

FAIR FUTURES COMMISSION

PROSPECTUS

Making Islington a great place to grow up



Foreword



Although I'm currently studying in Leeds and have travelled internationally, for me there is no place like home. I am a born and bred young Londoner. I have grown up here seeing many things – both good and bad – that have affected people I know and the community I live in and love.

For several years, one of the things that has struck me is the public debate on children and young people. Politically and democratically, children and young people get a raw deal. Sometimes they are seen as a problem to fix. Until they are 18 they are not taxpayers yet, cannot vote and have no one to represent democratically what matters to them or what they want for their future. They have to wait to be given a voice through their parents or people that believe in them enough to set up youth councils and other forums. There are conversations on the hard things such as child protection and families in crisis; election essentials such as schools and, if push comes to shove, children's mental health. But I wonder where the holistic funding or policy-related conversation about children and young people is taking place? And if that focused conversation existed, maybe there wouldn't be problems to fix?

The Islington Fair Future Commission is a pioneering approach, and possibly the first of its kind in the UK. I couldn't be prouder knowing Islington has devised this forward-thinking initiative, founded on the basis that prevention is better than cure. I'm delighted to be leading this Commission as its Chair. With my experience of growing up in Inner London, attending Islington Arts and Media School and working in Islington, I can lead my colleagues on the Commission to achieve the outcomes that children, young people and parents deserve.

We have put together some of the best minds - including parents to academics - covering all aspects of society that children and young people interact with and face. To ensure the Commission reflects and represents our community, I'm proud to have young people with a range of experiences on the Commission too, to drive the scope of the conversation: because who better knows what affects young people from all walks of life than young people themselves?.

This Commission is here to give a voice to the voiceless and lend an ear to those who have been crying out for change. Setting up this Commission is the first step in the right direction.

We have an opportunity to reshape the conversation on children, young people and parents, putting their concerns and the barriers they face back onto the agenda. For a fairer future, let's make 2017 the year for Islington's children and young people.



Jermain Jackman
Chair, Islington Fair Futures Commission
Winner of 'The Voice' 2014

Introduction: Why children and young people?



Islington is a fantastic place to grow up, with brilliant parks, museums, sports facilities, and cultural venues right on the doorstep. However, for too many children and young people, growing up in Islington is challenging, and we want to take a radical look at how the council and its partners can help to change that.

We are committed to making the borough a fairer place to live for everyone. That is why in 2017 there will be a focus on all children and young people to help them better reach their full potential. Everyone with an interest in children and young people has a part to play in this Commission to ensure we build resilience in children, young people, their families and the local community.

Already, there are many achievements to shout about in Islington. Despite significant cuts to council funding by the Government, there have been many improvements in outcomes across early years, social care, and we have protected budgets for youth services. The council is making a difference on key areas such as building more genuinely affordable homes, helping local people into work, and providing targeted support for young people that need it most. Local schools continue to improve, with the progress pupils make in Islington's secondary schools amongst the top 20 in the country.

However, for many of the 45,000 young people and 22,000 families who call Islington home, achieving their dreams and enjoying growing up in Islington is far harder than it should be. Unemployment, the cost of living, access to secure affordable housing and health challenges can push opportunities out of reach. Despite the perception that our borough is an affluent place, Islington has some of the highest levels of child poverty in the country. There is no clear geographical demarcation between lower and more affluent areas; and as a consequence richer and poorer people often live parallel lives.

More can and must be done to ensure that all children and young people in Islington get the best start in life. Despite the significant challenges we face from continued cuts to our budgets from central Government, there are still opportunities to drive innovation and positive change if we listen to everybody and use some imagination and creativity. We must work together to reflect and challenge ourselves to unlock these opportunities to benefit children, young people and their families in Islington. **This means re-imagining a child and youth friendly Islington to make it a great place to grow up, learn, work and have fun.**

Creating communities which are great places to grow up in is a collective effort. To spark our effort, the **Islington Fair Futures Commission** will provide independent advice and support by bringing everyone together who shares this vision and wants to make Islington a fairer place for all.




A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Caluori', written over a light grey background.

