

# Camden housing

## Gospel Oak edition Winter 2018

Local housing news for Camden Council tenants and leaseholders, including Hampstead Town, Gospel Oak and Haverstock.

Season's greetings to our residents

## The first extra-care council homes in Camden



Artist's impression of the new Charlie Ratchford Centre

In early 2019, construction will start on 38 new extra-care homes in Chalk Farm for older people who need support to live independently. The new Charlie Ratchford Centre will be the first extra-care council

homes funded by the Community Investment Programme.

Residents of the new homes, located on Crogsland Road, will be council tenants with their own front door and homes for

## The way you pay for your water is changing

If you are a council tenant, you will have seen in your last rent statement that the way you pay for your water is changing from April 2019.

Thames Water want to collect their own water charges and this means that from April 2019 you must pay them directly for your

life, with the care and support they need to live independently available onsite. There will be a shared garden, ground floor lounge and dining areas where residents can socialise.

The centre will also provide a new base for Camden Carers Service (CCS), an organisation that provides support services to improve the quality of life and wellbeing for carers in Camden.

Allegra Lynch, CEO of Camden Carers Centre said "We're very excited about the building work on the new Charlie Ratchford Centre. We're looking forward to moving into our new offices and making use of the space to encourage carers to make time for themselves; supporting them to maintain their own health and wellbeing."

Once the new building is complete, the CCS will move out of its current offices in the old Charlie Ratchford Centre on Belmont Street, a site that will also see redevelopment.

Find out more at [charlieratchfordgtp.co.uk](http://charlieratchfordgtp.co.uk)

water. This change does not affect you if you are a leaseholder or if you don't pay your water charges to the Council. You will get letters nearer the time about how this affects you and how to pay.

Find out more at [camden.gov.uk/payforwater](http://camden.gov.uk/payforwater)

# You said, we did:



## Your contribution to our fire risk assessments

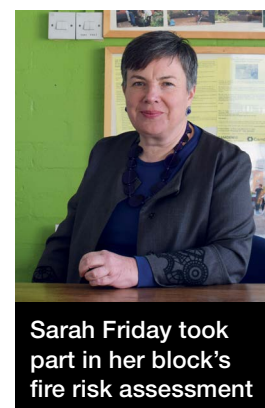
All landlords including Camden Council are required to carry out fire risk assessments (FRAs) on their properties with shared communal areas. The FRA looks at how safe a property is, what the fire risks are and gives recommendations on how to improve fire safety.

**You said:** Following the Grenfell tragedy, we received enquiries from many Camden residents and councillors about FRAs, what they cover and when they happen.

**We did:** As part of Camden's commitment to being open and transparent with resident safety, we invited residents and TRA chairs to take part in FRAs on their blocks.

Sarah Friday, co-chair of her TRA and member of the Fire Safety Advisory Panel was present for the fire

risk assessment for her block. "I was told that Camden were reviewing the FRAs for my building and I was keen to be involved. It was useful to take part in the FRA for my building because I could give residents first hand feedback. I was able to ask questions directly and learn about the process through conversations with the assessors. In turn, because I knew the building, I showed them particular areas that also needed to be assessed."



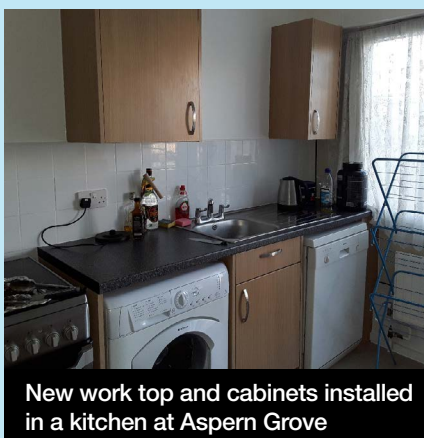
Sarah Friday took part in her block's fire risk assessment

The Council will approach your TRA when an FRA is due at your building. If you live in a street property, the Council will write to you directly. When available, the FRAs will be published on the Camden website at [camden.gov.uk/fra](http://camden.gov.uk/fra)

## Investment near you

In June we began a programme of works in Gospel Oak focusing on improving four areas – heating, electrics, kitchens and bathrooms. Fifty homes around Gospel Oak will soon benefit from a modern upgrade to their kitchens and bathrooms, replacement boilers and electrical rewiring. As the works continue, we are looking for innovative ways to work with our residents to try and make the work less disruptive to their everyday lives. One approach we are aiming to trial is to provide respite areas locally where residents can spend their time during the day whilst works take place in their home.

