A CLEANER, GREENER, SAFER CAMDEN

Camden Conservatives
Local election manifesto
3rd May 2018

Delivered at no cost to taxpayers
On 3rd May, local residents go to the polls to elect your local councillors and you get to decide who stands up for you.

Camden is a wonderfully diverse and open community: cosmopolitan, vibrant, and forward-looking. We also cherish our past, our cultural heritage, and our history. It is this combination that makes Camden such a unique borough.

Camden Conservatives reflect that diversity, with citizens of twelve different countries serving as councillors and standing as candidates: from France to Finland, and Bangladesh to Jamaica.

For me — as a British-Italian man who grew up in the US and has lived in Italy, France, and Luxembourg — choosing to move to Camden over 20 years ago was a surprisingly simple decision. Few other places across the world can match our borough’s culture and character.

But for all our borough’s great wonders, Camden faces serious challenges that it needs strong local councillors to confront.

On 3rd May, you can vote on local services: from local green spaces to Council Tax

On 3rd May, you can vote on bin collections: whether to continue with Labour’s cuts in bin collections to once a fortnight — with rising fly-tipping and rat infestations — or restore weekly collections for all residents.

On 3rd May, you can vote on the safety of our streets: whether to continue to let crime rise locally or put more police on our streets and tackle moped muggings.

On 3rd May, you can vote on our environment: whether to continue Labour’s half-measures on pollution or to install electric car charging points, plant more trees, and open new green spaces.

On 3rd May, you can vote on the quality of housing repairs, the condition of our roads, the running of our schools, the provision of parking, the amount of Council Tax you pay, and more.

Your vote — your most precious weapon in a democracy — will decide the direction Camden Council will moves in and how.

You may choose to vote out of lifelong loyalty to a particular party. You may choose to cast a protest vote on national issues.

But when the votes are counted and your local councillors elected, your vote will decide one thing: the Council and all the services it provides, such as bin collections, housing, school places, planning, and parking, as well as Council Tax.

OUR PLAN FOR A CLEANER, GREENER, SAFER CAMDEN

Since 2014, Camden Conservatives have been the only opposition in Camden: holding Labour to account and giving a voice to local residents.

Camden needs a strong opposition

Since 2014, Camden Conservatives have been the only opposition in Camden: holding Labour to account, and giving you a voice.

We have relentlessly stood up for you by questioning the ruling Labour administration’s decisions where they were wrong, supporting them where they were right, objecting when we had to, and always challenging assumptions, questioning narratives, and offering alternatives. This has led to countless improvements in Camden policy.
We have supported you over planning applications, school places, housing issues, transport, crime, and — of course — the constant problems caused by the Council’s bin collections.

**Camden needs a strong opposition**

This track record can’t be taken for granted. A recent Camden New Journal front page warned that these elections risk Camden becoming a ‘one-party state’ and Labour ‘running riot’.

It is vital in a thriving local democracy that there are multiple voices raised to enrich debate and different perspectives offered to inform the decisions the Council takes.

“This can’t be achieved in a one-party state. This can be achieved only by ensuring a strong Conservative presence on Camden Council.”

This can’t be achieved in a one-party state. This can be achieved only by ensuring a strong Conservative presence on Camden Council.

We know you can’t just offer us your support because of who we’re not, but rather who we are and what we will do for you.

**Camden Conservatives’ plan for a cleaner, greener, safer Camden**

That’s why it’s important we have a plan — the only alternative to Labour’s mismanagement of our borough — to make residents’ lives better.

- We will make Camden cleaner by **restoring weekly bin collections**, imposing proper fines for fly-tipping, and reversing the fall in recycling.
- We will make Camden greener by **installing electric car charging points**, opening new green spaces, and planting more trees.
- We will make Camden safer by **hiring 18 extra police officers**, opening a new police base in NW3, and tackling moped muggings.
- We will provide more good and outstanding school places, oppose over-development, protect and assist local pubs, combat social isolation and dementia, and underwrite private tenants’ rent deposits.
- And we will do all this while **freezing Council Tax** and cutting waste, not front-line services.

**Help us to provide an alternative**

So on 3rd May, we ask you to give us your support, and to help us so that together we can make a greener, cleaner, safer Camden.

Your local Conservative team has spoken to residents from Hampstead to Holborn. But they need your help. If you can help deliver leaflets or knock on doors, donate your time or donate your money, contact us by the details below.

**This manifesto is our plan for a cleaner, greener, safer Camden and our plan to provide a strong opposition, so that Camden Council works for you.**

Cllr Gio Spinella  
Leader of the Opposition  
London Borough of Camden

---

**Get involved**

The policies in this manifesto can’t be delivered without your help to elect Conservative councillors on 3rd May. To get involved, please contact us:

Camden Conservatives, 1A Heath Hurst Road, Hampstead, NW3 2RU  
**T** 020 7794 5679  
**E** agent@camdenconservatives.com  
www.camdenconservatives.com
Since Labour cut many residents’ bin collections to once a fortnight last April, residents across Camden have reported a significant increase in the amount of rubbish on our borough’s streets. Camden’s own statistics show a doubling of fly-tipping and a six-fold increase of littering.

Camden Conservatives fought tooth and nail against these changes, but Labour sadly pushed them through with the Lib Dems’ agreement. This was despite Labour pledging in their manifesto to retain weekly bin collections for all residents.

Meanwhile, recycling has fallen by a fifth since 2010, reports of vermin have risen, and our streets are dirtier than ever. We are committed to restoring weekly bin collections, tackling fly-tipping and littering, increasing recycling, and making Camden a cleaner borough.

**Restoring weekly bin collections**

Labour cutting waste collections to once a fortnight saved just £3 per resident a year — one-thousandth of Camden’s budget — but has led to dirty streets, more vermin, fly-tipping, and inconvenience. We will reverse this cut.

Regular bin collections are a basic service, with bins in neighbouring Conservative-run Westminster being collected at least twice a week. With our less frequent bin collections, Camden has 2½ times the number of rat infestations that Westminster does.

Moreover, collections were reduced only for homes north of Camden Town: creating an unfair divide in the borough that many have called politically-motivated. Camden Conservatives will end this divide and restore weekly waste collections for all residents to clean up our streets.

