

Camden Federation of Private Tenants

ANNUAL REPORT



April 2015 – March 2016

The voice of private renters in Camden

Directors as at 31st March 2016:

Zoe Seager (Chair)
Rita Legros (Secretary)
Safder Ali (Treasurer from June 2016)
Susan Aykroyd
Constantine Buhayer
Melissa Fernandez (to October 2015)
Carolyn Harms

Saoirse Keating (to October 2015)
John McMillan
Gordon Meenn
Sarah Mitchell
John Morris (to August 2015)
Vic Seedman (Treasurer to June 2016)
Simone Stenfors

Staff team:

Robert Taylor (Organiser, since April 2008)
Meade McCloughan (Assistant Organiser, since April 2008)
Rosie Walker (Renters' Rights London, since August 2014)

Volunteers:

Rita Brayshaw
Philipp Bejol
Marisa Marcos Martin
Daisy Penido
Alex Kilkenny

Registered office:

13 Malden Road
London
NW5 3HS

Camden Federation of Private Tenants is registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 as the Camden Federation for Private Tenants Ltd, registration number 25086R (England & Wales).



Thanks to our core funder Camden Council for its ongoing financial support

Thanks also to Trust for London for funding the Renters' Rights London project, and to The Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust for financially supporting our tenant's newsletter and Camden Carer's Service for a research project



Chair's Report 2016

As the new Chair of CFPT's management committee, I have been in the incredibly fortunate position of starting at a time where, for the first time in a long while, we have two years of funding agreed in advance. This stability has been invaluable, allowing us as a management committee, and CFPT as an organisation, to sit back and think a little more long term, reviewing our various strategies and engaging in a variety of important activities. We are incredibly grateful that Camden Council continues to recognise the value we bring to the Borough, which has been reflected in a range of our ongoing activities both in support of the Council's PRS (private rented sector) strategy and renters in Camden.

We are thrilled to have a co-opted member on the Council's Housing Scrutiny Committee to continue to ensure the PRS is as high as possible on the political agenda this year, a role very ably filled by Vic Seedman, a longstanding Camden resident and member of our management committee. In recognition of the growing number of private renters in Camden, a PRS Scrutiny Panel was set up to investigate and make recommendations to improve the sector in Camden. We along with other organisations gave evidence to this Panel, and we are noted as being instrumental in the framing of a number of the recommendations put forward. This has been an excellent opportunity for CFPT to provide the voice that private renters need directly to the Council, and we based all our evidence on the experiences that our members and those renters we have engaged with over the years have brought to us. Vic continues to serve on the Housing Scrutiny Committee, and will continue to provide the much-needed voice of private renters whilst they consider the officers' responses to their report.

Another exciting activity which started this year is the establishment of the first ever borough wide group for housing association residents. This group has been formed with the specific aim of improving the relationship between these often large landlords and their residents, which we believe can be achieved much more effectively as a collective rather than as isolated individuals.

Further afield, our Renters' Rights London project has had another successful year, and we are looking forward to the next ten months of outreach and engagement activities to make sure the voices of renters across London are clearly heard, and to also help them understand their rights when dealing with any individual issues they may have. We also look forward to working more closely with the national organisation, Generation Rent on this important work, as we share much in common, and by working together we can reach the greatest number of renters and provide the strongest possible voice for renters in the capital.

We will be working hard as always to build our membership across diverse groups in Camden, and will be providing as many opportunities as possible for renters to come together and be heard. We will also be undertaking further fundraising efforts to help ensure that we continue to be here for Camden renters long into the future.

Finally, I would like to extend our gratitude to Sarah Mitchell, who after six years as Chair of the management committee has stepped down to concentrate on her new role as Vice-Chair of the Nationwide Foundation, not to mention her day job. We wouldn't be where we are today without all Sarah's hard work, dedication and leadership.

