

## Written evidence from Climate Emergency Camden

### Climate Emergency Camden concerns about London Borough of Camden's performance in achieving its net-zero aims

Camden Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in October 2019 but has not significantly altered its operations since then, other than engaging consultants to produce glossy reports and sponsoring eye-catching initiatives such as Camden Renewal Commission. Specific examples include:

- support for the Edmonton Incinerator
- determination to demolish and rebuild council estates (instead of seriously considering deep retrofit)
- refusal to divest its pension funds from fossil fuels
- support for dense new private sector developments
- negligible efforts to tackle air pollution
- lack of a roadmap to achieve net zero (with interim and longer-term measurable targets, indicators, and monitoring guidance)
- failure to set zero carbon targets for new build (including the massive Murphy's Yard)
- recent upgrade of numerous estate heating systems with gas

Climate Emergency Camden would like Camden Council to:

- 1) Prepare an Action Plan with measurable interim targets to reduce carbon emissions and harm to global ecosystems, and report on related metrics annually, beginning at the end of 2021. The Action Plan should set out specific actions with regard to their actual projected impact.
- 2) Halt and review the current plans to build a new Edmonton Incinerator, which is based on producing increased amounts of waste for burning; focus council efforts on enabling Camden to become a zero-waste borough through increased recycling and reusing.
- 3) Take active steps to reduce carbon emissions from existing buildings by:
  - a) Properly researching retrofit as a way of renewing the Council's buildings;
  - b) Investigating ways to put in place funding mechanisms (such as social impact/green bonds) for retrofitting public and private buildings to provide zero-carbon heating and hot water;
  - c) Expanding construction skills training;
  - d) Instigating a clear and widely-distributed public education plan about the benefits of retrofitting compared with demolition and new build (we know of at least one instance where tenants were nominally consulted, but given little information);
  - e) Installing movement sensors across the Council's estate to turn lights on and off and ensure no night time lighting is on during daylight hours.

- 4) Divest the Council's pension fund from fossil fuel extraction. It is not acceptable that our money is being used in a way that is contributing directly to climate change. Also introduce ecological screening of all investments to ensure that they are not harming ecosystems in this country and globally.
- 5) Ensure that Camden's procurement of goods and services is subject to tender criteria that prioritise low-carbon operation and embodied carbon, and screen supply chains to ensure that they are not harming eco-systems in this country and globally.
- 6) Set an example of local wealth-creation by breaking down contracts for Council goods and services into packages small enough for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to bid for, and circulating all invitations to tender publicly, with sufficient notice for SMEs to respond.
- 7) Protect Camden's mature green space, trees and biodiversity by:
  - a) Prohibiting development on green space;
  - b) Protecting mature trees and stopping excessive pollarding;
  - c) Substantially increasing new tree planting, in addition to replacing trees that die or are removed. (Current tree policy is to plant 400 trees per annum, the same as 2012);
  - d) Stopping the use of all pesticides including Glyphosate.
- 8) Twin with one or two towns in the global South, to develop public understanding of the current impact of Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) on communities, lives and livelihoods and enable residents to provide direct support where appropriate.

*August 2021*