

From: Janice Wray <jwray@kctmo.org.uk>
Sent: 24 November 2016 08:51
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Robert Black; Barbara Matthews; Robert Black; Barbara Matthews
Subject: FW: Grenfell Tower (again!)
Attachments: image003.jpg

Dear Councillor Blakeman,

Robert has asked me to respond to your e-mail highlighting fire safety issues raised by Mr Daffarn in his blog.

With regard to fire procedures in Grenfell Tower, I can confirm that these were included in newsletters to the block and they are also documented on our website. Further,, we do publish regular fire safety articles in “The Link” magazine to all residents and we write to all new tenants to outline the fire strategy for their block, the procedure to follow in the event of a fire in their flat and also a fire elsewhere in their block and advise them of the London Fire Brigade’s (LFB) free Home Fire Safety Visit and how to access this. Additionally, I can advise that we are currently considering a programme of installation of Fire Action Notices – similar to those now installed at Adair and Hazlewood Towers – across all blocks. There has been a difference of opinion amongst London Fire Brigade officers on the value of fitting these notices within a block with a “stay put” fire strategy, however, we are keen to be proactive about this and I can confirm that we will be proceeding with the fitting of these notices at Grenfell Tower. It is likely that this will be completed within the next two weeks.

However, Mr Daffarn appears to be challenging the “stay put” fire strategy, stating that this is the wrong strategy and that we should be adopting a “one out all out” approach at Grenfell Tower. I would emphasise that, despite extensive discussions with the LFB and other fire professionals including our Fire Consultant and Senior Consultants from specialist fire engineering companies in relation to Grenfell Tower at no point has the need to change the stay put strategy even been raised. Further, the LFB operational crews continue to be very proactive about undertaking regular familiarisation visits to this block and the other blocks on this estate and remain content with the arrangements in place.

Finally, with regard to the mention of a fatal fire at Hazlewood Tower 10 years ago I’m afraid I have no knowledge of this. However, I have requested that the LFB interrogate their records and advise on this. I am also unclear on the reference to “the Fire Investigation Team ordered that the grills on the fire escape staircase be covered over”. I can confirm that Adair Tower was regularly audited by the LFB - most recent in the month before the fire took place - and no recommendations were made in relation to the design of either staircase or the lift lobbies. Requirements in relation to these areas were included in the Enforcement Notices as it was only following the fire that the LFB recommended that changes to the Building’s original design were required.

I hope this is helpful but please let me know if I can be of further assistance

Regards

Janice Wray

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P Before printing, please think about the environment

----- Original message -----

From: Judith Blakeman [REDACTED]
Date: 23/11/2016 08:46 (GMT+00:00)
To: Robert Black <rblack@kctmo.org.uk>
Subject: Grenfell Tower (again!)

Dear Robert

While Mr Daffarn engages in hyperbole in his Grenfell Action Group blog, it is read by most residents of the Tower and the most recent article causes me concern. Mr Daffarn discussed the fire safety issue with me at a recent meeting and I did point out that the instructions in the event of fire had been included in one of the refurbishment newsletters. However, I do take his point that instructions are not permanently available on noticeboards nor in a discrete letter to all residents (and in appropriate languages where required) and I am asking whether this can be rectified?

For your information, here is the extract from the most recent blog that does cause me worry, especially the allegation about Hazelwood Tower. Is this correct?:

“In the aftermath of the Adair Tower fire the London Fire Brigade found that the KCTMO had not been looking after the safety of residents properly and issued an Enforcement Order compelling them to improve the fire safety in the escape staircases and to provide self-closing devices to all the tower block’s front doors. A further audit by the London Fire Brigade of the neighbouring Hazelwood Tower (located alongside Adair Tower) found similar breaches of health and safety legislation and an Enforcement Order was also issued for this property forcing the TMO to address the serious concerns of the Fire Brigade’s inspectors. What is shocking is that a decade ago a fatality occurred due to a fire at Hazelwood Tower and the Fire Investigation Team ordered that the grills on the fire escape staircase be covered over. This never happened and it is believed that the uncovered grills at Adair House (Hazelwood Tower’s twin block) acted like a chimney and were responsible for the accelerated spread of the fire and smoke damage.

“In the last twenty years and despite the terrifying power surge incident in 2013 and recent fire at Adair Tower, the residents of Grenfell Tower have received no proper fire safety instructions from the KCTMO. Residents were informed by a temporary notice stuck in the lift and one announcement in a recent regeneration newsletter that they should remain in their flats in the event of fire. There are not and never have been any instructions posted in the Grenfell Tower noticeboard or on individual floor as to how residents should act in event of a fire. Anyone who witnessed the recent tower block fire at Shepherds Court, in nearby Shepherd’s Bush, will know that the advice to remain in our properties would have led to certain fatalities and we are calling on our landlord to re-consider the advice that they have so badly circulated.”

Kind regards

Judith