



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Michael Shanks MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero  
55 Whitehall  
London SW1A 2HP

28<sup>th</sup> October 2024

Dear Michael

**Cleat Hill Gas Explosion: Regulation of Borehole Drilling for GSHPs**

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

Approximately 15 weeks earlier on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 19<sup>th</sup> October and this may well include investigation of the actions taken from the original identification of gas on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 current regulations for permits or notification for the drilling of boreholes for GSHPs in residential neighbourhoods?
2. How many incidences of natural gas pockets being hit by drilling for a ground source heat pump have been recorded by the Government?
3. In the light of this incident, will the government consider a re-assessment of i) the risks and ii) requirements for permitting or notification for the drilling of boreholes for GSHPs?

Sincerely

Richard Fuller MP