**Scraping the Garden Tax**

We will also end the £75-a-year Garden Tax and restore free collection of green waste. The charge has increased fly-tipping and reduced recycling. Moreover, fewer residents have signed up to this paid-for service than had been forecast, meaning charging for it barely raises more than it costs.

**Tackling fly-tipping and littering**

Camden Conservatives will also tackle fly-tipping and littering to keep streets clean. Camden Council imposes lower fines than almost any other London borough and didn’t prosecute anybody for fly-tipping last year.

Labour initially didn’t want to impose any on-the-spot fines at all, but were forced to by Camden Conservatives. We will double fines for fly-tipping to £400, as is the case in most boroughs.

We will also use new powers to double fines for littering to £150. To aid enforcement, we will use powers to fine vehicle owners for littering from their vehicle: a power that no Labour borough uses.

**Cleaning up our streets**

Camden Conservatives will ensure that all streets are cleaned at least once a week and will back the return of regular street sweeping.

---

“The Camden New Journal dubbed me their ‘Chief Investigative Photographer’ for documenting the rise in fly-tipping since Labour cut bin collections. In the last year, fly-tipping has doubled and littering has risen six-fold. That is unacceptable.”

Frognal & Fitzjohns candidate Henry Newman has been campaigning against fly-tipping.
We will empty heavily-used public bins more frequently to stop them overflowing. We will also install more public recycling bins to encourage recycling of street waste.

We will put more dog waste bins on well-known dog walking routes, including near Hampstead Heath and Primrose Hill, and provide dog bags to residents.

**Making it easier to recycle**

We will support recycling and increase Camden’s recycling rate. Despite claims that slashing bin collections would raise recycling, the proportion of waste recycled is lower now than it was in 2014. Barely a quarter of Camden’s household waste is recycled: 20% lower than in 2010, when Camden Conservatives last ran the borough’s waste service (and bins were collected twice a week!).

Camden Conservatives will lead the country in making it easier to recycle. We will introduce a plastic bottle deposit scheme and look into other innovative recycling ideas, such as the coffee cup collection scheme promoted by charities such as Hubbub.

Helping residents to recycle will make a bigger difference than cutting collections. We will provide better information on what can be recycled, focusing on items that are under-recycled.

We will also focus on increasing recycling on Camden’s own housing estates, which have by far the lowest recycling rates in Camden.

We will open Regis Road recycling centre into the evening to allow people to recycle large items more easily. We will also continue and raise awareness of Camden’s large item collection service, which is under-utilised.

---

“The last year, I presented a petition of over 2,000 signatures to Camden Council, calling for bin collections to be restored to once a week. I’ve lived in West Hampstead for 20 years, and I’ve never seen the rubbish and rat situation as bad as it is now.”

West Hampstead candidate **David Brescia** is the Secretary of the West Hampstead Neighbourhood Development Forum

---

_The Conservative plan for a cleaner Camden_

- We will **restore free weekly bin collections for all residents across Camden**.
- We will **scrap the £75 Garden Tax** and make garden waste collections free once more.
- We will **increase fines for fly-tipping** to £400, in line with other boroughs, and increase fines for littering to £150. We will impose fines on people littering from vehicles.
- We will **introduce a plastic bottle deposit scheme** to reduce plastic waste, and explore other innovative ideas to promote recycling.
- We will **raise Camden’s recycling rate** by promoting recycling on estates, improving information on what can be recycled, and introducing new public recycling bins
- We will **help recycling of large items** by opening Camden’s recycling centre for longer.

---

“Rising fly-tipping has turned many streets into obstacle courses. I made a speech to the Council that forced Camden to introduce fines for fly-tipping. But these fines are still among the lowest in London — Camden must stop being a soft touch.”

Regent’s Park candidate **Chantelle De Villiers** made a deputation to Camden Council about fly-tipping
Living in the heart of a global city comes with amazing opportunities. It also comes with the difficulties of pollution and a lack of green spaces. Two of the five most polluted wards in the country are in Camden and that is just not good enough.

Camden Conservatives are committed to making Camden the greenest borough in London: raising air quality, opening green spaces, planting more trees, and improving biodiversity.

That’s why Camden Conservatives voted to adopt the World Health Organisation’s high standards for air quality. It’s why every Conservative councillor backs the London National Park City project. And it’s why we support going further.

**Opening more green spaces**

Camden is defined by its magnificent green spaces: from the wilds of Hampstead Heath to the garden squares of Bloomsbury. We will preserve these great green spaces and also embed greenery into every community.

Conservative councillors will work to open small ‘pocket parks’ that can provide lungs for local communities. Already, we’re working to open two pocket parks in Hampstead Village at Oriel Place and Boades Mews, and one at South End Green.

**Preserving our trees and planting more**

Camden Conservatives will plant hundreds of new trees on streets across the borough. This will be focused on places — such as in Swiss Cottage and West Hampstead — with wide pavements.

Camden is losing its trees through development, and that must stop. We will require developers to conduct a biodiversity analysis before felling trees and require all developments that lead to trees being felled to involve at least as many new trees being planted, so that no trees are lost overall.

We will protect our trees by placing Tree Preservation Orders on all ancient trees and most veteran trees. We will ensure that tree pollarding considers each tree’s unique characteristics.

**Supporting electric cars**

Camden Conservatives will support the shift to electric cars by discreetly installing thousands of electric vehicle charging points in lamp posts across Camden, as in Conservative-run Wandsworth and Richmond.

The Government pays for 75% of the cost of these charging points. Despite electric cars emitting no carbon dioxide, no nitrogen oxide, and releasing 50% less PM10 pollution than petrol cars, Camden is installing just 33 charging points.

We will bid for funding to install 2,000 in lamp posts across the borough. This will affordably make ordinary residents’ parking bays electric car-enabled without any loss of residents’ parking spaces and without any additional street clutter.

**Promoting cycling**

We will work to extend TfL Santander Cycle docks to Primrose Hill, Belsize Park, Swiss Cottage, South Hampstead, and West Hampstead.

We will help to protect bikes from theft by underwriting a borough-wide bicycle insurance scheme. We will work with cycling campaigns to hold more bicycle health-check drop-ins.

We will hold a consultation on the need for bike parking spaces or drop off points for increasingly-popular bike sharing services — such as Mobike and Ofo — to balance the convenience of the new services with the need to keep pavements clear.

