

**Title:** Housing Services report

**Discussion Report**

**Report summary:**

Due to the importance of the HRA Budget and Service Charge information, on this occasion the consolidated paper has been split into discussion and information items for the December DMC round of meetings. Discussion items on HRA budget and service charges, the impact of the inflation and rent levels on the repairs service and plans to transform Housing Management services will have officers in attendance to present those papers and answer questions, whilst the '*for information*' listed papers provide background context to the discussion items but will not have specific officers attending to cover each issue.

**Recommendation:** The DMCs are asked to feedback and make recommendations on the budget report and comment and ask questions on the Repairs and Housing Transformation reports.

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# **PRESENTED REPORTS**

## **HRA BUDGET 2023/24**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 2023/24 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 savings plans (MTFS- medium term financial strategy). 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 The external political and economic environment is a creating uncertainty and delays to our budget setting process. Since publishing the finance update to September DMCs, a government consultation was launched which asked for feedback on a proposal to replace the current Rent Standard (maximum rent September CPI + 1%) with a rent cap. The government modelled impacts at 3%, 5% and 7% and stated their preferred option as being 5%. For central government, a restriction on rent increases has the effect of lowering the benefit bill but for social housing providers, capping rents below the level of actual inflation (without direct subsidy from central government to fund the gap) will force cuts to budgets. The consultation closed on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022 but at time of printing, no announcement has yet been made regarding the outcome from government. It is hoped however, that this will be announced during November ahead of the December DMC meetings.
- 1.3 Housing Revenue Accounts are ring-fenced and self-funding. However, it is an enormous challenge to continue to balance the rising cost base with limitations and sudden changes to rent income increase assumptions. This is an issue affecting all local authorities as well as housing associations as they seek to continue to balance their budgets, maintain their stock and continue providing services to their tenants.

### **2. 2023/24 BUDGET PRESSURES**

- 2.1 **Inflation and Corporate** – Inflation indices are high- September CPI (released mid-October) is 10.1% and RPI is 12.6%. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the 2023/24 inflation is much higher than previous years. Some external contracts are linked to inflation indices (many are forecast to inflate by over 8% and material costs continue to inflate at different rates) and staff costs are linked to pay discussions between the Local Government Association and Trade Unions.
- 2.2 **Building Safety**- The Building Safety Act received Royal Assent on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2022. The Council included budget in 2022/23 to fund resources in place to deliver the Building Safety Manager function and the start of IT project work to

establish the “Golden Thread” data. However, there will need to be further budgets added to meet all the requirements set out in the legislation starting from 2023/24.

- 2.3 **Energy costs-** Due to high volatility, it is anticipated that the gas and electricity budgets will need to be significantly uplifted, which will impact the proposed charges to tenants and leaseholders. However, there are delays in receiving energy forecast information from LASER, who are awaiting government announcements. This is critical to underpinning the assumptions for electricity and gas budgets and proposed income charges.
- 2.4 **MTFS Savings:** The Council is currently reviewing savings options in advance of January Cabinet. Services are developing these in both the GF and the HRA to reduce the funding gaps anticipated from 2023/24-2025/26. The level of savings required will be impacted by the outcome of the government’s rent cap consultation as well as any changes to the economic outlook for inflation or any new government legislation that has not yet been announced. Section 6 sets the current options being considered for HRA out in more detail.
- 2.5 The Council continues to ask Central Government for burdens funding, in particular for Building Safety, and also to help close the anticipated funding gap of a rent cap being set below inflation, but we have to assume no subsidy in our budgetary plans until we receive a positive response.

### 3. RENTS

- 3.1 Under the current rent standard, the Council can usually increase rents up to a maximum of inflation (Sept CPI 10.1%) plus 1%. Therefore, the maximum permitted increase would be 11.1%. However, we are aware of cost of living pressures on our tenants and it is expected that the government are likely to introduce a rent cap to be brought into effect for 2023/24 following their recent consultation. As the outcome from the consultation has not yet been announced (at date of printing), we have modelled scenarios based on their options of 3%, 5% and 7%. These scenarios are summarised in Table 1 below.

**Table One- Rent increase scenarios 2023/24**

2023/24	Rent increase scenario (£m)		
	3%	5%	7%
Inflation pressure 23/24	7.7	7.7	7.7
Additional rent generated	-3.1	-5.5	-8.5
Difference	4.6	2.2	-0.8

- 3.2 The impact on average rents of these scenarios is shown in Table Two below.

**Table Two - Rent 2023/24**

Bed size	Average Rent 22/23	3% increase	5% increase	7% increase
0	£90.55	£2.72	£4.53	£6.34
1	£108.03	£3.24	£5.40	£7.56
2	£122.72	£3.68	£6.14	£8.59
3	£137.66	£4.13	£6.88	£9.64
4	£152.99	£4.59	£7.65	£10.71
5 +	£169.16	£5.07	£8.46	£11.84

3.3 70% of tenants are currently in receipt of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit, which would be uplifted to cover the rent increases. Appendix C “Help for tenants” outlines available support and assistance.

3.4 It is important to reiterate that the proposed increases are contingent to the proposed savings programme set out in 6.3, and they are intrinsically linked and interdependent. DMC members will be asked for their views on the Council’s strategy to consider rent increases from April 2023 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. £2.2m. Note that Communal lighting is a significant increase, reflecting the rising cost of electricity, this may change once we receive updated forecasts in the next few week’s but it is expected to be similar. These service charges are eligible under housing benefit and universal credit.

Tenant weekly service charges	2022/23	23/24 increase	2023/24 including increase
Caretaking	£10.73	£0.54	£11.27
Communal Lighting	£1.15	£1.64	£2.79
CCTV	£1.04	£0.05	£1.09
Communal M&E Maintenance	£1.26	£0.13	£1.39
Ground Maintenance	£1.90	£0.15	£2.05
Responsive Housing Patrol	£0.67	£0.03	£0.70
	<b>£16.75</b>	<b>£2.54</b>	<b>£19.29</b>

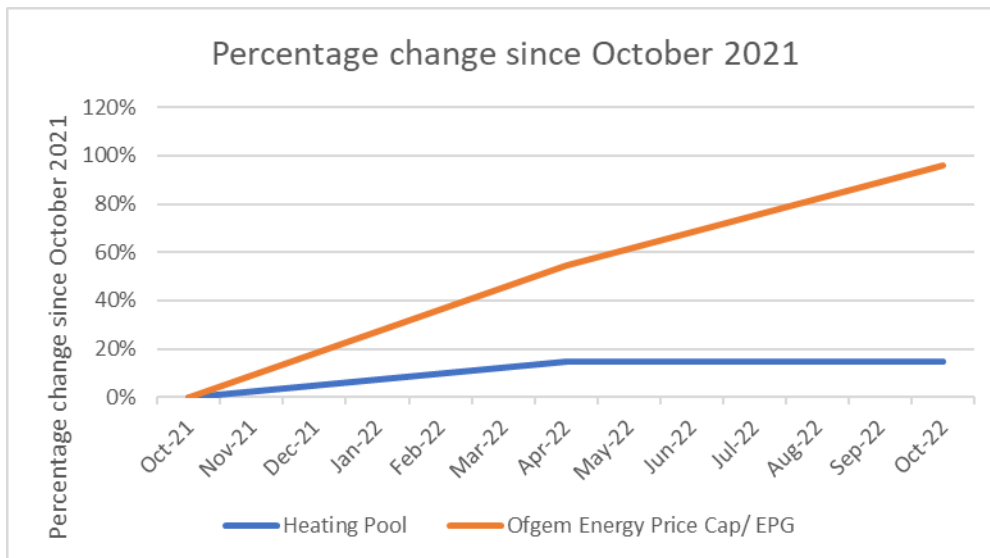
4.3 Additionally, some tenants will start to pay for the enhanced CCTV service (as agreed at January 2019 Cabinet) from April 2023 once the new cameras are

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 2023 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 Due to Camden's procurement via LASER who can forward purchase bulk gas, we have been able to secure much lower prices overall than domestic rates. Over the years, this has enabled district heating scale charges to be kept low. For 22/23, in recognition of rising prices, it was agreed to use the heating pool surplus in full in order to limit the increase in scales to 15% so an average 2 bed property costs c.£19/week. The price of gas is exceeding estimates even factoring in the heating pool surplus but Camden is honouring the charge agreed in January Cabinet to give certainty to residents on scales of what they will pay over winter in the middle of a cost of living crisis.
- 5.2 However, for 23/24 heating scales, as the heating pool surplus is due to be fully used (and in deficit from 22/23 costs), there is no option other than to raise charges to recover the anticipated costs. The Council is unable to quantify this due to delays in forecasts from LASER.
- 5.3 Chart 1 compares the 15% heating pool increase from 21/22 to 22/23 with the much larger increases in Ofgem's Energy Price Cap and the subsequent Energy Price Guarantee (EPG) which replaced it on 1 October. The huge increases in the bulk gas market over the past year mean that with the heating pool surplus used up even with forward purchasing, there will be no option other than to raise heating scale charges for 23/24 by a significant amount to reflect the higher prices.



5.4 DMC members will be asked to consider the recommendation to fully recover heating charges for 2023/24.

## 6 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

6.3 The Council is developing a new three-year Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) seeks to bridge the funding gap in both the HRA and the General Fund through a range of measures including funding choices, investment, borrowing, income generation and savings. As part of the MTFS, the Council is working hard to find savings to help offset some of these pressures.

6.4 As set out above and in the September update, it is an incredibly difficult and unpredictable financial climate. The base case funding gap for HRA is c.£8m between 2023/24 to 2025/26 and this could be far higher subject to the economy, inflation and government policy on rents. Officers have been developing savings proposals to start to address this gap. In doing so, we have sought to balance the need for financial savings alongside the need for and importance of maintaining high quality services and putting tenants at the heart of what we do.

6.5 The savings options developed by officers so far focus on the following themes:

- **Purchase Programme for Family Friendly Housing:** an approach to funding and delivering a purchase programme for family friendly Housing to address directly the overcrowding crisis and eliminate severe overcrowding within the next five years. A report on this is due to be taken to December Cabinet.
- **Void performance improvement:** The aim would be to reduce void turnaround time and overall level of voids of HRA dwelling stock.
- **Housing Transformation:** The housing service is reviewing its structure to consider how tenants can access services they need more easily and is seeking to eliminate duplication from service delivery.

- **Efficiency in Repairs:** The property service would make small changes in the delivery of repairs to generate savings.
- **Temporary removal of some of the spring clean budget (to be reinstated at the end of Chalcots project):** Spring Clean is something valued by tenants but in order to generate the significant savings required, it is proposed to reduce this budget temporarily until the Chalcots project ends.
- **Bad Debt Provision:** Saving anticipated through improved rental arrears management.
- **Leaseholder Income Maximisation Project:** A review of processes to ensure all valid rechargeable costs are being recovered from leaseholders within the terms of their leases.
- **Garage Income:** Garages are currently rented at £12/week – this has been fixed for many years and is significantly below the level of other local authorities or similar garages nearby which limits the ability to cover the cost of owning the assets. The saving option would seek to raise this over the next 3 years incrementally.
- **Increasing income from the commercial property portfolio:** This would aim to ensure that the Council’s commercial assets secure income through a reduction in voids or identify under-utilised assets that could provide commercial opportunities.

6.6 The savings options identified to date remain subject to further work and refinement- the base target is £8m over three years as set out in 6.2 however this may need to increase depending on a number of factors and decisions made. DMCs are asked to comment upon the existing proposed ideas and also make any new savings suggestions.

## 7 FORMAL CONSULTATION

7.1 The joint DMC meeting will take place on 11 January 2023. A list of the consultation questions that will be put before DMCs is in **Appendix B**.

