



LONDON FIRE BRIGADE

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Freedom of Information request reference number: 8162.1

Date of response: 03 January 2024

Request:

Eastgate, Station Approach, Woking, GU22 7PQ

Actions taken by Southern Housing who cite LFB as per below. I am seeking access to the information SH provided to LFB that supported their decision to prohibit access to Eastgate.

Further details can be found [here](#).

I am requesting copies of the following:

- 1. All the details/files/reports/notes/assessments etc related to building or structural works to "Eastgate" from 2018 onwards in the possession of LFB.*
- 2. In relation to the Prohibition Notice, all supporting information/documents/surveys etc relied upon in relation to Eastgate.*
- 3. Any communications from the Landlords or Freeholders owners of Eastgate or Centrium related to the above to include copy reports and assessments.*
- 4. Specifically, any request or proposal received from the Landlord or Freeholders regarding limited access to Eastgate for residents, and LFB's response (approval or to deny the request, if any). If none, please confirm.*
- 5. Any planning permission consultations associated with "Eastgate" in relation to any remediation works at Eastgate.*
- 6. Any communications, notices or application received or other such planning notices or consultations related to on-going structural works at Eastgate, including any communications from Barratts or their contractors (Ardmore Construction), or local Council.*
- 7. Any other documents or records related to any of the above-mentioned issues.*

Response:

Our Prevention and Protection (Fire Safety) team have confirmed that they hold very little information in relation to the Prohibition Notice served on Eastgate, GU22 by Woking Borough Council.

By way of background, the building is in another enforcing authority's area (in this case the enforcing authority is Woking Borough Council which is based outside of London in Surrey). A primary authority does not take enforcement action in another enforcing authority's area as the responsibility remains with the local authority concerned.

Please see the response to each of your queries below provided by our Prevention and Protection (Fire Safety) team:

- 1. All the details/files/reports/notes/assessments etc related to building or structural works to "Eastgate" from 2018 onwards in the possession of LFB.*

The only information that our Prevention and Protection (Fire Safety) team have recorded in relation to Eastgate is a small amount of correspondence. In this correspondence, we were notified by Southern Housing on 17 November 2023 that they would be taking immediate steps to evacuate the residents from Eastgate to ensure their safety.

- 2. In relation to the Prohibition Notice, all supporting information/documents/surveys etc relied upon in relation to Eastgate.*

On 21 November 2023, the LFB sent an email to Southern Housing to confirm they supported the approach suggested by Southern Housing, and enforced by Woking Borough Council, to evacuate the building.

- 3. Any communications from the Landlords or Freeholders owners of Eastgate or Centrium related to the above to include copy reports and assessments.*

As mentioned above, the only information that our Prevention and Protection (Fire Safety) team have recorded in relation to Eastgate is a small amount of correspondence about Southern Housing's approach to evacuate the building.

- 4. Specifically, any request or proposal received from the Landlord or Freeholders regarding limited access to Eastgate for residents, and LFB's response (approval or to deny the request, if any). If none, please confirm.*

The correspondence with Southern Housing does not mention any details about the access for residents following Southern Housing's proposed evacuation of the building.

- 5. Any planning permission consultations associated with "Eastgate" in relation to any remediation works at Eastgate.*

The LFB would not hold this information. This is likely to be held by Southern Housing, Woking Borough Council or the developer for the building.

- 6. Any communications, notices or application received or other such planning notices or consultations related to on-going structural works at Eastgate, including any communications from Barratts or their contractors (Ardmore Construction), or local Council.*

The LFB would not hold this information. This is likely to be held by Southern Housing, Woking Borough Council or the developer for the building.

- 7. Any other documents or records related to any of the above-mentioned issues.*

The only information that our Prevention and Protection (Fire Safety) team have recorded in relation to Eastgate is the small amount of correspondence about Southern Housing's approach to evacuate the building.

I have attached copies of this correspondence to this response. Please note that personal data has been removed from the attached document under [section 40 of the FOIA – Personal Information](#).

We have dealt with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. For more information about this process please see the guidance we publish about making a request [on our website](#).

