

STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION

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The Opposition has received more complaints from purchasers at Cumberland Terraces who are understandably upset at a number of different problems affecting the development. The length of time that people have had to wait for their flats even before the collapse of the developer OEM and the subsequent collapse of the contractor Haymills has only served to make matters worse.

The Opposition continue to receive complaints from purchasers regarding the fact that there are restrictors on the windows of the flats which only allow them to open a few centimetres. There are many purchasers who have a serious problem with this and who claim that the restricted opening does not allow them to have proper ventilation of their flats particularly at this time of the year in the heat of summer.

There have now been further complaints made regarding the front doors of the flats at Cumberland Terraces. The Opposition has been informed that the Government have had to replace the front doors in the development because these were deemed not to be good enough. This decision was apparently taken post-inspection and post the completion certificates being awarded which is a very unusual way in which to proceed.

The Government, through its wholly-owned company GRP, have told purchasers that they are not satisfied with the quality of the doors and they have a concern that they may deteriorate too quickly. They have not explained how it was that the front doors were installed before the Government took this view about their quality and decided to remove them. They have also not explained why this was done post-inspection and post the award of the completion certificates. The reality is that the front doors of many flats will now have to be changed with people living in them. Purchasers have been advised that this can be done in a day but it will nonetheless cause considerable inconvenience to many people not least about issues like safety and security.

The Government, in an obvious attempt to place the blame elsewhere, have explained to purchasers that they did not design the development nor did it specify the standards. However, they have declared “that both are satisfactory and fully compliant with applicable Regulations and Standards”.

Commenting on the matter, Shadow Housing Minister Charles Bruzon said that:

“I have been approached by a number of people who have expressed concern to me about their flats at Cumberland Terraces. These centre on the quality of the finished product and on the differences between their expectations and what has actually happened in reality. It is not acceptable that the Government should wash its hands of the project as if it had nothing to do with them. As I have said before, they have boasted they had closely supervised the quality of the construction, therefore any defects that surface now are clearly a Government responsibility for which they must answer and which they will have to rectify.”