



PRIVATE TENANT

Tenants evicted to house homeless

Roof – Shelter’s housing magazine – recently reported on an unpleasant anomaly in the implementation of the Government’s targets for reducing numbers of homeless families living in B&B accommodation.

It has come to light in some areas that landlords are taking advantage of Local Authorities’ private sector leasing (PSL) initiatives by terminating the tenancies of their existing tenants. PSL is a much needed resource for overstretched LA’s where demand for housing far outstrips supply; the Authority leases a property from a private landlord for a fixed period of time, usually at just under the market rent, but with the added bonus of comprehensive management and protection from voids – giving landlords complete peace of mind. The Authority then uses the accommodation to house its statutory homeless.

There is nothing legally wrong with this, and indeed, landlords have every right to choose how to let their

properties. However, there comes a dilemma when those existing tenants face homelessness as a result of this practice, which is doubly compromised when those tenants then present to their local authority as statutorily homeless and have to be housed by the council, as was suggested in the Roof article (Scams – May/June 2003).

CFPT spoke to Procurement Officer John Williams of Camden’s Private Sector Leasing(PSL) department about the potential problem. Camden has been promoting its local scheme – called Easylease – via the local press and radio. However, Camden only considers properties that are currently vacant, combating the blight of empty properties at the same time. But Mr Williams admitted that a potential property’s history is not investigated and that it would be extremely hard to know if tenants had been evicted prior to taking up the scheme. He pointed out that Camden would be loathe to take on properties where this scenario had

taken place and would reject a property if it was known that tenants had been evicted. Mr Williams said he would be very keen to hear of any such cases as Camden would not want to compromise this initiative by supporting bad practise. He also mentioned that other authorities using Camden properties for PSL were under an agreed obligation to let the Council know, and that it would be very unhappy of wholesale use of PSL in Camden by other LAs.

Michele Davies, manager of Camden’s Housing Advise Service, added that with rents in Camden so high, PSL was not so attractive for landlords, who can make excellent returns via traditional letting methods, and believes that this would not pose a problem here.

However, Housing Associations have also been in on the act of private sector leasing for some time in Camden, with Notting Hill Housing Trust and Paddington Churches HA both advertising for

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‘UK’s worst’ landlords in struggle with flat owners.

THE PEARS FAMILY HAS BECOME NOTORIOUS since being named last year as the UK’s worst landlords by a BBC consumer programme. Clarice Pears, late mother of the brothers who now

control a sprawling portfolio of other people’s homes, was once listed by The Sunday Times as being richer than The Queen. The Pears’ various companies have offices in

Hampstead High Street and extensive residential holdings in Camden.

They were reportedly
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Garages attached to the Froggnal Court flats

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embarrassed by the show which chose the UK's worst landlord from a fairly nasty shortlist. In their defence, the Pears cite the millions they've given to charity. The BBC revelations suggested that while charity may start at home, it didn't extend to the flat of disabled tenant Frank Stone, who is in his nineties. The Pears' neglect of properties in Fellows Road had caused Stone and his neighbours problems for years. Astonishingly, when builders came in to the redevelop the upper floors, they removed the stair rail installed by Camden to help Frank reach his basement home because he walks with difficulty.

It's clear that the properties in Fellows Road are by no means the only local homes to suffer the stewardship of Pears family companies. A large 1930's development of flats in Finchley Road consisting of Froggnal Court, Midland Court and Warwick House has become the battleground between residents who own 54 flats on long leases mostly granted in the 1960s and 1970's – and the Pears, who bought a head lease on the blocks in 1986.

There are allegations of unnecessary or poor repairs – windowpanes replaced without warning, leaving homes filled with broken glass – and lifts that haven't worked since 1990. These complaints have spawned a complex legal wrangle as the Pears tried to apportion service charges in ways that didn't match the terms of the residents' leases.

