

Cllr Stephanie Cryan
Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Housing

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Date: 23 March 2018

1-56 Bromyard House
1-56 Peterchurch House
1-56 Sarnsfield House
1-56 Skenfrith House

Dear Residents

Ledbury Towers – Confirmation of promises made to Residents by Southwark Council

I have been asked by the Ledbury TRA and the Ledbury Action Group to write to all residents to confirm what Southwark Council has offered to residents since the emergency situation first arose last summer.

A number of promises have been made and the Ledbury TRA and the Ledbury Action Group have suggested that it would be good to have them available in one document, so that residents and former residents are clear as to the situation, and so that if any resident does have any concerns they can raise it directly with the staff in the Ledbury Team.

Heating

District Heating has been installed powered by a temporary boiler. The supply pipes are connected to the existing radiator pipes in each flat. The heat supply will be metered separately to each flat. The supply pipes from the boiler to each flat will be permanent, and a permanent site for a permanent boiler will be planned. Residents will not pay any heating charge while the boilers are powered by diesel which is at least up until April 2018. With the current spell of cold weather the move to a gas fuelled system is being delayed.

Electrical Works

Keepmoat, the council's Major Works contractor, has provided new electric cookers to replace the gas cookers that have been removed. Following update of the electrical power to the blocks, there is no limit on the electrical capacity of individual flats.

Major Works and Option Appraisal

The scope of any permanent major works will be decided following an option appraisal process that follows on from the structural engineer's report of November 2017. There will be an Option Appraisal Process to consider different refurbishment, demolition and new build options that will be reported to the council's Cabinet in September 2018.

Residents will be consulted on the scope of the options appraised and the design of the options appraisal process.

If a refurbishment option is agreed, the major works will include redecoration and making good of flats where any repair disturbs decorations.

Compensation

Both Tenants and Leaseholders have been given the following compensation.

- £200 for extra electricity costs and £20 per week for general disturbance from the cut off of the gas supply until District Heating was installed and operational. Compensation was also available in cases of hardship.
- Compensation for loss of new gas cookers within their warranty period.
- Compensation where an appointment is made and the contractor does not attend is £50 or loss of earnings where the resident shows proof of loss of earnings.
- Compensation for loss of amenity for the time that the entry phone system was disabled.

Where there is any damage due to forced entry and emergency works the Council will make good the damage.

The Ledbury Action Group's request for compensation for loss and distress will be considered following the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee Inquiry. The Inquiry began in late 2017 and will report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2018.

Temporary Accommodation

LBS provided temporary accommodation when the fire safety issues were identified until the completion of temporary fire safety works, and the installation of district heating and hot water in the blocks. Council tenants and leaseholders who felt unsafe were provided with temporary accommodation by the council, at the council's expense until the central heating and hot water system was fully operational.

Depending on whether a refurbishment option or a new build option is chosen for the estate there will be a need for temporary accommodation to allow the permanent major works or demolition and new build to take place. This will be provided by Southwark Council the details of which will be developed as part of the Options Appraisal process.

Tenants Moving Out

Tenants were offered temporary accommodation where they felt unsafe until the completion of temporary fire safety works, and the installation of district heating and hot water in the blocks.

Ledbury Towers Tenants have been given Band 1 for moving on the council's Housing Register.

Ledbury Towers Tenants who have moved since 11 August 2017 have the Right to Return to refurbished or new homes on the Ledbury Estate when the works are completed, until 23 November 2024.

Where Ledbury Towers tenants bid through Homesearch, they will not be suspended if they are made three offers that are not accepted.

Ledbury Towers tenants will have first choice on new general needs council homes in Sylvan Grove, constructed by Hyde, that are due to be let from next month onwards.

All tenants will receive £5,800 help with costs to move when moving out before 30 September 2017 and £6,100 help with costs to move for moving out from 1 October 2017.

Tenants will receive help to cover the full costs of moving out and returning to Ledbury Towers which will include:

- Removals – These are arranged directly by Southwark Council with Harrow Green who carry out removals on behalf of the Council;
- Disconnection & Reconnection of cooker/washing machine - This has been arranged directly by Southwark Council with Harrow Green to do this at the same time they move the tenant
- Redirection of mail - Southwark Council will reimburse the tenant on receipt of the receipt from the Post Office.
- BT Telephone Installation - Depending on what line is already in a property, if a reconnection fee is payable Southwark Council will pay this on receipt of the bill from BT.
- Cable TV / TV Installation
- Adjustments to Carpets and Curtains - This is payment of between £100 and £150 depending on the size of the property that tenant is moving from to cover alterations to curtains and carpets

Leaseholder Costs

Leaseholders will not be charged for emergency works – including immersion heaters, district heating installation, temporary and permanent fire safety works until the completion of the major works to the blocks to deal with the issues identified by the Arup report in November 2017.

Leaseholders will not be charged for any refurbishment works including strengthening works, permanent fire safety works and works identified in the option chosen following the Option Appraisal process.

Leaseholder Compensation

The council will support non-resident landlords for their financial losses who can provide proof of net loss or net reduction in rental income for the specific period of 11 August 2017 to 14 October 2017.

The council has set out a process for leaseholders to apply for compensation, and will consider individual circumstances including stress and anxiety as part of this process.

Temporary Accommodation for Leaseholders

The council paid rent on temporary accommodation where leaseholders (or their tenants) moved out during emergency works until the central heating and hot water system was fully operational in October 2017.

Buyout Option for Leaseholders

The council has made an Offer to Buyout leaseholders to those who are interested in this option. This is a voluntary scheme for leaseholders, agreed by the council's Cabinet on 12 December 2017.

The council will value the property, where leaseholders request this, and make an offer to leaseholders. Resident Leaseholders will be offered Market Value plus 10% and non resident Leaseholders will be offered Market Value plus 7.5%.

The council will pay resident Leaseholders costs for:

- The fees of Carter Jonas and valuation by leaseholder's own surveyor
- Council and leaseholders reasonable legal fees including stamp duty on the purchase of a new property
- Mortgage redemption fees where these are necessary and appropriate
- Removal costs

Council will pay non-resident Leaseholders costs for:

- The fees of Carter Jonas and valuation by leaseholder's own surveyor
- Council legal expenses and leaseholder's reasonable legal fees including stamp duty t the value of the leaseholder's existing property

Leaseholders who have purchased through the Right to Buy will not be required to repay any of the discount.

I do hope that this information is helpful to you. If you have any queries on this or think that you have missed a payment, please contact your resident Services Officer. The Resident Services Officers are:

- Bromyard House - Sabdat (Sabi) Ibn-Ibrahim – Tel: 07984 144224
- Peterchurch House - Modupe Somoye – Tel: 07903 281390
- Sarnsfield House - Sharon Burrell – Tel: 07432 738774
- Skenfrith House - Sabdat (Sabi) Ibn-Ibrahim – Tel: 07984 144224

Yours faithfully



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