

Camden housing

Holborn edition Autumn 2018

Local housing news for Camden Council tenants and leaseholders, including King's Cross, Bloomsbury, Holborn and Covent Garden.

A summer of fun



The events celebrated a century since women got the vote

Hundreds of residents came out to enjoy our family fun days this summer. Sadly our event at Regents Park was cancelled due to muddy conditions after heavy rain, but the sun shone on the Bourne Estate and Talacre Park and saw residents of all ages taking part in activities

to celebrate 100 years since women got the vote. It was the first tenant engagement event at the Bourne Estate since construction completed and the new facilities opened. Activities included rosette making, pop up suffragette plays, a huge range of sports, crafts and games as well as fantastic music and dance performances.

Council staff were on hand and enjoyed speaking to lots of you about the local services available including healthy living, housing options and recycling, and the London Fire Brigade gave tips on preventing fires and staying safe.

To find out about more family events near you, visit lovecamden.org



Residents enjoyed face painting and dance performances from The Place

You said, we did:



Reading your electricity meters

Access to meters in communal electrical intake cupboards had to be restricted following guidance from the Health and Safety Executive.

You said: Some of you said that since these restrictions have been in place, you haven't been able to read your meter yourself and your energy provider has

not been prepared to take a reading for you.

We did: We know that this has been causing problems for some of our residents so we asked your energy suppliers to move their meters from our intake cupboards, but we have had very little cooperation. It is important that your meter is read safely so we are employing two officers to take your meter readings. This is a pilot and we will report back to you on how this service develops.



Officers will now take electric meter readings for residents who can't access them

Help us to make your homes safer

As we've told you in previous newsletters, Camden Council are carrying out fire risk assessments (FRAs) across the borough. These are essential surveys that need to happen to make sure that you, your family and your neighbours are safe – **and we need your help to do them**. Please look out for letters requesting access to your home and keep to your appointment to allow us to get in and carry out these tests which will help keep everyone safer.

Photographic ID is always carried by both contractors and council staff, don't let anyone into your home without the relevant ID.

If you have any questions about the FRA process or fire safety visit camden.gov.uk/firesafety or email the team at firesafety.team@camden.gov.uk



Investment near you

Works are underway at **Millman Place** and the **Tybalds Estate** and in 2019 almost 250 households will benefit from refurbished boiler rooms. The **Tybalds Estate** boiler was first commissioned in 1937 for **Boswell House**, and that it has lasted since before WWII is testament to what an excellent piece of machinery it is. It will be replaced with an efficient modern system which will serve **Richbell, Springwater** and **Boswell Houses**.

Also at the Tybalds Estate, residents will soon be seeing a few more workmen hanging around the towers – as abseilers prepare to clean, paint and repair the outside of the 14 storey buildings.

Work is due to start on the windows at **Vesage Court** in the **Gamages Estate** this October as part of Camden's Better Homes external programme. All 120 homes will have their existing single glazed windows replaced with modern double glazed metal windows that can be fully reversed for ease of cleaning.

New Princes Circus green space

As part of the West End Project, Camden's transformation of the area around Tottenham Court Road, three new and regenerated green spaces are being created in the heart of Camden's West End.

This includes Princes Circus in Holborn, which will be dramatically redesigned into a new public space linking Covent Garden and the British Museum. New planting will sit alongside widened pavements and new and safer crossings, while the dramatic removal of some of the road space of Shaftesbury Avenue and Bloomsbury Street will create a traffic free public space.

You can see all the designs for the area on our website camden.gov.uk/westendproject



The boiler being replaced at the Tybalds Estate is over 80 years old

Do you have the skills to help in an emergency?

Enthusiastic volunteers are invaluable during an emergency, and we know that in our Camden community there are many people who have useful skills and experience that they would like to be able to share in an emergency situation.

Now, a new and innovative emergency volunteer programme has been launched in Camden that will enable local people to register their skills to help in a time of emergency. Delivered by Volunteer Centre Camden, the CAMERA (Coordinating and Mobilising Emergency Response Activists) programme, funded by the Government and Nesta, will allow local people who have useful skills and experience, like counselling, languages or first aid, to be known and trusted to the local authority to be called upon in the event of an emergency.

If you have skills that you would like to share to help your community please email camera@volunteercentrecamden.org.uk or call **020 7424 9990**.

Would you like to get involved? Tell us how

Resident involvement is a two way relationship between residents and Camden. It gives residents a voice that is listened to and is a way for us to use your feedback to improve the services you use every day, because you know your homes and communities best.

