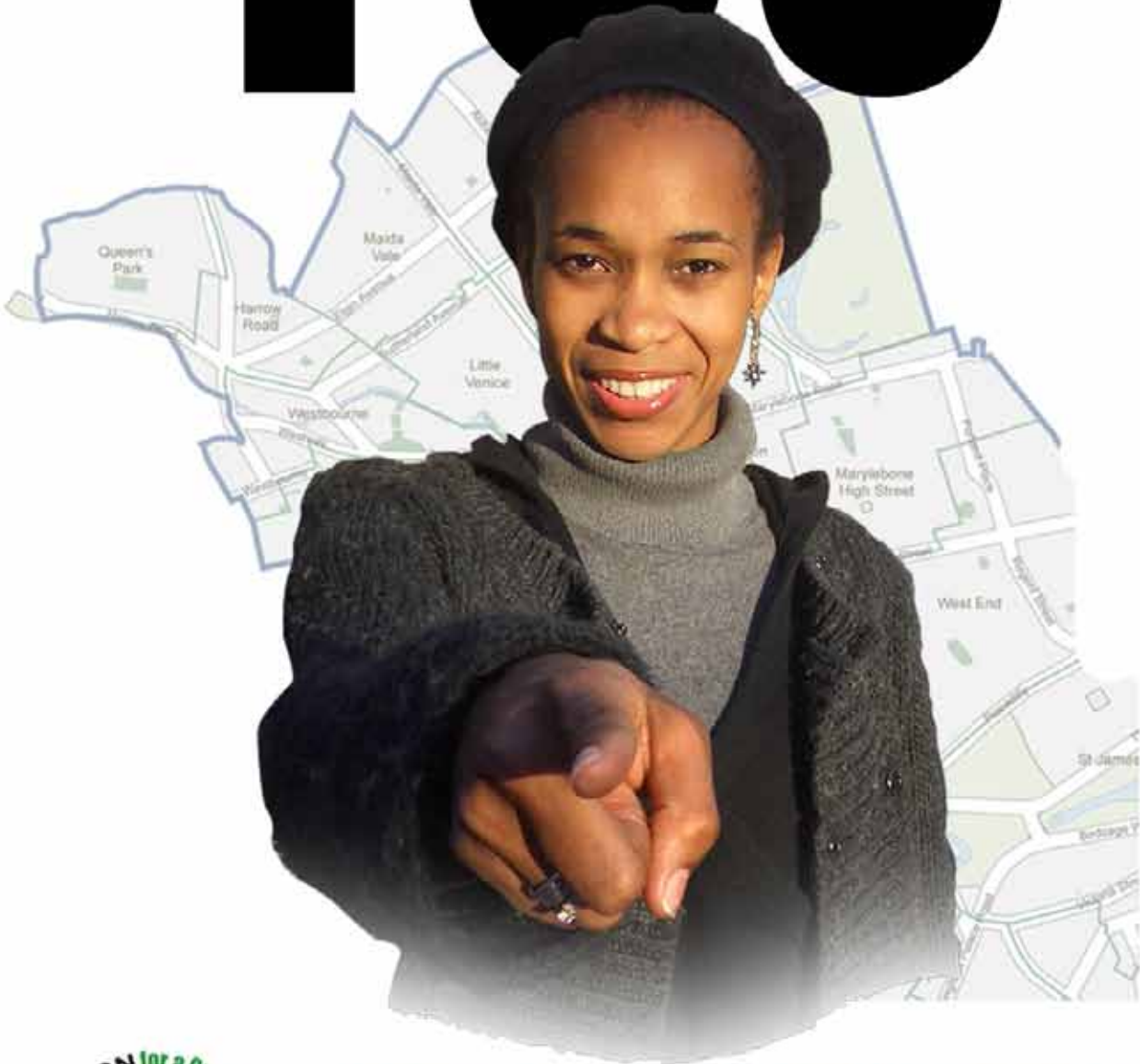


**your community needs**

**YOU**



***Queen's Park says  
"we're ready!"***

Say  
**YES!**

## Nearly two-thousand of Queen's Park's 10,000 residents are campaigning to be given the right to set up their own Community Council.

A sustained effort to achieve greater local democracy in the poorest corner of the City of Westminster began in January 2011 when 1600 residents signed a petition calling on Westminster Council to allow the formation of a Community Council in Queen's Park. The Community Council would serve to involve more local people in agreeing and addressing important local issues.

Much of England already benefits from this very local form of local government, (also known as civil Parish Councils, Town Councils or Neighbourhood Councils) but it has only been possible to create them in London since a change in the law in 2007.

