

17.6.17

Dear resident,

What we're doing to make sure you're safe

Following the horrendous fire in Kensington, I'm writing to update Edward Woods estate residents on what we're doing to make sure you're safe.

We understand how concerned you may be, especially if you had friends or family who have lost their lives, their loved-ones or their homes.

It's utterly unacceptable that such a fire could happen anywhere in this day and age.

Like all councils, we're currently waiting to hear from London Fire Brigade on what caused the fire and how it could have spread so fast. We're ready to act swiftly on any advice they give. If the fire experts say things need to change at other blocks, we will do anything necessary to keep you safe.

We also have extra officers based at Edward Woods to answer any detailed questions you may have.

In the meantime, I'd like to offer you what reassurance I can.

Extra checks at Edward Woods

We currently have some of the country's best independent experts checking fire safety at Edward Woods estate. They are looking at all aspects of fire prevention and control, and because they are independent of the council, they will be impartial and free to point out anything that is not up to standard.

We have a recent and full Fire Risk Assessment for Norland, Poynter and Stebbing houses, but we are checking all aspects of the fire plan for the estate while we wait for further advice from the fire brigade.

Cladding

You may have heard speculation on the news and social media about whether the cladding at Grenfell Tower was responsible for the spread of the fire. And, if it was, whether the problem was the type of cladding, how it was fitted or some other factor. We won't know the answers until the fire authorities tell us more.

According to media reports, the cladding used at Grenfell Tower was Reynobond panels possibly with a flammable plastic core. That is not the same as the cladding at Edward Woods which uses fire-resilient stone wool insulation, supplied by Rockwool Ltd.

Our independent fire safety consultants are currently doing stringent tests on the cladding at Edward Woods to make sure it's safe.

Counselling and support

If you have been bereaved, or if you are struggling to cope emotionally, you are not alone. The events of the past week have been immensely difficult for many people. There is help if you need it. In the first instance, I'd advise you to speak to the Community Champions at the community centre. They offer a fantastic service and will also be able to put you in touch with other people locally.

Your health

Public Health England has also released a statement allaying fears about the risk of smoke to local residents following the fire. It says tests show 'a minimal wider risk to public health as a result of yesterday's smoke plume.' They say some people experience nausea or dizziness caused just by the smell of chemicals, even at small levels that are not toxic. They advise against wearing face masks, particularly if you have heart or breathing problems.

If you have concerns, please seek medical advice or call NHS 111.

Rubbish collections

I understand that the police were preventing our waste contractors from entering the cordoned zone on Thursday and Friday to collect your rubbish and recycling. My apologies for the inconvenience that this caused. The service is back to normal now.

Thank you for your donations

Thank you to everyone who has donated supplies to people affected by the Grenfell fire. The generosity and compassion of people from all walks of life has been wonderful to see. We've been gathering and sorting contributions from organisations and community halls across the borough, but we're not taking any more now - thank you.

If you'd like to give money, you can do it online at thekandcfoundation.com/donate/

Finally

If you have any concerns, questions or suggestions, we're here to help. Please contact your housing office.

Best wishes,



Cllr Lisa Homan
Cabinet member for housing