

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> ALL
<b>REPORT TITLE</b> Camden Council Cultural Programme Update Report	
<b>REPORT OF</b> Director of Economy, Regeneration and Investment	
<b>CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY</b>	<b>DATE</b> 13 January 2025
<p><b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b></p> <p>This report summarises the vision and ambitions for the Culture Service, reflects on the development and delivery of the 2024 Cultural Programme and sets out the key priorities for the 2025 Cultural Programme for the communities of Camden.</p> <p>The Culture Service has been created to reposition the council's unique role as connectors and enablers of culture between cultural organisations, communities, and neighbourhoods to realise opportunities, animate the public realm and uncover Camden creatives and the everyday creativity of Camden people.</p> <p><b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</b></p> <p>No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b></p> <p>David Burns  Director of Economy, Regeneration and Investment  Regeneration and Planning  4th Floor, 5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG  <a href="mailto:david.burns@camden.gov.uk">david.burns@camden.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Zerritha Brown  Head of Culture  Regeneration and Planning  4th Floor, 5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG  <a href="mailto:Zerritha.brown@camden.gov.uk">Zerritha.brown@camden.gov.uk</a></p>	

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee is asked to note and comment on the service update report.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Dan', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

Date:17/12/24

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report to the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee is to update the committee on the Culture Service. The report includes an update on the 2024 cultural programme, plans for the 2025 cultural programme and the development of a new Cultural Strategy for the borough.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Culture Service brings together the existing arts and events team who are responsible for event management of community festivals and civic events, managing the film office and generating income through venue hire and public realm activations as well as strategically growing and protecting arts and culture in the borough and leading the Cultural Partnership –Cultural Camden, who help deliver and champion the cultural framework's vision.
- 2.3 Camden has a rich and thriving cultural sector, home to many of the UK's most visited cultural destinations, with 32 Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations, the second highest number in London. Camden is the fourth most popular filming location in London due to its iconic locations hosting up to 1000 film days a year and generating an income of up to £2m for the council.
- 2.4 In 2018 the Cultural Camden partnership, a strategic network of key arts and culture organisations in the borough was established. The partnership and the council worked collaboratively to develop the Culture Framework 2018 to 2025 with a vision of a borough shaped and inspired by its culture, where creative industries, arts, culture, heritage, libraries and museums are accessible, engaging and relevant for all.
- 2.5 Culture plays a vital role in embracing the vibrancy and identities that come together across the borough. The Culture Service act as connectors and collaborators between cultural organisations, residents, artists and neighbourhoods to ensure that all communities have access to produce and consume cultural experiences.

## **3. 2024 Cultural Programme**

- 3.1 The 2024 cultural programme created projects and events which celebrated the boroughs heritage and uncovered and platformed hidden histories. At the heart of the programme has been the aim of bringing the community together through activations in the public realm, commissioning new work and developing a talent pipeline for the future. 2024 built on the success of the 2023 programme, developing high quality cultural programming, exploring new partnerships with the community and cultural sector. Below is a list of key programmes delivered:

