



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms
Minister of State
Department for Work and Pensions
Caxton House
Tothill Street
London SW1A 9NA

28th October 2024

Dear Sir Stephen

Cleat Hill Gas Explosion: HSE Roles

There was a gas explosion at an address on Cleat Hill on Saturday 19th October which sadly caused a fatality and a serious injury at one of the properties.

Approximately 15 weeks earlier on Tuesday 2nd July, a pocket of natural gas was hit approximately 102 metres underground whilst a borehole was being drilled for a ground source heat pump.

Currently approximately 40 – 50 households are directly affected by a cordon and evacuation with most being housed in temporary accommodation. Efforts to resolve the situation are underway but this may well take some weeks. The HSE is taking a leading role in these efforts.

There is an investigation underway to determine the reasons for the explosion on Saturday 19th October and this may well include investigation of the actions taken from the original identification of gas on Thursday 2nd July.

I would be very grateful for the opportunity to meet with you or your staff to discuss the situation generally and more specifically to ascertain:

1. What are the regulatory responsibilities for the HSE in situations where a natural deposit of gas has been identified and needs to be capped/made secure?
2. Does the HSE have powers to determine, monitor and enforce third parties to take the steps necessary to resolve situations like this?

Sincerely

Richard Fuller MP