

## Bring back tenants' voice

□ CABINET member for housing Councillor Pat Callaghan has been doing the District Management Committee rounds asking tenant representatives for their support in helping Camden Labour campaign against the Tory government's housing bill – which will see a third of affordable housing in Camden wiped off the housing allocation list.

For 40 years Camden Federation of Tenants and Residents' independent voice *The Tenant* has advocated on behalf of the voiceless social housing tenants.

This paper needs to be raised from the grave and given the financial stimulus to start producing relevant campaign articles that can coherently inform tenants of the pressures that this bill will place on our fragile social housing.

If councillors are serious about combating this insidious parliamentary bill then they need to supply the resources for the campaign or else Camden's social housing policy will be consigned to the dustbin of history.

# What would Thomas Coram think?

□ WHAT is going on at Coram's Fields?

This proud institution, founded by selfless residents' fundraising effort in 1936, and standing in the spirit of the great philanthropist and reformist Thomas Coram, has been experiencing a dramatic freefall over the last couple of years. Once one of London's most cherished parks, dedicated solely to the benefit of children – it still displays the sign "Adults allowed only if accompanied by children." This is eminently not true any more. Coram's Fields have recently started wholesale substitution of children and teenage users for paying adults

who now mostly occupy the playing fields.

Incredibly Coram's have recently rented the entire park to a family's wedding – on a bank holiday Sunday!

Not so long ago Coram's Fields had strong links with the local community: Local youth organisations, schools and organisations were all represented on its board.

At present Coram is intending to hold its AGM behind closed doors. It appears that Coram's Fields board members are drawn from a tightly-knit group of political representatives and community outsiders, with

restricted input from regular park users. At the same time Coram's Fields are not acting upon petitions from local parents.

Two past petitions gained wide support in the community but produced reluctant, limited and temporary adjustments in Coram's. With its "behind-closed-doors" policy, Coram's Fields seems to be telling the local community that it will carry on regardless of issues raised.

We believe Coram's Fields' leadership needs to be reminded of Coram's historic legacy, its responsibility towards all sections of young population of south Camden and central London in

general. Their failure to seek to understand and consult with its local users, parents and guardians is a failure of the spirit and purpose of the park. Most importantly, this is causing significant damage to its many children and teenage users dependent on Coram's Fields.

**VELJKO ZIZIC**  
Coram's Parents Association,  
corams.parents@gmail.com  
**DANIEL ZYLBERSZTAJN**  
**ABJAL AFRUS**  
Chair, Tybalds Close TRA  
**TESSA LARNER**  
**JACQUI DYSON**  
**G KLISA**  
**GRAEME WESTON**

## Vanity HS2 out of date

□ YOUR report (Yes to high-speed rail, No to Euston, October 1) quotes the Labour transport shadow, Lillian Greenwood, saying: That's not to say the project cannot still be improved".

She is right. The underlying technology could be dragged from the late 19th century to the 21st by noting what the Japanese are doing with their maglev (from magnetic levitation) trains

which, in the 1960s, was described to me by the legendary Professor GFC Rogers, the name on the spine of all those textbooks, as suffering from over-kinematic restraint and all the woes that stem from this.

The rail needs to be "V"-shaped or one of the more advanced maglev shapes to attract the engineering benefits and allow the sort of speeds now being achieved by the Japanese.

Since it clips only 20 minutes off a trip to Birmingham, HS2 is certainly not focused only on speed. We are told the

project for politicians and when we follow the money, it may become very clear who is driving this on and why.

**PETER RUTHERFORD**  
Pandora Road, NW6

## Joined-up thinking?

□ THERE are swings and roundabouts here for Camden.

The plain fact is the entrance to the HS1 tunnel is just north of St Pancras station as everyone who has taken an HS1 train knows.

But what everybody Heathrow Airport, but what of the passengers who wish to travel on to central London or even Paris? HS2 could travel along the Arup route and then turn east over Camden Market through Camden Road station (which would flatten it) and then join the HS1 track just north of St Pancras.

What of passengers who wish to jump off the train in central London? You will have to provide a station at the HS2 / HS1 junction point (this station to replace Euston as a terminus). Fortunately there is a very large space (the old goods interchange

rendered unnecessary.

What Camden will lose: at least a four track rail route emerging from the tunnel at Chalk Farm and crossing Camden Market, turning east and probably flattening Camden Road station, and a new station at St Pancras (North) to join the two lines.

**RAMON PRASAD, NW3**

## Hear critics

□ HS2 is a very bad scheme – but shadow transport secretary Lillian Greenwood, an intelligent and responsible person, thinks it is a good one (Yes to high-speed rail, No to Euston, October 1).

## Four storeys at the most

□ PLANS for the Central Somers Town development have now been submitted.

While we welcome the proposal so that Edith Neville primary school can be redeveloped, the height of the proposed nine-storey buildings on plot 10 are totally inappropriate and should be restricted to four storeys, equal to the maximum height of surrounding buildings.

This area is of historical significance with many listed buildings and it would set a precedent and many more tower blocks could then be given the green light in future.

The loss of light would be considerable and privacy of neighbours compromised. Noise would also be a major concern.

Lowering the height of these buildings could be achieved by building this additional housing on top of the school (the primary beneficiary of the proposed development); an option that has been excluded from the proposal by the council, despite strong local support.

**TWENTY-ONE RESIDENTS**  
of Charrington Street, NW1  
See full list online