



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP
*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and
Local Government*

The Rt Hon Nick Hurd MP
*Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service
Minister for Grenfell Victims*

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Tel: 0303 444 3450

Email: james.brokenshire@communities.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/mhclg

Our Ref:

11 January 2019

Dear All

This letter updates you on the Independent Grenfell Recovery Taskforce's third report, and Building a Safer Future: an implementation plan, the Government's planned programme of work in response to the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety.

The Third Report of the Independent Grenfell Recovery Taskforce

On 18 December, the Government published the third report of the Independent Grenfell Recovery Taskforce. You can find it at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/third-report-from-the-independent-grenfell-recovery-taskforce-21-november-2018>

You may remember that the Taskforce was set up to help the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) support the survivors and address the long-term effects of the tragedy. It reflected the fact that the Council needed to change in order to put these arrangements in place. The Taskforce was also given the task of providing me, James Brokenshire, with reassurance that the Council had the ability to make these changes happen.

It is clear from the latest report that RBKC is making progress, particularly in relation to areas such as leadership and governance. There are also signs that the Council is starting to work in new and different ways. I am particularly pleased to learn that residents have been working together to design the recovery strategy, and that many of you have developed good relationships with Council officers. I have also welcomed the extra work

that the Taskforce has been doing with the Council on how they will develop ways to create more opportunities for jobs and skills.

However, the Taskforce is also clear that progress continues to be slow. Their report recommends that the Council focuses on the following areas for improvement:

- **Recovery strategy** – the Council should complete the strategy as soon as possible, so that there is a clear plan for recovery in place. The Council should also make sure they have the right people with the right skills in place to deliver the strategy, at the same time as responding to the Public Inquiry;
- **Relationship with residents** – the Council should carry on working to repair and improve relationships, and make sure they get the basics right when they communicate with you;
- **Culture change** - the Council should stay focused on their programme of culture change to show that they have learnt the lessons from the Grenfell Tower tragedy;
- **Rehousing** - the Council should prioritise rehousing everyone who has lost their home as a result of the tragedy;

The Council's Leadership Team has agreed and published their Recovery Strategy earlier this week to ensure a clear plan for recovery is in place. However, I agree with the Taskforce's assessment that the pace of change has been too slow, and with the recommendations that they have made. For this reason, I have asked the Taskforce to carry on working with RBKC to help them develop into a strong and confident Council. I have asked them to report to me again in the spring.

I am confident that the continued work of the Taskforce will also help ensure that you all receive the support and respect you deserve.

Building a Safer Future: an implementation plan

On 18 December, the Government also published its implementation plan setting out how it intends to improve building safety and implement the recommendations of the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety. The implementation plan sets out the significant programme of work that the Government intends to undertake to improve building safety and ensure that people who live in high-rise residential buildings are safe and feel safe, now and in the future. The plan is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-a-safer-future-an-implementation-plan>

The changes that we are making will ensure that those who undertake building work are more effectively held to account for building safety and that sanctions for wrongdoing are tougher. A Joint Regulators Group is being established that will bring together the expertise of the Health and Safety Executive, the National Fire Chiefs' Council, Local Authority Building Control, the Local Government Association and others as needed, to help to test new ideas and help with the move to a better regulatory system.

We will make sure that the standards and guidance are clearer and better understood, and that products are safe. A call for evidence has been published to kick-start a review of Approved Document B, the Building Regulations Fire Safety Guidance, and the Government response to the consultation on desktop studies has been published alongside the amended guidance that restricts their use.

Crucially, residents will be right at the heart of the new system: we want to make sure that residents are supported through strong engagement strategies; are given the information that you need to understand the protection measures in place in your buildings; and that you have a means to raise problems and be heard when things go wrong. As part of that, a call for evidence has been launched inviting views on how residents and those who manage buildings can work together regarding fire and structural safety and we would welcome as much input from local communities as possible to inform our policy development.

We are determined to learn the lessons from the Grenfell tragedy and bring about a lasting and fundamental change. We also wanted to send our thoughts as we remember the tragedy 18 months on, and to wish you and your families a peaceful New Year.

RT HON JAMES BROKENSHIRE MP

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Brokenshire'.

RT HON NICK HURD MP

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nick Hurd'.