



Green Space

Investment Programme

Camden



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Introduction to the programme





A greener, fairer, healthier Camden: Investing in Parks and Green Spaces

Parks and green spaces are some of Camden's most important community assets. They are places where people exercise, relax, play, connect with nature and spend time with friends and family.

Over the next five years, Camden will continue investing in parks, playgrounds, housing estate green spaces, streets, rain gardens and other public spaces to make them greener, healthier, safer and more resilient to climate change.

This document explains why investment is needed, how projects are prioritised, how funding is used and how residents can help shape and care for these spaces for future generations.

The programme uses data and community input to direct investment into areas of Camden that are most in need, creating greater quality spaces and a fairer distribution of green spaces and facilities across Camden. The spending plan predominantly uses Section 106 developer contributions secured through the planning process to upgrade and enhance the borough's green spaces.

The GSIP sits within the Leisure Service area of the council, working closely with colleagues in Housing, Transport and the Community Investment Programme

Why investment cannot wait

Climate change is already affecting Camden through extreme high temperatures in summer and more intense rainfall events which have caused significant damage through flooding. Green spaces provide natural cooling, flood mitigation and biodiversity that help the borough adapt to these challenges.

Meanwhile, health inequalities remain a significant challenge in Camden, and access to parks is a proven, cost-effective intervention. Addressing inequality in access to green space will help shift the balance to a more equitable Camden where all residents can benefit from access to nature and more active lifestyles.

Green spaces in Camden play a vital role in supporting physical and mental health, strengthening communities, and enhancing biodiversity. Parks and green space offer free and inclusive places for exercise, social connection and respite from busy urban life, as well as providing essential habitat for nature and biodiversity.



Alignment with We Make Camden
The Green Space Investment Programme will contribute towards the Camden ambition of: Camden should be a green, clean, vibrant, accessible and sustainable place with everyone empowered to contribute to tackling the climate emergency.

> "Our parks and open spaces are especially important for everyone's health and wellbeing because they provide a place to exercise, socialise and reflect. Trees, plants and greenery help to keep our air clean, cool our neighbourhoods down and help to tackle the climate emergency."



Camden's green spaces over the last 5 years

* Parks for Health Strategy – Vivid Economics: Natural capital accounts for public green space in London - report (October 2017) vivideconomics.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Natural-Capital-Accounts Report-GLA-NT-HLF-1.pdf

The Vision

"Camden's green space projects will deliver improvements where they are most needed, ensuring investment promotes healthy, accessible and resilient green infrastructure."

Recent projects

The map shows the locations of the case study projects across from the borough.



Parks and open spaces

1. Kilburn Grange Park
2. Swiss Cottage Open Space
3. Talacre Town Green
4. Polygon Road Open Space
5. Purchese Street Open Space

Housing

6. Harben Estate
7. Compton Close
8. Ampthill Estate

Highways

9. Goldhurst Terrace
10. Camley Street
11. Fleet Valley Pocket Park



Kilburn Grange Park

Kilburn Grange Park

Project name
Kilburn Grange Park
Kilburn
NW6 2BY

Project team
Camden Council, Chris Blanford Associates, Ground Control

Funding sources
S106. UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). Local CIL

Total budget
£400,000





The new entrance into Kilburn Grange Park provides a welcoming interface between the high street and this much-loved neighbourhood green space, offering a pocket park rest stop for one of the busiest high streets in Camden.

Combining high specification, durable paving materials with new climate-resilient planting zones creates a landing space for park visitors as well as an opportunity for community events and wider activation within the park. Rain gardens are designed to pick up the surface water from the surrounding paving to reduce the impact on the drainage network.



Swiss Cottage Open Space

Project name
Swiss Cottage Open Space
Swiss Cottage
NW3 3NR

Project team
Camden Council, LUC, Frost Landscapes
(original design team Gustafson and Porter)

Funding sources
S106, Local CIL, Green Space Accessibility Fund, Developer Parkland Licence funding

Total budget
£1m (phase 1)





This project was the first phase of a sensitive redesign of the Swiss Cottage Open Space. The site sits within a hub of community facilities in Swiss Cottage, including a library, leisure centre, and youth centre at The Winch.

