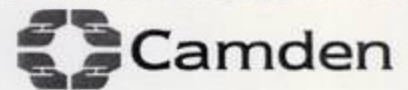


Date: 25.03.2013

Enquiries to: HASCcommunications@camden.gov.uk



London Borough of Camden
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Town Hall
Judd Street,
London, WC1H 9JE

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Local housing news from your area

You may have noticed building sites and scaffolding appearing across Camden in the last year, in particular on our housing estates. I wanted to write to explain how and why we are investing money in our estates. Enclosed you will find a newsletter which explains what's happened so far in your area and plans we've agreed for the next five years.

You, or someone you know, may have recently had a new kitchen or bathroom fitted or work done to your roof, windows or heating system as part of our Better Homes programme. We will be investing a further £178 million into improving 13,000 more Camden Council homes and buildings between now and 2017.

Talking to tenants and leaseholders over the years I know that often it's the communal areas like the entrance to your block which has the biggest impact on how you feel about your home. As a result we are starting a spring clean over the coming months to redecorate a number of buildings in each area that need priority work, which we agreed with your local district management committee (DMC). We are also appointing seven new gardeners to improve the grassed areas on our estates.

The money to pay for all this work comes both from rents and service charges, but primarily from funding created by the Council's Community Investment Programme (CIP). This programme is our solution to continue to invest in community facilities despite the funding cuts we received from central government. By selling or redeveloping old or underused buildings and land we can then use that money to repair and build new council and shared ownership homes, schools and community facilities; at a time when they are so vitally needed.

I hope that you will start to see the results in your area. If you want to find out more about when Better Homes is coming to your area or share your experience visit wearecamden.org/betterhomes.

Yours sincerely

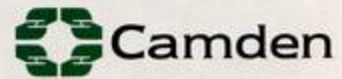
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julian Fulbrook".

Cllr Julian Fulbrook
Cabinet member for Housing, Camden Council

Camden housing

Camden Town edition

Spring 2013



Including Primrose Hill, Regent's Park, St Pancras and Somers Town
Local housing news for Camden Council tenants and leaseholders

Spring clean

You told us to look at how we could improve the communal areas where you live.

One of the ways we are doing this is with our new spring clean.

We worked with our District Management Committees (DMCs) to identify which buildings we should focus on first. We are now looking at how the appearance of the block entrances can be improved.

Work will focus on the decoration of communal areas and issues such as the type of flooring or surfaces, which can be difficult for caretakers to clean and maintain. Work is due to start in summer 2013. Turn to the back cover to see where in your area will be getting a spring clean.



Residents and members of the TRA at Coopers Lane

A safer path

Coopers Lane Tenants and Residents Association (TRA) in St Pancras have made it easier for local people to access the play areas behind their TRA hall and improved the disabled access to the hall's garden. Funding from their District Management Committee (DMC) allowed them to put in a new path and gate that is accessible for wheelchair users and parents with pushchairs.

Lil Scott from the TRA said: "The garden was first landscaped in 2006. It has been maintained by the Association and we grow a range of flowers and vegetables. The new path means wheelchair users can now access the garden easily and it has also provided a quicker route for

people with buggies to get to the play areas behind our hall."

If you would like to find out more about how to apply for funding or get involved with groups in your area please contact our tenant engagement team on 020 7974 2377 or visit our website camden.gov.uk

What's a DMC?

District Management Committees (DMCs) are made up of representatives from tenants' groups, councillors, and our housing services team. They meet four times a year to discuss local issues.

Community Investment Programme – building a bright future for Camden

You'll be seeing more construction work springing up around Camden as part of our Community Investment Programme (CIP). The CIP is our solution to how we can continue investing in schools, homes and community facilities in Camden despite government spending cuts. We're doing this by redeveloping or selling buildings and land that are underused or expensive to maintain and reinvesting the money created into community facilities and homes.

What does the CIP mean for you?

The CIP has helped pay for

work, including new kitchens and bathrooms, in almost 3,000 homes as part of the Better Homes programme (see opposite page). A further £178 million will be invested in over 13,000 other homes by 2017. The programme will also build around 1,100 new and replacement council or shared ownership homes in Camden.

This financial year (2013/14) we'll also be spending £10 million on local schools, with a total of £117 million planned to make vital repairs to 58 schools and children's centres. Some 17 schools across Camden

have already benefitted from improvement works including new heating systems, new windows, new roofs and brickwork repairs.

The CIP is not just about improving buildings – it's about making sure our communities have a bright future. We have created a number of work placements on sites in Camden so far. Future CIP projects will continue to provide new job opportunities for Camden residents.

For more information please visit camden.gov.uk/cip

Case study



Netley School - Camden Town

Building work started on site in November to redevelop the Netley school site. This development will provide new council homes on the site of the current Woodhall Garages, a new primary school building, a new Primary Learning Support Service including Robson House primary pupil referral unit, a redesigned community learning centre, new playgrounds, private, council and shared ownership homes, and improved pathways and public space.



Camden repairs – right first time

Right first time includes some big changes to our repairs service and our call centre. The benefits of the new service include a more flexible appointment system and an easier way to report repairs.

In 2012 we piloted the new way of working in the Gospel Oak and Camden Town districts which were a big success with up to 90% of our customers rating our service four (good) or five (excellent) out of five. We are now rolling out the right first time repairs service across the borough from early April 2013.

Where we have already trialled right first time we have seen improved repairs completion times, a reduction in missed appointments and an improvement in repairs completed in a single visit. To find out more visit camden.gov.uk/rft

Better Homes for you

We will be investing a further £178m in repairs work to over 13,000 homes between now and 2017 as part of our Better Homes programme. We recently consulted with tenants about how we could get the the best value for this money; prioritising repair work in each area.

We have already carried out work on almost 3,000 homes and are now working to identify what is needed in the remaining homes and properties that are part of the programme. For example, work is planned to take place in the next year in your local area which could include upgrading lifts and heating systems, re-wiring homes, repairing or renewing kitchens and bathrooms. We will also be repairing or renewing windows, and roofs and providing essential upgrades to the outside of our properties where needed.

If you haven't already had Better Homes work done to your home we will be in touch when it reaches your area if you are in one of the buildings which has been identified to need priority work. You can find out more by visiting wearecamden.org.uk/betterhomes

Between 2013-2015 the following will happen in your area:

197 homes will receive internal works, **316** homes will receive external works, **654** homes will benefit from new lifts and **508** homes will benefit from improved communal heating.

How are we doing?

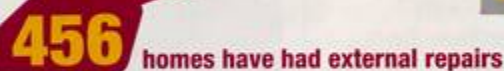


Between 2011-2013 in the **Camden Town area** we completed work on

Inside our homes



Communal and outside



Come and meet us



We are coming to you! We are holding a special week to talk to tenants and leaseholders across Camden. On **Monday 13 May**, housing staff wearing ID will be knocking on doors in Agar Grove, Churchway Estate and Oakshott Court to find out how we can improve our services.

Between 12 and 7pm you can also find us in our gazebos at College Place Estate with free children's activities such as face painting and free NHS health checks.

You can find out more and

tell us what you think about:

- exciting engagement opportunities that will develop your skills
- welfare benefit changes
- meet the grounds maintenance contractor
- better homes works
- meet your estate officer
- our new training programme for residents.

See you there.

For more information contact the tenant engagement team on **020 7674 2377** or visit camden.gov.uk/tenantparticipation

Spring clean

Continued from front cover. The buildings the DMC agreed we should look at first are:

- Levita House (1-21)
- Hawkshead
- Munster Square
- Waterhead
- The Tarns

- Monica Shaw Court
- Windermere (1-31)
- Englefield (1-44)

If you would like to find out more about the spring Clean please contact **Dorothy Gardner** on **020 7974 3278**.



Ian Judd,
Fountains
Head Gardener
for Alexander
and Ainsworth
estate.

Gardening expertise for our estates

You let us know you think well-maintained grounds and garden areas are important. Based on this we have invested more money in this area and our contractor, Fountains, has now recruited seven new gardeners to work on our housing estates.

The gardeners will be in touch with residents in each area they cover to find out where the grounds maintenance staff should focus their time to produce excellent grassed areas and shrub beds to enjoy during the summer.

This is a really important change in our approach to managing the grounds of our estates. The new gardening staff will continue to work with residents to make sure everyone can enjoy and be involved in the development of the outdoor space where you live.

Contacting your housing service

We recently changed the way we work so you can get housing management advice and support closer to home. Our teams of housing officers can now be seen by appointment in local venues like libraries or community centres. We also hold a number of regular surgeries at locations around the borough.

There are a number of things you can now do on-line or over the phone like requesting replacement keys or fobs.

To find out about your local housing surgeries, get advice and support, or make an appointment to see your housing officer: Phone: **020 7974 4444**

Visit: camden.gov.uk/housing

Textlink: **020 7974 6866**

You can call us Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm.

An out-of-hours service is available for emergencies on the same Contact Camden phone number. Contact Camden also handles all Textlink calls for deaf and hard of hearing people.