It will be a first for London unless Westminster City Council finds reasons to turn down the application.

Creating a Community Council will not affect the existing electoral arrangements in the ward, and supporters believe it will give residents an advantage in planning improvements to the area, help attract investment, unite the community and give local people a much needed voice that cannot be taken away.

## Why we want and need a Community Council

Queen's Park has a rich history of community action. For the last ten years we have enjoyed unprecedented levels of community involvement in improving the area. This has been made possible thanks to a democratically elected Neighbourhood Forum set up by the community, and the public endorsement of a community-led Neighbourhood Plan. We no longer want to rely on external funding to enable this - a Community Council would allow us to continue and sustain this tradition on our terms.

Queen's Park is home to the largest number of young people in Westminster and suffers the worst child poverty in the country. We, the residents of Queen's Park, believe we can and should be part of the solution to the serious and complex social issues we face in our community. To act effectively in this role we must be organised, supported and sustained. Given the varied range of interests and needs in Queen's Park, a democratically elected representative group is the only way of achieving this.

# Powers of a Community Council

The main value of a Community Council lies in "people power". This comes from involving citizens in deciding how things are done in the local area. A Community Council has statutory status, meaning that it is recognised in law and has the power to raise funds through a precept. It is envisaged that the Queen's Park Community Council will levy a precept just below the national average, around the cost of a bottle of water a week per household. The move to establish a Community Council is supported by government legislation and policy designed to strengthen localism.



## How the campaign is working:

The Campaign Group currently comprises active local volunteers including elected residents from the Queen's Park Forum and Ward Panel. Membership of the Campaign group is not limited and anyone interested is encouraged to get in touch. Although funding for Queen's Park Forum ended in March 2011, local charity Paddington Development Trust has secured temporary charitable funding to help residents in the transition to an independent and sustainable Queen's Park Community Council.

A number of exploratory meetings were held with residents to test the idea and ensure sufficient support before launching the campaign in January 2011.



*Above: Exploratory meeting number 3.*

*In May a petition signed by more than 1600 Queen's Park residents (double the number required in law) was submitted to Cllr Colin Barrow, Leader of Westminster Council and Mike More, Chief Executive.*

*Left: Campaigner Mary Doherty and Ted Flanagan getting support for the petition*

Campaigners will be holding regular events up to May 2012 to raise awareness of the campaign, answer questions, and garner further support for the initiative. This is a volunteer effort, and while the Campaign hopes to contact as many people and groups as possible, their capacity is limited. They aim to meet all requests for briefings, updates and visits in advance of Westminster's consultation.

Colin Barrow, Leader of Westminster Council, (right), and Mike More, Chief Executive, (left), receive the petition from the Chair and Vice Chair of the Campaign, Angela Singhate and Emma Sweeney. They are joined by fellow campaigners Gill Fitzhugh, Simon Walton and Ludo Hunter-Tilney.



“ We welcome people wanting to get involved in their community to make it a better place to live and work ”

- Councillor Colin Barrow, Leader of Westminster Council



Driving the Campaign are about 25 residents from across Queen's Park ward. They reflect many of the different groups and interests in the area, young and old, black and white, voters of all the main political parties, Christians and Muslims, council tenants and owner occupiers. A further 40 or so residents volunteer their support for the Campaign as and when they can. Over 200 have shown their support at public meetings over the last 12 months, and in addition to those who signed the petition new people are joining the campaign every week. The Campaign Group continues to receive support from all quarters - service providers, residents, politicians and community groups.

# How to support our campaign

The Queen's Park proposals will not affect residents living elsewhere in the City of Westminster. However, Westminster City Council is currently consulting residents groups across the borough about the way Westminster neighbourhoods should be governed in future.

The consultation starts on 14th November 2011 and will last three months. A verdict on the Queen's Park proposal must be reached by June 2012.

Whether you live in Queen's Park or elsewhere in Westminster you should:

- Inform yourself! Visit [www.campaign4queenspark.org](http://www.campaign4queenspark.org) or [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk)
- Take part in Westminster Council's consultation now! Have your say: [www.westminster.gov.uk/civiccommunity](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/civiccommunity) and follow the link to Community Governance Review
- Ask the Campaign Group to present their proposal to you and answer questions
- Get your neighbours and friends to say "YES" to the Queen's Park Community Council
- Wear your badge!
- Write to Westminster with your message of support.
- Like us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/campaign4queenspark](http://www.facebook.com/campaign4queenspark)

Address your letter to:

Tom Kimber  
Westminster Council  
18th floor, City Hall  
64 Victoria Street  
London SW1E 6QP

“ This is an extremely good way to ensure that the younger members of a community do not feel alienated ”

- Angela Piddock, Headteacher Wilberforce Primary School 1991-2011

**Q.** I don't live in Queen's Park but am a Westminster resident interested in this kind of association for the area where I live. What should I do?

