

Camden Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy

2024 – 2029



This strategy sets out our plan to make Camden the best place to work in Adult Social Care, and how we will build and sustain a workforce that meets the needs of those who draw on our service now and in the future.

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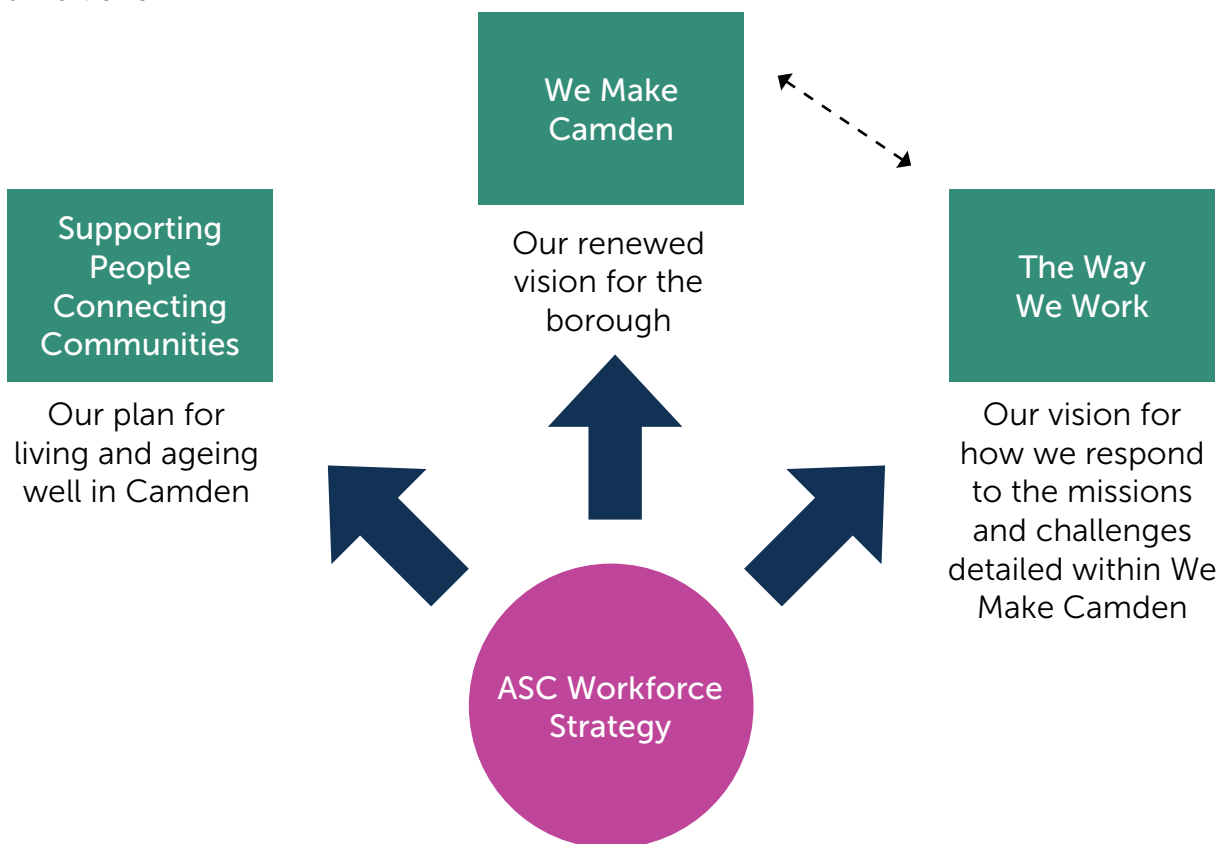
1. Foreword

Camden’s Adult Social Care (ASC) workforce is central to our success in supporting Camden citizens to stay well, remain independent and achieve what matters to them. The dedication and commitment of our workforce is unquestionable and the value they contribute to the borough is significant.

During the Covid-19 pandemic ASC staff pulled together to ensure those drawing on ASC services continued to receive quality support. The lasting impact of the pandemic, coupled with increased demand and financial challenges, requires us to think creatively and collaboratively to address our workforce challenges.

This strategy sets out our vision for our social care workforce across Camden. It outlines the steps we will take in partnership with our commissioned providers to cultivate a workforce that is equipped in both number and skill to serve our community effectively.

This strategy supports delivery of Supporting People Connecting Communities, our plan for living and ageing well in Camden, and both We Make Camden and The Way We Work, which challenge us to think differently about how we work together, how we put people at the centre of what we do, and how we remain relational in all that we do. A strong, happy and sustainable workforce is fundamental if we are to deliver on our ambitions.



