

# CAMDEN GIVING

## KILBURN COMMUNITY RESEARCH: RACE REPORT



# Introduction

Our dream of an anti-racist Camden starts by disrupting the structures perpetuating racial inequalities on communities through equitable policymaking and investment.

Structural racism shows up in many ways in Camden for the 34% of residents who are from racialised communities in Camden. We know it's particularly prevalent in some neighbourhoods that have large ethnic communities alongside high levels of deprivation, some within the top 10-20% in the UK. Kilburn is the 2nd most deprived ward in Camden, 34% of children live in poverty, it has the 2nd highest number of households in food and fuel poverty. This disproportionately impacts racialised communities so we carried out community research to deepen our understanding of the root causes of structural racism on residents living here.

## The Community

**12,000**

KILBURN RESIDENTS

**50%+**

ASIAN, BLACK, ARAB, MIXED AND OTHER

**1/3**

NOT BORN IN THE UK

**17.5%**

HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO-ONE THAT HAS ENGLISH AS THEIR MAIN LANGUAGE

**2nd**

LARGEST FAITH IS ISLAM



## Our Approach

We worked with a group of 9 Camden Giving Alumni Members – community panellists who make decisions on our funding and citizen grantees who hold grants – who live in Kilburn and have deep understanding of racial and intersectional inequality in Camden. After an initial induction and training session, we led small group research tours ('Walking Ethnography') that centred their direct experiences through observations and conversations, while actively moving through Kilburn. We led discussions on the question "how does structural racism show up in Kilburn?" around key areas where racist structures might exist e.g. the geographic makeup, employment, housing, education, safety, community infrastructure. It was also important to identify the benefits that exist because of racially diverse communities to find ways to protect these good things.

## Community Researchers



FEMALE

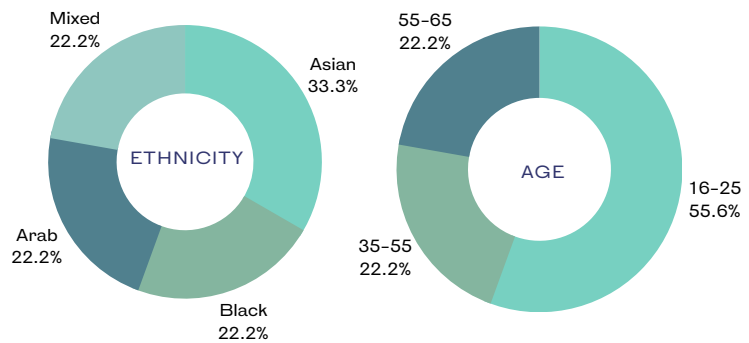
MALE



SOCIAL HOUSING

TEMPORARY HOUSING

PRIVATE RENTING



DISABLED



NEET

IN EMPLOYMENT

IN EDUCATION

# Our Approach: How it works

## COMMUNITY INSIGHTS



We have existing insights and knowledge on the experiences of racism on Camden's communities through working with residents as part of our Participatory Grantmaking. But it is limited and does not focus on specific geographic areas where we know racism is a significant issue, like Kilburn

## FUNDRAISING



Building on our racial justice strategy and commitment to being an anti-racist organisation that works to end inequality in Camden, we secured funding from Young Foundation to conduct community research that looks at the root causes and structural racism in Kilburn.

## COMMUNITY RESEARCHERS



Our Alumni, formed of community panellists and citizen grantees, have diverse experiences of inequality including racism. We recruited 9 Alumni who live in Kilburn to become Community Researchers. We paid them £25p/h to participate and supported them throughout the project.

## WALKING TOURS



We conducted a series of Walking Research Tours with the Kilburn Community Researchers around the Kilburn area, focussed on areas where structural racism exists such as housing, education, employment, safety, community and social infrastructure, public services and amenities.

## GATHERING RESEARCH

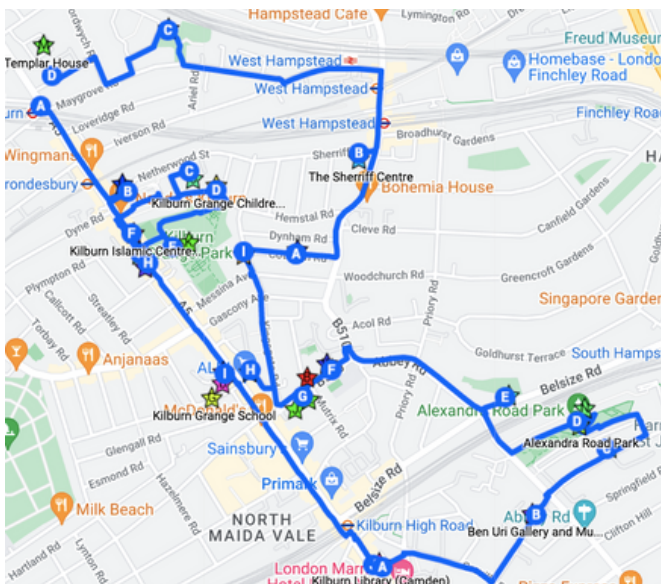


We captured conversational insights in small groups and 121s using interviews and photography physical and perceptual way to share experiences of places, interactions, feelings of racism, as well as the benefits brought about because of racially diverse communities.

