

Mike Tyrrell
Director of Ledbury Estate
Ledbury Estate Team
Housing & Modernisation
mike.tyrrell@southwark.gov.uk

1-56 Bromyard House

Date: 23 October 2017

Dear Resident

Fire Alarm Incident – 23 October 2017

Following on from my letter of 21 October 2017, I am so disappointed to be writing to you again about another fire alarm incident this morning. It is totally unacceptable that you were all put through another evacuation as a result of a problem with the alarm. On behalf of Southwark Council please accept my apologies for this.

As I advised in my letter on Saturday, the alarm should not even be working as the work to install it is not finished. The preliminary report that I have received today has shown that the alarm went off on Saturday and today because of a faulty smoke detector that is being replaced today. This triggered other alarms in the block by way of the wireless booster sets. The wireless booster sets ensure that when an alarm goes off anywhere in the block, the alarm then goes off in every home and common area so that all residents are alerted and can evacuate. This wireless system acted independently of the main panel in the ground floor lobby which was turned off because it is awaiting final installation.

This is of grave concern to me, as chatting to a number of you outside the block this morning you were concerned that some of you did not evacuate because it was a false alarm; and that any false alarm will lead to complacency. This is not good news because next month the alarm installation will be completed and the need for fire wardens on every other floor will end. You as residents and us at Southwark Council need to have full confidence in the alarm system, so that when it goes off, people know that they have to evacuate.

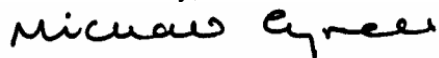
In my letter on Saturday I also promised to get back to you about who called the fire brigade. A simple investigation showed it is clear that the London Fire Brigade had not been called by the warden on duty at the bottom of the block. The fire brigade have confirmed that they were not called until 3.08am. This means that they were not called by the fire warden when the alarm went off at 2.58am, but by an undisclosed caller. This is unacceptable and I have taken

it up with the company providing the fire wardens. In addition we have changed things so that at the changeover of fire wardens every morning at 7am and every evening at 7pm, their briefing will be undertaken by senior management, until the new alarm system is commissioned.

In respect of the fire wardens, I wanted to thank those of you who spoke to me this morning to tell me that the evacuation went better today than it did on Saturday. However, there are still some issues which have had to be dealt with. On Saturday I told you all that we had changed procedures. Over the weekend I personally went around each block at 11pm on Saturday night and 5pm yesterday afternoon to check that every warden was aware of the changes we made to the procedure. In addition Cheryl Russell also arranged for some of our colleagues to increase the random checks (not more than two hours apart) during the overnight and weekend shifts. I am pleased to report that from my and my colleagues visits, the fire wardens were all aware of the new procedures and that made a difference today. However as I stated above the concerns I have are leading to some more personnel changes today.

Finally once again on behalf of Southwark Council, please accept my apologies for these unacceptable incidents.

Yours faithfully,



Mike Tyrrell

Director of Ledbury Estate