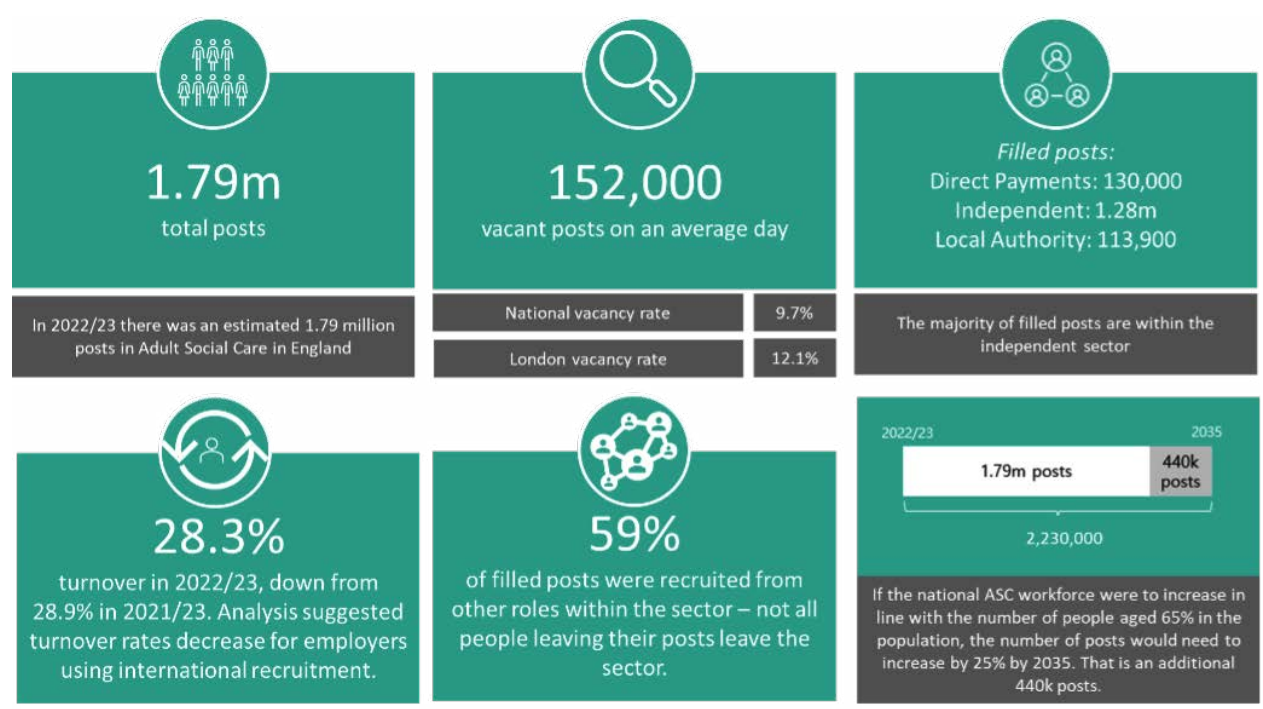


2. Context and drivers for change

Adult Social Care in Camden delivers various services to help people achieve what matters to them. Care and support is delivered from different sources: staff employed by Camden Council, Personal Assistants hired by residents and external providers commissioned by the council. It is also crucial to recognise the significant role played by our abundant voluntary and community sector in supporting people in the community. Their contribution is vital and invaluable.

National context:

Workforce pressures in Adult Social Care are not unique to Camden – across England, challenges are being felt with regards to vacancy levels, and pressures from changing demographics of the general population and the ASC workforce.



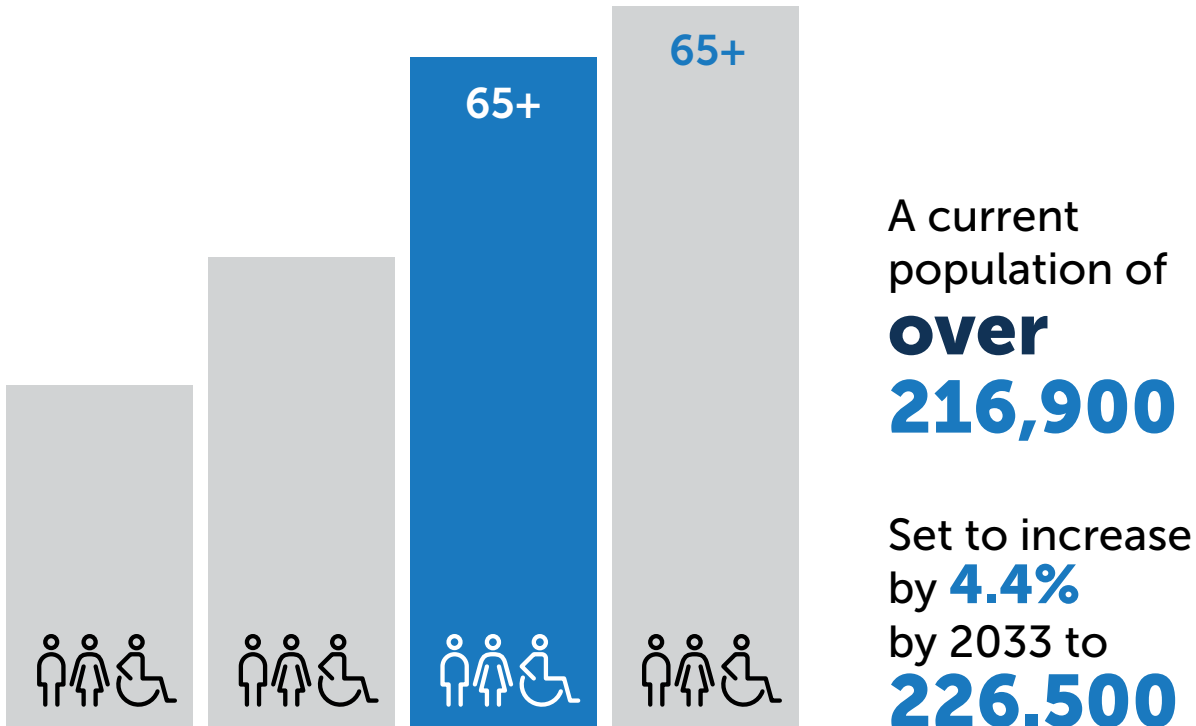
Data taken from: **The State of the Adult Social Care Sector and Workforce 2023**



Local context: Camden's population and workforce

Camden's population

The GLA population estimates and Camden Profile forecast that Camden was home to over 216,900 people in mid-2023, 11.7% of which were over the age of 65. The forecast predicted that by 2033 the population would have increased by 4.4% in total (9592 people). The most significant forecasted increase is seen in the over 65s – it is forecasted there will be a 51.7% increase, and that by 2033 people aged over 65 will account for 14.3% of Camden's total population.



Whilst Adult Social Care supports more than just people who are aged 65+, it is a good indicator of future pressures, as over half of people in receipt of social care services in Camden are over the age of 65.

There are currently over 2,900 people in Camden in receipt of Adult Social Care services, of which 56% are over the age of 65.

Camden's Adult Social Care Workforce

The Skills for Care 2022/23 report and ONS data and projections provide a helpful overview of the composition of the ASC workforce across Camden. This data is a helpful scene set and provides us with an opportunity to consider where we focus our efforts as part of our action plan.