**Report ends**

## Appendix A – Tenant Service Description

Service Charge	Purpose
Caretaking	<p>This charge is for the cost of cleaning the communal and external areas of Camden’s blocks and estates including the 23 street properties that receive a caretaking service.</p> <p>The enhanced service focuses on improved quality and achieving the standards and targets developed in partnership with residents. To ensure not only continuous improvement but</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaner estates – inside and outside areas that are now cleaned by our inhouse caretaking team</li> <li>• More caretakers – you'll see them out and about in their new blue uniforms</li> <li>• Faster response times</li> </ul> <p>The caretaking service is provided by caretakers, caretaking managers and principal caretaking managers.</p> <p>The cost of cleaning communal windows is included in the charge. Our window cleaning team managed by the caretaking support and response team manager clean the communal windows inside and out every six months.</p> <p>Camden has a huge variety of property types and the service has to adapt to suit the needs of the different blocks and estates. Duties undertaken by the service include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident safety – health and safety and fire safety checks undertaken daily to all communal areas</li> <li>• Supporting vulnerable residents</li> <li>• Cleaning service to lobbies and lifts every day</li> <li>• Check lights to communal areas and replace bulb s dependent upon fittings below 3m</li> <li>• liaise and support contractors working on the blocks</li> <li>• Signpost rough sleepers to support them to move on</li> <li>• External sweeping on estates.</li> <li>• Refuse and bulk item management - by cleaning bin rooms and rotating bins to avoid overflow and spillage, clear chute blockages, clean up dangerous items and move bulk waste to the correct pace of storage</li> <li>• Identify and report essential and emergency repairs</li> <li>• Reporting of ASB, missed refuse collections, monitor grounds maintenance contractor etc.</li> <li>• Assisting Police and LFB on site when necessary.</li> <li>• Provide the emergency out of hour’s service via residential Caretakers that runs between 5pm until 11pm on weekdays and 9am until 11pm at weekends</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seasonal work such as gritting during the winter maintenance process</li> <li>• Project work including deep cleaning, painting to communal areas etc.</li> </ul>
CCTV	The charge for this service covers the cost of Planned Preventative Maintenance and repairs to CCTV systems in Camden's housing premises. It also covers the cost of the CCTV hub which is a monitoring system. In addition to fixed/permanent CCTV cameras, mobile units can be deployed (where available) in conjunction with information received from the mobile patrol team and the police. Images can be shared with the Police, partners and Council officers.
Communal lighting	This covers the cost of communal electricity and the carrying out of the Planned Preventative Maintenance of and repairs to communal block and/or estate lighting. The contract includes repairs to all lighting to communal areas and electrical installations. There may also be additional repairs not covered by the contract. Generally Camden's caretakers replace bulbs where they are below 3m.
Grounds maintenance	This charge is your share of the costs incurred by Camden for maintaining the communal green spaces and trees on estates and communal gardens. Works to trees are carried out on a 3-5 year cycle although some work is undertaken on an ad-hoc basis where the need arises.
Responsive Housing Patrol	<p>This charge covers the provision of the responsive mobile security patrol to Camden's housing estates. The team helps to ensure there are reduced instances of anti-social behaviour around Camden's housing estates, improving security with targeted patrols and providing reassurance for residents.</p> <p>The mobile patrol team operates between the hours of 4pm and 4am Monday to Sunday every day of the year. Between the hours of 4pm and 4am you should telephone Contact Camden on 020 7974 4444 to request the assistance of the mobile patrol team.</p>
Communal M&E maintenance	This charge covers the repair and maintenance of Mechanical and Electrical equipment in the communal areas of dwellings.

## Appendix B – Rent and Service Charge Setting consultation questions

### District Management Committee Feedback

DMC.....

Recommendation	Yes	No/Other
Rent Increase: <b>TBC</b>		
Increase Tenant Service Charge- Caretaking: 5% (54p)		
Increase Tenant Service Charge- CCTV: 5% (5p)		
Increase Tenant Service Charge- Communal Lighting: 143% (£1.64)		
Increase Tenant Service Charge- Communal M&E Maintenance: 10.1% (13p)		
Increase Tenant Service Charge- Grounds Maintenance: 8% (15p)		
Increase Tenant Service Charge- Responsive Housing Patrol: 5% (3p)		
Heating Pool Charges: Increase TBC%		
MTFS Savings approach		
Any other feedback/Views		

## Appendix C – Help for residents

### Who from?

- **Neighbourhood housing officers** (NHOS) manage rent accounts and are trained in money conversations, basic benefits and sources of help. Can agree payment plans and provide advice and help. Tenants and leaseholders can identify their NHO here [Your Neighbourhood Housing Officer - Camden Council](#)
- **Welfare Rights Team** (WRT) 5 benefits advisors and 2 debt advisors. NHOs (and other officers) can refer to the team for specialist input / casework and advocacy. Duty system supports NHOs to support tenants.
- **Camden Advice Network:** incl Citizens Advice, Age UK, Mary Ward Legal Centre and Camden Community Law Centre. Contact details are here: [Advice on money, benefits and debt - Camden Council](#)
- **Contact Camden:** welfare support team can signpost callers to sources of advice and help 020 7974 4444 option 9.
- **The Green Camden Helpline** helps with energy efficiency measures, reducing energy bills and sources of support with bills
- **The Council's website** has improved information about advice and support: [What benefits and support are available? - Camden Council](#)
- **Citizens Advice, Shelter, Money Advice Service or StepChange** websites etc
- **Good Work Camden** for employment support. We work closely with GWC to integrate money and employment support for tenants
- **Find Food Support in Camden** website – helps residents identify food banks and other support near them. NHOs and other services can issue food bank vouchers
- **Key workers**, support workers, social workers and care coordinators can be a link to other services and advocate for tenants. ASC and Children's services have their own specialist advisors and tenants may prefer to speak to whoever knows them best.
- **WISH Plus** (warmth, income, safety and health) is part of the care navigation and social prescribing service with Age UK. If anyone wants help identifying services, WISH can help to access around 30 services from one referral / assessment. Tenants can refer themselves on the Council's website or by phone.
- **Services for TMO tenants** (tenant managed organisations). The Council manages rent accounts for TMOs in a small rent team with strong links to support services. TMO tenants may also be supported by the Council's floating support service.
- **Help with drug or alcohol problems** landlord services can link tenants who are spending money on addictions to services that can help
- **Mental health and wellbeing** housing staff can refer tenants who are suffering from anxiety, stress or depression due to money worries for specialist support. Our in-house psychology team (the PICT<sup>1</sup> team) supports staff with these conversations.
- **Charities** our guidance hub for staff includes details of charities to approach for help

### What help is there?

- **Payment plans** for rent arrears tailored around the individual including:
- **Managed payments**<sup>2</sup> direct from the DWP to the Council from Universal Credit (UC)

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<sup>1</sup> PICT = Psychologically informed consultation and training

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-and-rented-housing--2/universal-credit-and-rented-housing->

- Heating and hot water charges can be paid from benefit for housing benefit claimants but not for UC claimants
- **Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs)**
- For tenants on HB or UC for housing costs who still need help to pay rent (e.g. because of a shortfall in benefit due to the bedroom tax or benefit cap). Apply on the Council's website or via Contact Camden.
- **Council Tax Support** reduces council tax for people on low incomes. Anyone not working or who earns less than £86.80pw pays nothing. Apply on our website.
- **Council tax discounts and exemptions**
- some tenants may be eligible for money off their council tax, or an exemption, because of their situation rather than their income
- **Thames Water WaterHelp scheme** (previously WaterSure Plus) or WaterSure schemes can reduce water bills by up to 50%. Contact Thames Water to apply.
- **Local Welfare Assistance Fund** crisis payments for people with an urgent need for a one-off payment for urgent need e.g. for food or a utility bill. Apply on the website.
- **Help with scams and financial abuse** – all housing staff have safeguarding training reminding them to be alert to the possibility of financial and domestic abuse when working with tenants in arrears and, when applicable, to raise a safeguarding alert with social services. You can raise a safeguarding alert about a vulnerable adult on 020 7974 4000 (option1) or at [adultsocialcare@camden.gov.uk](mailto:adultsocialcare@camden.gov.uk).

There is information about raising a safeguarding alert for children or people with children here [Children's safeguarding and social work - Camden Council](#)

# REPAIRS

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The DMC Chairs requested an update on repairs including any considerations on managing the budgetary impacts of inflation and any imposed rent cap.

## 2 Context

- 2.1 The DMCs have received a number of updates on the work of the repairs contact centre and also the repairs team to adapt the service and make improvements. Looking ahead to next year we are considering the impact of continued inflation and also the possibility of a rent cap and the implications for the Housing Revenue Account.

## 3 Service update

- 3.1 Our performance improvement work continues and the key headlines for quarter two of this financial year are:
- The introduction of the new “Govmetrics” text message (SMS) surveys have allowed the housing repairs service to receive instant, presentable feedback on the work carried to residents' homes. We now have 8,000 pieces of individual feedback across various streams of work – day to day repairs, M&E contracts, void works, capital projects and case management. We are now looking at launching surveys for Environment Services and CCTV.
  - Our independent satisfaction surveys shows that satisfaction with the repairs service has remained stable with 85% satisfaction in Q2 for the in-house team and 81% for the M&E contractors. Satisfaction scores have slowly recovered since the pandemic, in general however they are still affected by our diary wait times being longer than they were before the pandemic.
  - Quarter 2 shows the continued impact of our ‘channel shift’ with a -62% drop in call volumes from the same period last year. 46% of residents now choose to report a repair via other channels other than telephony. Webchat and SMS have produced 4,500 conversations in the last month alone. This has freed up the telephone lines for our most vulnerable residents. We are looking to launch WhatsApp in the coming weeks.

Measure	Apr	May	June	July	August	September
Customer satisfaction with day to day repairs	85%	85%	87%	85%	86%	85%
Customer satisfaction with Mechanical & Electrical (M&E) repairs	78%	82%	85%	81%	83%	80%
Customer satisfaction with Voids	81%	88%	81%	80%	85%	83%
Volume of calls to repairs line	14,999	14,902	12,993	10,513	13,047	15,028
Repairs line response times	99%	99%	98%	97%	94%	95%
% of Online orders raised	37%	37%	<b>40%</b>	41%	46%	<b>46%</b>

3.2 Over the next few months we will be also implementing our updated structure for the repairs service. The updated structure will embed the following features within the structure:

- **Leak detection hub** – dedicated resources to trace and remedy leaks
- **Damp and mould team** – building on our work to professionally survey and proactively support residents experiencing issues in their home
- **Cyclical repairs** – continuing our work to periodically check roofs, gutters and outlets

3.3 Recruitment is challenging in current market conditions and we are working hard to make sure we have the right resources in place across the service as we head into the winter months.

## 4 Inflationary pressures

4.1 The main report highlights the inflationary pressures on the overall housing service. The forecasts for the “BCIS All in Maintenance Cost Indices” are generally above 8% in the coming months and are not forecast to start falling until the Summer next year. Some contracts – such as the M&E contracts – are directly linked to this index and our in-house service is affected by material costs that have also been increasing.

4.2 To manage costs within the service our work is focussed on the following:

- Finding efficiencies in our structures, noting that we are having to increase resources in areas such as Building Safety as legislation changes
- Pausing the Spring Clean programme which redecorates communal areas, reintroducing this when budgets allow
- Managing our diary wait times for non-essential repairs, this was a step we took following the pandemic and we will continue to target our resources on emergency and essential repairs

- Looking at the scope for targeted capital works to replace elements such as roofs – we already do this as part of our programmed work but we will be looking at how we can mobilise capital works more quickly at repair hot-spots
- Looking at options for resource intensive properties, for example some properties where we just own the freehold can take up management time where we have to address party wall or structural issues

4.3 We will consult DMCs as policy proposals are developed and progress is made.

**Report ends**

# HOUSING TRANSFORMATION

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline plans to improve the Council's Housing Services through three key areas: service area review, interim teams and tenancy visits.

## 2 Context

- 1.1 The Council is keen to improve the resident experience across all housing services. Performance has been under scrutiny for the past year and several issues have been highlighted: high levels of sickness, poor void turnaround and poor rental income collection. There are also issues relating to customer satisfaction. We are committed to an ambitious programme of transformation that seeks to address issues around finance, performance, culture, staff empowerment and most importantly, resident experience. Outlined in this report are three crucial areas that will contribute to addressing these issues.

## 2 Service Area Review

- 2.1 Residents have told us that they do not feel services are joined up across the council, and that there is a need for greater alignment between teams to ensure collaboration in the delivery of services. Through reviewing service areas, Camden will be better positioned to meet its housing ambitions by working in a solution-focused way. Services working closer together will also be better placed to empower staff in front line roles. They are in turn, more likely to make decisions that are in the best interests of the resident and the community.

- 2.2 In May 2022 a Director of Housing Services was appointed, as an amalgamation of the two previously distinct Director roles for a) Housing Management and b) Housing Support Services. Within these Divisions were the following Service areas:

1. Landlord Services
2. Estates Management
3. Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement / Sheltered Accommodation
4. Leaseholder Services
5. Voids Programme
6. Temporary Accommodation
7. Housing Commissioning
8. Housing Needs

- 2.3 To better align services and achieve our housing ambitions, the new structure will consist of five service areas:

1. Allocations, Lettings and Private Housing Services
2. Neighbourhoods (Housing Services)
3. Housing Solutions



- 4. Leaseholder Services and Housing Income
- 5. Innovation and Improvement

2.4 The new structure is due to go live in February 2023, where we will continue to review reporting arrangements and structures.

