

MAYOR OF LONDON

The Prime Minister

10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

Date: 11 June 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

As we approach the fourth anniversary of the tragic Grenfell Tower fire and the devastating loss of 72 men, women and children, my thoughts are with the bereaved, survivors and community of North Kensington. I know they feel disappointed by the lack of progress to meet promises made since the fire.

Grenfell Tower Inquiry

The Grenfell Inquiry continues to reveal shocking evidence of a failed regulatory system and an industry with an embedded culture that puts profits before public safety. This is a poisonous culture for which I know you agree, change is long overdue.

Disappointingly, the Inquiry's Phase 1 recommendations that require Government action and legislation are yet to be implemented. It is vital that urgent action is taken as delays in implementation may cost lives. It is encouraging to see, since my letter to you on the third anniversary calling for greater transparency around Government action, recent Government quarterly updates on the progress of implementation.

INQUEST, the independent charity, has repeatedly called for a national oversight mechanism to ensure official recommendations from inquiries and inquests are systematically followed up. I urge the Government to accept this proposal and signal a clear commitment to providing certainty and justice to bereaved families.

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

I am concerned that four years on, there are still six households that have not been permanently housed. Furthermore, I have heard concerns from some bereaved families that they have still not been able to access the Grenfell Recovery Fund. Given the final report from the Independent Grenfell Recovery Taskforce stated 'The Council has further to go in demonstrating pace, changing its culture and improving its relationship with the wider community' I believe the Taskforce was prematurely disbanded. I therefore urge you to consider reinstating it without delay, to ensure the Council is independently scrutinised and subject to annual reviews.

Social housing

The institutional indifference towards social housing tenants evident at Grenfell Tower is too often mirrored in social housing throughout the country. As evidence from the Grenfell Inquiry continues to emerge, the importance of placing resident voices at the heart of decision-making by councils and housing associations is clear. Your Social Housing White Paper set out policies that could achieve this with cross-sector support. However, I echo the disappointment of the bereaved, survivors and residents that the Queen's Speech did not commit to legislate for this. I hope that you will heed these concerns and bring the policies from this White Paper into law as soon as possible.

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Building safety

Thousands of people remain trapped in unsafe blocks around the country and the recent fire at New Providence Wharf serves as a stark reminder of the cost of delays in remediating buildings with combustible materials. I of course welcome your commitment to provide £3.5 billion extra funding towards cladding remediation in residential buildings which will go some way to helping a proportion of those leaseholders living in buildings over 18 metres in height.

For the many leaseholders not eligible for funding the question is not just is their home safe, but will they be bankrupted to make it so? The forthcoming Building Safety Bill provides a once in a generation opportunity to put things right for leaseholders. I am firm in my pledge to work with you on solutions to deliver your commitment that no leaseholder should have to pay for the unaffordable costs of fixing fire safety defects they did not cause.


I have called for a long-term funding solution which protects all leaseholders from the cost of remediating unsafe buildings of any height or type of safety defect. I urge you to reconsider your proposal for loans for leaseholders in buildings below 18 metres, which would create a leaseholder lottery based on building height and may have a damaging impact on the property market. I have previously called for a ground-breaking levy on major private property developers to fund vital building safety work and I therefore welcome your consultation on a residential developer tax.

I was extremely concerned to read that new buildings, including schools, under 18 metres with combustible materials, continue to be built across the country. As I have argued since August 2018, the current ban on combustible materials should be extended to all new buildings no matter their height or use.

As Mayor of London, I have taken significant action to protect Londoners' safety. New homes on GLA land commissioned via my development panel are now required to meet higher standards than the Building Regulations, including a requirement for sprinklers in all purpose-built blocks of flats and a complete ban on combustible materials on the external walls of buildings regardless of height. The same requirements have also been introduced for new homes funded by my new Affordable Homes Programme. My new London Plan introduces fire safety considerations into the planning application stage, ensuring that safety is considered from the very beginning of a building's lifecycle.

There are many whose lives will never be the same after Grenfell; they deserve justice and accountability. They also deserve to be assured that what happened to them will not happen to anyone else. These assurances can only be given through actions and not words. I commend the dignity and strength of the bereaved, survivors and residents as they continue to campaign and fight for justice and public safety. I stand with them and I stand ready to work with you to achieve the systemic change that is needed.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Cc Paul Scully MP, Minister for London