



# PRIVATE TENANT

## Hoogstraten sentence an insult say victim's family

TENANTS WHO ATTENDED THE OLD BAILEY sentencing of Nicholas van Hoogstraten were shocked when the judge handed down a sentence of just 10 years for his part in the death of a rival landlord. Hoogstraten had a long criminal record for handling stolen goods, for assault, and for bombing the home of a business associate. He was filmed illegally evicting a tenant and boasting that he'd kidnapped a former employee who had stolen from him. Despite this conduct (though many would say because of it) he built up a major empire of properties. Many were in areas bordering Camden, particularly Paddington, Maida Vale and in Brent.

He seems to have mainly avoided Camden, maybe thanks to the

Borough's policy during the 1970's of compulsorily purchasing rented homes which were neglected or badly managed. Hoogstraten deliberately allowed properties to deteriorate and even vandalised them to drive out secure tenants so he could redevelop at vast profit.

The Court had been told how the murder victim Mohammed Raja had borrowed money from Hoogstraten while amassing his own seedy empire of run-down rented houses, some in Willesden. Raja left property deeds with Hoogstraten as security but discovered that Hoogstraten had been transferring title to himself. Raja threatened to sue for fraud and, shortly afterwards, two of

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### Landlord Licensing in Queen's Speech

The Queen's Speech on 13th Nov went one step closer to introducing Licensing of homes in the private rented sector. The reference to a Housing Bill containing provision for licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's), usually houses divided as bedsits, could help end some of the very worst conditions in private renting.

Bedsit houses, like those owned by infamous landlord Nicholas van Hoogstraten, are the most vulnerable to fires and are often in the poorest conditions of all housing.

As regular readers will know from previous issues, CFPT have campaigned alongside other tenant organisations for many years for 'landlord licensing'. We have regularly reminded this Government that the introduction of Licensing has formed part of its last two pre-election manifestoes, and therefore welcome this move as good news for tenants. The introduction of limited Licensing should pave the way for greater regulations to improve standards within the whole of the private rented sector.

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Hoogstraten sentence an insult say victim's family



CFPT join others in demonstration outside the Old Bailey

# Latest estate agent scam

## shows need for deposit protection

HAVE YOU HEARD THE ONE ABOUT THE Estate Agent who persuaded someone to sell their home for £950,000 to a mate of his who sold it on within days for £1.2m? It's not a joke, it happened locally in 1998, and it's still going on.

### Agents sued

In December, well known Hampstead agents Goldschmidt & Howland were sued for unfair dismissal by Natalie Leon who claims that she hadn't known there was anything wrong with her taking a £5000 payment from a colleague's husband who'd bought a property she was handling for the firm.

Goldschmidt say that she had persuaded the 93 year-old owner of the property, David John, not to seek a new valuation of the £460,000 price she'd put on the property. The vendor, who is wheelchair bound and partially deaf, believes that the flat in Denning Road, Hampstead,

was sold for £165,000 less than its true value. The buyer was Clive Newman, property developer husband of Susan Newman, who also worked for Goldschmidt and Howland. Mr John has started a High Court action against the company, who have already refunded £15,000 in commission and £10,000 from two other employees, Simon Wilson and Tom Gladwin, who'd accepted gifts from Mr Newman. Ms Leon, who had been earning £50,000 a year, claimed to an Industrial Tribunal that the firm's policy was unclear on so-called 'thank you' payments to agents, which were common in the property business, and she'd only been fired by Goldschmidts after they'd been contacted by an investigative journalist.

Though 'thank you' payments from buyers to estate agents may be common, they are likely to be construed as corrupt because the

agent is contracted to act for the seller and has a clear obligation to find the best possible price for the property.

### Bungs Received

In the 1998 case, two agents working for another Hampstead agency (who also received bungs of £5000 each) were pursued in the courts by their employer Benham & Reeves seeking loss of commission they would have earned if the property had been sold at the market price. To his credit, Benham & Reeves boss Alan Brown also pressed the Office of Fair Trading to prosecute them despite any adverse publicity this might generate for his firm. At the time he noted that the two had no difficulty finding new employment with Hampstead agents and that he had heard of a similar case where a Belsize Park property had been bought for £190,000 and resold within days for £245,000.

