



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Lord Greenhalgh

*Minister of State for Building Safety, Fire and
Communities*

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and
Local Government**

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Stephen Hammond MP
House of Commons
London
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21 October 2020

Thank you for your letter of 18 August on behalf of your constituent, regarding concerns about the remediation of unsafe cladding on buildings. I am responding as Building Safety Minister. I apologise for the delay in responding.

I would like to thank you for supporting your constituent on this important issue. The Government's priority is the safety of residents and I want to assure you that I understand this will be a frustrating and worrying time for them.

As you are aware, the Building Safety Fund will cover the removal and replacement of unsafe non-ACM cladding systems on private and social sector high-rise residential buildings over 18 metres where landlords would not otherwise be able to do so at the pace we need. Government's decision to place the scope of the Building Safety Fund at buildings over 18 metres reflects the exceptional fire risk that certain cladding products pose at that height, as previously noted by the Independent Expert Advisory Panel and Dame Judith Hackitt.

Funding has been focussed on buildings over 18 metres in height because higher rise buildings are the least likely to safely evacuate in the event of a fire spreading via external cladding. Government support is focused on cladding because unsafe cladding acts as an accelerant to fire spread, and funding will remove any financial barriers to remediation proceeding.

I appreciate the difficult and distressing position that many leaseholders are currently in. I understand that too many building owners have not stepped up, leaving many leaseholders facing unfair and often substantial costs through no fault of their own. We have been very clear that building owners are responsible for the safety of their buildings, and that they should do all they can to protect leaseholders from the burden imposed by additional costs. We expect a significant proportion of remediation work to be funded by those responsible for the original work, through warranties or by building owners / landlords who are able to pay for the remediation without passing on costs to leaseholders.

Leaseholders can access support by contacting the Leaseholder Advisory Service (LEASE). LEASE provides independent, free, initial advice to leaseholders to ensure they are aware of their rights and are supported to understand the terms of their leases. More information on LEASE, including how to contact the service for advice, is available here: <https://www.lease-advice.org/>

For buildings under 18 metres, we are helping to speed up the removal of unsafe materials by supporting local authorities and Fire and Rescue Services to take enforcement action where

building owners are refusing to remediate. This includes £10 million for the Fire Protection Board and a further £20 million for Fire and Rescue Services.

Thank you again for your letter. I hope your constituent find this information helpful.

In answer,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JGH', written in a cursive style.

LORD GREENHALGH