

# Grand Union Heights external wall remediation

A guide to works  
December 2024



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## Glossary of terms

- **Balcony decking** – The surface that covers the floor of the balcony.
- **Cladding** – There are two main types on the external wall system at Grand Union Heights, the red and white HPL (High Pressure Laminate) panels and the red cedar (brown timber).
- **Elevation** – A particular wall or ‘face’ of the building.
- **External wall system** – The combination of materials used in the external walls of the property. This generally includes the sheathing board, insulation and render as well as fire breaks and associated items.
- **External Wall System (EWS1) Form** – A form used for valuation purposes by those seeking to sell or re-mortgage their homes. The form is signed by a suitably qualified professional and is often requested by mortgage lenders. This form is not a statutory requirement.
- **Firestopping** – Products within the internal and external walls that prevent or slow fire from spreading.
- **Sheathing board** – A flat panel used in construction to cover the frame of a building, in Grand Union it will be like a base layer to provide support and protect against wind, moisture and other elements.
- **Sprinklers** – A fire protection system that will help control or extinguish fire by spraying water when they detect a heat or smoke.

## Summary

This guide is to help you and your household understand the planned programme of works being carried out at Grand Union Heights; why the work is being done, how it will impact you, and the improvements it will bring.

SNG is very mindful of the impact that building work can have on you. We have appointed a team of expert consultants and specialist contractors, and we are committed to minimising any adverse impacts during this essential work, and to being transparent as to the processes involved.

SNG has extensive experience in external wall/cladding remediation projects and we will endeavour at all times to be open and transparent with our residents and we will operate wherever possible in line with the Government's "*Code of Practice for the remediation of residential buildings*".<sup>1</sup> It is vital that we work collaboratively with our residents to ensure remediation works are carried out to a high standard.

### **Context of the work**

Grand Union Heights is made up of five conjoined blocks, between five and eight storeys, with red and white HPL cladding and brown timber cladding.

SNG engaged a consultant (Philip Pank Partnership) to investigate the external wall system in line with Government guidance for owners of tall buildings to carry out investigations. The investigation focused on localised sections of the external wall system and noted that the cladding was not fit for purpose and needed to be replaced.

As we presented at the resident webinar, a design remediation solution has been developed by an expert design team with extensive experience in this field and has undergone large scale fire testing. We are now in a position to progress the cladding remediation work.

### **Resident webinar**

We held a resident webinar in November. If you haven't yet had a chance to, you can watch the recording of the presentation we gave, have a look at the presentation slides, and all the questions that were asked here: <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/media/21873/20241204-guh-webinar-faqs-sent.pdf>.

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<sup>1</sup> [Code of Practice for the remediation of residential buildings - GOV.UK](#)


## Current fire strategy


Your building continues to operate as a “simultaneous evacuation” strategy and in the event of a fire, sounders will activate within properties and residents should evacuate their flat and meet at the assembly point outside the building. **The assembly point has now changed for the duration of the project** – meet at the corner of the Peppermint Heights site by Ealing Road and Northwick Road, opposite the garages.

The concierge operates on a 24/7 basis and is performing the evacuation manager duties while the building operates a simultaneous evacuation fire strategy. They will assist and direct residents in event of an evacuation, and also responds to any fire alarm activations and monitors the fire alarm panel.

### What to do in the event of a fire?





Fire safety strategy









Your fire safety strategy for Grand Union Heights  
Simultaneous evacuation – here’s what that means:


If you see fire or smoke, then evacuate by the stairs and sound the alarm (it’s at the bottom of the stairs)



→



If you hear the alarm, then evacuate using the stairs





→


If you have to evacuate, leave the building first, and then call the fire brigade on 999




Don't get caught out!  
You should evacuate even if you think it is a false alarm

Assembly point  
The corner of the Peppermint Heights site by Ealing Road and Northwick Road, oppsite from the garages



Fire alarm test  
At 3pm every Wednesday



Our details  
customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk  
0300 373 3000



## Scope of remedial work

The work is due to commence in early 2025.

