

## **Camden Together**

### **Bloomsbury Ward Community Strategy Consultation**

**Notes of a meeting held on 21 November 2006 at 7.00pm at the NLA Building, 26 Store Street.**

#### **Camden Council councillors and officers present:**

Cllr Penny Abraham  
Cllr Fazlul Chowdhury  
Cllr Rebecca Hossack  
Gerri Scott, Assistant Director Community and Regeneration  
Richard Mason, Members' Office

#### **Members of the public present:**

Diana Scarrott	Friends of St. Georges Gardens
Martino Cartello	Warren Court Residents Association
Nicholas Falk	
Jo Winters	Ridgmount Gardens Residents' Association
Clive Henderson	Gordon Mansions Residents' Association
Eileen O'Keefe	Gordon Mansions Residents Association
Max Neufeld	
M. MacDonald	Camden New Journal
P.J Futatsugi	C.S Tenants' and Residents' Association
I.K Layzell	C.S Tenants' and Residents' Association
M. Scales	
Charles Stephens	Cleveland Court Residents' Association
Peter Wright	Holborn D.M.C
John O'Keefe	Gordon Mansions
Rod Jones	Bedford Court Mansions Ltd
Edward Gismatullin	Cavendish Mansions
Maria Ijuatura	Cavendish mansions
Paul Hawkins	Kings Cross & Brunswick Neighbourhood Assoc.
Jo Wright	Patisserie Deux Amis
Mr Townend	Patisserie Deux Amis
Darren Bone	Metropolitan Police.

#### **Welcomes and Introductions**

Cllr Abraham thanked all those in attendance, and introduced Cllr Chowdhury, Cllr Hossack and Gerri Scott. Cllr Abraham thanked the NLA for kindly letting us use their facilities for the meeting.

Cllr Hossack started the presentation by explaining that the Community Strategy will make the Council's policy until 2011.

#### **Part 1: Creating a Borough of Opportunity**

- After a general discussion by all present it was agreed that before a community strategy could be formed, a Social Audit should be conducted to ascertain the exact needs of the Bloomsbury Ward. It was strongly felt that it is imperative to analyse specific issues within the Ward, before we can begin to address them.

- It was felt that residents of Bloomsbury need to be made aware of their choices, in planning the future of the ward.

Cllr Abraham explained that a community strategy has to be completed, but in order to complete a community strategy a test case should be conducted.

- It was suggested that Camden use other major European cities as a benchmark to move forward with the Community Strategy.

- Other developments need to be taken into account when planning Bloomsbury's Strategy.

- It was felt that more should be done to promote the history of Camden. Tourist guides and planned historical walks.

## **Part 2: Balancing Growth With Our Environment**

- Camden needs to think how developments will affect local businesses. The renovation of the Brunswick Centre has had a detrimental affect on local businesses.

- Waiting/Loading Bays needed for local businesses to help them survive against the global organisations.

- Planning Applications need to be stricter and much more scrutinised to stop global companies and large organisations moving in.

- It was strongly felt that Camden needs a local business development plan.

- Camden should promote the use of car clubs.

- It is felt that resident parking is too cheap and not a deterrent for people to own cars.

- It was agreed that Camden should pioneer changes in the Planning laws to retain the character of the area.

- Can Camden broker a deal on developments where spaces in a multi-storey car park be assigned to residents free of charge to discourage people from using their cars, and to provide more space on the roads for cycle spaces.

- More resources should be spent on improving cycling in the Borough, with more routes and cycle spaces needed especially outside shops. Bedford Sq

was used as an example where a car parking space was converted into spaces for bicycles.

- It was felt that Bloomsbury's neighbourhoods and streets should be stated as "Special Places".

### **Part 3: Building Strong, healthy and Connected Communities**

- Camden needs to support more local unemployed people trying to get back into work.

Gerri Scott responded by informing the meeting that Camden already have a scheme of training local people, funded by the London Development Agency.

- It was suggested that Libraries should open longer hours, encouraging more of a social gathering.
- The Social Housing in Bloomsbury needs to be seriously addressed.
- It was strongly felt that in order to help and support small local businesses, Camden should provide financial incentives.
- The borough needs more available sports facilities.
- It was wholly agreed that Camden should reintroduce the sports centre subsidy for Camden residents.
- It was felt by all that not enough sports facilities were available to young people.
- All those present agreed that Bloomsbury desperately need play centres.
- Concerns were raised over the increasing division of the Hospital Quarter and the University Quarter from the rest of the community. The inclusion of these two institutions made Bloomsbury the vibrant and diverse place that it is.

### **Part 4: A Safe and Vibrant Place at the Heart of a World City**

- It was felt by all present that basic human needs were not being met. The Doctor's surgeries were a "disgrace".
- Concerns were raised over the proposed cuts to the voluntary sector.

Gerri Scott informed the meeting that three additional funding priorities have been identified in Camden: Environmental Sustainability, Community Safety and a Credit Union Scheme.

- It was strongly felt by all present that if an area is safe for children, it is safe for everyone. A safer environment for the children of Bloomsbury is needed.
- It was felt that there is a clear distinction between addressing Bloomsbury as a local community and the centre of a World City.
- Pedestrians should be given priority to cars. The Euston Road crossings were used as an example of how cars are prioritised.
- It was stressed that if Camden were safe for children, it would be safe for everyone.
- It was strongly felt that more Police on the streets are needed.
- It was felt by all that Police need to be more approachable.
- After discussion, it was strongly agreed that “less theory more practice” policing was needed through-out the borough.
- It was suggested that residents of Bloomsbury should receive discounts at local theatres.

Cllr Hossack stated that the people of Bloomsbury have come to the meeting on a very cold night because they really do care and want Camden to listen.

Cllr Abraham informed the meeting that a Sustainability task force would analyse the small shops and local businesses sustainability.

**The meeting was concluded at 9:10pm.**

**Cllr Abraham, Cllr chowdhury and Cllr Hossack thanked everyone for attending.**