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Hoogstraten's known associates David Croke and Robert Knapp were witnessed shooting and stabbing Raja at his home.

When key witnesses were apparently 'persuaded' not to appear, it seemed possible that Hoogstraten would walk free. The jury decided that, while he had commissioned the two killers to threaten Raja, Hoogstraten hadn't intended they kill him. His henchmen were found guilty of murder, but Hoogstraten only of manslaughter.

At the time of the verdict the Judge warned that, nevertheless, he would consider life sentences for all three. Hoogstraten's law team then demanded that sentencing be postponed while his mental health was assessed. It was delayed again when he appointed new lead Counsel who, appropriately, came to prominence defending the warlord

Arkan, accused of ethnic cleansing in the Balkan conflicts.

### Tenants Protest

Camden Federation of Private Tenants, Shelter and Brent Private Tenants Rights Group mounted a picket of the court on the day of sentencing to demand licensing of landlords to outlaw criminals like Hoogstraten from controlling other people's homes. The demo was supported by Karen Buck, MP for Regents Park & North Kensington and Councillor Heather Johnson, former Mayor of Camden.

The family of the murdered man, Mohammed Raja, said after hearing of the 10-year sentence that it was insulting. Their father's killers had shown no remorse and Hoogstraten's intention to appeal made it even harder for the family to come to terms with the death.

The Rajas are seeking restitution of more than 60 properties they

claim Hoogstraten illegally transferred. On Dec 12 Judge Peter Smith rejected Hoogstraten's defence to their case because Hoogstraten had failed to comply with the Court's order that he disclose his assets, on grounds that it might damage his defence. The judge also rejected Hoogstraten's assertion that he was down to his last few millions as not credible – part of Hoogstraten's defence in the murder trial was that he was so vastly wealthy he would not have bothered to kill Raja over the sums he was then claiming. The verdict grants the Raja family's solicitors access to Hoogstraten's estimated 30 bank accounts. It's conceivable that the family will also bring a private prosecution for murder.

Meanwhile, the fear for Hoogstraten's tenants and leaseholders is that their bullying and dangerous landlord could be back on the streets in five years time.

# Stolen Rent Deposits

The apparent widespread dishonesty within Estate Agencies (see opposite page) is worrying not only for sellers (and for ordinary buyers, who are passed over for sweetheart deals between agents and developers) but also for tenants who rent their homes via such estate agents.

A LOCAL LANDLORD TOLD US THAT SOME years ago he refunded a tenant's deposit in cash to Benham & Reeves, only to later receive a letter from a solicitor acting for the tenant trying to recover the same amount. It turned out that a B&R employee had not passed on the deposit. After the landlord protested and produced a receipt, the payment was made to the tenant.

Over the last year, Camden's Housing Advice Service handled 102 cases where agents or landlords failed to return all or part of a deposit to tenants, this accounts for just under one in ten of all of their cases. These are often the result of exaggerated damage claims, but frequently because either the agent or the landlord has simply pocketed the money.

## Rent Deposit Scheme

But now the Government has finally decided the pilot Tenancy Deposit Scheme (TDS), which was introduced two years ago to see if a voluntary national scheme to protect tenants' rent deposits would work, has not succeeded. The TDS, which was rolled out across the UK in pilot areas including Camden, relied on landlords opting voluntarily into the scheme. For the voluntary scheme to work the majority of private landlords would have had to join it – a scenario that CFPT vigorously argued would not happen. The then Housing Minister, Hilary Armstrong, did promise that if a voluntary scheme failed, the Government would introduce a mandatory one.