### What work are we doing?

The proposed work will rectify the defects in the external wall system that have been identified in building survey reports. In order to carry out the works we have commissioned an External Wall Fire Risk Assessment (FRAEW), which has identified a scope of works including;

- Replacement of all external wall systems in line with our large scale fire test.
- Replacement of balcony decking.
- Installation of a Sprinkler System within communal areas and within flats.
- Remediation works to putty pads behind plug sockets on external walls.

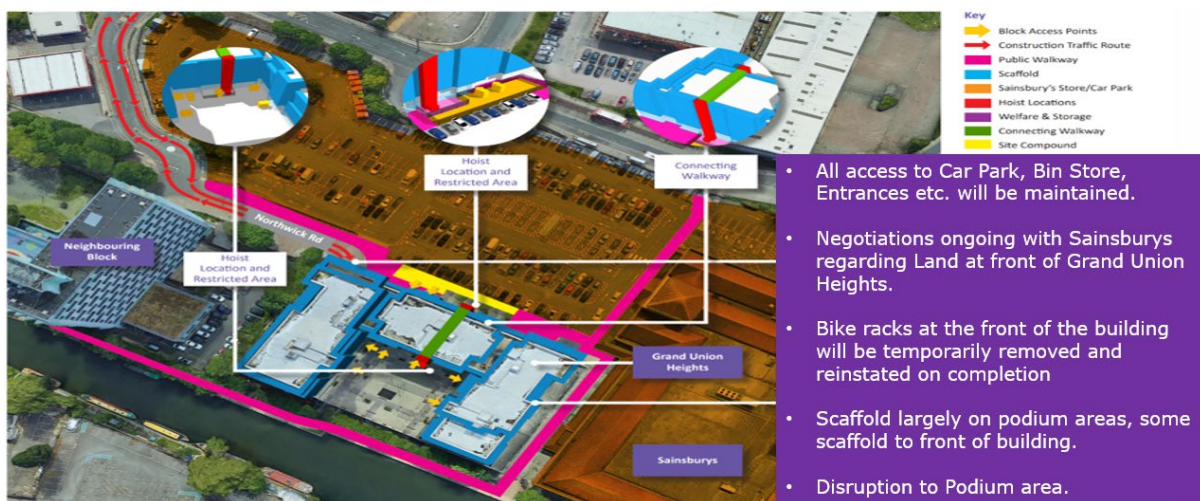
We will also inspect and likely carry out works to the roof system. We will also be undertaking fire door inspections within the building as the works progress.

United Living South (ULS), the original contractor of Grand Union Heights, will be returning to site to carry out the remediation works. You can read more about them here: <https://unitedliving.co.uk/>.

### Site plan

In order to carry out the works, all buildings will need to have scaffold erected. This will mean there will be disruption to podium areas during this time. A hoist will be installed adjacent to the car park to transport materials and operatives to podium level. There will be two further hoists on the podium to transport materials up and down the scaffold. There will also be disruption to terrace areas and balcony areas as these works progress.

We are currently negotiating with Sainsburys to place site cabins in the space immediately outside the front of Grand Union Heights. In order to do this, the bike racks will also need to be removed temporarily. All contractor facilities will be fenced off and inaccessible to residents/the public. There will be no changes to access and exit from any of the entrances to Grand Union Heights. Likewise there will still be access to the bin stores for refuse collection.



## **External work**

### **1. Replace red and white HPL cladding (pictured right)**

The existing cladding panels will be removed sequentially. The contractor will remove no more than three floors at any one time on one elevation. As soon as the cladding panels and support bracketry have been removed, the contractor will install a new sheathing board over the top of the existing board, weatherproof, install fire rated insulation and install the bracketry to hold the new cladding panels. Once all is in place the final cladding panels will be installed to match the existing colours. All the materials being installed are non-combustible materials which meet building regulations and are in line with the large scale fire test undertaken.



