



The Society of Licensed Conveyancers

For Immediate Release:

John Clay, a Board Member Past Chairman of the Society of Licensed Conveyancers, has written an open letter to the Secretary of State Michael Gove regarding cladding.

Dear Secretary of State

I write on behalf of The Society of Licensed Conveyancers in respect of the current crisis in high rise flats affected by safety issues following the Grenfell tragedy.

The Government must take action now:

Thousands of leaseholders are facing eviction and bankruptcy (many contemplating suicide).

The Government must step in and pay for all remedial costs to rectify the failures of past administrations to protect owners and leaseholders of high rise apartments. The Government of the day failed to take action after having been warned when fire tests carried out for them in 2004 predicted a disaster. This warning came 13 years before the Grenfell tragedy (and again when a similar fatal fire broke out at Lakanal House in 2009). The London Fire Brigade also warned the Government in 2012 and 2013 in a series of letters to Brandon Lewis about the fire danger in high rise blocks, but he declined to introduce new legislation which may have prevented 72 unnecessary deaths.

The remedial costs from Government intervention, should it step in, could be claimed back from the developers who are responsible for the current mess.

At least 500,000 flats are considered too dangerous to live in and are unsaleable. Yet it is deemed acceptable to leave, what are often vulnerable people, to carry on living under these conditions.

The Government has committed to building 300,000 new homes every year - surely the priority must be to make existing homes safe?

I attach a more detailed analysis for your consideration, and there are many aspects to consider. The Society's input is intended to be constructive and to find a way to provide a fair solution to those caught in a nightmare not of their making.

The Society would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further. It is a very complicated situation which we would suggest your department has not previously taken seriously enough in so far as those directly affected do not have any choice but to continue to live in apartments. Many of which have no value whatsoever.

Yours sincerely

John Clay Soc.L.C.

Board Member and past Chairman

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