

Alun Davies AM
Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Public
Services
Welsh Government

21 March 2018

Dear Alun

Our Committee has an on-going inquiry looking at fire safety in Wales, following the horrific fire at Grenfell Tower. We took evidence from key stakeholders in July and the Welsh Government in September. I am now writing to seek an update on the issues arising from our work.

Fire safety Advisory Group

In correspondence dated 1 November, the then Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children, committed to providing us with the Fire Safety Advisory Group's position statement, recommendations and the Government's response to these recommendations. When will you be able to share these with us? We are also aware that the Group was due to be reviewed in January 2018, can you update us as to whether the group will be continuing and what you will be expecting the Group to do?

Private sector buildings

We are aware of the recent press coverage which suggests that there are a number of privately owned buildings in South Wales with cladding that failed safety tests.



What work is the Welsh Government doing to ensure that buildings which have cladding that has failed safety tests take the requisite remedial action?

Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety

We would appreciate more information on how the Welsh Government has, and will continue to, engage with the Independent Review. In particular, have you, or your officials met with the Chair of the review, and have you commented on the interim report?

We note that the House of Commons' Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee ('the HCLG Committee') have been in correspondence with the Chair of the Review to express their dissatisfaction at elements of the interim review. One particular issue of concern was that the testing of domestic electrical appliances is not to be covered by the Review. Given a faulty electrical appliance appears to have started the fire at Grenfell Tower, we are equally concerned at the omission of this matter from the terms of reference. Has the Welsh Government made representations to either the UK Government or the Hackitt Review on this issue?

We are also aware that the HCLG Committee have continued to raise concerns about the lack of clarity on whether combustible materials can be used in the cladding of high rise buildings. We note these concerns and would echo the need for greater clarity on this issue.

High rise blocks in Cardiff


Finally, we note the recent news that six high rise residential blocks in Cardiff have cladding which has failed current combustibility standards. We know how worrying this will be for residents, and welcome the 24 hour fire wardens that have been put in place by Cardiff Council. Can you outline what support you are providing to Cardiff Council following these safety tests?



I am copying this letter to the Housing, Local Government and Communities Committee for reference.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted.

John Griffiths AM
Chair

Cc Clive Betts MP, Chair, Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee.

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

