

Mr Stevens
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7 October 2020

Dear Mr Stevens,

Thank you for providing me with your report on the tragic death of Pauline Oakley which has been drafted with a view to prevent future deaths.

With respect to the concern, detailed in the report regarding the 'fire alarm' I would advise that we have carefully considered this issue and would advise the following.

Supported housing will include fire alarms that are monitored as part of the services provided. Typically, the alarm will require the residents to leave their home and assemble at a designated point. However, the residential block where Ms Oakley lived, is identified as 'general needs' accommodation where typically fire alarms do not form part of the fire safety arrangements.

The alarms fitted in Pauline Oakley's home were domestic smoke alarms that the Fire Brigade encourage everyone to introduce into their homes. The model (Aico EI141RC Ionisation Smoke Alarm) is typical of the units fitted in properties managed by EastendHomes and other Housing Providers in the Borough. I can confirm that the alarms were last tested on 02/09/2019 during the Gas Safety Inspection (certification can be provided if required) and that the devices were activated at the time of the incident.

Our advice to residents, contained in our Fire Safety leaflet which is available on our website, is that 'if you hear somebody else's smoke alarm sounding for a while and you are concerned, call the Fire Brigade' (copy of the leaflet can be provided if required). We do not believe residents in such accommodation have an expectation that these domestic smoke alarm units are monitored externally.

Residents living in 'general needs' housing who believe they would benefit from a service that externally monitors a range of detectors may be able to access the Telecare community alarm service that operates a 24/7 monitoring service for vulnerable residents.

In conclusion, we have carefully considered the concerns detailed in the report and believe the smoke alarms were of an appropriate standard, had been properly installed and maintained and had operated when activated. We are also of the view that EeH provides guidance on the action to take when a domestic smoke alarm continues longer than normal. EastendHomes periodically draws attention to the Fire Safety leaflet and other important leaflets in our resident newsletter and web site and this is undertaken on a routine basis.

At the present time no additional actions have been identified in relation to the management of domestic fire alarms.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chief Executive