



Department for Communities and Local Government

CP scheme providers (replacement windows)

Our Ref: 017/003/002

Via e-mail

4 June 2013

Dear Competent Person Scheme Operator

Fire Safety - Lakanal House

You will, no doubt, be aware of the fire at Lakanal House in July 2009, and subsequent inquest. The fire, in a 1950's tower block owned by the London Borough of Southwark, is widely regarded as the UK's worst tower block fire. It claimed six lives, including three very young children.

During the Inquest, there was considerable attention paid to alterations that had been made to the building during its lifetime. This included replacement of the window system in 2006. This system took the form of a series of frames that formed windows, doors and wall panels. The fire spread both up and down the outside of the building and this was found to be exacerbated by the incorrect specification of the replacement wall panels.

The work had been carried out by a contractor that was registered with a competent person scheme and the contractor issued compliance certificates for their work. At the inquest, it was acknowledged that the competent person scheme did not extend to certification of the wall panels and that the replacement panels themselves did not meet the guidance given in Approved Document B.

The Secretary of State has asked that we seek details from providers of replacement window competent person schemes of what information is provided to their members regarding the scope of the schemes and the technical requirements applicable to their work. I would be grateful if you could write back to me, by **9 July**, setting out what information you provide to members on these issues and what measures you take to ensure that they are adequately understood. It would also be helpful if you could identify any plans you have to change these arrangements.

Yours faithfully,

Brian Martin

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