## Low take-up

Current Housing Minister, Jeff Rooker, has now revealed that because of low take-up amongst landlords, the Government is consulting on a compulsory national regulatory scheme. The consultation paper called Tenancy Money: probity and protection, asks whether rent deposits should be held by a separate independent body – in the pilot these were held in a ring-fenced Nationwide Building Society account – or whether to use an 'insured' option model. In the pilots, landlords overwhelmingly favoured the 'insured' option whereby they took out an insurance policy with the preferred CGU Guarantee Society; not surprisingly, as this allowed them to control the deposit, and in many cases to keep the interest it generated which would otherwise go towards paying for the custodial scheme.

Adjudication of the pilot schemes was provided in large part by the Independent Housing Ombudsman (IHO), but some adjudications were passed over to The Rent Service (TRS) where rental valuation expertise was required. Indeed, the paper suggests TRS as an alternative adjudication provider, alongside the Rent Assessment Panels (RAPs) as its appeal board – a prospect that might appal some Regulated tenants who have had previous dealings with the RAPs. The paper can be downloaded from [www.safety.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.safety.odpm.gov.uk) or can be obtained free from ODPM Free Literature on 0870 1226 236. CFPT

also have some to give to callers on 020 7383 0151. The deadline for responses is 28th February 2003.

## Protect your deposit

**There are a few simple steps you can take to help protect your deposit.**

- 1 Ask for and agree an inventory. The landlord will often have prepared an inventory of what's in the property. If not, you can do your own and get a witness to sign it.
- 2 Also note and jot down the condition of furnishings and state of repair in the property.
- 3 Take photographs to show contents and conditions on moving in.
- 4 On terminating the tenancy, ask for a joint inspection. If this is not possible –
- 5 Again, take photographs as evidence of how you have left the property.
- 6 The Unfair Terms in Consumer Contract now apply to Tenancy Agreements; if you feel that any of the conditions which are cover by the deposit are particularly onerous or could be considered unfair, seek advice.
- 7 Finally, outside of reasonable 'wear and tear', aim to leave the property in the condition you found it.

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to the Consultation Paper. We reiterated our concerns over the lack of consultation of tenants as opposed to input from the landlord lobby, and also our fears that changes to Regulated tenancies would open many Regulated tenants to abuses of the new system by

unscrupulous landlords. CFPT suggested that those who might benefit from the strengthened succession rights should be able to choose whether they wanted to be included under the new regime, whereas the majority of Regulated tenants to whom succession and

transfer would be of no relevance should be left out of the scheme. The proposals on co-occupation, transfer and succession would of course have no relevance for Assured Shorthold tenants as they have no real security of tenure.

# Housing benefit reform – again!

**The Government has recently announced that it will be introducing radical changes to the housing benefit system. Initially the reforms will only affect claimants in de-regulated private lettings within 10 'pathfinder' areas, with the aim that they will later be rolled out nationally. Lewisham is the only London borough listed as a 'pathfinder' local authority so the changes will not affect Camden tenants as yet. There are some positive changes in the reforms – as Housing Adviser, Marilyn Bramble Litchmore reports here.**

The Government proposes major changes to the housing benefit scheme. The reforms are set out in [Building choice and responsibility: a radical agenda for housing benefit](#). The current housing benefit scheme is complex, plagued by numerous difficulties, extremely costly and open to fraud. It has proved to be a nightmare to administer, resulting in backlogs of unprocessed claims. The lengthy delays and benefits restrictions affect both landlords and tenants and have increased hardship to claimants on low income.

## **The new scheme**

The aims of the reform are to create a simpler scheme, with speedier processing of claims, which is fairer and will give more choice to low-income tenants about where they live and how much of their money they spend. It also aims to reduce the difficulties of returning to work. The new scheme will not be linked to the rent paid by the tenant, as under the current scheme, instead a standard housing allowance will be introduced, based according to

household size and general local rent levels. Payments will also generally be paid directly to the tenant instead of the landlord.

The reforms will be piloted in designated areas, known as Pathfinders, and will be initially targeted at the deregulated private rented sector, where tenancies are subject to market rents. It is intended to extend the reforms eventually to include council and housing association tenants when the right conditions are in place. The Government is of the view that the new reforms will give benefit claimants more choice and minimise the need to live in poor housing conditions.