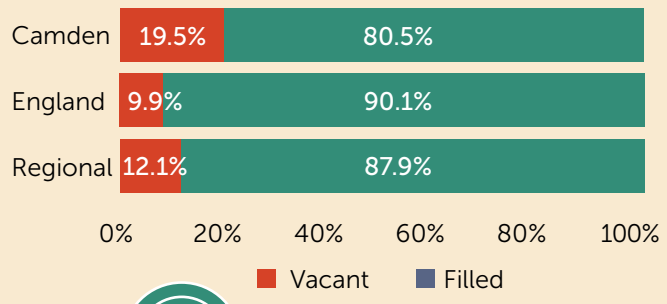


4500

total filled FTE posts

In 2022/23 it was estimated that Camden had over 4500 filled full time equivalent posts in its social care workforce across roles employed by the local authority and independent sector, and roles employed by recipients of direct payments. 67% of people in these posts were recruited from within the sector.

Vacancy levels: It was estimated that staff vacancy rate in Camden was 19.5%, which is higher than the regional and England averages of 12.1% and 9.9% respectively.



Other data

Economic contribution of social care workforce in Camden (gross value added):	£316m
Average age of workers	49
People aged 55+	30%
Posts reaching retirement in the next 10 years	1800
Black, Asian and other ethnic minority staff	68%



6.8

Sickness days per annum

The average number of sickness days taken in the last year in Camden was 6.8. This is higher than the London average of 5.9%. Internally, our 2023/24 Q1 HR highlight report calculated 9.5 average sickness days per staff member. The average number of sickness days across the whole of the UK labour market is 5.7.

Sources:

- The state of the Adult Social Care sector and workforce in England
- ONS national population projections
- ONS Labour Market

What has been done to address these challenges?

To tackle workforce challenges, providers and local authorities across the country have implemented a variety of strategies such as offering apprenticeships, partnering with educational institutions, leveraging technology for improved care and working conditions, cautiously exploring international recruitment, and making best use of government funding to recruit and retain staff. Each entity faces unique challenges and resources, with different providers and local authorities facing unique challenges and with different resources at their disposal.



Summary:

Recruitment and retention challenges in the sector jeopardise service sustainability and quality, especially with growing demand. Camden requires a robust, skilled workforce to continue to deliver a high-quality service. With challenging local and national drivers, Camden's social care employers must foster conditions for a skilled workforce that thrives and adapts to challenges, whilst taking account of the challenging financial reality within which we operate.

3. Scope

Camden's Adult Social Care sector encompasses diverse professions, roles and employers. To effectively address workforce challenges we need to extend beyond internal strategies and instead foster collaboration, resource pooling and knowledge sharing.

The scope of this strategy therefore includes (but is not limited to):

- Camden's internal Adult Social Care services
- Commissioned providers, including, for example, those providing:
 - Care Homes
 - Extra Care housing schemes
 - Domiciliary care
 - Supported Living schemes
- Personal Assistants and people who employ Personal Assistants.

4. What we've done so far

This strategy builds on work already underway, including:

- Conducting a review of our internal ASC workforce in 2022
- Working with Partners in Health and Care to engage with providers across Camden and establish appetite for working together
- Establishing a full time ASC Workforce Strategy Lead position
- Trialling an internal Camden ASC recruitment event to address internal workforce needs
- Creating internal Adult Social Care recruitment marketing materials including a website, video and leaflets
- Testing new ways of working/models without commissioned providers (e.g. fixed hours contracts)
- Conducting a recruitment pilot for Personal Assistants in collaboration with Good Work Camden
- Developing an internal Learning and Development Plan
- Conducting a supervision survey within our internal operations service to understand views of supervisees and supervisors
- Approving a biennial intake of both social work and OT apprentices.



5. Our approach

This strategy sets out our vision for our Camden Adult Social Care workforce with five key pillars each with specific visions and proposed actions. An action plan (set out in Appendix A) accompanies the strategy. Both documents are living, subject to iterative review and will be updated based on progress and shifting priorities.

Successful strategy delivery relies on collaboration with staff across the organisation, local commissioners, commissioned partners and sub-regional colleagues in health and across North Central London (NCL).

The ASC Workforce Lead will oversee the implementation at a programme level, with projects within the programme managed by relevant teams and individuals. Objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that demonstrate progress and impact will be scoped at project level by project leads for each action in the programme.

Progress on the action plan will be reported quarterly through the Supporting People Connecting Communities board. Ownership of the strategy rests with the ASC Innovation Team.

6. Our current challenges

Camden's Adult Social Care sector faces an array of workforce challenges. Recruitment remains a persistent hurdle, with a shortage of people applying for, accepting and remaining in roles – particularly in critical roles such as care workers and social workers. This scarcity is exacerbated by the declining perception of social care as a good career, making it challenging to attract new talent and younger staff into the sector.

Pay and conditions pose challenges, with competition from sectors like retail and hospitality, where pay may be similar but responsibilities and emotional labour are lower. Addressing these concerns by offering better pay and flexibility could boost retention, though implementation remains challenging due to service demands (e.g. preferred hours of care) and financial constraints. It should be noted that in order to scope and enact these changes it will be essential to engage at a national level to influence future funding decisions, with support from ADASS.

Financial pressures combined with the increasing complexity of need and demand, require creative models of pay and conditions to provide the required care while supporting the workforce's well-being. Stress, burnout, and sickness among staff further emphasise the urgency of supporting staff wellbeing.

To create a thriving and sustainable workforce, Camden's social care market must enhance retention and offer career progression opportunities – both upwards and sideways across services. By tackling these multifaceted challenges, Camden can pave the way for a resilient and effective workforce.



Challenges include:

- Recruitment and retention
- Poor perception of social care as a good career
- People join the service to help others and can be frustrated at the level of paperwork and processing in the role, causing them to leave the sector
- Pay and conditions e.g. flexible working, high caseloads, managing waiting lists
- Financial pressures on the system alongside increasing complexity of need and demand on the service
- Staff wellbeing and sickness levels
- Contracting models to deliver the care we need and support a sustainable workforce
- Progression.

