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Dear Councillor Wood,

Thank you for your patience this week while we managed the sewage situation at Thole Court and Salvor Tower. I am now able to provide you with an update to your original email you sent on 28 November 2021.

What happened

Saturday 27 November

The first call came in at 9.30am on Saturday, 27 November regarding a 'burst pipe' in the communal bin store which had flooded the basement with sewage and water. The sewage and water had got into the lift shaft, bin store and the communal areas. The LFB attended to isolate the electrics however they couldn't stop the leak. The cause wasn't immediately clear but by lunchtime was found to have been a blocked drain rather than a burst pipe. Contractors attended and they cleared the blockage around 3pm. Electricians also attended to see if the lifts could safely be put back into operation.

Unfortunately, our call centre received a much higher number of calls than they usually experience over the weekend owing to the storm conditions. Usually, they would receive around 250 calls during this period but on Saturday they received around 750 calls. This meant that out-of-hours calls took longer to answer than normal and as a result regrettably some were dropped altogether. We were also dealing with an issue in another borough and this also contributed towards our out-of-hours team being unable to answer and manage all calls as effectively as we would like. We are reviewing our business continuity plan to ensure the right mitigations are in place should similar events and call volume happen in future.

Sunday 28 November

At 8.30am Just Ask (our cleaning contractors) arrived with twelve operatives, six attended Salvor Tower and six attended Thole Court and they dealt with the worst affected areas first. Geoff Bronson, our asset lead for repairs, was on site and confirmed that the building was structurally safe and following the blockage clearance there were no concerns with the pipe.

Monday 29 November

Our team arrived into work at 9am and immediately called an urgent meeting to discuss the situation. We contacted all residents by email at 10am to assure them that we were looking into the matter.

The cleaning company, Just Ask, attended again and were instructed to carry out another deep clean of all areas. Our housing officer was on site by 12pm to review the situation. A CCTV drain survey was organised to carry out further investigation works to the drainage system. This has been confirmed for Friday 3 December. Our assets team arranged for our lift contractor, Jacksons, to attend to review the lifts and carry out a health check.

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They also arranged for a contractor to attend the lifts and drain the remaining water in the lift shafts. Electricians were also on site by 3pm reviewing the doors and the shutter of the car park which had also been affected by the water ingress.

Our property management officer and our senior property management officer attended site at 2.30pm to review the situation. At 3.45pm we received an update that the electrician had reinstated the electrics. At Salvor Tower the door entry, roller shutter and lifts were all confirmed as working. The CCTV was not and required a further period of drying out with a contractor scheduled to attend on 30 November to review it. At Thole Court the door entry wasn't working was apparently due to an issue with the fobs/readers that no longer worked after electrics were reinstated, while lift 1 was also out of service. However, lift 2 was operational.

The team sent an update to all residents at 5pm stating that;

- The lobby areas, bin store and lifts have now all been cleaned and disinfected, as this was the main focus of the clean today, however after conducting a site inspection this afternoon (29/11/2021) the cleaning contractor has been instructed to return to concentrate specifically around the skirting board areas within all lobbies
- The cleaning contractor has also been instructed to re-attend to do a deep clean of the carpets from the first floor up, throughout the building. This will be carried out within the next 24 hours and completed by the end of Wednesday of this week
- Please be assured that the blockage has now been cleared and the drains are now operating correctly (blockage was cleared on 27/11/2021). A deep clean was instructed at the weekend and will continue into this week with the cleaning operatives specifically concentrating on cleaning all carpets.
- At present please note that the Salvor Tower basement and bike store area have had their electrics isolated and switched off. This is to allow time for the equipment held within the riser cupboards to dry out. Please note that all internal doors and front entrance door to the block are still operational and functioning correctly.
- We are yet to receive a report back from the contractor with regards to the cause of the blockage but I would like to take this opportunity to remind residents not to put wet wipes/nappies and other foreign objects not designed to be flushed down the toilet.

Tuesday 30 November

At Salvor Tower the drainage contractor confirmed after their attendance yesterday afternoon there were no further issues. They checked the inspection point and found that this ran clear and flowing and found no issues. Regarding the CCTV, ABCA attended identified that the internal power supply had blown and that new parts were required.