Cycling infrastructure needs to improve, but it must also be fit for purpose. CS11 will halve Finchley Road’s capacity and inundate nearby residential streets with cars: making them more dangerous for cyclists, especially children cycling to school. We will thus continue to oppose CS11 and back more local cycling quietways instead.

“Labour often talk the talk on the environment, but fail to walk the walk. The government has offered to pay three-quarters of the cost of installing electric car charging points, and Labour’s refusal to take up this offer speaks volumes.”

Hampstead Town councillor Oliver Cooper launched a petition and campaign to install more electric car charging points.
Protecting local biodiversity

Camden Conservatives will protect and increase biodiversity. We will plant hedgerows next to fences on council land and amend planning guidelines to encourage new developments to integrate hedges, too. We will plant wild flowers in green spaces where possible.

We will end the use of glyphosate-based chemical weed-killers in Camden’s green spaces. We will sweep leaves instead of using leaf-blowers to protect small animals. We will look to restrict the use of private leaf-blowers to specific times to protect biodiversity and neighbourhood tranquillity.

Camden is home to the last two habitats for hedgehogs in inner London. We will help hedgehogs to return to green spaces and gardens where possible. We will continue to support the ban on fox hunting.

Reducing exhaust fumes

Camden Conservatives will work with TfL to replace diesel buses with electric or hybrid buses. Just one of London’s 12 ‘Low Emission Bus Zones’ grazes the border of Camden, but we will work with TfL to create one across our borough.

We will replace the Council’s diesel vehicles with electric ones. We will tackle traffic from development and consider the cumulative impact of traffic from several developments. We will impose £80 fines for deliberate engine idling — as in Westminster — in place of Labour’s £20 fines.

We will address school run traffic by working with schools to develop binding school travel plans that encourage going to school by foot, bike, or public transport, and by enforcing parking and engine idling fines more rigorously near schools.

“I helped lead the charge to oppose HS2 — and minimise the impact, including of construction traffic — in Parliament. Construction work can ruin communities, but Camden often considers how to reduce harm too late: hurting our environment.”

Swiss Cottage candidate Kate Fairhurst worked on opposing HS2 and fighting against construction traffic for three years.

The Conservative plan for a greener Camden

- We will open pocket parks across Camden, including three new parks in Hampstead.
- We will plant hundreds of new trees on streets and protect existing trees.
- We will install 2,000 electric car charging points on lamp posts on residential roads to allow people to drive electric cars without any loss of parking spaces.
- We will work to extend TfL cycle hire stations to South Hampstead, West Hampstead, Primrose Hill, and Belsize Park and open a new cycling proficiency centre.
- We will reduce exhaust fumes by backing electric vehicle use, tackling school run traffic, imposing proper fines for engine idling, and creating a Low Emission Bus Zone.
- We will protect local biodiversity, including by ending use of glyphosate weed-killers.

“Bloomsbury’s garden squares make it famous, but they also make it liveable. It’s vital to protect Camden’s parks, but also embed green spaces and micro-parks into all our communities, so everyone has access to high-quality open spaces.”

Bloomsbury candidate Paul Tavares has been a prominent champion of local green spaces.
Camden saw the biggest increase in crime of any London borough last year, so while crime’s fallen nationally, it’s remained high locally. And with the rise of moped crimes — with 25% of London’s moped muggings taking place in Camden — residents feel less safe than ever. That has to change.

Camden Conservatives will put more police on the streets, tackle moped muggings, open a new police contact point in NW3, and tackle anti-social behaviour wherever it’s found. We will take tough steps to tackle domestic violence, the rise in street drugs such as Spice and Black Mamba, and FGM.

**Putting more police on the beat**

Camden Conservatives will hire 18 extra full Metropolitan Police officers, with one additional officer allocated to each of Camden’s wards.

This will be funded through the Met’s ‘Met Patrol Plus’ match-funding scheme. This ‘buy one, get one free’ scheme has already been used in Camden Town and Holborn — as well as in several other boroughs — but we believe that all residents should benefit from it and feel safer. This would cost just £2.50 per resident a year: less than a thousandth of Camden’s budget. Camden Conservatives have proposed hiring new officers in each of the last seven years, but Labour and Lib Dem councillors have voted the proposal down.

**Ending the merger of Camden and Islington borough police**

Many residents feel that the police have become more detached and slower to respond to residents’ concerns. We will restore local accountability and make the police more responsive to Camden’s needs.

That’s why Camden Conservatives will work to end the merger of Camden and Islington’s borough police commands, under which our police are controlled from Islington.

**Tackling moped muggings**

We have been alarmed by the recent rise in muggings using mopeds. Camden Conservatives held a recent public meeting with the Met’s borough commander in Belsize Park to ensure the issue remains top of the police’s agenda.

We will look to using traffic calming measures — such as raised pavement curbs or bollards — in mugging hotspots to discourage thieves. We will explore installing CCTV cameras in hotspots to deter theft of mopeds and muggings using them.

**Opening a new police base in NW3**

Camden Conservatives are working to open a police base in NW3. Hampstead’s Conservative councillors have secured an offer from the Royal Free to open a Met contact point in the hospital. We’re also exploring ways to open new points in Hampstead Village and Swiss Cottage Library.

This will increase police visibility and enable officers to work in the local area, rather than having to return to West Hampstead station to do paperwork or get changed: increasing the time they can spend on the beat.

“As a sitting magistrate and the son of a police officer, I’ve seen first-hand how a visible, local presence can make an enormous difference. Camden has the third-highest crime rate of any London borough, and our plan to hire 18 additional Metropolitan police officers will help tackle this problem.”

Kilburn candidate **Harry Richardson** is a sitting magistrate.
Deterring crime and anti-social behaviour

We will do more to deter criminals: making it clear that our borough is not a soft touch.

We will create a Camden CCTV library — as in Glasgow — which will make it easier to identify and trace criminals and reduce the cost of operating CCTV. This will help victims and small businesses, which have suffered a spate of burglaries in Belsize Village and West Hampstead. We will also work with Tenants & Residents’ Associations to install CCTV cameras in anti-social behaviour hotspots on Camden’s housing estates to keep residents safe. We will also tackle anti-social tenants, and ensure those acting abusively are quickly transferred out of Camden’s housing.

We will support rolling Neighbourhood Watch out across Camden: empowering residents and collecting valuable information about local crime.

We will tackle speeding in residential areas by exploring implementing width restrictions and CCTV on roads where rat-running and speeding are particularly widespread and dangerous.

