

# Cambridge

## Independent

July 5-July 11, 2023 | cambridgeindependent.co.uk

£1.70

Try home  
delivery or our  
digital offer

page 44



Floral tributes and teddies lay outside the Sackville Close home where a mum and two children died. Above, emergency services at the scene  
Pictures: Keith Heppell

## Neighbour tried to save family from deadly fire

- Community mourns loss of mum, 31, and children, 4 and 8, in blaze
- Fire service says electric bike left charging overnight is likely cause
- Resident tells how friend tried to bash down door of the maisonette

By Alex Spencer  
alex.spencer@liffemedia.co.uk

A community is in mourning after the death of a woman and her two young children in a fire in Cambridge that firefighters believe was caused by an electric bike left charging overnight.

The blaze broke out in the early hours of Friday (June 30) at a two-storey maisonette in Sackville Close, King's Hedges.

Gemma Germeney, 31, was pronounced dead at the scene of the fire. Her children Lilly Peden, 8, and son Oliver Peden, 4, were rescued by firefighters but tragically died later in hospital. It is believed the family's two dogs also perished in the blaze.

A man escaped the property and remains in hospital in a critical condition.

A neighbour told the *Cambridge Independent* how his friend tried to save the family by hammering on the door with a scaffolding pole.

Mark Newman, who lives a few doors away from where the deadly fire broke out, ran into the street when he heard shouting and smelled smoke.

He saw his friend trying to break into the maisonette, from which smoke was pouring, but he rushed to drag him back as he feared he would be engulfed by the flames if the door was opened.

Mark said: "I didn't go to bed until about 12.30am. I had the window open and I could hear somebody screaming. I went to the window and it

sounded like the noise was coming from the street. Last time there was a fight out there they damaged my van, so I went out to see what was going on. As soon as I got out in the garden, I could smell smoke."

Pointing to a nearby property, he continued: "I looked around and I could see the smoke billowing out from up there. So I ran out there and that is when I saw my neighbour Jimmy was trying to bang the door

▶ Turn to page 4

## The future of the Beehive Centre



Four-page special report on ambitious scheme

News | pages 6-9

## Vision for 7,000-home Cambridge East unveiled

News | page 10



Meet our Inspirational YoungStars winners



Six-page special inside







Mail Delivery Subs... 28 Jun

to me ▾



## Recipient inbox full

Your message couldn't be delivered to **Licensing@scams.gov.uk**. Their inbox is full or it's receiving too much mail at the moment.

### LEARN MORE

⚠ This link will take you to a third-party site

The response from the remote server was:

554 Maximum email size exceeded -  
<https://community.mimecast.com/docs/DOC->

