



Update on Fire Safety & Cladding



28 August 2019

Grand Union Heights

We would like to apologise as you mistakenly received a draft version of this newsletter last week.

We are writing to you about the cladding and external walls at Grand Union Heights.

What cladding is on my building?

The cladding used at Grand Union Heights is a type of cladding called high pressure laminate manufactured by Trespa. The insulation behind the cladding is manufactured by Kingspan and is branded as Thermawall TW55.

What fire safety works were completed previously by United Living

Fire safety defects were previously identified within the internal walls, these were all remedied by United Living who originally built Grand Union Heights. These works are not related to the current investigations.

Why are we investigating the cladding now?

The Government has released the current Advice Note 14 in December 2018. This tells building owners to check the external wall system and that:

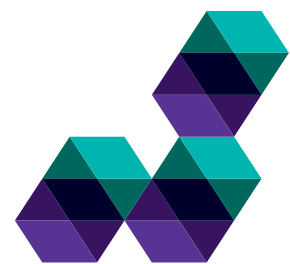
- the correct materials were used that met regulations at the time of construction
- it has been installed as recommended by the supplier/manufacturer
- it has been maintained as recommended by the supplier/manufacturer

We are working through a programme of buildings where we need to do this and had intended to inspect Grand Union Heights in the coming months.

On 18 July 2019, the Government released Advice Note 22. This tells building owners that high pressure laminate cladding with this type of insulation may not be suitable for high rise developments. The two taller blocks at Grand Union Heights, 56-76 and 77-108 are above 18m tall and therefore considered high rise. The other blocks are not as tall and therefore are below the 18m threshold.

What will we be doing?

We have engaged a professional consultant (BRE) to review all previous documentation and evidence relating to the cladding and external walls at Grand Union Heights to determine what should happen next. The BRE are a leading UK consultancy and are regularly advise the Government on fire safety.





What is the expected timeline?

We expect the review to take place during September. We expect to be able to provide further information to residents about the future of cladding in October of this year.

Why hasn't the cladding been investigated before now?

This cladding and insulation combination was approved for use when Grand Union Heights was built in 2006. The cladding and external wall system was also assessed by a qualified fire engineer when the previous fire safety works were completed by United Living during 2016 and 2017. We are now investigating following the new Government advice note published in July.

Following the Grenfell fire two years ago, the government started by issuing advice about ACM cladding on tall buildings. We wrote to you at the time to let you know that the cladding on your building was not ACM cladding.

The government has now asked landlords and building managers to investigate the design and installation of all other types of cladding.

This is not specific to Network Homes; it affects all owners of tall buildings whether they are housing associations, councils, private companies or organisations operating in other industries including hospitals, hotels, schools and colleges.

What is the fire strategy for my block?

You may recall in 2016 we installed a full fire alarm throughout Grand Union Heights, to support a simultaneous evacuation. This is still the policy. If you hear a fire alarm sounding you should immediately evacuate the building, before making yourself to the assembly point, in the courtyard of Peppermint Heights (the neighbouring building).

If you own your property: how will this affect your mortgage and if you want to sell your property?

Some lenders are asking for information about building cladding before offering mortgages. If a lender asks for information relating to cladding when you are re-mortgaging or selling your property, then please get in touch with us. We will try to assist as best we can.

Have a question?

If you have a question about these investigations on your block, or something else to do with fire safety, please contact our fire safety team on **0300 373 3000** or **firesafety@networkhomes.org.uk**

