

Summary of Stage 1 Observations

The legislation requires us to summarise the observations received at stage 1 in the consultation for Grounds Maintenance and Arboriculture (Trees) contract(s) and our responses. These are summarised below:

Summary of Stage 1 Observations	
Observation	Response
I do not wish to nominate a contractor.	It is not compulsory. As a landlord Camden is obligated to offer you the opportunity.
The new proposal should be to a reasonable figure.	Many elements are taken into account when recommending a contractor.
Our block does not have a garden.	If you do not contribute to Grounds Maintenance now the new agreement will not alter that.
I am concerned regarding the number of trees cut down.	It is the Council's policy to protect and give our trees every chance to fully mature.
Why is there a need for a Long Term Agreement (LTA)? Why not let one at a time?	LTA are used due to the size, cycle, regularity of work required. The contractor will be working with the Council for a long period and they will have a greater knowledge of the borough's needs
My roof is leaking and needs repair.	I will forward your letter to Repairs to investigate.
Please advise if Camden will replace/plant trees wherever possible.	Camden has a tree replacement and tree planting budget and trees are replanted where appropriate/possible. Camden has a tree replacement policy within Camden Tree Strategy which can be downloaded from our website.
I have no access to garden.	If you do not contribute to Grounds Maintenance now the new agreement will not alter that.
As far as I am aware there are no relevant costs to this matter.	The notice sent is borough wide and only applies to leaseholders that pay towards the above contract as part of their annual service charges.
There are no trees to be cared for in my block.	The contract will continue with the services currently being offered to your block and estate.
I wish a tree that has disappeared could be replaced.	Referred issue to the Arboriculture team to respond directly to leaseholder in relation to this matter.
I am perplexed by this notice as there are no trees at my block.	The notice sent is borough wide and only applies to leaseholders that pay towards the above contract as part of their annual service charges.
Our garden needs work done to it as well as the internal communal areas.	Informed District Housing Office and Repairs
More control should be maintained over the contractor. Leaseholder stated issues that they have previously reported regarding the current contract.	When the contract is put out for tender our procurement team will be assessing the returns for mathematical accuracy, understanding for the requirements and assurance that the each request from the Council can be completed to a high standard. Value for money is also a high priority when recommending a contractor to leaseholders. If you have any issues regarding the amount of work actually being carried out by the contractors when this are on your estate I advise you to report this to both your District Housing Office and you Parks and Open Space Section.

Previous tree work has poor quality and over the top.	I can assure you that it is the Council's policy to protect and give our trees every chance to fully mature. As far as I am aware trees are only disturbed in the case of disease or health and safety issues.
Don't object as long as I do have to pay.	If you do not contribute to Grounds Maintenance now the new agreement will not alter that.
How much will it cost my block?	When we recommend a contractor we will be able to give you an estimated contribution amount using contractors submitted tender.
I object to the Long Term Agreement (LTA).	LTA are used due to the size, cycle, regularity of work required. The contractor will be working with the Council for a long period and they will have a greater knowledge of the borough's needs
In what circumstances would leaseholders be liable for arboriculture work?	Under the terms of your lease, you would be required to contribute to both grounds maintenance and arboriculture works carried out within the communal areas of your block & estate.
The costs seem very large for such a small garden at our block. Can you tell me the size of the grounds at my block and also the total for the borough? I have found the gardens to be ok.	The estimates are for borough wide grounds maintenance and arboriculture works, not just your block/estate. You will only be required to contribute to works at your block/estate. The total grounds for your estate is 4248m2. I am unable to advise the total grounds for the borough.
It is imperative that work is checked to ensure quality is maintained.	The contractor will be asked to provide evidence of a quality management system operating.
We have no grounds, trees, hedges, plants or grass.	If no works are carried out to your block/estate then you will not be asked to contribute.
Can the area of ground between our block and Highgate Cemetery be cleared as it is very overgrown and has rubbish in it? Will this be done under the new contract?	We are currently in negotiations to have the area cleared under the new contract, as additional works.
The trees at my block need to be maintained more frequently.	I have forwarded your feedback to the Trees team for their consideration.
The estimated costs seem very high. How much has been spent in previous years? How will you demonstrate that the new contract is value for money? I don't want unnecessary costs for leaseholders.	The current contract has a value of £1,638,000 per year. The contract is borough-wide and covers more than housing properties. Leaseholders will only be asked to contribute to actual works at their block/estate. The tender process will look at value for money as well as quality standards and other criteria and leaseholders will have the opportunity to lodge observations again at the next stage of the consultation.
Will the contractor get paid an annual fee for all grounds maintenance? Will they be paid additional fees on top of this? The contractors can charge whatever they want. I think they should be paid a single annual fee only.	The aim of the procurement process is to achieve efficiency and cost effectiveness for the service. The contracts will have performance criteria which will be monitored by Camden. The contract will include an agreed schedule of rates and contractors will only be paid for works they carry out. Leaseholders will only contribute to works carried out at their block/estate.
I am happy with the current grounds maintenance. However, children disturb the garden beds and swing on tree branches and snap them.	Your feedback on the current service has been noted. Forwarded feedback on damage to garden beds and trees to estate officer for follow up to reply direct back to leaseholder.

