

Building Safety update

Purpose of Report

For information.

Is this report confidential? No

Summary

This report aims to update members on the LGA's building safety-related work since the last FSMC meeting.

LGA Plan Theme: **Championing climate change and local environments**

Recommendation

That the Committee note and comment on the LGA's building safety related work.

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Building Safety update

Background

1. Since FSMC's last meeting, the LGA has continued to support action associated with the remediation of high-rise residential with dangerous cladding systems and has been engaged in the implementation of the new building safety regime created by the Fire Safety and Building Safety Acts.

Update

Overall Remediation

2. On November 16, The Minister of State, Lee Rowley MP published a [written ministerial statement](#) on the progress of remediation.
3. [The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' \(DLUHC\) Building Safety Programme Monthly Data Release](#) provides data related to its Building Safety Programme. The October data release includes new additional data on the overall progress made so far on ACM remediation, Building Safety Fund (BSF), Cladding Safety Scheme (CCS), Developer remediation, and Social Housing Sector, and Enforcement.
4. The January 2024 release gives the following relevant figures:
 - 4.1. There are 3,839 residential buildings 11 metres and over in height identified with unsafe cladding whose remediation progression is being reported on in the release.
 - 4.2. Overall, 1,608 buildings (42%) have either started or completed remediation works.
 - 4.3. A breakdown can be seen below of these:
 - 4.3.1. 797 buildings (21%) have completed remediation, including those awaiting building control sign off
 - 4.3.2. 811 building (21%) have started remediation
 - 4.3.3. 2,231 buildings (58%) have not started remediation
5. It should be noted that the total number of buildings set out above does not sum to the total number of buildings reported in the sections below which are also taken from the data release due to crossover between schemes.

ACM Cladding Remediation

6. The January 2024 release gives the following relevant figures:

- 6.1. of the 496 high-rise (18 metres and over in height) residential and publicly owned buildings with ACM cladding systems unlikely to meet Building Regulations, 476 (96%) have either started or completed remediation works.
- 6.2. of these, 425 buildings (86%) have completed ACM remediation, including those awaiting building control sign-off.
- 6.3. there are 20 buildings yet to start ACM remediation (4% of all buildings). Two buildings are vacant and so do not pose a risk to resident safety, 14 buildings have forecast start dates and three without a start forecast have had local authority enforcement action taken against them.

Cladding Safety Scheme (CCS)

7. As of the end of December 2023, 534 buildings 11 metres and over in height have live applications with the Cladding Safety Scheme, and a further 104 buildings have already been assessed as eligible. There are an additional 900 buildings in the pipeline that are being investigated.

Developer Remediation

8. 1,345 buildings have been identified with life-critical fire safety risks that will be remediated by developers. Of these 262 are reported to have completed remediation, 473 are reported to have started remediation, and 506 have plans in place for remediation but work has not yet started.

Large Panel System (LPS) Buildings

9. The LGA has commissioned six case studies on management strategies for LPS Buildings. These have now been completed and are now on the LGA's website.
10. On November 14, Bristol City Council made the decision to decant the LPS tower block Barton House and evacuate 400 residents. There was concern that the tower block could be damaged in the event of a fire, explosion or large impact which posed a risk to the structure of the building as it was thought some structural ties connecting the floors and walls could potentially be missing, and the concrete cover protecting the building's metal reinforcements may have been too thin. Subsequent investigation has revealed the structural ties were in place and in good order, and that the concrete's thickness was generally found to be good. However work is being undertaken to ensure the building is structurally sound and fire safe.

Other construction methods

11. Media reports suggested a school closure in North Tyneside was closed due to links with high alumina concrete (HAC) or reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC). The council and HSE have been investigating.

Building Safety Regulator

12. The LGA continues to pay a role as a member of the Joint Regulatory Group (JRG), a HSE-led body as a precursor to the launch of the regulator in April 2024.
13. A model has been established to determine what buildings will be assed in any given year over the first five-year period. This has been a complex task as the model needed to take into account resources, recruitment, height and number of residential dwellings.
14. It has been determined all buildings over 50m tall with more than 11 residential units will be included for assessment in year one.
15. In addition, some large panel system buildings constructed between 1956-1973 with gas supplies and reinforcement works cannot be confirmed alongside 267 ACM buildings will also be included in year one.

Implications for Wales

16. The Fire Safety Act came into force in Wales in [October 2021](#). The new regulations passed under the FSO only apply in England. Building regulations and fire and rescue services are devolved responsibilities of the Welsh Assembly.

Financial Implications

17. Although the LGA has set up the Joint Inspection Team, the cost of doing so is being met by DLUHC. The Joint Inspection Team has secured funding for the next two years which will see it expand significantly.

Equalities implications

18. The group of people affected by building safety issues will be broad and include a wide variety of potential equalities issues, with social landlords for example having responsibilities to consider the need for personal emergency evacuation plans for people who are unable to self-evacuate from high-rise residential buildings.

Next steps

19. Officers are to continue to support the sector's work to keep residents safe and reform the building safety system, as directed by members.