The landscape works included a complete redesign of the play area to meet the needs of the local community, major remodelling of the grass banks to create more usable open space, restoration of the water feature and hard landscape elements of the site, biodiverse planting and rain gardens to reduce surface water run-off, and a new terraced seating space with views across the site. Future phases of improvement works will be coming forward as surrounding development completes. This will include an upgraded outdoor gym area and dedicated skate plaza on Adelaide Road.



Talacre Town Green

Talacre Town Green

Project name
Talacre Town Green play area
Kentish Town
NW5 3AF

Project team
Camden Council, Groundwork London, Ground Control

Funding sources
S106. Council Capital.

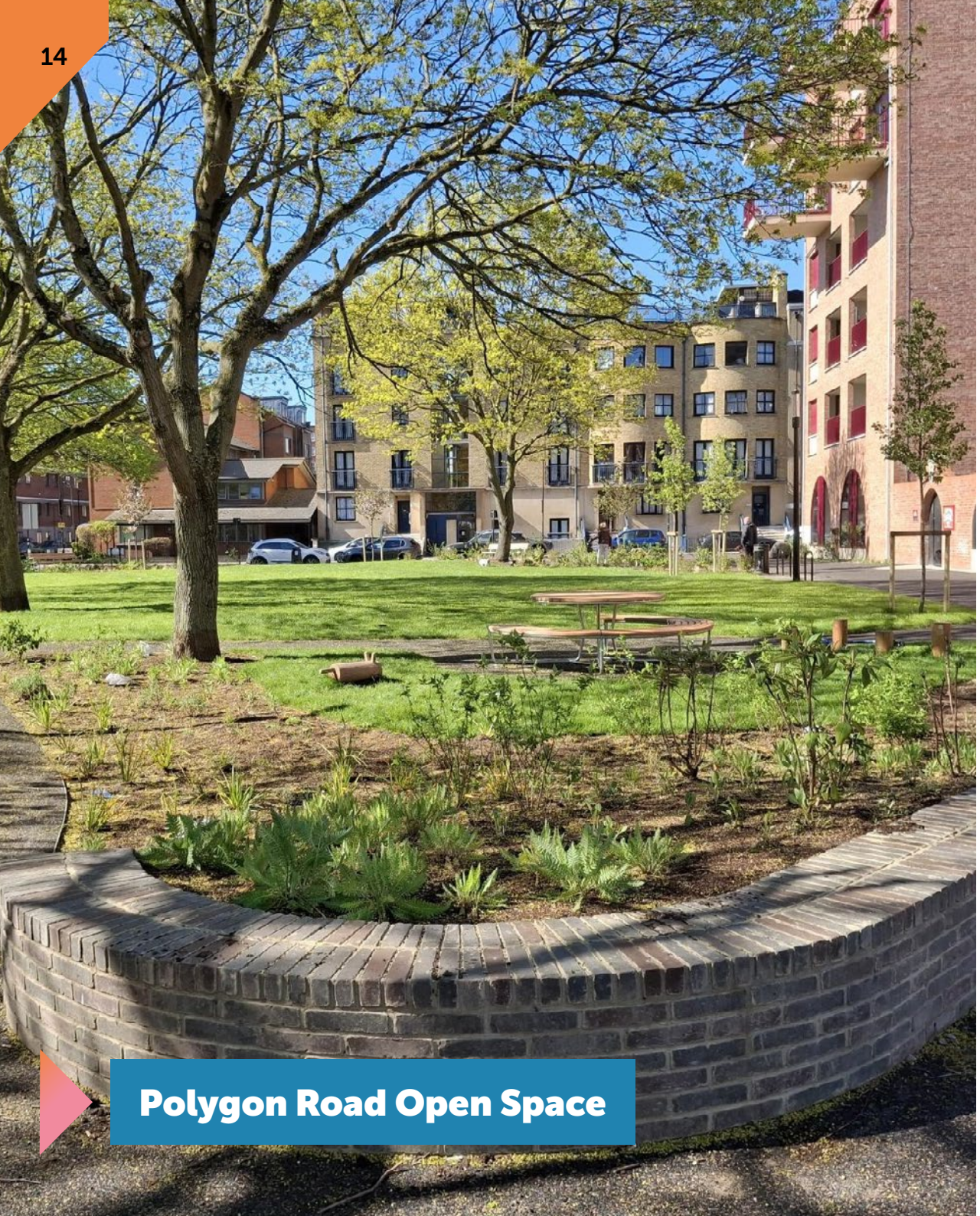
Total budget
£350,000



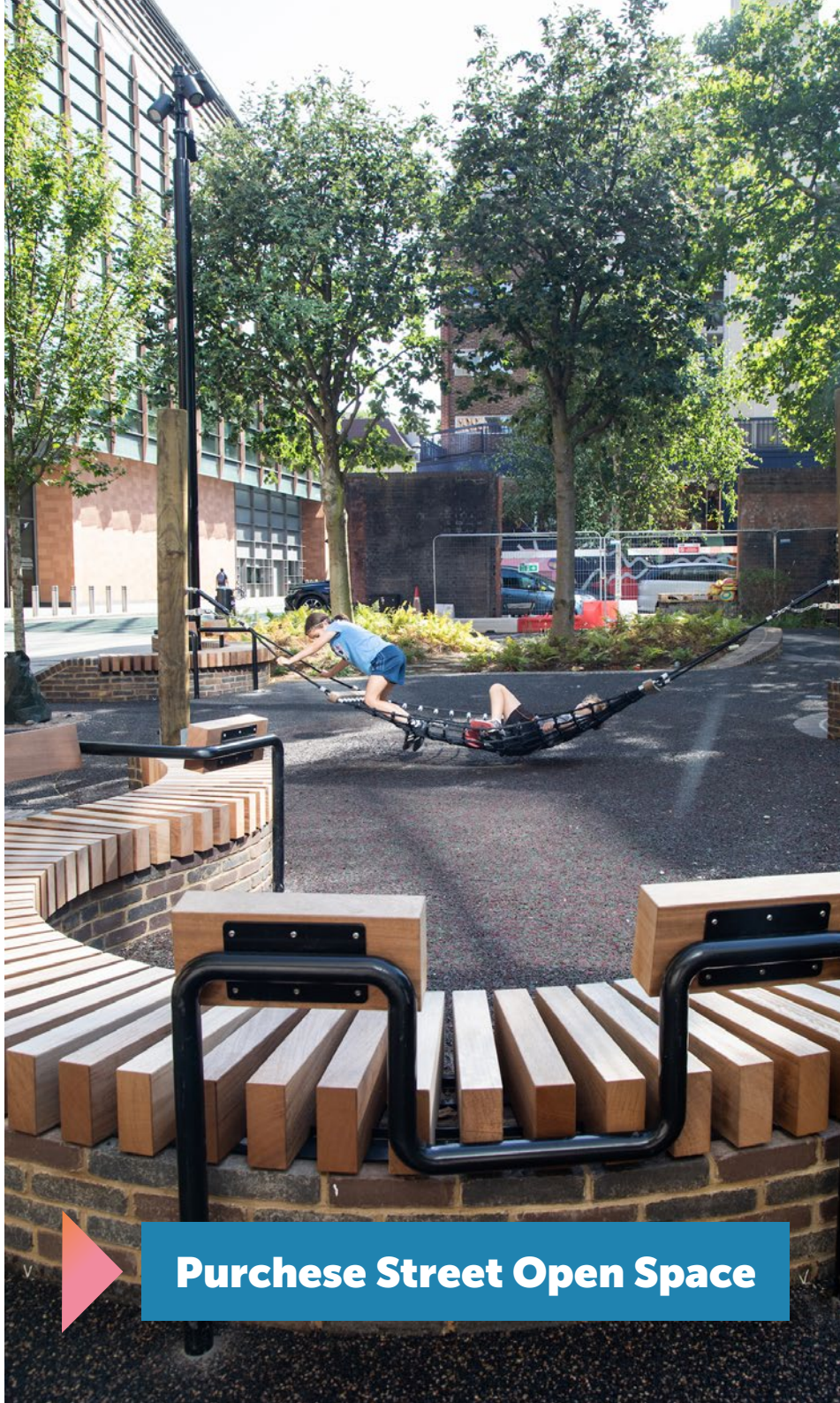


Talacre Town Green is a well-used and well-loved open space that sits within an area of low open space provision. Adjacent to the Talacre Sports Centre, which has also been refurbished, the site now offers a premium leisure offer and a range of community facilities, including gymnastics, 3G football pitches and soft play.