Camden are working on a new resident involvement strategy for 2019 and beyond.

This will make sure that our residents are always a part of and can influence the decisions made about their homes and communities. We would like the broadest range of our residents to get involved in as many ways as possible, and in ways that fit into their lifestyles.

So tell us what's important to you. We want to find out how and what you want to be involved in. We'll be meeting with lots of different residents and resident groups to find out their views and shape our new strategy, but you can have your say today by filling out our short questionnaire at camden.gov.uk/getinvolved

Mythbusting: sheltered housing

There are 774 residents in our 23 sheltered housing schemes in Camden, but not everyone is aware of exactly what sheltered housing is. Often, people think that moving to sheltered housing is like moving to a residential home, when in fact, it is the very opposite. Here we dispel the myths about sheltered housing...

Myth:

I will lose my secure tenancy ✘

I will lose my privacy and independence ✘

I will have to share facilities with other people ✘

I will not be allowed to bring my pet ✘

I will be treated like an old person and lose my voice ✘

Reality:

Sheltered housing is a supportive housing environment for older people. Residents all have a secure tenancy with their own front door, and live in a home

that is safe and well maintained. Residents have support and assistance – for example to book medical appointments or pay for utilities – while living a private and independent life, with a 24 hour alarm service and a housing manager who lives onsite.

Residents can choose to take part in a range of social events onsite and in the community to meet new people, as well as keeping in touch with old friends and family. Furry and feathered friends welcome.

If you or someone you know is 65 or over* with housing or support needs, this might be for you. Find out more about sheltered housing at camden.gov.uk/shelteredhousing

*exceptions can be made on the grounds of disability or medical conditions.



“Soon it will be three years in this haven of peace, where I have felt independent and protected. I enjoy the entertainment and take part in the activities provided by the gifted manager, Sean, each month.” – **Renee Vincent, Gospel Oak**



“I like living in sheltered housing because where I live is close to all the medical services and shops I need. I like to join in the parties we have and enjoy the daytrips, and to see the staff and chat and joke. It's my home with knobs on!” – **Barbarah Flemming, Holborn**

Applying for school places – don't miss the deadlines

Parents whose children are moving up to secondary school next year have until 31 October 2018 to apply for a year 7 place.

Camden has some of the highest performing schools

in the country. Find out more about what Camden secondary schools can offer your child at our schools' open days and evenings in September and October, or attend an informal session at your local Meet the Parents group to

find out what your local secondary schools are really like from parents of secondary school children as well as the students themselves.

For children moving from nursery up to primary schools, the deadline to apply for a reception place for your child starting in September next year is 15 January 2019.

Visit camden.gov.uk/admissions to find out everything you need to know about our schools and how to apply, or contact us at admissions@camden.gov.uk or **020 7974 1625**.



Our town hall is closed for refurbishment

Our 80-year old town hall closed last month as part of a refurbishment project to modernise the building.

A planning application to refurbish the town hall will be submitted this autumn. If the application is successful, works will begin. All services have been relocated while the town hall is closed.

Birth and death registrations, electoral services, duplicate certificate applications and citizenship ceremonies have moved to the Crowndale Centre, 218 Eversholt Street, NW1 1BD. The council chamber, committee rooms and services, councillors' offices and the Mayor's office

and parlour are also at the Crowndale Centre.

The following services are available at Tavistock House, Tavistock Square, WC1H 9JB: nationality checking service, settlement checking service, nationality document return service, European passport return service and taking notice for marriages and civil partnerships.

Two brand new ceremony suites for wedding and civil ceremonies are also available at Tavistock House.

For more information visit camden.gov.uk/townhall

What happens if I want to end my joint tenancy?

Many of our tenants have joint tenancies with a partner or spouse. Sometimes unfortunately these relationships will break down and one partner or tenant will leave. If this happens and either you or your partner leaves, there can be legal implications so it's important that you tell us so that we can help as soon as possible.

If your partner leaves, get in touch with us straight away so that we can tell you about your rights and responsibilities, rent and payment, and help to transfer the tenancy to you if appropriate.

If you want to leave your home and bring your joint tenancy to an end, this is possible as only one tenant is needed to end it. Please get in touch with us before you take this step so that we can advise you and help to grant a tenancy in just your name.

You can also seek your own independent legal advice from a solicitor, Citizen's Advice Bureau at camdencabservice.org.uk or the Mary Ward Legal Centre at marywardlegal.org.uk