- 3.2 **Light Up Kilburn** - Took place from the 9<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> February along Kilburn High Road. Delivered by the culture service with support from One Kilburn and Brent Council, the festival featured awe inspiring illuminations which lit up buildings such as the Kiln Theatre, TRAIID the Gaumont State Building and Beit Alwarded Café over three weekends. The final evening saw the community come together through a light inspired parade along the High Road which ended at Kilburn Grange Park with light installations, pop up performances and a creative night market attracting an audience of over 1000 people. Eight Kilburn based artist were commissioned to deliver light artworks and workshops from a shortlist of 97. Residents, school children and communities from both Brent and Camden were invited to participate in free workshops and activities attracting an audience of 251 of which 171 were young people from Kilburn Schools. The final weekend saw an increase footfall of 30% on the previous Saturday evening and the previous year.
- 3.3 **Windrush Pitt Lecture** – This was Camden’s second year delivering a Windrush programme which included The Pitt Lecture, The Homecoming and the Windrush flag raised at the Town Hall. The Pitt Lecture took place on the 17 June at the British Library. Hosted by Brenda Emmanus OBE, this year’s event explored equality for young people in care, with a keynote delivered by poet, playwright, and broadcaster Lemn Sissay and a panel discussion with Lavinya Stennett Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of The Black Curriculum who both shared personal reflections on their experiences of growing up as Black children in the UK care system. Emelia Kenlock gave personal and insightful reflections on Lord David Pitt’s legacy through the eyes of her father, Neil Kenlock OBE, a celebrated photographer who documented the lives and experiences of the African and Caribbean communities in Britain during the 70s and was honoured to have photographed Lord Pitt at his home. It was a deeply moving and personal account of the UK care system and how young people in particular Black children experience the care system. The discussion also covered the importance of teaching Black history in the curriculum, particularly for those young Black people in care (who may be placed with white families) to understand better colonialism and the contributions of the black community to the UK throughout history.
- 3.4 **The Homecoming Celebration** - Took place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June at Talacre Town Green for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. This was a one-day free event to celebrate the borough’s Windrush story and showcase Camden’s Caribbean heritage, culture and communities. The line up included Aitch B, Omar and Marla Brown, as well as performances and DJ set from the Apex Project young people. The service worked with Camden Black History Group, Grass Roots Arts, Black Owned London, The Apex Project and Talacre Playcentre to produce the Homecoming event. The Windrush programme attracted an audience of over 2500. Funding has been secured from Local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for two years which comes to an end in 2026. After this additional funding will need to be secured in order to make it sustainable.

3.5 **Pride On The Square** - The London Pride organisers had historically worked with the service over the last few years to curate the Family Zone in St Giles Garden. However, this year the organisers made the decision to move the Family Zone to another London location. As a result of this the service delivered a family zone programme, in collaboration with Almacantar and Central District Alliance, in St Giles Square on Saturday 29 June to compliment the London Pride celebrations. Gospel Oak based Mother Canteen were invited to curate a Queer Arts and Cultural Market and programme which included a mixture of queer makers/artists a large collage of chainmail and collaborative artworks and pop-up performances. The event was designed to be lowkey and a 'quiet space' against the backdrop of the wider Pride March and attracted an audience of up to 1000 throughout the day.

3.6 **Beyond The Bassline: 500 Years of Black British Music** – Was a new exhibition at the British Library which took place from April – August 2023 and was a musical journey of the Black diaspora in the UK. As part of the Living Knowledge Network (a UK wide partnership of national and public libraries), Camden Libraries hosted local exhibitions, and the culture service curated three events across June and July to complement the exhibition. This included:

- **Holborn Library:** Gary Crosby's Mingus Moves, a sextet featuring Gary Crosby on Bass and chat performing some of the music of Charles Mingus, curated by Tomorrows Warriors who started out at the Jazz Café 27 years ago
- **Pancras Square Library:** Can you See The Bassline? A discussion exploring the impact of Black Music on multicultural UK which was chaired by Erica McCoy – Disc Jockey (DJ), Producer and Radio Host, with panellists Buskin from Heartless Crew, Titania Altius – Head of Membership at Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL) Music Licensing and Aniefiok 'Neef' Ekpoudom – author of 'Where We Come From: Rap Home and Hope in Modern Britain is a social history of British Rap. There were also performances from young people from the Apex Project.
- **Kilburn Library:** Kilburn based Lin Kam Art delivered 'The Future of Sound System Culture' a workshop which explored the future of sound system culture through the intersection of community, creativity, and innovation all set against the backdrop of Kilburn's vibrant musical history rooted in Black music.

