

Press release

14th June 2006

Safety threat tackled and pirate radio shut down

A large and dangerous mast used by pirate radio operators to illegally broadcast has been removed at Burtonwood Estate.

The height of the mast was more than 40 foot and had been poorly erected. On Friday 9th June, the quick action of the Hackney Homes Estate Safety Team, working in partnership with the police and Ofcom (Office of Communications) ensured that the mast was removed.

According to Keith Veness of Hackney Homes' Estate Safety Team the mast was posing a major threat to the safety of residents.

"The mast was wobbling dangerously and could have potentially fallen into the Estate or nearby Seven Sisters Road, potentially causing damage to property and harm to residents," Keith said.

The team had to employ the services of scaffolders to safely dismantle and remove the eight poles and sundry fixings that made up the mast and aerial.

It is the latest success for the team in their ongoing campaign against pirate radio in Hackney which has seen more than 20 pirate radio stations taken off air in the past month.

"The situation at Burtonwood Estate has again demonstrated the serious problems posed by pirate radio operators. Pirate radio is illegal but there are many associated problems. The aerials and transmitters are a significant danger to residents. This equipment is also often stored in ventilation ducts which can cause further problems for tenants."

Keith said there was also a strong link between pirate radio operators and crime.

"There is a strong link between pirate radio and crime. In many cases the pirate radio station is used to sell drugs and warn of drug raids."

Hackney Homes has a zero tolerance policy towards pirate radio and is working hard to shut down as many operators as possible.

"Repeat offences are common with pirate radio operators but we have shown that we will continue to shut them down and confiscate their equipment. Each time we shut them down it makes it harder for them to start up again."

Ends

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Our mission is to deliver excellent, responsive housing services with decent homes and estates. To help residents lead healthy lives in safe and sustainable communities.

www.hackneyhomes.org.uk