

Hi all

Laura Johnson has suggested that we consider approaching David Crowder from the Building Research Establishment and arrange for him to come and talk to us about his extensive investigation into the fire at Lakanal House. Whilst it is acknowledged that we have no blocks of a similar design there are clearly lessons for all landlords – causes, why and how the fire spread, issues relating to refurbishment works on the block etc. and so we are keen to arrange this briefing. Robert has asked me to identify which TMO staff should be invited to attend this and so I would be grateful if you could advise me of the officers from your team who you would wish to nominate.

Grateful if you could please respond asap so that we can go back to Laura and Amanda.

Please advise

Thanks

Janice

Janice Wray

TMO Health, Safety & Facilities Manager

t: [REDACTED]

<http://www.kctmo.org.uk/>

w: www.kctmo.org.uk

a: : The Network Hub, 300 Kensal Road, W10 5BE

P Before printing, please think about the environment

From: Laura.Johnson@rbkc.gov.uk [mailto:Laura.Johnson@rbkc.gov.uk]

Sent: 15 November 2013 15:39

To: Robert Black; Janice Wray

Cc: Cynthia.Vachino@rbkc.gov.uk; Roger.Keane@rbkc.gov.uk;

Amanda.Johnson@rbkc.gov.uk
Subject: FW: High Rise Forum

To all,

For your information.

Interested in your thoughts as to whether you would be interested in a presentation from David Crowder, I know we don't have any block exactly like Lakanal but it may be worth-while never the less.

Regards

Laura

Director of Housing

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

Town Hall, Hornton Street, W8 7NX

Email:laura.johnson@rbkc.gov.uk

Tel: [REDACTED]

From: Brian Castle [<mailto:Brian.Castle@richmond.gov.uk>]

Sent: 15 November 2013 13:25

To: 'Jean Philadelphia'; 'bob.richardson@croydon.gov.uk'; 'Stewart, Ian'; 'ray.james@enfield.gov.uk'; 'jim.paterson@hackney.gov.uk'; 'Hunter, Tony'; 'Dominic Curran'; 'hilary.barber@lewisham.gov.uk'; 'andrew.donaldson@rbk.kingston.gov.uk'

Cc: Johnson, Laura: HS-Housing

Subject: FW: High Rise Forum

Colleagues

Most of you attended the 1st High Rise Forum, but I don't think any of you attended on Friday, (Nov 8). Boroughs were out numbered, hence my response below. You should have seen minutes, Comms Plan, and proposed workplan for the High Rise Forum. Basically, the LFB plan to start the Comms campaign in January, and want to get documentation completed Nov/ December. I plan to send my comments on their LFB leaflet, (we discussed at the last Fire Safety Group meeting), which will mainly be to emphasise the Stay Put message more.

Re: the leasehold doors issue, I understand from LB Hillingdon that expect a test case on a landlord taking enforcement action against a non complaint front door in January, and LFB are scheduled to meet with DCLG next week – and will lobby for clarity on common areas definitions and front doors.

Yesterday I went to a presentation (hosted by LB Wandsworth), by David Crowder, from the Building Research Establishment, about all the technical failings of Lakanal, (predominantly from adaptations to the original design), and it was excellent. He has spent at least 50% of the last 4 years working on the Lakanal fire. If you haven't seen it and would like to, he is available to do more presentations.

Please let me know of any local problems, give me any comments, and let me know whether you think the Fire Safety Group should meet again.

Thanks

Brian

From: Brian Castle
Sent: 15 November 2013 13:02
To: 'STEVE.TUREK@london-fire.gov.uk'
Cc: 'dominic.curran@londoncouncils.gov.uk'

Subject: High Rise Forum

Steve

Thanks for the opportunity to be involved in the High Rise Safety Forum. It is clear that the LFB is working hard to improve communications post Lakanal, and to improve good practice in general. As Chair of the London Councils Fire Safety Group, I would like to confirm that the general feedback from boroughs is very positive about relationships with LFB, and I also hear high levels of confidence that boroughs have most of the policies and procedures in place to manage the risk of fires in tall buildings.

Member boroughs for instance, feel confident in being able to identify most high risk residents, and take action to clear rubbish, or in extreme cases fit suppression chambers, or sprinkler devices into individual flats. When necessary, boroughs feel they will get help from the local Fire Service to take enforcement action.

As you know, we remain concerned about the lack of clarity over how non-compliant leaseholders' front entrance doors can be tackled; boroughs feel they cannot act using Housing Act powers, and LFB feels they have no enforcement authority either. Whichever side it 'lands', clarity is needed to improve safety for residents, and we welcome the news that you will be meeting with DCLG shortly to discuss 'common areas' and leasehold doors – any support you need from boroughs, please ask.

I think Friday's meeting, and the written returns regarding RRO and the list of future work for the Forum, showed an under representation by London boroughs, and a disproportionate amount of space given to private sector organisations and consultants say this not as a criticism of the LFB, (everyone had a chance to comment), just to bring some context to the debate. Of course LFB has duties across sectors, and, if as I heard, private sector 'CEOs aren't interested' in fire safety, then perhaps they need more support, but boroughs do not need much work to develop good practice, and we would be concerned if the High Rise Forum got taken down paths irrelevant or unhelpful to boroughs.

London boroughs own and manage the overwhelming majority of high rise social housing, and although implementation of good practice may vary, in the main we are confident we have the tools and skills to do it. I should add that issues around

parking and a transient population, whilst being constant challenges, are fairly mainstream in many London boroughs and we would not want LFB to devote too much resource on trying to resolve them.

On the comms plan, we are very keen to be involved in the designing of a leaflet, and once agreed, boroughs can help distribute (probably tens or hundreds of thousands of them). I think your timescale is fairly tight on this, so I will send detailed comments shortly.

On the suggestion that 'block' champions are used to help spread information for instance on fire evacuation routes, I don't have a comprehensive steer from boroughs but initial soundings have shown concerns with the practicalities. We can promote the engagement with Resident Associations over fire safety, but we are not confident that stand alone block reps would work. The landlord needs to lead avoid diluting responsibility by using residents in some sort of semi-formal role, as it would likely lead to a mixed level of response, when there is a need to have a consistent message.

Lakanal clearly prompted all boroughs to review their processes, and London Councils set up the Fire Safety Group. We developed an FRA template, (you provided useful comments), and there is an assumption that the action plans in them are carried out, and that the frequency of the next round of FRAs is based on High, Medium and Low risk. Boroughs report that fire safety is a top priority, and the FRA process is monitored by senior management.

We look forward to building on the progress that boroughs and LFB have made together.

Thanks

Brian Castle, Asst Director, Community Services Operations, LB Richmond

Chair of London Councils Fire Safety Group

cc. London Councils Housing Directors group

If you have received this message in error you must not print, copy, use or disclose the contents, but must delete it from your system and inform the sender of the error. You should be aware that all emails received and sent by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames may be stored or monitored, or disclosed to authorised third parties, in accordance with relevant legislation.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.
This e-mail may contain information which is confidential, legally privileged and/or copyright protected. This e-mail is intended for the addressee only. If you receive this in error, please contact the sender and delete the material from your computer.