We do not have any maintained areas.	I can confirm that if you do not have any areas or trees that are maintained by the Council on behalf of residents you will not incur any costs in relation to the proposed agreement
I am already paying for grounds maintenance and tree felling. What is included in grounds maintenance? How does council ensure value and competitive tendering?	The current agreement is due to end and council is re-tendering grounds maintenance and arboriculture to ensure continuation of this service. Listed grounds maintenance items. The tender will be advertised and tenders will be assessed against specific criteria. The contract will include both performance and frequency specifications and will be monitored by Camden. Leaseholders will be consulted on the tender and will only be asked to contribute to works carried out at their block/estate.
Which blocks are within my estate? How much will this cost me?	Listed blocks included in Regents Park Estate 6. Advised that an estimate cannot be provided, as we are currently tendering the works, however leaseholders will only contribute to works at their block/estate.
What properties are included within our block/estate? What is grounds maintenance and arboriculture? I don't need any because I look after the garden.	Advised that the block is the estate in this case. Explained items included under grounds maintenance and arboriculture. Confirmed that leaseholders will only be charged for these services if required at their block/estate.
If the Council opts for option 1, how will you charge Leaseholders who only require Arboriculture works?	Leaseholders will only be asked to contribute towards, if works are carried out to their Block or Estate.
My block fronts straight onto the pavement and should not be included.	As your block forms part of an estate, you are required to contribute to grounds maintenance and arboriculture carried out at you estate.
There is no ground maintenance or arboriculture work need affecting my flat. Please confirm this, and confirm that there will not be any charges.	Leaseholders will only be asked to contribute towards, if works are carried out to their Block or Estate.
It is unrealistic for the ground floor flat to maintain the garden and I would be willing to pay higher service charge, if necessary to cover such maintenance.	If the area is a communal garden then it would be the responsibility of the London Borough of Camden to carry out the work. If the ground floor flat has sole use of the garden, then it would be their responsibility to maintain.
I can not afford any further large bills.	This is a consultation for a Long Term Agreement not works themselves. You will continue to contribute towards any works carried out under this agreement by annual service charge.
I am already paying for grounds maintenance and tree felling.	The current agreement is due to end and council is re-tendering grounds maintenance and arboriculture to ensure continuation of this service.
Estimate seems expensive.	These figures are estimates based upon previous years annual spend on ground maintenance and arboriculture works.
I have a tree that needs maintenance that I have reported unsuccessfully for 2 years.	I have forwarded this on to the Trees team for their consideration.
I want to raise issues regarding previous major works.	Referred letter to Project Manager and Repairs Team for follow up.
Please ensure that the right charges are made for work carried out.	Many elements are taken into account when recommending a contractor.
There is work needed to my balcony.	Referred letter to Repairs for follow up.
Can I have a copy of the Specification?	A copy can be sent electronically.