### **3 Interim Teams**

- 3.1 Our performance data has shown that two areas where we are underperforming is the turnaround of void properties and income collections from tenants in rent arrears. In October 2022, we set up interim teams to focus immediately on improving these two areas. Neighbourhood Housing Managers and Officers have been redistributed to create fixed term 'specialist teams within the team'. The purpose is to have a rapid impact on these underperforming areas, amend work practices, and to learn lessons for future service design.
- 3.2 Creating these teams should not only reduce lost income in rent arrears and void property turnaround, but also allow space for existing Landlord Service staff to focus on delivering a holistic, neighbourhood model of working.
- 3.3 Whilst these teams have been set-up to be six-month fixed terms, they will be frequently reviewed to evaluate their performance and to decide if they should return to their original posts or should continue as specialist teams.

### **4 Tenancy Visits**

- 4.1 The Covid-19 pandemic saw the number of face-to-face services reduce drastically, with many members of staff no longer fully based in their patches and instead working from home. Whilst this was necessary during the pandemic, we want to start reaching out to residents that we haven't engaged with since before the pandemic and have set ourselves the ambitious target of visiting every tenant in the next year.
- 4.2 Many tenants will not need our services, but we want to ensure that we are reaching out and asking residents how they are so we can pick up any concerns that they may have. Issues that might be raised and escalated include disrepairs, fire safety, overcrowding, safeguarding and cost of living. By reaching out in this way, we hope to identify issues quickly and early before they escalate.
- 4.3 Through setting up the interim teams and removing the responsibility for income collection and voids, remaining Neighbourhood Housing staff will have capacity to visit tenants and help resolve any issues they may face. As a result, patches will be reviewed and where there is a change in NHO, we will let residents know.

**Report ends**

# **FOR INFORMATION REPORTS**

## **CAPITAL WORKS UPDATE**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Better Homes programme has delivered a number of major projects across the borough recently including the works at Levita, Bourne Estate, Lissenden Gardens and Gamages. The team have also delivered a number of fire safety projects including the large-scale project at Holly Lodge and at various Sheltered housing properties. Mechanical and Electrical projects being delivered by the team include the work at the St Silas and Weedington Road Estates and the works to remove temporary boilers at various locations.
- 1.2 Outlined below is an overview of the projects that will be delivered by the Capital Works team along with their status as either; scoping (scope of works being finalised before tender), procurement (in the tender process) or in progress (on site). These have been split by DMC area where appropriate.

### **2 Holborn**

- 2.1 There are a number of major projects being delivered in the Holborn area which are summarised below.

#### Tybalds

- 2.2 A large investment programme including works of approx. £6m have commenced with the contractor setting up site in the interim under Blemundsbury. To date the scaffolding has been erected at 3 of the blocks with the roofs to these 3 having been replaced. Work is now underway on the walkways, balconies and façade of the buildings in order to strike the scaffold next month. Once the first 3 blocks works are substantially complete the next 3 will commence. The works will happen in 3 phases:

1. Blemundsbury, Windmill, and Falcon
2. Chancellors Court, Babington Court, Richbell, and Springwater
3. Boswell House and Devonshire Court

- 2.3 The overall scope involves roof replacement, redecoration of previously decorated areas, Façade repairs, window repairs and replacement to Boswell House and fire safety works.

#### Bourne Phase 3

- 2.4 Phase 3 will see the 5 remaining Grade II listed blocks on the Estate have new double-glazed windows, communal entrance works, together with repairs to roofs, concrete and stonework, brickwork and communal areas – including redecoration of all previously painted areas. This project will also include the

installation of fire doors across the estate. The project is at scoping stage with a view to going to tender during early 2023.

#### Derby Lodge

- 2.5 We are reviewing the windows as to the extent of works working closely with planning and heritage to find the right solution for everyone. We will be re-covering the roof and carrying out external repairs to the fabric of the building where required. Boiler upgrade works have recently been completed to the blocks. The Better Homes Externals have been tendered and will commence during late 2022.

- 2.6 Projects included in the forward programme are as follows:

Block Address	Estate	Status
Bourne Estate Phase 3	Bourne Estate	Scoping
Derby Lodge	Derby Lodge	Tendered – S20 consultation
Tybalds	Tybalds	In progress
2-4 Calthorpe street	2-4 Calthorpe Street	Scoping
Powis House	Powis House	Scoping

### **3 Camden Town**

- 3.1 Larger schemes reaching site this Summer include the works at Monica Shaw Court and various blocks on the Regents Park Estate.

#### Monica Shaw Court

- 3.2 The works proposed are to 1-29, 30-37, 38-47 & 48-75; the works varies from block to block however in general they will all have previously decorated surfaces decorated, fire safety works, repairs to the roof and ease and adjustments to windows and doors.

- 3.3 Projects included in the forward programme are as follows:

Block Address	Estate	Status
1-45 Wellesley house (cons)	Churchway Estate	Procurement
1-31 Churchway (odd)	Churchway Estate	Procurement
1-32 The Chenies (cons)	Goldington St Estate	Tendered – S20 consultation
1-5 Platt street (odd)	Penryn Street Estate 1	Procurement
11-17 Platt street (odd)	Penryn Street Estate 2	Procurement
26-29 Medburn street (cons)	Penryn Street Estate 2	Procurement
2-84 Coopers Lane (even)	Coopers Lane Estate	Procurement
30-37(cons)/48-75 (cons) Monica Shaw Court	Monica Shaw Court	Tendered – S20 consultation
1-29 (cons) Monica Shaw Court	Monica Shaw Court	Tendered – S20 consultation

38-47( cons) Monica Shaw Court	Monica Shaw Court	Tendered – S20 consultation
33 Crowndale Road (flats a-b)	33 Crowndale Road	Procurement
Brockham house 1-17 (cons)/ Rainham	Bayham Place Estate	Tendered – S20 consultation
53-86 Munster Square (cons)	Regents Park Estate 1	Procurement
1-67 Troutbeck (cons)	Regents Park Estate 1	Procurement
1-70 The Combe (cons)	Regents Park Estate 1	Procurement
1-60 Mackworth House (cons)	Regents Park Estate 5	Procurement
1-24 Calgarth (cons)	Amphill Square Estate	Tendered – S20 consultation
92 Arlington road (flats a-b)	92 Arlington Rd	Procurement
96 Arlington road (flats a-b)	96 Arlington Rd	Procurement

#### 4 Gospel Oak

- 4.1 There are a number of key projects that are going to be delivered by the team this summer onwards. These include the investment at St Silas and Maitland Park Estates.

##### St Silas

- 4.2 The current heating and hot water project is due to complete this Autumn. The Better Homes project being tendered is for Southfleet which will largely comprise of new roofs and walkway coverings. The Better Homes works will commence once the heating and hot water project is complete estimated to be in the autumn of this year. The team are also reviewing if any works are required to other blocks on the estate and once this is confirmed then these blocks will be incorporated into one scheme with Southfleet.

##### Maitland Park

- 4.3 Better Homes works including window repairs and renewals and roof repairs will be carried out on selected blocks on the Maitland Park Estate (Maple, Alder, Hornbeam, Rowan and 190-205 Maitland Park Road). These will not commence until after the regeneration works complete in Autumn 2022. We have recently consulted with residents on the scope of the works and will shortly be proceeding to tender.

- 4.4 Projects included in the forward programme are as follows:

Block Address	Estate	Status
1-160 Southfleet (cons)	St Silas Street Estate 2	Procurement
1-27 Rowan house (cons)	Maitland Park Estate 1	Scoping being finalised
1-14 Maple house (cons)	Maitland Park Estate 2	Scoping – tender shortly
190-197 Maitland Park Road (Cons)	Maitland Park Estate 3	Scoping – tender shortly
198-205 Maitland Park Road (Cons)	Maitland Park Estate 3	Scoping – tender shortly
1-32 Hornbeam house (cons)	Maitland Park Estate 4	Scoping – tender shortly
1-43 Alder house (cons)	Maitland Park Estate 4	Scoping – tender shortly

117-164 Kiln place (cons)	Kiln Place Estate	Tendered – S20 consultation
28 Quadrant grove	28 Quadrant Grove	Tendered – S20 consultation

## 5 Hampstead

5.1 We have projects at the Alexandra and Ainsworth estate including Better Homes works at Stevenson, Greenaway and Edgeworth House, and also the work at Rowley Way to complete the design for the window and heating works – on this we have two pilot flats that will showcase the proposed designs. The viewings of the pilot flats have taken place by residents and we are progressing with the final scoping of the project to enable us to tender the project during the autumn of 2022 and aiming to start on site soon after.

5.2 Projects being mobilised at present include:

Block Address	Estate	Status
1-20 Stevenson House (cons)	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Tendered – S20 consultation
1-24 Greenaway House (cons)	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Tendered – S20 consultation
1-36 Edgeworth House (cons)	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Tendered – S20 consultation
10a-15b Ainsworth Way (Cons)	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Scoping
113-119 Rowley Way	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Scoping
16a-21b Ainsworth Way (Cons)	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Scoping
1a-9b Ainsworth Way (Cons)	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Scoping
23-47 Rowley Way	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Scoping
50- 76 Rowley Way	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Scoping
51-75 Rowley Way	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Scoping
5-48 Rowley Way	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Scoping
78-104 Rowley Way	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Scoping
79-103 Rowley Way	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Scoping
1-30 New Priory Court (cons)	Estate 1-30 New Priory Court	Pre-construction site set up
23 Gascony Avenue (flats a-c)	Estate 23 Gascony Avenue	Tendered – S20 consultation
23 Winchester Road & flats (a-c)	Estate 23 Winchester Road and flats	Tendered – S20 consultation

## 6 Kentish Town

6.1 There are a number of projects being mobilised, some of which have been carried forward from the previous year when a small number of schemes were held back due to Covid.

### Kenbrook

6.2 Work has now been completed on the design of the fire safety works which was quite complex. The scheme has been tendered with a view to site set up works commencing in December of 2022 and scaffolding being constructed in Jan 2023.

### Lissenden Gardens

6.3 The works at Lissenden Mansions were completed in March 2022. The external works to Clevedon, Parliament Hill Mansions and Chester Court have been tendered with a view to commencing on site in the New Year.

### 268 Kentish Town Road

6.4 Heating works have been carried out and we are commissioning work to replace the roof, install new windows and carry out various external works, communal area and general fire safety works.

6.5 Projects included in the forward programme are as follows:

Block Address	Estate	Status
268 Kentish Town Road	Kentish Town Road	Tendered – S20 consultation
Clevedon, Parliament and Chester	Lissenden Gardens	Tendered – S20 consultation
Kenbrook Phase 2	Kenbrook House	Pre-construction site set up
236-240, 242-244 Royal College Street	Royal College Street	Tendered – S20 consultation
25 Caversham road (flats a-d)	25 Caversham Road	Procurement
2 Winscombe street	2 Winscombe Street	Procurement
3 Winscombe street (flats a-b)	3 Winscombe Street	Procurement
4 Winscombe street	4 Winscombe Street	Procurement
7 Winscombe street (flats a-b)	7 Winscombe Street	Procurement
14 Winscombe street	14 Winscombe Street	Procurement
15 Winscombe street (flats a-b)	15 Winscombe Street	Procurement
53 Oseney crescent (flats a-d)	53 Oseney Crescent	Procurement
17 Bartholomew road (flats a-d)	17 Bartholomew Road	Procurement
1-95 Camelot house (cons)	1-95 Camelot House	Tendered – S20 consultation
15 Doynton street (flats a-b)	15 Doynton Street	Procurement
19 Doynton street (flats a-b)	19 Doynton Street	Procurement
25 Doynton street (flats a-b)	25 Doynton Street	Procurement
33 Doynton street (flats a-b)	33 Doynton Street	Procurement
35 Doynton street (flats a-b)	35 Doynton Street	Procurement
33 Leighton road	33 Leighton Road	Procurement
60 Woodsome road (flats a-b)	60 Woodsome Road	Procurement

## **7 Retrofitting housing stock and delivering against the aims of the Camden Climate Action Plan**

7.1 We are working up the programme and delivery options while learning how other local authorities have delivered similar projects. Demonstrator projects and pilot work consists of the following:

- Retrofit of 27 street properties (two separate grant allocations)
- Deep retrofit of 5-7 Belsize Grove, which comprises 58 homes – these works have been tendered and should be on site during early 2023.

