



## CAMDEN: NEW MODEL

### Be different

When the Greater London Council was set up in 1965, it transformed the boroughs that made up London. One of its new creations was the London Borough of Camden, a merger of three older boroughs in inner north London, with 240,000 people. Conventionally, the new borough would have asked the College of Heralds to design a coat of arms, that could be used on everything from the mayor's stationery to the corporation dustcarts. But Camden wanted to be different.

### Voting, working, giving, receiving

Wolff Olins created an entirely new kind of symbol for a local authority – not obscure and heraldic, but straightforward and immediate. This would be a conspicuous symbol to define the arbitrary borders of the new authority – saying, in effect, 'you are in Camden' – and drawing attention to the work the council did for its people. The symbol was a pattern of eight interlocking hands – voting, working, giving, receiving – expressing the human interrelatedness of modern local government. The hands were in white, against a warm orange background.

### Forty years

More than forty years on, Camden still uses the symbol, though it's now green in colour. Dozens of local authorities have followed Camden's lead, and tried to create friendly modern brands. In spite of all this, most local authorities are still largely seen as remote and inefficient. But Camden is nevertheless a marker – original and authentic – of a desire to be different and inefficient.

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