

# ICI Peoples Manifesto

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## **Introduction**

Islington Community Independents (ICI) are a group of local residents who believe we need to give power back to our community to make the decisions that impact our everyday lives. We know, through our own engagement with the local community, that together we can make Islington the borough and home we all deserve.

ICI's People's Manifesto is our commitment to ensuring that decisions made about our borough, for our communities, are made by and for us. Through our work and organising with the local community, we know we can make the things that matter to us better: housing, education, health, social care, public services and community spaces.

Our People's Manifesto is ambitious, and we believe every commitment in it is achievable. The resources exist. What has been missing is the political will to direct them toward the people and communities that need them most, and to build a fairer taxation system that makes the wealthiest pay their share.

This manifesto has been shaped by the work and thinking of many activists, educators, researchers and community members whose ideas and practice have informed our own. We are grateful to all of them.

So here is our commitment to you, our neighbours and community members. We hope you will join us in building a better Islington that works with and for us.

This is a working document. We will continue to make space to listen to each other and prioritise the things that matter to our community. Thank you to everyone for your time and contributions to ICI's People's Manifesto.

## **Housing**

One of the biggest issues impacting our community is housing. Where we live and the cost of our homes has huge impacts on our mental and physical health, opportunities in life and standard of living.

Housing costs are out of control, with recent Office for National Statistics findings confirming the average rent for a one bedroom flat in Islington is now over £2,000 a month. As a consequence, those working in health and social care and other public services cannot afford to live in the community they serve, depriving these services of essential local knowledge and understanding. High private rents are also dividing young adults from their families and communities. We are in a housing crisis and need radical change in policy, not just tinkering around the edges of a broken system.

For too long, the council has allowed the renting residents of Islington to live in unsafe, unhealthy and unsuitable housing. Whether it is social housing or private landlords, repairs aren't done, damp and black mould are rampant, and buildings are old, draughty and worn down.

With over 16,000 families on the waiting list for council housing, the need for more homes is critical. The lack of housing is causing higher rents and higher house prices, pricing many local people out of Islington.

ICI believes that we all have a right to a safe, decent and liveable home, and that people's right to a home should always come ahead of developers' and landlords' desire for higher prices.

Islington Community Independents are committed to doing everything in our power to:

### **1. Bring Down Housing Costs**

Housing in Islington is unaffordable for too many residents. ICI will:

- Lobby the government to give councils the power to implement rent controls in the private rental sector
- Push to end real-terms rent increases in council properties
- Work to end the exploitative use of bailiffs in collecting council tax debt and lobby for progressive council tax reform

- Work to ensure that key workers, including those in health, social care and education, have access to genuinely affordable housing in the borough so that the people who serve our community can be part of it

## **2. Improve Housing Quality**

Every rented home in Islington should meet a decent standard. ICI will:

- Require all wards to have the highest possible level of landlord licensing, and invest in the enforcement staff needed to make it count under the Renters Rights Act
- Require regular condition checks of all rented properties
- Work to develop a major programme of retrofitting council properties which will eliminate damp and reduce bills for tenants
- Invest in more regular maintenance and repairs of council properties, re-examine housing contracts to drive up service standards, and expand the Direct Labour Organisation and construction apprenticeship schemes to support delivery
- Increase oversight of housing associations and penalise them when they fail to complete repairs
- Tackle the exploitative service charges faced by council leaseholders, giving residents proper transparency and a genuine say in what they pay
- Support shared ownership leaseholders and older residents in new developments who are facing unaffordable fees imposed by freeholders, and push for greater regulation of freehold charges
- Return control over communal heating to residents, ending the current situation where vulnerable people are left sitting in cold homes for extended periods

## **3. Increase Housing Supply**

Islington needs more genuinely affordable homes. ICI will:

- Increase the percentage of social housing required in all new developments
- Lobby to reverse reductions in developers' obligation to build affordable housing
- Close loopholes that allow developers to count shared ownership as affordable housing
- Increase penalties for keeping buildings unoccupied and bring them into effect sooner
- Build more sites for the travelling community on currently unused land, enabling them to live as they choose and freeing up existing social housing stock