Once the work is complete, residents will have warmer homes and brand new up-to-date facilities.



New work top and cabinets installed in a kitchen at Aspern Grove

## A reminder about the town hall

The town hall is now closed for refurbishment. All services have been relocated. Find out where to access the services you need at [camden.gov.uk/townhall](http://camden.gov.uk/townhall)

## Working with the community

With so much work taking place in Gospel Oak and Haverstock, it is important that we ensure that local voices are heard throughout the process. Over the last few months, our community liaison officers have been working closely with residents of Wendling and St Stephen's Close, and speaking with site architects Metropolitan Workshop to come up with options for future estate rejuvenation. Similarly, at the West Kentish Town Estate, our community liaison officers have been engaging with local people and PRP Architects.

At both estates, we're piloting a resident led engagement model, where residents will take the lead on starting discussions with local people. They will use their expertise and knowledge of the estate to gather honest and detailed responses. The feedback collected will help the architects draw up a range of design options that meet the needs of the community.

The regeneration of Gospel Oak and Haverstock is part of the Community Investment Programme. As with any project delivered through the programme, local needs come first, which is why we're working with residents from design to delivery.



Exhibition event at West Kentish Town Estate

Find out more at [cip.camden.gov.uk](http://cip.camden.gov.uk)

## Can you help a rough sleeper this winter?

Do you know how to help if you see someone sleeping rough? The Camden Safer Streets Team is working hard to get people off the



streets and provide them with support so that they can rebuild their lives. But we need your help, especially throughout winter – and you can do it in just a few minutes on your smartphone.

If you see someone sleeping rough in Camden you can tell the Safer Streets Team using the StreetSafe app or by phone or email.

The team will use that information to send officers to the people sleeping rough and point them to the right service to help them get off the streets.

We will be providing extra emergency beds during periods of severe weather this winter. With your help, we can do our best to make sure that no one has to spend the night on the streets in freezing temperatures.

**Download the app** from the website below or by searching 'Camden safer streets' on the App Store or Google Play.

For more information visit **camdensst.com** or contact **streetsafe@cgl.org.uk** **020 7833 7970**

## Save money on energy this winter

There are many ways to help improve the warmth and comfort of your home whilst saving money on energy bills.

The Green Camden Helpline provides free advice and tips to help you keep well and warm, such as how to reduce your fuel bills, what to do if you are in fuel debt, switching energy tariff and checking if you are eligible for a free Well and Warm home advice visit, and other services and discounts. You can call the helpline free on **0800 801 738** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

Find out more at **camden.gov.uk/energy**



## Gifts for people in need

The Mayor of Camden invites you to get in the festive spirit by donating new toys, toiletries, gift vouchers and clothes for the annual Christmas appeal.

Your gifts will be given to residents in Camden who need them most.

You can take your donations to:

- Reception, 5 Pancras Square, N1C 4AG
- Reception, Crowndale Centre, NW1 1BD

You can also post them to: Mayor's offices, Crowndale Centre, 218 Eversholt Street, NW1 1BD

Please do not wrap your gifts, and make sure all toys have the CE mark. Send your gifts by **Wednesday 19 December 2018**.



## Help us help you this winter

At this time of year, having a cold or feeling unwell can ruin your festive plans – but there are simple things you can do to prevent seasonal illness.

For minor health concerns, including a cough or cold, speak to your pharmacist first and nip it in the bud before it gets more serious. They will assess you and decide the best course of action for self-care.

For more urgent medical concerns that are not life threatening, you can call NHS 111. The phone line is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Keep an eye on your vulnerable and older neighbours by visiting them regularly. If you have concerns about a vulnerable neighbour, contact your housing officer.