**A.** It is important to let Westminster know this in your response to their consultation. If you don't, you may not get another chance for years.

Campaigners for a Queen's Park Community Council hope residents elsewhere in Westminster will respect the wishes of Queen's Park residents and support their call to create a Community Council in Queen's Park. Whether the Community Council model could benefit your area is a matter for you and the people where you live. Queen's Park residents are happy to share their experience with you.

# Vision

Queen's Park has historically received a high level of public funding to meet the high levels of social and economic need in the area. Cuts to public spending will therefore affect Queen's Park more severely than most. It is for this reason that residents are demanding the right to organise their own support for the community through the creation of a Queen's Park Community Council.

The core group has worked up a vision and a set of values for the Community Council. The group is agreed that the Community Council should not be elected on party-political lines. All residents who are interested in improving the area are encouraged to consider standing for election, either as independents, or as members of the Campaign Group. When created, around 16 councillors will be elected to the Community Council.

The values of the Campaign Group are enshrined in the Mission, Aims and Objectives.

## Mission Statement:

The Queen's Park Community Council is an open, transparent and local democratic body which represents the opinions and interests of the whole community.

'The Community Council' aims to make tangible improvements to the quality of life of all Queen's Park residents and maintain this neighbourhood as a vibrant place to live and work, fostering a strong sense of community engagement & empowerment.

*This tree (pictured) was used at a meeting of more than 100 Queen's Park residents. The branches represent objectives that residents feel are important to a strong community - see right. Specific suggestions are shown overleaf.*