3.7 **South Asian Heritage Month** - The programme took place from the 18 July – 17 August. The theme this year was 'Free To Be Me' which was marked through a partnership with the Old Diorama Arts Centre and Remix Dance to present a programme of South Asian Dance within the annual Regents Roots

Festival on Saturday 3 August which was attended by an audience of 1000 throughout the day. Three community dance projects showed the mix, the range, the styles and the representation of South Asian Heritage through dance, the programme included:

- ‘Place Where We Live: A Dance Theatre Celebration of Home’ saw the return of Anusha Subramanyam & Prathap Ramachandra collaborating with local residents;
- Absolute Bollywood choreograph Remix Dance for a high-energy fusion set; and
- Birmingham-based Sonia Sabri Company worked with local families and renowned Euston dance theatre The Place to create a short version of their well renowned piece, Mughal Miniatures.
- Provided support to the Camden Mela and Henna Womens Group programmes.

**3.8 Representing Bloomsbury Toolkit Launch** - As part of the Representing Bloomsbury project the Culture Service wrote a toolkit, a comprehensive guide covering all aspects of developing and delivering projects which address the interpretation of statues and memorials to assist colleagues across the sector. The council is sector-leading in this approach and took the opportunity to officially launch the toolkit in July at the Building Centre, attended by an audience of 37 from sector partners. The toolkit has been shared across the UK, to other local authorities, the Greater London Authority (GLA), Arts Council England, English Heritage, Historic England, Heritage of London Trust, Chief Cultural & Leisure Officers Association and the Local Government Association. In October 2024 the GLA Culture, Creative Industries & 24 Hour Unit attended a peer-learning visit with representatives from City Culture teams around Europe where they shared the Toolkit to the group.

**3.9 Inverness Street Bloc Party** – Developed to celebrate the boroughs heritage and the legacy of Claudia Jones who organised the first Caribbean carnival at St Pancras Town Hall in 1950, the block party brings together Camden’s local community for a free day of music and entertainment, food and fashion in the heart of Camden Town. This year saw the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UK House and Garage, a genre which has grown out of the Windrush generation through Reggae and Jungle. Camden played a huge role in the development of the UK House and Garage movement; Ms Dynamite one of the queens of Garage hails from Kentish Town, whilst Camden Palais (now Koko) promoted House and Garage artists during the 1990’s. This year the Inverness Street Bloc Party was a celebration of 30 years of UK House and Garage and the role the borough has played in developing the genre. The culture service commissioned BBC 1xtra and north London based Heartless Crew, one of the pioneers and leading musical acts in the UK House and Garage scene to curate this year’s event. The event ran from 12-7pm and featured

performances from Shelly Nelson and Elisabeth Troy, along with DJ sets from Martin Lerner and Heartless Crew. Despite the adverse weather conditions, the event attracted an audience of over 1000 throughout the day.

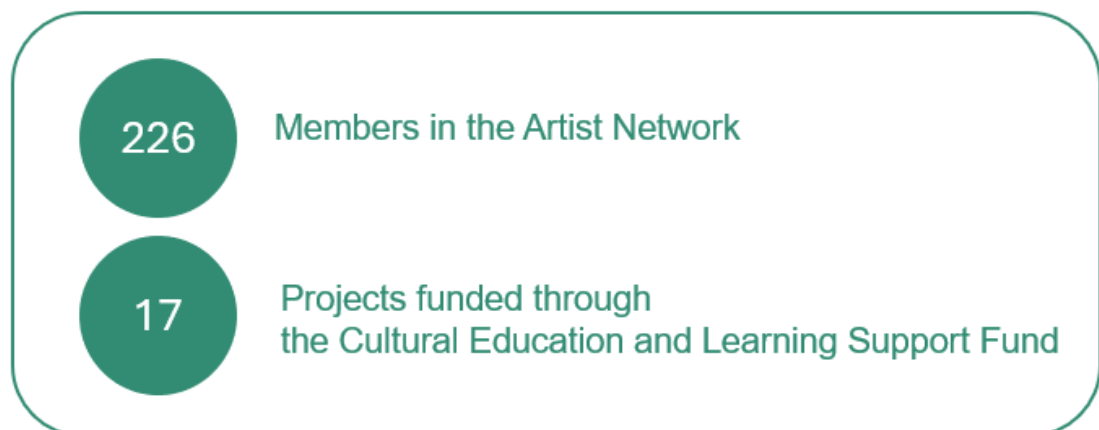
- 3.10 **Love Camden Amplify**- curated to celebrate the Paralympic Games, the Culture Service worked in partnership with the Sport Service, London Inclusive Sports Academy (LISA), and GLL. This took place at Swiss Cottage Open Space on 1<sup>st</sup> September and showcased young people from I Can Dance, interactive workshops from Be The Band and a variety of sports - boccia, Walking Football, Boxing pad work and games. The event attracted an audience of 250, most of which were families.
  