7. Our overarching vision

This strategy and associated action plan will support Camden Adult Social Care to achieve the following overarching workforce vision:

Our workforce is happy, and morale is high resulting in turnover and vacancy rates at or below the national average (28.3% and 9.9% respectively)

At all levels Camden's ASC workforce will represent and support the diverse communities of Camden

Camden's ASC workforce will have the skills, knowledge and capabilities to provide high quality support to those who draw on our services

Camden's ASC workforce is flexible and resilient to change

A career in Adult Social Care in Camden is perceived as a favourable option by many – we have redefined and repositioned how a career in this sector is perceived. There is a clear pipeline of people entering the sector, excited about the prospect of a long and fulfilling career in Adult Social Care.

8. Our key priority pillars

The development of this strategy has been informed by engagement with many stakeholders and partners including:

- Camden's internal Adult Social Care workforce
- Camden's commissioned Adult Social Care providers
- Trade unions
- Commissioners
- Leads from internal organisational development, resourcing, human resources and learning and development teams



- Camden Black Workers Group
- Cross-council leads for groups such as Race Equality Catalyst Group, Rainbow Network, Carers Group, and Disability Network
- North Central London workforce lead(s)
- Good Work Camden.

Through engagement, 5 key priority pillars have been identified to help us deliver on our vision. Each pillar has an ambition statement, a description of the current challenges faced, and a list of actions that we believe will aid us in achieving our ambition (some of which are already underway).

Our 5 key pillars:

1. Tackling inequalities and supporting staff with protected characteristics

- Fair provision of reward and recognition
- A diverse workforce at all levels
- Staff are listened to and protected from discrimination

2. Learning development and progression

- Comprehensive L&D offer that supports professional development
- A culture of systemic and individual learning
- Clear and identifiable progression pathways

3. Recruitment

- Innovative and tailored recruitment processes
- Demand modelling informs requirements
- A range of contract types and flexible working arrangement are available
- ASC have a business focused approach to working with agencies

4. Staff wellbeing and recognition

- Staff are celebrated
- Resources and support are available
- Staff are connected to and understand decision making
- Quality supervision

5. Working with our commissioned providers

- A stable workforce
- Working in partnership
- Effective recruitment
- Empowered staff

Many of our commissioned providers are significant in size and have their own strategies seeking to address challenges detailed within this strategy. These organisations have their own recruitment infrastructure and have indicated that at times working together would be beneficial. As such, Pillar 5 is dedicated to working with our commissioned providers, and acknowledges their experience and expertise, alongside



a shared desire to continue to work together on workforce challenges. Pillar 1, Tackling inequalities and supporting staff with protected characteristics, also references our commissioned providers.

9. Cross cutting themes

To ensure delivery of the ambitions listed within each of the above pillars there are three cross cutting themes that must be considered:

1. **Communications:** effective communication is crucial for engaging staff across the service including keeping staff informed, collaborating with colleagues from various services and directorates (e.g. HR) and actively participating in initiatives led by other services that align with ASC's workforce goals. To ensure awareness and support, an overarching communications plan should be developed early on, and updated regularly to align with actions/projects as they are scoped and developed.
2. **Data and insight:** there is a wealth of data available that demonstrates the state of the ASC workforce – both internally and externally. Ensuring that data underpins projects is essential as it will not only demonstrate a case for change, but also the impact of actions taken. It is vital that ASC works closely with colleagues in other departments to collect, make sense of, and make best use of data.
3. **Working in partnership:** Collaboration is essential for addressing unique workforce challenges in Adult Social Care. Partnering with colleagues across and beyond the organisation, including Children's Services, Good Work Camden, Human Resources, and commissioned providers, is crucial. The success of this strategy relies on ASC actively involving other services in delivery, championing existing initiatives, and maximising collaboration with colleagues in different departments.



Pillar 1: Tackling inequalities and supporting staff with protected characteristics

Addressing inequalities and supporting staff who may experience inequalities due to their protected characteristics is critical. With demographic shifts, evolving care needs and heightened awareness of social justice issues, it is essential that this strategy both recognises and actively seeks to address any disparities experienced by staff working directly for the Council, or staff who work for providers that we commission.

Our current challenges include:

- Some staff have told us that they experience prejudice whilst at work
- Staff have said that they are not confident formally reporting abuse or discrimination
- Reward and recognition data does not always demonstrate fair and equal distribution
- Internal workforce data demonstrates low numbers of staff recording a disability and Neurodiversity (this is in line with organisation wide figures, but still is an opportunity for improvement)
- As role grades increase, racial diversity decreases
- Some staff report that they do not see the impact of their contribution to conversations around protected characteristics.

Ambition: Adult Social Care is committed to representation. We are a service that takes bold and radical actions to ensure that inequalities are redressed. Our workforce reflects the diversity of the population we serve. Our communications are inclusive and demonstrate a 'language matters' approach.

Vision: By 2028

Fair provision of reward and recognition

- Reward and recognition is provided fairly and equally across the service, regardless of team, role, level or protected characteristic(s).

A diverse workforce at all levels

- The ASC workforce reflects the diversity of the population it serves.
- Data demonstrates that progression occurs equitably across all protected characteristics.
- ASC workforce data is accurate, and is viewed through an equalities lens at DMT and SMT.

Staff are protected from discrimination and are listened to

- Staff trust that their employer will protect them from discrimination in the workplace.
- More staff in Adult Social Care use wellbeing passports to communicate their needs and preferences with colleagues and managers.
- Staff understand how their views and opinions have been listened to and see the impact of their involvement in conversations.