Cllr Joe Caluori
Executive Member for Children, Young People & Families, Islington Council
Chair, Islington Children and Families Board

The Fair Futures Commission

Given the current and future social and economic challenges we face, 2017 is an appropriate time for everyone in Islington to take stock, reflect and focus. The Fair Futures Commission is asked to advise and make recommendations to the Council and its partners regarding **how, as a place, we build a child and youth friendly community** and create the conditions for children and young people to thrive and be at the heart of everything we do – creating the foundations for building their resilience, and fairer futures for every Islington child and young person. This will build on the ambitions set out in the Children and Families Board’s Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy (Figure 1).

Figure 1: 2015/25 Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy

ISLINGTON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES BOARD					
2015/25 Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy					
The Children and Families Board will oversee a collective, co-ordinated and concerted shift by all partners away from reactive spending towards early intervention to build resilience that can result in better outcomes, a fairer Islington and improved value for money					
CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES • CATALYST • COMMISSIONER					
Intended Board outcomes	Preventing and minimising risk of problems arising	Co-ordinated interventions to intervene early and nip problems in the bud	Ensure vulnerable children and young people are able to survive and thrive	Family and community environments where children and young people can thrive	
The Board will:	ASSIST	TARGET	ENABLE	SHAPE	
 Aim	Encourage, help and commission partners in places such as early years and youth settings, schools, housing, employment and health services to make prevention a key part of their activity or core business	Commission and promote services and/or support that actively get in early and nip problems in the bud using co-ordinated interventions	Work together to enable vulnerable children and their families (e.g. LAC, disabled children) to overcome challenges they face as they grow up	Support the integration of services around families, and the use of social and physical community assets, to solve whole family issues	
 2015/25 Priorities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improving outcomes from conception to 19 through good and outstanding universal services Strengthening our early help support for children and families who have additional needs Supporting our most vulnerable children to be safe and thrive and to be able to overcome the challenges they face as they grow up 				
 The Board's vision:	Children and young people to have the best start in life				
<i>Life course stage</i>	<i>Marmot health and wellbeing outcome</i>		<i>Development outcome by end of life course stage</i>		
Early Childhood	Starting well	Infancy-early childhood- pre-school > school ready	Ready for school; Positive attachments; Healthy babies & young children; Good parental health		Parents and Families Safe, nurturing, stable & supportive families Community Safe, supportive & prosperous community
The primary years: 6-11	Developing well	School age	Ready for secondary school; Achieve potential; Healthy		
The secondary years: 11-16		Adolescence	Social & emotional capabilities; Achieve potential & ready for further education &/or training; Can assess & manage risk		
Entering adulthood: 16 to early twenties		Young adulthood > life ready	Prepared for independent living; Prepared for parenthood; Can assess & manage risk; Prepared for work		
Supporting Principles	Channels Good quality integrated Universal Services • Reducing inequalities • Think Family • From Participation to Co-production • Connecting socially for a stronger community • Innovation and evidence				

We want all children and young people in Islington to start well and develop well. By 2025, Islington should be a place where:

- children and young people can achieve the very best wellbeing outcomes and have the resilience and creativity to thrive;
- parents and carers have the knowledge, skills and confidence to provide the environment in which children can thrive; and
- the community – made up of our residents, businesses, the state, charitable and community organisations - is the economic, physical and social infrastructure which supports children and young people to thrive.

Therefore, the Commission is asked to explore and identify:

- a shared commitment, framework and practical solutions so that everyone - individuals, communities and organisations - can support, play a part and develop their role in making Islington a great place to grow up in, and therefore promoting social and health development in early childhood, the middle years and adolescence/young adulthood.
- how we build on place-based commissioning, investment and collaboration (including with children, young people and parents).
- the partnership or place-based leadership required to realise this vision.

The Commission will seek to understand the characteristics of a child and youth friendly community and how Islington can become a place which achieves this. It will aim to:

- present a compelling case for shaping fairer futures for our children and young people.
- develop a framework to make Islington a great place to grow up in so that children are school-ready and young people are life-ready.
- use this to devise **practical** measures and recommendations to guide strategy and investment decisions for Islington's public, private and social sector organisations.
- stimulate momentum for change amongst Islington's stakeholders and other bodies such as the GLA and central government
- turn stakeholders into leading advocates for the Commission's recommendations and implementation.

Working together as an inquiry team, the Commission will operate for a year. It will gather and collect evidence through a combination of a call for written evidence and interactive sessions. It is envisaged that the sessions will be tailored to suit the wide ranging issues and enable good involvement from everyone including children, young people and parents.