- Energy efficiency works at Brookes Court, which comprises 32 homes – these works have been tendered and should be on site during early 2023.
- Internal wall insulation to 50 homes with solid walls included as part of the Somers Town Future Neighbourhoods project
- 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). We are currently engaging with residents on site regarding the proposals.
- Preparing data / property list for next round of external grant funding. The focus will be to target all EPC E & F rated blocks and bring them to a minimum of EPC C rating.

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.

- 7.2 We are now finalising our proposals for the SHDF round 2 bid which will aim to secure more external funding for energy efficiency projects across the borough.

## **8 Mechanical and Electrical Programme**

- 8.1 We have a range of projects underway to improve the efficiency and reliability of our communal heating networks. These include:

### Maiden Lane

- 8.2 Air source heat pumps have been identified as the most energy efficient renewable technology for the district heating system. Our consultants are finalising the system designs with a view to submit application for GHNF funding in the March round of applications. This project is due to proceed to tender in the Summer 2023 and the works will benefit the whole estate.

### Weedington

- 8.3 The works are currently in progress, this project will focus on the replacement of the total life-expired and failing heating and hot water distribution network pipework plus the heat emitters and controls within the dwellings. Works are due to be completed early 2024

### Mayford

- 8.4 The proposal is for the replacement of the radiators, pipework and the hot water systems within the dwellings. This project is due to proceed to tender Autumn 2023.

### Holly Lodge

- 8.5 Phase 1 of the works will focus on the immediate requirement to remove the temporary boiler. The proposal is for the replacement of the boiler plant room and sub-plants rooms for a more energy efficient system as it's nearing the end of its useful life. We are currently seeking input from planning with a view to the works being tendered in the early 2023.

### St Silas

- 8.6 The works are currently in progress to renew the central district heating system serving the estate and installing individual boilers in 83 homes. This will provide all the residents with a more efficient heating system. Works are expected to be completed during Spring 2023.

- 8.7 Projects included in the forward programme are as follows:

<b>Block Address</b>	<b>Estate</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Status</b>
Mayford	Mayford Estate	Camden Town	District heating	Contractor selection process in progress with a view to start works Autumn 2023
Belmont 13-29	Belmont Street	Gospel Oak	District heating plant room upgrade	Changes to scope of works with the principal contractor works due to start early 2023
New Harmood	New Harmood Estate	Gospel Oak	District heating plant room upgrade	Works on site and due to complete early 2023
Southampton Road 22-38	Southampton Road	Gospel Oak	District heating plant room upgrade	S20 consultations completed progress works due to start Winter 2022
St Silas	St Silas Estate	Gospel Oak	District heating	Works on site due to complete early 2023
Weedington	Weedington Estate	Gospel Oak	District heating	Works on site due to complete January 2024
Rowley Way	Alexandra & Ainsworth Estate	Hampstead	District heating and windows	Pilot flats completed, resident viewings took place in July, next steps are to tender the works with a view to starting on site Spring 2023
Spedan Close 1-42	Branch Hill Estate	Hampstead	District heating plant room upgrade	Works due to start early 2023
Sycamore Court 1-32	Kilburn Vale Estate	Hampstead	District heating plant room upgrade	Works completed
Great Ormond Street 9-17	Great Ormond Street	Holborn	District heating plant room upgrade	S20 consultations completed works due to start Winter 2023
Maiden Lane	Maiden Lane Estate	Holborn	District heating	Design stage



Tonbridge House 24-74	Tonbridge House	Holborn	District heating plant room upgrade	Works in progress due to complete Dec 2022
Lift packet 7	Cromer and Birkenhead, 13 lifts	Holborn	Lift Refurbishment	Works in progress
Camden Road (217 - 255)	Camden Road	Kentish Town	District heating plant room upgrade	Work in progress due to complete Dec 2022
Holly Lodge	Holly Lodge Estate	Kentish Town	District heating	Design stage
1-23 Elsfield	Elsfield	Kentish Town	Bulk Gas Works	Design stage
Heat Metering phase 3	Multiple Estates	Multiple	Installation of heat meters	Works in progress
Lift packet 6	7 blocks and 13 lifts	Multiple	Lift Refurbishment	Works in progress

## 9 Fire Safety Programme

9.1 There are a wide range of fire safety projects already on site and in progress. The team have been planning for the next phase of works which includes the development of 18 packages (list available below) of work. These packages are to address Fire Risk Assessment actions for various properties across the borough and will include work such as installation of fire alarms, signage and fire doors.

A summary of key projects is provided below:

### Cromer Estate

#### Funded works to the three tallest blocks

9.2 Our bid for government funding for the replacement of façades on some of our taller residential buildings through the Building Safety Fund has been successful. The works to the three tallest blocks on the estate are on site and are progressing against the agreed programme.

#### Next steps for the remaining blocks

9.3 We are looking into other options to replace the façade at the shorter blocks and we will continue to monitor the Government's review of the Building Safety Fund and any changes that may apply to blocks between 11 and 18 meters tall. While we find a solution to replace the façade, we have been carrying out general fire safety works which includes the installation of fire alarms and working with residents to ensure that communal areas and balconies are kept clear.

### Boroughwide fire safety work packages

9.4 We have a wide range of projects which are summarised below. We have split the work out into disciplines and property types where we need to have a particular focus, e.g. work to listed buildings.

No	Packet	Summary of works	Status
1	FRA Packet 001	Installation of hard-wired smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to over 2000 homes in the South of the borough	Works on site - due to be completed by February 2023
2	FRA Packet 002	Installation of hard-wired smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to over 2000 homes in the North of the borough	Works on site - due to be completed by February 2023
3	FRA Packet 003 -	Renewal of 457 flat entrance doors and installation of hard-wired smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to over 1800 homes in the South of the Borough	Works tendered contract to be awarded in October. Works to start on site December
4	FRA Packet 004 -	Renewal of 329 flat entrance doors and installation of hard-wired smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to over 1,600 homes in the North of the Borough	Works tendered contract to be awarded in November. Works to start on site December
5	FRA Packet 05 -	Various FRA works including flat entrance and communal door renewal, communal and individual hard wired smoke alarms, emergency lighting, fire stopping works to 219 blocks within Camden Town area.	Tender early November
6	FRA Packet 06 -	Packet merged with another due to low number of actions.	
7	FRA Packet 07 -	Various FRA works including flat entrance and communal door renewal, communal and individual hard wired smoke alarms, emergency lighting, fire stopping works to 509 blocks within Kentish Town area.	Tender early November
8	FRA Packet 08	Various FRA works including flat entrance and communal door renewal, communal and individual hard wired smoke alarms, emergency lighting, fire stopping works to 509 blocks within Hampstead / Kilburn area	Tender early November
9	FRA Packet 09	Various FRA works including flat entrance and communal door renewal, communal and individual hard wired smoke alarms, emergency lighting, fire stopping works to 119 blocks within Holborn area.	Tender early November
10	FRA Packet 010	Emergency lighting upgrading works to 300 purpose-built blocks in the South of the borough.	Scoping / Design stage
11	FRA Packet 011	Emergency lighting upgrading works to 384 purpose-built blocks in the North of the borough.	Scoping / Design stage

12	FRA Packet 12 - Bacton Tower	Fire risk assessment works to Bacton Tower	Scoping / Design stage
13	FRA Packet 13 - Grade 2 Listed Purpose-Built Blocks	Emergency lighting upgrade, communal and individual alarms, flat entrance doors, communal doors and other fire risk assessment works to 62 purpose-built Grade II Listed blocks in the borough.	Scoping / Design stage
14	FRA Packet 14 - Grade 2 Street Properties	Emergency lighting upgrade, communal and individual alarms, flat entrance doors, communal doors and other fire risk assessment works to 790 Grade II listed street properties in the borough.	Scoping / Design stage
15	FRA Packet 15 – Flat Entrance Doors	Installation of flat entrance doors to the south of the borough. The works to bin chutes have been incorporated into packets 10 and 11	To be reviewed
16	FRA Packet 16 –	Installation of domestic smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to properties in the south of the borough. The Fire safety improvement works to roof, and compartmentation works to various purpose-built blocks in the borough will be incorporated into packet 10 and 11 as well as smaller packets of work.	Works tendered, Contract to be awarded in November with works starting on site in December
17	FRA Packet 17	Installation of hard-wired smoke and carbon monoxide alarms to properties in the North of the borough.	Works to be tendered In November. Works to start on site in January 2023
18	FRA Packet 18	Renewal of flat entrance doors – North of the borough	To be reviewed

**Report ends**

# VOIDS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME UPDATE

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The new Moving Home Team, temporarily set up on 26 September to manage the letting of empty council homes, is settling into its new role very well.

As at 6 November 2022 Camden Council has 471 active voids – ie properties that are to be relet. This represents 2% of the Council's housing stock. This is a significant decrease from the 612 active voids we had in April 2021; although it does not represent enough movement from the 475 voids we had in April 2022.

## 2 What has happened during October

- 63 homes were let. This is below the target of 80 per month, and was due to a planned short pause on shortlists while the new team established itself. We expect to see this number increase in the following months.
  - The average turnaround time for the 63 homes let was 224 days, as a result of letting some very long-term voids including one flat that been void for almost 3 years as part of a legal matter, and another that had been used as a site office during estate major works. As we continue to re-let homes that have been empty for a significant time, they will skew the average turnaround time but the critical thing is to have them all re-occupied.
  - The shortest time in which a property was let during October was 42 days, and we are working hard to replicate this type of success.
  - All new tenancy sign-ups are now in person with approximately 50% being done in the property
  - There were 41 new voids during October
- 2.1 A two-pronged approach is being taken to reduce our empty homes:
- i) Addressing the backlog of long-term voids
  - ii) Changing processes to help reduce the times homes are left empty
- 2.2 New monitoring arrangements have been put in place, enabling us to have better insight into the parts of the process that are having an adverse effect on our overall turnaround times so that remedial action can be taken.

## 3 Actions for November and December

- Deep monitoring of all stages of the voids process
- Analyse refusal reasons and suggest helpful actions
- Performance meetings with repairs colleagues to start
- Consider if and how physical viewings can better support performance improvement and our residents' experience
- Separate out average let times for historic and newer voids

3.1 The table below outlines the total void numbers by district, and below that Table 2 shows a breakdown of voids by bedroom size. The total numbers vary slightly between the two tables due to the different days the data was captured.

<b>Table 1: Current number of voids by DMC area (as at 6 November 2022)</b>							
	<b>Active voids</b>					<b>Held voids</b>	<b>Total voids</b>
<b>District</b>	<b>General needs</b>	<b>Sheltered voids</b>	<b>Total active voids</b>	<b>% of stock*</b>	<b>Movement since 2 October</b>		
Camden Town	70	3	<b>73</b>	0.32%	+6	188	<b>261</b>
Gospel Oak	118	16	<b>134</b>	0.59%	+7	35	<b>169</b>
Hampstead	105	15	<b>120</b>	0.53%	+1	116	<b>236</b>
Holborn	58	11	<b>69</b>	0.31%	-3	12	<b>81</b>
Kentish Town	70	5	<b>75</b>	0.33%	+3	13	<b>88</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>2.09%</b>	<b>+14</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>835</b>

\*based on 22,497 council homes

<b>Table 2: Active voids by district and bedroom size (as at 31 October 2022)</b>							
<b>District</b>	<b>Studio</b>	<b>1 bed</b>	<b>2 bed</b>	<b>3 bed</b>	<b>4 bed</b>	<b>5 bed</b>	<b>Total</b>
Camden Town	13	36	15	7	1	-	<b>72</b>
Gospel Oak	15	58	31	24	4	-	<b>132</b>
Hampstead	13	68	28	10	2	1	<b>122</b>
Holborn	11	33	21	4	1	-	<b>71</b>
Kentish Town	7	27	26	12	3	-	<b>75</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>472</b>

**Report ends**

# CARETAKING PERFORMANCE UPDATE

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The following is an assessment of performance for the second quarter of 2022/23, ending September 2022, for the Estates Management service.

## 2. Performance

### Working with residents

- 2.1. Managers in the service work closely with TRAs and other residents' groups to identify local needs and meet new challenges on estates.
- 2.2. If you would like to invite your local manager to a meeting, or arrange a walkabout on your estate, you can find your local Caretaker Manager's contact details on the cleaning schedule posted in the foyer of your building.

