



Home Office

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All MPs

11 September 2020

Dear Colleague,

### **Government commitment to delivering the Grenfell Inquiry recommendations**

On 7 September 2020, I spoke to the House on the Report Stage of the Fire Safety Bill. I would like to thank colleagues for taking part in the debates which have aired the issues at stake.

At the Report Stage, the House voted down an amendment tabled by the Opposition – new clause one – which would have had the effect of implementing a number of specific recommendations made by the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry on information sharing with the local Fire and Rescue Service and residents, and inspections of flat front doors and lifts, to the Fire Safety Bill.

I want to reassure you that this Government is, and always has been, committed to implementing and where appropriate, legislating for the Inquiry's recommendations. This was set out in our manifesto. Contrary to claims by Opposition members during and since the debate, the vote in no way signals that the Government is reneging on this commitment.

The primary aim of the Fire Safety Bill is to put beyond doubt that the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the "Fire Safety Order") applies to the external walls and flat entrance doors of multi-occupied residential buildings. This Bill also affirms that enforcement action can be taken by Fire and Rescue Authorities in respect of these parts of multi-occupied residential buildings.

The clarification provided by the Fire Safety Bill ensures that the Government can then bring forward legislation which will create prescriptive duties on building owners or managers (and others who have responsibilities under the Fire Safety Order) as recommended by the Inquiry. On 20 July 2020, the Government launched a consultation which includes proposals to implement the recommendations and to further strengthen the Fire Safety Order. The consultation closes on 12 October 2020.

It is important that the Government seeks views from residents, responsible persons, fire and rescue services and the fire sector. This is not only because the Government

has a legal obligation to consult with these affected groups but also to ensure we implement the Inquiry's recommendations appropriately.

I also want to reiterate the words of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's Chairman, Sir Martin Moore-Bick, who said that it was important that his recommendations "command the support of those who have experience of the matters to which they relate".

The Fire Safety Bill and the Fire Safety consultation go hand in hand. This is a matter of legislative sequencing to ensure that the legislation can be properly enacted and provide greater legal certainty to underpin enforcement of the changes we are proposing to the Fire Safety Order as part of implementation of the Inquiry's phase 1 recommendations. As I said during Monday's debate, I understand the desire to see that change is made as quickly as possible, but it is in everyone's interest that we get this right. The Government will bring forward the necessary secondary legislation as early as practicable following commencement of the Fire Safety Bill.

The Opposition's amendment acknowledged the need for subsequent secondary legislation and therefore would not have hastened what the Government is already intending. However, it would have disrupted the legislative sequencing and created further legal uncertainty rather than the clarification of the Fire Safety Order, which the Fire Safety Bill intends to achieve. The amendment would also have potentially undermined the Government's statutory duty to consult with relevant groups who will be affected by the implementation of the Inquiry's recommendations risking the need to consult again and creating additional delay.

As you are also aware, the Government has also published the draft Building Safety Bill, which takes forward the recommendations from Dame Judith Hackitt's Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety. The Bill is being led by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and will introduce the Building Safety Regulator. The Housing, Communities and Local Government committee is leading pre-legislative scrutiny of this draft Bill.

Together, the Fire Safety Bill, the draft Building Safety Bill and the fire safety consultation will create fundamental improvements to building and fire safety standards and ensure that residents are safe and feel safe in their homes. My Ministerial Colleague Lord Greenhalgh, the Minister with responsibility for Building Safety and Fire, is leading on this work and introduced the Fire Safety Bill in the House of Lords on the 9 September.

I would strongly encourage those with an interest to respond to the Fire Safety consultation and the draft Building Safety Bill through the appropriate pre-legislation scrutiny and gov.uk channels to help inform this work.

As I said to the House on 7 September, the Government's programme of work is not limited to legislation and includes having established a remediation programme, supported by £1.6 billion of Government funding, to remove unsafe cladding from high-rise residential buildings. For those who registered for the fund, they are now able to submit their funding applications.

The Home Office has provided £20 million additional funding for fire and rescue services to undertake more fire protection work, of which £10 million has been allocated specifically to the Building Risk Review programme and to strengthen the National Fire Chiefs Council's (NFCC) central leadership on protection activity, which will ensure that all high-rise residential buildings in England are inspected or reviewed by December 2021. A further £10 million has been provided to drive investment in building the NFCC's central capability and to provide money to services to ensure they can implement the lessons from the Grenfell tragedy in their local services and implement the relevant recommendations from the Phase 1 Inquiry.

The protection uplift funding will be designed to progress the Grenfell Tower Inquiry recommendations and respond to the HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) State of Fire report to ensure that there is capacity to drive genuine improvement. It will boost fire and rescue services capacity to deliver their protection function in line with individual Integrated Risk Management Plans and local Risk Based Inspection Programmes.

I hope this letter provides reassurance that Government remains committed to implement the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's recommendations.

*Yours sincerely,*  


**RT HON JAMES BROKESHIRE**  
**MINISTER OF STATE FOR SECURITY**