**St Silas heating replacement scheme – frequently asked questions (FAQs)**

**For properties that will have their communal heating system renewed (Southfleet, Headcorn, Chiriton, Chislet, Leysdown, Fordcombe and Burmarsh)**

**November 2018**

Please see below for a list of frequently asked questions sent in to us from residents of the St Silas estate, along with our responses. If you have any questions or comments please contact me on:

Andrew Georgiou

E: andrew.georgiou@camden.gov.uk

T: 0207 974 5994.

For service charge queries, leaseholders can also contact:

Michael O’Sullivan

E: Michael.OSullivan@camden.gov.uk

T: 020 7974 4452

1. **When will the work start?**

Work inside flats will start in 2019, a programme will be sent to residents as soon as it is available. You may see workers onsite before this, as they will be working on the properties which are having individual boilers installed. Residents will receive more information on start dates nearer the time, and there will be further engagement meetings about the works.

1. **Will you redecorate after the work?**

Disturbance to decorations is normally minimal, and any damage will be ‘made good’, which means holes/cracks filled and surfaces left in a finished condition. We cannot offer any further decoration such as matching with previous paints or wallpapers. Radiators will be powder coated white finish. Pipework to the radiators will be surface mounted and will be painted white.

1. **How will you make sure the work is of a good standard?**

The Council employs Quality Assurance officers and the Contract Manager monitors the quality of the works for handover. This means that it is an officer from the council who will be performing the quality checks on the contractor’s work. If you are unhappy about the works we have a set complaints procedure for works onsite, which is as follows:

1. Report issues to the contractors Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) in the first instance and he/she will attempt to rectify your complaint. The RLO will be hired once the contract starts and their details will be made available by post, in person and online.
2. If you do not feel your complaint is dealt with satisfactorily, report your complaint to the Camden Contracts Manager who will investigate. The contract manager for this scheme is Andrew Georgiou.

E: andrew.georgiou@camden.gov.uk

T: 0207 974 5994.

1. If the Contract Manager is unable to resolve the complaint, you may wish to make a formal complaint using our complaints procedure. Please write to our Housing Customer Assurance Central Team on: London Borough of Camden 5th Floor, 5 Pancras Square c/o Town Hall, Judd Street London WC1H 9JE or fill in the complaints form online at: [camden.gov.uk/complaints](http://www.camden.gov.uk/complaints)
2. **How long will overall project take?**

The overall project will take up to 2 years to complete, we have received a draft programme from the contractor and we will release the details of this when it is finalised. We will also be updating the timeline on the website.

1. **Will I have to take time off for appointments?**

Works inside the flats will require the contractor to have access to your home. This will be arranged with you via the contractor’s Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) and they can discuss times and dates of appointments with you, as well as any holidays you may have booked.

1. **Will I lose cupboard space in my flat?**

This will depend on the configuration of the flat. If you have a hot water storage cylinder currently in your home the Heat Interface Unit (HIU) will replace this. A designer will visit your home to do a drawing of the flat, which will show you where the ideal position will be. In some cases, there may be a choice and the designer will discuss this with you.

1. **Where can I find drawings and project information?**

This project is a ‘design and build’ contract, which means that the contractor will design the system. This means that our current drawings are to be used as a guide only, and you will be issued with accurate drawings for your flat as detailed above. The St Silas heating scheme has a webpage on the main Camden website, which we are updating. Please use the following link:

is.gd/U60PB5

Alternatively, if you go to www.camden.gov.uk and type ‘St Silas’ into the search bar at the top this should also take you to the page.

1. **Will all pipe work be boxed in?**

The majority of the pipework will not be boxed in. ‘Boxed in’ means the pipework is fitted with a cover that looks similar to a skirting board.

You can choose if you want the pipework boxed in or not. If you do not wish to have it boxed in, the pipework will be left on show and painted white.

If you choose boxing in, it will be done as follows:

*Boxing of pipework to be carcassed and enclosed with MDF or ply board with cups and screws. Alternatively melamine finished ‘Pendock’ may be fitted. Shiplap / plastic cladding type covering will not be permitted. Pipework boxing to be primed, undercoated and top coated with white emulsion.*

1. **Will pipe work be lagged?**

Pipework not in view will be lagged (covered with insulating material).

