

COMMUNITY



Power to Change working with Camden Council

Piloting a ‘Community Improvement District’ in Kilburn

How piloting a ‘community improvement district’ in Kilburn is driving community-led regeneration

Camden Council led the pilot of the ‘One Kilburn’ Community Improvement District with funding and support from Power to Change and funding from the Greater London Authority.

A Community Improvement District (CID) is a new community-led approach to high street renewal, inspired by the Business Improvement District (BID) form to create a local regeneration partnership in which the community is a crucial player.

Prior to the CID, the local view was that there was a need to step up and better coordinate work to improve Kilburn which is the meeting point of the Camden, Brent and Westminster boroughs. A major town centre, the mile-long Kilburn High Road has excellent public transport connections, independent businesses and a strong VCS, but also and poor-quality public realm and challenges around congestion and pollution. Kilburn also has disproportionately high levels of long-term unemployment and health inequalities. There was no existing BID, and the local community and other high street stakeholders had faced challenges in articulating and galvanising action with a single voice.

ONE KILBURN ACHIEVEMENTS in 2023 HERE'S TO MORE IN '24!



One Kilburn Achievements in 2023

One Kilburn has created a new way for the councils to work in partnership with residents to address community needs. For example, it has unlocked access to meanwhile spaces for community organisations, enabled the delivery of a number of arts projects and is providing a platform for sharing project ideas and supporting their design and delivery.

Learning from One Kilburn and six other pilots demonstrates three main benefits from the CID approach:

- Convening new groups of partners and initiating new conversations and activities:** Camden & Brent facilitated conversations with people who live, work and shop on Kilburn High Road, walkabouts of the area, an ‘imagination’ event at a local theatre, developed a planning group and a range of sub-groups, and the One Kilburn online platform
- Amplifying resident and less-heard voices:** One Kilburn employed and trained local people as ‘community activators’ as a new way of working with residents, building connections and generating ideas on issues such as greening the area, and activating vacant space; it also connected residents’ ideas to funding through the One Kilburn Community Fund
- Galvanising action and making ‘quick wins’:** One Kilburn ran a ‘toilet hackathon’ to address the lack of public WCs, which was preventing people from using the high street, responding to the small things that matter; it enabled Camden Black Creatives’ use of meanwhile space, and introduced a Library of Things in Camden Library

Community-led regeneration takes time, and work is ongoing to nurture One Kilburn and to further clarify its purpose and build local capacity to lead this work. However, One Kilburn has demonstrated that local residents value direct collaboration with the council and that seeing physical change motivates people to get involved.

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