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£100 payout for hot water fault homes on Curnock Street estate



Camden Council compensation scheme for estate ordeal

Published: 15 March, 2012
 by GEORGIA GRAHAM

THE Town Hall is set to hand compensation payments of up to £100 to residents on a council estate with faulty hot water systems.

Homes on the Curnock Street estate in Camden Town have been hit by two years of problems and are currently enduring a three-week breakdown.

Tenants have set up a "ticker" on a website (www.curnockstreetestate.com) to record each day since the start of the year that the flats have been without hot water.

One of the tenants, Bertram Hallwood, 51, said: "The residents association at the estate has checked the water on 83 occasions since the beginning of the year and the water temperature has only passed the lowest passable 'hot' level of 37 degrees 24 times.

"They announced that we had a new resident officer to help us with her problems – I called her up and even she doesn't have any hot water. It is emails, emails, emails back and forth, but you can't bathe in an email."

He added: "You would think in this day and age, in Camden Town, water hot enough to have a bath in the morning that isn't too cold to sit in would be a human right really. I boil a kettle every time I need to shave – maybe it would be better to just start growing a beard – it would certainly be warmer."

Mr Hallwood is not alone. The block, which is made up of 286 flats, has had problems with hot water for almost two years.

Dmitri Papageorgiou, 39, who set up the website about the estate, said: "I wanted people to know they weren't alone in this.

"We have had this every single day since January and yet when I called the council they said that no one else has complained in the past 40 days.

"But I know, for a fact, that they have complained, I hear about their complaints every day.

"The council has spent £2million over the years on pipes and things and they can't even give us hot water. It really is completely ridiculous."

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Ward councillor Roger Robinson sent a strongly worded email to his Labour colleague Julian Fulbrook, Camden's housing chief.

It read: "Promises and promises re work scheduling to sort this out and here we are in a cold time without that wretched hot water."

Cllr Fulbrook replied: "Instant coffee may be possible, but instant hot water and instant responses from the council are not always practically possible! Particularly when we are dealing with a heating system."

A spokeswoman for Camden Council said: "Hot water has been supplied to the homes on the Curnock Estate, however we are aware of fluctuations in the temperatures experienced by residents. We have been working on this issue and we have carried out immediate maintenance works and commissioned an investigation into the continuing problems being experienced."

She added that "parts" would be delivered this week and "the works should be completed and tested by the end of March at no additional cost to residents".

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