### **2. Replace timber cladding (pictured right)**

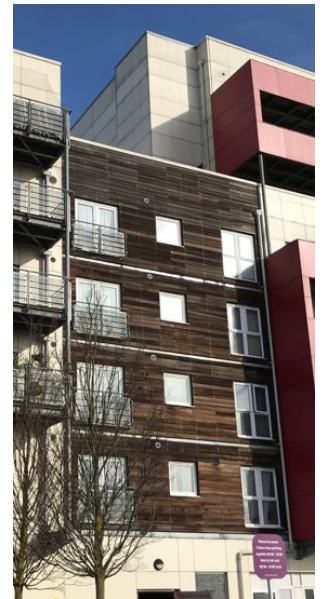
The same process will be adopted to the timber cladding as identified for the red and white HPL cladding above. The final cladding panels will appear similar to the existing timber, however they will be a non-combustible fibre cement board.

### **3. Replace balcony decking**

As part of the works, our Fire Engineer has identified that we will need to replace the balcony decking. The steel structures to the balconies will remain. If there are any cladding panels affixed to your balcony, we will remove these and replace these with an alternative non-combustible cladding. The floor surface will also be upgraded to a building regulations compliant solution. The balcony decking will likely be replaced with an aluminium decking which is compliant with building regulations.

### **4. Roof works**

We are currently undertaking inspections of the roof system and given the age of the roof system, we may decide during the course of the works to renew the roof coverings. We will write to our residents in due course if these works will fall under this contract. Roof works do not relate to external wall fire safety works.



## **Internal work**

### **1. Internal visual inspection**

During the course of the works, our specialist Structural Engineer will be undertaking a health check of the timber frame construction of the building. Internally within your flat, the floor and wall construction is of timber frame construction and our engineer will be establishing the condition of internal walls. This will help us to report back to the Building Safety Regulator about the condition of the building at Grand Union Heights as part of the Building Safety Case that we need to produce. These surveys will be scheduled from January 2025 onwards.

### **2. Firestopping works inside flats**

During the course of the works our contractor will be removing plug sockets which back onto the external wall system to ensure they are appropriately fire stopped.

### **3. Install sprinklers.**

We will be installing a sprinkler system throughout common parts and within flats. We will write to you once the final design has been agreed. We will need access to your properties to install this system, as the system will be connected into your flats.

## Project team

The main works will be undertaken by United Living South (ULS) and they will appoint a range of specialist sub-contractors to support them. As presented at the webinar and on the FAQs, ULS has a lot of experience on cladding remediation schemes and are on our cladding remediation framework.



SNG will also be supported by a number of companies:

- Philip Pank Partnership (Contract Administrator, Principle Designer (CDM), Clerk of Works) [www.philippank.net/](http://www.philippank.net/)



- PRP Architects (Lead Architect) [www.prp-co.uk/](http://www.prp-co.uk/)



- Project Milner (Specialist Timber Frame Structural Engineer) [www.milnerassociates.co.uk/](http://www.milnerassociates.co.uk/)



- Tullys (Structural Engineer) <https://tullys.uk/>



- CHPK Fire (Chartered Fire Engineer) <https://chpk.co.uk/>



- Wintech Facades (Façade Engineer) <https://wintech-group.com/>



- Multivista (Photographic Surveyor) [www.multivista.com/en-gb/](http://www.multivista.com/en-gb/)





## Indicative programme

The project at Grand Union Heights has already begun, and United Living is currently mobilising their supply chain, finalising designs, ordering materials and carrying out site surveys to establish the existing condition of the building. United Living has identified that welfare facilities, site offices etc will begin to be delivered to site in early 2025.

### Completion dates and likelihood of delays

SNG has been carrying out large scale, complex remediation projects for over five years. In our experience, projects of this size and complexity run into unforeseen issues which can significantly push back the completion date. Delays are very likely.

#### **Programme estimated completion date – Summer 2026:**

- The 'official' completion date provided by the contractor based on issues that we know about now
- Small contingencies built in for things like weather, delivery delays, operative numbers
- Doesn't build in large contingencies about unknown issues.

#### **SNG's estimated completion date – Summer 2027:**

- We'll be working hard to try and achieve the programme date
- But we think our estimate is more realistic, based on our experience at other sites. We want you to keep this in mind, so you have a more accurate picture of what to expect.

The programme is subject to building control and planning approvals. We will ensure that scaffold is up for no longer than it needs to be on an elevation and will keep you up to date on progress in our regular updates.

