

Safety in your building

18 May 2020

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Dear Residents,

Making your home safer - Installation of fire safety equipment in your block

On the advice of our fire consultants, our contractor Oakray will need to enhance the fire detection system in Grand Union Heights to comply with current National Fire Chief Council (NFCC) guidelines. They are starting work on Monday 18 May. We expect the work to last for three months for the whole development.

What does the work involve?

There is already a fire detection system in GUH - however as we need to install more sounders/detectors, we need to ensure the system can work well with an increased capacity of sounders and detectors. Because of this, we need to replace it with an enhanced system. This is a two-stage project:

- Stage 1 – installation of communal fire detection system

This will be a relatively simple project and shouldn't cause you any disruption. The workers **will not need to enter anyone's homes at this stage**. They will only be installing alarms in the corridors and other communal areas.

- Stage 2 – installation of detectors and sounders in your flat

We will be installing fire safety equipment in your flat. This work will make your home safer for you and your family. Again, this is following from the advice of our fire consultants and we believe this is necessary safety work to install this.

We're aiming to install sounders (alarms), which will only require one or two sounders in your hallway and will work for the entire flat. This will depend on the size of your flat.

We also need to install heat detectors in every room within of your flat except the bathroom. We will need to work with you to ensure your safety and the safety of our workers. We'll write to you again with more information about stage 2 nearer the time.

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 smoke detectors in your home 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: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance>.

Contacting you going forwards

We're going to be sending you **updates by text** from now on, unless it is a critical safety update.

If you're a leaseholder and you have tenants living in your flat, please ensure you pass on any messages to your tenants.

We have also sent a summary of this letter as a text, so if you didn't receive a message from us, then we don't have your correct details.

If you're not sure we have your details, send them to us at customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk.

You can also **check for the latest update on the website** by going to the 'My block documents' section and searching for your block/estate name.

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.

The government have also put in place guidance for tradespeople who need to enter people's homes, which we will be following. You can read it at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/social-distancing-in-the-workplace-during-coronavirus-covid-19-sector-guidance#working-in-peoples-homes-as-a-tradesperson-cleaner-or-nanny>.

What measures are we taking to ensure the safety of everyone at Grand Union Heights?

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:

- We will have two teams of two on-site.
- Workers will be observing Government recommended guidance with regards to social distancing.
- The workers will be wearing full protective equipment, including protective clothing, gloves, and masks.
- Work should take approximately 10-25 minutes.
- The workers will carry anti-bacterial spray with them at all times.
- Remember, even if there are workers on your floor, you should be able to leave the floor by one of the two exits. So, you could use the lifts/stairs at the other end to where the workers are. Please remember not to use the lifts in the event you hear an alarm, leave the building using the nearest staircase. This will be shown on the fire signage within your block.

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 want to ask any questions, then please contact me on **0300 373 3000** or customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk.

Yours sincerely



Sam Drinkwater
Neighbourhood Team Leader (Building Safety)