What we will do

We will continue to:

1. Promote our Memorandum of Understanding expanding this to make clear that it covers all protected characteristics, encouraging staff to report all incidents through the new Discrimination Hub, promoting this reporting route through
 2. Review reward and recognition data to understand and act on any disparities between staff in different roles/teams, on different grades, with different protected characteristics etc.
 3. Regularly review workforce data and take action where issues arise or underrepresentation exists.
-

We will also:

1. Take action to improve recording of protected characteristics e.g. the accuracy of our data on staff disability and Neurodiversity, undertaking regular service communications to address recording concerns
2. Use ASC communications channels to champion and promote work the wider organisation are doing to support with protected characteristics or additional needs e.g. increasing use/knowledge of Wellbeing Passports
3. Adopt a “you said we did” approach together by engaging with staff who have protected characteristics to not only hear their views but work together to enact the changes they want to see, ensuring staff can see the outcome of their contributions to conversations, and be a part of the change if they wish
4. Develop a routes to progression approach that includes supported opportunities and exposure for staff with protected characteristics, linking in with and promoting corporate opportunities e.g. mentorship and sponsorship schemes.



Pillar 2: Learning, development and progression

Ensuring staff have access to excellent learning, development and progression opportunities not only underpins quality service delivery but it also plays a significant and crucial role in staff motivation, satisfaction and retention. In Camden, our What Matters principles shape the way we deliver Adult Social Care Services and work is underway to better embed these principles across services. This will also support staff to gain the confidence, skills, capabilities and experiences with which to progress their careers. ASC currently has a learning and development offer but there is opportunity to expand this by actively commissioning more learning opportunities.

Ambition: A systemic and person-centred learning culture is at the heart of Adult Social Care, we celebrate learning over failure versus success. Staff are fully engaged in and own their development and understand how individual and collective development links to resident outcomes. ASC has a comprehensive learning and development offer for staff to tap into, that seeks to ensure staff have the knowledge, skills and confidence required to provide the best care and support possible to those who draw on our services. A learning and development framework addresses key areas of learning for all staff and allows for flexible support for development opportunities. We adopt a test and learn approach when designing learning pathways and progression development opportunities. Staff are highly valued, and the service ensures skills are developed and made best use of, and that staff are supported to progress in their career if they wish to do so.

Vision: By 2028

Comprehensive L&D offer that supports professional development

- All staff are suitably skilled to deliver their role.
- Staff report feeling supported by ASC and the wider organisation with their professional development.
- There are a variety of flexible learning opportunities for staff to build knowledge and test and develop new skills and confidence.
- What Matters principles are well embedded across all services.
- ASC has a comprehensive L&D offer and framework that address key areas of learning for all staff and allow for flexible support for development opportunities.

A culture of systemic and individual learning

- All managers feel able to identify competency requirements and confident to develop teams and coach staff.
- We invest in staff who want to stay and develop within their existing role, acknowledging the importance of specialisms and/or brilliant all-rounders.

Clear and identifiable progression pathways

- There are identifiable progression pathways for all staff across the service.
- There are succession plans and progression pathways that support staff to succeed in achieving internal promotion.



What we will do

We will continue to:

1. Refine and embed our What Matters approach throughout Adult Social Care
2. Develop an annual ASC Learning and Development offer and framework that is informed by learning needs analysis and meets compliance and development requirements. The offer should clearly demonstrate links to resident outcomes, have specific modules co-produced and delivered by experts-by-experience and will meet the learning needs of staff in both operational and non-operational roles. Learning opportunities hosted by other services such as Public Health training – Making Every Contact Count, and Mental Health Awareness will be signposted to. Staff will be supported to navigate the learning offer and learn within their work, through protected time for learning, self-directed learning, reciprocal learning, reflection, shadowing, mentoring and coaching.

We will also:

1. Map career pathways across the service, sharing these to demonstrate the potential of a career in ASC and routes to progression
2. Enhance our ASC local induction, ensuring all staff receive the right training and information at the right time
3. Have a renewed focus on supervision, focussing on supporting managers to provide high quality supervision, where staff receive person-centred support and guidance around their career aspirations, balancing individual aspirations with the needs of the service, and are supported to navigate the ASC learning offer and learn within their work through learning, reflection, shadowing, mentoring and coaching. This could involve encouraging attendance at readily available HR focussed L&D sessions, setting up bespoke training, reviewing our ASC supervision policy etc.
4. Build in job application and interview skills learning opportunities to support staff to apply for vacant posts
5. Strengthen links with local and regional workforce groups to share opportunities and resources e.g. Camden Training Hub, NCL etc.



Pillar 3: Recruitment

Recruitment challenges exist across the sector and are being particularly felt in relation to occupational therapists, social workers with mental health experience, commissioners, and roles in ASC specialist financial services. With high demand on the service, recruitment and the effort required to recruit can impact service capacity further and can lead to increased use of agency. This not only drives instability and cost, but can also impact on quality, and the progression opportunities availability for both internal and agency staff. Our vacancy and rates (at place level) are higher than the national and regional average, and anecdotally it is felt that a career in Adult Social Care is not as an attractive prospect as it once was.

Ambition: recruitment into social care vacancies is effective, timely and often local, and will yield a well-staffed, motivated and compassionate workforce who are committed to staying at Camden to develop their career. A career in Adult Social Care in Camden is viewed as a career of choice and open to many including those who have poor access to the employment market (e.g. people balancing caring responsibilities, people with few academic qualifications), and people returning to the sector after a career break. Camden Adult Social Care has a strong contribution to the local economy.

Vision: By 2028

Innovative and tailored recruitment processes

- Recruitment systems and processes will be innovative and tailored to the role, and will meet our recruitment needs.
- The service will see reducing vacancy levels and agency use.
- Recruitment efforts result in a pool of high calibre candidates from diverse communities, many of whom live in Camden.

Data and demand modelling informs requirements and decision making

- Demand modelling will inform our resourcing requirements, we horizon scan, and adopt a risk-based approach to resourcing.
- A career in Adult Social Care in Camden will be an attractive prospect, there is a clear pipeline of staff entering the service which is planned for in light of demand modelling.

