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Press release

Government announces it will fully fund unsafe cladding removal in social housing

The government will fully fund the removal and replacement of unsafe cladding by councils and housing associations, estimated at £400 million.

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From:

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government>), HM Treasury (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-treasury>), The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP (<https://www.gov.uk/government/people/james-brokenshire>), and The Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP (<https://www.gov.uk/government/people/philip-hammond>)



The government will fully fund the removal and replacement of unsafe cladding by councils and housing associations, estimated at £400 million, it was announced today (16 May 2018).

Local authorities and housing associations, which are non-profit making, will be given access to the money to help with reasonable costs of removing and replacing unsafe cladding from buildings which they own to ensure people are safe in their homes.

In the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the government quickly established a comprehensive building safety programme (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/building-safety-programme>). It made clear that aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding on buildings over 18 metres which was not compliant with building regulations guidance should be remediated by the building owners.

The fund follows the government's offer last year of financial flexibilities to assist local authorities with essential fire safety work. From conversations with social sector landlords, it has become apparent that they are having to take decisions about how to prioritise important services, repairs and maintenance work and investment in new homes.

The government has listened to their concerns, discussed the issue in Cabinet, and decided that, although social landlords have made good progress on replacing unsafe cladding, it is right to provide further support. It is therefore today announcing additional funding for the social sector. It recognises the tough decisions that are being made to carry out fire safety work as well as the potential impact on other services.

The government will also continue to provide financial flexibilities to councils for other essential fire safety measures and is directing local authorities to take cladding-related issues into account when carrying out reviews of housing conditions in their areas.

Social landlords have been working hard to replace unsafe cladding. Interim safety measures are in place in all affected buildings and latest figures from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government show that over 65% (104 out of 158) of social housing buildings with unsafe cladding are currently going through the process of remediation.

The additional money will enable social housing providers to focus on providing safe properties for people to live in.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

People must always feel safe in their own home.

Since the tragic events at Grenfell Tower, we have taken steps to ensure the immediate safety of all high rise buildings.

This money will ensure local authorities and housing associations are being given the support they need to get this work done now as well as removing the uncertainty around funding.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond said:

We have always been clear that unsafe cladding must be removed from tower blocks so that people are safe in their own homes.

But we do not want vital safety work to put at risk our high priority house-building programmes. So we have decided to provide funding to ensure that housing associations and councils can carry out this vital work.

The government is clear that building owners in the private sector must ensure private sector homes are made safe.

The Secretary of State, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, will meet industry representatives to ensure that remediation work is completed as soon as possible.

The industry roundtable will take place shortly.

Further information

The government will set out further details shortly about how councils and housing associations can apply for funding, including conditions attached to the grant.

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