<p>The cost is very large. Will the new contract include weed control as our lawn has a lot of dandelions? The agreement should be good value for money.</p>	<p>Explained not just housing included in this contract. Explained items included under grounds maintenance. Advised leaseholder to discuss any issues regarding grounds maintenance with District Housing Office. Advised many elements are taken into account when recommending a contractor.</p>
<p>I cannot afford grounds maintenance and I do not benefit from the works as I live on the 3rd floor.</p>	<p>Camden is required to carry out grounds maintenance and arboriculture works at their block/estate and that they are required to contribute, under the terms of the lease. Provided Collections phone number to discuss payment arrangements for service charges.</p>
<p>I disagree that the contract should be awarded to the lowest bidder as this does not ensure quality or value. Council should be aiming to raise standards and get best value for money.</p>	<p>Many elements are taken into account when recommending a contractor. Provided extract from Executive report detailing procurement rationale for this contract. Also advised frequency/quality criteria to be included in new contract. Advised leaseholders will be able to lodge observations again at Stage 2 of the consultation.</p>
<p>Huge gaps show on our walls, the trees are too close to the garden walls and they are now unsafe. Who is responsible for the Grounds Maintenance (GM)? Has Camden looked at this before? There is also subsidence.</p>	<p>Camden Council is responsible for the GM and tree work. Glendale Grounds Maintenance Ltd carry out the GM work and KPS Contractors Ltd carry out the tree work. The council is aware of the problems at your property and is currently investigating the issue to establish what remedial works are required.</p>
<p>Will arboriculture work be carried out at my block? How much will it cost?</p>	<p>Camden will carry out necessary arboriculture works at their block and estate. Advised that works will be carried out as needed and that an estimate cannot be provided at this stage.</p>
<p>Who is responsible for the tree with the garden for Flat A at my block? Who is responsible for the ivy that has grown up the wall and is causing problems with my windows and guttering?</p>	<p>The leaseholder of Flat A is responsible for the trees within their demise. In regards to issues cause by ivy growth - this will need to be reported to Repairs so Camden can investigate the problem.</p>
<p>How are the costs apportioned across the estate? Who is responsible for the trees on the public highway? How has the estimate of £1.7 million made? Who is currently doing the work and why is it changing? How will the service/contractors be monitored?</p>	<p>The costs are apportioned across the flats in the estate. Trees on highways are Camden's responsibility - the costs for these are included in council tax charges. The estimates for the contract is based on previous years actual spend, along with forecasts for future works. The contracts will have both frequency and quality requirements and will be monitored by Camden.</p>
<p>Why has this been sent? No one will listen to comments.</p>	<p>We are currently consulting as we are proposing to enter into a new contract for these works as the current contract is due to expire. All observations received are given due care and leaseholders will receive a formal reply.</p>
<p>I do not believe that a long term agreement should be made for arboriculture should be made. The costs should continue to be included in my service charges</p>	<p>The new contracts will ensure that Camden has the resources needed to carry out these works. You will only be asked to contribute to works carried out at your block/estate and they will be included on your service charges.</p>
<p>The shrubs need to be properly pruned at our block and the vegetation cleared. This has not been properly completed. The new contract should have criteria that the contractors need to meet.</p>	<p>I have passed your comments to the Estate Services Manager for follow up and have asked him to reply direct to you. The new contract has both frequency and quality criteria and will be monitored by Camden.</p>

