

Public Statement: Jane Sharp

Good evening

First, BUYER BEWARE; to those who say, **why did you move to your house if you didn't like the noise?** I would ask – how many affordable homes are available to rent or buy in Saffron Walden? Look on Rightmove, very few to buy, even fewer to rent. I'd also point out that apart from my home and two others in close proximity to the substation, most are rented or part rented small homes. Many of the occupants are on low incomes.

We were told that an acoustic fence would reduce the noise. We took that on trust. We are not experts in acoustics. We had no knowledge at the time of a dispute between Bloor Homes and UK Power, where it transpired that the only effective engineering solution would be to fully encase the transformer.

Does a discount on the sale of just one of these homes, justify putting at risk the health and welfare of over 100 residents, including children?

Next, to those who say **it was Bloor Home's responsibility** to fund this work, I would agree with you. Now ask yourself, why didn't they do this and put in place the more expensive option they knew was necessary to reduce the noise?

Three reasons:

1. Profit – they are in the business of making money
2. Lack of care –once they've got your money they are not concerned about your health and welfare
3. UDC allowed them to take advantage of a weak planning condition, discharged by UDC without even questioning its effectiveness.

The Ombudsman agreed that UDC was at fault and so issued a final decision with a plan of action agreed by UDC.

Officers are now saying they did not agree with it. Well I would ask:

First, did they appeal against the findings on a point of law? **Secondly**, did they go back to the Ombudsman and ask him to amend the agreed plan? If the answer is no, why not?

Of course as predicted, Bloor Homes have refused to contribute to the cost of the works. Why? Because they complied with the planning condition which meant they had no legal obligation to do so.

Does UDC have a responsibility equal to that of Bloor Homes for funding the work? I believe they do.

1. A council should protect residents from harm
2. Overruling an Ombudsman recommendation and action, previously agreed, undermines this government-appointed role and removes the right of redress for residents of Mortimers Gate.

3. It damages the Council's reputation and risks costly legal action being taken against them and it generates a lack of trust and confidence in UDC.

I would ask you all, to please vote for option C which will put an end to this statutory noise nuisance and mean that residents can sleep at night with the windows open and finally enjoy peace and quiet in their home and garden.