



What will Boris do for us?

Boris Johnson's re-election as London Mayor means he will exert a significant influence over the lives of Londoners over the next four years.

Whilst his manifesto made little direct reference to the voluntary sector, Boris's proclaimed support for the London Citizens 'Citizens Agenda' is something which many in the sector will want to see him deliver on.

The Citizens Agenda comprises five key planks of policy, they relate to governance, housing, street safety, opportunities for young people and the London Living Wage.

Boris Johnson has already introduced the London Living Wage to City Hall and his manifesto contains a pledge to increase the number of companies that become 'living wage employers' from just over 100 to 250 in four years.

Figures suggest that about 20% of Londoners currently earn less than the current living wage figure of £8.30. That's over half a million people who struggle to meet the basic cost of living in the capital. Many local voluntary organisations pay the living wage but the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is one employer that has chosen not to implement it. Whether Boris is doing enough to make a difference on this issue is open to debate.

On youth employment Boris's policies centre on vastly expanding the apprenticeships



scheme. He plans to create an extra 100,000 by the end of this year and an additional 250,000 by 2016. We want to see if any of these opportunities turn into substantive jobs.

On housing Boris is pledging to deliver 55,000 new affordable homes by 2015. He has set targets in the London Plan to deliver 32,210 new homes every year but delivered only 18,310 last year. Rising private rents and an estimated 240,000 living in overcrowded accommodation is why many, including homelessness charity Shelter and the National Housing Federation, are calling for a greater increase in the available housing stock.

London needs a mayor that will work with local councils to ensure that our city is one that is full of

mixed neighbourhoods with housing for all. Healthy mixed communities are vital and require a good range of proper social housing and enough lower cost rented accommodation. After all one would hope that no one really wants to live in a monochrome world.

The Social Council is working with a number of groups locally and across London to ensure that the unfairness associated with recent decisions about housing and housing benefit is public knowledge.

Through our membership of London Citizens we will be part of a number of London wide campaigns to ensure fairness and social justice is delivered, especially through the role of the London mayor.

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**Kensington & Chelsea
Social Council (KCSC)**
works to support locally focused
voluntary and community
organisations serving local residents.

The views expressed in Link are not
necessarily those of KCSC.

Poverty Watch hears *Golborne* Voices

After speaking with around 70 local residents from the Golborne ward on what it is like to live in Golborne, the Social Council in partnership with several voluntary and community organisations held a dialogue session with Golborne residents on 3 May to discuss ways of improving the area and the lives of people who live locally.



Golborne Road during the Notting Hill Carnival: The area's rich diversity and range of cultures is something many people value and want to preserve.

The meeting was called following the release of figures earlier this year that showed the ward to be the second most deprived in London based on the extent measure of the Indices of Deprivation.

People spoke passionately about the need to protect the area's rich cultural mix and highlighted the concerns that mattered most. The rising cost of living was a running theme whilst people called for more to be done to boost learning and employment opportunities for youth, more affordable nursery care and improvements to the physical landscape.

A group from the meeting went forward to address councillors at a Borough Voluntary Advisory Group meeting to find ways the local community and the statutory authorities could work together to tackle some of the issues raised.

You can read about the Golborne Voices work at www.kcsc.org/povertywatch.

The Future of Affordable Housing



An artist's impression of the Wornington Green development currently under construction in North Kensington. There is concern that many people currently housed in the area will not be able to afford to live there much longer.

The council has produced a draft Housing Strategy and draft Tenancy Strategy for consultation until 10th June. The Housing Strategy lays out how affordable housing will be developed whilst the Tenancy Strategy sets out objectives for social housing providers on how social tenancies should be issued. Both draft strategies were presented at the Kensington and Chelsea Partnership on Tuesday 22 May.

A concern over 'affordable housing' is defining what is deemed 'affordable' in a borough where the cost of housing is amongst the highest in the UK. An estimated starting salary of £80,000 is required to get onto the housing ladder in Kensington and Chelsea. This salary is way out of the reach of many local residents, especially those in more deprived areas.

The future of social housing and the chances of getting a home are also a big concern in a borough

where 8000 people are currently on the housing waiting list. On average there are only 490 new lettings per year. With new legislation that will allow social landlords to charge up to 80% of the market rate for social housing and the impact of universal credit next year, there are fears that even social housing will be out of reach for local people in the future.

With high land values that mean buying a property is an option only for the few and space for building new homes at a premium, Kensington and Chelsea is not unique but is certainly an extreme case. Surely we should be arguing for a different response to the Government's guidance on social and affordable housing. One that values the rich social mix of our existing communities.

