



Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

Justin Young,
Chief Executive Officer, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS),
12 Great George Street,
London,
SW1P 3AD

11 March 2024

Dear Mr Young,

Fake signatures on EWS1 Forms

I am writing to you, on behalf of my Committee, about concerns we have about the possibility of fake signatures being used on EWS1 forms during the sale of some properties. We would be grateful if you could provide clarity on the scale of the problem, and what can be done to combat it.

We note that, according to your website, RICS “have been made aware that unqualified people may be signing off EWS1 forms” and “encourage everyone to check the signatory on a form with the professional’s institution.”¹ We welcome the advice to check that signatories are qualified with an appropriate body and note the guidance RICS has already provided about how to do this. However, members of the public have raised the concern with us that some individuals may still be using the fake signatures of qualified assessors on EWS1 forms, as occurred during the first few years after the EWS1 process was introduced by the industry.² It would therefore be helpful for us to know:

- **How widespread do you think the issue of fake signatures might be?**
- **What methods are there for lenders and individual residents to verify that an assessment has in fact been carried out by a form’s signatory?**
- **If an individual becomes aware that the signature on an EWS1 certificate has been faked which is the most appropriate body or bodies to report it to: RICS, Action Fraud, Trading Standards, or another organisation?**

We are also aware that EWS1 forms can be verified through the Fire Industry Association’s Building Safety Information Portal, but that in the past the cost of registration fees meant that thousands of EWS1 forms were not uploaded.³ **Are fees continuing to present a barrier to your members uploading EWS1 forms?**

¹ [Cladding External Wall System \(EWS\) FAQs](#), RICS, 19 January 2024

² [Forged signature found on Cardiff flats fire certificate](#), BBC, 3 October 2020; [Fake EWS1 forms cause headache for borrowers](#), FT, 29 June 2021; [Cladding form fraudster gets suspension from RICS](#), Inside Housing, 31 October 2022

³ [UK lenders foot bill for EWS1 forms](#), FT, 13 July 2021;



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Finally, we understand that the EWS1 form was revised in February 2022 to account for the introduction of Publicly Available Specification (PAS) 9980.⁴ **What impact do you expect PAS 9980 to have on the use of EWS1 forms, and any potential for fraud in assessments?**

I appreciate your support as we consider this important matter. We would be grateful for a written reply by 22 March to allow us to make progress in a timely manner.

Best wishes,

Clive Betts MP
Chair, Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

⁴ [The Cladding External Wall System \(EWS\)](#), House of Commons Library, June 2023