## **Current system fraught with difficulties**

The process of making a claim for housing benefit is fraught with difficulties and uncertainty, whereby tenants having committed themselves to taking on a tenancy find themselves in rent arrears due to housing benefit restrictions. Benefit restrictions and delays have caused stress and anxiety to benefit claimants, and have put landlords out of pocket, deterring them from renting to benefit claimants. The current requirement where every application for housing benefit is referred to the Rent Officer will be scrapped under the new scheme and will assist in reducing the lengthy procedures that add to the delay in processing claims. Application for housing benefit is generally a matter between the claimant and the local authority and is usually paid direct to claimants.

## **Safeguards to protect the vulnerable**

The scheme will apply to all new claimants and most existing claimants in the deregulated private rented sector in the Pathfinder areas. Standard flat rate local

allowances will be increased according to the size of the household and based on current 'local reference rents' and 'single room rents' in the local market calculated by Rent Officers. The figures, as they do now, will aim to reflect market conditions in the middle rent market and will be made public. This would be of great advantage to both landlord and tenant, as both will have advance knowledge of the allowance for a household size in a particular area. Assessment of income will apply as now in order to decide if the full allowance is to be paid. The standard allowance will allow tenants to 'shop around', keeping some of the difference of the standard allowance if they rent below it or move to a cheaper property in their local area, or are able to negotiate to keep the rent below the standard allowance. They will continue to pay any shortfall on a more expensive rent. Provision will be set in place for tenants claiming benefit since 1997 and different rules may apply to a minority of claimants for reasons of their circumstances. There are possible risks involved in giving money direct to tenants and safeguards will be put in place to protect the vulnerable. In cases where the tenant falls into rent arrears of eight weeks, the arrears will be paid direct to the landlord.

## **A speedier claims process**

It is envisaged that the introduction of the standard local housing allowance will speed up the process of benefit claims, as referring individual claims to the Rent Officer will no longer be necessary. Proposed changes also include the end to the requirement for a claimant to make a new claim on finding employment. Claiming benefit and the back to work process after six months' unemployment is to be simplified in

order to speed up the reclaim process. Where a claimant has moved back into employment this will be treated as a change of circumstances and filling in a new form will not be required. If the local authority is given all the information required about the new circumstances within four weeks of the claim, then a further entitlement to the four weeks' benefit run-on will be given until the local authority has re-calculated the benefit entitlement. It is proposed to simplify and speed up the process when claimants reclaim housing benefit within 12 weeks of their previous claim.

### Good news for Pensioners

An end to the fixed-term benefit period is also proposed for pensioners who will no longer have to renew their HB applications annually as these will run on

automatically. This process is generally one of the major causes for loss of benefit and rent arrears to all groups and particularly the vulnerable. It is proposed to extend this approach to all other groups.

The proposals are long awaited. A clear, simplified administrative process that enables easy administration and reduces duplication can only be of benefit to claimants, landlords and administrators alike. The new process would be of particular advantage to claimants who are caught in the 'poverty trap' and want to return to work. However, the future developments of the proposals within the pilot areas will be of interest to both advisers and tenants.

**Thanks to Marilyn Bramble  
Litchmore of Camden's Housing  
Advice Service**

Both landlords and tenants will have much to say about the new proposals which raise several issues and potential pitfalls. How will size of rent restrictions and removal of direct payments to landlords affect the supply of private rented accommodation to those on low incomes? Will the standard rent rate encourage the poorest households to take on worse accommodation or move to the worst areas to save money for other things? And how will the size and boundaries of localities be defined for the purpose of the standard local housing allowance?

It seems that there is no question that these initial pilots will be rolled out nationally, but close monitoring of these 'pathfinder' authorities will be essential in evaluating how successful the proposed reforms will be.



## Free heating and insulation grants of up to £5,000 – you may qualify!

You may be eligible for a free Council grant of up to £5,000 to make your home warmer and healthier and cheaper to heat.