## **4. Expand and Enforce Renters Rights**

Tenants in Islington deserve to know and exercise their rights. ICI will:

- Run a public information campaign so all tenants know their legal rights, including entitlement to rent repayment orders where these are breached
- Support private tenants in challenging rent increases at tribunal
- Oppose any discrimination in rental accommodation on any basis, including receipt of benefits, immigration status or family situation
- Impose the maximum possible penalty on landlords who break the rules

## **Homelessness**

Homelessness is the most visible sign of an economy and a council that has failed to put people first. Too often the Labour council's response to homelessness is not more housing but more enforcement, sending in the police to move people on with no regard for their safety, their wellbeing or their lives.

ICI believes that everyone deserves a safe and stable place to call home, and that no one should be left to sleep rough on the streets of one of the wealthiest cities in the world.

Islington Community Independents is committed to doing everything in our power to end homelessness and housing insecurity in the borough.

We intend to do this by:

### **1. Getting People off the Streets**

No one should be sleeping rough in one of the wealthiest cities in the world. The ICI will:

- End the practice of using the police to move homeless people on
- Invest in services that directly meet the needs of people sleeping rough, including access to medical care, social care, addiction services, food and shelter
- Raise the cap on temporary accommodation spending so that people can be housed in real homes, not overpriced hotel rooms
- Build an all-female temporary housing unit so that homeless women can be and feel safe
- Fund or build accommodation where people are able to live with their pets

### **2. Keeping People off the Streets**

Getting someone housed is only the first step. ICI will:

- Promote a Housing First model to ensure that homeless people get the support they need not just to be housed but to stay housed
- Invest in mental health services, employment support and help accessing services people are entitled to

## **Health and Social Care**

We stand for a National Health Service that is publicly owned, publicly run, publicly funded and free at the point of need. We all deserve a health service that meets our physical and mental health needs, without means-testing or charging. We believe in a health and social care system that treats every person with dignity, that is there when you need it and that sees you as a whole person, not a number on a waiting list.

The creeping privatisation of our NHS, including through data infrastructure contracts with companies like Palantir, must be resisted. Our health data belongs to us, not to private corporations.

Islington Community Independents know that migrant workers are the backbone of our NHS and social care system. We will oppose any hostile environment policies that threaten their ability to live and work here, and stand with all healthcare workers in their demands for decent pay and working conditions.

We intend to do this by:

### **1. Defending Our Local NHS**

The Whittington Hospital is a vital resource for the people of Islington and must be protected. ICI will:

- Oppose any cuts or closures of departments at the Whittington Hospital
- Campaign to keep all NHS services in Islington publicly run and publicly funded
- Oppose any further privatisation of NHS services or infrastructure

### **2. Mental Health and CAMHS**

Mental health services in Islington are underfunded and overstretched. ICI will:

- Campaign for all mental health day centres to be run by the council, with enough trained staff to meet demand

- Demand that CAMHS is properly funded and accessible to all children and young people who need it, with waiting lists reduced as a matter of urgency
- Work with GPs and local voluntary organisations to improve access to support for young adults with mental health conditions and neurodiverse conditions who were not recognised or supported during their school years or by CAMHS

### **3. Social Care**

Social care should be available to all who need it, free at the point of need. ICI will:

- Oppose means-testing and charging for social care
- Campaign for social care to be brought fully into public hands
- Ensure health consultations and appointments are accessible to all residents, including through translation and interpretation services
- Push for funded respite for carers of disabled people, including carers supporting people with mental health needs

### **Education**

Knowledge and education are power. Investing in education is how we build a better future, and access to a good education is one of the biggest determinants of a person's overall quality of life.

We believe education should be joyful, inclusive and rooted in care. It should centre the needs of children and young people, not systems or targets, and give every young person in Islington the foundation they need to flourish.