At Thole Court the drainage contractor also confirmed there were no further issues found and also found the inspection point was clear and flowing. Unfortunately the door entry was not working after ABCA attended. They found that no fobs were recognised. The readers are encrypted and compromised according to the manufacturer. New readers have been ordered and will be installed on Saturday 4 December depending on delivery of parts. We agreed that we would borrow a reader from Laker Court and install this at the main entrance door at Thole Court so as to provide secure access. The reader chosen will not negatively impact residents in Laker Court but we have updated them as a courtesy.

Regarding the lifts, lift 1 was attended to by Jacksons who drained, cleaned and dried the lift pit. A service engineer was attending to determine if lift can be restored into service.

The cleaning team were on site again to continue cleaning each floor.

Wednesday 1 December

At both Salvor Tower and Thole Court, the CCTV parts are on order and we have an expected installation date of 7 December 2021.

The door entry panel borrowed from Laker Court was installed and is operational and the front door is secure. Jacksons attended to test lift 1 however despite running, it is still a bit damp so was left out of service until 2 December 2021. Lift 2 was confirmed as being in working order.

Other queries raised

Longer term damage to the building from this incident

We appreciate that this incident has caused residents to feel insecure about the safety of their building however we do not suspect that this issue was in relation to a defect or the structure of the pipes. We strongly suspect that the blockage has come from incorrect usage of the pipes, that is to say, by unsuitable objects being flushed down the drains or toilet. We have sent out communication to residents and we trust with continuous resident engagement regarding the correct way to use the pipes, that this will not occur again. The CCTV survey, taking place on 3 December 2021 will provide us with further confirmation that there is no lasting damage.

Communications from NHG

We are sincerely sorry that we were unable to communicate with all residents over the weekend. As this incident took place out of working hours, it is managed via the out-of-hours contact centre. The contact centre is available for residents to call and raise emergency issues which are then dealt with by an appropriate contractor. The following working day, the local officer (property management officer or housing officer) will then follow up with all residents to provide an overview and update on the situation.

As part of our review of this situation, we have arranged for a lessons-learned discussion with all parties involved to discuss the events that occurred at this scheme and consider what mitigations can be put in place to further minimise the impact on residents.

Water outage

As you know there was a water outage that occurred on 8 November 2021 however we can confirm that these two incidents are not related. The water conditioner unit that affected incoming water supply to Salvor Tower was blocked due to severe limescale build up. This has been completely rectified and we will put place regular maintenance to ensure this does not occur again.

Defect period

Both Salvor Tower and Thole Court were out of defects on October 2021. Neither incident is related to any works that Galliard are carrying out.

Fire safety concerns

FRA's are carried out across both blocks and any actions arising are addressed. For leasehold stock, a further measure of building safety is the EWS1 report which has

become something many lenders mandate they need to lend on a unit within a block, particularly when the block is over 18m. We have achieved a A1 EWS1 on Salvor Tower which demonstrates building safety compliance through this testing route and this gives residents the ability to provide to lenders and buyers for the purpose of remortgage, staircasing or sale.

Door entry

The incident your constituent stated regarding the doors is something that has been remedied each time it has been raised, whether that is through a repair or by a visit from our officers. It is not a concern as each time our officers and contractors attend the doors on each corridor are working correctly.

Zoom meeting

Thank you for sending the invitation to the Zoom meeting on Tuesday. In attendance will be the following people;

Neil Coils – Regional head of housing, housing East region
Geoff Bronson – Asset lead for repairs
Samehra Arif – Housing manager
James Thompson – Senior property management officer
Paula Charrua – Housing officer – Thole Court
Jasmine Fulkes – Property management officer – Salvor Tower
Ryan Foster – Previous property management officer – Salvor Tower

Outstanding issues

Interior doors sticking i.e. you cannot open them from inside

The weight of the doors in Salvor Tower caused the hinges to drop and this caused them to catch on the frame. This has now been rectified.

