

Opportunity Through Community: The Power of Us

The Winch's strategy, 2019-2022

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Introduction and Summary

Our mission is to help each child succeed, regardless of their circumstances, by giving them the opportunities and support they need.

The Winch started when the Old Winchester Arms pub, was squatted in the early 1970s by a group of young people looking to rehouse their youth club. Since 1973, we've worked alongside thousands of children, young people and families across North Camden to draw on the strengths of and support the whole community, all while retaining our rebellious spirit! Some of the issues we tackle include social exclusion, homelessness and gang involvement.

This three year strategy is the result of an incredible amount of thought and hard work from the Winch staff, trustees, volunteers and beneficiaries since our initial planning discussion in January 2018.

The strategy is split into one organisational and three strategic goals:

Goal One: Work alongside children and young people to develop their strengths, skills and sense of purpose.

We will continue to invest in a **long-term, relational approach** with children, young people and families, and **remain committed to our 'Cradle-to-Career' offer**. We will see the positives in our communities and work to draw out their strengths. We will meet individuals where they are, exploring their interests and building their skills through programmes and activities like our After School Club, one-to-one Promise Work and The Company.

Goal Two: Connect people to create a kinder and more resourceful neighbourhood.

We will spend more of our time and resources not only on working alongside individuals but also **connecting people and creating kind, self-sustaining groups**. Connecting Parents, a parent-led group is an example of how we are currently doing this— many of the parents who attend the group help run and plan events and trips, and the connections and skills they have gained from the group reach far beyond the time they spend at The Winch.

We commit to **continue and strengthen our work with partner organisations and to seek new collaborations**, for example, other charities, schools and businesses.

Goal Three: Back community-led change.

We will work towards **creating long-term positive change, by nurturing and supporting more local residents to take the lead in shaping our community**. With continued cuts to public services, we aim to address difficulties and problems in the wider systems that our beneficiaries experience.

An example of how we are already working towards this is through working alongside Community Organisers. This year the North Camden Zone employed eight people from the Chalcots Estate, who have carried out 80 in-depth peer research interviews and will engage as many people as possible to write Community Manifestos as a basis for future change based on the voices of the community.

Goal Four: Build organisational excellence.

We will continually improve the ways we work so we can best deliver on our ambitions. We aim to:

- improve **participation**: make sure we are listening and responding to the voices of the children, young people and adults we work with and building their leadership and influence in our community;
- **strengthen our learning and impact culture**, so that we can demonstrate the effect we are having through our work, harnessing our curiosity and passion for professional growth to drive improvements ;
- **grow our income** through room hire and other sources of funding to invest in our future;
- make sure we are **working together across teams**, sharing our development and also **communicating successfully outside of The Winch**.

We hope we have captured the impressive contributions of everyone who has helped guide our thinking and shape our ambitions. We know the goals we have set ourselves are tough, but we believe we can rise to the challenge, for our children, for our young people and for our community.

The Challenges We Face

Camden is a brilliantly diverse area of central London, rich in opportunity and talent.

Camden has the fourth-highest number of businesses in the UK, generating 367,000 jobs. The borough is the third-highest contributor to London's economy, measured by Gross Value Add, and has some of the most valuable commercial property in the country.

Camden is also home to eleven Higher Education Institutions, many of which have an international profile. As a central London borough, Camden experiences a high degree of population 'churn'; the fourth highest in UK after the City, Cambridge and Oxford. In Camden, after English, the most commonly spoken languages are Bengali, French and Spanish; with Camden's young people speaking an impressive 163 different languages and dialects.

However, Camden faces some stubborn and persistent challenges.

36% of children continue to live in poverty and several neighbourhoods served by the Winch are in the poorest 10% in the country. A staggering 40% of children live in overcrowded accommodation. Camden Council estimate there are 12,000 children and young people living in challenging family situations, who without additional support, are at risk of suffering significant harm, the threshold for safeguarding intervention.

Despite its impressive stock of cultural capital and the generally very good standards of education provision, in Camden 44% of boys start school below expected levels of educational development and 37% of 19 year olds lack a qualification at Level 3 or above. Worryingly, there were 1,089 fixed term exclusions across state-funded schools.

Reflecting trends observed across London, there have been 600 incidents of knife crime in Camden, with injuries reported in 192 of these incidents - a rise from 347 (138) incidents in 2016/17. Authorities report a 13% increase in hate crime (to 2,748 offences in 2017/18) and a decline in the proportion of residents that agree Camden is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well –down to 68% from 86% in 2016. This erosion to the social fabric of our community, reflects our own analysis of the external environment, and is mirrored by our current national divisions.

Our new organisational strategy sets out how we will respond to these challenges, working on an 'eco-system' mode of the individual, friends and families, and the wider community and environment.

We will grow individual strengths and skills, ensuring we offer personalised support to overcome persistent challenges and bridge opportunity gaps. We will work with partners to better connect our families and communities, tackling isolation and nurturing new relationships, to counteract the growing division we face. We also intend to better incubate and support the efforts of our community to engage with our work, to lead and shape their own futures, and to impact on the wider systems that entrench inequality and embed injustice.