The Froggnal Estate Residents Association, which represents most of the occupants of the blocks is chaired by well-known local civic activist Marie Garside. The Association (which recently joined CFPT) retained lawyers who advised residents to withhold payments of disputed excess service charges. Ms Garside points out that the flats have separate and different contract terms because the long leases were originally granted by several different landlords. There is no way that the Pears should have attempted to charge residents for works on a formula that was not in their leases.

The dispute has lasted since 1988, made more bitter by the Pears' attempts to stop individuals selling their flats unless they paid the family's demands in full. Some owners have paid up simply so that they could get out. Some new owners were then pursued for questionable bills that long predated their occupation, even though these had already been paid by the predecessors.

After years of correspondence between the parties' lawyers, in January 1991 the Pears sought to break the deadlock in the courts by issuing proceedings against 47 leaseholders claiming forfeiture of their flats, service charge arrears with interest, and hoped to get the court to amend their leases to reflect the landlords' wishes.

But the Pears' first court appearance was probably doomed from the moment the judge, Recorder Harrod, took the trouble to visit the site in his own time and questioned their central claim that the blocks were a single building that happened to have different names. He noted that the blocks were clearly different in appearance, nature and facilities and his summary concluded that seven or eight different forms of service charge existed for the different leases, so the landlords could not apply a uniform charge. The Court refused to "rectify" the leases because that remedy applied only where the wording of a lease was somehow contrary to the intentions of the original signatories. But since then, service charges have continued to be incorrectly calculated.

The dispute rumbled on for nine

years more and new issues arose from the extra rights against forfeiture in the 1996 Act. It looked to be coming to a conclusion in February 2003 when Judge Langley in the Central London County Court agreed to strike out the case and the Pears were ordered to make an interim payment of £40,000 towards the residents' legal costs.

At an earlier, rather heated, meeting between some residents and Trevor Pears, the family had already let it be known they wanted to sort things out once and for all on an amicable basis. The Association hoped to negotiate the outstanding issues and consider new leases, if the Pears would agree.

But in early 2003 it suddenly seemed the Pears were pre-empting any deal when, against protests by the residents that they had not received proper notices regarding their right of first refusal, the family announced that they were going to sell the residential parts of the Estate. When For Sale signs were erected by the well known property auctioneers Allsop & Co, it emerged that the buildings' head leases were to be offered in auction at the Cafe Royal on June 2nd with a reserve of just £100,000 and listed with clear caveats warning potential buyers of legal problems.

Residents who attended the sale intervened directly with the auctioneer and heard an announcement as the sale commenced that the lot was being withdrawn on that date – but a new sale notice has been spotted on the internet scheduling the Estate for sale at a further auction in July.



The Froggnal Court block in dispute

► *continued from page 1*

properties for PSL. These Housing Associations may have less compunction about how they come by their private sector properties; the Paddington Churches HA website merely states that landlords “must have vacant possession of the property. While (they) have tenants in the property, PCHA cannot inspect

the property or enter into a lease”.

Roof were unable to divulge their source, understandably, as this is a controversial issue – but is one that needs to be looked at and monitored. With recent targets for reduction of use of B&Bs for homeless families and little new housing to pick up the slack, private sector leasing may become more and more popular as a source of housing for the statutory

homeless. Whilst it is bringing empty properties back into use, all well and good, but any trend toward evicting existing tenants needs to be condemned.

If you suspect you have had your tenancy terminated to make way for PSL, or are aware of such practise, please let us know, contact CFPT's offices on 020 7383 0151.

Camden beats greedy Developers Court backs Camden in dispute over too-small flats

A PROPERTY FIRM WHICH CONVERTED A house into 17 ridiculously small flats has been fined £15,000 by Highbury Magistrates. Directors of Holaw Ltd were already fined \$5,000 last year in the same matter but continued to ignore planning enforcement notices. In fact, according to the Ham & High report, the saga goes back to 2001 when Camden spotted that builders had converted the single family home in Swiss Cottage into flats without seeking planning permission. When the developer refused to restore the house to a single dwelling, Camden relented and granted permission for 12 flats which would not breach guidelines on overcrowding. This concession was ignored, leading to the original prosecution. Including costs, the firm now owes Camden £21,000 and will have to spend many times that on new works.