Zoe Seager

Our year in numbers

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Newsletters we produced and distributed | 1 |
| Meetings, events we held | 9 |
| Outreach events/stalls we did | 2 |
| Unique website visitors per month on average | 631 |
| Social media (Twitter followers) | 16.5% increase |
| New members who joined | 47 |
| New projects we started | 2 |
| Information leaflets we produced and distributed | 3500 |
| Individual tenants we empowered and supported | 99 |
| Individual tenants we signposted to other services/organisations | 23 |
| Direct project beneficiaries | 584 |

Moving to a new home

In the middle of what was another very busy year, we moved to a new office in Malden Road, NW5 and were very pleased to have councillors Sarah Hayward (Leader of the Council), Danny Beales (Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Committee) and Lorraine Revah (Mayor of Camden) at our launch event.



Sarah Mitchell, Chair of the Management Committee addressing guests at our new office "welcome" event

A big thanks to Osbornes Solicitors, who are based in Pratt Street in Camden Town, for the free use of their ground floor meeting room for our Camden Housing Association Residents Group meetings.



Improving the relationship between Camden's housing associations and their residents

At the beginning of 2016, we set up the first ever borough wide group for housing association (HA) tenants. This was in response to a recommendation made by Camden Council's Housing Scrutiny Committee and growing concerns that many people felt their landlords were unaccountable and weren't listening and responding to their needs.



However, in recognition of the fact that these landlords now cover tenants, shared ownership, leaseholders and also people on "affordable" and market rents, the group now covers all residents of HAs and housing co-op tenants as well.

The purpose of the group is to:

- Improve engagement between HAs and their residents
- Make HAs more responsive to the needs of their residents
- Give politicians and policymakers the residents' perspective of HAs with a view to bringing about change and improvements in how they operate

Renters' Rights London (RRL) project year in numbers

There is a housing crisis in London and most private renters feel powerless, but this is slowly changing as they begin to arm themselves with knowledge, speak out about their individual experiences and call for a fairer renting system.

In response to this, Camden Federation of Private Tenants created Renters' Rights London (RRL) in 2014, which is the first ever city wide information, education and engagement project for the capital's 2.7 million private renters.

We not only teach renters about their rights – we campaign for more of them, because a privately rented room, flat or house is not a landlord's cash cow; it's somebody's home.

We also think privately rented homes should be decent, secure and affordable, and we think local councils should intervene when they're not. We want every private renter in London to stand up for their rights and we want the Mayor, politicians, local authorities and landlords to listen when they do.

Organise or play active role in face-to-face events for private renters:

3

Attend other meetings and events:

13

Involve renters online:

7,000 people

Information packs produced and distributed:

330

Encourage and support the setting up of local private renter groups:

2 and 1 "how to" guide produced

For more information about the project go to:

www.rentersrightslondon.org

Election hustings meetings

We organised two very well attended meetings on the subject of housing during the 2015 Election, in Swiss Cottage Library (below) and Marchmont Community Centre in the south of the borough.



Working together with Camden Carers Service (CCS)

In September 2015, we received a small amount of funding from Camden Carers Service to promote their organisation amongst our members and increase the awareness and take-up of the help and support that is available through this organisation.

The project was split into two phases:

- The first part consisted of a covering letter and CCS information leaflet being mailed out to 300 of our members
- The second part consisted of a follow-up phone call being made to 104 of our members



Breakdown of people we spoke to:

- 71% were aged over 60 years of age
- 29% were aged between 35 and 60 years of age.
- 43% were male
- 57% were females
- 19% were BAME



Treasurer's Report 2016

CFPT continues to grow! Our income is up by nearly 15%, following a similar increase last year. This year has seen the first full year of funding from the Trust for London for the Renters' Rights London project, with this coming over on top of continued support from the London Borough of Camden for the organization's core activities.

As with last year, the accounts show the income and expenditure split into two funds, the 'General Fund' covering CFPT's core work and the 'Restricted Fund' covering the Renters' Rights London project, both of which ended the year in surplus.

With the 'General Fund', the surplus has been generated by our success in raising additional funds (£7,949 in 'donations and other income'), combined with somewhat reduced activity during the period when we were busy moving into and fixing up the new office. Now we are settled in, we are expanding our activities on the basis of the healthy financial position we find ourselves in. But we also have to bear in mind that we will have to bear increased costs in the future, notably as a result of the incremental removal of our rent subsidy over the three years from January 2017.