### Activities to be undertaken in January 2025

From January 2025, you will begin to see a presence on site from our Contractor and our Site Team. We'll be carrying out the following:

- **Meet and greet the contractor:** Please look out for posters in early January 2025, where we will be inviting you to meet the contractor and our Resident Liaison team. The drop-in event will allow residents to ask any questions they may have in regards to the remediation. Any queries that are not related to the remediation, should be sent to our Customer Services Team: [CustomerService@networkhomes.org.uk](mailto:CustomerService@networkhomes.org.uk) or **0300 373 3000**.
- **Balconies:** Our team has begun to contact residents regarding items which remain on balconies. Balconies must remain cleared of any combustible materials stored.
- **Site set up:** United Living is finalising their site set up and we are working with the contractor to agree a licence with Sainsburys. The contractor will begin to install cabins for their contractors' welfare and materials directly outside Grand Union Heights. In order to do this the contractor will require to remove the bike storage at the front of the building.
- **Scaffold:** The scaffold design is in the final stages of being agreed. Given that the building is a timber frame, the design is being reviewed by a number of parties. We expect this to be concluded early in 2025 and we will write to our residents to confirm when scaffold will start to be erected on site.
- **Schedule of Condition Surveys:** As part of the works, we will ensure that no damage is caused to your properties. We therefore propose that we do a schedule of condition survey of your property ahead of works starting. This will protect both you and us in the event of an issue. Your SNG Resident Liaison Office will be in touch in January 2025 to arrange a date for this survey. Our photographic survey consultant, Multivista, will also be on site to record the condition of common areas.

## Working with you in mind

The SNG team and our experienced specialist contractor, United Living, will work hard to protect residents during the course of work.

Some groups, such as disabled people, elderly people, and children, require special attention during any building work and we are very mindful of these needs.

Children in particular often aren't aware of the dangers associated with construction sites, which can lead to injury. In addition to the safety measures being put in place, we would appreciate your co-operation in reinforcing messaging aimed at preventing children entering the areas of work. Please be vigilant and should you see anyone where they should not be, please inform a member of our team immediately.

Safety signs will be displayed around the site during the work and working areas will be segregated by physical barriers. If you have any questions on safety, please contact us via [customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk](mailto:customerservice@networkhomes.org.uk).



## FAQs

### External Work

**1. What happens if the works uncover additional issues that need to be addressed?**

If additional issues are discovered during the remediation works, we will assess them promptly and determine the best course of action. Residents will be informed of any changes to the scope of works and the potential impact on the timeline or living conditions. SNG has appointed a robust team to support us with the remediation works and they will be afforded the responsibility of identifying design solutions with the contractor.

**2. Where will the contractor's site office be located?**

The United Living site office will be located at the front of Grand Union Heights. There will be various containers used for a site office, site welfare (toilets etc) and also storage.

**3. Will there be any changes to the bin collections?**

You should continue to use the bin store. We will arrange collections with the local council and will move bins on a weekly basis for collection.

**4. How will you manage the contractors' waste?**

We will have a secure skip located to the front of the building.

**5. What will be the extent of the scaffold?**

Full scaffold will be erected to entire building.

**6. How will the scaffold be secured?**

The scaffold will be secured and there will be an alarm which is monitored 24/7 in case of any activations. You can protect your property by ensuring that you lock all your windows and balcony door when you go out. The work should not have any bearing on your home contents policy, however we recommend that you keep your insurance provider updated on the status of the project.

**7. What does the scaffold netting look like?**

We will be wrapping the scaffolding in fire-retardant debris netting which will protect the surroundings from particles or building dust from the facade work. The netting will be fixed to the scaffolding by cable ties.

**8. Will my light be obscured?**

The debris netting that encloses the scaffold and the boards used to create walkways on the scaffolding will reduce some of the natural light getting into your property and will obscure your view. The scaffolding and netting will be in place for the minimum possible time.

**9. Will I have increased heating costs?**

We do not expect that you will experience any noticeable increase in costs for heating your property. No insulation is being removed from the building.

