

P-06-1491 We demand a fair deal for residents affected by the Arbed and CESP scheme - Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Committee, 05 January 2025

Dear Carolyn,

I thank you for the attached letter from Jayne Brynant. I will address each point below individually.

"Funding was provided based on BCBC's scope of works"

-Please could you provide a copy of the scope of works? We want to identify what exactly was proposed to the Welsh Government.

"A total of £3.2 million... has been provided to date"

-£1.5 million has been spent so far, and ONE property has been completed! This is concerning.

"My officials hold regular grant meetings... and current indications are that the project will be completed for the funding agreed"

-I fear that whatever is being discussed in these meetings is far from the truth. If only one property has been completed and £1.5 million has already been spent, that is close to half of the funding, and there are over 70 more properties still to be done.

"The funding requires BCBC to ensure all remediation work is completed to PAS2035. BCBC has appointed experienced contractors, Warmworks"

-PAS2035 is a very interesting read. Did you know that PAS2035 requires installers to be certified by a UKAS-accredited certification body? Warmworks has various certifications; however, it doesn't appear to hold direct UKAS accreditation.

The subcontractors who were previously SERS were recently acquired by another company, CARDO. SERS does or did not appear to have or hold its own direct accreditation from UKAS (UKAS being the sole national accreditation body appointed by the Government to assess organisations providing certification, testing, inspection and calibration services) CARDO – or one of its subsidiaries – CARDO (South) Limited – has been registered with Trustmark for only 2 years. They are registered with NAPIT, which holds UKAS accreditation, although, according to CARDO's own website, their area of expertise is Solar Panels. This does not fill me with confidence that PAS2035 guidance is being followed, especially with the recent experience of 'ongoing' works.

"There have been ongoing conversations with homeowners regarding the appropriateness of each potential solution"

-This is far from the reality of the situation. Residents are not being informed of any 'appropriateness'. Reports are not sent to residents unless requested. Regardless of the extent of technical jargon, residents should receive ALL information about each visit, retrofit assessment, RICS survey, etc. Residents are being asked whether they intend to replace the insulation. That is the extent of the 'appropriateness'. I am sorry to say, but the reality of what is happening and what is being portrayed to Jayne are two very different scenarios.

"BCBC have reviewed the RICS surveys and advised that new plastering hasn't been included as internal works fall outside the scope of the project, which is defined as the minimum requirement for PAS2035"

-Did you know PAS2035 was the outcome of the 2016 Each Home Counts report, and its purpose was to review the results of poorly performing retrofit installations and their recommended actions. It covered restoring customer trust and protection.

PAS2035 is a whole-house retrofit process that supports residents from inception to completion.

PAS2035 also introduced new roles: the Retrofit Assessor, Retrofit Co-ordinator, Retrofit Evaluator and Retrofit Designer.

Work is supposed to be signed off as part of a Claim of Compliance document, which is submitted to the Retrofit Co-ordinator as one of the key project documents, ensuring that responsibility and transparency for the resident. This document is then submitted to Trustmark, including all the assessments and surveys.

All projects must be undertaken by a retrofit assessor who is qualified by a retrofit assessor who is qualified as a Domestic Energy Assessor. Additionally, they must hold a Level 3 Award in Energy Efficiency for Older and Traditional Buildings. Retrofit Co-ordinators must also hold this qualification.

PAS2035 guidance specifies that building defects are addressed and remediated before any installation.

"The surveys have found that most plaster damage appears unrelated to the EWI"

-Which survey would this information be in? What qualifications does the person have that have made this statement? What previous reports are they using to support their statement and to show the buildings' condition before 2012?

"Issues such as poor ventilation and existing defects to guttering and roofs..."

-Again, I ask what previous building reports they are using to show that the defects existed before 2012 and before the faulty EWI system was wrongly installed?

Every property has defective guttering due to guidelines not being followed and the roofline not being extended as per the ARBED/CESP guidelines. What evidence can they provide that these issues were there before 2012?

"Reports from my officials..."

-I regret to inform you that you are being misinformed. There are serious concerns among residents, and half-finished properties across the village. The quality of workmanship is questionable. Certain aspects are not being followed, and problems are not being addressed promptly. I regretfully say it is not working well.

With all those points addressed in Jayne's letter, I wish to put forward that now.

1. We would like to request a meeting with Jayne and you.
2. We would like to come back to the original point of this petition. If BCBC and the Welsh Government are not going to include the repair and replacement of damaged fixtures and chattels, plastering of internal walls, and replacement of boilers that were replaced in the original ARBED/CESP scheme, we still seek compensation for this. But for the insulation being incorrectly installed in 2012, none of these issues would have

occurred. Residents would not be suffering from damp, damaged and uninhabitable homes.

3. Lastly, we would like to revisit the original points of the petition that were made when it was first discussed. We still request a public inquiry. Especially now, as a National Audit has since been released regarding faulty energy efficiency schemes across the UK. Additionally, BCBC's audit is heavily redacted, even to its own councillors. Recently, a councillor's request to view the unredacted version was unequivocally denied. We believe that it is in the public interest that an unredacted version be released.

I appreciate the time you have devoted to our case and the help and support you have provided.

Kind regards, Rhiannon.