



Network Homes

Safety in your building

11 June 2021

Blanche House and Larkspur House,
Rectory Park Avenue,
Northolt,
UB5 6WW

Dear resident,

The Hive
22 Wembley Park Boulevard
Wembley
HA9 0HP

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customerservice@
networkhomes.org.uk
0300 373 3000

Investigation results and fire alarms to be upgraded

We wrote to you to let you know we would be investigating your building to determine whether the materials used met building regulations, and that the buildings have been constructed as designed.

Our investigations identified some issues with the installation of cavity barriers – these are designed to restrict the spread of smoke and flames in the external wall system. We have contacted Hill who originally built the properties and asked them to draft a proposal to address the remedial work. They are cooperating with us at present and are currently gathering the information required and speaking with their design team.

External Wall System (EWS1) Form

Some lenders require an EWS1 Form in order to lend on a property. The form gives a risk rating to the external wall system, as lenders are becoming risk averse for your type of building.

I know that some of you are looking to sell and are frustrated by any delays to that. We want to be up front with you and let you know that the fire engineer will not be able to issue an EWS1 form until the remediation work to the cavity barriers has been completed. We are pushing our contractor to remediate the issues identified as quickly as possible across all our blocks, so that we can issue an EWS1 form to you.

If you are looking to staircase or remortgage, you may also not be able to do this until we have an EWS1 form, although you may be able to do a 'product transfer' with your current lender.

Fire alarm upgrade – access required on Tuesday 15 June

On the advice of our fire engineer, we will be upgrading the fire alarm system in your building to provide a common alarm in the event of a confirmed fire within any flat or ancillary room. This will involve the installation of a Heat Detector and a Sounder within the entrance hallway to your flat, as well as the introduction of smoke detectors and call points in communal areas.

In order to complete the final design for the alarm system, we will require access to a small number of flats. This will be undertaken on **Tuesday 15 June between 9am and 5pm** by Hill and their subcontractor Emersons. We will contact a sample of residents this week to carry out an initial assessment of the system requirements. This will be done in a Covid safe way and staff will wear PPE.

Once the system design has been completed, we will contact all residents to agree access to install the Heat Detector within your entrance hallway. The alarm will be wireless, and the installation will

A quick summary

Following our investigations, we have found some issues with the cavity barriers in the external wall system.

We're waiting on the original contractor to put together a plan to remediate – we'll share more details when we have them.

Our fire engineer has recommended upgrading the fire alarm system, so we'll be contacting some of you to do an initial assessment.

Until the remediation to the cavity barriers is complete, our fire engineer will not be able to issue an EWS1 form which is required by lenders.

be completed in a very short period of time. Once the system has been installed and commissioned, we will write to all our residents.

Who will cover the cost?

The original contractor of the building has accepted responsibility for the incorrect installation of the cavity barriers. At the moment, we expect they will pay for the cost of the project to remediate the barriers.

We don't expect residents to have to pay towards this alarm installation, as the original contractor will be covering the costs or we will see if we are eligible to apply to the government's Waking Watch Relief Fund, which may be able to support with costs. However, if either of those are unsuccessful, we may have to recover costs through the service charge.

Next steps

Once we have a remediation plan for the cavity barriers, we will organise a webinar to let you know the details of the project. If you have any questions in the meantime, contact us at customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk.

Best wishes

Carla Ferrarello
Building Safety Project Manager