

Mr Glyn Miles  
Mainstay Residential Ltd.  
Whittington Hall  
Whittington Road  
Worcester  
WR5 2ZX

14th August 2006

Dear Mr Miles

**Re: Fire Evacuation Policy / Procedures**

Please find enclosed copy correspondence variously sent to me by several of your employees and the regional fire service, the contents of which should be self-explanatory. Once you have read through them, I would be obliged if you could inform me what precisely has transpired since.?

Having been previously assured that the Mainstay Group places the utmost emphasis on health & safety related matters, I thought it might first be useful to summarise a number of more recent and relevant incidents that I and others have made note of.

Firstly, fire notices. You may recall that it was necessary for me to write to you about this issue in July 2005 because, when fire notices were first erected in March 2005, no one in Mainstay seemed to have considered it necessary to fill in pertinent details such as the location of assembly points. As a result of my letter to you, responded to by Ms Hannis (copy attached), your Mr Wiffen instructed the then concierge to fill in the missing information accordingly. This was duly done - in delible ink. (I pointed this out to the site staff, but was informed that such were the delays in receiving petty cash funds from Mainstay that they were no longer prepared to pay for sundry items such as indelible markers themselves.) Unsurprisingly, it was just a matter of days before the first of the assembly point directions were "rubbed off" or smudged.

On Friday 30th December, a fellow leaseholder joined me in a survey of these signs. Of the four cores we surveyed, we found that the "assembly point" location was completely eradicated on over a third of the signs, with only eight showing the information in a legible state. The rest were either partly wiped off or blurred. It was January 19th 2006 before they were refilled in correctly with indelible ink. (Co-incidentally a day after my mentioning in conversation to the concierge that I was attending a fire safety seminar.)

Some notable instances regarding the fire alarm / evacuation procedure:

On 5th August 2005 at 6:55am, the fire alarm sounded for approximately 40 seconds prior to being isolated. On ringing down to the concierge, residents were informed that the alarm had been triggered by "the rain" and not to

bother evacuating.

On Sunday 19th February 2006 at 3:02pm the fire alarm sounded. On arrival at reception it was apparent that the duty concierge was away from the building, so one of the residents (using the number left on the reception area counter) telephoned him. Fifteen minutes later he returned. It was 3:27pm before the alarm was isolated and the lift usable again. During this time we counted a mere twenty three residents as having evacuated, but half of those decided it was too cold outside and soon went back in - in addition to visitors who simply ignored the evacuation and entered via the stairs. There were only seven of us remaining by the time of the "all-clear" instruction. You will doubtless appreciate that most of the evacuees were somewhat critical of the lack of direction.

Subsequent to this there have been numerous short burst alarms, one recently at 1:30am and to which, on enquiring, the concierge informed me that he had turned the sounder off, as he could not identify the cause of the alarm on the panel. I am sure you will agree that this hardly inspires confidence, particularly as the relatively recently introduced "advertised" weekly alarm tests seem to have become intermittent again.

Finally, on 15th July 2006 I reported the closer on the entrance door of my corridor as being out of order, resulting in the door remaining in a fully open position. (Copy photograph attached). Despite this being labeled as a fire door, it is now more than four weeks since the fault occurred and yet repair is still awaited.

In light of the above and the attached correspondence, can you please tell me:-

a) Why the promised communication of policies and procedures relating to fire evacuation procedures has not been forthcoming.? It is now no less than *thirteen months* since Mr Wiffen's stated intention to supply such.?

b) Why is a faulty fire door still awaiting attention more than four weeks after being reported.?

c) Why is it ever necessary for leaseholders to have to pursue you on such important matters as these.? Your Ms Hannis once assured me that Mr Wiffen carried out a *thorough* inspection of our development on a monthly basis. Please tell me, then, how issues such as the fire notices were so consistently overlooked, given that one is situated adjacent to the lift on every floor.? The ground floor signs were the first to be defaced, so it is beyond belief that they would not have been noticed. Furthermore, in his letter of 21<sup>st</sup> July 2005, Mr Wiffen concedes that the recording of fire checks etc. was not being recorded in the Health & Safety file consistently. I previously let this pass, but given the seemingly ongoing failure to honour the agreement with the fire service, perhaps you would now explain this admission. Are we to believe that a "thorough" inspection did not involve routinely checking such key documents.? I find this of deep concern. Perhaps someone in Mainstay would be good enough to define a thorough inspection for me.?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Graham Winter

*c.c. ADO Doyle, South Wales Fire Service*

*Landmark Place leaseholders web-site*

***Enc:*** *St. David residents' manual – Emergency Procedures page*

*Letter from South Wales Fire Service, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2005*

*Letter from Sue Hannis, Mainstay, 18<sup>th</sup> July 2005*

*Letter from Robert Wiffen, Mainstay, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2005*

*Copy photograph – Core 2, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor*