

Dear Mr Awoderu and Mr Chapman

Thank you for your emails dated 7 March, 13 March, 15 March, 16 March, 20 March and 22 March on behalf of the Grenfell Leasehold Association. To ensure we have addressed all of the issues you have raised in the above emails, I have briefly summarised our understanding of your concerns below.

Summary

- Health and safety concerns relating to the gas pipes given their current exposed state.
- Request for an independent adjudicator to investigate the installation of the gas pipes.
- Request for the health and safety certificate authorising the installation of the gas pipes
- You feel the leasehold agreement has been breached due to a lack of consultation on the installation of the pipes.
- Concern for the location of the pipe in terms of potential vandalism.
- Request to know if the building insurance company has been informed of the installation of the gas pipes and any comments they might have.
- Your view that the internal image of the building has been damaged by the installation of the gas pipes.
- Request for a stakeholder meeting with Senior Managers from the KCTMO
- Report of loud banging noises in Grenfell Tower
- You believe there has been an increase in anti-social behaviour including drug use in the building
- Your view that safety of residents is being put at risk by trying to prevent non-residents from entering the building.

Gas mains Installation and health & Safety at Grenfell Tower issues

RBKC and KCTMO are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of all the homes in the borough. I can assure you that the KCTMO take their health & safety responsibilities very seriously and are committed to complying with our statutory obligations and implementing effective control measures to mitigate risks to residents, their visitors, our staff and our contractors.

To assist us with this we employ a competent and experienced Health and Safety Advisor, Janice Wray. Additionally, in relation to fire safety specifically, Janice is supported by a competent independent consultant who undertakes our Fire Risk Assessments and provides a range of fire safety inspections, advice and guidance as necessary. Further, as necessary, my staff will seek advice, guidance and clarification from other professionals such as Building Control Officers, the Health & Safety Executive.

Within the KCTMO there is a formal governance structure through which the Health and Safety Committee reports to the Executive Team and if required the Board. As such we do not see that it is necessary to instruct or fund an 'independent adjudicator' at this time.

As previously mentioned in our recent briefing, National Grid are a utility company and statutory body and are not required to enter into contractual arrangements with the TMO or RBKC. This therefore does restrict the level of control we have over their work. The National Grid have advised that they are not required to apply to Building Control for Building Regulations approval for works of this nature.

However, I can confirm that we have provided our Fire Safety Consultant with copies of all National Grid proposals made available to us and we have progressed all concerns, queries and observations raised by him. Further, we instructed this Consultant to undertake an inspection of on-site works and we have again raised all issues he has highlighted with the National Grid and we have received confirmation that these will be addressed.

As noted in Anthony Cheney's briefing dated 21 March, National Grid have explored other options for the location of the pipework. The stairwell was considered the only feasible option and the Fire Safety Consultant has not raised any specific concerns with regards to its location providing it is located within a suitably fire-rated enclosure.

At a meeting with National Grid on Monday 27 March the National Grid confirmed their intention to install fire-rated boxing to enclose the gas riser. They are currently preparing a timetable for this work and have agreed to draft a letter for residents outlining the outstanding work and the timetable for completion.

It has been suggested that we seek London Fire Brigade's approval, report or certification for this work. We have reviewed this and I can advise you it is our intention to raise this with the Fire Brigade and request their input at our next regular liaison meeting (scheduled for 29 March).

We have endeavoured to control all risks and we continue to actively pursue National Grid for confirmation that all necessary action is taken to effectively control all risks.

Leasehold consultation breached and building Insurance

I can confirm that day to day repairs and maintenance do not always trigger statutory leaseholder consultation, as is the case with the installed pipe work and therefore there have not been any breaches, statutory or otherwise, of your rights as a leaseholder.

With regard to the buildings insurer, it is not standard practice to notify the insurer of every repair or maintenance undertaken at any given block, nor is this practical when thousands of works orders are raised annually across the stock.

Report of loud banging noises

It is my understanding that following your initial report of banging noises coming from properties during the night, a block letter was sent to all residents in Grenfell Tower on 10 March 2017 to try and understand if this was a wider issue impacting a number of residents or if it is only affecting a specific location. Two responses were received from other residents following this letter. One suggested it related to home improvement works and the other was a specific noise complaint relating to children. I have been advised that the Neighbourhood Management Team are currently investigating both of these issues.

In addition, you emailed KCTMO on 13 March in response to the block letter stating that the banging noise throughout the night could not be coming from the toilet alone. However, no specific information has been provided by you in terms of time, location or if this is a specific issue relating to your flat. From your email responses you have referred to this as a collective issue, however as stated above the KCTMO have only had two other noise complaints.

Anti-Social Behaviour in Grenfell Tower

The Neighbourhood Management Team have investigated your concerns around increased anti-social behaviour and drug use in the building and I can confirm that at present the KCTMO have not seen an increase in reports of this nature. The number of reports received are quite low and all concerns are being investigated fully with relevant authorities. We have not received any reports of small fires reported and no issues have been raised by OCS. Notwithstanding the above, if you or any other residents do witness incidents of anti-social behaviour, we urge you to report these to the Police and the KCTMO.

Preventing non-residents from entering the building

As there are over one hundred properties in Grenfell Tower it is a challenge to ensure that only residents enter the building. We endeavour to provide secure entry systems to help prevent unauthorised entrance to the building and will continue to look at ways of improving security in the area. To ensure the safety of residents we would not suggest approaching non-residents directly, especially if their demeanour poses a threat to others. Instead it is recommended that you inform the KCTMO or the Police where appropriate.

Request for stakeholder meeting

In order to discuss complaints of loud banging and other issues with the KCTMO, Millicent Williams has offered you a number of meeting dates and times which is the correct process to try and resolve any ongoing concerns. It is not relevant or in line with procedures to have a wider stakeholder meeting to investigate such matters. Should you wish to progress your noise concerns and discuss any other issues please inform her of your availability. Nicola Bartholomew is also able to attend this meeting as the Neighbourhood Management Team Leader for the area.

I hope that the information above has answered the issues raised in your enquiries. If you wish to report a service failure by the KCTMO we suggest that a formal letter of complaint is submitted at Stage 1 of our complaints process to ensure it is dealt with in line with our Complaints procedures.