

Camden Women's Forum

Purpose

We recently celebrated the 100th anniversary of the first law in the UK giving some women the right to vote. We want to renew our commitment to pushing forward the rights of women and ensure that all women and girls in Camden have equal opportunities and the chance to live freely and safely without prejudice and discrimination. We will work in partnership with men and boys to enable all Camden citizens to fulfil their full potential.

Despite the progress that has been made, too many women in Camden work in low-paid jobs with poor conditions and experience discrimination. The gender pay gap persists and changes to welfare benefits and reductions in local authority budgets have had an acute impact on certain groups of women, reducing incomes and forcing many mothers into low-paid jobs. In 2019, 3,263 domestic abuse incidents were reported to the police, and there has been a rapid rise in sexual offences.

The purpose of Camden Women's Forum is to bring together councillors with women's representatives from different walks of life to ensure that women's and girls' voices and experiences are heard and to all work together on the key issues identified in the Camden 2025 community vision including:

- Supporting women into employment
- Reducing domestic abuse and challenging harmful gender stereotyping
- Supporting women and girls to access all services including sport and physical activity.
- Encourage and support more women and girls to actively participate in public and political life.

Working methods

Camden Women's Forum will meet at least four times a year and work on the same lines as a Parliamentary Select Committee. The forum will seek to understand and represent the views and experience of women in Camden. It will aim to hold two inquiries per year, in the course of which it will make calls for evidence, hold oral hearings and write reports with recommendations. The recommendations will advise Camden on how to maximise women's and girls' contributions, identifying the barriers and challenges that prevent them from achieving this, and including the means of overcoming these obstacles. The outcome will be to generate practical and tangible actions for Camden to consider and implement. The forum will be assisted by Camden Council officers who will provide research, analytical and secretariat support.

Membership of Camden Women's Forum

Camden Women's Forum will be chaired by Helene Reardon Bond OBE, who has been appointed by the Leader of Camden Council, and is Camden's Gender Equality Champion. It will work in a cross-party political way and build a network of gender champions across Camden.