

Subject:	Retro-fitting sprinklers to high rise blocks		
Date of Meeting:	Area Panels September 2014 Housing Committee 12 November 2014		
Report of:	Executive Director of Environment, Development & Housing		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Brett Wells	Tel: 293190
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 To provide information to enable a decision to be made regarding the approach to be taken by Property & Investment in relation to fitting sprinkler systems in high rise blocks.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That a pilot installation of a sprinkler system at Somerset Point is undertaken.
- 2.2 This will inform a decision about whether to undertake a second pilot at St James House.
- 2.3 That the Head of Housing be given mandate to exercise the delegated authority that be given to the Executive Director Environment, Development & Housing to facilitate acting on such an informed decision – where appropriate - to undertake the second pilot at St James House.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Lakanal House fire in July 2009 in which 6 people died and the Shirley Towers fire in April 2010 in which 2 fire fighters died, prompted Rule 43 letters from the coroners with recommendations on both that:

“Social housing providers should be encouraged to consider the retro-fitting of sprinklers in all existing high rise buildings in excess of 30 meters in height”.

- 3.2 The Fire Health & Safety Board (Brighton & Hove Housing Department working in collaboration with East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (ESFRS)) has been approached by the ESFRS with an offer of assistance in carrying out pilots for the retro fitting of sprinkler systems. Part of this offer of assistance is 50% matched funding towards the capital costs of these pilots.
- 3.3 Officers are proposing, after careful analysis of the available options, that the first two high rise blocks in consideration for such a pilot scheme would be Somerset Point and St James House.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 Risk Matrix

Selection of the pilot schemes are based around a risk-rating matrix, provided by ESFRS. This identifies St James House and Somerset Point as being at the highest risk within the context of all (50 no.) high rise blocks owned by Brighton and Hove City Council.

4.2 Somerset Point

This is a sheltered housing scheme high rise block comprised of 72 dwellings over 13 floors. The 85 residents have an average age of 74 years. The main consideration is carrying out these works within the residents' flats. This will require pipes to be installed within the flat running to all habitable rooms with sprinkler heads, these will all be boxed in using a prefinished formed boxing. Communal areas will also be covered by the system. The initial costing for this block is approximately £86,400. With match funding from ESFRS the cost to BHCC would be £43,200.

4.3 St James House

This is a general needs high rise block comprised of 120 dwellings over 16 floors. The 175 residents have an average age of 46 years. The additional consideration here, compared to Somerset Point, is that some of the flats are occupied by leaseholders which will require the legal process of Section 20 consultation. The initial costing for this project is approximately £212,060 with match funding from ESFRS the cost to BHCC would be £106,030.

4.4 Glenwood Lodge

The council are at present installing a retro fit sprinkler system at The Glenwood Lodge Hostel in Grand Parade. At the time of preparing this report, contractors are in the process of installing pipe work around the building as the pictures below show. Once this is complete the pipe work will be boxed in.



4.5 Current position

BHCC and ESFRS have had several meetings to discuss the need for retro fitting sprinklers within high rise blocks of flats. ESFRS have carried out desk top risk analysis on all High Rise Blocks within East Sussex (see Appendix 1 for the blocks owned by Brighton & Hove City Council). St James House comes at the top of this list and Somerset Point is the highest sheltered block coming 4th overall. It is considered that Somerset Point being fully tenanted would be the best option to trial a “pilot” and in the first instance using the guest flat as a show flat so that residents and other interested parties can consider the finished product. If this scheme is agreed, ESFRS and BHCC would then consult fully with all residents to inform and advise on the proposed programme of works.

- 4.6 If the pilot scheme is deemed to be successful, and the council decide to retro-fit sprinklers in all of the high rise and sheltered schemes the initial costings at present would be approximately £2.9m over 50 schemes with possible additional costs for any associated building works. In addition the ongoing annual maintenance costs would be approximately £250 per block, and based on the 50 schemes this would equate to £12.5k per year.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 This report will be discussed at Area Panels in September 2014 prior to being presented to Housing Committee in November 2014. The report will then be amended in line with residents’ views on the subject matter presented, allowing residents and stakeholders to determine, whether there is actual appetite to engage with the costs and adjustments that will be required to actually effect the retrofitting of sprinklers in their homes.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The officer recommendation is to carry out the pilot installation of the sprinkler system at Somerset Point, this being a block that is fully tenanted, thus mitigating any access problems. In addition, there are no section 20 leaseholder consultation requirements. This block is the cheaper of the two options and with the match funding from ESFRS would be a cost effective scheme within which to initiate such a pilot scheme. The project closedown and review stage will then

provide guidance on making an informed decision as to whether to and how to proceed with St James House and developing a programme of citywide installations to all high rise blocks.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

7.1 There is a substantial initial cost of installing a sprinkler system compared to a traditional fire alarm system.

7.2 The cost to BHCC for the Pilot Project (2 blocks) is:
St James House £106,030 (match funded by ESFRS)
Somerset Point £ 43,200 (match funded by ESFRS)
There is no match funding for subsequent projects. The current capital programme 2014-2017 for the HRA does not include the costs of these schemes but they could be built into the HRA capital programme 2015-2018 subject to available resources which will be reported to Housing Committee in January 2015 and Policy and Resources Committee in February 2015. The on-going revenue maintenance costs of £250 per block for the two pilot schemes can be met from current revenue servicing budgets. .

