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ARMA - C

Engaging with Local Communities to Resolve Concerns over Building Safety

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Introduction

- ARMA – operates in England and Wales in the private residential block management sector
- 1.5m leaseholders – over 5% of the UK population
- 50,000 blocks
- 325 managing agents, over 500 firms in total



Topics

- Landlord
- Building Safety Manager
- Managing Agent
- Resident
- Cost



Building Owners

- Professional landlords (if they continue)
 - will have to develop an H&S capacity as Accountable Person.
 - Size will likely determine in-house vs buy-in
- RMC/RTMs
 - will struggle as H&S is a technical area and liability remains
 - Director retention due to liabilities
 - Ability to understand liabilities and obligations - training
 - How far down the scale do we go (staircase and a light bulb?)



Building Safety Manager

- Government originally saw this as the Property Manager
- PM vs BSM is like a GP vs consultant
- The pipeline of BSMs is yet to be established
- Ideally have a single recognised certification to avoid confusion, particularly for lay boards
- Contractor certification will save time and cost
- How involved in day to day affairs is a question
 - bicycle in the fire escape
 - two rabbits running



Managing Agents

- Building Safety Manager
 - Larger MA's - inhouse capability charged out separately
 - Smaller MA's – only need a part of a BSM so will contract in
 - Charging mechanism will also play a part
- Residents Engagement challenge
 - Private Sector – over 50% of flats sub let
 - Hard enough to know the owner let alone the resident (sub-letting fees; HMRC)
 - Need to take into account language and literacy
 - Grumble vs safety issue vs complaint?
 - Develop a capture, respond and reporting system for safety issues
- Public Sector paper on how best to engage
 - Mail vs text/email
 - Trusted brand eg F&RS
 - Infographics



→ The Social Sector (Building Safety) Engagement Best Practice Group: Final Report

- Recognising that one size does not fit all, engagement needs to be tailored to residents needs and the type of home they live in.
- Consideration of residents' different learning styles and preferences when developing approaches to convey fire safety messages and evacuation procedures. A range of messaging and communication channels should be used to ensure disengaged and harder to reach residents can access fire safety information.
- Reminding residents repeatedly of the recommended course of action to be taken in the event of a fire. This could be through annual visits, newsletters, briefings at resident meetings or video message boards in blocks.
- Recognising that trusted partners, particularly the Fire and Rescue Services, are important in successfully communicating safety messages.
- Facilitating a positive environment for open and honest engagement.



Residents

- Emphasis must be on the flat owner to cascade information to the resident
- Flat owner to provide info as the basis of PEEPs
- Public awareness program as safety isn't always foremost in people's minds – Clunk/Click
- Enforcement needs to be both ways – landlords/agents failing to act, residents failing to comply (eg BBQs)
- Access will be key, particularly in the private sector
- Residents will trust a badge more than an agent – so who/how enforcement takes place is important



Cost of the Safety Regime

- This is probably going to cause a lot of grief and resentment
- Important for MA's, homeowners and Gov. that its transparent
- Golden Thread – great for new builds, but what about legacy stock where only ~2% have the data. 50 unit block = £30-£35k
- Proportionality is key – Wales two category system. One up/one down will need an annual FRA costing £250
- BSM at £6,400 to £10,000 per block (assuming 7-11 blocks per BSM @£60k with no on costs)
- PM/BSM interaction could be burdensome
- Insurers will steer towards intrusive FRA's and EWS A1 classification – risk to life vs risk to financial loss



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ANY QUESTIONS?



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