



Camden Housing Delivery Taskforce: Session 3
December 2025

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Agenda

Overview of the research

Findings:

- The experience of living in Camden
- The impact of new development
- Experience of residents in homes delivered through CIP
- Recommendations for future delivery

Overview of research

Overview of the engagement

Context

Disproportionate impact of housing crisis on teenagers and young adults

Rising proportions of people renting privately

Distinct challenges faced by social renters

Camden Council has delivered 10,600 new homes

Research questions

How are people experiencing the housing crisis in Camden?

What are the social, economic and health benefits of new homes delivered through CIP?

What interventions should the council consider to mitigate the impact of the housing crisis?

Stakeholders

Those living in hostel accommodation delivered through CIP

Bourne Estate, Central Somers Town and Agar Grove residents

Private renters

Social renters

Young adults

Private landlords

The experience of homes in Camden

Despite enjoying living in the borough,
participants across tenures highlighted
the challenges of living in Camden

Across all tenures, residents felt Camden was a great place to call home and bring up a family

“Compared to other places in London, I am glad I live here; I am glad I call Camden home.”

Private Renting Focus Group Participant

“I said to my brother, if you have children, bring them up in Camden.”

Social Housing Focus Group Participant



For many people we spoke to, the draw of Camden was enough for them to stay, despite problems with their homes

“To move out of the area is a really big challenge ... I think about all the connections, the missed connections.”

**Private Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“In the end, they decided that being overcrowded and being near their support network, and children’s schools, was better for them [than moving out of London].”

**Social Housing
Focus Group Participant**

Many of the stories were challenging, but there were residents across tenure types who enjoyed their homes

“We moved to a very beautiful and unique estate.”

**Social Housing
Focus Group
Participant**

“We found the perfect flat... I love it.”

“It was a SpareRoom success.”

**Private Housing
Focus Group
Participants**

“Moving out [into supported accommodation] is one of the best things that I ever did.”

**Young People
Focus Group
Participant**

Overcrowding was an issue for both private and social renters

“It does have a massive impact on your mental health. If you haven’t got the money to go out, you spend more time at home – in a claustrophobic place.”

**Private Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“It puts a strain on relationships. Everyone is on top of each other; there is no privacy.”

**Bourne Estate Focus
Group Participant**

“Now I live in a room with one of my sisters. It is nice to have a bit more space. For example, in my old house I wouldn’t be able to sit and study in my room or chill in my room. I have a desk now.”

**Social Housing Focus
Group Participant**



Poor maintenance of stock in social and private rented properties was a key challenge and area of focus in all conversations

“It feels like they [Camden council] don’t really care for the houses they have.”

***Young Person Focus
Group Participant***

“I don’t think he was qualified to do an inspection...it is not only about my safety; there are so many flats in my area.”

***Private Renter Focus
Group Participant***

“Could the council require credentials for contractors? [...] Maybe have some bodies who are approved by the council and only those can be used.”

***Private Renter Focus
Group Participant***

For private renters, there were specific challenges around affordability and support

“First, you’ve got to have a job [...] and then second is your rent. Everything else – your health, your enjoyment – is always at the bottom because you are so worried about having a roof over your head.”

**Private Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“I wouldn’t have a clue. [where to go for help] So frustrated being passed from pillar to post.”

**Private Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“[The council could] organise face-to-face sessions on how to build that resilience and how to have those conversations [with landlords]. Tell me how to speak, how to deal with that situation.”

**Private Renter Focus
Group Participant**



Across focus groups there was an emphasis on the pressure caused by Airbnb, overseas ownership and students

“A lot of people who are high earners are renting large properties for just one person – often paid for by their company... They are taking the properties so it’s harder for us to move around and have choices.”

***Private Renter Focus Group
Participant***

“Too many people Airbnbing, which they shouldn’t be. You’ve got suitcases wheeling through the square at all hours. And the students living on the Bourne – they think they’re on a university campus.”

***Bourne Estate Focus Group
Participant***

The impact of the Renters' Rights Act is already impacting on landlord behaviour – but this risks creating a two-tier market

“[I will now] hold on like hell to the tenants I have. Because if I have a change in tenancy, it’s like playing Russian roulette... I’m already in a regime of holding rents as they are to the extent I can, even though my costs are going up.”

Landlord Focus group

“The effect will be an increase in rent... Get your house in order now – and also start increasing your rents now, and doing the other things which the regulations will stop you from doing in the future.”

Landlord Focus Group

“The new regulations will affect us because many of our tenants are employed by large companies so they’ve got sufficient salary to pay, but they have no references. So, one of the things that we have done is take six months’ rent in advance. Under the new Renters Act, we’re not allowed to do that.”

Landlord Focus Group

New development

Overall new development was seen as necessary, but few residents saw the new homes as a good option for them

Residents felt that new development brings expensive homes for private ownership, and new social housing or improvements to existing neighbourhoods are deprioritised

“The world gets nicer around us, but tenants don’t see any of that [benefit]. The Kentish Town development is hundreds of houses for private ownership.”