A range of contract types and flexible working offers

- Adult social care will be recognised as a service that champions people's choices on contract types and flexible working requirements whilst still meeting service requirements.

A business focussed approach to working with agencies

- We will have a commercial and business focussed approach to working with agencies around agency to permanent arrangements and pay.



What we will do

We will continue to:

1. Work to adopt a more planned approach to Social Work ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year In Employment) and apprentice recruitment, being mindful of the ongoing development needs of individuals once in their role e.g. considering rotations, career upon completion etc., and supporting teams hosting ASYE/ apprentices (e.g. providing backfill etc)
2. Consider how flexible working is managed across the service, ensuring that we balance the needs of the community, individual (and their wellbeing), and the organisation. Assess the flex working offers of frontline teams within Camden, and other ASC services beyond Camden.

We will also:

1. Regularly review agency use, requiring justification at SMT for long-term placements and ensuring all agency workers have regular opportunities to apply for permanent roles. Continue to work within agency cap rates set by London ADASS for Occupational Therapist and Social Worker positions, communicating changes with managers
2. Review and streamline our internal end-to-end recruitment process including supporting managers to take a more active role, and considering rolling adverts, how we recruit to values, the role of co-production, and how we market our vacancies (including a review of our job profiles)
3. Gain insights from exit interviews (both promoting and supporting wider organisational effort to increase take up and undertaking local in-service interviews), and phone calls with staff who decline job offers. Data could be incorporated into quarterly HR scorecards
4. Work with corporate HR colleagues on policy implementation across the service e.g. through training and guidance on topics such as recruitment, managing performance, understanding our establishment and budget management
5. Link up with local schools and colleges to promote careers in social care, aiming to bring more young people into the sector, creating a pipeline of staff for the future
6. Scope and agree how the service can support people who wish to gain support to enter the sector, return after a career break or transfer qualifications gained overseas
7. Run recruitment and marketing campaigns for hard-to-fill roles, supported by strong communications that challenge and redress the way the sector and roles within it are perceived
8. Review whether Adult Social Care has parity of esteem with Children's Social Care –e.g. reviewing our approach to reward and recognition
9. Undertake targeted recruitment campaigns in partnership with health, colleges and other partners ensuring the image and profile of social work is promoted and the sector is a career of choice.



Pillar 4: Staff wellbeing and recognition

Looking after the wellbeing of our workforce is vital – it not only positively impacts people's ability to undertake their roles, but as a consequence it positively impacts retention. We know many staff feel the pressure of heavy workloads, impacted by resourcing gaps and other demands such as preparation for inspection and a wealth of opportunities (both corporate and in-service) that require input. Being mindful of workloads whilst focussing on how the service can support wellbeing, recognition and work-life balance (through flexible working options) is essential.

Ambition: Adult Social Care staff feel valued, supported and empowered to contribute their best. Through meaningful recognition, effective management support and service and individual-appropriate flexible working options, job satisfaction and morale in Adult Social Care will be high. This ultimately will enhance the quality of support we provide to those who draw on our service.

Vision: By 2028

Staff are celebrated

- Staff wellbeing and happiness at work is high.
- Staff are regularly celebrated for their work, with reward and recognition provided fairly and consistently, with no discrepancies between teams, role grade or protected characteristics.

Support is available and used

- Resources and support are readily available and communicated about regularly.

Staff are connected to and understand decision making

- ASC communicates effectively to staff at all levels. Staff are connected to and understand our strategic decision making and context.

All staff receive quality supervision

- All staff receive quality, person-centred supervision that covers their workload, wellbeing, progression and development.

What we will do

We will continue to:

1. Hold annual celebration events that recognise staff
2. Develop a sophisticated approach to internal and external communications
3. Review reward and recognition data provision across the service, taking action to address disparities, and establish a shared understanding between managers of what warrants recognition. This includes section 75 arrangements and ensuring equitable provision for staff in these services.
4. Undertake supervision survey(s) – expanding these to non-operational staff, ensuring



managers receive the right guidance and support to supervise staff, that they tap into existing policies and training, and that staff have a means of providing feedback where they think their supervision experience could/should be different

5. Review how flexible working is utilised across the service, acknowledging the role that flexibility has in work life balance and staff wellbeing (see recruitment pillar for more information).

We will also:

1. Support managers to understand and make best use of our organisational reward and recognition scheme, analysing this data frequently to ensure equity
2. Re-confirm our approach to ASC supervision – setting expectations and supporting managers to deliver excellent supervision
3. Promote corporate wellbeing offer across ASC more regularly, ensuring staff know how to access support
4. Link in with colleagues in HR around organisational trauma support initiatives.



Pillar 5: Working with our commissioned providers

Recruitment challenges are felt in relation to care workers, registered and deputy manager roles, and non-frontline roles; retention is also a concern. Workforce pressures mean some services struggle to respond to referrals in a timely way and there is increased use of agency and spot purchasing, which can affect budgets and the quality of service delivery. It particularly affects our ability to deliver person-centred and outcomes-focussed support that relies on care workers knowing those they support well, which is challenging when turnover and agency use is high.

It is important to recognise the strength of our commissioned providers, with many organisations already possessing a robust workforce strategy and recruitment infrastructure. Additionally, commissioners have undertaken work to stabilise the workforce through contracting mechanisms, sharing intelligence, ensuring contracts reflect our commitment to the London Living Wage and being signed up to the Ethical Care Charter, and supporting providers to train and sustain a skilled workforce.

Ambition: a vision for our commissioned workforce will be shared by all. Recruitment to roles in commissioned services is not a challenge, with an abundance of high calibre, often local applicants with the right values applying for, obtaining and progressing in roles across the sector, ensuring the residents are able to draw on high quality services.

Vision: By 2028 we will be working closely with our commissioned providers to:

A stable workforce

- Stabilise the workforce, promoting local recruitment and reducing vacancies at all levels.
- Pilot new ways of working that may promote retention e.g. guaranteed hours pilots.
- Identify and communicate progression pathways for staff.

