

Title: Neighbourhood working update – Housing and Communities Team

Information/Discussion Report – Information

Recommendations: The DMC is asked to note the report.

Report Summary: This report provides a summary update on the development of Neighbourhood working in Housing and Community Teams in Camden.

1. Background

1.1 Neighbourhood working is about getting Camden teams and staff to work closer together across teams while focused on resident issues.

1.2 Currently many of our services demonstrate ‘siloes’ team structures where teams from different departments struggle to collaborate. This leads to a number of challenges:

- **Residents often experience issues that do not fit neatly into the remit or one team**, and local services are not always collaborating with each other. Consequently, residents can feel like they are passed from service to service or must navigate multiple contacts before seeing their issue resolved.
- **Effective joined up working happens in some but not all parts of the system**, leading to an inconsistent experience of care.
- **Services are not always connected to local networks**, meaning opportunities are missed to connect people to the wider offer of community-based support.
- **Services are not always present or visible in communities**, meaning our residents are unaware or unable to access support or don’t build strong relationships.

1.3 In response to the challenges outlined above, and building on the thinking that has developed over the last few years, the Neighbourhoods programme was launched in 2023. Our vision for neighbourhoods is that:

In Camden, people and place lead the way.

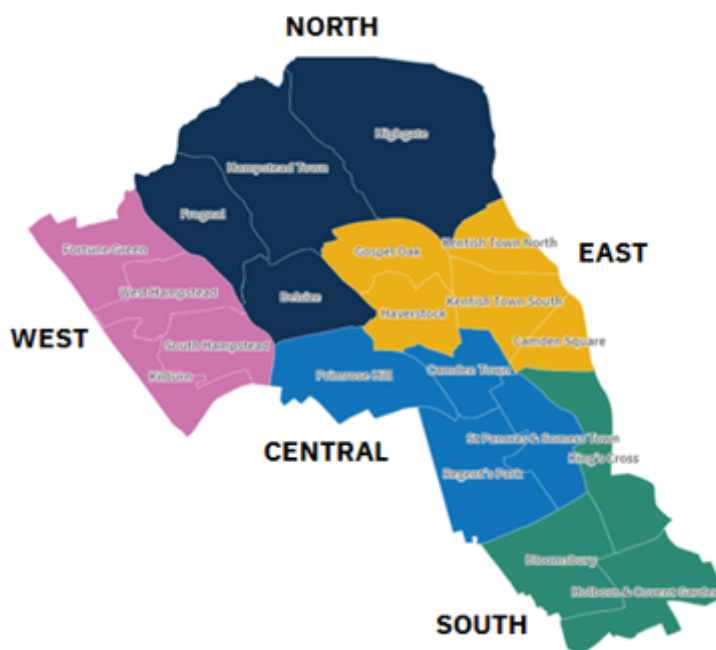
We are accessible to people where they live and want everyone to be empowered to live a good life.

Our services are local, connected and built on relationships, enabling people to find solutions.

Neighbourhoods is our opportunity to reimagine services as a fundamental part of local communities, organised around the issues and places that matter to people

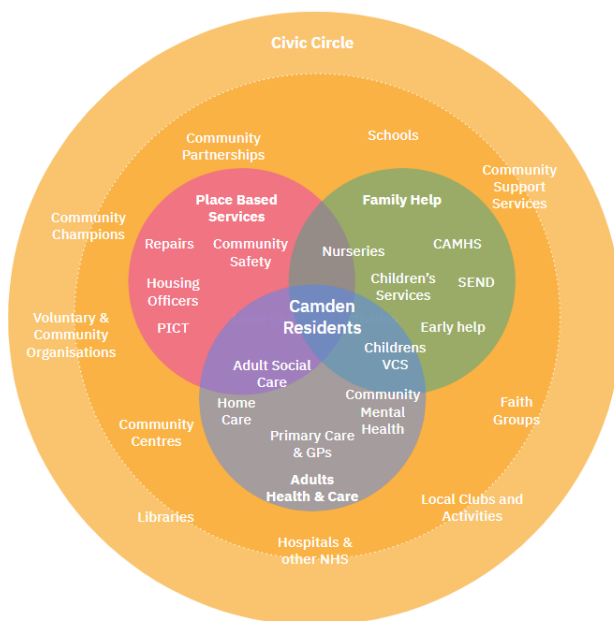
2. Our Neighbourhood 'Clusters'

2.1 To deliver a model fit for Camden, we have established five commonly understood geographical neighbourhoods (North, East, West, Central, South).



2.2 Within these five geographical neighbourhoods, our ambition is to establish themed 'clusters' of services that represent existing services and support who already have relationships to some extent and tend to support similar cohorts of people and teams.

- **Housing and Communities** typically council services that tend to support people with social housing needs (including neighbourhood housing, community safety, repairs, estates management).
- **Health and social care**, a mix of NHS and council services who support adults with additional health and social care needs (including GPs, adult social care, NHS community health, and NHS mental health services, social prescribing, and commissioned homecare and drug and alcohol services).
- **Family help**, a mix of council and NHS services who tend to support children and families with additional health and social needs (including NHS health visiting, school health, GPs, CAMHS, Children's Services, SEND, early help, nurseries).
- **Civic organisations**, the backbone of neighbourhoods who provide often universal services and additional support for those who might be lonely or have a greater level of need (including VCS, libraries, hospitals, faith groups, schools, community support, community champions etc).



2.3 The first phase of growing a Housing and Communities Neighbourhood Team began at Holmes Road Depot, bringing together team members such as Housing Officers, Community Safety Officers, Caretakers, and Estate Managers who service the Kentish Town areas. There are three main components of this team building:

- **Developing new collaborative rhythms and rituals.** We facilitate three new meetings – a Monday managers meeting, a weekly multi-disciplinary team meeting, and fortnightly sharing sessions with other parts of the council or external organisations.
- **Co-location and team building activities.** We have created an expectation that team members across the services all sit together two days a week. We ran a team ‘away day’ to launch the project, and run regular retros with the teams.
- **A flexible, delegated budget.** The team have access to a flexible budget that enables them to respond quickly to issues they see on the ground. Spending decisions are proposed by the team and made collectively by the managers.

2.4 We have also developed a weekly Members’ Enquiry surgery, collaboration with Social Prescribers/ local organisations who support our residents.

2.5 Throughout the team pilot at Holmes Road, we have used a ‘test and learn’ methodology to try out new working practices, learn and iterate based on what works and what has had less impact.

2.6 We have recently expanded our geographical reach, moving beyond the initial pilot area covering two Kentish Town wards to all three wards in the east.

3. What’s next for Neighbourhoods?

3.1 We are continuing to grow and bed in the Neighbourhood working model across Housing and Community teams working in the East but are looking at growing the model to a new location in another Camden neighbourhood. The location of the next neighbourhood team, and the timeline for establishing it is still under discussion.

Report Ends