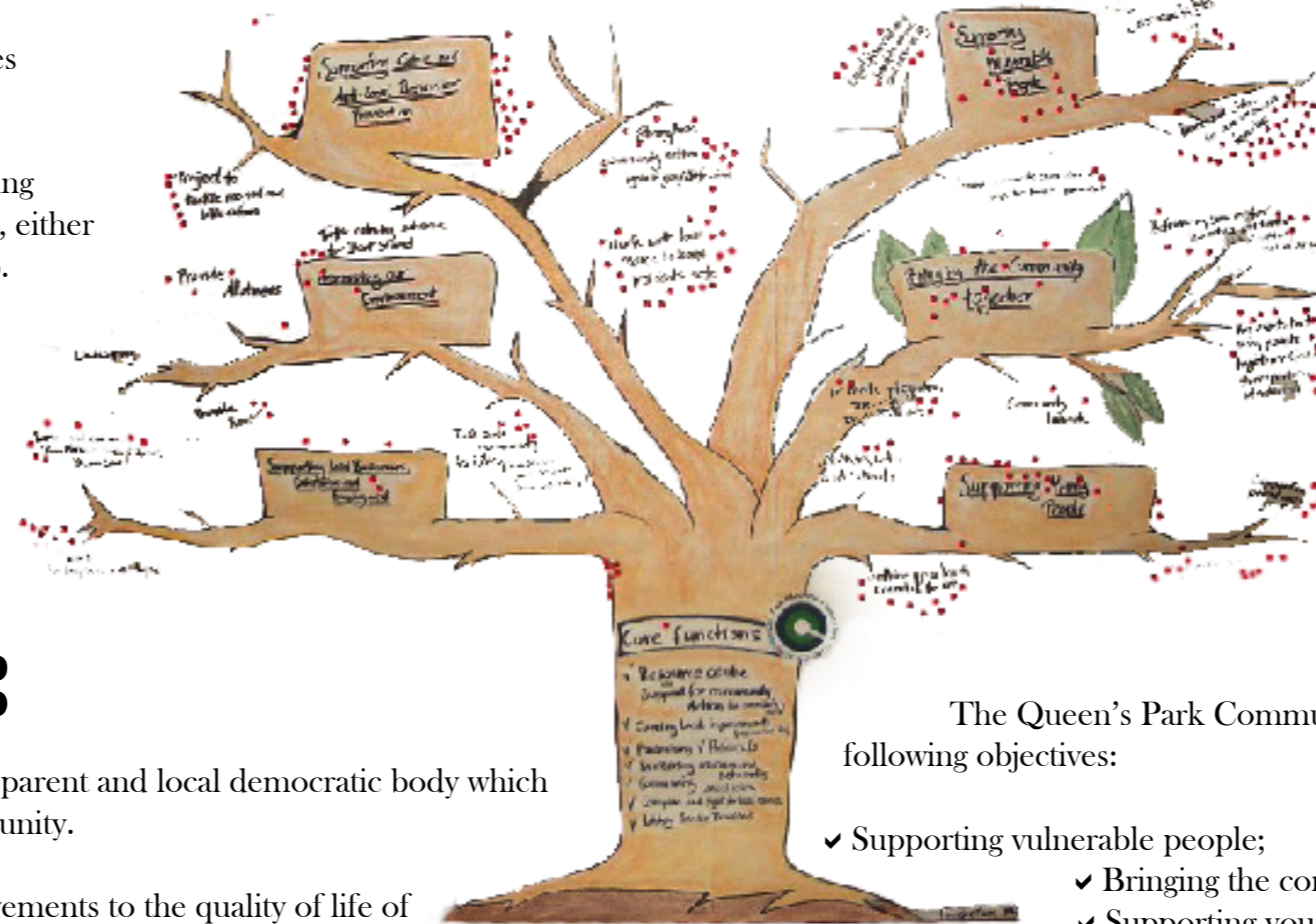
# Values

Say YES!

## Aims:

Queen's Park Community Council aims to:

- ✓ Act as an advocate for the residents of Queen's Park;
- ✓ Engage with all sections of the community with a focus on community cohesion;
- ✓ Improve opportunities for vulnerable people in the community;
- ✓ Work with local businesses, the voluntary sector, and public sector providers;
- ✓ Attract investment in the local area;
- ✓ Contribute positively to the life of the community;
- ✓ Encourage greater democratic participation.



## Objectives:

The Queen's Park Community Council has the following objectives:

- ✓ Supporting vulnerable people;
- ✓ Bringing the community together;
- ✓ Supporting young people;
- ✓ Supporting Crime/ASB prevention;
- ✓ Improving the environment;
- ✓ Supporting local business, enterprise and employment;
- ✓ Collaborating to improve the way local services are delivered;
- ✓ Managing local community facilities and spaces;
- ✓ Providing a dedicated community resource and support.



# What will the Community Council do?

The Campaign Group is currently consulting Queen's Park residents on local priorities for inclusion in a detailed Action Plan for neighbourhood improvements. Proposals include:

- **B**efriending the elderly;
- **P**utting on community events (Fireworks, Festival, Street Parties etc );
- **P**romoting local entertainment e.g. Open Air Cinema;
- **S**wap shop for kids products;
- **S**upporting homework clubs;
- **E**stablishing a Youth Council;
- **S**upport for youth outreach work;
- **V**olunteer warden service;
- **I**nstalling CCTV cameras in hot spots;
- **R**evive Mozart Street (community café / pub, pop-up shop);
- **L**ocal management of Queen's Park Gardens;
- **L**ocal management of Basketball Court at Lancefield Street;
- **L**aunching a local allotment;
- **P**utting under-used/failing premises to community use
- **P**roducing a local newsletter and update community website and noticeboards;
- **R**etaining a resource centre, a clerk to fundraise and a community organiser;
- **H**elping the long-term unemployed;
- **E**nglish language classes;
- **S**upport for legal, financial & benefits advice;
- **W**orking with the QP Ward Panel and Safer Neighbourhood Team;
- **F**orming a 'partnership board' so residents can usefully influence local service delivery;

“ I am impressed by the genuine public-spirited desire from many to work for a better community ”

- Alastair Thom, Priest-in-charge, St Luke West Kilburn and Emmanuel Harrow Road

# How can we fund improvements?

*Did you know:*

Parish Councils can charge council tax payers a precept. The average parish precept in England is 85p per week, but Queen's Park would aim to levy a precept below the national average.

□ There are approx 5000 council tax payers in QP. Approximately half of these currently receive council tax benefit. The same applies to the precept.

□ Even including the cost of the Community Council, household taxes in Westminster will be much lower than they are in neighbouring Brent or Kensington & Chelsea. Council Tax for Band D properties 2011/12: Westminster £687.22, Kensington & Chelsea £1079.12, Brent £1368.76

□ The Precept would be collected by Westminster Council at the same time as Council Tax, the funds then being managed by the Community Council to spend exclusively for the benefit of Queen's Park. A similar arrangement already exists for residents of Montpelier Square in Knightsbridge where residents top up their council tax to fund extra work they want done to the communal gardens.



