

17th October 2008

Dear Councillor Blakeman,

Thank you for your enquiry, raised at the Council meeting on the 8th October 2008.

I feel I must challenge your comment that Christian Castano fell "to his death when a window catch gave way." As you may know the Inquest recorded a verdict of "Accidental Death" on this tragic incident and in reaching his verdict the Coroner, Dr Knapman, was very clear that there was no fault with the window design. Specifically, the window in question was inspected by the Metropolitan Police immediately after the accident and then subsequently by an independent chartered surveyor in the presence of the police and a health and safety manager and both these inspections found no fault / defect with the window and the window has not been found by the Police, Coroner or Health and Safety Executive to be the cause of accident. (The Health and Safety Executive also confirmed that it does not intend to investigate any further and they too consider this a tragic accident.)

I can confirm that all repair requests are logged and telephone calls coming into the Customer Services Centre are monitored and the response to a random sample of these is audited. The TMO has no record of a repair request relating to the windows at this flat.

Any resident who is unhappy with the service they have received from us can contact the Customer Relations Team via telephone, e-mail or in writing to make a complaint. We do, periodically, commission "mystery shopping" to test contact with us more generally. We are working to improve monitoring of both Contractor and Call Centre performance but there is no evidence of failure to record complaints in this case and, as above, the window was not, in fact, defective.

With regard to reporting of repairs I can advise that the TMO is in the process of commissioning our Residents Panel to scrutinise our Customer Service Centre call-handling procedures. In addition our procedures include a number of customer service checks where residents are telephoned and asked about their experience of our service etc.

You have also raised your concerns about the windows at Grenfell Tower and you have referred to the report from John Shreeves, Chartered Surveyors, who reviewed the original feasibility reports and produced this window strategy report. I can confirm that the range of options this report identifies to secure and restrict the opening of these and other similar windows at Lancaster West Stage 1 is being investigated and we have made a capital bid to the Council for monies to resource this work. Specifically, Project Managers have been engaged to investigate the most appropriate option to adopt.

I do hope this addresses your concerns.

Helen Evans
TMO Chief Executive

cc. Cllr Buxton