

KENTISH TOWN DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 28 NOVEMBER 2023 AT 6.30 PM
**KENNISTOUN AND WILLINGHAM TRA HALL, WILLINGHAM TERRACE, LEIGHTON
ROAD, LONDON NW5 2UY**

Enquiries to: Rebecca Taylor, Committee Services
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CHAIR

Derek Jarman (Kennistoun, Willingham, Rosemary & Margaret TA)

VICE CHAIRS

Momota Khatoun (St Pancras Way Estate TRA)
Jane McWilliams (Brookfield TRA)

A full list of voting DMC members and substitutes is set out at Item 1.

COUNCILLOR OBSERVERS

**Councillors Meric Apak (L), Camron Aref-Adib (L), Richard Cotton (L),
Sylvia McNamara (L), Andrew Parkinson (C), James Slater (L) and
Anna Wright (L)**

Please note that all DMCs should aim to complete their business within 3 hours from when the meeting starts, and DMC Chairs will seek to ensure that the agenda for the meeting is completed within this timeframe. However, if the meeting has not ended after 3 hours Council officers still in attendance will leave the meeting. The DMC may, if it wishes, continue its meeting informally without council officer attendance.

Issued on: Tuesday, 14 November 2023

KENTISH TOWN DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

28 NOVEMBER 2023

AGENDA

1. **REGISTRATION OF TENANTS' AND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS AND CO-OPTION OF TENANT REPRESENTATIVES** (Pages 5 - 8)

Appendix A lists those Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRAs), which have satisfactorily completed the registration process at the date of despatch of this agenda. It gives details of the representatives of those Associations to be co-opted onto the DMC, in accordance with the constitution, together with the names of the substitutes.

Appendix B lists those TRAs whose registrations have lapsed. If a TRA wishes to register it must hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM), open to all members, once a year (with an independent observer in attendance). The minutes must be sent to the Tenant Participation Team together with a membership list and a completed registered form.

2. **APOLOGIES**

3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA**

5. **NOTIFICATIONS OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT**

6. **MINUTES**

(Pages 9 -
18)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Kentish Town District Management Committee held on 5th September 2023.

7. **KENTISH TOWN PROGRESS REPORT - ACTION POINTS UPDATE** (Pages 19 -
28)

The DMC is asked to note the progress of the action points arising from the previous meeting.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 8(a) HRA BUDGET MONITORING UPDATE** (Pages 29 - 34)
Report of the Team Leader (HRA & Capital Projects).
- 8(b) COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR** (Pages 35 - 40)
Report of the Director of Public Safety.
- 8(c) HOUSING PERFORMANCE** (Pages 41 - 46)
Report of the Director of Housing.
- 8(d) RENT ARREARS** (Pages 47 - 50)
Report of the Head of Leaseholder Services & Housing Income.
- 8(e) NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICERS ROLE AND FUNCTION** (Pages 51 - 52)
Neighbourhood Managers to present.
- 8(f) DAMP AND MOULD PROGRAMME** (Pages 53 - 54)
Report of the Director of Property Services.
- 8(g) HEAT METERING PROGRAMME** (Pages 55 - 56)
Report of the Head of Capital Works.
- 8(h) STOCK CONDITION SURVEYS/CAPITAL PROGRAMME** (Pages 57 - 58)
Report of the Head of Capital Works.
- 8(i) PROPOSAL FOR A TENANT CONFERENCE - SPRING 2024** (Pages 59 - 62)
Report of the Head of Innovation & Improvement.
- 9. KENTISH TOWN DMC BUDGET** (Pages 63 - 64)
Report of the Head of Neighbourhoods.

In line with the DMC funding guidelines, TRAs will be asked to provide an update to the meeting regarding the progress of agreed bids, including an update on the associated spend. TRAs are invited to circulate any relevant information in advance through the clerk.

TRAs are encouraged to submit bids as soon as possible, so they can be properly assessed and prepared by officers, ready for submission to the DMC. TRAs are reminded that verbal bids cannot be accepted at DMC meetings as, in line with the guidelines, officers need to be able to assess bids before passing them to the DMC.

For more information on DMC bids, please see our webpages: www.camden.gov.uk/dmcbids.

10. INFORMATION REPORT

Report of the Neighbourhood Manager.

This report provides an update of recent news within the Kentish Town DMC boundary.

11. CABINET MEMBER FOR BETTER HOMES UPDATE

(Pages 65 -
68)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Better Homes

This report provides DMC Members with an update from the Cabinet Member for Better Homes.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

AGENDA ENDS

The date of the next meeting will be Wednesday, 10 January 2024 at 6.30 pm.

Kentish Town Appendix A

The Reports show all currently registered Tenants' and Residents' Associations as at:

7th November 2023

An updated listing will be prepared for the actual DMC meeting, and presented on the evening, by either the Tenant Participation Service or by the Committee Services officer.

Association Name	DMC Member	DMC SUB	Last recognised AGM
Brookfield TRA	Ms Jane McWilliams		21/02/2023
Camden Square TRAs	Ewa Cobel	John Cowley	12/07/2022
Carrol Close & Sanderson Close TRA	Sophie Rodger	Barbara Daniel	26/11/2022
Camden Association of Street Properties	Petra Dando	Andrew Pierce	27/05/2022
Highgate Road TRA	Emily Wickham	Foulla Pashkaj	23/06/2023
Holly Lodge Residents Association	Mr Joshua Cedar Steve Barton	Ms Grace Livingstone	17/11/2022
Lissenden Gardens Tenants Association	Ms Helen Jack		05/07/2023
Ingestre Road Tenants Association	Mr J Loughran	Mrs Helen Duff	16/11/2022
Kenbrook House TRA*	John Legg	Chukwudi Onyebuchukwu	22/10/2023
Kennistoun, Willingham, Rosemary & Margaret TA	Mr D Jarman	Mr John Webb	26/10/2022
Maiden Lane Estate TRA	Mrs Pauline Stafford Ms Joanna Hill		03/08/2022
Raglan Estate TRA	Andrew St. John	Shah Daber	24/05/2023
St Pancras Way Est TRA	Mrs Momota Khatun		15/01/2023
Torriano Estate TRA	Greg Hattingh	Tim Morgan	10/11/2022
Whittington TRA	Runa Begum Miah	Victoria Jago	09/06/2022

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Kentish Town Appendix B

The Reports show all currently registered Tenants' and Residents' Associations as at:

7th November 2023

B listed TRAs are those who have not had a recognised AGM within 15 months of their previous ones. In 2020 we gave them a year's grace because of the pandemic. After 18 months they drop off the list altogether (very rare)

Association Name	DMC Member	DMC SUB	Last recognised AGM
Durdans House TRA	Ms Christina Gordon	Mr Craig Duncan	21/11/2018
Highgate Newtown Street Properties	Shezan Renny		15/07/2021
Leighton Crescent TRA	Ms Jane Hickson	Miss Emma Chimonidou	27/08/2021
Peckwater Estate Tenants Association	Mrs June Dodds		09/09/2021
Una House TRA	Hazel Saunders		18/11/2021

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THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of the **KENTISH TOWN DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held on **TUESDAY, 5TH SEPTEMBER, 2023** at 6.30 pm in the Kennistoun and Willingham TRA Hall, Willingham Terrace, Leighton Road, London NW5 2UY

REGISTERED DMC MEMBERS PRESENT

Derek Jarman (Chair)	Kennistoun & Willingham TRA
Jane McWilliams (Vice-Chair)	Brookfield Estate TRA
Momota Khatun (Vice-Chair)	St Pancras Way Estate TRA
Steve Barton	Holly Lodge Residents Association
Runa Begum Miah	Whittington Estate TRA
Helen Duff (sub)	Ingestre Road Tenants Association
Greg Hattingh	Torriano Estate TRA
Joanna Hill	Maiden Lane TRA
Helen Jack	Lissenden Gardens Tenants Association
Victoria Jago	Whittington Estate TRA
Tim Morgan	Torriano Estate TRA
Andrew Pierce	Camden Association of Street Properties
Pauline Stafford	Maiden Lane TRA
John Webb	Kennistoun & Willingham TRA

OTHER RESIDENTS PRESENT

Ms Jane Hickson	Leighton Crescent TRA
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COUNCILLOR OBSERVERS PRESENT

Councillors Meric Apak, Sylvia McNamara, James Slater and Anna Wright

COUNCILLOR OBSERVERS ABSENT

Councillors Camron Aref-Adib, Richard Cotton and Andrew Parkinson

OFFICERS PRESENT

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Kentish Town District Management Committee and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.

MINUTES

1. REGISTRATION OF TENANTS' AND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS AND CO-OPTION OF TENANT REPRESENTATIVES

The 'A' and 'B' lists were noted.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Petra Dando (CASP) and John Webb (Kennistoun & Willingham TRA).

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA

There were no such declarations.

5. NOTIFICATIONS OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

There were no notifications of urgent business.

6. MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023.

The DMC noted that at the meeting, under Agenda Item 4 - Election of Vice-Chair, a discussion took place, in which the role of Chair and Vice-Chair was discussed. The DMC sought clarity on what the expectations and duties of Vice-Chair were and how they worked alongside the Chair. Members also discussed the wider role of the DMC.

It was suggested, at the previous meeting, that an information report be provided to the DMC at a future meeting with the intention of explaining these points and providing clarity about the role of DMC Members, DMC Chairs and DMC Vice-Chairs.

ACTION: Tennant Participation

RESOLVED –

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June 2023 be approved and signed as a correct record, subject to the addition above.

7. KENTISH TOWN PROGRESS REPORT - ACTION POINTS UPDATE

Void Properties

It had continued to prove difficult to obtain information from other Local Authorities on void properties.

The DMC discussed that long term void properties and rent arrears had continued to be an issue, and that policies related to these issues were in need of updating to address this. It was stated that current policies did not work for Londoners and Camden Council should lead the way on innovative ways to improve these policies and encourage people to downsize when necessary.

The Head of Neighbourhoods understood residents concerns and advised that three new Heads of Service had been appointed and moving forward work would be undertaken to improve services, and that the Council would be more transparent with residents about future plans.

Responding to a question about under occupation and downsizing, the Head of Neighbourhoods explained that the Council could not bring an assured tenancy to an end, mutual agreement or a court judgement was needed. However, there were several incentives offered to residents to encourage and assist with downsizing. Furthermore, a downsizing transformation project was underway but will take time to complete.

The meeting noted that some residents did not know about the incentives as they were not clearly advertised and that the strict allocation policy could cause issues for residents who are ready to move but don't want to leave their estate or local area.

The Head of Neighbourhoods informed the DMC that the allocations and voids deep dive meeting was to be arranged and would provide DMC Members with more information and the work that was being undertaken by the service.

ACTION: Head of Innovation & Improvement

Master Key Scheme

A response had been provided to CASP in relation to the statement they made on the Master Key Scheme at the meeting of the DMC that took place on 13 June 2023. It was noted that the reply had been circulated.

The Action Point Update was noted.

8. HOUSING SERVICES CONSOLIDATED REPORT

Consideration was given to the consolidated report of the Director of Housing Management and the Director of Property Services.

HRA Budget Monitoring Update

Michael Webb (Head of Finance, Supporting Communities) presented the report which provided an overview of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). It provided an outturn for 2022/23 and the budgeted and forecast expenditure and income for 2023/24.

The Head of Finance noted that there was a correction to the report on page 34 of the agenda pack. The report incorrectly stated that “interest payable is also forecast to be £2.6m over budget due to rising interest rates.” This figure should have stated £3.6 million.

