

The smug and self-congratulatory press release that failed to thank the residents for everything they had put up with

13 May 2016

The Leader of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Cllr Nick Paget-Brown, and the Deputy Leader, Cllr Rock Feilding-Mellen, saw for themselves on Wednesday 11 May the transformation of North Kensington's Grenfell Tower following a major £10m refurbishment.

Funded by the Council as part of a wider £67m investment of the area, the wide-ranging improvements include the installation of insulated exterior cladding, new double-glazed windows and a new communal heating system. All of this will greatly enhance the energy efficiency of the tower and help reduce residents' living costs. There will also be an impressive new foyer.

Nine much-needed new homes were also developed from unused spaces in the building which is managed by Kensington & Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation (KCTMO). There are also new facilities at the Dale Youth Amateur Boxing Club and Grenfell Under 3s Nursery. These, along with the new Kensington Aldridge Academy and the Kensington Leisure Centre, with its café, have helped to transform the neighbourhood.

The two-year project, which was designed and delivered by KCTMO in partnership with Rydon Construction, was a complex one as it took place with all 120 flats occupied throughout. The logistics had to be carefully managed to minimise disruption. Essential to the progress of the project was close consultation with residents, ensuring that access to their homes was possible at all key stages. Residents were kept informed through regular newsletters and meetings and there were also demonstrations of the new heating and door entry systems.

"It is remarkable to see first-hand how the cladding has lifted the external appearance of the tower and how the improvements inside people's homes will make a big difference to their day-to-day lives", said Cllr Paget-Brown.

"As well as this investment, in a relatively short space of time Grenfell Tower

residents have benefitted from a brand-new academy and leisure centre which represents our ongoing commitment to North Kensington.”

Robert Black, KCTMO’s Chief Executive, added: “We’re delighted to have worked in partnership with the Council to deliver this major regeneration of the tower. This has improved the homes overall and residents can now have the benefits of living in energy-efficient homes, all in a vastly improved environment. I am especially pleased with the nine new homes, which cost £878,000 to deliver, and add much-needed family homes for the Royal Borough. The whole project was done within budget too.”