Our Strategic Goals 2019-22

Goal One: Work alongside children and young people to develop their strengths, skills and sense of purpose

The Winch works alongside children, young people and families to nurture, grow and celebrate their individual capabilities, through activities like Adventure Play, Promise Work, The Company and Family Support. From cradle-to-career, we provide personalised help and developmental experiences that assist children, young people and families in overcoming the challenges and disadvantages they face, so that they are better able to explore and pursue their aspirations, and live the life they deserve.

In the future, The Winch will build on this work by more systematically growing our youth and community leadership offer. We are as committed as ever to our face-to-face, long-term relational approach and will seek to enrich this through more digital engagement, and through extending our Promise approach to younger children.

Our approach to tackling the safety of our young people is fundamentally rooted in this approach of investing early in long-term relationships - with children and young people, with families and with local partners. Hence, we will create opportunities for children and young people to learn the skills they need to manage in the contexts and histories in which they live. This requires us to further develop our shared skills in recognising and managing the sustained impact of adverse childhood experiences on young people's development, and in designing smarter ways to mitigate and, where possible, help resolve or regulate the difficulties these experiences continue to create for them.

We will maintain our focus on building young people's confidence and self-esteem, promoting their social and emotional wellbeing, and linking more effectively our literacy development programmes to our Library offer. With local partners, we will provide opportunities that boost employability and skills development- fit for the future of work -in particular, for those young people at risk or disengaged from mainstream education.

Goal Two: Connect people to create a kinder and more resourceful neighbourhood

The Winch acts as a centre for the community; we are a 'community anchor'. In an increasingly fragmented and turbulent society, we seek to fulfil this purpose by working to engender kinship, scaffold community connections and create more opportunities for participation and belonging. Connecting Parents, a parent-led group that meets weekly, is one such example of how we currently achieve this. Our Family Meals and intergenerational lunches bring our wider Winch families together, often with the active support of local organisations, encouraging them to share and helping build mutual trust.

Our work with all ages in local schools, and the investment of business partners in our Company programme, reveal not only the social benefits of partnerships that bridge opportunities and help realise potential, but also evidence that generosity is not a fixed stock that is diminished in its sharing, but rather it is strengthened. This reciprocity is a fundamental requirement for a thriving civil society, and essential to the longer-term well-being of our community.

In the future, therefore, we will continue to grow our youth-led social action programmes. We believe they can increase peer-to-peer learning and cooperation, and that they enable new communities to form, giving young people positive groups to which they can belong. Our innovative North Camden Zone programme is focussed on generating new forms of community-led infrastructure that can help improve social cohesion and civic participation, celebrate and invest in local skills and talent, and make our neighbourhoods great places to live in. We will also build on the capacity of our holiday scheme provision to encourage more local children, otherwise separated by the school system, to mix and play together - equipping them with the skills to better manage conflict and build sustained friendships. Belsize Community Library will play a pivotal role in connecting disparate communities, reducing social isolation and increasing social capital.

We believe that we stand a better chance of changing our world if we work with others to achieve our goals. We will build and strengthen partnerships with organisations that can better assist our families and young people. This will mean creating routes to sources of expertise we don't hold, such as housing advice or specialised support for those families facing multiple and severe disadvantages. We will also explore innovative partnerships and joint working opportunities that can bring new resources into our community or create new capacity.

Goal Three: Back community-led change

With reduced state-provided assets and growing need, and in the context of eroding public-trust, The Winch aims to address difficulties and problems in the wider systems that our beneficiaries come into contact with. We aim to ensure children, young people and families can explore, identify and pursue the changes we believe will best secure positive, enduring change.

The North Camden Zone recently connected residents of local hostels with local service providers for a community 'hack' to improve housing conditions for families living diminished lives in temporary accommodation. It has since trained and built the capacity of local organisations to undertake systems-change initiatives across Camden, encouraging local leaders to work collectively. Take Back the Power, a project for young people affected by youth violence, connects young people to the skills, confidence and tools to share their views on the causes and impacts of youth violence on their lives, and seeks to inform the debate on youth safety, shaping the wider community response.

In the future, we envisage rolling out our community organising work to more local estates, investing in local residents and supporting their determination to create thriving communities in which to live and grow up in. We aim to scale up and share our learning and experiences through North Camden Zone to inspire more social action. We can't predict and determine all the activities, innovations and impacts this will create at this stage in our plans. However, we believe that adopting a strength-based approach to community-led systems change is fundamental to nurturing and sustaining our neighbourhoods and their civic growth, through this period of uncertainty and change.

We will secure further funding to grow our Take Back the Power programme, developing young people's research and campaigning skills, and supporting them to explore more active citizenship. We will also build the capacity of our volunteers and parents to lead projects and events that can be managed independently - opening up our mission to greater local involvement, and ensuring supporters and beneficiaries can play a more significant role in achieving our aspirations for our community.

Goal Four: Build organisational excellence

The Winch has always been ambitious for the children, young people and families it champions. It was founded on the hopes and aspirations our community holds for its young people. We are proud of that inheritance, and commit to continuously exploring how we can best make a difference, for those we support today and for those we want to reach in the future.

