

**Email Helen Shervington 071024**

Dear Helen

I hope you are well.

Thank you for your recent email seeking our input regarding the identification of good-quality and new homes within the Ladywood regeneration area. While we are well-acquainted with specific parts of the designated regeneration area, particularly Phase 1—which includes the three non-council built private freehold estates, high-quality housing association properties constructed in the late 1990s, and new council housing built approximately 13 years ago—we believe it is beyond our expertise to provide a comprehensive assessment of the overall condition and quality of homes across the entire area. We are mindful that any comments we provide could inadvertently disadvantage others or ourselves within the designated area, or potentially misrepresent the varying quality of housing across all phases.

Therefore, we respectfully recommend that a comprehensive evaluation by truly independent professionals with expertise in housing quality and construction standards would be the most appropriate approach to ensuring a fair and accurate assessment of the current housing conditions. We remain profoundly concerned about the conflicts of interest that seem to have become entrenched within the planning process, compromising the objectivity, impartiality, and fairness of such assessments.

Moreover, as previously noted, the community in Ladywood is well-established and settled, and it would be irresponsible not to undertake a thorough and holistic review of the current housing situation. We question why such a review was not conducted prior to the widespread blighting of thousands of homes. Particular consideration must be given to the positive impact of the 1990s regeneration, which not only benefited Central Ladywood but also contributed significantly to the city's overall development. For example, the creation of the three private freehold estates in the 1990s was intended to attract professionals to the area. These estates are now home to a wide range of professionals who serve both the city and beyond, including NHS staff such as paediatricians, doctors, and nurses, as well as members of the clergy, social care workers, and educators such as teachers and university lecturers. It is disgraceful that essential key workers, many of whom were on the frontlines serving the public during the pandemic, are now deeply suffering.

Given the substantial number of council homes in Birmingham that fail to meet even minimum decent housing standards, it would be deeply troubling to demolish well-maintained, good-quality homes.

Furthermore, there have been escalating concerns from residents of council housing, particularly those residing in the tower blocks, regarding the ongoing improvement works being carried out by Birmingham City Council. We have received numerous reports of dissatisfaction, primarily focused on the Council's lack of responsiveness and the significant disruption caused by the recent refurbishment process. On Friday, 27 September, members of the Ladywood Unite Committee were invited to a meeting with residents from the tower blocks, where we were presented with deeply troubling and distressing accounts of residents being left without basic facilities—such as cookers or showers—for several weeks. This was due to delays in the refurbishment works, with residents reporting unclear timelines and poor communication between contractors and residents. Many felt as though their concerns were being ignored, as work would start and then be halted for weeks at a time, leaving their flats in an incomplete state.

In addition to these issues, serious concerns were raised about the overall safety of the tower blocks. Residents voiced their frustration with the Council's ongoing lack of communication, with one of the most pressing concerns being the inadequate water pressure in Truro Tower. This issue has raised significant concerns, particularly regarding fire safety. During the meeting, several residents expressed deep distress over their safety, feeling that their concerns had been inadequately addressed by the Council. Residents have been informed by the Council that this is a structural problem involving large underground pipes, the cost of which is prohibitively high for replacement. As you will understand, under the current regeneration framework (Cabinet Report, June 2023), the developer would not be responsible for addressing such significant structural issues.

It is our understanding that members of Birmingham City Council were invited to attend this meeting; however, regrettably, no representatives made themselves known to organisers during the meeting. The accounts shared by residents were particularly distressing, as they highlighted the personal hardships and sense of neglect many are enduring, especially in relation to the recent refurbishment works. Several residents expressed that they had lost hope in receiving any meaningful support from the Council.

We are pleased to be working closely with Shabana Mahmood MP and her team on the [Ladywood Regeneration Survey 2024 - Shabana Mahmood](#). As part of this collaboration, this co-produced questionnaire is currently being distributed by post to all residents within the designated regeneration area. Residents will have the option to respond either electronically or via freepost.

Given that this survey is government-funded, it is crucial that residents receive full assurance that their feedback will, first, be acknowledged by Birmingham City Council and, second, acted upon in a constructive and positive manner. Could you please provide an outline of how Birmingham City Council plans to utilise the survey findings to inform and shape the regeneration project as it moves forward?

Finally, thank you for your kind offer to visit homes within the designated regeneration area alongside the developer. I would like to extend a personal invitation for you to visit my home. Additionally, I invite you to visit Mr. and Mrs. Charles, long-term residents of the privately built and owned Ashton Croft. They have lived in their home since it was built 31 years ago, and both have dedicated much of their careers to the NHS. Mrs. Charles is now retired, while Mr. Charles continues to work as a porter at Birmingham Children's Hospital. Please advise on possible dates for a visit, and we will be happy to accommodate accordingly.

In summary, we request that Birmingham City Council consider the following actions:

1. **Commission a comprehensive evaluation** by housing quality and construction experts to accurately assess the current condition of homes across all phases of the regeneration area with a view of preserving good quality homes.
2. **Address the ongoing concerns** of residents in the tower blocks, particularly regarding unresolved issues with the refurbishment works, poor communication, and critical safety concerns, such as inadequate water pressure in Truro Tower.
3. **Outline how the findings** of the [Ladywood Regeneration Survey 2024](#) undertaken by Shabana Mahmood MP will be used to inform and shape the regeneration project moving forward, ensuring that residents' feedback is acknowledged and acted upon constructively. As you can appreciate this survey is funded through the public purse.

We look forward to your response and to working in partnership to ensure that the regeneration of Ladywood meets the needs of its residents. Thank you once again for your attention to these matters. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information or clarification.

Warmest regards

George