Your Credit Union, Kensington and Chelsea: The Changing Face of Ethical Banking



A new ethical credit union will soon be offering individuals and businesses a real alternative to high street banking in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC).

As well as providing a financial return, Your Credit Union will focus on investing in the local community, so money stays local and in the pockets of members, rather than just private shareholders.

Community-minded residents of RBKC and neighbouring areas will be offered the chance to invest money for social good, unlocking affordable financial services for people who may otherwise be unable to access mainstream banking.

Despite being one of the richest areas of the UK, almost a quarter of all residents in Kensington and

Chelsea – nearly 25,000 households – are marginalised from mainstream financial services and are frequently at the mercy of home credit companies, payday lenders, pawnbrokers and illegal loan sharks, often paying extortionate borrowing rates, sometimes as high as 2,000% APR.

The mutually owned and not-for-profit credit union aims to provide local people, no matter what their circumstances, with an opportunity to save and borrow using a fair, affordable and local service.

Interested individuals can find out more information about the credit union at www.yourcu.co.uk or contact **020 8354 5663**.

Building Vocal Confidence

The **Kensington Community Voices Project** was a Big Lottery funded community cohesion initiative supported by the Social Council and Westway Development Trust. It built vocal confidence amongst local people to enable them to speak up effectively at meetings as well as by telling their story through songs which they choose, learnt and performed.

The **Kensington Community Choir** was free and open to anyone living or working in the borough and members described how taking part helped them to increase their confidence, get out of their home and even lose weight!

A film about how the projects boosted vocal confidence can be viewed at

www.kcsc.org.uk/communityvoices.

Both projects were run by vocal coach Aneesa Chaudhry.



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The Olympics – A LEGACY

Five years ago the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) was set up. Now with the games just weeks away it is worth considering the legacy it will leave behind.

‘Our responsibility is to stage a great games for the athletes of the world – a games that inspires young people and heralds a new era for community development linked to sport, and maximises the social, economic and environmental benefits of the 2012 games for future generations.’

Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA), 2007

Kensington and Chelsea is one of the host boroughs for this summer’s games with indoor volleyball to be staged at the Earl’s Court Exhibition Centre and road cycling due to pass through Fulham Road.

In 2010 the council outlined its vision for a local legacy for the games in the policy – Raising the Bar – 2012 and Beyond. In it, the council states that the Olympic and Paralympic games will provide the opportunity to promote sport and physical activity amongst the residents of Kensington and Chelsea.

There is a particular emphasis in the policy on increasing physical activity for residents and groups in the north of the borough where statistics show historically lower levels of participation and poorer health outcomes.

The council’s Transport Environment and Leisure Service Delivery Plan also refers to a legacy for Kensington and Chelsea. It states its aim “to capitalise on the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics to promote recognition of the royal borough as a place for creativity and innovation, and increase



The Olympic Stadium has transformed the landscape of East London but will there be any lasting transformation for our communities?

participation in sport and community activity.”

The plan again, emphasises a desire to see increased levels of physical activity in the north of the borough.

So how are we doing?

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which maps the needs of the local population reported last year that whilst levels of physical activity (defined as 30 minutes 3 times a week) across the borough as a whole were much higher (28%) than the London (21.3%) and national (21%) average, in the north of the borough this

figure was much lower at 18%.

Obesity levels are generally lower than the London average despite a difference of 6-7% between the northern and southern parts of the borough. However worryingly, year 6 children (aged 10-11) in the borough see rates amongst the highest in the country. In 2009/10 the JSNA reported one quarter of year 6 children as obese.

To ensure the legacy of the Olympics has the desired impact, the physical health of residents should continue to be a priority. Whilst there are plenty of activities to get involved in, clearly more needs to be done to address the

LEGACY FOR LONDONERS?

published its vision for the 2012 London Olympics. Considering if that vision is on course to be delivered.

discrepancy in health related statistics between the borough as a whole and its most deprived neighbourhoods.

Volunteering

Increasing volunteering opportunities is another key way in which the Olympics will be used to engage communities. A team of 500 local people have been recruited as London Ambassadors as part of the volunteering drive lead by the local Volunteer Centre. There is also a local

scheme to place volunteers in sports and activity groups as part of the borough's legacy. Kirsty Palmer, Chief Executive of the Volunteer Centre states *"The whole Olympics is depending on almost 100,000 volunteers giving millions of hours of their time and, as a host Borough, K&C is making every effort to make sure that local people are able to be a part of it."*

Volunteering is seen as an essential part of building the spirit of the Olympics and once the Games

have ended it is an important aspect of maintaining community spirit. There are plenty of ways to get involved, not just in the Olympics and celebration events but in supporting the local voluntary sector, ensuring a lasting legacy.

