

Camden housing

Kentish Town edition Winter 2018

Local housing news for Camden Council tenants and leaseholders, including Highgate, Cantelowes and Kentish Town.

❄️ 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

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

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

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

You said, we did:



Your contribution to our fire risk assessments

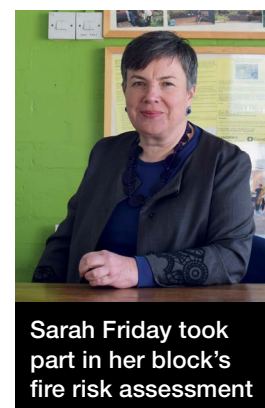
All landlords including Camden Council are required to carry out fire risk assessments (FRAs) on their properties with shared communal areas. The FRA looks at how safe a property is, what the fire risks are and gives recommendations on how to improve fire safety.

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."



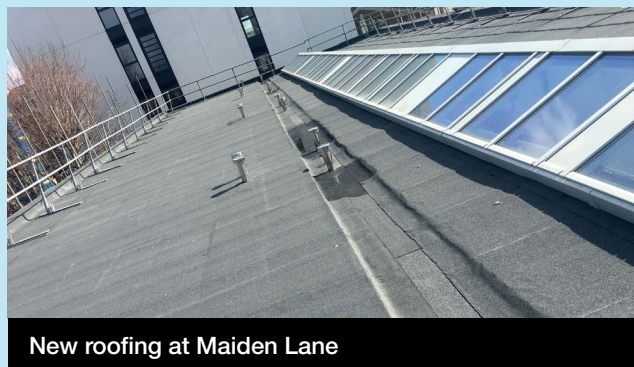
Sarah Friday took part in her block's fire risk assessment

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

Investment near you

One hundred and eighteen homes at **Maiden Lane Estate** will soon be warmer and more energy efficient as the flat roofs are renewed and single glazed windows are replaced with double glazing in the **Elm Friars Walk block**. The windows and doors will meet police accredited 'Secure by Design' requirements for added security.

Residents will also benefit from redecoration and repairs to the external walls as part of the Better Homes external scheme and new fire doors as part of our borough wide work to improve fire safety.



New roofing at Maiden Lane

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

William Ellis: all singing, all dancing

Pupils at William Ellis School are now learning the chords to Christmas carols in their new music room and reading Shakespeare in their new drama studio. These refurbished facilities were completed in October, offering children the chance to explore new and creative learning opportunities in a purpose built extension to the school.

The works at William Ellis School are the latest in a series of huge improvements happening in the area through the Community Investment Programme. It is the latest school improvement after the new LaSWAP sixth form building on Highgate Road. The project also includes new buildings and facilities for Parliament Hill School which are expected to start opening later in the new year following the art department refurbishment in 2017.

We're delivering improvements to 48 schools across the borough, opening doors to success for children all over Camden.

Find out more at cip.camden.gov.uk



Students in a study room at the new LaSWAP sixth form building

Camden Council housing annual report 2017/18

Between April 2017 and March 2018

Investing in your homes

93%

of you rated our
repairs service
'good' to 'excellent'

We responded to

137,809

repair calls



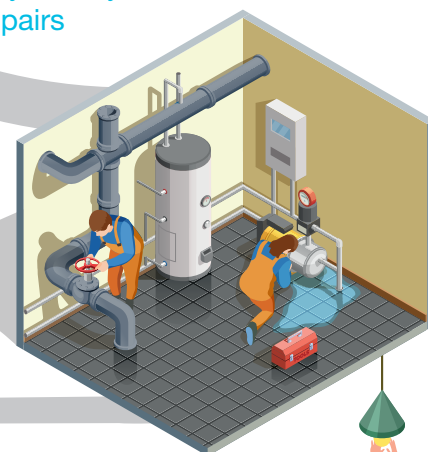
71%

of our repairs were finished
in a single visit as part
of our **right first time**
programme

We completed

48,864

day-to-day
repairs



We completed

45,562

mechanical and electrical
repairs to **heating and hot
water**, lifts, TV aerials, door
entry systems and CCTV



88.5%

of you said that our
mechanical and electrical
repairs service was 'good'
to **'excellent'**



We looked into **496** complaints
and **improved our services** as a result
(notably around caretaking, voids and recycling)



Improving lives

We allocated



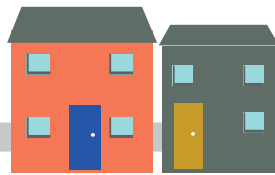
homes including **755** of our council homes and **153** from housing associations



160 of our allocations went to severely overcrowded households improving the lives of **285 children**



We helped **106** households to exchange their homes



We created **2** new officers dedicated to helping our older tenants wishing to downsize and they have supported **28 moves** so far



We supported



residents to move into sheltered housing

Our **Well and Warm** service visited **313 homes** to give them energy advice and make them warmer and more comfortable

Creating safe and attractive places

We launched a new resident-led **Fire Safety Advisory Panel** to improve fire safety across the borough

We spent **£15 million** on making fire safety improvements across Camden

We supported

101 TRAs

25 leaseholder associations

7 tenant management organisations

Our **Spring Clean** programme helped to renovate **8** blocks

Over **50** tenants took part in our TRA training

We organised two summer events, which over **600** residents attended

We visited **1,826** households to raise awareness of recycling and healthy living

1 estate had its chute converted which increased recycling on average by **110kg** per week per block.

15 textile banks brought the council an income of **£12,000**

Making communities stronger

At the Bourne Estate we provided a brand new tenants hall, play areas and landscaping

At Maiden Lane we built new shops, a new play area, open space and low cost business space with training opportunities for local people

We completed **65** new Camden Living rent homes, and started to let them at below market rents. We gave priority to council tenants, people on the housing register and key workers

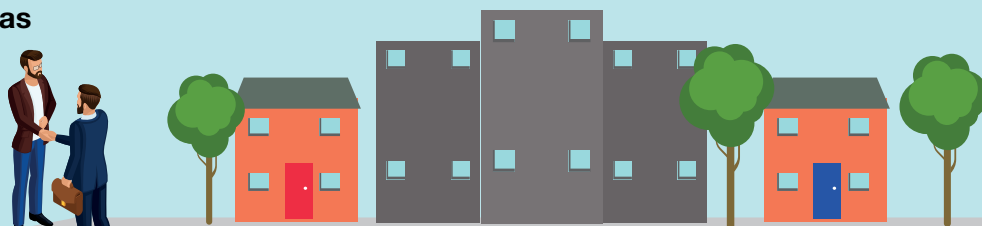
We built **115** homes, for the first time in a decade building more homes than were lost through Right to Buy

Of these, **62** were additional new homes and 53 were replacing existing homes which were in a poor state

We supported **20** tenants who were affected by the benefit cap into employment

We visited **100** tenants in our over 75s visiting programme

We assisted **517** new claims for benefits and generated **£2 million** in additional income



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 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

For information about changes to parking over the festive period, please visit 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

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 camdencabservice.org.uk

Find out more about the support available in Camden at camden.gov.uk/universalcredit

For more information about Universal Credit and to find out what benefits you can claim visit 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