



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Rt Hon James Brokenshire
*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities
and Local Government*

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Government***

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Dear Clive,

It is almost two years on from the Grenfell tragedy, one of the worst in our nation's history. Since then this government has acted urgently to address the serious fire and public safety risks exposed by the tragedy.

We have set up a comprehensive building safety programme to oversee the remediation of ACM buildings. We have banned the use of combustible materials from use in the exterior walls of new high rise residential buildings. And we have made up to £400 million available to pay for the remediation of ACM clad buildings in the social sector.

We have seen some progress in the private sector, with some building owners acting swiftly and responsibly to put plans in place and protect leaseholders from costs.

But too many building owners have failed to act. They have been slow to co-operate and dragged their feet in planning for remediation. The Housing Minister and I have met with leaseholders and other individuals affected by these issues and heard their personal concerns.

I know that you too have met and heard the concerns of leaseholders up and down the country. Many face unfair, and often substantial, costs, and have told us that they live in fear for the safety of their home.

This Government believes this to be completely unacceptable. Leaseholders find themselves in this position through no fault of their own – this is not morally defensible.

Building owners are responsible for the safety of their buildings and it was right that we asked them to step up and meet their responsibilities. Yet despite this being an extraordinary situation, where the risk to residents has been demonstrated beyond doubt – some have not responded. Where building owners have failed to step up, it is now imperative for the Government to act.

Government action

Last week I announced the creation of a new fund to unblock progress in remediating private sector high-rise residential buildings. The new fund will cover the full cost of remediating the unsafe ACM cladding systems on privately owned high-rise residential buildings.

First and foremost this fund is about public safety. This funding is being provided entirely for the benefit of the leaseholders in these buildings. It will allow remediation to happen quickly, it will restore peace of mind and it will protect leaseholders from bearing the cost.

This fund will:

- include all private sector high-rise residential buildings in England over 18m with unsafe ACM cladding except where there is a valid warranty claim for a building. This ensures public money is focused on buildings where lack of a funding solution is the main obstacle to progress and where leaseholders cannot plausibly afford to pay for remediation;
- be for the benefit of leaseholders living in buildings eligible for funding (within certain limitations to ensure adherence to for instance state aid rules);
- only cover works to remediate the ACM cladding system. Other issues identified, such as faulty windows, fire doors or other cladding material, would be excluded;
- cover 100% of costs associated with the remediation of the ACM cladding system;
- put a hard time limit on applications to the fund and a condition that funding is contingent on remediation starting within that period (or the contractor being appointed); and
- have conditions attached to the grant that require building owners to make efforts to recover costs from those responsible for erecting the cladding.

To allow building owners to start preparing their applications swiftly, we will write to all potential fund applicants this week to alert them to the fund and will follow this by publishing full fund application guidance. Further details on the application process will be provided in the coming weeks.

Next steps

Almost two years on from the Grenfell tragedy, I want to thank you for your engagement on building safety and leaseholder protection issues. Your advocacy on these issues has rightly highlighted the plight of leaseholders who have found themselves in this situation through no fault of their own.

The fund set out above marks a major milestone in our programme to make buildings with ACM cladding permanently safe. In the months to come my officials will be engaging with building owners, managing agents, developers, leaseholders and others to get money to those buildings that need it.

I hope you will join me in highlighting the fund to those affected and encouraging building owners to apply so we make all these buildings permanently safe.

I know that you have written to me separately on these, and wider building safety issues, and I will reply to your letter in due course.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Brokenshire', written in a cursive style.

RT HON JAMES BROKESHIRE MP