The school-to-prison and exclusion-to-prison pipeline is real and must be dismantled. Instead of punishing and removing children from education for behavioural issues, we should be supporting them to get the education and care they need and deserve. Black and brown students, students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and students from low income families are still massively overrepresented in exclusions, and this only recreates and reinforces the disparities, discrimination and lack of opportunities marginalised students already face.

How is it that in one of the richest cities in the world we have children going to bed hungry? And how can the current Labour council be so uncaring as to refuse to expand free school meals to secondary school children because they worry we might feed children from other boroughs?

Islington Community Independents believes that we all have the right to a high quality, free education that sets young people up for life and is available to everyone who wants one.

We intend to do this by:

## **1. Ending Exclusions**

Excluding a child from school doesn't make a problem disappear, it pushes it elsewhere, too often into the criminal justice system. ICI takes an abolitionist approach to exclusions, believing that every child deserves to be in school and that the school-to-prison and exclusion-to-prison pipeline must be dismantled. We also recognise that distressed behaviour is too often treated as an individual failing rather than understood as a response to structural inequality. Our approach is systemic, not punitive. ICI will:

- End the practice of excluding students and invest in restorative and transformative approaches that keep children and young people in education
- Replace punitive, zero tolerance behaviour policies with child-centred, care-centred and relational policies
- Address behavioural issues and learning barriers in the early school years, before they escalate
- Implement mandatory screening for ADHD, autism, dyslexia and other differences to identify learning barriers early, rather than punishing related behavioural issues, alongside mandatory training for all school staff
- Ensure every school has guaranteed, regular access to educational psychologists from diverse backgrounds, working systemically with schools toward true inclusion rather than solely on individual casework
- Work in collaboration with teaching unions, No More Exclusions, and parent and carer groups to build better systems and structures, explore alternatives to exclusion, and develop an education system that works for everyone
- Investigate schools that have overused exclusions, especially where students from marginalised communities are disproportionately represented
- Work to convert closed school buildings into youth centres, creating spaces where children and young people of all ages have somewhere to go, grow and spend time together
- Ensure youth provision covers a range of appropriate activities across different age groups, so that every young person in Islington has access to spaces and opportunities that meet them where they are

## **2. No Child in Islington Going to Bed Hungry**

It is not possible to get a good education when your stomach is empty. ICI will:

- Use funding provided by the GLA to expand free school lunches to all students, regardless of age or residence in the borough

### **Section 3. Bringing Schools Under Local Democratic Control**

Academies were designed to sit outside local government oversight, answerable to central government and multi-academy trusts rather than to the communities they serve. This Tory initiative to quietly privatise the education system will be opposed by ICI, and we will:

- Lobby to end academy status and oppose the academisation and marketisation of further education colleges, which prioritises profit over the needs of students and staff
- Oppose any new academies
- Support teachers and parents to convert academies to local authority maintained schools, bringing them under proper democratic oversight
- Oppose unnecessary school closures and mergers, which too often serve the interests of academy trusts rather than local communities
- Where school closures have occurred or do occur, work to ensure that buildings are repurposed for community use, including as youth centres and community spaces, rather than sold off to developers

### **4. A SEND Charter**

ICI believes that inclusion should be the norm, not the exception. The current system too often works by identifying children and young people as "different" and then trying to accommodate them, rather than designing education from the outset to work for everyone. We want to move toward a system where difference is anticipated and embraced, and where every educational route is valued equally, without hierarchy or parity of esteem.

We recognise that distressed behaviour and what gets labelled as mental health difficulties are often direct responses to structural inequality, and that schools need support to understand and respond to this at a systemic level, not just an individual one.

