnership will prioritise are money first approach, sustainability and food waste, and healthy eating and nutritious food</p>
<p>4. That Camden considers how it can expand the reach of our food waste recycling services so that all homes are eligible.</p>	<p>Food waste collections to be expanded to cover all properties in 2025 including flats above shops.</p>
<p>5. That Camden should support efforts to encourage local restaurants, pubs, shops and hotels to donate any food that cannot be used in time.</p>	<p>Part of the food mission investment is to support the development of a food hub in Camden. The food hub will support the surplus food agenda and act as a catalyst to redistributing surplus food in Camden. a site has been identified as a potential food hub. colleagues from the council are assessing viability.</p>
<p>6. That Camden should strongly endorse the national organisation "Fare Share", which is a network of charitable food redistributions, with the aim of taking good quality surplus food from across the food industry and making it available to charities and community groups, including school breakfast clubs, older people's luncheon clubs, homeless shelters, and community cafés.</p>	<p>Our partners and food network are already working receiving surplus food from the Felix project and a representative of Felix project is sitting on the Camden Food Partnership steering group.</p>
<p>7. That Camden should support the delivery method in shops of cutting food waste and further minimising packaging by encouraging customers to bring in their own containers and shopping bags.</p>	<p>We are working with NLWA to promote the 'Bring It' campaign, launching in July 2024 which encourages residents to bring reusable containers and bags when shopping. Camden Markets are working with Raze, offering reusable bags via traders on Leather Lane Market, which provides points to the customer each time they are used, which can be exchanged for discounts for purchasing items at sustainable businesses. We will promote use of food sharing to businesses via apps such as Olío and Too Good to Go via website pages</p>
THEME: REPAIRS	
<p>8. That Camden further supports repair stations across the Borough with the aim of having a repair workshop in walking distance of every ward.</p>	<p>In partnership with Veolia, Think & Do & Camden Fixing Factory, we have delivered 7 Fix and Do repair events across the borough. We are looking to deliver more events in new locations across the borough and support/ promote existing and new repair groups where possible. We also promote wide range of repair resources - including existing repair directory on our pages</p>

<p>9. That all Council teams, and in particular Voids and Repairs, be asked about the extent to which they prioritised re-use and repair of materials, which would alert management as to areas where a more strategic approach was needed if there was no fully cognisant answer.</p>	<p>A procurement exercise will start later in 2024/25 for the Housing Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) contracts and we will look at repair opportunities as part of the Invitation to Tender. Other procurement activity for 'disrepair works' and 'complex repairs' and capital works will be used to work with appointed contractors on repair opportunities may be possible within the confines of regulatory requirements.</p>
<p>10. That the Voids team should be asked to draw up new procedures so that more fixtures and fittings that could be useful to new tenants are left in situ, repaired if need be, and then offered as part of the new let to the new tenant (with liability waivers signed if needed). Where these fittings are not wanted then there should be 35 an appropriate way of offering them elsewhere.</p>	<p>A new Voids Manager is to be appointed and the voids standard is kept under review. The possibilities in relation to re-using fixtures and fittings will be reviewed during 2024/25. Please note that under 'choice-based' lettings the property will have been cleared prior to the advertisement process - but we will explore the potential for items to be retained where safe to do so.</p>
<p>11. That in respect of the excellent repair projects in the Borough, such as Fixing Factory, Sharing Spaces and the Library of Things, consideration be given to utilising Community Investment Levy funding to develop further such local initiatives elsewhere in Camden.</p>	<p>Local CIL can be used by ward Members to allocate funds to set-up such projects. Thought must be given to provide annual funding routes for ongoing revenue costs of running such project year-on-year.</p>
<p>12. That Camden try to co-ordinate or provide further training for community centres, tenants and residents associations and local businesses who need support for expansion or for consistency in delivery of sustainability projects.</p>	<p>Ideally linked with Camden's Voluntary and Community Centres wider work on corporate volunteering, but also picked up through ongoing support of the Somers Town Future Neighbourhoods programme until December 2025, Think and Do Energy Savers clubs and the Euston Skills Centre Energy Skills Training Courses</p>
<p>13. That Camden continue to support localised shopping options which can be walked or cycled to, and Camden property services in their continuing audits should be encouraged further to make available such unused space as multi-storey or underground parking as well as commercial premises for workshops, storage and community facilities.</p>	<p>Officers continue to support the principles of vibrant High Streets and localised shopping, although need to consider the fiduciary duty to obtain market rents. Nevertheless, when marketing vacant properties consideration will be given to independent businesses, especially those with a track record of success in the borough. The majority of underground parking opportunities are within housing blocks; the Commercial property Team can work with appropriate Housing and Regeneration teams to make them available (where appropriate) for workshops, storage and community facilities.</p>
