
From: David Collins <david@future-conversations.com>
Sent: 15 July 2015 20:11
To: slawrence@rydon.co.uk
Cc: suzy.cohen@ccscheme.org.uk; david.crook@ccscheme.org.uk;
cllr.r.atkinson@rbkc.gov.uk; Cllr.Blakeman@rbkc.gov.uk
Subject: Re: Grenfell Tower Improvement Works

Dear Simon,

I read this email at our weekly Grenfell Tower residents meeting this evening, and it was agreed by all as worth sending to you.

Thank you for attending the public meeting about the Grenfell Tower works which was organised by Cllr Atkinson and Cllr Blakeman on Saturday 11th July. It was good that the you and Peter Maddison, Director of Assets & Regeneration for your client, agreed to meet with residents about the ongoing project and to listen to their concerns and frustrations.

It was disappointing that you did not take it as an opportunity to investigate further the matter of your workmen threatening residents, as you had previously written to say you took those matters seriously, and that you would investigate any such reported incidents. It was only at the end of the meeting when residents raised the issue themselves that there was any acknowledgement of the matter.

It was interesting that when residents raised the subject of threats and harassment around half of those in attendance (I guess that would be around a dozen households) were vocal in saying they had experienced such things: for instance, threats of having their water cut off, having received verbal abuse, and there was reference to others not in attendance at the meeting having experienced other issues such as invasion of privacy. These are just some of the stories I have heard over the past few months. In general, many of the people speaking on Saturday are those who would say they have the confidence to stand up to this behaviour. I have met and spoken with people who have not had the confidence to do so.

It was also interesting that it was the residents themselves who insisted on giving you their flat numbers so that you could investigate further, and that you did not ask for this information yourself. I also do not think you captured all of the house numbers for the people who said they have experienced such threats. As only about 20% of all 119 households were represented at the hastily called meeting I expect these cases are simply the tip of the iceberg, and there are many other individual cases.

I hope you will now investigate these matters with the intent and seriousness with which you have previously suggested they deserve. As I said in my previous email, until this point I have seen or heard nothing from you to suggest you take these matters seriously at all.

When we spoke about this matter a few weeks ago, I suggested the workmen in question are not to blame for what is happening. As in any organisation, they follow the lead given to them by the people more senior to them, they follow what those people make important, and disregard what those people allow them to disregard. This may be difficult to hear, but I suggest the most meaningful place you can begin your investigation is by considering your own action or lack of action, your attitude, and your communication in the matter: and how those may have influenced the culture and behaviour of others. As you said on Saturday, you are the Senior Manager responsible for this project, and the men and women working here follow your lead.

I do understand there are many good things about the project, but the use of threats is not one of them.

Thank you again for taking part in the meeting on Saturday, and I look forward to hear the results of your investigations; particularly what this means for the approach being taken by those leading the project, particularly in terms of changing the culture of the project and how residents are treated.

Best Wishes,

David

From: David Collins

Date: Monday, 6 July 2015 22:34

To: <slawrence@rydon.co.uk>

Cc: <suzy.cohen@ccscheme.org.uk>, <david.crook@ccscheme.org.uk>, <cllr.r.atkinson@rbkc.gov.uk>

Subject: Grenfell Tower Improvement Works

Dear Simon,

Thank you for the conversation we had the week before last about the harassment and threats some residents in Grenfell Tower have experienced during the current improvement works. I did very much appreciate your honesty and willingness to listen.

It was a shame that I had to find you to discuss matters. Having received your letter to say you take this sort of matter seriously, I had hoped that I would actually have heard from you by telephone or you would have come to meet me in person. Furthermore, I remain disappointed about the lack of intention to investigate and act on the issues raised.

You gave me your email address and suggested I tell people to email you if they have any concerns or if they have experienced any form of harassment or threat. Unfortunately, in a building of 120 homes I am not in a position to do so. I did give your email address to around 12 households, and although I encourage people to respond to you if they had any such experiences (and some had) they were largely disappointed more than anything else. Please let me know if you did receive any emails. As I said last week, I relate to the investigation of complaints made against Rydon as your job, not mine. My disappointment relates to your refusal to do nothing more to investigate these matters.

As we discussed, whilst there may be individuals working for Rydon who have said or behaved inappropriately, I am more concerned about the culture of the entire project here at Grenfell Tower: where residents and their collective concerns have been marginalised. As we discussed the community has not been engaged and consulted on the ongoing work in the manner as would normally be the case in a project like this – even though the change in plans have given many residents concerns about the safety of their families, and the aesthetics and access to their homes. In an environment such as this, it is no surprise to me that your people and Tower residents are having to deal with difficult situations. My request of you remains, to take on the lack of community engagement which the client has displayed.

Copied on this email are Suzy Cohen and David Crook of Considerate Contractors, and Councillors Judith Blakeman and Robert Atkinson of Notting Dale.

Best Wishes,

David

Summer activities for young people and children

Check out the free or low cost activities on offer during the summer holiday
<http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/summer>

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

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