It's questionable whether even this kind of penalty is enough to discourage other speculators who, presumably, see the chance intervention of legitimate authorities as part of the risk associated with getting rich quick. It's only a short step from this logic to other kinds of lawlessness.

Paradoxically, the overcrowding issue at the heart of this case contrasts with a different density issue in the planning cases that regularly make local headlines. More often, unlawful conversions are to Homes in Multiple Occupation. HMOs usually consist of many bedsit rooms whose occupants put up with shared cooking and toilet facilities but pay comparatively low rents. As more

and more of Camden gentrifies, owners are tempted to convert these houses back to single dwellings for sale or into self-contained 'luxury' apartments at rents which quickly repay the cost of conversion.

A steady loss of cheaper homes for people in the low wage jobs that keep London operating forced Camden to try to halt such conversions by refusing planning consent. But the more ruthless developers see this as an opportunity, getting hold of such properties on the cheap precisely due to the local controls. These transactions are not done in ignorance – a buyer's lawyer carries out pre-purchase investigation in order to reveal all such restrictions.

Of course, rogue developers don't even bother with planning applications. They chuck out the tenants and erase any trace of multi-occupation. In a recent typical case, even before the tenants had gone, the vendor or the new owner removed the ten or so door-bell buttons at the main entrance. Within days of the people leaving, builders were removing partitions prior to works which, we gather, will convert rooms formerly occupied by young foreign students and elderly single men into just three large flats either for rent at much higher levels, or for sale.

One of the bedsit residents, a regulated tenant with security of tenure and a controlled rent was persuaded to give up a room he'd occupied for 15 years in return for £15,000 in cash, though he'd been advised by a lawyer to seek nearly

twice that. Obviously he hopes that the money is enough to pay higher rents elsewhere for the rest of his life, but he explained to us that the alternative seemed to be to stay on alone in the building while it was torn down around him.

For tenants who lack this bargaining power, things are bleaker. Some may join the homeless or turn to Camden for help, most will have to pay more rent or move further out of town. The consistent result of inner London losing low cost housing is that the lowest paid workers face the longest, most expensive, journeys into work. We all lose out as essential services face staff shortages.

CFPT is tabling proposals to Camden aimed at making sure tenants know about planning applications that affect their homes. Because some developers don't seek permission, we have suggested to the Enforcement Scrutiny Panel that there should be cross-referencing between Council departments to help detect unauthorised works – for example automatically investigating the planning status of premises that are subject to complaints about noisy building works outside lawful hours. Our assumption is that developers who ignore one regulation may be breaking others.

If you suspect an unauthorised conversion of residential property, contact Camden's Planning Department (020 7974 1911). If you prefer, tell us at CFPT and we can pass on details in confidence.

Retire a millionaire landlord in 5 years? You can on Easy Street, Eldorado.

Landlords' pressure groups who have had some success in diverting the Government from its pledges on housing must wish that people like Russ Whitney would just shut the hell up!

THE BRITISH PROPERTY FEDERATION portray their members as large, responsible, corporate bodies who would invest seriously in providing private rented housing if only there was less red tape (such as tenants' rights or planning controls). By contrast, the Small Landlords' Association would like us to imagine their members are elderly people losing their savings maintaining homes occupied by cuckoo-like rent-control tenants.

Neither image rings true to any private tenant, but nor are they as wacky as the advertisements which have recently been appearing in daily papers proclaiming "Become a Property Millionaire And Quit Work Forever in as little as 2-5 Years".

This, from New World Education, selling places on seminars about property speculation is eerily similar to ads self-proclaimed "Millionaire" Russ Whitney ran a few months ago in the London Evening Standard, under the needlessly melodramatic heading:

"MILLIONAIRE SWEARS Under Oath He Can Show London Residents How To Get Wealthy". In both, the secret of sudden riches is Buy To Let.