7.3 To fit these sprinkler systems to all of the high rise blocks is estimated to cost in the region of £3 million with on-going revenue costs of £12,500. If the pilot(s) are deemed successful and further schemes are required, then a further report to Housing Committee and Policy and Resources Committee will be required in order to ensure that appropriate levels of capital and revenue resources are in place.

Finance Officer Consulted: Name: Monica Brooks Date: 1/08/14

7.4 Legal Implications:

There is no statutory obligation on the council to fit sprinklers. However, their installation will assist in discharging the council's obligations to take fire precautions under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Tenants are required under their secure tenancy agreements to allow officers and others authorised by the council into their homes to carry out any work that may be necessary.

Lawyer Consulted: Name Liz Woodley Date: 08/08/14

7.5 Equalities Implications:

Ideally the ESFRS would like to see Sprinkler systems fitted in all high rise blocks, following the Rule 43 Coroners report. This would significantly enhance the safety of all residents within high rise blocks, these being of obvious higher risk of death or injury to residents in the event of an outbreak of fire. This also fits

in with the Council's mission statement of 'Safeguarding the most vulnerable' and the Council's priority of 'Creating a more sustainable city'.

7.6 Sustainability Implications:

none

7.7 Any Other Significant Implications

The system activates immediately and manually to suppress fires reducing damage to the fabric of the building and also weighs down deadly smoke particles—making the air safer for residents to breathe, and therefore reducing deaths and injuries from smoke inhalation and fire. The Fire Service are actively promoting the installation of sprinklers as offering benefit in reducing the potential size of a fire and therefore offering better protection to the attending firefighting crews.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Table of all high rise blocks within BHCC, and is broken down to show the risk rating of each block. We have factored in costings for all blocks to be spread over the 30 year business plan (2 blocks per year = 25 years), thus providing a manageable budget allocation for retro-fitting all blocks across the designated period. What does FDR1 in the table mean?
2. Three year financial projections showing cost implications to BHCC including initial outlay cost plus ongoing (accrued) Annual Maintenance costs.
3. Ownership disposition of initially involved Blocks.

Documents in Members' Rooms

none

Background Documents

none

Appendix 1

ESFRS Risk Rating for BHCC Blocks

Site name	Flats	Total No. of floors	Sheltered Y/N?	Number of FDR1	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Risk Score2	Budget Cost for Sprinklers	Budget Allocation / Year
St James House, High Street, Brighton	120	16		16	2	4	10	69.20	£212,060	2014/15
Essex Place, Montague Street, Brighton	128	17		10	1	4	5	56.76	£153,600	2015/16
Wiltshire House, Lavender Street, Brighton	96	17		7	2	2	3	49.32	£115,200	2015/16
Somerset Point (Brighton), Somerset Street, Brighton	72	13	Y	9	1	1	7	47.04	£86,400	2014/15
Highleigh, Grove Hill, Brighton	45	12		6	2	3	1	41.40	£54,000	2016/17
Kestrel Court, 1-57 Swanborough Place, Brighton	57	11		5	2	3	0	41.27	£68,400	2016/17
Theobald House, Blackman Street, Brighton	110	19		7	1	1	5	40.90	£132,000	2017/18
Normanhurst, Grove Hill, Brighton	45	12		4	3	1	0	40.40	£54,000	2017/18
Falcon Court, 106-159 Swanborough Place, Brighton	54	10		6	2	0	4	29.40	£64,800	2018/19
Hereford Court (Brighton), Hereford Street, Brighton	96	17		4	0	2	2	28.32	£115,200	2018/19
Nettleton Court, Upper Hollingdean Road, Brighton	87	14		4	1	0	3	25.18	£104,400	2019/20
Dudenev Lodge, Upper Hollingdean Road, Brighton	80	15		10	0	0	10	22.00	£96,000	2019/20
Courtlands, Ashton Rise, Brighton	46	13		3	0	3	0	20.98	£55,200	2020/21
Swallow Court, 1-54 Albourne Close, Brighton	54	10		6	0	2	4	19.40	£64,800	2020/21
Patching Lodge, Park Street, Brighton	76	7		5	1	0	4	19.32	£91,200	2021/22
Saxonbury, Ashton Rise, Brighton	45	12		3	1	0	2	17.40	£54,000	2021/22
Highcroft Lodge, Highcroft Villas, Brighton	35	7		9	0	1	8	15.45	£42,000	2022/23
Warwick Mount, Montague Street, Brighton	73	13		5	0	0	5	14.49	£87,600	2022/23
Goldstone House, Clarendon Road, Hove	57	10		3	0	1	2	12.70	£68,400	2023/24
Richmond Heights, John Street, Brighton	46	12		2	0	1	1	11.52	£55,200	2023/24
Kingfisher Court, 55 - 99 Albourne Close, Brighton	45	9		3	0	1	2	11.05	£54,000	2024/25