- 3.11 **Black History Season - 2024** built on the quality and breadth of 2023 programme with artistic interventions from the borough's black artists as well as artists across London. A strong film programme has emerged, partnering with Garden Cinema, Everyman Cinema KX, Labtech Curzon Cinema and Film Africa. A cross council working group have steered the programme and we have worked with cultural, commercial and Community Voluntary Sector (CVS) organisations on developing the programme. In total there are 40 events across the season with the majority being delivered by the council in partnership with cultural organisations. Key academic cultural and commercial organisations such as SOAS, British Museum, Samsung KX, Coal Drops Yard and Labtech, Everyman Cinema and Garden Cinema have collaborated with the council to provide spaces for artists to platform their work. The programme includes a range of talks, Black history walks, supper clubs, Explore Africa workshops in libraries and a host of high profile artists/lecturers which include Olivette Otele, Mykaell Riley, MC Buskin, Eddie Kadi and Kabaka Pyramid.
  
- 3.12 The season launch took place on Friday 4 October at Coal Drops Yard and Samsung KX in Partnership with Black Owned London and their second BOLOFest. This year the programme has teamed up with the Black Curriculum as charity partner, donating income from events to support Black futures. To date the programme has raised just over £1800 and attracted an audience of over 9600 (9000 was for BOLOFest).
  
- 3.13 **Swiss Cottage Gallery** - The service host up to six exhibitions a year at Swiss Cottage Gallery, situated on the first floor in Swiss Cottage Library. The programme ranges from solo to group exhibitions by artists and arts organisations who live or work in the borough and attract around 5,500 visits a year.

#### 4. **Sector Support**

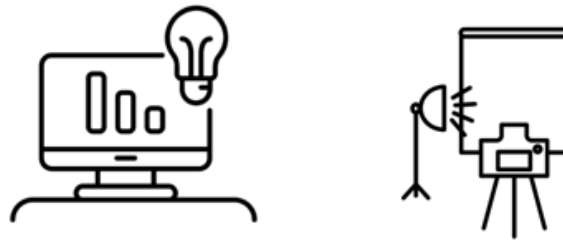
- 4.1 The Cultural Education and Learning Support Fund was established in 2023 following the announcement from Arts Council England on their investment

programme (which saw the redistribution of funding outside of London), along with the cost-of-living crisis, which both had an impact on the culture sector. This funding programme enabled local arts and cultural organisations to deliver free learning programmes for children and young people in the borough. To date 17 projects have been funded in rounds one and two with four completed across both rounds. The final round launches on the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025 with grant announcement confirmed in March 2025. In total £199, 785 has been allocated across both rounds with £100, 215 available for round 3.

- 4.2 The Artist Network currently has a membership base of 226. Two networking meetings have taken place this year with a third planned for December, it is an opportunity for grass roots artists to connect and collaborate.
- 4.3 The Culture Service and Euston Regeneration Team are working in collaboration with Bow Arts to provide affordable creative workspaces in Regents Park Estate for artists, designers, and makers, with a specific focus on offering affordable workspace to existing residents. Due to the construction disruption caused by the High Speed 2 (HS2) rail project, residents in Cartmel, Coniston and Langdale were moved to homes away from the site. This presented an opportunity to use the vacant blocks in a different way, leading to the creation of creative workspace. Currently 74% of artists who have a studio/creative workspace either live or work in Camden.