Responding to questions and comments from DMC Members, Officers provided the following information:

- In terms of energy costs, leaseholders were given an estimated cost and charged based on this, if the actual figure is higher leaseholders would then be required to pay the difference.
- Depending on the next Bank of England announcement regarding the interest rate, some HRA borrowing would be impacted and a revised estimate would be formulated. It was hoped that the interest rate would soon start to decrease.
- The main objective for the Community Investment Programme (CIP) was to provide replacement and additional council housing. Properties in council estates that had reached end of lifecycle were replaced with new properties. There was a set process which determined where regeneration needed to take place.
- A further aim of the CIP was to reduce repairs expenditure by regenerating the estates which need the most repairs.
- The only way the CIP scheme generated income was by selling flats privately, but in addition to these private flats, the council replaced existing council properties and built additional properties.
- The intention of the Better Homes programme was to invest in and improve existing housing stock. The Council wanted homes to be safe and in good condition and the Better Homes programme enabled the Council to do this.
- Concerns about damp and mould were noted and the Council was working on this issue.
- The Council wanted to demonstrate to residents how improvements to services would be achieved, and communications would be sent to residents providing more information on improvement strategies on this information was available.
- The CIP Scheme was projected to break even. Private sales covered the costs of new social housing and replacing old housing. With development schemes there was always risk involved, but as a whole it was expected that the programme would break even.
- Forward buying and the LASER Scheme had helped lower the costs to residents, as there were examples of other local authorities that had not forward purchased and residents there were faced with even higher costs.

- Gas prices were decreasing but not at the pace that would mean prices could be lowered in year. This would be reassessed when charges were determined for the next financial year.
- When energy prices went up in April, the increase was estimated at about 290% and the only way it could be lowered was by drawing on reserves, but as a result of that there was a gap in the reserves which needed to be replenished.
- In terms of rents arrears, clarity would be sought on whether the accounts in credit impacted on the arrears figure. This was discussed at the previous meeting, and it was explained that arrears figures in the report quotes the arrears figure, without adjusting it for credits. This position would be confirmed, and an explanation provided prior to the next DMC meeting.

ACTION: Head of Allocations, Lettings and Private Housing Services

- In terms of calculating the rent increase for the next financial year, there were so many variables it was difficult to predict what this might be. Normally, the increase would be inflation + 1% but this approach might not be taken as the Cost of Living Crisis needed to be taken into account.
- Unauthorised tenants were discovered through various measures, but one of the main indicators was when someone passed away and there was an unauthorised resident living there who is not on the tenancy. In these instances, the unauthorised tenant will be required to pay a use and occupation charge if they continue to occupy the property. All reports of a resident passing are followed up quickly to establish if there is someone unauthorised residing in the property.

Regarding CIP, Better Homes and Repairs, Councillor Apak (Cabinet Member for Better Homes) advised that other residents had shared similar concerns and therefore it would be important to have a discussion to explain these schemes in more detail and some of the work the council is planning to undertake to improve repairs. The Cabinet Member considered that it might be appropriate to use some time at the deep dive meeting that was being arranged to discuss the schemes in more depth so residents can have a fuller understanding.

ACTION: Head of Asset Management

Repairs

Hannah Ashley Fraser (Head of Asset Management) provided the following information in response to questions from DMC Members:

- The heating works and improvements that were taking place would be funded within the existing budget as there were no government funds available to cover these works.
- Improvements had been underway with damp and mould and whilst there were 155 new reports in July, these were dealt with swiftly. Inspections and

check ups were being carried out and findings passed on to the repairs team for action.

- Camden no longer installed individual boilers on estates where communal heating was available, as individual systems were less efficient than communal systems.
- Those residents who did have boilers should receive instructions and demonstrations on how to use them if their system was installed or replaced. If there were instances where this did not happen, these should be reported so a demonstration can be arranged.

Fire safety

Hannah Ashley Fraser (Head of Asset Management) advised that there was a programme across all estates to install smoke alarms that were wired into the mains electricity. This work was being undertaken in order to comply with legislation and was to be completed by March 2024. However, there was currently a programme running alongside this to install battery powered smoke alarms in properties that required them as an interim measure. It was reported that caretakers had been trained to undertake this work and would be doing so alongside their other caretaking duties.

Concern was expressed by a DMC Member that this work had meant that other caretaking duties were not being fulfilled. It was explained by officers that caretakers had been instructed to do this alongside their other work and that it was targeted work, and smoke alarms would only be checked in properties where it was known that an alarm required installation or those properties where this status was unclear. Caretakers had been checking properties and taking photographs to evidence that the smoke alarms had been fitted. Furthermore, the DMC noted that Caretakers were known to residents so they would be granted access by those residents who might otherwise be wary of letting an unknown contractor into their home.

Whilst the London Fire Brigade could undertake fire safety inspections and help vulnerable people install alarms, the alarms needed to be fitted in certain positions and Caretakers had been trained to do this, therefore it was more appropriate that Caretakers carried out this work.

Whilst some of the records for certain properties were detailed, those with a boiler for example, there were others where it was not as clear which alarms were installed, therefore it was important to target those properties to ensure compliance.

A representative from Holly Lodge Residents Association provided an update on some of the fire safety and fire alarm issues on the estate and advised that a meeting about fire safety had been scheduled and the London Fire Brigade would be in attendance. It was hoped that these issues would soon be resolved.

A representative from St Pancras Way TRA reported that there had been an issue on the estate with the installation of new Fire Doors. Residents had been informed that the fire doors could not be installed due to the doorframes not being suitable,

despite having been advised that the doors had been purchased and were ready for installation. The Head of Asset Management advised that this issue would be investigated, and an update provided to the TRA.

ACTION: Head of Asset Management

The meeting expressed concern about the dangerous fire risk caused by lithium batteries in e-scooters, e-bikes and mobility scooters. Officers advised that tenancy agreements stated that storage of combustible materials was not permitted so offending items were removed from communal areas based upon this rationale and several communications had been circulated requesting that e-scooters be removed. Furthermore, visual inspections were undertaken weekly to ensure that fire risk assessments were being adhered to.

Assurance was sought that the Council had up to date records on where gas mains could be switched off. Officers responded that Mechanical and Electrical Services had an asset register which was an accurate record of where mains were located and would be dispatched to an estate quickly in a fire or other emergency to switch these off.

DMC Members noted that Cadent Gas had been undertaking works on some of the Estates in Kentish Town and sought clarity if the Council was aware of this work. The Head of Asset Management advised that the Council would be aware of these works but would seek confirmation from the relevant service.

ACTION: Mechanical & Electrical Manager

CCTV

Responding to a question, Officers advised that the priority list for CCTV installation was based on the number of reports of crime and antisocial behaviour reported on estates.

Neighbourhoods

The DMC requested an update on the resident visits. Officers advised that these visits would be undertaken as soon as possible, but the Estate Pop Ups that took place during the week had been prioritised.

Officers reported that issues with recruitment had continued, and some teams were understaffed as a result, but recruitment was underway. Some of the issues encountered were part of a national trend of Officers leaving Housing roles, in the wake of Grenfell and due to increased pressures in customer facing roles. Data provided by the Health and Safety team demonstrated that verbal and physical abuse against staff was increasing. Work was undertaken to attract people to the roles, including offering apprenticeships to young people and those wanting to get back into employment.

Responding to follow up questions, Officers advised that:

- The Job Hub in Queens Crescent had been offering training classes for Maths and English to support people seeking apprenticeships.
- Neighbourhood Managers were encouraged to work within the community, which had meant that sometimes they were not available at their desks to take calls, however it would be ensured that residents were informed of the communication channels available to reach Officers.
- Availability of information would be improved so residents could more easily identify who their points of contact were at the Council.
- A Digital Transformation Programme was underway which had already been effective in resolving cases more effectively and enabled residents to contact the Council more easily. This work would continue to be rolled out to improve services for residents.

Grounds Maintenance

Issues with grounds maintenance had continued across some estates, with work not being undertaken despite several requests. Some TRA Representatives were disappointed that actions that had been agreed at estate walkabouts had not been completed.

Officers responded that Greenspaces would be advised of the ongoing issues with the grounds maintenance service. Responding to a follow up question, Officers reported that the current contract with Idverde was due to expire and that the contract would be retendered soon.

The consolidated housing report was noted.

9. KENTISH TOWN DMC BUDGET

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Landlord Services.

Tara Cookson (Neighbourhood Manager) introduced the report and outlined the bids received. The Neighbourhood Manager specified that the installation of the Gerda security panels were officer lead bids and the panels had been effective on the estates where they had already been installed.

Representatives from Whittington TRA had attended the meeting but left before they were able to support their bid. Therefore, it was not possible to seek clarity on specific details of the gardening project, therefore Whittington TRA would be invited to resubmit the bid to the December meeting.

Torriano Estate TRA clarified details of their bid, highlighting that the money would be spend on items for the TRA Hall, which would enable the hall to be hired out, such as tables, chairs and other furniture, kitchen equipment, toys, and speakers.

RESOLVED –

THAT the following requests be approved:

TRA	BID REQUEST	AMOUNT
81-83 Camden Road	2 x LFB drop key gerda security panels to main entrance doors	£1,750.00
85-89 Camden Road	2 x LFB drop key gerda security panels to main entrance doors	£1,750.00
Torriano Estate TRA	Equipment for TRA hall	£1,500.00
Charlton Court	2 x LFB drop key gerda security panels to main entrance doors	£1,500.00

10. KENTISH TOWN INFORMATION REPORT

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Neighbourhoods.

Tara Cookson (Neighbourhood Manager) provided an overview of the report and highlighted that the work at St Pancras Way was proving to be more complicated than initially thought due to planning and building regulations, a more substantive update would be provided to the TRA prior to the next meeting.

The meeting were further advised that it had not yet been possible to complete the redesign of refuse storage arrangements at Leighton Crescent, but alternatives had been proposed, including the installation of a MetroSTOR bin store. Representatives of Leighton Crescent TRA explained that there had been issues surrounding the proposed location of the bin store, but a solution was needed to prevent animals and vermin getting to the bins.

An Ingestre Road TRA Representative presented their update, as outlined in the information report.

Responding to a question about addressing fly tipping on the estate, officers advised that, unfortunately, it was not possible for a camera be installed to deter fly tipping but physical deterrents could be considered instead and that Environmental Services could be asked to advise on a solution to address this issue.

Responding to a question about the rent arrears table shown within the report, it was explained that the total number of residential accounts and the number of accounts in arrears had a sharp increase after November 2022 because there had been a boundary change and Camden Square Ward had been added into Kentish Town DMC area.

The Neighbourhood Manager invited DMC Members to send her updates from their estates for inclusion in the next report.

The report was noted.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

The Chair requested an urgent update on the use of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) and sought confirmation if RAAC had been identified in any Council properties.

The Head of Asset Management advised that schools were the priority and were currently being investigated and a statement would be released. However, there was no indication that any of Camden's schools were affected. In terms of other council properties, this was an emerging issue that had not yet been investigated. Once work was underway in this area, residents would be informed of any surveys, findings and identified risks.

A DMC Member raised concern about asbestos on their estate. The Head of Asset Management advised that if asbestos was encapsulated it was considered a managed risk and disturbing it was avoided.

Councillor Slater advised that he had some helpful written information about asbestos that he would circulate to the relevant TRA.

The meeting ended at 9.00 pm.

CHAIR

Contact Officer: Rebecca Taylor

Telephone No: 020 7974 8177

E-Mail: Rebecca.Taylor@camden.gov.uk

MINUTES END

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM SEPTEMBER 2023 DMC MEETINGS

KENTISH TOWN DMC ACTION – 5th SEPTEMBER 2023			
Item	Action	Responsible Individual/Department	Comments
KT/0923/01	To provide an information report to a future meeting of the DMC, which provides an overview of the role of the DMC in general and outlines the duties of Chair and Vice-Chair.	Hugh Boatswain Senior Tenant Participation Officer	<p>The responsibilities of DMC Chairs and Vice Chairs will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing leadership for the DMC, enabling the DMC to act strategically to meet both policies and priorities; • With the vice-chair(s) and in consultation with the Cabinet Member, the Chair will plan the annual cycle of meetings; • The Chair will liaise closely with Vice Chair(s) and Council Officers around arrangements and agendas for DMC meetings; • The Chair will Chair DMC meetings and in the absence the Vice Chair will carry out this role; • The Chair and Vice Chair will together monitor that decisions taken at meetings are implemented; and • Outside of meetings, the Chair and Vice Chair will represent the DMC, provide advice and support to members and officers and act as the spokesperson for DMCs as appropriate
KT/0923/02	To arrange a date in late September for an all-DMCs special meeting themed on Camden housing allocation for Members to receive in-depth information on voids, overcrowding, mutual exchanges and downsizing.	Gerry Crowley Head of Allocations, Lettings and Private Housing Services	This session has been scheduled for Thursday 9th November.

