

# LONDON ASSEMBLY



**Susan Hall AM**

**Chairman of the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee**

Sadiq Khan  
Mayor of London  
City Hall

(Sent by email)

18 November 2021

Dear Sadiq

**London Assembly Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee: actions following meeting on 22 September 2021**

I am writing to you on behalf of the London Assembly Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning (FREP) Committee following its meeting on 22 September 2021. At this meeting, the Committee discussed the issues of building and fire safety and their impacts on the London Fire Brigade (LFB) and its work, delivery of the Building Safety Programme (BSP) in London and the impact on Londoners living in high rise buildings with fire safety defects.

We were grateful to Tom Copley, the Deputy Mayor for Housing and Residential Development (DMHRD), for his attendance to answer our questions about these issues, in addition to the LFB.

Tom updated us on the progress of the remediation of high rise residential buildings in London under the Government-funded BSP. He told us that as at 31 August 2021 there were 54 buildings over 18 metres in height that still had dangerous aluminium composite material (ACM) cladding, over four years since the Grenfell Tower fire.

The Committee was concerned about the slow progress of remediation of London buildings, as highlighted in the Government's monthly BSP data release for July 2021 that showed only 121

buildings (46 per cent of all buildings identified) in London had completed remediation compared to 61 per cent in Greater Manchester and 76 per cent in the Rest of England.<sup>1</sup> Tom told the Committee that you previously wrote to a number of building owners/managers to urge them to progress remediation which he said had had some success. **The Committee recommends that this exercise is repeated for buildings which have yet to start remediation or where work is still required, in order to urge completion of remediation as soon as possible.**

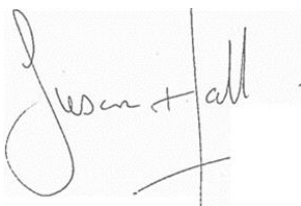
The LFB told us that, as at 15 September 2021, 1,003 buildings in London had simultaneous evacuation measures in place as 'stay put' had been suspended due to fire safety defects. These buildings require waking watches or a common fire alarm system, with some having a common fire alarm system but still needing simultaneous evacuation in the event of a fire; approximately one third of the total applies to each category. It is a concern that so many buildings remain dependent on simultaneous evacuation pending remediation of fire safety defects.

Many London leaseholders are still experiencing difficulties in selling or remortgaging their properties due to the lack of an External Wall System (EWS) 1 form. The DMHRD spoke about the Task and Finish group you set up to improve how social sector landlords respond to the EWS1 process. **The Committee requests an update on the work of this Task and Finish group.**

In response to information provided by Tom Copley at our meeting, the Committee is writing separately to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). We are urging them to open the Waking Watch Relief Fund to residential buildings between 11 to 18 metres in height so their residents can benefit from the fund and be relieved of the costs of waking watches. We are also asking DLUHC to provide funding to London boroughs to meet the request from the Department to undertake fire safety assessments of residential buildings between 11 to 18 metres in height to identify those with dangerous cladding.

I would appreciate a response to the recommendations and actions identified in this letter **by 16 December 2021**.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Hall', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

**Susan Hall AM**

**Chairman of the Fire, Resilience and Emergency Planning Committee**

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Housing, [Communities and Local Government, Building Safety Programme Monthly Data Release, England: 31 July 2021](#), 31 July 2021