ICI is committed to our SEND Charter, which includes:

- Working with SEND students, teachers, parents and carers to design policies that actually meet the needs of all children and young people, not just children and young people who have been identified as "different"

- Supporting educational psychologists to work systemically with schools toward true inclusion, building institutions that are designed to work for everyone from the ground up
- Training all school staff in neuroaffirming and equity-centred, trauma-informed practice, so that inclusion is embedded in how schools operate day to day
- Ensuring that the legal framework of EHCPs is protected and properly resourced, while working toward a system where legal protection is not the only route to inclusion
- Ending delays in the diagnosis and support of SEND students
- Ending delays in EHCP reviews
- Holding schools to account for implementing EHCPs

## **5. Adult Education**

Education is a lifelong process that doesn't end when mandatory schooling does. ICI will support all residents to access education by:

- Funding night schools and adult education courses
- Supporting libraries and lobbying for them to be open more

## **Section 6. Supporting Teaching Staff and Raising Standards**

Schools have been hit hard by austerity, with over a decade of cuts making life harder for teaching staff and damaging children and young people's future prospects. ICI will:

- Support teachers and their unions to get the pay they deserve
- Lobby for smaller class sizes so that teaching staff can give every child and young person the attention they need and deserve
- Lobby for change on how schools are inspected and held to account
- Support schools to tackle the rise of misogyny and hate being fuelled by the internet
- Fund schools properly
- Recognise that teaching staff, children, young people and their families cannot flourish if their basic needs are not met, and commit to ensuring that the housing commitments in our housing section extend to the whole school community
- Support teaching staff facing redundancy, reduced hours and increasing workloads as a result of cuts, and lobby against job losses across schools, further education and higher education in the borough

## **Local Economic Justice**

ICI rejects the notion that there is no money. The resources exist. ICI will push back against cuts, advocate for a fairer national taxation system that makes the wealthiest pay their share, and work to redirect resources toward the communities and services that need them most.

Independent businesses, tradespeople and workers are the backbone of Islington's economy and its communities. Gentrification, rising rents, insecure work and large corporate chains are pushing people and businesses out, hollowing out our high streets and replacing local character with identikit retail. ICI believes in an Islington economy that works for the people who live and work here.

Anti-social behaviour does not appear from nowhere. It is a symptom of cut services, poverty and the grinding effect of over a decade of austerity. ICI will not simply respond with more policing, we will tackle the root causes by investing in people, communities and the services they deserve.

We intend to do this by:

### **1. Fighting Austerity**

Austerity is a political choice, not an economic necessity. ICI will:

- Push back against cuts to local services and resist pressure from central government to reduce provision for residents
- Advocate for a fairer national taxation system that makes the wealthiest pay their share
- Work to redirect resources toward the communities and services that need them most
- Explore participatory budgeting so that residents have a genuine say in how council resources are spent

### **2. Investing in Communities**

Long-term change requires sustained investment in people and the spaces they share. ICI will:

- Invest in community centres, making them genuine local hubs and supporting organisations and charities to deliver services from them
- Invest in mental health support, particularly for children and young people
- Bring back youth centres so young people have somewhere to go
- Open safe drug consumption spaces so people living with addiction can access support rather than be criminalised
- Invest in education and apprenticeships so that young people can see a future for themselves

- Support the campaign to open a women's building on the old Holloway Prison site, ensuring that this historic place retains a meaningful legacy for women, especially women who have experienced or are at risk of contact with the criminal justice system, and the wider communities of Islington

### **3. Workers Rights**

ICI stands in solidarity with workers organising to defend their rights. ICI will:

- Build on the council's commitment to the London Living Wage by ensuring it extends to all contractors and subcontractors working for the council, and advocate for its adoption across all workplaces in the borough
- Work alongside local council trade unions to encourage all those who work for the council to join and become actively involved in a trade union
- Build on and develop existing work with Islington Trades Council to promote information on employment rights, encourage trade union membership across the borough and ensure all workers in Islington know their rights and how to exercise them
- Oppose zero hours contracts, poverty wages and exploitative working conditions wherever they exist in the borough
- Support the right of all workers in Islington to organise, strike and collectively bargain

### **4. Supporting Small Businesses and Tradespeople**

Independent businesses and tradespeople are the lifeblood of Islington's high streets and communities. ICI will:

- Prioritise local procurement, ensuring that council contracts go to small and independent businesses and tradespeople in the borough wherever possible
- Push for rent caps and protections for small businesses facing unaffordable commercial rents
- Actively challenge gentrification and the displacement of independent businesses from our high streets and market spaces
- Support market traders and protect existing market sites from development
- Ensure that small businesses have a voice in council decision making and that their needs are reflected in planning and economic policy

## **Transport**

We want everyone in Islington to be able to travel affordably, safely, quickly and effectively, while enjoying cleaner air. Our goal is to create streets that are healthy for all and free from road danger.