KT/0923/03	To provide information to DMC Members on repairs, CIP, and Better Homes, and the relationship between these schemes at the Special Deep Dive meeting, in September.	Hannah Ashley Frazer Head of Asset Management	Officer responsible for a response to this request understood ask however they are not currently in position to pull all this information together though will revisit at a future date.
KT/0923/04	To clarify whether the rent arrears figure is impacted by the rent accounts that are in credit and to provide a breakdown of this information.	Graeme Jones Neighborhood/ Housing Services	The arrears figure is not impacted by people in credit. As at 23.10, the total arrears for general needs housing and sheltered is £18.1 million. Those accounts in credit are not included in this so the arrears amount is not offset by any credit. 42% of accounts are in credit and a further 6% have a zero balance.
KT/0923/05	To provide a progress update on the fire doors at the St Pancras Way Estate, and identify the cause of delays	Hannah Ashley Frazer Head of Asset Management	<p>We were planning to renew all the tenanted doors on the estate with Vinci Construction. However there where issues with the original contractor sourced to undertake the work, their door manufacturer confirmed that that they do not have a door set to fit that complies with the current regulations.</p> <p>The replacement of doors has been put on hold whilst we review other viable options.</p> <p>We have written to the TRA to explain the situation and that we are committed to replacing the tenanted doors at St Pancras Way estate, will also be writing to all the residents next week so that they are aware. We will again update the TRA and all residents once a viable solution has been found.</p>
KT/0923/06	To confirm that the Council are aware of the Cadent Gas Works being undertaken on the estates in the Kentish Town DMC Area	John Stow Mechanical & Electrical Manager	Officers have confirmed they are working with Cadent to complete these work. Should there be any major issues that could affect the gas supply to our estates, Cadent would notify officers in advance that working together any discomfort for our residents can be avoided.

CAMDEN TOWN DMC ACTIONS – 6th SEPTEMBER 2023

Item	Action	Responsible Individual/Department	Comments
CT/0923/01	<p>Special DMC The meeting was advised that there would be a special DMC in October on a date and time to be determined regarding local issues, action tracker update along with HRA Budgetary issues including heating charges.</p> <p>The DMC also agreed that the special meeting due to take place in October would do a deep dive into the heating and hot water costs of the current provision to tenants and leaseholders. The meeting would look at the annualised costs; standing charges; individual meeting installation programme; through metering, paying for actual usage only; the position relating to the use of the one-off sale to help keep the heating pool cost down this year; what the proposals would be to help tenants this year; the position of electricity sold back to the national grid; whether a breakdown of charges could be given to tenants; cost comparison between those not in the heating pool with those that are; tenants paying standing charges even when the property was unused. DMC representatives would also seek to identify specific questions to officers in advance of the special meeting.</p>	<p>Sarah Moore TP/Other relevant officers</p>	<p>This meeting is taking place on 14th December and will be open to all DMC reps.</p>

CT/0923/02	<p>Voids and Allocations The DMC asked that officers set up the proposed session with other DMCs regarding voids and allocations as had previously been agreed.</p>	<p>Gerry Crowley Head of allocations, Lettings and Private Housing Services</p>	<p>This session has been scheduled for Thursday 9th November</p>
CT/0923/03	<p>Lifts Officers would look into the issue regarding the Ampthill Square (Dalehead) lifts that were not stopping on a particular floor.</p>	<p>Sam Hulbert Lifts Contract Manager</p>	<p>Officers have reviewed the operation records to the beginning of this year and have found only one instance where it would seem the lift was not going to correct floors. This was due to the indicators being out of sync. These were reset and fault corrected.</p>
CT/0923/04	<p>Damp and Mould Officers would look into the decant issue that John Wood would provide the details on.</p>	<p>Darren Smith Head of Repairs</p>	<p>The team is currently dealing with a leak but it should be returned to the lettings team by end of Nov.</p>
CT/0923/05	<p>Capital Works Officers would provide information regarding the timelines for the retrofitting projects outlined, the position on the possible Ampthill Square individual metering programme along, with the position regarding Phoenix Court (mould).</p>	<p>Susanne Afra Head of Capital Works</p>	<p>Retrofit programme – two of our pilot projects at Brooks Court and Belsize Grove are due to complete later this year. Our retrofitting of up to 10 street properties is going to be retendered as the bids received were not considered value for money. Work is progressing well on our internal insulation project which is part of the GLA funded Future Neighbourhoods programme. Our Energiesprong project is progressing with an aim to get on site by the Spring. We are looking at funding models which will help us scale up the programme.</p> <p>Ampthill - Our current housing metering programme involves installing 'heat meters' and takes guidance from the regulation 'The Heat Network (Metering and Billing) Regulations 2014' to determines the programme of delivery. This regulation covers communal and district</p>

			<p>heating systems, i.e. where one boiler is feeding more than one dwelling, for example at Dalehead/Gillfoot/Oxenholm there are 80 dwellings in each tower block, they have a shared plant room which is located on the roof, heating and hot water is distributed from this location to each of the 80 dwellings. Each of these blocks has heat meters installed at dwelling level, and residents are billed on actual usage. The dwellings in the other blocks have individual boilers (not communal or district heating) which wouldn't allow for heat meters and therefore are not on a metering programme.</p> <p>Phoenix Court – we are developing a project at Phoenix Court with feasibility funding from the Future Neighbourhoods project which is a collaboration between LBC and the GLA specifically for the Somers Town area. We plan to develop an accurate energy performance certificate profile at dwelling level, allowing us to understand what work and the level of funding required. We will find out in January if our funding bid is successful and if this project can progress. Any issues related to damp and mould will be taken into consideration in this project. There are 5 properties that required damp and mould works at Phoenix court all with minor mould cleaning taken place which suggests condensation issues generally for these affected properties.</p>
CT/0923/06	<p>CCTV Officers agreed to provide the DMC with information regarding the resident engagement process surrounding the installation of CCTV cameras; an update on whether Churchway estate would be receiving CCTV camera, and an update on the broken gates on the estate.</p>	<p>Graeme Dyson Head of Security</p>	<p>Churchway estate is not on the list of estates currently receiving a CCTV upgrade.</p>

CT/0923/07	Income management The DMC were advised that the information regarding the rent collection data for June 23 should have been included in the table in the paper. Officers would also seek to circulate the information to DMC representatives regarding the September data when it was available.	Graeme Jones Neighbourhood Housing Manager	Circulated to DMC members on 3 October.
CT/0923/08	Neighbourhoods Officers would seek to ensure that the website link to the full list of current neighbourhood officers worked.	Maria Jacobs Head of Neighbourhoods	The list is now up-to-date and working we have also asked if the Neighbourhood Housing Manager (who the NHO reports to) could be added: https://www.camden.gov.uk/contact-your-neighbourhood-housing-team
CT/0923/09	Estate Parking Officers agreed to provide information regarding the statutory consultation process, when the consultation would start, how long it would run for, what the proposed physical changes would be for the proposed parking changes.	Michael Wood Project Manager	An update paper on the first phase pilot of the Traffic Management Order (TMO) will be provided for information at the December DMC round.
CT/0923/10	DMC Budget Officers agreed to meet with David Auger regarding his concerns on the DMC budget process and following this, if he still felt it necessary, he should provide officers with a note that specific outlined what issues he wished to raise, so that an officer response could be provided. Officers would also seek to provide an update on the Metro bins and the	Olivier Goma/Ramona Damien Neighbourhood Housing Managers	Olivier Goma and Ramona Damiean held a meeting with David on Friday 27 th October 2023, to discuss his concerns – additional information to be shared by David so further clarification be sought from the finance team

	Ampthill Square pathway.		
CT/0923/11	Camden Contact Centre update Officers agreed to provide further data for information.	Phil Quickenden Head of Customer and Registration Services	Circulated to DMC members on 11 October.
GOSPEL OAK DMC ACTIONS – 14th SEPTEMBER 2023			
Item	Action	Responsible Individual/Department	Comments
	Minutes and Progress Report		
GO/0923/01	To confirm the meeting about boilers and the RFH took place and to organise an additional meeting, in person if needed.	Scot Reid Head of Property Customer Services & Engagement	The meeting took place on the 28 th of September and was a hybrid event. Eight TRA reps were there, and any agreed follow-up requests should now have been addressed.
	Housing Services Report		
GO/0923/02	Find out in what forms information about the property inspections can be accessed. Also, to look at using QR codes as a point of accessing information.	Scot Reid Head of Property Customer Services & Engagement	We are currently reviewing how we engage with residents and whether this is effective. This includes Housing News, leaflets we send out and the current main avenue to view information via the Camden website, where changes are taking place to improve this. Although we are not likely to be expanding the PDF options, in early 2024, we will produce our engagement plan for the following year. This will consider many methods currently being used effectively across other local authorities. We have already been testing QR codes on our letters, and

			out-of-order lift posters, and the high uptake of mediums such as SMS and WhatsApp has proved to be very effective, so this will likely form a significant part of our strategy in the future.
	Local Issues		
GO/0923/03	Someone from Estate parking to attend future meeting to discuss parking and parking space rental.	Jayne Seaman Principal Lead Officer for Parking & Access	The request has been made to the relevant team for attendance at December meeting.
GO/0923/04	Someone from Grounds Maintenance to attend future meeting to discuss trees and grass	David Houghton Tree Manager	Our tree policy, maintenance cycles and outstanding tree work can be found on our tree webpages. TRA's are encouraged to check these for any general enquiries and email treesection@Camden.gov.uk for specific issues. Grass is maintained by our Grounds Maintenance team. Darrell Abercrombie, Green Space Operations Manager and his team will be able to answer questions about this. They can be contacted by groundsmaintenance@Camden.gov.uk
HOLBORN DMC ACTIONS – 20th SEPTEMBER 2023			
Item	Action	Responsible Individual/Department	Comments
	Consolidated Housing Services Report		
HOL/0923/01	Officers to check the LASER contract and extent of financial advice provided with the energy team and report back.	Emma Cardoso Team Leader (HRA and Capital Projects)	Camden have a mix of procurement only and fully managed service arrangements. There is no difference to the delivered procurement strategy, with Camden having full access to energy market advice for all Council supplies, whether they adopt a procurement only or fully managed service arrangement with LASER.

HOL/0923/02	Officers to pass feedback on workmen jamming open lift doors resulting in them being out of order back to the repairs team along with suggestions of notices.	<p align="center">Susanne Afra Head of Capital Works</p>	Feedback shared with the M&E team.
HOL/0923/03	Officers to look at the history of Flaxman Court and follow up on damp issues with the TRA representative.		<p>Information has been shared with TRA lead regarding the plans for the block.</p> <p>A surveyor has been asked to get in touch with the residents that have raised concerns regarding damp and mould.</p>
HOL/0923/04	Feedback to be given to the Head of Property Customer Service and Engagement on no shows to repairs appointments without any advance notification of cancellation.		Feedback shared.
HOL/0923/05	A resident of Langdon House to let the Landlord Services Manager know about any specific issues with NHOs	<p align="center">Judith Milner Langdon House TRA</p>	Officers are following up with the TRA rep and awaiting further information to resolve.
HOL/0923/06	Officers to liaise with the Tybalds Close TRA representative on parking spaces on Tybalds Estate being let via a parking website.	<p align="center">Andy Foster Estate Parking and Access Manager</p>	Relevant officers have been provided with details to make contact with the TRA to resolve the query
HOL/0923/06	The tree management team to contact the Flaxman Court TRA representative on the removal of trees without advance notice	<p align="center">Darrell Abercrombie Green Space Operations Manager</p>	<p>Relevant officers have been provided with details to contact the TRA to resolve the query</p>
HOL/0923/07	Officers to arrange a meeting at the Gamages Estate wildflower meadow to discuss concerns.		
HOL/0923/08	The tree officer to update the Bourne Estate TRA directly about tree pruning.		
HOL/0923/09	Officers to follow up and provide an update on the issues with the Birkenhead grant.	<p align="center">Stephanie Marsh-Aldis Landlord Services Manager</p>	Project completed. Request made for a site visit when this has been confirmed I will invite Cllr Bautista.
HOL/0923/10	Officers to provide a list of the small projects undertaken in Holborn by the caretaking response team.		Liaising with Dilip Shah regarding this and will provide a further update.