### Cleaning

- 2.3. Caretakers keep your buildings and estates clean and safe. Each month local Caretaker Managers perform inspections to ensure standards are being maintained. Results are graded on a scale from A to D (A is very good, B is satisfactory, C additional focus needed, D requires improvement).
- 2.4. These checks also monitor health and fire safety issues, a key activity to ensure residents are kept safe, often requiring prompt action to keep communal areas free and clear of potential hazards.

Q2 (Jul – Sep 2022/23)	A	B	C	D
<b>Borough</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>85.3%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>
Camden Town	4.3%	89.1%	6.6%	0.0%
Gospel Oak	15.6%	77.6%	6.8%	0.1%
Hampstead	24.0%	75.6%	0.3%	0.2%
Holborn	8.3%	91.1%	0.6%	0.0%
Kentish Town	0.0%	96.8%	3.1%	0.0%

- 2.5. Managers in the service regularly assess the evolving needs of individual blocks and estates to ensure that standards are maintained and our stated cleaning and safety commitments are achieved.

### Estate cleaning

- 2.6. Three times a year, independent inspectors, Keep Britain Tidy (KBT), report the number and type of issue it has observed during a series of random sample inspections across the borough. The below table shows KBTs most recent sample inspections and compares against previous period.

Survey period	Litter	Detritus	Fly-posting	Graffiti	Fly Tipping
Current samples (2022/23)	2.22%	2.22%%	0.00%	1.11%	3.33%
Previous samples (2021/22)	2.22%	4.44%	0.00%	2.22%	3.33%

### Caretaking Support and Response team

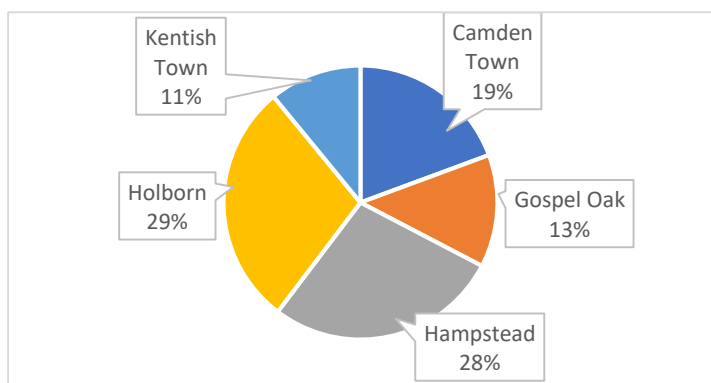
- 2.7. The Caretaking Support and Response team (CSR) is a mobile service that is tasked with delivering enhanced cleaning and project work to estates. This service is a huge asset to the Caretaking Service and is currently starting its winter works programme.
- 2.8. Caretaker Managers, often after discussion with their TRAs, identify and request project support. This is then added to the CSR teams rolling work schedule. Before project work starts the team leader contacts the local TRA Chair to identify any other priorities that can be included alongside the planned works.

### Out of hours service

- 2.9. Each month Caretakers attend between 15 and 25 incidents on average. Examples include, flooding, emergency household evacuations during for e.g. floods or fire, clearing up of dangerous chemical spills, dealing with water penetration, cleaning up human waste found in lifts, distributing bottled water to residents during water supply failure.
- 2.10. If you think you need the service out of hours call Contact Camden on *0207 974 4444* who will assign the appropriate response. The out of hours Caretaking service operates from 17.00 to 23.00 on weekdays and 08.00 until 23.00 at weekends, providing cover to the whole borough.

### Window Cleaning

- 2.11. In the second quarter, the team achieved 167 individual window cleaning operations, with the chart (right) indicating the time spent in each district.
- 2.12. With over 600 buildings on the schedule, the window cleaning team is on track to achieve its target of up to two cleans of each block per year.



### Meter Reading

- 2.13. Each week this team conducts around 50 readings, assists with five smart meter installations and provides access for top-up meters, meter resets and

access for other electrical works. Importantly whilst carrying out these duties the team checks for hazards in these secure and infrequently used locations.

- 2.14. Recent uncertainty in the energy market has seen an increase in demand for this service. We are monitoring service demand to ensure we can continue to support residents and help to prevent fuel poverty.
- 2.15. Requests for meter readings, and help with relocating utility meters can be requested by emailing the team directly at: [meterreading@camden.gov.uk](mailto:meterreading@camden.gov.uk)

## **Report Ends**



# ESTATE PARKING REPORT – TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ORDERS

## 1. Background

- 1.1. Working with Parking Team colleagues, the first estate Traffic Management Order (TMO) was introduced on the Maiden Lane Estate in 2020. This addressed health and safety concerns on the estate which had been suffering from high pressure parking demand and non-compliant parking. Close to Kings Cross and the Islington border there was a high degree of unauthorised parking and several incidents where the Fire Brigade reported being unable to access all parts of the estate in the time they needed to get to an emergency. In addition, there were frequent bin collections missed as the council's contractor was prevented from accessing some parts of the estate due to obstructive parking.
- 1.2. Two years on, the changes to Maiden Lane have improved parking compliance on the estate, with emergency vehicles and waste trucks able to access the estate quickly, footways kept clear and legitimate permit holders, including disabled residents able to access parking.
- 1.3. Following the success of this work, and the proven benefits to residents, it was proposed that a programme be developed to extend the TMO model across the borough.
- 1.4. This report outlines our progress so far and provides a roadmap for the new Estate Parking programme.

## 2. Priority sites

- 2.1. Initial assessments by council officers has identified 26 priority estates, where parking stress is known to be experienced by residents and non-compliant parking behaviours affect access for emergency and service vehicles.
- 2.2. Officers used the following assessment criteria when developing the priority sites list:
  - Improved access for emergency vehicles
  - Improved pedestrian safety
  - Evidence of non-compliant parking
  - Parking overspill
  - Parking demand
  - Impacts of other changes on the site (such as significant or long-lasting construction work in the local area)
- 2.3. Feasibility work has been concluded for these 26 locations, confirming that a TMO could be implemented and would improve our ability to manage parking effectively.

### 3. Roadmap

- 3.1. Introducing a TMO is complex, requiring a very prescriptive process to be followed to meet regulatory requirements. It means however that when properly implemented, parking on estates becomes subject to the same enforcement legislation as is undertaken on the borough's highways.
- 3.2. While we want to make this transition as quickly as possible and with the minimum of disruption to residents, it is not feasible to introduce TMO's to all estates at the same time. This is due to the level of consultation required as well as the number of physical adjustments that are required to implement the new parking schemes, such as adjustments to site layout, remarking bays, installing signage, and introducing alternative transport provisions.
- 3.3. It is proposed that the new parking schemes will be implemented in groups of five to ten sites. This approach will balance the workload and costs against the council's available resources. As the programme progresses it may be possible to increase this number of estates we implement in each group.
- 3.4. The timetable below includes all preparatory work for the programme and takes us through to the implementation of the first group of locations :

22-23 Q1	Define programme approach considering lessons learned from the Maiden Lane pilot, resident benefits, financial modelling, and legal matters
22-23 Q2	Develop borough-wide consultation. Secure resources and expertise required
22-23 Q3	Borough-wide consultation on TMO principles
22-23 Q1	Consult with residents of the first group estates on the design proposals as necessary, and then undertake a statutory <i>Traffic Order</i> consultation with residents
22-23 Q2	Make any physical changes to estates and begin parking enforcement

- 3.5. The first three elements on the above timetable are preparatory and are only required once at the beginning of the programme. The final elements will be repeated for each subsequent group of estates.

### 4. Borough-wide consultation

- 4.1. This exercise seeks to consult residents and other stakeholders on the principal of introducing Traffic Management Orders on our estates.
- 4.2. The consultation commenced in early November and is scheduled to run until 19<sup>th</sup> December.

- 4.3. You can view the consultation pages and submit your responses at [www.estateparkingcamden.co.uk](http://www.estateparkingcamden.co.uk)

## **5. Group 1**

- 5.1. The first group of sites will be selected using the criteria outlined above (para 2.2) and considering additional factors, such as geographical location and breadth of unique site situations. Our aim with this approach is to test our multi-site implementation approach and ensure that as we continue to roll out the TMO programme we are ready for most eventualities.
- 5.2. The final site selection for group 1 will be confirmed after the borough-wide consultation has concluded, in late December.

## **6. Subsequent groups**

- 6.1. As we implement parking controls on one location, it is possible that parking issues may migrate to a nearby estate without a TMO in place. Wherever possible we will anticipate these migrations and include affected sites in the same group; however, this will not always be possible to anticipate.
- 6.2. As the situation evolves, so will the need to reassess the sequence in which we implement the TMO programme. It is anticipated that subsequent groups will initially be selected from the 26 we already have feasibility studies for, but it is not practical to give detail on the specific sequence at this time. Prior to each group of sites being selected we will assess the situation using our selection criteria (para. 2.2 above) to ensure that we are prioritising based on current information, not historical data.
- 6.3. At this time, we consider that not all estates in Camden will benefit from a TMO, however as we work through our list of priority sites it might become apparent that more estates should be included in the programme. We will continue to monitor parking on all our estates to ensure that all residents receive the best outcome from this programme.

## **7. Finance**

- 7.1. While each site is unique with sizes of estate and layout varying considerably, financial modelling shows that the average cost of implementing a TMO is £10k per site. This includes design, statutory resident consultation, and physical changes to estate layout. These costs will be met equally by the HRA (Housing Revenue Account) and General Fund.
- 7.2. One-off costs include the initial borough-wide consultation (sec. 4 above) and a new electronic permit system, necessary to accommodate the management of TMOs on estate land.
- 7.3. Once in place, operating TMO's will effectively be cost neutral to the HRA.

**Report ends**

# GROUNDS MAINTENANCE & TREE MANAGEMENT

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the scope of the works delivered by the Green Spaces service on housing areas, providing recent example of work and performance information.
- 1.2 There are over 300 green spaces and 28,000 trees in Camden which are predominantly located across parks and housing estates, other sites include; corporate property, education sites, verges and temporary accommodation which are all maintained to the same standards. The role the Green Spaces service undertakes across Housing sites was set out in the March 2021 report. The below sets out an update to that report.

## 2 Grounds Maintenance

Enquires should be raised by:

- Emailing the team directly using [GroundsMaintenance@camden.gov.uk](mailto:GroundsMaintenance@camden.gov.uk)
- Telephoning 020 7974 4444 (Contact Camden)

### Routine and ad-hoc grounds maintenance

- 2.1 Camden's Grounds Maintenance Monitoring Officers (GMMOs) regularly inspect and respond to enquiries from residents to ensure the quality of the works and that all green spaces are maintained in line with the contracted specification.
- 2.2 Where underperformance is found, the Council can raise a rectification and default with our contractor, these include a penalty to our contractor which is recirculated into improvements.

	<b>Non Rectifiable Default</b>	<b>Stage 2 Rectification</b>
<b>2019/20</b>	14	207
<b>2020/21</b>	21	143
<b>2021/22</b>	36	197
<b>2022/23 – to 15<sup>th</sup> Sept</b>	1	62

- 2.3 The extreme weather patterns have continued since the summer with the average maximum and minimum temperatures for the UK for October were well above average and entered at equal-sixth and equal-fifth respectively.



Source: Met Office Blog 1/11/2022 <https://blog.metoffice.gov.uk/>

- 2.4 An official drought was declared in London in mid-August <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/environment-agency-chairs-national-drought-group-as-parts-of-country-move-into-drought>
- 2.5 Thames Water brought in a Temporary Use Ban (aka Hosepipe Ban) at the end of August restricting the use of water (<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/help/water-restrictions>). Due to the sustainable planting used in Camden we have only seen limited impact to plants and the rain from September has led to the grass areas largely recovering well.
- 2.6 The mild and wet weather conditions throughout Autumn have resulted in an increase in growing conditions across all green spaces.
- Delivering safe and accessible playgrounds across housing
- 2.7 Green Space Operations currently inspect 183 play areas (play and sports) across 104 Camden housing estates, of these 5 play areas over 4 estates are currently TMO maintained and 178 are maintained by Green Space Operations and our term contractor Idverde.
- 2.8 The team also manages a further 66 play areas across 35 park sites.
- 2.9 97% of play areas managed by Camden Green Space Operations on housing estates are open for play. Two sites are currently undergoing improvement works and are due for completion at the end of December 2022, two further sites are awaiting start dates for works and a further two are in planning stages prior to the commencement of works.