<p>14. That Camden continue to support appropriate use of space, for example by use by charities and other bona fide organisations of school playgrounds at weekends for "car boot sales" and other methods of recycling and reselling items.</p>	<p>The council currently let 96 Properties to voluntary community sector (VCS) organisations, most of them will qualify for the VCS lease benefits. The VCS lease has been devised to benefit charitable organisations. School playgrounds and their use over weekends and holidays are controlled by the schools themselves and are beyond the remit of LBC.</p>
<p>Theme: TEXTILES</p>	
<p>15. That Camden creates a charity shop directory and map on its website so that residents can easily see which charity shops are accessible in their area.</p>	<p>This type of facility is available through a range of on-line search engines and local social media platforms. Picking up this recommendation, the Council will include the role of charity shops and local re-use services through ongoing campaign and communications opportunities.</p>
<p>16. That Camden brings together its partners to organise a carpet, rug and blanket making workshop.</p>	<p>We will engage with partners to scope potential of holding a workshop</p>
<p>17. That Camden conduct research into what "fast fashion" companies there are in the Borough, and organise a roundtable with these brands to discuss the practicalities of moving towards more sustainable fashion and eco-conscious supply chains.</p>	<p>We have some existing understanding through the Camden Climate Alliance members e.g. ASOS (clothing company). Decision to move to sustainable fashion is market led and so the Council will work with London Environment Programme on this to drive forward at a regional level.</p>
<p>18. That Camden review its own textile production carbon footprint.</p>	<p>Not a specific area that the Council has current capacity or funding to undertake. Will discuss at a regional level with London Council's Environment Programme - One World Living project.</p>

19. That Camden encourages regular local clothes swaps at community centres and schools across Camden, and advertises these clearly across the Council's website and social media channels, as well as supporting notification in community centres, libraries, and on council estate noticeboards.	With Veolia we will promote future clothes swapping opportunities. We will also be working with NLWA on their expected textiles focussed campaign in Autumn 2024.
20. That Camden encourages the recycling of school uniform and school specific sports kit by school and community organisations	NLWA recently launched a school uniform reuse scheme, which we are supporting through promotion.
21. That Camden support sustainable textile-apparel businesses by organising a "sustainable fashion fair", inviting them to advertise and sell their clothes.	Textile re-use events take place throughout the year - Ongoing work and campaigns with NLWA and regional partners will develop these public events and campaigns.
Theme: TRANSPORT	
22. That Camden in continuing with its Healthy Schools projects aim to secure suitable cargo bike parking, particularly outside schools when children can be delivered by cargo bike.	The Council provides this and will continue - providing 'Sheffield' or "M" bike-stands outside schools when we deliver Healthy Streets schemes. A good example is outside the Stewart International School in Gospel Oak, where many parents arrive with cargo bikes to transport their children to school and additional cycle parking has been provided as part of a wider Safe & Healthy Streets scheme
23. That Camden should consider appropriate land use for further development of "last mile" hubs, with associated parking provision for larger vehicles delivering bulk supplies to these distribution centres.	The draft Local Plan promotes the sustainable movement of goods, services and materials and encourages the use of micro-mobility hubs and urban logistics hubs and promotes the provision and use of freight consolidation facilities to ensure that last mile deliveries are undertaken by sustainable means. Through the pre-application process officers will seek to promote such uses on appropriate sites in and around the Central Activities Zone.
24. That Camden, clearly in the lead on the use of cargo and e-cargo bikes for deliveries should now reach out further to firms, large and small, in the Borough to support cargo and e-cargo bike use to a greater degree.	The Council will do this through the emerging Freight & Servicing Action Plan (FSAP) which has specific actions to bolster cargo bike use amongst organisations across the Borough. The FSAP and associated implementation is due to be approved by the Cabinet Member this summer
25. That Camden in seeking to reduce vehicular traffic caused by major construction sites should change to a to a much clearer expectation that Construction and Management Plans, should be available in the pre-planning process, so that these plans can form part of the tendering package given to contractors by the developer, as opposed to only being required after planning permission has been granted. While we accept it is not always practical to agree CMPs prior to planning permissions, as has been explained to members frequently, best practice for larger projects should enhance the Camden expectation that there will be full public consultation and at the earliest stage possible.	It is not clear how this would improve circular economy outcomes. If the objective is to reduce vehicular traffic then we could amend the CMP pro-forma to include a specific question about how vehicular traffic is being reduced. The CMP pro-formas are published on Camden's website and freely available for developers to include in their tender processes.