Combatting domestic violence and FGM

We will help victims of domestic violence by working with local hospitals to track victims that appear at more than one NHS location and advising them of their options.

We will work with experts and campaigners to tackle female genital mutilation and support victims of it.

The Conservative plan for a safer Camden

- We will hire an additional Metropolitan Police officer in every ward in Camden, using the Met Patrol Plus ‘buy one, get one free’ match-funding scheme.

- We will work to end the merger of Camden’s police with Islington’s — under which our police are controlled from Islington — so that local policing reflects local priorities.

- We will tackle moped muggings, including using traffic-calming measures and CCTV.

- We will open a new police base in NW3, with Conservative councillors working on proposals at the Royal Free Hospital, in Hampstead village, and Swiss Cottage Library.

- We will create a CCTV library for the borough and install CCTV at crime hotspots.

- We will make it easier to remove anti-social tenants from Camden-owned properties and work with TRAs to install more CCTV in anti-social behaviour hotspots on estates.

- We will provide further help to victims of domestic violence and FGM.
CONSERVING CAMDEN

Camden’s neighbourhoods are internationally renowned for their beauty and character. Each community has a distinct identity and personality that sets it apart, and Camden Conservatives are committed to preserving each and every one.

We will continue to oppose over-development in all its forms: whether high-rise developments in low-rise areas, ugly developments that are out-of-character of the area, or basement excavations that threaten neighbouring properties.

We will mitigate the impact of development by improving construction management, monitoring basement excavations closely, and clamping down on developers that break the rules.

**Opposing inappropriate developments**

Conservative councillors speak up on behalf of residents against far more planning applications than councillors of other parties. We will continue to oppose developments that harm residents.

We will oppose high-rise developments that dwarf communities, such as the 24-storey 100 Avenue Road tower at Swiss Cottage: for which all Labour councillors backed the construction plan. We will instead push for more housing through terraces, mansion blocks, and mews housing, which can provide equally-high density at much lower heights.

We will also oppose inappropriate basement excavations where they threaten neighbouring properties or impact underground river flows. We will follow Conservative-run Westminster’s lead of introducing a ‘sub squad’ — funded by higher application fees for basements — to police excavations and ensure they do not harm neighbouring properties.

We will oppose most developments that lead to a loss of parking spaces. Camden’s demand that developments be car-free is ideologically motivated and imposes extra demands on parking spaces: causing inconvenience and extra traffic.

**Backing Neighbourhood Plans**

Neighbourhood Plans help to protect what’s best about an area. We will back local residents and Neighbourhood Forums developing plans, including continuing to support the Hampstead Forum and RedFrog (Redington & Frognal).

We will back Conservation Areas by updating out-of-date Conservation Area appraisals, as we have secured for Hampstead and Fitzjohns & Netherhall.

We will make sure that Camden fulfils its legal obligation to take account of Neighbourhood Plans and Conservation Areas and to consult with residents’ groups as statutory consultees.

**Empowering local residents**

We will resume sending letters to residents informing them when a development is proposed next door: a service ended by Labour in 2016 despite proposals having been made at the time to run the service for just 10p per resident per year.

We will reform the planning process so that it works for residents. We will stop planning officers making recommendations to the Planning

“Preserving our communities is absolutely vital, but the planning system is stacked against ordinary residents. That has to change. I use my professional skills as a structural engineer to work with residents to oppose inappropriate proposals.”

Hampstead Town councillor Stephen Stark is a chartered civil/structural engineer and party wall surveyor.
Committee, which are almost always followed and invariably recommend approval.

**Reducing the impact of development**

Camden Conservatives will reduce the harm caused by development by requiring construction management plans sooner, reforming how they are signed off, and giving extra resources to the team overseeing them.

All too often, developers don’t abide by the terms of the agreements they’ve made. We will clamp down on rogue developers that breach demolition, basement, or construction management plans, and penalise them to the full extent of the law.

Residents regularly complain that construction work is taking place at anti-social hours. We will clamp down on work that takes place outside the hours allotted to construction work.

We will devote extra resources to the planning enforcement department to carry out these checks and have them liaise with neighbourhood police teams where the law is violated.

**Restoring our heritage**

We will preserve and restore our heritage for future generations. Conservative councillors have worked with the Heath & Hampstead Society to get Camden to buy new black-and-white heritage tiles to repair and replace broken street signs in Hampstead. We will work to procure more tiles and install these across the north-west of the borough, where they were once commonplace.

---

**The Conservative plan to conserve Camden**

- We will oppose high-rise developments in low-rise areas, and instead support low-rise but high-density mansion blocks, terraces, and mews housing.

- We will mitigate harm caused by development, including seeking tighter construction management plans, limiting hours of work, enforcing the rules more effectively.

- We will introduce a ‘sub squad’ to police basement developments and ensure they do not harm neighbouring properties, funded by the applicants.

- We will reinstate notification letters to neighbours of planning applications.

- We will support Neighbourhood Plans being adopted across Camden and entrench Conservation Areas by updating out-of-date Conservation Area statements.

- We will restore black and white street sign tiles across the north-west of the borough.

- We will reform the Planning Committee to make it work for residents.
FIVE ACHIEVEMENTS OF A STRONG OPPOSITION

The importance of a strong opposition has been demonstrated time and again by the large number of ideas that Camden Conservatives have come up with and forced Labour to adopt. Here are just five of the ideas that Labour have adopted in the last two years alone!

1. INTRODUCING FINES FOR FLY-TIPPING — BUT CAMDEN’S FINES ARE AMONG THE LOWEST IN LONDON
   Camden has introduced fines for fly-tipping after they were demanded by Camden Conservative councillors. Dragged kicking and screaming to introduce them, Labour set the fines at just £200 — half the level in most London boroughs — despite fly-tipping doubling. Camden Conservatives will raise the fines to £400.

2. SAVING £1 MILLION A YEAR BY LETTING OUT UNUSED OFFICES — BUT CAMDEN COULD SAVE MILLIONS MORE
   Camden’s plush new office building at Pancras Square is only half-used. Camden Conservative councillors pushed Labour to let out unused space, saving £1m that can be put into front-line services. But we have identified many more areas of waste that could save millions more to preserve services and reduce taxes.