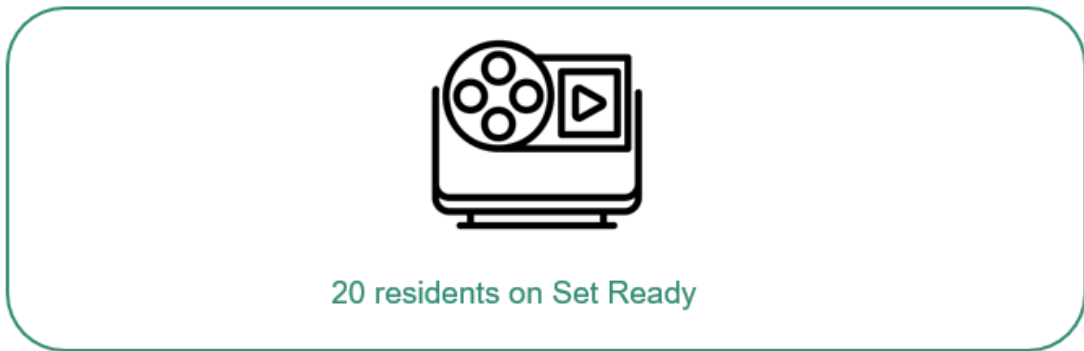




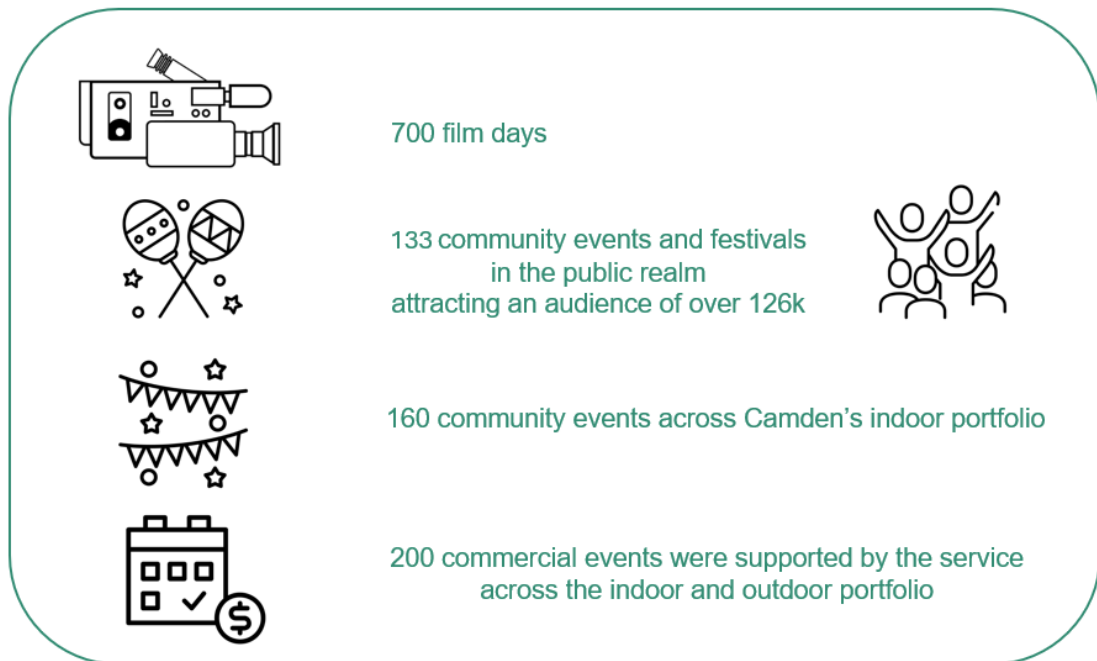
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## 5. Youth Engagement and Pathways to Employment and Training

- 5.1 The Camden Spark Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM)work experience took place in between 8 – 12 July. The Culture Service supported Camden Spark to provide 23 Year 12 students with the opportunity to participate in workplace activities at Universal Music, The Roundhouse, Celebro Media, London Film School, ATG Phoenix and the October Gallery. Feedback was positive with 59% of students feeling more confident about entering the world of work having completed work experience.
- 5.2 Set Ready is a Film Fixer initiative where they leverage their position as Camden’s film service provider to secure paid work placements on shoots in the borough. The course is entirely free and provides entry-level opportunities to those aged 19 - 54 who want to get into the film industry. The course ran twice in 2024 with 20 Camden residents participating.
- 5.3 The Culture Service have appointed two apprentices to provide business support to the events and arts services. Both apprentices are born and raised Camden residents are between 19–25 year-olds. This is their first step into the local government arts and culture sector; and are positively contributing to the delivery of the cultural programmes and administration of the service.



