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

**For properties to receive new individual heating systems (Halstow, Lenham, Wingham, Westwell, Stonegate)**

**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?**

We have received a draft programme for the works showing when the works could start and how the works would be organised. Once this is reviewed, we will send you a further update with start dates. You will also receive an invitation to a ‘Meet the Contractor’ Meeting where you will meet the site team responsible for 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 Liason 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.

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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. **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 layout of the flat. If you have a hot water storage cylinder currently in your home, a combination boiler could be installed in tis position, subject to the route of the exhaust flue. You will be given a drawing of your flat, which will show where your new boiler will go. 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?**

Hidden pipework will be lagged (covered with insulating material).

1. **Will I be able to control my heating and hot water independently from my neighbours?**

Yes, you will have total control over your heating and hot water, as it will not be linked with any other flat. This means if your neighbour’s boiler was to break down it would not affect you. Similarly, if you wanted to turn your heating and hot water off to go on holiday for example, this would not affect your neighbours heating and hot water.

1. **Who is responsible for maintaining the new individual boiler that will be installed in my flat?**

For leaseholders, the radiators, pipework and boiler maintenance would become the responsibility of the leaseholder. For council tenants the responsibility will remain with the council to maintain the boiler and radiators, and you would report a fault to our repairs line as you would with all other qualifying repairs. For council tenants, we will carry out annual gas safety checks on your boiler as part of our responsibility to you as a landlord.

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

When the heating and hot water system is switched over from the old communal system to an individual boiler, you will need to set up an account with an energy company of your choice. They will bill you according to your usage, and many offer smart metering which allows you to watch how much you are spending, so that you do not end up paying more than necessary.

For more information on how to use your heating controls efficiently visit www.camden.gov.uk/wellandwarm. Or alternatively 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. **What are the exact works that will be done inside the flat?**

The works inside the flat would be the installation of an individual boiler in your property, and replacement of the distribution pipework and radiators. If you have a hot water cylinder this will be removed.

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

If you are a leaseholder, you will have the opportunity to ‘opt out’ of the installation of the boiler, radiators and associated pipework. This 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 to let us know so we can plan our work properly. We would also require access to check the works after completion.

Your bill is made up of costs for work that takes place inside your flat, as well as your calculated contribution for communal works, such as the decommissioning of the old system. If you choose the option to install your own boiler, we would adjust your bill to remove the relevant cost of the installation works, but you would still need to pay your share of the communal works. We would write to you to advise you what you would need to pay if you chose this option.

1. **Will you need to come into my property before you being the works?**

Yes, every property will need to have a ‘precondition survey’ carried out. This will allow the contractor to scope the property individually, map out the best routes for pipe work, assess the needs of residents, and to advise if there is anything you will need to do in preparation for works being carried out, such as the moving of furniture, clearing of wall/ or floor space etc. You will be contacted with a date and time for your survey, and will be given the contact details of the officer to speak to if you need to re-arrange. The visits will take approximately 45 minutes. There will normally be a designer and a resident liaison offer attend the appointment.