

 **Receive Updates**

Enter Email Address

GO



Camden landlord news | coronavirus update | national and local updates

London Borough of Camden sent this bulletin at 31-03-2020 12:50 PM BST



Landlord newsletter

A newsletter for HMO landlords, managing agents and letting agents in Camden



Issue 4 – Spring 2020

We hope this newsletter finds you and your families safe and well in these troubled times. Within a couple of weeks we have all gone from business as usual to vastly changed working practices. Reflecting these changes, this newsletter contains recent updates about our service, up to date guidance for landlords and tenants and other news.

Unfortunately, along with other public events, our landlord event planned for April has been postponed. This is likely be held in the autumn.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update

The new [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(England\) Regulations 2020](#) were published last week and further guidance on business closure can be found [here](#) (section 2 relates to work carried out in people's homes). The offices of managing and letting agents will be closed, but landlords and tenants must still be able to contact them by telephone, email and online.

Landlords and their agents are encouraged to work closely with their tenants at this time, both in relation to their ability to maintain rent payments and also works that might be needed. In general the Council is only expecting essential works to be carried out at the moment - these are issues which will affect your tenant's ability to live safely and maintain their mental and physical health in the property. In relation to legally required gas and electrical checks, you should make every effort to work with your tenants and contractors to ensure the checks take place - and document attempts made to carry out checks where it has not been possible. COVID-19 advice from Gas Safe can be found [here](#).

Housing possession claims [have been suspended](#) from 27 March and, under the new legislation, most landlords will not be able to start possession proceedings unless they have given their tenants three months' notice.

The Council is committed to ensuring private tenants have a safe place to call home, particularly during this current crisis, and so are maintaining a complaints service for tenants to report disrepair, harassment and any threats of eviction.

In relation to [HMO licensing](#), we are now issuing licences based on the information provided at application and, if you have an application pending, you will be contacted by officers over the next few weeks asking for further information by email and telephone. These properties will all receive inspections once the compliance periods have expired, when information (including room sizes) will be checked. Licences may have to be varied if these inspections bring to light circumstances that differ to information provided.

Further guidance for landlords and tenants is available both on the [Council's website](#) and on the [government's website](#).



National Updates

Renters' Reform Bill

Mandatory electrical checks

As you may have heard in the Queen's Speech, the Government intends to introduce a Renters' Reform Bill to implement its manifesto commitments to deliver a fairer and more effective rental market. This will be introduced when parliamentary time allows and will:

- abolish the use of 'no fault' evictions by removing section 21 of the Housing Act 1988
- strengthen the rights of landlords who need to gain possession of their property through the courts where there is a legitimate need for them to do so by reforming current legislation
- introduce a new lifetime deposit to ease the burden when tenants choose to move

Pet rent

The Secretary of State has announced a revision of the model tenancy agreement for shorthold assured tenancies in the private rented sector. The revision will make it easier for tenants with pets to find landlords who will accept them. It removes restrictions on responsible tenants with pets and encourages landlords who use the model tenancy agreement to offer greater flexibility in their approach to pet ownership. The revised model tenancy agreement will be published on Gov.uk shortly.



New legislation coming in shortly will make it a legal requirement for private landlords to have electrical installations inspected every five years, fix any serious problems and give tenants and the Council a copy of the report. Councils will be able to issue large fines to landlords who do not comply.

The regulations will apply to all new tenancies from 1 July 2020. All existing tenancies will be covered by the regulations from 1 April 2021.

This is already a requirement for HMOs under the HMO management regulations and we ask for a copy of the certificate when landlords apply for a licence.

Other landlords should be booking in inspections as soon as possible. Competent electricians can be found online and [Electrical Safety First](#) and the [ECP](#) are good places to start. Government advice on the impact of COVID-19 on this legislation can be found [here](#).

Velux windows - safety warning

VELUX has released a product warning over their VELUX roof windows installed between 1997 and 2003 due to a risk of the inner glass sheet spontaneously breaking, posing risk of injury. Further information can be found at <http://velux-pw.velux.co.uk/> or by contacting VELUX on 0345 111 4414.

Local updates and information

Short term and holiday lets

There are as many as 7,000 properties in Camden currently used for short term letting, many of which are unlawful. This results in the loss of much needed permanent homes and can often lead to noise, problems with refuse and other anti-social behaviour for neighbours.

The law only allows the renting of an entire property as a holiday home/short term let by the person liable for the council tax and where the total number of holiday let days over the calendar year is not more than 90 days.

[New research](#) by Camden Council estimates that nearly half of the short term let properties available in the borough last year exceeded the legal 90-night allowance.

If you think a flat or house is being used as a holiday home/short term let please tell us and we will investigate (planning@camden.gov.uk).

The planning enforcement team will take robust action against unlawful holiday/short lets. For more information, please visit the Council's [webpages](#) on short term letting which also includes a COVID-19 update.

Help with finding good trades people

We have compiled a [list](#) of the most commonly used trade associations and organisations which will help you find competent and professional trades people and companies to carry out work needed to your property. Whilst the Council cannot recommend particular trades people or companies, these organisations train, vet or

HMO licensing consultation

The consultation regarding renewing our HMO licensing scheme has now finished. We were very pleased to see a large number of our landlords in Camden took the time to respond. In total we received 1,063 responses from people living and working in Camden and the neighbouring boroughs, and 274 of these were landlords and agents. The results will now be analysed and will inform a decision whether to renew the scheme and if so, what form the scheme will take.

Look out for the summer newsletter and keep an eye on our website for updates and further information.

Government awards Camden additional funding

The private sector housing team have recently been successful in winning two funding bids from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

This first part of this funding will enable the Council to develop ways of engaging and empowering private tenants, a key result of this will be an online 'one stop shop' which will direct tenants to relevant Council services and also support provided by external partners. The second bid is enabling the Council to access private rented sector stock condition information which will help us target properties and areas of the borough more strategically. The [Building Research Establishment \(BRE\)](#) has been helping us with this.

rate their members which allows you to be better informed when making a choice about who to use.

Rogue landlords

The Council is continuing to take more enforcement action against rogue landlords than any other London borough. This is mainly against landlords and agents who fail to license or who breach licence conditions. The new rogue landlord task force set up a few months ago to target the most vulnerable tenants in the borough took their first [prosecution](#) recently.

If you own, rent or manage an HMO you need to make sure you have an HMO licence and comply with the conditions. Our [webpages](#) contain useful information and if you still have any questions, contact the HMO licensing team (details below).

Contact the team

If you would like any further information concerning your HMO licence, or to report an unlicensed HMO, please contact the HMO licensing team: hmolicensing@camden.gov.uk or phone the team on: 020 7974 5969.

POWERED BY



[Privacy Policy](#) | [Cookie Statement](#) | [Help](#)