**10. What can I do for ventilation in the summer?**

You will be able to open your windows for ventilation purposes. However as some of our work will create dust we strongly recommend where possible, that windows remain shut while work to your balcony elevation is being carried out Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm.

**11. Will I be able to use my balcony/terrace during the works?**

It is likely that use of the balconies and terraces may be restricted throughout the project. Once the scaffold design has been completed, our resident liaison teams will meet with you to discuss.

**12. Is it safe for my children to be in the property during the work?**

During the façade work, it is safe for you and your children to be in your property. When we are working on your block there will be some noisy work which may cause some disturbance, but not to the extent that hearing protection is required. We will be installing fencing around your balcony, to prevent unauthorised access to scaffold. We recommend making sure any older children who are left home alone know what to do in the event of the fire alarm system sounding.

**13. Will I need to close all my blinds and curtains?**

As scaffolding goes up you will start to see movement around the scaffold. For your privacy we would recommend that you keep blinds and curtains closed first thing in the morning, opening these once you are dressed.

**14. What happens if I am on holiday?**

We will work with you prior to you going on holiday and any access required will be scheduled before you go on holiday. This will enable us to move forward with our programme in your absence.

**15. What sort of sign-off will be provided?**

We will liaise with building control throughout our work to ensure that all work is compliant and meets all building regulations. A robust QCQA (quality control/quality assurance) process will be followed throughout the project.

SNG has also appointed Philip Pank Partnership (PPP) to act as our site inspector throughout the work and also CHPK Fire to act as our Chartered Fire Engineers. They will undertake regular inspections to ensure the contractor is working to the building regulations and project specification.

**16. What sort of certification will we get?**

The work being undertaken to the façade will be certified as complete and compliant with the building regulations by an approved Building Control Inspector. If you are a leaseholder, you will receive an EWS1 form for mortgage and selling purposes on completion of works.

**17. How long will this project take? Once the repair work has been complete, how long will it be before we receive the EWS1 safety certificate?**

You will be kept updated on progress and developments to the timeframe. We estimate that once the remediation project is complete, it will take between 6-8 weeks to receive an EWS1 form from our fire engineer.

**18. How many people will be carrying out the work to the building?**

We have not established resources levels yet with the contractor, however once works have started, it is likely there will be on average 20-30 operatives on site. We will keep you updated on resource levels throughout the course of the project.

## **Internal Work**

**1. Will you need access to my property?**

We will need to carry out a schedule of condition survey as explained above at the outset of the project. We will also need access to your property to undertake sprinkler installation works. We will write to all residents once we have received the final proposal from the contractor.



## **Health and safety**

### **1. What safety measures will be in place during the works?**

Safety is our top priority. All contractors will adhere to strict safety protocols, including the use of appropriate barriers, signage, and personal protective equipment (PPE). Residents will be informed of any potential hazards, and access to certain areas where works are required may be restricted temporarily to ensure everyone's safety. Should you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

### **2. Will there be any changes to the fire safety procedures during the works?**

We do not envisage any changes to the fire strategy. It will continue to remain as a simultaneous evacuation strategy. Should any temporary fire safety procedures be put in place during the works, including alternative evacuation routes we will notify all residents. Please refer to previous letters you have previously received. In case of an alarm activation please follow the instructions displayed on the posters around the building, in this Guide to Works and the Evacuation Manager on site. Access and exit routes will not be blocked as a result of the works.

### **3. How will SNG ensure that the quality of work meets safety and building standards?**

We have appointed an independent quality assurance team to oversee the works. Regular inspections will be conducted, and all works will be certified as compliant with current safety and building standards before completion. We are committed to delivering high-quality work that ensures the long-term safety and integrity of the building.

## **Potential disruption**

### **1. Will there be any disruptions to utilities, before or during the works?**

We don't expect there will be any disruptions. We will tell you before any planned disruptions, and efforts will be made to schedule these during off-peak hours to minimise inconvenience.

### **2. How will the works affect access to the building and communal areas?**

Large areas of the podium will be scaffolded during the course of the works. Access to terraces and to balconies will also be impacted and our resident liaison officer will be able to provide further information throughout the course of works.