Working in partnership

- Hold a shared workforce vision.
- Co-produce services.
- Work together to market a career in social care.

Services are delivered in line with Camden's approach

- Embed the wellbeing model across all commissioned services, inclusive of (but not limited to) trauma informed support, psychologically informed environments and values-based recruitment.
- Deliver What Matters consistently in a culturally sensitive way.
- Empower to confidently voice concerns regarding their safety, instances of abuse, or unmet resident needs, ensuring prompt and supportive actions are taken in response.



What we will do:

We will continue to:

1. Develop the Personal Assistant market, working with the Direct Payment Steering Group (and co-production offshoot group), People Plus and Good Work Camden to run and evaluate pilots, host events, consider pay rates, and to consider role of micro enterprises, community catalysts and circles of support in the development of the Personal Assistant market
2. Maximise use of NCL workforce support such as recruitment and learning and development initiatives through linking in with the NCL Workforce Academy and their offer e.g. Proud to Care, job brokering
3. Monitor the impact of international recruitment and changes in rules/regulations, considering how this may affect the workforce
4. Support providers to deliver services in line with our What Matters approach
5. Provide access to some of Camden's learning and development offer, in-reach to co-produce training standards and deliver train-the-trainer programmes. Consider whether providers could access Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training, What Matters training and leadership development training. Ensure that there is a clear offer and rationale
6. Continue to ensure the sustainability of our local Adult Social Care market e.g. by procuring services and uplifting contracts in line with market rates – striking a balance between affordability for the Council and a sustainable and fair price for providers that enables both good pay and funds for workforce development initiatives.

We will also:

1. Build a shared vision of a sustainable workforce
2. Amplify the role of Good Work Camden in supporting providers to recruit to their vacancies
3. Engage, alongside our providers and their HR, L&D and strategy leads, in sector wide and local recruitment and initiatives e.g. joint campaigns and recruitment fairs, local marketing initiatives, joint advertising, using staff as ambassadors, marketing)
4. Participate in sub-regional and national campaigns on improving the reputation of social care as a career, the future of our social care workforce and overcoming shared challenges
5. Support providers to embed values-based recruitment and the implementation of the wellbeing model
7. Include commissioned providers in celebration events that recognise staff and explore what role Camden Council could pay in rewarding exceptional work
8. Consider new commissioning models that support locality-based working to support staff retention and incentivise best-practice for recruitment.



Conclusion

Adult Social Care at both a national and local level faces many workforce challenges and will continue to do so as demand inevitably increases. It is vital that we adopt a planned and strategic approach to supporting the development of a workforce that is abundant in both number and skill to meet current and future challenges.

This strategy emphasises collaboration not only amongst council staff, but between other employers (e.g. Personal Assistants and commissioned providers), and workforce leads at sub-regional and national levels. Given the current landscape, it is vital that both resources and time constraints are considered when implementing this strategy – there are a number of additional priorities and stressors in the system that will create direct competition with implementation of this strategy.

This strategy has been written alongside an action plan (see Appendix A), that describes which priorities will be focussed on in year 1, with the remainder to be picked up in years 2-5. This will develop over time iteratively as the impact of implemented solutions is measured, and the landscape continues to develop.



Appendix A: Action plan

Actions for year 1

Pillar 1: Tackling inequalities

Fair provision of reward and recognition:

- Review reward and recognition data to understand and act on any disparities between staff in different roles, on different grades, with different protected characteristics etc.

Staff are supported to work in ways that align with their personal circumstances:

- Use ASC communications channels to champion and promote work the wider organisation are doing to support staff who have protected characteristics or other additional responsibilities e.g. increasing use/knowledge of Wellbeing Passports through promoting training sessions, carers cuppas, disability hub, rainbow network.

A diverse workforce at all levels:

- Regularly review workforce data and take action where issues arise or underrepresentation exists.
- Take action to improve recording of protected characteristics e.g. the accuracy of our data on staff disability and Neurodiversity, undertaking regular service communications to address recording concerns.

Develop routes to progression approach that includes supported opportunities and exposure for staff with protected characteristics:

- Staff are protected from discrimination and are listened to.
- Promote our Memorandum of Understanding: Zero tolerance to abuse towards staff, expanding this to cover all protected characteristics, encouraging staff to report all incidents through the new Discrimination Hub, working with colleagues in Corporate Services to promote this.
- More staff in Adult Social Care use wellbeing passports to communicate their needs and preferences with colleagues and managers.

Pillar 2: Learning, development and progression

Comprehensive L&D offer that supports professional development:

- Refine and embed our What Matters approach throughout Adult Social Care.
- Develop an annual ASC Learning and Development Plan and offer that is informed by learning needs analysis and meets compliance and development requirements. The offer clearly demonstrate links to resident outcomes, will have specific modules co-produced and delivered by experts-by-experience and will meet the learning needs of staff in both operational and non-operational roles. The ASC Learning and Development Plan will signpost to additional training hosted by other services such as Public Health training – Making Every Contact Count, and Mental Health Awareness. Staff will be supported to navigate the learning offer and learn within their work, through protected time for learning, self-directed learning, reciprocal learning, reflection, shadowing, mentoring and coaching.



A culture of systemic and individual learning:

- Support managers to provide high quality supervision, where staff receive person-centred support and guidance around their career aspirations, balancing individual aspirations with the needs of the service, and are supported to navigate the ASC learning offer and learn within their work through learning, reflection, shadowing, mentoring and coaching.

Pillar 3: Recruitment

Innovative and tailored recruitment processes:

- Work to adopt a more planned approach to Social Work ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year In Employment) and apprentice recruitment, being mindful of the ongoing development needs of individuals once in their role e.g. considering rotations, career upon completion etc., and supporting teams hosting ASYE/ apprentices (e.g. providing backfill etc).
- Where agency use is required and approved, work within the agency cap rates set by London ADASS, sharing updates with managers across the service and holding ourselves and other local authorities to account.
- Review and streamline our internal end-to-end recruitment process including supporting managers to take a more active role, considering rolling adverts, how we recruit to values, the role of co-production, and how we market ourselves, reviewing our job descriptions.

