



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Lee Rowley MP

*Minister of State for Housing, Planning and
Building Safety*

**Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities**

2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Clive Betts MP
Chair, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

27 March 2024

Dear Clive,

Progress on cladding remediation

Yesterday I updated the House on the government's plans to accelerate the pace of building safety remediation in England. I am writing to you with further details.

In my last [written statement](#) on building safety in November 2023, I updated the House on our progress to break the impasse on getting thousands of unsafe buildings in England fixed. I am pleased to say that we have made progress since then. 1,815 buildings have now formally started remediation work, and of those 863 have completed that work.

Of the occupied buildings with the most dangerous Grenfell-type (ACM) cladding, 98% have completed works, with only 10 yet to start work on site. We are putting increased pressure on these 10 buildings to start work, including regular visits by senior civil servants, and they will be prioritised by the Building Safety Regulator when they are fully operational next month.

Where building owners are failing to fix unsafe buildings quickly enough, enforcement action by our regulatory partners – councils, fire and rescue authorities, and the Building Safety Regulator – is critical. Regulators have the full support of government behind them to use their legal powers to make sure building owners fix unsafe buildings.

The update builds on our [joint statement](#) with building safety bodies on enforcing the remediation of fire safety defects. The Building Safety Regulator, the Local Government Association, and the National Fire Chiefs Council all put their names to this statement and committed to see buildings made safe faster through a robust enforcement regime.

We published new enforcement data last week which shows that enforcement is increasing. Councils are now enforcing at an average rate of four buildings per week, compared to one per month in 2022. However, we can also see that overall performance is patchy, with levels of enforcement and success varying by regulator and region.

Yesterday, I announced a package of upcoming measures to support our regulatory partners to go further and faster.

A shared plan with regulators

To date, building safety enforcement has been carried out by councils and fire and rescue authorities and they will continue to play a critical role in the coming months. It is more important than ever that regulators work effectively together to unblock stalling buildings. Last week, I met with leaders in key building safety organisations to agree how we will work together over the coming months to build and deliver a shared plan to increase the pace of remediation and pursue rogue actors.

The new Building Safety Regulator will be fully operational from 1 April and will play a key role in enforcing the remediation of buildings above 18 metres in height or with at least seven storeys. The Regulator will shortly begin calling in the first tranche of buildings to apply for a building assessment certificate. As part of this process, they will assess how accountable persons are managing building safety risks and will act if owners fail to assess and control risks at their properties.

Our partners operate in a complex regulatory context, with multiple regulators working under various pieces of legislation to enforce building safety. Government is working closely with regulators, and we are providing bespoke guidance and training to make sure they have the knowledge they need to enforce effectively. Last month, we provided guidance to councils on how to approach enforcement in complex scenarios: at buildings where leaseholders have assumed the management responsibility, and buildings where the developer has committed to remediate under the [developer remediation contract](#).

Later this spring, we will publish a new suite of guidance to support regulators to take more effective and consistent action. Our 'regulator protocol' will provide regulators with detailed guidance on how to work together effectively and use their legal powers to enforce permanent remediation. The protocol responds to direct requests from regulators, for government to provide detailed guidance on how to enforce remediation at medium and high-rise buildings. I will be asking regulators to report in the new year on changes they have made to their enforcement strategies following the protocol. I would be happy to provide the Committee with an update following their responses.

We are also publishing further guidance on how regulators can use their new legal powers under the Building Safety Act 2022, to compel building owners and developers to fix, or pay to fix, their unsafe buildings: new guidance on remediation contribution orders will complement guidance on [remediation orders](#) we published last year.

New funding for councils and fire and rescue services

It is important that regulators have the right resources in place to deliver our shared ambition to get homes made safe fast. I am therefore announcing several funding initiatives that will support councils and fire and rescue authorities to boost their enforcement activity in the next financial year.

First, we are allocating over £6 million in grant funding to 47 councils for 2024/25. Funding is being allocated based on several factors including the number of buildings in a government remediation scheme that have not started work on site. We have engaged and confirmed funding with 27 councils and will confirm allocated funding with the remaining 20 in the coming days. This follows [£8.4 million](#) in new burdens funding we provided to 59 councils in 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Second, we are continuing to fund councils' cost-free access to the Joint Inspection Team, a highly specialist team hosted by the Local Government Association who support councils to inspect buildings, assess fire safety defects and enforce building safety. As of 31 January 2024, councils have used this team to inspect 106 buildings, with 27 more inspections already scheduled in for 2024.

Third, our engagement with fire and rescue services tells us that they need additional dedicated support to share knowledge and effectively enforce permanent remediation at defective buildings. We are setting up a new remediation taskforce to provide a centre of excellence and specialist enforcement support to fire and rescue service officers, following consultation with the National Fire Chiefs Council and fire and rescue authorities.

Finally, we know that councils principally use their grant funding to recruit new enforcement staff. But, when complex enforcement cases arise, councils often need access to specialist legal and expert advice at short notice. We are therefore launching a new enforcement fund that councils and fire and rescue services can apply to for grant funding to support enforcement action at complex cases, including legal action where necessary.

Increased data-sharing to improve transparency and accountability

Effective data gathering and sharing is central to our remediation programme and work with regulators. We continue to publish monthly remediation data on buildings' progress through the Government funds and on councils' enforcement action. Last week's data publication is supported by a new remediation dashboard, which seeks to improve the accessibility of the public data. We also continue to share quarterly data with regulators on buildings' progress through our remediation schemes, to help them identify buildings where work is stalling.

Yesterday we published a new enforcement league table, showing aggregate data on councils' and fire and rescue authorities' enforcement action at high-rise buildings. This data increases transparency, providing communities with key information on how their councils and fire and rescue authorities are performing on enforcement.

Next month, we will publish new freeholder data and make public for the first time which corporate entities in the Building Safety Fund hold the largest amount of un-remediated buildings and their progress to date. This is an important step to further support targeted enforcement activity.

The Office for Local Government (Oflog) is also delivering a programme of work to consider how its Data Explorer could measure local authority activities on housing and building safety, including remediation enforcement where possible. In the summer Oflog will engage with councils and stakeholders to ensure it is capturing the best metrics.

Accelerating and reporting on social housing remediation

Government is working with the Regulator of Social Housing to make sure social housing providers identify and assess their housing stock, and remediate their buildings in a proportionate and timely way. The Regulator of Social Housing is monitoring data on social housing landlords' progress remediating buildings above 11 metres tall and will be inspecting social housing providers performance against the consumer standards from April 2024. We are also collecting and monitoring progress of 17,320 social housing buildings across 1,498 providers, of which 1,952 have been identified as requiring cladding remediation. The findings from our second survey were made public as part of the wider data release last week.

Government action against the most egregious actors

Our Recovery Strategy Unit continues to take legal action against the most egregious actors in the system. Wallace Estates Ltd recently agreed to four remediation orders against them, following RSU action, ensuring 400 leaseholders are safe in their homes. The Government has also forced Grey GR, a subsidiary of Railpen, to fix building safety issues at Galbraith House in Birmingham within 3 weeks, and is taking action at six further Grey GR buildings, with the Vista Tower trial commencing on 25 March 2024. Legal action was also taken last week against the Yiannis Group and two

developers, Urban Splash and Holybroke Homes, to ensure that remediation is taken seriously and those responsible are held accountable.

I look forward to continuing our work with you, as we take the next steps in our long-term plan to accelerate remediation enforcement and see homes made safe faster.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lee', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive.

LEE ROWLEY MP