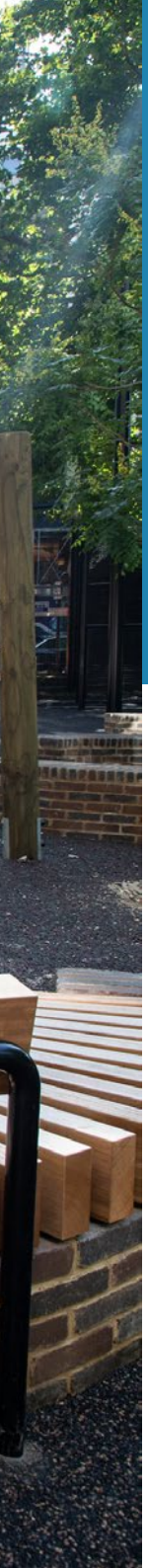
The play area works created a new destination playground within the existing footprint of the park and significantly improved the quality of the play equipment available for use. The project included planting trees to provide shade in summer, enabling better year-round use of the equipment.



Polygon Road Open Space



Purchese Street Open Space



Project name
Purchese Street and Polygon Road Open Space, Somers Town
NW1 1RX

Project team
Camden Council, DSDHA, Maylim, Edit Collective, Currie and Brown

Funding sources
S106. Council Capital. Local CIL

Total budget
£3m



This project was part of a major master planning exercise that reimagined the community facilities and provision of public open space within Somers Town, working alongside the Camden Community Investment Programme.

The Purchese Street Open Space and Polygon Road Open Space improvement works have created an extensive new open space that connects across the Somers Town area. A significant destination play area with a wide variety of play equipment catering for a range of needs and users has been delivered. A range of outdoor gym areas have also been created, alongside the wider planting and soft landscaping works that complement the large amenity lawns and open spaces. Informal sports and play spaces have also been integrated within the design which connects across the neighbourhood.



Harben Estate

Project name
Harben Estate, Swiss Cottage
NW3 3NR

Project team
Camden Council, Groundwork, Frost Landscapes, Global Street Art, Penfold

Funding sources
Local CIL, HS2 Environment Fund, DMC Funding, Green Space Accessibility Fund

Total budget
£185,000



This project was part of a ward-based initiative to review green infrastructure and play across Swiss Cottage, seeking opportunities for improving play facilities and green infrastructure.

This project focused on the refurbishment of an old Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA), as well as creating a new step-free ramp access into the court. Play features were also upgraded, as well as planting and a colourful mural by the street artist Penfold as part of Global Street Art London Mural Festival 2024.



Compton Close

Compton Close

Project name
Compton Close
Regent's Park Estate
NW1 3LJ

Project team
Camden Council, Cityscapes, Garden Link

Funding sources
Local CIL

Total budget
£55,000





Positioned within Regent's Park Estate, the pocket garden space has transformed a large expanse of paving slabs into an urban oasis for people and nature.

The design focused on adaptive reuse, repurposing reclaimed planting and materials directly from a former RHS Chelsea Show garden. This included low environmental impact materials. Rather than concrete pouring, the project used recycled crushed concrete mounds to create natural topography and seating areas. Paving stones were removed entirely to plant directly into aggregates, utilising drought-tolerant species and wildflowers which promote biodiversity, particularly for pollinator insect species.