Camden's **WARMTH for ALL** scheme offers a heating and insulation package at no cost to Camden's private tenants who are either over 60 **or** in receipt of a means tested benefit. We may be able to provide help with the following:

- Central heating
- Boiler replacement or repair
- Additional room heaters
- Loft insulation
- Cavity wall insulation
- Hot water tank insulation

**WARMTH for ALL** is a borough-wide partnership which aims to help people in Camden to heat their homes to the level required for health and comfort. For more information, please call the freephone **WARMTH for ALL Helpline** on **0800 801 738**

**You may also write to or visit our Helpline at the**

**Islington Energy Centre,  
159 Upper St, Islington,  
London N1 1RE.**

Please quote reference – CPT/0103

**The Warmth for All Helpline also offers free advice on:**

- Ways to save energy in the home
- Choosing a gas and electricity supplier
- Money matters

## Camden Housing Advice Service

**Free, expert advice** for private tenants, leaseholders and people seeking accommodation. You can phone us, come in or email us.

### Housing Advice Centre

North team  
179 West End Lane,  
NW6 2LH  
**Tel:** 7974 8855  
hacnorth.housing@camden.gov.uk

### Opening hours

Mon, Thurs, Fri: 9.30 – 4pm  
Tues: 9.30 – 1pm; 4 – 7pm  
Wed: Closed

### Housing Advice Centre

South team  
Bidborough House  
20 Mabledon Place, WC1H 9BF  
**Tel:** 7974 5801  
hacsouth.housing@camden.gov.uk

### Opening hours

Mon, Tues, Thurs,  
Fri: 9.30 – 3pm  
Tues: 4 – 6 by appointment  
Wed am: Somali speakers only



# Preventing homelessness – The Camden Strategy

CAMDEN, LIKE ALL OF THE INNER LONDON boroughs, has a large degree of homelessness. An attractive borough with links to the north encourages people to come and stay. High private sector rents, rarely covered by housing benefit and a lucrative business in ex-council property, has led to a reduction of affordable accommodation with demand far outstripping supply. These are just some of the many reasons for homelessness in Camden.

Camden Council like every other local authority nationally has until July to undertake a homelessness review and produce a five-year strategy. The review stage has been largely completed by now and the strategy is to be completed by April. The strategy must build on the review and needs to consider the prevention of homelessness

- Securing that sufficient accommodation will be available for those that are, or may become homeless
- Securing that there is sufficient provision of support for those who are or are at risk of homelessness.

Obviously CFPT focuses its work very much around these issues for private tenure tenants and it is vital that the knowledge CFPT has is not left out of the strategy, or the private sector will be a resource untapped, its tenants increasingly vulnerable.

## Where does CFPT fit in

So what has happened so far and where does CFPT fit in? A research project has been undertaken in the borough, with questionnaires being sent out to relevant agencies in Camden and over seventy homeless people interviewed by peer social researchers. This largely quantitative research has

been supplemented by additional work on key themes, including health, education, training and employment, crime and community safety, participation and housing options. This has taken the form of focus groups and/or workshops at the homelessness review conference held towards the end of last year. This research has now been published, both in summary and in full, and will form a sound basis from which to deal with the meaty topics of prevention, supply, and support – which will be tackled in the strategy.

First of all, it is important to see the strategy partly as a co-ordinating effort, as there is already a lot of work being done on these issues. For example, Camden housing department expends much energy in trying to secure more accommodation and clinging on to what it has. Camden is forefront in the battle to halt 'right to buy' as its own housing stock is being swiftly decimated. In addition to this, voluntary sector agencies such as CFPT offer the kind of support needed to help people maintain their tenancies. What the strategy aims to do is to bring all Camden departments and voluntary sector agencies into the debate, in order to co-ordinate existing initiatives, identifying and plugging gaps in the existing efforts, resulting in a strong and coherent approach to homelessness and its prevention.

