



High Rise News

Your Guide to Future Improvement Works

£13m sprinkler investment gives residents peace of mind

We're delighted to report that the sprinkler installation in Woodbrooke House, the first high rise to have the work carried out, is nearing completion. We've had some tremendous feedback from some of the residents at Woodbrooke and we would like to thank them for their cooperation during this essential maintenance and improvement safety works.

The fitting of the sprinklers is a £13million investment from SCH and SMBC and reflects our total commitment to the safety of all our residents. We are now continuing the programme at Redwood House.

This is particularly relevant to the sprinkler installation programme as Redwood House suffered a serious fire just last year. Potentially it could have been worse than it was, but this scare simply confirmed to us – and our partners at Solihull Council – that sprinklers is the right way forward for all our high rise blocks.

We also work very closely with our friends at West Midlands Fire Service. We discussed the Redwood fire with them and they were consistent in their thoughts that sprinklers would have helped in this incident.

Sprinklers target fires quickly, before the emergency services arrive. Therefore, if for example the fire is in the living room, then this is where the sprinklers will be activated – not across the whole flat. As the sprinklers stop the fire from spreading they also make it much much safer for the fire crews to enter the flat and contain the fire – or put it out completely.



Sprinkler installation at Woodbrooke House

There was another very serious fire in a tower block in London recently. Fire crews reported that the fire spread across three floors very quickly. Sprinklers work instantly and can therefore reach higher levels more quickly than the fire service.

This is precisely why we are so committed to this project. We know how much discussion this vital work has generated among our customers. It has really made everyone think carefully about their personal safety along with their neighbours.

We are hoping to be able to invite residents of most blocks to view the sprinkler installation work in an empty property, where available. Further updates will be shared on social media and via our website.

High rise sprinkler installation timetable

Phase 1

Due to start	High Rise	Order	Completed	In Progress	Spandrel Panels
April 2021	Woodbrooke House	1		✓	Yes
May 2021	Redwood House	2		✓	Yes
June 2021	Wedgewood House	3			Yes
June 2021	Westham House	4			Yes

Phase 2

Due to start	High Rise	Order	Spandrel Panels
July 2021	Kingsgate House	5	Yes
August 2021	Warwick Court	6	
August 2021	Chester Court	7	
September 2021	Keele House	8	Yes
October 2021	Bangor House	9	Yes
October 2021	Clare House	10	
November 2021	Pembroke House	11	
December 2021	Bedford House	12	
December 2021	Birkbeck House	13	
January 2022	Newnham House	14	

Phase 3

Due to start	High Rise	Order	Spandrel Panels
February 2022	Selwyn House	15	
February 2022	Somerville House	16	
March 2022	Fircroft House	17	Yes
April 2022	Avoncroft House	18	Yes
April 2022	Keble House	19	
May 2022	Linacre House	20	
June 2022	Merton House	21	
June 2022	Oriel House	22	
July 2022	Balliol House	23	
August 2022	Richmond House	24	

Phase 4

Due to start	High Rise	Order	Spandrel Panels
August 2022	Trevelyan House	25	
September 2022	Wadham House	26	
October 2022	Mansfield House	27	
October 2022	Cheshunt House	28	Yes
October 2022	Dillington House	29	Yes
November 2022	Greyfriars House	30	
November 2022	Darwin House	31	
January 2023	Downing House	32	
February 2023	Catesby House	33	Yes
February 2023	Demontfort House	34	Yes
March 2023	Digby House	35	Yes
April 2023	Kingshurst House	36	Yes
April 2023	Wingfield House	37	Yes

Please note: Dates shown are a guide as to when each phase of the project begins. You will receive a letter from us nearer the time with full details about when the work will take place inside your flat.

Woodbrooke residents are thrilled with sprinklers

We have been blown away by the kind words we received from Woodbrooke House residents following the installation of sprinklers in their homes. We wanted this important project to get off to a good start and we think it has certainly done that!

Jean Jukes from Woodbrooke, said: "All the lads are lovely. They made no mess, they cleared up after themselves and there were no problems at all. I feel even safer in my home now and would definitely recommend it to other tenants."

Our engagement team have been having lots of conversations on the doorstep with residents, talking about why the work is important and answering any questions customers may have.

We have a long list of Frequently Answered Questions on our special high rise safety page on the website. We know not all of our customers are online so we have also been handing this list out to those who prefer a paper copy.

Another happy Woodbrooke resident, Tina Reading, said: "The lads were no trouble at all and they were all very polite. They did a lovely job and didn't make a mess and where there was a bit of dust they cleared up after themselves. The sprinklers give you an extra layer of protection and could save someone's life."



Woodbrooke resident Tina with Dodd tenant liaison officer, Steve Hatherley.

Take a look for yourself!



SCH customer liaison officer, Tony McIntosh, shows the sprinkler to Woodbrooke resident Barbara

Have you seen our sprinkler installation video yet? It shows what's involved in the installation.

You can also take a look at the high rise safety page on our website. You will also find lots of other information around the sprinkler project, including the very latest list of Frequently Asked Questions and Step-by-Step guide to the installation process.

Becoming a BSA gives you a say on your home

Dave Palmer lives with his wife Carol in Woodbrooke House. When he heard we were looking for Building Safety Advocates (BSAs) to work with us he immediately got in touch.

"I really like being a Building Safety Advocate," says Dave. "It keeps me active but I also think building safety is very important. By carrying out my regular checks, I can alert SCH if I find anything and it stops small problems becoming big ones."

"It also means I get to understand more about building safety, such as how the fire doors work, and I can share this information with other residents."

We want a Building Safety Ambassador like Dave to volunteer in all of our blocks. Not only will it give you a voice when the sprinkler installation team arrive at your block, it will also give you say in all safety issues.



Building Safety Advocate Dave carries out his checks

Please visit our Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page on our website at www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk for further information about the projects highlighted in this newsletter.

It includes details on how to become a Building Safety Advocate or a Block Advocate. If you have any questions after reading the FAQs you can phone our High Rise works number on **0121 717 1599**.

Spandrel planning permission

Spandrel Panels

As explained in the first of these high rise safety newsletters, 16 blocks will be having their external spandrel panels replaced in 2022.

Planning applications have now been submitted to seek approval for this essential work to be undertaken.

In the following six blocks we will need to work inside flats to complete this work.

- Kingshurst House
- DeMontfort House
- Digby House
- Redwood House
- Catesby House
- Wingfield House

We will be working very closely with all affected customers and we're hoping to get your feedback on things such as what colour you would like the new panels to be in your block, in due course.



SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Please visit our website to see a demonstration video of the sprinkler installation process



🌐 www.solihullcommunityhousing.org.uk

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