Let's all get behind the Olympics and make the Games something to be proud of. We also hope the legacy the Games leave behind can also inspire pride in years to come.

Exhibition Road Show, 28 July – 5 August 2012

Road Show is the Council's contribution to this summer's festivities. Taking place on Exhibition Road during the first nine days of the Games, ROAD SHOW will provide a place for Londoners and visitors alike to unwind and recharge during London 2012 with everything from a pop-up ballroom to a bicycle orchestra.

Visit the Road Show website www.exhibitionroadshow.co.uk for full details.

A 400-strong team of volunteers will be recruited to support production, administration, on-street information, visitor support, and much more. If you are interested in getting involved visit the Volunteer Centre website at www.voluntarywork.org.uk

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Lottery money

£425 million that was diverted from the Big Lottery Fund to pay for the games is not likely to be returned until the mid-2020s. In total £675 million was taken from lottery distributors and it will not be recouped until the land of the Olympic Park is sold. Sales are expected to take place over 25 years.

The Big Lottery Fund is a major funder of the voluntary sector and the Directory of Social Change has been leading calls for the money to be refunded.



www.biglotteryrefund.org.uk

Concerned about how the Olympics will affect your organisation?

If you are worried about how road closures, diversions and a busy tube network will impact on your organisation during the games the good news is that help is on hand.

For information about how journeys will be affected you can visit www.GetAheadOfTheGames.com

To keep up to date with local news and information visit the councils Games pages at www.rbkc.gov.uk/london2012

Read a guest article from the council on the 'Games in the Royal Borough' on our website at www.kcsc.org.uk/olympics

Baraka Youth Association

As it's Olympic year we spoke to Abdullahi Ali from Baraka Youth Association about the role sport has played in inspiring the young people his organisation works with.



The Baraka Youth juniors football team practise every Saturday at Westway.

Can you tell us a bit about the origins of the Baraka Youth Association?

Baraka has been around for about ten years. We started with football for young boys and their fathers. A lot of new arrivals from Somalia settled in the area in the late 90s and there was a growing problem with some of the boys getting mixed up in anti-social behaviour and petty crime. Some of us parents thought we needed something constructive to do and so we started playing football at Kensington Memorial Park.

Did you have any support to do this?

At first it was parents from the local community, at one stage we had an ex-player who had played for the Somali national team come and train the boys which made everyone more determined to succeed. It wasn't until 2002 when we got funding from Children in Need that we could afford to buy kits and boots. Westway Development Trust has also been helpful and even now they provide us with pitches to play on weekends. We run sessions for juniors from 4pm to 6pm on Saturdays and for those aged over 16 on Sundays.

How has football helped the people you support?

It was never about helping people become footballers. It keeps you fit but the sessions were also a chance for people to make friends and meet people they otherwise wouldn't meet.

Post 9/11 there was a lot of discrimination, many Somali

children faced bullying and we wanted to breakdown some barriers through football. We play a lot against teams from different backgrounds and our teams are not now wholly Somali. We welcome children from all backgrounds. Football has in many cases been a stepping stone to wider participation. We have encouraged the boys to take up gym sessions and to try for the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, 14 children have now received a bronze award.

What other activities do you provide?

We started female only swimming classes for the girls, normally over 12s wouldn't swim because they wouldn't want to attend mixed classes. We had to find females from the community who would volunteer to support them. Every year we take the boys and girls away, camping in the countryside. We encourage them to work in teams and to work things out for themselves and we help them to work towards a Duke of Edinburgh Award. In addition to this our supplementary school provides English, Maths and Science study and homework support during weekday evenings.

How does the sporting activity link to the supplementary school activities?

A lot of children get involved through sport and then start attending the supplementary school classes. I believe the discipline and team ethic children

learn through sport helps them in the class room. Those who attend regular sports activities also become better at school. As part of the Duke of Edinburgh scheme we encouraged children to volunteer. Sometimes they might help in the classroom by taking the register and we recorded the time they spent helping out. 17 children have become peer mentors. Participation helps to tackle low self-esteem and raises aspirations. We encourage children to put forward suggestions for activities and they have taken part in debating contests and been taken on trips to the science museum.

What new activities are you involved with at the moment?