Action Points Update			
Item	Action	Responsible Individual/Department	Comments
HOL/0923/11	Officers to liaise with M&E and the Brunswick Estate TRA on how heating could be controlled individually and costs managed.	Stephanie Marsh-Aldis Neighbourhood Manager	There is no scope for this currently and it is part of a wider issue with all district heating blocks
HOL/0923/12	The energy team to visit Brunswick Estate to investigate the replacement of window seals.		Referral made and awaiting an update on when a visit will take place
HAMPSTEAD DMC ACTIONS – 21st SEPTEMBER 2023			
NO ACTIONS SEPTEMBER DMC ROUND			



DMC Round December 2023
Emma Cardoso
Team Leader (HRA & Capital Projects)
Strategic Finance, Corporate Services
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Title: HRA Budget 2024/25

Information/Discussion Report – Discussion

Recommendations: The DMC is asked to note the report and provide comment.

Report Summary: This report provides an update on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 2024/25 Budget Setting progress ahead of the January Joint DMC meeting at which DMC representatives will be asked to provide feedback on proposals.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This report provides an update on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 2024/25 Budget Setting progress ahead of the January Joint DMC meeting at which DMC representatives will be asked to provide feedback on proposals being taken to January Cabinet for approval by members regarding rents, service charges, the heating pool and the budget. An example of the template to be completed as part of the individual DMC meetings (part of the Joint DMC meeting) is shown in Appendix B.
- 1.2. At January 2023 Cabinet, it was assessed that there was a medium-term pressure to the HRA of £8m, which on high scenario would be £14m over 23/24 to 25/26 and therefore members approved a savings programme of £7.5m over this period to mitigate it. However, in-year forecasts for 23/24 are suggesting that the pressures will be higher than originally anticipated and the HRA is currently forecasting an overspend in year. The service is working hard to reduce this overspend as much as possible, but it is difficult to eradicate all the pressures as some are externally driven. Damp & mould and disrepair cases are causing severe pressures on the repairs budget. While having fallen since its peak in late 2022, inflation remains stubbornly high. Interest rates have risen rapidly over the course of the year and the cost-of-living crisis is putting pressure on the household budgets of tenants and leaseholders.
- 1.3. These more recent pressures come on top of longer-term financial challenges for the HRA which go back to the period 2016-2020 when the government obliged

social housing providers to reduce their rents, reducing income to investment in their stock. The Chalcots evacuation and subsequent investment in fire and building safety works as well as inflation have all added to the HRA's expenditure exceeding the HRA's income. HRA's income can be limited at short notice e.g. for 23/24 budgets, central government implemented a cap of 7% rent increase at a time when CPI was at 10.1%- the rent limits and short notice of caps although helpful to tenants and housing benefit/universal credit bill affordability, makes it challenging to plan medium term of the HRA's finances as well as creating pressures to the HRA. The HRA has operationally overspent in the last four years- which is a structural pressure in funding social housing, that is being seen across local government nationally.

- 1.4. The 2024/25 budget must focus on the financial sustainability of the HRA, eradicating overspends, delivering on MTFs (medium term financial strategy) savings and replenishing the reserves.

2. 2024/25 BUDGET PRESSURES

- 2.1. **Inflation and Corporate** – while CPI inflation has fallen since its peak of 10.7% in November 2022, it was still 6.7% in September 2023. Prior to 2022, inflation was last above 6% in 1992. The HRA has many types of cost inflation:

- Staff inflation is determined following national negotiations and is therefore not a controllable factor. For the past two years, the negotiations have been slow and the result higher than assumed budget. Therefore, pressure from 23/24 pay (settlement agreed November 2023) will need to be included with 24/25 estimate to ensure fully budgeted.
- Some external contracts are index-linked, and these fluctuate month on month and run at different rates to CPI (e.g. RPI was 8.9% vs CPI of 6.7% for September 2023.)
- Energy costs have fallen since their peak in mid-2022 but remain high by historical standards. The Council should know the full cost of its 2023/24 supply in late November and receive updated forecasts for the first half of 2024/25 from LASER.
- Insurance premiums have significantly grown in recent years beyond CPI levels.

- 2.2. **Investment in Stock: Interest rates** have continued to increase during 2023/24. Much of the HRA's borrowing is from the General Fund at a floating rate (so called internal borrowing), so the HRA is exposed to the rapid rise in interest rates. The HRA's rate of internal borrowing is now 4.6% compared with 1.13% before the 2023 "mini budget". The Bank of England have been increasing the base rate in response to rising inflation. There is also growing need to set aside more for capital investment in stock through better homes, above and beyond the statutory minimum contribution to MRR (currently £38m per annum). This would over time reduce pressures in the revenue repairs budgets but not immediately.

- 2.3. **Disrepair and damp & mould** cases remain a pressure on the repairs budget and are the source of much of the forecast overspend in this area. Disrepair has a triple impact on costs; settlement to disrepair companies claiming on behalf of residents, cost of repairing the site, cost of legal team processing the claims. Pressure in

responsive repairs, disrepair and damp and mould can be traced directly back to the enforced under-investment in the stock caused by government policies of rent reduction or rent capping. Alongside budgeted fire and building safety works, they have reduced the resources available for responsive repairs and capital maintenance works.

- 2.4. Further regulation has been introduced through the **Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023** which gained Royal Assent earlier in the year, to add to the Fire Safety Act 2021 and the Building Safety Act 2022. The full extent of the Social Housing cost is not yet known but there will be regulator fees based on stock size and a call on resource to ensure compliance. The council continues to invest significant sums on fire and building safety, without any contributions from central government for the HRA. This then limits funds available to invest in stock and services.
- 2.5. **Transfer to HRA reserve-** The HRA reserve has provided protection at times of need but has been depleted in recent years and it is critically important that it is replenished as quickly as possible to ensure it is financially stable over the medium term.
- 2.6. Offsetting some of these pressures are the MTFS savings for 24/25 totalling £3.1m, as approved by Cabinet in January 2023. It is important that the savings can be achieved otherwise it would result in an overspend to the balanced HRA budget.

3. RENTS

- 3.1. As the HRA receives no government subsidy even related to new burdens such as Building Safety, Fire Safety, Damp and Mould, Social Housing regulations, the only source of funding is from rents and service charges- predominantly from rents.
- 3.2. Under the current rent standard, the Council can increase rents up to a maximum of inflation (Sept CPI 6.7%) plus 1%. The rent standard recognises that the HRA needs to be able to fund more than inflation each year to operate due to being ringfenced and without external funding for items as referenced in the pressures section above.
- 3.3. The maximum permitted rent increase for 2024/25 would be 7.7%, which would generate £10.5m in income for the HRA, costing an average 2 bed property £10.12 extra per week. Average rents for Camden if increased by 7.7% next year would still be c.£12 per week lower than they would be if increased just by CPI since 2015/16 (due to four years of 1% reductions and fixed cap at 7% vs CPI 10.1% for 23/24).

3.4. The impact on average rents is shown in Table One below.

Table One - Rent 2024/25

Bed size	Average Rent 23/24	Increase 7.7%	Average Rent 24/25 7.7%
0	£97.28	£7.49	£104.77
1	£115.87	£8.92	£124.79
2	£131.49	£10.12	£141.62
3	£147.40	£11.35	£158.75
4	£163.77	£12.61	£176.38
5 +	£180.19	£13.87	£194.06

3.5. Rent is eligible under housing benefit and universal credit. Information on Camden’s website on support for residents is available here: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support> .

3.6. DMC members will be asked for their views on the Council’s strategy to consider rent increases from April 2024 at the joint DMC meeting in January.

4. SERVICE CHARGES

4.1. Tenants pay fixed service charges for caretaking, grounds maintenance, CCTV, mobile security, concierge, maintenance of mechanical and electrical equipment in communal areas and block and estate lighting, if they receive that service.

4.2. If service charges are raised by underlying inflationary pressures for each service, this would mean increases to charges as shown in **Table two** below, generating c. £0.8m. These service charges are eligible under housing benefit and universal credit.

Tenant weekly service charges	2023/24 weekly charge	2024/25 weekly increase	2024/25 weekly charge	Additional income £m
Caretaking	£11.27	£0.56	£11.83	0.36
Communal Lighting	£2.78	£0.31	£3.09	0.20
CCTV	£1.09	£0.05	£1.14	0.03
Communal M&E Maintenance	£1.39	£0.06	£1.45	0.04
Ground Maintenance	£2.05	£0.21	£2.26	0.13
Responsive Housing Patrol	£0.70	£0.05	£0.75	0.03
	£19.28	£1.24	£20.52	0.80

- 4.3. Additionally, some tenants pay for the enhanced CCTV service (as agreed at January 2019 Cabinet) once the new cameras are installed. The charge is £1.12 per week (on top of the CCTV maintenance charge) for 7 years. The original approved amount was £2.10 per week including CCTV maintenance which was then 98p. Therefore, the incremental charge for enhanced CCTV service was agreed to be £1.12 per week.
- 4.4. DMC members will be asked for their views on the Council's strategy to consider a service charge increase from April 2024 at the joint DMC meeting in January. As the charges fund the inflated cost of the current services, any reduction in funding would mean that the service would have to be scaled back in the medium term.

5. HEATING POOL

- 5.1. At January Cabinet 2023, in recognition of a significant spike in gas and electricity prices, scales were increased by 175% and credits totalling £3.5m were applied to accounts to limit the increase to residents on scales to 125%. It was also agreed that the heating pool deficit (created by heating charges being less than actual costs to the HRA of gas and electricity during 2022/23) would be carried forward and recovered in later years.
- 5.2. The recommended level of heating scales is not yet known for 24/25 because this is subject to review, following updates from LASER on next year's price forecasts, but the significant deficit will need to be considered.
- 5.3. As the market stabilises, once the heating account has restored its own reserves and shows a net surplus, as per in previous years, DMCs will be asked whether this surplus should be held for future price volatility, reinvested or a refund, or a combination. However, it is not expected there would be a surplus in 24/25 so this would be a discussion with DMCs in future years.
- 5.4. A separate meeting is being scheduled during December which will focus on the heating pool following a request from Camden Town DMC to provide more information ahead of January's DMC meeting.
- 5.5. DMC members will be asked to consider the recommendation on heating charges for 2024/25 at January DMC meeting.

6. FORMAL CONSULTATION

- 6.1. The joint DMC meeting will take place on 10 January 2024. The January report will contain details of all proposals being taken to Cabinet as well as considerations around affordability.
- 6.2. A list of the consultation questions that will be put before DMCs is in **Appendix B**.

Report Ends

Title: Community Safety Report

Information/Discussion Report – Discussion

Recommendations: The DMC is asked to note the report and/or other recommendation.

Report Summary: This report provides an overview of the work of the Community Safety Service throughout 2023.

1. Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Overview

- 1.1. ASB and drug related problems remain the number one issue reported to us by our residents, and we have been working closely with a number of internal and external partners to tackle these issues. Joint walkabouts with housing colleagues, the Metropolitan Police Service (Met) and other stakeholders continue to help us identify and act on priority ASB concerns, with feedback shared in community meetings such as the Tenants and Residents Associations Meetings, District Management Committees and Ward Safer Neighbourhood Panels.
- 1.2. In July, the Council initiated an intensive engagement programme, reaching out to 22,000 tenanted homes. As part of the programme the Council is hosting Estate Action Days, aiming to bring us closer to our residents and enable us to work with them to identify creative solutions to issues on their estates and neighbourhoods. Community Safety has been represented across all 15 Estate Action Days to date.
- 1.3. A consistent theme across the feedback received so far indicates that ASB is a key concern, particularly related to drug dealing in hidden pockets across the estates: out of sight of patrols and away from CCTV coverage. Residents have told officers that people from outside the estate are finding ways to access and are engaging in ASB. Further engagement with residents has been planned on those estates visited to develop Estate Plans to work with residents to develop positive and creative responses to the issues raised.
- 1.4. In response to drug-related concerns, we are supporting the delivery of a new Combatting Drugs Partnership in Camden. This will be an annual meeting of a joint

Health and Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Partnership Board and is a mandated requirement to ensure the effective allocation of resources made available via the Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery (SSMTR) Grant and Project Adder funding by provided to the Met. The delivery of this work is overseen by the Camden Drugs, Alcohol, and Community Safety working group comprised of Council services and external stakeholders. Performance will be tracked by the national metrics laid out in the government's national drugs strategy as well as the creation of a Local Outcomes Framework that will be tailored to Camden.