You wouldn't think it took a seminar to learn that Buy To Let involves borrowing cheap money to acquire property you don't need to live in, then charging high rents to people who do need to live in it (they'd prefer to buy but, sadly, smarter people like you got there first and caused prices to rise). Theoretically, your tenants' rent repays all the borrowing and then you kick them out when the market peaks and you can sell for maximum gain.

Such strategies are going out of fashion fast as property prices appear to peak and we discover how far tenants can subsidise a mortgage before malnutrition gets the better of them. Also, like many

self or wealth-improvement schemes you might wonder why, if these people have found some simple secret to happiness, they don't just get on and enjoy it. Why would they invest money advertising that they can help others go into business to compete with them?

Levity aside, you might hope that their workshops would cover the whole gamut of becoming a landlord – planning regulations, responsibility for safety and repairs, tenants' rights on notice and deposits, etc. But the theme of the ads is one of relentless avarice. A promise of easy riches that can only evoke a response from the worst chancers, bankrupts and deadbeats you could imagine – the kind of people you want nothing to do with, especially not as the owner of your home.

We quote from New World:

"Purchase unlimited amounts of property using none of your own money".

"Purchase property up to 30% BELOW market value to create instant equity to fund your next property".

"Access to UNIQUE BUY TO LET FINANCE ... based on rental income not your personal financial position".

"Quantify a property's TRUE value in seconds".

"Protect yourself against vacancy, bad tenants"

"Pay LITTLE TO NO TAX LEGALLY"

"Pay LITTLE TO NO TAX LEGALLY"

From Russ Whitney:

"Buy property with LITTLE OR NO FUNDS DOWN"

"Turn a cash profit every month ... "

"Buy properties – even with bad credit."

"Increase property values regardless of market conditions."

"Legally reduce your taxes."

If you have any remaining doubts,

"Russ Whitney, American self made Millionaire (sic) and Best Selling Author, amassed a personal fortune in real estate by age 27 using little to no funds down. Once he mastered this secret technique, he converted a small amount of seed money into \$4.7 million."

That doesn't sound much these days, but Mr Whitney's picture suggests he's now closer to 47 and not unfamiliar with the rug-weavers' art. Twenty years ago £3 million was quite a lot of money, even in the property game.

In case you're still holding back, there's a "Free Gift For You. Free Gift For Attending. You'll receive a free gift to help get you started – just for attending". Russ Whitney (surely the sort of name you acquire by deed poll) comes from the "Tell them what you're going to tell them. Tell them. And then tell them what you've told them" school of instructors.

Enjoy!

Thanks to A.M. for this piece, which does not necessarily reflect the views of CFPT.

An alternative to the standard view

WE WERE AMUSED BY A LETTER WRITTEN TO the Evening Standard by City resident Rex Pointon, regarding claims by the Standard's landlord apologists such as Mira Bar Hillel, that if today's outrageous rents ever come down it will discourage new build of property for rent, thus reducing supply (thereby increasing rents ... ?).

Our readers will be familiar with the fact that most landlords don't actually build properties but instead carve ever-smaller divisions from existing buildings at ever-higher

rents. Most would not divest themselves of property were rents lowered, simply because other investments still wouldn't match the combination of growth, income and security enjoyed in the property rental market. And, anyway, such conveniently simplistic views don't explain why new house build has been at an all time low for the last 20 years whilst rents have rocketed.

Mr Pointon takes a slightly different approach, however, stating that landlords who own multiple properties are greedily using up

supply that could be bought by others. His proposed solution is to tax investment property and second homes to force landlords to sell up and release property onto the market so that more people can become owner-occupiers. Sounds a bit like the original idea behind Right to Buy for council tenants, where previous governments starved local authorities of the funds needed to maintain housing and introduced legislation forcing council landlords to sell up.