The Commission has chosen three themes to guide its discussions and research: place, power and possibilities.

1. **Place** is about the physical and economic environment. It will look at what children and young people need from their local area in order to thrive. Particular issues include safety, housing, outside space and employment.
2. **Power** focuses on how children, young people and families can shape their lives. There will be a focus on the role of the wider community and different types of networks.
3. **Possibilities** focuses on how we can ensure that children and young people develop the life skills that they need to thrive. This includes preparation for the workplace, independent living and other key transitions in life.

It will not scrutinise, review or evaluate individual services. Where existing change programmes are in train, the Commission will seek to enhance and further their development rather than replicate or delay implementation.

The Commissioners will produce a report with practical recommendations for how Islington can become a great place for children and young people to grow up in.

The People

Fair Futures Commissioners

The Board has been fortunate enough to secure a fantastic mix of individuals to enable a practical-thinking, diverse and energetic Commission

Chair: **Jermain Jackman**

Deputy Chair: **Kadeema Woodbryne**

Dominic Campbell, Founder of FutureGov

Cllr Joe Caluori, Council Executive Member for Children, Young People & Families, Islington Council

Carlene Firmin, Senior Research Fellow, University of Bedfordshire

Dawood Gustave, Reluctantly Brave

Dez Holmes, Director of Research in Practice

Claire Lemer, Consultant in General Paediatrics and Service Transformation, Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital

Carmel Littleton, Corporate Director, Islington Council

Yvonne Millar, Consultant Clinical Psychologist / Service Manager, CAMHS Islington

Margaret O'Brien, Director of Thomas Coram Research Unit

Kitty Stewart, London School of Economics

Islington Community¹

Young people:

- **Jessica Hall**
- **Kevin Jara Aced**
- **Chloe Olden**
- Islington Youth Councillors:
 - **YCllr Honey Baker**
 - **YCllr Diana Gomez**
 - **YCllr Iqra Finiin**(YCllr Mohamed Abaas will support as required)

Maggie Elliott, Islington resident

John Roberts, Islington parent

Cllrs **Theresa Debono**, **Una O'Halloran**, **Nick Ward**, **Rakhia Ismail**, **Mouna Hamitouche**, Islington Council

¹ Please note that it is recognised that representatives do not speak for **all** children, young people, parents or the wider community. All of these community groups will be involved throughout the inquiry in a variety of different ways to ensure that the findings are as representative as possible.

Project Delivery Team

Executive Sponsor (Council Executive Lead)	Cllr Joe Caluori, Executive Member for Children and Families
Business Sponsor (Islington Council Senior Leadership Lead)	Carmel Littleton, Corporate Director of Children's Services
Programme Manager	Tania Townsend
Project and Policy Officer	Rose Yorke Barber
Communications	Kim Ward
Project Administrator	Kirsty Fay
Fair Futures Commission Advisors who will provide assistance and guidance to the project throughout the project's lifecycle	
Research, information, analysis and interpretation advice from the council's Using Data Better Group and Qualitative Research and Involvement Network (QRIN)	

A 'Design and Action' Group drawn from across the council and its partners to

- expand upon the knowledge and skills within the Advisory Group
- be the mechanism to test the findings from the 'Explore' phase, ideas and solutions and to assist with the generation of recommendations.

The Fair Futures Inquiry: Commission Roadmap

DATE	2017												2018			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr+
Commission launch		★ 22														
Recommendations: Explore Define by uncovering the issues through gathering insights and genuine experiences; Understand the problems and issues; Build knowledge and awareness about what is already happening and promising practice; Develop capacity to challenge and question the information.		█														
Recommendations: Ideas – Create Generate ideas and co-produce solutions.					█											
Recommendations: Ideas – Reflect Consider the future impact and sustainability of the ideas produced; Encourage recommendations to be challenged to consolidate thinking						█										
Recommendations: Commission Report Produce ideas/solutions							█									
Recommendations: Publication/Dissemination Deliver a written report and disseminate										█						
Recommendations: Council/Partners' response – Council Exec														█		
Recommendations: Council/Partners' response – implementation plan Implementation of ideas/solutions; Use existing network to share final report and recommendations; Encourage wider support on legacy of the project; Gain public response from key stakeholders to action and implement recommendations.															→	