2. Anti-Social Behaviour Review

2.1. The ASB review was created to tackle the challenges related to the management of ASB. Examining case studies highlighted opportunities for improving current systems for handling complex or challenging cases involving ASB and mental health. The data also indicated that Housing Estates are disproportionately affected by ASB. The review's main areas of focus include:

- Conducting a Population Health Needs Assessment to facilitate the development of a preventative approach to reduce ASB.
- Establishing a Joint Protocol in collaboration with C&I Mental Health Trust, with a focus on guiding the management of cases where metal health is a contributing factor.
- Conducting a comprehensive Systems Review to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing approaches of the Council and its partners in reducing ASB.

3. ASB Taskforce

3.1. To support the Council to address the challenges and disproportionality, a dedicated ASB taskforce will be established during a five-month trial period from November 2023 until March 2024. Adult Safeguarding, Mental Health and Family Support services will play a crucial role in supporting the management of complex cases and ASB reduction activity during the trial period.

4. Responsive Security Patrol

4.1. The Council's five vehicle Responsive Security Patrol (RSP) is available for residents to call out 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, from 4pm to 4am. The main purpose is to act as a deterrent and to detect and disrupt ASB on housing land. The RSP can be called out for any type of ASB, and residents can call them out without sharing their personal details if they want.

4.2. So far this year they have carried out over 40,980 patrols. Nearly 20% of these are targeted patrols to proactively disrupt ASB, about 5% are residents calls with the RSP dealing with more than 2,027 residents call outs so far this year. As well as responding to resident's call outs, the RSP carry out targeted vehicle and foot patrols

at the request of Community Safety, Housing Managers and the Police. They may also carry out welfare or tenancy checks and form part of the Council's emergency response. They can be contacted on 020 7974 4444 asking for the Responsive Security Patrol or at RSP@camden.gov.uk.

- 4.3. All RSP cars are fitted with GPS trackers that show in real-time where the vehicles are and keep a record of all the car's movements. The cars have in car CCTV fitted that records automatically and the RSP officers are equipped with body worn CCTV cameras that captures both audio and video. If there is a complaint about a patrol, then all of this data is downloaded and compared to the patrol logs, they submit. Management also carries out a "dip sampling" process where they select patrols at random and check all of this for accuracy.

5. CCTV

- 5.1. We have completed technical surveys on 49 of the 54 identified estates for the upgrade programme. The remaining 5 estates will be surveyed in the coming weeks. There has been CCTV installation on 12 estates (22% of the total project) is complete, with another 4 estates (7%) in various stages of completion. We're set to begin work on an additional 2 estates (4%), bringing our progress to about 30% of the total project. Over 261 new high-definition CCTV cameras have been installed, accounting for approximately 37% of the estimated total. These cameras are highly regarded for their quality, especially at night.
- 5.2. Our initial goal was to complete most estates by the end of the calendar year, with a few complex ones carried over to the financial year's end. The current pace suggests around 50% completion by year-end, with the majority finalised by the financial year-end and the complex ones afterward. While progress is slightly slower than hoped, it remains steady, and the work's quality is excellent.
- 5.3. A document with more details about the upgrade (subject to change due to operational and technical reasons) has been published on the Council's website. It will be updated monthly and can be accessed here - [CCTV and Responsive Security Patrol \(RSP\) - Camden Council](#).

6. Metropolitan Police Partnership

Turnaround Plan

- 6.1. Baroness Casey's Review revealed the significant challenge the Met now faces in regaining trust and confidence in London's policing. The review uncovered issues like institutionalised behaviour, systemic racism, misogyny, and homophobia, emphasising the need for the Met to fully engage with communities across London/Camden.
- 6.2. The Council has been supporting the delivery of the New Met for London Turnaround Plan which offers an opportunity for the Met to re-engage and connect with local

communities. The plan outlines core policing activities to fulfil the Met's mission, focusing on nine priorities to delivery More Trust, Less Crime and High Standards. We have worked in partnership with the Met to promote the co-production of a localised Turnaround Plan with those who live, work, study, and visit Camden to ensure it is tailored to the needs of the Borough.

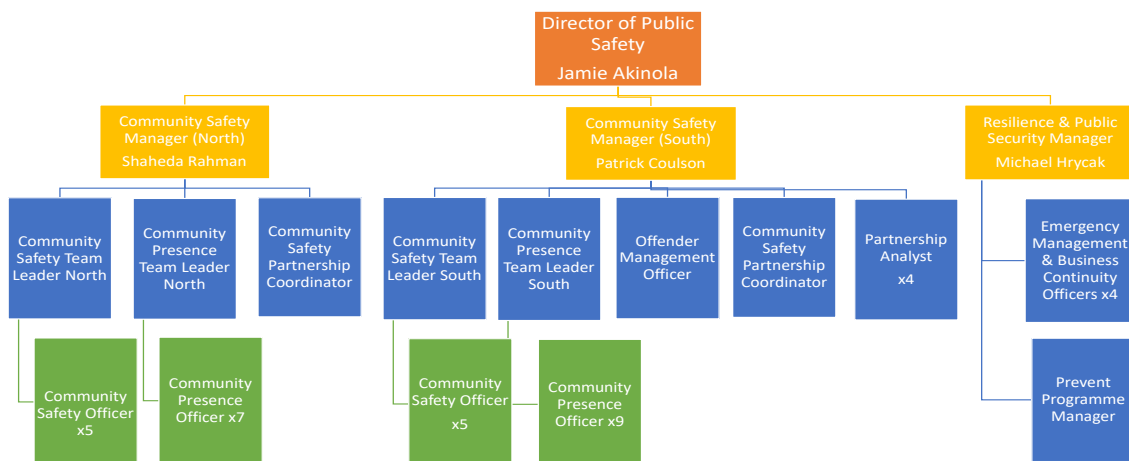
Violence Against Women and Girls

- 6.2. Women's safety is a key priority in the Met's seasonal plans, with dedicated patrols carried out in locations within the evening and night-time economy, including Christmas and New Year. They use Late-Night Levy funding for a Domestic Abuse Utility Vehicle and conduct licensing visits in partnership with Camden's Licensing Officers, enforcing the 'Ask for Angela' scheme. Non-uniformed officers have been patrolling both licensed premises and problematic locations to address misogynistic behaviour and prevent crimes against women and girls.
- 6.3. Project Vigilant is a pre-emptive policing operation which uses uniformed and non-uniformed officers to target violence against women and girls in evening and night-time economy venues, preventing violence displacement and identifying predatory behaviour. The Council supports this project with £85,000 in funding and keeps the Camden Safety Hub open until the early hours of the morning on operation nights to support delivery and provide additional signposting to vulnerable individuals.

Crime and ASB

- 6.4. Our Community Presence Officers are working closely with the Met on a proactive policing programme involving local businesses and officers from Neighbourhood and Town Centre Teams. This includes the 'Camden Day of Action' with targeted activities in Camden Town and the North of the Borough to address persistent ASB by issuing Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and Community Protection Notices (CPNs).
- 6.5. 'Operation Midnight' is a joint operation between the Council, the Met's Integrated Offender Management, and Operation Pantera teams. It allocates additional resources to known Addresses of Concern (AOCs), enabling the execution of enforcement measures such as surveillance, search warrants, and arrests for cuckooing perpetrators.

7. Community Safety Service Structure



8. Contacting the Community Safety Service

8.1 If ASB is causing alarm or distress to you or the community where you live you should report this to Camden's Community Safety Service. You can do this by:

- Completing our [online form](#) to report antisocial behaviour.
- Phone: 020 7974 444 (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday). When on the telephone please go through them all until you are asked to hold and there will be a further submenu, then please choose option 6 for Community Safety.

8.2 If you're a Camden council tenant or leaseholder and the ASB is happening on a council estate between 4pm and 4am you can call the Responsive Security Patrol on 020 7974 4444 (everyday).

8.3 More information on how to contact Camden's Community Safety Service can be found on our website [here](#).

9. Contacting the Metropolitan Police Service

9.1 Information on how to find your local officer, get the latest crime statistics and advice, help the police with appeals for information, and find out what they're doing to tackle crime in your local area can be found on their website [here](#).

9.2 To contact the police for non-emergencies, please dial 101. For emergencies, please dial 999.

Report Ends

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Title: Housing Performance Report – November 2023

Information/Discussion Report – Discussion

Recommendations: The DMC is asked to note the report and comment.

Report Summary: This report provides performance information on areas of the Housing Service provided to council tenants.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides performance information on areas of the Housing service provided to council tenants, and is mainly based on the period from June to September 2023, ie Quarter 2.
- 1.2 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 places new requirements on all social landlords in respect of the quality and safety of homes, and the quality of neighbourhoods and housing services – including complaints, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, tenant engagement and the provision of performance and other information to tenants.
- 1.3 The Council is currently working with Housemark, a housing data organisation, who are currently conducting Camden's first tenant satisfaction survey as part of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures under the new regulatory regime. This survey will be completed by April 2024, and results will be fed back to DMC's and residents more widely in the summer of 2024.
- 1.4 The transformation work taking place within housing and repairs services aims to achieve the following outcomes:
 - Residents experience an empathetic, joined-up housing service and access the support they need quickly and effectively
 - Residents have access to decent, safe, warm and friendly housing and advice
 - Camden's estates and neighbourhoods have a greater sense of community cohesion and belonging
 - Residents and staff are more connected, feel listened to and empowered; and their feedback is used to drive improvement.

2. HOUSING SERVICES PERFORMANCE

2.1 Tenant participation and engagement

- 2.1.1 Involving residents in council services is widespread across the Council, and the new social housing regulatory framework places additional emphasis on how tenants are involved in shaping their services, holding their landlord to account, having their voices heard, and being informed about performance.
- 2.1.2 As part of Camden’s work to listen to and empower tenant voices both through tenancy visits and the intensive tenant participation programme, Council staff have visited 4,750 homes and held pop-up events attended by various Council teams on 16 council estates to discuss estate and service improvement with tenants. This has involved close working with TRAs and active community organisations. More events are scheduled, particularly door knocking in some areas of street properties to have conversations with tenants in those properties. Some early findings from the events held so far show that anti-social behaviour remains a consistent theme across Camden estates as well as issues with the satisfactory completion of repairs. Residents spoke favourably about where they live; appreciating the neighbourliness of their estates and how people look out for each other; and some expressed an interest in participating in matters regarding their estate – eg opportunities for estate gardening and growing schemes.
- 2.1.3 A tenant conference is being planned for next year where there will be discussions on topics that tenants decide are most important to them, as well opportunities for wider consultations. This is the subject of another report on the agenda for this meeting

2.2 Management of empty council homes (voids)

- 2.2.1 Reducing the number of empty homes, and the time taken to turn them around before letting is a priority. Voids management has shown improvement, with the number of average void turnaround days decreasing from 228 days in Q3 22/23 to 180 days in Q2 23/24. The slight increase from 160 days in August to 202 days in September was due to the ongoing work to return some of the Council’s longest-standing vacant homes back into use. As properties with longer void periods are let they will slightly skew the average times.

	Q3 2022-23	Q4 2022-23	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24	Change Q3 2022 to Q2 2023
Average re-let times for empty	228	232	206	180	21% reduction in days void

2.3 Rent arrears

	Q4 2022-23	Q1 2023-24	Q2 2023-24
Rent arrears	£15,293,089	£17,104,480	£17,935,141
Collection rate	97.37%	94.72%	95.95%
% of tenants in 7 weeks+ arrears	15.22%	15.44%	16.12%
Number of tenants on UC	6,076	6,399	6,594
Total arrears by tenants on UC	£ 7,140,272	£8,930,423	£9,523,126
% of tenants on UC direct payments (as of all UC claimants)	33%	33%	33%
Number of tenants claiming full housing benefit (HB)	2,463	2,423	2,393
% of tenants claiming full HB in arrears	11%	11%	11%
Number of tenants claiming partial HB	6,647	6,571	6,553
% of tenants claiming partial HB in arrears	42%	44%	45%
Number of tenants not claiming HB	13,259	13,337	13,423
% of tenants claiming no HB in arrears	60%	60%	61%

2.3.1 Rising rent arrears remains a key challenge for the Council, with tenants struggling with additional financial pressures from rising heating charges, rent charges and increased cost of living. Whilst the arrears have increased, data in recent quarters shows a slow-down in the rate of growth. In September 2022, the Council set up a rent pilot to have a focussed team supporting residents with rent arrears. Following a review of this pilot, it is being extended as part of the Council's approach to meeting the challenge of growing arrears.

