

Camden Leaseholders' Forum

We are an independent group speaking for those paying service charges to Camden Council. We tackle major issues to improve Council services, and advise individuals through our website. Forum elections are held every 3 years.

www.wearecamden.org/leaseholders: see details of our monthly meetings (all welcome to attend!), agendas, minutes from previous meetings plus guides, news updates and discussions boards.

September '14 update

- **WORKING GROUPS** Our AGM in June set up the following working groups for 2014/15
 - **Billing** To cover both the process of issuing bills, and the accounting methods used to decide what costs to put into them.
 - **Regeneration & HS2** Our pressure led Camden to vastly improve the range of options for those affected by Regeneration. We will continue to press for the best possible deals both in general and for individual schemes, particularly now focusing on HS2.
 - **Procurement** Covering the method for procuring the future capital programme which produces so many large bills, and of managing the contract once it is let to ensure value for money.
 - **Communications** Covering our website and newsletters.
 - **Surveys** Are the right surveys being done; are they done correctly; interpreted properly; and then used constructively so every one is cost-effective.

Volunteers for these groups and any other topics are always welcome.

- **LVT CASE FOR RAISING MANAGEMENT CHARGES**
 - The outcome for "B" leaseholders (generally post 1996 leases) is that management charges rise from 10% of the service charge bill to a flat rate. It is less than Camden wanted to charge (initially £314, now reduced to £235 for 2013/14 estimated service charges), but considerably more than most leaseholders have been paying. The deadline for appeals (1st September) has not passed at the time of writing; updates will continue to appear on our website.
 - The Tribunal said that "Camden should strive for a more accurate analysis for the actual management charge" in relation to monitoring council staff time. The Forum will be reminding Camden of this, monitoring progress and also following up on other points.
 - Not all is lost: this case has been about changes in management charge calculation. Actual service charges (including the management charge) are published every September and can always be challenged by any leaseholder if they are felt to be unreasonable.
- **NEW STEP-BY-STEP GUIDES** published on our website:
 - Leaseholders' Associations – how to form them, and why they are so useful
 - Enfranchisement – buying the freehold of your property

Peter Wright

**Dr Peter Wright, Chair,
For the Forum**

Where can I find out more information?

Our website. www.wearecamden.org/leaseholders

Our mailing list. Email: leaseholdersforum@wearecamden.org Write "subscribe" in the subject line.

How do I contact the Forum?

1. Join the website and send a message on it, or send an email to the above address.
2. Leave a message for us with Richard Stratford (our secretary) on 020 7974 6884.