The great bulk of our funding continues to come from London Borough of Camden, specifically the Housing and Adult Social Care Department. The stability and reliability of the Council's support has been crucial not just in enabling CFPT to keep going over the recent years, but also to expand. We are currently still benefiting from a two year funding arrangement, which will take us through to the end of September 2017.

The Balance Sheet shows overall reserves of £21,817. This figure includes two designated reserve funds instituted by the Management Committee seven years ago. These are (i) a redundancy fund, currently standing at £10,230, and (ii) a premises fund, currently standing at £4,766. The intention is to increase these funds each year in line with the organisation's potential future liabilities.

On behalf of the Management Committee, I would like to thank once again our main funders, the London Borough of Camden and the Trust for London, for their continuing support of the organisation, and also thank both the Hampstead Wells and Campden Trust and Camden Carers Service for funding specific activities during the year.

Safder Ali

Copies of the full certified accounts are available on request from the staff.

Camden Federation of Private Tenants

Balance Sheet at 31 March 2016

| | 2016 | | 2015 | |
|--|--------|---------------|---------|---------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Current assets | | | | |
| Debtors | 4,675 | | 207 | |
| Cash at bank and in hand | 23,240 | | 27,149 | |
| Creditors: | | | | |
| - amounts falling due within one year | -6,098 | | -11,056 | |
| Total assets less current liabilities | | 21,817 | | 16,300 |
| Capital and reserves | | | | |
| Called up share capital | | 382 | | 385 |
| Designed Funds | | 14,996 | | 12,709 |
| Renters Right London fund | | 2,519 | | -736 |
| Income and expenditure reserve | | 3,920 | | 3,942 |
| Total funds | | 21,817 | | 16,300 |

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 March 2016

| | General Fund | Restricted Grant | Total 2016 | Total 2015 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| | CFPT | Renters' Rights London | | |
| Income | | | | |
| - Grant: London Borough of Camden | 54,400 | 0 | 54,400 | 56,033 |
| - Grant: Trust for London | 0 | 23,000 | 23,000 | 15,333 |
| - Donations & other income | 7,949 | 3,333 | 11,282 | 5,965 |
| Total Income | 62,349 | 26,333 | 88,682 | 77,331 |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| - Salaries | 38,152 | 14,248 | 52,400 | 46,166 |
| - Recruitment costs | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1,134 |
| - Rent & services | 8,931 | 4,900 | 13,831 | 14,078 |
| - Management charges & overheads | 0 | 3,046 | 3,046 | 2,016 |
| - Insurance | 1,193 | 0 | 1,193 | 1,183 |
| - Repairs & maintenance | 2,486 | 0 | 2,486 | 1,189 |
| - Stationery | 2,240 | 420 | 2,660 | 2,583 |
| - Projects & events | 1,519 | 0 | 1,519 | 657 |
| - Telephone | 2,588 | 0 | 2,588 | 1,124 |
| - Equipment & IT costs | 558 | 0 | 558 | 1,524 |
| - Website costs | 0 | 108 | 108 | 1,679 |
| - Travelling expenses | 62 | 196 | 258 | 86 |
| - Accountancy & payroll | 234 | 0 | 234 | 216 |
| - Audit | 1,620 | 0 | 1,620 | 1,440 |
| - Sundry expenses | 247 | 160 | 407 | 172 |
| - Subscriptions | 254 | 0 | 254 | 320 |
| Total expenditure | 60,084 | 23,078 | 83,162 | 75,567 |
| Income less expenditure | 2,265 | 3,255 | 5,520 | 1,764 |
| - movements in reserves (from 2015) | 736 | -736 | 0 | 0 |
| Fund balances | 3,001 | 2,519 | 5,520 | 1,764 |

Approved by the Management Committee on the 19th July 2016 and signed on its behalf by Zoe Seager and Rita Legros. This summary has been extracted from the full accounts, copies of which are available from CFPT's office.

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Funded by Camden Council