

Safety in your building

4 August 2021

Grand Union Heights,
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Alperton,
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The Hive
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Wembley
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Dear residents,

Further investigations on building started Monday 26 July

I'd first like to express my apologies – an internal mix-up meant we thought we had sent this letter so you would receive it before the 26th, but when we checked our records it hadn't been sent. We will work to ensure you receive all future updates in good time of any key dates.

I am writing to keep you up to date on progress with the design of the proposal for the remedial of the external wall at Grand Union Heights. Thank you for your patience while we work on this project.

New investigations required by design team

In February, we appointed the design team with the brief to develop a detailed design proposal. In the last three months the design team has been developing a detailed proposal, carried out investigations to understand how the areas of the external wall system behind the cladding panels have been built and have progressed two options. As part of this design work, a specialist Structural Engineer from Milner Associate has recently joined the team in order to advise on the proposed system.

As you may be aware this is a complex remediation project and the engineer requires additional data to support his work. This means that we need to carry out further investigations of the fabric of the building, which started the week of Monday 26 July. If your property is affected by these investigations, we will be contacting you separately to discuss what these involve and arrange an appointment. We still have further investigations to do, so if you would like to volunteer and provide access to your home for these investigations, please let us know by emailing Cameron Anterkyi, Resident Liaison Officer at Cameron.anterkyi@networkhomes.org.uk or calling him on **02045 125 791**.

Important safety reminders - Items in communal areas and on balconies, fire strategy

You must not use or store a barbeque on your balcony. The London Fire Brigade (LFB) says barbeques are a major cause of balcony fires and should never be used on balconies.

You can learn more from the LFB here: www.london-fire.gov.uk/news/2020-news/may/don-t-be-the-cause-of-a-balcony-blaze-warn-firefighters/.

Please ensure no items are stored in communal areas and escape routes are clear. We have a zero-tolerance approach and personal items left in the communal areas will be removed. Flammable items such as barbeques, wired electrical goods and gas bottles should not be stored on balconies. These need to be removed immediately, as this is treated as a breach of your tenancy/lease.

Fire Strategy Reminder

Currently Grand Union Heights has a **Simultaneous Evacuation Strategy**. This means if you become aware of a fire within your building or you hear a fire alarm, **you must evacuate immediately** and go to the evacuation point which is located outside Peppermint Heights.

Why do we have the current Fire Strategy?

Our surveys showed concerns with the fire performance of the external wall system that was installed in 2006, most notably the type of cladding material (High Pressure Laminate Panels and Red Cedar Cladding) and the installation of the cavity barriers behind. We've put the current fire strategy in place as a precaution because of this.

What have we done to keep people safe?

Your safety is our top priority. We've appointed a specialist fire engineer to help us until full remediation of the building is completed. In line with National Fire Chief Council Guidance we installed heat detectors within each apartment; upgraded the fire alarm panels in communal areas; and introduced a system so the fire alarm panel can be monitored 24/7. We've consulted the London Fire Brigade at all stages and currently have an on-site presence from our security company United Guarding. The duties of the on-site security officer include monitoring the fire alarm panel and carrying out daily checks of the building in line with our fire engineer's advice.

Security

We have been having some incidences of people purposefully breaking paving slabs outside the building using nearby benches. This could cause injury to anyone going past or the people themselves. We have identified the people who have been doing this and are working with our colleagues in the housing team to ensure this doesn't happen again. Thank you to those who alerted us to this happening.

We would like to take this opportunity to remind you that you should only let your visitors and those permitted, into the building. Taking this precaution will ensure residents and the building remain safe and secure. Finally, I can confirm we are not intending to change the existing security in the building at this stage.

If you have any questions, please get in touch on customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk.

Kind regards

Carla Ferrarello
Project Manager – Building Safety