

**Rt Hon John Healey MP**



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP  
Secretary of State  
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
2 Marsham St  
London SW1P 4DF

18 January 2018

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sajid Javid'.

You will have seen the concerning news in today's Guardian, and subsequently reported by other news outlets, that residents in a privately owned tower block in Croydon are facing huge costs to rectify the dangerous cladding on their building. Like me, you will also know there have been reports of other residents in the same situation in other areas.

It is surely wrong that residents have to pay for these essential works. Rather, the first call must be on the owner or manager of any tower block to co-ordinate these essential works, and on the developer or contractor who installed dangerous and non-compliant cladding to pay for the remedial work that now needs to be urgently done.

I am deeply concerned at the slow and insubstantial government response to this issue to date, and would be grateful for your urgent response on the following questions.

Ensuring all -risk private blocks are identified

1. Extraordinarily, seven months on from the Grenfell Tower fire, you have still not been able to confirm that all private tower blocks with dangerous aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding have been identified. Your latest Building Safety Programme Data release reveals over 100 tower blocks with ACM cladding but says "These figures are not expected to remain static".<sup>i</sup> When will you have this final information?
2. For the information that you have collected, can you confirm the number, local authority area and owner of all privately-owned high-rise blocks with ACM cladding?
3. You have not even attempted to do the comprehensive testing clearly needed to ascertain which other, non-ACM, cladding is not fire safe, despite individual cases where non-ACM cladding has been found to be dangerous.<sup>ii</sup> Do you have any plans to extend this



vital testing programme, and if not, how can you assure residents in other blocks with non-ACM cladding that they will be safe in the event of a fire?

Ensuring vital remediation work is done

4. Not only do you still not know how many private blocks are at risk, you have provided no information about remediation work in private blocks. Of the private blocks you do know about, how many have had all the cladding removed? Of these, how many have started to install replacement cladding? And of these, how many have finished the installation of replacement cladding?

5. There are widespread concerns about the ability of local authorities to enforce the removal and replacement of dangerous cladding on private blocks. Are you satisfied that councils have the ability to ensure all private blocks in their areas have dangerous cladding removed and are made fire safe as a matter of urgency? Will you issue guidance on this matter? At what point after dangerous cladding has been identified but has not been remedied will you intervene to ensure that privately-owned tower blocks are made safe?

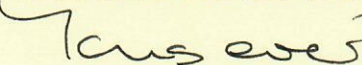
Ensuring the cost of remediation work is shared fairly

6. In MP correspondence you have said "I urge those in the private sector with responsibility for resident safety to follow the lead from the social sector and private companies already doing the right thing, and not attempt to pass costs onto leaseholders." Given this statement of government policy, what are you doing to enforce it? How many of those concerned have heeded your statement, and how many have not?

7. What are you doing to stop block owners or managers pre-emptively going to tribunal to force leaseholders to pay?

8. There is much more that the government could be doing to ensure that work is done and costs are shared fairly. Where those with a responsibility for building safety in private blocks are not able to afford the cost of urgent work up-front, will you consider providing government loans to be paid to get this work done?

I look forward to your prompt response.



John Healey MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Housing

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[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/669073/Building\\_Safety\\_Programme\\_Monthly\\_Data\\_Release\\_-\\_December\\_2017\\_18\\_12\\_2017.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/669073/Building_Safety_Programme_Monthly_Data_Release_-_December_2017_18_12_2017.pdf)

ii <https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/news/non-aluminium-cladding-to-be-stripped-from-high-rise-after-test-failure-54021>