Theme: BUILDINGS	

<p>26. That a response be requested from Camden planning officers to the unanimous suggestion by circular economy experts at the roundtable discussion on 16 June that the Council strengthens the local plan and guidance to developers in refurbishing buildings rather than demolishing and rebuilding them. While noting that Camden is one of the few London Boroughs that already specifically discourages demolition, and much of course depends on what is possible and indeed financially viable, there have been examples given to the Scrutiny Panel where refurbishment would have been possible in Camden, but planning permission had been granted to “demolish and rebuild”, and we heard considerable criticism from experts and residents, so we recommend greater clarity in this area.</p>	<p>The Camden Local Plan is currently under review and its already strong policies on retrofit and re-use have been strengthened. Policy CC2 of the draft Local Plan states that the Council will seek to ensure that the repurposing, refurbishment and re-use of existing buildings is prioritised over demolition. For existing buildings applicants will be required to undertake a condition and feasibility assessment to understand the re-use potential of the existing buildings and explore the best use of the site. Taking into account the findings of the condition and feasibility assessment applicants will be required to demonstrate that alternative development options have been fully explored. Proposals that involve partial or substantial demolition will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction that the applicant has comprehensively explored a range of alternative development options, informed by the condition and feasibility assessment prior to considering full or partial demolition and the proposal constitutes the best use of the site when considered against alternative options involving the retention, repurposing, refurbishment and/or re-use of the existing building/s. Consultation on the draft Local Plan finished in April, officers are now addressing the responses received and a final draft will go to Cabinet and Council in the Autumn with the final stage of consultation planned in the Winter 2024/25.</p>
<p>27. That the Camden default should be more straightforwardly based on preventing unnecessary demolition and there should be a strong encouragement for the re-use of existing materials in construction. The Scrutiny Panel welcomes what has been achieved and recommends that work continues and deepens.</p>	<p>The draft Local Plan makes clear that where partial or full demolition is justified a pre-demolition audit will be required to be submitted to demonstrate that circular economy principles have been applied in accordance with a new dedicated policy CC3 titled "Circular Economy and Reduction of Waste". The draft Local Plan is available on the Council's website where the full text of the policy can be viewed.</p>
<p>28. That Camden work together with other local authorities to support and share best practice with retrofit approaches to housing and building archetypes, thus avoiding duplication and maximizing resources and delivery.</p>	<p>Camden officers have good links with local authorities across London and the wider region where retrofit is discussed. Retrofit is explored at the options appraisal stage of all projects and we have a major retrofit planned of Lulworth Tower on the Agar Grove estate.</p>
<p>29. That Camden take advantage of offers from various voluntary organisations and Universities, which we were informed about, to provide training for officers and Planning Committee members for retrofit and archetype approaches in this rapidly changing terrain.</p>	<p>This is ongoing work - Planning Committee members received in-house training from the Sustainability Team earlier this year which was well received. The Climate Action Team attends training courses as required and it is well connected to London Universities, the current corporate retrofit lead has just completed a Masters at London University in the energy field. Officers maintain their professional qualifications and experience on an ongoing basis through local, regional, national and international good practice, learning and development.</p>
<p>30. That Camden looks to further lead in this area. It should be required or expected of planning applications above an appropriate threshold that they demonstrate how they conform to the principles of “design for deconstruction”.</p>	<p>The draft Local Plan requires all developments to be designed for easy maintenance and renovation, flexibility and adaptations, and longer life and facilitating deconstruction for future re-use.</p>
<p>31. That Camden should establish a “rubble reclamation centre” and support a network where building material can be exchanged between developers for re-use elsewhere in developments and refurbishment.</p>	<p>The draft Local Plan requires applicants to explore opportunities to use the site, or other local sites, for the temporary storage of re-usable materials, during the construction phase, to enable other developments coming forward in the locality to use those materials.</p>
<p>32. That Camden update its planning guidelines, given that the GLA and the Mayor in March 2022 finalised their “Circular Economy Statements Guidance”, and this postdates the declaration of Camden's Five Year Climate Action Plan: https://consult.london.gov.uk/circular-economy-statements</p>	<p>The Local Plan is currently being reviewed with the final draft due to be consulted on in December 2024 / January 2025.</p>

<p>33. That in every large new development in the Borough there should be consideration in the pre-planning process not just of separate space for re-use and recycling relating to that specific site, which already occurs, but for wider considerations of additional space to be used to further the aims of sustainability in local and Borough-wide projects.</p>	<p>Officers could look further into this in more detail if the Panel provided further information on what additional space is needed and for what specific purposes.</p>
<p>Theme: OTHER</p>	
