

Getting things done – Morven Terrace and Ancrum Place sheltered housing



I had a meeting with residents of the Morven Terrace and Ancrum Place sheltered housing just before Christmas at which residents asked when the external stairwells would be repainted as part of external cyclical maintenance (ECM) works. Tenants also asked about possible insulation improvements.

The council's Housing Investment Manager has since updated me as follows :

We are planning to commence ECM works at Ancrum / Morven at the tail end of the 17/18 Financial year and I would confirm this will include a repaint to the stairwells and landings. Unfortunately this development is of a traditional build so is not a priority for External Insulation as it will have received cavity insulation in the past.

I have since been in correspondence with him regarding the properties' Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing ratings to ensure all properties meet current standards.

All properties meet minimum standards apart from two properties where old electric heating has since been improved with the provision of new gas central heating. I am particularly concerned to ensure end terraced properties have efficient insulation as a number of tenants here have highlighted end terraced properties appear to be less warm.

Contributions to this site

Some contributors have not responded to my appeal. I have to reduce the amount of time I am spending on moderating this site, which is now considerably more time than it takes me to write my pieces for it. As a result, from today I will not be publishing comments which are

1. Long

2. Part of a series of multiple comments the same day from the same person
3. Require me to investigate a named third party site or other sources to check out allegations about named people of named institutions.

I value all contributions from constituents, who are welcome to make a longer comment or comments on relevant issues under a local issues story. They should include the first part of their post code as an identifier if they want to submit long or multiple postings.

Train accident in Andhra Pradesh is extremely distressing: Union Home Minister

The Union Home Minister, Shri Rajnath Singh has said that the news of train accident in Andhra Pradesh is extremely distressing and deeply pained over the loss of precious lives. He was reviewing the situation of the train accident in Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh as eight coaches of Hirakund Express derailed last night. He expressed his condolences to the families of the deceased.

Discussions with the EU on departure

The EU is always quick to point out that there will be discussions about the details of our departure, and these are different from the discussions about our future relationship. Some in the Commission fondly imagine they can make a meal of the former. There is even talk of presenting the UK with a large leaving bill! A few people write into this site to ask if we have to pay it. Of course we don't.

There is nothing in the Treaty to provide for the calculation and presentation of a leaving bill. There is plenty in the Treaty to say the remaining member states need to have good relations with neighbouring countries in Europe. Presenting a big bill would be a violation of that part of the Treaty.

The truth is the UK has a share in a wide range of assets built up by the EU over the years we have been a member, including our small shareholding in the vast bond portfolio of the ECB, our share of the many expensive properties the EU institutions own and occupy and our share of the cash and other

financial assets held by the EU. I doubt the EU will be totting them all up and wanting to send us our share. Our rights to those assets will be unenforceable once we leave.

Similarly, the EU has borrowed a lot of money whilst we have been members, to spend on itself and other countries in the Union. There is no enforceable claim on us for any part of that debt after we have gone. If they send us a bill we will tell them we will not be paying it. If I resign from a club which has borrowed money and has a valuable club house, I immediately lose my stake in the property and end any responsibility for the debts. If just after I left the club they sell the clubhouse and distribute some cash to members I don't get a share as a past member. The assets and the liabilities are assumed by the remaining members. When a new nation joins the EU it signs up to share in the present and future assets and liabilities for the duration of its membership.

Some in the EU seem to think we should be liable for the pensions of Euro officials who happen to live in the UK and are UK nationals. It is difficult to see the logic behind this. They acted as EU officials, as EU citizens, and swore an oath to the EU. No-one asked the UK to underwrite their pensions at the time they were accruing them. Surely the EU has to accept it incurred the debts and it needs to meet them. It is a pity it didn't invest the money from the pension contributions at the time, because then there would be no future problem.

The UK will have to pay the pensions of all those UK civil servants who have been effectively working for the EU for many years putting in place all their regulations and directives in the UK. The UK promised to pay their pensions and we will keep that promise. I was pleased to see senior German politicians now talking about how they will need a trade deal with us to keep their exports flowing. This is an early sign of some realism returning to the continental debate.

[The Gambia: UN, ECOWAS, AU hail 'goodwill' of former President Jammeh; commit to work for his dignity and security](#)

22 January 2017 – The United Nations, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) have commended the “goodwill and the statesmanship” of the former President of The Gambia, Yahya Jammeh, who decided to facilitate an immediate and orderly transition process and transfer of power to President Adama Barrow.

In a joint declaration late yesterday, UN, ECOWAS and AU pledged to work with the Government of The Gambia to ensure that it assures and ensures the dignity, respect, security and rights of former President Jammeh, as a citizen, a party leader and a former Head of State as provided for and guaranteed by the 1997 Gambian Constitution and other Laws of The Gambia.

The same also extended to the former President's immediate family, cabinet members, government and security officials, and party supporters and loyalists.

The declaration noted that former President Jammeh will temporarily leave the country, without any prejudice to his rights, to assist the peaceful and orderly transition and transfer of power and the establishment of a new government,.

Furthermore, the three organizations also said that they would work with the Government to ensure that no legislative action is taken against the former President and his entourage, as well as to prevent seizure of assets and properties lawfully belonging to them, and urged the authorities to take all necessary measures to ensure that there is no intimidation or harassment of former regime members and supporters.

They also pledged to work with Gambian authorities on national reconciliation to cement social, cultural and national cohesion.

The joint declaration further noted that the UN, ECOWAS and AU will work to ensure that host countries that offer African hospitality to former President Jammeh and his family do not become undue targets of harassment, intimidation and all other pressures and sanctions.

It added that the three organizations would also work the Government to ensure that former President Jammeh is at liberty to return to The Gambia at any time of his choosing in accordance with international human rights law and his rights as a citizen of The Gambia and a former head of state.

The joint declaration further noted that ECOWAS will halt any military operations in the country and will continue to pursue peaceful and political resolution of the crisis.