## 6. Filming and Event Management



6.1 Film Fixer lead the film service on behalf of the council. Following on from the impact of the writers strikes on filming, Camden has continued to be one of the busiest boroughs in London in 2024 with 700 shoot days. The borough hosted key shoots such as the new Bridget Jones sequel that filmed across

Hampstead in Vale of Health and Haverstock Hill, Apple TV series *Slow Horses* featuring Gary Oldman using such locations as Red Lion Square, Chalcot Crescent in Primrose Hill, Lincoln's Inn Fields and Kentish Town and hosted 10 commercials and 10 stills shoots for brands like Dominos Pizza, Knight Frank, Costa, National Express, Disney, NME, Abercrombie & Fitch, Asda, Jo Malone and others.

- 6.2 Film Fixer lead the Generator Project, highlighting research and recommendations for a more sustainable and eco-friendly approach for the Filming and Events industry. They have secured funding from the Mayors Air Quality Fund for three years of funding to carry out 40 site visits and emissions reports. Five visits on shoots in Hampstead High Street, Flask Walk Lincolns Inn Fields, Maresfield Gardens and Malet Street have been carried out to date. Film Fixer are working on converting these into final reports with Sustainable Film, a leading sustainability consultant which will provide recommendations to large-scale productions on how they can reduce air pollution.
- 6.3 The service has continued to support community events whilst attracting commercial clients to the borough which include the Devil Wears Prada red carpet event at the Dominion Theatre. Over the year they supported 133 community events and festivals in the public realm, attracting an audience of over 126k as well as facilitating 160 community events across Camden's indoor portfolio. A total of 200 commercial events were supported by the service across the indoor and outdoor portfolio.

## **7. Community Engagement**

- 7.1 Ten Love Camden Advisors were recruited in May 2024 from resident communities as a forum to help shape and develop the cultural offer of the borough. They supported with the consultation of the cultural strategy and the delivery of various Love Camden cultural programmes. All members live in the borough and represent the following neighbourhoods: Highgate, Tufnell Park, Kentish Town, Chalk Farm, Kilburn, Somers Town, Euston, Regents Park, Holborn and Covent Garden, King's Cross, Bloomsbury.
- 7.2 The community festivals grants programme awarded 67 grants to community organisations to deliver festivals in their neighbourhoods between April – December. These include, Camden People's Theatre: Tolmer's Square Variety Spectacular in Regents Park, Kindle Corner: South Asian Heritage Storytelling for all in St Pancras & Somerstown and York Rise Street Party: Highgate
- 7.3 In 2024 the Culture Service engaged with:



10 Love Camden Advisors recruited



67 grants to community organisations



21300 participants in cultural experiences



280 paid opportunities for local artists  
and the creative sector

- 7.4 Key feedback from the community was the need to have more activities in the public realm which bring communities together to celebrate and connect over shared and new experiences. This is demonstrated through the following quotes captured throughout the Love Camden Cultural Programme:

*'Amazing! Every year please. Organisers were brilliant! Give us more events like this! Intergenerational music/outdoors' Resident - Windrush Homecoming Event*

*'Thank you @lovecamden for putting on this beautiful and social community event! #Lightupkilburn. This is the first time in 3.5 years that I felt a sense of community and warmth while living in the neighbourhood. We really need more of this PLEASE @CamdenCouncil' Resident via X – Light Up Kilburn*

*'I feel so special to have Hartless Crew at this free event in my borough on my birthday' – Resident – Inverness Street Bloc Party*

*'I'm very pleased to report that the Camden Black History Season was a success. The events during the season provided a very powerful platform to celebrate the rich history and cultural heritage of Camden's Black Community – Love Camden Advisor*

