

Emanuel House Residents Meeting

Question and Answer Document

13th June 2024

Innovation Space

Westminster City Hall

18:00-19:30

Residents

Paul Hudson (Chair)
Wendy Baverstock
Clare Calderwood
Lori Chen
Howard Exton-Smith
Brian Fraiman
Andrew Gerrard
Duncan Henderson
Brenda King
Stephen Leigh
Claire Lemoyne de Vernon (online)
Sue Marsden (online)
Lukasz Orlowski (online)
Brian Parkins
Sylva Verrycken (online)

Westminster City Council / Appointed Contractors

Kevin Dey, *Head of Residential Services*
Georgia Yates, *Senior Surveyor, AtkinsRéalis*
Sam Springate, *Implementation Programme Manager*
Philip Owen, *Head of Investment (online)*
Judith Morrison, *Residential Leasehold Manager*
Tiffeny Alexander, *Engagement Officer*
Jennie Roos, *Property Manager, First Port (online)*
Malcolm McMichael, *Project Manager (online)*

Apologies

KD provided apologies on behalf of Cllr Gillian Arrindell, Cllr David Harvey and Cllr Selina Short, who couldn't attend due to being given short notice of the meeting.

Questions

- 1) Previous major works surveys in 2005 indicated windows needed to be replaced. Would this work not being completed had affected the deterioration of the windows, leading to earlier replacement?**

The windows have met their life expectancy. Since the meeting took place, we reviewed the previous survey, which made a recommendation to replace the seals around windows and some mechanisms, which would not affect the lifespan of the windows.

- 2) There was a first draft of the survey in 2005 which was later replaced by a second survey, which omitted key details.**

After a review of documentation in our paper and electronic filing, we found no evidence of a second survey. Please contact us if you have any information which support this claim.

- 3) Why are there two surveys required for the roof?**

One is for the roof covering which needs to be checked for leaks and damage, one is for the roof structure under the covering, which may contain RAAC.

- 4) Are you inspecting the cladding through flat 20?**

Yes, but an external inspection may be required if the inspection can't be completed by this method.

- 5) Will the cladding testing complete the last bit of testing for Major Works?**

The roof and cladding inspections are the last for the current major works.

- 6) Has the £62k mentioned earlier already been billed?**

No, the costs are being paid by Westminster City Council first. Once the work is complete, Leaseholders will need to pay a percentage via service charges.

- 7) Is the £62k payable this year?**

Yes.

- 8) How can Leaseholders be assured of value for money in the major works charges?**

Malcolm McMichael is assigned to oversee the quality of works as a Project Manager, using a framework which has been negotiated to offer the best value.

- 9) Were all flats surveyed for asbestos?**

No, only the flats that were having a ceiling inspection.

10) Is RAAC limited to top floor ceilings and balconies?

Yes. The communal areas on all floors were checked for RAAC, but it had only been found on the 6th floor.

11) Will all ceiling inspections be done between the 18th and 20th June?

No, it is just the properties where no asbestos was found.

12) What is the plan to determine the full scope of RAAC remedial works?

The remaining flats will be surveyed and recommendations made.

13) What is the relationship between asbestos and RAAC?

Inspecting the ceiling for RAAC requires cutting away the first layer, which may contain asbestos. If it does, more safety measures would need to be put in place to contain it and reduce risks to health.

14) Would any asbestos need to be removed entirely?

This will depend on the type and extent of the asbestos found.

15) If asbestos is removed, who will pay to reinstate / remediate what has been removed?

Westminster will arrange and pay for reinstatement.

16) Can keys be left with AtkinsRéalis for property access?

No, but some residents have chosen to leave them with the on-site caretaker.

17) Is RAAC in the stairwell?

RAAC has been found in the corridors and lift shaft. The Surveyor said there was no immediate concerns.

18) Are balconies safe to use on the 6th floor?

We can't confirm that balconies are safe to use at the moment, so we advise not to use them.

19) Will the newly installed plant machinery on the roof need to be moved?

This will need to be confirmed after the RAAC surveys and recommendations received from

the structural engineer.

20) Is RAAC present in properties other than the 6th floor?

No RAAC was found on other floors during the surveys in communal areas.

21) Is asbestos found in properties other than the 6th floor?

There is a chance that asbestos is found in other properties, but the risk to health is very low if it is not disturbed.

22) What should we do to test for asbestos if we are doing DIY?

We would recommend hiring a qualified asbestos professional to test your property.

23) How have Westminster City Council prepared for the possibility of major works to remediate the RAAC?

WCC have kept some properties vacant to prepare for possibility of decanting both short and long term, but final plans will be made once the RAAC surveys have been completed.

24) When will residents be made aware of the outcome of the initial RAAC investigations?

We will aim to provide an update by the 15th of July.

25) Can anything be done to prepare contractors for the next stage of works?

Without having a specification for works, we are unable to prepare contractors.

26) Is there any way to predict the cost of major works?

Without having a specification for works, we are unable to provide an accurate cost. Any estimated cost we could provide would change dramatically depending on the works required.

27) Why has it taken a long time to inspect the RAAC?

Specialist knowledge is required in an area of work where demand is high. Time is required to get the right people with the availability at the right cost as well as arrange access to multiple properties.

28) Will major works be cancelled if the RAAC is very serious?

The chances of this are low. We anticipate the major works will be delayed due to RAAC.

29) What is the lead team of the major works, once the decision has been made to proceed?

We are unable to provide this detail, due to the many variables both in the current market and the lack of specification and a remedial plan to deal with the RAAC.

30) When is the leasehold extension issue going to be resolved?

An information letter has been sent in the week following the meeting.

31) Will this letter take into account the changes to legislation around leaseholds?

Yes, it will reference the new legislation.

32) When will the leaseholders have a response to their query regarding a security gate to the rear of the building?

The estimated cost for this would be significant, but FirstPort will arrange to get a quote for leaseholders to review.

33) Who do we contact if we have further questions?

Please contact Sam Springate. This can be done via email or phone. Meetings can be arranged over Teams or in-person.