### **3. What noise levels can we expect during the works, and during what hours will noisy activities take place?**

Our contractors will be carrying out their work during the hours of 8am and 6pm, Monday to Friday. Noisy work will only be done between 9am and 5pm. Set-up and cleaning may occur outside of these hours. There may be some Saturday working as we wish to complete these building safety work as quickly as possible, however residents will be given ample notice should this be the case.

Set up and cleaning work includes delivering the materials we require to site each day, and this will be transported both by hoists and manual handling to the required position for the work on that day. Although housekeeping will be undertaken constantly throughout the day, we will check the scaffold and balcony areas at the end of each day to ensure these areas are clean and clear of any materials and dust from our work.

### **4. What will the noise impact be?**

While it is impossible for us to promise that our work will not disrupt your daily routine (especially if you work from home or have a shift pattern), we will work to minimise noise impact. Our operatives will be mindful that they are working outside your home and we will try to keep you fully informed during the course of the work. Due to the mechanical fixing there will be drilling noise intermittently throughout the working day.

**5. Will the works affect our health and safety, particularly regarding dust and debris?**

The contractors will implement dust control measures, such as using dust sheets, to minimize the impact on indoor air quality. Residents are advised to keep windows closed during particularly dusty activities. If you have concerns about specific health issues, please contact us.

**6. Will residents be required to vacate their homes at any point during the works?**

We do not anticipate the need for residents to vacate their homes. However, if there are specific areas where access will be restricted or where works will make living conditions difficult, we will work with you to find a temporary solution.

**7. What steps are being taken to protect personal property during the works?**

We recommend that residents remove any valuable or fragile items from areas where work will be conducted such as balconies. Contractors will take care to protect personal property, but we advise you to take additional precautions if necessary. If you have concerns, please reach out to us for assistance. Additionally as scaffolding will be up and around the building, we will encourage you to ensure all windows are closed when not in the property. You should ensure your balcony is cleared of all items.

**8. What measures are in place to ensure that contractors respect residents' privacy and maintain cleanliness in the building?**

Contractors are required to follow a strict code of conduct, which includes respecting residents' privacy and maintaining cleanliness in all areas they work in. We will monitor this closely and conduct regular inspections to ensure that these standards are met. If you notice any issues, please report them immediately to your dedicated RLO officer.

## **Finance**

**1. How will the works be funded, and will there be any additional costs passed on to residents?**

The external wall remediation works will be funded by SNG, government funding and United Living. SNG (formerly Network Homes) are not able to recover any costs from our residents related to the remediation of the external wall system at Grand Union Heights. We sought government funding and external wall remediation costs will be covered by SNG/government funding for all our individual tenants, individual qualifying leaseholders, including individual leaseholders who rent out the property.

A qualifying leaseholder, under the Building Safety Act, is someone who on 14 February 2022 had the following conditions:

- your property was your main home
- you owned no more than three UK residential properties in total
- For more information on qualifying leaseholders, you can check the government's advice: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/leaseholder-protections-on-building-safety-costs-in-england-frequently-asked-questions>.

Please ensure if you are a leaseholder of Grand Union Heights, that you share all updates on the remediation with the tenants living in your property. You can direct them to the dedicated Grand Union webpage for updates, but please forward on any you receive as well. The webpage can be found at <https://www.networkhomes.org.uk/guhbuildingsafety/>.

## **Contact information**

**1. Who can we contact if we have concerns or questions during the works?**

A dedicated Resident Liaison Officer (RLO) will be assigned to this project. They will be your primary

point of contact for any concerns or questions during working hours. We will also provide regular updates through newsletters, emails, and on-site notice boards. You can reach them at:

- Network Homes RLO team: [Buildingsafetyteam@sng.org.uk](mailto:Buildingsafetyteam@sng.org.uk)  
Cameron Anterkyi Resident Liaison Officer:  
**020 4512 5791**
- United Living  
Lorraine Pearce - Senior Resident Liaison Officer  
[Lorraine.Pearce@UnitedLiving.co.uk](mailto:Lorraine.Pearce@UnitedLiving.co.uk)
- Emergency out of hours:  
SNG: **0300 373 3000**  
United Living: **01322 660226**
- **Dial 999** in an emergency.