3. HIRING MORE POLICE IN SOME AREAS — BUT CAMDEN NEEDS TO PROTECT ALL OUR COMMUNITIES
   For eight years, Camden Conservatives have proposed hiring more police officers under the Metropolitan Police’s ‘buy one, get one free’ match-funding scheme. This was voted down each time by Labour. They’ve now made a big deal out of using the same scheme to hire just 4 officers, rather than the 18 they voted down!

4. TEMPERING SUPPORT FOR CS11 — BUT CAMDEN NEEDS TO STOP THIS ILL-DESIGNED PROJECT ALTOGETHER
   Camden Conservatives have campaigned against CS11, which would cause gridlock on Finchley Road and inundate residential streets with traffic. Under this pressure, Camden tempered its previously-enthusiastic support for the scheme, but only using its veto will stop this scheme and save Swiss Cottage.

5. DEPLOYING SUPER-FAST PUBLIC WI-FI — BUT CAMDEN’S POOR COMMERCIAL SERVICES HAVE HELD IT UP
   Camden deployed free super-fast public Wi-Fi around Swiss Cottage, Camden Town, and the West End after it was proposed by Camden Conservatives. But rollout lags behind other boroughs, thanks to the Council’s poor management.
LABOUR’S FIVE BROKEN PROMISES TO CAMDEN

Labour were elected to run Camden Council in 2014, making a number of key pledges in the manifesto they were elected on. So how have they done over the last four years?

**Labour’s promise:** “Build over 6,000 new homes”

**Labour’s record:** Since 2014, construction has started on just 1,720 new homes: less than a third as many.

(Source: Ministry of Housing, Live Table 253a)

**Labour’s promise:** “Maintain weekly recycling and waste collections for all residents”

**Labour’s record:** Labour cut collections for most residents north of Camden Town to just once a fortnight in 2017.

**Labour’s promise:** “Create 1,000 apprenticeships”

**Labour’s record:** The number of apprenticeships rose by just 100 since 2014 and is lower than it was in 2011/12.

(Source: Department for Education FE Data Library)

**Labour’s promise:** “Make Camden the best borough in London for cyclists and pedestrians”

**Labour’s record:** Camden has sunk to having the second-lowest proportion of people cycling regularly in Inner London.

(Source: Department for Transport, Table CW031)

**Labour’s promise:** “Cut council costs and make every pound count”

**Labour’s record:** Camden’s raised Council Tax by one of the largest amounts nationally. It’s up 17% since 2014 and is now £800 higher than Westminster.
Education is the great engine of social mobility. We are committed to making sure our borough has enough good and outstanding school places for every child to get the best start in life. London’s schools now lead the country, and we want Camden’s to do the same.

Sadly, Camden’s top-down approach to education is failing too many of our young people. Of the five secondary schools that Camden runs, Ofsted rates two as requiring improvement and none as outstanding. Camden’s secondaries get the third-worst results of any borough in Inner London, while the two best-performing boroughs in Inner London are Conservative-run.

Improving our schools is a priority for Camden Conservatives, which is why a number of teachers and others experienced in education are standing for election for us. This is our plan to improve education and life opportunities in Camden.

Providing more school places

With the growing population in the borough due to new developments, Camden needs to provide more good state school places. Camden has the second most pupils attending private schools in London: in part, the result of Labour’s failure on school places.

In areas with a shortage of good or outstanding school places, we will support parents that want to set up new schools, rather than deterring them, as Camden has done under Labour.

The seven wards in the north-west of Camden are all among the ten with the greatest forecast need for more primary school places by 2025. Labour blocked the creation of West Hampstead International free school on the outrageous grounds that parents would just go private.

We will back opening a new state primary or all-ages school in West Hampstead to serve West Hampstead, Swiss Cottage, and Hampstead.

Raising school standards

We will work with Camden Learning to raise school standards — especially at Camden’s two struggling secondary schools. We will ensure Camden-run schools benefit from the expertise available at Camden School for Girls and UCL Academy: neither of which is run by the Council.

Computing is an essential subject, but often overlooked in Camden’s schools. We will work with the National Computing Centre to ensure computing and coding are taught in every school. We will also ensure every school has a coding club and reduce the cost of attending existing coding clubs.

We will assist enterprise education across all schools — teaching young people about creative problem-solving, collaboration, and other key business skills — so that our young people have the ‘soft skills’ that employers say they need most.

We will put more money into teacher training and staff development locally by sharing the proceeds of the Apprenticeship Levy — which would have to be returned to central government if, as expected, it goes unspent — with all schools in Camden.

“I switched from tech to teaching because it allows me to empower the next generation. I’m standing because the Conservatives share that ambition and because Camden can’t afford to let down any more young people.”

Swiss Cottage candidate Calvin Robinson is a local Computer Science teacher and former tech entrepreneur.
Increasing options for school-leavers

We will ensure that there are appropriate training opportunities and apprenticeships available for all of our 16-24 year olds to help them to gain the experience needed to find a fulfilling career.

We will organise more work fairs and ensure that more advice is offered to young people leaving education at 16 and 18.

Many Camden pupils are deterred from applying to universities that match their talents — Oxford receives six times as many applicants from UCS alone as from all 5 Camden-run schools combined. We will work with schools to give students the confidence to apply to Russell Group universities.

We recognise that learning doesn’t end at 21. We will work to bring professional schools to Camden and work with business to provide life-long training.

Unleashing every child’s potential

We will hold a root-and-branch review of how our schools serve our worst-off and marginalised families to ensure every child makes the most of his or her potential.

Camden has more pupils eligible for free school meals but not eating them than anywhere in London: leaving £500,000 of free meals uneaten each year, and hurting nutrition and concentration. We will increase the take-up of free school meals.

We will help local independent schools — which have long supported closer working — to share resources with state schools to benefit all pupils.

We will act speedily and effectively to provide for special educational needs in all schools to ensure all children can get a great education. We will continue to support the Swiss Cottage School.

"I know first-hand that pupils rise to the challenge when their school has high academic standards, an ethos of excellence, and strong but fair discipline. Camden can’t have low expectations — all children deserve to go to outstanding schools.”

