

**Councillor Peter John, OBE**

**Leader of the Council**

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**17 August, 2017**

**Ref: Cllr PJ/H8687**

Dear resident,

I have visited residents of the Ledbury towers twice this week, and am grateful to those of you have taken the time to talk to me. I truly understand what a difficult time this is for you, and after each visit I have reported back to officers on the main issues and problems you are experiencing.

I promised you another more detailed update this week on our progress to fix the problems on your estate, and officers have pulled together the attached questions and answers, to keep you up to date. I hope the attached information shows that we are listening, and doing all we can to address your concerns.

Some residents have asked us to call a public meeting, while others have asked us to wait until we have more information and a timeline available. We will let you know as soon as possible when a meeting is arranged, in close collaboration with the Tenants and Residents Association. In the meantime please do speak to council officers in the TRA hall if you have any questions or need help with anything. They are available 24 hours a day to help you.

With best wishes.

Yours faithfully,



**Councillor Peter John, OBE**  
**LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

## Questions and Answers – Ledbury Towers (17 August 2017)

<p>How is the installation of immersion heaters progressing?</p>	<p>We have already installed immersion heaters in several flats and this work is ongoing. The asbestos removal has slowed us down a little but we are working as fast as possible. We are prioritising vulnerable residents, but will then move to a general rollout – you can book an appointment with officers in the TRA hall.</p>
<p>Is the asbestos dangerous?</p>	<p>Many buildings contain asbestos and as long as it isn't disturbed, it isn't a problem. As we have found asbestos in the area where we are fitting the immersion heaters, we need to remove it. This work is being done safely by qualified staff wearing protective clothing.</p>
<p>Do we still have to shower at the leisure centres?</p>	<p>We understand how inconvenient this is and we are looking for other solutions including temporary shower blocks, until all the immersion heaters are fitted. With many festivals taking place this month, we are struggling to source these blocks, but we will keep looking.</p>
<p>When will proper electric cookers be supplied?</p>	<p>Once the work on installing immersion heaters to provide hot water and upgrading the electrical mains supply is completed (approx. 2 – 4 weeks) we will start on installation of electric cookers.</p>
<p>Can we guarantee the electrical capacity will be sufficient for the new appliances?</p>	<p>Our engineers are onsite and we are talking to UK Power Networks to increase capacity. Water heaters will be placed on controlled timers to prevent overloading and further information will be provided in due course. We would be very grateful if residents could avoid using appliances that use large amounts of electricity for the time being.</p>
<p>How long are residents expected to stay in temporary accommodation?</p>	<p>A small number of residents requested temporary accommodation, and most have told us they will return when hot water is restored. Others may apply for a new permanent home.</p>
<p>If I want to move, how long will it take?</p>	<p>The council officers at the TRA hall are dedicated to Ledbury residents to ensure the process is as quick as possible. Residents are receiving help directly, 24/7. Band one gives the fastest opportunity for rehousing but depends upon individual residents bidding for their preferred properties.</p>
<p>Does the council commit to keeping council blocks on this site?</p>	<p>Yes, our plans are to repair and refurbish the block to a high quality for the benefit of current residents. The council will continue to be completely transparent about its plans.</p>

When will the council make a compensation payment for our extra electricity costs and other inconvenience?	Yes. Our calculation of a likely temporary increase in electricity bills and compensation for inconvenience caused is £200 per household. We will arrange for cheques to be hand delivered to tenants by 1 <sup>st</sup> September.
Do we have to keep paying rent?	Yes, you must pay your rent, but we have agreed to pay compensation to residents.
Is there additional information for leaseholders?	Council staff are contacting all leaseholders in the blocks and will assist them with the options available to them. Temporary accommodation has been offered to leaseholders and their tenants until hot water is returned, in the same way as to tenants.
Can you share ARUP's report with residents?	The ARUP report will be made public once it is complete.
Do residents really have to move out during the major works?	The council is exploring every option to ensure that you can stay in your home while these works take place, but it will depend on how intrusive the works are. If temporary moves are necessary then every household will have a dedicated team looking after them and making sure their needs are met. Working together on an individual basis will ensure that the residents can make choices about where they want to live.
When will we have a timetable for the major works?	We want to discuss that with you once we have spoken to our contractors and have a clearer idea of timescales and options. At the moment our focus is on the short-term fix for your hot water and cooking needs, but we will make more information available to you as soon as possible, and will ensure there is a slot on the agenda at the next public meeting to discuss this.