1. **Are you aware of the number of feeds & stacks?**

Yes. From the plant rooms, there will be one primary flow and return circuit to all dwellings (2-pipes) and these will enter the properties at a new point of entry.

1. **Will the heating & hot water systems be separate?**

One pair of heating and hot water flow and return pipework will be provided to the heat interface unit (HIU) from the central boiler plant.

1. **Who is responsible for maintaining the new communal system?**

Camden Council’s maintenance team contractor will be responsible for the continued maintenance of the communal heating system and the HIUs. If you opt-out of the internal works then the internal pipework will be your responsibility, please see question 21 for details.

1. **How will the bulk gas discount be applied and will we still receive money back from heating charge?**

Heating costs under the replacement system will initially be billed on the same basis you are billed currently. The main boilers for the heating and hot water system will continue to benefit from the Council’s bulk gas purchase contract and lower gas prices.

Please note that over the next two years the Council is rolling out a new computer system which will mean that residents with new communal heating systems and heat meters installed will only pay for the heat they use within their property plus a standing charge. The Council will contact all residents once the new system is ready and when heat meters will be used to generate bills.

1. **What measures will be put in place to protect the elderly & those with young children from a dramatic price increase for heating flats?**

When the billing for heating and hot water system is switched over to heat meters, residents will be charged according to how much heat and hot water they use. Residents will also be able to monitor how much heat and hot water they have used. We also have officers who can provide advice on energy use, details will be provided when the system goes live.

If you are a tenant then you will be billed for the heating and hot water through your rent as you currently do, meaning you will continue to have the support of our rents department.

For more information on how to use your heating controls efficiently residents will also be able to visit www.camden.gov.uk/wellandwarm. If you would like advice about how to keep well and warm at home over the winter months, you can call the Green Camden Helpline on 0800 801 738.

1. **Which heat interface units (HIUs) are to be used?**

A Worcester Bosch Greenstar HIU, Altecnic HIU, and the SAV HIU are available and have been used on other estates. As this is a design and build contract the contractor Invicta will select the most suitable unit for the project in conjunction with the Camden contracts manager.

1. **Who will be responsible for regular maintenance of the heat interface unit (HIU) to prevent blockages?**

Camden Council’s maintenance term contractor will be responsible for the continued maintenance of the whole heating and hot water system. The actual HIUs require very little maintenance.

1. **Will all heat interface units (HIUs) be covered (thermal casing, not exposed exchanger) & boxed in correctly & comply with all current regulations?**

Yes all HIUs will comply with current regulations, and all new units installed are available with manufacturer’s thermal insulation outer casing.

1. **What efficiency rating will the lagging have? How will the thermal interface between internal pipe work, external mounted, & external ground pipe work be maintained?**

Insulation performance will be to the requirements of Part L Building Regulations as a minimum throughout the estate. Underground pipework will be pre-insulated at the time of manufacture, with the exception of fittings (“tees”, “bends” etc.), which will be installed and secured on site by the specialist installers. Underground pipework will be protected by a fully monitored leak detection system.

1. **Will the system include isolation valves to each incoming point within each flat?**

Yes, the new heating circuit will be installed with new isolating valves.

1. **What are the exact works that will be done inside the flat?**

The works inside the flat would be the installation of a heat interface unit (HIU) in your property, replacement of the distribution pipework and radiators and reconnection to your hot water taps.

1. **Can leaseholders undertake any of the internal work themselves?**

As a leaseholder you will have the opportunity to ‘opt out’ of the distribution on the dwelling side of the HIU, which would mean you could hire a company of your own choosing to undertake the works inside your flat. If you chose this option, you would need to sign an ‘opt-out’ form and assume responsibility for the maintenance of the heating and hot water pipework and radiators within your flat. When the project goes onsite, an officer will process opt-out requests and their details will be sent to you.

1. **Will you do a show flat?**

If a vacant property becomes available we will talk to our housing allocations team whether it can be used for a show flat. We do like to do this but as you would understand, we have a large housing waiting list and we are not always able to make properties available.