Ampthill Estate

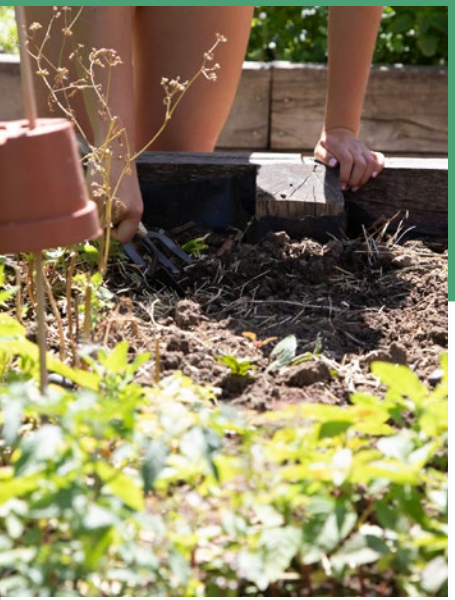
Ampthill Estate

Project name
Ampthill Estate
Somers Town
NW1 2JN

Project team
Camden Council, Blakedown, Groundwork London

Funding sources
HS2

Total budget
£350,000





The impact of HS2 has been significant in this area of Camden. The council has secured financial assurances from HS2 to improve existing and new open spaces within the surrounding area.

The Ampthill Estate works included a wide variety of landscape improvements, ranging from resurfacing and planting upgrades, to play area refurbishment works and food growing beds. The food growing beds continue to thrive, providing residents with an opportunity to connect with their neighbours, nature and produce edible crops. This work has also been supported by our team's Food Growing Accelerator work within our team that supports and promotes food growing initiatives across the borough.



Goldhurst Terrace

Project name
Goldhurst Terrace rain gardens
NW3 3HX

Project team
Camden Council, Roadways Consulting, PJA Consultants, LUC, Marlborough, IdVerde

Funding sources
S106, Local CIL, GLA Grow Back Greener Fund, Thames Water Prosper Funding

Total budget
£386,000



Working in partnership with the Camden Transport team, this sustainable urban drainage project sought to address flood risk within the South Hampstead critical drainage area by reducing surface water run-off from an area that is vulnerable to flooding.

The design converted wide pavement space into lush green rain gardens that capture the water from the pavement and carriageway. Planting has been selected to be drought tolerant and new street trees will provide a wide variety of ecosystem services as they grow to maturity, particularly around the creation of shade in this high footfall location adjacent to Finchley Road.



Camley Street

Project name
Camley Street Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS)
N1C WPW

Project team
Camden Council, Robert Bray Associates, Volker Fitzpatrick, IdVerde

Funding sources
S106 and Thames Water

Total budget
£360,000





The 135-metre-long sustainable drainage system (SuDS) was completed in 2020 and disconnects an area of 1,537 m2 from the sewer and holds water before it enters the drainage network. There are also 11 tree pits and planting beds containing over 30 diverse herbaceous planting and bulbs, contributing to local biodiversity improvements.

The rain gardens and surrounding highways improvements also provide amenity to the local area with biodiversity from the planting, and an 'urban cooling' effect from the maturing street trees. The project was an example of how flood risk management and street greening can work together to provide solutions to our changing climate.



Fleet Valley Pocket Park

Project name
Fleet Valley Pocket Park
Holborn
WC1X 0AY

Project team
Camden Council, LUC,
Volker Fitzpatrick, IdVerde

Funding sources
S106, Thames Water SWMP grant

Total budget
£400,000





The pocket park helped to realise a long-held aspiration from the community to create a new neighbourhood park in this location. Previously a large expanse of paving, the pocket park pulled together various themes to help achieve a rich community-centred green space in an area of open space deficiency.