2.4 Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

2.4.1 Anti-social behaviour remains a key priority for many of Camden's residents. In response to this, Housing is working with colleagues in Contact Camden and Community Safety to form an operational ASB task force to tackle issues and jointly improve processes and make sure the Council maintains contact and communication with residents reporting ASB.

2.4.2 Anti-social behaviour is also a new reporting requirement of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 and is a key tenant satisfaction measure. Housing services are

working towards ensuring the services' reporting arrangements are compliant with these regulations, and lead to better management of cases for residents,

2.5 Fire Safety

2.5.1 Ensuring the safety of Camden residents and those the Council are a landlord for is of paramount importance, and fire safety is central to this. The number of outstanding fire risk assessments (FRAs) and fire safety actions is falling each quarter. As of October 2023, Housing have completed 97% of the fire risk assessments on Camden estates. Housing is prioritising the completion of fire risk assessment actions, actively monitoring and reporting them at both the Fire Risk Compliance Safety Panel and the Housing Safety and Regulatory Board.

2.6 Domestic violence and abuse (DVA) and violence against women and girls (VAWG)

2.6.1 During 2022/23, 11% (236) of homelessness cases reported domestic abuse as the main reason for loss of accommodation. DVA is disproportionately a gendered issue; in 85% of DVA homelessness cases the main applicant self-identified as a woman. Transgender applicants also are disproportionately affected, with 25% of all transgender homelessness applicants reporting fleeing domestic violence and abuse as the reason they are homelessness.

2.6.2 Housing is working to achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation and have been working with a full time DAHA Coordinator since March 2023. There are a number of areas of work taking place across the Housing service in relation to this, including reviewing some past cases to learn from how they were managed, and bringing staff training up-to-date so that responses to tenants experiencing abuse and violence is improved.

2.7 Enquiries and complaints

2.7.1 How the Council responds to enquiries and complaints leaves a marked impression on residents, and there is ambition across the service to make concerted improvements in this area. For the last quarter (July to September) Housing services responded to just over a quarter (28%) of Stage 1 complaints within the target time of 10 days.

2.7.2 The service is taking actions to improve responses to complaints, including routing all tenancy management complaints to one team from December for better co-ordination and ensuring holding responses are sent where enquiries require responses from multiple teams and may take longer than the target time. Housing will be conducting an analysis of where complaints are currently being held up and reviewing some complaints in order to learn from them. Such learning will be built into service improvement plans.

2.8 Conclusion

2.8.1 Service improvements across Housing are very much focussed on seeking to ease the pressures residents are experiencing particularly in regard to accessing services

and dealing with the cost-of-living crisis. Housing services are also looking to improve how it uses data to help it monitor progress and look for early corrective actions where possible.

2.8.2 Feedback from DMC on the contents of this report and the measures presented is welcomed.

Report Ends

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DMC Round December 2023

Sean Scott

Head of Leaseholder Services & Housing Income

Supporting Communities

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Title: Rent Arrears

Discussion Report

Recommendations: The DMC is asked to note the report

Report Summary: This report gives information on the Council's rent arrears.

1.1. Rising rent arrears remains a key challenge for the Council. A combination of factors has meant that tenants are increasingly struggling with their finances; rising heating charges and overall cost of living means that we are seeing tenants are less able to pay rent.

2. Actions

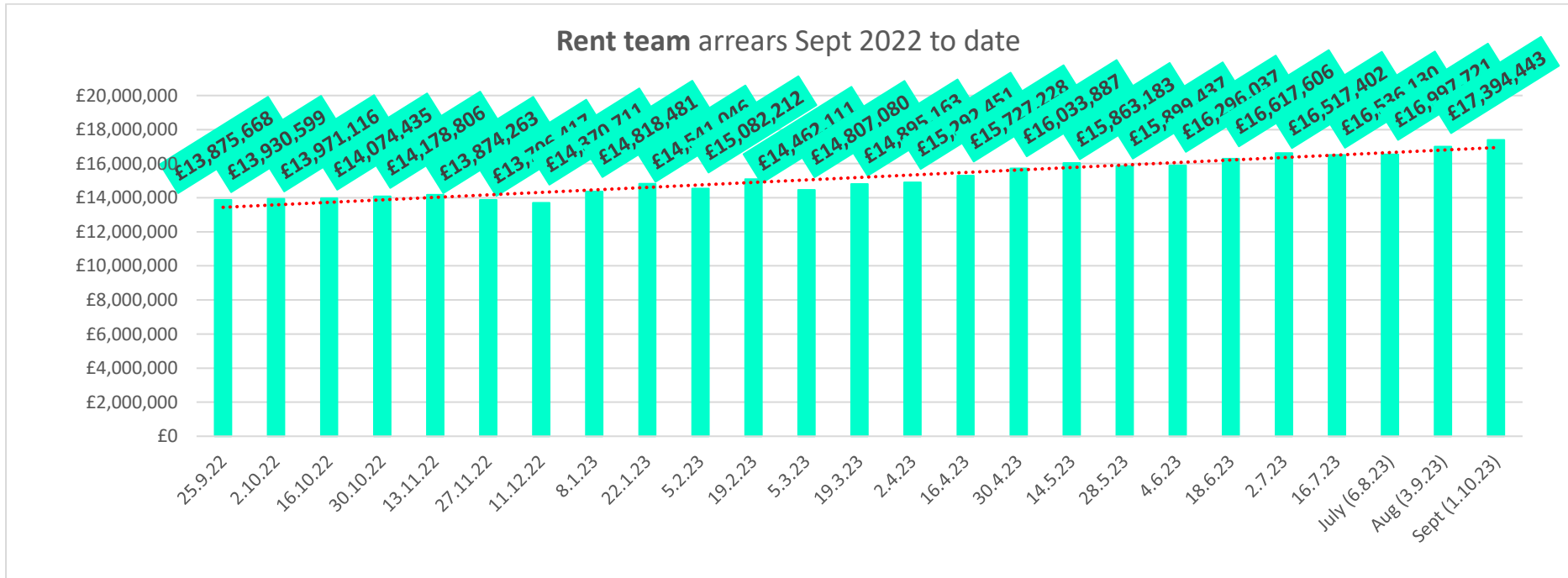
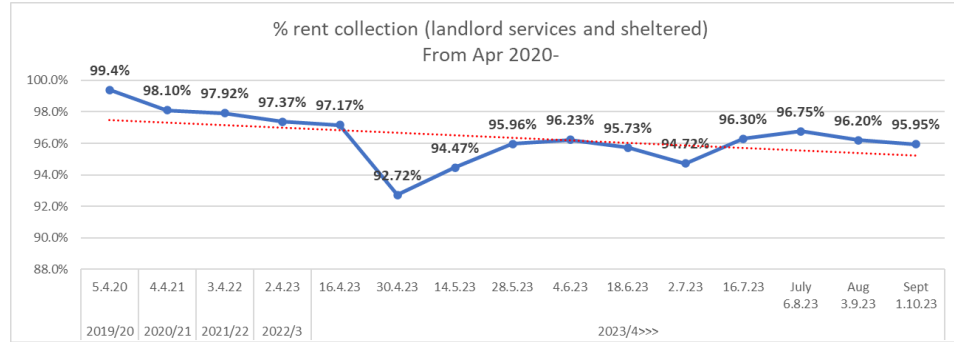
2.1. Along with the pilot of a specialist rent team, a rent arrears improvement plan has been created by the service and includes a thorough approach to reviewing how the Council can implement a proactive but supportive approach to rent collection.

2.2. These actions are grouped under the following themes:

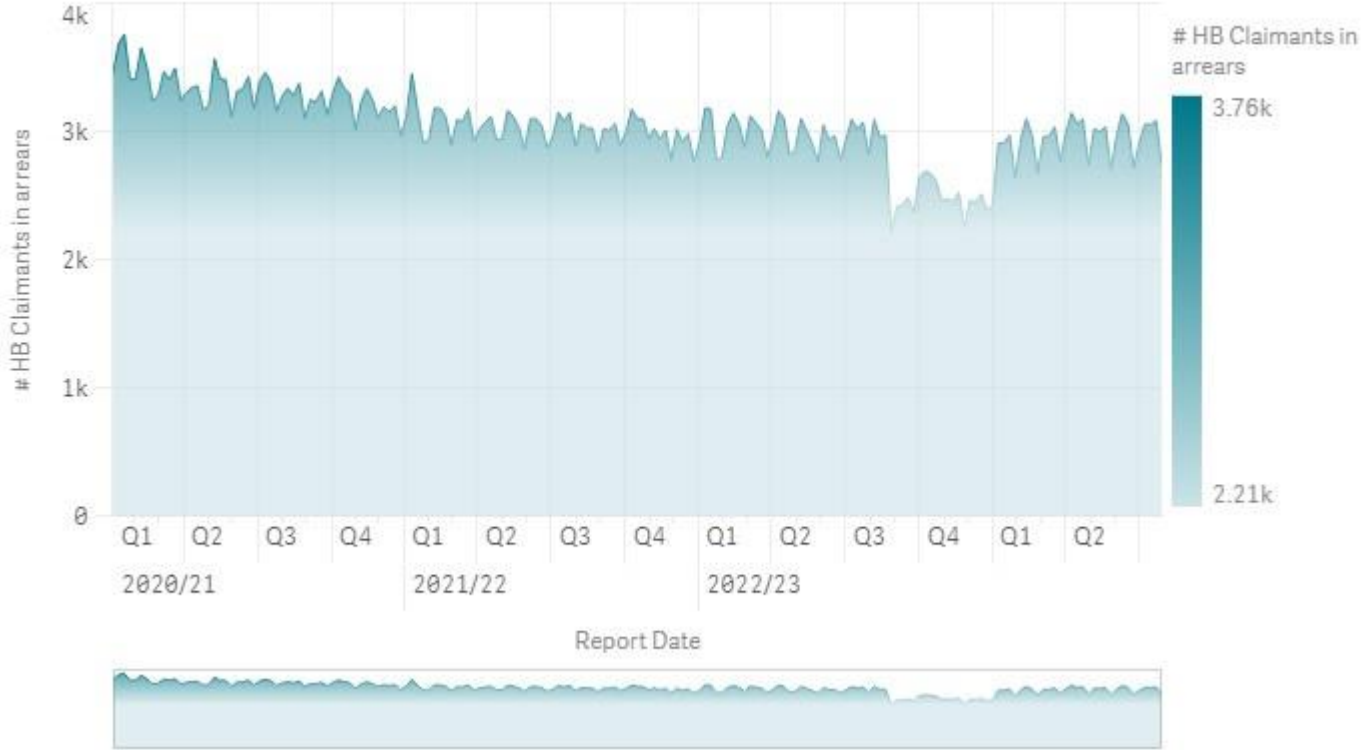
- Ensuring tenants have access to the support they need
- Improving the systems that support rent collection
- Reviewing the services' internal rent collection policies and processes
- Establishing a rent-first, performance driven culture across teams
- Reviewing roles and responsibilities within the rent collection process

2.3. The actions in this plan will help the Council to ensure cases that 'can't pay' are supported to maximise their incomes but will also enable teams to have access to enforcement measures that means tenants who 'won't pay' are encouraged to do so more quickly.