□ The Community Council could also borrow money against this annual income to finance large one-off projects.

□ Through the Localism Bill Community Councils will be accorded the right to challenge public sector service delivery, giving rise to the possibility that if it chooses, the Queen's Park Community Council could be contracted to deliver local services - not paid for through the precept.

□ The Community Council will be able, and expected, to fundraise from charitable trusts and grant making organisations to support local projects in addition to its core programme.

□ The Community Council will be able to contract local groups to deliver services.

[Illustration: Queen's Park Community scene at Ha'Penny Steps, Harrow Road. By local artist Brian Okello.]

# TALK OF

# THE TOWN!



From government ministers and Whitehall mandarins, to community champions and 1000s of Westminster residents, the Campaign for a Queen's Park Community Council is the hottest campaign in town right now...

The enterprising action of Queen's Park residents has been reported in the local and national press. Articles about the campaign have appeared among other places in The Economist, The Guardian, BBC London News and Online, The Local Government Chronicle, The Grove, West End Extra, and Wood and Vale. Links to all of these and more can be found on the Community Council website: [www.campaign4queenspark.org](http://www.campaign4queenspark.org)



## What people are saying

## about the Campaign:

**"As the tier of local government closest to their communities, parish, town and neighbourhood councils have a key role to play in our vision for localism and the Big Society. Where people want a new local council, they should be able to have one and we wish the people of Queen's Park well in their bid to create a new neighbourhood council."**

Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)

**"I write in strong support of the Community Council being initiated in Queen's Park ward. As public funding recedes, it is essential that residents find a means for organising and representing themselves in future. It is to their huge credit that they have been able to run with the Community Council model and win sufficient support to take it forward and I am very keen for them to continue to do so."**

Karen Buck MP

*"It would be tragic to undo all that has been done over the last ten years by the community. We should grasp this opportunity to do government by the people and for the people."*

*Simon Walton, Chair of Queen's Park Ward Panel*

*"The Campaign has shown how passionate people in Queen's Park are about their local community."*

*Angela Singhat, Chair of the Campaign for a Queen's Park Community Council*

*"Giving scrutiny and decision making powers on as many local matters as possible to local people can only help to bring the residents of Queen's Park closer together as they address the issues that are important to them. The North Paddington Society (NPS) considers this to be a wholly positive development"*

*Rob Howard, Chair of North Paddington Amenity Society*

**"This is an extremely good way to ensure that the younger members of a community do not feel alienated. I know the Queen's Park community has the proven experience and commitment to support an effective Community Council. It would be something of which Westminster could be proud."**

*Angela Piddock, Headteacher Wilberforce Primary School 1991-2011*

**"The Community Council will help to forge improved community relations between the Bangladeshi community and the wider Queen's Park community and promote integration, co-operation and understanding."**

*Raful Miah, Chair of Queen's Park Bangladeshi Association*

**"In villages and some towns and cities [Community Councils] are responsible for matters, such as public toilets, playing fields, road humps and youth clubs... David Cameron should be pleased. This local activism seems to accord with the "Big Society", a plan to devolve more power to local communities and make the state less overbearing."**

*The Economist, February 2011*

**"THIS COMMUNITY INITIATIVE DESERVES TO SUCCEED - IT WILL MAKE QUEEN'S PARK AN EVEN STRONGER COMMUNITY"**

*Councillor Paul Dimoldenberg, Leader of the opposition at Westminster*

**"Queen's Park residents have shown resourcefulness, skill and considerable spirit to get this far. A Community Council will sustain support for residents' efforts to further improve the area. Paddington Development Trust fully endorses the campaign"**

*Neil Johnston, CEO, Paddington Development Trust*

**"The Community Council will help to forge improved community relations between groups and promote integration, co-operation and understanding in the community. It will also help to get local people involved in community life. The Community Council reflects a will locally to take responsibility for, to identify and to respond to local needs. The energy involved in creating this bodes well."**

*Neil Frazer, Lead GP Halfpenny Steps Health Centre*

**"The Community Council will help to get local people involved in community life."**

*Abdihakim Moalim, Chair of Somali Management and Development Centre.*

Say  
**YES!**



*Residents at  
Queen's Park  
Festival*

## STAY IN TOUCH!

For updates on the Campaign and related information visit  
[www.campaign4queenspark.org](http://www.campaign4queenspark.org)

Drop in to see us or call to make an appointment, Mon-Fri 9.30am-6.30pm

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