

Date: 29/03/2023

Ref: CAM4969

Dear Requester

Thank you for your request for information dated 23/03/2023 about heat meters. We have dealt with this under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Response

The council holds the information requested.

I am making an FOI request regarding the installation of heat meters in Camden Council owned properties

I see in the Homeowners News that certain properties are being fitted with heat meters.

1, Why were the listed Estates selected over any other properties?

And 2. What was the selection criteria?

Camden began its heat metering retrofit programme in 2009 at Kiln Place, followed by other sites in later years (known internally as Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 sites). The heat meters in these phases of the programme were retrofitted in two stages; first a meter installation by a general contractor, and second the connection of the meter communications by a specialist heat metering engineer to get the resident's heat data to Camden's systems for charging purposes. This informed our retrofit programme content and order up until 2020 as the meters had been fitted in resident's homes so we wanted to connect them up.

These phases covered certain homes and blocks at the following estates: Chalcots, Kiln Place, Ampthill, Henderson Court, Kenbrook, Kennistoun, Snowman, Casterbridge, Churchway, Doric, Hampstead Rd (partial), North Gower, George Mews, Mary Green, Hastings House, Penshurst, Rothay, Waxham, Ludham, Una House, Templar House, Seymour House, Somers Close, Platt Street, Purchase Street, Constable House, Tolmer Square. We are currently approaching the end of Phase 3.

In addition during these years we retrofitted meters as part of several Capital Works projects (where an estate was having a bigger heating upgrade) and also for regeneration projects so the meters were fitted as part of the new build development. These estates were: Bacton, Bourne, Netley, Maiden Lane, Agar Grove, Regents Park, Abbey, Chester Balmore, Holly Lodge, Central Somers Town, Charlie Ratchford, Harben Road, Monica Shaw and Mansfield Road. These works are currently underway at St Silas, Highgate Newtown and Maitland Park.

The Heat Network (Metering and Billing) Regulations 2014 required us to meter homes where technically and financially viable, but the government put their tool for assessing viability on hold

for several years while they redesigned the tool, so it was fit for purpose. In the meantime we continued with the above phases of our heat metering programme.

The Heat Metering Regulations were amended in 2020 and a new cost effectiveness tool published. We applied the tool to all the remaining homes on our heat network, with the result that 157 homes still needed to be metered. The rest were either exempt from metering under the Regulations (including Camelot House) or deemed not cost effective through the tool.

These 157 homes are going to be prioritised under the next phase of our heat metering programme (Phase 4) as they are the ones we are legally required to meter. These are certain homes at Sanderson Close, Cressfield and Woodyard Estate, Lymington Road Estate, Netherwood Estate and Bacton Estate. This part of the programme is in the procurement phase, and we intend to do the meter installs later this year.

We still have plans to meter as many other homes on our heat network as possible, including those we are not legally required to meter. However the speed of the rest of the programme will depend on budget, resource, supplier constraints and resident access issues. We may also decide to change our retrofit approach and install meters as part of bigger heating upgrades as estates, rather than as standalone work. These are all decisions that will be made in the future by senior management.

3. Provide the spec of the meter being installed and an explanation of how each dwelling will know their usage. Will this be monthly? Does the meter allow for monitoring by the Leaseholders themselves?

The choice of meter installed varies from site to site and depending on who the metering specialist is. Some of our sites use hard wired meters to send the resident's heat data to us through broadband, other sites use a wireless solution to send the data to us via 4G. Often the choice depends on the fabric and signal quality of the building and plant room. Our metering specialists advises us on the most appropriate metering solution for the site.

When homes move over to metered heating, residents are able to view their monthly heat usage via their Camden Account. The Heat Charges team send those residents a letter to explain this prior to switching over. The usage (usually in kWh) is also viewable on the meter itself, but for most residents we don't advise this as the meter is often difficult and sometimes dangerous to access. Using the online Camden Account is an easier and safer method of viewing usage.

4. Has there been any consideration of how this usage monitoring will affect those Leaseholders who let their properties and how they will be able to fairly recharge their Tenants?

Leaseholders pay for heat charges through their service charges. For metered leaseholders, the weekly usage, the previous year, and the heat unit rate, are factored into the service charge, as well as a standing charge property portion which covers maintenance and insurance. Camden's contractual relationship is with the leaseholder. Where a leaseholder sublets their home, it is for the leaseholder to decide how to fairly recoup the charges from the occupying tenant. Leaseholders can view their tenant's heat usage through the Camden Account as above.

5. Advise where on the installation list Camelot House sits and approximately when will that be.

As stated above, we have yet to decide our approach to future heat metering work for the remaining homes that we are not legally required to meter, which homes will be metered or

when. There are also no planned Capital Works projects over the next 5 years to upgrade the internal heating systems at 1-95 Camelot House that would also include the installation of heat meters. The plant room at Camelot House was upgraded in 2019.

In replying with the information, provide the reports and documentation to support the answers.

Further information can be found at the following links:

Regulations 2014: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2014/3120/pdfs/ukxi_20143120_en.pdf

Regulations amended 2020: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2020/1221/contents/made>

Guidance on the regulations:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/941673/heat-networks-guidance-on-metering-and-billing-regulations-2014.pdf

Guidance on the cost effectiveness tool:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/939107/heat-networks-metering-cost-effectiveness-tool-user-guide.pdf

Further Information:

We do not give our consent for any names and contact details provided in this response to be sent marketing material. Any such use will be reported to the ICO as a breach of General Data Protection Regulations and the Privacy and Electronic Communication Regulations.

Why not check our Portal [Open Data Camden](#) before making a new request as your question may already be answered by a previous [FOI response](#) or in one of our many useful and interesting datasets.

Your Rights

If you are not happy with how your response was handled you can request an Internal Review within 2 months of this letter by email to foireviews@camden.gov.uk or post: Information and Records Management Team, London Borough of Camden, Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE. Please quote your case reference number. If you are not satisfied with the Internal Review outcome you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office at casework@ico.org.uk telephone 0303 123 1113, or post to Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. The ICO website www.ico.org.uk may be useful.

Yours sincerely

Philip Lewis
Information Rights Officer