

**Mayor of Camden’s Christmas Appeal 2015**

Each year the Mayor of Camden leads an appeal on behalf of families in need in the borough to ask staff, residents, local schools and businesses in the borough to support the appeal.  The gifts are donated to the Borough’s **Family Services and Social Work Division** who provide early help and long term services to support families and help parents to care for their children.

I know that bringing up children can be a demanding job, and sometimes parents may need extra help or advice.

In Camden we believe that usually, children do better when they live at home, and we aim to work with parents to help them care for their children so that families can stay together.

While families do make small and positive changes to improving their life styles, many of them find themselves in financial crisis and the need to rely heavily on charity assistance for food and clothing.

Christmas over the years has become a very stressful period for families who are considered to be living in poverty and will continue to live in this cycle for many years, the generous support families receive each year through the appeal from members of the public, companies help them to provide for their families as donations are given directly to **the parents / carers to give to their children on Christmas day**.

Please do not wrap your gifts as they will be checked by [**Camden’s Trading Standards team**](http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/business/your-business-account/trading-standards/?context=live) before they are given to families.  Unfortunately we have been informed that cuddly toys are not recommended unless brought by the parent to reduce health issues Asthma, skin allergies etc. We would welcome new cuddly toys that are packaged in clear plastic.   Donations can include toys, books, gift vouchers, small food items or clothing.   Decorated shoe boxes covered in Christmas wrapping paper (which hold small gifts) are acceptable as long as they can be easily opened and the contents can be checked.

Good quality second-hand toys are acceptable but they must have a [CE mark](http://www.bsieducation.org/Education/about/what-kitemark.shtml) and be in good condition.   Do not provide incomplete toys or toys without instructions if it isn’t clear how they can be properly and safely used. Please check to ensure any toys (new or second-hand) have the **CE Mark**.   Any received without the CE mark cannot be used. Good quality second hand clothing is also acceptable.

We also welcome gifts of toiletries, gift vouchers and suitable gifts for older teenagers especially those [**leaving care**](http://www.camden.gov.uk/theme/fc-sw2/ccm/content/social-care-and-health/services-for-children-and-families/leaving-care/) who are often one of the most vulnerable groups in our society.

**Contact the Mayor’s office for further information or if you have any queries : 0207 974 1989   or   email: mayor@camden.gov.uk**

Thank you for your support,



**Councillor Larraine Revah**

**Mayor of Camden**