Letter to the Editor

Estate agents damage communities

The increased number of estate agencies in Camden is no more welcome than the bogus For Sale boards that litter our streets. The agents' sterile storefronts have replaced retailers valued by locals, such as Hampstead's last independent record shop in West End Lane. Finchley Road has lost a deli, a bookshop and a driving school. Perhaps worse, the omnipresent boards are evidence that homes in London no longer represent the fabric of a community, but have been hyped up beyond the means of ordinary residents. They are now largely the domain of speculators and the absentee freeholders or landlords whom the agents serve. And how many of Britain's homeless could be housed, if the millions of metres of timber used to construct estate agents' signs, were instead employed in house-building?

Name and address supplied

The opinions expressed above do not necessarily reflect those of CFPT – Ed.

Sign Wars: agents Foxtons admit wrongdoing

London's largest estate agent chain has confessed to dirty tricks against homeowners and rivals, according to a report in the 'Metro' newspaper. Former senior employee Steven Hewitt admitted that he had ordered the firm's board erectors to remove as many as 100 rival firms' For Sale and To Let signs every night and replace them with Foxtons boards. He said the firm also put up boards on other properties they had no connection with. The company is likely to face investigation by the Office of Fair Trading and may be open to litigation from other estate

agents and the owners of affected properties.

The firm has also made itself unpopular locally by permitting employees to park illegally in Heath Street Hampstead endangering schoolchildren by obstructing a pedestrian crossing, according to local Councillor Mike Greene who criticised Camden wardens for turning a blind eye. Foxtons' Hampstead branch manager Cliff Gardiner admitted the offence, saying that there was nowhere else they could stop when picking up clients.



Kept in the dark

A CAMDEN TOWN RESIDENT CAME TO SEE us recently horrified to discover that her landlord had applied for planning permission to split her home into three flats – and to build a hostel in space at the back of the building.

Though a neighbour had been directly notified of the application in a letter from Camden, Miss B, who is a regulated tenant, only found out about the application when she spotted a notice tied to a lamppost nearby. It seems extraordinary that she had not been notified though she has lived in the property more than 20 years and the plan directly affects her home. The tenants of commercial premises below her had also not been informed.

Past the 21 day response limit and desperate for information, Miss B contacted Camden's planning department to find out what was happening and what rights she had. Miss B was amazed to learn that neither landlord nor Camden Council had any duty to inform her of the application.

She was supplied with copy of the original notice, but she was not referred to Camden's Housing Advice Service, which might have been sensible in the circumstances. She approached them independently and the HAS tried to

alleviate her fears, pointing out that planning applications take a long time and there is no guarantee that her landlord would be granted permission to carry out such works. Understandably, Miss B has been very distressed by the concern that she might lose her home.

Tenants who find themselves in this type of situation are routinely subject to great stress caused by the feeling that they are powerless in a matter as vital as the future of their home. The fact is, their housing situation has little bearing on the outcome of a planning application. Their rights will depend on their tenancy type. Regulated tenants like Miss B are protected from homelessness, as a worst-case scenario would involve her landlord finding her suitable alternative accommodation. Assured tenants have similar protection but, unfortunately for Assured Shorthold tenants (the majority of private renters in Camden) once past the fixed term, two months notice to quit is all that is needed.

CFPT has contacted the Environment Department flagging up this problem, and argued that good practice should dictate that residents are notified of planning applications affecting the property they live in. Also, that some sort of

mechanism should exist to 'signpost' tenants in this situation to the Housing Advice Service. CFPT has been informed that Assistant Director of Planning, Anne Doherty, is confident that a new planning management information system called MVM will improve matters substantially, but that further tests will be made.

If your landlord has applied for planning permission that might substantially affect your home, contact Camden's Housing Advice Service on 020 7974 5801 (South) or 020 7974 8855 (North).