From: [REDACTED]@southernhousing.org.uk>
Sent: 17 November 2023 16:59
To: [REDACTED]@london-fire.gov.uk>; sfcontactqueries@surreycc.gov.uk
Cc: [REDACTED]@southernhousing.org.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@southernhousing.org.uk>
Subject: Centrium 1 (Eastgate) , Woking

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] Do not click links or open attachments unless you are expecting them, even if you know the sender

Hi [REDACTED] and Surrey Fire and Rescue Service

Immediate decant of residents from Centrium 1 (Eastgate) , Woking

We have been undertaking a comprehensive structural review at Centrium 1, Eastgate Station Approach, Woking, Surrey. Centrium 1 is a single block containing 61 homes in Woking. The building was completed in September 2005. The block was initially owned under a leasehold interest by another housing provider, who sold their leasehold interest to Southern Housing in 2018. The original freehold owner was Barratt Homes Limited. The current freehold owner is Centrium Freehold Limited.

As part of the review, recent intrusive concrete core sampling investigations were undertaken by structural engineers appointed by us. On Thursday this week, we were advised by structural engineers that the building suffers from structural defects and is currently unsafe to occupy. In summary the structural engineers advised:

- All eight samples (second to ninth floors inclusive in the Property) failed to achieve the specified RC32/40 concrete strength grade.
- Statistically only 5% of the concrete tested should be less than the strength specified.
- This means that the concrete strength on site is only 50% of that which was originally designed.
- Additionally, the density of the concrete suggests a lightweight concrete has been used rather than a standard heavyweight concrete appropriate as would be expected for this Property.
- These preliminary results demonstrate that the concrete used in the Property is of insufficient strength to cope with tolerances for which it was designed.

As a result of this advice we are taking immediate steps to evacuate our residents from the building to ensure their safety. On advice from our appointed experts, we will be undertaking further investigations over the coming days in order to inform our next steps in relation to this building.

We have today informed our residents, the Regulator of Social Housing and the freehold owner and the managing agent of the neighbouring property (Centrium 2), which was constructed at the same time as Centrium 1. In light of the above information, please do let us know if you would recommend that we inform any other parties or building owners and we will co-operate fully.

We would be happy to discuss this matter in detail with you.

Regards

[Redacted]

Southern Housing

[Redacted]

From: LFB [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, November 21, 2023 10:40:38 AM

To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@southernhousing.org.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@southernhousing.org.uk)>

Cc: >BUSINESS SUPPORT GROUP <BusinessSupportGroup@london-fire.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Eastgate

Morning [REDACTED]

Thanks for the call this morning and letting me see the draft of what you are planning to issue to the residents of Eastgate regarding decanting them due to structural integrity of the building.

Both [REDACTED] and I have looked at the statement, and below is my response and edit:

I have changed endorsed to supported solely because we cannot endorse as a enforcing body, and also because we have no control of the premises itself.

Our approach to evacuating the building at Eastgate has been *supported by the London Fire Brigade under the Primary Authority Partnership Scheme.* This is a partnership between Southern Housing and *the London Fire Brigade* who are there to provide us with fire safety regulation advice.

Let me know if you have any questions. Appreciate that I may be delayed in replying as I am on a course, but will make sure that you are getting the support needed with this project from a fire safety perspective.

Kind Regards;

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Petroleum & Primary Authority Business Group
Regulatory (Fire Safety) Lead – Waste Sites
London Fire Brigade

M: [REDACTED]

London Fire Brigade
169 Union Street
London
SE1 0LL

From: [REDACTED]@southernhousing.org.uk>

Sent: 21 November 2023 09:21

To: [REDACTED]@london-fire.gov.uk>

Subject: Eastgate

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Hi [REDACTED]

Really good to meet you in person yesterday and thank you for your very helpful advice.

We'd like to take up your offer of FRS support for our decision to evacuate Eastgate.

Can you please confirm that you are happy for us to use the following statement:

Our approach to evacuating the building at Eastgate has been endorsed by the Primary Authority Partnership Scheme. This is a partnership between Southern Housing and a local fire authority who are there to provide us with fire safety regulation advice.

We are hoping to get something out this morning and so your early response would be really appreciated.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Southern Housing [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]