

Fire Risk Assessment – Update

1. Harbour Sail, Poole

Our review of Stonewater's 14 high rise blocks has revealed that further action is required in one, Harbour Sail, an eleven story block above Asda in Poole.

On Monday 26th we held a meeting with residents of Harbour Sail, as well as with those in the adjoining block, Harbour Court, which is not high rise and has different construction. There are a number of long running latent defects in Harbour Sail and we have been working with the insurance company to undertake the necessary remedial works. The works were originally planned for, and will still commence, in the spring of 2018.

Harbour Sail is an 11-storey, residential scheme of 32 apartments: 5 homes are fully owned by their residents, 13 are shared ownership and 14 are let to tenants on Assured Shorthold Tenancy agreements, on intermediate rent. After seeking advice from Dorset & Wiltshire Fire Service we have decided to ask residents to decant Harbour Sail before work begins. The meeting with residents was hosted by Scott Baxendale and Sue Shirt, two of Stonewater's executive directors. We are looking to agree a voluntary decant arrangement rather than go through what could be an adversarial legal process.

A list of further questions is covered by the accompanying Q&A, including those related to the proposed works to insulation and cladding, and decant arrangements.

A specific area on the Stonewater Homes website is now live for residents, where they can find copies of all information along with the dedicated Helpline and email details. We have a team on the ground over the next few days who will be very busy with resident enquiries. We are taking a proactive approach to engage with residents who did not attend the meeting by distributing further follow up letters, along with phone calls and 'door knocking'.

The second meeting was with residents of the adjoining lower level block called Harbour Court, hosted by Jonathan Layzell, a Stonewater executive director. The construction of Harbour Court is very different to Harbour Sail. It is a 4 storey building with robust fire safety measures, including two means of escape and above standard fire doors. This, combined with the fact that Fire Service equipment and ladders can reach the full height of the building means we are comfortable with the mitigation in place. No action is being taken here and the purpose of the meeting was simply to inform residents about what is happening at the neighbouring Harbour Sail and provide reassurance.

Stonewater has set up a small team to lead on post-Grenfell actions and make this large amount of additional work their number one priority, whilst ensuring that we carry on with 'business as a usual'.

2. Other high-rise blocks

Stonewater has reviewed arrangements across all its 14 'high rise' schemes (above 18 meters). The remaining 13 have all been inspected and we are satisfied that they are safe to remain in occupation without requiring significant works.

3. Tenants and fire / other safety

Q: Have we had any fire safety-related complaints / issues from tenants?

A: No

Q: Do we do any fire safety-related work with tenants?

A: We provide on our website basic advice to tenants concerning fire safety within their home, but we do not set specific requirements for tenants. We will be increasing our communication with residents to ensure they understand the regime applicable to their own block. The majority of our blocks of flats operate a "stay-put" policy but in a small number we operate an "evacuation policy".

Q: Gas safety and other issues - do we have the ability to inspect properties with or without permission from tenants?

A: We must inspect all homes with a gas supply annually and we closely manage this. We are not able to enter homes without permission to undertake the inspection, and at any one point, for a few homes (generally less than 0.3%) we are undertaking actions to ensure access where tenants have not provided it within the annual deadline.