Congestion and road safety remain serious challenges. Whether travelling by car, bus, bike or on foot, many journeys are slowed by traffic and gridlock. A large share of vehicles passing through Islington are not local, contributing to pollution and overcrowded roads.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) were introduced to reduce car use and improve air quality. While they have had benefits for some residents, they have also created problems for others. Road closures can push traffic onto main roads, increasing congestion and pollution and making essential journeys longer and more difficult. Local drivers are often hit hardest, facing rising costs from fines and parking charges, while through-traffic remains largely unchanged.

Most households in Islington do not own or have access to a car (66%) and rely on taxis, deliveries and public transport. Taxi and delivery drivers, many on low incomes, are dealing with longer hours, increased congestion and financial penalties linked to complex and changing road restrictions. Some residents, including those travelling to essential medical appointments, are also experiencing more difficult journeys.

Too often, transport decisions have not reflected residents' day-to-day experiences, leading to frustration and a loss of trust. Planning must begin with the needs of residents and workers, using local knowledge and lived experience to design solutions that work for the whole community.

We intend to do this by:

### **1. Taking a Fresh Approach to Traffic Management**

Our priority is an evidence-based approach that puts residents first. ICI will:

- Review road closures that are causing significant problems and explore alternative safety measures
- Pause and reassess any proposed new Low Traffic Neighbourhoods
- Review existing LTNs identified by residents as most problematic, with equality impact assessments and road safety analysis at the centre
- Improve exemption systems and use better technology to ensure fair access for those who need it
- Continue working with residents on safety issues, including tackling dangerous traffic and considering restrictions on heavy goods vehicles where needed

### **2. Building Better Alternatives**

We support reducing car dependency, but this must go hand in hand with genuinely better alternatives. ICI will:

- Expand cycle infrastructure and bike storage, ensuring streets are safe and accessible for cyclists, pedestrians, wheelchair users and people with impaired mobility
- Assess current cycle lanes that affect bus routes and explore alternatives
- Campaign for improved public transport and lower fares
- Get tough with bike hire companies whose vehicles cause havoc on our streets and green spaces
- Ensure that transport planning and road layout decisions specifically consider the impact on elderly residents and people with disabilities, for whom buses are often the only sustainable travel option
- Review and extend the borough's taxi card scheme to better support elderly residents and people with disabilities, particularly those living within LTN boundaries who may not have the mobility to walk to main roads
- Review the provision of public toilets across the borough and work to reopen closed facilities, making public spaces genuinely accessible to elderly residents, disabled people, families and all those who need them

## **Environment**

Islington has declared a climate emergency, and the ICI takes that seriously. The environment is not a separate issue from poverty, housing or health. In Islington, as elsewhere, it is often people with the least who are hit hardest by poor air quality, lack of green space and the effects of climate change. Any serious environmental commitment must be rooted in justice.

ICI believes that a healthy environment is a right, not a privilege, and that the benefits of clean air, green space and sustainable energy should be shared equally across our communities.

We intend to do this by:

### **1. Clean Air for All**

Air pollution in Islington is not evenly distributed. The poorest communities bear the greatest burden. ICI will:

- Continue to improve air quality across the borough, with particular focus on the areas and communities most affected by pollution
- Ensure that clean air solutions work for all residents, recognising that cycling and walking are not viable options for many older people, people with disabilities, those with several children and those in certain trades and professions, and that for many of these residents buses remain the only sustainable travel option available to them

- Support Low Traffic Neighbourhoods as a tool for reducing emissions, while ensuring they work for all residents
- Work to reduce heavy goods vehicle traffic in residential areas

