

**Sent by email**

04/11/2024

**Central West Remediation Programme  
October 2024 – Questions and Answers Update**

Thank you for sharing your feedback and questions about the remediation work at Central West. We have collated the questions into themes and provided answers below.

We will arrange a further meeting with residents in late November / early December to discuss the below points and any other questions you may have.

Ryan Harkness (Regional Programme Delivery Manager, The Guinness Partnership)  
[ryan.harkness@guinness.org.uk](mailto:ryan.harkness@guinness.org.uk)

Richard Higgins (Head of M&E, The Guinness Partnership) – [buildingsafety@guinness.org.uk](mailto:buildingsafety@guinness.org.uk)

Tracey Abena Owusu (Resident Liaison Officer, The Guinness Partnership)  
[traceyabena.Owusu@guinness.org.uk](mailto:traceyabena.Owusu@guinness.org.uk)

Syed Momin (Senior Resident Liaison Officer, NewmanFrancis) [syed@newmanfrancis.org](mailto:syed@newmanfrancis.org)

**1. In response to questions about what work is being done to remediate the building.**

Our specialist fire engineers, Hydrock Consultants Limited, have carried out a type 4 Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) survey at the building. This survey identified that work is required to remediate compartmentation issues in the building and we have instructed CLM Fireproofing Limited carry out this work, in line with Hydrock's recommendations.

We presented the wider remediation plans to you, with indicative timescales, at our meeting on 30 September. Whilst these are indicative, our advisors (PRP) have worked on many external wall remediation programmes and we therefore have reasonable confidence in the timescales shared (subject to factors that are not foreseen at present).

The remediation timetable allows for submission and determination of a Planning application. Determination should take no more than eight weeks. We cannot submit the Planning application until the preferred remediation option has been decided on. To the extent that we can make use of the previous consent granted by Ealing Council (potentially through seeking a material amendment, if necessary/appropriate), we will do this.

A ballot will be held in December 2024 so you can share your preference on the options presented. To ensure we closely follow the timeline we presented to you, we are working in the background on tender documentation and designs for the external wall remediation, as well as long term heating and hot water options.

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In addition to the works to remediate the external wall system and work on the heating and hot water system, we plan to incorporate window replacement into the programme of works.

**2. In response to questions about the steps already taken to ensure the building remains safe, prior to the fuller remediation works that are required, and whether the building is still High Risk.**

We have put several mitigating measures in place while we plan and undertake the remediation works. We have installed a fire detection and alarm system in properties, linked to the communal areas to provide all properties with early warning in the event of a fire. We have changed the evacuation strategy from Stay Put, to a Simultaneous Evacuation – this means you should evacuate the building if the alarm sounds.

We have started remediation works to internal parts of the building (as above) and are progressing plans to remediate the external walls and resolve heating, hot water and energy supply issues.

The FRAEW (PAS 9980) survey undertaken by PRP concluded that Central West is Medium-High Risk. We would expect that as works are carried out, the risk rating for the building should improve.

**3. In response to questions about how the simultaneous evacuation works with the new fire detection and alarm system?**

The fire detection alarms, which have been recently installed in flats, are linked to a fire panel connected to an alarm-receiving centre – this centre is contactable 24 hours a day. In the event of the alarms activating, the fire service is notified and should attend the building (even in cases of a false alarm).

The simultaneous evacuation policy means you must leave the building if the alarm sounds.

Earlier this year there was a false alarm at the building, caused by a leak in the communal area, and the fire service attended. We understand the disruption this caused, and we are sorry for this. Our priority is to ensure your safety and we are monitoring and reviewing the system to prevent unnecessary evacuations from a false alarm. If the alarm is activated you must evacuate the building, even if you believe it may be a false alarm – this is for your safety.

**4. In response to questions about whether alternative accommodation will be offered during the works to remediate the external wall.**

In our recent letter, we acknowledged that some households may need to move to alternative accommodation while the work is being carried out. We will consider this and other options on a case-by-case basis. As part of the programme planning, we will be undertaking an impact assessment with each household to understand the support required. The impact assessment will include considering the extent to which the scaffolding imposes on individual households given specific day-to-day use of your home and the impact of any noise expected to be associated with the works. As we understand the extent to which we can improve temporary heating to the building, the impact assessment will also consider concerns about temperature as the current external wall system is being dismantled.

We have not refused to move anyone out of the building on a temporary basis if the impact assessment concludes that this is necessary. We have been open about the practical challenges of temporary rehousing, both in terms of supply of homes available and the level of disruption this type of move can have on people.

#### **5. In response to questions about the Winter 2024 Plan.**

We have been reviewing whether we can provide improved facilities for the coming winter.

We completed the electrical loading review on 9 October 2024 as planned. There were several factors that had to be reviewed to determine what load could be taken by the individual installations, including the substation size and the rating of the cables within each home.

We are adding energy loggers which will enable us to monitor peak energy usage in the building over the next couple of weeks. If the energy loggers show energy usage is below the maximum capacity indicated by the electrical loading review, it may mean there is scope for additional heating solutions.

We have been researching alternative low energy products that might be available to provide additional comfort/facilities without causing electrical overload. Suggestions have been made that we consider provision of further electric heaters, electric cookers/table-top ovens, and electric blankets – all of these are being included in our research.

We will contact you individually to establish what electrical equipment you already have and, subject to the results of the data loggers, what additional heating and cooking provision would make you more comfortable.

#### **6. In response to questions about why the buy-back offer is not being revisited now the full scale of works required at Central West is better understood.**

There was not unanimous agreement for us to buy-back your homes in the ballot earlier this year, therefore we are proceeding with remediation of the cladding, compartmentation and main heating system at Central West.

As you are aware, we continue to work to improve the underlying safety and quality of the building in advance of the start of the cladding and heating remediation programme.

We do not envisage another buy-back ballot, given that the outcome of the previous ballot was not unanimous and remediation plans are now progressing.

#### **7. In response to questions about improving communication with residents.**

We now have a dedicated Resident Liaison Officer, Tracey Abena-Owusu, to assist with resident engagement. We will provide regular updates to residents – every other month or sooner if there is significant news to share – using a range of methods, such as newsletters, meetings or drop-in sessions.

You should have already received slides from and a recording of our meeting on 30 September.

NewmanFrancis continues to act as an impartial advocate for residents, ensuring your concerns are heard and providing guidance and support. They also have a specific remit in respect of helping to develop a compensation proposal.

**8. In response to questions about compensating residents and when we will come back to residents with an offer.**

NewmanFrancis has been engaging with residents to understand your thoughts on the support we could be providing and your views on compensation. NewmanFrancis will share a written report of this with us, so we can consider your feedback and update you on our proposals prior to December 2024.

If you have not shared your views with NewmanFrancis and would prefer to share them directly with a member of staff, please email your feedback to Tracey Abena-Owusu, Resident Liaison Officer or complete this online form: [Central West Compensation Proposal \(Page 1 of 8\) \(office.com\)](#) by 14 November – any delay to this may delay our updating residents on our proposals.

If you have not received a payment expected under the existing payment arrangements, again please contact Tracey Abena-Owusu, Resident Liaison Officer.