Kilburn candidate Georgina Stockley is a local Humanities teacher and Teach First graduate

The Conservative plan for a brighter future for Camden

- We will support parents to establish new schools, including one in West Hampstead.
- We will raise school standards by encouraging leadership by Camden School for Girls and UCL Academy and help top-performing pupils apply to Russell Group universities.
- We will ensure computing and coding are taught in all schools throughout Camden and promote enterprise education to teach soft skills.
- We will support teacher training by sharing Apprenticeship funding with all schools.
- We will increase employability by encouraging apprenticeships, organising more work fairs, and encouraging continuing professional development in the borough.
- We will review how our schools serve our worst-off, including raising the take-up of free school meals and improving cooperation between independent and state schools.

“When Anton was small, there just weren’t enough state primary school places in Belsize, and Camden did nothing to provide more. I was terrified that my son would be left behind, so I worked with fellow local residents to set up a free school.”

Belsize councillor Leila Roy is a parent that was involved in establishing the Belsize Abacus Primary School

—I 15—I
As Conservatives, we believe in conserving what’s best about our borough — but we also believe in reforming and fixing what’s wrong.

We believe that Camden Council is too wasteful, too distant, and too unaccountable. Our borough stretches from Holborn to Hampstead and from Kentish Town to Kilburn. The needs of Bloomsbury can be very different from the needs of Belsize.

Since 2011, Camden Conservatives have been the only party to provide an alternative budget — signed off as costed by Camden’s director of finance — that would lead to lower taxes, less waste, and more money for front-line services.

**Freezing Council Tax**

Since 2014, Labour has increased Camden’s Council tax by 17%: just 1% less than the maximum that they could legally impose, making Camden one of the boroughs with the largest increases in the country.

As a result, Band-D Council Tax in Camden is now £800 a year higher than in Conservative-run Westminster or Wandsworth, despite all three councils receiving similar grants from the government.

Labour have shown little interest in keeping Council Tax low, and have tried to blame the government, despite Conservative councils keeping taxes down. Conservatives will commit to freezing Camden’s share of Council Tax for each of the next four years.

**Getting value for money**

While some of the savings that Camden Conservatives have campaigned for have been adopted by the administration, there is still too much waste at Camden Council.

We pushed Labour to let out the unused top floor of Camden’s plush new office building, saving £1 million a year. By making better use of space, we will let out an additional floor, saving enough to restore weekly bin collections for all residents.

We will save £500,000 a year by replacing high-cost sodium street lights with LEDs — which cost half as much — as Westminster has. This is almost enough to put 18 new police on our streets.

We will maximise revenue from advertising and commercial opportunities by following innovations by other local authorities. We will work with Hertsmere Council — owner of Elstree Studios — to increase revenue from filming and music rights.

We will scrap the Camden magazine, which is an ineffective means of communication; end the funding of trade union branch officials using taxpayers’ money; and reduce spending on Camden’s publicity department.

We will always look to utilise match-funding, as with hiring more police officers (100% match-funding), granting Business Rates relief (230%), or installing electric car charging points (300%). This will stretch every penny of taxpayers’ money.

We will also cut the cost of Camden councillors by reducing the number of Cabinet members from 10 to 7.

“I’ve tabled Camden’s only alternative budget since 2011: reducing taxes, increasing services, and identifying waste. Camden has saved millions a year by us making them adopt our ideas! That’s the importance of a strong opposition.”

Swiss Cottage councillor Don Williams is the Conservatives’ Deputy Leader and finance spokesman
Creating Community Councils to make Camden more accountable

At a time when councils have been made more accountable, Camden has become less. All too often, residents in the north of the borough are sneered at by the Labour Cabinet: a sneer that even pre-dated Jeremy Corbyn. But just because Town Hall is far away does not mean it needs to be distant.

Following the lead of Labour-run Southwark, we will create five ‘Community Councils’ that will put budgets in the hands of local communities, from Hampstead to Holborn: devolving powers from Town Hall to every corner of our borough.

These councils would have a number of powers, from traffic management to community safety, and from the environment to planning. This would give powers to local councillors — regardless of party affiliation — and ensure that local representatives can respond directly to residents’ concerns.

To allow residents’ concerns to be heard and debated thoroughly, we will ban councillors debating business outside the council’s powers — such as on national or foreign policy.

Improving communications

Camden Conservatives will reduce waiting times for the Contact Camden phone line by make it clearer who residents have to talk to.

We will overhaul Camden’s website, which is now a decade old and difficult to navigate. We will fund this by ending the grant to the underused LoveCamden website, which uses taxpayers’ money to replicate newspapers’ events listings.

We will support our local press — from the Camden New Journal to Ham & High, West Hampstead Life to Kentishtowner — instead of using your money to compete with them.

“The Conservative plan to reform Camden

- We will freeze Council Tax every year of a Conservative-run Camden.
- We will reduce waste, such as scrapping the Camden magazine, ending funding of trade union officials, reducing the publicity budget, and using LED street lights.
- We will use match-funding to stretch resources, as with our proposals to hire more police, grant discretionary Business Rates relief, or install electric car charge points.
- We will introduce Community Councils that handle budgets for service delivery in their areas, making the Council more responsive to overlooked areas of Camden.
- We will reduce waiting times on Camden’s phone lines and overhaul Camden’s website to make it easier to access services.

“I worked on civil service reform to reduce back-office waste by over £10bn a year so it could be invested in front-line services. It’s not easy, but with real reform, Camden can do the same: saving money, so we can invest in services and freeze taxes.”

Highgate candidate Simone Finn was an adviser leading on civil service reform for the Cabinet Office

“Anyone that’s run a business would be shocked at how parts of Camden Council are run. Just in IT, Camden could save millions a year, and better use of technology would greatly raise productivity: improving services and reducing costs.”

Holborn & Covent Garden candidate Richard Merrin is the MD a communications consultancy specialising in technology
Living in Camden is a great privilege, but it shouldn’t be as difficult to find a home as wonderful and welcoming as the community around it. Yet with houses less affordable than ever and the Council’s properties in disrepair, it’s harder than ever for people to call Camden home.

While Labour pass the buck to the government, the lack of homes is most acute in Camden because of their inaction locally. In 2014, Labour promised to build 6,000 new homes in Camden, but they’ve started less than a third of that.

We will take action to improve Camden’s housing stock, reduce costs for residents, support private renters, and build a Camden fit to call home.

**Building more affordable housing**

Housing affordability has been falling dramatically in Camden, with median property prices now 19 times median earnings in the borough.

Although Camden’s policies requires large developments to provide affordable housing, this is often waived. We will require all developments over 10 units to provide a full contribution for affordable housing, with no exceptions or sweetheart deals. This would provide hundreds of extra affordable homes.