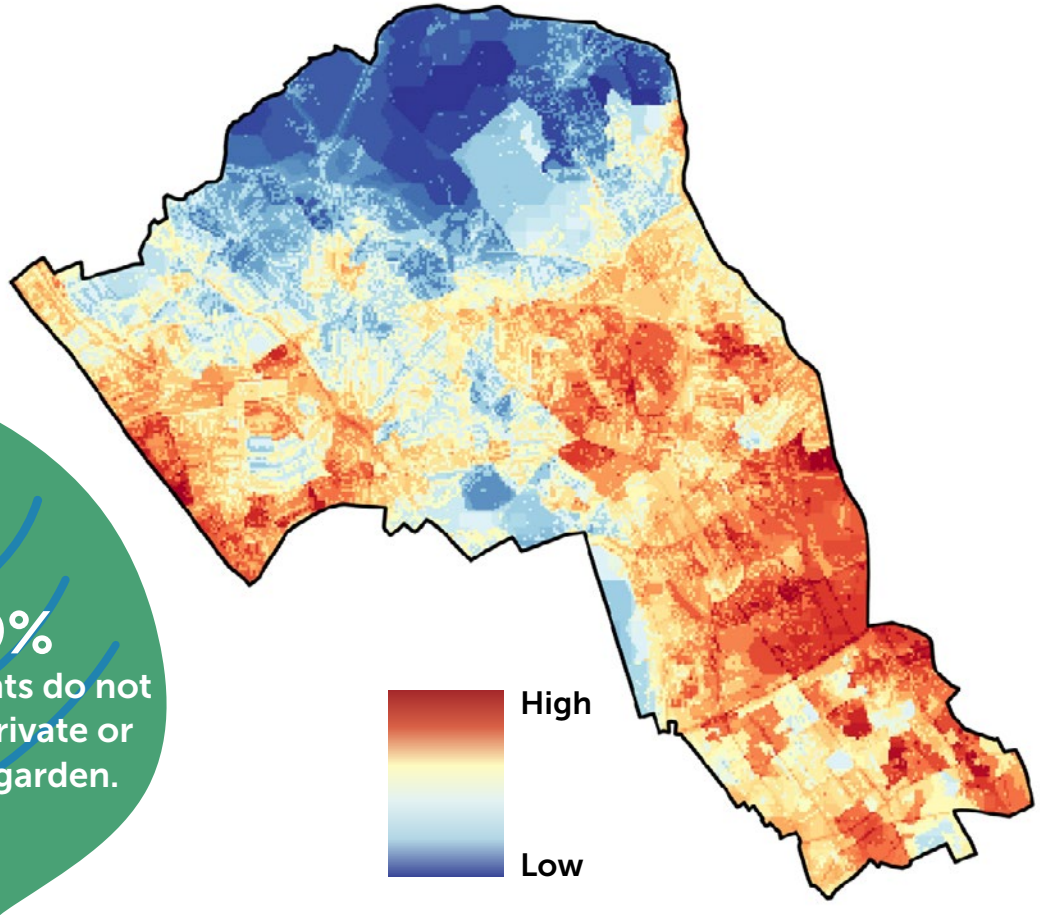
The design focuses on the creation of large capacity rain gardens, with a significant below ground storage structure to hold surface water and reduce flood risk. Community art also played a significant role in the project, with a local artist creating vinyl wraps to decorate the electrical feeder pillars, and the local school children designing bespoke brass plaques that reference environmental stewardship.

Inequality in access

Inequality in access to green space is one of Camden's defining challenges. As an inner-London borough, Camden experiences some of the most acute environmental and social pressures in the country, including limited space and high-density living conditions, poor air quality, climate-related flood risk, urban heat, and stark inequality in access to nature.

We also know that these challenges are not experienced equally across the borough and that broadly speaking areas with higher social pressures have less access to high-quality green space. Many neighbourhoods, such as Kentish Town, Gospel Oak and parts of Holborn lack high-quality public green space within a short walking distance. This inequality limits residents' opportunities to exercise, relax, play and connect with nature.

39%
of residents do not have a private or shared garden.



This map shows how different areas of Camden are exposed to higher or lower levels of climate risks like urban heating or surface water flooding

Source: Mayor of London

Programme priorities

Every project in the programme delivers at least one of these three priorities:

Priority 1:
Supporting Healthy Lifestyles

The programme invests in play areas, sports facilities, outdoor gyms, walking routes, and attractive spaces where people can be active and sociable. These improvements will help increase physical activity and reduce health inequalities across the borough, supporting the borough's Parks for Health Strategy.

- Parks for Health Strategy
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Camden Transport Strategy

Priority 2:
Making Green Space Inclusive and Accessible

The GSIP will ensure that all new projects follow accessible design standards, helping to support the London Mayor's aspiration to make London a more child-friendly city. This work includes improving paths, lighting, signage and seating, as well as providing stimulating and inclusive play features. Making green spaces and facilities feel safe and welcoming to all Camden residents is a key part of delivering this priority.