The review was the first stage in this, and responses from its circulation will guide the work on the strategy. A variety of consultations will be taking place, and it is vital that all tenures be represented. What has become increasingly apparent is that the statutory sector must work in partnership in order to achieve lasting change. People become homeless from private tenancies as much as from social housing

providers and council property, and need support in all these tenures in order to maintain their tenancies. Without looking beyond the statutory homeless, i.e. beyond the people Camden is under legal obligation to house, we will never find a solution to homelessness. They are just the tip of the iceberg, and we need to look at the whole picture. Camden's private tenants are part of that picture.

When looking at homelessness prevention we must look at a variety of areas that are of importance to private tenants.

**Housing Supply** – Trying to ameliorate a regional problem at a local level. Which would include the kind of work CFPT has been doing on highlighting loss of affordable accommodation such as nurses homes.

**Supporting People in Tenancies** Looking at prevention in terms of helping people sustain new, and maintain existing tenancies.

**Tenancy Work** – Working to prevent eviction and promoting more secure tenancies such as the work on eviction that CFPT has been doing with UHWA, including equipping tenants with information and tools to preserve their rights.

**Education** – Working to a long-term agenda, ensuring that the people of Camden understand their housing rights and obligations thus preventing unnecessary homelessness through lack of awareness.

To receive a copy of the Review report or summary and to find out how to influence the strategy call the housing department directly on **020 7974 3245** or **homeless.strategy@camden.gov.uk**

With thanks to Harriet Neuberger

Camden Homelessness Forum

## Empty homes tax break to be cut

Following on from a report in The Camden Private Tenant Winter issue 2001 which described the culture of empty homes as a blight on communities, it has now been revealed that owners of second homes will lose their automatic right to a 50% council tax discount. Minister Nick Raynsford announced that councils will be given discretionary powers to reduce discounts from 50% down to just 10%. He further said that councils could withdraw discounts completely on empty properties. The changes are expected to raise up to £65million for councils to spend on their services including housing, whilst hopefully encouraging owners to let their homes in high demand areas like Camden rather than leaving

them empty. Camden currently has 1,875 properties that have been empty for over six months while there are just over 14,000 people on the Housing Register waiting list.

In a statement to CFPT, Council Leader Jane Roberts welcomed the news saying, that with approximately 100,000 empty homes in London including 1,458 long term empties in Camden with the housing crisis as it is, she could see no justification for any discount.

Ms Roberts said that the value of the 50% discount in Camden was worth approximately £0.73million, but that the Government's intention was that any savings were to be pooled centrally, and it was uncertain to what extent Camden might benefit as no redistribution formulae had yet been proposed.

## Minimum Income Guarantee for the over 60's

If you are aged 60 or over, you are entitled to an income of not less than £98.15 per week if you are single, and £ 149.80 per week for a couple. You may be entitled to more if you:

- are disabled and live alone with another disabled person,
- are a carer receiving Invalid Care Allowance,
- have certain housing costs not covered by Housing Benefit.

If you think you are eligible, contact the Minimum Income Guarantee Claimline free on 0800 028 1111, 7am to 7pm Mon – Fri. Or you can call Camden Citizens Advice Bureau on 0845 050 5152.

## Need support in your home?

From April 2003 there will be a new way of funding support services for vulnerable people. The idea is to allow more flexibility in the way these services are delivered and hopefully enable more tenants to remain in their current homes rather than go into sheltered or supported housing. This will be particularly important for elderly, disabled or otherwise vulnerable private tenants who need support in looking after themselves and in maintaining their tenancies.

CFPT carried out a consultation of its members and other private tenants as part of Camden's Tenancy Support for Vulnerable People Scrutiny Commission last year, to see what their support needs might be.

One of the crucial points raised was that very few of those who responded were aware of the range of services on offer through the council or voluntary sector that they might want to make use of. This was no great surprise, as private tenants often imagine that council services are usually reserved for council tenants – and considered a hard to reach target group, can be overlooked by service providers. Many of those responding to our consultation stressed the importance of support in dealings with their landlords and also of informal help through trusted voluntary groups including CFPT. If you feel you need support in your home you can contact Camden's Social Services Enquiry Team on 020 7974 6666.

