

Safety in your building

16 November 2020

9-19 Robsart Street, 1-11 Thornton Street,
Stockwell,
SW9

Dear Residents,



Olympic Office Centre
8 Fulton Road
Wembley
HA9 0NU

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0300 373 3000

We need your help to make your home safer - installation of fire safety equipment in your home

We will be installing a fire detection system in your building over the coming weeks. We expect work to start on Wednesday 18 November and hope that it will be finished before Christmas. If it's not finished by then, we won't be working over the Christmas holiday.

First, we will be installing smoke detectors and sounders in the communal areas, and then we will need to access your home to install heat detectors and sounders. Heat detectors need to go in every room and sounders need to be installed in the hallway. This is to ensure your safety in an unlikely event of an evacuation. The installation will take around 10 – 20 minutes per flat.

The majority of the residents have agreed access, but we need to make sure of everyone's safety and must install the detectors and sounders in **all homes**. I look forward to your help on this matter.

Why is it essential that we are allowed access to your home?

This is essential safety work that we need to carry out. The new system will help to alert both your household and your neighbours in the event of a fire or smoke. That's why it's crucial to allow us access to your home when we're installing this safety equipment in your home.

If one household denies entry to our contractor when they are installing the system, this doesn't only affect that household, but the safety of everyone in the block.

Why is this necessary to do right now?

We understand that you are all practicing social distancing and may be worried about the spread of coronavirus (Covid-19) within the block. We are carrying out this work as we believe it is an essential piece of safety work – the detectors will give you more notice if there is a fire than just the waking watch. The government have said safety work can continue – you can read the guidance here: www.gov.uk/guidance/remediation-and-covid-19-building-safety-update-27-march-2020.

While the waking watch will still continue after this work is finished, you will have an extra measure in place to notify you of a fire.

What measures are we taking to ensure the safety of everyone at your block?

There are a variety of steps we are taking to ensure the safety of residents and workers on-site. We will work with you to ensure we can quickly do this work safely:

- There will only be one worker entering your home and they will follow all government guidance on tradespeople entering your home. There may also be one worker at the doorway, but they will not come in.

- You should only need to prop the door open and then go to your living room/bedroom while we are working in the hallway.
- Workers will be observing Government guidance with regards to social distancing.
- The workers will wear full protective equipment, including clothing, gloves, and masks.
- The workers will carry anti-bacterial spray with them at all times.

Who will pay for the works?

We would like to confirm that we will seek to recover the cost of the fire alarm from any parties where we can prove liability such as the contractor and warranty provider. As a **last resort**, leaseholders may be asked to contribute towards the cost of the fire alarm. The fire alarm will enable the waking watch service, which is more expensive over the long term, to be stood down. Therefore, installing the fire alarm will save money in the long term.

Due to the urgency of the matter we will not be carrying out formal leaseholder consultation in accordance with Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, which would require two 30-day consultation periods. If we do need to ask leaseholders to contribute towards the fire alarm, then we will make an application to the First Tier Tribunal to dispense with the Section 20 consultation requirements. The First Tier Tribunal will decide if it is reasonable for leaseholders and shared owners to contribute towards the cost and you will have an opportunity to present any objections at the Tribunal. Further information relating to general fire safety matters for leaseholders has been prepared by LEASE (Leasehold Advisory Service) www.lease-advice.org/fire-safety/. They also offer a free advisory service to leaseholders and you may wish to contact them.

In order to demonstrate value for money when procuring the fire alarm, we have sought three quotes as described below:

- Oakray - £86,801.78 + VAT
- AJS - £140,626.35 + VAT
- Bridge fire - £131,791.74 + VAT
- Bridge fire (Fully wireless system) £117,735.8 + VAT

We have appointed Oakray as the contractor that provided the most value for money quote. Oakray are experienced in installing these fire alarm systems and we are confident they will complete the work quickly and to a good standard.

We understand this is a very troubling time for everyone, and we understand you may be concerned with people coming into your block. Please be assured that Network Homes and Oakray take the safety of residents and staff very seriously and are installing these alarms as we believe it will make you safer in your homes.

If you have a question, get in touch on customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk or **0300 373 3000**.

Yours sincerely



Sam Drinkwater
Neighbourhood Team Leader (Building Safety)