

Will You Join Us ? CLF Update July 2023



News Update and invitation to apply to be a Representative

Dear {firstname}

Will you join us?

Forum membership vacancies in Kentish Town, Hampstead, Holborn

As a Camden Council leaseholder, we invite you to join the Camden Leaseholders' Forum (CLF) as a Representative for your district?

We have 4 formal meetings in the year and interim online meetings to progress business. As a Representative, you should expect to take part in a working group (some meetings - in person or online - and exchange of emails). These groups actively engage Camden officers and Councillors on issues that are important to leaseholders generally. You can find more about the CLF on our website ([link here](#)) and in our Constitution [here](#).

Your postcode will reveal your district (District Management Committee) if you use this link and search for Ward: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/find-your-ward-and-ward-map>

If you wish to join us and get involved, or just want more information, please email us at Camden@leaseholdersforum.org.uk.

CLF Annual Meeting on 30 May 2023

Election of Officers

At the annual meeting on 30 May, Representatives voted to elect the following Officers for the municipal year 2023-24:

Chair: Isabella Luger

Vice-chair: Patrick Hagopian

Communications Member: David Hart

Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the meeting are available [on the Camden website - linked here](#).

Some participants engaged in online chats. These include questions put to Geraldine Littlechild (acting Head of Leaseholder Services) and her responses. A record of the chats may be found [linked here](#).

Individual Heat Meters

Patrick gave a very helpful presentation on heat meters, under agenda item 'Energy Costs Update - Energy working group'. This was visually supported by slides and the handout for these may be found [linked here](#).

The CLF working group arranged to meet with Cllr. Meric Apak and Gavin Haynes (Director of Property Management) to look into speeding up the roll-out of individual heat meters across the Borough.

Energy Costs

Geraldine Littlechild reported that the Energy Costs page on the Council's website ([linked here](#)) would continue to be kept updated. It includes information about the Government's Energy Bill Discount Scheme which operated from April 2023 to March 2024.

A new page, specifically relating to the 2023/24 estimated service charge, has been added ([linked here](#)). This includes information about the calculation of heating charges and a list of advice agencies. In September, a page explaining the 2022/23 actual charges will be added.

The Council has introduced measures to assist leaseholders with the payment of their 2023/24 heating bills, including extending payment plans and delaying payment of major works invoices for up to 12 months. Requests are being considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Management charge for leaseholders on communal heating systems has been capped at £187.57 for the 2023/24 estimates, rather than applying a 10% charge which many leases require. This cap will be reviewed in September 2024 when the actual costs are known. The Council is considering extending a similar cap to the year 2022/23, recognising that when the actual costs are billed this September they are likely to significantly exceed the estimated charges which leaseholders have already paid.

With regard to the Government's Energy Bill Relief Scheme (EBRS) operating from April 2023 to March 2024, the price Camden is paying for energy is below the Government cap, so the Council is not eligible for a discount.

Changes in Camden Heads of department

The new Head of Leaseholder Services and Income is Sean Scott. He will take up his role on 24 July.

Danny Waite, Head of Repairs, has left Camden and Darren Smith has stepped in as interim Head.

A message from the new CLF Chair

Firstly, I wish to thank Carolyn Morgan for her service to leaseholders as Chair during the last year. She has generated a momentum upon which I wish to build, so the Forum continues effectively to represent leaseholders.

Next, I list some of the concrete achievements

1. Camden has agreed to run a leaseholder satisfaction survey in Autumn 2023 using an independent research company and with comparisons to other local authorities. The survey will allow us to have an understanding of the satisfaction of leaseholders and will identify any items Camden needs to address.
2. Camden has agreed to set up a correspondence management system to track enquiries to Leaseholder Services. Performance statistics are now being shared with the Forum.
3. Camden has added more leaseholder information to the main LH page on the website, and made it easier for a leaseholder to use the Camden Account to look up information about works on their property.
4. Camden has agreed to cap management charges in 2023-24 for leaseholders who would otherwise be charged a 10% rate in accordance with their lease. This in recognition of the impact of increased energy costs.
5. Camden was persuaded to consult with CLF and CASP over its proposed introduction of master keys to street properties.
6. Camden has agreed to offer extended payment plans for leaseholders in financial difficulty paying service charge heating bills as well as concurrent major works bills.
7. Camden is looking at speeding up the process of installing heat meters in estates with heat networks and moving to billing leaseholders on their individual usage, not an averaged bill.
8. Leaseholder Services has agreed to pilot online surgery sessions in October, where leaseholders with a complex problem can book a slot in advance.
9. Leaseholder Services has agreed to pilot email and text reminders for late payments before they move to "legal" letters.

These achievements have been brought about by the CLF working groups.

The Forum is not just a passive body. As noted elsewhere in this News Update, we are looking for new members - leaseholders who will play an active part in the working groups so that more can be achieved.

I am aware that other work has been going on behind the scenes and we will maintain a focus on this to promote the delivery of further achievements during this year.

Isabella Luger

How do I get attention for the issues that are affecting me personally?

CLF Representatives are volunteers with day jobs. So, the CLF cannot act as an advice service for leaseholders' individual issues. If you have not got the result you want from Camden then try the following:

- post on the website Discussion Board ([linked here](#)) to seek advice from other leaseholders
- submit an online complaint ([linked here](#))
- ask your Councillor to take up your issue ([linked here](#))
- take a complaint response to the Housing Ombudsman ([linked here](#))

CLF tracks topics on the Discussion Board and will take up with Camden any issues of a generic nature.

CLF website Discussion Board
To keep updated or to post yourself...

CLICK AND COMPLETE THIS EMAIL

Visit us on the Forum website

CLF website

You are receiving this email because you signed up for our occasional mailing

If you want to unsubscribe, [click here](#).