## **2. Green Spaces and Growing**

Access to nature and the ability to grow food should not be a privilege. ICI will:

- Protect and expand green spaces across the borough, ensuring every resident has access to one
- Expand allotment provision so that more residents can grow their own food
- Invest in forest schools so that children can learn in and connect with nature
- Support community kitchens and food co-ops across the borough, reducing food waste, building food sovereignty and helping residents cut the cost of eating well

## **3. Renewable Energy**

The transition to clean energy should benefit everyone, not just those who can afford it. The ICI will:

- Roll out an affordable solar panel scheme for homes and businesses across Islington, reducing energy costs and reliance on fossil fuels
- Prioritise council-owned buildings and social housing in the rollout, ensuring the transition reaches those who need it most

## **4. Getting Around Sustainably**

Sustainable travel should be accessible and affordable for all. ICI will:

- Expand cycle infrastructure and bike hangar storage across the borough
- Improve the bike hangar payment system so that residents can pay monthly rather than annually, with costs tiered according to income
- Introduce a bike donation scheme so that low income households can access a bike at no cost
- Run bike maintenance and safety workshops so that all residents have the skills and confidence to cycle
- Work with bike hire scheme operators to ensure their bikes and e-bikes are parked responsibly and do not cause hazards on streets and in green spaces
- Campaign for lower public transport fares so that sustainable travel is within reach for everyone

## **Migrant Justice**

In Islington, many of us are proud of our diversity and our long history as a borough shaped by migration. Migrants have built and sustained this borough in the most literal sense, constructing our homes, staffing our hospitals, teaching in our schools and delivering our social care. We are a borough of sanctuary, with a proud tradition of supporting migrant communities and those fleeing persecution. That tradition is now under threat, with the government proposing to expand no recourse to public funds, increase hostile environment measures, and pursue changes that would strip more people of their rights and their safety.

ICI will not allow the hostile environment to take root in Islington. Migrants are not a problem to be managed. They are our neighbours, our colleagues, our NHS and care workers, and our community.

We intend to do this by:

### **1. Defending No Recourse to Public Funds**

The government's proposed expansion of no recourse to public funds would push more people into destitution. ICI will:

- Actively oppose any expansion of no recourse to public funds at a national level
- Continue and expand the council's support for residents living with no recourse to public funds
- Fund and support community organisations working with people in this situation

### **2. Supporting Legal Rights**

Migrants and asylum seekers must be able to access justice. ICI will:

- Lobby for legal aid to be available to all migrants and asylum seekers
- Support law centres and specialist legal firms that provide immigration advice
- Push for reform of a legal aid system that currently leaves too many people without access to support

### **3. Opposing the Hostile Environment**

The hostile environment is a deliberate government policy designed to make life unbearable for migrants. ICI will:

- Oppose any local implementation of hostile environment policies, including right to rent checks and any data sharing with the Home Office
- Oppose discriminatory policing and any immigration enforcement operations that target or demonise migrant communities

- Refuse to allow Islington's public services to become instruments of immigration control

#### **4. Celebrating Our Migrant Community**

Islington's diversity is one of its greatest strengths. ICI will:

- Celebrate and support the migrant communities that have shaped and continue to shape our borough
- Fund community groups working on migration issues and ensure their voices are heard in council decisions
- Ensure that all residents, regardless of immigration status, feel that Islington is their home and that the council is on their side
- Protect and build on Islington's status as a Borough of Sanctuary, ensuring it remains a genuine commitment rather than just a title, and deepening its reach across all council services and communities

### **Democracy and Community Power**

Democracy only works when people can meaningfully participate in it. In Islington, that participation has been deliberately constrained. The current Labour council has amended the council constitution in ways that seriously limit residents' right to question or even observe council deliberations, closing the doors of local democracy to the very people it is supposed to serve. ICI believes that power belongs with the community, and that every decision made about our borough should be open, accountable and accessible to all.