*'The Culture Service has significantly advanced opportunities for residents and local businesses in Camden. Through their support, Grassroots—a Black female-led organisation founded by Camden residents—has*

*successfully engaged with a wide range of creatives aged 16 and above, across various stages of their journeys’ – Grassroots Arts CIC*

*‘I learnt a lot about how the industry works, the structure and roles within a set, how to be a freelancer more effectively. I think it made the industry seem more accessible’ – Set Ready participant*

*‘I’m proud to be a Love Camden advisor because it enables me to have a say on the cultural strategy in my borough. I can see slowly but surely more opportunities are being presented to Camden residents to put their stamp on the cultural offer that happens in the borough’ – Love Camden Advisor*

## **8. Development Of A New Cultural Strategy**

- 8.1 The existing Cultural Framework was developed in 2019 and expires in 2025. This has created the opportunity to develop a new 5-year Cultural Strategy for the borough to cover the period of 2026-2031. From July – November 2024 the service undertook an extensive consultation programme with residents, cultural organisations/partners, schools, higher education, knowledge quarter partners, representatives from the Business Improvement Districts, young people, the Disability Oversight Panel, colleagues across the council and via an online survey. The combination of engagement has generated over 300 responses which have contributed to shaping the strategy, the vision and ambitions.
- 8.2 Three emerging themes of Creative Growth, People and Place and Learning and Pathways are emerging with Social Justice, Creative Health and Climate Action as the golden threads. From the consultation feedback, the service are confident that the new strategy will:
- Create a shared vision and a set of shared priorities for culture in the borough.
  - Reflect the needs, interests and aspirations of the sector and the borough’s residents and communities.
  - Seize the opportunity to link cultural activity and programmes with other borough strategies (We Make Camden, Evening & Night-time Economy strategy (ENTE), Strategy for Diversity in the Public Realm (SDPR), Camden Future High Streets and the three renewal missions – Diversity, Estates and Young People)
  - Build on and diversify the existing cultural offer in the borough.
  - Be a live document that is reviewed annually (featured in the Cabinet Member Portfolio annual report)
- 8.3 Work is now underway to draft the Cultural Strategy with a first draft published in February which will provide further opportunity for residents, partners, stakeholders, Council Officers and Councillors to give feedback, comments and input to the strategy development. A final version will be prepared for consideration by Cabinet at its meeting in September 2025.

## **9. 2025 Cultural Programme**

9.1 The 2025 programme will see the service continue to work with partners and residents to create high quality cultural experiences which bring communities together. In line with We Make Camden and the Strategy for Diversity in the Public Realm we plan to deliver the following activities which realise this ambition:

- The final round of The Cultural Education and Learning Support Fund and the annual Community Festival Grants. Both open in January 2025 and provide opportunities for residents and the culture sector to deliver cultural programmes within their communities
- Spark STEAM work experience and Set Ready Training, providing more opportunities to support and guide young people on careers in the creative and cultural sector
- An application to the National Heritage Lottery Fund for Representing Camden to continue review and interpretation of statues in the public realm across the borough
- Two permanent public artworks to celebrate the contributions of the Windrush and Bangladeshi communities
- The Camden Town 12-month trial pedestrianisation programme will place culture at its heart, activations which celebrate Camden's rich history, stories, and grassroots culture, bringing its unique character to life across the year.
- The Love Camden Cultural programme of events which include Lesbian Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT+) History Month, Windrush, Pride, South Asian Heritage Month, Black History Season and curation of the Swiss Cottage Art Gallery.

## **10. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services**

10.1 The report provides an update on the 2024 cultural programme and sets out the key priorities for the 2025 Cultural Programme for the communities in Camden.

10.2 The funding of £300k as agreed by Cabinet for the Cultural Education and Learning Support Fund set out in section 5 has been identified and is available for drawdown when required.

**11. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor**

11.1 Legal Services have been consulted and their comments are incorporated

**12. Environmental Implications**

12.1 There are no environmental impacts arising directly from this report.

**REPORT ENDS**