- Diversity in the Public Realm 2023-2028
- Make Space for Girls
- Everything to Play For – Play Commission

Priority 3:
Building Climate and Ecological Resilience

Camden's green spaces play a crucial role in cooling the borough, reducing flood risk, supporting biodiversity and creating nature-rich habitats. Investments will focus on planting, high-performance sustainable urban drainage (SuDS), and increasing canopy cover where climate impacts are greatest.

- Climate Action Plan 2020-2025
- Tree Planting Strategy 2020-2025
- Make Space for Nature

What is funded

The programme funds capital improvements to a wide range of spaces, including parks, housing estates, pocket parks, streetscapes, playgrounds, and nature-based green infrastructure such as rain gardens and sustainable urban drainage systems.

All GSIP projects are based on need, using data on deprivation, green space accessibility, asset condition, safety concerns and site quality. This ensures that investment goes where it will have the biggest impact in Camden, targeting the sites and communities where investments are most needed.



Evidence assessment criteria for selecting projects

- Deprivation scoring
- Resident feedback
- Asset condition / safety
- Existing quality of green space assets
- Green space deficiency maps

Evidence and public engagement shape the scope of the projects with investment priorities matched against available funding

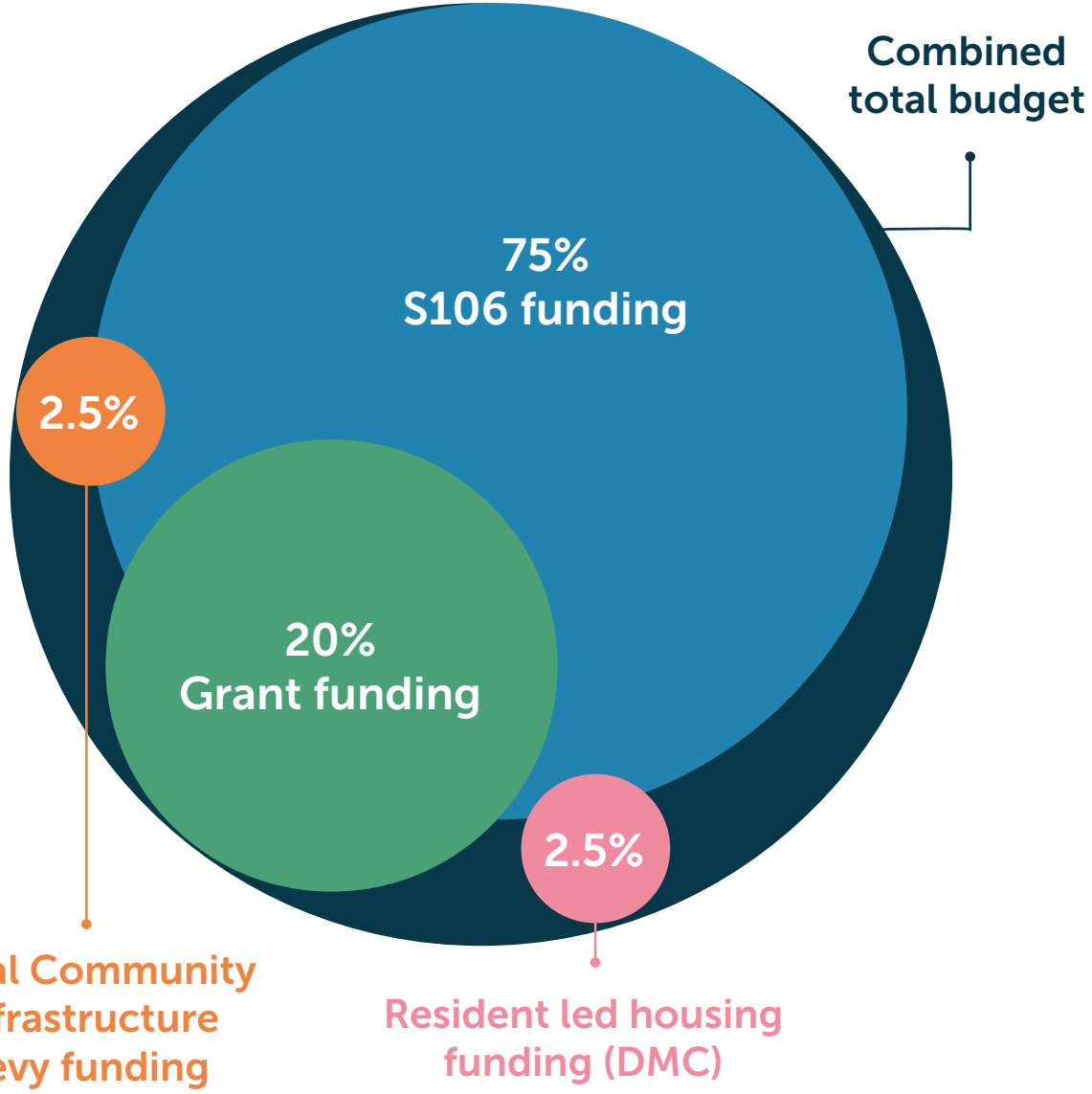
Evidence	Engagement	Investment Priorities	Funding
Deprivation indicator (IMO)	Boroughwide resident survey	Supporting Healthy Lifestyles	Open Space S106
Asset condition survey	Resident and community conversations	Making Green Space Inclusive and Accessible	Grant funding
Borough wide resident survey data	Local stakeholder groups	Building Climate and Ecological Resilience	Local CIL funding
Quality evaluation of play and informal sports	Local Councillors		DMC funding
Areas of open space deficiency mapping			Community/third party support
			Transport programme