### 3 Tree Management

Enquires should be raised by:

- Emailing the team, managed by Contact Camden, using [tree@camden.gov.uk](mailto:tree@camden.gov.uk)
- Telephoning 020 7974 4444 (Contact Camden)

Tree emergencies, such as fallen trees or branches, should be called through to the Contact Camden on 020 7974 4444 (24 hours)

- 3.1 Trees on housing sites are managed in line with the [Council's Tree Policy](#) and are subject to the programmed 3-year health and safety inspection regime where work orders are raised and works undertaken.
- 3.2 The Tree Section, formed of highly trained tree officers, are responsible for inspections and contract monitoring of our contractor. Together we provide 24 hrs emergency response, 365 days a year for tree emergencies.
- 3.3 The tree term contractor, City Suburban Tree Surgeons Ltd who have worked for the Council for the last 10 years have been voluntarily liquidated. They ceased working for the council on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022.
- 3.4 To provide continuity of service, the tree work element of the contract has been successfully novated to Treehab Ltd, a local firm to Camden that has been subcontracting for City Suburban for the last 3 years. While we work with our new contractor to transfer the operation there will be delays to work being completed.

### 4 Housing Tree enquiries

- 4.1 We are experiencing a very high number of enquiries at present and are seeing some longer than normal response times. We are also currently struggling to recruit to a full complement of staff due to shortage of suitably qualified staff in the sector. Our term contractor is experiencing the same staffing problems which is causing a delay in some works being completed.
- 4.2 Following the complete year of reporting, it is now possible to provide performance information compared to the same period last year:

<b>Enquiries Received</b>	<b>Apr - Sept 2021</b>	<b>Apr - Sept 2022</b>
Housing Communal	246	<b>235</b>
Street Property	96	<b>97</b>
Total	342	<b>332</b>

<b>Enquiries closed</b>	<b>Apr - Sept 2021</b>	<b>Apr - Sept 2022</b>
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Housing Communal	167	<b>182</b>
Street Property	93	<b>107</b>
Total	260	<b>289</b>

<b>Work completed</b>	Apr - Sept 2021	<b>Apr - Oct 2022</b>
Housing Communal	2,260	<b>2,294</b>
Street Property	168	<b>131</b>
Total	2,428	<b>2,425</b>

- 4.3 As can be seen from the tables above enquiries received, enquiries closed and works completed between 2021 and 2022 are broadly similar. Therefore, we will continue with our new contractor to prioritise risk and maximise work capacity.
- 4.4 In response to an updated risk assessment, the service has resumed entering residents' homes for access to trees so they can be inspected and works resume.
- 4.5 Trees planted in urban areas have a hard beginning to their life, we welcome your help in helping these new trees establish in their new homes by supporting our watering of them for the first 3 years. A map of new trees and a video on how you can supplement the Council's watering can be found at: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/trees#taiz>

## 5 Housing Tree Inspections

- 5.1 The programme of 3 yearly health & safety inspections and maintenance for 2022/23 on Housing estates covers the following wards:
- Bloomsbury
  - Camden Square
  - Camden Town
  - Holborn & Covent Garden
  - Kings Cross
  - Primrose Hill
  - Regents Park
  - St. Pancras
- N.B. these are the pre-2022 ward boundaries.
- 5.2 A map of works raised is available at: [www.camden.gov.uk/trees](http://www.camden.gov.uk/trees)
- 5.3 A map of individual trees managed by the Council (and details of inspection dates, work, species etc) can be found at [www.camden.gov.uk/trees](http://www.camden.gov.uk/trees) there is also a link to general information about tree population managed by Camden Council at <https://opendata.camden.gov.uk/stories/s/Camden-Tree-Statistics/ad58-u6q7/>

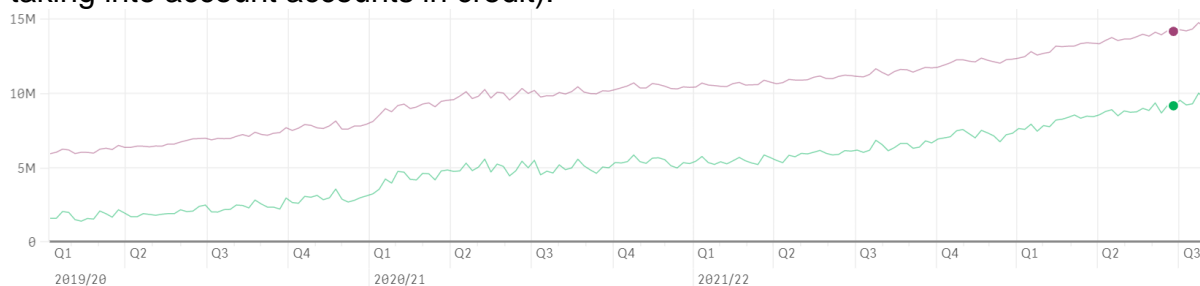
**Report ends**

## LANDLORD SERVICES UPDATE

### Rent collection data

	4 Apr 2021	7 Nov 2021	4 Apr 2022	2 Oct 2022*	7 Nov 2022
Rent arrears	£10,387,511	£11,186,988	£12,346,862	£14,253,940	£14,562,353
%Collection rate	98.10	98.6	97.92	96.92	97.06
Owe 7 weeks+	2677	2,766	3010	3303	3317
Tenants on UC	4412	4904*	5164	5680	5749*
Arrears owed by tenants on UC and % of total arrears	£4,099,443 39%	5,384,545 47.3%	£6,515,001 53%	£7,264,844 51%	£7,597,743* 52.6%
*2 Oct 2022 is the week after the specialist rent teams began work					* as at 30 Oct

**Rent arrears trajectory over time** (purple line, the green line shows collection taking into account accounts in credit).



The dots show when the new rent teams began



### Welfare Rights team data 2022-3

Income generated from benefit and debt work since April 2022	£899,311
No. of tenants the team has worked with since April 2022	728
Closed cases	358
Open cases	370

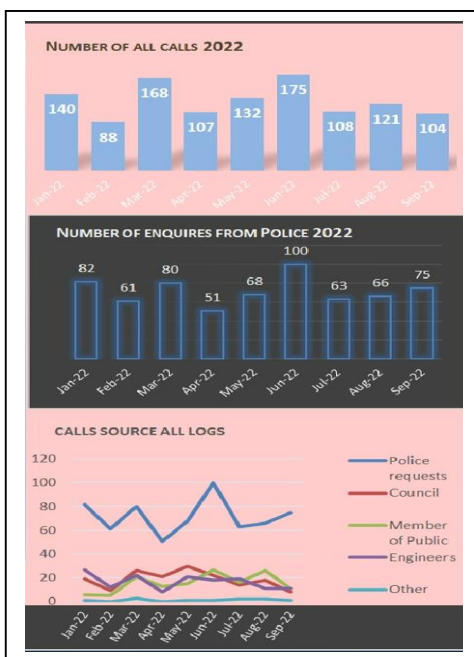
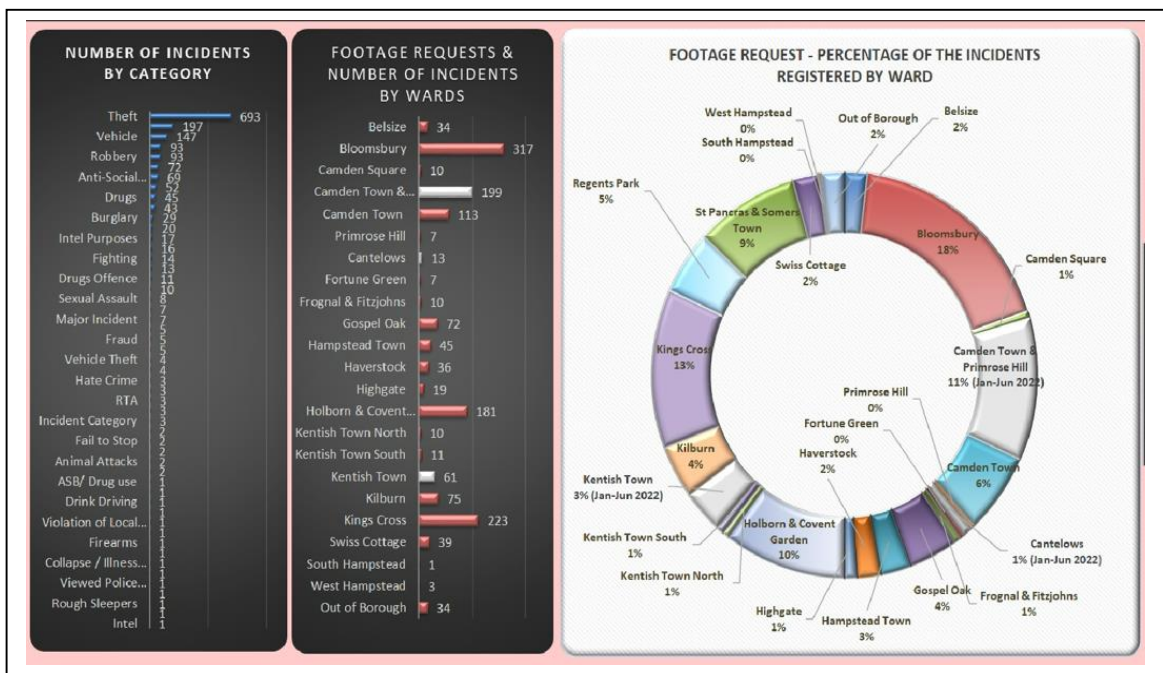


# CCTV & RESPONSIVE SECURITY PATROL

## 1 CCTV

- 1.1 Work has continued on the new housing CCTV installation project over the last three months.
- 47 Estates identified with CCTV as a priority for upgrade
  - Detailed CCTV design visits and resident consultations for these commenced February 2022
  - Involves a wide range of council staff, contractors and technical specialists
  - 15 estates visited to date and full assessments completed
  - By end of December we aim to visit and assess Birkenhead, Oakshott Court and Ossulston
- 1.2 Regents Park is now about 50% complete and connected to the council's CCTV control room. Originally there were 45 old cameras on the estate, there are now about 40 new cameras connected to the control room with another 40 due to be installed this month.
- 1.3 The benefits already seen with the new system are:
- Camera quality very clear – low light images very good
  - Stable transmission – no dropouts so far on new network
  - All footage viewable and downloadable instantly via new CCTV control room
- 1.4 Work is due to commence on Curncok, Bayham and Ampthill estates very soon and we are expecting a faster delivery rate from our contractors moving forward as they recruit more staff for their team.
- 1.5 We have been asked to provide more information on which estates have been identified for an upgrade, how they were chosen and the anticipated schedule of works and we have also been asked to provide a webpage with regular updates that people can check on. We are combining those two pieces of work and are looking at what we can provide on a dedicated page on the council's website. This piece of work has just started so a more complete update will be provide next round.
- 1.6 As a reminder, visits have started to the new CCTV control room and a number of you have visited already, we are booking in as many interested people as possible so spaces are limited. Each DMC / TRA can send 2 people along at the moment. If you are interested in visiting then please email the Control Room Operations Manager direct at [tawanda.majasi@camden.gov.uk](mailto:tawanda.majasi@camden.gov.uk) and he will make the arrangements.