## Camden ready for Compulsory Purchase of properties

A recent full council meeting passed a resolution to target two Camden properties with compulsory purchase orders (CPOs). The first property is one that has been partially empty for some time and whose owners have breached numerous orders imposed by the Environment Department for serious unfitness and disrepair. The other property, which is in a prime location where there is a shortage of affordable housing, has been empty since it was purchased in 1998. Camden's Private Sector Development Officer, Ruth Newman, says that it is Camden's policy to offer successfully CPO'd properties to their partner Registered Social Landlords to manage.



Substantial property left empty and boarded up on Arkwright Road in NW3.

# Report highlights abuse of elderly

A Help the Aged commissioned report by the University of West England and Bristol University shows up the harassment of older tenants by their landlords. The report, entitled Harassment and Abuse of Older People in the Private Rented Sector, will be made available from the 28th Jan. The report uses anonymous case studies of tenants aged 60 or over who have been subject to verbal, physical, psychological and financial harassment and abuse, but also emphasises how landlord neglect of a property and repairs can be used

as a form of harassment – something that CFPT has been strongly arguing for years. The report bears out CFPT's belief that the harassment suffered by these tenants is ignored because it doesn't fit any legal definitions of the term, it also argues that older private tenants are let down by the legal system, as pursuit of remedies is often extremely stressful and expensive.

The report criticises the Government for ignoring the private rented sector in its approach to promoting better housing for older people, and that older private

tenants are forced to remain in unsuitable accommodation because of lack of adequate choice or alternatives from Social landlords. It also argues that private tenants have less access to advice and are less aware of their rights than their social or council counterparts.

The report will have real implications for Local Authorities' including Camden's Supporting People programmes. If you would like a copy of the report at £14.99, contact Marston Book Services on 01235 465 500 or visit [www.helptheaged.org.uk](http://www.helptheaged.org.uk) after 28th Jan.

## Law Commission tenancy proposals



Helen Carr of the Law Commission addressing CFPT's Annual General Meeting

CFPT was one of several tenant groups concerned over the Law Commissions proposals to change all existing tenancies into just two types. Regular readers will be familiar with the main proposals and also of CFPT's fears over inclusion of Regulated (or Rent Act) tenancies within the scope of the new system, and the proposed reduction of Assured Shorthold or 'Type 2' tenancies from the current six to just three months.

Also concerned over the apparent lack of consultation of and input from tenants, CFPT invited Helen Carr of the Law Commission to speak at our recent AGM.

Whilst aware of our apprehensions Ms Carr emphasised the benefits to Regulated tenants of proposals in the second Paper, Renting Homes 2: Co-occupation, Transfer and Succession, which claims to strengthen their rights on succession. CFPT used input from tenants at the AGM and other meetings in response

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## Camden Federation of Private Tenants — needs you —

CFPT is run for and by private tenants. We work on all aspects of tenant issues, providing information and resources, lobbying Government and campaigning on issues both locally and nationally.

We have close working links with other groups such as Shelter and have worked with former DETR on a number of issues.

If you are interested in becoming involved, please contact us. If you would like to see other topics covered, please let us know.

We welcome letters, questions, comments and suggestions. You can become a member or a subscriber. This will put you on our mailing list

and you will receive notice of any meetings, workshops, events, special reports, etc., as well as our newsletter for £7.50 per year.

We also need volunteers to work on the newsletter, contributing to policy work and consultations, attending occasional court cases, and representing us with other organisations and committees.

**Please contact us at:**

11-17 The Marr,  
Camden Street, London NW1 0HE

**Tel:** 020 7383 0151

**e-mail:** [camfpt@lineone.net](mailto:camfpt@lineone.net)

CFPT has recently been awarded the  
**Community Legal Services Quality Mark.**

**Community  
Legal Service**



**This Mark means that we offer a  
Quality Assured Information Service  
to all our callers.**