<p>I don't think our block needs a lot of grounds maintenance. However I would welcome a suggestion on how they could be improved for the benefit of all residents</p>	<p>The new contracts will ensure that Camden has the resources needed to carry out these works. You will only be asked to contribute to works carried out at your block/estate and they will be included on your service charges. If you have a suggestion for grounds maintenance at your block, please let us know.</p>
<p>We are happy with the current grounds maintenance service. Why is it changing? How we will get value for money?</p>	<p>The new contracts will ensure that Camden has the resources needed to carry out these works. You will only be asked to contribute to works carried out at your block/estate and they will be included on your service charges. The tender process will look at value for money as well as quality standards and other criteria</p>
<p>Would like to know more about costs</p>	<p>We do not have any further details in regards to costs at this stage. However, once we have chosen a Contractor we will then be in a position to provide you with more information</p>
<p>1. How many leaseholders receive grounds maintenance? 2. How many other blocks are in the same estate as Bridge House? 3. How many shrubs are at Bridge House? 4. What is going to happen to the large overgrown bush at our block which some residents don't want pruned. 5. Can we have copies of minutes referred to on page 9 4.3.4? 6. Can we have access to the records mentioned on page 7, 2.1?</p>	<p>1. I am unable to provide the number of leaseholders which receive grounds maintenance. The number of leaseholders does not determine if a property receives grounds maintenance. 2. Bridge House is the block and estate (copy of map provided). 3. If you require a shrub survey to be carried out, please contact our office. A list of the trees onsite provided. 4. Peter Freeman will be at Bridge House with the contractors within the next 2 weeks to attend to the overgrown shrub. He will contact you to let you know what date they will be there. 5. You are able to obtain the minutes to the meeting under Freedom of Information provisions. 6. I am unsure where section 2.1 is as it is not on page 7 - please clarify what you are referring to and I will respond as soon as possible.</p>
<p>Please confirm that I do not have any communal grounds that I need to contribute to? I have been advised that there have previously been grounds maintenance charges on my service charge account.</p>	<p>The rear garden at your block is part of the demise of Flat A and the leaseholder will be responsible for the maintenance. Leaseholders will only be asked to contribute to works carried out within the common parts of their block/estate. Your collections officer has advised that there was an incorrect grounds maintenance charge included on service charges which will be written off.</p>
<p>What am I paying for? I want evidence of the work.</p>	<p>The works may involve cutting grass, trimming hedges, pruning bushes and shrubs or planting flowers, and includes any general overheads</p>
<p>We do not wish to pay for the council to send someone else to do unnecessary and often harmful work. Please remove this property from your list of properties that need to be serviced by ground maintenance and arboriculture workers.</p>	<p>I have forwarded a copy to your District Housing Office and the Park and Open Spaces Section for their consideration. Please bear in mind that the Council may find it necessary to tend to the grounds of your block and continue to recharge a proportion of the cost of those works.</p>
<p>Please ensure the contractor is charging a good price.</p>	<p>Many elements are taken into account when recommending a contractor. Value for money is also a high priority when recommending a contractor to leaseholders.</p>

<p>Shrubs are much more practical for not blocking the view while being ornamental. There is a limit to the workmen we want on the Block. I was surprised at the number of Camden Council estates which are planned to receive these works. How much time will the contractor need to complete this work? How does this compare to time taken before by Council employees on this same work?</p>	<p>It is the Council's policy to protect and give our trees every chance to fully mature. As far as I am aware trees are only disturbed in the case of disease or health and safety issues. The new contracts will be tendered with the option of a straight period of 7 years and one of 5 years plus a possible extension of 2 years, with a start date of 1st April 2010. The reason for awarding a 7 year contract period or a contract period that would add up to 7 years if extended, is so that Camden has the option of letting the Waste and Grounds Contract as one contract together in 2017.</p>
<p>All leaseholders are currently contributing towards grounds maintenance. It is difficult for leaseholders to contribute to extra charges. There are only few trees in this block. Are there plans to plant more trees? As all other leaseholders will agree, cheapest contract should be chosen.</p>	<p>Ground Maintenance works will continue to be recharged through the annual service charges. This notice is not to inform you of a new item that you have not been asked to contribute towards before.</p>
<p>Whatever the option it should be the cheapest.</p>	<p>Many elements are taken into account when recommending a contractor. Value for money is also a high priority when recommending a contractor to leaseholders.</p>
<p>When contract in place I suggest something is done about 3 green areas.</p>	<p>I have forwarded you request concerning the three green areas on to the Parks and Open Spaces Section for their attention.</p>