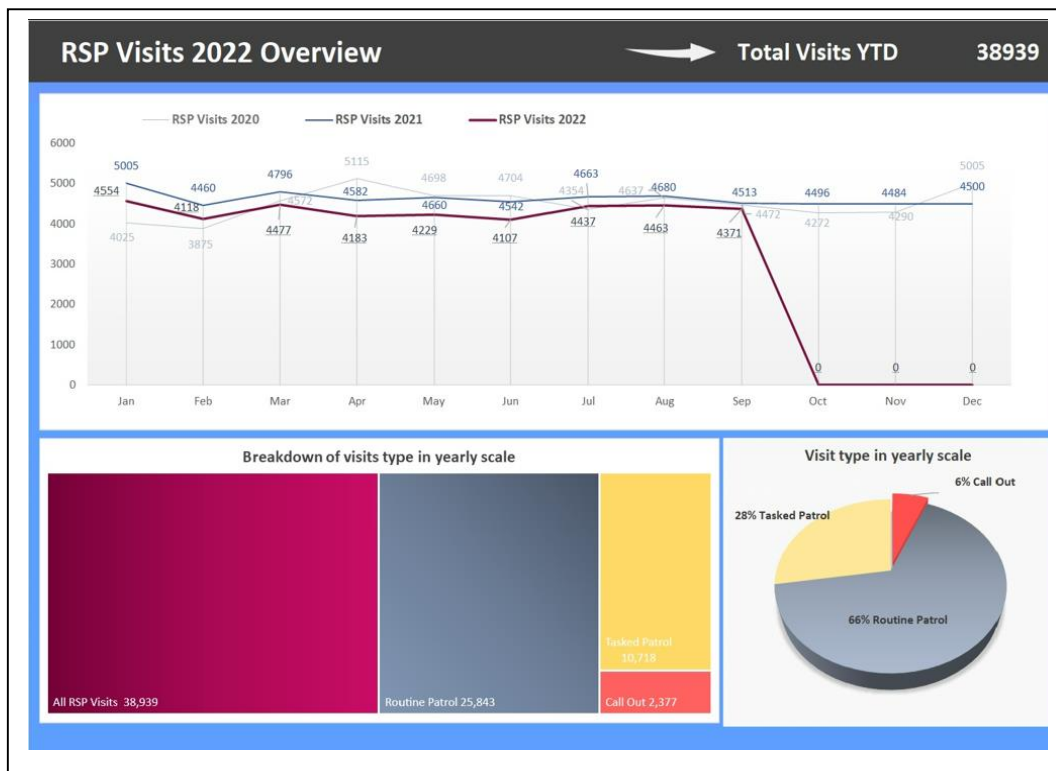
- 1.7 Just to remind everyone, residents will only be charged a higher rate of CCTV service charges from the next April **after** their estate is upgraded to the new CCTV system. The majority of residents will not see an increase above inflation in 2022 and the increased service charge will be applied in 2023 or 2024. You will be notified in advance.
- 1.8 Below are some graphs from the CCTV dashboard that we are working on. You can see the types of incidents we get requests for, where in the borough the requests relate to and the number of incidents into the control room being dealt with (remember this is for CCTV footage requests). We are currently adjusting the ward boundaries to reflect recent electoral changes.

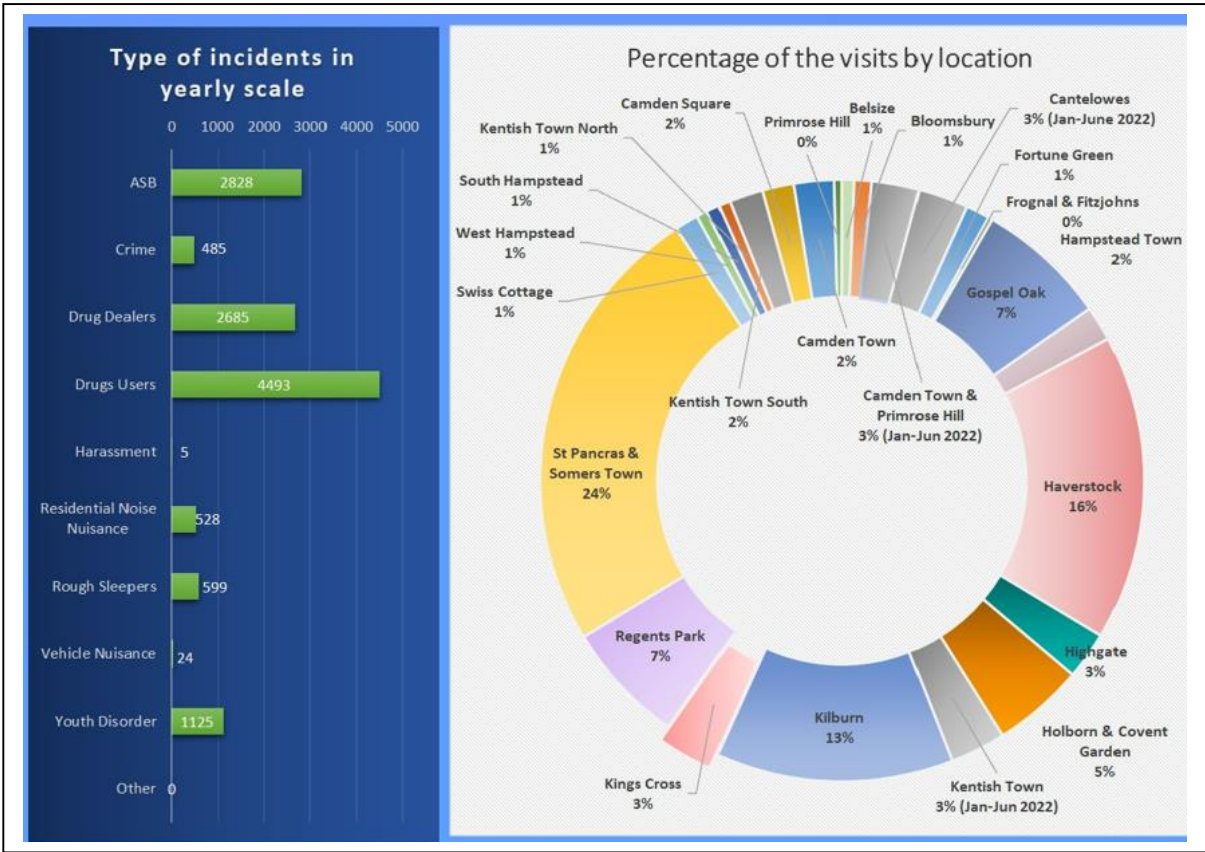


## 2 Responsive Security Patrol

- 2.1 The Council's five vehicle Responsive Security Patrol (RSP) are 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. Last year they carried out nearly 55,500 patrols – another year-on-year increase and so far half-way through this year they have carried out nearly 26,000 patrols.

- 2.2 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](mailto:RSP@camden.gov.uk).
- 2.3 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 carry out a "dip sampling" process where they select patrols at random and check all of this for accuracy.
- 2.4 Below are some charts from the RSP dashboard showing number of visits per month, the types of incidents they deal with and a breakdown of where they patrol. RSP have carried out over 40000 patrols so far this year.





Report ends

# COMPLAINTS PERFORMANCE

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 In addition to the usual summary of complaints performance from the previous quarter, DMC chairs asked us to this time include an overview of the Council's complaints process. This report is therefore in two parts, a summary of the complaints policy and procedure followed by Housing data from quarter 2.

## 2 The Policy

- 2.1 The complaints policy is based on the principle of a two-stage process.

- The complaint will be escalated to the relevant service department for a resolution (Stage 1 or local resolution)
- The local service department resolution will then be reviewed (Stage 2 or Review Stage)

- 2.2 The Council's definition of a complaint is **'When someone lets us know that they are unhappy with our service and they want us to take action to resolve it'**.

Examples of a complaint

- Failure to follow process
- Failure to follow the council's own policy
- Significant or repeated failure to provide a service
- Failure to do what we said we would do
- Failure to respond

- 2.3 There are some types of feedback or enquiries that fall outside the scope of this policy because there are other more suitable processes for dealing with them. We will deal with service requests as part of the council's day to day business, rather than through our complaints process (called Business As Usual (BAU) or 'Not a complaint')

- 2.4 This policy applies to complaints relating to services directly provided by the Council and to services where we have a responsibility, such as contracted services.

- 2.5 A resident can make a complaint (either Stage 1 or Stage 2) using the online form or by telephone or by email or letter. You can attach documents and photos to your complaint.

- 2.6 When replying to a complaint, we will inform the complainant of any right of further redress, such as Housing Ombudsman and Local Government Ombudsman. The complainant is free to contact the Ombudsman at any stage of the complaint for advice.

### **3 The Journey of a complaint**

#### Submitting a complaint

- 3.1 A resident can make a complaint (either Stage 1 or Stage 2) using the online form or by telephone or by email or letter.
- 3.2 If it is made by telephone, email or letter then the Council officer will log the complaint on to the case management system so that there is a record and the complaint can be tracked.

#### Acknowledgement

- 3.3 When a complaint is submitted, the complainant receives an acknowledgement that the complaint has been submitted with a unique reference number.
- 3.4 The timescale to respond to a complaint starts the day after the complaint is received to the Council.

#### Triage

- The complaints team checks the complaint and decides whether it is a formal complaint (some sort of service failure) or can be dealt with as business as usual (BAU).
- The complaints team assign the complaint to the relevant team.
- A member of the relevant team receives notification they have been assigned a complaint. They then accept it as their case. If it is not for them, then they return it to the complaints team who will re-assign it to the correct team.
- The complainant receives an email explaining whether it is a formal complaint or BAU and who will be dealing with the complaint.

#### The Response

- 3.5 The service dealing with the complaint gather information, investigate and provide a response. The complainant will receive the response in the format they requested in the form (either by email, post or telephone).
- 3.6 The officer responding then records any learning outcomes and any financial remedies paid as compensation and closes the case.

#### Escalation

- 3.7 If the complainant is still dissatisfied with the outcome of Stage 1 they can request a Stage 2 review. This is submitted in the same way as a Stage 1 complaint.
- 3.8 A stage 2 is triaged in the same way as a stage 1 but rather than being assigned to the service, it is assigned to a complaints officer. The complaints officer will investigate and provide a response.

If the complainant remains dissatisfied they can contact the Ombudsman.  
*[Please note the following change to the Housing Ombudsman scheme which came into effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022.*

*The removal of the ‘democratic filter’. This means residents will no longer have to contact a designated person or wait eight weeks before referring their complaint to us if they remain dissatisfied at the end of their landlord’s complaint process].*

3.9 The Ombudsman will contact the Council to inform them they have received a complaint and may ask for further information. They will provide a draft decision for comment before issuing the final decision.

Timescales

3.10 We will discuss your concerns with you and agree timescales with you and keep you updated on the progress of your complaint. The following are guidelines which we will follow although some complaints may be resolved sooner than this and others that are more complex may take longer.

- All stages (acknowledgement) - 2 working days
- Stage 1 - 10 working days (can be extended to 20 working for complex cases)
- Stage 2 - 25 working days
- Stage 3 - dependent on the Ombudsman timescales as laid out by them

**4 Housing Complaints Quarter 2 22/23**

Division	Housing Management Qtr 2	Qtr 1 22/23	Property Management Qtr 2	Qtr 1 22/23
Number stage 1 complaints in Qtr	66	82	215	190
cases responded to within time (10 wkg days)	35%	28%	62%	68%
cases responded to late	35%	24%	31%	19%
Open cases currently overdue	30%	48%	7%	13%
Number of "not a complaint" cases & not included in above figures	53	53	139	76
Number stage 2 complaints in Qtr	19	4	58	26
Number Housing Ombudsman decisions in Qtr	1	1		8

Housing Management (by Service)	Landlord Services Qtr 2	Qtr 1 22/23	Estate Management Qtr 2	Qtr 1 22/23
Number stage 1 complaints in Qtr	38	32	15	32
cases responded to within time (10 wkg days)	21%	31%	47%	41%
cases responded to late	45%	16%	33%	22%
Open cases currently overdue	34%	53%	20%	37%
Number of "not a complaint" cases & not included in above figures	30	38	18	14
Number stage 2 complaints in Qtr	6	1	5	1
Number Housing Ombudsman decisions in Qtr	0	1		0

Property Management	Repairs & Operations	Qtr 1 22/23
Number stage 1 complaints in Qtr	210	188
cases responded to within time (10 wkg days)	62%	67%
cases responded to late	32%	19%
Open cases currently overdue	6%	12%
Number of "not a complaint" cases & not included in above figures	133	66
Number stage 2 complaints in Qtr	55	25
Number Housing Ombudsman decisions in Qtr		

- 4.1 The data shows an increase in complaints received relating to Repairs with a decrease in Landlord Services.
- 4.2 In all Housing services there has been a significant decrease in the number of open cases overdue indicating that performance in responding to complaints is improving. However, there has been a drop in performance in responding to cases within 10 working days compared to last quarter.
- 4.3 Monitoring of the journey of a complaint continues and highlights where there are blockages that are causing delays to responding and improvements made to reduce these.
- 4.4 Response times will continue to improve as staff become accustomed to responding via the complaints system.



- 4.5 Please note, the above complaints performance is calculated as per the complaints policy and procedure. The 10 working days are counted from the date the complaint is received into the central complaints team.
- 4.6 Housing Repairs prepare their own specific performance data to measure the performance of the actual service rather than the Council as a whole. In which, the 10 working days is counted from the date Housing Repairs case management team receive the complaint.