Leaks from the roof or sidewall

There have been historical leaks at Salvor Tower from the roof where the water got under the cladding and down the side of the building. This has been resolved by Galliard. The previous PMO attended the flats which had reported this with Omar Kahn (our defects surveyor), Andrea Balan (Galliard's defects site administrator) and a Galliard contractor. They inspected the damage caused by the leaks and tenants had confirmed that there were no further leaks. As such Galliard completed the making good works last month.

External door problems at ground floor and basement level

Unfortunately Galliard deemed any repairs to the doors as our responsibility to repair due to resident misuse. We had to remove the electronic openers as residents kept forcing the doors open causing it to burn out. The doors also have a timer on the fob swipe to prevent unauthorised access and for the locking mechanism to disengage. Residents do need to wait for an audible bleep prior to opening the door.

Access to the bins and people dumping rubbish by the lift

The issues regarding access occurred during the most recent event and the bin store was isolated due to the electrics being switched off. Also the bin store was unsightly so residents left their rubbish in the hallway while the area was cleaned. All rubbish has been removed and placed in the correct bins.

The loss of the interior child play space to the Parkour school. That the community space (next to the playground and Thole Court behind the NHS banner) is still not available and its future is unclear despite me asking the council about it for a year now

Regarding the indoor play space, this is a private commercial unit owned by Galliard and run by PMM Ltd. This was a decision they made and unfortunately we have not been included in these conversations. Regarding the outdoor space, the green open space between Thole Court and Maine Tower is not demised to us and is managed by PMM Ltd. The only barriers at this area are on the ramps, however I believe access is available near Maine Tower. There are no Notting Hill Genesis barriers at the Millharbour estate.

Disabled parking access to the permitted disabled bays underground not made clear even though in the s106

When tenants advise us that they have been issued a blue badge, we provide them with a parking permit and we have ten spaces demised to us. We have started issuing these and I am aware that one has been issued to a tenant in Thole court.

Access through the barriers or into the car park for picking up and dropping off stuff by car/van

The barriers were installed on the side road by PMM Ltd. This decision was made to limit access to the private road due to parking of vehicles that prevented emergency and refuse vehicles from gaining access.

Unfortunately there is no parking available on the estate. This was communicated to the residents prior to the selling/tenancy process taking place. The estate is managed by PMM Ltd who have instructed parking enforcement to enforce the area. I understand Joe Obeng provided you with an update on the parking in August. The S106 agreement stated the parking is for the social rent tenants and those with disabled badges only. As such, we have left these decisions to be organised between PMM Ltd (which is responsible for the car park) and the housing officers who manage the units at Thole Court. They met on-site on 26 October and agreed to a drop-off system where residents can ask the security team at the car park shutters to let them into a designated bay to drop off shopping, however this has not been communicated to tenants yet due to the housing officer waiting on AIS to reprogram the fobs and this has to be done on-site. There is one space demised for the use of this for each block (Salvor, Thole and Coxswain).

The recent loss of water

As addressed above we will be placing a regular maintenance contract to ensure the limescale does not build up again to this magnitude.

The sewage problems this weekend

I trust the above reassures you of our actions to manage this situation.

The people getting access to your roof for parties or to parasail from Salvor Tower.

Previously, outsiders were getting into the block and breaking into the AOV which opens to the roof. We had contractors go out and put locks on the AOV to prevent access, however the locks would then be broken again. A quote was provided by Greater London Locks (GLL) to cage up the entire top landing to block access to level 28 landing which houses the entry doors to the roof as well as the AOV. GLL had to go back to site early November to confirm the plans for the production of the barriers. They are bespoke barriers that need to be made and are not standard pieces that GLL can buy and fit. The production company have to set aside people to work specifically on this order which is why it may take a few more weeks until we receive them.

Going forwards

Our assets and repairs team have confirmed that they are ensuring the maintenance contracts for the limescale and flushing are arranged half-yearly. We have also arranged for a CCTV drain survey to occur on Friday 3 December. We will of course keep you updated with our findings once the report has been received.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Aine Short".

Áine Short
Leasehold Manager
Notting Hill Genesis