For more information visit **nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/keep-warm-keep-well**



## Camden Alive

Earlier this year, we were delighted to be awarded the Mayor of London's Cultural Impact Award as part of the London Borough of Culture competition. The award was given for our project 'Camden Alive', which will invite residents on estates across the borough to share their personal experiences of Camden. These stories will be brought to life through cutting-edge virtual reality technology for everyone to explore. As part of the first stages of the project, we're working with residents at the Maiden Lane Estate. We'll be working with more residents in the new year. Find out more at **lovecamden.org**

## Have your say in our caretaking review

Our estates are looked after by council staff and contractors. Our caretakers look after the communal areas inside your buildings, estate sweepers provided by our contractor Veolia clean the outside areas on your estates, and gardening maintenance is provided by contractor Idverde.

We want to find out how we can improve your caretaking service and make sure that you are happy with how we look after where you live. To help us get it right take part in our review. Tell us what you think about how we deliver our services now, and how we can do better in future at [camden.gov.uk/caretakingreview](https://camden.gov.uk/caretakingreview) by Sunday 13 January.

## Opening hours and service updates over Christmas

Contact Camden will be closed for general enquiries on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day, operating an emergency service only. The emergency out of hours number is **020 7974 4444**. You can use your Camden Account to access most services like renewing parking permits, paying bills and reporting housing repairs.

Recycling and rubbish will be collected as usual on Christmas Eve. All other collections during Christmas week will be collected two days later than usual. Rubbish and recycling will be collected on New Year's Eve but all other collections during the first week of 2019 will be a day later than usual.

More details about the opening hours and service updates can be found in the Camden magazine or online at [camden.gov.uk/christmas](https://camden.gov.uk/christmas)

For information about changes to parking over the festive period, please visit [camden.gov.uk/parking](https://camden.gov.uk/parking)

## Camden's financial challenge

This month, our spending plans for local public services will be discussed by the Council's Cabinet.

We're proud to provide essential services to our communities but Camden Council, along with public services across the country, is facing a financial challenge. Since 2010 the government has cut our budget in half and we've had to make savings of £169 million.

Due to continued cuts, rising costs and increased demand for services, by 2022 we'll need to save a further estimated £35-40 million from our annual budget. We need to prepare now for how we'll make these savings, which means making some difficult decisions.

At a Cabinet meeting on 12 December, cabinet members with responsibility for all of the affected areas will discuss the report. The report will state which decisions are to be taken that night, the plans that will continue to be developed, and the plans that will require local engagement or consultation before a decision is taken.

Keep up to date at [camden.gov.uk/financialchallenge](https://camden.gov.uk/financialchallenge)

## Support with Universal Credit

Universal Credit has rolled out across Camden, replacing some existing benefits for people of working age who are making a new claim. We know many residents are concerned about the changes and we are here to support you.

If you are a council tenant claiming Universal Credit and worried about paying your rent, speak to your rent officer first on **020 7974 4444** and they will ensure you get support and advice.

You can also contact Citizens Advice Camden, who we are funding to provide

dedicated support:

- If you are already claiming Universal Credit, phone the UC SmartMoney helpline: **0300 303 0308**
- Get advice about moving to Universal Credit and other benefit advice: **0300 330 1157**
- Drop in for advice: 141a Robert Street, NW1 3QT or 2 Prince of Wales Road, NW5 3LQ – see opening hours at [camden.cabservice.org.uk](https://camden.cabservice.org.uk)

Find out more about the support available in Camden at [camden.gov.uk/universalcredit](https://camden.gov.uk/universalcredit)

For more information about Universal Credit and to find out what benefits you can claim visit [gov.uk/universalcredit](https://gov.uk/universalcredit)

## Affordable homes for adult children of Camden council tenants

Our first 65 Camden Living homes have been let and residents have settled in.

Nearly a third of the new tenants are adult children of Camden's council or housing association tenants.

It's our aim to provide homes at lower rents for children of council tenants because these residents typically find it harder to move out of their parents' council homes due to the high private rents in Camden.

Camden Living is a company the council set up to allow us to rent homes at lower rents. They're designed to fill the gap for those who can't afford private rented homes but aren't eligible for council housing. This also includes nurses, doctors, medical researchers, teachers, police officers and probation officers.

Our first Camden Living homes are let, but more will become available. You can register your interest for Camden Living and other affordable housing schemes with our partners on our website [camdenliving.co.uk](https://camdenliving.co.uk)