Camden Planning Applications are shown on the Council's website; go to www.camden.gov.uk and search under P for Planning. Anyone can comment on an application, but only 'planning' comments can be considered. Broadly speaking these are on: – Design and layout – External appearance and materials – Access for disabled people – Loss of daylight, sunlight and privacy of neighbours – Noise nuisance – Traffic and parking issues – Loss of, or an increase in, a particular type or use of land. You can send your comments within 21 days of the application to Development Control, Camden Town Hall, Argyle St, WC1H 8ND

Government calls for HB restrictions for Anti-social tenants

AS THE GOVERNMENT'S WAR ON ANTI-SOCIAL behaviour heats up with the recently published consultation paper *Housing Benefit Sanctions and Anti-Social Behaviour*, we came across a case which we had been predicting would happen for some time.

A Belsize Regulated tenant, who has suffered from years of landlord harassment, received a letter from her landlord's solicitor threatening her with an anti-social behaviour order. The solicitor, rather stupidly, referred to a supposed incident of the tenant's vandalism (she was accused of deliberately smashing the stair banister whilst shouting that her landlord was a wealthy man and could afford to fix it), stating a day

and exact time when the incident was apparently witnessed by others. The tenant was able to verify that she had in fact been in a meeting with her Councillor at the time in question – discussing the problems she was having with her landlord.

It is incredible that a solicitor should make such unfounded allegations, but not perhaps so very surprising, given the absolute determination of his client in getting this tenant out of the property. The tenant had no fear of this attempt – the latest in a long line – to eject her, as the accusations were completely and comically false.

However, the Government's seeming determination to

implement this policy, against the arguments of housing and homelessness groups such as Shelter that the policy won't work but merely cause more homelessness, and against the arguments of landlords who rightly say that they are the ones who end up housing those that no-one else will, is very worrying.

The consultation paper *Housing Benefit Sanctions and Anti-Social Behaviour* is available on www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/ 2003, CFPT have a number of copies to give away, please call on 020 7383 0151 – closing date for responses is 12 August.

Under-claim of Council Tax Benefit

Incredibly, over 50% of Council Tax Benefit claimants who were contacted by Camden's Benefits Service inviting them to claim extra benefits didn't respond.

Camden was disappointed at the results of the exercise, which was targeted at claimants who had their benefit restricted because they lived in a property banded F, G or H.

They are urging those who didn't claim now rather than waiting until the end of the financial year, when the exercise is likely to be repeated.

If you would like to find out more and see if you qualify contact the Council on 020 7974 6470, or, you can get a Discretionary Housing Payment form from CFPT's offices, call on 020 7383 0151.

Prescott eviction bid

John Prescott is being threatened with eviction from his Clapham flat to make way for key and low paid worker housing. Prescott, whose brief includes tackling the affordable housing crisis, rented the subsidised RMT flat for more than 30 years. He was given until June 20th to leave the flat, but failed to do so. The RMT union is now likely to go to court to get possession.

Landlord caves in to Leaseholder Pressure

It looks like a victory for the residents of Beacon House in West Hampstead after their freeholder pulled the decision to allow a Vodafone mobile phone mast on top of their block of flats. The 25 flat block of leaseholders were united in their objection to the plan on the grounds that it would affect their health and that of neighbours, forcing their freeholder to back down, and prompting Ward Councillor Phil Turner to call it a victory for 'people power'.

There are mounting health fears over the masts which can also affect the price of property and an owners' ability to sell on.

ARLA offers landlords career guidance

The Buy to Let boom, although slowed considerably, has resulted in many more people seeking to make a living in lettings and residential management. As returns are still relatively strong and property seems to remain the safe place to put one's money, people are continuing to invest in Buy to Let properties. The Association of Residential Letting Agents has responded by offering a new industry qualification whilst widening its range of membership categories for individuals. The Technical Award in Residential Letting and Property Management has been approved by the government's Qualification and Curriculum Authority.

Visit ARLA's website at www.arla.co.uk for more information.

Get the Knowledge!

