

[Article on Camden Council website](http://news.camden.gov.uk/the-black-cap/)

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London, 17 April 2015

The Black Cap

Camden Council is disappointed to hear of the closure of this venue which has had an iconic status for Camden's gay community since the 1960s as a place to meet and socialise.

Unfortunately the council does not have the power to stop the closure of any commercial activities as this is the sole responsibility of the owners.

The council is currently considering its available options and has been working hard to use the powers it does have to protect this important community icon.

The council recently listed the property as an Asset of Community Value under the Localism Act 2011 following a nomination by the community. Because of this listing, if the owner wants to sell the Black Cap, in most cases they must tell the council triggering a six month timeframe which allows the community time to raise the required capital to bid for the property to buy the asset.

In the case of the Black Cap, when the Asset of Community Value listing was made by the Council a contract for sale was already in existence between the current owner and the intended purchaser which exempts it from this six month timeframe. However, if circumstances change and this sale does not proceed for any reason, if the owner wishes to sell in the future the six month period will apply.

The Asset of Community Value status also ensures that the current or any future owners of this property cannot change the use of the building as a pub and entertainment venue without applying to the council's Development and Control Committee for planning permission. In February this year the Council's Development Control Committee resolved to refuse a planning application for the redevelopment of the upper floors of the

property on the basis (amongst other reasons) that it would adversely impact on the operation of the Black Cap.

This shows the council's belief in the significance of this venue as no ordinary gay pub, but one that also plays an important cultural role as a renowned venue for drag and cabaret performances. The pub's heritage contributes to its continued central role in Camden and London's gay scene and means that the community value would not be easily replicable elsewhere.