



# Ledbury Estate

## Monthly newsletter

22 December 2017

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## Introduction

Hello and welcome to the first edition of the Ledbury Estate Newsletter.

Everyone on the Ledbury Estate will be aware of the situation in the four tower blocks – Peterchurch, Skenfrith, Sarnsfield and Bromyard.

Since the summer, Southwark Council has had a team of officers working out of the Ledbury TRA Hall to support residents living in the blocks and oversee a programme of major works, including installing a temporary district heating system to get heating and hot water installed back into the buildings.

The dedicated Ledbury team is in regular contact with the residents in the four blocks but we are aware that people living on the rest of the estate have also been affected by the events taking place over the last few months, and would like to know what is happening in the future.

This is why we will now produce a monthly newsletter that will go to all residents on the estate to keep them updated on the wider implications on what is happening in the towers.

If you ever have any questions or concerns, please call into see the team in the hall.

Cllr Stephanie Cryan, Cabinet Member for Housing.

## The situation so far:

There has been a lot happening around the Ledbury Estate since the summer. Here is a round up of the work that has been taking place.

- **Arup Report:** The Arup Report was made public on Monday 20 November. In July, Southwark Council appointed

structural engineers, Arup, to inspect the four towers. This was in response to concerns raised at a public meeting, held after the Grenfell fire, that cracks appearing in walls could compromise fire safety. The Report concluded that while the buildings were fine structurally they did require extensive and intrusive strengthening work. The council is now looking at what these works would cost and will be consulting with the residents of the Towers in the New Year.

- **Gas supply removal:** As well as the main Arup Report, a separate survey was commissioned when additional concerns were raised that the towers had not had the strengthening works done to protect them in the event of an event like a gas explosion. The results of the additional survey were revealed on 10 August and concluded that works had not been done as believed. As such the council immediately took action to remove the gas supply, which was the main risk. Instead the council installed a temporary District Heating System to provide heating and hot water to the four blocks.
- **Electricity supply:** As well as installing the new heating systems, the council has been working with the electricity suppliers to increase the capacity to the blocks to allow for the extra usage from things like electric cookers and heaters. Southwark Council has provided replacement electric cookers to any resident who had to remove their gas cooker. The work to increase the capacity was completed in October.
- **Fire wardens and alarms:** Since July the council has been employing fire wardens to patrol the four blocks. Because the cracks that have been appearing between walls could compromise the compartmentation of the rooms, the council and London Fire Brigade have agreed that instead of the usual 'stay put' policy, residents will be evacuated in the event of a fire. The wardens are employed to alert people in the event of a fire and help with the evacuations. Over the last few weeks the council has been installing and testing a

new communal smoke and heat detection system in the blocks to eventually replace the majority of the wardens. The new system went live earlier this month but when we had two false alarms caused by faults in the system it was removed as the flats still have individual smoke alarms. Fire wardens remain on site and will until we are certain the new alarm system is completely functional, when they will be reduced to two per block. Their main role will then be to patrol the buildings and support residents who need help to evacuate.

- **Tenant moves:** As of this week 42 households have moved out of the Ledbury blocks. Since the summer the council has given any tenants in the block Band One priority status to allow them to bid for new homes. Whilst the council has reassured the blocks are safe and every measure has been taken to reduce risks in case of a fire, we understand that many residents may no longer feel happy living there, especially with the prospects of further intrusive works. The Ledbury Team has been helping tenants bid for new homes and offered compensation to help with moving costs. Any resident who leaves has been guaranteed a Right to Return once any works are completed in the future.
- **Leaseholders:** The council has provided a dedicated officer in the Ledbury Team to support leaseholders in the blocks. Earlier this month Cabinet members approved a new policy to allow the council to buy back properties from the 33 leaseholders in the Ledbury Towers. The offer would be open to any of the leaseholders who want to leave and take advantage of the opportunity. Although all leaseholders will be able to take advantage of this offer it is not compulsory.

## Ledbury webpage

Everything we have issued to residents, including these newsletters and answers to frequently asked questions,, will also be uploaded to our website at [www.southwark.gov.uk/Ledbury](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/Ledbury)

## The Ledbury Team

There is a dedicated team working out of the Ledbury TRA Hall to help residents in the four towers. The team is led by Mike Tyrrell who will be attending the TRA AGM in February 2018.



**Mike Tyrrell – Director of Ledbury Estate.**

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