<p>34. That Camden utilise the ReLondon database of all the organisations, bidders, and businesses who have indicated that they have circular economy objectives, so that those within the Borough can be identified and linked up.</p>	<p>There is no obvious ReLondon database, however some Camden businesses interested in shifting to circular economy practices are connected to the Camden Climate Alliance network and attend networking events and deliver impactful projects. For example the CCA promoted the Highstreets Beyond Waste grant to Camden businesses, Gentrack worked with the CCA and Camden Friends of the Earth to rally 70 businesses to sign a plastic free pledge and Anthesis and BMA House delivered re-use interventions at schools and across their premises that are noted in our Camden Climate Alliance 2023 Review.</p>
<p>35. That such organisations be asked if they are looking for support from Camden, not necessarily of a financial nature, but possibly in terms of space, networking and sharing ideas.</p>	<p>The Camden Climate Alliance runs a variety of environmentally focused networking events including some that include a focus on circular economy themes.</p>
<p>36. That Camden should take immediate steps to commence the formal process of a new bye-law making all parks smoke-free zones, on the basis of health, litter reduction and setting a suitable example for children and young people.</p>	<p>The Council has reviewed the process of updating the Byelaws in 2015, reporting to Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee in March 2015, and considered the burden excessive in terms of the benefits it would provide. The process has not significantly changed since then and Government's model byelaws do not include any restrictions on smoking . Experiences from other areas shows that deviating from the model Byelaws leads to detailed review by the Secretary of State and can lead to the process taking between 2-3 years.</p>
<p>37. That when Camden redevelops the Recycling Centre at Regis Road it should prioritise significant space for the exchange and re-use of still functioning and repairable items.</p>	<p>The NLWA manages all re-use and recycling centres in north London, including the site at Regis Road, which operate as a network across the sub-region. The size of the sites often define the breadth of activity that specifically takes place on site. Re-use and repair takes place through this site network across north London. Working in partnership with NLWA will expand activities where practicable and investigate options for development of appropriate new local infrastructure, such as the Reuse Shop at King's Road RRC which provides a place for residents to buy ethically by purchasing pre-loved items.</p>
<p>38. That further consideration should be given to the Council communicating about these issues through social media, for example by such apps as "next-door" and "Facebook Marketplace" that appear to have a large following, and that in this way the Council could use its leverage to change narratives about re-using commodities.</p>	<p>Circular economy initiatives such as the Library of Thing and Fixing Factory are promoted through all Council social media accounts, e.g. Next Door, Instagram and Facebook. This will continue.</p>
<p>39. That Camden Council should very strongly support the campaign to outlaw the loophole in business rates rules which allows a commercial landlord to move boxes or equipment into an empty space and claim it is in use, so that after removal a further period of business rates relief is triggered.</p>	<p>April 2024 saw some positive regulatory movement (Non-Domestic Rating (Unoccupied Property) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 (S.I. 2024/323) in this area, which has started to reduce the issue and the Council would see benefit in the fuller reform of business rates altogether and enabling Councils to take full control of local discounts policy.</p>
<p>40. That Camden should further encourage the ethical use of any such empty commercial or residential property.</p>	<p>When appropriate commercial properties become vacant, the Commercial Property Team have undertaken agreements with 'Meanwhile' operators who partner with charitable organisations to use the space for a period of at least 6 months whilst further future use/strategy for the retails unit are being considered. This approach will continue.</p>

<p>41. That Camden should also use its power to disseminate good practice by encouraging further the initiative in some food shops of “bulk food shopping” to minimise packaging, where customers are prompted to bring in their own containers.</p>	<p>Bulk buying and unpackaged retail is advocated through the Council's work on street markets and development of ReFill Camden. Along with the 'Circular Markets' concept in Chalton Street market the Council will continue to promote this approach.</p>
<p>42. That Camden should support any government proposals to have returnable deposits on bottles (Deposit Return Schemes), as has been hugely successful in so many other countries.</p>	<p>Camden supports this proposal and awaits the production of national regulations and implementation for this national scheme, which should increase the overall recycling rate for drinks containers.</p>
<p>43. That Camden should appoint among current officers a Programme Lead to try to articulate a vision for the Borough on the circular economy and co-ordinate activity across the Council's work to foster the use of this tool towards increasing sustainability.</p>	<p>The Council recognises the cross-organisational nature of circular economy activities and the ongoing need to foster circular economy thinking across the organisation. This work will continue through the Council's Environmental Stewardship training, which includes a module on 'waste and resource efficiency'. Following this recommendation the Director of Environment and Sustainability will act as a circular economy 'sponsor' bringing together services and Divisions from across the Council to co-ordinate thinking, influence and delivery of the circular economy activity.</p>