**Report ends**

# REGULATORY FRAMEWORK UPDATE

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 DMCs have received regular updates on progress of the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill since the Government published its social housing white paper, [The Charter for Social Housing Residents](#) in November 2020.
- 1.2 As has been explained in previous updates, the Bill aims to facilitate a new, proactive approach to regulating Council and housing association landlords on consumer issues such as safety, transparency and tenant engagement, with new enforcement powers to tackle failing landlords. It aims to drive significant change in landlord behaviour to focus on the needs of tenants and ensure landlords are held to account for their performance. Camden Council believe that we currently meet the consumer standards and will ensure that we continue to do so through our Housing transformation programme and as regulation evolves.
- 1.3 The Bill was introduced to Parliament in June this year and has recently completed the report stage in the House of Lords. This report describes some of the most significant parts of the Bill.

## 2 REMOVAL OF SERIOUS DETRIMENT TEST

- 2.1 The bill includes the removal of what in current legislation is called the 'serious detriment' test, which currently blocks the [Regulator of Social Housing](#) (RSH) from intervening over consumer standards unless it suspects tenants are at risk of serious harm. The bill will remove the serious detriment test from statute and allow the RSH to regulate proactively.

## 3 PERFORMANCE AND MONITORING

- 3.1 The regulator will be able to ask social landlords to collect and publish information relating to their compliance performance and tenant satisfaction. They have now completed their consultation on the [Tenant Satisfaction Measures \(TSMs\)](#) and will asking landlords to submit the results to them annually.
- 3.2 We will be required to collect the first batch of data from April 2023 and submit it to the RSH in the Summer of 2024. This data and additional information sent to the RSH from the Housing Ombudsman and Building Safety Regulator will inform their regulatory judgements.

## 4 INSPECTIONS

- 4.1 Where underperformance is identified, social landlords would be subject to 'Ofsted-style' inspections as part of the raft of changes coming in with the bill. The RSH will carry out the inspection and, will only have to give 48 hours' notice to landlords before inspections. The regulator will also have to give

tenants – if the properties are occupied – 24 hours’ notice before an inspection.

## **5.1 PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

5.1 The bill grants the regulator powers to issue social landlords with ‘performance improvement plan notices’ if they fail to meet standards, if there is a risk they will fail to meet standards and if it fails to provide documents or information the RSH has asked for. The landlord will then have to prepare a plan on how it is going to address any issues and send it to the regulator. The regulator can also issue the landlord notices if it believes it is in the interest of tenants. Tenants can also request to see copies of their landlords’ improvement plans. If the landlord fails to comply with improvement plan notices they could be issued with enforcement action or a fine, or have to pay compensation. The Bill removes the cap on the fines that the RSH can issue to a landlord who fails to meet required standards.

## **6 EMERGENCY REMEDIAL ACTION**

6.1 The bill has given the regulator the power to carry out emergency works on properties, for which the landlord will have to foot the bill. The emergency works can be carried out after a survey of a property finds it below standards, which in turn caused “an imminent risk of serious harm” to the health and safety of anyone living there.

6.2 They can also be carried out if a social landlord has failed to comply with an enforcement notice ordering it to carry out the works. Tenants must be given 24 hours’ notice before the works are carried out.

## **7 APPOINTMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY LEAD**

7.1 Every registered provider will have to appoint a health and safety lead. The role will be taken up by one of the organisation’s current staff members.

7.2 The health and safety lead will monitor whether the Council is complying with health and safety rules and assess whether it is at risk of non-compliance. The health and safety lead will then notify the regulator of any risks and failures to comply.

## **8 HOUSING OMBUDSMAN SCHEME**

8.1 The Housing Ombudsman was granted new powers – which included the ability to refer more cases to the regulator and to issue complaint-handling orders against poorly performing landlords in September 2020.

8.2 The purpose of a complaint-handling failure order is to ensure that a landlord’s complaint-handling process is accessible and consistent, and that it enables the timely progression of complaints for residents, as set out in the Housing Ombudsman’s complaint-handling code of practice. The bill puts into

law the code of practice. It also legally allows the Housing Ombudsman to order a landlord to review its policies on specific issues.

- 8.3 Added to this, the ombudsman and the RSH must by law prepare and maintain a memorandum describing how they intend to work together as they perform their duties.
- 8.4 Annually Landlords need to complete and submit a self-assessment demonstrating how they are complying with the Complaints handling Code of Practice. Camden's self-assessment is available to view on the [Council's website](#).

## **9 PROGRESS OF THE BILL**

- 9.1 As described in the Introduction, the bill has recently completed the report stage in the House of Lords and now includes some amendments. Social housing providers will now have to ensure that all their staff, from frontline officers up to senior management have the right skills, experience and knowledge to deliver a high-quality service for residents.
- 9.2 The new amendments also include a requirement for the RSH to lay out details on how often it inspects the conditions of social landlords' properties.
- 9.3 In terms of timing it is expected that the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill will receive royal ascent and become law in the Spring next year.

**Report ends**

# CAMDEN HOUSING & PROPERTY RESIDENTS PANEL

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Recruitment to the panel has been a significant but rewarding undertaking and a huge success. We received almost 350 applications from residents eager to play a part in this new way to understand and improve Camden's housing and property services.

## 2 Shortlisting & selection

- 2.1 Applicants were shortlisted and invited to meet and discuss the panel with the panel leads, following which the 20 appointments have been made.
- 2.2 The shortlisting process was carried out by a probability sampling method called *anonymous stratified random selection*. This enabled the selection process to be completely fair and unbiased, while also ensuring that the selected applicants included a balance of demographics and protected characteristics.
- 2.3 The sampling was carried out with the support of Camden's Participation and Partnerships team, and used the anonymous ID number of the application so that personally identifiable information could be removed from the process. This selection methodology utilises the same approach as that used in shortlisting Camden's Data Charter Residents' Panel and Citizens' Assembly on the Climate Crisis.
- 2.4 36 shortlisted resident applicants as well as the 10 DMC nominees were then invited to group discussion exercises in groups of 8-10 which offered the opportunity to demonstrate positive group working skills, as well as exploring the ways they could constructively contribute to the work of the panel. 20 successful resident panel members, and 2 successful DMC panel members were then appointed to the panel.
- 2.5 We are publishing open and transparent information on the recruitment and selection process online at **[Camden.gov.uk/housing-property-panel](https://camden.gov.uk/housing-property-panel)** where residents will also be able to find information on the work of the panel as it progresses.

## 3 Initial schedule of panel sessions

- 3.1 The panel is ultimately intended to meet four times per year, where possible with dates which allow easy and timely updates to be fed into the DMCs. There is one additional session programmed initially to support the inception and self-design of the panel and its work.
- 3.2 The first panel session is to be held on the evening of Thursday 01 December. This will be followed by a second session on the evening of Tuesday 17 January. These two sessions will focus on how the panel wants

to work together, and what topics the panel wishes to explore. These sessions offer the panel themselves meaningful input into the design of the panel, to ensure that panel members feel able and supported to achieve the aims of the panel, and produce useful constructive output which can be used to improve the provision of Camden's housing and property services from residents' point of view.

- 3.3 The third panel session, scheduled for Thursday 02 February will be representative of the general format of future panel sessions. Exact details of this format will be decided by the panel at the first two sessions. Further sessions will be scheduled according to the dates decided for next year's DMC meetings.

**Report ends**

# UPDATE ON CAMDEN'S ENVIRONMENT SERVICES CONTRACT

## 1 Introduction

1.1 In 2017/18, Camden launched its new 8-year Environment Services contract with Veolia Environment Services, delivering the £5m savings target, as set out in Camden's Financial Strategy (2015-18). The contract started on 1 April 2017 for an initial period of 8 years with the option for the Council to extend for up to a further 8 years.

## 2 Contract Summary

2.1 The contract has an 'outcome-based' specification that informs Veolia of the service standards that must be met but not the methods of delivery needed to achieve these outcomes. This gives Veolia greater flexibility to decide how and when to deliver its services.

2.2 The contract outcomes are as follows:

- Managing Camden's local environmental quality to an agreed standard
- Minimising waste and maximising participation in reuse and recycling
- Generating additional surplus from business recycling and waste services
- Increasing local employment opportunities and local economic development

2.3 The contract is managed through twenty-four key outcome targets which measure performance against agreed standards using live dashboards and data sets. The contract also includes a process for an annual service report and improvement plan. These documents focus on service performance for the previous year, in relation to the contract targets, and define an improvement plan to improve performance in required areas over the forthcoming year. Annual reports and contract documents are available on the Council's [website](#).

2.4 Waste collection services are based on a pro-recycling approach, as around 85% of the material in a typical Camden rubbish bin is recyclable. Properties with communal bins have at least weekly residual waste collections, weekly dry recycling collections and weekly (or more frequent) food waste collections, scheduled bulky waste collections.

2.5 The cleansing services are based on manual cleansing (sweeping and litter picking) supported by a range of mechanical sweeping (and washing, where required) across all land use types, including parks and open spaces. All streets are scheduled with at least a weekly cleans and mobile response crews and maintenance operatives are deployed as flexible resources responsible for reactive service issues such as ad-hoc littered areas, litter bin servicing, dead animal clearance and fly tip removal. In April 2020, responsibility for external cleansing of Camden-owned housing estates moved from Veolia to Camden's estate caretakers.

### 3 Contract performance

- 3.1 The contract has been operational for over 5 years and has continued to perform well maintaining contract standards and continuing to deliver services throughout the pandemic. Annual reports and contract documents are available on the Council's [website](#).
- 3.2 The service adapted quickly to the initial COVID-19 pandemic and continually flexed in 2021/22 to meet the ongoing challenges of the impact of track and trace with staff isolation/absences across the contract. Since July 2021 the UK also experienced a shortage of over 100,000 HGV drivers due to COVID and uncertainties around Brexit which also impacted the ability to deliver services.
- 3.3 In July 2021 in light of the HGV driver shortage and impact of track and trace business continuity plans were reviewed to ensure key services and staff resources were structured and prioritised in line with central government guidance to maintain statutory services. Unfortunately, this led to temporarily stopping our kerbside bulky/special collection service in July which then resumed in February 2022.
- 3.4 We were also unable to recruit to HGV driver vacancies or use agency staff, so Veolia Environmental Managers and Supervisors drove, and continue to drive collection vehicles to maintain statutory services and work longer hours and weekends to complete collections. These mitigations continue to well to maintain services.
- 3.5 Unfortunately as a result there are delays in some collections, and an increase in missed collections in some areas, but in 2021/22 the contract averaged 49.8 missed collections per 10,000, well below the 60 per 100,000 threshold set out within the contract

### 4 Cleansing and dumped rubbish

- 4.1 In April 2020, responsibility for external cleansing of Camden-owned housing estates moved from Veolia to Camden's estate caretakers.
- 4.2 Street cleansing standards in Camden are independently measured by Keep Britain Tidy (KBT) three times a year. The results in table 1 show the percentage of sites surveyed that were not at an acceptable standard for 2017/18 to 2021/22, and the contract target.
- 4.3 The results show that standards have remained very good for litter, well under the contract target of 6% in 2021/22 (see table 1).

Table 1. Camden street cleansing standard data

NI195 Item (%)	Contract Target	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Litter	6%	5.74%	3.80%	5.28%	4.03%	4.49%



- 4.4 The Veolia Camden Fly-tipping Reduction Project aims to reduce incidents of fly-tipping in target 'hotspot' locations by trialling different communications interventions that each provide information to residents and businesses about their waste and how best to present it for collection.
- 4.5 Phases of the project often involve work with Estates residents – last being Gospel Oak in October 21, which saw a reduction in number of fly-tipped items in target areas, and an increase in users of the Love Clean Streets app.

## 5 Recycling

- 5.1 Following a reduction in the recycling rate in 2019/20 an increase to Camden's recycling rate was experienced in 2020/21 (see table 2) and this was maintained in 2021/22.

Table 2. Recycling Rates

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
31.1%	25.9%	28.6%	28.2%

- 5.2 Other initiatives being developed on estates in 2018/19 include the monitored use of 'clear panelled' communal recycling bins on Harben Road Estate and Taplow Tower from February 2022. Over the course of the trial:
  - the contamination rate dropped by over 10% from the baseline data for the estates with the clear panelled bins
  - collection crews also reported that the clear side panels in particular made identifying contamination a lot easier.
  - over 75% resident satisfaction from those who responded to the post-intervention survey
- 5.3 Going forward we will monitor the continued impact and effectiveness/robustness of the of the panels to help assess the impact on the collection crews ability to identify contamination. To further tackle contamination, information will be provided to residents on targeted estates about common recycling contaminants.

**Report ends**