This summer we will be taking some of the children on an exchange trip to Sweden, they had to fundraise for the trip themselves and managed to raise £2,500. We are also developing a small allotment for boys to grow vegetables; the girls are taking part in an intergenerational project in which they are teaching older women computer skills in exchange for learning domestic skills like sewing.

We have drop in advice and guidance sessions, regular coffee mornings, workshops and seminars for parents and local residents aimed at improving their knowledge of the education system, training and job opportunities, fitness and healthy eating.

More info: www.barakayouth.org
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Transforming support for your organisation

In our last edition we introduced the new Kensington and Chelsea Infrastructure Consortium, a partnership between us, the Volunteer Centre, CASH, K&C Foundation and the Migrant and Refugee Communities Forum. But how will its work improve services to your organisation? Here we outline our 5 pledges to you:

- 1 We will work to develop closer relationships between local businesses and local voluntary organisations, developing corporate volunteering and giving
- 2 We will develop a joint web portal so that you can access our web support through one easy to navigate online gateway
- 3 We will develop financial e-learning courses, providing your staff and volunteers with more flexible ways of learning
- 4 We will support you to learn about tendering processes and come together with other organisations to bid for contracts
- 5 We will explore and implement ways for us to work more closely together ensuring you receive a more seamless and joined up service from us



Get involved with Transforming

We need you as members of the Social Council to tell us how we can continue to provide effective support that will help move us into what is looking like an uncertain future.

We have two colleagues – Helen Hughes and Lisa Charalambous working for KCSC that are keen to hear your views and will be running a Community Day on Sunday 15th July so that as many of you can attend as possible to help shape future services and to find out more about our ideas on providing future support for the sector.

To find out how you can get involved contact the Transforming Team at transforming@kcsc.org.uk

Kensington & Chelsea Community Enterprises

You will have read in previous editions of LINK that we have set up a company, Kensington & Chelsea Community Enterprises CIC, which will bid for contracts and sub-contract work to local organisations through a consortium approach.



Lev Pedro and Ian Harvey will be developing K&C Community Enterprises CIC.

We have now received funding to develop this company as part of the work of the K&C Infrastructure Consortium. Lev Pedro has now been appointed business development manager, and Ian Harvey is the newly recruited monitoring and compliance officer. Based at the Social Council, Lev and Ian are now developing a business plan and the monitoring systems that will support the company.

The company won its first contract in March to undertake

some action research into the barriers that people from disadvantaged groups face in changing their household energy tariffs. We are delivering this through four partner organisations based in Westminster and K&C.

As we go to press, we are gathering 'pre-qualification questionnaire' data from a minimum of 50 organisations, so that we have all the data at our fingertips when a commissioning opportunity arises. We plan to open up another round of data

gathering later in the year.

The company has a board of directors drawn from the board of Social Council, and an advisory group representing different client groups.

We are also working closely with the new tri-borough consortia Desta (health and social care) and Valens (children and families) to ensure that we are all working together, not in competition, to bring money into the voluntary sector.

Big Olympic Festival

Sunday 29 July 2012, 12noon - 5pm

World's End Place (outside Chelsea Theatre)

The second of our big lunch events will have an Olympic theme in celebration of the Games as the women's cycling road race passes nearby.

Similarly to the first Big Lunch event in June, this festival will be family friendly, with lots of entertainment and activities for all. So come along and join us in a celebration of our multicultural neighbourhood. This will be a great opportunity for all ages, races and cultures to come together and socialise in a fun and healthy environment.

A third and final Big Lunch event will be taking place on Sunday 19 August 2012 at Old Brompton Cemetery. Please keep an eye on our website for further details of that.



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Overseeing Finances – a training session for trustees

Thursday 21 June 2012 6.30pm - 8.30pm

This training will provide voluntary sector trustees with an overview of what they need to know to help guide their organisation in managing its finances.

The session is being organised by the Get on Board Kensington and Chelsea project in

partnership with Community Accountancy Self Help (CASH).

It is open to any trustee of a voluntary and community organisation operating in the borough of Kensington and Chelsea and is particularly suitable for new trustees.

Would your trustee board like some bespoke training?

The Get on Board trustee support project can provide your board members with in-house training, advice and facilitation.

Whether it's just refresher training on trustee law or advice on a specific issue the Get on Board project can help.

Maybe your charity trustees would benefit from a facilitated session on strategic planning?

Whatever your in-house training and facilitation needs are, contact us for a chat and we will see how we can help you.



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Would you like to circulate information with Link?

Our Link magazine is mailed out quarterly to over 600 recipients around the borough. From as little as £60 you can get your message out by

including your publicity leaflets in our mailing.

If you would like more information please contact Kuldip.

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