



# Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service

Our Ref: BEECHMEREUPDATE

Your Ref:

Contact: Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service

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Dear former residents of Beechmere,

## Commencement of prosecutions in relation to the Beechmere Assisted Living Complex, Rolls Avenue, Crewe.

I am writing to update you regarding the investigation undertaken by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service following the fire at the Beechmere Assisted Living Complex, Rolls Avenue, Crewe on 8 August 2019.

More than 150 residents lost their homes and possessions and while none were injured, the impact on their lives has been significant. The fire was one of the biggest ever attended by the Service with over 70 firefighters deployed at its height to bring it under control.

Since 2019 the Service has worked tirelessly to investigate the cause of the fire and establish any potential breaches of fire safety legislation. This has been a long and complex process owing to the scale of the fire and the number of parties involved in designing, building, maintaining and managing the building.

I am aware that for many former residents, the fire resulted in significant distress and upheaval. I also know that the investigative activities have taken some time due to their complexity. I appreciate your patience and understanding as the Service has conducted its investigation.

As a result of the investigation, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service is now bringing charges against six companies for failing to comply with the Fire Safety (Regulatory Reform) Order 2005 at Beechmere:

- **Avantage (Cheshire) Ltd.** Contracted to procure the design, build and finance of Beechmere and operate the village in accordance with Cheshire East Council's specification. Avantage is a subsidiary of Your Housing Ltd.
- **Your Housing Ltd.** Employed staff at Beechmere and as such was the 'responsible person' for fire safety measures as defined by Article 3(a) of the Fire Safety (Regulatory Reform) Order 2005.
- **Morgan Sindall Property Services Ltd.** The facilities management subcontractor to Avantage, with responsibility for responsive repairs and cyclical maintenance.
- **WSP UK Ltd.** Contracted to produce a detailed fire strategy in 2007 and in 2008 produce an operational fire safety manual and carry out a fire risk assessment of Beechmere.
- **Total Fire Group Ltd.** Contracted to carry out fire risk assessments in August 2017 and August 2018 at both Beechmere and Hazelmere retirement villages.

- **MAC Roofing and Contractors Ltd.** Contracted by Morgan Sindall Property Services Ltd. to undertake roofing works at Beechmere between 6 and 8 August 2019.

During the course of the investigation, alleged breaches of the Fire Safety Order were also discovered at another retirement village, Hazelmere on Hambleton Way, Winsford. A number of charges have been laid in respect of these failures, in addition to those at Beechmere.

The Service regrets that it cannot enter into detailed discussion about its investigation or specific charges owing to legal proceedings being active at this time. I should also take this opportunity to remind you to refrain from discussing the case on social media or other public platforms due to the risk of comments made in the public domain that may risk prejudicing proceedings.

However, further information is available on our website [www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk) and this will be updated regularly with information that can be shared in the public domain.

Yours sincerely

**Lee Shears**  
**Deputy Chief Fire Officer**  
**Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service**