

Allen House, Bristol

We took over the management of Allen House in Bristol in 2014.

The development consists of:

- 43 apartments
- Converted 19th-century building
- Combination of new build properties and converted Grade II listed buildings



The issue: Managing a structural emergency

In the early hours of September 2017 residents awoke to a sudden and violent movement. Later reports likened the event to an earthquake like feeling with a frightening bang. It was later found that a shear failure of the internal seating within the original 1800's cast iron column running through the core of the block had caused the apartments to drop between 300mm and 400mm. As the column ran through the centre of 3 apartments the apartments affectively vertically dropped at a central point causing the floors to drop and some walls to start separating from their frame.

What we did:

Following the 3am OOH call, a category A response process was immediately implemented. Members of the senior team attended along with the regional team to a Hollywoodesque scene. Media presence was high with local and national coverage going live from 3am. All 43 apartments were evacuated with no physical injuries. The fire and rescue teams deemed the building 'safe' at 9am and handed incident control over to the Associate Director of Remus. Meanwhile the team had been liaising with the Red Cross to set up an evacuation centre and finding temporary accommodation for the vulnerable and affected with water and food provided to all residents temporarily on the street.

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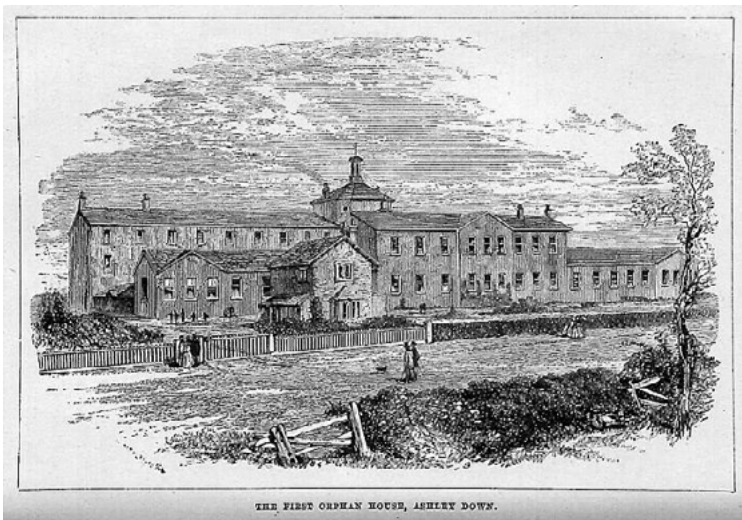


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The next few days were spent working at least 18 hours daily based on site, managing the influx of associated parties from the developer, the block insurer to the warranty provider and many others. Remus were influential in ensuring communication flowed and the issue identified as quickly as possible. The team did an incredible job of juggling 43 leaseholders, a freeholder, local council interest, media and associated contracted parties. While a robust crisis management plan is in place and was followed, some eventualities over the days needed on the spot decisions with a great deal of responsibility on the senior teams shoulders. From sourcing 100 acrow props to finding temporary housing for over 100 bikes, unprecedented matters started to become par for the course.

The outcome:

Nearly 2 years on the 3 affected apartments are unfortunately still in temporary accommodation. The claim was taken on by the warranty provider with the hefty excess being applied to the service charge. Ongoing management throughout the last two years has been challenging. With Remus being the front face of a large rebuild project we have no control over while still being the key contact for all parties. The incident has strengthened our relationship with the Leaseholders though clear and regular communication. We have made ourself available at all times and not used our management agreement as a tool to make money from this unfortunate event. .



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