

12 January 2024

As previously stated, we would welcome the opportunity to appear before the Committee given the lack of progress being made in the private sector. Whilst developers build on "at pace" in massive sites such as Plasdwr in West Cardiff, decent, honest, hard working citizens who did everything right are being left to wait and wait. We face years of uncertainty and disruption. We trust the Committee are conscious of the parallels between the Post Office Scandal and the Welsh / English Building Safety Crisis:

Shocking levels of corporate denial, deflection and obfuscation

A woefully inadequate legal framework

Use of expensive lawyers to intimidate victims

Officialdom indifference

Weak media coverage of a major public safety crisis

Lives being destroyed and put on hold - for six years

We ask the Committee to seek input from "on the ground victims" and to call on the WG Minister to:

Publish a comprehensive update on the numbers of buildings in need of remediation in Wales (both social and private sector homes)

The current rate of progress from developers on the remediation of their responsible fire defective homes. Homes requiring remediation, works completed, works yet to begin, expected dates for completion (there is one development in Cardiff Bay that still has scaffolding up after four years of works?!?)

We also think it is time that the Committee called developers to give evidence on the crisis. Welsh citizens need to know that any new homes they are purchasing are fire safe, particularly given the recent critical Audit Wales report on Building Control.

Diolch yn fawr

With regards

Mark Thomas - Robert Nicholls - Welsh Cladiators

30 January 2024

Since last writing we would like to advise the Committee of important legal developments in England.

The first-tier tribunal (FTT) has ruled that Stratford Village Development Partnership SVDP, the developer of East Village, (former Stratford Olympic Village) and its parent company Get Living must pay £18m towards making five of the 66 blocks safe.

The ruling makes use of the new BSA (sections 116-125) that invokes the use of Remediation & Contribution Orders (RCOS) to force responsible persons - developers and freeholders - to pay for fire defective homes. Other RCOs have also now been announced in England since the profound Stratford Village ruling

The Committee will no doubt recall that in November 2022 the Welsh Labour Government voted against Sections 116-125 becoming law in Wales. To quote Minister Julie James "we just don't need the sections in Wales."

Consequently, many totally innocent Welsh private homeowners have had to take the difficult decision of litigating against developers in Wales with all the attendant personal costs and risks. In recent weeks we have been made fully aware of the similarities with the long suffering plight of the victims of the Post Office Scandal.

Despite Julie James' continued upbeat Senedd statements about the Welsh crisis, remediation works by responsible developers are not progressing "at pace." We know, almost one year on from developers signing the WG's contract, that both at Celestia (Redrow) & Altamar (Swansea - Bellway Homes) no remediation work is taking place.

In a recent reply to a written question from Rhys ab Owen , the Minister confirmed that of the 113 buildings in Wales requiring fire remediation works:

- *1 building has been completed.*
- *34 buildings have contractors on site and works underway.*
- ***9 buildings are having fire safety solutions designed or procurement is underway.***
- ***69 are having preparatory work undertaken to inform the schedule of work.***

These figures (which lack important details) are deeply concerning and should be a matter of widespread Welsh public concern and safety. We also have no idea of what progress is being made on the many orphan buildings in Wales. The depressing figures mirror the English crisis, where there is also widespread anger at the dismal rate of progress being made by developers.

We thank the Committee for their time and look forward to hearing from them

We are copying some of our wider political supporters so that they are advised of our long running concerns

With kind regards

Mark Thomas & Robert Nichols - on behalf of Welsh Cladiators