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**Date:** 4 August 2023

**Reference:** If you call us about this letter and are asked what you're calling about, please say "Building problems at Summerhill Grove". This will help us to direct your call more effectively.

Dear **NAME**,

I'm writing to you following my recent letter and visits to Summerhill Grove. I would again like to express our sincerest apologies for the issues at your home and the impact they have had, and will have, in the coming weeks.

We want to be as open and transparent as possible about the process of carrying out the required remedial works to make your home safe so have outlined the key elements of the situation below.

### **What do we know?**

Surveys relating to the communal areas and around half of the flats across both blocks have been conducted and we are awaiting the findings.

Further work to the roof has been completed and will continue to be monitored. We are aware that further work on the chimney is required, as well as a permanent solution to overflowing gutters. There are restrictions on what improvements can be made to the roof due to the building being a Grade II listed building. We are due to discuss with Newcastle City Council's Conservation team and our representatives to find a suitable resolution. Due to this, scaffolding on the building will remain in place for the next few weeks to allow easy access for inspection and potential further works.

Following an inspection on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> July, Newcastle City Council's Environmental Health team have issued three prohibition notices on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023. This means we are legally required to move the affected residents into alternative, temporary accommodation whilst we carry out the remedial works to the satisfaction of the local authority. We have spoken to those residents affected to support them in arranging alternative, temporary accommodation.

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Newcastle Environmental Health have also issued three improvement notices on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2023, and we will be speaking to those residents affected detailing what the notice means for them.

### **What works have been carried out in the last week?**

Our Building Safety team and our internal contractor, Evolve, have been, and will continue to, resolve health and safety issues they have previously identified.

The lighting in communal areas in blocks 3 and 4 was reinstated on Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> July, with all lighting and power within the blocks being tested the same day and were found to be satisfactory. A temporary socket has also been supplied within block 4 for the dehumidifiers.

We have prioritised testing of the electrical supply within the buildings with 7 satisfactory Electrical Installation Condition Reports completed. We are working with residents of the remaining flats to complete the inspections and we would welcome your support in allowing them to take place.

### **Our position on offering alternative, temporary accommodation:**

Having listened to resident concerns and taken time to reflect on plans to address building standards at Summerhill Grove, we acknowledge our initial approach to ask all residents to move into temporary alternative accommodation may not have been the best option for everyone.

With your health and safety at the forefront of our mind, and while we conduct communal works in your building, we are still offering the choice for those who are unaffected by the prohibition notices to move into alternative, temporary accommodation. If you wish to take up this offer now, we will work with you to find the most suitable solution for you and support you throughout the process.

### **What will be happening in the next few days?**

We have commissioned an independent damp specialist company, Damp Survey UK, to assess the works required throughout the blocks. They will be onsite from Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> August to determine the underlying causes of the issues and provide a scope of works for each individual property. For the inspections to be carried out we will need access to your property, and we will be in touch individually to arrange this with you. We appreciate that this is short notice but given the seriousness of the situation we are eager for these inspections to be completed as soon as possible.

### **What will be happening in the coming weeks?**

Once we have gathered all the survey information, we will begin to develop a more detailed plan for programming the works and we will engage you in a detailed consultation of our proposals before any work is commissioned.

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### **How will we communicate with you going forward**

I will be in touch to discuss with you your preferred contact methods for regular updates and will support you throughout. You can also contact me using my details below:

- Heather Sherriff (Housing Services Manager)  
[Heather.Sherriff@riverside.org.uk](mailto:Heather.Sherriff@riverside.org.uk)  
Tel: 07580 761588

Once again, I want to apologise for the inconvenience caused and offer our reassurance that we are working to resolve all issues as quickly as possible and will keep you updated of our progress.

Yours sincerely,

**Heather Sherriff**  
Housing Services Manager