



Ledbury Towers

Weekly newsletter

22 September 2017

Heating

A district heating system will be installed by mid-late October, which will provide heating and hot water to every flat. We have begun preparatory works outside the buildings this week, and from Monday will begin works inside the towers. We are aware it has been cold, and if anyone is struggling with the cold please speak to one of our officers to arrange a move into temporary accommodation.

Please do not put yourselves and your neighbours at risk by leaving on ovens or other appliances.

Hot water

Immersion heaters have now been installed, are underway or appointments made, in every flat where one has been requested. As the district heating is installed, we may have to remove the immersion heaters if space is tight, but where possible we will retain them as a back-up.

Cookers

Residents have selected their cookers from a number of options, and these have been ordered. These should be delivered from the beginning of October, and we will contact you individually to agree a date for installation.

Electrical capacity

We are working with UK Power Network to increase the supply of electricity to the Ledbury so that it can support the additional electricity demands caused by the gas being removed. They have told us this work should be able to be completed within a few weeks, although they do need to explore this further. In the meantime it is really important that the usage is limited, and this is why we are asking residents not to use fan heaters or other electrical appliances that use a lot of power.

Dedicated team

In response to requests from residents for consistent messages and timely responses to queries, from Monday, a dedicated team of specialist officers will be based in the TRA hall to work alongside the Resident Services Officers (RSOs). This team will include:

Tony Hunter – Engineering
 Abigail Buckingham/Sharon Shadbolt – Major works
 Cheryl Russell – Housing Management
 Kim Hooper – Communications
 Ricky Bellot/Quesha McFarlane – Housing Solutions
 Gary Wallace - Leaseholders
 Community Engagement – tbc

The RSOs should still be your first point of contact. There is one for each block and they are:

Bromyard	Hema Vashi
Peterchurch	Modupe Someye
Sarnsfield	Charmain Bynoe
Skenfrith	Sabdat Ibn-Ibrahim

Compensation payments

We wrote to you at the end of August with a compensation cheque for £200 and a promise that we would also pay you £20 a week (paid monthly) for the period that there is no heating. The first payment will be with you at the end of September. Most households will receive £140 (seven weeks' worth from 11th August to 29th September), while those who lost gas earlier in Peterchurch will receive a little more.

We are also paying a 'cost of moving' one-off allowance to residents who move out of the Ledbury towers into another council or housing association property. The amount is £5,800, and to date we have paid this to four residents with five more being processed. This is paid

when the new tenancy is signed.

- 19 offers refused following viewing/second thoughts after bidding cycle

Structure

All cracks and gaps that were reported to us have now been temporarily filled, with a longer term solution planned once we know the outcome of the structural survey.

We hope to receive the results of Arup's investigation into the structure of the tower blocks at the end of November. We will then take a decision about whether the blocks can be repaired and strengthened. It is very much our hope that this will be possible, and we will keep you updated on any developments.

Warning re bottled gas

It is really important that residents do not bring any bottled gas or gas appliances into the tower blocks, we have been advised that the buildings will not withstand the force of a gas explosion.

Housing updates

Registrations

- 161 Households have registered on the Homeseach bidding scheme.
- Of the 188 LBS tenanted properties 27 have not registered on the bidding scheme, and we are actively communicating with applicants

Offers

- 7 residents moved
- 10 offers made and accepted. Awaiting move in dates.
- 7 residents in 1st position and viewing pending.
- 8 Households finished within 2nd & 3rd positions and awaiting confirmation of viewing results from 1st applicants.

Leaseholders

We are arranging a meeting for leaseholders with council officers to answer their specific questions relating to their ownership of their homes. As soon as we have a date confirmed we will let leaseholders know.

Residents' Friend

The Tenants and Residents' Association and the Ledbury Action Group recently agreed the appointment of Neal Purvis as the Residents' Friend. This is an important liaison role between residents and the council, and Neal is in the process of establishing ways of working.

We will be setting up a Resident Project Team to oversee developments with the Ledbury Towers and Neal will work with us to set it up. If anyone is interested in joining this team please call Freephone 0800 073 1051 or email enquiries@opencommunities.org