We have *Sweet & Maxwell's Encyclopaedia of Housing Law and Practice* for private tenants and leaseholders to consult absolutely free of charge. The Encyclopaedia covers every aspect of landlord/tenant law including the principal Housing Acts and Statutory Instruments, so if you want to check up on the finer points of law contact the office on 020 7383 0151 to book an appointment. We also have Shelter's Housing Advice Factsheets, a comprehensive and easy to follow manual giving you the facts on your housing problems.



At least somebody loves them!

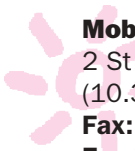
Did you know?

CFPT has a wide range of information leaflets on all issues relevant to private tenants and private leaseholders.

If you would like any of the following free information leaflets, please contact our offices (details on back pg) and we will send you the information free of charge:

- Assured and Assured Shorthold Tenancies
- Regulated Tenancies
- Repairs – a guide for landlords and tenants
- Unfair tenancy terms – don't get caught out
- Long Residential Tenancies – your right to security of tenure
- Long Leaseholders
- Notice that you must leave – a brief guide for landlords and tenants
- Bothered by Noise – There's no need to suffer
- My Landlord Wants Me Out – protection against harassment and illegal eviction
- Right of first refusal – for long leaseholders and other tenants in privately owned flats
- Leasehold flats – your right to buy the freehold of your building or renew your lease
- Lease running out? Security of tenure for long leaseholders
- Applying to a Leasehold Valuation Tribunal – service charges, insurance, management
- Home repair assistance
- A Practical Guide For Protecting & Maintaining Your Home (Age Concern)
- Dealing With Your Debts (Rent)
- DIY Home Energy Check
- Have a warmer, healthier home – grants from the Government's Home Energy Efficiency Scheme

And many more from making a small claim to County Court Fees. Contact us today for your copies.



Mobile Repair Service

2 St Pauls Road, London N1 2QN Tel: 722 8431
(10.30-12.30pm Mon-Fri or answering machine)

Fax: 020 7704 0391

Email: Services@mobilerepairservice.org.uk

Please quote "Safe As Houses"

Free safety measures

"Safe As Houses" is promoting three services, which are aimed at making Camden safer.

1. Free 10-year smoke alarms

This project aims to fit 10 year smoke alarms for anyone who needs one in the Camden Neighbourhood Renewal areas.

2. Free security packs for elderly persons

Elderly persons throughout Camden can ask for a security check against a list drawn up with the help of Camden Police. We then fit any locks and other items identified in agreement with the service user. Priority will go to owner-occupiers and private tenants and to those living in the Neighbourhood Renewal areas. The security equipment that can be fitted free of charge include:

- Mortice locks and window lock
- Spyholes and door bars
- Strengthening for the door and locks

- Equipment to help deal with people calling at the door such as memo minders, door bar, mirror
- Letterbox guard.

3. Safety equipment for families with small children

The project is able to fit safety equipment for families with young children under 4 years old, living in one of the Neighbourhood Renewal areas. This service is being provided with the support of the Camden Sure Start network.

The Neighbourhood Renewal areas:

- Gospel Oak
- Kings Cross
- Caversham
- Highgate New Town
- Bloomsbury
- West Euston
- Camden Central
- Kilburn
- Holborn
- Adelaide

This service is aimed at families in receipt of benefits or who for other reasons could not buy or fit the equipment without help. Following a safety check, free equipment fitted could include:

- Stairgates
- Cupboard catches
- Window locks
- Furniture corner cushions

Camden's Home Safety and Security Delivery Group are developing an effective and integrated strategy to improve safety and security in Camden. So it is an initiative in which the Fire Brigade, Camden Primary Care Trust and Mobile repair Service are working in partnership to reduce risk of injury.

Like to know more? Call the Mobile Repair Service on **020 7226 8431** quoting Safe as Houses, or email on services@mobilerepairservice.org.uk

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

This Mark means that we offer a Quality Assured Information Service.

Community
Legal Service



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