

Camden stepping up to climate emergency challenge

07 October 2019

Camden councillors of all parties pledged to go further and faster to reduce carbon emissions as they debated the climate crisis alongside school children, Extinction Rebellion, Citizens' Assembly members and Climate Emergency Camden representatives tonight.

Extinction Rebellion activist Farhana Yamin described Camden as "a pioneer in the field of climate action", while Hareta and Gabrielle, students at La Sainte Union, urged Camden to go further, including more meat-free meals in schools.

Central to the discussion were the 17 proposals agreed by the Citizens' Assembly the council convened earlier this year – the first assembly of its kind in the United Kingdom - set up specifically for residents to examine the climate emergency and what practical action can help stop climate change.

The Assembly's proposals include making all new buildings zero carbon, installing solar panels on as many homes as possible, designing a new public information campaign on the climate crisis, piloting community energy schemes and installing more 'segregated' cycle lanes. They are at different stages of development, but Camden Council has already translated some of these into action, including:

- Offering [low cost solar panels for homes in the borough in October < http://www.camden.gov.uk/solar-together>](http://www.camden.gov.uk/solar-together), in partnership with the Greater London Authority
- The council is proposing segregated cycle lanes on Gray's Inn Road, improving conditions for people cycling and walking in the area
- The first community led 'car-free day', held in in Leighton Road in Kentish Town in September.

Within Camden's borough boundary, 90% of carbon emissions result from heating and powering buildings, while 10% are caused by road transport. However, less tangible factors, including residents' consumption patterns and lifestyle choices, as well as the supply chains of businesses and organisations also contribute to carbon dioxide emissions.

You can read the papers from our full council debate on [our website < http://democracy.camden.gov.uk/documents/s84073/Climate%20crisis%20report%20to%20Council.pdf>](http://democracy.camden.gov.uk/documents/s84073/Climate%20crisis%20report%20to%20Council.pdf).

The full list of Citizen Assembly proposals, which the council unanimously voted for, are as follows:

Home

- Encouraging low-carbon dietary choices.
- Making all new homes 'zero carbon'.
- Creating more green space on residential streets.
- Fitting solar panels on as many homes as possible.
- Campaigning to make CO2 reduction fun.

Neighbourhood

- Planting more trees and creating more allotments.
- Piloting a community energy heating scheme.
- Installing more 'segregated' cycle lanes.
- Promoting and trialling car free zones and days.
- Enabling electric transport with infrastructure and incentives.
- Developers to fund energy efficiency retrofits of old buildings.

Council

- Establishing a Climate Emergency scrutiny panel made up of experts and residents.
- All council properties to be fossil-fuel free.
- Planting trees and retaining public spaces.
- Improving council communications and engagement on the climate crisis.
- Mobilising existing community groups to work on tackling the climate crisis.
- Greening the Council's operations.

The Citizens Assembly comprised of people with diverse views about the climate crisis from a representative range of backgrounds across Camden.

Over the course of the three Citizens Assembly meetings, participants learned how the climate crisis is already affecting Camden and communities around the world, gained an understanding of how significant carbon dioxide reduction can be technically achieved in Camden, as well as the trade-offs and costs required to secure the deep decarbonisation needed to limit global temperature rises.

To inspire ideas, assembly members heard from community energy groups, academics, renewable energy experts and other cities about how decarbonisation has been achieved in other settings.

You can read more about sessions [1 < https://news.camden.gov.uk/camden-holds-first-citizens-assembly-on-the-climate-crisis/>](https://news.camden.gov.uk/camden-holds-first-citizens-assembly-on-the-climate-crisis/), [2 < https://news.camden.gov.uk/camden-holds-second-citizens-assembly-on-the-climate-crisis/>](https://news.camden.gov.uk/camden-holds-second-citizens-assembly-on-the-climate-crisis/) and [3 < https://news.camden.gov.uk/citizens-assembly-makes-recommendations-for-action-on-the-climate-crisis/>](https://news.camden.gov.uk/citizens-assembly-makes-recommendations-for-action-on-the-climate-crisis/) on our website or watch our video recap of them.