

IMPORTANT - PLEASE READ

Somerstown Housing Office
Somerstown Central
Tyseley Road
Southsea
PO5 4EZ
023 9284 1311

Monday 18 February 2019

Dear former resident

I am writing to give you an update on the future plans for Leamington House and Horatia House, as although you are now in your new home, I know you have expressed an interest in possibly returning in the future.

As you know, cladding was removed from Leamington House and Horatia House following the Grenfell tragedy. We then found problems with the original 1960s concrete construction of the blocks during the detailed building surveys, which were carried out while we were looking for a suitable replacement for cladding. As a result, we put additional safety measures in place and started the process of moving residents to new homes.

I appreciate how unsettling and disruptive this was for everyone, I wanted to say thank you for your patience, understanding and support throughout, and I really hope you are settling in well and are happy in your new home.

While we have been finding new homes for residents, we have also been doing a lot of work to understand what the future options might be for the blocks. This has meant doing more survey work, and starting to get estimates for the cost of repairs.

Our investigations have shown that, because of the way the buildings were constructed in the 1960s from large concrete panels, the work needed to repair HH & LH is significant and would be very expensive. It is estimated that it would cost around £86M to strengthen the two blocks. These costs mean we don't think it is affordable for the council to repair the blocks.

What happens now is a decision for the council's Cabinet. A report has been written recommending we look at future options for redeveloping the site to create new affordable and social housing, working with residents in Somerstown to make sure the local community is involved. The council has already made a commitment to making sure there are at least as many council homes available in the future as there are in the two blocks at the moment.

The report will be available on the council website at lunchtime on 18 February, along with

information for residents and former residents, and those living near the blocks. Go to www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/housing/leamington-house-and-horatia-house and follow the link to the report.

The Cabinet is expected to make a decision when it meets on 26 February 2019 at 9am.

Once a decision has been taken, we will get in touch with you again to explain what has been decided and what will happen next. As you have expressed an interested in potentially returning to the Leamington House and Horatia House area in the future, we will continue to keep you informed.

If you have any questions or concerns in the meantime, you can call our 24 hour helpline on **023 92 841311** or email **RepairsSupportTeam@portsmouthcc.gov.uk**

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Hill', written over a circular stamp or mark.

James Hill
Director of Housing, Neighbourhood & Building Services
Portsmouth City Council