We intend to do this by:

#### **1. Opening Up Democracy**

Every resident in Islington deserves a real voice in the decisions that affect their lives, and ICI is committed to making that a reality. ICI will:

- Reverse the restrictions to local democracy brought about by the most recent amendments to the council constitution, restoring residents' right to question and observe council deliberations
- Centre the public in council decision making through public meetings, citizens assemblies and consultations that are truly reflective of community opinion
- Ensure that consultations and democratic processes are accessible to the most marginalised, producing materials in community languages and holding meetings in community centres
- Work to increase the percentage of residents on the electoral register and support eligible residents to vote, through public campaigning as well as fulfilling our legal responsibilities

## **2. Supporting Voluntary and Community Organisations**

Islington has a rich tradition of voluntary and community organisations that play a vital role in supporting residents to understand and exercise their rights.

Organisations like Islington Law Centre and Voluntary Action Islington provide essential services with deep roots in our communities, and ICI is committed to working in partnership with them. ICI will:

- Fund and support voluntary organisations, law centres and community groups to deliver essential services and ensure that all residents, including the most marginalised, are able to understand and exercise their rights
- Ensure that voluntary organisations have a meaningful voice in council decision making and are treated as genuine partners

## **Water Rights**

Water is not a commodity, it is a human right. Residents in Islington, as throughout Britain, have been scandalised by the behaviour of water companies that hold a monopoly over one of the elements most essential to human life.

ICI will:

- Campaign for the renationalisation of the water companies
- Provide free drinking water in all council facilities, reducing the pressure on residents to buy expensive bottled water or go without

## **International Politics**

Islington Community Independents is committed to the local community and the challenges we face, as well as being internationalists. We know that events in other parts of the world may sometimes feel removed and far away, and yet they do impact us here, directly, and we believe in solidarity. Every pound spent on bombs dropped abroad is one less to spend on providing social care and support in our community, and the lessons in repression learnt in Gaza trickle back to how the police act on the streets of Islington.

This is why Islington Community Independents will:

### **1. Implement Full Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS)**

- Divest from Israel. Take all pension funds out of firms complicit in violations of Palestinian rights, not just the UN list

- Notify all companies that if they trade with or invest in Israel, they will be unable to receive council contracts and face exposure, boycotts, mass mobilisations and strikes
- Support any companies, businesses, community groups & organisations within the borough to implement full BDS

## **2. Stand in Solidarity with International Struggle**

One of the strengths of our borough is that people living and working here have connections with every part of the globe. We will work to confront British complicity with slavery, exploitation and colonialism, and stand in solidarity with communities fighting for their national and civil rights, from Sudan and the Congo, to Haiti to Kurdistan to Palestine and beyond.

ICI will:

- Platform and amplify the struggles of oppressed peoples around the world, including through our work in council chambers and community spaces
- Work with community organisations in Islington that have ties to international struggles, platforming their voices and supporting their work
- Support refugees and asylum seekers fleeing conflict and persecution, connecting to our commitments in the immigration section
- Confront British complicity with slavery, colonialism and exploitation, including through education, commemoration and public acknowledgment
- Advocate for debt cancellation and reparations for countries and communities still bearing the cost of colonial extraction
- Oppose British arms sales and military support to regimes committing human rights abuses
- Support the right of workers and communities globally to organise, resist and determine their own futures

## **In Conclusion: A Better Islington is Possible**

Everything in this manifesto has come from our community. These are not promises handed down from politicians in offices, they are commitments forged through conversation, organising and collective action by the people who live and work in Islington every day.

We know that the problems we face, from the housing crisis to the underfunding of our schools and health services, are not inevitable. They are the result of political choices made by those with power, and power can be challenged, redistributed and taken back by the people. The resources exist. The will to use

them differently exists in our community. What has been missing is representation that reflects that will.

ICI is built from that community power. We are asking you to join us, to vote for us, to hold us to account, and to keep organising and building alongside us. Change does not come from the top down. It comes from people like us, refusing to accept less than we deserve, and coming together to demand and build something better.

A better Islington is possible. We are a community that refuses to accept less than we deserve.