Funding the programme

The programme is funded through a combination of Section 106 contributions, the Local Community Infrastructure Levy (Local CIL), capital funding from the council's general fund and external grants. These funding streams are combined wherever possible to maximise the value and impact of each project.

The programme delivers capital investment in green space and works in tandem with the revenue-funded maintenance teams to ensure designs are sensitive to available budgets and that ongoing maintenance costs are minimised wherever possible.

Developer Contributions
Section 106 funding makes up a large part of the funding for the programme. This funding is paid to the council when a developer is unable to meet the policy requirements for open space within their development footprint, which is often the case in central London where land values are so high and space is so limited. This funding is then reinvested into Camden's open spaces to ensure the impact of new development is offset by upgraded and improved facilities for residents.



A greener, healthier, fairer Camden



Through the Green Space Investment Programme, Camden is investing in the wellbeing of its residents, the resilience of its neighbourhoods and the health of its natural environment. Green spaces make Camden a better place to live, now and for generations to come.

The programme addresses issues of access to facilities and distribution of green space, creating a more just mix of green spaces to ensure the benefits of high-quality green space are experienced by all Camden residents.

Making Camden a climate resilient borough is essential if we are to mitigate the impacts of climate change. This means that considered green infrastructure will be introduced to create more shade and reduce the risk of flooding.

Resident feedback matters

Resident feedback matters

More than 400 residents contributed feedback to help shape our current green space investment programme priorities. Community ideas and suggestions also guide the project design process to ensure each project meets local needs and is tailored to the site-specific context of a project.

We recognise that our communities are diverse and that different forms of engagement are essential to get effective input on projects from a wide range of ages and backgrounds. These methods include face-to-face discussions, online feedback using more detailed plans presented in a way that people can digest in their own time, workshop sessions with specific communities or groups, as well as specialist input from experts where appropriate.

How you can get involved

Whether you're a regular park user, local resident, volunteer or community organisation, there are many ways to help shape Camden's green spaces. Below are the key areas where you can help shape your local park or green space.

Share your ideas and help design projects

Take part in consultations and tell us what improvements matter most in your neighbourhood. We promote projects via letter drops, emailing through established community organisations, online engagement sessions, community workshop sessions and most importantly in-person events where we can hear views and ideas from residents.

Join a Friends Group or volunteer

Many Camden parks have active volunteer groups that help improve and champion local spaces. There are also lots of great opportunities for volunteers in Camden parks, including help with planting, habitat creation, food growing and community events. If you would like to join your local Friends of Group or would like to know more about establishing a group, please get in contact on: **Parks@camden.gov.uk**

If you have any project suggestions or would like to understand more about our project work, please visit: **camdengreenspaces.commonplace.is**

Or contact us on: greenspaceimprovements@camden.gov.uk







Camden