3. Performance and data



HB Claimants in Arrears over time



31 October 23

HB Claimants in arrears
2,736
8,526 # Total HB Claimants

% HB Tenants in Arrears vs Total
HB Tenants (Current)
 32.1%

1 Jan 2023

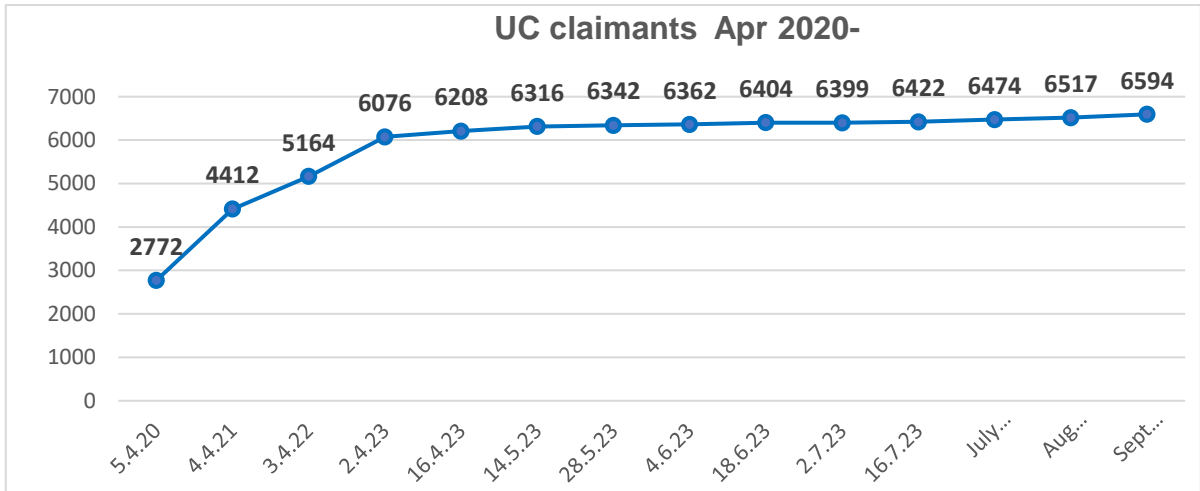
HB Claimants in arrears
2,650
9,156 # Total HB Claimants

% HB Tenants in Arrears vs Total
HB Tenants (Current)
 28.9%

2 October 2022

HB Claimants in arrears
2,945
9,329 # Total HB Claimants

% HB Tenants in Arrears vs Total
HB Tenants (Current)
 31.6%



Report ends

Hello from your Neighbourhood

Housing Officer!

As Neighbourhood Housing Officers we help council tenants and leaseholders with many tenancy related matters. We aim to provide an easy and accessible service which tenants can be proud of, giving that extra support when it matters the most.

Each officer covers around 500 homes, and you guessed it, our role is really varied. Everyday a different story! But here are just some of the things we can do:

- Supporting with tenancy requests such as successions, mutual exchanges, and home improvements.
- Helping residents achieve improvements to their estates by working with resident groups.
- Supporting residents when they experience problems within the community, such as anti-social behaviour.
- Helping to make sure the area residents live in feels clean and safe.
- Offering advice in the areas of resolving disputes, cost of living worries, and housing options to support tenants to reach their own solutions.
- Supporting with welfare concerns, keeping in mind our most vulnerable residents.
- Work with other services to meet resident's diverse needs such as like cost of living, debt advice.
- If a tenants choose to move out, we offer advice on what they need to do.

Whilst that's not all of it, we hope it makes things a little clearer! For information on ways you can contact us [click here](#).



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DMC Round December 2023
Gavin Haynes
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Supporting Communities
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Title: Damp and Mould Programme Update – November 2023

Information/Discussion Report – Discussion

Recommendations: The DMC is asked to note the report and comment.

Report Summary: This report provides an update on the Council's proactive programme to address damp and mould.

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 Following the Council's proactive communications campaign to encourage residents to contact it if they had damp and mould in their property, the Council has actioned and closed over 6,100 reports of damp and mould since December 2022.

2. Progress to Date

- 2.1 Over 5,000 properties had a mould inspection and over 2,000 have had a subsequent mould wash was carried out. 72 cases were classed as 24-hour emergency requests, and 15 households required a decant move due to the seriousness of the mould in the property.
- 2.2 The commitment of having a business-as-usual damp and mould operation in place by the end of August 2023 has been achieved, which has been down to a clear and managed way of working across operations and back-office functions. The Council currently has 430 active cases on hand, and the Damp and Mould Team is working hard to action these as a matter of urgency before the expected winter peak of cases.
- 2.3 The Council continues to proactively engage with residents through its ongoing outbound call campaign via our provider, KWEST. If the Council has had no further contact following an initial report of mould, or there have been two no-access attempts, then the Council will send a letter to the resident and advise them that as we have not heard from them, it will close their case and request they contact the Council again. However, the Council passes these 'closed cases' to our outbound call provider, KWEST, who will try to call them to confirm this is still the case. Recent

feedback from KWEST is that approximately 25% - 30% are still reporting mould or damp, so another appointment will be booked.

- 2.4 The Council has also been contacting again approximately 1,000 households designated as high-risk vulnerable residents, as it did earlier this year, to check if they are having any damp or mould issues. The Council acknowledges that there has been a high volume of cases and it has not always co-ordinated its actions in the best way. The Council now has all casework managed by one team and will look to closely co-ordinate actions in the future.
- 2.5 Since January, the Council has had 16 Ombudsman cases where damp and mould were listed as a factor and recently received a severe maladministration finding on a case related to 2021, prior to the Council introducing its new approach in December 2022. The Council will carry out a review and provide a copy of the final report to the Housing Scrutiny Committee. Members of the committee can then discuss and agree how it will oversee the implementation of recommendations made following the review. The Council will also provide a copy of its findings to the Ombudsman.

3. Moving Forward

- 3.1 Recognising the need to continue providing this service as part of the Council's operational demand but aware of budget constraints, it has changed the operation and how it works.
- 3.2 The Repairs Service reviewed the operation of the previous 23 staff who were separately covering inspection and mould wash tasks, and now has 12 on-the-ground staff members who cover both elements of the work. This is proving to be a more efficient approach in terms of staff time and also for residents.
- 3.3 As part of this revised approach, the Repairs Service has made diary changes to allow the inspection and any mould wash ideally to be completed on the first visit. This slightly extended appointment time from 45 minutes to 1 hour means the Repairs Service can reduce the need for further appointments and eliminate the mould during the first visit.

Report Ends



DMC Round December 2023
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Title: Property Services Heat Metering Programme Update

Information/Discussion Report – information

Recommendations: The DMC is asked to note the report and comment.

Report Summary: This report provides an update on the council's heat metering programme and progress to date.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We currently have over 3000 residents with connected heat meters being charged on a usage basis.
- 1.2 By the end of Mar 2023, approx. 1500 additional residents will switch over from heat scales to usage based charging (about 700 heat meter retrofits, 700 via capital works projects and 100 in new builds) for either the whole or part year 23/24.
- 1.3 Towards the end of July/early August 2024, these residents receive a review of their energy charges for the period to 31 March 2024. This review will be based on the heating and hot water they have used during the period in question.
- 1.4 A link to the heat metering programme is available on Open Data.
<https://opendata.camden.gov.uk/Housing/Housing-Capital-Team-Heat-Metering-Programme/vhvj-wqy5/data>

2. Next

- 2.1 We will shortly start Phase 4 of our meter retrofit programme (approx.150 homes) which has now finished the tender process.
- 2.2 We have other heat metering works in the pipeline through capital works and new build projects but these projects involve longer timeframes for completion.

Report Ends

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DMC Round December 2023
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Title: Property Services Stock Condition Surveys/Capital Programme Update

Information/Discussion Report – Discussion

Recommendations: The DMC is asked to note the report and comment.

Report Summary: This report provides an update on the council's stock condition survey programme information and any indicative investment required, what needs to be prioritised and the resources available.

1. Assessment of investment need and resources available

- 1.1 The Council is currently carrying out its latest stock condition survey. This will conclude shortly and we will then look at the investment required, what needs to be prioritised and the resources available.
- 1.2 At the time of the last survey which concluded in 2018/19, it was noted that there was a gap of c. £180m between the investment required and the resources available. This means that we have had to prioritise schemes that we bring forward and also that we have to focus on the main building elements such as roofs and windows, in addition to infrastructure such as heating, communal electrics and lifts. We have also had to divert resources to fire safety works with c. £50m set aside for investment in this area over this financial year and next.

2. Better Homes Programme Progress

- 2.1 Works on the current programme is progressing well with some larger estate wide such as the one at Tybalds soon to complete and new projects soon to commence such as that at the Bourne Estate.
- 2.2 Mechanical and Electrical programme has a number of projects on site including the upgrades to the heating and hot water at the Weedington Estate.
- 2.3 The Fire Safety programme to address the large number of FRA actions is making good progress with another five projects mobilising to address the actions and a further batch of projects being scoped and going out to tender soon.

- 2.4 Fire evacuation strategies are informed by the FRA for each block. The Council installs signage that confirms the fire evacuation strategy. If there is a change to the strategy we would as a minimum write to all residents and update signage. Where changes have been required we have also generally offered drop-in sessions and held door knocking exercises. The Council is also developing the Building Safety Cases for its 167 tall buildings and these may ultimately change the evacuation strategy for a block once they have been completed and approved by the Regulator. Changes to a fire evacuation strategy are rare and in very general terms we tend to have a 'stay put' strategy for purpose built blocks and a 'simultaneous evacuation' strategy for conversions, e.g. street property flats. If a change to a strategy was to take place we would always contact those residents affected as outlined above, as well as the London Fire Brigade who is the enforcing authority.

Retrofit Update

- 3.1 We are working up the programme and delivery options while learning how other local authorities have delivered similar projects. Demonstrator projects and pilot work consist of the following:
- 2.1.1 Full deep retrofit of 10 street properties, currently undergoing planning permission. Tendering of these works is in progress.
 - 2.1.2 Deep retrofit of 5-7 Belsize Grove, which comprises 58 homes – these works are progressing and due to complete soon.
 - 2.1.3 Energy efficiency works at Brookes Court, which comprises 32 homes – these works are progressing and due to complete soon.
 - 2.1.4 Internal wall insulation to 50 homes with solid walls included as part of the Somers Town Future Neighbourhoods project.
 - 2.1.5 Discussions with “Energiesprong” (meaning “Energy Leap”) on a demonstrator project to carry out deep retrofit of a small block as a prototype project using their technology and repayment model (comfort charge). The GLA have allocated ‘United Living’ as the principal contractor via their RE:NEW framework.
 - 2.1.6 Successfully secured £3.6m of central government grant funding to retrofit 283 homes in 23/24 & 24/25.
 - 2.1.7 We are looking at scaling up our programme by looking at options related to sourcing private investment.

Note: Deep retrofitting is a process where you look at a property’s overall energy efficiency and use a combination of measures to improve it. The aim is to ensure the property is operating in the most efficient way possible, using the least amount of energy.

Report Ends



DMC Round December 2023
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Title: Proposal for a Tenant Conference – Spring 2024

Information/Discussion Report – Discussion

Recommendations: The DMC is asked to note the report and comment.

Report Summary: This report provides information on the proposed Residents Conference, the initial idea and plans to fruition co-produced with residents.

1. Background and Context

Chairs of the five District Management Committees (DMCs) wrote to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Georgia Gould, in May 2023 to propose holding a tenant conference.

At that time, the topics suggested for consideration are summarised as:

- Development, support and monitoring of tenants and residents' associations (TRAs) – particularly in using more up-to-date and accessible methods of communication and engagement with residents.
- how to extend traditional TRA activities to a wider range of residents of varied tenures, beyond the 'usual suspects' to enable greater involvement of groups that are sometimes harder to engage.
- Opportunities for TRAs to share experiences and success stories of their good practices in engaging residents and being more transparent and more representative of the communities within their area of benefit.
- The council's difficult funding decisions, and how residents can be engaged in such hard choices particularly in relation to the capital and repairs programmes.

The proposal for a conference was immediately welcomed as one of several ways of widening tenant engagement and listening to the views of residents, particularly in light of the new social housing regulations calling for clear demonstration of tenants views being taken into account in decisions relating to their housing services and the safety of their homes. As a result of the programme of tenant engagement already planned for the year ahead of door-knocking, 'Estate Action

Day' events on various estates, and involvement events with residents living in street properties, it was decided that such a tenant conference would be in mind for spring of 2024.