**Social Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“The price is ridiculous for the place you are getting... The new builds come with a service charge which is out of control and very difficult to predict.”

**Private Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“All the building that is taking place has become private – when they agree a proportion for shared ownership or social housing they just decrease it over time.”

**Social Renter Focus
Group Participant**



Many residents feel that new builds are not designed for them and aren't a "forever home"

"The size that they are building rooms is not practical [for a family]; the sofa is in the kitchen."

Private Rented Focus Group Participant

"I was offered a new home but it was too small, plus it was open plan. I hate open plan kitchens."

Bourne Estate Focus Group Participant

"I think that living in a new build is ideal for me [...] But if I wanted to start a family, I don't think living in an apartment would be ideal."

Young People Focus Group Participant

The poor quality of new developments was raised across focus groups

“My building is 15 years old and we have constant leaks, heating issues... When it was built, it was considered the crown jewel in that area and a Clarion premium estate. But it hasn’t lasted, it’s been so poorly maintained.”

**Social Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“[Damp and mould] is a major problem. I am on the fifth floor and the floors down below have had serious problems with their kid’s health.”

**Social Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“It’s obviously not greener on the other side to be in a new build. We are in prewar buildings. We’re lucky because the flats can generally keep warm. It just sounds like new build isn’t the way forward.”

**Bourne Estate Focus
Group Participant**



CIP developments

Temporary accommodation

“I would like to move into my own place but I don’t know how.”

Specialist Housing Interviewee

“This is totally different to other places. The best thing that has ever happened. I’d rather forget the other places; this place I’ll never forget. I would like to live in my own place on the ground floor. I don’t know what would need to happen to get that.”

Specialist Housing Interviewee

“I’ve been sent to viewings for self-contained flats that aren’t self-contained; the kitchen is shared. I don’t want to deal with private landlords again.”

Specialist Housing Interviewee

Investment in estates: Central Somers Town & Bourne Estate

“There are a few people in here from my old building. There’s three of us – including a family that was overcrowded with a dad who had cancer. They live downstairs from me now and they’re happy with their property.”

**Central Somers Town
Estate Focus Group
Participant**

“I don’t even know who they [residents who bought new homes] are. But we know who our social housing neighbours are. I’m not against people buying their own properties – my mum bought her flat – but we’re not really benefitting from these [new homes delivered for private sale].”

**Bourne Estate Focus
Group Participant**

“I love it [the estate]. I’m proud to be a resident here. I’m proud of the community that has been built up.”

**Bourne Estate Focus
Group Participant**



Recommendations for future delivery

Residents thought there should be more social and intermediate housing, and options for older people

“I acknowledge that to build a block of flats must cost a lot of money and Camden doesn’t have that much resource, but maybe they should increase that [the social housing proportion].”

**Social Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“The government’s affordable rent is not what our affordable rent is. For the places that they are doing up, that they are building, just make them affordable, for goodness sake.”

**Private Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“I don’t think there is anywhere appropriate for older people. [...] It is like chucking them into a housing estate, putting them into a property which is loud. I like the idea that you have older people in one place.”

**Social Renter Focus
Group Participant**

Build quality and the suitability of homes for families should be prioritised

“We’ve seen properties built as soon as possible, but we don’t want to rush the building site. Don’t compromise on safety and the regulations.”

Private Renter Focus Group Participant

“There is no storage in my property. We’re on the third floor; if you look on the balconies, everyone’s house is outside their house.”

Social Renter Focus Group Participant

“They keep building these tiny little boxes, they are not appropriate for families.”

Private Renter Focus Group Participant



Who should new homes go
to?

All participants felt Camden residents should be prioritised for affordable housing

“Even if they are expensive, you could have schemes to make it affordable [...] Maybe you will have a cheaper rent because you have been in Camden for a while; you have built those connections.”

Private Renter Focus Group Participant

“Priority for current residents so we keep a sense of community and people who have already established roots.”

Young People Focus Group Participant

There should be affordable options for young people, either through social housing or discount market prices

“Having a certain percentage for up-and-coming young people in housing will be great.”

**Young People Focus
Group Participant**

“There should be something for the new generation because they are the future of Camden.”

**Social Renter Focus
Group Participant**

“The kids that have just finished university [...] That category should be included in whatever system they have to help them with their first home... They have jobs, but a job that doesn't allow them to buy. It is that kind of group in the market that doesn't fall under any category.”

**Bourne Estate Focus
Group Participant**



Summary

What other levers should the council be considering to tackle the biggest housing challenges facing residents?

- Short-term lets and overseas ownership
- Support for private renters
- Joined-up communication within social housing teams
- Support for young people living at home

How should we work with residents to maximise the benefits of housing delivery for communities?

- Affordability
- Design for families
- Quality
- Communication

Who should new homes go to?

- Mixed communities
- Older residents
- Intermediate options for those with specialist housing needs
- Young people
- Camden residents

What should our priorities be for Camden's existing stock?

- Maintenance and refurbishment
- Fast and efficient repairs
- Support for residents to downsize

Thank you

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