

Flat
Jefferson House

7 February 2001

Dear Noëlle

I have today spoken to a Mr Michael Talbot, who is a solicitor with the firm of Knockolds in Bishops Stortford. The firm acted for a friend's husband in a property transaction and was recommended. Mr Talbot has told me that he has handled about six such cases in the last year and he appears to know what he is doing.

He agrees that we would be sensible to serve the notice on the landlord as soon as possible, so that we do not rule ourselves out of things by missing the deadline for reply. He also thinks that we will have to take counsel's advice about the clause in the offer to build an additional floor onto the building. As you know, I had already told residents that this would be likely.

At present, from the service of notice, we have ONE MONTH initially in which to get advice and, even if we then withdrew, we would only pay for our advice. We would NOT be liable for either the deposit or the landlord's costs. If we carry on with the negotiations after the first month, that position changes. We must, therefore, use our time very wisely.

Because of the need to take advice, as already explained to residents, I propose to ask all of them to contribute the sum of £100 towards the costs. If we do not proceed that will be the whole of their liability, which could hardly be termed unreasonable.

Of immediate relevance, however, is the Notice for the landlord. I explained to Mr Talbot that it is not possible for us to get all the residents to send him individual letters saying send the notice; because they are so widespread, we would miss the deadline. However, those residents who have indicated that they want the offer pursued know that a notice must be served for that to be done and so I propose to ask Mr Talbot to proceed.

He asked me if at least some of the residents could indicate their understanding of the position and so I said I would seek out those who are most accessible first. Could I, therefore, ask you to sign the attached form and let me have it back by return, so that I can set the ball rolling. The form does not commit you to anything other than an understanding that I have to do this to get things started. If I do not, the block goes straight to Mr Ladsky by default.

I will act as quickly as possible regarding the residents and will keep you informed of the outcome. For the record 16 tenants wish to proceed and a further one (away) is being tracked down by his lawyer at present. To protect tenants from harassment, however, please keep this information strictly to yourselves until I can tell all the residents together.

Thank you again for all your support which has been very heartening. These are really difficult times for us all. If you need anything, you know where I am.

With many thanks