

## **Area Panels: September 2016**

### **Report: Somerset Point Sprinkler Project**

#### **Purpose of Report:**

The Purpose of this report is to gain feedback from Area Panels on the recent Pilot project for the installation of a Sprinkler system at Somerset Point. This feedback will be used assist Housing Committee in reaching a decision to progress with further installations in high rise blocks across the City that are designated as 'high risk' of incidents of fire outbreak.

#### **Introduction:**

Through the joint partnership working delivered by the Repairs and Improvement Partnership, we have successfully invested £1.5m in the upgrade of fire safety to our properties.

The Partnership (BHCC / Mears), have developed collaborative relationships with our stakeholders and other public bodies and we work closely with East Sussex Fire and Rescue Services (ESFRS) to continue to review and improve Fire Safety throughout the city.

#### **Background - ESFRS**

Fires in the home still account for the greatest number of fire deaths and injuries each year. All fires will grow and spread until someone, often the Fire Service intervenes to halt the spread and extinguish the fire. Most fire safety measures are designed to guarantee a safe escape from premises in the event of fire; however ESFRS, in partnership with BHCC, are keen to further improve fire safety and progress the installation of sprinkler systems within our blocks, paying particular attention to those housing vulnerable residents and high rise dwellings.

#### **BHCC – Corporate Plan Commitments**

BHCC have pledged, through its corporate plan to deliver on its main values / purpose:

**A good life:** Ensuring a city for all ages, inclusive of everyone and protecting the most vulnerable.

And in line with our principles of demonstrating citizen focus and increasing equality to improve:

**Health and Wellbeing:** Safeguarding our most vulnerable children and adults from neglect and harm. Providing better care services for older and vulnerable people, focused on personal choice and staying independent.

#### **Sprinkler Systems – overview**

Sprinklers are one of the few measures that intervene to control the fire at an early stage – significantly earlier than the fire service could and without placing anyone in danger to do so. This not only guarantees the occupants time to escape but stops

the fire from growing and damaging the property further as well as reducing the risk for the firefighters.

ESFRS are committed to promoting and encouraging the installation of sprinklers, particularly in premises housing vulnerable people. In order to do this, they committed a sum of money to match fund sprinkler installations in selected premises. This was to demonstrate the feasibility of such schemes, and obtain a commitment to continue installing sprinklers. The overall goal is to protect vulnerable people in the future. Brighton & Hove City Council & ESFRS were one of the first partnerships to declare such a commitment.

### **Somerset Point – Sprinkler Installation Pilot**

Somerset Point was selected for a pilot study with BHCC as it was a high-rise premise housing elderly people, both of which created added challenges to ensuring the safety of the occupants from fire. It contains 72 flats on 13 floors plus various communal facilities. The guest flat was fitted out to show the residents how the system would look in their flat on completion.

A comprehensive consultation process was carried out with residents before the commencement of the project, by BHCC, ESFRS and Triangle Fire Systems (the installer). The main concerns from residents were around aesthetics, however we were able to demonstrate how the pipework would be sympathetically ‘boxed in’ following installation and this was well received.

The project is due to be completed in early October which meets the anticipated target completion date.

### **Project Feedback:**

- a) Resident disruption – The Project Team sought to keep disruption and inconvenience to an absolute minimum and each resident was consulted personally before commencement of works to fully explain the installation procedure. The pipework was ‘boxed in’ and decorations made good. There was only one complaint throughout the project.
- b) Scope of Works / VFM – As this was a pilot scheme, we procured the works through a supplier known and trusted by ESFRS. We conducted some soft market research around the quotes / estimates received and were satisfied that the project offered VFM. The final cost for the Somerset Point installation was £136k and this was match funded by ESFRS.
- c) Tenant Satisfaction – we have carried out a Tenant Satisfaction Survey following the works and our survey (achieving a 55% response rate) demonstrated a high Satisfaction rate, where most residents gave a satisfaction rate of 9 or 10. (Table attached).
- d) Ongoing costs – maintenance – We have established that the ongoing maintenance costs are relatively low. The systems will need an annual maintenance regime which is currently being quoted at around £250 pa. We will continue to review costs and value for money.

## Somerset Point Sprinkler System – Gallery

### Somerset Point – Scheme Managers and Installation Team



### Somerset Point Sprinkler System – Satisfied Customers!



### Sprinkler System – Boxing in detail



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### Somerset Point Sprinklers Satisfaction Survey

	Scores – 10 out of 10	Comments
1	10	
2	10	Still to box in pipes
3	10	
4	8	Would like to have known contractor coming
5	9.5	Did not have a letter stating contractors coming
6	10	
7	10	
8	10	
9	9.5	Only issue was noise as tenant sensitive
10	10	
11	10	
12	10	
13	10	Still to box in pipes
14	3	Tenant away and not happy that contractors left dust in flat – spoke with scheme manager and contractors apologised
15	10	
16	7	Hold up to finish because of tenant in certain flat
17	10	
18	10	
19	8	Still to finish
20	9	Tenant asking when external decorations being done on block
21	10	
22	7	
23		Have not finished yet will say after
24	8	
25	8	
26		Good so far not finished yet
27	7	Lifts a bit dusty untidy from contractors
28	10	
29	9	
30	10	
31	9	Acceptable clean up – what was told did not happen in that they had to get another company to drill through the concrete
32	10	Polite
33		Still to box in
34		Still waiting to finish but good so far
35	10	
36	10	Would have been good to give dates to do flats
37	9	Polite – tidy neat
38	7	Not to tidy – some mess
39	8	
40	10	