2. Initial thinking

2.1 On 23 October, DMC chairs came together with Ododo Dafé, Head of Innovation & Improvement, to share initial thoughts on various aspects of planning for the tenant conference in order that DMC attendees and wider tenants have something against which they can also contribute ideas. The headings below summarise the initial thoughts and options.

2.2 Involving others in the thinking and planning

How to involve tenants? Eg through an easy online or mobile phone based survey – either presenting ideas, or voting from a selected list - using Google, Survey Monkey or something similar.

CASP

Leaseholder Forum

Fire Safety Panel

Housing Residents' Panel

Possibly reaching out to the local authority area Youth Parliament

2.3 Scope of invitations

Invitations made to all residents.

2.4 Methods of publicising the event

Tenant newsletter, email, text messaging, social media, posters, word of mouth, TRA reps, DMC meetings and communications.

2.5 Venue

In view of potential large attendance, venue such as 5 Pancras Square – good it able to use space outside too – eg with a canopy; Swiss Cottage library if it has a high capacity; or possibly other local venues with space for large and smaller discussions and stalls

2.6 Day of the week

Preferably a Saturday

2.7 Number of events

Possibly one event, possibly over a number of weekends

2.8 Timings

All day event although people can pop in for specific times presentations, workshops, activities or discussions that may be of specific interest to them

2.9 Topics for large group presentations with discussion, or for smaller workshops that people can choose

Need to consider how many is possible in the given time - eg three to five?

The topics below are an amalgam of thoughts from DMC chairs, common areas mentioned by residents, and feedback so far from the Estate Action Days currently taking place:

Property repairs and maintenance related topics	Other topics
Repairs Capital works Fire safety work Lift repairs Future of gas boilers and what replaces them Leaks, condensation, mould and damp	Allocations policy Grounds maintenance Caretaking service ASB CCTV provision Training for TRAs and residents Modern IT support for TRAs The future of HS2 land at Euston Estate Regeneration and CIP HRA and low reserves Use of TRA rooms and/or community halls Focus of young people's concerns - eg spaces for start-ups, target of ASB, mentoring, apprenticeships... How to...?

2.10 Potential keynote speakers for debate topic

Resident speaker

Staff speaker

External speaker eg on social housing regulation; on tenant involvement, Housing Ombudsman

2.11 Stalls of possible interest

Contractors – BTU, Gem, Apex, Viola, Idverde, Open View, Lush

Others – eg fire service, advice sector, Camden employment support, creative activities to try, police, cost of living, Age UK

2.12 Other thoughts

Sponsorship or support from eg Google, Youtube, British Library, HS2, Travel Lodge

Potential for recording some of the event – eg keynote sessions and Q&A

3. Camden Council potential tenant consultation topics

This section is from a landlord perspective and contains items that the Council would like to consult tenants about to understand more about what can be done, some items that will feed into the Council's updated tenant engagement strategy, some matters that tenants have raised in various discussions, and some areas of accepted good practice.

These will be topics that residents can take part in throughout the day – eg on an engagement stall, a workshop, or through social media. Examples are below, however tenants might suggest other areas on which they would like to be consulted or engaged:

- 3.1 Your housing service – **what does great look like?** Or what does transparent look like?
- 3.2 Understanding **barriers to tenant participation**. What would encourage more people to participate, and in what sort of ways? (ie menu of participation)
- 3.3 What **information** you would like to receive, and how you'd like to receive it
- 3.4 Your thoughts - **training and support** for TRA reps or tenants generally
- 3.5 Main **issue of concern** for your estate
- 3.6 Categories for estate or **TRA awards**
- 3.7 **“What if...?” sessions** - tenants can pick their own topic for discussion or later consideration among smaller groups. For example, “What if...
 - Everyone felt safe on our estates?
 - Young people made decisions relating to their estates?
 - There was a lot of community connection and people didn't feel lonely, isolated or left out?

4. Outline actions and timeline

Action	Date
DMC conversations	28 November to 6 December 2023
Gather more feedback from residents through TRA and DMC feedback and online survey	
Research and decide on suitable venue and dates	by end December 2023
Consultation on topics - eg in tenants quarterly newsletter, Housing News	Copy deadline possibly mid-January 2024
Arrange speakers, workshops etc	Once tenant choices known and dates set
Publicise event in tenants quarterly newsletter, Housing News	Copy deadline possibly mid-April 2024

Report Ends

Title: Kentish Town DMC Budget Report

Discussion Report

Recommendations: The DMC is asked to, note the report and approve any new bids as appropriate.

Report Summary: This report details the DMC budget allocation for 2023/24 in addition to any bids submitted for consideration.

Minor & Major Revenue Works Budget 2022/23

For the financial year 2023/24, the DMC Budget allocation is £151,650.00. This budget is the consolidated total of the former minor works and major revenue works budgets.

TRA's are asked to consider and put forward any improvement schemes that it is believed would benefit their estates/areas. Ideas should be discussed with their Neighbourhood Housing Officer in the first instance, and depending on the type of bid may also require input from the Neighbourhood Manager or Estate Services Manager. Where applicable, technical input or pricing can be obtained.

To date, £55,545.05 has been committed against this year's DMC budget allocation. There are sufficient funds available to agree the bids tabled below.

New Bids Received

The following bids have been received for approval at this meeting:

TRA	BID REQUEST	AMOUNT	COMMENTS
Peckwater& Wolsey House	2 x LFB drop key gerda security panels to main entrance doors	£ 1,750.00	Officer led bid (Tara Cookson)
St Pancras Way TRA	Youth activities	£ 500.00	
St Pancras Way TRA	Christmas community event	£ 1,000.00	
St Pancras Way TRA	Mental health and online consumer awareness workshops	£ 500.00	
Lissenden Gardens TRA	Room hire costs	£ 300.00	
Ingestre TRA	Signage, bench, new timber to secure handrails and wildflower planting for the woodland	£ 4,953.00	
Ingestre TRA	New lining and plants and safety mesh for the woodland pond. Brickwork and new bird nesting boxes	£ 4,977.00	

Ingestre TRA	Repair and replace a section of fencing to secure woodland	£ 4,990.00	
Brookfield TRA	Christmas Bonanza weekend event	£ 4,950.00	
Brookfield TRA	Christmas hampers	£ 1,750,00	
Whittington TRA	Landscape improvement project	£ 4,000.00	

Late Submissions

It has been agreed that all bids should be raised and discussed by the TRA with the relevant officer prior to submitting bids to DMC. This will ensure that the correct information regarding costs, resident consultation and surveyors input, if necessary, can be presented alongside the bid. It has therefore been agreed that any late or verbal bids received at the meeting, will not be considered until the following meeting.

Bid Criteria

The criteria for bidding is outlined in the letter sent to all TRA's during the year when inviting new bids.

Report Ends

My last substantial report to DMCs earlier this year talked about the direction of travel in the state of Housing Revenue Accounts across London and a consistent pressure borne out of the events since 2016, which began with Government cuts, targeting our only source of income stream and is a cumulative loss to the HRA.

I also reported that we were embarking on a Housing Transformation journey. A vision rooted on principles delivering a service based on transparency, empathy, which is relational, and one which measures success, aligned to the consumer standards measured by the Housing Regulator.

The figure below is a summary of these Principles being developed:



How will we know we have been successful?

Responsive, joined up service

Better access to housing and advice

Feedback driven improvement

Greater sense of community

Effective, efficient operations

Suggested measures of success:



Resident satisfaction



Meeting regulatory requirements



Stable Housing Revenue Account



Relational practice embedded



Structure and staff wellbeing that meets the vision

In fact, it is fair to say that the transformation journey has already started and there have been several changes within the repairs and housing services designed to improve our services and to make us work better.

We have been listening to our tenants through tenancy visits, and the intensive tenant participation programme, where over 4,750 homes have had personal contact, and the pop-up events on 15 council estates where we have been able to respond to immediate issues for residents and provide information they have been able to use for themselves.

Officers have also been responding to feedback about difficulties in raising repairs orders by introducing a host of options to make the reporting experience easier for residents and more efficient. This will include reporting options such as online, webchat, text messaging and WhatsApp, where residents can also easily upload photographs. These options will not work for everyone, and we are still on a journey to perfecting these relatively new processes. Despite this, efficiency has already been realised, because more than 80% of residents are now using these methods, therefore freeing up the telephone lines for those who have no option but to make contact by phone.

A series of 10 **“How to” repair videos**, have been produced offering helpful tips and advice for home repairs that fall within tenant responsibilities, or give information on how to identify matters that need to be reported. Early feedback has mentioned how helpful these videos have been. And they are very accessible as they’ve been translated into Bengali, French, Somali, Spanish and British Sign Language. They are available on the council’s own YouTube channel: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/home-repair-videos>

We have made structural changes within the repairs service and have some planned within Housing so that our teams are better set up to proactively provide services in an empathetic way, and are more easily able to use feedback to drive improvements.

Temporary teams were set up to focus on rent arrears work which has been very challenging, and to focus on voids where we’ve seen a 21% reduction in the average time it takes to let a home over the past year. There is also an action plan to improve how we carry out repairs work to voids; and there is work underway to look at certain areas of our allocations process.

Our **Neighbourhoods way of working pilot** in Kentish Town means staff from estate management, tenancy management and other council and local services are located together in order to more effectively provide co-ordinated services for residents.

In response to feedback, we are trialling a new **antisocial behaviour task force** which works across council departments to tackle issues and jointly improve processes such as the case escalation procedures and how the Council maintains contact and communication with residents reporting ASB.

Finally, we have taken a range of measures to improve the safety of our homes and our residents.

Other upcoming areas of work that need a very quick mention are:

- working to achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation
- reviewing how we respond to complaints and enquiries
- increasing options for residents to be engaged in their services
- responding to overcrowding
- improving our use of systems and data to enable us to provide better services
- and generally changing the culture to be much more focused on outcomes for residents.

Ensuring we have a stable Housing Revenue Account will be key in all this, and it is worth reminding ourselves that we are embarking on this transformation with both hands tied behind our backs.

Previously, I reported that the Government-enforced rental income loss stood at around £79m in 2020. However, because of its cumulative nature, this effective disinvestment stands at around £125m to date which represents around 65% of our annual total revenue spending. This, while Gove has had to hand back £1.9bn to the Treasury because it could not administer the process in a timely manner, moneys which was earmarked for the maintenance and repair of crumbling council homes.

I also reported on inflationary impacts from the war in Ukraine, the effects of Brexit and the pandemic, the impact of increased fire safety works following the Grenfell fire, and more lately the cost-of-living crisis. Combined, these pressures alone amount to some £300m which we had never planned for and had to be paid for either through reserves or by deprioritising other planned expenditure.

The sad reality is that the financial picture is getting worse for housing. Our repairs budget is projected to be overspent by at least £5m (we are looking at options to reduce this). And the gap between what we need to spend on major works to maintain our buildings, and what we have available, is predicted to grow from £180m in the stock condition survey around five years ago, to well above £200m. The analysis will be firmed up by officers in December and January and we will come back to DMCs early 2024 with the details.

It is important to note that inflationary rent and service charge increases do not improve the fiscal position. Even in a world without the latest seismic events, these increases only help the Housing Department to keep its head just above the water while the tide keeps rising. And as for energy charge increases, we must continue to insulate our homes wherever possible, speed up heat metering and installing heating controls with every heating upgrade to stop wasting energy and bring costs for residents down.

Given the fiscal backdrop and the enormity of the tasks ahead, it is not surprising that some HRAs in London and beyond are reportedly teetering on a precipice and may run out of their reserves at current spending levels. This is not sustainable, and all Councils will be looking at how they can curtail spending where possible, while we coordinate efforts across London and lobby for the additional funding, particularly for the new burdens we are required to undertake by the Government. This will of course mean that Camden, like many other local authorities, won't be able to do some of the things we normally would do for our residents.

Notwithstanding all the doom and gloom, officers and I, are determined to bring about a change in the way we work, creating an environment in which what we do revolves around the needs and priorities of our residents.

REPORT ENDS - as at 7 November 2023

Cllr Meric Apak

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