We have identified four priority themes that we believe are critical to our long term success and which reflect our values:

- **Advancing participation** – We will build more systemic practices to encourage and support greater beneficiary participation within our work, and offer more opportunities for engagement to our community of supporters, donors and volunteers.
- **Strengthening our learning and impact culture** – We will invest in our ability to learn from and improve our practice, and to better evaluate and communicate the difference we make. We will build on our commitment to develop effective models of work, and our ambition to nurture long-term relationships and trust, through supporting professional development.
- **Growing our income to invest in our future** – We will grow our income, diversifying our sources of funding to better sustain our ability to efficiently deliver our mission. We will focus on developing unrestricted income; securing more local giving, boosting our room hire income and testing new forms of revenue generation and enterprise. We will continue to seek mission-aligned partnerships and long term funding opportunities that enable us to deliver our goals.
- **Delivering effectively** – We will ensure we are better able to achieve our goals through operational improvements, embedding systems and developing processes that amplify our values and purpose, and which help us promote the wellbeing of young people and manage change. We will grow our communications infrastructure, so that we can engage and influence more effectively. Finally, we will continue to develop creative and sustainable solutions to resourcing fit for purpose facilities and spaces, including managing our planned building move.

Achieving Our Plan

Reach

We will reach 1,400 beneficiaries annually, aiming to achieve a balance between the ‘depth’ of our engagement and building long-term, trusting relationships, and striving to connect with those that would benefit most from being aware of the Winch, and from working with us.

We remain committed to our ‘Cradle-to-Career’ offer. We invest in long-standing relationships from an early age with young people and their families, and, in particular, with those that face the greatest challenges and for whom they have no one else to turn to or fight their corner.

Finance, Fundraising and Income Generation

Our three-year budget outlines how we plan to resource our efforts to achieve our goals. It also highlights some of the challenges we face and the opportunities we hope to create or secure.

We anticipate modest income growth over the strategic period, primarily driven through improved fundraising returns, with a focus on optimising our unrestricted income, deepening our local engagement and through working to improve our room hire offer.

We have also set out our initial ambitions around promoting innovation in our provision, both in terms of our service offering and in testing and growing different revenue models through trading and fees. In the current uncertain economic context, and with competition for funding intensifying, this will be challenging. However, we believe we have set out a realistic, workable and achievable plan.

The table below outlines the changes we aim to secure, over the course of the strategic plan.

<i>£ 000s</i>	Current		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3	
Trust and Foundation Grants	522	58%	554	59%	590	61%	589	59%
Local Authority Contracts and Grants	141	16%	125	13%	89	9%	75	8%
Trading Income	163	18%	191	20%	195	20%	207	21%
Donations	80	9%	70	8%	93	10%	122	12%
Total Income	907	100%	940	100%	968	100%	993	100%

Our planned move to a new building in 100 Avenue Road in 2022 will require us to undertake some significant capital fundraising. This will both incur additional costs and may temporarily see our income rise above the £1m mark.

100 Avenue Road Relocation

Except for Belsize Community Library, which is located in a separate building, most of our staff work from 21 Winchester Road, in a formerly derelict pub that was reclaimed and repurposed by local people. It's a space that we feel proud of, where overlapping generations of residents know they can always come to reach out to each other and our experienced staff. For young people without a support network or who are at risk, the continuity and reassurance of knowing someone is always there for them, in a friendly and familiar space, can make all the difference.

However, our current building at 21 Winchester Road also constrains us, limiting our capacity and impinging on our ability to realise potential. The building is reaching the end of its serviceable lifespan, and without substantial investment, will become unmanageable and unaffordable. We have therefore agreed, in principle, to move to a new, purpose-built community facility in the adjacent development at 100 Avenue Road.

We understand and empathise with the concerns of many local residents around the planned building at 100 Avenue Road. We will continue to engage with the Construction Working Group, adding our voice to ensure that these concerns are taken seriously by the developers, and working to mitigate the local disturbances the construction will create. At the same time, we are excited for the possibilities that a new facility for the community promises and for the opportunity to design a space that is safe, accessible and suitable for all.

There is much to do to secure, design, construct, finance and fit out the new building in time for a move that will align with our 50th anniversary in 2023. If we can achieve this goal, then we will also create the opportunity to do more for our community with more, and to better assure the long-term future of The Winch, albeit in a very different environment to the one which has shaped so many of our historic successes, traditions and culture.

This strategy lays some of the groundwork for this move, acknowledging the requirements and focus that this places on the organisation, and helps inform the kind of space we aspire to create to deliver into our future. It reinforces the need to continue to grow and deepen our engagement with our different communities so that they can continue to feel invested in our organisation, and so that we can sustain their pride and participation in our work.

Join us

Thank you for reading our strategic plan!

We are all part of many communities, systems and organisations that make up our eco-system, and we are all responsible for creating positive change. Putting this plan into action will be a collaborative effort across our whole neighbourhood, and we'd love for you to join us.

If you'd like to find out more about how you can get involved in The Winch's mission, via making a donation or volunteering your time or expertise, please visit:

<http://thewinch.org/get-involved/>

