**Camden Climate Citizen Panel Terms of Reference v.1**

**Background**

Camden Council has demonstrated a long history of commitment to delivering and achieving environmental sustainability. The Council’s 10-year sustainability plan ‘[Green Action for Change’](https://www.camden.gov.uk/green-action-for-change), which saw the focus on a collective effort to make Camden a low carbon and low waste borough, while improving local air quality and green space, came to an end in March 2020.

In preparation of this, Camden Council hosted the first Citizens’ Assembly on the Climate Crisis in July 2019, which brought together over 50 randomly selected residents from Camden to learn, deliberate and make recommendations on how Camden could best tackle the climate crisis.

Across three sessions, assembly members listened to a range of evidence from climate scientists, environmentalists and community energy practitioners before developing and agreeing 17 recommendations to be taken forward by the council, as well as Camden’s residents, community groups and businesses.

These actions have shaped the new [Climate Action Plan](http://democracy.camden.gov.uk/documents/s89494/Climate%20Action%20Plan%20Appendix%201%20_%20Camden%20climate%20action%20plan.pdf) which Camden Council will deliver in response to the climate crisis over the next 5 years – a continuation of work from the 10-year plan. A recommendation to come from the assembly was the creation of a panel led by citizens, to challenge the progress of the council against the actions set out in the Climate Action Plan for Camden.

For further information on the Climate Crisis, Citizen’s Assembly and Climate Action Plan please click [here](https://www.camden.gov.uk/climate-crisis)**.**

**Purpose of the Camden Climate Citizen Panel**

The citizen panel will have three primary aims:

* To review and challenge the progress of Camden’s climate initiatives against the action plan as well as borough-wide challenges and projects.
* To be an active audience for off-shoot projects and research stemming from the Climate Action Plan.
* To support community engagement, advocate on how best to involve residents on climate matters and help to identify potential barriers with proposed initiatives and projects.

**Panel Recruitment**

The panel will run for 5 years in line with the 5-year Climate Action Plan. We are expecting to recruit for the panel three times during this period. The panel will run for a two-year term, followed by another two-year term and concluding with a final shorter term of one year.

The panel will consist of 15 members which will mirror the diverse demographic profile of the borough. It is hoped that the panel will include two young person representatives (16-21) and three members from the Citizen Assembly.

**Key attributes of a panel member**:

* To understand the borough, neighbouring views and be an active member of the community
* Take an interest in Camden’s response to the Climate Emergency
* To question, challenge and deliberate discussion topics with confidence
* Remain resilient, positive and stick with the process
* Remain open and transparent
* Respect that everyone has an equal status on the panel
* Accept that the process is likely to be imperfect and lessons can be learnt that will improve along the way
* Recognise that compromise may be required to secure deliverable actions

**Chairing and support arrangements**

For the majority of sessions, the panel will be chaired independently. On occasion, guest chairs will be invited along, with the opportunity for panel members to also chair. Officers from Camden’s Sustainability Team will be in attendance to provide organisational support.

**Panel Meetings**

Panel meetings are expected to be held four times a year for a two-year term. Panel meetings will take place during the evening and will last between two and a half to three hours.

Meetings will initially be held online with the potential for meetings to move to a face-to-face setting. This will be reviewed at a later date and the council will make all necessary arrangements to support panel members should this change. For panel members that do not have access to IT facilities, the council will provide support so that all members are able to dial in for the meeting sessions.

Panel meetings will begin after an introductory session whereby members will become acquainted with each another and receive training to ensure they are informed and empowered to contribute.

The meetings will follow a structured agenda to ensure clear timings for discussion and Q&A. Experts and Action Plan Partners will be invited to support the delivery of meeting sessions as and when required. The Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden will be frequently invited to attend sessions as an honorary panel member to ensure direct engagement with the citizen panel at decision-making level.

Minutes will be taken from the meetings by a member of the Sustainability Team and circulated to the panel for comments, so an accurate account of discussions is documented. Discussion contributions will assist with the delivery of council projects and the review and development of the Climate Action Plan where appropriate.

Each meeting will begin with an update from the previous meetings’ recommendations where relevant and appropriate. All materials and outputs from the meetings will be publicly shared.

**Review of TOR**

The terms of reference will be discussed and co-designed with panel members during the first session.

**Sample items for panel discussion**

**Scenario 1:**

The Sustainability Team are developing a communications campaign to educate the public on reducing ‘consumption-based emissions’.

These emissions result from consumer choices on the food, clothes and products we buy, many of which have travelled far before arriving into the UK and into our shops and homes, and these can have significant climate impacts. We therefore want to engage with communities on ways that they can make a difference, such as taking sustainable modes of transport where possible or making small changes to their diet to name but a few.

Key discussion points for the panel:

* What should the campaign look like / how could this be delivered?
* How could the information be presented?
* What are the barriers to making greener choices?

**Scenario 2:**

A piece of work has been commissioned by the council to work with a group of consultants to explore the low carbon retrofit of a housing estate in Camden. Adopting a ‘retrofitting’ mentality to existing housing stock is a necessary and favoured approach by government to tackle energy demand and carbon emissions.

Key discussion points for the panel:

* Benefits / Costs to leaseholders
* Funding
* Key challenges / barriers for the community – what are they and how do we overcome them?

**TOR ENDS**