



# Camden Community champions

Health and Wellbeing Board  
December 2023

# Community champions

## Capacity building on our estates



Community Champions project:  
launched in March 2020

Focused on estates in Regent's Park, Kentish Town and Kilburn

Camden Public Health  
funded Champion Co-ordinators

builds community  
capacity by engaging with  
residents to understand  
their priorities to improve  
health and wellbeing

supports a network of  
Champions to deliver activities  
and initiatives to address these  
issues.

Projects created and developed by champions include: the community kitchen in Regent's Park, warm welcome spaces on estates, community gardening, wellbeing walks and sports, festivals and community safety programmes in primary schools



Ends in March 2024

**External evaluation will include consideration of the opportunities to scale the model and its potential to support a neighbourhoods approach**

# Community Champions



*"Being a champion has changed my life. I used to think I was useless and worthless...It was the start of a new me and I would say my dream came true literally...I have been able to do so many things as part of this project. I have gained so much confidence and this is where I belong."*

Parent on RPE who runs Arts and Crafts at Community Kitchen

Each of the three projects have taken different approaches, focussing on the needs and aspirations of the residents they are supporting. These are just a few examples to illustrate the projects residents have managed to get off the ground.

**Regent's Park Community Champions** have weekly socials and work on projects together. They created the Young Guardians project – a community safety project. This is a quote from a 17 year old young guardian *"Being a guardian has shown me that with the right support I can create change."* They are now looking to expand this model onto the Ampthill estate. They also ran the Regent's Roots festival this year and run community kitchen with ODAC.

**Kentish Town Community Champions** supported Osney Crescent residents to create a TRA so they can deliver estate improvements. They have two What's App groups with over 100 men and have two sessions of football per week and coordinate regular BBQs. They are supporting the residents of Kenbrook to set up a homework club in the TRA hall.

**Kilburn Community Champions** created a community garden in the park, regular gardening on Webheath, run a weekly wellbeing walk, have a weekly knitting group in the library, and are planning to support residents with play streets.

## Everton Mews – Regent's Park Estate



Before

After

- In 2023 the community champions began improving Everton Mews – an unloved area, residents felt unsafe using.
- 15 Champions worked with Veolia and Camden refuse teams and cleared the area and helped to repaint it.
- Two of the young guardians created a short film to explain what the changes have meant for them

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M\\_J7OjazL3A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_J7OjazL3A)



## Learning from community champions programme

Having a **coordinator** working at estate level helps to build trust with citizens

**Citizens have been motivated to make improvements to their estate** with support from a VCSO coordinator

**Having a base on the estate so citizens knew where to go for help helped to build enthusiasm**, trust and support for the project

**The coordinator has helped citizens** to tackle some of the complexities of the council to get projects delivered. E.g. gardening,

**Working on a community project** has helped some citizens to move into work or access additional training

The project has helped to **create friendships, build cohesion and tackle loneliness** at an estate level

**The champions coordinator has helped to create new partnerships at a local level** and has supported other organisations to grow and flourish e.g. KT has supported the NW5 project

The projects residents have worked on have **improved creativity, health and sustainability** at a local level.

Some **citizens have a sense of pride in their estate** that they did not have before the project

Capacity building projects have **enabled citizens to test out new ideas** they would probably never have done on their own

Capacity building **projects have brought in extra funding** and opportunities at an estate level

**When support has been withdrawn** (due to a staff vacancy) **some citizens have become disheartened** and projects have failed.