Barclay House, Wellington Road, Brighton	37	7		4	0	1	3	10.59	£44,400	2024/25
Livingstone House, Clarendon Road, Hove	54	10		5	0	0	5	10.40	£64,800	2025/26
St Johns Mount, Mount Pleasant, Brighton	74	14		0	0	0	0	10.36	£88,800	2025/26
37-72 Leach Court, Park Street, Brighton	36	7	Y	4	0	0	4	9.78	£43,200	2026/27
Tyson Place, Grosvenor Street, Brighton	74	13		0	0	0	0	9.62	£88,800	2026/27
1-36 Leach Court, Park Street, Brighton	36	7	Y	3	0	0	3	8.28	£43,200	2027/28
Thornsedale, Albion Hill, Brighton	45	12		2	0	0	2	7.40	£54,000	2027/28
Ellen House BN3 3WX	57	10		1	0	0	1	6.70	£68,400	2028/29
Ecclesden, Grove Hill, Brighton	46	11		1	0	0	1	6.06	£55,200	2028/29
Clarendon House, Clarendon Road Hove	57	10		0	0	0	0	5.70	£68,400	2029/30
Conway Court, Clarendon Road, Block 3 Flats 37-54					0	0	4	5.62	£21,600	2029/30
Heron Court, 58-105 Swanborough Place, Brighton	48	9		0	0	0	0	4.32	£57,600	2030/31
73-108 Leach Court, Park Street, Brighton	36	7	Y	0	0	0	0	3.78	£43,200	2030/31
Conway Court, Clarendon Road, Block 1 Flats 1-18					0	0	2	3.62	£21,600	2031/32
Conway Court, Clarendon Road, Block 2 Flats 19-36					0	0	2	3.62	£21,600	2031/32
Johnson Bank, Wellington Road, Brighton	37	7		1	0	0	1	3.59	£44,400	2032/33
Conway Court, Clarendon Road, Block 4 Flats 55-72					0	0	1	2.62	£21,600	2032/33
Napier House, Wellington Road, Brighton	37	7		0	0	0	0	2.59	£44,400	2033/34
Allamanda, 146 - 192 Donald Hall Road, Brighton	24	7		0	0	0	0	1.68	£28,800	2033/34
Calendula, 109-155 Donald Hall Road, Brighton	24	7		0	0	0	0	1.68	£28,800	2034/35
Cherry, 13-59 Bowring Way, Bristol Estate, Brighton	24	7		0	0	0	0	1.68	£28,800	2034/35
Damson, 61-107 Bowring Way, Brighton	24	7		0	0	0	0	1.68	£28,800	2035/36
Hazel, 1-24 Turton Close, Brighton	24	7		0	0	0	0	1.68	£28,800	2035/36
Hollyhock, 206-252 Donald Hall Road, Brighton	24	7		0	0	0	0	1.68	£28,800	2036/37
Jasmine, 2 - 48 Donald Hall Road, Brighton	24	7		0	0	0	0	1.68	£28,800	2036/37
Meadowsweet, 74 - 120 Donald Hall Road, Brighton	24	7		0	0	0	0	1.68	£28,800	2037/38
Sorrel, 1-47 Chadborn Close, Brighton	24	7		0	0	0	0	1.68	£28,800	2037/38
Viscaria, 61-107 Donald Hall Road, Brighton	24	7		0	0	0	0	1.68	£28,800	2038/39
									£2,943,600	25 Years

APPENDIX 2:

Financial Projections over next 3 Years.

Financial Year	Site Name	Total budget cost	Match funded (if applicable)	Estimated Cost to BHCC	Annual Maintenance cost	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Accrual Cost over 3 years
2014/15	St James House, High Street, Brighton	£212,060	Y	£106,030	£250	£106,030	£250	£250	£106,530
2014/15	Somerset Point (Brighton), Somerset Street, Brighton	£86,400	Y	£43,200	£250	£43,200	£250	£250	£43,700
2015/16	Essex Place, Montague Street, Brighton	£153,600	Not decided	£153,600	£250	£0	£153,600	£250	£153,850
2015/16	Wiltshire House, Lavender Street, Brighton	£115,200	Not decided	£115,200	£250	£0	£115,200	£250	£115,450
2016/17	Highleigh, Grove Hill, Brighton	£54,000	Not decided	£54,000	£250	£0	£0	£54,000	£54,000
2016/17	Kestrel Court, 1-57 Swanborough Place, Brighton	£68,400	Not decided	£68,400	£250	£0	£0	£68,400	£68,400
						<u>£149,230</u>	<u>£269,300</u>	<u>£123,400</u>	<u>£541,930</u>

APPENDIX 3:

Ownership Disposition of initially involved Blocks.

Block	Number Of Flats	Number Of Flats Sold	Number of Seaside Homes
St James House	120	29	1
Somerset Point	72	0	0
Essex Place	128	28	0
Wiltshire House	96	22	3
Highleigh	45	17	3
Kestrel Court	57	5	2
Theobald House	110	25	6
Normanhurst	45	15	2
Falcon Court	54	8	4
Hereford Court	96	22	4