## INFLUENCING & ADVOCACY



We'll build on the insights and research by providing recommendations to businesses, policymakers and funders, to enact on the Community Researchers priorities, as well as support our own Participatory Grantmaking



# Key Findings

## Public Amenities

The residents highly value the buzzing multi-cultural high street that is affordable and caters to the many faiths and cultures through the shops, restaurants and faith settings, and feel proud that it represents them. Men really value the only green space most residents have at Kilburn Park with the outdoor gym, as the two local gyms are expensive. Mental health is a big issue for black and brown men here, so it's important to them to have this space. Though women shared that there is a lack of affordable, safe spaces to exercise especially for muslim women, and felt it was not safe for young children as there are gang dogs, its not policed enough.

## Employment

Local jobs in Kilburn aren't paying enough to meet increasing costs of living, it's pushing young black and brown men into earning income illegitimately and families are being priced out of their neighbourhood. Global businesses like Google aren't reaching them or focussing on supporting them into leadership roles. They "don't want youth from Kilburn going to their protected space". This perpetuate structural racism and hinder efforts to promote equity and inclusion. Impacts young racialised residents who don't have relatable leaders in community to aspire to.



## Power, Representation & Investment

Kilburn sits between the border of some of Camden, Barnet and Westminster's wealthiest streets which visibly have more investment, policies (ie access to space, maintenance, community policing), and more of a priority as they're 'wealthier white' neighbourhoods. There's a significant lack of trust amongst policymakers and leaders making decisions that impact on racialised communities. There's a sense of gatekeeping of wealth and opportunity by policymakers, developers, big businesses, even Tenants & Resident Association in social housing blocks. The benefits of large development projects in Central/South Camden are not felt by racialised communities here including jobs and community cohesion. Residents voices don't feel heard or represented, so they are unable to influence important things that matter.



## Crime & Safety

Policing is not priority here compared to wealthier, affluent, developed areas like West Hampstead and Kings Cross, which is a result of racial structures. Police presence has been stripped back which means more crime is being committed on marginalised communities. The lack of youth services, interventions and funding affects everyone, young women get off at West Hampstead even though its longer to home they feel safer than walking through Kilburn. "Kilburn has so much drug dealing and they just let it happen" which particularly impacts young black and brown men.

## Community Infrastructure

There's inequality of access to opportunities, funding, and community infrastructure for racially diverse communities, so many services that used to protect and benefit them have closed. This increased community division between races and cultures as there's a lack of spaces to come together and build cohesion. All nurseries have closed so there are now no services for 0-5 year olds, alongside lack of youth intervention services and women's services is worrying. There's no real effort for targeted outreach particularly to the larger Arab, Asian and African communities whose first language isn't English, so cant keep in the loop with what's happening in the community.



## Housing

The disparities in housing quality and policies is very visible. Much of Kilburns ethnically diverse communities live in social housing where there's a lot of overcrowding problems and is not well maintained. "They make it obvious, almost deliberately labelling housing with big green signs and signs like "No Ball Games" and gated spaces like a prison. It doesn't help people across communities to integrate. It's also pushing many of us out because we can't afford to live here, there's no policy over landlords increasing rents. The Council and housing associations are fostering racial and social inequality, there are responsible young people like those living in hostel but who are overlooked and not supported by the system. Being in the youth justice system as a young black man, the system sets them up to fail. Racist social constructs like lack of employment and housing policies impact black communities. "We can earn money living in temporary housing but if we earn over a threshold we have to pay over £1k a month in rent, which isn't realistic, so we're kept in the cycle of the housing system."



## Education

Residents felt they had worse experiences in secondary school due to a lack of training, cultural awareness and support from teachers and white-washed curriculum, increasing exclusion rates and experience of microaggressions. There aren't any schools locally that support the many SEN children from racial backgrounds and not enough funding to support them, or it's not used properly. Schools don't accommodate for cultural and disability requirements which puts costs and burden onto parents, many on low incomes. Kingsgate Infant school has been moved to Primary School site, so it's much further for parents, including those with disabled children, to get there and is displacing communities.

# Recommendations

There are 3 key recommendations focussed on the Kilburn Community Researchers insights aimed at policymakers, government, corporates, developers and funders. By aligning actions with these recommendations, we can collectively contribute to more racially equitable and inclusive communities, economies, and social systems, while also addressing the challenges and priorities identified through the research insights.

## 1. Racially Equitable Funding & Investment

We'll provide our community panels with research insights so they can fund grassroots and citizen-led activity through our We Make Camden Kit including:

- investing in quality youth services that protect young racialised men through appropriate interventions and mentoring
- quality employment initiatives that prioritise black and brown residents to access leadership and decision-making
- providing representative and diverse spaces that promote community cohesion and building that bridge cultural divides and build a sense of inclusion and belonging. Support initiatives that bring people together, foster familiarity, and enhance understanding among diverse groups.
- affordable, safe spaces that promotes wellbeing for racialised women to exercise.
- community activism and campaigning.

Other Camden funders should put in place funding allocation mechanisms that are informed by this research to more effectively invest in Kilburn in the long-term and build the community infrastructure sustainably.

Camden, Brent and Westminster boroughs should invest in building social infrastructure in Kilburn, with residents and community leaders, to design and inform a racially equitable community, social and public sector, including the high street. Resources should be directed towards initiatives and economic activity that tackle systemic causes of racial inequality and safeguard and enhance these positive aspects.



*We're on the border of 3 different boroughs who are not coordinating with each other and not prioritising Kilburn communities. We exist between some of the richest areas, and I think because of that is one of the most forgotten places.*

## 2. Inclusive Labour Market

Promoting equitable access to employment opportunities where black and brown residents are underrepresented in the labour market, for example ringfencing targeted training and skills development particularly for the Black and Arab community and young men at risk. This could include collaborating with local community services and agencies embedded in the community to create pathways to employment and entrepreneurial mentorship, addressing the challenges faced by young men affected by youth violence.

Policymakers can develop policies to create a better infrastructure that facilitate equitable access to the labour market within large, global corporates and developers that are moving and building in Camden. Kilburn residents want to feel the benefits of regeneration and development particularly of those based in Central and South Camden where investment and jobs are created and more accessible to hyper local communities.

# Recommendations Continued...

## 3. Representative Decision Making & Policy

Empower racialised communities to engage in decision-making processes around policy including:

- Prioritising equitable investment in Kilburn so the benefits of regeneration and development projects extend to racialised communities, relating to job opportunities, community infrastructure and leadership development.
- Establish policies that ensure equal access to space, amenities and maintenance regardless of the neighborhood's demographic makeup, circumstance or affluence.
- Improve the quality and maintenance of social housing in Kilburn, addressing overcrowding and neglect. Ensure transparency in housing allocation and rental policies, preventing the perpetuation of racial and social inequality. Support responsible young people living in temporary housing by providing pathways to stable living conditions.
- Address systemic racial bias in policing by prioritising community safety, providing resources for youth services and interventions. Ensure equitable distribution of policing resources to tackle crime. Build trust through transparent and community-oriented law enforcement practices and bridge gaps between the police and racialised communities. Ensure youth are involved in policy that particularly disproportionately impacts young Arab and African men.
- Promoting transparent decision-making processes that involve community voices, fostering trust and representation. There should be more focus on different sectors and agencies collaborating, such as local government and community representatives to co-produce visions, policies and plans for addressing structural inequalities and prioritise equitable, civil society strength for collective action.

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*Kilburn is affordable because of locally owned shop and the market, its multicultural and we feel safe here and can enjoy food from our cultures! But the rich high street in neighbouring West Hampstead doesn't accommodate for the large Muslim community here. The difference between our two high streets street is stark.*



## Next Steps

We know more can be done to support communities in Kilburn and hope to continue beyond this initial phase of community led research to:

- Secure funding to conduct further research that will enable us to delve deeper into the initial findings and understand more about structural racism using an intersectional lens by age, faith, disability.
- Continue working with BRAP to understand the similarities and differences of racism with a place-based lens, and work collaboratively to influence change on a larger scale on themes we know are prevalent in both research – access to power and decision-making, equitable employment and economic opportunities, increased diversity and representation within leadership.
- We believe our donors and supporters can play a significant role in overcoming racial injustice. We will share our unique insights with them to better understand how racial inequalities contribute to, or are caused by, other issues in Camden. As well as use this knowledge to understand how they can promote racial equity as part of their strategies.

## Get In Touch

Email [danielle@camdengiving.org.uk](mailto:danielle@camdengiving.org.uk) to find out more about the Kilburn Community Research project.

To read our Racial Justice strategy visit

[www.camdengiving.org.uk/racial-justice-strategy-1](http://www.camdengiving.org.uk/racial-justice-strategy-1)

If you're interested in supporting or funding our Racial Justice work email [lucy@camdengiving.org.uk](mailto:lucy@camdengiving.org.uk)