Data and demand modelling informs requirements and decision making:

- Gain insights from exit interviews (both promoting and supporting wider organisational effort to increase take up and undertaking local in-service interviews), and phone calls with staff who decline job offers. Data could be incorporated into quarterly HR scorecards.

A range of contract types and flexible working offers:

- Consider how flexible working is managed across the service, ensuring that we balance the needs of the community, individual (and their wellbeing), and the organisation. Assess the flex working offers of frontline teams within Camden, and other ASC services beyond Camden.

Business focussed approach to working with agencies:

- Regularly review agency use, requiring justification at SMT for long-term placements and ensuring all agency workers have regular opportunities to apply for permanent roles. Continue to work within agency cap rates set by London ADASS for Occupational Therapist and Social Worker positions, communicating changes with managers.

Pillar 4: Wellbeing

Staff are celebrated:

- Hold annual celebration events that recognise staff .
- Review reward and recognition data provision across the service, taking action to address disparities, and establish a shared understanding between managers of what warrants recognition. This includes section 75 arrangements and ensuring equitable provision for staff in these services.

**Support is available and used:**

- Promote corporate wellbeing offer across ASC more regularly, ensuring staff know where to access support from.
- Link in with colleagues in HR around organisational trauma support initiatives.

Staff are connected to and understand decision making:

- Develop a sophisticated approach to internal and external communications.

All staff receive quality supervision:

- Undertake supervision survey(s) – expanding these to non-operational staff, ensuring managers receive the right guidance and support to supervise staff, that they tap into existing policies and training, and that staff have a means of providing feedback where they think their supervision experience could/should be different.

Pillar 5: Working with our commissioned providers

A stable workforce:

- Develop the Personal Assistant market, working with the Direct Payment Steering Group (and Co-production offshoot group), People Plus and Good Work Camden to run and evaluate pilots, put on events, consider pay rates etc.
- Amplify the role of Good Work Camden in supporting providers to recruit to their vacancies.
- Monitor the impact of international recruitment and changes in rules/regulations, considering how this may affect the workforce.
- Engage, alongside our providers and their HR, L&D and strategy leads, in sector wide and local recruitment and initiatives e.g. joint campaigns and recruitment fairs, local marketing initiatives, joint advertising, using staff as ambassadors, marketing)
- Maximise use of NCL workforce support such as recruitment and learning and development initiatives through linking in with the NCL Workforce Academy and their offer e.g. Proud to Care, job brokering.
- Consider new commissioning models that support locality-based working to support staff retention and incentivise best-practice for recruitment.

Working in partnership:

- Build a shared vision of a sustainable workforce.
- Provide access to some of Camden's learning and development offer, in-reach to co-produce training standards and deliver train-the-trainer programmes. Consider whether providers could access Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training, What Matters training and leadership development training. Ensure that there is a clear offer and rationale.

Services are delivered in line with Camden's approach:

- Support providers to deliver services in line with our What Matters approach
- Continue to ensure the sustainability of our local adult social care market e.g. by procuring services and uplifting contracts in line with market rates – striking a balance between affordability for the Council and a sustainable and fair price for providers that enables both good pay and funds for workforce development initiatives.



Actions for year 2 onwards (to be reviewed)

Pillar 1: Tackling inequalities

- Adopt a “you said we did” approach together by engaging with staff who have protected characteristics to not only hear their views but work together to enact the changes they want to see, ensuring staff can see the outcome of their contributions to conversations, and be a part of the change if they wish.

Pillar 2: Learning, development and progression

- Map career pathways across the service, sharing these to demonstrate the potential of a career in ASC and routes to progression.
- Enhance our ASC local induction, ensuring all staff receive the right training and information at the right time.
- Build in job application and interview skills learning opportunities to support staff to apply for vacant posts.
- Strengthen links with local and regional workforce groups to share opportunities and resources e.g. Camden Training Hub, NCL etc.

Pillar 3: Recruitment

- Work with corporate HR colleagues on policy implementation across the service e.g. through training and guidance on topics such as recruitment, managing performance, understanding our establishment and budget management.
- Link up with local schools and colleges to promote careers in social care, aiming to bring more young people into the sector, creating a pipeline of staff for the future.
- Scope and agree how the service can support people who wish to gain support to enter the sector, return after a career break or transfer qualifications gained overseas.
- Run recruitment and marketing campaigns for hard-to-fill roles, supported by strong communications that challenge and redress the way the sector and roles within it are perceived.
- Review whether Adult Social Care has parity of esteem with Children’s Social Care –e.g. reviewing our approach to reward and recognition.
- Undertake targeted recruitment campaigns in partnership with health, colleges and other partners ensuring the image and profile of social work is promoted and the sector is a career of choice.

Pillar 4: Wellbeing

- Support managers to understand and make best use of our organisational reward and recognition scheme, analysing this data frequently to ensure equity.
- Re-confirm our approach to ASC supervision – setting expectations and supporting managers to deliver excellent supervision.



Pillar 5: Working with our commissioned providers

- Participate in sub-regional and national campaigns on improving the reputation of social care as a career, the future of our social care workforce and overcoming shared challenges.
- Support providers to embed values-based recruitment and the implementation of the wellbeing model.
- Include commissioned providers in celebration events that recognise staff and explore what role Camden Council could play in rewarding exceptional work.

Other

A conversation is required with colleagues across the council to understand the following:

- Appetite for future in-housing of commissioned services.
- If and how housing could support care worker recruitment, acknowledging the disparity between seeking staff local to Camden and the high rental/purchase prices of homes in the borough.
- Implementing support packages for hard-to-reach roles e.g. relocation support.

Whilst not in the scope of this current strategy, these could be considered if other actions are delivered early.



**Camden Adult Social Care
Workforce Strategy**
2024 – 2029