We will require developers of such large sites to make s106 financial contributions that are no less than the market price of an average 3-bedroom flat in the borough.

We will oppose the loss of affordable housing and repeat of the loss of hundreds of affordable housing units at 79 Fitzjohn’s Avenue, 29 New End, Bartram’s Convent, and Ornan Court: all of which were pushed through despite objections from local Conservative councillors.

We will work with Housing Associations — which provide half of new affordable housing — to ensure the delivery of more affordable homes.

**Improving repairs and ensuring value for council leaseholders and tenants**

Camden’s repairs service for properties it manages is slow, inefficient, and costly. Several estates — notably Harben Road — lost hot water and heating over winter: the coldest winter for years. We will work to improve repairs and save tenants and leaseholders money.

Camden Conservatives will pay contractors only when the work is signed off. To track works more effectively, we will create maintenance manuals and logs for every council property to track works across each property’s lifetime.

Inspired by Florrie’s Law, Camden Conservatives will cap charges to leaseholders for repairs at £15,000 in any year. We will consult leaseholders fully before work is commissioned to ensure they are happy before being landed with a bill.

We will also cut rent for council tenants. After Labour hiked rents by 28% between 2010 and 2014, the government forced Camden to cut rent: saving tenants an average of £1,000 a year. While Labour attacked this reduction, we support it and will implement it to save tenants money.

“As a Camden leaseholder, I was forced to pay an extortionate amount for works without proper consultation. Leaseholders must be treated with respect, and charges capped to prevent Camden passing the cost of their failure to leaseholders.”

Highgate candidate Ben Seifert is a barrister who specialises in human rights law
Introducing a security deposit scheme for private renters

Camden Conservatives will fight for a better deal for the third of local residents that rent privately. The Conservatives are leading the way in government by banning letting agencies’ fees, by capping holding deposits at one week’s rent, and by capping security deposits at 6 weeks’ rent.

However, security deposits remain a major obstacles to private renters moving to new flats: unable to pay new deposit until they receive their last one back often weeks or months later.

In order to help renters move, we will set up a scheme to offer tenants bridge loans to cover security deposits for those moving within Camden. This will allow them to pay a new deposit and then repay Camden when their old deposit is returned: making it easier to rent and move in Camden, rather than having to stay put.

Providing welcome packs to residents

We want our borough to feel like home the moment residents step over the threshold for the first time. But it often takes time to bed in and get to know the community.

We will provide welcome packs to movers upon registration to pay Council Tax. These packs will be automatically tailored to each street and tenure of the property, and will outline local services and community groups, give better information on accessing services (such as on waste disposal), and outline their legal rights.

The Conservative plan to house Camden

- We will deliver more affordable housing, by requiring new developments to contribute to affordable housing and ending Labour’s practice of waiving or reducing this demand.
- We will secure value for council leaseholders by capping repair costs at £15,000 a year and only making payments for works when they have been signed off.
- We will reduce rent for council tenants, reducing the cost of rent by £1,000 a year compared to Labour’s plans for year-on-year hikes.
- We will track works done on council-owned properties by introducing operation and maintenance manuals that log all work and needs of the property over its lifetime.
- We will advance private renters’ security deposits when moving within the borough.
- We will send welcome packs to people that move that inform them of their rights, waste disposal times, and community facilities.
One of Camden’s great strengths is its diverse community institutions. From the West End to West End Lane, Camden has an unmatched breadth of local communities, and we’re committed to supporting them all.

We will save and support local pubs and keep all our libraries open. We’ll also work with local businesses to ensure our high streets are vibrant, diverse, and successful.

We’ll support sport to promote good health, and work with our diverse communities to ensure Camden remains a diverse and tolerant borough.

**Protecting community assets and pubs**

We will back our local pubs, which have dwindled in number since the 1990s. We will list all pubs as Assets of Community Value (ACVs): making it harder to change their use to anything other than a pub and giving the local community first refusal when they are put up for sale.

We will use our powers to grant discretionary Business Rates relief to reduce Rates for all ACVs: reflecting their social benefit. This would save each ACV several thousand pounds a year, but just 30% of the cost would be borne by Camden, making it a cost-effective means of supporting pubs and other community institutions.

**Backing local businesses**

We will support local businesses across Camden and work with them to ensure a dynamic local economy. With the government giving councils revenue from Business Rates, it’s more important than ever to help the local economy thrive.

Camden’s failure to work with businesses has caused a huge backlog of appeals against Business Rate valuations: costing businesses and Camden Council millions. We will invest in ensuring valuations are accurate, helping businesses to appeal early and resolve disputes with HMRC’s Valuation Office Agency.

We will make the first 20 minutes of parking free on our smaller high streets — such as Mill Lane, England’s Lane, and southern Swain’s Lane — to encourage people to shop in our borough.

**Improving parking services**

We will get tough on supermarket lorries abusing parking spaces — such as on Heath Street, West End Lane, England’s Lane, and Swain’s Lane — and we will force them to play by the same rules as residents and neighbouring small businesses.

It is unfair to require residents to obtain an impossibly high number of petition signatures before consulting on changes to parking zones. On streets with obvious parking and traffic problems — such as Maygrove Road — we will go straight to consulting residents to find local views on potential solutions, such as one-way systems, splitting parking zones, or longer restricted hours.

**Helping our libraries survive and thrive**

Camden Conservatives guarantee that we will keep all Camden libraries and community libraries

“I’ve founded charities and businesses to promote small businesses and know they’re the lifeblood of our economy. We will offer joined-up help from the Council and service providers so firms can thrive in Camden’s competitive marketplace.”

Bloomsbury candidate **Tim Barnes** founded The Rain Gods and Citrus Saturday, and headed UCL’s centre for entrepreneurship.
open. We will look to extend library opening hours, including opening Swiss Cottage Library on Sundays so they can build upon their great work.

We will co-locate services at libraries that can provide public services and revenue for our libraries, including exploring opening a police counter at Swiss Cottage Library.

We will provide £100,000 a year of extra funding to Keats, Belsize, and Primrose Hill Community Libraries to ensure they continue to thrive.

Supporting sport and exercise

We believe in the importance of sport and exercise, and will support it across Camden. By contrast, Labour’s priorities are reflected by the council charging people more for a licence to be a tennis coach than to run a betting shop.

