

29 November 2015

Dear Ms. Jevans

I have now had an opportunity to visit a number of flats in Grenfell Tower, both where the works have been completed and where they are still outstanding. I have seen HIU units that have been installed in hallways and also in kitchens. I also had the opportunity to see the show flat where the HIU installation was demonstrated. I have been surprised by a few matters.

- The show flat has the HIU flush with the ledge in the hallway, thus giving credence to the claim that it will still be possible for furniture to be moved in and out of the flat as normal. However, in the one-bedroomed flats, the unit is not flush and sticks out by about 8 inches. This is both unsightly and seriously reduces the space in the hallway. It could, as residents have complained, make moving furniture in and out far more difficult and perhaps impossible, depending on the size of the item. I believe that residents of one-bedroomed flats have been misled about the effect on their hallway, which explains why so many of them are unhappy with the unit in the hallway and why so many would like them moved to the kitchen. The ward councillors were also misled. The information provided at the show flat should have been clarified to explain that this was not how the finished works would be in one-bedroomed flats.
- Both residents and ward councillors were informed that installing units in kitchens would be very impractical, that the finished work would not be so good, that it would take up to two weeks and that water would have to be disconnected for over a week, not just in the flat in question but also in flats above and below. I was therefore very surprised, when I asked residents who have had the unit put into their kitchen, how little disruption had actually take place. It seems that water was cut off for no more than two days and did not require to be cut off in the flats above or below. This explains why I received no response to my proposal that arrangements be made with the Leisure Centre so that residents could use their showers. In addition, I was told that putting the units in kitchens would be unsightly and reduce space in bathrooms and lavatories. Again, this is not the case. The bathrooms and lavatories look perfectly fine with the boxed in pipework at ceiling level.

Can you please explain why so much information has been so poorly and indeed inaccurately provided? It is hardly surprising that residents now do not trust anything the TMO tells them about these works and why they have become so hostile.

And indeed, why were we as ward councillors also so badly misinformed? One of our roles is to mediate and advocate on behalf of residents and this is very difficult if we are given incorrect information that we then pass on in good faith to residents. It breaks down the trust between us and our electorate as well, which is a rather serious matter.

Many thanks.

Cllr. Judith Blakeman