



## RENTS RECORDED MONTHLY RISES IN ALL REGIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME ON RECORD IN SEPTEMBER. Source: LSL Property Services Plc

>> *Tribunal Tells Managing Agent: Be Reasonable, They Can't Afford To Pay continued from cover*

hurts my pride - and my pocket (!) - to lose a case such as this. I did not expect to lose and believe that this decision will have a substantial impact on block maintenance nationwide."

The Upper Tribunal explicitly made clear that their decision did not apply to the payability of service charges ordinarily demanded under the lease.

Her Honour Judge Robinson determined: "liability to pay service charges cannot be avoided simply on the grounds of hardship, even if extreme".

Chainbow have since taken over the management of the building.

Visit News on the Block.com for further discussion of this case.

>> *Managing Agents call for more fire power continued from cover*

Weil's call resonated with Peverel Retirement, who are dealing with the aftermath of the tragic fire at Gibson Court. A Peverel Retirement spokesperson said: "... many of the developments we manage have smoke detectors in individual apartments linked to the fire panel or warden call systems. The latter are linked to CarelineUK's 24 hour social alarm monitoring centre. Where this is not the case, we encourage residents to fit standalone detectors."

Fire can also affect nearby properties, as surveyor Julian Davies of Earl Kendrick Associates identified: "What is often not considered is the damaging and distressing effects a fire can have on

neighbouring properties, which may have borne the brunt of nearby fire damage but may not be deemed inhabitable by the insurers. Such effects can include smoke damage, water damage, fumes and foul smells as well as the often lengthy disruption caused as a result of reinstatement building works."

Colin Welch, General Manager at specialist Health and Safety consultants, 4Site Consulting explained the difficulty faced by managing agents: "The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places clear duties on owners, managers, landlords of such buildings but the regulation has been somewhat "muddied" by a guidance document from the Local Government Group which has caused many to question

aspects of where this seems to contradict the Order. It is important to remember that in any case of contradiction, the Order is law."

Separately, one MP has already pledged to table a Parliamentary question on fire safety in blocks. The commitment was made following the successful completion of the retrofitting of an automatic fire sprinkler system in a block in her Sheffield Heeley constituency. Meg Munn MP said: "I'm pleased this project has demonstrated that sprinklers can be fitted on existing high rise blocks without difficulty. It's time for Government and local authorities to act to prevent further unnecessary loss of life." The project was supported by the British Fire Sprinkler Association.

## Deacon launches bespoke professional indemnity insurance



Deacon has developed a new Professional Indemnity insurance for

Managing Agents. Offering bespoke policy wording, the comprehensive new

cover provides cost effective protection against potentially damaging claims and legal action arising from failure to comply with Section 20 consultations.

Penny Jepson, Head of Business at Deacon says:

"Most managing agents are well aware of their statutory obligations but mistakes do happen. Professional Indemnity insurance is absolutely essential to protect an agent's business, as well as being a membership condition

of the industry's trade associations and professional bodies. I would urge managing agents to check the extent and cost effectiveness of their existing cover. It could save them from unrecoverable financial disaster."

## Crown Paints Launches Block Management Brochure

**Crown Paints** has produced a new brochure illustrating the company's personalised products and services for block managers. The brochure includes an overview of Crown Paints' Sustainable Smart

Maintenance programme, which delivers cost savings to cyclical maintenance. Details of Crown Trade's Timonox flame retardant systems and information on the company's portfolio of brands are also

provided, which offer a total solution for block management. Vernon Kinrade, Crown Paints Specification Sector Support Manager, said: "Over the years we've developed a focused sector approach to

decorative maintenance and have acquired a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the block management sector."

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