We will encourage children to swim by making Camden’s swimming pool free for children during holidays and half-term.

We will guarantee the future of the Globe Tennis Club in Belsize Park by granting it a new lease without a break clause, as demanded by the LTA.

Guaranteeing community cohesion

We will work to combat all intolerance to make sure Camden remains a tolerant and diverse borough. We will ensure Camden adopts the recommendations of the Casey Review to address the link between deprivation, social exclusion, and a fall in trust between groups and public services.

Hampstead Conservative councillors have set up regular meetings between synagogues and the police to improve security. We will fight to keep Jewish residents safe, including working with the CST and protecting Jewish students at Camden’s universities in the wake of violence at UCL.

“I work with the Bengali Workers’ Association in Camden to promote the welfare of British Bangladeshi people. It’s vitally important to work with community groups from all walks of life to ensure every resident feels welcome in our borough.”

Bloomsbury candidate Shahin Ahmed has campaigned for the Bangladeshi community for several years.

The Conservative plan to build strong communities in Camden

- We will reduce Business Rates for pubs and other Assets of Community Value, and protect all pubs as Assets of Community Value.
- We will introduce 20 minutes of free parking on minor high streets and reduce the number of Business Rates mis-valuations.
- We will keep all libraries open, extend library opening hours, co-locate services at council-run libraries, and increase funding for community libraries.
- We will make swimming free for children in school holidays.
- We will guarantee the future of the Globe Tennis Club in Belsize Park.
- We will combat intolerance and continue to work to keep our Jewish community safe.
HELPING CAMDEN’S VULNERABLE

As well as making sure we have a beautiful borough that's clean and green, we want to ensure our community provides a safety net for those that need one.

We will work with neighbouring boroughs, government agencies, and charities to address some of the big problems facing Camden’s most vulnerable.

That means caring for our elderly, combatting social isolation, making life easier for disabled residents, tackling Camden’s homelessness crisis, and supporting low-income families.

Camden Conservatives are committed to ensuring that our borough is as welcoming and comfortable as possible for people from all walks of life.

Caring for our older residents and combatting social isolation

We will combat social isolation by reviving luncheon clubs and promoting a wider range of activities for residents, including local walking groups.

We will launch a scheme that helps older people let out spare rooms to younger people at a reduced rent by screening the prospective lodgers: giving younger residents somewhere to live and giving the older residents company.

We will encourage inter-generational volunteering among Camden’s large student population to keep vulnerable older people socially active.

We will continue to invest in caring for our older residents. Hampstead’s Conservative councillors are using the Community Infrastructure Levy to invest in renovating Henderson Court and have invested £70,000 in making the Royal Free’s dementia ward more comforting.

We believe helping to cope with dementia is everyone’s business, and we will ensure Camden is a dementia-friendly community.

Helping disabled and at-risk residents

Camden Conservatives will support our care providers to integrate health and adult social care, which is proven to improve care: putting patients before politics.

We will work with TfL to install lifts at more tube stations — including Finchley Road, West Hampstead, and Euston Square — to help disabled or older people and those with prams.

We will improve sharing of data about residents within the Council on an opt-in basis, so disabled people do not have to repeat their circumstances to each team just to get the right support.

Supporting low-income families

Camden Conservatives secured a 100% reduction in Council Tax for the worst-off. We will guarantee this continues and extend it by providing a 10% reduction in council tax for each adult child still living at home.

We are committed to providing access to high-quality youth services across our borough so that all young people have opportunities, regardless of background.

“People often ask why I volunteer. The thing that sticks with me is the look of happiness when you walk through the doors at the Royal Free and elderly patients realise others care too. That somebody is willing to help them. I volunteer because of their happiness.”

Fortune Green candidate Axel Kaae volunteer at the Royal Free Hospital and raises money for Marie Curie Cancer Care
Supporting the NHS and mental health

Developments have placed huge pressures on local surgeries. We will ensure that health facilities are provided as part of new developments by considering GP and dentist surgery places in development decisions. We will assist the NHS with capital funding — provided by developments through s106 contributions — to purchase or invest in sites.

Mental illness is a scourge that must be treated more effectively. Camden has the third most cases of serious mental illness in London. We will adopt best practice for local authorities from mental health charity Mind and give equal weight to mental health and physical health. We will invest to deliver the best possible care, including childhood resilience and universal interventions, so that all children receive some support.

Tackling homelessness

Camden has the worst record on combatting homelessness in the country. The number of rough-sleepers in Camden increased six-fold last year, while the numbers fell in Conservative-run Westminster and Barnet next door.

We will work with Westminster to ensure we have staff with the foreign language skills to help homeless people regardless of their background.

We will also work with the police to tackle Spice and other synthetic street drugs, which have increased the number of homeless people beyond the reach of traditional social services.

And we will work more closely with shelters, who tell us that Camden is the worst borough for working with charitable groups like theirs.

“I have a long track record as a councillor of fighting the most vulnerable residents in Camden: whether on human trafficking, mental health, or for our older people. Camden Conservatives will continue to advocate for our citizens who need us most.”

Belsize candidate Kirsty Roberts is a former councillor was Camden’s Mental Health Champion

The Conservative plan to help Camden’s vulnerable

- We will combat social isolation by reviving luncheon clubs for older residents and promote a range of activities for more vulnerable.
- We will ensure Camden is a dementia-friendly community.
- We will back disabled residents by installing lifts at more tube stations, making it easier for residents get the right support, and integrating health and adult social care.
- We will tackle Camden’s homelessness crisis by sharing language resources with other boroughs, tackling street drugs, and working more closely with homeless shelters.
- We will reduce Council Tax for each adult child still living at home and guarantee the 100% Council Tax reduction for low-income households.
- We will ensure funding for GPs’ and dentists’ surgeries near new developments.
RESTORING WEEKLY BIN COLLECTIONS
OPENING NEW GREEN SPACES
PUTTING MORE POLICE ON OUR STREETS
INSTALLING ELECTRIC CAR CHARGING POINTS
FREEZING COUNCIL TAX

Get involved
The policies in this manifesto can’t be delivered without your help to elect Conservative councillors on 3rd May. To get involved, please contact us:

Camden Conservatives, 1A Heath Hurst Road, Hampstead, NW3 2RU
T 020 7794 5679 E agent@camdenconservatives.com

www.camdenconservatives.com