

First Minister Mark Drakeford  
Minister for Housing Julie James AM  
Andrew RT Davies AM  
Stephen Doughty MP  
Vaughan Gething AM  
John Griffiths AM  
Mark Isherwood AM  
David Melding AM  
Leanne Wood AM  
Mick Antonwi AM

5th December 2019

Dear Representatives and Supporters,

**Re Urgent - Celestia Cardiff - Celestia Action Group ("CAG")**

Further to our update on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019 we are writing to brief you on the ongoing crisis at the Celestia Development in Cardiff Bay.

It is widely accepted that the serious defects in the development are a direct consequence of the failure by Redrow, the developer, to deliver to customers what they had promised and sold – a safe and high-quality property. Redrow's refusal to accept legal liability seems to be largely based on the fact that the defects (which were hidden) remained undiscovered for a period of just 12 years or so.

The issues at Celestia are set to receive high profile scrutiny on **Monday, 9 December (19.30pm) as BBC Wales' X-Ray consumer affairs programme** focuses on the desperate plight of residents and leaseholders and Redrow's attempts to conflate their historic disregard for building regulations with the complex issues which have emerged following the Grenfell tragedy.

You may also know that our repeated requests, together with some of your own direct appeals to Redrow's Executive Chairman John Tutte, to agree to a standstill agreement and extend the limitation date for claims to protect the interests of some 50 leaseholders by 16 November, was consistently rejected. So, after some five years plus of delay and prevarication leaseholders are highly concerned about Redrow's continued stance on the huge problems facing the development.

The most immediate and stressful issue facing Celestia homeowners remains the Enforcement Notices served by SWFRS on all the buildings in the development.

At our recent AGM on 26 November we learnt of the details of Redrow's "soft loan" to deal with certain aspects of their fire safety defects. As stated previously Celestia homeowners welcome this offer, however, significantly, we learnt that the loan does not guarantee to cover all of the costs associated with addressing the fire safety issues. Neither does the loan recognise or address the other serious building defects that have been subject to years of lengthy discussions and still remain unresolved.

Redrow continues to refuse to accept responsibility for these serious faults; despite their public assertions that they are keen to help and assist homeowners. Consequently, the loan received heavy and widespread criticism from leaseholders who worry that Redrow is simply

seeking to alleviate the public and brand scrutiny they are receiving as a result of the crisis. There is widespread concern that should we accept the loan in its current form, the other very serious and more expensive defects would still be facing leaseholders. Redrow's "broken record" for the last five years has been "not our problem" so consequently leaseholders are naturally suspicious of their intentions. We estimate the loan offer of £1 million equates to approximately 50% of John Tutte's annual compensation package

At the AGM Leaseholders were also advised that the current initial cost estimates for rectifying the known build defects is **in excess of £6 million** – this excludes the £1million plus already spent by homeowners on legal fees and technical surveys /reports. Currently homeowners are paying for 24/7 fire watch in the complex. This last year Redrow made profits of £406 million!

In circumstances where leaseholders are already under severe financial pressure, funding a substantial legal exercise and taking on the additional risk of becoming liable for Redrow's costs is particularly daunting and difficult.

CAG remains acutely aware of the mental and financial stress the continued delays in addressing the problems is having on homeowners and remains totally committed to holding to account those responsible. We are very aware of the huge impact these financial liabilities are having on the well-being of all residents including young families and pensioners who are particularly vulnerable. **Current estimates put the costs of all repairs per homeowner to be in the region of £14,000. Many leaseholders will simply not be able to pay these monies.**

CAG remains committed to securing a comprehensive and lasting solution to the problems that have beset homeowners. We therefore look forward to urgent and constructive discussions with Redrow's leadership and call on you as our political representatives and leaders to urgently lobby Redrow on behalf of 457 homeowners in Cardiff Bay.

We would respectfully ask that you consider:

- *Individually writing to Mr John Tutte to express concerns about any continuation of the fire safety delays and the potential danger and impact this will have on the well-being of some 1500 inhabitants of Celestia as well as wider public safety concerns*
- *Visiting the Celestia site to meet residents and inspect some of the build problems – we thank those leaders who have already done so*
- *Inviting Redrow's senior leaders to the relevant Welsh Government Committees to explain their position – we believe the issues we are experiencing are a matter of wider public concern and planning and housing policy*
- *The impact of further prolonged delays on addressing problems that have now been the subject of some five years of discussion, delays and prevarication*
- *The negative impact this whole crisis is having on the image of Cardiff Bay and of course Redrow as a leading Welsh house builder with extensive sites around Wales and Cardiff.*

Please let us know if we can provide you with any further information. We are very grateful for your continued support and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

CAG Members - You can follow our continued work and actions on **Twitter @RedrowRipOff**